

CINEMATOGRAPHIC TECHNIQUES OF HILARY NGWENO'S
THE MAKING OF A NATION

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or any other award.

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DEDICATION

To my now aged parents, Mzee Irungu and Mama Helenah, who took me to school as a 7 years old little boy nearly 4½ decades ago and taught me that the “roots” of education are bitter but the “fruits” of the same are sweet. In all this long academic journey, they have been praying for me while at the same time cheering me on to achieve more academic success. Bravo!! *Ni ngatho!!*

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. **Ambient Sound:** Refers to the background noise (sound) present in a scene. It is any sound other than the sound being monitored (primary sound).
2. **Analogue:** The term refers to heritage information that is not in digital form.
3. **B-Roll, B roll, or Broll:** Is the supplemental or alternative footage intercut with the main shot in an interview or documentary.
4. **Cinema Verite:** Used here to imply truthful cinema (Bordwell, 2003). It refers to the art or technique of filming a motion picture film so as to convey candid realism.
5. **Cinema:** For the purposes of this study, the term 'cinema' is used interchangeably with the term 'film' or 'movie' and carry the same meaning.
6. **Cinematography:** "The process of taking ideas, words, actions, emotional subtext, tone, and all other forms of nonverbal communication and rendering them in visual terms." Brown (2012, p. 2). It refers to the art of capturing images during the creation of motion picture films.
7. **Diegetic Sound:** Refers to the sound originating from the world within the film. It is the sound whose source is visible on the screen or whose source is implied to be present by the action of the film.
8. **Digitization:** The conversion of analogue information into digital form.
9. **Documentary Film:** A nonfictional motion picture film whose aim is to document some aspects of reality, mainly for the purposes of instructions or maintaining a historical record.
10. **Kapenguria Six:** They were six leading Kenyan nationalists who were arrested in 1952, tried and imprisoned thereafter at Kapenguria by colonial regime.
11. **Mau Mau:** Refers to Kenya's liberation movement from the yoke of colonialism
12. **Mise-en-scene:** Expressive elements which constitute meaning within a framed shot (Bordwell, 2003). It is a French term that means "putting on scene" or "placing on stage" and refers to the arrangement of everything that appears in the framing- actors, lighting, decor, props, costume, etc
13. **Montage:** A technique in film editing in which a series of short shots are edited into a sequence to condense space, time, and information.

14. **Panoramic view:** A full and wide view of a subject without obstruction.
15. **Safina:** Refers to a political party in Kenya.
16. **Soundtrack:** Refers to the music used in a movie.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

1. **AEMO:** African Elected Members Organization in the colonial Legislative Council (LEGCO).
2. **APP:** African People's Party.
3. **COTU:** Central Organization of Trade Unions.
4. **DP:** Democratic Party of Kenya.
5. **EAC:** East African Community.
6. **ECK:** Electoral Commission of Kenya.
7. **FORD:** Forum for Restoration of Democracy.
8. **FORD-ASILI:** Forum for Restoration of Democracy-Asili.
9. **FORD-KENYA:** Forum for Restoration of Democracy-Kenya.
10. **GEMA:** Gikuyu, Embu, Meru, Association.
11. **IATED:** International Association for Technology, Education and Development.
12. **KADU:** Kenya African Democratic Union.
13. **KANU:** Kenya African National Union.
14. **KAU:** Kenya African Union.
15. **KCA:** Kikuyu Central Association.
16. **KFL:** Kenya Federation of Labour.
17. **KPU:** Kenya People's Union.
18. **LDP:** Liberal Democratic Party.
19. **LEGCO:** Legislative Council in the colonial days.
20. **MP:** Member of Parliament.
21. **NAK:** National Alliance Party of Kenya.
22. **NARC:** National Rainbow Coalition.
23. **NDP:** National Development Party.
24. **NGO:** Non-Governmental Organization.
25. **ODM:** Orange Democratic Movement.
26. **ODM-KENYA:** Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya.
27. **PNU:** Party of National Unity.
28. **SDP:** Social Democratic Party.
29. **TMN:** The Making of a Nation.

ABSTRACT

Just in the same way the African history was reconstructed through such elements as archaeological sources, oral traditions among others, Hilary Ngweno's **The Making of a Nation** documentary film series used the same principle to reconstruct Kenya's political history through cinematographic elements such as archival materials (still photographs and a few video clips). The former has already become an academic discipline while the later is attracting an academic attention beginning with this study. This study sought to critically explore the various cinematographic techniques deployed in Hilary Ngweno's **The Making of a Nation** documentary series. The specific focus of the study is the establishment of cinematographic styles and characteristics in Hilary Ngweno's films. The study also examines the role of cinematographic techniques in these films. Finally, it analyses thematic and narrative development in the episodic films. The study uses formalist film theory as its apparatus in analysing the films. The film theory is concerned with design and form of shots composition. Formalist films persuade viewers to see things the way the artist sees them. The sample size is the fourteen (14) episodes of Hilary Ngweno's documentary series. The specific focus is the examination of how the narratives have engaged formalistic tendencies and thus their efficacy and reliability on archival resources for reconstruction of Kenya's political history. This study is qualitative research deploying the case research design. Qualitative research explores attitudes, behavior and experiences. It attempts to get an in-depth opinion from participant(s). Reading and interpretation of pictures (films) is subjective and therefore based on attitudes, behavior and experiences. The researcher watched the films and recorded down their various aspects in relation to the study objectives. This helped to identify the various cinematographic elements which is the main focus of the study. Data analysis capitalized on textual analysis to yield information relevant for film studies and policy formulation in respect to archival film techniques. The filmmaker uses especially still photograph shots to create other various shots which include extreme close ups, close ups, medium shots, zooms-in, zooms-out, among others. The close up shots dominate in all the episodes in the documentary film series and have been used to show reactions among various political players and create emotional attachment to the viewers. They help to bring viewers closer to the subject (s) covered. The camera angles have been used to show political supremacy where political machinations and counter machinations involving political figures is also a subject of this study. The study made two recommendations; (1) recommendation for more documentary film series and (2) recommendation for further research.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Brown (2012), defines cinematography as “the process of taking ideas, words, actions, emotional subtext, tone, and all other forms of nonverbal communication and rendering them in cinematic terms”. This rendering is made possible by use of technology in the filmmaking process. McKernan (2005), in analysing the role of technology in film development ascertained that transition from analogue to digital filmmaking made it possible to transform the dynamics of the medium. This has also opened many creative possibilities available to the cinematographer by offering bigger creative latitude that “has even encouraged some filmmakers to make radical and specific changes to their images...” (McKernan, 2005 p.95).

Elaborating on this view, Wheeler (2005) identifies the director of photography as the professional steward of cinematography in any work of film. In view of these two complementary arguments, cinematography can be thought of as the creative input which make it possible to highlight the desired meaning in the film by use of camera language. Lighting, composition, camera, sound and other visual clues are all important in determining how any picture is interpreted. This study has borrowed heavily from these professional adjuncts in determining how film images are interpreted in relation to the specified objectives.

While various technical and creative persons who can be regarded as cinematographers have made significant contribution to the development of the film medium, Lumiere brothers - Louis and Auguste Lumiere - are regarded as the pioneers of commercial cinema through combining film photography and projection into one device in early 1895 (Bordwell & Thompson, 2003). Their camera/projector Cinematograph patented on 13th February 1895 gave way to their first screenings on 28th December 1895, in Salon Indien of the Grand Cafe in Paris. The brothers’ creativity is evident in such films

as La Sortie des usines Lumiere (Workers Leaving the Lumiere Factory), L'Arroseur arrose (Tables Turned on the Gardener), and Repas de bebe (Feeding the Baby).

While their actual documentation of the film made the Lumiere brothers the world's first documentary filmmakers, it is important to note that "modern filming trends are moving away from theatrical effects and toward more natural lighting and camera treatment, involving the audience more deeply with the screen story," (Mascelli, 2000, p. 3). This shift in cinematographic emphasis strongly hints of the role of modern technology involved in the three key phases of film production. Mascelli (2000) also identifies the relevance of shots, camera angles and shot composition in determining how the audience experience film. This observation is important in highlighting the interconnectedness of cinematography to the filmmaking experience not just at the production phase but also in the spectator's own world. But in order to understand Hilary Ngweno's films, it is important to understand how documentary films differ from other forms of films, at least from the conventional perspective. Whereas documentary films uphold realism in its formulation, other forms of films especially feature films are based on creativity through manipulation of various cinematographic elements.

This study sought to analyse how various cinematographic elements have been creatively manipulated in Hilary Ngweno's documentary film series, **TMN**, to create meaning and tell Kenya's socio-political history.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Cinematography plays a key role in determining how the visual image is rendered and interpreted by the audience. Especially within documentary films where realism should be preserved, creative interferences due to manipulation of various cinematic elements may enhance or counteract the film's ability to project accurate meaning. Hilary Ngweno's documentary films retell Kenya's socio-political history, and are thus important tools in dispensing Kenya's historical and cultural ideologies. Preservation of reality is important especially because the films, being a reflection of Kenyan people's

culture, have wide audiences. This study investigates the deployment of cinematographic elements in Hilary Ngweno's documentary film series, **The Making of a Nation**. It specifically analyses how such elements have participated in the reconstruction process based on thematic and narrative development of Kenya's socio-political history.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To establish cinematographic styles and characteristics in Hilary Ngweno's documentary films.
2. To examine the role of cinematographic techniques in the 14 series films.
3. To analyse the thematic and narrative development in Hilary Ngweno's documentary films.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What cinematographic styles and characteristics are used in Hilary Ngweno's documentary films?
2. What is the role of cinematographic techniques as used in the 14 series films?
3. What are the thematic and narrative development strategies in Hilary Ngweno's documentary films?

1.5 Research Assumptions

1. Hilary Ngweno has used distinguishable cinematographic styles in the films under study.
2. That these cinematographic techniques play an important role in shaping the meaning of the films.
3. That the films have prevalent and / or cross-cutting themes noticeable in their narrative structures.

1.6 Significance and Rationale of the Study

A country's history and culture is crucial part of a nation's identity, and there is no price tag that can be placed or exchanged for it. Documenting this important national facet is equally significant for preservation and propagation of national values. Documentary films, as part of the available means of historical and cultural archiving, have become increasingly popular. This is useful because the study of the same yields information relevant to scholars interested in these documentaries, a research gap not currently addressed.

Focusing on Hilary Ngweno's documentary works, therefore yields knowledge crucial in judging the efficacy of his documentary techniques and yields information relevant for further research in historical and cultural documentaries. This study is of benefit to, among others, national historians, policy makers, academic researchers, and information specialists, by informing them about the cinematographic aspects of the documentary films as forms of national historical and cultural archiving.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study covers documentary film episodes of Hilary Ngweno's fourteen-piece TMN series, making comparative references where necessary to illustrate its key objective concerns. It does not refer to any other documentaries by other filmmakers, or any other work by the same filmmaker.

1.8 Review of Related Literature

1.8.1 Documentary Genres and Conventions

There are several varieties of documentary films, with different functions. The Lumiere Brothers' early work consisted of 'actuality' films which were footages of happenings from ordinary life, simple recording of what was in front of the camera (Bordwell & Thompson, 2003). Later documentary filmmaking showed significant improvement by editing reality footage and offering diverse ways to serve specific purposes. Soviet film-

maker Dziga Vertov documented aspects of life in filmmaking in the Soviet Union during the 1920s, but his films already presented their materials in unusual ways not previously seen in documentaries. He used untried postproduction practices like superimposed images, animation, split screens and editing together shots that have visual associations. Man with a Movie Camera (1929), for example, is a rare mix of information, propaganda and entertainment. Leni Riefenstahl's 1930s documentaries had a slightly different resolve: she was hired by the Nazis to produce propaganda films. Triumph of the Will (1935) is a documentation of a Nazi assembly using mise-en-scene, camerawork and editing to serve one purpose: to compliment Hitler, the Nazi party and the Aryan race (Beumers, 2005).

In this movie, the camera shows the devised speeches and the massed, geometrically organized ranks of submissive residents and militias. Abrams, Bell, & Udris (2001) argued that the film used various cinematographic and stylistic techniques to achieve its goals, just like Roberto Rossellini's films:

The editing highlights the film's central message of Hitler as saviour and leader, backed by a strong party (and an army), with the purpose of making the heroic and mythologized German people victorious and great again. This is clever propaganda and effective documentary. In Italy, Roberto Rossellini's Paisa (1946), one of the first neorealist films, consists of six fictional stories, but the closeness to reality of each episode is emphasized through the use of actuality footage from Italy's war years. Common documentary devices in the film include the use of archive footage and a voice-over to provide explanation (Abrams, Bell, & Udris, 2001, pp. 279-280).

Based on their deployment of various cinematographic techniques, and their premised messages, documentary films can be classified into various genres which include public affairs and propaganda documentaries (Aufderheide, 2007).

1.8.2 Public Affairs Documentary.

Public affairs documentary is mostly consumed through public television transmission, and focuses on such issues as poverty, government welfare programs, corporate

corruption, and healthcare, and other public service programs. Such documentaries characteristically use investigative or problem-oriented method, feature restrained exposition with narration and sometimes hosts, makes substantial use of background footage or b-roll, and concentrate on symbolic personalities who demonstrate or illustrate the problem they are addressing. They assure their audiences of an authoritative, frequently social-scientific interpretation of a subject, talking as proficient journalists on behalf of a community inflicted by the problem (Aufderheide, 2007). This form of documentary is regarded as socially powerful and artistically robust, with its foundations in the early experiences of documentary filmmakers and journalistic traditions. Many viewers expect it to be objective and sober in its documentation and presentation of facts.

The broadcast TV public affairs documentary was most popular from mid-1950s to mid-1980s. It was mainly funded by commercial broadcasting companies which produced these films aiming to win prizes and prestige, to rationalize their use of frequencies allocated to them by the government, and as a portion of their public service directives enforced by regulators. These documentaries grew as a form of more detailed, attentive form of news aiming to provide interpretation, background and understanding provided by investigative journalists. Their primary objective was to use journalism as an overseer on authority (Baker , 2006).

1.8.3 Propaganda Documentaries.

In addition to public affairs, is government propaganda – a significant foundation of finance and training for documentarians and a controlling power on public opinion. Oliver Thomson in Mungai (2006, p.6) shares this view when he states that propaganda is mainly used in seven categories ; political, religious, economic, moral, social, diplomatic, and military. In practice, he stretches that propaganda is the use of a range of efforts, including the media, to influence the masses to support, accept or even reject a position or state of affairs. Propaganda documentaries intend to persuade audiences of an organization's point of view or reasoning. They market the organization's beliefs, although some filmmakers fully support the cause of the organizations they work for.

Despite that anyone might get involved in this form of filmmaking, advertisers and activists for instance, “propaganda” is more often connoted with governments. These documentaries are valuable to governments because of their claims to truthfulness and fidelity to real life. They were especially important for various world governments in the period before, during, and immediately after World War II when film was the dominant audio-visual medium enjoyed by the masses. In this period, documentaries were used by governments to influence public opinion and as warfare escalated in World War I, governments used propaganda documentary media to encourage their own troops, mobilize their own civilians, and influence others of their might. The British documentary The Battle of the Somme (1916) succeeded with British audiences in theatres largely because it showed actual battle footage from the warfront (Miller, 2010).

After World War I, global governments saw documentary as a novel and powerful tool. The Nazi party in Germany after it captured power in 1933, combined the control over production, distribution, and exhibition of all films. Its political validity was mostly fed by propaganda. Japanese government passed a law demanding filmmakers to support government cause and mandated theatres to show documentaries in every film program in 1939. In 1940, the government enforced a union of top news film companies to nurture conformism of communication and to promote uniformity of behavior. The emerging Soviet government nationalized all media requiring them to submit to the service of state agendas. Other propaganda organizations were formed in Britain and the United States, usually negotiating with commercial producers, distributors, and exhibitors to get communications to citizens, except for members of the armed forces (Aufderheide, 2007).

Britain formed a Ministry of Information; the U.S. Office of War Information was never fully supported by President Roosevelt, with each division of the armed forces directing its own propaganda production. In Britain, John Grierson’s crews produced some of critics’ most prized and disturbing documentaries. Basil Wright’s Song of Ceylon (1934) not only romanticized pre-colonial life in one of Britain’s key tea-producing

zones but also celebrated the inspiring industrial process by which tea arrived at Britons' kitchens. It thus idealized tea drinking, as William Guynn has noted, making the act a partaking in a sentimental view of an exotic culture, while also partying in the energy and power of Britain. From these observations, this study has analyzed cinematography as a technique, guided by Brown's (2012, p2) argument that "cinematic technique is the entire range of methods and techniques that we use to add layers of meaning and subtext to the "content" of the film — the dialogue and action".

1.8.4 Cinematographic Styles in Documentary Filmmaking.

Style in and of itself can add or undermine the narrative if it is not dramatically purposeful (Aufderheide, 2007). Style can be achieved through use of compositional elements - camera placement, movement, juxtaposition of foreground and background people or things, light, sound, and editing. But all these elements only serve the purpose of defining how the narrative itself advances. Therefore, narration styles are dependent on the fusion of the various cinematographic elements within cinema, to achieve any effect within the wide arc of narration which defines individual style of narration. Dancyger (2011) argues that "whether the filmmaker relies on the editing, the pace, to explain the narrative, or she avoids editing, moving the camera, using the planes within the frame to explain the narrative. More often style is associated with composition—naturalistic or stylized; however, editing, as I hope is illustrated in this book, has its own style, ranging from directly expository to elliptical and metaphorical" (Dancyger, 2011, p. 203).

When applied to the documentary films context, cinematographic styles are achieved through the use of various conceptual tools: frame, light and colour, lens, movement, texture, establishing and point of view (Brown, 2012). Aufderheide (2007) affirms, "styles can be dramatically different, in order to accomplish the end of public engagement" (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 8). Patricia Aufderheide (2007) reasons that a good way to recognize the integration of documentary conventions is to analyze the vastly celebrated documentary films bred of artistic countercurrents. In exploring cinematographic styles within cinema, Brown (2012) finds out that such an analysis can

encompass among other pertinent units of meaning, flashback and narrative technique of chronological interruption, with earlier events taking the form of reminiscence. The flashback technique is useful in that it enables the narrator to start the story from a point of high interest and to avoid the monotony of chronological exposition while keeping the story in the objective, dramatic present. Brown (2012) further recounts that flashback can be indicated by both narrative devices and a variety of other optical techniques such as fade-in or fade-out, dissolves, or iris-in or iris-out.

To correlate Brown (2012) findings to this study, it is important to adduce that Hilary Ngweno recounts Kenya's political history from a flashback perspective, retelling issues that have already passed in the nation's current political situation. However, more than focusing on the dramatic value of these cinematographic styles, this study has implored the audience's perspective to illustrate the prevailing perceptions about Kenya's socio-political history. The preceding example foregrounds the notion that deeper analysis of documentary filmmaking may encompass what Aufderheide (2007) calls 'personalization for the problem by the documentary filmmaker, who goes to the actual setting to see and experience the situation from an insider's point of view'.

According to Dancyger (2011), style determines how the audience experiences the documentary's narrative and ... is critical to the experience. Making it feel real, albeit a stylistic posture, is the central tenet of Dogme 95. The subject matter of the films, the fact that they are scripted, and the fact that actors are portraying the characters, makes the content classic melodrama. The style, however, is the style of *cine'ma ve'rite* (Dancyger, 2011, p. 214). While in some films the filmmaker may deploy *cine'ma ve'rite* or even integrate full dialogues, it is however possible, especially in documentary films to be economical with dialogue. Most documentaries use minimal dialogue and contemplative close-ups, slowly highlighting pertinent issues to invite the viewer to become complicit with the camera in knowing, in speaking the languages of the inherent messages.

As Aufderheide (2007) argues, "our shared understanding of what a documentary is—built up from our own viewing experience—shifts over time, with business and

marketing pressures, technological and formal innovations, and with vigorous debate’’. The genre of documentary always has two crucial elements that are in tension: representation, and reality (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 9). It is however noteworthy that documentaries are different in how they use narration styles and in how they adopt the conventions of Cinema Verite’. From the preceding arguments, cinematographic styles can be understood as those inherent attributes deployed by the filmmaker to highlight his messages delivery by giving the viewer clues, and pointing towards his desired interpretation. Such clues could be through voice, image or combination of both. These perspectives advanced by the various scholars have been helpful in helping this study ascertain cinematographic stylistics advanced in the films under study.

1.8.5 Role of Cinematography in Film.

How cinematography functions within film can be interpreted through the use of the various elements identified through styles. For instance, dialogue plays a very important role in documentary filmmaking. In articulating this fact, Rosenthal (2002) argues that “the broad function of narration is to amplify and clarify the picture. It should help establish the direction of the film and provide any necessary information not obvious from the visuals. In a simple but effective way, it should help focus what the film is about and where it is going’’ (Rosenthal, 2002, p. 220). This study has drawn upon these criticisms of the medium as basis for critiquing Hilary Ngweno’s TMN documentary films, and how it has used the various cinematographic elements to influence the viewer’s perception of Kenya’s socio-political dialogues. Some of the cinematographic elements analyzed in this study include camera, sound and dialogue, mise en scene, editing and montage among others.

Camera use helps to identify points of emphasis, convergence as well as divergence of the narrator’s perspectives. Pace shifts, for instance, serve to inform the viewer of shift in a subjective or fantasy or imaginary world contrasted with the real-world setup. Georges Me´lie`s, A Trip to the Moon (1902) is rich in subjective camera styles which documentarians regard as a narrative apprehension and creative dare. Within motion pictures, camera can be perceived as a narrator:

Narration can also help establish the mood of the film, and it is particularly useful in bridging filmic transitions and turning the film in a new direction. The first thing one learns in journalism is to let the reader know the five W's: who, what, when, where, and why. This is often the function of narration when the visuals by themselves make no sense (Rosenthal, 2002, p. 220).

Dialogue is also an important part of cinematography. Documentary film relies on, besides the images, the narrator's voice which may be used as a voice-over to enhance the communication potential of the film. There are three main narration styles possible within documentary cinema. These are first person, second person and third person narration styles (Bresson, 1958). In third person, the narrator uses impersonal language to describe the occurrence of events. The audience is also impersonal, abstract and accidental in that there is no identified viewer to whom the narration is addressing. The second person narration style is more personal. The viewer is identified as the recipient of the message. It is therefore more persuasive form of narration as the audience can find warmth of contact, confidence and trust within it by knowing that the narrator is addressing them. The first person narration style is highly attractive as it is considered a calmer format that allows for a remarkable amount of tones. The narration's more personal form creates a more humane and closer empathy with the spectator. This helps to bridge the distance between the filmmaker and the viewer thus making it a better narration. Conveniently placed diegetic signs may serve a similar narrative function. Furthermore, the practice of oral identification works not only to define locations but also to explain characters' movements in time and space in the entire film. Bordwell & Thompson (2008) calls this verbal orientation dialogue hooks.

Dialogue within documentary film also communicates narrative causation. Narratives develop through a series of events, connected together by progression of causation. The concealed purpose of film dialogue is to explain "why?" and "how?" and "what next?" to the viewer (Aufderheide, 2007). It primes the viewer to connect the meaning of shots with the overall narrative progress. But besides explaining causation, dialogue also serves the purpose of enacting narrative events. Characters are always in the act of doing something: promise, enchant, betray, hurt, revenge, persuade, love or do any one

human action through their words. In disclosing a crucial event, dialogue provides information significant to the plot, whose exposure has some risk or danger to the characters, thereby providing dramatic tension.

Dialogue also aids in character revelation as well as control of viewer evaluation and emotions. A character is a concept developed from various signs used by a film. Dialogue makes characters significant by hinting of their inside life. Social status, education level, attitude, humility, politeness, laziness, thoughtfulness and other personal mannerisms can be portrayed through dialogue (Balazs, 1952). By controlling pacing, dialogue may divert the viewer's attention or set us up some visual surprise. It could also lengthen a moment, to stretch a suspenseful climax or even influence the audience's emotions about a specific issue. In this way, it guides our interpretation of what we are seeing. Finally, dialogue helps to achieve a significant level of realism in documentary films (Balazs, *ibid*).

Even though the events in the films are reconstructed or re-arranged to convey a particular point of view, narration or dialogue helps to create surface plausibility of the facts. Most documentary films encourage the interruption of doubt by sustaining the diegetic illusion that the viewer is witnessing the action as a real event. Dialogue in these films serves the primary function of representing ordinary conversational activities like friends chatting over a meal. These exchanges exist to replicate ordinary encounters (Bordwell & Thompson, 2003). This research has tried to establish how dialogue - a form of cinema narration - when put in the context of cinematographic discourses has been used in the films under study.

Sound (music or diegetic sounds) also serves several functions in a documentary film narrative. First, dialogue announces the diegetic space and placement of characters. The most elementary function of dialogue is to create documentary diegesis by informing the viewer of the imaginary world of the narrative (Balazs, 1952). When the dialogue or voice over makes a declaration about space, that space is instantly defined for the audience. Even though this function may seem unnecessary in film media where the camera shows the viewer the location, yet dialogue is important to help the audience

identify the location, as meaning can potentially be anchored on elaboration. Within Hilary Ngweno's **TMN**, this research has analysed how camera techniques have been used to contrast or enhance subjective and objective narration.

Another element whose role this study has focused on is *mise-en-scène*. *Mise-en-scène* includes everything that the filmmaker captures in the framed shot. (Buckland, 2010), shares this view when he argues that in its narrower sense, *mise-en-scène* means what appears in front of the camera – set design, lighting, and character movement. Accompanied by the dialogue, it helps to reveal complementary information about the shot, which may add more meaning to it and bring new perspectives on the shot. To analyze *mise-en-scène* therefore, is to sift through all the symbols and clues put in the camera shot to aid the filmmaker make meaningful communication to the audience.

This includes set, props, setting, color, lighting, placement and other aspects of making meaning through filmic space. The influence of Eisenstein's fast cut renews "interest in *mise-en-scène*, particularly in the work of Stanley Kubrick and Martin Scorsese, and it is to this work that we now turn" (Dancyger, 2011, p. 217). Of specific interest to this study is how *mise-en-scène* impacts on the elegance of camera work while adding a more refined route to increase a sense of aesthetic flair within Hilary Ngweno's films. Use of deliberate technical techniques and film aesthetics to capture the feeling is more effective when accompanied by a cutaway or subjective sound. Within the films under study, this analysis has focused on how the various aspects of *mise-en-scène* have been achieved within the film, and offer critical judgment of whether they enhance the film's communicated message or impede it.

Finally, this study highlights editing techniques as part of its cinematographic analysis. While editing is about sequential placement of images and sounds to help tell the story, it plays a very important role in shaping the subtext while achieving continuity through place and time shifts, dramatic emphasis, introduction of new ideas into a scene, creation of identification with a character, and building mounting tension through the narrative. But while these are the initial objectives of editing, many alterations have been made to editing over the evolution period of art. Dancyger (2011) points out that:

Along the way, aesthetic insights were achieved—how random shots could collectively achieve greater power than individual shots, how shock juxtapositions could alter meaning, the range of possible meaning that was possible from discontinuity editing (the jump cut), the power of sound to shape as well as to alter meaning. But throughout that history, two guiding editing principles dominated—narrative clarity and dramatic emphasis (Dancyger, 2011, p. 267).

It is however notable that documentary films defy this artistic criteria especially in regard to deployment of dramatic sequence. As quoted by Dancyger (2011), Karel Reisz proposes that “A story-film—and this will serve as a working distinction between documentary and story-films—is concerned with the development of a plot; the documentary is concerned with the exposition of a theme. It is out of this fundamental difference of aims that the different production methods arise” (Dancyger, 2011, p. 327).

In this way, documentary films can be said to foster on direct editing more than indirect editing in order to mirror facts as closely as possible. Unlike the feature films where the production is usually controlled than that of the documentary with the story split into considered shots that enhance the plot; and performance, camera placement, camera movement, light, color, setting, and juxtaposition of people within the shot to help advance the plot, the documentary film is more concerned with meeting the reality as it is. This research has explored how editing techniques within Hilary Ngweni's TMN enhances meaning, or recreate the shots in a way that reflects upon his messages about reconstruction of Kenya's socio-political history.

1.8.6 Themes and Narrative Development in the Documentary Films

Brown (2012, p. 32) identifies the fusion of theme within a film's own composition when he asserts that “a montage is simply a series of shots related by theme”. Against this backdrop, these can be said to manifest the montage, hence the narrative flow of the film. Form is an important factor in understanding how documentary films uphold cinema conventions in constructing their meanings. Given that there are no performers in documentary films, just subjects that the filmmaker follows:

Camera positioning tends to be a matter of convenience rather than intention, and lighting is designed to be as unobtrusive as possible. Documentary filmmakers tend to adhere to their definition of a documentary: a film of real people in real situations doing what they usually do. Consequently, the role of the director is less that of the orchestra conductor than that of the soloist. He tries to capture the essence of the film by working with others—the cinematographer, the sound recordist, and the editor. The documentary film is found and shaped in the editing (Dancyger, 2011, p. 327)

Documentary narration deploys reasoned argument as a basis of its story. Brief motion shots with experts exposing how their arguments are reflected in the streets; the interviews and b-roll stock images that demonstrate the narrator's point and some educational animation accompanied by well-toned music, documentary's formal elements are silently embedded within the creative spaces in which the filmmaker transforms his thoughts persuasively (Baker , 2006). The most significant way to consider the documentary is understanding it as a set of choices about how to symbolize reality with the tools available to the filmmaker: “sound (ambient sound, soundtrack music, special sound effects, dialogue, narration); images (material shot on location, historical images captured in photographs, video, or objects); special effects in audio and video, including animation; and pacing (length of scenes)” (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 10). Based on the aforementioned cinematographic elements within documentaries, their narrative structure appears to be the most unifying convention. Aufderheide (2007) argues that all documentaries share one similarity in that “they are stories, they have beginnings, middles, and ends; they invest viewers in their characters, they take viewers on emotional journeys. They often refer to classic story structure. When Jon Else made a documentary about J. Robert Oppenheimer, the creator of the first atomic bomb—a scientist who anguished over his responsibilities—Else had his staff read Hamlet” (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 12).

Aufderheide (2007, p. 25) terms this factual representation as “the illusion of reality for the viewer” in which “realism was not an attempt to authentically capture reality but an attempt to use art to mimic it so effectively that the viewer would be pulled in without

thinking about it". This realistic illusion could be achieved through deployment of such realism and formalism techniques as

... (1) elision editing (editing that goes unnoticed by the conscious mind, so that your eye is tricked into thinking it is merely moving with the action); (2) cinematography that creates the illusion that you are almost in the scene or "looking over the shoulder" of the action and gives you a psychological stake in the action; and (3) pacing that follows the viewer's expectations for events in the natural world. ... (and) some ... formal elements in the film itself... including sharp or recognizable edits, unnatural colors, distortions in the lens, special effects such as animation, and slowing down or speeding up sound and image (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 25-26).

However, the issue of replicating reality versus re-presenting reality as the core of documentary filmmaking has been on the fore front of film critics. Filmmakers' arguments from the early days of film tried to have, "...typified a strong strand of expression in documentary outside commercial structures (with) proponents of formalism charging realists with illusionism, tricking viewers into believing that they are watching something real; instead, these makers argued, let viewers notice and even celebrate the artist's role in creating the work" (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 25-26).

Thematically, a documentary is allied to its primary objective. For instance, intervention documentaries would thematically differ significantly from advocacy or political campaign documentaries. Scottish John Grierson's documentaries focused on his interest in public relations business during late nineteenth century labor strife. John Grierson was employed by the Empire Marketing Board to uphold the very notion of empire. His superior unambiguously stated the point: "For the State, the function of official documentary is to win the consent of this new public for the existing order" (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 33).

His narratives were thus political and served the political expectations of his time. Viewed against the backdrop of Flaherty's Nanook of the North (1922) which was the first straight, commercially successful documentary film, the narrative concerns seem

different. Flaherty, working in his adventures, simply documented the daily life and sufferings of the Eskimo Nanook and his family who survived through hunting and building igloos in Hudson Bay, Canada. He followed this with his second feature, Moana (1926), which was an expressive account of the South Seas, specifically life in Samoa (Bordwell & Thompson, 2003). In this study, narrative concerns have been interpreted according to the subject matter of the films under study. This has been tallied with the historical events depicted in the films, and thus helped map out the director's role in shaping the narrative. Since themes are congruent aspects of the subject matter, such an analysis has inevitably implored prevalent themes within Hilary Ngweno's documentary films.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

Since this study focuses on cinematographic elements of the documentary film series, its main theory is formalism film theory. The theory is concerned with how film uses artistry, stylization and technique to express the artist's ideas (Balazs, 1952). The Russian formalist critics, Roman Jakobson, Viktor Shklovsky, and I.A Richard are considered the most popular proponents of formalism. Their linguistic techniques were however credited to Ferdinand de Saussure. Formalist films persuade viewers to see things the way the artist sees them. Stylistically, formalist film theory is concerned with design and form of shots composition. In analysis of shots, formalists focus on the control and deliberate manipulation through montage, the camera angles, camera movements, arrangement of objects and people within the shots and how they are designed to convey a specific perspective. Analysis of this form of composition and how it encourages a more active mental participation from the viewer's own interpretation of the artist's intended message is the primary function of this theory. This echo Robert Stam's (2000) view that:

Cinematic language can be suddenly prodded in a new direction by innovatory aesthetic procedures ... or those made possible by a new technology such as the zoom or the steadicam. Natural language, however, shows a more powerful inertia and is less open to individual initiative and creativity. The analogy is less between cinema and natural

language than between cinema and other arts like painting or literature, which can also be suddenly inflected by the revolutionary aesthetic procedures of a Picasso or a Joyce (Stam, 2000, p. 112).

What Stam refers to as innovatory aesthetic procedures can be interpreted to imply the film's formal processes and elements. In this way, formalist concerns and engagements provide an avenue to understand film as a language, and thereby to understand its textual messages.

This theory is relevant to this research in that it has helped the study to critically engage with the formal aspects of Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary film series. This has made it possible to analyze mise en scene, montage, editing, and other cinematographic aspects and stylistics. Like the shot composition, the way some shots are edited together in formalist films often has a deeper, symbolic meaning that can be understood through juxtaposition with narration, music and the overall montage. Its interest on the significance of form and technique over content and specifies creative autonomy as more functional component of the film's discourse.

1.10 Research Methodology

1.10.1 Research Design

This is a qualitative research deploying the case study research design. Qualitative research explores attitudes, behaviour and experiences. It attempts to get an in-depth opinion from participants (Dawson, 2002, p.14). Reading and interpretation of pictures (films) is subjective and therefore based on attitudes, behaviour and experiences. The research method is suitable because the study has been concerned with observation of phenomena and description of observed characteristics explaining how they encounter the stated objectives. The research studied the works of a single artist, hence it is a case study based on Hilary Ngweno's documentary films. This has made it possible to gain in-depth knowledge of how they deploy cinematographic techniques. Given that qualitative research describes and explains rather than predict a phenomenon (Oso and

Onen, 2009, p.77), it is most suitable in analysing the documentary works of Hilary Ngweno.

1.10.2 Sample Size

This study analysed episodes from Hilary Ngweno's fourteen-piece **TMN** documentary series. Each episode has been analysed individually, though all the related data has been recorded together under the respective objective. This sample has been able to provide sufficient basis to make logical arguments about Hilary Ngweno's cinematographic techniques and their efficacy in delivering authentic socio-historical discourse.

1.10.3 Sampling Techniques

This research used purposive sampling technique. This is where elements are deliberately chosen for inclusion in the study sample based on how they are relevant to the study (Oso & Onen, 2009). The approach of this sampling technique is suitable because it helped limit the sample to Hilary Ngweno's **TMN** documentary series.

1.10.4 Validity and Reliability

To guarantee validity and reliability of the collected data, the researcher ensured that data conformed to the various specified objectives as well as adhering to the theoretical framework. Data was considered valid to the extent that it did not contradict the objectives and the theory being used.

1.10.5 Data Collection Techniques

Observation was the main form of data collection used in this study. The researcher watched the films and recorded down their various aspects in relation to the study objectives. This helped to identify the various cinematography elements, which are the main focus of this study. The researcher used observation guide appearing elsewhere in this study.

1.10.6 Data Analysis

This study used textual analysis as primary form of data analysis. In this approach, the researcher looked at the recorded observations of the various cinematographic elements recurring in Hilary Ngweno's documentary series and did critic their relevance to the various study objectives. This yielded qualitative data necessary to fomenting the objective concerns of the entire study.

1.10.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the basic introductory information, which is the road map of the study. The objectives identified in this chapter, jointly form the backbone of this study. The next chapter discusses various cinematographic styles used by the filmmaker throughout the 14- film series, in his effort to pass the intended message across.

CHAPTER TWO

2. CINEMATOGRAPHIC STYLES AND CHARACTERISTICS IN HILARY NGWENO'S THE MAKING OF A NATION DOCUMENTARY FILMS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the various cinematographic styles deployed in the films under study. It also highlights their manifestation through an elaborate discussion of the film narratives, specifically the contents of the films themselves.

Artistically, filmmaking has evolved significantly with advancement in technology, leading to an unprecedented scope of creative expression within the medium. Some of these artistic improvements touch on the various cinematographic elements of the film, where professionals have combined skill and technology to enlarge the vocabulary of what Monaco (2009) defines as the filmic language. This chapter is dedicated to an analysis of the various schemes of filmic language, especially those which directly relate to cinematography, in order to catalogue and explain their characteristics and effectiveness in conveying the cinematic messages within the films under study. In order to achieve this, it is important to understand the various cinematographic techniques deployed within the films, and to discuss them in detail to have an in-depth understanding. As a starting point, then, this chapter will first outlay the general form and content of Hilary Ngweno's films as a basis of building a framework for understanding and discussing the use of cinematographic techniques and its relationship to the film's messages delivery at the level of film language.

2.2 Narrative Form in Hilary Ngweno's TMN Documentary Series

This section discusses the form of Hilary Ngweno's documentaries, drawing some scholarly thoughts crucial in discussing the specific form and content of the films under study. In view of their nature of reportage, Bordwell & Thompson (2008, p. 340) have identified various types of documentaries: compilation, direct cinema (cinéma vérité), nature cinema, portrait and synthetic documentary. In light of their inherent structural

differences, Hilary Ngweni's documentaries can be classified as compilation documentaries, which are "produced by assembling images from archival sources." The fourteen-section episodic **TMN** encompasses various moments of Kenya's political history. Most of its elementary resources include primarily archival photos, and a motley mix of some video clips. It is narrated in retrospect, seeking to detail Kenya's political landscape from a wide array of historical perspectives. These episodes are arranged chronologically from Kenya's pre-independence until its political landscape in 2007, unfolding in various segments. These sections correspond to various political moments within Kenya's political history, and seek to discuss salient political issues of the day as experienced by the native Kenyans, and as carried out by the colonial authorities and their representatives. The episodic political segments are as follows:

- i. Before the Beginning 1959-1963
- ii. Dividing the Spoils 1964
- iii. Battle of Ideologies 1964-1966
- iv. Shifting Alliances 1966-1969
- v. Cohesion at the Centre 1969-1972
- vi. No longer at Ease 1973-1975
- vii. Rise and Fall of the Community 1967-1977
- viii. End of an Era 1975-1978
- ix. The Rise of Moi 1978-1982
- x. Feet of Clay 1982-1988
- xi. Return of Party Politics 1988-1991

- xii. A Divided House 1992-1997
- xiii. A Coalition for Change 1998-2002
- xiv. Unity and After 2002-2007

One of the key issues emerging from close scrutiny of these films is the fact that Kenya's political amplitude, starting from the pre-independence period, has remained somewhat unchanged. Images of disoriented opposition group, ravaged by internal wrangles and individual greed even in the face of impenetrable government pervade the entire political arc. There are also moments of national unity, of inspiration and hope, which convey the changing faces of nationhood in Kenya's political stature. In a sense, then, these narratives carry both hope and sadness as essential thematic epicenters, seeking to resurrect memories of the colonial Kenya as a trigger for a proactive political process that has remained elusive even in post-colonial Kenya. In order to make meaning of the films, it is practical therefore, to read the images from a number of perspectives, especially that advanced by Zelizer (2010):

Because many images reflect unsettled public events - the difficult and often contested planned violence, torture, terrorism, natural disaster, war, famine, crime, epidemic, and political assassinations at the core of today's geopolitical environment - their consideration can help clarify how the public forms sentiments about the larger world. It can also elucidate under which conditions images promote broader political agendas and what happens to a healthy body politic when images reduce complex issues and circumstances to memorable but simplistic visual frames (Zelizer, 2010, p. 1).

There is however another way of analysing documentaries, which distinguishes the structure of the documentary in accordance with the mode of engagement - or its philosophical tenet. Despite that "many, perhaps most, documentaries are organized as narratives, just as fiction films" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 342), there are various forms possible in the context of documentary films which arise from the

perspective adopted by the documentary filmmaker. The most common, according to Bordwell & Thompson (ibid) include categorical and rhetorical documentary films.

Categorical documentaries are inspired by the need to represent a specific category of information to a selected audience, using “categories and subcategories ... (to) provide a basis for organizing the film’s form (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 343).” For instance;

A documentary film about butterflies might use scientific classification, showing one type of butterfly and giving information about its habits, then showing another, with more information, and so on. Similarly, a travelogue about Switzerland might offer a sampling of local sights and customs. Often the categories chosen will be loose, common sense ones that audiences can easily recognize (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 343).

This statement explicitly inundates the categorical documentary form with diverse possibilities of its subject of focus, while hinting of the specificity of its subject matter. Hilary Ngweni’s documentary defies this definition in the sense that in its exploration of Kenya’s vast political space, it hardly focuses on any specific subject, dwelling instead on the tangle of political fracas, which characterised Kenya’s pre-independence and post-independence governance.

Rhetorical form documentaries, on the other hand, are the ones where “the filmmaker presents a persuasive argument” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 348). Persuasion is an important term here because it denotes the use of conscious effort on the filmmaker’s side to channel pre-meditated thought patterns in order to guide the viewer towards a specific way of interpreting the film as indicated by Bordwell & Thompson (Ibid) who argue that:

The goal in such a film is to persuade the audience to adopt an opinion about the subject matter and perhaps to act on that opinion. This type of film goes beyond the categorical type in that it tries to make an explicit argument (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 348).

Hilary Ngweno's documentaries seem to fit well within the precincts of this definition, given their inherent commentary that is skewed towards the expose of Kenya's political fallacies, including the ideological fatalities that have characterised the country's top political leadership to date. The montage stylistics have also played a key role in the persuasive tangent of these films, offering a contiguous narration of the political events in a specific way that explains, and almost justifies some particular political decisions, actions or outcomes.

In order to understand the essential aspects of this documentary form - to which Hilary Ngweno's films subscribe - the following main features identified by Bordwell & Thompson (2008) may be handy. According to the two scholars, a rhetoric documentary has at least four distinct features, first of which is that "it addresses the viewer openly, trying to move him or her to a new intellectual conviction, to a new emotional attitude, or to action" (Bordwell & Thompson, (ibid), p. 348). Hilary Ngweno's documentary films aim to persuade the Kenyan populace to look at the behind-the-scenes political exchanges that have led to the current state of affairs within the country's post-independence political circles. The open revolt against ethnic mutiny, which has led to the entrenchment of various laws within the national constitution, is a highly emphasised issue in these films. The use of live video footage is also used to enhance the authenticity of the message, in order to invoke a sense of patriotism and possibly, action towards positive political transformation.

The second feature identified by the two scholars is that the subject of rhetoric documentaries:

...is usually not an issue of scientific truth but a matter of opinion, toward which a person may take a number of equally plausible attitudes. The filmmaker tries to make his or her position seem the most plausible by presenting different types of arguments and evidence. Yet, because the issue cannot be absolutely proved, we may accept the position simply because the filmmaker has made a convincing case for it. Because rhetorical films deal with beliefs and arguments, they involve the expression of ideology; indeed, perhaps no type of film form centers so

consistently on explicit meaning and ideological implications (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 348-349).

Against this view, and in respect to Hilary Ngweno's **TMN** documentary series, there are various pertinent arguments that can be raised. First, the fact that Ngweno uses archival material implies a retrospective research into Kenyas' political past. Such a process, then, easily transmutes to an endorsement of a specific individual perspective - the filmmaker's perspective, to the exclusion of many other possible voices whose insights can make a significant contribution to the narrative spine. Such voices could include interviews with the actual politicians, those who participated in the political processes at various stages of the independence journey. Citizens of the time, especially those who fought during the **Mau Mau** era could also provide an alternative source of credible information, though given that such information is reliant on memory, it still does not submit itself to verification. This elusiveness of the scientific verity is thus an important entry point for the discourse of ideology, crosscutting between the filmmaker's subjective view and the feeble task of verification, which is hinged on strategic reconstruction of the film's 'apparent' reality. In his case, Hilary Ngweno uses archival still photos and video footage as the basis of his narrative validity, yet, there is no specified channel of verification into the specifics of how the events unfolded. This sets the stage for the third feature of rhetorical documentary film form as advanced by Bordwell & Thompson (2008, p. 349), that "if the conclusion cannot be proved beyond question, the filmmaker is often appealing to our emotions, rather than presenting only factual evidence." The important question then is how does Hilary Ngweno achieve this?

There are a number of ways that the filmmaker uses to persuade the viewers to accept his point of view, the most significant of which is the use of voice over narration as a tool to validate the archival still photos. His use of voice-over is a strategic tool that introduces, explains and locates the photo's historical significance, thereby defining the terms in which it is to be interpreted. This is the most important tool because it overshadows all other elements in the film, providing the viewer (listener) with a specific way of reading the accompanying images, instead of reading how the sound

accompanies the images. This is important because the elevation of voice-over to a primary element of the film's diegetic discourse invariably designates some preference for the narrator's point of view - which is essentially that of the filmmaker. The voice then gives the impression that the accompanying photo is a justifiable validation of the various oratory assertions being made. This is what Bordwell & Thompson (2008, p. 349) have implied in their reference to the use of arguments as a primary source of ideological dispersal within rhetoric documentaries.

The scholars have also noted that there are three main types of arguments used to implore the viewer towards a specific ideological perspective: arguments from source, subject-centered arguments and viewer-centered arguments. Arguments from source, especially in political documentaries, "rely on what (is) taken to be reliable sources of information. The film may present first-hand accounts of events, expert testimony at a hearing, or interviews with people assumed to be knowledgeable on the subject" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 349). Ngweno does not really offer much substantiated arguments in his films, relying as he does on the easy-to-manipulate archival photos as the main source of his pictorial evidence. Where he perhaps leans strongly is the appeal of his informed narration, which poises him as a competent professional who is well versed with the events he seeks to narrate. Ngweno's deployment of the subject centered argument adhere's to the routine noted by Bordwell & Thompson (2008, p. 349) that "filmmakers can back up an argument by exploiting familiar, easily accepted, argumentative patterns... (called) enthymemes, (or) arguments that rely on widespread opinion and usually conceal some crucial premises."

His leaning on the postcolonial euphoria seems to be a decisive aspect of his film narration technique. Through his juxtaposition of the frail pre-independence politicians with the ruthless arm of the colonisers, he idolises their bravery and courage, culminating in a sustained elevation of especially the Kapenguria Six to a semi-god status. Not only that, but Ngweno also deifies other prominent politicians of the time as a starting place for his argumentative campaign for their innocence, purity, and later on, unending greed. This apposition of views creates an ideological space which Ngweno

has exploited quite well to discuss his political subjects. For instance, he is able to justify Kenyatta's political ruthlessness as a necessary measure to survive the ceaseless onslaught of the political opposition of the time, including Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya and others.

Finally, the viewer centered approach seeks to counter the viewer's opposition to reception of the filmmakers' message by decentring the message from the political anchor to the human anchor; or, in the words of Bordwell & Thompson (2008, p. 349), "the film may make an argument that appeals to the emotions of the viewer." This is especially prevalent in the initial episodes of the documentary series, which are laced with pre-independence and the first stages of post-independence ecstasy before the political outrages set in. In these scenes, Ngweno provides a highly persuasive recount of the collective national consciousness, especially how the Kenyans crossed the tribal barrier to confront the minority white rulers. This is one example of the filmmaker's aggressive engagement with persuasive discourses within his rhetoric documentaries.

Lastly, Bordwell & Thompson (2008, p. 349) have identified a propagandist role as the fourth and the last feature of rhetoric documentary, saying;

The film often attempts to persuade the viewer to make a choice that will have an effect on his or her everyday life. This may be as simple as what shampoo to use, or it may involve decisions about which political candidate to support or even whether a young person will fight in a war.

Given the covert political intimations of Hilary Ngweno's films, Bordwell & Thompson's (Ibid) observation serves as an ideological barometer which can be used to decipher the implicit political codes which are the main premises comprising the form of his films. It is the pursuit of these political codes, especially how they are conveyed through the various elements of cinematography, which is the main focus of this study.

2.3 Critique of Cinematographic Styles in the Films under Study

According to Bresson (1958, p. 2), films can be classified into two: “those that employ the resources of the theatre (actors, direction, etc) and use the camera in order to reproduce; those that employ the resources of cinematography and use the camera to create.” This classification usefully facilitates a binary analysis of film from the two divergent perspectives, an attempt which is quite useful in explaining at least the inherent virtual artistic approaches deployed within films. Bresson’s word can further be expanded to provide a useful framework for interpretation and understanding of cinema from a number of approaches, live-skills versus technical skills. While the first cinematic domain represents those films which anchor their creative approaches on the power of the production team, especially the actors and the director to generate the bulk of the cinematic meaning and communication, the other category places great emphasis on cinematographic elements as the conduit for their narrative meaning. This level can thus be said to be anchored on the use of live skills as a source of the cinema’s meaning. The second set of films use especially the technical aspect of film to construct their meaning, while live personnel, especially the actors remain auxiliary subjects to embolden the technical diegetics. In this sense, therefore, the technical approach can be also equated to cinematography, in that it uses the various aspects of cinematography to convey the film’s meaning.

Brown (2002) identifies the various points of intersection between film’s language and its communicative elements. Brown (ibid), names visual and lens language as the two primary sets of film’s communicative discourse which interact within the film’s space to create meaning. Visual language comprises composition, framing field, and visual organisation (Brown, 2002, pp. 29-44) while the lens’s language includes perspective, focus, image control and framing (Brown, 2002, pp. 45-54). These views are especially important for this study because, among other points of investigation, these two forms of cinematic language will be widely used as the basis of analysis for the various films across all the three main chapters of the study. Almost four decades before Brown’s suggestion, Lessing (1961) had anticipated the role of especially the visual language

(which is really the essence of cinematography) across the entire process of filmmaking. The most poignant suggestion advanced by Lessing (*ibid*) is that the visual – or the cinematographer – uses “but a single moment of an action, and must therefore choose the most pregnant one, the one more suggestive of what has gone before and what is to follow” (Lessing, 1961, p. 92). It is the key scope of this study to establish not just “the most pregnant... moment(s) of action”, but also to discuss how cinematography, as the main composite encapsulation of the film’s visual aspect, facilitates this creative impregnation.

In view of this concept, it is important to address one important question: To what extent, then, does the cinematography influence meaning of a filmic text? The power of cinematography in intercepting and shaping the meaning within a film has been well expressed by Henley (2004). He cautions that an ethnographic filmmaker “has to be cautious with any form of cinematic effect—abnormal framing, grading, extradiegetic music, commentary, disruptive juxtaposition of shots, and so on—which runs the risk of disturbing the transmission of the cameraperson’s lived experience of the life-world filmed” (Henley, 2004, pp. 115-116). The next sub-sections dwell on how the various aspects of cinematography identified by Ryan (1993), Mascelli (1998), and Brown (2002) play out within Hilary Ngweni’s political film memoir of pre to post-independence Kenya. So, what specific aspects of cinematography are being investigated in this study?

According to Ryan (1993), cinematography as a filmic discourse involves such elements as lighting, sound, exposure, filters and special effects. These however, are achieved through a number of specific film processes. Mascelli (1998) has identified the five most crucial aspects of cinematography, which constitute film meaning, and which are therefore the main points of investigation in this study. These are camera angles, continuity, cutting, close ups, and composition. In order to achieve a comprehensive analysis of the five elements, this study aligns them within the specific film production practice in which they are embedded and discusses them as such. Camera angles, composition and close ups are discussed under photography and lighting; while

continuity and cutting are discussed under montage and sound. There are however various interconnections between the various elements under discussion. Given the crucial role that they play in generating the meaning of any film, it is therefore imperative to discuss how these elements have been used within Hilary Ngweno's films in order to appraise their characteristics, significance, and impact in the films. This will also make it possible to offer an insightful commentary on cinematography, and its manifestation within the cinematic images used as part of the narrative style.

2.3.1 Montage

As discussed by Bordwell (2005), montage is primarily a cinematic technique which was first used by Soviet filmmakers – especially Sergei Eisenstein – to denote the creative manipulation of film to achieve pre-meditated meaning through truncation and the outlay of shots in a sequence. Subsequently, it was widely adopted as a deliberate editing technique in the film world, mounting in complexity and usage in the periods especially between 1930s and 1950s. The power of montage has been the subject of study by various film scholars. According to (Kiener, 2006, p. 3), montage reveals the “social and psychological effects of the globalising and the postcolonial world.” This suggestion offers a springboard to investigate Hilary Ngweno's films – which are essentially postcolonial cinema discourses about the political realities of rapidly postcolonial-*iated* Kenya.

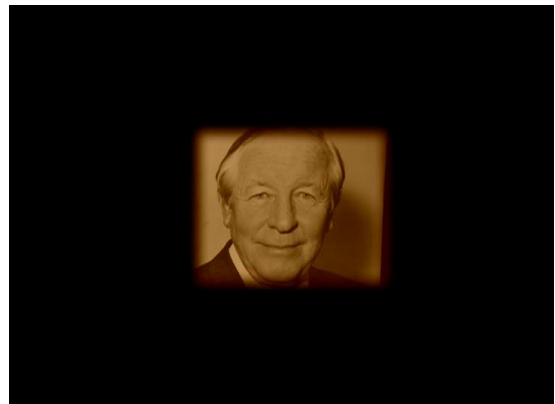
While the specific circumstances in which the various film elements used were taken may have been essentially colonial, the film's seek to enumerate the diverse woes of political anarchism prevalent in the post-colonial Kenya, or what can be termed as pre and post-independence political malignancies. The answer to the question to what extent, then, does the cinematography influence meaning of a filmic text? Proposed earlier therefore lies in Vaughan's (1992, p. 110) view that in order to achieve meaningful interpretation of the ethnographic films, new methods are needed to intercept the various innuendos of the film discourse whereby “the referential nature of the images, their demonstrative disposition, the construction of narrative continuities in time and space, the films and extra-filmic codings—may be denied elision and offered

as separable to the viewer’s security.” Given that the primary kernel of montage is the reduction of space, time, and information to fit a particular expressive ambition, or to enclose a specific way of interpretation, then a discussion of editing as the primary tool of montage will serve a good purpose.

Editing in the first episode, Before the Beginning 1959-1963, is both spasmodic and restless. The editor has widely used zooming technique to bridge (elongate) the duration of shots, as well as to elucidate more complex interpretations of the films. One case in point is where zooming has been used to highlight key features, especially the faces of significant characters, for instance, Oliver Lyttleton, the Colonial Secretary in 1954. As indicated in the following images (Pictures i-iv), there has been a deliberate use of montage stylistic to generate wider perception of the colonial master vis-à-vis the colonial subjects.



Picture i: A zoomed-out shot captured at an earlier frame showing the smaller framing of the shot.



Picture ii: A more zoomed-in shot captured at a successive frame.



Picture iii: A bigger face now visible in the near-full frame shot of the colonial secretary.



Picture iv: The final close-up captured at a full frame shot.

This shot is immediately followed by another zooming-in shot of the Africans, which draws in from a long shot narrowing to the image of an aged woman sitting in the midst of anxious youth. This sequencing constitutes an act of deliberate appeal to the emotional identification of the audience with the otherwise berated subjects, especially the Africans who are seen as powerless and undeserving victims of a ruthless colonial system. The use of the close-up shot also serves to convey the idea of wisdom and kindness that has been bred of 'age'. The implicit meaning here is that the filmmaker could have used clips of the younger Oliver Lyttleton, but chose to suppress his youthful virility by substituting it with a more humane older face, which somehow communicates the mind-set of a man who has come to terms with the 'realities' of life, and who is willing to be 'human', at least in a concessionary way.

In the zooming shot of Oliver Lyttleton, the Colonial Secretary in Kenya in 1954, there is the deliberate use of further editing effects to enhance the meaning of the shot. The use of Vignette at the editing level not only feathers out the outer portions of the subject's face, creating more emphasis for the facial expression, but also the use of monochrome black background renders an undisturbed perception of the subject. The

final shot gives particular emphasis on the wrinkles, the eyes and the semi-smile of the colonial administration in a persuasive manner which emphatically campaigns for a recognition of his humaneness.

Similar use of montage is also highly deployed throughout the entire film, resulting in a purposively spanned narration of Kenya's political discourses. The study notes that the filmmaker has deployed deliberate editing strategies, including image-sound matching, to create tenable version of his perspective on Kenya's political legacy. The fusion of narrator's voice-over, still and motion photographs, music and other sounds, and effects, have all been done purposively to achieve the filmmaker's intention.

2.3.2 Sound

Sound plays an important role in any film, a fact acknowledged by some of the world's most renowned filmmakers and scholars who have studied the significance of sound in cinema. After analyzing Robert Bresson's A Man Escaped (*UnCondamné á mort c'estéchappé*), Bordwell & Thompson (2008, p. 293) note that "throughout the film, sound has many important functions. As in all of his films, Bresson emphasizes the sound track, rightly believing that sound may be just as cinematic as images." This observation echoes the central role of sound in shaping the meaning of a video, whether through added levels of interpretation or simply augmentation of the existing sensory perception.

There are four common types of sounds used in film production: voice over, ambient sound, dialogue and background sounds. Of these, the films studied have emphasized on the use of only three: voice over (narration), dialogue (mainly deployed as monologues of characters) and background sounds (accompanying music). These three give rise to different effects within the films, which can be interpreted in relation to the instances in which they are used and the nature of the diegetic occurrence in which they are used. So far, it is important to note that the three sound usages will be broadly discussed as diegetic and non-diegetic sounds. Within the context of this study, the term

diegetic is used to imply dialogue (or monologue or speech); while nondiegetic is used to imply narration and background music.

2.4 Classification and Functions of Sound in Hilary Ngweno's Films

Bordwell & Thompson (2008) have identified several functions of sound within cinema: improved sensory reception, giving cues to events, and enhancing the perception of the accompanying images. These functions are achieved by use of both the diegetic and nondiegetic sounds in the film.

2.4.1 Diegetic Sounds

Bordwell & Thompson (ibid) identify three types of diegetic sounds which can be used in the film. These include non-simultaneous sound picked from earlier phases within the story than image currently accompanied by the sound; sounds which run simultaneously with the image, and non-simultaneous sound which has been picked from the later portions of the story than the accompanying image. The two scholars have also made useful distinctions between the three diegetic sounds, by especially explaining the various contexts in which they can be studied.

Bordwell & Thompson (ibid), pp. 288-289) observe that sounds which run simultaneously with the image include “noise, music, or speech that comes from the space of the story almost invariably occurs at the same time as the image. Like any other sort of diegetic sound, simultaneous sound can be either external (objective) or internal (subjective) (and) include “sound flashback, image flashforward, (and) sound bridge.” The most common forms of internal diegetic sounds include thoughts voiced from within a character’s head while external include dialogue, sound effects, and ambient music. About non-simultaneous sound picked from earlier phases within the story than image, the two scholars have cited sound flashback, image flashforward and sound bridge as the three main ways in which they are effected within the film. And finally, they have identified the sound of flashforward, the image flashback with sound continuing in the present, character narration of earlier events and sound bridge as the

four main ways in which filmmakers effect the non-simultaneous sound which has been picked from the later portions of the story than the accompanying image.

Due to the documentary nature of Hilary Ngweno's films, the use of external diegetic sounds (especially dialogue) has been heavily constrained. Besides the assemblage of photos and videos, Hilary Ngweno's documentaries deploy narration (voice-over commentary) as the main technique of delivery of the films' diegetic discourses. There are however various instances where the filmmaker has used motion clips with sound for emphasis about specific facets of the narrative. In the Before the Beginning 1959-1963 episode, Ngweno has used dialogue (speech) as a powerful tool of emphasis on the various hints suggested through the narration commentary (voice-over). One of the most significant use of diegetic sound occurs when the voice-over is narrating the international appeal of pre-independence workers Union leader, Tom Mboya, especially his links with the Western countries, especially the United States of America. After the voice over narrates how the Western media idolised the eloquent leader, the filmmaker has used a video clip in which Tom Mboya is reiterating his reciprocity to the Western authorities, as transcribed below:

I believe that one day Kenya will be governed by a democratic government, representative and elected by the people. And by the people I include anybody who decides to make Kenya his home – Tom Mboya, Legislative Council 1957-1963.

Tom Mboya's allusion to "anybody who decides to make Kenya his home" can be interpreted as a coded lingo for an open arm to the Western governments to seek alliances with and within Kenya.

Similarly, the filmmaker has also used dialogue in the subsequent sequence to achieve two functions. The first one is to show the precarious situation that Tom Mboya faced in his political backyard as he struggled to face the fiery rural teacher turned politician, Oginga Odinga. The second one is to reinforce the earlier view that only Jomo Kenyatta was the preferred national leader in Kenya, within or without the incarceration zones. In the transcribed clip, Odinga says:

The fears of the European minorities in Kenya, they regard or link Kenyatta with **Mau Mau** or terrorism, but we the Africans know that he is a sincere leader of his people who had devoted all his time to the benefit of the ordinary man – Oginga Odinga– Legislative Council.

This speech exonerates the jailed Kenyatta from any political blame, watering down the colonial master's lockdown that is based on the assumption that he is a terrorist leader.

Within the same episode, the filmmaker has also used a video clip to emphasize the importance of Kenyatta's view of the white settlers during his first prime-ministerial address in Nakuru. Here is a transcript of his official speech that is inserted within the film:

I am telling you what I believe and what my government believes: that white, brown, red can work together harmoniously in this country – Prime Minister Kenyatta, August 12th, 1963.

Why does the filmmaker decide to use the president's actual speech instead of just using the narration? The most tenable argument is that his actual footage will augment a specific meaning which the voice-over could not. This intended meaning, or point of view, which the filmmaker imbues upon the prime minister, is full of conciliatory concessions. The elderly premier, despite his decade of incarceration, does not choose revenge over the now politically evacuating white colonial rulers, but chooses his greatest moment of power to express a graceful face of his personality. Such a personality calls for an actual representation that only his own persona can deliver, hence the choice of the film clip, which is otherwise brief.

In the Battle of Ideologies 1964-1966, the filmmaker has used Achieng Oneko's video clip too, thereby retaining his actual voice for several reasons. The first, which becomes apparent from his speech, is that the filmmaker wishes to highlight his sincere personality as a patriot, and former freedom fighter. In his speech, he also reveals his political patriotism equivalence to Kenyatta, with whom he was detained as part of the Kapenguria Six. This neutralizes the superiority stance acquired by Kenyatta and his alliances, while stamping honour on the displaced politicians who were now building a

political safe-haven for themselves in the newly founded Kenya People's Union (KPU) party. This is a transcription of Oneko's speech:

No one, not in my position can appreciate the feeling of sadness at this parting with my old friend and comrade, Mzee Kenyatta. We worked together in KAU for many years. Both of us were arrested on the same night, subsequently tried, and either detained or imprisoned for nearly ten years.

During the 3pm swearing-in ceremony of Vice president Moi as interim president of Kenya on August 22nd, 1978, the filmmaker also uses diegetic sounds as a tool of emphasis to highlight Moi's moment of accession to power. Before discussing this event further, let's get the transcript of the sequence: "... bila uwoga, upendeleo, wala chuki, Ee mwenyezi Mungu, nisaidie". ("...without fear, favour or hatred. Help me God").

The filmmaker uses this oath of allegiance as the foundation of engaging with the new political dispensation, which started with the swearing in of the new president. It is, however, also, the filmmaker's way of showing how important it was for the incoming president to uphold those three pillars of leadership on which was anchored Kenya's dream for future development. On these three issues, the filmmaker would hold the new president into account throughout his twenty-four year political journey.

During President Kenyatta's interment at Parliament buildings in 1978, President Moi's speech has also been captured as a diegetic sound which offers an objective account of the President's new spirit of leadership. "It is very painful to speak about Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, who has been my father, my teacher and my leader".

In this sound clip, the filmmaker uses the direct sound to capture President Moi's political philosophy, as well as articulate his underlying ideological connections with the nation's founding father.

2.4.2 Nondiegetic Sounds

Some of the scholars who have explained the possible relation between nondiegetic sounds and film meaning include Bordwell & Thompson (2008) who have argued that:

Most nondiegetic sound has no relevant temporal relationship to the story. When mood music comes up over a tense scene, it would be irrelevant to ask if it is happening at the same time as the images, since the music has no existence in the world of the action. But occasionally, the filmmaker uses a type of nondiegetic sound that does have a defined temporal relationship to the story (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, pp. 290-291).

Within Hilary Ngweno's films, nondiegetic sounds, especially narration, has been widely used to guide the viewer's perception and interpretation of the accompanying image. In especially those shots and sequences involving the use of still images, (which are the primary types of visual images used in the films to reconstruct Kenya's political history) nondiegetic sound (voice-over narration) has been extensively used as a tool which "at some points even corrects an impression given by the (accompanying) image" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 293).

One of the main ways in which narration voice is used in Hilary Ngweno's films is to explain the accompanying images. This is especially important in instances where the picture cannot offer all the details about its context, or symbolic importance. For instance, when the filmmaker is explaining the political potential and significance of Lumumba's institute set by Bildad Kaggia and Oginga Odinga in Nairobi, he uses a combination of the institute's front poster (see Photo a below) accompanied by the following narration:

By the end of the year, they had set up the Lumumba Institute in Nairobi and started training a selected group of KANU cadres in left-wing techniques of party and union organizations as well as left-wing ideology.

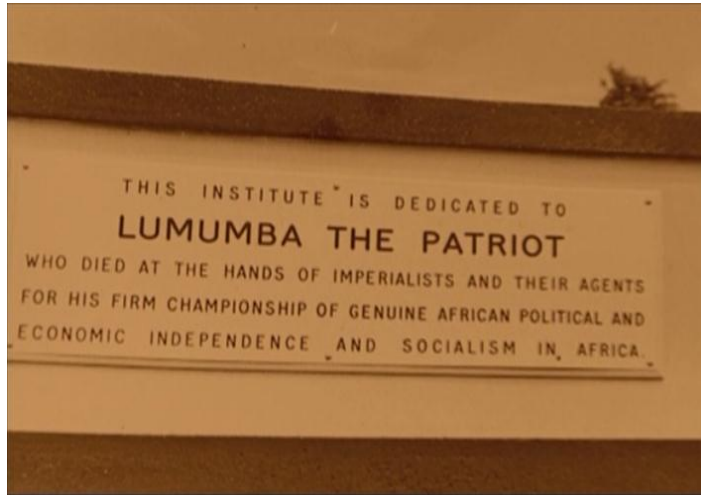


Photo a: Portrait of the Lumumba Institute where leftist political radicals trained their followers during President Kenyatta's time.

This voice over narration at this point serves two purposes. Firstly, it explains Kaggia's political mindset and especially his unceasing desire to achieve a socialism ideal within Kenya's political circles. Secondly, it shows Kaggia's political path of choice and his freedom of association. Moreover, the narrator also explains the main purpose of the institute, thereby enabling the viewer to draw up significant understanding of the political impact of the institute – something which would have been otherwise impossible if the photo of the institute was simply displayed without the accompanying narration.

To accentuate this interpretation, the filmmaker inserts a photo of the thoughtful Kenyatta (see Photo b below) immediately after the Lumumba narration, then leads the viewer to the life of Oginga Odinga's socialist field man, Pio Gama Pinto, who was the financial and ideological conduit between Russia and Kenyatta's leftist political enemies. This focus on Kenyatta's pose is essential in narrowing down the filmmaker's insinuation that Kenyatta was probably thinking of Oginga Odinga's weakest point which he could attack, thus validating a persuasive view that the President spearheaded Pinto's murder shortly after.



Photo b: Portrait photo of the thoughtful Kenyatta inserted during the narration of Lumumba Institute political saga.

In some instances, the narrator's voice-over takes over the place of direct quotations, emphasizing select words cited from specific rulers without the need for an accompanying text. For instance, in explaining Oginga Odinga's resignation from the government, the filmmaker uses the narrator's sole voice to amplify the politician's political voice, captured in a section of his resignation speech where he says: "I owe it to Wananchi to remain true to nationalist ideals."

The narrator's emphasis on this statement serves to annotate the politician's nonchalance with the unfolding political machinations, posing him as a sincere national leader unperturbed by the enraging greed and manoeuvres. Even more symbolic is the accompanying photo (see Photo c below), which captures the resigned ambience of the political warrior, who had earlier campaigned for national unity as he rallied members of Kenya African National Union (KANU) not to accept any political transaction with the colonial masters unless Kenyatta was freed from prison.



*Photo c: Resigned
ambience of the
political warrior,
Oginga Odinga,
after his political
defeat by President
Kenyatta.*

Another way in which the voice-over narration has proven indispensable is where the filmmaker is reporting direct quotes of the various political figures, but whose actual footage is not available. For example, in episode three, Battle of Ideologies 1964-1966, the narrator's voice reads direct quotes from President Kenyatta's independence speeches to the Kenyans, urging them to work hard. Here are the narrated excerpts:

If we want freedom, we must eschew idleness, freedom will not come falling from heaven, we must work, and work hard, particularly on our shambas.....Those Africans who think that when we have achieved our freedom, they can walk into a shop and say 'this is my property', or go to a farm and say 'this is my farm', are very much mistaken, because this is not our aim.

One of the thorny issues that prevailed at the time was the looming land problem as thousands of displaced Kikuyus found themselves landless in their own country, while the then President Kenyatta sought to disregard their pleas for allocation of land. To shield his interests, Kenyatta had even appointed former British Settler, Bruce McKenzie, as the Minister for Agriculture. To highlight the growing restlessness, the filmmaker focuses on selected quotes from a letter addressed to the powerful British politician.

Similar to Kenyatta's speech narration, the filmmaker uses the narrator's voice to capture the desperation of Bildad Kaggia, then assistant Minister for Education, who highlighted the prevailing land problems among the Kikuyus, saying:

Everyone in this country is very well aware of the land hunger that has existed among Africans as a result of the robbery of their land by the British colonial imperialists. The logical method to solve the problem posed by this robbery would have been to nationalize all big estates owned by Europeans and make them either state farms, so as to alleviate unemployment, or to hand them over to cooperatives formed by landless Africans.

The filmmaker also narrates the contents of Kenyatta's reply to Kaggia using voice over, both to lay emphasis to the contents and message, and to emphasize the urgency of the words using the human voice:

I am seriously concerned at your repeated attacks on the policies of the Ministry of Lands and Settlement, and with your interference with land consolidation in Fort Hall (Muranga, Kaggia's home district.)

There is another type of nondiegetic sound introduced by the filmmaker at this point; music which praises the new president and pledges loyalty. Immediately after the swearing in of President Moi, the filmmaker uses accompanying music, accompanying the subsequent sequences all the way to President Kenyatta's final funeral mass at his Gatundu home. In order to appreciate the contribution of the music to the overall meaning of the film, the following partial transcription of the music used in the first two sequences after Kenyatta's death would be helpful:

Ewe Rais Moi, ushike usukani, wewe ndiwe nahodha Kenyatta amepumzika. (You president Moi, take the leadership mantle, you are now the captain as Kenyatta has rested).

This nondiegetic sound serves to highlight the looming national consciousness that the newly installed president is vested with the hope of the nation for a better tomorrow. It also serves to highlight the sober mood surrounding Kenyatta's succession, at least from

the Kenyan's perspective. The filmmaker's choice of music serves to make the ordinary Kenyan a non-political citizen, who is not interested in the frailties of political tussles.

2.5 Photography and Lighting in the Documentary Series

Since the filmmaker was not in control of taking of the original photographs and lighting of the archival materials used in the production of these films, it is understandable that this study will not discuss his contribution toward the photography of the films. What will then be discussed is how the photographs convey a specific outlook of the subjects, constituting a particular perception of their messages. At this level, the main question to be answered is what meanings are conveyed through the photographs, especially the use of photography aspects?

Similarly, another point of inquiry will be the choice of photos, which then implies the filmmakers' conscious choice with a pre-determined perceptual view in mind. This approach will be interested in understanding how the filmmaker has used the photographs and to what end. According to Moeller (1999, p. 39), a "photograph provokes a tension in us—not only about the precise moment that the image depicts, but also about all the moments that led up to that instant and about all the moments that will follow." This allusion to montage, nevertheless induces the perception that photography plays an important role in generating meaning within any film, whether stills or motion pictures are used.

This new meaning has been encapsulated within, especially, the connotation sense in which the photos are selected and used:

Connotation here suggests that images provide more than what is physically caught by the camera, where, associated with symbolism, generalizability, and universality, the image draws from broad symbolic systems in lending meaning to what is depicted (Zelizer, 2010, p. 3).

As discussed in Chapter Three, the filmmaker hardly makes use of photos which do not create discernible discourse with his political narration. What looks superficially

normal, is actually impregnable with many pertinent cinema discourses, including those which engender ideology.

2.6 Shot Types in the Documentary Series

The question “what types of shots are used within these films?” is an important one if the filmmaker’s intention within these films is to be properly contextualized. Photographs have been thought to work by twinning denotation and connotation, matching the ability to depict the world “as it is” with the ability to couch what is depicted in a symbolic frame with broader understandings of the world. These films use various types of shots in different combinations, and situations. These range from long shots, medium close-ups, to close ups – infused with other shot variables.

2.6.1 Close-up Shots

Close-up shots give more details on subject(s) than medium shots, where surrounding visual information is significantly eliminated to give more focus on the subject. Close ups have been used widely across the episodes, to achieve various meanings. Some of the prevalent variations include medium close-up, to extreme close-up. The films significantly use medium close ups for prominent figures, which are considerably clear. For instance, in the first part, major political leaders are introduced in this manner. In this sequence, the filmmaker introduces some of Kenya’s most vocal post-independence political heavyweights who have since been encrusted in the country’s political history. These include Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, Tom Mboya, Oginga Odinga, among others. (see photos v-xii below).



Picture v: Riftvalley pre-independence political representative Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi



Picture vi: Pre-independence political activist, Achieng Oneko



Picture vii: Nyanza political giant, Oginga Odinga



Picture viii: Freedom Fighter, Bildad Kaggia



Picture ix: Coastal pre-independence political personality, Ronald Ngala.



Picture x: Kenya's founding President, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta in his youthful days, then known as Johnstone Kamau.



Picture xi: Fiery Luo Politician, the late Tom Mboya



Picture xii: Mau Mau Hero, Fred Kubai

2.6.2 Medium Shots

Medium shots fall between close up shots and long shots. They give more information contents than being emotional and intimate. They have been used across all the episodes in different contexts and for different effects. The medium shot below shows Kenyatta who had teamed up with Tom Mboya to politically cut Oginga Odinga and his KPU members down to sizes especially in Nairobi. They began by government banning all KPU activities in Nairobi, citing a threat of law and order. According to voice-over narration, by the end of 1966, Kenyatta had succeeded in containing Odinga with help of Mboya, hence Mboya had brought the much needed victory to Kenyatta.



Picture xvi: .Smiling Kenyatta with attentive Tom Mboya on a mission to contain Oginga Odinga.

The filmmaker's intention is quite clear from the way he uses the medium shots as tools of emphasis. In the case of the above photo, the filmmaker emphasizes Kenyatta's happiness and satisfaction after containing his political opponent, Oginga Odinga with the help of Mboya.

2.6.3 Long Shots

Long shots have been used invariably across the episodes to provide a panoramic view of the various subjects being narrated. Some of the most outstanding examples include those captured in the photos below.



Picture xvii: Pre-independence Kikuyu political activists who founded the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA).

Another significant use of long shots is used in Episode three of Hilary Ngweno's documentary series, when the filmmaker tries to persuade the viewers to identify the significance of the new KPU party leader, Oginga Odinga, as a national leader. After using a medium shot of the humiliated Vice President during the Limuru Delegates conference, the filmmaker uses a long shot (see Picture xviii below) to highlight his popularity. In the photo, Odinga is seen marching with fellow socialist trade union radicals who defected to his new political party KPU, after being ousted in the Limuru Conference.



Picture xviii: Oginga Odinga, after losing out during the Limuru Delegates conference, is surrounded by his radical supporters with whom he founded KPU.

2.7 Effects and Filters in the Documentary Series

There has been deliberate and significant use of the sepia filter in especially the black and white still photographs and the video footage used in the documentary series. The filmmaker uses sepia filter to create color tonal distribution across all the episodes to soften especially the black and white images by film tinting to add the color effects. It has also been used widely in these films as a tonal regulation of the photos. This technique, given that it is used indiscriminately across the colonizer - colonized subjects, suggests two purposes. The first is that it harmonizes all political figures from both sides, eliminating the colour barrier which was the racial bias for colonization. In this sense, this technique can be considered a way of emphasizing the importance of all the subjects, by avoiding an overwhelming concern with the racial barriers which saw the masses as inadequate black people who must be subdued by the indomitable superior and minority white settlers. Given that the episodes recapture the pre-independence turmoil and anxieties, the use of solid sepia tone also suggests the filmmaker's desire to cut a neutral space across the political symbols, avoiding to recast the black - white relationship which would otherwise have been a racial symbol.

2.8 Camera Movement Techniques in the Documentary Series

There is use of various camera movement techniques in these films. These have been selected to achieve specific effects. Some of the most popular techniques include zooming, panning and tilting. Given that the film uses mostly still photographs for

reconstruction of its narrative, it is important to discuss how these movements are interpreted. Zoom is interpreted in the same way it applies to video (motion) photography, as the still photographs in this case are zoomed in a similar manner. On the other hand, panning is interpreted as the sideways movement of the still photograph to simulate the equivalent of panning camera movement in motion photography. Tilting is also interpreted in the same way, by analyzing the equivalence of the still photo's movement to that of video photography. Within these constraints, therefore, this study has noted that it is impractical to effect either tracking or pedestal camera movement simulation with a still photograph. There are however additional possibilities afforded by the use of video clips in various sections of the films, which have used especially tracking camera movements, besides the zoom, pan and tilt camera movement techniques.

2.8.1 Panning

In the video clip showing the detention camp where the Kapenguria Six were detained during the **Mau Mau** uprising, the camera offers an expansive panning shot which gives a panoramic view of the scrappy court house where the leaders met their (in) justice. The panning starts from the lone table in the front space of the room, quickly screening the constrained space with the empty benches where Kenyatta was detained. It is noteworthy that even in this empty shot, the setting symbolically elevates the social significance of the white rulers by giving priority to their 'throne', symbolized by the front table which overwhelmingly overlooks the empty intimidating benches, dwarfing under the symbolic flow of authority.

Panning is also significantly used as a tool of information and emphasis in the final sections of the first episode. When Prime Minister Kenyatta is addressing the settlers in Nakuru on August 12th, 1963, the camera pans across the filled hall to show the massive crowd that had gathered to listen to his speech. The shot also captures the restive mood of the tightly packed settlers, who are anxious in their uneasy contemplation of their lives in the new political dispensation.

One of the filmmaker's most significant use of panning camera movement occurs in the Feet of Clay 1982-1988 episode, where he is trying to show the cumbersome feat that was Moi's line-up voting system in post-1982 politics. In the sequence, he shows a long queue of voters who lined up to show their support to their respective candidates, starting from the front and panning all the way as the queues snake away to the rear end. This sequence also serves to highlight the ambiguity of the voting system, as the hard task of counting the supporters was merely illusory. Panning technique is also used to show the jubilant mood surrounding the 2002 general elections in Kenya, where the filmmaker uses a panning shot of a video clip which shows the excited political supporters of the opposition candidate, Mwai Kibaki, who headed the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC)

2.8.2 Tracking

In the next sequence, the camera plays out a tracking shot of Dennis Pritt, a British lawyer who successfully defended the Kapenguria Six over the allegations that they were managing **Mau Mau**, leading to their partial acquittal followed by a seven-year imprisonment sentence. This shot, interspersed with close-ups and medium close-ups of the accused, deliberately prolongs Mr. Pritt's screen time through use of slow motion as an editing technique. Such a manoeuvre significantly heightens the importance of the British lawyer, the camera keenly following him as if afraid to lose him. The importance of the lawyer in this case is two-fold; both ironic and symbolic: ironic in the sense that despite that the overly important lawyer, dressed in his high-end British regalia and passing through the screen time in an invincible gait, the lawyer - who was to defend the six political activists did nothing to improve their condition as they nevertheless ended up in jail. Secondly, his intimidating gait served to reinforce the feel of British authority at all levels of the protectorate's justice system, as the colonial masters served as the prosecutors, lawyers and judges. It is evident that the high-poised British lawyer was just an imperialist front to dupe the African out of his due justice, serving in the end, the wishes of his colonial brothers. This eclipse of the African in all

levels of representation is made more acute in the following sequence which shows the indomitable power of the colonial master.

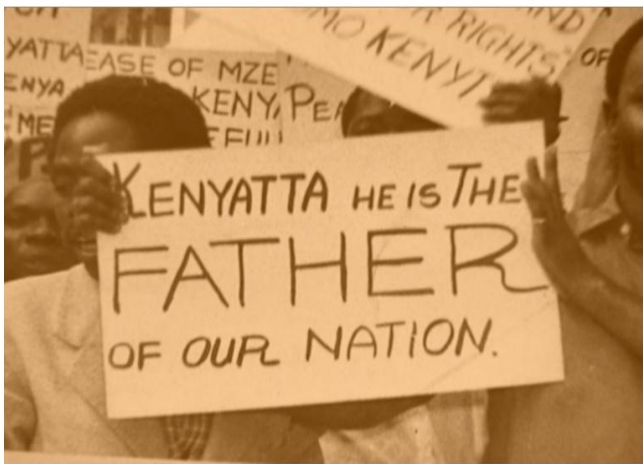
The sequence starts with diverse shots of colonial soldiers ambushing **Mau Mau** villages, briefly rushing through a number of arrests before slowing down at the final moment of their symbolic heroism: the capture of the **Mau Mau** leader, Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi. This segment is offered through a video clip which shows the war veteran being carried by the British troops aboard an improvised stretcher, surrounded by the top leaders of the colonial military regime. The shots in this sequence are framed to emphasize the power of the colonial master: the fore British soldier engulfs the screen's foreground as a massive hero, while Dedan Kimathi is intimidatingly enveloped by the British soldiers casting an image of futility, and inescapable fate.

2.8.3 Zoom

Zooming has been used as a selective tool to emphasize specific aspects of the film's messages, including isolation of symbols to reflect the filmmakers' point of view. In a way, the filmmaker uses this camera movement technique to designate his choice of meaning, or endorse a specific interpretation from a cluster of film's symbols. One good example of this technique occurs in the first third of the first episode, Before the Beginning 1959-1963, where the filmmaker is attempting to show the unity of Kenyans as they protested against the continued detention of Jomo Kenyatta. From a long shot of a protesting mob with banners (see photo xxi below), the filmmaker selectively zooms into one placard banner with the inscription: "KENYATTA HE IS THE FATHER OF OUR NATION" (see photo xxii below). This choice of representation achieved through selective zooming identifies the filmmaker's diegetic persuasion that Kenyatta was a much loved leader. It also highlights the preference of Kenya's pre-independence to be led by the then incarcerated Kenyatta not just within the newly-found political representation (afforded through the 1958 colonial resolve to create a fourteen-seat African representation in the Legislative Council).



Picture xxi: Pre-independence Kenyan political activists who founded the Kikuyu Central Association.



Picture xxii: Zoomed in photo of Kikuyu Central Association Activists highlighting the message of their banner

This selective representation (achieved through zooming) isolates a message that highlight Kenyatta's preference as a presidential candidate, setting in motion a series of well-mastered steps which saw him released from prison and later declared Kenya's first Prime Minister in 1963. The significance of the fourteen members of the African Elected Members Organization (AEMO) is instantly eclipsed by this shot which emphasizes that only Kenyatta can lead the country forward. Their roles as elected African representatives in the majority white legislative house were thus turned into a facilitation of the release of the rightful representative of the African freedom.

The second episode opens with a series of motion video clips which capture the anxiety of Kenya's post-independence political turmoil. To set the stage for the enraging animosities, the episode starts with a medium shot of President Kenyatta addressing a mammoth crowd of Kenyans who congregated to celebrate the country's new political birth. The shot of the belated president cuts into a long shot of the surging crowds, which slowly zooms into the sea of faces breathing the first gulps of freedom, before cutting to a medium shot of waving crowds which is rendered in slow motion. The use of zoom in this case achieves two main purposes: that of highlighting the euphoric moment of Kenya's independence; and that of emphasizing the significance of the moment to the people and their president who through his Harambee slogan expresses a spirit of unity and hard work. But this sequence, which captures the jubilant aura of nationhood, gives way to a series of still photos which narrates the impending dangers quickly closing on the presidential position – the risk of an impending overthrow. This political decadence is narrated through the use of several photos which identify the fast raging series of coups across the region.

The first series of shots captures the armed January 12th coup on the Sultanate island of Zanzibar by a guerrilla army led by Field Marshall John Okello who successfully overthrew the century old Zanzibar Arab Dynasty. On January 19th, barely a week after the Zanzibar revolution, soldiers of the Tanganyika army based in Dar es Salaam mutinied leading to widespread looting and temporary exile of the then Prime Minister, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere to the British High Commission offices. This was followed by the kidnapping of Uganda's Interior Minister, Felix Onama by the Soldiers of Uganda military force. In these narrations, the filmmaker has used the zoom option to capture essential aspects of the characters. In the Zanzibar case, there are two subsequent shots of still photos of the armed group, one of which zooms into the face of the youthful-looking Field Marshall John Okello.

Similarly, in the Dar es Salaam case, the filmmaker has used zooming in and zooming out techniques which isolate the pertinent aspects of the ongoing fracas, including the keen look of the embattled Prime Minister, Julius Nyerere. The hostage of Uganda's

Interior Minister, Felix Onama, is also emphasized by use of zooming technique which emphasize especially the facial features of the government official. In this case, just like in the previous episode, the zoom technique has been used as a tool of emphasis to expose the unraveling political uncertainties which have ravaged the post-independence East Africa, especially from the perspective of the actual leaders who were the main players in the political space.

2.9 Conclusion

As ethnographic political commentaries, Hilary Ngweno's films have addressed a vast array of Kenya's post-colonial political deep-ends. In a way, the films synthesize the mounting pressures of freedom and progress among the masses who quickly find themselves duped into false independence, simply transiting from one colonial master to the other. Their hopes diminish across the films, from the pre-independence low to a post-independence low. Such a cinema has been – of necessity - imbued with many restless tangents in tune with the anxiety of the period it depicts. Since the main goal of this chapter was to document the cinematographic stylistics and highlighting their contribution to the development of Hilary Ngweno's narrative of Kenya's post-independence political mirage, the findings were quite broad and involving. Some of the main conclusions from these findings are focused on how the various cinematographic elements contribute to the emboldening of the narrative spines.

Starting with montage, the study has established that there is great emphasis on the editing level, where shots are selected to emphasize pertinent aspects addressed by the voice over as well. The most prevalent sounds used in the films are external diegetic sounds, especially voice-over which is the primary delivery mode of the film's main message. Photography has also been widely deployed within the films, especially the use of archival pictures and video clips which are widely used within the films. Especially the still photos are widely used as the main building blocks of the film's narrative. Due to their archival nature, there has not been much use of lighting by the filmmaker as a form of symbolic coding for the films. Some of the main effects used in the still photos include sepia and monochrome. There has been use of camera

movement techniques, with the three main types being panning, tilting and zooming. The photos have similarly shown various camera angles, but the most prevalent are normal or Eye-level angles.

There are various possible conclusions that can be drawn from the foregoing arguments. From the foregoing discussions, Hilary Ngweno's political documentaries can thus be termed as ethnographic films, claiming as it is, an unadulterated narration of Kenya's pre and post-independence political turmoil. The extensive reliance of actual photos and film clips of the period, and the constant reference to actual historical moments in Kenya's political scene serve to augment the perception that these films easily fit into the cluster identified by (Suhr & Willerslev, 2012, p. 283) as "observational cinema". This, in turn, incepts a new meaning to the pursuit of cinematography as a key aspect of this ethnographic approach (Kiener, 2008). Having noted the main thematic as well as narrative anchors embraced by this filmmaker in his fourteen-piece documentary, it is now possible to discuss cinematography in details, in order to interrogate how it interfaces with the filmic texts at the language level.

This chapter has explored various cinematographic styles which have helped to shape up various cinematographic elements employed by the filmmaker to bring out the envisaged meaning throughout the film series. The next chapter supplements this effort by discussing the role played by cinematographic techniques in the films, where selected frames (still photographs) are put into perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

3. THE ROLE OF CINEMATOGRAPHIC TECHNIQUES IN THE 14 SERIES FILMS.

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, examples of various selected shot types which include close ups, medium shots and long shots have been identified. This chapter goes a step further to identify examples of various selected types of shots throughout the fourteen (14) episodes and the role they play in message delivery to the viewers as envisaged by the filmmaker. Specifically, the selected shots showcase the cinematographic role they play in meaning generation depending on the political themes of the respective episodes.

3.2 The Episodes in the Documentary Series

The fourteen episodes that make up Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary series are covered in this section.

In his effort to reconstruct Kenya's political history from pre-independence in 1959 to post-independence in 2007, Hilary Ngweno's documentary series mainly rely on close-up shots to reconstruct this rather emotional story full of political machinations and counter machinations. Close-ups are crucial ingredients in the language of films where shots, camera moves, and transitions are the key pillars as Campbell (2002) argues:

The shot themselves are the nouns, marking out the story in blocks of time and narrative. The transitions between them are verbs, establishing relationship between people, places and events. The camera movements are the adjectives, amplifying and describing the action by providing speed and changes in perspective (Campbell, 2002, P. 20).

What Campbell (ibid) refers to as nouns in the language of film are in this context the close ups which are the main ingredients being put into perspective in this section. The verbs include zoom-in, zoom-out, fade-out, fade-in, and dissolves among others, which help in transition from one shot to the other.

In order to effectively highlight the shots' cinematographic technique roles as applied in the films, few frames of the visual images have been selected in each episode and put into perspective for the purpose. The selected frames (photographs) are provided at the end of each of the fourteen (14) episodes below.

3.2.1 Episode 1: Before the Beginning 1959-1963.

In this episode, a close up of James Gichuru (from a zoom), a close Kenyatta ally, is framed to show an innocent, selfishless and non-ambitious man (**see picture i**). The voice-over narration insinuates Gichuru as an “actor” in politics where he was being elected to leadership positions on the understanding that he was holding the same for Kenyatta, who was still in incarceration and who the colonial government did not want to lead his people. The colonial government described Kenyatta as a leader unto darkness and death. The cool image of Gichuru as displayed by the filmmaker lived up to the above description of the man as Kenya's political events unfolded in the days that followed.

The filmmaker also shows a close up of an angry and frustrated Kenyatta who is found “guilty” and sentenced to 7 years in jail by the colonial government for managing **Mau Mau**(**see picture ii**). (**Picture iii**) shows desperation written all over the face of the captured last commander of **Mau Mau** by the colonial soldiers carried on improvised stretches.

The shot immediately draws sympathy from viewers, especially the local Africans who identify with him as their hero, for devoting all his life in liberating Kenyan people from the yoke of colonialism.

In (**picture iv**) a shot of a patriotic Oginga Odinga reveals honesty and sincerity as he calls for Kenyatta release and praises him as their leader of choice. At long last, the feeling of free atmosphere by Kenyatta after being released from jail in August, 1961, is shown in (**picture v**). The cinematographic techniques deployed to capture these shots enhance message delivery.



*Picture i: Selfishless and non-ambitious
James Gichuru*



*Picture ii: Angry and frustrated
Kenyatta sentenced to 7 years in jail*



*Picture iii: Desperate Field Marshal
Dedan Kimathi captured by colonial
soldiers*



Picture iv: Patriotic Oginga Odinga calls for Kenyatta release



Picture v: Kenyatta finally released from Jail in August, 1961

3.2.2. Episode 2: Dividing the Spoils 1964

In this episode, the filmmaker shows a close up (from a zoom) of a shaken and traumatized prime minister, Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika following the young country's army mutiny which threatened to topple him (**see picture vi**). The voice-over narration describes Nyerere as so shaken that he had to seek temporary refuge to the British high commission in the country. The filmmaker brings the Tanganyika mutiny fiasco in the film to show interrelationship of happenings in a neighbouring country is likely to have political ripple effects to its neighbours and therefore create alertness. The Nyerere shot instantly draws sympathy to the viewers, hence serving the intended purpose.

However, a shot of Felix Onama, Uganda's Interior Minister who was held prisoner under the same circumstances as Nyerere, does not convince viewers that he was indeed held prisoner when Ugandan army mutinied (**see picture vii**). The filmmaker shows a shot of a smiling Onama under the circumstances he finds himself in, instead of the obvious expected sad and shaken posture. The visual image seems to go against the norms. This is perhaps due to lack of a suitable photograph as the filmmaker relied on archival collection of the photographs and video clips used in the documentary series.

In yet another shot in the episode, Kenyatta views the outgoing colonial governor general, Malcolm Macdonald with suspicion (**see picture viii**). According to voice-over narration, the governor influenced the appointment of Mr. Daniel Arap Moi, who had been initially elected on an opposition KADU ticket from Rift Valley in 1963 elections, into the government. KADU party had just been dissolved and joined KANU government side. The filmmaker deliberately uses this shot to portray Kenyatta as a person in doubt of what the colonial governor Macdonald was up to in this particular appointment. Unaware that Kenyatta had also interest in Rift Valley where he intended to settle many landless people especially from Mount Kenya region, Governor Macdonald's motive was also not far from Kenyatta's as he too wanted a neutral person like Moi to protect the interest of the white farmers in the vast Rift Valley. This prompted the filmmaker to use the shot to bring out that tension.



Picture vi: Shaken and traumatized Prime Minister Nyerere after army mutiny



Picture vii: Smiling Ugandan Minister for Interior, Felix Onama, held prisoner after the Ugandan army mutinied.



Picture viii: Suspicious Kenyatta with outgoing colonial governor, Malcolm Macdonald.

3.2.3 Episode 3: Battle of Ideologies 1964-1966

In his strategic calculation to get out KANU opponents from the ruling party, the filmmaker chooses a shot of a smiling Tom Mboya all the way to the master plan tactics as evidenced in this episode (see **picture ix**). Mboya has been reputed to be a man of great organizational skills as reinforced by the voice-over narration.

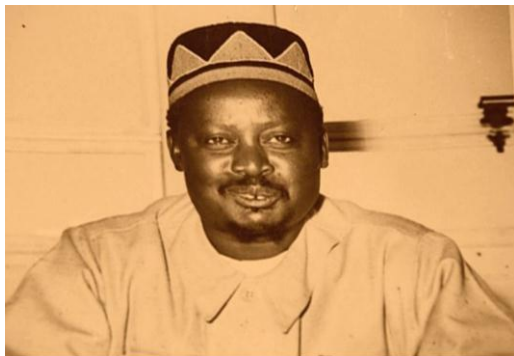
In the same episode, the filmmaker selects a shot of enraged Oginga Odinga over a surprise motion of confidence of Kenyatta's Government which was sponsored by Mboya and which Odinga was not consulted as the official leader of government business in the house (see **picture x**). The shot captures Odinga's emotions perfectly well, which is the essence of its choice. In a complete reversal change of the mood in the same episode, the filmmaker chooses a shot of a smiling Odinga after his party KPU (Kenya People's Union) won all the contested seats in Luo Nyanza during what was referred to by commentary as little general elections, hence beating his political foe, Tom Mboya (see **picture xi**).



Picture ix: Smiling, strategist KANU secretary general, Tom Mboya



Picture x: Enraged Oginga Odinga over a surprise Motion



Picture xi: Happy Oginga Odinga after winning all seats in Luo Nyanza

3.2.4 Episode 4: Shifting Alliance 1966-1969

In this episode, the filmmaker shows a shot of a sad Tom Mboya after his political star seems to dwindle when he lost KANU control in two crucial branches of Nairobi and Mombasa to what the commentary referred to as Pro-Kenyatta Gatundu group (see **picture xii**). In an alternative shot, the filmmaker chooses yet another shot of Mboya lost in thoughts in what the voice-over narration describes as fear for his dear life as he has lost everything politically in the party except the KANU secretary general's job (see **picture xiii**).

As if to qualify the fear for his very life, the filmmaker frames an emotional tight close up (from a zoom) of a gunned down Tom Mboya being resuscitated to save his life (**see picture xiv**). The viewer is made to witness how Mboya met his death as everything possible was being done to save his life on that fateful day of 5th July 1969. The recreated sound effects of the two gunshots that is loudly heard as Mboya steps out of a shop at the then government road (now Moi Avenue) guides and leaves no doubt to the viewers as to what killed him in broad daylight, which fulfills the role of cinematographic techniques applied by the filmmaker.

Still in the same episode, the filmmaker selects a shot of an aged and tired-looking Bildad Kaggia, one of the famous Kapenguria six, as having retired from politics to lead a simple life in his native Muranga District (**see xv**). This was as a result of frustrations and humiliation in election after election defeat by political green horns. Kaggia's tribulations began when he angered central Kenya voters and in particular Muranga voters by joining Odinga-led opposition party, KPU. The voters never forgave him even as he belatedly rejoined KANU, which left him with few options. The choice of the shot visually resonates well with the frustration ordeal and subsequent retirement, after going against the political tide in his backyard central Kenya.



Picture xii: Sad Tom Mboya after losing Kanu control in Nairobi and Mombasa



Picture xiii: Tom Mboya lost in thoughts as he feared for his very life.



Picture xiv: Gunned down Tom Mboya being resuscitated to save his life



Picture xv: Aged and tired looking Bildad Kaggia, one of the Kapenguria six, retires from politics

3.2.5 Episode 5: Cohesion at the Centre 1969-1972

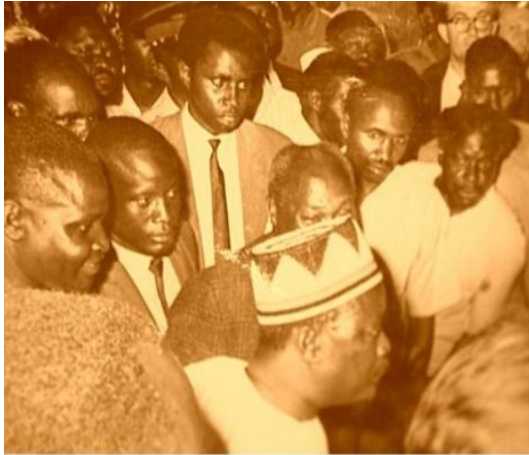
In this episode, the filmmaker framed a shot of irate Oginga Odinga (in the foreground) in a bitter exchange of words, with Kenyatta (off shot) following a fracas that took place in Kisumu where Kenyatta went to open new Nyanza hospital, after which all KPU members were detained. (See **picture xvi**). The shot catches the tensed and emotional moment as evidenced by the people (in the background) whose eyes are tensed and

directed towards the source of the bitter exchange. Without even a single word, the visual image tells it all about the bitter encounter of the two leaders.

The episode provides two shots of speakers, (i) the smiling incoming speaker, Fredrick Mati, who made history as the first ever black and indigenous speaker (**see xvii**) and (ii) the cool outgoing speaker, Humphrey Slade, white speaker who has been at the helm of parliament as the speaker since the colonial days of legislative council in 1956 (**see xviii**). The two shots clearly cut the impression of change of guard in the important arm of the government (parliament) as the white wig over their heads, which is associated with the status of the office, enriches the informational details on the visual images.

In the same episode, is a close up of a shocked Milton Obote, Ugandan President, after being overthrown by General Idi Amin (**see picture xix**). The filmmaker's choice of the shot reveals the shock and disbelief associated with the circumstances and nature of events that Obote found himself in. The clear wrinkles on his face, wide open eyes and partially gaping mouth, clearly brings out the emotional aspects of Obote's predicament, which is the primary role of cinematographic techniques in a film.

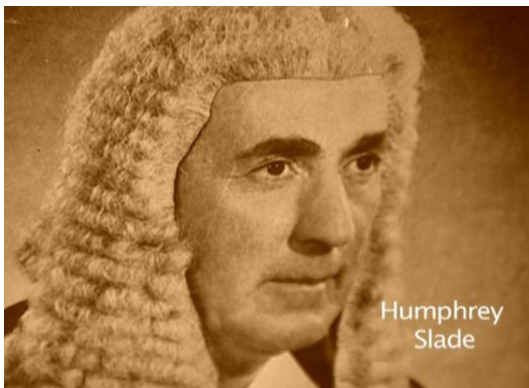
The same episode ushers in fresh Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association (GEMA) leadership after the earlier top leadership mostly cabinet ministers, found the association as a liability to Kenyatta government which they all served, hence reducing the government national status. GEMA has been viewed as a very strong wing of the government which caters for the interest of especially Mount Kenya region. Notable new GEMA leadership includes youthful and renown wealthy businessman Njenga Karume, who became chairman (**see picture xx**) and Kihika Kimani, an indigenous born and raised in Rift valley, became the new GEMA Organizing Secretary (**see picture xxi**). The happy faces of these new leaders as portrayed by the filmmaker, cast the images of energetic people who are ready and willing to serve the association.



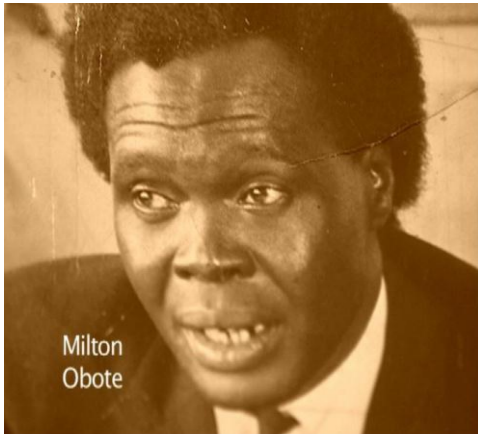
Picture xvi: Irate Oginga Odinga (in the foreground) in bitter exchange



Picture xvii: Smiling in-coming speaker, Fredrick Mati, first ever black and indigenous speaker.



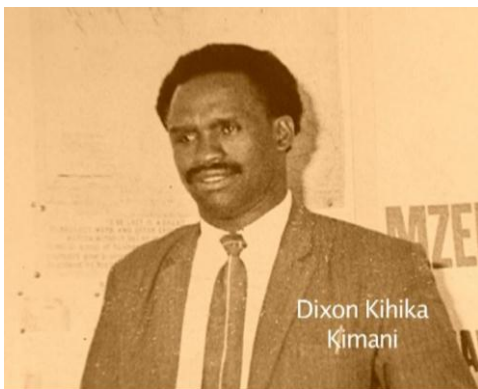
Picture xviii: Cool outgoing speaker, Humphrey Slade, White speaker



Picture xix: Shocked Milton Obote, Ugandan President, overthrown by General Idi Amin



Picture xx: Youthful and Wealthy businessman, Njenga Karume, becomes new GEMA Chairman.



Picture xxi: Happy Kihika Kimani, becomes the new GEMA Organizing Secretary.

3.2.6 Episode 6: No Longer at Ease 1973-175

The episode shows a happy Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, popularly known as J. M, upon appointment as an assistant minister for agriculture (see **picture xxii**). The choice of the shot represents the mood and general atmosphere of the moment. In a different shot, the episode carries a shot of a shocked Kenyatta after the 1974 general elections defeat of

his close ally and confidant, Njoroge Mungai (see **picture xxiii**). The sad face of the aged president with his mouth partially gaping brings out his inner feelings following the unfolding political reality of the election's outcomes.

In the same episode, a smiling Stanley Oloitiptip, is appointed the first ever Maasai Minister and given the ministry of natural resources docket (see **picture xxiv**). The shot reveals the internal emotion which is written all over the new minister's face. In another shot, the filmmaker focuses on a gloomy face of Masinde Muliro, a cabinet minister, after being sacked to show reaction (see **picture xxv**) Muliro made history as the first cabinet minister to be sacked in independent Kenya as the voice-over narration puts it. The sad face displayed in the shot, summarizes the former minister's regrets.



Picture xxii: Happy J. M. Kariuki, upon appointment as an assistant Minister for agriculture.



Picture xxiii: Shocked Kenyatta after Njoroge Mungai, close ally and confidant, lost in elections



Picture xxiv: Smiling Stanley Oloiptip, appointed first ever Maasai minister



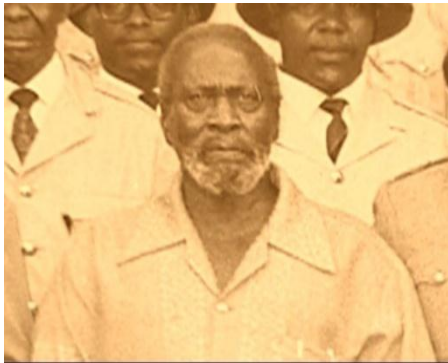
Picture xxv: Gloomy Masinde Muliro after being sacked as a Cabinet Minister

3.2.7 Episode 7: The Rise and Fall of the Community 1967-1977

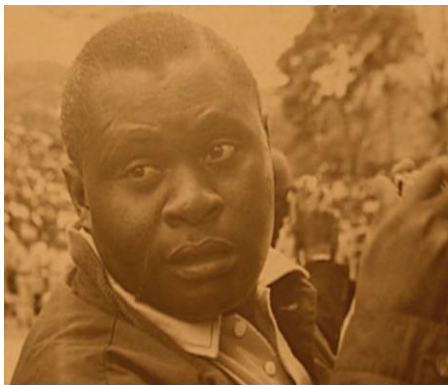
The episode screens a shot of a frustrated and infuriated Kenyatta over J. M. Kariuki's murder report outcome, where backbenchers and some frontbenchers in parliament, failed to support the watering down plan of the report (**see picture xxvi**). The anger portrayed by the shot seems to be heavily weighing on the aging president and even threaten to complicate his intermittent failing health. The shot exposes the president's frail health.

Against all the norms of parliament, the episode in a different shot shows a shot of a shaken Martin Shikuku who is picked from the premises of parliament and in total disregard of parliament's immunity (**see picture xxvii**). Found also in the episode is a shot of equally shocked Paul Ngei following nullification of his election on the ground of what narration voiced as violation of election rules (**see picture xxviii**). In both shots, which are similar in nature but different in subject, the filmmaker captures the frustration experienced by the two politicians as evidenced by their sulky faces. General

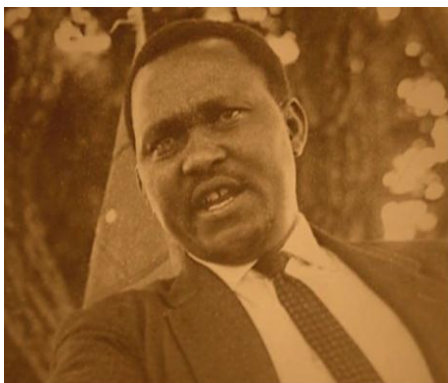
Idi Amin (foreground) backed by his soldiers (background) is also found in the episode where he threatens to attack Kenya following the Entebbe raid which he believes Kenya was involved (**see picture xxix**). The choice of the shot sends shiver down the spines of viewers as it invokes insecurity issues. Amin is perceived as a war-like personality.



*Picture xxvi: Frustrated and Infuriated
Kenyatta over J. M. Kariuki Murder report.*



*Picture xxvii: Shaken Martin Shikuku
Picked from parliament for detention*



*Picture xxviii: Shocked Paul Ngei after
nullification of his election*



Picture xxix: General Idi Amin threatens to attack Kenya after Entebbe raid.

3.2.8 Episode 8: The End of an Era 1975-1978

The episode shows a shot portraying a tired and worn out Kenyatta who is faced with a myriad of challenges among them succession issues as he approaches his sun-set days (see **picture xxx**). The choice of this particular shot is to indirectly inform the viewers and public in general that there is need to prepare for a change of guard at the presidency. As if to actualize fore-warning through the earlier indirect information to the public (tired and worn out image), the filmmaker chooses a tight close up of Kenyatta portrait to announce his death which the voice-over narration says occurred in his sleep at 3.30 am on 22nd August 1978 (see **picture xxxi**). The filmmaker's intention in this extreme close up is to bring the viewers closer to the late president and create a permanent memorable effect. To catch the mood during Kenyatta funeral, the filmmaker brings shots of crying and fainting mourners to show their emotional attachment to the late president (see **picture xxxii**)

Newly sworn-in acting president Moi gives a passionate key address during Kenyatta's funeral where he describes the late president as his father, teacher and leader (See **picture xxxiii**). These kind words on Kenyatta are intended to assure Kenyatta followers and the entire nation that the country would be in safe hands under the new president (himself) as Kenyatta's ideology and legacy would be perpetuated through his "son", "student" and "follower".



Picture xxx: Tired and worn out Kenyatta in his sun-set days.



Picture xxxi: Kenyatta's Portrait that announced his death



Picture xxxii: Fainted mourner over Kenyatta's death.



Picture xxxiii: New acting President Moi gives passionate address during Kenyatta funeral

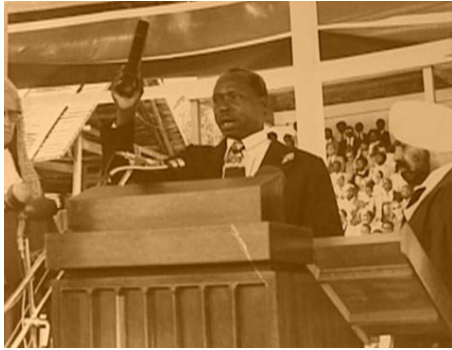
3.2.9 Episode 9: The Rise of Moi 1978-1982

The episode opens with a shot of a confident Moi being sworn in as the second president of the republic of Kenya on 10th October 1978, after expiry of the acting period (see **picture xxxiv**). In his inaugural speech to the nation, Moi promises to follow in the foot-steps of his predecessor, hence nicknamed “Nyayo” (foot-steps) as the voice-over narration puts it. Here the narration clarifies the reassurance to the nation and Kenyatta’s followers in general that Moi was ready and willing to carry on Kenyatta’s legacy to the very end. The narration in this scenario complements what the visual could not bring out.

This technique ensures that the message is delivered effectively as scripted by the filmmaker. On the same day, Mwai Kibaki is sworn-in as the 4th vice president of the republic of Kenya and minister for finance (see **picture xxxv**).

In the new political mandate as president, the filmmaker shows a shot of president Moi in a pensive mood to suggest he was in a deep political “calculation” (see **picture xxxvi**). According to voice-over narration, a word had gone around that Moi was a “passing cloud” and that he would soon give way to Kibaki or Njonjo, hence the Moi’s posture of a deep political “calculation”. The cinematographic technique applied here has perfectly worked well to bring out the intended message to the viewers.

In the same episode, Kenyatta’s most trusted and confidant Man, Mbiyu Koinange, got a rude shock in the 1979 general elections when Kiambaa voters threw him out in post-Kenyatta epoch only to replace him with GEMA chairman, Njenga Karume (see **xxxvii**). The mood portrayed here fits the situational circumstance especially to the man who has never lost in any election since independence. In quite opposite to Kiambaa debacle in the same elections, a smiling youthful Kenneth Matiba trounces yet another veteran politician and Kenyatta man, Julius Kiano in Mbiri constituency, in Muranga (see **xxxviii**). The voice-over narration describes the 1979 general elections as full of surprises where half of the sitting MPs lost their seats which include 7 cabinet ministers and quite a sizeable number of assistant ministers.



Picture xxxiv: Moi sworn-in as Kenya's second President after expiry of acting period, on 10th October 1978



Picture xxxv: Mwai Kibaki sworn-in as vice president and Minister for finance



Picture xxxvi: Moi in pensive mood over "Passing cloud" talks



Picture xxxvii: Shocked Mbiyu Koinange (foreground) loses Kiambaa seat

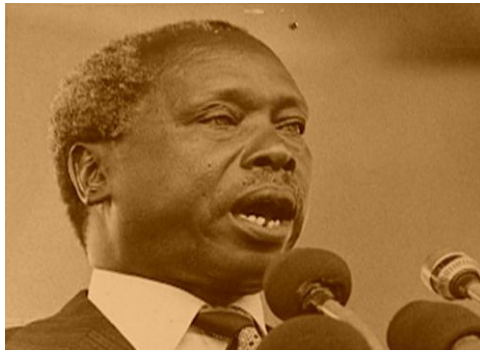


Picture xxxviii: Smiling, youthful Kenneth Matiba beats Kiano in Mbiri constituency, Muranga

3.2.10 Episode 10: Feet of Clay 1982 -1988

The episode begins with a shot of a shocked and mouth-gaping president Moi following a military coup attempt spearheaded by Moi Air Base soldiers in Nairobi, on 1st August 1982 (See **picture xxxix**). The shot is intended to paint an image of a shaken and traumatized head of state who seems completely taken unawares by the military coup attempt. The source of the fear is clarified by the narration which plays a complementary role in message delivery in the film. Following the aftermath of the military coup debacle, the filmmaker focuses on a shot of a sulky and agitated Charles Njonjo, who resigns his seat as an MP for Kikuyu constituency and all other posts he held, following alleged traitor claims (see **picture xl**). The clear wringles on his face, the wide open eyes and the tensed general mood, communicates the politician's emotions, just as intended by the filmmaker.

Following lukewarm support of his government's policies especially from members of Kikuyu community, particularly queue-voting methods, Moi appears fed up with his vice president Mwai Kibaki (see **picture xli**). The framed shot of the two politicians shows an invisible crack developing between them which can only be told by their body language. Finally as the crack becomes inevitable, Moi drops Mwai Kibaki as his vice president, actualizing what started as an invisible crack (see **picture xlii**). The big close up covering Kibaki's sad face brings viewers closer and draws sympathy especially among his supporters.



Picture xxxix: Shocked and traumatized Moi after a military coup attempt on 1st august 1982



Picture xl: Sulky and agitated Charles Njonjo resigns over alleged traitor claims.



Picture xli: Fed up Moi with his Vice President Mwai Kibaki.



Picture xlii: Shocked Kibaki dropped as a vice president

3.2.11 Episode 11: The Return of Party Politics 1988-1991

The episode shows a shot of Kenneth Matiba and others in the periphery demanding for multiparty democracy in the country (see **picture xliii**). The enraged facial expression displayed in the shot, reveals a feeling of a man whose right of association seems to have been violated or denied altogether. It is for this reason that Matiba demands for a multiparty state where other political parties can be formed to allow for political competition in the country, hence giving the citizens democratic space. It is important to note that the ruling party KANU had been the only party since Kenyatta era. The demand for a multiparty state did not go down well with the government of the day as Matiba and others were detained. The filmmaker shows a shot of a sickly and emaciated Matiba released from detention (see **picture xliv**). According to voice over narration, Matiba suffered a stroke while in detention and he needed urgent medical attention abroad.

The episode also carries a close up shot of Mwai Kibaki who had resigned from government as minister for health on a Christmas day in 1991 (see **picture xlv**). Earlier on, it is important to note that Kibaki had been demoted from vice presidency to minister for health. In two weeks after his resignation from the government, Kibaki forms Democratic Party (DP) - the vehicle in which he intended to compete for political power. The shot portrays Kibaki as a man who has finally walked into a democratic space with confidence, hitherto difficult to access.



Picture xliii: Enraged Matiba (middle) and others demand for multiparty democracy in the country.



Picture xlv: sickly and emaciated Matiba released from detention.



Picture xlv: Kibaki resigns from government on Christmas day 1991

3.2.12 Episode 12: A Divided House 1992-1997

In the episode, Kenneth Matiba displays a victory sign as he rejects the 1992 general election results, which he lost to the incumbent Moi (**see picture xlv**). The victory sign is interpreted in this circumstance to mean defiance. Matiba moves to court to contest the disputed election results as he assumes leader of official opposition role in parliament.

On political intolerance, the filmmaker shows an injured, clergyman, Timothy Njoya in hospital bed following police assault under KANU regime (**see picture xlvii**). Njoya had led some demonstrations together with some civil human right groups to press the Kanu government for more constitutional reforms, to create a level political ground for all the players. The KANU government responded with brutal and barbaric beatings which led to the injury and subsequent hospitalization of Njoya as depicted in the shot.

The shot elicits sympathy to the viewers as Njoya is a renowned man of God and not a common thug.

In the 1997 general election, the filmmaker presents a face of a confident and focused Charity Ngilu who contested as a presidential candidate on a Social Democratic Party (SDP) ticket (see **picture xlviii**). Being the only serious female candidate, Ngilu rated highly among the top contenders, who were dominantly male contenders.



Picture xlvii: Matiba rejects the 1992 general election results which he lost to Moi.



Picture xlvii: Injured Clergyman Timothy Njoya in hospital bed after police assault

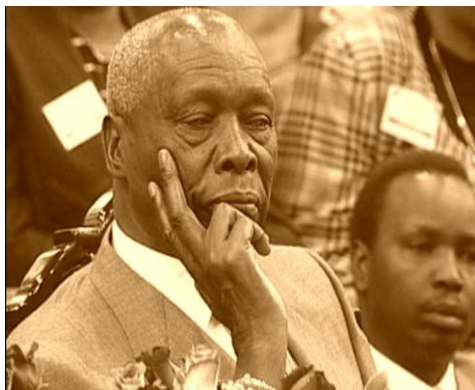


Picture xlviii: Charity Ngilu, a confident and focused 1997 presidential candidate.

3.2.13 Episode 13: A Coalition of Change 1998-2002

The episode focuses on Moi in deep thoughts following Raila Odinga's National Development Party (NDP) proposal of a coalition government between KANU and his NDP party (**See picture xlix**). The shot portrays Moi as not amused by the proposal. As the voice-over narration goes, Moi was not initially keen on sharing power with Raila Odinga as much as he required more MPs on his side to counter any opposition in and out of parliament.

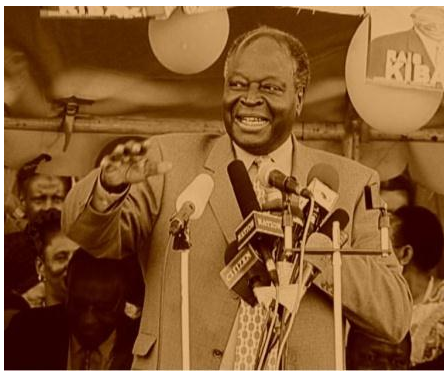
In preparation for the 2002 general elections, Moi grooms Uhuru Kenyatta for the country's top leadership as he plans to hand over power to a younger generation (**see picture I**). The filmmaker captures the mood of the two individuals, where it is all smiles from both ends as the deal is done. In another development, Kibaki-led National Alliance Party of Kenya (NAK) teams up with Raila-led KANU rebels to form National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), whose joint presidential candidate becomes Mwai Kibaki (**see picture li**). The opposition unity brought hope to many people who yearned for change and as the commentary puts it, KANU party faced the biggest threat ever to end its 40-year rule.



Picture xlix: Moi in deep thoughts over Raila's party proposal on coalition..



Picture i: Moi grooms Uhuru for the country's top leadership



Picture li: Jovial Kibaki becomes NARC's joint presidential candidate

3.2.14 Episode 14: Unity and After 2002-2007

In this episode, Mwai Kibaki is sworn-in as the third president of the republic of Kenya following a landslide victory in the 2002 general elections, at Uhuru Park, Nairobi (see **picture lii**). Taking the oath of allegiance on a wheelchair following a near fatal accident during campaign period, Kibaki rekindled people's hope when he promised to end corruption, create 500,000 jobs, improve the economy, introduce free primary school education and usher in a new constitution in a hundred days as voiced by narration.

On the 2005 national referendum, Kivuitu, the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) chairman, displays two symbols used in the referendum-banana for "Yes" side and Orange for "No" side (see **picture liii**). The orange side won the referendum thereby defeating the proposed draft. As the 2007 general elections drew near, two main opposition leaders, Raila Odinga and Kalonzo Musyoka could not agree who between them would support the other against the incumbent Mwai Kibaki (see **picture liv**).

According to voice-over narration, the two leaders in the end broke up into two factions; Raila-led ODM and Kalonzo-led ODM-Kenya. The shot shows the two leaders holding each other with suspicion and mistrust between them, which later became evident when they politically went separate ways.



Picture lii: Kibaki is sworn-in as Kenya's third president after landslide victory in 2002 general elections, on a wheelchair.



Picture liii: Kivuitu, ECK chairman, displays banana and orange symbols for the 2005 referendum.



Picture liv: Raila and Kalonzo fail to unite as the 2007 general elections drew near.

3.3 Camera Angles in the Films under Study

Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary film series have used various angles to tell the story of Kenya's political strife. On camera angles, Boggs and Petrie (2004) explain:

When the camera is placed below eye level, creating a low-angle shot, the size and importance of the subject is exaggerated (p. 149). On the other hand, an effect opposite to that of the low-angle shot is generally achieved by placing the camera above eye level, creating a high-angle shot, which seems to dwarf the subject and diminish its importance (p. 150).

On expressing emotions through a camera, Melo and Paiva (2005) seem to concur with their counterparts when they add that, in low angle, the camera films the point of interest from below creating the impression of a powerful point of interest while in high angle, the camera films the point of interest from above creating the impression of smallness and isolation. Eye level angle represents a neutral view point (p. 715-722).

In the reconstruction of Kenya's political history through the archival materials, Hilary Ngweno chose materials that adhered to the above principles especially to bring out the political machinations and counter machinations by various political players, which is generally the nature of the documentary film series.

3.3.1 Eye-Level Angle

Most shots in Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary film series are taken from normal (Eye-level) camera angle. This choice of shots can be explained in two ways. Firstly, given that the photos are archival resources, meaning they were taken in an earlier period and later used in the reconstruction of the documentary narrative, it is understandable that eye level shots prevailed in terms of quantity. Secondly, it is noteworthy that despite the highly undulated political bandwidth, the political curve itself remained the same: the powerful government prevailed over the berated opposition across all major government levels, resulting in a rather linear emotional curve. The filmmaker has therefore used the normal eye level angle as a symbolic

indication of this constant political tempo, intervening with appropriate pictorial choices – especially in terms of selective angled shots - when and if it becomes necessary.

3.3.2 Low Angle

Despite the prevalence of normal angle shots, there are however instances when the filmmaker chooses alternative shots with different camera angles. Low angle, one of these alternative angles, has been selectively used in various montage contexts to symbolise the moments of ebbing political acme, or for specific emphasis. For instance, in Cohesion at the Centre 1969-1972, the filmmaker has used a low angle shot (see picture xxiii below) of the then politically defeated Oginga Odinga, where he is addressing his fellow radical supporters. This shot seeks to elevate his esteem among his scanty followers, creating an ambience of his political resiliency. As the official, albeit outlawed opposition leader, Odinga is a man under siege, but who refuses to let go his political ideologies, even in the face of the unsettling political realities of the time.



Picture xxiii: Oginga Odinga addressing his KPU radical supporters

The filmmaker also uses a similar technique to symbolize the raging influence of Uganda's military coup leader, General Idi Amin, who overthrew Milton Obote's government in January 25th 1971. To capture Amin's authority, the narrator uses a low angle shot of the fearful dictator as he rode with his loyal soldiers in the streets of Kampala (see Picture xxiv below).



Picture xxiv: General Idi Amin patrolling the streets of Kampala after overthrowing Milton Obote

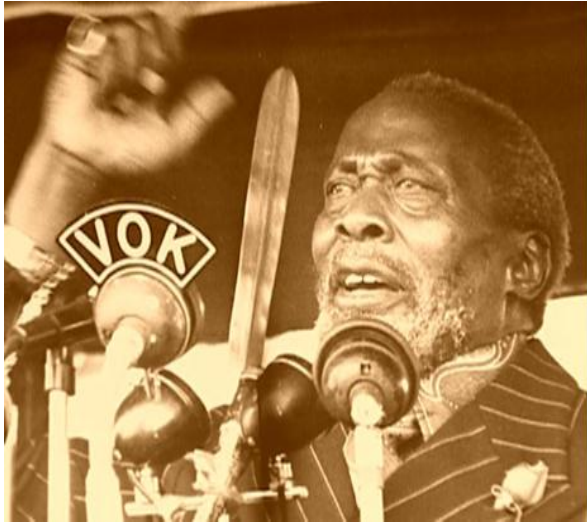
Other shots which use the low camera angle to symbolize increased influence and authority are as captured in the following photos:



Picture xxv: President Kenyatta and Vice President Moi after the 1969 elections. The shot emphasises their perceived iron grip on Kenya's political power.



Picture xxvi: Shot of military soldiers used to denote the military's growing influence as the filmmaker narrates the imminent coup in Kenya's post-1969 elections.



Picture xxvii: Low angle shot of President Kenyatta as he addressed the nation at Uhuru Park on June 29th after a possible coup. The shot emphasizes the president's unwavering authority, and his ability to prevail over the nation's political destiny.



Picture xxviii: President Kenyatta walks with newly appointed Military bosses after the resignation of army boss, Joseph Ndolo and abolishment of his post. The commanders here have been mandated to answer directly to the President.



Picture xxix: While narrating about Moi's growing political power in 1976, the filmmaker uses this low angle shot to highlight the rising superiority of the then Vice-President in view of the ailing President, and the likely scenario that he may succeed him.



Picture xxx: Low angle, medium shot of powerful GEMA organising secretary, Kihika Kimani.

In signaling President Moi's powerful entry to Kenya's politics after his inauguration as Kenya's second President in October 10th, 1978, the filmmaker uses a low angle shot of the President as he gives his inaugural speech (see Picture xxxi below).



Picture xxxi: Low angle shot of powerful President Moi after he clinched Kenya's Presidency.

In introducing Raila Odinga's new role as the leader of the newly formed National Development Party (NDP), Hilary Ngweni has used a low angle shot to amplify his political significance as the emerging face of Luo politics (Picture xxxii). Further, to symbolize the heroic act achieved by the NARC party in 2002, which manages to topple Moi-led KANU candidate, Uhuru Kenyatta, the filmmaker has deployed low angle shots to introduce the main players in the NARC victory. These include Charity Kaluki Ngilu, Kijana Wamalwa, and Raila Odinga (see Pictures xxxiii and xxxiv below). To capture the filmmaker's deliberate deployment of the low angle shots, the motion clip he uses for the narration of Kibaki's victory and his inauguration speech is a good example. In the shot, despite Kibaki's physically challenged position, the camera offers a low angle shot to show his political prominence at the hour of his maiden presidential speech (Picture xxxv and xxxvi).



Picture xxxii: Low angle shot of Raila in his new role as the leader of the newly formed National Development Party (NDP).



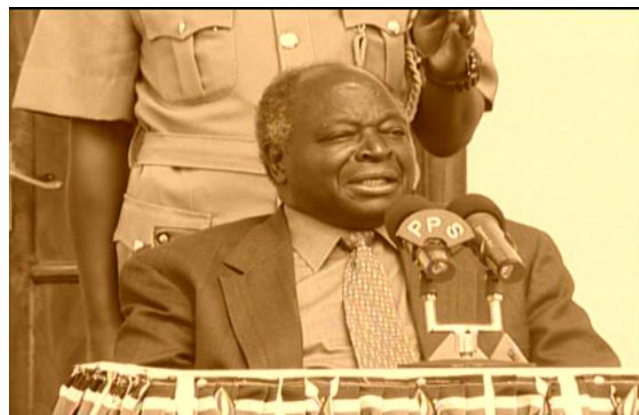
Picture xxxiii: Charity Kaluki Ngilu and Kijana Wamalwa after they toppled Moi regime in 2002.



Picture xxxiv: Low angle shot of Raila Odinga used by the filmmaker in highlighting his pivotal role in the toppling of Moi Regime in 2002 general Elections.



Picture xxxv: Newly elected President Mwai Kibaki gives his victory speech on a wheelchair at Uhuru Park, Nairobi, after the 2002 General Elections.



Picture xxxvi: Low angle shot of the newly elected President Mwai Kibaki giving a maiden speech after the 2002 General Elections.

3.3.3 High Angle

In the shot where the filmmaker is narrating how Luos expended their anger on President Kenyatta during a requiem mass held at the Holy Family Cathedral in respect of the slain Tom Mboya, he uses a high angle shot to show the raging multitudes who attacked the President during the mourning week (see Picture xxxvii below).



Picture xxxvii: High angle shot of the Luo masses who pelted President Kenyatta's car with stones during a requiem mass held at the Holy Family Cathedral in respect of the slain Tom Mboya.

Similarly, the filmmaker uses a high angle shot to capture the welling multitudes who showed up in support of Kenyatta at his rural home in Gatundu, in a moment when Luos and Kikuyus were consolidating political power and allegiance in post-Tom Mboya political landscape, and his later tour of Kisumu. President Kenyatta was met with a lot of hostility during his Kisumu tour where he had a bitter exchange with Oginga Odinga (see Pictures xxxviii to xl below).



Picture xxxviii: First shot - Kenyatta with delegates at his rural home in Gatundu.



*Picture xxxix: Second shot -
Kenyatta's tour of Kisumu*



*Picture xl: Third shot -
Kenyatta's tour of Kisumu*

In retrospect, these shots are symbolic in that they show President Kenyatta at his weakest point. The choice of the high camera angle shots therefore serves right to elicit the aura of his growing belittlement within the political circles, especially his growing unease and frustration with the Oginga Odinga's Luo community. This remarked vulnerability is further accentuated through other filmic elements, including the narrator's voice which emphasizes the ceaseless agitation by KPU allied Luo politicians and their masses of supporters.

Similarly, the same camera angle is used when the filmmaker is narrating the massive rejection of Kenya's MPs in the general elections of December 1969. In this election, 77 seating MPs of the 158 total numbers were rejected. For emphasis of this massive fallout, the filmmaker has used a high angle shot of the parliamentary session, which both diminishes the MPs relevance in the unfolding political situation (see Picture xli below).



***Picture xli:** A high angle shot accompanying the narration of the gloomy moment within Kenya's parliament after the massive failure of legislators to recapture their seats in the 1969 elections.*

Other instances where the high angle shot has been used within the films include the following:



***Picture xlii:** Kamba leaders march to show Kenyatta their loyalty after the confession of Mutiso and Ndolo that they were co-conspirators in the bid to overthrow Kenyatta's government. The High angle reflects their declining political respectability by the president, and their relative lessened political recognition.*



Picture xliii: A high angle shot of Nyanza political leader, Oginga Odinga, which the filmmaker uses in the End of an Era episode when explaining about his political isolation in the proposed 1977 KANU party elections.

In a bid to highlight the massive popularity enjoyed by Kenneth Matiba's FORD-Asili party, the filmmaker has used a high angle shot to show the masses who had camped at Uhuru Park in Nairobi to show support of the vigorous opposition boss who was then recuperating at a London hospital after a heart attack (see Picture xliv below). The shot, which is juxtaposed in the A Divided House 1992-1997 episode, also serves to highlight the political barrier that the newly formed Democratic Party (DP) headed by the former Vice President Mwai Kibaki, had to face and probably surmount in order to gain any meaningful footing in the highly competitive Central Province political scene.



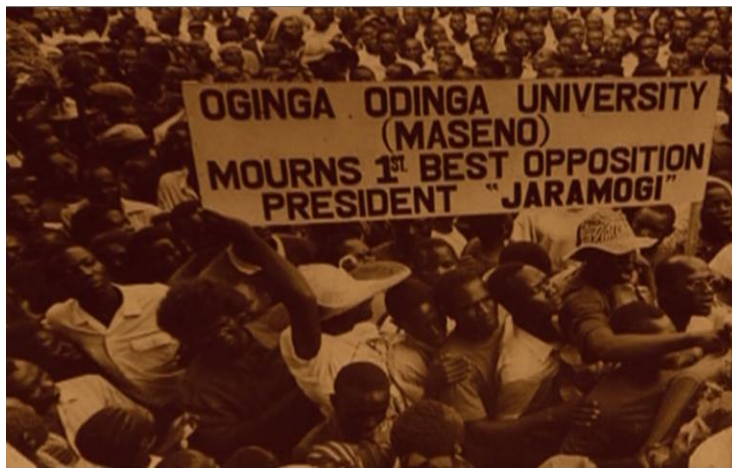
Picture xliv: Masses who had camped at Uhuru Park in Nairobi to show support of the vigorous opposition boss, Kenneth Matiba whose FORD-Asili party threatened to topple Moi's regime.

There are a series of more shots to emphasize Matiba's political acumen, and his growing popularity in the political space of the time (see Picture xlv).



Picture xlv: Kenneth Matiba's political supporters

While terming Oginga Odinga a political colossus, the filmmaker chose to highlight the magnitude of support that the late politician enjoyed in his home by use of a high angle shot. This image (Picture xlv) shows the mass of supporters carrying a banner in honour of the late opposition leader, who had managed to keep two government regimes on their toes.



Picture xlvii: Oginga Odinga political supporters.

After their support of The National Alliance, many religious leaders found themselves on the wrong side of the government's security organs. To highlight the frustrations and overpowering political subjugation of the masses, Ngweno uses a high angle shot of the July 7th, 1997 protest when the leaders joined other Kenyans at Kamukunji grounds to stage an anti-government rally (see Picture xlvii below).



Picture xlvii: Spiritual leaders join with citizens during the July 7th 1997 protest against Moi's harsh stance on opposition.

To emphasize the joyous mood of the masses of supporters who turned up to cheer Mwai Kibaki, the presidential candidate for the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) in the 2002 general elections, the filmmaker has used a high angle shot which emphasizes the jubilation of the masses. The event is also rendered in a motion clip, with a panning camera movement to express the extent of the swelling masses (Picture xlviii to 1 below)



Picture xlviii: Shot One of Masses of supporters who turned up to cheer Mwai Kibaki, the presidential candidate for the National Rainbow Coalition in the 2002 general elections



Picture xlix: Shot Two of Masses of supporters who turned up to cheer Mwai Kibaki, the presidential candidate for the National Rainbow Coalition in the 2002 general elections



Picture l: Shot Three of Masses of supporters who turned up to cheer Mwai Kibaki, the presidential candidate for the National Rainbow Coalition in the 2002 general elections

There is a similar use of low angle shots, especially when the filmmaker is emphasizing the intimidating failure incurred by KANU presidential candidate, Uhuru Kenyatta in the 2002 general elections (Picture li).



Picture li: The filmmaker emphasizes the intimidating failure incurred by KANU candidate, Uhuru Kenyatta through this high angle shot.

3.4 Lighting in the Films under Study

In photography, lighting plays a key role in the recording of an image in a film. Just in the same way a human being uses light to see an object, similarly, a camera uses light to see and record the image.

On the visible characteristics of objects, Cuttle (2008), observes:

At first, it seems obvious that we provide lighting to enable people to see, so that all lighting can be assessed in terms of how well it enables people to see. Lighting that maximizes the luminance contrast of visual detail enables very small detail to be accurately detected, and this is the basis of many lighting recommendations and standards (p. 3).

Although the filmmaker did not have any in-input in terms of lighting the original archival materials (still photographs), he still required light to re-shoot the materials. At this stage of re-shooting the archival materials, the filmmaker had a choice of darkening some of the scenes by controlling the amount of light that fall on the material to portray a particular mood intended. In this aspect of lighting strategy, Cuttle (ibid) states, “ the underlying aim of lighting design is to control the luminous environment in order to influence the perceived environment” (p. 4). Melo and Paiva (2005), are even more categorical on implications of brightness on scenes when they argue that well illuminated scenes are happy and cheerful and poorly illuminated scenes are mysterious and sad. It is this principle that Hilary Ngweno has used in his documentary series to darken some selected scenes to depict sadness and mourning period. The filmmaker has also darkened some scenes to depict scenario where the country has sunk too low politically.

In The Rise and fall of the Community 1967-1977 episode, the filmmaker chose to darken a shot on a parliamentary session discussing the report about J.M Kariuki's murder, who was Nyandarua North MP. The politically alleged murder almost brought the country to a point of disintegration as the session was marred by fierce confrontations among members of parliament, and eventual sacking of top three government radicals who supported the report (Masinde Muliro, minister for works; assistant minister, John Keen; and Peter Kibisu, assistant minister for labour) (see

picture lii). The filmmaker used this darkened shot to show the sad mood that engulfed the entire nation after the mysterious death of the popular Nyandarua North MP, J.M Kariuki.

In End of an Era 1975-1978 episode, the filmmaker chooses a darkened shot of the vice president, Moi as he is sworn-in as acting president after the demise of Kenyatta (see **picture liii**). On 22nd August, 1978, Kenyans woke up to a sad day where they learned the death of their beloved president, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. The gloomy faces of the government officials, especially the ministers, confirm the sad mood as the country tries to come to terms with Kenyatta's death. In the same episode, the filmmaker chooses a dark shot as Kenyatta's body lies in state for people to pay their last respect to their late president (see **picture liv**). Again, the sad faces confirm and reveal the experience of the entire nation.

In Feet of Clay 1982-1988 episode, the filmmaker selects a dark shot of Kenyans lying on their bellies especially on Nairobi streets following what voice-over narration described as military coup attempt on 1st August, 1982 (see **picture lv**). The filmmaker deliberately chose this shot to show how low the country sunk politically as many people were reported to have lost their lives in the process of quelling the coup attempt.

In Coalition for Change 1998-2002 episode, the filmmaker chose a dark shot of a NARC's presidential candidate, Mwai Kibaki, involved in a car accident while in a campaign trail (see **picture lvi**). Kibaki, who was a joint opposition candidate, was a front-runner in the election and the accident sent shivers down the spines of NARC party followers, who were yearning for change that would end the ruling party, KANU's 40-year rule.



Picture lii: Parliamentary session discussing the report about J. M. Kariuki's murder.



Picture liii: Moi sworn-in as acting President after Kenyatta's death.



Picture liv: Kenyatta's body lies in state



Picture lv: Kenyans on their bellies following military coup attempt on 1st August 1982



Picture lvi: NARC's presidential candidate, Kibaki, involved in a car accident

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the message delivery effort by the filmmaker through cinematographic techniques which include distant shots especially close ups, camera angles especially low and high angles and lighting where dark shots have been deliberately chosen to reflect a particular desired mood.

Close ups have also been used to give more visual details on the political players and bring viewers closer. Low angle shots have been used to empower and show importance of the political figures involved while at the same time, high angle shots have been used to portray the opposite. The high angle shots have also been used to reflect a country in

political turmoil. In lighting, especially the choice of dark shots, have been used to reflect a country in sad and mourning mood and to an extent in a political crisis.

The selected shots (frames) cut across the thematic political periods discussed in the film series. The frames begin from pre-independence when Kenyan people agitated for freedom, through the 40-year KANU regime in post-independence, to a new political dispensation – Kibaki-led NARC administration. The shots scream out the various intended messages and resonate well with the political themes in the individual episodes.

The chapter has identified selected frames (still photographs) throughout the 14 episodes to explore especially visual communicative strategy employed by the filmmaker in his effort to bring out the role played by cinematographic techniques in the films under study. The next chapter identifies the main themes in the films and how these themes complement the narrative development.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. THEMES AND NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN HILARY NGWENO'S DOCUMENTARY FILMS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter dwells on two main aspects of Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary films: themes and narrative development approaches in the films. For ease of discussion, the chapter first discusses the narrative structure in the films, and then engages with the various thematic concerns raised within the film's spines. Specific attention is given to identification of the themes, how the themes complement the narrative and analysis of whether they are isolated or crosscutting.

In all of Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary film series, the filmmaker has extensively formed numerous themes along which he has rendered his narrative. While some of the cinematographic techniques may not have contributed per se to the narrative's thematic formulation, there is especially two main elements which have played a key role in the expression of the film's themes: sound and photography. Sound, especially the voice over narration, has been instrumental in informing the films' message. As for the photography, various selected photographs in line with the respective thematic political periods, have been deployed for reinforcement purposes and also help to bring out the reality of happenings on the ground. In order to locate these themes and meanings as used in the films, this chapter first starts by summarizing the content of the fourteen episodes. This summary will be useful in guiding the foregoing engagement with the content at the thematic level, highlighting the various points of convergence between the film's diegetic discourses and the thematic flow at play within the narrative spine.

4.2 Narrative Development in Hilary Ngweno's TMN Documentary Films

Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary films are divided into fourteen episodes, each covering a specific historical period of Kenya's political history. In order to grasp an in-depth view of the various thematic issues addressed in these films (which are also

discussed in details in Chapters Two and Three), this section lays out the narrative structure in relation to the episodic segments of the films. The term narrative development is used here to refer to the structured flow of ideas within Hilary Ngweno's documentary films. It therefore means how the filmmaker narrates his story, especially the chronological flow of events, which is the main focus of analysis in this section. In order to document this chronological flow of ideas, the initial analysis of the content of the various episodes will be carried out as a prelude to the thematic analysis of the film texts. The term 'content' is used here to refer to the broad concerns addressed in the various episodes. This section therefore engages the main narrative premises of these episodes in the same order they are arranged in the actual documentary series, outlining briefly their various perspectives on the Kenya's varied historical junctures.

Before the Beginning 1959-1963, highlights the preliminary political processes which occurred in Kenya in the years prior to independence, and documents the increasing agitation between the British colonial masters and their African subjects. This episode adjudicates the various political infringements between the native Kenyans and their British oppressors. One of the key highlights of this episode is the enumeration of the various efforts carried out by the pre-independence Kenyans in order to drive away the British colonialists, especially through political formations like Kikuyu Central Association, North Kavirondo Central Association, Akamba Members Association, Taita Hills Association and Coast African Association. The British colonialists later disbanded such political fronts to give way to a legalised political unit, Kenya African National Union (KANU). It is the party that successfully spearheaded the fight for independence culminating in the swearing in of Kenya's first Prime Minister, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, in 1963 and the handover of power which was symbolically resounded by the playing of the British National Anthem and for the first time playing of Kenya's national anthem in the well-attended night event held at Uhuru gardens, Nairobi.

Dividing the Spoils 1964, explores the political greed and the accompanying scuffle as top leaders sought to grab the resources left by the colonial administration, especially

the consolidation of political power. Among the key issues addressed during this period is the ripening tribal dissension between the various political figures, which culminated in a full-blown political crisis, especially between President Kenyatta and his Luo leadership rivals – specifically the Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya duo. The episode also exposes the lingering Western and Eastern influence on the status of Kenya's post-independence political path, especially the ability to mobilise people which was vested with the trade unions. One more salient issue that is narrated in this episode is how the Western NGOs are being used to decentre Kenyatta's government through his associates, specifically Tom Mboya. On the other hand, Oginga Odinga is used by Russia to counter Kenyatta's effort to create a solid KANU base, as the inaugurated Lumumba Institute, led by Odinga, silently embraces Russian socialist ideologies against Kenyatta's wish. The main thesis of this section is that political wrangles were the primary barriers towards Kenya's political maturity, birthing decadent woes waged on especially ethnic lines.

Battle of Ideologies 1964-1966, narrates the political scuffles between the leftist Oginga Odinga-led faction which battled the Kenyatta's government. It especially highlights the President's swift political swings in a bid to counter the growing defiance by the Odinga group, which had growing connections with Russia. Besides the establishment of the leftist Lumumba Institute, the faction also undermined the President's political ideologies, leading to a confrontation which resulted in the death of Odinga's political strategist, Pio Gama Pinto, and cancellation of his Russian dealings in a neutralisation mission led by the fire-brand politician, Tom Mboya. Further, this episode also narrates the political manoeuvres which saw KADU party lose its supporters to KANU, thereby diminishing Odinga's political influence within the parliament while arming his political adversary, Tom Mboya, to the teeth. The ensuing battle ended up with a politically displaced Odinga resigning from government after his humiliation during the Limuru delegates' conference.

In Shifting Alliances 1966-1969, the filmmaker exposes the enigmatic moves by President Kenyatta to amalgamate loyalty around his core team, which was especially

signalled by his appointment of Daniel Arap Moi on January 3rd 1967 to succeed Joseph Murumbi as Kenya's vice-president. The episode also spells out the growing urgency over hushed debates about Kenyatta's succession, in light of his recent heart attack that had been kept top secret. Thus, the possibility of Tom Mboya succeeding the aging President aroused new political tangles, climaxing in his fatal shooting on July 5th 1969 and eventual death moments later. This also marked the end of Luo's encroachment to the then GEMA-led political supremacy.

Cohesion at the Centre 1969-1972, is an expose of President Kenyatta's political manoeuvres in post one party general elections, especially his swift action to re-align his political goodwill within his Kikuyu community. After the snobbery of Kamba political figures, starting with the conviction of the alleged revolutionary council chairman, Gideon Mutiso, Yatta MP and resignation of both Chief of the defence staff, Major General Joseph Ndolo and Chief Justice Kitili Mwendwa over their allegations of involvement in conspiracy to overthrow Kenyatta's government, the president seeks to consolidate his authority by recruiting people he can trust around him. One of the measures he initiated involved granting top military bosses direct access to him, and relinquishing hold of the lesser loyal subjects. Further, the episode explains the entry of GEMA business moguls into the national political grip, and their growing tenacity as they gained more and more control over the decision processes within Kenyatta's political circles. At the end of this period, Kenya's national politics are firmly in the grip of GEMA stewards, creating a dominant 'regional' government within a government.

No longer at Ease 1973-1975, is an ephemeral inference to the onset of devastating political unease which was characterised by especially a series of fatal incapacitation and death of influential political persons. Starting in December 12th, 1972 when Ronald Ngala, then the Minister for Power and Communications was involved in a fatal car accident at Konza on his way from Nairobi to Mombasa and died thirteen days later while undergoing treatment at Kenyatta National Hospital. This was followed shortly by the disappearance of Kungú Karumba, one of the original Kapenguria Six during a

business trip to Uganda, never to be found despite pleas with Idi Amin government to pursue investigations. However, most political mavericks were unveiled with the entry of former political detainees turned scholars, Johnstone Muthiora and Josiah Mwangi Kariuki popularly known as J. M., whose entry into Kenya's politics marked an interesting turn as Kenyatta's government fought to contain their radical ideologies. The section also highlights the infighting between top political figures within Kenyatta's government after the 1974 general elections, leading to significant governance problems for the aging president. This section also details Kenya's first encounter with terrorism, when on March 1st, 1975 a bomb exploded at the Racecourse bus terminal killing 27 people and injuring hundreds. The political innuendos resulting from this incidence were further amplified with the disappearance of the then vocal Nyandarua North MP, J. M. Kariuki at the same time. Kariuki was later found murdered in the thickets of Ngong Hills. In April 1975, Johnstone Muthiora died two days after his return from an official trip to India. These upheavals resulted in aggressive dissensions among the government leaders, leading to the eventual sacking of three top government leaders led by Masinde Muliro who opposed the government's stand on J. M. Kariuki's murder report that was tabled by Elijah Mwangale.

Rise and Fall of the Community 1967-1977, focuses on especially President Kenyatta's final critical years at the helm of the Presidency, and the sullen political discourses of the day, particularly the hazy GEMA community leadership. The most important point raised by the filmmaker in this episode is President Kenyatta's sense of loyalty, and his concern for the future political status of the country in his absence. He especially grooms his Vice President, Daniel Arap Moi, to be able to take over from him, fearing the imminent wrangles sought by the GEMA leadership. Assisted by the Attorney General, Charles Njonjo, Kenyatta manages to thwart the feuding radicals, and upholds a political stance which saw the GEMA community fragmented in its call for political overhaul. It is important also that the filmmaker poses this period as the end of totally Kikuyu government, by injecting fresh thoughts, albeit fuelled by greed, which would see Njonjo team up with Moi and claim the presidency a year later.

Another sense in which the symbol of communal disintegration is explained is through the exposure of political fault lines which threatened to drive the region to total war, especially the escalating threats of attack by Uganda's Idi Amin who claimed Kenya's territory. At the same time, Siad Barre-led Somalia, which was heavily armed by the Saudi Arabia government and posed threats to her neighbours, especially Kenya, was also a huge political factor for the ailing Kenyatta, who sent his Vice President Daniel Arap Moi to plead with the Saudi Arabia authority to stop the armament of Somalia. At the end of this period, the spirit of East African Community has disappeared, giving way to nationalised interests and development pursuits.

The End of an Era 1975-1978 episode explains the severing of various political ties across the East African region. It explains the terms under which public investments in the East African Community (EAC) – including joint railway services, air travel services and even the East African Community itself – ground to a halt in this period, which was characterized by unusually high levels of mistrust among the regional leaders. It is also the period during which Kenya set up its own airline - Kenya Airways - to serve its national interests, especially those focused on the blooming tourism business. The episode closes with the recall of Kenya's representatives to the East African Community and their redeployment in national positions. The biggest beneficiary of this era was Robert Ouko.

The era of centralised collective national politics was also coming to an end, with Kenya's regional politicians awakening and lining up their communities for negotiation of political muscle. Most of the political events in this period were incited by the growing restlessness from the GEMA-led Change- the- Constitution- movement Group, which sought to block Vice president Moi from automatically succeeding Kenyatta as President in the event of his demise. The president who is also the founding president of the Kenyan nation, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta passes on in this period. This marks the end of an era. The episode ends with the narration of the new spirit of patriotism and loyalty which is imbued upon the newly sworn-in president Moi, and the depth of optimism

among Kenyans who mourned their fallen leader with unity and hope for a better country.

The Rise of Moi 1978-1982 episode is an exploration of the political upheavals that faced the new President in the first four years of his tenure. The filmmaker makes his first political generalisations about the president using the narrator's voice, which explains Moi's first genius strokes in the highly volatile Kenyan political scene. From strategic reshuffling of the cabinet to rid the then Attorney General, Charles Njonjo of political influence, to the flexing of his political muscle by confronting Oginga Odinga-led radical opposition rhetoric; Moi seems to be an energetic man who is determined to meet the opposition's negative thrust at every level. Unlike the late President Kenyatta, he is a man of front action, identifying himself with the masses while squashing the radicals with absolute authority. His political strategy is also highlighted here, with his regional politics quite evident in the way he shuffles his cabinet to achieve political advantage. Finally, the session ends with an explanation of Moi's looming political doom that saw senior Standard newspaper editor, George Githii, relieved of his duties over his overt criticism of the government's Preventive Detention law. Apart from the massive detention, leading to public chaos, especially in Kenya's top universities, it also culminated in Kenya Air Force's infamous attempted coup on August 1st 1982 led by Hezekiah Ochuka.

Feet of Clay 1982-1988 episode, dwells heavily on President Moi's political tactics in post-1982 attempted coup. The period emphasises the political dilemma incurred by the presidency as massive fallout with his close allies followed the attempted coup, isolating the powerful leader at the helm of a highly shaking government. One of his key manoeuvres of the time was to strategically dispense all his political opponents. The first casualty was Attorney General, Charles Njonjo, who was relieved of his position after enraging speculations that he was being groomed by Western powers to topple Moi's government. Vice President, Kibaki's fallout, was next, as he found himself on the receiving end of Moi's political radar. The primary focus of this session is the

changing political fortunes of former powerful leaders within Kenyatta's and Moi's led governments, and exposing the start of Moi's political genius.

In the Return of Party Politics 1988-1991, the filmmaker narrates the re-emergence of political activists, including the formerly banned and imprisoned left wing radicals led by Nyanza politician, Oginga Odinga. The episode evaluates the ongoing political strategies, especially those effected through Moi's strategic strangulation of effective opposition. By denying Odinga the right to assemble an effective opposition political party, the episodic narrative maintains, the president preserves a one party system which affords him unrivalled political power. Some of the widely popular political parties resulting from the time include Kenneth Matiba and Oginga Odinga's FORD, which later split up after the leaders were engaged on leadership wrangles. The weakening of the party was occasioned by the split-up which saw the original FORD party become FORD-Kenya (Oginga Odinga faction) and FORD-Asili (Kenneth Matiba faction). Among the casualties of KANU's political machination included Kenneth Matiba, who suffered stroke while incarcerated.

A Divided House 1992-1997 episode, with Kibaki's resignation from his position as Health Minister and abandoning of his KANU membership on 25th December 1991, and the subsequent formation of his own political party, DP, Moi's political grasp was highly tested. This episode documents the changing political fortunes of the various dominant political personalities who sought refuge in the opening opposition political spaces. At the end of this period, however, Moi's KANU would prevail as the face of Kenya's preferred political party, while the de facto parties would see their founders succumb to massive disorientation as they fought each other for recognition and dominance.

A Coalition for Change 1998-2002 unravels the ongoing political manoeuvres, especially from the blossoming opposition as they scrambled to book space in the potent opposition political space. To contextualize the prevailing social realities, the filmmaker starts by offering a background to the ongoing political situation. One of the things he emphasizes is the proliferation of political parties started by many former

KANU adherents and leftist radicals. In the 1997 General Elections, the opposition parties namely Kibaki's DP, Raila's NDP, Wamalwa's Ford-Kenya, Ngilu's SDP, among others went to the elections more divided than ever before. For their failure to unite, it was clear they faced imminent defeat in the hands of Moi's united KANU party. One big lesson that the opposition learned yet again from these elections was to work on unity strategies in order to dislodge the KANU government from power. The opposition equally realised that their combined total votes by far outweighed KANU's total votes. It was for this reason that Kibaki, Wamalwa, and Ngilu came together and formed what came to be known as National Alliance for Change. This amorphous union would later be transformed into a political party known as National Alliance Party of Kenya (NAK), mainly to counter the influence of Moi's KANU and Raila's NDP merger.

As the 2002 General Elections drew nearer, Moi surprised many by unveiling Uhuru Kenyatta, son of the founding father of the nation, the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, as KANU's presidential candidate. This triggered a mass walkout of the prominent political figures from KANU led by Raila, Saitoti, Kalonzo and others, who formed Rainbow Party. This rainbow party would later join forces with Kibaki - Wamalwa - Ngilu-led NAK and formed a formidable coalition called National Rainbow Coalition (NARC). NARC's presidential candidate, Mwai Kibaki, overwhelmingly defeated KANU's candidate Uhuru Kenyatta, thereby ending KANU's 40-year rule and ushering in a new dawn in Kenya's political dispensation.

The Unity and After 2002-2007 episode recounts Kenya's political milestones after the historical 2002 toppling of KANU's four-decade reign of power. With NARC's assumption of power and subsequent declaration of war on corruption by president Kibaki, the filmmaker narrates of an optimistic moment in Kenya where the citizens felt some hope of development. However, the episode also exposes the ongoing ethnic affinity of Kibaki's new government, despite his best effort to achieve reasonable regional balance in his cabinet membership. His otherwise expansive government saw

the rise of Raila Odinga, Kijana Wamalwa, Charity Ngilu, George Saitoti, David Mwiraria, and Kiraitu Murungi into powerful government dockets.

One of the first casualties of Kibaki's corruption intolerance were the members of the Court of Appeal, who, faced by Chief Justice Evans Gicheru's call for comprehensive audit of their professional conducts, chose to resign to avoid public embarrassment. Chief Justice Bosire fell out of his powerful position at this time. There were also significant rumblings within Kibaki's government. The main political discord erupted during the Yash Pal Ghai-led constitution review process at Bomas of Kenya, where Kijana Wamalwa's successor, Moody Awori, led a government walkout from the venue protesting the LDP's arm-twisting tactics which sought to replace Presidential Executive powers with those of a Prime Minister. However, the government-led draft constitution, which was approved for public referendum in 2005, was totally defeated by the opposition-led Orange side. As a recourse, Kibaki sacked his entire cabinet and sent parliament to recess for an indefinite period. It was only when he replaced his pre-referendum cabinet when his motives became clear. Raila Odinga, Kalonzo Musyoka, Anyang Nyong, William Ole Ntimama, Najib Balala, Ochillo Ayako, and Chris Murungaru all lost their cabinet positions. Kibaki's strong men, Kiraitu Murungi and George Saitoti, were to fall off their political positions from the allegations made by self-exiled Githongo, who implicated them in the mega scandals, Anglo Leasing and Goldenberg. Kibaki's woes would not recede, but would haunt him all the way to his re-election campaign in 2007.

In this episode, the filmmaker emphasizes the growing restlessness within both political camps: the Raila-led ODM, and Kibaki-led PNU. Despite efforts from both ends for political instauration, ODM split to ODM Kenya (led by Kalonzo Musyoka whose running mate was Julia Ojiambo), and ODM (led by Raila Odinga whose running mate was Musalia Mudavadi), and KANU (led by Uhuru Kenyatta who backed Kibaki-led PNU bid for his re-election). It is in this murky political outlook that Kenyans went to the polls in 2007. The top three contenders for the presidential seat were Mwai Kibaki (PNU), Raila Odinga (ODM), and Kalonzo Musyoka (ODM Kenya). The three enjoyed

massive ethnic following on which they were counting to clinch victory. The episode ends with a clear message that after four decades of political negotiations, Kenya had receded to ethnic echelons, and stuck there as at the end of the documentary, that is, 2007 General elections.

4.3 Themes in Hilary Ngweno's TMN Documentary Films.

There are various themes which have been invoked through Hilary Ngweno's political documentary, TMN. Among the most outstanding include greed and oppression; political decimation; resilience and agitation; political absolutism; tribalism, ethnicity and political restlessness; hope and hopelessness; and patriotism and loyalty. These are discussed in details in the subsequent subsections below.

4.3.1 Greed and Oppression

Greed is one of the most prevalent themes which Hilary Ngweno has exploited in his fourteen-episode documentary film series. The most prevalent types of greed expressed in the films are: political greed and material greed. Political greed has been widely associated with the colonial administration, being transferred to the first batch of national political leaders and later on to the successors of the national political leadership. This has been widely seen both within the government side and the opposition leadership where tussle for domination and power has been the main source of controversy. This has been especially expressed through wrangles for party leadership and ideological domination, with the political leaders engaging in multiple duels both on the private and public domains. Party leadership has been used as a symbol of authority, and an ultimate expression of political dominance. This is the centre which the filmmaker exploits to advance his greed-oppression theme. Similarly, material greed is another prevalent arc of the greed and oppression thematic matrix. Just like political greed, it has been widely associated with political leadership, and expressed through the voice-over narration or the accompanying pictorial imagery. This section takes strong interest in explaining how these two forms of greed correspond to

each other within the fourteen episodes of Hilary Ngweno's **TMN** documentary film series.

Oppression on the other hand has been expressed as a consequence of the power-tussle between the greed-levers identified within the film narratives. Often, the overriding factor identified by the filmmaker, especially through the vocal narrator, is the problem of unsilenced contestants who seek to prevail in the murky political climate at all odds, leading to a series of devastating manoeuvres by the popular leadership from time to time. Just like the problem of greed, oppression is anchored on two main issues: political and material. According to the film's premise, political oppression is not a preserve of the colonial, government. Later governments in Kenya's postcolonial history have shown similar tendencies as the political leaders outmanoeuvre each other to seize opportunistic leadership at the expense of the other contesting party. Some of the most obvious results of this oppressive confrontation include public riots or anger, public condemnation of oppressive political processes, as well as contestation of prevailing political ideologies leading to eventual fall-out of once closely-knit political friends.

Material oppression, on the other hand, has been expressed as a tyrannical manoeuvre adopted by especially the colonial government and later, the top Kenyan political leadership. In the colonized Kenya, colonial authorities plundered most of the productive land from the natives, bequeathing it to the minority white settlers in huge portions. This material oppression led to the emergence of tiny echelon of super-rich aristocrats who exercised unrivalled power over the masses. In postcolonial setup, this oppressive tendency was conferred upon the leadership of the day, especially the first crop of postcolonial leaders, who allegedly grabbed huge portions of land for themselves, leaving millions of displaced Kenyans living as squatters. It is the same land issue and the consequent ideological disputes over the same, which, according to the filmmaker, could explain the eventual political demise and in some instances, physical death of the most vocal politicians who condemned the seemingly oppressive

material (land) exploitation. This is prevalent in both the governing arm and the opposition as well.

In Before the Beginning 1959-1963 episode, the filmmaker has used the voice over to narrate the nature and extent of oppression among the pre-independence colonial Kenya, where unarmed civilians incurred deadly wrath of the colonial authorities. The extent of this oppressive brutality has been captured in the narrator's commentary which is transcribed below:

In March 1922, Harry Thuku's East African Association organised a strike in Nairobi to protest the government's decision to reduce the wage of African workers by a third. More than twenty five demonstrating Africans were shot dead outside the Norfolk Hotel by angry White settlers.

The filmmaker also uses a long shot photo to cast a more accurate view of the desperate Africans, who are seen seated peacefully in their rightful demonstration (see Picture i). This montage stylistic helps to bring out the comparative dimension to the confrontation, which saw Harry Thuku deported to the Indian Ocean island of Kismayu. It also serves to emphasize the magnitude of brutality, oppression and ruthlessness with which the colonial masters regarded the native Kenyans.



Picture i: View of the desperate Africans, who had congregated for a peaceful demonstration in protest of reduction in wages.

The January 25th 1971 overthrow of Milton Obote's government by General Idi Amin is another poignant incidence which highlights East Africa's growing political greed. The fact that General Amin was Uganda's Chief of Armed Forces by the time he overthrew

Obote's government in his absence as he had travelled to Singapore to attend a conference, awakened fresh anxieties in the Kenyatta government. In the ensuing political tussles, Asians were forced to flee from Uganda's Amin regime who renounced their citizenship. In the ensuing months, Kenyatta would deal with various traitors who were conspiring to overthrow his government, culminating in consolidation of the president's grip on the country's security apparatus. GEMA would move in to encircle Kenyatta's political authority.

After his defeat in the resulting by-election, Odinga and his followers were to face one of Kenyatta's harshest political reprimands of the time. Six KPU members were detained under the new detention without trial rules in August, including Ochola McOnyango and US born Caroline Odongo, who was then Odinga's Personal Secretary. This was followed by the banning of all KPU functions in Nairobi in November 1966. By the end of the Battle of Ideologies 1964-1966 episode, the filmmaker identifies Tom Mboya as the man who helped to squash Odinga's dream. But he also marks him as Kenyatta's next political victim, spinning the continuing cycle of oppression and political greed in one more direction. Just like Odinga, he had run his full political utility, and would be next on the line to be squashed.

The filmmaker has used the voice-over narration to outline the unraveling anxieties experienced by especially the Luo community after various attempts to alienate them from Kenya's political limelight. This was made more manifest in post-Mboya period, when the community was restlessly agitating against the 1969 murder of Tom Mboya. According to the narrator's voice:

Within hours, there were riots and demonstrations in Nairobi and in towns and villages in Nyanza. From the very beginning, Luos had assumed that the Kikuyus had killed Mboya. The experience of KPU had given most Luos the feeling that the Kikuyu were out to deny them any position of political leadership, they had pushed Odinga out of KANU and hobbled the party he had set up. Now they have killed Mboya.

This commentary is an important signal to the filmmaker's intention to ratify the ongoing theme of political greed and oppression, especially in the Kikuyu-Luo

dichotomy. The filmmaker, in this very statement, regards the Kikuyus as politically greedy, who are out to annihilate any opposition to their current presidency. On the other hand, the Luos were designated as politically inferior, and thus the victims of Kikuyu's political sacrilege. For emphasis of this important political eventuality, the filmmaker has used a motion video clip which shows the swelling crowds restlessly demonstrating in the chaotic streets (see Pictures ii below).



Picture ii: Angry crowds protesting in Nairobi streets after murder of Tom Mboya

The ongoing riots in the one week mourning period attest to the emerging symptoms of this oppression, as Luos indiscriminately attacked Kenyatta and Moi's convoys with stones in the ongoing chaos. After the Mboya burial, Luos congregated around their only surviving political heavyweight, Oginga Odinga, attaining an anti-Kikuyu political stance. This was the first widespread eruption of ethnic political affiliations.

Moi's harsh stance with the opposing political leaders in the 1980s also promotes the notion of political oppression. The ruthlessness with which he wiggled most popular leaders who were not loyal to him attests to his harsh policy in dealing with the political dissidents. At the height of his political greed, he saw such figures as Mwai Kibaki, Charles Njonjo and other prominent community leaders from across the country desert KANU in pursuit of alternative political accommodations. Koigi wa Wamwere chose exile as the enraging political oppression ceaselessly swept the country's political space.

Raila Odinga, the son of Nyanza political heavyweight, Oginga Odinga, was also incarcerated.

4.3.2 Political Decimation

The idea of political oppression was coupled with great violence that saw many people, especially the Africans involved in freedom fighting, lose their lives in the hands of the colonial masters and their native collaborators. The filmmaker has used various cinema elements to foster the subtheme of political forbearance, enshrined in the umbrella theme of political decimation. In the first episode of the TMN documentary, Before the Beginning 1959-1963, the filmmaker uses the voice over commentary and some video clips to emphasize the heinous atrocities committed by the ruthless colonial masters against those whom they perceived as **Mau Mau** operands. Here is the transcription of the narrator's voice:

For more than four years, the British colonial government mounted a major military offensive against the **Mau Mau** in a war that was remarkable for both acts of extreme bravery and atrocity on both sides.

This ruthlessness is further emphasized through use of video clips, from which a few frames have been selected to highlight the various facets of the torturous encounter (Picture iii to vii below).



Picture iii: A shot of a suspected Mau Mau fighter being arrested by British soldiers.



Picture iv: A shot of suspected Mau Mau fighters being escorted for detention after being arrested.



Picture v: A shot of a simi allegedly used by Mau Mau fighters to harm British soldiers.



Picture vi: A shot of allegedly Mau Mau fighters being inspected by British soldiers after being captured.



Picture vii: More suspected Mau Mau fighters being rounded off in a raid by British colonial soldiers.

All these images highlight the raging gloom and finality of the African's political revolt, as the **Mau Mau** were hunted down in humiliating crackdowns, and swooped in what the narrator calls "major military offensive."

Another moment which instantiates the political decimation theme is when the political leaders in post-1960 Lancaster House constitutional conference launched KANU in Kiambu, heralding a new era in Kenya's pro-freedom political effort. But, despite that the colonial government wished to have Kenyatta away from the mainstream political arena – as seen in their continued incarceration of the agile leader – there is continued effort by other political leaders to include him in their political formations which signals their continued support of the incarcerated leader. The question of political decimation, in reference to Kenyatta, comes into play when the then colonial administration refused to register KANU simply because Kenyatta had been designated as its leader (see Picture viii clipped from the sequence below).



Picture viii: The Newspaper article which carried the story of KANU's registration denial by the colonial masters.

While this political impasse was solved by the temporary replacement of Kenyatta with James Gichuru as shadow leader, it served to locate the colonial government's stance against the jailed Kenyatta: to politically decimate him into political oblivion in the unfolding pace to independence. In essence, these manoeuvres sought to uphold the British colonial view that Kenyatta was a leader "unto darkness and death", a statement which sought to bedevil the aging, but witty political leader.

It was however not just the colonial authorities who exercised tactical politics of the day. President Kenyatta too, had great affinity for underhand tactics which enabled him to wrestle power and political grip from the opposition. His landmark attempt to decimate his political opponents came during the drafting of the constitutional amendments as the country prepared for independence. In his bid to squash the oppositions' political ideologies which had been encrusted in the Lancaster House constitution, he used Tom Mboya's organizational skills to outstrip KADU of its political potency, and thus annihilate its political proponents. According to the filmmaker, Tom Mboya used his handy organizational skills to achieve Kenyatta's decree, leaving the deserted KADU voiceless. This is how the narrator explains the manoeuvres:

Drafting the constitutional amendment was one thing, getting the parliament to adopt the amendment was Mboya's responsibility; and he performed it with the ruthless efficiency that had characterized all his political and trade union activities. As minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, and working in tandem with Njonjo, he threatened and cajoled opposition MPs into dropping plans to block the bills in parliament. The first political dominoes to fall were the eight African People's Party MPs including Paul Ngei. They all joined KANU in August. After that, there was a steady trickle of KADU MPs crossing the floor. So well did Mboya's strategy work, that on November 10th, Ngala announced KADU's dissolution.

To accentuate the totality of KADU's obliteration, the filmmaker uses a still image which shows the joyous former KADU members celebrating their disbandment (Picture ix). Such a show serves to highlight the efficiency with which the KANU regime obliterated their opponents, making them even joyful and to celebrate at the moment of their political expiration. The full scale of this manoeuvre is manifested in Kenyatta's Independence cabinet membership, where he left out all members of the now annihilated KADU party including their leader, Ronald Ngala and deputy leader, Masinde Muliro. Only Moi and Paul Ngei made it to the cabinet list.



Picture ix: Joyous former KADU members celebrating their disbandment, led by their leader, Ronald Ngala.

Soon after President Kenyatta's discovery that Bildad Kaggia-led Nairobi-based Lumumba Institute was spreading left-wing ideologies, his fall out with fiery Nyanza politician and Vice President, Oginga Odinga, set in. He immediately engaged the state

security and surveillance machinery to monitor Odinga's men, marking the start of his wide-spread campaign for the political end of the leftist Odinga. Pio Gama Pinto, Odinga's main strategist, and whose other role was acting as the financial conduit between Odinga's political projects and his Soviet sponsors, was immediately informed of an imminent threat on his life. Joseph Murumbi, then Kenyatta's Foreign Minister, dutifully advised Pinto to head to Mozambique and deploy his political energies there.

He would lie low in Mombasa for a while, only to return to his Westlands home on February 25th. He was shot dead the following morning as he emerged from his Nairobi home. The filmmaker uses this narration as a framework for explaining Kenyatta's allegedly growing determination to eradicate all forms of political opposition, not just in the short term, but by carrying out extensive measures for long-term defeat of his political opponents. Pinto's murder, the filmmaker hints, is one such move which was aimed at vanquishing Odinga's political operations. There is one other aspect which is emphasised by the filmmaker through use of accompanying images that the threat of political extermination was quite real and was understood by especially Pinto, to be so. In the first image (Picture x), Pinto is seen mingling with children during his hideout in Mombasa where he briefly fled after learning of the impending threat to his life. The next image (Picture xi), shows the scene of his morning murder outside his Westlands home. This visual imagery emphasis is important in expressing Kenyatta's determination to vanquish the opposition's political ambitions and thus reclaim his authoritarian stature in the sense that it emphasizes the degree to which the threat was carried out.



Picture x: Pio Gama Pinto when he had taken refuge in Mombasa at the heat of political pressure from Kenyatta government.



Picture xi: The scene of Pio Gama Pinto's murder outside his Westlands home where he was shot and killed by an unknown gunman.

The wider perspective of Kenyatta's political move to push Odinga into political oblivion is made apparent in the next sequence. Here is a transcript of the narrator's voice:

All the KANU radicals led by Odinga were at Pinto's funeral. They eulogised him as a fallen hero who stood for the rights of freedom fighters and Kenya's poor. It would not be long before the magnitude of the loss became apparent. For even as they tried to come to terms with Pinto's assassination, that great strategist of the KANU conservatives, Tom Mboya, was putting into effect a master plan aimed at forcing Odinga and his associates out of the ruling party.

This stance is an eye-opener to the enraging political battles, especially the desired end which started with Pinto's death. The filmmaker uses the narrator's voice to highlight the fact that indeed, it was the President's intention to decimate Odinga and all other KANU leftist leaders politically. The full scale implication of this political move was the eventual extermination of Odinga and his followers, edging them out of KANU and into political oblivion within the political structures of the time. Odinga's main failure would come during the oncoming days when Kenyatta dissolved the existing trade union movements including Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL) which was headed by KANU conservatists and Kenya African Worker's Congress whose members were sympathetic to Odinga's ideology. They were replaced with Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU).

In January 1966, Mboya renegotiated Odinga's agreement with Soviet Union, ending his Moscow mission with cancellation of all existing agreements. Finally, during the KANU party elections held in Limuru the same year, Mboya successfully replaced Odinga's role as party Vice president with eight vice-presidents, one for each province, thereby effectively rendering Odinga party-less and politically irrelevant. He resigned from the government in April 18th.

4.3.3 Resilience and Agitation

The filmmaker has dedicated the Dividing the Spoils 1964 episode to enumerate Africa's first encounter with political agitation in the new political climate. Unlike the previous political tussles which were racially divided along the Whites (colonialists) – Blacks (natives) strait, the new wave of political agitation in Africa was a series of post-independence power wrangles characterised by mutiny, coups or revolutions. In

Zanzibar, Field Marshall John Okello had toppled Sultanate of Zanzibar's Arab government in a hasty revolution announced on the morning of January 12th. The success of the coup, which was effected by a bunch of scantily armed men, saw the group overthrow a century old Arab dynasty in the Indian Ocean Island, which had been entrusted by the British colonial powers to govern the island. Zanzibar had been granted independence the same month as Kenya. To emphasize the significance of this incidence in (East) Africa's political landscape, the filmmaker uses still images showing the coup leader and a bunch of his supporters (Picture xii). The face of Okello a young man, who uses self-styled tactics to overthrow a mature dynasty, is usefully exploited by the filmmaker as a symbolic pointer to the vulnerability of the newly emerging republics within the continent, which could be easily toppled even by the crudest groups.



Picture xii: Field Marshal Okello who overthrew the Sultanate Dynasty of Zanzibar in East Africa's first post-independence political revolution.

The case was not any different in Dar es Salaam. In January 19th, a week after the Zanzibar revolution, soldiers of the Tanganyika Army based in Dar es Salaam mutinied leading to rampant looting and chaos in the city. This caused massive business loses especially among the Asian community whose business premises were looted and rundown in the ensuing rampage. This led to a temporary exile of the then prime minister, Julius Nyerere into British embassy, emerging only after the British soldiers helped to quell the revolt. Again, the filmmaker uses a still shot of a young rebel (Picture xiii), reinforcing the notion of not just the ongoing political restlessness, but

also the vulnerability of the newly installed political leaders who could be easily predated by a bunch of soldiers at will.



Picture xiii: The shot of the man allegedly behind the Dar es Salaam mutiny.

Shortly thereafter, military soldiers of the Ugandan army kidnapped the country's Minister for Interior, Felix Onama, whose command included the army. This new incidence was also quelled with the help of Nairobi based British troops who were flown to Uganda to intervene. Not long after, there were some shootings at Kenya's Lanet army barracks in Nakuru. The restoration of order in this latest unrest was also achieved through deployment of British troops. While the three incidences serve to highlight the frailty of the newly formed government structures, it also points out to the political indispensability of the colonial masters, especially due to their strategic security indispensability within the emerging Africa's political scene. These instances of political agitation also highlight the frailties of Africa's political dispensation.

The filmmaker has also tried severally to cast the resilient spirit of the native Kenyan in the gloom of the pre-independence political situation in a number of ways. Often, the overriding view is that of the resilient African who, despite the realization that he is overwhelmingly overpowered by the minority colonial masters, still chose to stand up and fight, both ideologically and physically. This is first made evident in the Before the Beginning 1959-1963 episode, where in 1924, after the colonial masters deported Harry Thuku to the Indian Ocean Island of Kismayu, a group of fellow Africans rose up to fill

in his shoes by forming another political party, Kikuyu Central Association (KCA). Some of their grievances included land deprivation, access to better education, and more participation in the fast growing country's cash economy. Johnstone Kamau (later Kenyatta) was appointed the KCA Secretary General whose role was to steer the leadership of the association to tame what the narrator calls "the excesses of colonial administration."

Further, in Hilary Ngweno's **TMN** documentary films, resilience and agitation is not just associated with political processes, differing ideological stances also play a key role in dispensing hopelessness among the leaders and masses of followers alike. A major ideological-political rift that marked the start of this hopelessness in post-independence Kenya was that between President Kenyatta and his then Vice President, Oginga Odinga. Hardly a year into their post-independence governance, the two fell victims of ideological discordant, resulting in the emergence of radical branch within the KANU regime. Led by Oginga Odinga and Fred Kubai, this new wave of politicians expressed dissatisfaction with Kenyatta's stance on especially nationalization of Kenya's industries, compensation for **Mau Mau** fighters, and equitable distribution of land for the displaced persons whose land had been forcefully taken by the colonial settlers. However, their socialist ideals were considered contrary to Kenyatta's capitalist stance. Bildad Kaggia's letter to Bruce McKenzie served to highlight this ideological rift, while also intimating of the ongoing agitation for ideological concessions from especially President Kenyatta and Tom Mboya:

Everyone in this country is very well aware of the land hunger that has existed among Africans as a result of the robbery of their land by the British colonial imperialists. The logical method to solve the problem posed by this robbery would have been to nationalize all big estates owned by Europeans and make them either state farms, so as to alleviate unemployment, or to hand them over to cooperatives formed by landless Africans.

To reinforce the heightened sense of betrayal, and justify Kaggia's ideological deviation, the filmmaker has used a flashback narration, accompanied by images of the young Kaggia who, after his rough stint as a British fighter during the World War II,

came back and initiated the fight for freedom. It is his sense of political and ideological resilience which saw Kaggia join fellow like-minded Kikuyus and form the first original twelve members of the secret group which resulted in the birth of **Mau Mau** (see Picture xiv).



Picture xiv: The shot of the original twelve Mau Mau founders in which Bildad Kaggia was a member.

Another image used by the filmmaker in this sequence to justify Kaggia's ideological agitation is that of the Kapenguria Six, where he stands alongside Kenyatta and the other detainees during their years of political incarceration. To see Kenyatta turning around and disregarding the interests of the men who fought and died for freedom, while he did not fight for the freedom himself, thus justifiably irks Kaggia who is pro-socialist agenda, especially in the land, job and welfare policies. In mid-1964, he resigned from the Kenyatta government to launch a more vocal campaign in support of the former freedom fighters whom he said were being neglected by the Kenyatta government. One of his first fruits of this agitation was the Nairobi-based Lumumba Institute which propagated left wing ideology among KANU adherents.

At the height of the Kenyatta-Odinga political rivalry, the filmmaker uses narrative commentary to expound on the ensuing political resilience and restlessness. After his April 18th resignation from KANU after the Limuru conference, Odinga formed a new leftist political party, Kenya people's Union (KPU). To highlight the growing political

unease and the ongoing spirit of fight for more liberal policies, the filmmaker explains the ensuing series of defections from KANU by majority of leftist radicals. Some of the most notable figures who joined this defection included the newly installed COTU deputy leader, Dennis Akumu; and Ochola McOnyango, the leader of the Kenya Oil and Petroleum Workers Union. Both were suspended from COTU roles immediately. Though Odinga's strategy at the helm of the newly formed KPU was to attract more defections and then outvote Kenyatta in a motion of no confidence, it was immediately countered by a hasty constitutional amendment which stipulated that all defectors must seek fresh elections from their electorates before joining the house. Odinga and his followers were effectively stripped of all political essence. To ensure total annihilation of the opposition, Kenyatta appointed Joseph Murumbi, the only remaining radical in KANU, as Kenya's Vice-President. Odinga's plan for orchestrating political change in Kenya was buried, at least for the time being, but his resilience was not, as seen in his future political battles.

The infamous 1982 attempted coup, orchestrated by the Embakasi barracks based military officers has been also narrated as an act of political agitation. The incidence sought to put military pressure on President Moi to heed to the oppositions call for less stringent political grip. But as it turned out, the president enjoyed massive loyalty from many of his security apparatus. The soldiers and leaders involved in the coup were swiftly overpowered and arrested to face charges of treason. This incidence however serves to highlight the resilience of especially Nyanza political leader, Oginga Odinga, whose followers were widely believed to have been behind the plot. That he could survive through two successive regimes to invoke political restlessness attests to his ongoing political ambition to wage war with the political leaders as he sought to negotiate for accommodation of his communist ideologies. The coup was, in a way, then, an act of desperation on the opposition's side, as Odinga had exhausted all possible options for political negotiation without much success. At the same time, he was unable to form any political party to militate against the government's growing grip on the nation's agenda, thus the option of a military coup – which also failed. Odinga would face even more stringent political constraints in the later days when he would be

denied right to assemble, or any opportunity to participate in any active political agenda.

Among those who would join the call for alternative political policy would include Mwai Kibaki, who quit KANU in 1991. He launched a new political party, the Democratic Party of Kenya. This marked the start of a very active political period in which many leaders joined the agitation for political representation and freedom. They included FORD leaders, Kenneth Matiba and Oginga Odinga, and DP's Mwai Kibaki. They would be joined later on by other political figures who dominated the post- 2000 political space including Wamalwa's Ford-Kenya, Shikuku's Ford-Asili, and Paul Muite's Safina political parties. However, despite this massive campaign to oust KANU, the opposition lost in the 1997 general elections when Moi won against all his opponents who including Mwai Kibaki, Koigi wa Wamwere, Paul Muite, Michael Kijana Wamalwa, Raila Odinga, Kimani Wanyoike, Charity Ngilu, Wangari Maathai, Munyua Waiyaki and George Anyona; the perceived heroes of political change.

The National Rainbow Coalition which appeared prior to the 2002 general elections, would be the main political vehicle that ousted KANU from its four decades of power. Mwai Kibaki, backed by the country's top political figures including Raila Odinga, Charity Ngilu, Kijana Wamalwa, among others, ended the independence party 40-year rule.

4.3.4 Political Absolutism

The filmmaker has made clear argument that political leadership in Kenya has been inherently absolutist, across the racial and ethnic divide. The British colonial rulers, in a bid to squash Kenya's growing restlessness with their oppressive leadership, banned all political organisations within the country by the time the Second World War came to an end. These included Kikuyu Central Association, North Kavirondo Central Association, Akamba Members Association, Taita Hills Association and Coast African Association. Such a move symbolises the imperious stance adopted by the colonial authorities when dealing with the native Africans. In October 20th 1952 when the then British governor to

Kenya banned all forms of political activities of the Africans and declared a state of emergency, it was yet another attempt to highlight the colonizer's unrelenting effort to retain an unquestionable authority over the majority blacks. One of the first casualties of this ruthless regime was the pre-independence struggle for freedom groups, especially **Mau Mau** whose adherents were hunted down and jailed, killed, maimed, or openly mistreated to dissuade further African aggression.

The Kapenguria Six was among the pre-independence freedom agitation groups who faced the wrath of the colonial administration through incarceration. The six leaders included Jomo Kenyatta, Achieng Oneko, Bildad Kaggia, Fred Kubai, Kungú Karumba, and Paul Ngei. The filmmaker uses an accompanying photo to highlight the sad faces of the majority of the detainees, who were incarcerated over political crimes (Picture xv).



Picture xv: A shot of the Kapenguria Six during their arraignment in Kapenguria after their arrest at the height of Mau Mau political insurgency.

In Kenyatta's post-1963 political antics, there is however more evidence of his ambitious plan to oust the Luos from the centre of power. According to the narrator's voice over commentary:

Between the pro-Odinga and the pro-Mboya factions in KANU, Kenyatta continued to perform a highly balancing act aimed at keeping

both sides off-guard. He made Odinga the number two man in his government's hierarchy, by appointing him Vice President. But he transferred most of his Home Affairs powers to Moi. Immigration, including powers of deportation, went to Mungai as the minister for Internal Affairs and Defence. These moves had of course been engineered by Tom Mboya when Kenyatta mandated him and Charles Njonjo to draw up the republican constitution. But Kenyatta was equally weary of Tom Mboya. He had found it useful to support Mboya against Odinga, but remained suspicious of the KANU Secretary General's ambitions. He was uneasy about Mboya's tremendous organizational skills. Mboya too, had to be contained. Fred Kubai's appointment as Assistant minister for Labour and Social affairs was clear evidence of Kenyatta trying to chip away at one of Mboya's sources of power.

Given that this appointment occurred in the background of enraging political rivalry between Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya, Kenyatta's move can be seen as a signal of his intention to retain unrivalled political power by chipping away the powers of those around him. Moreover, in later periods, he came to fall out with both Mboya and Odinga, leading to political eclipse of both. Mboya eclipsed Odinga, and he was eclipsed by Pinto. Kenyatta's political grip on the two was at the peak by then.

One of the incidences which put President Kenyatta in close proximity to the dangers of the growing threat to challenge his government was the Lanet army barracks shootings in 1964. The president however used the same incidence to implant the counter-notion of his impenetrable political authority. By the time the unrest was calmed, sixteen soldiers were court marshalled and sentenced to a total of one hundred and ninety-seven (197) years (Picture xvii).



Picture xvii: The soldiers arrested after the Lanet barracks shooting incidence. They were jailed for a total of 197 years.

This was his way of signaling his political absolutism, and reinforcing his authority as the national leader. His later political moves after this period show his conscious effort to guard himself against such incidences as the Togo coup in which the president was shot dead, or the Congo mutiny which occurred only six days into independence. In the ensuing months, Lumumba-led rebels would conquer half of the country, including the mineral rich province of Katanga and declare self-independence under the leadership of Moise Tshombe.

However, the filmmaker explains that the seemingly risk-free Kenyatta government was essentially marked by significant steps of political intolerance. The various absolutism interventions employed by the Kenyatta government are well articulated through the voice-over narrator's commentary, which is transcribed below:

The instability in the East African region only underlined for Kenyatta the need to secure his position and power as fully and as soon as possible. At the Lancaster House constitutional conference that charted out the way to Kenya's independence, Kenyatta and his colleagues in the ruling party KANU had made some major concessions to KADU and European interests. From the very beginning, they had made it abundantly clear that they would not be bound to honour these concessions once they were in power. For Kenyatta, the most important Lancaster House concession that needed to be discarded was the regional or Majimbo structural government, and it went without saying that

Kenya would become a republic. This he announced in August 1964. He set the first anniversary of independence as Jamhuri republic day. There would be no need to go back to Lancaster House. The government would bring the necessary bills to parliament and ensure their passage.

Kenyatta's refusal to honour pre-independence concessions as narrated by the filmmaker here serves two purposes. The first is that of expressing his courage and authority as a political figure, as he could stand up to his conviction, without swaying his political ideologies to accommodate alternative interests. But even more important, the refusal to go back to a negotiation table at Lancaster House in pre-independence setup when Kenya would become a republic, announces his totalitarian tendencies. Since KANU was the ruling party with majority of parliamentary delegates, it therefore translates to an open elevation of KANU's exceeding domination to the national platform, meaning the president could endorse any decision he felt like.

It is perhaps how he effected this despotic trend which speaks of Kenyatta's own political orientation as obviously dictatorial. This is how the filmmaker narrates the ordeal through the voice-over commentary:

The men to whom Kenyatta entrusted this dual task were the Attorney General, Charles Njonjo, and Tom Mboya, his Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs. There would be two bills to amend the independence constitution: one would make Kenya a republic, replacing the Queen with the Head of State and creating the post of Vice-President. The other amendment would whittle down the powers of the regions. Under the constitutional amendment, there was some homage paid to the principle of separation of powers, but the President would have the power alone, to appoint and sack all key officers in the Executive including the armed forces. He would appoint all judges, including the Chief Justice without a need to consult a third party. Although parliament was to remain independent, the president had the power to prolong or to dissolve the parliament.

The true meaning of these measures (amendments) was captured by Ronald Ngala's August protest at Kenyatta's amendments which sought to squash the opposition and make Kenya a one-party state. The presidency, at the time occupied by Kenyatta, was simply being granted too much power to disrupt any form of political protest, either from the political figures or the military personnel. The ability of the president to

influence the military and judicial system; and to severe parliamentary sessions or elongate them at will simply foretold of the presidency's intent to eliminate direct or indirect revolt against his rule, by ensuring that no substantial resistance can be raised against him – in other words, he was supplanting the first seeds of imperial dictatorship.

In all the fourteen episodes in Hilary Ngweno's **TMN** documentary film series, it is perhaps in No Longer at Ease 1973-1975 where he exploits various ideological perspectives to paint the gloomy portrait of Kenya's political tyranny. Whereas in the previous episodes the government's hard stance on the opposition was mainly manipulative or merely intimidating, there is emerging a new breed of political manoeuvres which announce the start of overt political repression. In the previous years, especially between 1964 and 1969, the filmmaker exploits the various political ideologies to highlight the pivotal role played by the political leaders of the time in adjudicating Kenya's political destiny. But he does not pursue the idea of political extermination, and the resultant discourse of authoritarianism as he does in the No Longer at Ease 1973-1975 episode. Significantly, Tom Mboya's death, just like Pio Gama Pinto's, is enshrined in remarkable uncertainty: it is never clear who commissioned their deaths as they had political antagonists across the whole political spectrum. Mboya was as much Odinga's opponent as he was Kenyatta's, perhaps even more. His death is therefore addressed as a political void, a stance expounded through the 1969 mini-elections in which even the Luos showed significant aversion to the late politician.

Ronald Ngala's fatal accident in December 1972 is however given more political significance than any other political death since independence. The filmmaker uses various images to emphasize the horrific wreckage which caused the death of the prominent Coastal politician (Picture xviii below). Despite the prevailing public outcry that Ngala's death was orchestrated by political adversaries to exterminate him from political participation, the government, through the vocal Daniel Arap Moi, warned the politicians against such rumours. A commission of enquiry was established to

investigate the incidence, and reported back three months later. Ngala's death, the commission maintained, was purely caused by a normal accident.



Picture xviii: The car in which Coastal politician Ronald Ngala crashed and suffered fatal injuries on his way to Mombasa.

In June 1974, yet another mystery occurred. Kungú Karumba, a member of the original Kapenguria Six disappeared during his supposed business trip to Uganda. In the same year, the KANU leadership decreed that only former KPU members who have been out of detention for three years would be allowed to vie for any seat; this left out Oginga Odinga out of political participation. Josiah Mwangi Kariuki would also fall out of Kenyatta leadership, and too, died mysteriously in March 1975. Johnstone Muthiora was next to die in April, two days after he arrived in the country from India.

4.3.5 Tribalism, Ethnicity and Political Restiveness

Ethnicity forms a major narrative strand in Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary film series. Underlying the various political efforts, the narrator has emphasized the unending role that ethnicity played in recreating, reformulating and re-orienting Kenya's political facet after the nation's emergence from the colonial racial discordance. The main ethnic affiliations identified in the narrative, and along whose the political narration has been constructed include the following communities; Kikuyu, Luo, Luyhia, Kalenjin, and Kamba.

One of the most upsetting political moments when ethnicity took a centre stage was after McLeod's constitutional conference held at Lancaster House, London, in 1960, when the African leaders came back to Kenya, amidst the growing political pressure effected by the leaders upon the colonial government to release Kenyatta. It all started with the Luo leaders, Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya, who led the majority of Kenyan politicians of the day to refuse to take part in the proposed government. But, as the filmmaker reveals, there were some other political leaders from other tribes who readily accepted to take over the proposed ministries reserved for the Africans in the new LEGCO. These were mainly the AEMO leaders who took over the ministries in what was initially termed as a caretaker government. They include Ronald Ngala, who took over Labour, Social Security and Adult Education ministry; Kiano took over ministry of Commerce and Industry; James Muimi took over the ministry of Health and Welfare; and Taita Toweet became Assistant Minister for Agriculture. To accentuate the enormity of this political outcome, the filmmaker uses the narrator's voice to capture the start of Kenya's ethnic and tribal politics. This is how the voice over narrator explains the situation:

It looked like a step in the right direction towards bringing Africans finally into power. In reality, however, it marked the beginning of a major rift amongst the African elected leaders, a rift that was to reverberate throughout Kenya's political history for many years to come.

The elected leaders then sought to exclude Tom Mboya from any leadership position in their new political party, The Uhuru Party. Despite that Odinga was the one who drafted the constitution for the new party and a list of the possible office bearers, he omitted Mboya's name from the list. This marked the start of their political rivalry, heralding future political affronts in their duel for dominance in the Nyanza Politics. Their ethnic rivalry extended beyond that single instance in 1960, culminating in open political feud spanning all their political face-offs.

Another major facet of ethnic and tribal politics is evidenced in KANU's 1960 elections. The delegates who had convened the special meeting in Kiambu elected their leaders as follows:

- i. James Gichuru- (Shadow) Chairman
- ii. Oginga Odinga – Vice Chairman
- iii. Tom Mboya – Secretary general
- iv. Ronald Ngala – Treasurer
- v. Daniel Moi – Vice Treasurer

It was when Moi and Ngala declined to take up their posts in KANU claiming that the party was dominated by Luos and Kikuyus that party politics took a tribal dimension. Their ethnic tirade was followed by their political meeting in Ngong in June, where they met with political representatives from Maasai, Mijikenda, Kalenjin, and the Abaluyhia, which birthed a rival political party, Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU). Ronald Ngala was elected the president of the new party, while Masinde Muliro was elected the Vice President.

Paul Ngei's entry into the tribal politics in November 1962 marked yet another ethnic twist to Kenya's emerging political landscape. His exit from KANU and subsequent formation of his African People's Party (APP) signaled the future tribal and ethnic direction of Kenya's post-independence politics, where tribes rallied behind their political leaders to secure political dominance and or concessions. One of the main issues highlighted by Ngei's new party, which was mainly sported by Kamba, was the issue of tribalism especially within the ruling KANU, as seen in his campaign poster of 1963. He even drew an analogy to Kenya's tribalism to that in Congo, by using an image of a flexing baboon in a domination stance (Picture xix).



Picture xix: A campaign poster used by APP political party in the 1963 election campaigns.

In Kenyatta's political leadership as Kenya's first Prime Minister in 1963, many more instances of political tribalism would surface. In tune with Sudan's tribal strife starting in 1950's, and Ethiopia's and Eritrea's tribal wars of 1960's, there occurred a series of mutiny and potentially destabilising events in East Africa, specifically, Zanzibar, Tanzania and Uganda. In these unfolding political events, Kenyatta found himself facing a new threat: that of being eased out of power by greedy militants. It did not take him long to taste the threat, as military officers based in Lanet army barracks mutinied later within the year and threatened to oust Kenyatta from power. It took the intervention of British troops to quell the Lanet incidence, but Kenyatta had learnt his lesson well. To mitigate future attempts, he replaced top military bosses with people he could trust; Bernard Hinga was appointed the Police Commissioner, Ignatius Nderi led the Criminal Investigations Department, James Kanyotu was appointed to head the civilian intelligence machinery, Special Branch, and Benjamin Gethi headed the newly formed General Service Unit. In view of Togo's and Congo's mutiny, Kenyatta's move to recruit people from his tribe to head the sensitive security machinery seemed a logical first step to shield himself from any potential threat of military coup, or, like in the case of Lanet, mutiny. On his legal front, Kenyatta was led by the witty legal brain,

Charles Njonjo who was Kenya's first Attorney General. James Gichuru headed Finance Ministry, Julius Kiano headed the Commerce and Industry ministry, while the Ministry for Internal Security and Defence was headed by Njoroge Mungai; Mbiyu Koinange was appointed Minister for Education. However, it is not just negative tribalism or ethnicity which pervades Kenya's political history. The filmmaker has also reinforced the view that there were as well many positive instances of political ethnicity. One of these is the Luo-kikuyu political unity after their 1963 political victory. For this important event, the filmmaker uses a photo of the jubilant Kenyatta flagged by equally jubilant Tom Mboya and Mwai Kibaki (Picture xx).



Picture xx: The jubilant KANU top leaders celebrating their resounding victory against KADU.

Despite their age differences, the three political leaders seem united in their joyful celebration of victory, which, from the filmmaker's point of view, is a symbolic gesture of their non-recognition of tribal or ethnic barriers, choosing instead to view themselves as the new face of Kenya's new political drive. This positive tribalism would be seen when Kenyatta appointed Oginga Odinga to be the Minister for Home Affairs, making him the second most powerful politician in his government. Tom Mboya was given the powerful docket of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. In the end, Kenyatta's cabinet had five Kikuyus, four Luos, and six other representatives from six different tribes.

More political divisions, especially along the tribal lines, emerged in the Kenyatta administration in the post-Odinga political setup. In the quietly emerging political

concerns of the highly hushed Kenyatta succession debate, there emerged a top tribal cadre from the Kikuyu region. They comprised of Koinange, Njonjo and Mungai who formed the KANU-A group widely known as the Gatundu Group. They were also allied with James Gichuru, Julius Kiano and Mwai Kibaki. KANU-B was comprised of Mboya followers, including Ngala from Coast, Samuel Ayodo from Luoland, Lawrence Sagini from Kisii, Joseph Otiende - a Luyhia, Jeremiah Nyaga –an Embu, and Eliud Ngala Mwendwa, a Kamba. The main concerns of KANU-A were to ensure that the country's presidency did not transit to a non-Kikuyu leader, and more specifically, Mboya. Their inimical political battles would end in the death of the young charismatic leader through broad day light shooting in July, 1969 in what the filmmaker insinuates was KANU-A's plan to silence the errand patriot and eclipse him from political participation in the post-Kenyatta political setup.

Given that the December 1969 elections took place in the absence of any opposition party, Kenyatta's move to put all KPU leaders in jail and ban their party can be interpreted as a politically significant one. One of its main objectives was to conclusively render the opposition hopeless in their ambition to outrun the government. Equally important was the realisation that the 1969 general elections effectively cemented the quickly emerging Luo-Kikuyu rift, as even the voting citizens allied themselves behind their ethnic political leaders. This is how the filmmaker reiterates this ethnic stance:

Even in a one-party state, it seems those in control of KANU were powerless against the public who had become disgruntled by the goings on of the previous two or three years. Seventy seven sitting MPs out of a total of hundred and fifty eight - almost fully one half - lost to newcomers. Of interest and serious implications to Nyanza and Western province was the fact that among them were four of the five defeated ministers and nine of the fourteen defeated assistant ministers. Most of them were Mboya's political allies: Odera Jowi and Samuel Ayodo in Luoland; Lawrence Sagini in Kisii and Joseph Otiende in Western province. But among the losers too, was Bildad Kaggia. Just as the voters in Luoland had not forgiven anyone who had sided with the Kikuyus – and Mboya's allies in Luoland were so perceived – similarly, Kikuyu voters were in no mood for forgiveness towards anyone who had sided with forces perceived to be under Odinga's control.

The ongoing narration reveals the extent of proliferation of tribal and ethnic politics in Kenya after the 1969 elections in more details than any other event in Hilary Ngweno's documentary films. While the other incidences of ethnic disarray were constituted at the leadership level, this general election shows a fragmented nation whose masses have aligned themselves along tribal lines in opposition to each other, especially the Luos and Kikuyus. One of the end results of this tribalised politics was the uneventful exit of once fiery political leaders from national politics. Bildad Kaggia would become one of them. His political career ended in sad extermination, regenerating into a forgotten village man (Picture xxi below).



Picture xxi: The politically-spent Bildad Kaggia in his aged days after falling out of favour with Kenyatta regime and being forced to political extinction.

Further ethnic political appropriations were evidenced in Kenyatta's 1969 government. Especially in the choice of his cabinet members, he did not consider North Eastern representation, retaining the most vital political seats for people from his community. As per the narrator's account:

Except for the Vice Presidency, Kenyatta retained the key positions in his cabinet for people from his community. There was Mbiu Koinange, Minister of State in the Office of the President responsible for administration; James Gichuru at Defence, Njoroge Mungai at Foreign Affairs, Mwai Kibaki - Finance, Julius Kiano - Local Government, and Charles Njonjo - Attorney General. If one counted Kenyatta himself, the Kikuyu had seven representatives in a cabinet of twenty-two.

It is thus clearly evident that the president's political manoeuvres were guided by tribal loyalty, as he deliberately worked to shield the country's centre of power from the other tribes. Kikuyu would dominate all vital government operations.

Much of Hilary Ngweno's intra-ethnic dialectics occur in the Rise and Fall of the Community 1967-1977 episode. In this episode, the filmmaker highlights the blooming incoherencies within especially the Kikuyu community where GEMA-led political merchants were battling to contain fellow radical Kikuyu politicians. While the Josiah Mwangi Kariuki's murder is poised as the tipping point of this large-scale political patronage, the filmmaker also points out at the ruthless wrestles that characterized the intra-tribal political machinations. Mwithaga, the MP for Nakuru East, would follow suit. Other inter-tribal woes have also been well documented in this episode, whose prevailing proposition is that of political discord and its attendant repercussions, especially political intimidation.

4.3.6 Hope and Hopelessness

Most of Kenya's political woes have been interwoven in the racial – tribal - political tri-axis. The racial facet existed especially in the pre-independence era when the Whites were collectively united against Blacks. One of the most obvious results of this encounter was the inauguration of terror, hope and hopelessness among the warring parties. The earliest moments of hope for the British colonial rulers came at the time when they sought to suppress all political activities among the Africans, banning all political organizations and declaring a state of emergency in 1952.

Hopelessness for the Africans was experienced many times in the pre-independence and post-independence political dispensations. One of the highlights of this aura of hopelessness was when the Kapenguria six were tried, found not guilty of organizing **Mau Mau**, but still sent to jail for seven years. This is how the narrator explains their ordeal:

The Kenyatta trial, conducted in the remote Northern Rift Valley little town of Kapenguria would last seven months, and attract much

international attention. Dennis Pritt, a famous lawyer from Britain, headed a team of lawyers who argued convincingly that the Kapenguria Six as they came to be known, were innocent of the charge of managing **Mau Mau**. Nevertheless, on April 8th, 1954, Kenyatta and his colleagues were found guilty and sentenced to seven years of imprisonment.

This study takes specific interest in the filmmaker's intention, through the narrator's voice-over commentary, to contrast the face of justice in the Kapenguria trial. That the six were found not guilty, and still sentenced to seven years imprisonment speaks of the raging aura of hopelessness, especially for political justice within the legal judicial systems of the time. The accused had indeed not fought in the **Mau Mau** uprising, but nevertheless, still suffered unspeakable injustice imbuing upon their political dream an impasse of hopelessness. The filmmaker reiterates this perception by using images which show the detainees' impending misery in the face of their inescapable fate (see Picture xxi of Kenyatta's face)



Picture xxi: The medium shot used to highlight the frailties of the incarcerated Kenyatta as he faced the colonial judicial system at Kapenguria.

Picture xxii below, also used in the same sequence, highlights the collective gloom of the Kapenguria Six as they were herded around Kapenguria where they faced their charges. The final photo, Picture xxiii shows the moment of their utmost humiliation and hopelessness as they were being driven away in a prison van.



Picture xxii: The Kapenguria Six at their Kapenguria base where they were briefly tried and jailed for political mobilisation in the outlawed Mau Mau.



Picture xxiii: The same Kapenguria Six members being escorted in a colonial administration van to start their jail terms after conviction.

A similar impression of hopelessness, especially for the native freedom fighter was effected in the British colonial's military offensive sequence when the filmmaker uses both images and narration commentary to express the degrading finality, futility and hopelessness of confronting the colonial master in the battle ground. While rendering the scene of field Marshal Dedan Kimathi's final public humiliation before being killed by the British troops, this is what the narrator says:

With superior arms and a whole colonial power behind it, the British government finally managed to bring the **Mau Mau** rebellion under control. The **Mau Mau** last commander, Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi,

was captured on October 20th 1956; and a year later, the military operations came to an end.

To augment the hopelessness motif, the filmmaker also uses video footage of the humiliated **Mau Mau** hero, Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi. Some of the highlights of the hero's hopelessness can be espied in the following images clipped from the footage (Picture xiv to xv below)



Picture xxiv: The captured Mau Mau hero, Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi being huddled by colonial soldiers as he was paraded for public humiliation.



Picture xxv: A close-up shot of Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi highlighting his despicable public humiliation.

On the other hand, the ethnic facet took root in post-independence Kenya when the natives sought to appropriate political power along the ethnic gridlines. One of the most significant outcomes of the new ethnic-based political alignment in post-Tom Mboya political landscape is that of political harassment. The first casualties of the irate

Kenyatta government had their moment of hopelessness after the President's raucous encounter with the jittery Luo community during Nyanza tour in 1969. After the bitter exchanges with Odinga during the commissioning of the Soviet built hospital, this is how the narrator captures the mood of the Kenyatta regime:

Two days later, on the 27th of October, Odinga and all other KPU leaders and MPs were arrested in a pre-dawn swoop and put into detention... on October 30th, the KPU was banned. Once again, Kenya became a de facto one party state.

The new one-party political dispensation closed the edgy opposition from mainstream political participation, leading to their immediate plunge into political restlessness yet again. Odinga's political debacle under Moi regime would be no different.

Despite briefly hovering near Moi's power circles, Odinga's press conference near the moment into his re-entry into Moi's government cost him the much coveted appointment which had been promised by the Kenyatta successor. Consequent to his rhetoric in which he criticised the former President, he was again excluded from KANU political participation, a move that ended in a wider orchestrated move to plunge his political career into chaos. Despite his announcement that he would be creating a new party, Njonjo moved a quick bill in parliament legally making Kenya a one-party state, which was passed effectively barring Odinga from any political participation.

4.3.7 Patriotism and Loyalty

The filmmaker has made deliberate emphasis to highlight the issue of patriotism and loyalty in his films. Patriotism, in especially the first episode, Before the Beginning 1959-1963, is tied to the bravery of Kenya's freedom fighters who sacrificed their strength and lives to fight the colonial administration through a pre- independence liberation movement, dubbed **Mau Mau**. The filmmaker has used the voice over narration to make a case for the patriotism and loyalty of these heroes and heroines.

In Before the Beginning 1959-1963 episode, the sequence opens with a very compelling narration, whose transcription is as follows:

Most of them are now gone, the men and women who helped to make a nation. Some were already old when they made their contributions. Others were barely thirty. They brought together an array of talents, temperaments, energies and ambitions. Some had vision, other were a bit actors who appeared on the stage for a brief moment, only to give way to those better suited to the onerous task at hand.

The filmmaker has used the above narration to explore the depths of loyalty and patriotism among Kenyans in the pre-independence period when they were united as one political front to push for freedom. In order to make clear the sense of loyalty and patriotism, the above narration, especially the portion where the narrator says "...other were a bit actors who appeared on the stage for a brief moment, only to give way to those better suited to the onerous task at hand", the filmmaker has used a clipping from a 1960 Taifa Leo news clipping which shows the then KANU Chairman, James Gichuru delivering a speech (see Picture xxvi below). It is only later on when the narrator reveals that Gichuru was only holding a place for Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, and that he willingly stepped down for him in the newly founded elite political party, Kenya African Union (KAU) after his return from London so as to assume leadership of the party and hence become its presidential candidate, that the subtle innuendos of loyalty and patriotism that the filmmaker alluded to become apparent.

Moreover, his act not only shows the pre-independence aura of selflessness that pervaded Kenya's political scene, but also highlights especially the spirit of brotherhood, of oneness and of shared national sense of pride, patriotism and loyalty that defined every act, both collective-politically and individually.

Another prominent political figure of the time used by the filmmaker to perpetuate the theme of patriotism and loyalty is the then Nyanza political bigwig, Oginga Odinga. In his public address while Kenyans collectively agitated for the release of the jailed Jomo Kenyatta, captures his spirit of patriotism, as he sought to cast an image of Kenyatta as a true national hero, who is being exploited by the colonial authorities, despite the Kenyans' universal declaration of his innocence and role as a national leader. Here is a transcript of his address as used by the filmmaker:

“The fears of the European minorities in Kenya, they regard or link Kenyatta with **Mau Mau** or terrorism, but we the Africans know that he is a sincere leader of his people who had devoted all his time to the benefit of the ordinary man” – Oginga Odinga – Legislative Council.



Picture xxvi: A Newspaper clipping showing James Gichuru's moment of fame as he ascended to the helm of KANU leadership as a shadow custodian of Kenyatta's party

The use of video footage is the filmmaker's strategy to ratify the ongoing thematic discourse which shows the humble Nyanza leader as a true patriot of the nation, seeking the larger collective good of the nation over his own political advancement (see Picture xxvii)



Picture xxvii: A shot of Oginga Odinga as he addressed the nation in his public advocacy for Kenyatta's release from prison.

The extent of their patriotism is further articulated in the adjoining sequence, in which the narrator's voice over explain the patriotic political decisions made by the political leaders of the time, especially Tom Mboya and Oginga Odinga, who had been offered a-go-ahead to constitute government in Kenyatta's absence, but declined to participate in any political trade-off with the British colonial rulers until Kenyatta was released. To gather the full extent of their sense of patriotism, the transcription below of the public address in South Africa led by British prime minister, Harold Macmillan, is helpful in highlighting the ongoing political negotiations and how they perpetuate the patriotism discourse:

In February 1960, Macmillan toured Africa. While in South Africa, he delivered his famous Wind of Change speech in the old Cape Colony parliament. Even as Macmillan was signaling a major policy shift by the British government on the fate of colonial rule, his Colonial Secretary, Ian McLeod was already huddled at Lancaster House London with all of Kenya's LEGCO. On the 18th January, 1960, a constitutional conference had started to chart out the future of Kenya. McLeod proposed that Africans should have 33 of the 65 elected seats in the proposed new legislative assembly. They would also have four government ministries as opposed to three for Europeans. For the first time, it would be a common electoral law... if the Africans delegates accepted the deal... Kenya would be well on its way to becoming an independent nation along the lines of Ghana. On coming back to Nairobi, the African leaders

could not agree on the issue of taking up ministries under the new McLeod constitution. A majority, led by Odinga, held out against serving in the government until Kenyatta was released. Mboya was offered a ministry by the Kenya government, he felt tempted, but in the end he thought the better of it.

This narration is portended with many political symbols, whose end is the justification of the premise that in pre-independence Kenya, the political leaders were united against political greed, sacrificing individual advancement for collective good. There was no ethnic divide among the political leaders, as Luos (led by Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya) refused to participate in McLeod's political process until a Kikuyu (Jomo Kenyatta) was released from incarceration. So much did the political leaders of the time, especially those affiliated to KANU, love Kenyatta, that even after their resounding victory in the February 1961 general elections, they used Kenyatta's photo as the symbolic portrait of their leader when they posed for their victory photo (Picture xxviii below).



Picture xxviii: The KANU leaders celebrate their victory against a portrait of the absent Kenyatta to show their support of the incarcerated leader.

The filmmaker has also tried significantly to cast an image of Kenyatta's patriotism, especially espoused in his public life after his return to political circulation in April 1961, when he was transferred from his detention camp of Lodwar to Maralal and granted association privileges with friends, family and media. It was his entry into the

political events, starting with his return home in August 14th 1961, which highlights his patriotic stance. Instead of taking over the reins of KANU, he spent his first months seeking to unite KANU and KADU political sides. The filmmaker uses photos of his public addresses as he addressed the leaders and crowds of their followers (Picture xxix) to cast a sympathetic stance on the ageing Kenyatta who, despite the obvious reality that he could just take over KANU and become the presidential bearer in the ongoing process of freedom, he chose to invest his dwindling energy in the fight for unity and as an arbitrator in the ongoing political dissensions. He nevertheless chose to move on with the KANU leadership in October after failing to secure meaningful political ceasefire between KANU and KADU leaders.



*Picture xxix:
This long shot
shows the
massive crowds
which were
addressed by
Kenyatta as he
campaigns for
national
political unity
after his release*

Another important moment used by the filmmaker to highlight Kenya's surging sense of patriotism is the infamous General Idi Amin threat for territorial invasion of Kenya. The revered Ugandan dictator had argued that Kenya's territorial land from Naivasha belonged to Uganda, a move that saw Kenyans take to the streets to protest his greedy political outburst, culminating in massive show of support for the Kenyatta government who so far had been enraged by various political discords, especially the recent murders of top political leaders opposed to the conservationist KANU ideology. This sense of

patriotism and loyalty is well articulated also in the accompanying images which show the masses of Kenyans (Picture xxx and xxxi below).



Picture xxx: Section of Kenyans who took to the streets to demonstrate against the alleged territorial takeover of Kenya's land by Idi Amin.



Picture xxxi: Another shot of more Kenyans who joined the anti-Idi Amin street protests.

The two images used in the sequence highlight the massive support and show of loyalty which poured out to the aging president Kenyatta in this moment of national security threat.

4.4 Conclusion

This study has noted various narrative and thematic peculiarities within Hilary Ngweno's **TMN** documentary film series. First, the study observes that Hilary Ngweno uses both linear and non-linear documentary approaches in his narration stylistics. In his forty eight year-span narrative period, he has used deliberate chronological episodic

arrangement of his narrative, especially in his review of Kenya's political history. His otherwise sequential narration has shown great affinity for elaborate historical enumeration of Kenya's entire political view spanning from 1959 to 2007. Another significant observation about the narrative structure is that Ngweno has also used non-linear narration in his films, using especially flashbacks to provide contextual perception of the various arguments he advances in his work. These flashbacks have been used especially to provide important background overview of the character's life, previous conflicts or flag important anchors in the narrative flow.

Thematically, the filmmaker has dwelt on various political aspects of pre-independence and post-independence political indulgences in Kenya. The filmmaker especially takes great caution not to sound argumentative with his opinions, but nevertheless manages to raise some red flags on various pertinent political issues including greed and oppression, political decimation, resilience and agitation, political absolutism; tribalism, ethnicity and political restlessness; hope and hopelessness, and patriotism and loyalty. The study makes emphasis here that these thematic strands are indeed the subject of Hilary Ngweno's **TMN** documentary films.

Finally, this study also notes that the filmmaker has significantly amplified especially the notion of political decimation, oppression and greed as the three main forms of political woes. But equally amplified is the idea of political loyalty and tribal political outlays. By so doing, the filmmaker has created a rich niche for critical engagement with the key subjects of Kenya's political space, which, as the documentary suggests, still runs their course in today's Kenya's political structures.

This chapter has identified the main themes across the entire 14 episodes and how these themes have contributed to the narrative development. It has also deployed various selected photographs in line with the respective themes and shown the impact of these photographs in the reinforcement aspects of the same. The next chapter summarises the major findings and draws conclusion. It also makes two recommendations; (1) recommendation for more documentary film series and (2) recommendation for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the major findings of the study and draws conclusion relating the study's objectives and the findings. It also makes two recommendations, firstly, the recommendation for more documentary film series and secondly, the recommendation for further research.

5.2 Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Hilary Ngweni's **TMN** documentary series have mainly used archival still photographs which are complemented by a few video clips to reconstruct and tell Kenya's political history, right from pre-independence in 1959 to post-independence in 2007. From these still photographs, the filmmaker creates various shots which include extreme close ups, close ups, medium close ups, medium shots, long shots, zooms-in, zooms-out, among others. In addition, the filmmaker creates camera movements such as panning either left or right and tilting either up or down.

The filmmaker uses camera angles to show political supremacy among political players at different times throughout the documentary film series. He has used low angle shots to empower or elevate certain political figures while at the same time uses high angle shots to diminish the status of others. In some cases, the filmmaker has also used high camera angle shots to show masses of supporters of prominent political players.

In the documentary series, close up shots dominate in all episodes throughout the film series for obvious reason that a close up shot gives more visual details about the subject and therefore the films being political in nature, where political machinations and counter machinations involving political players are inevitable, their reactions are best displayed by close up shots. Close up shots throughout the documentary series bring viewers closer to the personalities therein and create emotional attachment. Emotions

and general moods of the political players in the films are clearly brought out by close ups, hence the natural choice for the filmmaker.

In several occasions, Hilary Ngweno has used the same still photograph (shot) more than once either in the same episode or in another episode. This is an indication that there has been lack of enough archival materials for use in the documentary series. In this regard, Bernard (2007) explains the challenges that filmmakers face on such historical films when he observes, “Many historical films and series cover events for which there isn’t as significant a visual record, or there is none” (P. 56).

In isolated cases, the filmmaker has used photographs whose moods are contrary to the expected mood portrayal in a few scenes in different episodes. A good example of such photograph is when Uganda’s interior minister, Felix Onama, is held captive following a mutiny in the country. Ordinarily, the minister would have been expected to be shocked and traumatized as the act is life threatening but the minister appears smiling in the shot, contrary to the dictation of norms. This is a clear indication that the filmmaker did not get a suitable photograph for such a scene.

Some of the still photographs used in the documentary film series were earlier taken as political figures were engaged in various public functions as evidenced by the presence of microphones in some shots and such photographs made to fit in the narrative. Across the episodes, there is also evidence of some photographs with scratches while others have dirt marks on them which indicates poor storage over the years. This may be attributed to the lack of proper and modern technology to preserve and conserve the archival materials, for instance, digitization for easy retrieval and accessibility. Digitization technology ensures that the copy of the material is as good as the original in terms of quality. Through this technology, the original archival materials (analogue) would be spared and preserved for posterity. However, the marks do not significantly obstruct the message delivery capacity of the affected photographs.

Hilary Ngweno has made use of a strong, clear and powerful voice-over narration to effectively communicate his message throughout the documentary series. As Bernard

(2007) observes, “With archival films, the story is often driven by narration, with visuals playing a supporting role”, (P.22), similarly in Hilary Ngweno’s documentary series, the still photographs and the video clips play a supporting role to narration in the narrative. Although in some video clips the filmmaker had an option of using monologue in them, he instead used voice-over narration and muted monologue in the clips mainly to summarize the same and save time to cover more footage. On these positive aspects of narration, Hilary Ngweno reads from the same page as Rabiger (1998) who argues:

It (narration) can also be a lifesaver, rapidly and effectively introducing a new character, summarizing intervening development, or concisely supplying a few vital facts. Especially when a film must fit a lot into a short duration, time saved is time won for additional “evidence” footage (P.277).

Although the filmmaker used archival materials in the documentary series and therefore did not have any in-put in lighting these original materials, during re-shooting the filmmaker had an option of reducing light and darken some selected shots to reflect a particular mood in intended situations. For example, whenever the country sunk too low politically especially during political crisis or in a mourning mood, the filmmaker darkened the shots to create a sad situation.

The filmmaker has used sepia filter in the production of the documentary film series. The sepia filter has been used to create color tonal distribution across all the episodes to soften especially the black and white images by film tinting to add the color effects. The filmmaker also uses sepia filter to politically eliminate color barrier between the black native Africans (colonized) and the white settlers (colonizers) and cut a neutral space across the political symbols which would otherwise have been a racial symbol.

Hilary Ngweno’s **The Making of a Nation** documentary film series have used archival imagery (mainly still photographs and some footage of video clips) to illustrate and advance a powerful and thematically rich narrative from Kenya’s pre-independence in the year 1959 to post-independence in the year 2007.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendation for more Documentary Film Series.

Hilary Ngweno's TMN documentary series ends at a critical moment in Kenya's political history where political battles were drawn in yet another general election to be held at the tail end of 2007. Backed mainly by their respective tribal blocks as is the practice in Kenyan elections, the three main players were Party of National Unity (PNU) presidential candidate, Mwai Kibaki- a Kikuyu, Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) presidential candidate, Raila Odinga- A Luo and Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya (ODM-Kenya) presidential candidate, Kalonzo Musyoka- A Kamba. There is need for more such documentary film series to be made to cover the outcomes of the 2007 general elections and the post-election violence that followed thereafter. In addition, the documentary series would also cover the controversial Kibaki's second term as president, Grand- coalition government, promulgation of the August 2010 new constitution, 2013 general elections and the outcomes, inauguration of the Jubilee administration, among other important events that transpired in Kenya's political history in nearly a decade ever since. This will enable future research on Kenya's political history to be carried out.

5.3.2 Recommendation for Further Research.

In view of the fact that tribalism has invaded Kenya's political arena, especially in post-independence era, there is need to conduct further research which among others, would find out the root cause of this trend which is quite opposite of the independence heroes and heroines' spirit and aspirations, as they fought colonial rulers to reclaim independence as one regardless of their tribal affiliations. This would greatly help the Kenya government to retrace its steps and enhance the much elusive cohesion among various communities, where the gap between them is currently widening at an alarming rate.

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APPENDICES

OPERATIONAL OBSERVATION GUIDE IN THE ANALYSIS OF HILARY NGWENO'S THE MAKING OF A NATION

In order to achieve the stipulated objectives, the following cinematographic elements were used to guide the observation phase of data collection

1. **Long shot** - contains a landscape but gives the audience a more specific idea of setting. It may show the audience the environment in which the action will take place.
2. **Medium shot** - contains the characters or a character from the waist up. In this shot, the audience can see the characters face clearly and can also see their interaction with other characters.
3. **Close-up** – contains just one character`s face. Through this, the viewers will understand the actor`s emotion and also allow them to empathise with the character.
4. **High Angle** - It is a camera angle that looks down upon a subject. A character shot with a high angle will look powerless, vulnerable or small.
5. **Eye-Level Angle** - It is the most commonly used angle in most films and allows the audience to feel comfortable with the characters. It puts the viewers on an equal footing with the characters.
6. **Low Angle** - This is an angle below eye level where the size and the importance of the subject are exaggerated. It conveys a sense of dominance, strength and protectiveness.
7. **Panoramic Angle/View** - This is a full and wide view of a subject without obstruction.
8. **Dutch Angle** - It is the type of a camera angle that is used to demonstrate the confusion of a character.
9. **Camera Focus** - It helps direct attention and control mood. A sharp focus reflects reality. Soft focus can help to convey certain subjective states.

10. **Point of View (POV)** - In this kind of shot, viewers look through the eyes of a character.
11. **Deep Focus** - refers to a shot in which everything including the background is in focus.
12. **Rack Focus** - refers to the shifting of focus from one object to another within a single shot.