

**PRESIDENTIAL RHETORIC AND NATIONHOOD: A STUDY OF THE
SPEECHES OF JOMO KENYATTA**

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This project is my original work and it has not been submitted for examination in another university:

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear wife Dorothy Akeyo Odhiambo and my sons Samuel, Emmanuel, Amos, and Meshack Odhiambo, my late mother Truphena Onyango Owiti and my late father Samuel Owiti who never lived to see my graduation, Santos family for their tireless encouragement and assistance to enable me achieve this not forgetting Alphonse and Sophie for their effort too.

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the rhetoric of Jomo Kenyatta and its relationship to the Kenyan nation. It is a critical approach to the statements made by Kenyatta during the formative ages of Kenya. I explore how the utterances of leaders intersect with the histories of a nation. I also evaluate how different or correct a leader's statements can be in relation to what his or her actions. Since this study is situated in literature, I examine the rhetorical aspects that my subject employs in conveying his message to the targeted population.

The selected speeches were also made at the same time when the East African countries were enthusiastic to federate; I therefore sought to engage with how themes such as federation and Pan-Africanism were formulated through the performance of speech.

In conceptualizing the selected speeches, I highlight pertinent theoretical issues on rhetoric. Rhetoric has the power to change perception and thus enhance change of policies. I also point out that presidential rhetoric is so powerful that it can affect the economy and the social fabric of the nation. In this study, I employed a close textual methodology in engaging with the speeches. I read the texts through the lenses of formalist, reader-response, and literary Marxist theories. These aspects of research lay the foundation to understanding the relationship between rhetoric and the nation and also situate rhetoric into literature. The study also discusses at length the controversial persona Jomo Kenyatta. By scrutinizing his utterances and actions as Kenya's first Prime Minister and then first President, the study brings out the presumed foundations of unconscious marginalization of certain communities and regions of Kenya. In my discussion, I point out areas where the texts under study are effectively used by its author to 'other' the rest of Kenya while at the same time centering his ethnic community.

Throughout the discussion, I show that rhetoric is part of literature and speeches employ literary aspects so as to persuade the audience. A study of speeches as literary texts is significant since it focuses on the actual stylistic devices used in developing themes affecting the society. An area that should also be studied is the performance of rhetoric in which a researcher can investigate how the aspects of performance are enhanced during speech delivery. Such studies will significantly enrich literature through the enhancement of a variety of critical texts.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

This project affirms that a critical study of the pronouncements of political leaders in Kenya is very important. A look at the pronouncements of African heads of states during their inaugurations reveals that Africa is a space for contestation in the world due to its histories of dispossession, oppression, struggle, and misrepresentation. Due to these uncomfortable histories, African leaders speak out to correct the image of their continent. Through their speeches, many leaders manage to create peaceful existences among diverse people living together. Notable here is Julius Nyerere (1993) in *Uongozi Wetu na Hatimaya Tanzania*; a speech which most leaders in Tanzania keep referring to in order to underscore the need for peaceful co-existence among people from all regions: those from Pemba, Zanzibar, and Tanganyika.

Felistas Becker (2013), in analyzing the rhetoric after Nyerere death foregrounds him as the symbol of unity in Tanzania even in his death. She observes that “[d]uring the weeks after Nyerere’s death, the heritage of peaceful societal relations that he was said to have bestowed on Tanzania – and of which the CCM claims to be the enduring guarantor – became the focus of a sustained media campaign characterized by discreet cooperation between state and non-state actors” (239). In her analysis, Nyerere in his death meant different things to the political leaders and to the common people: the political leaders would invoke his memory in their enterprise to maintain peace and unity while the common people would invoke his memory in fighting for equity and a just society where the lowly are humanely treated.

In this project I claim that political pronouncements can translate into strengthening the national cohesion or tearing such a fabric altogether. In the case of Nyerere, Becker shows that he bestowed to Tanzania the “heritage of peaceful societal relations” (ibid), but the case with Kenyatta is arguably the opposite. The heritage of peace or conflict is normally bestowed through rhetoric. At the same time, political leaders may not always live what they articulate. This becomes bare when a political leader’s rhetoric is analyzed in the context of his/her actions.

I also note that rhetorical aspects employed by speakers help them to convey their messages effectively to their intended audiences. This is something that mostly depends on the emotional investments of the supporters of the political leader speaking. For instance, Hugh Rank (1980) states that political rhetoric can be without direction and that its consumption is hardly rational since the audience heavily invest their emotions in what the political leader says. According to Rank,

[t]o analyze political rhetoric, the first step is to focus very closely on the content and form, to identify what is being said and how it is being said. While this may seem obvious and self-evident, it's all too seldom done. Most political discussions are characterized by their randomness and lack of coherence as people switch from one topic to another and soon lose any continuity or direction. In addition, such discussions often generate intense emotional involvement, not at all conducive to a rational discussion or systematic analysis. To clarify complex issues, it helps to impose some kind of pattern or structure to identify and sort out the various messages. Such patterning also gives a greater sense of detachment and perspective. (38).

With these views in mind, I selected Kenyatta's speeches that address the Kenyan nation at its very infancy, at a time when he was Prime Minister to a time when he had just become president and Kenya had become a republic. This was motivated by the fact that I set out to analyze the foundations the Kenyan nation, and analyze how issues of nationhood were articulated.

In this study I focus on exploring how political rhetoric contributes to nationalism. I bring into focus some selected speeches of Jomo Kenyatta and discuss the rhetorical aspects he employed in his arguments as he was addressing the citizens of Kenya during his reign. Kenyatta was in power from the time of independence in 1963 up to his death in August of 1978. Since people say what they believe in, a contextual analysis of his speeches helps to portray Kenyatta's worldview and how this helped to shape the narrative of Kenya as a nation. Considering the fact that Kenyatta was ruling at a time after the bitter and traumatic experiences of colonialism, and a time when there was much expectations for the benefits of *uhuru* (freedom), one can conclude that his utterances were crucial for the survival of the nation.

Through the power of words, especially from leaders of any status, a country can grow as one united front or it can be wiped out through hatred and anger in a few days. But this does not mean that citizens of a given country cannot make independent decisions. The rhetorical aspects that speakers use are usually powerful and very appealing to the emotions of people. Ryan Lee Teten (2007) in "We the People': The Modern Rhetorical Popular Address of the Presidents during the Founding Period" observes that "it is with words minds are changed, votes acquired, enemies labeled, alliances secured, unpopular programs made palatable, and the status quo suddenly unveiled as unjust and intolerable" (669).

This argument demonstrates the power of rhetoric in swaying the masses. Rhetoric makes a politician well positioned to bring about change in perception of reality. These perceptions of reality by the speaker's audience translate to actions that affect different temporal and spatial spaces. Furthermore, politicians use rhetoric to construct their identities; through what they say, they change their statuses.

By using some popular statements such as "we the people", politicians are elevated to vantage positions from where they can convince the society to support their (politicians') parties and beliefs. Teten shows that the phrase "we the people" is a persuasive strategy in which a leader makes the subaltern, people who are lower than him in social standing, to believe that they are on equal standing socially and economically with their leader. This strategy achieves its purpose of making his/her target to unquestioningly support a certain idea or ideology. However, the statement does not in any way make the leader's subjects his/her equals.

This understanding demonstrates that there's much that can be studied in regard to rhetoric. In this project, I intend to study the presidential rhetoric of Jomo Kenyatta and the issues that it highlights in regard to nationhood. The study will focus on selected speeches of Jomo Kenyatta from the early days towards Kenya's independence to the end of his era when he died in 1978. In selecting the speeches, I prioritize literary aspects employed in the speeches in order to achieve persuasion. In attempting to evaluate the nature of rhetoric, I discussed the literariness of the speeches he delivered under different circumstances.

My understanding of the nation in this study is that which Ernest Renan (1990) refers to as "a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and those that one is prepared to make in future" (19). Renan contends that race, language, religion, interests, and geography do not suffice to make a nation. He states that "man is slave neither of his race nor his language, nor of his religion, nor of the course of rivers nor of the direction taken

by the mountain chains” (20). In as much as religion, race, geography, and language help people to find a common ground of tolerance, the nation surpasses them all. In underscoring sacrifice in the imagination of a nation, Renan shows that citizens of a particular country are ready to risk it all for the sake of defending that which they claim a belonging.

Kenya for instance is a nation that is largely for black people. During the nationalization campaigns immediately after independence, some races such as those of Asian and those of European extract were excluded from the imaginaries of the Kenyan nation. Furthermore, Kenya has forty-two tribes. But as Renan asserts, “[e]thnographic considerations have [...] played no part in the constitution of modern nations” (14). In fact, ethnic diversity in Kenya has in many occasions threatened to tear into pieces the national fabric. In interrogating nationhood in Kenyatta’s speeches, I seek to explore how he articulates these issues that help to foster a shared heritage, and a common past for all the citizens. This is because, as Renan affirms, “the nation, like the individual, is the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion” (19). This echoes Kenyatta’s slogan “Harambee” which urges citizens to work together towards developing their country.

Jomo Kenyatta is the first president of the Kenyan nation. Though he was born in 1889, George Delf (1961) narrates that Kenyatta was born in 1893 “as on his passport at the time of his trial in 1952” and “his name at that time was Kamau, son of Ngengi [...] from the Fort Hall district” (11). His father was Ngengi wa Muigai. His mother died during child-birth. Kenyatta spent his childhood with his grandfather Kung’uwa Magana. Magana was a medicine man and he established a very close tie with the young boy. At the age of twenty five, he joined the Church of Scotland Mission at Thogoto where, as Delf observes, “he was drafted into the carpentry section” (34).

Joining the mission was circumstantial since Kenyatta went into the station in search of a job. Delf notes that Kenyatta was employed there at the mission station as “a kitchen help by Mr. J. Cookie” (34). This portrays a narrative of humble beginnings.

Kenyatta converted to Christianity at the same year he joined the mission in 1914. Five years later he married Grace Wahu under the Kikuyu customs. At that time he was working as the Nairobi High Court interpreter. This experience led him into politics because it made him more informed on the injustices that were being committed against the black people by the colonialist. He was appointed to be the secretary of the Kikuyu Central Association which defended the interests of the Kikuyu.

Kenyatta is remembered for championing African nationalism and solidarity. Gifted with oratory skills during his tenure, he gave voice to significant things that were happening in Africa. Through his speeches, Kenyatta manages to rally the indigenous Kenyans championing for *uhuru* and reawakening them for a greater cause. His influence becomes a nightmare to the colonialists but as for the colonized it represents hope. Guy Arnold (1974) notes that the European colonialists created myths about Kenyatta. He states that the colonialist authorities and European settlers

created myths about him, accorded to him political arts of cunning, diabolism and organizational ability that it would be difficult for any one man to possess, and dubbed him ‘leader to darkness and death’. [...] For Africans he has become a father figure, the beloved leader of the Kikuyu, the first president of an independent Kenya, a man widely regarded as above politics, the nationalist leader who is revered in his own country and

Accepted far beyond its borders as one of the architects of African nationalist achievement since 1945. (192).

Guy demonstrates the extent to which the people of Kenya mythologized Kenyatta during his time. The accolades accorded to him by the Kikuyu people and by extension the other communities of Kenya, made him look like a savior. Taking a cue from what the African continent expected from him, Kenyatta began speaking boldly against the oppression of the black people in Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, the then Southern Rhodesia, and other places on the continent.

Jomo Kenyatta's rise to fame and power is well captured by Daniel Branch in *Kenya: Between Hope and Despair* (2012). Branch disabuses us of the rosy image of Kenyatta as a liberator, the architect of African nationalism, the savior of the African people in Kenya. Towards the end of his reign, Branch notes that Kenyatta's reputation was already ruined because he "went from being known as The Elder" or "The father of the Nation" to "The Finisher" or "The Killer" (120). In this regard, Branch refers to the assassinations of JM Kariuki and Tom Mboya. For instance, Branch notes that "after Kariuki's body was finally found, Kenyatta told a crowd the story of a fallen angel who was 'going bad, so God threw him away'" (118). In such a statement, I read Kenyatta's impunity and cruelty. He had elevated himself to the level of God and whoever didn't support him risked being classified under the fallen angels.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Political rhetoric presents complexities in the imagination and construction of nationhood. The rhetoric is significant in creating meanings and different identities based on political affiliation, racial, ethnic or regional identity. A case study of selected speeches of Kenyatta exposes how politicians equivocate, compromise, and creates divisions or unity in the imaginations of nationhood through utterances meant to serve particular conveniences.

1.3 Objectives

- I. To analyze literary and rhetorical aspects that Jomo Kenyatta uses in selected speeches.
- II. To explore representations of the nation in Jomo Kenyatta's selected speeches.
- III. To explore how political rhetoric contributes to nationalism.

1.4 Hypotheses

- I. Political speeches employ literary and rhetoric tools.
- II. Political speeches address important aspects affecting the society.
- III. Political rhetoric contributes to the creation of a nation.

1.5 Justification

Jomo Kenyatta's speeches have not been given much critical study in literature. A study in this field of presidential rhetoric will be of much importance because it will open up an area that is not exhaustively studied in literary discourses. A literary approach to the speeches will help in bringing out insights that had not been earlier evaluated. That which makes a speaker charismatic is something that literature focuses on. A literary approach will expose deeper meanings that the speakers did underscore.

In studying rhetoric, I intended to be in a position to understand the driving force behind major decisions that the public normally take after consistently listening to the speeches of their leaders. This helped in unveiling the anatomy of tribalism which is a cancer in Kenya. It came out clearly to me that it is through rhetoric that one tribe is labeled as the enemy thus fueling unprecedented loss of life and property. Furthermore, the study of Jomo Kenyatta's speeches helped to show the histories of Kenya as it was coming of age.

By analyzing the rhetorical aspects employed by the speaker while addressing the nation, I sought to bring out literary aspects that are normally employed. The literary aspects used in the selected speeches demonstrate that style is not merely for embellishment but it serves important functions in rendering the message to the intended audience in a better and robust way.

1.6 Literature Review

This section offers some critical insights into my research by exploring what has been studied in the area of rhetoric and nationhood. I draw from scholars who have already studied rhetoric and its significance to the nation for the purposes of locating my study in the current debates on the same. The reviewed works of scholars who have studied rhetoric in different geographical spaces helped me to conceptualize the possible meanings of rhetoric in a nation such as Kenya. I also review works that address Kenya's birth as a nation, its pasts and histories. Such works help to bring into perspective the context under which my study is interested in. At the end, I identify the gap that my research attempts to fill.

In my review of Deborah F. Atwater (2007) in "Senator Barack Obama: The Rhetoric of Hope and the American Dream" who discusses how Barack Obama creates a contemporary vision of an inclusive America and the American dream, I was able to grasp a deeper meaning of rhetoric. Atwater attempts a new definition of rhetoric by asserting that rhetoric goes beyond persuasion and communicating with the intention of gaining approval from the audience to gaining and solidifying citizens of a particular space for a particular purpose. She suggests that

[a]lthough there are numerous definitions of rhetoric from Aristotle's 'so let rhetoric be defined as the faculty (power) of discovering in the particular case what are the available means of persuasion' [...] to more contemporary definitions as Hauser's 'rhetoric, then, is the management of symbols to coordinate social action' [...], or Asante's 'rhetoric is concerned with the communication of ideas, values, opinions, and beliefs in an effort to elicit the approval or acceptance of others' [...], *I am defining a rhetoric of hope as the use of symbols to get Americans to care about this country, to want to believe in this country, to regain hope and faith and hope in this country, to want to believe that we are*

more alike than we are different with a common destiny and a core set of values. (124, brackets in original, emphasis added).

Atwater shows that rhetoric helps in fostering patriotism in a country. She also argues that rhetoric is an art that seeks the approval of the people in order for the speaker to chart the way towards achieving a particular goal.

In this case, rhetoric ceases to serve a selfish cause whereby a speaker persuades people so that he/she can get what they want at a particular moment to a greater purpose of nationalism. The nation is foregrounded as the individual who creates the symbols becomes invisible. The destiny of the nation is put on the pedestal while the individual is reduced to a servant. The speaker in this case becomes like a mediator between the nation and its people. Therefore, the rhetoric of hope that Obama uses in his campaigns towards his first term in the office of the president of United States of America significantly contributes in the constructions of identities of different people in his country. Through Obama's rhetoric, the core values of the Americans are suggested and adopted.

Atwater's goal in this study is to analyze how Barack Obama's rhetoric of hope contributes to the restoration of hope among Americans. Since nationalism is built on hope, this study offered to me a broader understanding of rhetoric and its relationship with the nation. In my study, I investigate how Jomo Kenyatta uses his speeches to get Kenyans to believe in their country, and if he uses his speeches to foster unity among the people that he speaks to.

Eugene Garver (2009) in "Aristotle on the Kinds of Rhetoric" argues that Aristotle identified three kinds of rhetoric: deliberative, judicial, epideictic. These kinds of rhetoric reflect the three ways through which the arguments achieve persuasion. Garver makes a significant observation when he states that

[t]he doctor...uses rhetoric to persuade a patient to take his medicine. The physicist uses rhetoric to persuade an audience to spend money on building a missile defense system. The preacher uses rhetoric to give the audience hope...The politician, then and now, argues rhetorically that voters should vote for him. The contemporary politician asks citizens to support a particular ideology, rather than a specific policy recommendation.

(6).

Garver's observations foreground varied functions of rhetoric in different spaces. Its main purpose is to sell the speaker's ideology and meet his ends. In order to achieve this, the speaker employs different strategies. In this case, every leader has the challenge to steer the nation that he governs in a particular direction that he deems fit. This means that speech occupies a central space in the lives of people who occupy public offices. In my case, the speeches that I am studying are delivered from the office of the Prime Minister to the people who had just emerged from colonialism. This work is very important in since it helps me to imagine most of the possible functions of rhetoric in the society.

Furthermore, Garver's claim that rhetoric for a politician is used in selling ideology to the people is very significant to my case. This is because when rhetoric is used by politicians for the purpose of winning votes then it is limited to a temporary function. However, in the cases where politicians use rhetoric in order to campaign for a particular ideology, then rhetoric in such a case serves a long-term purpose. This is because the ideology accepted by people will be passed on from generation to generation. For instance, the non-violent ideology of Martin Luther King jr. and Mahatma Gandhi has outlived its proponents.

Authors Mark Pancer et al in “Political Roles and the Complexity of Political” Rhetoric examine the complexity of political rhetoric of the politicians who are in the policy making and those in the opposition role. The authors observe that politicians who are in the government of the day fail to appeal to the public as they attempt to make their policies practical while the politicians in the opposition become more convincing to the masses in their rhetoric. They argue that

...leaders of a government became significantly more complex in their rhetoric [since] leaders of [the] government in power are accountable to the public in a way that aspiring government leaders are not. Accountability—the need to be able to offer a plausible justification to the public for one’s policies and actions—compels the leader to demonstrate that he or she has considered different alternatives or perspectives in deciding upon a course of action. In discussing such alternatives, the leader’s speeches become substantially more complex (32).

This study helped to conceive the challenges that a sitting president encounters in persuading citizens as opposed to the opposition.

Authors B. Dan Wood, Chris T. Owens, and Brandy M. Darham in “Presidential Rhetoric and the Economy” in The Journal of Politics, Vol. 67, No.3 (Aug., 2005) demonstrate the economic performance of a country is always affected by the optimism or pessimism of presidential rhetoric. Pessimistic statements by the president lead to a collapse of the economy while optimistic sentiments reawaken hope among the economical player hence leading to a significant growth. The authors argue as follows:

Consumers take cues and receive information about their current and future economic status from a variety of sources, including personal experience, the experiences of others, the news, economic reports, and elite economic actors. Presidential rhetoric, manifest

through speeches and other public documents, is one of those sources of cues and information.

Why should presidential rhetoric on the economy filter strongly into consumer psychology? The president is the most visible political and economic actor in the U.S. system and people look to the president for economic leadership (632).

Wood et al show that what the president says is taken with a lot of seriousness by business people. They show that if the president expresses confidence in the economy, the economic players get into action and this result into a significant economical growth. Having understood the power of presidential rhetoric in changing the economical perceptions of the citizens, in my study I sought to explore the optimism and pessimism expressed in Jomo Kenyatta's speeches.

In "Provisional Notes on the Post colony" in Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, Mbembe critically evaluates the state of affairs in African nations after the unfortunate era of colonialism. Mbembe states as follows:

The notion 'post colony' identifies specifically a given historical trajectory—that of societies recently emerging from the experience of colonization and the violence which the colonial relationship, *par excellence*, involves. To be sure, the post colony is chaotically pluralistic, yet it has nonetheless an internal coherence. It is a specific system of signs, a particular way of fabricating simulacra or re-forming stereotypes. It is not, however, just an economy of signs in which power is mirrored and imagined self-reflectively. The post colony is characterized by a distinctive style of political improvisation, by a tendency to excess and a lack of proportion as well as by distinctive ways in which identities are multiplied, transformed and put into circulation (3).

Considering Mbembe's statements, I found out that the post colony faces the challenge of greed from those in power. The political improvisations found in nations that have emerged from the violence of colonialism are normally articulated in the songs that artists compose. The internal coherence that Mbembe says is a characteristic of the post colony is normally fostered by political activists and human rights crusaders in their speeches. This deep analysis of the post colony will be very helpful to me during the analysis of the speeches. Mbembe focuses on the entire post colony across the continent; however, my research will focus on the Kenyan post colony as reflected in the speeches of Kenyan politicians.

Artist the Ruler by Okot P'Bitek. In the article "Artist the Ruler", P'Bitek argues that the world-view of any society is "created by the most powerful, sensitive, and imaginative minds that that society has produced: these are the few men and women, the supreme artists, the imaginative creators of their time who form the consciousness of their time. They respond deeply and intuitively to what is happening, what has happened and what will happen" (39). This article puts artists on a very elevated pedestal and emphasizes that their role cannot be ignored. The culture of any society is moulded by artists who through narrative and songs create understanding for the people. P'Bitek insists that in Africa artists are highly acknowledged and their contribution to society is experienced by all members. The role of the artist, according to P'Bitek, is higher compared to the role played by conventional leaders. P'Bitek's argument is worth quoting at length:

The artist proclaims laws but expresses them in the most indirect language: through metaphor and symbol, in image and fable. He sings and dances his laws. It is taught, not in the school of law, not at the Inns of Court, but around the evening fire, where elephants and hares act as men. The body movement, the painting, the sculptures are his law books. The drums, the flutes, the horns, the strumming and plucking on the strings of the musical instruments, are proclamations of his decrees. He lures his subjects by the sweetness of his song, and the beauty of his works. He punishes the culprits with laughter, and awards the good mannered with praises (39).

This work enabled me to understand that artists establish the foundations of society through their imaginative works. P'Bitek's work is theoretical and general; however, my task will be on the artistry of the speeches of Kenyatta and how they have influenced the social and cultural lives of the people.

David Anderson in *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya* (2005) brings into perspective the struggle against colonialism in Kenya. He shows that the struggle was not easy, and that it constituted of grave injustices committed by the British soldiers under the colonial authorities, and also by the Mau Mau fighters. Anderson also notes that the Mau Mau story is a disturbing one, one of total annihilation of the indigenous people by the colonialist. Of significance to my research was his illumination of Jomo Kenyatta and the role he played during the struggle. Anderson shows that Kenyatta didn't even know who the leaders of the armed struggle were. He only came to know about them prior to his arrest. This understanding helped me in redefining Kenyatta in the context of my study.

I also reviewed Daniel Branch's *Kenya: Between Hope and Despair, 1963 – 2012* (2012). Branch critically analyzes Kenyatta's governance from independence to the time of his death. He gives deeper reflection of power and nation building. Branch notes that during the formation of the nation the ideology of order was used to trample on people's voices of dissent. He states that "fetishisation of order has been used to discredit those who dissent from the state's development policies and to allow the state to violate its citizens' human rights" (18). Such efforts made by Kenyatta's government and even the preceding governments led to dictatorial leadership. Branch also unearths many utterances made by Kenyatta during his tenure and offers critical interpretation of the same. This text was significant to be in providing a foundation for the understanding of Kenya's histories and nation building.

Guy Arnold's *Kenyatta and the Politics of Kenya* (1974) proved very useful to my work. Arnold brings into focus Kenyatta's role in the politics of Kenya, and more so discusses how Kenyatta was imagined by the people of Kenya. Arnold observes that Kenyatta was Mau Mau's spiritual leader. He notes that "as a nationalist movement aiming at independence Mau Mau would naturally look to Kenyatta as its inspiration, and this is borne out both by its claims that he was its leader and in the frequent references to him in the Mau Mau hymns" (129). This explains why the colonial authority adamantly insisted that Kenyatta was the leader of Mau Mau when in actual sense he didn't know much about it.

Arnold also observes that "Kenyatta was personally charged with elevating Mau Mau into a religious cult, and further accused of wanting to drive all Europeans out of Kenya" (125). It was Kenyatta's name that was his cause of tribulations with the colonialists. Since he had become more of a myth to the indigenous Kenyans, especially the Kikuyu, it was easy for him to be victimized. For, as Arnold states, "[t]o the settlers Kenyatta symbolized all their fears; to

Africans he symbolized their coming political triumph” (200). In his discussions, Arnold underscores the challenges of the formation of the Kenyan nation. He also helps us to envision Kenyatta’s role in the liberation struggle. He states that

[i]t was essential that there should be two nationalist arms: the orthodox nationalists led by Kenyatta, tackling authorities by constitutional means; and the strong-arm branch of nationalists, able to put pressure on the authorities and, when necessary, force the pace in ways that the orthodox leadership could not employ (130).

This observation underscores the fact that Kenyatta was committed to achieving justice through constitutional means but not through bloodshed as the colonialists portrayed him. Being on the frontline to negotiate for the rights of the black people, Kenyatta made it possible for Kenya to achieve its independence.

After reviewing different literatures, I identified the study of Kenyatta’s speeches as a gap in knowledge which should be studied. Speeches are literary texts that write the histories of a nation. Through an analysis of Kenyatta’s speeches new insights in regard to nationhood would emerge. This helped in adding to the growth of literatures on rhetoric in literature as a discipline.

According to the literature that I was able to access, no one has done a study on the political speeches of Jomo Kenyatta in relation to nationalism. My study therefore seeks to fill this gap by underscoring the significance of political rhetoric in the construction of national identities and nationalism.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the three theories that I used in the study of Jomo Kenyatta's speeches. The theories are formalist literary theory that came in handy in analyzing the literary aspects employed in the speeches; the Marxist literary theory which helped in exploring class relations as portrayed in the texts; and the reader response theory which helped me to explore possible meanings of the selected speeches.

I used the formalist literary theory in this research. The proponents of this theory include I.A. Richards, Cleanth Brooks, and Northrop Frye. The formalists argue that content and form are one and the same thing. They also assert that texts exist in and for themselves. This means that a text contains all the information required by the reader, they are autonomous. In this particular work, I analyzed the selected speeches of Jomo Kenyatta with the understanding that they can provide all the required information. Formalists aim at classifying, categorizing, and discussing any universal truth that literary works might hold concerning the human condition. In analyzing the structure of the speeches and their content, I was in a position to ascertain the literary aspects employed in the delivery of the speeches.

I also used the Marxist literary theory. Marxists judge literature by the contribution it makes in bringing about a revolution in the society. They look at literature from the dimension of the impact that a work of art has on the masses, the proletariat, the workers of the world, in making them aware of their oppression by the bourgeois. In Marxism, the workers of the world are the essence of the society and when they realize their power to change their world they will live better lives. Marxism is majorly concerned about material well being of the population. Everything unfortunate that happens to the poor is interpreted to mean that it is because of the oppression of those who control the economy. Marxists believe that economic and social

conditions determine religious beliefs, legal systems, and cultural frameworks. The role of literature is therefore to improve the economical welfare of the people. In attempting to grasp a deeper understanding of Kenyan politicians' remarks, this theory will be of great value particularly in relation to the speeches of trade unionists who spoke for the workers.

M. Habib (2005) traces the origin of Marxist ideals and states that “the tradition of Marxist thought has provided the most powerful critique of capitalist institutions and ethics ever conducted” and that “the influence of Marx’s ideas on modern world history has been vast” (527). Habib further states that “[w]hat distinguishes Marxism is that it is not only a political, economic, and social theory but also a form of practice in all of these domains” (527). The critiques of the capitalist institutions were theorized by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Habib notes that according to Marxism, the proletariat “live only so long as they find work, and [...] find work only so long as their labor increases capital” (528). Thus the proletariat is co modified by the bourgeois in the latter’s pursuit for capital. Marxism comes out as a very powerful idea especially when Marx insists on action rather than merely idealizing the plight of the poor in the society. Habib observes that Marx “insisted that the dialectic in history involved a necessary combination of theory and practice, that a given economic and political system cannot be abolished by mere thought but by a revolution” (530). In this regard, Marxism calls for action against the oppressors (perceived and real).

Reader-Response theory was also very important in this particular research. The theory suggests that the interpretations of a literary text according to Rosenblatt “is not a smorgasbord of infinite interpretations; rather, it is a transactional experience in which several different yet probable meanings emerge in a particular social context and thereby create a variety of ‘poems’ (78). This approach indicates that the text is not the sole determiner of meaning and that the reader performs a very critical role in this Endeavour. The reader of a particular text participates

actively together with the text in creating meaning. Stanley Fish in affective stylistics also asserts that meaning is inheres the reader not the text. Therefore the meaning of a particular text is found in a particular reading community, a group of people who share interpretive strategies.

In applying the three theories mentioned above, I was able to discuss salient issues that advance nationalism through presidential rhetoric.

1.8 Methodology

This study focuses on three speeches made by Jomo Kenyatta between 1963 and 1964. The speeches are “The fruits of Life”, a speech delivered on 20th October 1964; “Dawn of the Republic”, a speech delivered on 1st June 1963; and “Federation, the Road Ahead”, a speech delivered on 2nd July 1963. I also draw from several other speeches made by Kenyatta within the same period in reference to the ideas he raises in the three speeches for the purpose of conversation.

I chose Jomo Kenyatta’s speeches because they address a time when Kenya was at its nationhood infancy, a gaze into the past. Immediately after independence, economical as well as social issues glared at the new government that was experimenting with power for the first time. This selection is therefore meant to probe the roots of nationalism, taking Kenya as a case study. It is also informed by the ideas of nationalism in Africa in the early 1960’s, a time when the frontiers were being used to foster identity.

In this study I applied the close textual reading method as theorized by Ivor Armstrong Richards (2009). Among other things, Armstrong encourages a critic to study closely the “text’s feeling, its tone, its intention” (12). I approached the three speeches through a close textual analysis and attempted to analyze the tone, the intention of the remarks made by Kenyatta, and the “feeling” of the texts, that is, the underlying meanings of the words used. This method helped me to carry out a deep reflection on the utterances made by Kenyatta while speaking to the public.

I used the reader-response theory, Marxist literary theory, and formalist theory in order to understand different literary aspects of the texts under study. The theories were useful in the conceptualization of ideas. The theories helped me to achieve a greater picture of the society reflected in the speeches. I also reviewed theoretical aspects on rhetoric. This study enabled me to form theoretical orientations with which to approach the research that I intend to undertake.

1.9 Scope and Limitations

In this study, I focused on three speeches of Jomo Kenyatta during his tenure as the first Prime Minister of Kenya and the Founding President of the Republic. In studying these speeches, I made references to scholars' criticisms on Kenyatta's governance and rhetorical leadership. The study also evaluated the themes and the literary styles employed in the delivery.

The study was limited to three published selected speeches in *Harambee! The Prime Minister of Kenya's Speeches 1963—1964: Jomo Kenyatta* edited and arranged by Anthony Cullen. The oral aspects of the speeches during delivery are lost, however, my study limits itself on the utterances only.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the theoretical issues that informed this study. Theory is very important in charting the way for analysis. The introductory part laid the foundation for the understanding of rhetoric and nationhood. A critical study of what scholars have done in regard to presidential rhetoric provided more insight in the understanding the texts. The methods that were used in collecting information were inclined towards a qualitative research.

CHAPTER TWO: THE SELECTED SPEECHES OF JOMO KENYATTA

2.1 Introduction

Most of the speeches of Jomo Kenyatta are published in *Harambee! The Prime Minister of Kenya's Speeches 1963—1964: Jomo Kenyatta* which is edited and arranged by Anthony Cullen.

The speeches deal with issues of the new dawn for Kenya, the long awaited celebrations for *uhuru*, Kenyatta's messages on the constitution, and his uneasiness on the role of the opposition in the parliament.

The speeches also show a state of uncertainty since Kenyatta keeps reminding the citizens of the then young nation not to support secessionist groups. Furthermore, the speeches also bring into focus other issues affecting Africa at the time such as the goal for East African states to federate, the question of apartheid in Africa and its implications on the African continent, and the liberation struggles in Angola and Mozambique. By addressing issues that were affecting Africa at large at the time, his rhetoric strategically locates him in a global imaginary making him a global leader.

2.2 The Selected Speeches

Harambee has a forward by Malcolm MacDonald who was the Governor-General of Kenya. In his forward to the book, MacDonald states that Kenyatta's wisdom saved Kenya from falling apart in its formative age soon after the colonialists had departed. He lauds Kenyatta's choice of the motto of the nation which helped to cement unity in a country that was burning with tribal rivalry, racial hatred, and class bickering. In a section of the forward, MacDonald states as follows:

The speeches of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta published in this book have been the inspiration of the young Kenyan nation. Two years ago few people—either African, Asian or European inside Kenya, or of any race outside it—thought that the new nation could be successfully born in 1963; and many others who supposed that its birth soon afterwards was inevitable assumed that it would be still-born, or that within a few months after its emergence from the womb of Mother Africa it would die from chronic internal disorders (ix).

Considering the terrible civil wars that several African nations sank in immediately after independence, MacDonald suggests that Kenyatta should be appreciated for his efforts to have a harmonious nation through his speeches. MacDonald asserts that Kenyatta was instrumental in fostering a country that would forge forth in peace. This will be analyzed through a thorough analysis of Kenyatta's speeches in the next chapter.

However, in the Eurocentric and colonialist statement, “that within a few months after its emergence from the womb of Mother Africa it would die from chronic internal disorders” (ix), MacDonald underscores the pessimism that Britain harboured when it reluctantly handed over leadership to the black people. The statement suggests the incapability of a black person running a nation. He thus expresses surprise that Kenyatta was capable of managing the country Kenya. In other words, the editor seems happy that the Africans are getting civilized enough to hold office. But it is exactly such perceptions that justified slavery and colonialism. In the end, the British looked back proudly to the “civilizing mission” in Africa without the guilty of having committed the worst atrocities especially when fighting the Mau Mau.

David Anderson in *Histories of the Hanged* (2005) observes that when the British vacated Kenya, they had committed heinous crimes against the indigenous people. Anderson reflects that “[t]his was not how empire was supposed to end. The British have liked to imagine that their retreat from imperial grandeur was dignified and orderly. Above all in Africa, the British tend to think they made a better job than anyone else” (3). But Anderson dismantles this view by exposing the colonialist’s extreme violations of human rights. Guy Arnold (1974) in *Kenyatta and the Politics of Kenya* points out that colonialism was an investment for the economy of Britain. He argues that

[m]ost commentators, even those who defend colonialism, have admitted that it was profitable. The American Negley Farson says: “Colonialism should be looked at for exactly what it is; a money-making business...’ The theme of Kenya’s profitability and value to the colonial power was established early in the century: Sir Charles Eliot, the British Commissioner for East African Protectorate from 1901 to 1904, claimed that he had no illusions about nor interests in civilizing missions: ‘The interior of the Protectorate is a white man’s country, and it is mere hypocrisy not to admit that white interests must be paramount, and the main object of our policy should be to found a white colony (35).

With the observations of Anderson and Arnold, Macdonald’s nostalgic views of colonialism are dismantled. It becomes obvious that colonialism was not a system that was benefiting the indigenous people of Kenya, but an inhumane project meant to profit London as it impoverished Nairobi economically, socially, and culturally.

The book begins with a speech titled “The Fruits of Life”. This speech was delivered on 20th Oct. 1964 during the very first celebration of what was then known as Kenyatta Day. It was delivered on radio and television. The speech outlines Kenyatta’s contribution to the building of Kenya and the place of Africa in the global imaginaries. Kenyatta states that the day “reminds me very vividly of all the phases and milestones of more than forty years of service, dedicated to freedom and the dignity of Africa, and the Pan-African ideals” (1). He also emphasizes the fact that the struggle for freedom was a just one because all human beings “have the right to be free” (1). The fruits of life which are implied in this speech are the benefits of the struggle, that the struggle has finally borne fruits.

The second speech in the text is titled “Dawn of the Republic”. The speech is anchored on Kenya’s attainment of internal self-government which happened on June 1st, 1963. This is also the time when Kenyatta came up with the national motto and rallying-cry “Harambee” (which calls upon people to “pull together”, or work in unity for the development of their country). The new slogan replaced the earlier one “Uhuru!” through which African nationalists demanded for freedom from colonialism. In essence, the new leaders after colonialism felt threatened that the citizens in discontent may use the same slogan against them. So for the sake of containing dissident voices, Kenyatta invents a new slogan which completely submerges the “uhuru” slogan. His argument is “never again must we say that we want our freedom” (22). According to Kenyatta, it was “uhuru” era. But Jaramogi Oginga Odinga in *Not Yet Uhuru* contended the idea that Kenya had achieved freedom. It had only been the change of guard.

The recurrent theme in the “Dawn of the Republic” that Kenyatta constantly addresses is unity and peaceful reconstruction of the lives of the African people after the departure of the British colonialist. For the purpose of unity, as the editor innocently portrays it, Kenyatta goes ahead to rebuke the opposition using tough sentiments.

Apart from rallying the citizens to work in unity with his government, Kenyatta also urges them to make Kenya example “to Africa and the world of how people of different origins can come together—as citizens of one country—to build a peaceful nation” (11). By so doing, the speaker demonstrates that he understands the great task before him. He shows that his leadership of the country is significant not only to the citizens of Kenya, but even to the rest of the world.

The third speech is titled “Federation, the Road Ahead”. It has short remarks that Kenyatta made on several occasions in reference to the matter of East Africa federation. The additional speeches cover a period of eighteen months. They were delivered in different places in Kenya, particularly in the parliament, in Meru, in Githunguri, and in different rallies in Nairobi. This was in a way an attempt to assure people on the grassroots that their president was working towards uniting Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. In most of the utterances, Kenyatta devoted much time in speaking about the need for an East African Federation. He however changes the tone in the early 1964 when he starts giving excuses as to why it was nearly impossible for the three countries to federate. Eventually, his statements reveal that he was not ready to let Kenya federate with Uganda and Tanganyika.

In the speeches under the title “Back to the Land”, Kenya underpins the significance of land to the prosperity of Kenya’s economy. The main speech is “Back to the Land” which was delivered on 11th September 1964, but the editor includes in the same title other speeches that Kenyatta made while addressing the issue of agriculture as the major resource for Kenya’s future. This speech was made more popular through a song “Mzee aKasema” by John Mwale which reminds people that the elder (the wise leader) said people should go back to their lands and engage in agriculture. John Mwale is also the singer of “Shirikisho la Afrika”, the federation of Africa, in which he lauds Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere and Milton Obote 1 for uniting Africa. This act of

turning presidential utterances into song in a way helped the citizens to memorize what their leader expected of them.

In this animated speech that was made a great song, Kenyatta asserted that “our greatest asset in Kenya is our land” (60). He stated that the people of Kenya fought for their land from colonialists because “this is the heritage that we received from our forefathers. In land lies our salvation and survival” (60). He went on to condemn relatives who move to the city just to be a burden to their family members instead of being productive on the lands that they own back in the rural areas. By insisting that men who were in the urban areas in search of jobs yet they had land lying fallow in their homes were a disgrace to their manhood, Kenyatta helped to influence people’s perceptions and thus stir up the economical development of the country.

In a fable that Jomo Kenyatta published in 1938, one gets a glimpse into his worldview. In the fable titled “You can Fool People for a Time, but not forever”, he expresses his beliefs when it comes to the relationship between Africans and Europeans during colonialism, a kind of relationship saturated with hypocrisy and dominance over the black people. This fable was published in 1938, fourteen years before the Mau Mau Revolt which took place from 1952 to 1955. In the fable, the narrator tells of Elephant who was escaping from a heavy thunderstorm and sought for help from Man who had built a hut on the edge of a forest. Man welcomes elephant in his house on humanitarian grounds hoping that after the storm elephant would go away. But elephant chooses to evict man from his own house saying “[m]y dear good friend, your skin is harder than mine, and there is not enough room for both of us, you can afford to remain in the rain while I am protecting my delicate skin from the hailstorm”(8). Man stayed in the rain as he sought for help from the King of the Jungle so as to resolve the matter

diplomatically. This reveals the invasion of Africa by the empire (Europe), and its subsequent evictions of black people from their (black people's) ancestral lands.

In order to solve the dispute, the King of the Jungle formed a commission of inquiry in which he appointed curious members. The narrator says

[t]he Commission was duly appointed. It comprised: (1) Mr. Rhinoceros; (2) Mr. Buffalo; (3) Mr. Alligator; (4) The Rt. Hon. Mr. Fox to act as chairman; and (5) Mr. Leopard to act as Secretary to the Commission. The man asked that one of his kind be included on the Commission, but was assured that none of his kind was educated enough to understand the intricacy of jungle law, and that the members of the Commission were God-chosen and would execute their business with justice (8).

This commission of inquiry discriminated against mankind and favoured the animal kingdom. Elephant alleged that Man's hut was unoccupied and the hurricane threatened to demolish it and he felt the need to protect the interest of man by filling it up completely. The commission of inquiry considered Man's lack of appreciation a sign of backwardness that is common among his kind. The verdict they gave favoured elephant and man was expected to build another hut. In this case, Kenyatta highlights the mundane justifications that colonialists held onto while scrambling for Africa. One of the things that they held onto was that the African was backward, primitive, uneducated. They saw a need therefore, to invade, conquer and subdue them, and rob them of their livelihoods—land, dignity, and life.

Kenyatta shows that the Kikuyu are very resilient since they choose civilized ways of existence by moving away from the lands that had been robbed from them. But the settlers' insatiable thirst for land stalks the black people wherever they go. The narrator says Man built huts and all of them were occupied until all the members of the commission were well housed. He then

remembered that there's nothing that treads the earth that cannot be trapped. Kenyatta ends the tale as follows:

So the man built a big hut, and soon the lords of the jungle came and occupied the big hut. The man shut them in and set the hut on fire and all perished. The man returned home saying: "Peace is costly, but it's worth the expense (8).

From this fable which is drawn from Kikuyu folklore, we get an idea of Jomo Kenyatta's desires for liberation through a violent resistance against the colonialist invaders. He is not like Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King (jnr.) when it comes to fighting for land and liberation, at least as depicted in the fable. Kenyatta believed in trapping and setting the lords of the jungle on fire. The colonialists here are depicted as the lords of the jungle because they had no human right to invade other peoples' territories and establish themselves as rulers over the inhabitants of the land.

This narrative centers the emotive land issue. Land in Kenyatta's speeches is imagined as a refuge for humanity. Guy notes that "[i]n a rural society where a few acres can keep a whole family, land is the symbol of life" and that the Europeans' "arrival and the fact that they took for themselves vast tracts of land created the problems and bitterness which dominated the whole colonial era" (195). In the event of displacement from the vital resource, the narrator in Kenyatta's narrative shows that violence will be one of the major means of asserting the land ownership rights of the black people. The Europeans had illegally occupied land that belonged to Africans and settling the dispute through diplomacy had completely failed and even shown that prejudice was core in the dispossession of the heritage of Africans. Action was necessary, as the narrative shows. The people who had been displaced had to fight for their survival. They had to

burn the invaders so that they may live in peace. This line of thinking was also common among the founders of the Mau Mau Revolt fourteen years after the publication of the narrative.

The hut in the fable symbolizes land and other resources in Africa which were exploited by Europeans during colonialism and even during slavery. Land was the major cause of violent revolts against colonialism. The white settlers who established the White Highlands and sent all the black people to the “native camps” angered Africans. The settlement schemes were the most fertile grounds while the native camps were infertile and crowded. The Africans who had ancestral attachment to land found the European occupation a serious violation of their humanity.

The fable composed by Kenyatta expresses the inevitability of a violent retaliation against the injustice. Kenyatta also shows that African kindness, hospitality, and resilience were mistaken by the Europeans for backwardness. The idea of “African backwardness” made the colonialists reason that they were justified to treat Africans as a people inferior to them. In the narrative, Kenyatta shows that the whites used the jungle law while the Africans at all time kept their humanity until it was absolutely necessary to fight for their lives and their dignity.

Kenyatta’s narrative was motivated by actual happenings. The settler, the colonial masters, and the colonial lawyers were the culprits of the injustices against Man. These were the enemies to be trapped in a big house and be burnt alive. Bruce Berman (1996) in “Ethnography as Politics, Politics as Ethnography: Kenyatta, Malinowski, and the Making of Facing Mount Kenya” discusses the circumstances under which Kenyatta’s land report was dismissed. He states that

[t]he report of the Kenya Land Commission, issued in 1934, dismissed Kenyatta’s and the KCA’s representative role. Before a group of three dubious whites—a white judge, a retired colonial official, and a settler—they found their testimony and memorandum undermined by the numerous inconsistencies and outright contradictions in the testimony

of other Kikuyu witnesses and members of other groups, and ultimately ignored as representing only the biased and contentious interests of certain segments of a contentious and faction-ridden people (317).

According to Berman, Kenyatta was involved in the diplomatic efforts to solve the land impasse. The narrative therefore captures Kenyatta's experiences with the land commissions in his role as the messenger of the Kikuyu people.

In "The Challenge to Apartheid", Kenyatta addresses the plight of black South Africans. He reckons that Kenya's freedom is useless if the black people continue to be enslaved in South Africa. He also promises to support the black people in the south to salvage their freedom. His disappointment with the racist policies is manifested when he turns to the Boers living in Kenya and says: "There are Boers who are enjoying themselves in this country. Not one of them has condemned the South African apartheid policy. We shall condemn these people in the same way as we condemn South Africa" (47). In the same speech, Kenyatta emphasizes racial harmony in Kenya by urging citizens to be an example to the world that people of different races can live together in harmony.

What stands out in this speech is Kenyatta's recognition of the threat that apartheid South Africa posed to the peace of the entire world. He notes that "South Africa, so long as the current undemocratic system prevails there, represents a threat to the peace of the continent, and indeed to the stability of the whole world" (48). This observation underscores the need for humanity to exist in mutual understanding and tolerance despite of race. But since South Africa was inventing barbaric laws with the aim of rendering the black people sub-human, Kenyatta noticed that it was setting a dangerous precedence on the African continent and even to the rest of the world. By

condemning this evil through a presidential rhetoric, Kenyatta contributes significantly to the fight against racism and oppression of the black people on the continent.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter focused on discussing Kenyatta's selected speeches and attempted to underscore the contribution such utterances had on the Kenyan nation. This chapter helps us to see Kenyatta the man through the ideals that he shared with his citizens through presidential rhetoric. By discussing the issues highlighted in his speeches, I aimed at deepening the comprehension of the presidential rhetoric of Kenyatta. Furthermore, since Kenya stands prominently in the rhetoric of Kenyatta, I found it necessary to trace its evolution from the colonial governance, through the founding political leaders who were fresh from the ravages of war for the liberation of their motherland, to the new dispensation where the country prides itself with a better constitution and enlightened citizens. It is always important to look over one shoulder to view what has been left behind in the journey of life before soldiering on into the uncertain future. Such an action helps one to avoid stumbling on the hurdles that may have been disastrous in the years when one was a toddler.

CHAPTER THREE: RHETORICAL ASPECTS IN KENYATTA'S SELECTED SPEECHES

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on the tools that Jomo Kenyatta employs in his speeches in order to persuade the citizens he governs to follow his arguments. Having already mentioned that political rhetoric is complex due to the way in which the speaker may keep jumping from one idea to another, I endeavour to explore patterns that emerge in the selected speeches. Roy Sellars (2006) posits that rhetoric

is not so much a question of finding the right words (though that, invention, is also part of rhetoric) as of realizing that there is nothing outside context, a realization that can be upsetting or liberating, depending on one's point of view (another part of rhetoric).(59, brackets in original).

In as much as the invention of better persuasive aspects is crucial, political rhetoric is grounded in context. Kenyatta employs several rhetorical aspects to persuade his listeners. In most cases, the listeners already understand the backdrop of the ideas he is advancing. The speeches under study are set in a period immediately after colonialism and Kenyatta's listeners are every now and then told of the struggle. He uses promises and threats, plain folk talk, attacks on the motives of his opponents, and slogans to rally people to his side.

3.2 Promises and Threats

In the speech "The Fruits of Life", Kenyatta promises Kenyans better living standards which they never experienced during the struggle for independence. Hugh Rank (1980) observes that promises and threats are rhetorical aspects. According to Rank,

Politicians might promise "more jobs," "greater opportunities," "safer streets," "increased Social Security benefits," "stronger military capability," "better government," "greater efficiency," "faster bus service," "greater prosperity," or "more responsive government."

Or, switching tactics slightly, the promises may be relief from the disadvantages: "lower taxes," "reduced inflation," "less wasteful," "lower crime rate," "fewer restrictions," "no more war," "lower unemployment," or "no nukes." (42).

The electorate listens to political rhetoric with the hope that his/her life is going to be improved if he carefully selects the best political leader. And in cases where the political leader is already in power, the electorate listens with the hope that the leadership of the country is headed in the right direction. The issues highlighted by Rank are quite pertinent to the entire population: jobs, security, military power, and government efficiency.

In the mentioned speech, Kenyatta states that his government has established the Africanization programme in order "to maintain an efficient and effective machine of Government by and for Kenya's people" (3). The Africanization programme refers to the conscious efforts that Kenyatta's government puts in place to ensure that the employment and other leadership positions initially held by the colonialists and settlers are occupied by the indigenous Kenyans. This promise, given during the day that commemorates the struggle for independence, is an effective rhetorical aspect. The promise goes a long way in persuading the people to believe in the governance of Kenyatta.

In "The Fruits of Life", outlines the major milestones that his government has made in just a short period of time. This rhetoric is meant to inspire confidence in the nation that he is leading. For instance, he outlines the privileges that the black people have been given by his government when he remarks that

[n]early all the high appointments in the Civil Service are now held by Africans. In the Police force, this process will shortly extend to the rank of Inspector-General. The Kenya Army will soon be commanded by an African and many other African officers—up to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel – have successfully completed training to take their rightful place. We have founded the Kenya air Force, and a Kenya Navy will be formally established before long. (3).

The promise on building a stronger military power makes his audience to understand the efforts that their leader is putting in place for their nation. However, one can note that Kenyatta is finding it very difficult to let the colonialists, or rather the expatriates, leave.

Since Kenyatta is no longer in detention, he finds waiting easy for the people he leads. If the colonialist would still have been in leadership, the rhetoric would have been that the Africans cannot wait any more. But in this case, whatever the people were promised before independence is to be approached diplomatically. Kenyatta argues that

Africanization has not been, and cannot be, an automatic programme based on colour or race. We need at many levels not only talent and loyalty but also experience. This is why training schemes have been instituted, and must be continued, to equip our people for posts of high responsibility, and give them opportunity to gain the maturity that comes from experience. (3).

This is a well thought out argument. The Africans who celebrated when *uhuru* dawned are now realizing that they will have to wait longer. Though the speaker emphasizes the idea that the fruits of the struggle had ripened, and that everyone was going to get a share, he cleverly hides the fact that the fruits are not for everyone. Kenyatta manages to hide the truth in yet another promise of training institutions that he claims will equip the Africans with the maturity and

experience required to handle top jobs. What this means, essentially, is that the colonialists will continue to dominate the economy, the security units, and the military. In other words, not much has changed.

In his rhetoric, Kenyatta also used threats. A threat, just as a promise, is also a rhetorical aspect. It is used to persuade the listeners to follow the line of thought of the speaker. In this case, the targeted audience is presented with expected consequences if they fail to do what the speaker says. The audience is therefore expected to be persuaded on the account of the threats of the speaker. Kenyatta in his speech to the opposition in parliament states that

I am rather worried that the opposition is increasingly tending to fail to appreciate its responsibilities and duties to Kenya. There is emerging a tendency towards ‘opposition for the sake of opposition’. Negative and destructive opposition can only do harm to democracy, and – what is more – it can quickly lead to the destruction of the privileges and rights of the opposition itself. This is not a threat, but a word of advice. (12).

Because the speaker already understands that he is threatening the opposition, he blatantly claims that he is offering a piece of advice. However, he has already stated that if the opposition continues with its work of putting the executive in check, it will be abolished all the same. The argument advanced is weak, but the opposition must be persuaded to follow it.

3.3 Attacks on Opponents’ Motives

In the selected speeches of Jomo Kenyatta, I was also able to identify the rhetoric aspect of attacking the opponents’ motives. Hugh Rank argues:

[t]hus the most intense personal attacks often focus on motives; even good deeds may be attacked for having ulterior motives, for being done for "the wrong reason," especially that of opportunism (personal ambition) and favoritism ("partisan politics"). Attackers can raise suspicions, cast doubts, or create misgivings in nearly any situation simply by attacking or questioning motives. The rhetorical question becomes a powerful weapon: "What's the real reason he did that?" "Did she really mean that?" It's a tough attack to fend off. (40).

In political rhetoric, casting doubts on the motives of one's opponent is detrimental. The opponent is left struggling to change the perception of the people against him.

In order to undermine the role of the opposition which was coming out strongly, Kenyatta attacks their motive. The members of the opposition party Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) cannot fully put away the tag that has been imposed on them. This idea of stirring suspicion over one's motive is a rhetorical aspect that certain speakers use to persuade their listeners. Kenyatta on 13th August 1964, while arguing for a one-party state, states that

[i]t was only after KANU was formed that several dissidents formed a splinter group, which was later called KADU. It cannot be imagined that these conceited, grasshopper politicians formed their new group because of their belief in majority rule, democracy and the rule of law. (25).

By stating authoritatively that the opposition had a different agenda other than ensuring democracy is upheld in governance, Kenyatta casts doubt on the motives of the entire opposition. He thus drives a rift between the opposition party and the citizens, rendering it irrelevant. In his speech, he states that his party KANU is the one that understands the plight of the majority and

Therefore multiparty system should be done away with. This rhetorical aspect is used to persuade the members of the public to embrace the move to kill multiparty system completely.

3.4 Common man

In most political speeches, the speakers claim to be of humble beginnings, as people who have known the pangs of poverty and helplessness in the face of diseases and corruption. Such claims make them very popular among the electorates or the people they are serving at the time. Hugh Rank discusses this idea of plain folk in detail when he argues that politicians and advertisers are benefit promisers and that the audience hopes to benefit more from the person who understands their problems better. Rank says that

[p]oliticians (and advertisers) are benefit-promisers. We, their audiences, are benefit-seekers. It's not a one-sided affair; it's a mutual relationship in which both roles have their own goals. As we sort out the various claims of persuaders, we should remain aware of this two-way transaction; these persuaders are not only seeking something from us, we are also seeking something from them. Again, the actual expressions used to claim benevolence will vary. At present, the fashionable words are "concerned," "interested," "caring." Most "plain folks" appeals ("peoples' choice," "common man," "one of us") have this element of the persuader as being one with the audience.(40, brackets in original).

The two-way transaction that Rank refers to is mostly in terms of expectations may not translate into actions.

When addressing the nation on Kenyatta Day, 20th October 1964, Kenyatta claims that he speaks to his citizens as a man, not just as a Prime Minister. He says,

[a]nd I want to speak to you all, today, not just as a Prime Minister, but as a man. For although -- by your wish -- I am the leader of my country, the recollections of this Day in all your hearts and minds means more than just a tribute to a title. (1).

In this case, Kenyatta lays claim on being an ordinary person, someone who never sought greatness, but one who greatness was bestowed unto by the people. This rhetorical aspect enables him to endorse the day named in his honour as a choice of the people, but not his own excesses.

3.5 Slogans

Political rhetoric is at many times punctuated by slogans which convey the mission of the particular party or group in a tacit manner. Considering Kenya's elections in 2013, one notes that much energy was invested in search for the most appropriate slogans. For instance, the Jubilee Alliance came up with the slogan "KusemanaKutenda¹"persuading the electorate to cast their votes in favour of the party that would deliver all the promises they have made to the people. During his first term campaigns for the presidency, President Barack Obama of the United States of America used the slogan "Yes We Can." In only three words, he is able to persuade millions of America to believe in him since he expresses the hope that the country needs in order to move forward.

Slogans convey patriotism, hope for the country, commitment, or integrity among other ideals. Rank discusses slogans as being part of the rhetorical aspects in political rhetoric. He avers that

[i]n popular slogans, the claim is "ready, willing, and able." The most common way to claim competency is to emphasize experience in similar situations, past achievements or accomplishments: "look at the record...proven ability..." Presidential candidates, for example, stress parallel experiences; former state governors and corporation presidents will emphasize executive duties in organizing and managing; ex-legislators, ex-military

¹ Kiswahili for "saying and performing", which implies that every promise they have made will be fulfilled.

leaders, and ex-diplomats all stress their particular insider status ("know-how," "knowing the ropes," "inner workings," etc.).(39, brackets in original).

In slogans, the politicians think hard in order to capture their most profound beliefs in a word or a shortest phrase possible. The more creative and simple the slogan is, the more popular it becomes.

Jomo Kenyatta in a speech on 1st June 1963, the first Madaraka Day² sees the need to unleash a slogan that has become his memory. He states that

[a]s we participate in pomp and circumstance, and as we make merry at this time, remember this: we are relaxing before the toil that is to come. We must work harder to fight our enemies – ignorance, sickness and poverty. I therefore give you the call: HARAMBEE! Let us all work hard together for our country, Kenya. (7, emphasis in original).

The word *Harambee* is a rhetorical aspect that helps Kenyatta to consolidate his audience. In his speech, he explains that the word is a prompting to all the citizens unite and work for the development of their country. In just one word, the people are persuaded to follow the ideas of their leader. This shows that slogans are very powerful rhetorical tools in politics. Even if all the words that the politician uses are forgotten, the slogan remains memorable to the listeners.

²A national holiday in Kenya when people commemorate the attainment of internal self-governance, every 1st June 1963. The word *madaraka* is Kiswahili for "promotion", literally

3.6 Conclusion

Rhetorical aspects are very crucial in advancing certain arguments in a political arena. These aspects may not be strong enough when approached from an intellectual point of view, but to the masses that attend rallies they are very powerful. Most of the aspects are fallacies or appeals. For instance, the attack on the motive of one's motive at many times is an ad hominem fallacy while the plain folk claim is an appeal. A critical view into these rhetorical aspects exposes the political challenges that Kenya faced during the early stages of nationalism. I note that there were shaky intellectual investments in the arguments that Kenyatta was advancing. For instance, by belittling the opposition and its leaders, he caused a rift among communities that align themselves according to their political affiliations. Further, his arguments in establishing a one-party state are dictatorial rather than rational. Even though Kenyatta makes a claim that every move he makes is for the benefit and prosperity of Kenya as a nation, I still can read his selfish interest in the move that he makes.

CHAPTER FOUR: THEMES IN JOMO KENYATTA'S RHETORIC

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the major ideas that can be found in the selected speeches of Jomo Kenyatta. The chapter presents an evaluation of Kenyatta's political pronouncements and the themes that they articulate. The major ideas, which include freedom, unity in Kenya and in Africa among others are highlighted and discussed.

4.2 The Theme of Freedom in "The Fruits of Life"

The title of this speech is very persuasive. In the speech, Kenyatta states that the time had come for the African continent to enjoy the fruits of freedom which they had fought for in a period of forty years. By stating that the then Kenyatta Day [which in the new constitution is Heroes Day meant to celebrate all Kenyans who have done extraordinary things for their country] was dedicated to the freedom and dignity of Africa, Kenyatta aspires to expand his territories from a national leader to an international leader. The speaker justifies the fact that the great day bears his name because he directly contributed to the struggle for freedom in Kenya.

As much as Kenyatta wishes to situate the "fruits of life" into the achievements of the Kenyan people and Africans at large, he leaves a suspicion that a time had come for him to enjoy the fruits of life as a person. Kenyatta says:

I am proud to think back on the part that I played in this struggle. Much was direct contribution. But it gladdened me to know, through a long period of anxieties and sufferings, that my conception of duty—to this country and its people—inspired and upheld others, when I could not be there (1).

It is true that Jomo Kenyatta was detained and he suffered in the hand of the colonialist. He was a spokesman of the Kikuyu Central Association and therefore he was the target of the failed

colonial state which used him as a scapegoat to all their inadequacies. So, one can read more in the statement that it was time to eat the fruits of life. This assumption becomes credible when Kenyatta amasses wealth for himself and his close loyalists at the expense of the people he claimed to fight for. This is made clear when Daniel Branch highlights the ‘Kamau for Smith’ idea that JM Kariuki decried:

Kariuki’s most severe censure of the government was reserved for its land policy. Recalling ‘the determination with which we fought and the death of many people in Kenya’ during the struggle for independence, he argued that independence had been about more than ‘a mere change-over or substitution in ownership’ of land. Rather, he and other Kenyans had expected independence to be accompanied by a more systematic overhaul of the land tenure system. The ownership of vast tracts of land by individuals, while thousands of others were without land, was ‘socially and morally unjust and unacceptable’ in the colonial period. [...] ‘It is socially unacceptable and unjust today. It is wrong now. I believe firmly that substituting Kamau for Smith, Odongo for Jones and Kiplangat for Keith does not solve what the gallant fighters of our Uhuru considered an imposed and undesirable social injustice’ (108).

These sentiments show that nothing really changed. It was a mere change of guard. The fruits of life were reserved for the chosen group. As much as Kenyatta in his speech insists that freedom is sweet, that freedom is a free gift for humanity, he curtails the same freedom from the citizens of his country. In what Branch calls “the Kikuyu ascendancy” (98), it becomes clear that the fruits were not for all the people regardless of tribe as he implies in his utterances. Branch notes that by 1971 nine ministerial positions with key portfolios in Kenyatta’s government were Kikuyu, “four of the eight provincial commissioners were Kikuyu. [...] Nearly half of the 222 African highest earners in the civil service in 1970 and 1971 were Kikuyu” (99). Furthermore,

“in the foreign service, key diplomatic postings were reserved for members of the ascendancy” (99). The higher education and the army were also drastically populated by “members of the ascendancy”. In this case, one notes that nothing really changed, and therefore the fruits of were merely a rhetorical aspect that never translated into reality for many ordinary Kenyans. The fruits of life were meant for Kenyatta himself and his inner circle.

Daniel Branch highlights an excerpt from Kenyatta’s speech on 27th June 1971 in which Kenyatta unrepentantly declared that he was not committed to treating all the Kenyan communities with equality. In the speech (qtd by Branch), Kenyatta states:

Some want to tell us that Kenya belongs to all the people. Granted, I know that much. But I have a question to ask: when we were shedding blood, some languished in prison and some suffering in the forests, fighting for uhuru, where were the bloody other?...If you want honey, bear the sting of the bee...(102).

These statements, though directed to Kenyatta’s critics and opponents at the time, reveals the position of Kenyatta’s inner circle and his meditations. These utterances that counter the idea of the “fruits of life” reveal Kenyatta’s real beliefs. By ‘othering’ other communities from the ‘honey’, which he initially referred to as ‘the fruits of life’, he ended up dismantling the whole idea of freedom as was conceived by the citizens who celebrated *uhuru* with much jubilation.

In the opening remarks of “The Fruits of Life”, Kenyatta uses the common rhetorical aspects to reach out to the people of Kenya. He cleverly sells the idea of naming the great day for the struggle for independence after himself but still persuades people not to see it as a tribute to himself but to the nation. In a democracy, the national day should have reflected the diversity of the nation and also encompassed all the other tribes which did play a major role in the liberation of the country. Since Kenyatta was the kingpin of the Kikuyu people, he believed that his name

was a brand that was synonymous to Kenya as a state. Furthermore, he had embarked on the colonial naming spree, where there was Queen way, he named it Mama Ngina, where there was King George's Hospital, he renamed it Kenyatta National Hospital, and all this was done without any objectiveness or sensitivity to other communities in the country. He states that

[o]n this Day that bears my name, I want to speak to you all without formality, in your homes or in community centre's or wherever you might be. And I want to speak to you all, today, not just as a Prime Minister, but as a man. For although—by your wish—I am the leader of my country, the recollection of this Day in all your hearts and minds means more than just a tribute to a title. It reaches back in time. And it reminds me very vividly of all the phases and milestones of more than forty years of work and service, dedicated to the freedom and the dignity of Africa, and to Pan-African ideals (1).

A presidential speech is always formal. It is accompanied with the flag and a presidential podium and it is carefully relayed to the nation through the major media channels. However, in order to appeal to the masses, Kenyatta declares that he is speaking informally. This in itself is not wrong at all, but I am pointing out a rhetorical aspect. So as to win the hearts of as many people as possible, the speaker alleges that whatever he is saying on a public day is like a friendly talk to friends in kind. The rhetorical aspect here prepares the ground for the audience to embrace whatever message the speaker will be conveying to them. The aspect washes down all the reverence that citizens hold for a person in power so that they can listen with interest and attentiveness. But at the same time, the aspect elevates the speaker in the eyes of the citizens who imagine their leader as a humble person thus entrenching the trope of the savior who was humble all his life till death even though he was the son of God.

The other point worth noting in the introductory remarks is the claim that Kenyatta is speaking as “a man” and not as a Prime Minister. In this case, Kenyatta uses the usual presidential rhetoric of identification in order to achieve his ends. “Man” is the opposite of master. The master owns man in the same way he (the master) owns lands and horses and vehicles. The idea of master and man is made clearer in Leo Tolstoy’s short story “Master and Man” in which man is the peasant who does everything that his master commands even when he knows it may cost his life. A Prime Minister is not a common man; he is not among the ordinary people, the peasants; he is among the masters. The status of the Prime Minister is different from that of the ordinary people. However, for the purposes of making the masses welcome his message, he has to show that he is part of them and that he also understands the ordinary people’s struggles and misfortunes. He therefore quickly connects with the people when he states that he is speaking to them as a man and not as a Prime Minister.

In order to incorporate all the citizens in Kenya and foster acceptance of the day named after him, Kenyatta states that the day is not just a tribute to a title. Yet after Kenyatta Day came Moi Day when Daniel Moi succeeded him. Kenyatta alleges that the day is meant to celebrate the toil against colonialism of the entire continent of Africa. The nature of the celebrations that followed Kenyatta Day demonstrated that it was not really about Africa, neither about Kenya, but the honour of a few individuals presumed to have engineered the liberation of the country.

Still in the opening remarks, Kenyatta claims that he is a leader of the country by the wish of the people. This statement goes a long way to remind the people that Kenya had the leadership of the people—that it was at that time a democracy. During this founding time, the nation had just

woken up from the brutal inhumane governance imposed on them by the British Empire. Therefore the idea that the citizens had come of age to choose who should govern them, and in - Particular a fellow African means a lot to them. The phrase is a rhetorical aspect that is very effective in enhancing the reception of the speech.

In the speech, Kenyatta expresses his belief that the war for freedom was justified. Kenyatta credits Mau Mau for enhancing the “fruits of life” which in this case refers to freedom. He argues in the speech that “all the noble Charters and Declarations of history, and all the Constitutions that enshrine human rights, have sprung from one paramount truth: that men in their spirit and their striving, under the law, have the right to be free” (1). This indeed is a noble cause that the Mau Mau was fighting for. It remains a paramount truth as Kenyatta expresses it.

Grenville Byford in “The Wrong War” in Foreign Affairs, Vol. 81, No. 4 (Jul. - Aug., 2002) labels the Mau Mau war under the wrong wars in the world. For one, he states that the Mau Mau, though armed with a noble cause lacked the support of eighty percent of the Kenyan population hence it had no legitimacy. He also observes that about one hundred settlers were killed in grisly fashion together with about two thousand British soldiers. In return, over eleven thousand “rebels” were killed. Byford’s argument is worth quoting at length. He states as follows:

Looking at means rather than ends, however, the Mau Mau are on weaker ground. The British had already demonstrated in India that they were willing to leave their colonial possessions without the threat of violence, and some progress had already been made in bringing Africans into the colonial government. Alternatives to terror were available; Mau Mau leader Jomo Kenyatta was no Gandhi. And the British army, although it was fighting for a less defensible cause, generally behaved well. Some might therefore, on

Balance; detect a moral equivalence between the two sides in Kenya. Usually a correlation exists between the morality of ends and means. People who pursue noble goals tend to be scrupulous about how they achieve them, whereas unscrupulous people and rotten causes often go together. This fact generally makes it possible to have a sensible discussion about political morality without distinguishing clearly between the acceptability of means and ends. The case of terrorism, however, is often an exception and can force us to make difficult moral judgments--weighing the relative merits, for example, of those who pursue a noble end through questionable or downright horrendous means and those who pursue a dubious aim with great integrity.

One thing that comes out in these statements is that Jomo Kenyatta cannot be compared to Mahatma Gandhi in any way. In other words, Byford states that Kenyatta was a violent person who believed that the only way to resolve conflict was through violence. He at the same time states that the Mau Mau is currently glorified but apart from the end, the means was absolutely wrong. This is a matter that is very controversial.

Kenyatta tries to involve all communities in the Mau Mau war. This is something that has been propagated even by Ngugi wa Thiong'o in his novels when he celebrates the Kikuyu for liberating the country. In order to show that freedom was for all and not for a few, Jomo Kenyatta remarks that

[t]here have been murmurs here in Kenya about the part played by one set of people, or another set of people, in the struggle for Uhuru. There has been talk of the contribution made, or refused, by this group or that. There has been—at times—vindictive comment,

and a finger of scorn has been pointed at some selected race, or group, or tribe. All this is unworthy of our future here (2).

In uttering these words on such an important day, Kenyatta was attempting to make all the other tribes apart from the Kikuyu to share in the celebration of the day. The fight over who actually fought for freedom was only divisive and at that moment it was not healthy for the nation. For every citizen to realize the “fruits of life”, the founding father of the nation had a duty to consolidate all the tribes including tribes that had lived as arch-enemies ever since.

However, the Mau Mau issue could later on be used for exclusion of ‘the other’, communities that were not part of Mau Mau. Branch observes that after the assassination of Tom Mboya, Kenyatta turned to oathing “over 300, 000 people transported to Gatundu” (85) through 1969. Part of the oath read “if any tribe tries to set itself against the Kikuyu, we must fight them in the same way that we died fighting the British settlers” (85). In this case, one can point out that Mau Mau was no longer a unifying factor, but something used to exclude and subdue the other politically and economically.

Rhetoric is used by leaders to stir the development of the economy. Leaders can use their vantage positions to speak about what citizens should do in order to better their economies. Economical prosperity increases the chances of people living together in harmony. When there are enough resources in a nation, chances of conflicts are minimal. Understanding this, Kenyatta uses rhetoric to unite the people through labour. In order to make the citizens know that freedom was not just about being free from the colonialist, Kenyatta in this speech reminds citizen to work towards self-reliance. He states that

[b]ut I must warn the country now that, in the long term, the prosperity and development of Kenya will depend on the efforts of the people themselves. We must work hard and constantly towards the greatest possible degree of self-reliance. We cannot and must not always rely on outside aid. (5).

In this case, Kenyatta reviews the idea of freedom. He demonstrates that political freedom is not enough; it must be accompanied by economical freedom. In this plea to the citizens, the speaker enables the people to understand that they had a role to play in liberating themselves from economical slavery. He dismisses the idea of depending on aids from the big economies that had colonized them. He makes the people know that economical independence is part and parcel of freedom. These utterances stir the development of the country since the citizens choose to work hard. The citizens take the words of their leaders seriously, and therefore having been persuaded through rhetoric to work towards self-reliance, the citizens take it seriously.

4.3 The Theme of Unity

a) Unity in Kenya as expressed in “Dawn of the Republic”

The word Harambee is synonymous with Kenyatta. This is a slogan that means “let’s pull together”. The spirit of Harambee is the call to rally the people of Kenya together regardless of their ethnic orientations to work together in ensuring that they eradicate ignorance, sickness, and poverty. In the brief speech delivered on the 1st of June 1963 during the swearing in ceremony at the Prime Minister’s Office, at a time when Kenya had attained internal self-governance, Kenyatta urges the entire nation to move together towards independence. This was a time of great jubilation and there was hope that all the strife, and the tribulations of the people of Kenya (the black people) had come to an end. The “Harambee” slogan is a rhetorical aspect that is quite memorable. The audience finds it completely new and original. While contemplating on it, the

ideals intended by the speaker are imparted in the lives of the citizens. This finally translates to a national motto, one of the markers of national identity. In a sense, this helps one to note how rhetoric contributes to nationhood.

In order to restore trust in the people, Kenyatta uses presidential rhetoric to foster a sense of togetherness. Unity was paramount at that stage. Since the ethnic groups had fought against a common enemy—the colonialist, they had to come up with something that would ensure that they stood together. This unity was threatened by divisive politics and historical tribal animosity. Due to politics, some ethnic groups had a feeling that it was only a few tribes that were entitled to the benefits of freedom.

Through rhetoric, Kenyatta explores the idea of national unity deeply. He shows that unity is achieved after forgiveness and reconciliation. He recognizes that there had been racial hatred due to colonialism and exploitation. In a speech delivered on 3rd June 1963, Kenyatta gave a speech over radio in which he stated as follows:

I believe firmly that, if this country is to prosper, we must create a sense of togetherness, a national family hood. In Swahili, we express this by the word “ujamaa”, which can also be translated loosely as socialism.

We must bring all the communities of Kenya together, to build a unified nation. In this task, we shall make use of those attitudes of self-help, good neighbourliness and communal assistance, which are such an important feature of our traditional societies.

Where there has been racial hatred, it must be ended. Where there has been tribal animosity, it will be finished. Let us not dwell upon the bitterness of the past. I would rather we look to the future, to the good new Kenya, not the bad old days (8)

In this particular speech, Kenyatta foregrounds tribal animosity and racial hatred as hindrances to prosperity. The Indians who had established their businesses were still in the country and they needed assurance that they would be tolerated.

Some settlers such as Lord Delamere had decided to remain in Kenya and thus they needed assurance that they will be tolerated. This speech was also targeting international investors. When the president says that racial hatred must come to an immediate end, it is taken as law. Arnold observes that “Europeans who formerly condemned him have come to realize he is far more likely to look with favour upon their interests (whether settler or commercial) than any probable successor” (193). By advocating for racial and ethnic tolerance in his speeches, Kenyatta paves the way for unity in the country.

On the eve of Kenyatta’s departure to the Constitutional Conference in London, September 21st 1963, Kenyatta expressed his understanding of the fears of other tribes in Kenya who felt that their interests would not be taken into consideration by the government of the day. He stated categorically that “the KANU government is concerned with the welfare of all the people, regardless of their race or tribe”(13). By stating that the government understood the plight of all the people in the country, Kenyatta succeeds in fostering peace and unity. He succeeds in cultivating trust among the tribes that were not represented in the government of the day. He did also succeed in making the citizens to view him as a symbol of national unity but not just a representative of the Kikuyu’s welfare.

The setting of the statements concerning national harmony is very significant. Kenyatta chose a very important occasion to speak to Kenyans about unity. He was on the way to London in the quest for a constitution that would eventually recognize the black people of Kenya as a people. On a journey towards constitutional independence, Kenyatta succeeds in making the citizens see that he was committed to making Kenya a great nation. It is also at this moment that he reminds the people of the spirit of “harambee”. He calls on the people to remember that “[t]he new era that Kenya will enter as an independent nation—in the spirit of ‘harambee’—in December, is one which will call for dedication, hard work and unity. This is the challenge of the future”(13). In these remarks, it is obvious that Kenyatta was calling upon the people to believe him and to understand that he was committed to the duty of bettering the lives of all Kenyans during his tenure as the Prime Minister of Kenya and thereafter as the president.

The promise of the future in this speech is packaged in hope. Deborah Atwater in “Senator Barack Obama: The Rhetoric of Hope and the American Dream” views rhetoric as the communication of ideas and values. She observes that rhetoric is some kind of campaign of the speaker’s opinions and believes with the purpose of eliciting acceptance from others. In her study of Obama’s rhetoric of hope, Atwater notes as follows:

I am defining rhetoric of hope as the use of symbols to get Americans to care about this country, to want to believe in this country, to regain hope and faith in this country, and to believe that we are more alike than we are different with a common destiny and a core set of values. Rhetoric of hope also entails an important persuasion campaign. Senator Obama really wants more people to participate in the political process and ultimately to vote for him. If you only believe and have hope, then it really is possible for Senator

Barack Obama to be the first Black president elected to lead the most powerful country in the world (123).

Considering the important roles that hope plays, one realizes that it was Kenyatta's duty as the highest leader to make Kenyans hope for a great future after the departure of the colonialist. He wanted the people to care for their country; he wanted them to believe that they have a common destiny as a people. Kenyatta promises the citizens that the only challenge they will encounter in achieving the ultimate success as a nation will be "hard work, dedication, and unity". This makes the people to see great possibilities in the coming days of the nation. Through this particular presidential speech, Kenyatta succeeds in convincing the people that in the spirit of harambee, they will be able to overcome poverty, diseases, and ignorance.

A critical look in the state of affairs immediately after independence shows that unity was not as simplistic as Kenyatta put it in his speeches. He spoke as if the tribes were not a threat at all to the harmony of the young nation. He sidelined the greed of the people who were taking over the reins of power from the colonialist. Thandika Mkandawire (2005) observes that tribalism was one major threat to national unity and harmony. He argues that

[t]he questions that immediately arose after independence were: How does one govern societies in which ethnic identities are strong and tend to glide easily into tribalism? And what state structure is appropriate for development? The almost universal response in Africa was one-party rule. In its most idealized form, one-party rule would provide a common forum through which all groups would be heard (15).

Mkandawire's ideas foreground the immense challenges that leaders of a young nation faced. With forty-two tribes, most of which had lived in legendary acrimony, it seemed an insurmountable task for Kenyatta to bring about unity and harmony. Turning to one-party rule

does not necessarily show his commitment to bring about unity; it only shows that he was insecure with his time on the helm of the presidency. Furthermore, the one-party democracy was the way that many African leaders were going. Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana and Julius Nyerere in Tanzania had already adopted it.

Kenyatta only promises that the government was committed to put into consideration all the fears of other tribes. He asserts that “we must bring all communities of Kenya together, to build a unified nation” (8). But this rhetorical aspect of showing that he is committed to unity in the young nation does not bear much fruit. He does not even attempt to assure people that resources from the central government would be shared equally across the country. In fact, he unapologetically claims that “[w]hether people are KANU or KADU, and no matter to what tribe they belong, the Government knows only citizens. Development money will be allocated according to the needs of any part of Kenya” (9). This remark can be viewed as the spring of marginalization. This is because there were no parameters to determine the needs of different regions of Kenya except for the discretion of Jomo Kenyatta. In the end, his government marginalizes many parts of the country: the coast, North Eastern parts, and Eastern regions among others. The same government is also accused of historical injustices committed against particular communities.

If presidential rhetoric is anything to go by, such injustices as witnessed in Kenya would never have been committed. Kenyatta was constantly aware of the discontent among the people from other tribes in regard to his governance. On October 20th 1963, he assured that the people that the new constitution was the ultimate solution to anxiety and mistrust against the KANU leaders. He stated as follows:

I assure the country that the new constitution now provides a strong base for a united Kenya nation, within which everyone—regardless of tribe or race—shall feel safe and secure. Within this State, there will be no room for domination, but there will be ample room for everyone to participate and contribute towards our efforts for nation building.

There is no room for autonomy or secession. Such talk is idle, and will lead nowhere. Why should anyone deny the Kalenjin, Masai or Coastal tribes the right to be part of the new Kenya nation? Why should anyone try to deny these tribes the right to participate in and contribute towards the exciting task of creating a new nation (14).

Despite the constitution that seemed to provide a fair treatment of all the people of Kenya, there existed fears among some tribes that the government would not give them a good share of the national resources. Today when we list down the marginalized regions in Kenya, the coastal tribes take the lead. In other words, Kenyatta understood that the fears of the people from the coast were real, but he only dismissed the pleas for consideration of the coast through some speeches.

This shows that the presidential rhetoric does not always lead to action, it is always meant to portray the president as a caring individual. It helps the citizens to view their leader as someone who understands their plight and one who is ready to help solve them. However, the purpose of the rhetoric is to foster unity in the country.

b) Unity in East Africa as Expressed in “Federation—the Road Ahead”

Kenyatta also expresses his desire for a federation of the East African Community. He argues that the brothers and sisters from Tanganyika and Uganda should not be isolated from Kenya just because of artificial frontiers. The idea of the East Africa Federation was strongly supported by

the British Government. On 31st July 1963, Kenyatta made the following remarks concerning the federation:

In achieving East African Unity, we shall be contributing towards a greater unity of the world, through a greater unity of Africa. I will not hide from you that we hope an East African Federation will be one of the cornerstones of African unity, as an indispensable element in building a united world (28).

These remarks show that Kenyatta well understood the importance of regional cooperation. He understood well that a country such as Kenya could not develop economically, socially, and politically in isolation from its neighbours.

Paulo Sebalu in “The East African Community” views the East African Community as the most advanced regional organizations in the world. Sebalu notes that the unity of the three East African states was necessitated by historical circumstances. He observes that the cooperation began due to the common colonial power which enhanced a common railway line, a common post office, and a common airline. In 1926, the Governor’s Conference which brought together the governors of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania saw to it that the region was more integrated. Sebalu states as follows:

It is claimed by many students of economic organizations that the East African Community is unique in the whole world and is one of the most integrated and most advanced of regional organizations for economic and political co-operation. This may well be so if it is compared with those organizations which have sprung up during recent decades in an effort to stem -

Military conflicts. To the many generations of East Africans who have grown up with the idea of co-operation through common services of railways, posts and telegraphs, airways,

currency, customs and numerous others, this is not unique. In fact, considering the long period over which the States have been co-operating, the people had expected much more in 1967 than a mere "common market"--they wanted, and still want, a federation, at the least (345).

Sebalu notes that Tanganyika was more committed to having a federation of East Africa, but Kenya and Ugandan leaders were not ready. Tanganyika postponed its independence for a year and requested the British Government to grant Kenya and Uganda independence so that they may form a federation.

As much as Kenyatta's speeches show a desire for a federation, he was not ready for a federation. He wanted a territory where he could be a king. He was not ready to be swallowed up in the bigger region. On June 1964, Kenyatta responded to the push by the parliament, especially the opposition members of KADU (Kenya African Democratic Union), to have federation. He stated that "in every Region, each president thinks he is a small king in his domain, and when you speak about federation in terms of a little "majimbo" federating with another Government, this cannot be done. The time has come when you must be told the truth. It is a bitter pill, but you can swallow it (31). The bitter pill that Kenyatta was referring to in this case was the fact that he considered himself the Kenyan king and that he was not ready to allow any other leader from another region neutralize his power in the name of a federation.

In his response to the pressure mounted against him by the Kenya's parliament in the quest for a federation, Kenyatta termed the other heads of state of the East African region as being ignorant of the complexity of a federation that involves three countries. He even dismissed the idea that a federation of East African States was as simple as the unity of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. In his own words, Kenyatta said: "You cannot compare the federation of these three territories with the

new union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar”(31). This shows that Kenyatta was not ready for a federation. He had seen and smelt power, he had tasted the sweetness of sovereignty, he had come face to face with the “fruits of life” which he was ready to help himself and his close allies.

The rhetoric of Kenyatta further shows that he equivocated more than any other East African leader on the question of federation. Kenyatta states that

[t]he three Heads of Government are in agreement now—as we were in 1963—that we are for Federation, but people forget that Rome was not built in a day. Federation is not a thing you can achieve through magic; you have to work and prepare. There are economic factors which have to be sorted out, and political factors which have to be resolved. You cannot just say “federate” and be able to act at once...It is not Nyerere, nor Obote, nor Kenyatta, who is against Federation. We are all for it...It is true we made a declaration that we are going to federate at the end of 1963, but it was impossible to do so at that time...Even angels could not do this. It is impossible for me to give you the date when federation will be (31-32).

In a very indirect language, Kenyatta was telling the citizens that the dream of a federation will never be realized. He was admitting that the declaration they made to the people of East African states will never be fulfilled. He uses the imagery of magic to persuade his listeners. Since his listeners understand that magic happens immediately without putting things in order, and that magic happens illogically and against the principles of science, they can quickly visualize why it was impossible for the federation to take place at all. The rhetorical aspect also indicates that the speaker is not leaving anything to chance; he is dealing with the matter with the thoroughness it deserves. Above all, the rhetorical aspect makes it easy for his listeners to accept the fact that federation has not taken place.

At the same time, Julius Nyerere in *Uongozi Wetu na Hatima ya Tanzania*³ (1993) also castigates the need for the federation. He stated that “Chama cha Mapinduzi chenye wanachama wenyeakili, naukweli, naujasiri, katuhakiwezikukubali sera yaserikalitatu, kikijua waziwazi kwamba matokeo na shabaha ya kenikuiua, nakuizika Tanzania”⁴ (61). In this light, one notices that the three countries were not ready for a federation. Furthermore, mistrust can be seen in the statements of Kenyatta and Nyerere with each leader claiming to protect the welfare of his country from a snare.

4.4 The Theme of Intolerance of the Opposition in “Dawn of the Republic” and “Federation—the Road Ahead”

In what Kenyatta refers to as “a word of advice” while speaking to parliament on the 2nd July 1963, he lashes at the opposition because he believes that it is a destructive force. The opposition during Kenyatta’s time was supposed to praise his government and never dare to criticize his policies. The speech also shows that Kenyatta treats the opposition as if they are irresponsible naughty boys. He treated the opposition as a nuisance. Kenyatta was determined to contain the opposition; he saw them as the enemy of the new nation. In fact, he was ready to fight the opposition in the same manner the Mau Mau fought the colonialist. The only difference in this case was that Kenyatta’s Mau Mau was to fight against a very defenseless force. He threatens the opposition by saying

I would like to point out here that we have recognized the rights of the opposition, but I am rather worried that the opposition is increasingly tending to fail to appreciate its responsibilities and duties to Kenya. There is emerging a tendency towards “opposition for the sake of opposition.” Negative and destructive opposition can only do harm to democracy, and—what is more—it can quickly lead to the destruction of the privileges

³Kiswahili for “our Leadership and the destiny of Tanzania”.

⁴ Kiswahili for Chama cha Mapinduzi (a political party CCM which is the party for revolution) with its rational members, equipped with truth, and bravery, can never accept a policy of three governments, knowing very well that the results and goals of such a union is to kill, and to bury Tanzania.

and rights of the opposition itself...This is not a threat, but a word of advice. We will accept fair and constructive criticism, but the country cannot afford the luxury of negative and destructive opposition (12).

By stating openly that destructive opposition can be deprived of privileges and rights, Kenyatta depicts himself as a dictator. He portrays himself as a man who couldn't entertain dissenting voices. This means that Kenyatta was not ready to embrace the values he had presumably fought for—values such as democracy and freedom.

The “word of advice” is a rhetorical aspect that conveys a lot of meanings to his audience. I choose to examine two possible meanings. For one, the aspect is meant to elevate Kenyatta as a very wise person in a position of giving profound directives to the opposition. At the same time, the aspect brings out the opposition as a lost lot, like lost sheep. Secondly, the rhetorical aspect comes out as a camouflaged threat. Indeed, it is a stern warning to the opposition who are supposed to read the mood of the speaker and cease their actions of dissent. At the same time, the aspect is meant to show Kenyatta as a man who exercises restraint by choosing to show direction to his estranged subjects instead of whipping them.

In the attempt to collapse the opposition completely, Kenyatta worked towards a one party system of governance. This was in the attempt to make himself more powerful and beyond any criticism while he was in office. In his speech on 13th August 1964, he stated categorically that he was putting aside western ideologies of democracy so that he could establish a one party state. He stated as follows:

We reject a blueprint of the Western model of a two-party system of Government, because we do not subscribe to the notion of the Government and the governed being in opposition to one another, one clamouring for duties and the other crying for rights...In one-Party state such as we envisage, we hold that politics is a potent instrument: it is through our political institutions that we influence economic trends, and not the other way round (24).

Since many Africans were opposed to western ideals due to the sad memories of colonialism, Kenyatta chose to use the word “Western model” in order to strangle democracy. He at the same time packaged the one-Party system of governance in flowery terms that it appeared to many people as the friendliest form of governance.

Vincent Khapoya in “The Politics of Succession: Kenya after Kenyatta” revisits the idea of one-party state. He states that as much as it was constitutional, the one-party leadership led to no indication of visible fair and genuine electoral contests. According to Khapoya’s study, by 1972 Africa had experienced 114 regime changes of which 32% had been through coup d’état and assassinations while 47% had been through intra-regime succession which involved one-party system. It is obvious that the leaders, including Kenyatta, were afraid of democracy. The one-party system assured them of power and sovereignty. It made them feel like they were kings who could do whatever they wanted without being criticized.

The question that one may wish to ask is: why did the founding leaders of African states romanticize the one-party system of governance? The leaders feared that democracy could eventually lead to ethnic fragmentation. Khapoya discusses this issue in the paper as follows:

Some scholars have argued simply that, given the highly fragmented politics one finds in Africa, with the majority of people professing loyalty to their ethnic groups rather than to the new states, many leaders felt that permitting dissent and free discussion of issues such as political succession would exacerbate ethnic rivalries and undermine nation-building efforts of the newly installed governments (8).

Considering the ethnic hatred that resulted from Kenyatta’s one party reign, one concludes that such fears were unfounded. The one-party would have been excellent had the top leaders put into

consideration regional representation in power and also ensured that all the regions in Kenya experienced an equitable share of resources.

In the speech to parliament, Kenyatta sinks as low as calling names and demeaning the opposition. He states as follows:

It was only after KANU was formed that several dissidents formed a splinter group, which was later called KADU. It cannot be imagined that these conceited, grasshopper politicians formed their new groups because of their belief in majority rule, democracy and the rule of law (25).

These sentiments show intolerance of the opposition in Kenyatta's regime. By referring to the opposition as the "conceited, grasshopper politicians", Kenyatta demonstrated that he was not ready to respect the views of the opposition group. It also demonstrates that Kenyatta was ready to institute prohibitive legislation against a multi-party system of governance. This is something that gave room to Kenyatta and his close allies to commit injustices against their very country Kenya.

The major role of the opposition in a democracy is to check on the excesses of the government of the day. The case of Jomo Kenyatta turned out to be very complicated. In his speeches to the nation, he assured the people that he would embrace people from all the ethnic groups in Kenya. However, when he noticed that the opposition group which mostly constituted people from other tribes other than Kikuyu, he was unsettled and sought to stamp his authority. In his quest to abolish the opposition, the Kenyatta regime knew very well that it was creating a space for impunity. With the death of the opposition, there was no restraint to the greed of Kenyatta and his accomplices as they ran the young nation. This was the foundation of what is nowadays referred to as historical injustices in Kenya.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the critical issues raised in the selected speeches of Jomo Kenyatta. I discussed the theme of freedom, unity, and the intolerance of the opposition in Kenyatta's regime. The chapter examines Kenyatta's remarks in relation to the standards of democracy in the world. It further attempts to bring to book his earlier remarks of commitment to good governance, commitment to the East African Federation, and his sudden change of mind.

CONCLUSION

Having studied Jomo Kenyatta's selected speeches from the era when he was the Prime Minister of Kenya, I wish to claim that political rhetoric is quite vital in the understandings of nationalism. Thandika Mkandawire (2005) argues that Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela have remained a constant reminder to Africans of what nationalism is all about. In his view, "nationalism in Africa and elsewhere has displayed a remarkable enduring resonance, although in the eyes of some incongruously and regretfully so" (10). Mandela and Nyerere remain outstanding in African nationalism because of their unwavering spirits towards the sanctity of the lives of the people they led. Mandela's case is one of absolute sacrifice in a struggle against apartheid and racist South Africa. But for Nyerere, it is his commitment towards humanism, a quest for *ujamaa* (family-hood), and a dedication to a life where every individual is seen as a human being before anything else. The case for Kenya is different. Very few individuals can be sampled out to have given their lives towards the common cause of making better the lives of the people of Kenya.

Despite many challenges, nationalism in Kenya has remained vibrant. Even in the wake of violence and hatred among communities, the nation has always returned to its fabric. The resonance that Mkandawire mentions can indeed be seen in the Kenyan nation which has challenged various conflicts to remain standing. David Carr (1986) argues that "history seems to suggest that [...] communities require external opposition in order to survive" (159). One of the external opposition that united the Kenyan people was colonialism. Since it was a threat to all the indigenous people of Kenya, colonialism made them (the indigenous people) more cohesive, it made them develop a collective conscience. Carr elaborates this argument when he states that "as a community we stand in opposition to another group whose threat may have occasioned our mutual recognition in the first place" (159). However, the challenging part here is when the

colonialist is wiped out; the mutual recognition of a community shifts and perceives another group as a threat. This other group is tribe.

In this study, I began with theoretical issues surrounding rhetoric and its impact on nationhood. In theorizing rhetoric, I evaluated how the art of persuasion affects a nation such as Kenya. Through convincing words carefully located in context, citizens of a country can be persuaded to embrace and support certain policies. As long as the political leader carefully presents his/her views to the citizens, the after effects of the rhetoric are sure to follow. This means that political rhetoric can empower people, and can also radicalize others. The inherent potential of political rhetoric to make a nation hold together or split apart cannot therefore be underestimated.

Kenyatta in his speeches effectively silences the dissenting voices through certain appeals, some of which are ethnic appeals, for instance when he rallies the Kikuyu people together arguing that people from other tribes did not fight for freedom, they did not die for *uhuru*, they were not imprisoned for freedom to be realized. This is a rhetorical aspect which the speaker uses to gain authority and acceptance among his target audience, yet ends up tearing apart the faith that holds people together. Through the selected speeches of Kenyatta, I discuss Kenyatta's dismantling of the opposition claiming it was for the purposes of creating a unified Kenya.

The study brings out several themes that can be noted in the selected speeches. The speeches were delivered at a very crucial time in Kenya's history—when Kenya was breaking loose from the shackles of colonialism. The time of the political rhetoric is quite significant because, as I argue in the study, it was a time when the foundations of Kenya as a nation were being established.

I also examine the honesty in political utterances. For instance, when Kenyatta promises that he is committed to the federation of the East African communities. He later on says that a federation cannot happen even with the aid of angels. This raises many questions concerning how accountable the remarks of top leaders in a developing nation can be. Considering the complicated journey towards a united East African community which is still underway in the present time, 2014, my study raises vital issues. Majorly, the remarks of the East African top leaders have made their citizen to fear regional integration.

I also highlight the significance of political rhetoric to nationhood. By appealing to the country to remain united, Kenyatta managed to foster an apparently united country in the eyes of foreign investors despite the frustration of the opposition and the marginalization of particular communities, the speeches which emphasize inclusivity enable citizens to carry out their duties well and thus lead to a rapid growth of the nation. Through his speeches, investors imagine Kenya to be the best place to carry out business.

The first hypothesis states that rhetoric achieves its effectiveness due to the appropriate use of literary aspects. Kenyatta's speeches use a lot of exaggeration and symbolism, and other literary devices which I have discussed in the study. In the study, I claim that literary devices and rhetorical aspects make political speeches memorable and enduring.

The second hypothesis states that political rhetoric addresses important matters in society. In Kenyatta's speeches, the history of the Kenyan nation is represented. The time when Kenya was coming forth from colonialism is captured in the speeches of Kenyatta who highlights pertinent issues such as the need for unity, the efforts towards integration, and the political upheavals and

eventually the formation of one-party state. Furthermore, the speeches enhance a sense of united effort in providing solutions to problems that faced the black people in the country.

The third hypothesis in this study states that political rhetoric contributes to nationhood. A critical evaluation of the speeches of Kenyatta during the tender age of the Kenyan nation reveals that Kenyatta had a very challenging task of ensuring that all the scattered and divided tribes of Kenya came to embrace one another in the spirit of brotherhood. By emphasizing that all the communities of Kenya would be part of the development agenda in the country, Kenyatta manages to fast-track the construction of a national identity of Kenyanness. In my study I argue that indeed political rhetoric contributes to nationhood.

It is important to evaluate the pronouncements of leaders in a nation. Considering Obama's rhetoric of hope and how it influenced good relations among the Americans and the world at large, one realizes that the art of persuasion is very significant in enhancing change in a society. The troubled history of Kenya is well captured in the speeches of Jomo Kenyatta. The ideas expressed in the tender age of the Kenyan nation are important in making us determine how far political rhetoric goes in resolution of national crises.

In this I study focused on the speeches of Kenyatta when he was the Prime Minister immediately after colonialism. The rhetoric of Tom Mboya who influenced policies in the sixties should be studied in order to explore the labour and trade union activism contributed to nationalism. Other eloquent speakers such as Raila Amolo Odinga and Michael Wamalwa Kijana should also be studied. The studies will help in the understanding of the Kenyan nation better.

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