

The representation of African government leaders or
‘Sovereigns’ in selected African and mainstream films

By

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DECLARATION

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“But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint”

Isaiah40:31

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	1
Acknowledgments	2
Chapter I - Introduction.....	3
Chapter II - Literature review	6
A. The conflict between leadership and political power.....	6
B. The origin of critical African Cinema.....	8
C. African leadership as a motif in African films.....	11
D. Western Cinema on African topics	16
Chapter III – Methodology and theoretical framework.....	22
A 1- Methodology and analytical map of the study	22
i. Methodology and method of analysis	22
ii. Research objectives.....	24
iii. Research questions.....	25
iv. Purpose of the study.....	25
v. Delimitations.....	26
vi. Assumptions.....	27
A 2- Hobbes’ model of benevolent dictatorship	28
B – The relevance of Thomas Hobbes’ 17th century theory in a contemporary African film setting.....	32
C- Brief overview of the four selected films.....	35
Chapter IV – Analysis of the representation of African leaders’ leadership styles in the four fiction films	43
I. Preamble to the analysis.....	43
II. The controlling but contested Cameroonian political leader in <i>Le Président (2013)</i>	46
III. The religious Prince and traditional Sovereign in <i>Who’s the King (2012)</i>	65
VI. Two African leaders in <i>Invictus (2009)</i>	78
A. Nelson Mandela: a political leader in <i>Invictus (2009)</i>	78

B. Francois Pienaar: a sport leader in <i>Invictus</i> (2009).....	88
V. Idi Amin: false hero and delusional leader in <i>The last King of Scotland</i> (2006)	95
Chapter V – Conclusion	114
Chapter VI- Findings.....	119
Bibliography	121
Filmography	133

Abstract

African Cinema is an entity as diverse as the various countries, languages and cultures on this continent. The entertainment value of Cinema has been more popular than the study of its ideological significance, but nevertheless in a contemporary Africa where politics affect the social, cultural and economical survival of its citizens, Cinema can be used as a valuable asset and a powerful means of communication that can conscientize and educate African audiences. Thomas Hobbes's leadership model and political theory of sovereignty, though a XVIIth century framework, can theoretically contribute in the analysis of the representation of African leadership styles in Cinema. This article analyzes four fiction films representing four different political leaders in, respectively, South Africa, Uganda, Cameroon and Nigeria. A film content analysis will explore the different representation of leadership styles, the personality of each leader, the power struggles in each society and how this may suggest value judgments about African leadership to the films' various target audiences.

Key words: African Cinema, Francophone Cinema, mainstream Cinema, Thomas Hobbes, leadership style, sovereignty, Nelson Mandela, Idi Amin Dada, Paul Biya, Nollywood.

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Chapter I - Introduction

The originality of African Cinema lies in its nature, its cinematic language, its visual and cultural codes. African Cinema is mainly directed at African audiences, but this is not an exclusive condition. However, “Black African cinema has often been misconstrued, especially in Western analysis, as constituting a single entity rather than a plurality of works reflecting the various states and federations of culture within which they are produced” (Ukadike 1994:308). Within the term ‘African Cinema’, various African prominent industries exist in both Francophone and Anglophone African countries. For the relevance of this study, four production contexts will be looked at: a film from Cameroon will be taken from the Francophone African film industry, and three films from respectively Nigeria, from the USA about South Africa, and from Scotland about Idi Amin and Uganda, will be taken from the Anglophone African film industry. “In Africa’s desperate struggle for freedom, cinema has proven to be as valuable an asset as other communication media, [as a] powerful instrument of ideological education” (Ukadike 1994:223); this is particularly relevant in African countries with high illiteracy rates and poor living conditions. According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, “physiological needs” (Green 2000) are identified as biological needs such as food water or oxygen. They are considered as the strongest needs which, when they are not fulfilled, will indisputably prevent the individual from focusing on anything else. Thus, an oppressed African citizen in this schema cannot afford to think of Cinema, let alone the ideology that it carries, but that “was precisely [Sembène’s] concern, to reach out to the largely non-literate African masses” through Cinema (Pfaff 1993:13).

However, for these very Africans, films could also be used as a mean of escapism, recognition and entertainment with an underlying ideological value. As Ousmane Sembène demonstrated since his earliest films such as *Mandabi* (1968) and *Borom Sarret* (1963), African filmmakers bring the Cinema to the people, and show realities on screen that they

identify with; from their daily struggles to their (often un-democratic) political leaders. In this instance Cinema can be used as a tool by the African filmmaker to educate the masses. One of the main differences between Hollywood Cinema, for example, and African Cinema is that the former mainly caters for a Western audience whereas the latter aims at African audiences (Gabara 2006:201); further, one benefits from substantially larger filming budgets and facilities than the other. The focus of this study however will not be on the differences between Western and non-Western Cinema, but rather on processes of representation as presented by film directors in the four selected fiction films, namely, *Invictus* (2009), *The last King of Scotland* (2006), *Le Président* (2013) and *Who's the King* (2012). The first two are mainstream entertainment, while the second pair is social criticism from within the society depicted in the films.

Since all central characters are powerful leaders of a country or a grouping, thus different instances of leadership styles in the four films will be analyzed in the light of philosopher Thomas Hobbes's sovereignty and leadership model (1651). While Hobbes's theory was originally devised to address war and peace issues in the Western World in the XVIIth century, it may also be possible that this theoretical premise can be used for the analysis of film motifs and, for the purpose of this study, in films from and about Africa. This study will therefore consist of a film content analysis of selected film scenes depicting the Sovereign and the governed society. Within the film content analysis, there will be a character analysis of some leaders according to Vladímir Propp's (1928) character theory. Propp's theory analyzes film characters' behavior, the reasons and the motivations behind the narrative choices that they make. Hobbes's theory on the other hand is concerned with non-fictional political realities, whereas Propp's only deals with fictional characters. Since this study analyzes political behaviors of non-fictional characters, it is necessary to add Propp's

character analysis principles in the analysis of the fictionalized political leaders in the selected films.

In the selected scenes of the study sample, it will be explored how the respective representations of leadership suggest values and interpretations of the given political power situations to the target audience. The study will also explore how behaviors described in selected scenes of Hobbes's theory of leadership are reflected to describe pertinent societal and political issues that are part of the human condition *per se*. While Hollywood mainstream productions function according to proven production 'recipes', some African filmmakers may favor a more differentiated representation or more subtle and local discourses, because their personal and national experiences inform their representation of given leadership issues, and this is how the selected films may therefore feed into local public debate beyond their cinematic consumption.

This study recognizes the entertainment value of mainstream Cinema on African topics, as well as the educational and ideological value of African films for African audiences; for some African directors or African films aspire to "*Cinéma engagé*" (engaged Cinema), to quote filmmaker Ousmane Sembène (Landy 1984). Such Cinema is mindful of every scene, every cut and every plot that is used. Sartre's *littérature engagée* is a constant fight – through literature – for the social, political, economical and cultural improvement of people (Saeidabâdi 2007). In a similar understanding, the two films from African producers criticize the leadership styles of the non-fictional African leaders with the aim of educating and conscientizing the masses. The other two Western films, on the other hand, through the use of negative stereotypes, are limited to represent a Westernized interpretation of African stories.

Chapter II - Literature review

A. The conflict between leadership and political power

In *Leviathan* (1651), the philosopher Thomas Hobbes suggests the integration of theoretical concepts of political governance with practical political situations through enlightened governance. The aim is for the former to ameliorate the latter in its everyday practice. One of his relevant contributions in that regard is his philosophical definition of a political leader or Sovereign. In the definition, Thomas Hobbes clearly explains what Sovereigns are to their people. To elaborate on his definition of a ‘Sovereign’ I shall consult Hobbes’s book *Leviathan* (1651), which is one of his most influential philosophical texts. *Book II* in particular summarizes the rights of a Sovereign: who he is and what he ought to do – and not to do – in order to efficiently play his leadership role in the society. In *Book II of Leviathan*, it is evident that Hobbesian Sovereigns are supreme leaders with total power and control over their people. They do not have to apply the separation of powers as clearly identified in Montesquieu’s *De l’Esprit des Lois* (The Spirit of Laws, 1977). Montesquieu (1977:202) defends the argument that a good leader should not cumulate all powers in order to rule, or else “the life and liberty of the subject[s] would be exposed to arbitrary control [when] the same man or the same body [is] to exercise these three powers”. Montesquieu thus advocates for a system where, instead of one person controlling all spheres of power, there should rather be a body in charge of the Executive, one in charge of the Legislative and one in charge of the Judicial. The political leader in this representation is the person or the body in charge only of the Executive. Montesquieu is not arguing that the three powers will equally rule the state, but that there needs to be a system of “checks and balances” (Montesquieu 1977:86) where each power acts as a counter-power to the others. The ultimate goal here is for leaders to efficiently and equitably govern their people. The coexistence of the three

powers should not be seen, according to Montesquieu, as the characteristics of a weak state or the enforcement of “impassable barriers and unalterable frontiers, but [the establishment] of mutual restraints” that will help the leader in running his government (Singh 1996:1).

According to Frankfurter (1930, cited in Schwartz 1955:286), the strict application of the principle of separation of powers is “a rigid conception ... [that] would make Government impossible”. In view of political events since independence, the probability of successfully applying such a model, to most African political systems, is minimal. This is the case in most African states, where the system of check and balances is almost inexistent, with the Executive unilaterally dominating through the President, the head of state or the political entity in charge. The leadership role in this case can quickly alienate citizens’ Civil Rights, and this is what Locke and Montesquieu regard as “the eclipse of liberty [which is always caused by] the monopoly, or disproportionate accumulation of power in one sphere” (Alien 1965:10-19).

Thus, Locke and Montesquieu’s principles of political governance caution against the negative consequences of state absolutism as it negates the value of state sovereignty, whereas Hobbes advocates absolutism as the natural expression of sovereignty. However, for both authors, the ultimate goal is to find effective models and principles that will sustain a state that can fulfill its traditional functions. In the four selected films, in establishing their leadership styles, the African leaders effectively rely on the state *apparatus* to materialize their political and personal agenda.

B. The origin of critical African Cinema

The principle of the separation of power, or the lack thereof, is a recurrent theme in critical African Cinema, and prominent *auteurs* in the field of Cinema such as Ousmane Sembène or Djibril Diop Mambety, illustrate on screen the consequences of an omnipresent and omniscient Executive that often leads to social flaws such as administrative corruption or asocial behaviors (e.g. in *Xala* (1974) and *Hyenas* (1992)). It is almost implausible to analyze African Cinema or selected African films without mentioning Sembène's contribution to ideological critique of African leadership. In his films, the Senegalese director, also known as the grandfather of African Cinema, "questioned the order of the world ... demanded change, and challenged our view of Africa as a continent outside of history" (Diawara 2010:23). Sembène produced in total fourteen (Gadjigo 2009) short and long features, namely, *L'Empire Sonhrai* (1963), *Borom Sarret* (1963), *Niaye* (1964), *La noire de...* (1966), *Mandabi* (1968), *Taaw* (1970), *Emitai* (1971), *Xala* (1974), *Ceddo* (1976), *Camp de Thiaroye* (1989), *Guelwaar* (1992), *L'héroïsme au quotidien* (1999), *Faat Kine* (2000) and *Moolaade* (2004). These films can be divided into three large main categories, and thus represent characteristics that are relevant to many other films from and about this continent.

Firstly, it is a Cinema for the masses in Africa and for mass consumption. This type of films explores narratives that are not centered around individual characters, but around collective identities. Sembène is interested in what the film can bring to the society as a whole and does "not lock spectatorial comprehension into an individually unique set of perceptions... Instead, the characters are translated into something more socially and politically generalizable" (Petty 1996:37).

Secondly, Sembène created a "cinema of distantiation" (Diawara 2010:23) where the viewer is subtly driven to distance himself from the negative characters displayed on screen. Sembène's films were often adaptations of novels that he had previously written, often based

on true stories, as Vrancken (2008: 123) points out. For instance, the narrative in *La Noire de...* (1966) – which in this case was filmed before the novel was written – deals with the themes of Black migrations and immigrations, and traces the story of a Black Senegalese young woman who committed suicide in her White employers' bathroom because of the financial exploitation and racial discrimination to which they subjected her. The film narrative was inspired “by a story that Ousmane Sembène read in a newspaper called *Nice Matin* in July 1958 about the suicide of an African maid” (Tchouaffé 2012). Sembène defends the argument that he transposes ‘real stories’ and everyday Senegalese life stories onto the screen. Moreover, in reference to African oral tradition, he “has repeatedly described his role as that of a *griot*” (Gabara 2006:210) who shares ‘real’ information with his audience. In West Africa, a *griot* is assimilated as a historian, a storyteller or a praise singer who recounts events that have effectively occurred in the past; he is a walking library with all the accurate references on the facts that he brings to his audience.

In an interview, Sembène explained,

The African filmmaker is like the *griot* who is similar to the European medieval minstrel: a man of learning and commonsense who is the historian, the raconteur, the living memory and the conscience of his people. The filmmaker must live within his society and say what goes wrong within his society. (Pfaff 1993:13)

The neorealist approach of the Cinema of distantiation builds trust between the director and his audience, making it therefore easier for the audience to accept Sembène's ‘filmic advice’ to distance itself from the villains and false heroes that are portrayed in his films. According to Vieyra (1975:173), in addition to other circumstances, viewers would be more inclined to allow the director to shape their views if he is well known to them and has a good track record as a filmmaker, which is certainly the case for Sembène.

Sembène's film categories can, thirdly, be identified as a "cinema of good and evil" (Diawara 2010:23). In this group, Sembène's films are used as a socio-political weapon to fight colonialism and neo-colonialism. In this category, Sembène uses a direct approach when he criticizes the political, social and/or cultural environment in Senegal or in Africa. He does not go "against the grain" (Comolli & Narboni 1993:47), and openly denounces contentious political, religious and societal issues. In using such a direct approach, the filmmaker adjusts his message to his audience, knowing that his target audience has a better access to his films than his novels (Vrancken 2008:233). Thus, his primary concern is that his Senegalese audience understands the political messages that the films convey, hence he makes the narratives as direct, simple and clear as possible (Vrancken 2008:233). In this particular category, Sembène puts an emphasis on the critical representation of politicians, religious leaders, business figures, social injustice and national identity in Senegal in particular, but also in Africa in general. Sembène is thus identified as a director who belongs to the Third Cinema movement which is "the only major branch of film theory that did not originate within a specifically Euro-American context" (Guneratne & Dissanayake 2003:7). Third Cinema includes all films produced by directors from 'Third World' labeled countries which are not films from Hollywood or European mainstream popular Cinema, nor produced with their collaboration.

Sembène's films are 'engaged' in the sense that he relentlessly denounced inequalities and fought for the wellbeing of the community as a solid social unit. Sembène's critical Cinema through his filmic style and techniques used simple forms, not because he did not know how to make his films 'complicated', but because he was trying to stay as faithful as possible to experienced reality and therefore the intended message (Gabara 2006:210). Sembène described himself as "a realist filmmaker" (Gabara 2006:209). One of his films, *Mandabi* (1968), is not very different from *The bicycle thief* (1948) by Vittorio De Sica, in

the use of some neorealist techniques, but Sembène went beyond that in order to show “the true face of Africa” (Vieyra 1972:173) and “never tried to please [his] audiences through the embellishment of reality” (Pfaff 1984:40).

The ideological background to the representation of Africa in fiction films, the model for African expression of local content, and the use of neo-realism in the two African films will be explored in the analysis. More angles thus emerge such as the use of genre elements (adventure, horror, sports etc.) as a secondary standard narrative, which is merely placed within the African setting, and indeed turns out to be the more powerful one for the mainstream viewer. Consequently, the ideological model that is either contravened by foreign “models of Africa in film” or approached by allowing African characters significant roles are exposed. These angles will be contrasted with mainstream narratives about Africa that are aimed at Western audiences for their entertainment consumption of their own bias about the continent.

C. African leadership as a motif in African films

The theme of African leadership often encompasses a narrative emphasis on negative leaders and their leadership styles. Sembène’s treatment on African realities in fiction creates a model for interpretation of African Cinema. The ideological and pedagogical value that he argues films have will be used as a theoretical base in this study, especially in the analysis of the two African films. In Sembène’s films on the subject, he “does not want the viewer to identify with the new African elites who do nothing to raise the consciousness of the masses” (Diawara 2010:23). In his films, he depicts a corrupted leadership who uses money, power, food, poverty and religion to divide the masses in order to control them adequately. Sembène does not advocate religious discrimination, as he believes that religion itself is not the problem, but its abuse by religious and political leaders in order to further their personal

agenda (Vrancken 2008:112). He also calls for a change of mentality in every citizen in their choice of leaders through their political awareness and consciousness in choosing their leadership (Leahy 2003). Sembène's representation of leadership exists both in the traditional and modern sphere. Thus, according to Sembène, whether the leader is a traditional notability or an elected representative, the general interest of the masses should always be a priority to him (Pfaff1993:13). In his films, society as a whole is a victim of such individuals; mostly of the new Black elite, the *nouveaux riches* who took over from the White colonizers upon Independence.

Rather different from Sembène's strong Africanist ideological content and post-colonial slant, in Nollywood, the prolific hub of African entertainment film production, films are often culturally orientated as well as serving the prime purpose of entertainment. The term 'Nollywood' is the colloquial, yet internationally acknowledged, name given to the Nigerian film industry (What's Nollywood? 2013). Historically, the Nigerian film industry has its roots in the Yoruba theatre. The Yoruba are "one of the three largest ethnic groups of Nigeria [and they] are famous for their art and craftwork" (DeFusco 1994). Yoruba theatre is well known in Nigeria for its aesthetical quality and closeness to the Yoruba culture; its topics of interest range between "serious historical mythological dramas ... political satires ... morality plays ... comic fantasies [and] comedy" (Obafemi 1996:13). According to the British online newspaper *The Independent* (AFP 2010), the visual and filmic Nollywood industry is "eclipsing Hollywood in Africa", but for Japheth Omojuwa (2013), from its early beginning, the Nollywood industry set the tone to produce a large quantity of films rather than quality. Manthia Diawara (2010:175), on the other hand, sees Nollywood as a cinematic "revolution [with as] many admirers [as] detractors", and is of the opinion that analysis should not unnecessarily focus on the films' techniques, or lack thereof, but more what on Nollywood represents and what its filmic products attempt to convey. The core interest in the existence

of Nollywood Cinema, he argues, “lies in the stories it tells, beyond theory and abstraction, about the dislocation of people, social relations, economics, cultures and identities in Africa” (Diawara 2010:178). Historically known films such as *Living in bondage* (1982), which sold more than half a million copies” (Balogun 2013) or *Amadioha* (The god of thunder) (1998) establish the particularity of early Nollywood films with a strong emphasis on the occult and on the binary oppositions of good versus evil, black magic versus good (therapeutic) magic, tradition versus modernity and dominant men versus defenseless women. The leader figure in these narratives is often the husband, the village chief or the feared witchdoctor, but the recurrent narratives of “Juju and Christianity [among others] are mere facades and narrative enablers” (Diawara 2010:179) in the diegetic construction. In other words, in analyzing Nollywood Cinema, the focus needs to be shifted from “the Manichean opposition between tradition and modernity” (Diawara 2010:180) to the cinematic experience and the educational value, for some directors, that Nollywood directors attempt to convey. As such, Nollywood films embody a different but equally relevant focus on African self-representation as the films of Sembène and his generation of critical directors.

According to Cameroonian writer and Cinema critic Jean-Marie Mollo Olinga (2008), Cameroon was one of the first African countries to engage with Cinema; the documentary film that is often quoted to support this claim is *Aventure en France* (*Adventure in France*) (1962) by Jean-Paul Ngassa (Bile 2013). Early Cameroonian films favored the theme of immigration, with films such as *Tam-Tam à Paris* (1963) by Thérèse Sita Bella (Bile 2013), but as the Cameroon film industry developed, so did the cinematic themes portrayed on screen. Thus, well-known directors emerged such as Bassek ba Kobhio who used a Sembène’s neorealist approach in his filming, editing and narrative style, with an iconic and nationally acclaimed film entitled *Sango Malo: le maître du canton* (1991). The narrative revolves around a family leader in crisis who needs to find drastic solutions to cope with the

situations that he is facing. The theme of leadership in a middle-class Cameroonian family is also the focal point in *Quartier Mozart* (1992) by director Jean-Pierre Bekolo who followed in his predecessors' footsteps. *Quartier Mozart* was a local and international success, and has been described as "one of the chefs-d'œuvre of African Cinema in the 1990s" (Andersen & Pekba 2008).

In Cameroon, being a former French and British colony, emergent film directors aimed to represent the new independent nation through their choice of narratives, the language used in the films, the register, the local cast as well as the genres (Dovey 2009:216). The focus was to entertain and address Cameroonian audiences with films that they can relate to. This regain of national consciousness and national identity paved the way to a Cinema more focused on sensitive topics such as politics, poverty, tribalism and corruption in Cameroon with productions such as *Une Affaire de nègres* (2009) by Osvalde Lewat (Tchouaffé 2012:199), and *Sister-in-Law* (2005) by Kim Longinotto and Florence Ayisi (Tchouaffé 2012:196). Local audiences effortlessly identified with these themes that reflected their daily realities. On the other hand, in order to escape censorship, many Cameroonian filmmakers immigrated, thus as part of the diaphora, they have been able to comment on the local regime without fear of physical repression. Consequently, Cameroonian films, produced outside the country, became increasingly critical of the country's political system, the leaders and the governmental structures in place. It is only through a thorough understanding of the films' form and structure, that their political nature would thus be revealed. Comolli & Narboni (1993:47) categorize these types of productions as films that "go against the grain", because their content might appear apolitical, but their cinematic and diegetic structure subvert and transform daily and familiar realities in order to subtly stress on the central political theme of the film. Some of the directors who have used this cinematic approach are Jean-Marie Teno with *Clando* (*Clandestine*, 1996), Bassek ba Kobhio with *Le Grand Blanc de Lambaréné*

(*The Great White of Lambaréné*, 1994) and Jean-Pierre Dikongue Pipa with *Une nation est née* (*A nation is born*, 1970). These narratives depict instance of national and post-colonial leadership, and how the main characters contribute in redefining it. Similarly, in a socio-cultural critic of the Cameroonian society, comedy and satire have been used in films such as *Pousse-Pousse* (1975) by Daniel Kamwa. Apart from films with political undertones where the incumbent President's system of governance is questioned, other genres relating to traditional beliefs and occultism such as *Le Cercle des pouvoirs* (*The Circle of powers*, 1997) by Daniel Kamwa, have confirmed the national success that the developing Cameroon film industry has had. "The creativity and the high status of Cameroonian filmmakers on the African cinematographic scene, is undeniable" (Coulon 2011). In *Pousse-Pousse* there is a clash of individual authorities demonstrating that leadership attributes are not easily bestowed onto one person. Thus, in the family drama, the main character's acknowledgment as a male authoritative figure is disputed. In the list of Cameroonian films above-mentioned, the representation of leadership goes beyond the political realm and also extends to the family structure or the professional environment. The common denominator in these narratives is the constant fight to establish a clear hierarchical social order with one strong and respected figure at the top. While there is a relatively new and timid effort from the government to assist local-based filmmakers, there is "a handful of filmmakers [that] have emerged in the country and some ... [have gain] an international reputation" (Mbaku 2005:187). With Cameroonian filmmakers such as Jean-Pierre Bekolo, Jean-Marie Teno, Daniel Kamwa or Thérèse Sita Bella, "who was Africa's very first woman filmmaker (Thackway 2003:151), the Cameroon film industry is developing increasingly. More filmmakers thus adhere to the idea of a Cinema that is not solely for entertainment, but that also has a social, cultural, economical and political value. According to Robert Stock (2012:73), "filmmakers in Cameroon are developing a reputation for higher-quality art films [and from an observational

point of view] Cameroon and South Africa are the most prominent among the several other African countries with emerging film industries.”

D. Western Cinema on African topics

Hollywood Cinema is primarily produced for consumption by Western audiences. Most of these productions were filmed in studios and often “told by foreigners and through actors from the same global north” (Orgeret 2009:507). The narratives that were popular in these films often revolved around the same stereotypes of “Africa as a dangerous or exotic territory, as the pinnacle of horror and savagery, and as the recipient of the West’s benevolent, heroic humanitarianism” (Higgins 2012:3). Such colonial narratives still recur in some contemporary Hollywood films about Africa, and continue to represent inaccurate images of Africa as a continent where humans and animals cohabit, or a continent continuously ravaged by war, poverty, corruption disease and famine. This misrepresentation of Africa through the Hollywood medium is the consequence of what Nigerian female writer Chimamanda Adichie (2009) calls “the danger of the single story of Africa”, which is the unilateral view that, in this case, Hollywood has of Africa and spreads as the only existing reality through its broad network of films. Consequently, the millions of consumers of Hollywood Cinema will only have Hollywood’s representation of Africa as the only basis of understanding how Africa and African are really like. The ‘single story’ then conditions viewers to see Africa only through a Western prism and thus “creates stereotypes” (Adichie 2009). Therefore, although a film is a fictional representation of some reality, it is the closest ‘reality’ of Africa that the audience will ever have and against which it thus defines its supposed cultural difference. The colonial dialectic of the White coming to the rescue of the Black African is a common “binary in which Africans are characterized in Hollywood

cinema” (Higgins 2012:187), for example, perpetuated not only in fiction films of the adventure genre but also in documentaries on much human rights and medical work on the continent. Several mainstream films about Africa such as *District 9* (2009), *The Constant Gardener* (2005) or *Tears of the sun* (2003) continue to popularize these negative clichés where Africans are very often reduced to “helpless victims and cruel warlords [in order to emphasize] American patriotism and courage” (Orgeret 2009:507).

“Before 1960, Western cinema filmed primarily its own vision of the Dark Continent [which] mirrored the dominant ideology of the era” (Pfaff 1986:53). At the time, most of the African continent was under tutelage or under occupation by a Western country, and Cinema functioned as an instrument of propaganda to subject the African masses to this condition as a *fait accompli* and to comfort White supremacy. Thus, “those films about Africa, made in Africa by non-Africans, were basically aimed at a non-African audience and as such, with few-exceptions, condoned Western colonialism’ (Pfaff 1986:53). In the 1960s, with many African countries gaining their independence, Hollywood Cinema adjusted to the new socio-political realities and “slowly began to reflect new patterns of world ideologies, now associated with the new political assertiveness of Blacks” (Pfaff 1986:53). However, the older stereotypes have not completely disappeared from Hollywood film narratives about Africa, particularly in Hollywood films about South Africa; and were ironically strongly revitalized in the public mind through news coverage of African crises under the new governments.

In representing the post-Apartheid South Africa, Hollywood films moved from the colonial diegetic to embrace a new stereotypical angle by producing films “across the colour line ... where black/white friendship existed [...or with films] set in a fictive South Africa that bore little resemblance to reality” (Davis 1996:61).

Hollywood's mainstream post-racial representation of South Africa did not always take into consideration the new "goal of South African cinema to create a new national story that is essentially post-racial" (Saks 2010:2), and thus to critically address racial themes from within the social contexts in which they had been operational by engaging characters in actively deconstructing them through their relationships and the narrative of these South African films. Post-racialism, according to Farred (2006:52), is a condition "however contentious [it] might be, [that] constitutes the dialogic project of recognizing race as the primary discourse to be at once engaged and disarticulated". Thus, Hollywood directors making films that "position white protagonists as the savior of blacks and other colors seems incongruous with the stated goals of post-apartheid cinema and its desire to offer counternarratives and depictions that challenge old notions of white supremacy and black inferiority" (Higgins 2012:195). The development of a South African film industry has been argued to be a response to Hollywood misrepresentations, but according to Mbye Cham (2009), the post-Apartheid South African film industry is still dominated by Whites, "and despite feeble challenges, American Hollywood products and models still dominate the country's mediascape". Nevertheless, this distortion of reality about Africa in general and South Africa in particular through mainstream Hollywood filmmaking is the "manifestation of a widespread, simplistic view of a geographically diverse, multiethnic, multilingual, and multinational continent" (Higgins 2012:187). Therefore, as long as Hollywood will still function with yet another version of the "single story" (Adichie 2009) about Africa, it will then keep on producing films of the same negative caliber, no matter how often it reshapes its focus.

While the Hollywood industry is well-known and controversial, the Scottish film industry on the other hand is not very prominent, especially in view of films about Africa. However, the "popularity of cinema in Scotland is legendary. Purpose-built cinemas began to

appear in 1910, and by 1920 there were more than 500 cinemas in Scotland. In the same period, internationally, over 150 films have clearly identified Scottish themes; [with films such as] *Bonnie Prince Charlie*, *Rob Roy*, *Mary, Queen of Scots* [and] *Annie Laurie*” (Caughie et al. 2012). This Scottish film industry mainly concentrates on Scotland’s history and popular mainstream genres, which range from “comedy and horror to romantic comedy and the gangster film to Bollywood and road movies, as well as the art film – which are either set in Scotland or use Scotland as a film set” (Martin-Jones 2009:15). The film genres found in Scottish films are very similar to Hollywood’s popular genres, but the few differences stem from Scottish myths and culture that can only be understood by a Scottish audience. However, Scottish scholar Martin-Jones (2009:19) argues that “the diverse genres and modes [found in Scottish Cinema] collectively illustrate the lack of one singular, ‘authentic’ Scottish identity in favour of many cinematic Scotlands” (Martin-Jones 2009:19). One recurrent identity of adventure and war narratives long before the advent of film was the Scottish soldier as part of the British military, often member of the Scots Guards, within which the soldiers experienced many events of the British Empire, including Africa in the colonial era, or of the Scottish trader in the colonial period. Indeed, the character of Idi Amin experienced the British Army, as did the historical person Idi Amin. For the purpose of this study, however, the historical identity of Scotland as a formerly colonized by the English and the military service in the British Army are relevant. Amid the various literary and cinematic expressions, and apart from Scottish colonial short films in British colonies, there are not many Scottish feature films about Africa. Few productions such as *The last King of Scotland* (2006) by Scottish director Kevin McDonald, *The Librarian: Return to King Solomon’s mines* (2006) by Jonathan Frakes, and *Curious George* (2006) by Mathew O’Callaghan, explore Africa as a film subject. These productions are “film adaptations of literature with

long histories of representing Africa as a locus of Western penetration and interrogation” (Heffelfinger & Wright 2011:24).

The last King of Scotland about Ugandan dictator Idi Amin is described by the Scottish director as being faithful to the original story, and different from regular Western films that are “telling more about the European experience of Africa than about Africa itself” (Stairs 2003). From a Scottish cinematic perspective, *The last King of Scotland* is an African film, when actually it is not, because there is a difference between African film and Western film about Africa (Higgins 2012:255). On the other hand, Scottish films narratives do not play on the colonial label of Africans relying on Whites or being in “a constant state of war” (Higgins 2012:187), perhaps because there are almost no Scottish films about Africa – while there is indeed a broad range of Scottish individuals in older narrative fiction and particularly war fiction, including colonial wars. When analyzing the Scottish film industry as “global cinema” Martin-Jones (2009:11) argues that he looked at Scotland “as a country that exists in the midst of, and interjects in various ways with, the increasingly decentralised flows of film production and distribution that circulate the globe”. *Scotland: Global Cinema: Genres, Modes and Identities* by Martin-Jones (2009) gives a contemporary assessment of what Scottish film production has been throughout the past years. “The book is organized around 10 chapters, each examining a distinct film genre” (Marmysz 2011:159), but none of them mention African Cinema or Scottish films about Africa. The same observation is made in secondary readings about the Scottish film industry, such as *Scottish Cinema Now* by Murray, Farley, and Stoneman (2009) and ‘Fictional Scotland: A “Realm of the Imagination” in Film Drama and Literature’ by Bicket (1999). Orgeret (2009:505) encourages Western film industries to produce films about Africa, only if they have “film producers with [an] African knowledge [of the continent, because they] may play an important role in increasing global audiences' knowledge of Africa.”

On the other hand, Scotland might not produce as much films on or about Africa, but there is the Scotland African film festival, Africa in Motion, which is held in the cities of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling every year, and where a large number of African films and documentaries are presented to audiences with an interest in African Cinema. The festival was founded by African film researcher Lizelle Bisschoff (2006) who gives two main reasons for creating the festival: firstly “to introduce Scottish audiences to the brilliance of African Cinema [and secondly] to listen to African voices and to view representations created by African themselves, as these often counter the stereotypical representations we see from Africa in mainstream media in the West”.

Thus, Scotland and Uganda as a film theme are related to the military history of Scotland rather than to present-day film-making; and the character of Idi Amin based on the historical service in the British Army builds both on Scot resentment of British domination, and on the military identity that defined the mindset of this historical persona.

Chapter III – Methodology and theoretical framework

A 1- Methodology and analytical map of the study

i. Methodology and method of analysis

Film content analysis is the content analysis of certain aspects of a film production, and the assessment of possible meanings that can be derived from it. It is a reflective and analytical argumentation on one or more than one film. On one hand, a film analysis is the process in which a film is analyzed in terms of the *mise-en-scène*, the cinematography and the techniques that are used, and on the other hand, a content analysis structures and analyzes selected content. By definition, content analysis “seeks to analyze data within a specific context in view of the meanings someone – a group or a culture – attributes to them... [it is] a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (Krippendorff 1989:403). Data in content analysis generally consists of written texts or discourses, but Neuman (1997:273) asserts that in content analysis ‘text’ “is anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication”. Therefore, film content analysis is a research technique that observes and analyzes the combination of visual texts and documented theoretical principles. It explores how data from a content analysis assists in creating meaning in a film. In this study, the film content analysis will look at the four selected films as well as incorporate a theoretical framework on political leadership.

One of the advantages of using a film content analysis is that it draws on “explicit content” (Jacobs 2013:2) to give meaning to selected scenes of the films in the study. Explicit content exists either when a film narrative gives “some sort of moral of the story or [when there is a] socio-political attitude that the filmmaker [expresses] directly through the

mouths and actions of the characters” (Jacobs 2013:2). Moreover, the use of explicit content allows the study to adopt both a formalist and contextualist approach in the analysis.

The formalist approach focuses on both the film’s structure and form, whereas the contextualist approach can encompass various dimensions such as a “culturalist, an auteurist approach, a dualist approach and a Marxist critic approach” (Jacobs 2013:6-7). According to Christopher Jacobs (2013:6), the culturalist approach relates to a particular culture, timeframe, and place when a film was produced; the auteurist approach understands a film in relation to the director’s style and other films that he/she has made. The dualist approach on the other hand looks at binary oppositions or “pairs of opposites” and finally the Marxist critic approach attempts “to associate characters and events in a film as representative of class struggle, poor vs. ... oppressive governments” (Jacobs 2013:7).

This study’s method will consist of analyzing selected film scenes depicting African leaders and the societies that they rule. The film content analysis will specifically look at scenes where different leadership styles are represented together with an analysis of scenes where the leaders deal with crisis moments related to national or local political emergencies in the narrative. Thus, in each film, scenes of a display of positive (benevolent dictator) or negative leadership (dictator) will be explored. The analysis of the selected scenes will also include an examination, whenever applicable, of the major characters as well as some supporting characters, the geographical location, the spatiotemporal scene setting, the plot development, the dialogue between the characters, the language register, the element of suspense, the diegetic and non-diegetic sound, and the type of narrative. These elements will be examined in relation to the effect that they may have in the analysis of each fictional leader. Then, if significant to the analysis of a particular leader, there will be a character film analysis according to Vladimir Propp’s character theory, in order to understand what motivates and informs the leader’s political or strategic behaviors and decisions. The aim is

to explore how the nature of the character and the narrative development, both contribute to the expression of the leader's political style.

Furthermore, throughout the study, the film content analysis will engage Levi-Strauss' (1955) narrative structures in terms of binary oppositions in order to identify the central topics of the narratives and how they impact on the leaders' styles of governance. Moreover, if the narrative makes use of any element of intertextuality, this will be referred to in the film content analysis and explored for in how it adds meaning to the narrative as a mean of explaining further the character of the relevant African leader.

For films produced by directors with a very distinct auteurist style, the director's style will be mentioned, in order to understand the use and the relevance of certain narrative and filming techniques. This additional information will only be referred to if it yields more insight in the character of the African political leader. For clarity purposes, if the director has not made some crucial narrative and/or historical information available to the audience, the context and the background of these selected scenes will be briefly explained, before their analysis. Finally, similarities or disparities between each African political leader's governing principles and Hobbes' principles of leadership will be identified in order to evaluate whether the African leaders' ruling principles would define them as Hobbesian benevolent Sovereigns, or not, and what the effect of this is on the film narrative.

ii. Research objectives

1. The study will show how Thomas Hobbes' theory on leadership and the difference that he makes between a dictator and a benevolent dictator, can be understood and applied to the representation of different leadership styles in the selected films and for their function in the narrative.

2. It will be analyzed how the four films situate the government leader as a focal point for positive or negative audience identification, and
3. In the African productions, the use of angles and motifs will be explored to suggest a regional interpretation of the Sovereign's position.

iii. Research questions

How is each film constructed, particularly in the scenes pertaining to leadership? How does each fictional leader understand and use his Sovereign prerogatives? Does the leader's expression of his political, traditional or religious sovereignty conflict with the consistent application of his leadership style? How do the leaders in the selected films act either as Hobbesian benevolent Sovereign, and if not, how does this affect the plot? How do the narrative and the character development around each leader illustrate the leadership style and its consequences? And lastly, which stylistic elements do the directors use to illustrate their narratives?

iv. Purpose of the study

The character of a leader may either be a political, religious, family, sport or traditional figure, for the purposes of this study. This study will analyze the modes and processes of representation in *Le Président* (2013), *Who's the King* (2012), *Invictus* (2009) and *The last King of Scotland* (2006). The research will focus on different instances of leadership in the four films, with the aim of revealing the positive or negative role that each African fictional leader plays through the relevant films narratives and aesthetical constructions. The nature of

the fictional character, the country's political context and the narrative constructions all contribute to shaping these fictional African Sovereigns for the audience; either as benevolent or contested leaders in their own countries, and thus, for the development of the plot. In as much as there are secondary historical, political, religious, traditional, social and cultural factors evident in the fictional narratives, the type of governance is nonetheless attributed to the leader's choice and determines the development of his character.

v. Delimitations

In reasserting the differences between the historical personae and the fictional characters, this study stresses that its focus is on the fictional characters and not the historical personae. The only exception is the main character of *Le Président*, the only fiction film with elements of documentary among the four selected films. In *Le Président*, the narrative draws on historical non-fictional events and characters, and incorporates them in a neorealist style throughout the narrative. In this instance, the analysis will include some non-fictional characters and information, wherever it is relevant to the study.

This study is not a media film analysis or a technical film analysis, and will not look at technical filming components such camera angles, camera shots, lighting, mise-en-scène and editing techniques. However, some of these elements may be mentioned for purposes of clarity, but an in-depth analysis of any of these elements will not be done in this study. Finally, the study looks at the representation of African leadership in two African films and two Western films about Africa, but will not compare African and Western Cinema, nor explore the differences between Western and non-Western Cinema beyond the films for study.

vi. Assumptions

It is the premise of filmmaking that audiences identify with what they see on screen, with added emotional appeal if a fiction film is supposedly ‘based on a true story’ or inspired by historical facts, however loosely; this is in the nature of entertainment films. Furthermore, the line between history and fiction can be deliberately blurred by the director in order to achieve a narrative goal. In the case of the four selected films, the narratives invite a reflection on African leadership; they can be considered as mirrored representations of what their African audiences live on a daily basis. The historically inspired narratives suggest to audiences that such African leaders repeat the same unconstructive patterns of leadership, which has led to a state of forged democracy, where the same causes and actions keep on producing the same devastating effects for the broad majority. Consequently, as outlined for Ousmane Sembène’s films above, Cinema that exposes such non-fictional realities and stories through fictional storylines can be understood in Africa as an instrument of change that can enlighten or reshape viewers’ ideologies on how to engage and create a leadership that works for African citizens, and no longer for an elitist minority. Whether it is African Cinema or Western productions on African topics, “many films are overt attempts by their filmmakers to persuade audiences to their points of view, [whereas others] are more interested in raising various issues for audiences to think about” (Jacobs 2013:4).

The existence of financial, technical and human constraints make it difficult for some African filmmakers to regularly produce a large number of films, but nevertheless, there is a solid development of an African film industry that rejects “colonial images of Africa in the name of an authentic national reality” (Gabara 2006: 211). This is a Cinema that fictionalizes “the reality of everyday life and contemporary social crises within African society” (Gabara 2006:211). Thus, in Africa, film could efficiently be used as “a pedagogical, political, and

social tool” (Dovey 2009:201), as Sembène argued, to motivate the public to challenge their living conditions in some form.

A 2- Hobbes’ model of benevolent dictatorship

The term “Hobbesian Sovereign”, according to Steven Smith (2008), refers to any political leader who applies Thomas Hobbes’s principles of sovereignty. A Hobbesian Sovereign needs not to belong to Hobbes’s century or continent, but only to observe in his leadership style, some of Hobbes’ founding principles on sovereignty. Hobbes clearly differentiates between a benevolent and a totalitarian leader; the latter does not achieve Hobbesian Sovereign status (Williams 2005). Hobbes believed that normal humans’ actions and emotions could not always be trusted, whereas the Sovereign’s could. Hence, Hobbes argued, “sovereigns are [the] sole judges of what is necessary for the peace and defense of their subjects [and] judges of what doctrines and opinions may go abroad among [their] people” (Hobbes1968, cited from Hurtgen 1979:61). Moreover, Hobbesian Sovereigns solely decide on which developmental policies to implement and which not; they choose the standard of living they believe their citizens deserve, and they have the right to reward or punish the citizens as they see fit. In a present-day setting, Hobbesian Sovereigns may be found among autocratic political leaders, highly-placed religious or traditional rulers; while democratic leaders are not vested with enough power to act in this manner. Such leaders, Hobbes assumes, base their leadership styles on their own, supposedly clear understanding of what their sovereignty entails and how much of it they are entitled to use in governing their states or chieftainships.

For a leader to be acknowledged as a benevolent Hobbesian Sovereign and exercise his Sovereign attributes appropriately, he must have been chosen by the people, in other

words, have the people's consent to rule as their unique leader. This could be achieved through birthright in a kinship lineage or through what Anne Look (2012) refers to as "democratization by coup d'état". The latter often took place in newly independent African states or in African governments with a long history of civil unrests. In such situations, citizens have experienced more years of fighting than years of peace, thus they have come to accept coups d'état as the least preferable but unavoidable solution that will eventually bring some sort of public and national order in the country. For those Africans, coups d'état are even "welcome as jumpstarts for faltering constitutional democracies" (Look 2012). Similarly, Hobbes was not concerned about how a Sovereign accessed power, but rather how he then managed it as a leader.

The choice of the most suitable leader, according to Hobbes, belongs to the people. He conceptualized a social contract where both the leader and the people need to clearly express their adherence to the moral contract. This legitimacy distinguishes a benevolent dictator from a regular dictator, who cannot be a Hobbesian Sovereign. The benevolent dictator is an autocratic leader chosen by the people, and whose sole purpose is "to seek peace and follow it" (Lindsay 1651:xi), therefore avoiding civil wars or any type of unrest at all costs. Hobbes' benevolent dictator is his theoretical solution to avoid "a state of nature" which can be understood as a state of perpetual civil war (Lindsay 1651:xx) or any long-lasting armed conflict that will make the government vulnerable, and the exercise of sovereignty almost null and void. Hence Hobbes' suggestion that, in order to keep the sovereignty of a state and of its leader, the ruler needs to enter into a social contract with his people with a clear hierarchical ladder; with the Hobbesian Sovereign at the top of this ladder. In this social contract, each party has a moral obligation to keep his or her part or else forfeit the moral contract. The main constant in Hobbes' understanding of leadership and sovereignty is that the leader's authority is not negotiable, and as Hurtgen (1979:61) analyzes

the meaning of this Hobbesian concept, he states that “sovereignty signifies an authority beyond which there is no appeal; in this sense it is and must be absolute”. The total allegiance of the people to this leader is thus not negotiable; hence a weak Sovereign who can easily be unsettled by the people or any other entity does not deserve to be called a leader, according to Hobbes. “There must be unmistakable inequality of strength”, Hurtgen (1979:58) argues, which underlines that the set of relations between the ruling leader and the citizens is agreed on from the start of his rule. Thus, the Hobbesian leader’s decisions cannot be questioned either, as it is implicitly established that he will only make choices that will benefit all; because he is a “great-souled man [who] would lack the incentive to harm others” (Hurtgen 1979:65). In present-day countries, whether the setting is a fragile democracy with a dominant leader, a monarchy or an authoritarian regime, Hobbes’ theoretical framework could be used to argue that the leader in charge should still have his citizens’ best interests at heart in whatever governing actions he/she pursues or leadership styles he/she chooses, and equally, that the population indeed expects sovereign authority from such a person, having accepted its supposed own insignificance and fallibility to conveniently make the leader responsible for their needs. It is thus a two-way relationship of vested interests.

Leadership principles from a Hobbesian logic are the *sine qua non* condition for a long-lasting peace in the governed society. As a theoretical basis for comparison, there are nine circumstances unambiguously stipulated in *The Elements of Law Natural and Politic* (1640), specifically in its Chapter 28, ‘Of the Duty of Them That Have Sovereign Power’, that can assist a leader in successfully benefiting from his Sovereign prerogatives. Firstly, the core role of leaders is the protection and safety of their people; it is the Sovereign’s “uttermost ... endeavour” (Hobbes 2013:60). Secondly, leaders should make sure that there are laws, ordinances and decrees in place, and that all these rules are followed by the people. Thirdly, Hobbes states that it is the leader’s duty to encourage population growth; a common

demand from leaders at his time because of the high mortality of people due to diseases and frequent wars. One way to achieve that would be to encourage sexual relations among people of the opposite sex; in other words the Sovereign is “not to forbid the promiscuous use of women [or] not to forbid marriages within certain degrees of kindred and affinity” (Hobbes 1640:124). Fourthly, a leader is to respect the “natural liberty” of the people; which means that they should not be arbitrarily imprisoned, but rather allowed to freely move in and around the country. Fifthly, the leader shall use his Sovereign rights to see that the land is equally and proportionally distributed among the people. Sixthly, the leader is to put men in charge to keep justice in the country as he sees it fit, though the leader remains the final overseer, as Hobbes suggests that the magistrates in charge might “abuse their authority” (Hobbes 1640:126). Seventhly, in the matter of good governance and ethical management of the people, the leader should know when to punish and when to show mercy. The eighth provision encourages the Sovereign to start educating the masses at an early stage in schools, therefore making the future adults more receptive and understanding of their role as well as the place that the leader is to occupy in the national and political life. Finally, a strong leader has to cater for his country or Kingdom’s safety, ensuring that it is ready in the case of any potential external or internal threat. The leader should guarantee that his government made provision with enough “soldiers ... arms, ships, and fortified places in readiness of defence [to avoid] unnecessary wars” (Hobbes 1640:127).

In the following section, the relevance of public expectations towards their political leaders in an African post-independence setting will be explored.

B – The relevance of Thomas Hobbes’ 17th century theory in a contemporary African film setting

"A commonwealth is said to be instituted, when a multitude of men do agree and covenant, everyone with everyone, that to whatsoever man, or assembly of men, shall be given by the major part the right to present the present of them all, that is to say, to be their representative; everyone, as well as he that voted for it as he that voted against it, shall authorize all the actions and judgments of that man, or assembly of men, in the same manner as if they were his own, to the end to live peaceably amongst themselves and be protected against other men." (Hobbes 1651, cited from Bassiouni 1998:1)

This declaration is quoted from *Leviathan* in its Chapter XVII, ‘Of the Rights of Sovereigns by Institution’, by Cherif Bassiouni (1998) in his capacity of General Rapporteur for the Geneva Inter-Parliamentary Union, in a publication entitled *Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement*. Professor Bassiouni acknowledges Hobbes’ theoretical and political contribution in mankind’s search for a just and equitable political system of governance. Hobbes’ theory on leadership and model of sovereignty, also known as an “authoritarian rule of law” (Wantchekon 2003:20) might originate from the 17th century, but still find a place in contemporary political analysis. Political philosopher “Leo Strauss [in] 1965 turned to Hobbes to find an explanation for the chaos and disorder in Weimar Germany” (Wantchekon 2003:24). If McCormick (1997 cited from Wantchekon 2003:16) argues that this “attempt led to the strengthening of the military, the repression of the Left, and, ultimately, the collapse of the republic and the emergence of authoritarianism” through the National Socialist Party in Germany with its well-known consequences, Hobbes’ model and philosophical principles in political analysis of contemporary democracies may also serve to explain political events in Africa since independence.

Sovereignty is a non-negotiable attribute for individuals leading a political system, and is found in both democratic and authoritarian regimes. The major difference is that in contemporary democracies, the extent of the sovereignty is established by the Constitution and unequally distributed among the major structures of power, such as the Executive, Parliamentary and Judiciary. In authoritarian regimes on the other hand, sovereignty is in essence unlimited and centralized in the person or group of people who assume the leadership position.

Secular philosophies place sovereignty in the people who are deemed to have the right to create and undo government, [whereas] contemporary political thinkers are far less ideological and much more pragmatic than their predecessors of the last century. (Bassiouni 1998:4)

In other words, sovereignty is a mandatory component, but its nature and its adaptation will differ depending on the social and political reality of the time in which it is applied. Thomas Hobbes as “the founding father of modern political philosophy” (Williams 2005) emphasized the crucial place sovereignty, or the Sovereign, has in a reliable political setting. His analysis emerged as an attempt to repair societal crises and political infightings that erupted in the aftermath of the three English Civil Wars between 1642 and 1651 (Williams 2005). Centuries later, empires have made way to republics, but the contests for power and for sovereignty still exist.

Hobbes proposes a theoretical model of sovereignty within the scope of authoritarian governance as was common in his time; describing the perfect authoritative political leader in an ‘imperfect’ society; he provides, in his view, a drastic solution to drastic situations during his era of monarchies. In Africa, since 1960, the political landscape is dominated by a history of military coups, genocides, segregation, civil and transborder wars. In such dire situations,

Hobbes's models and political principles might be used as a basis for political analysis, particularly in cases of implemented leadership styles; and in particular, for the expectations levied by a politically dependent public at new leaders. Hobbes's political theory "justifies authoritarian rule as a mean to create social order" (Wantchekon 2003:24), which has been evident in the attempts of most African governments soon after the faltering of the first post-independence government. In the context of this study, where four film characters of African leaders are created as fictional personae, good governance or individual leadership styles are initially used by all leaders, either as an instrument of political control or social cohesion. Hobbes in devising his political principles had tried to find a balance between the interests of the Sovereign or leader and those of the people. Though the leader dominates the people, it is based on a mutual agreement, a covenant (Hobbes 1968:198) between the two parties. The idea of a reciprocal relation between a leader and his people is not a behavioral assumption unique to the 17th century. In the four films selected for this study, the four leaders find, each in his character's own understanding, several ways to address, relate, engage and satisfy their people's pressing needs. Not all four film characters are authoritarian leaders in a purely Hobbesian sense, but they equally claim the right to fully exercise their sovereignty, to implement their leadership styles and connect with their people. In as much as Hobbes does not compromise on the unlimited powers of a Sovereign, he also states what his duties are for his people. He draws leaders' attention to "order and conflict resolution" (Wantchekon 2003:18), particularly to countries previously affected by any type of deadly conflict. Government leaders need to ensure that their people live in a peaceful country. According to Wantchekon (2003:24), in a Hobbesian understanding the role of a leader "is to create and maintain political order and to protect the rights that political order makes possible and, most importantly, the right to hold political office or the rights to secure private property". These are not foreign goals to contemporary political governments, especially in Africa.

In the selected films, the internal conflict of a leader who starts out as a positive character, but is too weak to sustain this image may develop. Moreover, the recognition of the African leaders' inner turmoil by other characters may be used in the narratives to drive the plot, and, ideally, invite audience anticipation of the key events in the plot as an element of suspense.

C- Brief overview of the four selected films

Hobbes's approach on leadership touches various aspects of state's life: prerogatives and roles of a Sovereign (President/king), relations with the people, relations with other governing apparatuses, and rapports between state and religion. All of these aspects are found in the four selected films through the four leading film characters who are playing the roles of historically and politically famous African leaders. Though the films' narratives are fictional representations, three of these African leaders have existed in reality, with the exception of the leader in the Nigerian film.

The sample for the study is a selection of four films set in four African countries:

1. *Le Président* (2013) by Jean-Pierre Bekolo, set in Cameroon
2. *Who is the King* (2012) by Iyke Odife, set in Nigeria
3. *Invictus* (2009) by Clint Eastwood, set in South Africa
4. *The last King of Scotland* (2006) by Kevin McDonald, set in Uganda

These four films have been selected because each presents a different leadership style illustrated through the leading role of the President or the King. Furthermore, they belong to

different film genres and have different subject matters. The first two films aim at an international audience, whereas the second two target regional and local audiences.

The first two films are African films by African directors and mainly target African audiences. The narratives themselves entirely revolve around the representation of modern and traditional African leadership in two Black African countries. The settings and the stories' locations were geographically delimited, by the directors, to Cameroon and Nigeria, respectively. Entirely in French, *Le Président* (The President) is by a Cameroonian director; it was however banned in Cameroon (Bekolo 2013) because of the narrative which is an allegory about a long-term dictator who refuses to step down. Speaking about Cameroon, Jean-Marie Teno, another Cameroonian film director familiar with censorship, says: "I was born in a country where there was very strict censorship when I was little and where there was, – and still is – a great deal of injustice" (Thackway 2003:204). In *Le Président*, the narrative evidently alludes to a fictional country similar to the Republic of Cameroon which is ruled by 81-year-old President Paul Biya, who has been in office since 1982 (Sakho 2012). *Le Président* is a fictional story with elements of the fake documentary genre through the use of voiceovers, split-screens and ambient natural lighting. Regarding the censorship of his film and the motivation behind its production, film director Jean Pierre Bekolo comments:

...my intent centers on the figure of the President, locating the film at an ending: the end of a man, the end of a long reign and the end of blame, failures and grievances. We had to find the right tone, poetry, humor and music that would narrate both the fragility of an all-mighty man acting as President as well as the danger inherent in the times to come (Eijkman 2013).

Le Président is thus an explicit criticism of Mr. Paul Biya's authoritarian leadership style.

Bekolo uses a neorealist approach in producing *Le Président* as a combination of a fiction film and a fake documentary, because neorealist films “rely on a spectatorial familiarity with the codes of documentary, which have been imported into fiction” (Gabara 2006:203). In *Le Président*, the analysis of the leadership style will be of the President’s film character and not directly of Mr. Paul Biya, even though it is evident that the politically engaged director is directly referring to him. However, because *Le Président*, to a certain extent, also presents some aspects of documentary filmmaking, there will be few instances in this study, where in addition to the film content analysis, selected diegetic events or certain film characters in *Le Président*, will be related to relevant non-fictional equivalents. This analysis will thus briefly look at the impact that an event or a person had in the real-life history of Cameroon; an impact that is well known to Cameroonian viewers, but not necessarily to a reader who is not familiar with the political history of Cameroon. This attempt to correlate fictional events with historical events intends to offer background information for non-Cameroonian viewers that Bekolo did not include in the script. The above-mentioned scenes will include the film character of the Cameroonian leader as well as his leadership style. Real-life events related to particular scenes of the film typically correlate Bekolo’s auteurist signature in the films that he produces. He habitually uses mimesis in film (Dovey 2009:207) as a cinematic tool to address an ‘initiated’ audience with whom he may play with irony, satire or go against the grain, if he wishes, but knowing that his audience will still perfectly understand his underlying message. Hence, this analysis needs to draw such parallels, too.

Motifs of leadership management are also present in the Nollywood-produced film entitled *Who’s the King*. The narrative revolves around a succession to the throne of a late King in a Nigerian big chieftaincy; there is a strong binary opposition of Christianity and Animism as a sub-narrative. The village has a strong history of ancestral worship whereas the heir to the throne is a converted Christian. He is expected to renounce his beliefs in order to be officially

enthroned, and likewise, he requires of the local notables as well as the villagers to renounce their old ways and only embrace his, as he is going to be their new king. Like most Nollywood productions, the film has a distinctly theatrical style, inspired by Nigerian old Yoruba theatre (Olayiwola 2011:193). On the other hand, even if many scholars and film critics argue that Nollywood predominantly “has its origins in earlier forms of popular art in Africa, and particularly in *Yoruba* traveling theatre” (Jeyifo 1984; Barber 2000), some Nigerian filmmakers state that Nollywood can also be traced back to “Igbo Onitsha Market Literature” (Adesanya 1997:18). The reason for this claim is that Nollywood films with a strong *Yoruba* influence cater mostly for Yoruba audience through the language and cultural realities in these films. Statistical evidence from the Nigerian National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) valid the claim that from the years 2000 to 2010, Nollywood films were majoritarilly in the *Yoruba* language (Ihejirika & Osueke 2012:15).

A film is not only a sequence of moving images but also an organized mixture of images, words, texts, music and noises that are characterized by a constant displacement and circulation of meaning. (Jensen 2002: 134)

Thus, the argument of the *Igbo* origin of Nollywood is to reassert Nollywood as a cultural platform for the manifestation of *Igbo* identity; according to Uwah (2009:7-8) Nollywood films contribute to “reaffirm an authentic [Igbo] identity [as Nigerian viewers] believe that these texts [culturally] help build their societies”.

The film, *Who's the King*, illustrates political, religious intrigues as well as emotional abuse and economical blackmail in a local *Igbo* Kingdom in Nigeria. The film is predominantly in the English language, but some terms, especially traditional titles or hierarchical ranks are given in the *Igbo* language (*Who's the King* 2012). In addition to the language, the film mentions customs such as the *Igbo* masquerades (Uwah 2009:208), and

Igbo rituals such as the “new yam festival” (Uwah 2009:28). Moreover, the character of Prince William, in a conversation with his wife, informs the audience that the Kingdom, and its traditional mode of government, is specific to the *Igbo* culture. Christianity however, is not a direct feature of the *Igbo* culture, but in the narrative, the heir to the throne is a zealous Christian. Consequently, his position as the future King is opposed by both the second heir to the throne and the older and conservative generation. The royal elders are not favorable to the prospect of having a king who despises their ancestral gods and worships a foreign God. They would have overturned the late King’s will to have the first-born take over the kingship, if the second born was not of mixed race descent, which automatically disqualifies him, though he speaks the local language and follows ancestral customs.

A conflict between the political and the religious sphere is present in Hobbes’s theory of sovereignty, as well. The philosopher advocated a strict separation between state and religion; as the precursor of modern political philosophy, he has looked at politics “as a secular discipline divorced from theology” (Williams 2005). Hobbes does not deny the existence of a supernatural entity and the value that men place in religion when he stated that “there is no cause to doubt, but that the seed of Religion, is also onely in Man” (Hobbes 1651:54). Hobbes thus conveyed that religion or the belief in a higher power is inherent to human nature. Moreover, he acknowledged that conflicts between religion and (human) laws are inevitable, and proposed a solution:

To take away this scruple of conscience concerning obedience to human laws, amongst those that interpret to themselves the word of God in the Holy Scriptures; I propound to their consideration ...that no human law is intended to oblige the conscience of a man, but the actions only. (Hobbes 1640:100)

Hobbes therefore asserted that religion significantly influences people's principles or ethics, but not their behaviors. Furthermore, he argued that "a Christian Sovereign [can only provide] for the people salvation" (Hobbes 1640:101), whereas the political Sovereign is more apt to establish a country's system of governance that will guarantee peace and stability for the citizens. "All men agree on this, that peace is good, and therefore also the way or means of peace are good (Hobbes 2009:70), and in his views, the only way to achieve that state is through one absolute leader who is "called SOVEREIGN, and said to have Sovereign Power" (Hobbes 2009:76).

In relation to the narrative in *Who's the King*, the royal leader, a fervent Christian, envisions his religious belief and his political leadership style as a homogeneous structure. Hobbes however cautioned leaders about combining state and religious affairs, but in the event where this is already the case, as a palliative measure, "when the commands of God and man shall differ, we are to obey God, rather than man" (Hobbes 1640:99). His argument continues by emphasizing that, even in that defective model of governance, peace and justice remain *sine qua non* conditions. If they cannot be fulfilled, therefore, for such a leader, Hobbes stressed the contradiction in claiming "peace and justice towards God" whilst he/she cannot sustain the same attributes among his own subjects (Hobbes 1640:100-101).

Following the two African films above-mentioned, the first mainstream film about Africa in the sample of study is *Invictus*, a sport success and nation-building film. The setting is South Africa in 1995 and the cast is mainly South African and American. The film focuses on two leaders: a political and a sport leader, each of whom has a mission to accomplish in the newly-democratic South Africa. *Invictus* is a mainstream film with an African theme, more precisely, a South African reconciliation theme. Although the film is based on historically verifiable elements of South Africa's political and sporting history, it also adopts popular Hollywood film conventions such as "spurious harmony" (Modleski 1984:692) with

predictable narratives and plot resolutions to please the audience. It also makes use of Hollywood character definitions, based on Propp's (1928) film characterization; in this instance it is the character of the hero, played by the character of Mandela, and his helper, played by the character of Pienaar, that are rendered prominent through the binary oppositions of 'good' versus 'bad' using various South African contexts and identities. However, the character of Pienaar is not strictly painted as negative, but as a character who has to run a team that is (majoritarily) racist, and plays a sport with a racist past.

The fourth film is *The last King of Scotland*, set in Uganda for the majority of the scenes. In a similar manner as *Invictus*, the film is a mainstream production on an African topic, and the original story comes from a historical and national set of events. Idi Amin Dada, the model for the false hero film character, was historically the President of Uganda. Even though the setting of the story is Africa, the film is produced in a combination of psychodrama, horror and suspense Hollywood genre in a gothic style with Hollywood conventions and Hollywood actors in lead roles. The narrative follows a young Scottish doctor who decides to go and live in Africa, and randomly chooses Uganda. He later develops a mixed friendship with the character of Idi Amin; a relation made of admiration and respect which later turn into hate and fear. If *Invictus* was realized for nation building purposes in South Africa, *The last King of Scotland* represents a fictional interpretation of President Idi Amin who was propelled into international media visibility after the successful Entebbe raid on a Sunday, 4 July 1976 where more than a hundred hostages, mainly Israeli, were rescued by an Israeli commando from pro-Palestinian plane hijackers (Smith 1976). A fictional reconstruction of the Entebbe hostage situation is included in the film to emphasize how the character of Idi Amin deals with leadership crisis situations and how he deals with any opposition to his sovereignty as an authoritarian leader. *Invictus* and *The last King of Scotland* both illustrate and address old myths and stereotypes about African leaders;

furthermore these two films, far from being African films in the strict cinematic sense of the term, are rather mainstream representations of Africa with an underlying Western focus and a diegetic emphasis on their main characters who are historically well-known African leaders, instead of the African context which is largely stereotyped. This however is not to suggest that the films are autobiographic constructions; while certainly they are inspired by the historical persona, they remain fictional representations that make use of a three-stage narrative approach (Todorov & Weinstein 1969:75). Firstly, this implies the equilibrium at the beginning of the diegesis where everything is tranquil and undisturbed. The second stage is the disequilibrium where a fact irrevocably disrupts the narrative and thirdly, at the end of the diegesis, there is a concluding stage where everything in the film falls back into place again; it is the new equilibrium.

Chapter IV – Analysis of the representation of African leaders’ leadership styles in the four fiction films

I. Preamble to the analysis

Wallis (2012) understands the theory of representation in Media Studies as a measure to analyze “how a particular person or group of people are being presented to [an] audience”. In this instance, the sample of study consists of four films depicting historical individuals, who are represented through fictional characters in the role of African leaders with divergent leadership styles. In addition to bringing a different angle of analysis in the processes and mechanisms of representation, each African leader presents some elements that are found in Hobbes’ political principles of sovereign governance. Thus, in each film, scenes displaying positive (benevolent leader) or negative leadership (dictatorship) will be explored, and then the leadership styles in all of those scenes will be analyzed.

The fictional leaders in the four narratives differ in a number of regards from the real historical personae that the film characters portray. In *Le Président*, the character of the Cameroonian leader has some resemblance to the non-fictional Cameroonian leader; while the situation that he faces at the outset of the film is fictional, and the subsequent scenes move between the surreal and projections of the future, while using both real personae in Cameroon and fictional sub-plots. Hence, the director purposefully uses both differences and similarities between the fictional and non-fictional leader in order to advance the narrative. *Who’s the King* on the other hand, is not based on an historical persona that has inspired the narrative; it illustrates a power struggle between leadership and religion in a traditional Nigerian Kingdom. To date, the non-fictional Nigeria, as many African countries, still has traditional kingships where the authority of the King or *Igwe* is venerated, in addition to

modern political institutions. While *Who's the King* might not allude to a particular historical Nigerian leader, the narrative and the settings remain familiar for a local audience to recognize the theme of kingship and governance.

In *Invictus*, the main differences between the historical personae and the characters are firstly that the film was produced in 2009, whereas the real-life Rugby World Cup event took place fourteen years earlier, in 1995, which allows the benefit of historical hindsight and may have contributed positive stereotyping to both characters. Here, the racial segregation theme is also simplified and exaggerated for the mainstream audience, in Hollywood style. Secondly, the fictional president of Mandela differs from the historical Nelson Mandela, the first democratically elected Black President of South Africa. Contrary to the fictional character, the non-fictional Mandela did not only focus on rugby in his national reconciliation agenda. Furthermore, he also faced strong opposition from the African National Congress for his support of the Springbok, much more opposition than what the fictional character encounters in the film, “because the springbok was [still] a symbol of apartheid” (Smith 2013). Additional characters in the personal security guards of Mandela furthermore counterfoil Mandela in their sullen masculinities; while Pienaar’s counterfoils are the rugby players. The two men indeed have to challenge their immediate male team before they can challenge the country’s mindset; After all, *Invictus* is a Clint Eastwood film that builds narrative development on male identities. (Wozniak 2012)

In *The Last King of Scotland*, there is also a considerable temporal difference between the fictional Idi Amin who is portrayed in a 2006 Hollywood production and the non-fictional historical Idi Amin who seized power in Uganda 35 years earlier, in 1971, and died in 2003 (Keatley 2003). The economic mismanagement and the abuse of the Islamic religion as a political strategy to obtain financial and strategic alliances with wealthy Muslim nations, which were all imputed to the historical Idi Amin (Keatley 2003), do not appear in his

fictional character narrative construction. Moreover, the recurrent religious purges of Ugandan Christians and the nepotistic privileges given to Muslim tribal groups (Luck 2007), which are historically attributed to the non-fictional Idi Amin, are not found in the film character of the Ugandan President. Similarly, the allegations of cannibalism, admitted by the non-fictional Idi Amin's exiled Health Minister, Henry Kyemba, who "confessed that on several occasions [Amin] told [him] quite proudly that he had eaten the organs or flesh of his human victims" (Jacob & Jacob 2010:10), are not explored in the narrative. The non-fictional Idi Amin himself, in an interview given to the New York Times, answered the question of his alleged cannibalism by saying: "I don't like human flesh. It's too salty for me" (Orizio 2003); those facets of the historical Amin do not transpire in the fictional character of Idi Amin in *The Last King of Scotland*.

II. The controlling but contested Cameroonian political leader in *Le Président* (2013)

Le Président is Jean-Pierre Bekolo Obama's fourth full-length production. Bekolo has seen all his feature films internationally acclaimed, notably for his ability on one hand to manipulate visual images, sound and words and on the other hand, to break popular film conventions, in order to convey a message to his target audience. At the age of 25, his first film *Quartier Mozart* (*The Mozart Neighborhood*) (1992), won prizes at the Film Festivals of Cannes and Locarno and he was also a British Film Institute award nominee (Nkem-Eneanya 2014). Faithful to his avant-gardist trademark, just as in his second feature *Le Complot d'Aristote* (*Aristotle's Plot*) (1996), in *Le Président* "Bekolo produces a playful and provocative criticism of the role of cinema in African contexts [and] engages discursively, in voice-over, dialogue [and] allusion" (Dovey 2009:206-207). The film, *Le Président*, is a combination of both elements of film and documentary making.

Le Président is described by some reviewers as a "mockumentary", as mockumentaries often provoke controversy or are seen as subversive (Thomas 2003). The official review describes the film as a fiction film combined with elements of the fake documentary genre. *Le Président* effectively borrows codes from traditional documentary making and uses techniques that will be well accepted in a documentary production. In *Le Président* Bekolo uses shaky cameras, split screen display, voice over narrators, holographic transmissions on the television screen and non-fictional individuals playing themselves as characters. "Fake documentaries don't simply play with the real world" (Juhasz & Lerner 2006:28), but by not strictly following documentaries conventions either, they create "the hybrid nature of the film [which is] suspended between documentary and fiction" (Levine

2011:98). The hybrid nature of *Le Président* allows the director to carefully select effective conventions from both fiction films and documentaries, in an effort to construct a critical narrative that audiences can still identify with. “This blurring of modes [for Bekolo]... serves both poetic and political ends” (Levine 2011:95).

The political leader in *Le Président* mysteriously disappears as the narrative opens. This triggers a war of succession between political actors that plot to take the President’s place in case he never returns; “young people [are] becoming restless, intellectuals [are] debating national issues [and even] prisoners [are] making political plans” (Eijkman 2013). These different strata of the society react in relation to their needs and expectations. Young Cameroonians are impatient and proactive; they are “more orientated towards democracy than the generation that preceded them, and they want to maintain a community in which the rights of each citizen will be respected” (Tchouaffé 2009:74). On the other hand, intellectuals, represented in the character of Owona Nguini, are more conservative and recommend the strict respect of constitutional texts. Similarly to Abderrahmane Sissako’s films with a hybrid nature such as *Heremakono* (2002) (Levine 2011:98), in *Le Président*, Bekolo uses neorealist conventions when “he intermingles professional and non-professional actors, actors playing themselves and those playing characters” (Levine 2011:94). Owona Nguini is an illustration of a character playing his non-fictional role of political analyst, researcher and Professor in Cameroon. At this stage of the narrative, the whereabouts of the President are still unknown, but through the President’s dialogue with his chauffeur and bodyguard, the narrative informs the audience that the presidential car is going to the President’s village. The convoy however gets lost in an unfamiliar area in the underdeveloped countryside. This information, however, is unknown to the film characters, as the director uses foreshadowing to give to the audience “hints of what is to come” (Chatman 1980:59), for example, when in a scene, a government official answers a call and says: “my men are

with him, I know wherever he goes, if anything was to happen, I will be the first to know” (*Le Président 2013*). The use of the term ‘my men’ translates into a certain degree of affinity between the chauffeur and the bodyguard. This however is not apparent in the car scene, especially when the bodyguard brings to the chauffeur’s attention that they are “driving in circles”, as the chauffeur ignores the comment (*Le Président 2013*).

After being aware of his situation of being lost with no means to communicate with the capitol, the Cameroonian leader himself begins to speculate “upon the violent means of his eventual demise” (Murrey 2014), contemplating how ineffective and despotic he has been, thus creating a spiral of hate and resentment among his countrymen, to a point where any citizen could launch an attempt on his life. Lost in an enclosed and deserted area, with his luxurious car parked on an untarred road, the President realizes how vulnerable he is and ponders where the first hit will come from.

The character of the President is a contested leader who has not been deposed by a coup or dethroned by democratic elections, but already experiences a premonition of the aftermath of his reign: “...it is becoming more and more difficult, as if it is a sign that announces the end of a long destiny”, he says (*Le Président 2013*). That is the credibility crisis that he needs to explore throughout the film; he has to either reassert his political sovereignty and his agency as a strong leader or to admit defeat and step down. On the other hand, the character of the Cameroonian leader has also increasingly grown suspicious. The route to the presidential village is a familiar road to the chauffeur, hence in a monologue the President questions his chauffeur’s loyalty. “Has my chauffeur been hired to assassinate me?” (*Le Président 2013*), he wonders, “as he grapples with the [consequences of the] destructive political policies that he has implemented” (Murrey 2014).

The character of the President does not confront either his chauffeur or his bodyguard, but keeps a composed demeanor, which on the contrary emphasizes the political vulnerability that he attempts to disguise.

The Cameroonian leader in the narrative is an over-controlling ruler who is framed to be omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient in the mind of Cameroonians. The narrative expresses this through the secondary character of Jo Wood'ou (*Le Président 2013*), a television reporter who is determined to establish what has happened to the President. Jo Wood'ou is an investigative journalist for the Canal-D channel in the film, which is an allegory to the Canal 2 channel in the non-fictional Cameroon, the first private and independent television station in the country (<http://www.canal2international.net/>). In his journalistic quest, Jo Wood'ou undertakes to interview people on the street who might know about the President's disappearance, but

... they instead give him confessions about their own problems and fantasies. To ask them about the president is to ask about their own lives. The image of the president's face is constantly present so that it becomes the flickering backdrop in which their own lives are shown. (Eijkman 2013)

Although the secondary characters in the narrative, interviewed by Jo Wood'ou, wish to see the end of the despotic regime, their expectations are hesitant, because the President is the only socio-political construct that they have known for a long time. Jo Wood'ou himself expresses shared apprehension with his interviewees, by "breaking the fourth wall" (Brown 2012:166-84) and directly addressing the film audience in his frequent television reports on the disappearance of the President. "Breaking the fourth wall not only crosses the frontier between the world of the senses and the suprasensible world, but that between two aesthetic sensibilities" (Brown 2012:166-84). Thus, a direct address is a particularly "rich metaphor for

the problems of vision experienced by film characters [with] an extra diegetic force” (Brown 2012:166-169) that will advance the story further. The direct address used by Wood’ou is not intended to disrupt the fiction, but to enrich it. In the state of confusion in which the leader’s disappearance left the citizens, Wood’ou sarcastically recalls that in all his life stages, “Cameroon has had the same president throughout each [of them]” (Murrey 2014). In another direct address cinematic technique, Jo Wood’ou says,

... when I was born, the President was already President. I learnt how to walk, when the President was still the President. I learnt how to speak, I went to nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary, and the President was still the President. Now, I myself am a Television personality and the President is still the President. (*Le Président* 2013)

After 55 years of independence, Cameroon has only had two heads of state. The practice of democracy is no longer defined by the constitutional texts, but daily implementation of governance has become the expression of the President’s will. Furthermore, as Khapoya (1998:194) notes, the existence of “one party rule or one-party state system [is] a conducive environment for repressive leadership”. The comment made by the character Jo Wood’ou is a social reality that the Cameroonian audience can identify with. The political system is described as democratic, but is merely a nominal democracy, which means “that ‘free elections’ have yet to produce a real alternative to entrenched systems of power” (Tchouaffé 2009:74). Even though, the character of the President has been in power for many consecutive years, as Jo Wood’ou metaphor suggests, this long-term mandate is not a reflection of the people’s endorsement of his leadership style. His political endurance as the Cameroonian leader in this narrative is therefore not understood as a symbol of Sovereign strength in Hobbes’ sense, but rather as an evidence of external assistance to preserve his political mandate. One of the means through which this can be achieved is foreign aid; “several ...corrupt and often incompetent state leaders with relatively little domestic

legitimacy [benefit] greatly from international support that [assist] them to maintain political stability” (Clapham, Herbst & Mills 2001:204).

On the other hand, using documentary material, Bekolo draws from the journalistic history of Cameroon to build the story. Bekolo emphasizes the importance of the role played by the journalist film character of Jo Wood’ou, who represents the people and symbolizes freedom of the press. He is an agent of change, and promotes freedom of expression inside the narrative. In the non-fictional Cameroon however, journalists are not allowed to question the perfect public image and idiosyncrasies of the non-fictional President Paul Biya. An infamous example, known by all Cameroonians, is when a judiciary court sentenced the late journalist Pius Njawé to two years in prison for asking the question whether the President was sick, after he did not reappear for the second half of a soccer match (Haski 1998). Teno’s film *Chef!* (1999) also depicts this graphically. “Cameroon’s president rarely speaks publicly and is seldom seen, other than in the seemingly infinite campaign posters, billboards and fliers on prominent display across the country” (Murrey 2014). The non-fictional President Paul Biya has made it a custom to always attend the finale of the Cameroonian national soccer cup; he will always go to a private suite during half time and return for the second half of the game. At the time, Mr. Njawé quoted anonymous sources in his article, alleging that the President might have had a mild heart attack on that day, which is why he did not return as usual for the second half of the match (Haski 1998). Bekolo ironically states, “if you think about him, he puts you in jail” (Eardley 2013). In the narrative, he suggests a critical comparison between the non-fictional and the fictional journalist. Both have expressed a journalistic interest for the President, at a real and fictional level. Only the character of Jo Wood’ou succeeds in his endeavor, because “Cameroonian cinema provides a template for creating a new social utopia, a new place where politicians are required to listen to citizens, not simply tell them what to do” (Tchouaffé 2009:75). The symbolic freedom of expression

from which the character of Jo Wood'ou benefits, is used to inform the public opinion, and ironically to also locate the despot who has muzzled private press for years. In doing so, the character of Jo Wood'ou is portrayed as a product of the President's failed leadership style over the years, and at the same time, as the independent foundation upon which a new social and political dynamic can be envisioned.

Throughout the film narrative, "Bekolo toggles between [Wood'ou] and his interviews, and the president himself" (Eardley 2013). The fictional Cameroonian leader still sees himself as the untouchable leader that he has always been, and his citizens as ordinary people, but as the narrative and the character develop, and through internal monologues, the leader for the first time contemplates the eventuality "of the approaching end of an era" (Murrey 2014). In a non-linear narrative, typical of Bekolo's films, the binary oppositions of present and past are represented in scenes where the President is seen in what appears to be the present time, but physically interacting with characters from the past. This metaphysical dimension reflects, to a certain extent, on the President's troubled and persecuted state of mind. He thus "oscillates between a meditation on the specter and the body, and ... [an alarming] political situation" (Eardley 2013). Already in his third film, *Les Saignantes* (2005), Bekolo had shown a taste for mixing elements of supernatural into a contemporary narrative as a film technique, which may initially confuse an audience who is not familiar with his cinematic style. In this instance, the image of President moving in the past and the present – at the same time – reasserts his internal fears and insecurities. It is the realization that he has been a poor and unfit leader as well as a long-term African dictator, and that the people might decide to get their revenge for this. Furthermore, 'being in the past' almost allows the President to have a retrospect view on how his subjects despise him, how his own political allies are looking forward to him be removed and how his late wife, whom he meets in a metaphysical dimension, expounds before him the political and human mistakes that he

has made. It is only during this transcendental voyage that the President fully realizes that he has indeed been a dictator and an unfit leader for the entire duration of his rule; "... it seems that I am walking towards a deserted ocean, and I no longer recognize anything ... I am not ashamed to do my *mea culpa* as it is my people, my country, my nature", he states (*Le Président* 2013). It is particularly only after speaking and listening to his late wife that he confirms that he has been in power for far too long, and nothing positive has come for the country during his long reign. At this stage in the narrative, Todorov's new equilibrium is not yet restored, although *Le Président* gradually progresses towards a turning point which differs from the initial equilibrium status quo (Todorov & Weinstein 1969:75). Furthermore, the character development of the Cameroonian leader does not end in a perfect resolution or restored equilibrium, because this simplistic linear approach that favors continuity, is not endorsed by Bekolo, who is also a film lecturer who studied under Christian Metz (Adesokan 2011:110), "the father of film semiotics" (Ruby 2000:273).

In the state of stress that he is experiencing, the character of the President finds himself in two different realities: the actual world in the narrative and a surreal space identified as "Paradise" (*Le Président* 2013). However, in order to understand what Bekolo is expressing through these two realities, it is necessary to look at a particular car scene in the narrative. It is the preamble to the character of the President entering the two parallel worlds. Moreover, a condensed version of the dialogue between the President and his chauffeur is necessary background to the analysis.

It is daylight in the scene, and there are three characters in the car: the chauffeur, one bodyguard and the President, alone in the back seat.

President: If you are going to kill me, at least tell me who sent you. Give me the name of the person who paid you to assassinate me.

Chauffeur: I don't need to be paid for that, AlHaji, for all the years that you've been treating me as a slave.

President: A slave? How many slaves do you know of, who own the houses and businesses that you do? Do you think that I'm not aware of how corrupt you are?

Chauffeur: AlHaji, you know too much, I now have to kill you. (*Le Président 2013*)

The bodyguard, who is not wearing sunglasses, is startled by the chauffeur's last sentence. The following sequence is made of two shots: a wide shot of the car driving towards the camera, which then stops; followed by a medium shot, from inside the car, where the chauffeur stops the ignition. In the last shot, the bodyguard has put his sunglasses on, and the President appears to be sleeping in the back seat. He is at the same position as when he was talking to the driver, but in this scene, the light has been dimmed, and it is impossible to have a clear look at the President's face. Another element is that all the shots of the chauffeur do not fully show his face, they either do not give enough head room, lead room or his entire face is completely off shot. These subjective shots frame the chauffeur as a deceitful character. The narrative thus creates mystery around him, in order to build tension, but also to introduce an ellipsis in relation to the argument between the President and the chauffeur in the car scene. The ellipsis in this instance refers to periods of time that have been removed from the narrative in order to create new meaning. Thus, the visual instability of the character of the chauffeur is closely linked to the narrative void that Bekolo leaves, concerning the outcome of the car scene, and its impact on subsequent events in the narrative.

The next time that the character of the President is seen in the narrative, he is in 'Paradise' where he meets his late wife, and his bodyguard is again with him. It would however be simplistic to assume that the President and the bodyguard were killed by the chauffeur since, on one hand, the bodyguard still receives secret communication from the capitol, and on the other hand, Jo Wood'ou relays the information that his sources have located the President in Paradise (*Le Président 2013*). There is thus a clear line of

communication between the two independent realities through the actions of the bodyguard, which creates meaning for the characters belonging to the respective reality, or to both. In other words, “the process of framing intertwines metaphorically with the various instances of movement and communication in the film” (Levine 2011:95).

In a hybrid film construction, such as *Le Président*, the existence of two parallel worlds yet connected to each other is what Levine (2011:94) calls the “poetics of liminality, in which real, and metaphorical liminal space signifies broadly for the transformational power of the in-between”. Thus, the real narrative world and the surreal construct are both real for all characters in the narrative; Jo Wood’ou in his last report confirms that “the President was last seen in Paradise with his deceased wife, and that she heavily criticized his mode of leadership” (Le Président 2013). Jo Wood’ou is thus aware of the President’s whereabouts, but questions the veracity of the information. His concern however is not on the location, but on the possibility of the President being “accepted in Paradise after all the pain that he has caused to millions of Cameroonians” (Le Président 2013). The importance of the existence of these two parallel dimensions is however more relevant to the character of the President. Levine’s concept of liminality can be used here to explain what each world means, and what effect it has on the narrative whenever the President finds himself in any of each.

Liminality is based on the word *limen*, meaning threshold... The threshold between the visible and the invisible, the audible and inaudible...a state of in-betweenness... The liminal contains both the idea of threshold *and* the idea that a threshold might open-up like two parts of a parenthesis and actually contain a piece of in-between space and time, outside the normal order of things. (Levine 2011:95)

Thus, when he is in Paradise, the character of the President is not physically dead, but disconnected from the normal reality. The present as he sees it, is uncertain and even life-

threatening, hence he escapes to a more welcoming space where he can calmly assess his political future. The car scene and the dialogue with the chauffeur could function as a red herring, or a metafictional narrative construct, a story within a story to build tension. Thus, the narrative of *Le Président* “stretches across the gaps in the real, into the gulf between *real* subject and *real* viewer, to convince one of the other’s existence” (Levine 2011:97). The audience might become confused on what is real and what is surreal; this seems to be the intention of the director so as to stimulate change. For this analysis, the focus should rather be on what each space signifies and how it influences the overall narrative.

To use Levine’s terminology (2011:95), the threshold is a state of in-betweenness which is neither fully in the real or surreal space. It is then possible that the character of the President is not in Paradise, but in a threshold between the real world and a dream. Therefore, in this neutral space, he would be dreaming the Paradise scene and even Jo Wood’ou’s reaction to him being in Paradise, as Jo Wood’ou represents the voice of the people which the President fears, as the audience now knows. As with the characters in *Heremakono* (2002) by Sissako, the President is “in a state of in-betweenness, a state of waiting” (Levine 2011:99). As such, he may be contemplating the idea of either returning to power or resigning, and his dreamed representation of Paradise is the only place where he can make that decision without fearing for his life.

In the metaphysical world where the President finds refuge, the person that he feels comfortable and safe enough to ‘talk to’, is his deceased wife. In the narrative, Paradise is not visually different from the other locations, thus inviting audience scrutiny in a reflex to clarify this. Lighting and setting in the relevant scenes do not use any special after-effects to inform the viewer that these are parallel worlds; the only exception is the non-diegetic ethnic music that plays when the President first enters Paradise and sees his deceased wife. In all other respects, from the dialogues, the costumes, the food that the President eats, to his late

wife's house, there is no visual difference between the surreal Paradise and the real diegetic Cameroon.

This seamless dialectic between the past and the present, in the President's mind, can be understood in the light of Gilles Deleuze's concept of time-image. According to Jung (1964:23), "as a general rule, the unconscious aspect of any event is revealed to us in dreams, where it appears not as a rational thought but as a symbolic image". A dream is then an unconscious state, where everything is virtually possible. For Jung, they are "those flimsy, evasive, unreliable, vague, and uncertain fantasies (Jung 1964:25) that belong to a virtual interface which is in the past. Through his concept of time-image, Gilles Deleuze (1989) argues that the present and the past are not two immiscible components of narrative or of the character's awareness. Through the idea of duration, he demonstrates that there is indeed a lively and permanent connection between the two, in the sense that as the present passes, the past remains present as it continually supplements the past. In Cinema however, for Deleuze (1989), it is impossible to experience duration in mainstream representations of the movement-image. The latter is a combination of the action image (what the characters do), the perception image (what they see) and the affection image (how they react to what they have seen). The nature of the action image can be modified by both the perception and the affection image. A character reacts after being exposed to something, and according to Deleuze, that reaction is even more meaningful when the character has been "forced" to come out of his comfort zone and now has to "think" (Deleuze 2000:97). According to Deleuze, such a state where the action image is in crisis and reveals a new state, a new reality where the past can be witnessed in the present and the present in the past, is understood as the time-image (Deleuze 2005:219). This is the state in which the character of the President is shown at this stage of the narrative. His current situation has forced him to look into his past, to

assess his present, and then find equilibrium. The character of the President is thus between two realities without being fully part of either of them.

Moreover, film characters seek the ‘truth’ only within time when they are constrained and forced to do so by certain occurrences (Deleuze 2000:97). Thus for Deleuze, only when placed in front of “opsigns” and “sonsigns”, the human mind will exercise its true critical ability to think instead of merely following others. In film, “opsign” refers to anything that is visual in the narrative such as the visuals themselves, it is “the actual optical image” (Deleuze 2005:67) that is accessible to the viewer’s eyes. “Sonsigns” on the other hand are autonomous components that exist from their separation from the visual opsigns; they are “sound images” (Deleuze 2005:241). The fictional Cameroonian characters are momentarily surprised upon hearing of the unexpected news of the incumbent’s disappearance, which has left a political vacuum. Thus, they find themselves in an unprecedented and thus initially unthinkable situation where they can contribute to reshaping the political future of the country. Hence, their opsign is the disappearance of their leader whom they cannot physically see; their sonsign is the panic and claims to power that have taken the country by surprise, Jo Wood’ou’s reports, the quarrels of succession and the nationalist discourses that are sung through Valsero’s music. Valsero is a non-fictional, politically engaged Cameroonian rapper who plays his own character, uses his own name and his non-fictional critical lyrics in the film, *Le Président*. The neorealist use of real personae playing their own role as film characters is Bekolo’s consistent technique in the narrative. The character of Valsero in the narrative is an important measure for public opinion and youth opinion. He represents a new generation of Cameroonians who openly criticizes the repressive regime regardless of the potential harmful consequences. Through his lyrics, he describes the political decadence of a government that can no longer provide a social climate conducive to the development of the youth. His music thus provides individuals with a voice. When he raps in the narrative,

Valsero's lyrics are the expression of what Schumann (2008:19) calls "resistance music", in comparison to the importance of music and political lyrics, in the fight against the Apartheid regime in South Africa. .

Deleuze's concept of time-image has been claimed as the answer to a Cinema without clichés (Deleuze 2005), an unpredictable Cinema that goes beyond conventional formulas. Time-image allows the "ageing patriarch [to] encounter himself [and have] a rendezvous with his deceased spouse" (Murrey 2014). She listens to him, humors him to laugh, but also gives him a very critical assessment of his years as a supreme leader. Before her, the President does not argue or try to justify himself, but on the contrary, he is ashamed and admits his massive political failure: "I don't know anymore...only to you I can say it, I got lost along the way" (*Le Président* 2013). The strong film character of the deceased spouse was probably inspired by the life of Jeanne-Irène Biya, the non-fictional President's first wife who died in 1992 (Murrey 2014). In the narrative, the fictional President calls his fictional late wife – once only – "Jeanne" (*Le Président* 2013). The non-fictional late Jeanne-Irène Biya was a popular, loved and respected first lady in her country. In the narrative, the character of the deceased wife "offers the most genuine and scathing criticism of the president's lifetime of power" and the President listens to her and values her opinion (Murrey 2014). In style recalling that of Sembène, women always play a central role in Bekolo's films. In an interview, Sembène argued that "Africa can't develop without the participation of its women" (Sembène 1978:36), and strongly believed that "African women have a major role to play in the evolution of society" (Pfaff 1993:14); a motif which he developed in all his films. In Bekolo's award-winning film *Quartier Mozart*, the main female protagonist is known as the "Queen of the Hood" (*Quartier Mozart* 1992). In his third film, *Les Saignantes* (2005), the protagonists are "two femmes fatales who set out to rid their country of its corrupt and sexually obsessed male politicians [in] a hybrid sci-fi-action-horror film set in the year 2025" (Adesokan 2008:2). "In

each instance, it is the woman who reveals or fights against the tendency of masculine power to corrupt” (Murrey 2014). Similarly, in *Le Président*, the deceased first lady’s interrogation is a key factor in convincing the leader to reconsider his political ambitions; “no one forces you to go back”, she says (*Le Président* 2013). The crucial place of women in the fictional Cameroonian society is further emphasized by the male character of Jo Wood’ou, still looking for the President, who turns to women operating what is known as ‘Call box’ in Cameroon. ‘Call boxes’ are “umbrellaed, street-side stands where customers can pay for cigarettes, candies and telephone calls by the minute” (Murrey 2014). The investigative journalist is of the opinion that these women who manage an informal public service and somehow have ‘access’ to people’s communications and conversations, are the “pulse” of the country, hence he turns to them for valuable information . These Cameroonian women characters thus clearly subvert older stereotypes of women who are only capable of “compassion, emotionality [but] not authority, leadership...and decisiveness” (Tchouaffé 2012:197); both as real personae and as film characters.

Just as in Sembène’s film narratives, women characters in *Le Président* are thus not reduced to passive objects of male desire, but offer critical views on the value of the leadership style and also reflect on the leader’s weaknesses. Moreover, they “provide necessary connections between the past and the future, the traditional and the contemporary, the individual and the community” (Kindem & Steele 1991:52). The critical role of women in fictional Cameroon in *Le Président* is lastly illustrated through a woman who is, in the interim, the constitutional presidential successor, based on the premise that the President is still missing. She is the only persona that features on the film’s official poster besides the President (Obenson 2013). In her inaugural speech (recalling the access to power of Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson in Liberia, as depicted in the documentary *Iron Ladies of Liberia*, 2007), as

she takes over from the absent leader, she consecutively addresses the missing leader, the citizens, the diaspora and the international community in these terms:

I will have to destroy all that you have built. You will agree with me that the system in place has not produced the desired results... we will no longer be an exception to humanity, but a normal country... I am warning you, I will not steal with you, worse, I will prevent you from stealing. A country is not a cake but a plantation, the more hard-working people they are, the more benefits for all... To those whose despise the diaspora, I say to them, there is no super-citizen, and all Cameroonians equally belong to this country, and even if foreigners would like to join our plantation, they are most welcome. (*Le Président* 2013)

The current Cameroonian leader's unfit nature to lead is repeatedly exposed through female characters. This female presidential character represents a new type of African politician. By "challenging values of patriarchy [she not only seeks] the expansion of the public sphere to accommodate greater participation of women" (Adeoti 2009:51), but also to encourage hope for governmental accountability and change among the population. "Characters in Cameroonian films indicate [that] hope is real because they all believe in the future" (Tchouaffé 2009:74). Jo Wood'ou relentlessly does his job, political actors try to fill the void, critical discourses from local artists are aired on television and the engaged speech of the new female president; all this concur to demonstrate the commitment of these characters to bring change in their country. As Tchouaffé (2009:58) observes, "Cameroonian cinema can be considered an authoritative medium because of the way in which it captures the hopes and anxieties of its citizens in a direct attempt to frame a more democratic debate."

As counterfoil to the increasing public engagement in the political vacuum, as the plot progresses, the formerly omnipresent leader is increasingly deteriorating into an old man

without any political and personal direction. At this point in the narrative, stranded both in his past and his present, the Cameroonian leader knows that he has failed as a political leader. To return to Thomas Hobbes description of the duties of leadership, it is however, a political leader's responsibility to ensure that the leadership style that he implements and the governing bodies that he put in place, lead to good governance, to the country's economical development and to the well being of the citizens (Hobbes 1651:87). As rapper Valsero says in the narrative of *Le Président*, the country has been engulfed in a dictatorship and has been part of Cameroonians' lives for so long that, without realizing it, their leader has made them "accomplice to their own death" (*Le Président 2013*). The falling leader himself foresees the tumultuous end, but remains reluctant to come to terms with the unavoidable end. This is inherent in his self-understanding: to admit his failure, he has to question his own supposedly unchallengeable judgment on which his absolute authority was formerly based: "the mirror shows me an image that I don't like, something is broken, but what?", he queries rhetorically (*Le Président 2013*). The falling leader who thought of himself as a Sovereign, to use Hobbes's description, thus faces a fundamental crisis of logic because he has to realize that he is indeed not a Sovereign, but a mere dictator. This momentous event is his turning point. In the same line of thought, the film director uses intertextuality when he refers to Roman literature, in a scene where the President – still in Paradise – is informed by his bodyguard that some people have launched "Operation Brutus" (*Le Président 2013*).

A shocked President interprets the coded message by pointing out that his heir apparent and other conspirators want to eliminate him physically and permanently. The analogy with the Roman text is particularly centered on the persona of Brutus. However, there are two historically known Brutus in the Roman Empire: Lucius Junius Brutus, the founder of the Roman Republic (Matthes 2010:29), and Marcus Junius Brutus who assassinated Julius Caesar (Badian 2014). Both Brutus have been associated with events

involving betrayal and murder. One Brutus was betrayed by his own two sons who plotted with a political rival to kill him (Morey 1901:48), and the second Brutus deceived and killed Caesar. Regardless of which Brutus Bekolo alludes to, these two illustrations relate to violent incidents in the history of Rome. However, the narrative in *Le Président* does not suggest that the country is moving towards a civil conflict in the absence of its long term dictator, but it certainly depicts a number of individuals seriously considering taking over government. According to Azam, a civil war in this fictional Cameroon is the most probable scenario because “the occurrence of civil conflict in Africa is intimately related to the [sovereign’s failure] to deliver ... [what] the people want” Azam (2001:442). In the context of the film narrative, the President’s failure as a political leader is the direct – if not the only – consequence of his poor leadership, and will indubitably result in the collapse of his despotic regime. Consequently, if a leader can no longer provide “the framework of peace and security that makes probable the preservation [of the people, then he has clearly] failed to do his job” (Ribeiro 2011:53), and should resign. Bekolo on the other hand does not state in the narrative whether the President has officially decided to resign, and this open-endedness confirms that *Le Président* is a critical piece where the resolution is not forced but allows for the many allusions and innuendos to form a strong message of the political change to the audience, as it occurs among the) characters of the film. This “open-endedness” is one of the “cardinal virtues” of Cinema that differentiates popular mainstream from engaged critical Cinema Peter Wollen (1999:499).

In *The Président*, all characters, including the President’s late wife, share the opinion that throughout the years that he has been in power, the President has not been a benevolent leader to his people. His authoritarian leadership style did not bring social stability or economical development in the country. Moreover,

authoritarian systems are those in which opportunities for participation are severely limited, power is exercised by a leader... not accountable to the public, and there are no limits to power. (Khapoya 1998:215)

Thus, in the narrative, Cameroonian citizens are not free to “pursue private interests and happiness that benefit [them] and [the] society” (Millen 2006:3).

In Bekolo’s film, the President’s political legitimacy and sovereignty gradually become irrelevant, as he has failed to establish a political system that prioritizes the respect of individual liberties and democratic participation. Dissenting voices from all levels of the Cameroonian society, triggered by the President’s disappearance, led to a “quiet revolution” or “*révolution tranquille*” to quote the name given to Quebec historical period of political change in Canada (Gélinas 2007:134). It is a revolution that aims at reshaping the political, social and cultural image and structures of a country. In the narrative: women, politicians, young people, artists, journalists, scholars and ordinary citizens, join efforts in ending the long-term dictatorship, by providing a new political alternative. Furthermore, according to Hobbes (1651:92), when there are no longer “consenting voices” from the majority to acknowledge the incumbent, he is no longer fit to be the Sovereign leader. Moreover, Hobbes (1651:92) argues that unless an injustice has been committed, no subject has the right to protest against the national leader; however the character of the President, through his authoritarian leadership, has created several social injustices such as laxness, corruption, poverty and unemployment that affect all citizens. At the end of the narrative, these social inequalities are the political foundation that the new female incumbent builds her new mandate on.

III. The religious Prince and traditional Sovereign in *Who's the King* (2012)

Who's the King is the story of a Prince who has to choose between his religious beliefs and be crowned king of the “*Umuodogwu* community in Igboland” (*Who's the King* 2012). In a non-fictional Nigeria, the *Igbo* are “one of the three major culture groups” (Ajaegbo 2014:17) and they are mostly located “in the Southeastern and South-central Nigeria [and the territories that they occupy are referred to as] Igboland or Igbo society” (Dike 2002:2). In the narrative, the Kingdom of *Umuodogwu* is a “hierarchical system...highly centralized” (Khapoya 1998:63), where there is a strong leading authority that oversees political, economical, traditional and cultural affairs in the community. The leader that this section will focus on is Prince William, the legitimate heir to the throne of *Umuodogwu*. However, there is more than one leader in the entire film series’ linear narrative, because that narrative is prolonged through four different films that also have sub-narratives. One of the specificities about Nollywood products is that one feature film is often divided into two parts; the film *Who's the King* is made of a part 1 and a part 2, but for the purpose of this study, these two parts will be analyzed as a single feature. Furthermore, in typical Nollywood film tradition, films are structured in sequel(s) and prequel(s). A film sequel is a follow-up narrative that is released after a previous production. The latter is called a prequel, and the sequel often carries the prequel’s main narrative. In the system of prequel and sequel, each part is a full-length film; the prequels to *Who's the King* are *The King is coming* part 1, which is over an hour, and *The King is coming* part 2, which is over two hours. *Who's the King* part 1 and 2, on the other hand are over an hour each. However, in this study, prequels to this film will not be analyzed but referred to as a source of background information. A vast majority of Nollywood films use the structure of prequels and sequels, and each will have a part 1, part 2 and sometimes a part 3. The central narrative thus

consecutively unfolds in these different sections. For viewers who are watching a sequel part 1, there will often be an onscreen notification to inform them that in order to better understand the story, prequels are available. In relation to this study, Todorov & Weinstein's (1969:75) initial equilibrium is found in the prequel part 1 and its full resolution only takes place in the sequel part 2.

Who's the King is what Diawara (1992:141) classifies as a film with a "social realist tendency which defines itself by thematizing current sociocultural issues [by drawing] on contemporary experiences [as] they oppose tradition to modernity." In *Who's the King*, the council of notables, with their adamancy to protect their old beliefs, symbolically represents tradition, whereas the educated Prince William who only speaks English but not his vernacular *Igbo*, symbolically represents modernity and change. In the first prequel, the late King mentions his two sons' high level of education, and also addresses his first son's eccentric behavior, for he not only refuses to partake in any traditional ceremony, but also despises them. For instance, the first prequel starts with a more than 10-minute long dancing ceremony dedicated to "the new yams festival" (*Who's the King* 2012). Yam is an edible starchy food from of a climbing plant found in tropical African countries. In a non-fictional Nigeria, 'the new yams festival', known in *Igbo* as "Iri Ji Ohuru... is a sacred festival... respected and annually celebrated all over the Igbo Nation" (Ukachukwu 2007: 249, 252). The ceremony consists of thanking the local gods for a "bountiful harvest" (*Who's the King* 2012). Local *Igbo* traditions, as explained in the narrative, expect the heir to the throne to be by his father's side during the dancing and eating festival, but Prince William refuses to take part in what he calls a pagan and "demonic" ceremony (*The King is coming* 2012). That is the first confrontation that the designated leader, Prince William, faces in the narrative, and he handles it in a non-diplomatic manner when he repeatedly derides his father, brother and the whole community for being "perpetrators... of evil... and darkness" (*Who's the King* 2012).

The religious contentions between modern Christianity and African religion in Nigeria originate from the British colonial occupation when locals were “ardent opponents of Christianity ... [as they] saw the European powers ... as partners in a joint mission to civilize traditional Africa [and by] “civilization [they] meant the rule of [colonial] law” (Mamdani 1996:75, 109). The clashes between locals and colonizers arose from the fact that these Nigerian communities already had a belief system based on ancestral customs. They believed in “the concept of God, of a Supreme Being, who created the universe and everything in it, the Ibo [or Igbo] believe in a Supreme Being who is assisted by smaller deities” (Khapoya 1998:55). However, the British colonizers’ goals in view of religion were to annihilate all forms of traditional belief system and to replace it with Christianity. This has consequently led to a hybrid form where religion in traditional African societies would comprise of “three intertwined components [that are the] belief in [a Christian] God, in spirits and in ancestors (Khapoya 1998: 55-58). In the narrative, when Prince William confronts his father about the nature of his beliefs, the elder responds that “I am a Christian myself”, and I still follow old traditions” (*Who’s the King* 2012). Quoting Afolabi Adesanya, filmmaker and director of the Nigerian Film Corporation, Santorri Chamley (2012:23) reaffirms that the

... appeal of Nollywood films is that they tell stories about characters from environments that Nigerian audiences can relate to, empathize and crack up with. They are stories about their villages and cities, not about faraway places like Europe and America ... They are not about holding on to the American Dream but about [Nigerian] reality.

Thus, when non-fictional cultural aspects are inserted in the narrative, they speak directly to an informed local audience, who is also given ample visual and thematic clues on the story.

The late King, who respected and valued the culture and old traditions of his people, dies in the second sequel, and his first son, William, is to inherit the throne. The heir apparent to the throne is portrayed as a fanatic Christian who intends to mould his leadership style on his religious principles. In the first sequel, the late King disinherits him and dispossesses him of his heir position. However, the council of elders, who symbolizes ancestral beliefs and immutable traditions, is forced to reinstate him as the crown Prince, because his only brother, Prince Ibe, is of mixed race descent. “From a modernist point of view, [filmmakers] attempt to romanticize traditional values as pure and original” (Diawara 1992:141). Customs or traditions are often portrayed as the ‘authentic’ and the most preferred choice for a character, when confronted with a dilemma. Uwah (2009:202) argues that “given the filmmakers’ ability to twist rituals from their own perspectives”, the representation of traditional rituals or customs in Nollywood films, is not always a precise transposition of the real-life equivalents. However, even in these narratives, traditions or the filmmaker’s version of traditions, are portrayed as an authentic set of values that some of the film’s characters conscientiously respect. This explains why, amid the numerous clashes between Prince William and the elders, ‘pure tradition’ still has to be observed, consequently the council of elders cannot resort to enthrone Prince William’s sister, Princess Nkem, or Prince Ibe instead. The Princess disqualifies because she is a woman in a patriarchal society, and the option of Prince Ibe as the future King is discarded because ancestral traditions, in the narrative, only favor royal lineages that are not mixed with any other tribe or race. One of the elders complains about the dilemma when he says that “Prince Ibe is basically a White man, and [he] can hardly imagine a White man sitting on the throne of *Umuodogwu* [whereas] Prince William is a true son of the soil, but the religious wars [that] he wages against” them are detrimental for the community (*Who’s the King* 2012). The council of elders chose Prince William merely because they had no other alternative, as they were aware that he could not be converted back

to traditional belief. The urgency was for the King's throne not to remain vacant, and to give to the community a sense of order by instating a king. In traditional African societies, a

kinship relationship is one that binds two individuals, either through birth or marriage. Blood relationships are called consanguine and those based on marriage are called affilial. Consanguine relationships raise the question of one ancestry's or descent and how that is determined through generations."

(Khapoya 1998:30)

Prince Ibe is a royal child by birth, but the nature of his consanguine relationship to the late King proves that his mother was not of Nigerian origins. His royal status comes from his father only. However, for a Prince to be an heir to the throne, the royal descent shall be traced from both the parents' origins. Issues of descent and bloodline are vital, because they determine matters such as inheritance in African traditional monarchies (Khapoya 1998:31). Thus, Prince William might be the chosen leader by birth, but effectively becomes one by default and by force. By default because the council of elders had no other alternative, and by force because he himself argues that his religious affiliation should not disqualify him, and consequently pressures the elders into instating him as king on his own terms. Throughout the linear narrative, he is clearly framed as the crown Prince who is called to lead his people while awaiting his official coronation, which is more of a traditional formality.

Prince William decides to establish and assert his leadership style before being instated as king of the land. In the narrative, as a crown Prince, he already has more authority and power over everyone in the Kingdom than his contenders, and his coronation is a simple confirmation and manifestation of the people's acknowledgment of their leader. Through the use of "melodrama, satire, and comedy [to communicate] more with African spectator" (Diawara 1992:141), the narrative thus reveals a leader who uses threats and intimidation to

govern his people. Moreover, he undermines the existing traditional structures and the local hierarchy of power in an effort to lessen the power of elders and concentrate governing duties towards him. In Nigerian *Igbo* communities, the highest level of authority is bestowed to the King or *Igwe*. The *Igwe* is a traditional leader in the *Igbo* culture, and “only government-recognized Traditional Rulers are legally entitled to carry the titles of *eze* and *igwe*” (Harneit-Sievers 1998:64). The traditional ruler has an “Igwe-in-council [which] serves the community in matters of peace, development and values” (Widjaja 2014). In the narrative, this traditional structure is represented by the council of elders, also called “king makers” (*Who’s the King* 2012). Their role is to assist, counsel and criticize the leader’s decisions if need be. In this traditional hierarchy, the witch doctor is acknowledged among the high profile personalities in the Kingdom of *Umuodogwu*. However, contrary to the witch doctor, Prince William’s religious beliefs are not traditional but Western and support the principle of one supreme God, with no “lesser deities” (Khapoya 1998:55). It is thus impossible for the royal leader to envisage any form of cooperation that involves the witch doctor, as he precisely represents all that Prince William’s interpretation of Christianity abhors. This motif leads to narrative tension in the plot.

There are several instances in the narratives of altercations between Prince William and the witch doctor. Consequently, the Nigerian local leader decides to resort to physical violence and verbal abuse as a strategy to annihilate the influence that the witch doctor has on his community. In Prince William and the witch doctor’s understanding of Christianity and African religion, respectively, the belief in a supernatural being or the belief in the existence of deities is manifested through the use of “sacred objects designed to bring good fortune when handled properly or misfortune when misused” (Khapoya 1998:54). Thus, prince William uses and quotes from his Bible to verbally abuse the witch doctor. He also burns all kingly ‘juju’ artifacts that have been kept for generations, and that were “meant to fortify him

as a king” (*Who’s the King* 2012), thus challenging the supernatural authority of the witch doctor who is the custodian of these traditional sacred objects. In undermining the witch doctor, the emerging local leader attempts to alienate him from the local community in which he exercises his traditional authority. However, the witch doctor is not an individual entity and cannot exist outside of the group because “African societies are collectivist societies. The group is paramount, and the group’s interests clearly supersede those of the individual” (Khapoya 1998:44). Both Prince William and the witch doctor define their identity in terms of belonging to a group, which in this instance is the community in the Kingdom of *Umuodogwu*. However, they have a dissimilar understanding of what the group’s interests are; thus the religious battle between the two characters is a power struggle to control the community, by controlling and homogenizing its belief system. The end of the film narrative is not clear whether Prince William banishes the witch doctor or finds a compromise. However, at the end of the narrative, as Prince William is enthroned king, irrespective of his affinity for his traditions, he will automatically become an entity traditionally higher than the witch doctor.

Prince William has a brutal approach where he blackmails all his servants and ordinary villagers with the promise of employment if they follow his faith, or threatens them with the prospect of being jobless, and enemy of the future King, if they do not. Ignoring counsel from the ‘king makers’, he refuses to separate religion and Sovereign authority in his leadership style over his people. Further, the royal leader is not only challenged by the high profile elders, but also by his Christian wife and his Christian bishop. These two supporting characters, though sharing the same Christian faith as Prince William, acknowledges his inability to relate to his people because of his drastic methods. The royal leader has effectively decided that everyone in *Umuodogwu* Kingdom, including the council of elders, either agrees “to repent” (*Who’s the King* 2012) by embracing his version of Christianity, or

accepts to be cast out. Prince William thus implements a theocratic system where he expects perfect obedience from his subjects in the choices and decisions that he makes for them.

Prince William's leadership style places God as the higher and ultimate power, followed by him as the direct human representative of that power in the local Kingdom. In this hierarchy of power, Prince William excludes the council members because their religious beliefs conflict with Christianity. Christianity, in the narrative, is thus a selective, exclusive and discriminatory governing mechanism. The royal leader's extremist behavior in insisting on making religion his sole model of governance, contradicts Hobbes' advocacy for a complete separation between religion and any governing principles (Williams 2005). Further, Hobbes's principles convey that the effective management of a country or a community will be very problematic if the leader has to follow "both the law of God and the laws of men, [especially] should they come to contradict each other (Dumouchel 1995:39). These principles are equally true in Hobbes and the film's 'reality'. The real society in Nigeria on the other hand is a secular state with dominant local religions such as Christianity, Islam and traditional religions. As a secular democratic state, the non-fictional Nigeria places the rule of law above all religions, while allowing freedom of religion to all its citizens. Nevertheless, "the Christian conversion strand remains [a] dominant [genre] in Nollywood films" (Diawara 2010:182). Nollywood "has created its own genres [...] which may appear to resemble [American genres] but [are] actually quite different in some fundamental ways" (Haynes 2012). Thus "Nollywood succeeds by telling familiar stories that accord with local sensibilities" (Schultz 2012:232), and religion, particularly the wave of Pentecostal new churches, is a central and familiar topic that local Nigerian audiences strongly identify with.

The leader in *Who's the King*, throughout the narrative, is permanently dealing with crisis pertaining to his leadership style. The origin of the conflict is always an action of the Prince or a comment that he makes. The language register that he uses is very discriminatory;

he decrees that intimidation and violence are the only means through which he will successfully convert the entire community to Christianity, which is a powerful allegory to the strategies of early missionaries in many countries. In his own family, he has decided not to eat at the same table with his brother and sister, because they are “unbelievers...who represent darkness [while]... he represents the light” (*Who’s the King* 2012). The theocratic local leader is thus in an almost delusional set of reasoning, insisting that the people “should see [him] differently, [because he is] a child of God [and] that’s what makes [him] different” (*Who’s the King* 2012). Prince William’s leadership style is not designed on negotiation, and revolves around the binary dialectic of other individuals being either with or against him.

According to this leader, Christianity is not a sanction that he wishes to enforce on his people, but the manifestation of his genuine concern for their spiritual and social well-being. In the royal leader’s mind, it is paramount that his subjects abandon their ancestral beliefs by burning all their traditional fetishes, as it is the only way through which they will succeed in society. Spiritual achievements and social status are thus intertwined as one single entity. Diawara (2010:183) notes that it is very common that Nollywood narratives “propose Christianity as one of the solutions to social stagnation”. The young royal leader is a learned and wealthy man with a good social position. He makes his example of success, a direct consequence of his religious connection with his God, and what he preaches. The conversion narratives in *Who’s the King*, as in many Nollywood Christian genre films, are manifest through the character’s “desire to destroy African shrines and replace them with born again churches” (Diawara 2010:182), and this is precisely what the leader instructs his fellow Christian brothers to do. He even calls on law enforcement agents to protect Christians from angry residents and defiant mobs, while the Christians are burning shrines because these symbolize everything that Christianity, in the narrative, despises. The escalating religious crusade that Christians and non-Christians in *Umuodogwu* have embarked on, respectively, is

illustrated through various scenes with fast-pace edit, non-diegetic sound and short-length shots, in order to build tension in the narrative. Adeoti (2009:47) comments that in Nollywood films, “swift changes in locations and scenes... [help] creating suspense and sustaining the interest of the viewers from the beginning to the end when the conflict is resolved in favour of popular will”.

The leader’s religious tenacity, which even the bishop character reprimands as “fanaticism” (*Who’s the King* 2012), is balanced by the stock characters of the supporting Christian wife and the zealous local pastor. These two characters work as binary opposite in the way they assist Prince William in taking decisions. His wife, on one hand, is calling for indulgence and understanding “of the sinners... just as Jesus did” (*Who’s the King* 2012), and the local pastor, on the other hand, encourages him to go on a religious and physical war against all non-Christian in the community. The binary oppositions of Christianity versus witchcraft, good versus evil and young versus old, are reflected in Prince William’s leadership style. The pastor is young and all the churchgoing characters are also young adults, except the bishop. Thus, this young and modern generation, through Prince William, promotes a change of mentality and attitude in the Kingdom of *Umuodogwu*; this contrasts with the older generation who want consistency and full submission to ancestral traditions. Thus, “the youth are the bastion of social change” in the film (Adeoti 2009:47).

Another element that accentuates the importance of these binary oppositions in the narrative is the use of non-diegetic sound through a musical leitmotif. As Adeoti (2009:48) points out, “music comes to reinforce thematic concerns” and in *Who’s the King*, it is a distinct narrative choice by director Iyke Odife to address the audience about the relevance of the conflict of religions. In the narrative, in all instances where Prince William’s leadership is challenged by the elders or any character that he attacks for not being a “born-again Christian” (*Who’s the King* 2012), one specific chorus plays in the background. The non-

diegetic sound is audible enough for viewers to understand the lyrics, and the volume of the chorus is raised when there is no dialogue on screen. The chorus is also regularly played with cutaways visuals. The chorus says, as a clear leitmotif towards the conclusion of the plot:

We are one, the matter of tradition or religion, let's love one another, and live as one.

We are one, the matter of tradition or religion, let's respect one another, and live as one. (*Who's the King* 2012)

Moreover, as the narrative and the character of Prince William develop, the royal leader comes to the realization that he cannot possibly enforce his religious beliefs on an entire community, and decides to make some concessions. He makes peace with his brother and sister, and agrees to tolerate some of the elders' traditional customs, as long as they do not directly affect his faith. Thereafter, another non-diegetic chorus which embodies this character growth is audibly brought to the viewer's attention. The second chorus has a new set of lyrics that states, "no matter what we believe, there will be harmony as long as we live, we are one" (*Who's the King* 2012).

Throughout the narrative, in an effort to assert his sovereignty, Prince William moves through different phases in his character development. He is firstly represented as a villain, and then a false hero, and finally a Proppian hero, to a certain extent. The local Nigerian leader thus follows a linear pattern where he is firstly forbidden to practice something (Propp 1928:13), in this case, his religion; then he is "approached with a command" (Propp 1928:21), which is embracing the ancestral beliefs in order to be crowned king; but he ultimately bypasses all interdiction and obstacles to assume his inherited role. The royal Proppian hero restores the equilibrium at the end of the last sequel when he makes peace with his family and allows the council of elders to enthrone him in a half-Christian, half-traditional coronation ceremony. As a hero, he is rewarded for his accomplishments by officially

ascending to the throne as an unchallenged leader. One principal characteristic of a Proppian hero is that he solves all conflicting situations at the end, after facing various challenges. Thus, Prince William eventually becomes the hero of his community, as he has restored peace between Christianity and Animism, and has calmed the religious tensions that his intimidating initial leadership style had already provoked.

The local leader thus comes to the realization that his original leadership style is counter-effective, and that there is a need for adjustments, without compromising on his royal sovereignty. Prince William reviews his conception of religion in his community as a system of beliefs that is determined by “the social and cultural conditions of [his subjects], the physical environment in which they live, their past experiences, and their collective needs and goals as a people” (Khapoya 1998:54). He therefore amends his leadership style, while remaining the unconditional leader of his community. Although he initially seems to threaten social cohesion and the integrity of the community, Prince William in the end is the leader who prevents the *Umuodogwu* community from falling in a state of chaos through the Nigerian religious conflict that an entire genre of Nollywood films comments on.

Prince William becomes a good leader who understands his power and his duty of keeping peace and harmony in his community, as a true Hobbesian Sovereign. Hobbes’s principles of leadership effectively place a strong emphasis on keeping a long lasting peace as a *sine qua non* condition for the acknowledgement of a benevolent leader. The Nigerian king is a traditional leader with a local constitutional democracy; in this particular socio-political context, he is the higher and absolute authority. Thus, the Nigerian Sovereign unilaterally decided to reshape his methods in function of his people’s needs. This state of unconditional supremacy is reasserted by Lloyd & Sreedhar (2014:4) who confirm that Hobbes’ insistence on absolute sovereignty is to actually “demonstrate the reciprocal relationship between [subjects’] obedience and peace”. By using his Sovereign prerogatives to unilaterally decide

to adjust his leadership style, the royal leader is acting as a benevolent Sovereign who uses his absolute powers as a Prince, then a king, to make a Sovereign decision. In the narrative, there is a scene where young men from the community are about to burn the local church in retaliation of their shrines being burnt; this is to illustrate that the community was already divided into two sides that were at war with each other. According to Hobbes's principles of leadership, a state "in which there is no agency [nor] recognized authority" (Lloyd & Sreedhar 2014:5) requires an absolute leader to reinstitute peace, because a state without a true Sovereign is no different from an anarchical society where "miseries [and] horrible calamities [will lead to] a Civill Warre" (Lloyd & Sreedhar 2014:4). Thus, when Prince William decides to allow freedom of religion in his community, he is acting as a Hobbesian Sovereign who privileges the prospect of safety and peace for all the people of *Umuodogwu*.

VI. Two African leaders in *Invictus* (2009)

A. Nelson Mandela: a political leader in *Invictus* (2009)

‘Invictus’ is also the title of a poem by William Ernest Henley, and this poem alone largely contributed in building the literary reputation of the English poet (Staton 2014). ‘Invictus’ is Latin for ‘unconquered’, and was allegedly one of Nelson Mandela’s favorite poems that he “recited [during] his darker days in prison” (Bloom 2014). In one of his encounters with the film character Francois Pienaar, the character of President Mandela shared with him that “on Robben Island when things got very bad, [he] found inspiration in a poem...just words but they helped [him] to stand when all that [he] wanted to do was to lie down” (*Invictus* 2009). On another occasion in the film, while cabinet members are waiting for him, the character of President Mandela, on a paper with the presidential stamp, writes the title ‘Invictus’ and carries on with the first line from the first stanza of Henley’s poem. He later hands in a copy of the poem to Pienaar as a gift, and is also heard reciting the entire poem as a voiceover while the Springboks team is visiting Robben Island. The film makes a clear connection between Henley’s poem and the Mandela character’s dedication to achieve the goals he has set himself to fulfill.

Here is a full copy of that poem (Bloom 2014):

Invictus

by William Ernest Henley

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.
Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

The clear link between the poem and the film is confirmed when the film character of President Mandela, at the end of the film, uses four lines taken from two different stanzas of this poem, to symbolize his political and personal victory. In the narrative, it happens in the closing scene, when President Mandela is in his car and is surrounded by a cheerful crowd of South Africans, all races combined. For the first time in the narrative, they all commune and celebrate with one heart over a shared victory: the crowning of South Africa as the Rugby World Champion. It is at this time that the character of President Mandela quotes the poem 'Invictus', in a voiceover:

"I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul." (*Invictus* 2009)

The film narrative of *Invictus* (2009) is set and starts in "SOUTH AFRICA, FEBRUARY 11, 1990" as indicated by the superimposed title. There are two types of leaders in the film

Invictus: a political and a sport leader. The film character of South African President Nelson Mandela is the former, and the character of The Springboks (South African rugby team) captain Francois Pienaar is the latter. In the following section, the use of the names ‘Nelson Mandela’, ‘Mr. Mandela’, ‘President Mandela’ and ‘Pienaar’ or ‘Francois Pienaar’, will refer to the film character of Nelson Mandela and the film character of Francois Pienaar respectively, and not to the original historical persons.

In the establishing scenes of the film, the narrative opens with wide shots of White high school children playing rugby with professional-looking sports gears and rugby ball. These White South African children are neat, clean and composed, rehearsing almost quietly in their white striped sport uniforms. The establishing shot continues with a cross pan to the other side of the street with long shots of Black children playing soccer with a handmade soccer ball. These children are untidy with torn and disheveled clothes, playing on a makeshift soccer pitch. These Black children look carefree and play loudly. The children on both sides are happily playing as the intercut edit between the two scenes suggests, and they are either oblivious or not interested by what is happening on the other side of the street. This spatial condensation of racial segregation traces the somewhat exaggerated demarcation between two worlds: the Black impoverished townships on one side and the White wealthier suburbs on the other side. It takes a leader to drive past in a car, to make both sides aware of the other. When Mandela’s cortege drives past on that street, all the Black children and the adults run to the fence’s barbed wires to cheer his name, whereas on the other side, the White children also run to the barbed wires of their school, but do not understand who Mandela is. A young student even asks his coach “who is it, Sir?”(*Invictus* 2009). Apartheid was a political system based on racial discrimination, but White children born under the system were not formally taught about it at schools; racism was not directly taught to White children, but for some “it seemed to be imbibed unconsciously, and automatically became a part of

[them]" (Faul 2013). Recounting his early years memories as a young White Afrikaner living in an Apartheid South Africa, Riaan Malan (1990:29) recalls: "I have no recollection at all of the Sharpeville massacre, in which sixty-nine black people were shot dead while protesting against the pass laws, [and only] the vaguest memory of Nelson Mandela's trial and jailing. I remember the day John F. Kennedy died though" (Malan 1990:29). Young Whites of all language groups (Afrikaans, English, some Portuguese, German, Italian, Lebanese and Greek) were to some extent exposed to external Western news, but hardly aware of the socio-political situation of their own country in which they lived in relative privilege without considering children of other population groups as equals. Moreover, as children, White South African-born, would not fully grasp the complexities and technicalities of internal politics, as they did not suffer repression, nor see that imposed on Black South Africans.

In my childhood, there were always Africans in our backyard. We called them natives... Natives cooked my meals, polished my shoes, made my bed, mowed the lawn... They spoke broken English or Afrikaans, wore old clothes, had no money and no last names. That was all it was really necessary to know about them. (Malan 1990:30)

Similarly, the non-fictional Francois Pienaar stated that White children were not informed of the atrocities of the Apartheid regime. In an interview, he complains that in Afrikaner community, "children were seen and not heard ...you didn't ask questions like why black kids don't go to school with you, why is it just all white? That's how you grew up" (Smith 2013). Thus, the generation of White children born under Apartheid or who were still children when Apartheid ended, did not know much about Black people's struggle and fight for freedom. This explains why, in the narrative, they do not know who Nelson Mandela is, or why he is being cheered by the other children as illustrated in these introductory scenes. From his first appearance in the film, Nelson Mandela is presented as a unifier, a leader who seeks to join

two worlds separated by a street and years of painful history. In that scene already, the film director uses foreshadowing to hint to the audience that sport as the very activity that divides those children, will be the medium that will be used to reunite them, and the country with them, later in the narrative. In these early scenes, Mandela is not the country's President yet; he has just been released from Robben Island prison, but is acknowledged by his people as a leader. He is already acclaimed by the Black community as their uncontested leader and rejected by the White Afrikaner community, through the White Afrikaner high school rugby coach who, to the question of "who is it Sir?" replies "it's that terrorist Mandela, they are letting him out. Remember this day, boys, this is the day our country went to the dogs" (*Invictus* 2009).

The narrative unfolds by illustrating visuals of violent civil unrests among the Black community in South Africa, and a voiceover by a reporter utters that Mr. Mandela has inherited a country on a brink of a civil war. In a Hobbesian logic, maintaining a long lasting peace and avoiding internal conflicts is the Sovereign's supreme endeavor. An efficient leader, in the Hobbesian sense, ought to do all that is in his capacity to keep unity and address any threat to his sovereignty. President Mandela's access to power was not unanimous and challenges to his authority as a newly elected President of the country were expressed within different political factions in the Black community. The television reporter in a voiceover alleged that it is the former Apartheid government who is fuelling the civil unrests by providing weapons to Black rival political groups (*Invictus* 2009). Before this social, more than a political, crisis, Mr. Mandela as a charismatic leader adopts a pragmatic approach, directly addresses his people and commands them to immediately cease internal fighting in a scene where he addresses a hundred of thousands of South African at an ANC rally; (founded in Bloemfontein in 1912, ANC is the African National Congress; one of the most popular political parties in South Africa). The leader Mandela does not use political subterfuges or

evasive arguments to bring his point across. He does not ask for the infighting to stop, he orders them to: “take your knives and your guns and your *pangas* (South African neologism for machete), and throw them into the sea” (*Invictus* 2009). At this point in the narrative, Mr. Mandela is not head of state yet; he is officially seen swearing the presidential oath a few scenes later. The challenges to Mr. Mandela’s leadership did not stop when he officially became the democratic Sovereign of the people of South Africa in the film.

On his first day in office, as Mr. Mandela walks in with a jovial face as he greets everyone that he sees, White employees are packing up and holding boxes with their heads down as they exit their offices. This is not a crisis *per se*, but it is a first challenge to Mr. Mandela’s leadership style. The character can here act as a unifying leader and acknowledge all staff regardless of their race, or he may decide to be a discriminatory boss who is going to base his mandate on racial preferences. In such instances, a wise Sovereign will not use criteria such as race or gender in order to make decisions that will impact the majority. A security agent, of the former Afrikaner President, using racial expectations and aggressive bias, is convinced that Mr. Mandela is calling his first meeting with all staff merely for the sadistic pleasure of firing and humiliating White staff members himself in front of the new Black staff members (*Invictus* 2009). The actions of the leader are wrongfully anticipated because they are fueled by fearful resignation and fearful expectations.

This challenge to Mr. Mandela’s authority is smoothly resolved by his open dialogue leadership style where the new President reassures all staff members that they are part of the new government and will not be discriminated against because of their race, their gender or who they previously worked for. The character of Mr. Mandela adopts a unifying style where he places merits, competency and efficiency above social constructions such as the supposed inequality of races. While this may be seen as a managerial victory from the new President, as the White and Coloured staff members decide to stay in office, it does not have the

approval of all Black staff members who do not understand why President Mandela is being so accommodative of the former 'White oppressor' "as per [Steve Biko's] polarised rhetoric of Black Consciousness" (Powell 2014).

By comparison, Hobbes' leadership principles in 1640 motivated leaders to have a formal system of governance in order to efficiently rule the city; there need to be a system of laws, ordinances and decrees in place that will convey the leader's vision for his country. Hence by asking all staff members to stay, Mr. Mandela argued that their expertise in running the country is needed and they "will be doing [their] country a great service" (*Invictus* 2009). The South African leader figure, as a Hobbesian leader would, places the interest of the general community before any individual need; when talking with the staff members, Mr. Mandela argues that with all South Africans from all race, social and political divides working together, South Africa "will be a shining light in the world" (*Invictus* 2009). Mr. Mandela uses an inclusive leadership style, where citizens play an active part in the governing strategies that the leader puts in place. Indeed, this is not an infringement to his sovereignty, but underscores it as he remains the final overseer who leads and decides on the political, economical and social directions to be followed by all South Africans. There are several instances in the film, where Mr. Mandela uses this inclusive leadership approach where instead of dividing in order to conquer, as Machiavelli's art of war suggests (Posner, Spier & Vermeule 2009), he actually unites to reign. He decides to use former Apartheid security officers and assign them to join his presidential, Black-only personal guard. The South African President is well aware that the Black community finds him too lenient with White Afrikaners, but as a wise leader he does not leave that question opened to debate, but instead keeps his ultimate focus on how to solidly unify the country's two strong heads which are former Apartheid partisans and former freedom struggle partisans into one homogeneous nation. The displeased chief of security, who does not conceive working with former

Apartheid officers as the President's new security corps, is called back in line by the South African leader: "the rainbow nation starts here, reconciliation starts here...forgiveness starts here too" (*Invictus* 2009). The character of President Mandela does not play on his citizens' weak points such as race, revenge and fear, to establish his government; on the contrary, he uses those elements as empirical facts to build a new government and a strong nation in the film.

Old binary oppositions of Blacks and Whites under the former government, previously labeled as terrorists and citizens, communists and democrats (*Invictus* 2009) have no strategic place in the new leader's nation building agenda. While the President is not unmindful of the country's fragile state, he is determined to move beyond the constraints of the political past, "*verbey is verbey*" (*Invictus* 2009) as President Mandela said himself in Afrikaans, which means 'the past is past'. Afrikaans is the language majoritarily spoken by White Afrikaners in South Africa, and during Apartheid that language was taught in some Black schools and was since labeled as the "language of the oppressor", as Archbishop Desmond Tutu called it (Cohen 2009). Afrikaans "was the language of the bureaucracy and the police force" (Silva 1997). This explains why some Black South Africans do not like the language (Khanye 2009) but either understand or even speak it well. The language register used in the film varies in terms of the settings: President Mandela uses both a formal and semi-formal register when he addresses anyone, from his staff in the President's office to his domestic workers in his private residence. He greets people, calls them by their first name and enquires about a relative's state of health, across the races in the film. The character of Mr. Mandela does not tailor a specific behavioral trait according to the race or the social class he encounters. He is thus the uncontested Proppian hero.

In Vladímir Propp's *Morphology of the Folk Tale* (1928), the hero always starts with a mission that he is assigned to; he is "approached with a request" (Propp 1928:21) which will

determine the nature and the course of the narrative throughout the film. In (*Invictus 2009*), President Mandela's task is to run a newly democratic South Africa, "balancing Black aspirations with White fears" as a news anchor reports in the film (*Invictus 2009*). According to Propp (1928:23), the hero needs to leave home or the familiar environment that he is used to in order to pursue the mission. Having lost his familiar environment upon his arrest, the character of President Mandela left his tiny jail cell in Robben Island that he has occupied for 27 years (*Invictus 2009*) to emerge as a peaceful leader. In terms of Propp's characterization, the real hero breaks away from his routine and ventures into unknown territories – including the cell. Furthermore, President Mandela is hardly seen in direct contact with any family member except his daughter Zindzi, throughout the film, thus Mandela does not experience any emotional family support system to make his 'mission' more bearable. The few mentions of his daughter Zindzi, in the narrative, is when she reschedules their meetings, and does so via the secretary without directly speaking to Mandela, her father, or when she tells him how she disapproves of his 'White friendly' politics. The Proppian hero indeed has to be almost in isolation in order to accomplish the task that he was assigned to. He is also given interdictions and expectations he cannot reasonably be expected to meet; which could be in the form of a warning, a suggestion or an advice. Jason Tshabalala, Mandela's head of security, strongly advises him against having former Apartheid special forces officers as his bodyguards; Brenda Mazibuko, his personal assistant warns him that by going against what the Black majority wants, regarding his public support for the Springboks, he jeopardizes his credibility and leadership style. The character of Brenda Mazibuko is the only ahistorical character of the team as the real secretary was Zelda La Grange, a White Afrikaner (Carlin 2008). Mazibuko was a stock character who served a clear narrative purpose as she represents the voice of dissent of Black people. The Proppian hero, however, cannot step back before obstacles as he is also given means and tools to accomplish the mission. Thus, President

Mandela eventually overcomes most obstacles in order to reach the ultimate goal that he set himself on, from the beginning of the narrative. From his first appearances in the films, the character of President Mandela had made it clear that he intends to be the leader of all South Africans with no dividing categories. As a benevolent leader, he thus uses his official and personal powers to constantly keep the country at peace, apart from isolated incidents, as the entire film narrative proves it. The main asset in the film narrative that President Mandela uses to achieve his goal is sport, and most particularly South Africans fond interest in sport. Sport is “a contested terrain” (Kimmel, Hearn & Connel 2005:314), and was racially defined in the “complex South African sporting context” (Wozniak 2014:22) during and after Apartheid, where Blacks only loved soccer and White cheered for rugby only. In his journey as a Proppian hero, the character of President Mandela was “tested, interrogated, attacked [but that paved] the way for [him to receive] a ...helper” (Propp 1928:23). This helper was Francois Pienaar, the captain of the South African rugby team also known as The Springboks. At the end of the film, as a true Proppian hero, President Mandela achieves his goals and is consequently rewarded with “a mark ... or by a thing given to him [to acknowledge] his accomplishment of a difficult task” (Propp 1928:41). In *Invictus* (2009), those signifiers of victory are the Springboks’ cap that President Mandela is being given by the team as an acknowledgement of his efforts, also the custom made Springboks jersey that he wore at the final between the Springboks and the All Blacks (the New Zealand team) and the world cup trophy that he gave to his helper Francois Pienaar.

The character of Nelson Mandela appears to have numerous characteristic of a Hobbesian Sovereign; he is an authoritative figure who puts his citizens’ interests first. In his leadership style, President Mandela in the narrative does not hesitate to be unpopular among his constituents, and remains firm in his strategic political decisions as he believes that they will prevent the country from sinking in an unstable and unprecedented violent state.

Consequently, throughout the film narrative, South Africans appear to be more and more peaceful, tolerant and forgiving, especially after the Springbok team's World Cup victory. In the narrative, as a benevolent Sovereign, he focuses his leadership's methods into constantly seeking national peace, as Hobbes' principles advocate (Lindsay 1651:xi). Furthermore, as all Hobbesian Sovereigns (Hobbes 1640), the character of Mandela has not enforced his political presence onto South Africans, but has been democratically elected, chosen by the (majority of) people. Therefore, as a leader, his political choices cannot be second-guessed, and even if they were, they could only be altered by the Sovereign's discretionary will, because sovereignty is "unitary and absolute" in all Hobbesian Sovereigns (Hurtgen 1979:61).

B. Francois Pienaar: a sport leader in *Invictus* (2009)

In Hobbes's understanding of political philosophy and its governing principles, Pienaar is not a political leader, but from a Proppian logic, he is a helper who worked together with a heroic political leader in order to achieve a level of social cohesion in South Africa, even if it was only for the duration of a rugby match. In *Invictus* (2009), the early mise-en-scène with the Springboks shows a team that is weak, a management that is divided, and supporters who do not have confidence in the team's leader or his abilities to successfully lead the group during the upcoming Rugby World Cup. South African viewers will relate to either captain Pienaar or President Mandela's predicament, in terms of their interest and expectations, but the inherent nature of the sport hero's challenge is similar to that of the Mandela character: a nation/group in turmoil that does not have faith in his leadership. The correlation between the two characters' situation throughout the plot is a strong narrative construction. The divided and porous state of the Springboks

early in the narrative is a *replica* of South Africa in the early post-Apartheid era, where some White South Africans still proudly fly the country's old flag, refuse to sing the new national anthem or to acknowledge President Mandela as their head of state (*Invictus* 2009). The metamorphosis that will slowly take place within the Springbok team thus reflects on growing changes that are emerging within the nation.

“For them [Black people], Springbok still represents Apartheid” (*Invictus* 2009) explains a Black female character to a White female charity worker who does not understand why a homeless Black child will not take the Springbok jersey that she is giving him. This shows the different symbolism of the Springbok team in the minds of Black and White South Africans, respectively. The team was majoritarially White, and rugby was a popular and well-financed sport among White Afrikaners in South Africa. Thus, for Black South Africans, rugby was a ‘White sport’, and they would never cheer for the Springboks. If they were in the stadium at all for international matches, they would cheer for the other team, as Mandela noticed, “look at this, all of the Whites are cheering for the Springboks, all of the Blacks are cheering for England. I used to do it that on the island, we will cheer for anyone but the [Spring]boks” (*Invictus* 2009). Binary opposition of Black and White is also strongly embedded in the team. The film character that embodies it best is Springbok player Chester Williams who is referred to in the narrative as the only Black player. He is the player whom all Black children cheer when they see the Springbok team. However, in real life, Chester Williams, though he has a dark skin, was classified not Black but Coloured, according to the South African race classification “generated by the 1950 Population Registration Act” (Erasmus & Ellison 2008). In a recent interview given to the City Press, the non-fictional Chester Williams recalls that his “own community [coloured people in the Paarl region with a long history of playing rugby] were very proud of [him] being in the squad [but he] had a sense of

letting them down as [he] was aware that through [him], black people [had] found a way to relate to the team” (Retief 2014). In other words, because historical Chester Williams was the only non-White player, he was the only player that Black South Africans could accept to cheer for, which made him feel that he was not really representing his own ‘race group’, the Coloureds. Further, even if in international anti-Apartheid terminology, all people not White were Black, Chester in the old and new South African equity terminology is still not Black, but Coloured. However, for the purpose of the narrative which intends to end in spurious harmony and play on Black and White binary opposite, this important local fact was omitted. On the other hand, in the narrative, the mere fact that Chester Williams is simply not White, already positions him as the ‘closest race’, Black South Africans can identify with in the team. It is almost as if they are cheering for Chester as a person and not for the whole squad, whereas White supporters are cheering for the White dominated Springbok team. The character of Chester Williams as a Black person in the film underscores the narrative, thus consolidating the idea of individuals of two races attempting to work together as one team. In a scene where the head of the rugby federation announces to the Springbok team that township tours have been added to their training schedule, one White player complains about the workload. He then turns to Chester and ask him what he personally thinks about that decision, implying that he wants to have a Black person’s point of view on the matter. Chester jokingly answers that, in general, he avoids thinking too much because it interferes with his rugby (*Invictus* 2009). Chester’s response provoked laughter among the teammates, but here, the narrative surreptitiously shows how the racial divide exists in the team; suggesting that each side has a tacitly racialized understanding of the other’s race place in society. Chester’s answer in the narrative was indeed not funny but degrading in that he simulated

ignorance, but in the political context of the film, it did not sound as the submissive statement that it was.

With this negative racial identity stamped on the Springboks, it becomes very difficult for Pienaar to be an efficient helper for the President; even his own father does not believe that he should have any ties with Mandela. Pienaar's father argues that since Apartheid is over, Black people will forcefully take "all their jobs and cast them in the sea" (*Invictus* 2009), reflecting long-standing political fears intensively nurtured by National Party propaganda and, incidentally, by much earlier news reports of the violence of the earlier African Independence era in other African countries as well as Idi Amin's prosecution of Indians that included forcing them into Lake Victoria; including films such as the 1966 horror documentary *Africa Addio* by Gualtiero Jacopetti and Franco Prosperi, screened in South Africa the 1970's, or Zimbabwean director Clive Harding's evocative bush war fiction film *Shamwari* (1982).

Notwithstanding the prejudices and the expectations of failure, the new South African leader plainly asks the Springbok captain to help him unite the nation. He engages with him in rhetoric where he persuades the captain that the unifying factor that needs to be used is the new national anthem during the rugby World Cup tournament. "Tell me Francois, what is your philosophy on leadership?" the President asks (*Invictus* 2009); "I always taught to lead by example", the Springbok captain replies (*Invictus* 2009). On the particular issue of language, with the rugby team being asked to sing the new national anthem that has lyrics in English, Afrikaans but also various Black South African languages, such unity however appears to be impossible. In a scene at rugby stadium, Brenda Mazibuko, the President's fictional Black personal assistant (historically, he kept on De Klerk's P.A., Zelda Le Grange), after singing the beginning of the national anthem, bluntly stops and does not sing the Afrikaans part of the anthem. At this point in the narrative, the racial tensions and

apprehensions still inform most characters' behaviors. Pienaar faces an internal crisis when he is contested by his teammates, as he tells them that they should learn the lyrics of the new anthem.

Feeding on Mandela's inclusive leadership style, the captain observes and allowed each teammate and staff member in the Springboks to come to terms with the presidential decision, in their own time. Thus, when the team eventually stands as one, singing the new anthem, they are a stronger unit not only against the All Blacks, but against the social odds of having Black and Whites in the same venue cheering for the same team. The national anthem was a strong catalyst to release repressed feelings, from people sitting in the stadium's tiers to people in the team, South Africans before their television sets or those watching the game in a bar or listening to it on a radio set on the streets. The singing of the national anthem by the Springboks ignites the representation of the "rainbow nation" as Desmond Tutu first called it (Smith 2014). It allows South Africans, all races combined to forget the time of the match, the pain of Apartheid and the fear of Post-Apartheid, and to align behind their national team, which gave them "a sense of social belonging and [later] a sense of shared victory" (Wozniak 2014:5). Just as the character of political leader Mandela expects, the singing of the multilingual anthem thus propels the fictional South Africans to a state of acceptance and forgiveness that they had not envisaged (*Invictus* 2009). The Springboks' victory in the World Cup thus culminates in a display of social adhesion with scenes such as a safari-suit clad Afrikaner fan hugging Jason Tshabalala, Mandela's head of security, or scenes of ecstatic White Afrikaner police officers lifting a Black street child into the air, not to mention Black, White, Indian and Coloured characters embracing each other in the stadium.

The character of Pienaar thus assists President Mandela in his vision of leading South Africa to a united though diverse nation. As a powerful leader, Mandela did not readjust his political objectives, especially when criticized by Black South Africans who had assumed

that, with Black leadership, South Africa would be Black -dominated, and did not deviate from his unification agenda.

In terms of Hobbes theory, the character of Mandela as discussed above represents a Hobbesian Sovereign in many aspects of his leadership style. His Sovereign attributes go beyond the political realm to shape the sport vision and direction of an iconic team. Before a Hobbesian Sovereign, the total allegiance of the people is not debatable; a leader who can easily be unsettled by the people or any other entity is weak and does not deserve to be called a Sovereign, according to Hobbes. “There must be unmistakable inequality of strength” (Hurtgen 1979:58), and this is precisely what has driven the character of President Mandela to stand his ground regardless of the internal and external criticisms. Further, as an inclusive leader, Mandela needed to decide when to step in and use his discretionary powers. When he was cautioned not to dismiss Black South Africans’ racially biased opinion about rugby, he clearly stated that “in this instance, the people are wrong and as their elected leader, it is my job to show them that” (*Invictus* 2009). To the question whether rugby was just a political calculation, President Mandela answers that “it is a human calculation” (*Invictus* 2009), which reflects the nature of a Hobbesian Sovereign who always places the people’s interest before his own. However, President Mandela is not an authoritarian leader in the strictly Hobbesian sense of the term, but in his leadership style in *Invictus* (2009), he does make use of some of Hobbes’ governing principles.

On the other hand, there is a cinematic use of non-diegetic sound with lyrics to encourage the Springboks and make them realize that it is “more than a game” (*Invictus* 2009), amounting to a life-changing and nation building operation. Henley’s poem is furthermore turned into a song at the end of the film with credits and a slideshow with real-life pictures of Nelson Mandela and the Springboks playing the final. As another diegetic technique, the film adds a red herring, reminding South Africa audiences of the latent and

over-publicized threat of random terrorism in pre-1994 South Africa, when a solitary man is seen analyzing the rugby pitch the day before the match, and is later encountered as the pilot of a commercial plane. He is the plane's captain, and as the leader of the aircraft crew, he declares: "let it be known that I am taking control of the aircraft...I take full responsibility from what happens from now on" (*Invictus* 2009). Instead of an act of terrorism, he flies the plane over the pitch at very low altitude to celebrate the match, causing initial concern and then great exhilaration. This functions as a powerful intertextual suspense device for world audiences that associate the plane with the intensely mediated twin towers attack incident; but in the local context, it also echoes the ceremonial flight of the now ANC-controlled Air Force planes over the Union buildings at Mandela's inauguration in 1994. The film director purposely distracts and misleads the audience into thinking that an attack on Mr. Mandela's life is imminent, but these scenes allow the narrative to build tension and create suspense, as it is a convention in popular mainstream films.

The narrative ends in full circle with what the Freytag's pyramid identifies as the resolution (Harun et al. 2013:2). The resolution refers to a stable state in the narrative when the conflict is resolved through the hero accomplishing the mission. The concluding scene of the film is a wide shot of Black children wearing professional-looking rugby sport gears and playing on a well-maintained professional rugby pitch. There are no longer two sides playing two different sports, but only one pitch, one team playing one national sport, just as the South African leader had envisioned throughout the narrative.

V. Idi Amin: false hero and delusional leader in *The last King of Scotland* (2006)

In the film *The last King of Scotland*, the character of Idi Amin is an autocratic leader who uses fear and physical violence to govern his country. He acknowledges that he uses fear as an Althusserian repressive state apparatus (Eagleton 2014:91), in order to reduce his subjects to obedient pawns. In the narrative, General Amin who becomes President Amin argues that “a man who shows fear ... is weak and he is a slave” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006); this statement implies that as a leader with military experience, he has agency over civilians. Moreover, as a general, he leads armies of men, whereas civilians are submissive and obedient subjects, thus the dynamic of fear can only exist from the civilians towards the military, and not the other way around. This, according to the character of Idi Amin, gives him the political legitimacy to be Ugandans’ ruler. This section will analyze the leadership style of the film character of Idi Amin and not of the historical persona, unless referred to for comparison.

As established in Hobbesian governing principles early in this study, a good leader needs to take charge in a politically troubled situation, and most importantly, the chosen leader to become the Sovereign has to have strong support from the people from the outset, even before acquiring the Sovereign position. The leader cannot enforce himself upon the people (Hobbes 1968:199). In *The last King of Scotland*, Idi Amin comes to power after a military coup to depose Milton Obote, the previous Ugandan President (Ingham 1994), but the coup happened ‘outside’ the narrative of the film, and the character of Idi Amin publicly alleges that he personally had no political ambition, but was led to power by the people of Uganda. What Idi Amin cunningly describes as a sign of his good will, is actually a political strategy that he uses to obtain international and regional recognition of his military regime. He thus bases his political legitimacy on the national will of the people when he says,

“Uganda loves me because I am loyal and I am fair” and “me, myself, I did not want to become president, but the people, they wanted it so” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006).

After the establishing sequences of the country, Idi Amin is shown in several scenes surrounded by numerous military vans and tanks with heavily armed men, driving through untarred village roads. Travelling in a bus, young Scottish doctor Nicholas Garrigan, who is to become an important secondary character later on, is also introduced here and is obviously uncomfortable with this public display of armed men with loaded guns. In an attempt to understand the situation, he anxiously questions a village woman who tells him that a military coup has been successfully conducted. She enthusiastically replies that “today is a very happy day for us [Ugandans]” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). The character of Idi Amin legitimizes his regime to the Ugandan people by presenting himself as the leader who was on the front line during the coup, risking his own life to save Uganda (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). He uses this military rhetoric to gain credibility, solidarity and respect. At an early stage in the narrative, with scenes of Ugandans cheering and dancing with the President, the character of Idi Amin is framed to be the most suitable political leader through the eyes of one of his subjects. In the film, the Ugandan leader repeatedly attempts to persuade national and international audiences that the essence of his politics is centered on developing his country and improving the citizens’ standard of living; “I am sure I will contribute more for the people of Uganda” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). He certainly shows no intention of stepping down as President of Uganda with discretionary and total powers and control over the Executive, Parliamentary and Judiciary, at any stage of the narrative. However, Montesquieu (1989:327) observed that every human vested with (absolute) powers tends to abuse them. On the other hand, “political legitimacy depends not on how a government came to power, but only on whether it can effectively protect those who have consented to obey it” (Lloyd & Sreedhar 2014:10).

The character of Idi Amin succeeds in the early narrative of the film in building a strong public image that portrays him as positive leader and a national hero, when he is in fact a manipulative leader who readily uses ruses and distractions to build public consent for his leadership style among his immediate entourage as well as in the broad public. In the film, he manipulates the international press to serve his personal agenda; this is particularly illustrated in a press conference scene with local and international reporters. The initial focus of the media conference unexpectedly shifts from foreigners demanding answers from him, to serious allegations of Human Rights violations, to a joking and laughing environment with the President dictator indulging in facetious comments. He jokes about writing a letter to the Queen of England offering to be her lover; he addresses the British government with raillery about opening a special bank account to lend them money as a helping gesture. The spectacle continues with Idi Amin laughing derisively and accusing the British of jealousy of his individual person, and claiming that the Scottish government wants to hire him so that he can help them defeat the British, in the same way he did in Uganda (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). International and local reporters, present at what was supposed to be a press conference, did not repress their laughter at every single of Idi Amin's jokes. At this point, Idi Amin controls the discourse of the meeting, and by using ridicule and forced hilarity, he asserts his power to refuse cooperation or accountability. The character of Idi Amin is wearing, as in most scenes in the film, his military uniform of a General, as a symbol of the highest position of power that he occupies in the country. Moreover, he is acting not as a civilian leader but as military leader, and in this function communicates a personal history of violent actions that can potentially be directed to any member in his audience at any time and at the leader's sole discretion. The sensitive understanding of his role of power by the journalists, and his tacit expectation of compliance in the presence of his military support personnel, explain why the foreign journalists chose to indulge Idi Amin instead of persisting

to ask the questions the media conference had been called for. As an autocratic military leader, Idi Amin is psychologically very aware of the power that he exercises over the journalists and uses it to his political advantage by strategically diverting from the threatening topic of the day and turning the international media conference into a trivial gathering.

Furthermore, Idi Ami adjusts his language register depending on his audience. When he addresses regular citizens, he indulges in folkloric tradition as he promises them not to be an everyday politician, but someone who genuinely cares for his nation. The character of Idi Amin uses various strategies in the narrative to garner popular support as a means to legitimate his political mandate. Firstly, he exploits what can be called ethnic active support and ethnic passive support. The former refers to members of his tribe that willingly support him as a symbol of social recognition for their tribe. In the narrative, when Idi Amin introduces Masanga, his chief of security, to Nicholas Garrigan, he distinctly says: “He is one of my people”, with a strong emphasis on the possessive pronoun ‘my’ (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). Idi Amin hands all security matters to Masanga, but there is no clear indication whether Idi Amin’s tribesman is qualified for the position. However, because of what Munoz (2010:4) calls the “tribal identity” (Munoz 2010:4), Masanga’s appointment is unchallenged by military authorities present at the scene. Another strategy that the character of Idi Amin uses is ethnic passive support. Snyder (2007) explains that because of existing ethnic clashes in the society, the leader’s tribesmen will ultimately support him even if they disfavor him as leader, out of “fear that a new leader from a different ethnic group would be much worse for them” (Snyder 2007). In the narrative, the character of Idi Amin effectively uses the motif of tribe as a catalyst to rally national support and as a justification to eliminate political rivals from different tribes. “Through the ‘divide and conquer’ strategy and by imposing an artificial hierarchy of cultural systems” (Nkunzimana 2009:86), the character of Idi Amin replicates a leadership style recalling the colonialist strategy, which aimed at

strengthening political and economic authority through allocating relative privileges to traditional authorities and thus co-opting them into supporting the colonial government; enabling the foreign rulers to delegate state violence to these second-class leaders as well (Khapoya (1998:127).

Idi Amin also psychologically manipulates Nicholas Garrigan when he asks for his Scottish soccer jersey for his son, named Campbell, in an effort to convince Nicholas Garrigan of his role as loving father and soccer fan besides being a positive African leader. Soccer is thus used as a medium to break political and ideological barriers between two otherwise conflicting realities (Finchelstein 2014:150); in this case, the perception by a foreigner of an African statesman.

As the narrative evolves, the character of the Ugandan leader experiences increasing difficulties in asserting his legitimacy and sovereignty. According to Hobbes, without total control over his Sovereign attributes, a leader becomes a weak ruler. There cannot be a mention of leadership if the person in charge fails to efficiently address threats to his sovereignty.

It is an infallible mark of absolute sovereignty in a man ..., if there be no right in any other person natural or civil to punish that man For he that cannot of right be punished, cannot of right be resisted; and he that cannot of right be resisted, hath coercive power over all the rest, and thereby can frame and govern their actions at his pleasure; which is absolute sovereignty. Contrariwise he that in a commonwealth is punishable by any ... is not sovereign. (Hobbes 1640:81)

When faced with direct political and personal attacks to his leadership, Idi Amin, as the autocratic dictator that he is in the film, retaliates with intimidation, violence and mass murders of any Ugandan believed to discredit the President's authority. In lieu of directly

showing scenes of killings in the film, the narrative gradually builds a haunting awareness of this for the audience, and thus creates narrative tension as the audience expects danger for the ignorant White doctor who is, by counterfoil, becoming the positive but erring apprentice on a path to realization, as in any drama or horror film. Two sequences reflect this diegetic state, firstly, it is through dialogue between the character of Idi Amin and his secret forces, and secondly it is through the scene between Nicholas Garrigan and the British High Commissioner in Uganda. In that scene, in a diatribe against the character of Idi Amin, the British High Commissioner speaks of people disappearing after speaking out against the regime;

... in the countryside, they are not even bothering to dig graves anymore, they simply feeding them to the crocodiles...right here in Kampala right under our noses, [Idi Amin] has wiped out the entire political opposition. He doesn't bother to cover it anymore, [even] members of his own cabinet. (*The last King of Scotland* 2006)

In the same scene, the British High Commissioner shows graphic pictures of dead bodies, mutilated bodies and mass graves to Nicholas Garrigan. The level of suspense escalates and is retained with Nicholas Garrigan's realization that he has been defending and working for a despotic leader, while not yet understanding the latent danger to his person. Concurrently, Idi Amin's authority is belittled in his own home, and as a punishment, Idi Amin orders the murder of Kay Amin, one of his wives who had an extra-marital affair with Nicholas Garrigan. Violent personality traits in the character of Idi Amin are confirmed as the narrative creates suspense and builds tension, while the persistent ignorance of Nicholas Garrigan, now both confidante and perpetrator of adultery against the ruler, creates an ominous sense of thrill in the viewer. This is partially released in the horror scene of Kay's body in the mortuary, but maintained further as the two men still do not face each other in the showdown that Nicholas Garrigan needs to comprehend his own peril in the narrative.

According to Hobbes (1968:229), whether citizens voted for or against the ruler in charge, regardless of their current political affiliation, regardless of how they personally feel about the Sovereign, all citizen have to surrender their agency to him, because “sovereignty signifies an authority beyond which there is no appeal; in this sense it is and must be absolute” (Hurtgen 1979:61). The political principle of absolutism that the character of Idi Amin advocates through his leadership style can be linked back to British colonial indirect rule.

The configuration of contemporary African states and governments cannot be understood outside the context of the former colonial occupation (Mamdani 1996:62). In the film, Idi Amin’s political and military strategies are not isolated constructs, though they are motivated by the narrative, but continue historical patterns after British colonial domination – thematically, over both Scotland and Uganda. Older international target audiences who experienced Britain’s colonial wars can easily relate to this, and usually emotively. Hence, a brief historical overview of the non-fictional colonized Uganda could add value in understanding the nature and the motifs behind the character of Idi Amin’s leadership style. The political identity or orientations taken by African states is a chronological consequence of the colonial governing reforms imposed on Africans through the indirect rule (Mamdani 1996:62). Khapoya (1998:127) defines the strategy of indirect rule as an approach that involved identifying the representatives of the existing local power structures with the aim of coercing or bribing them, so that they would “become part of the colonial administrative structure while retaining considerable political power over the people in their own areas.” Indirect rule was a system of government used by the British colonial administration, to rule its African and other colonies (Mamdani 1996:62). Indirect rule had created a concept of leadership where the authority of the British colonizer was strengthened by the divisions that he had created in the local and traditional districts. The segregation was “actually a

description of two distinct, though related, forms of power: the centrally located modern state and the locally organized Native Authority” managed by local and traditional chiefs (Mamdani 1996:109). These local authorities in charge of customary laws as well as milder types of punitive measures for small crimes were given some level of power to apply these laws and rule over other Africans, but for the colonizer’s interests. Thus, by granting them some degree of power, the colonizer was strategically dividing Africans among themselves along older group patterns, but beyond traditional differences, because “customarily law was not about guaranteeing rights; it was about enforcing custom. Its point was not to limit power, but to enable it” (Mamdani 1996:110). This colonial mode of leadership, which still exists in some African regimes, justifies tyranny, and the absolute powers conferred to a leader.

On the other hand, by advocating citizens to always obey their Sovereign, Hobbes’ principles also promoted support for a leader who remembers that “the general law for sovereigns [is] that they procure, to the uttermost of their endeavour, the good [to their] people (Hobbes 2013:60). Under no circumstances could citizens be arbitrarily killed because of their views or the tribe they belong to. In *The last King of Scotland*, there is a scene with an intellectual montage that suggests that Idi Amin’s troubled state of mind. The sequence starts with unknown armed men bombing the presidential car in an attempt to assassinate him. Unknown to the attackers, the President was going on a test drive with Nicholas Garrigan, in a car that he had just bought him as a gift. As defined by Eisenstein (1949:12), intellectual montage exists when each shot on its own is meaningless, but the juxtaposition of more than one shots, triggers intellectual meaning in a (critical) viewer. Intellectual montage is used when the director does not want give away the action by using the simple *montage alterné*, which is linear succession of images with a chronological link to the narrative (Lacuve 2010). The understanding that the intellectual montage creates in the car attack scene is that the character of Idi Amin is going through some of the four stages of fear, namely

“freeze, flight, fight and fright” (Bracha 2004:679). During the attack, Idi Amin as a former military combatant does not freeze but immediately instructs Nicholas Garrigan to escape by driving over his own security guards if necessary. The character of Idi Amin is however unable to fight as he has no weapon at his disposal. The armed men wearing balaclavas notice that Idi Amin is in fact in Nicholas Garrigan’s car, not his own, and start to shoot at both the President and his physician as they are fleeing the scene, driving at high speed. The last stage of fear, fright, is illustrated through a panicked Idi Amin’s who accuses everyone around him of being a conspirator. The monologue, the shaky camera shots, the diegetic-sound of visible walkie-talkies, running steps and soldiers talking in the background, together with the fast edit between medium close ups, wide shots, close ups and pans, add to the tension and visually as well as audibly narrate Idi Amin’s terrified state. Early in the narrative, Idi Amin tells Nicholas Garrigan that he knows when he is going to die as “he saw it in a dream” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). What transpired initially as the imaginings of a delirious man, is reasserted in the aftermath of the shooting scene, when Idi Amin angrily stresses the absurdity of the murder attempt, because according to him, only he knows the date of his death, and he furiously shouts that “I will not die until I say” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). This psychological attempt at regaining control also narratively marks his psychotic state.

After this failed attempt, the character of Idi Amin hysterically utters that he is sure that it was “Obote’s men” who tried to kill him (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). Milton Obote is the former President that Idi Amin deposed with a coup early in the narrative; not only was Obote Idi Amin’s principal political adversary, but he was also from a rival tribe.

The discourse between African tribes and political leadership can be traced back to colonial times where there was a strategic intention from the colonizers to force Black Africans to believe that they were a lower race of human beings than the colonizers. Apart

from indirect rule that forcibly kept people in ethnic traditional governance well into the age of low-paid colonial labor instead of giving voice to a shared working class experience of oppression, this manifested through employment discrimination, land deprivation, class and racial division. In Uganda particularly, the colonial British strategically signed “alliances and treaties with rulers of precolonial kingdoms” (Mamdani 1996:83), and “not surprisingly, the tendency was for the tribe to be defined as the unit of indirect rule administration” (Mamdani 1996:79). Colonial administration was favoring segregation among Whites and Blacks, especially turning the locals against themselves, thus some Africans were granted low-level managerial administrative positions, solely based on the tribes they belong to; one example in Uganda is “the Kingdom of Buganda” (Khapoya 1998:181). The tribal hierarchy created by the colonial government led to increasing “intraethnic tribalism” (Mamdani 1996:183), where some tribes believed, even after independence, that they were superior to other tribes. Further, during the course of decolonization in Uganda “several small ... kingdoms ... resented the special protection that had been accorded to the Kingdom of Buganda by the British during colonial days” (Khapoya 1998:180-181). Consequently, the complex of inferiority that had animated ‘inferior-labeled’ tribes during colonization, turned into tribal animosity in the independent Uganda. Moreover, “British colonial policies favoring Buganda had contributed to the persistence of separatist tendencies” (Khapoya 1998:18), and the British indirect rule had mistakenly made the *Kabaka* (King of Buganda) believe that his Buganda tribe was superior, and should therefore be allowed to create its own independent country apart from Uganda (Khapoya 1998:181) upon independence. The tribal conflict between the Kingdom of Buganda and other Ugandan tribes thus expanded in the political scene, where each incumbent aligned his political leadership with his tribal affiliations.

In *The last King of Scotland*, the character of Idi Amin belongs to a small Islamic tribe called the Kakwa (Keatley 2003). His affinity to his tribe is the reflection of his

ethnicity and therefore his identity. In a post-colonial context, this random colonial hierarchy of tribes is still socially visible. Thus, Ugandans from previously favored tribes had access to better education, and were better positioned to take over from colonial powers after independence, whereas individuals such as the character of Idi Amin who is from a 'lower' tribe, had to work harder to obtain some social recognition.

Commenting on the political history of Uganda, Karugire (1980:144) explains;

the introduction of western Education and values also effectively disenfranchised those, who for one reason or another, did not get that Education so that the uneducated populace – something in the region of 80% or so of the population – were largely spectators rather than active participants in the events leading to the granting of independence.

Thus, as the Head of State of the fictional Uganda, the character of Idi Amin proudly wears his uniform of general with numerous insignias on his chest as well as on his epaulettes; he wears all these emblems of military rank, as a symbol of his successful ascension to power. In a conversation with Nicholas Garrigan, the character of Idi Amin boasts about rising from a latrine cleaner in the British army to the President of a country. He thus expects recognition from the West, and admiration from his subjects, for his achievements (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). Indeed, this refutes his initial assertions that he did not want to lead, but was chosen by the people. The former President, Milton Obote, is a learned man, whereas Idi Amin acknowledges that he comes from a very poor background, and the awkwardness of his syntax when he speaks in English confirms that he does not have a strong academic background. Consequently, the complex of inferiority that the character of Idi Amin has towards the former President, or any political opposition leader or tribe, reinforces his paranoia and violent behaviors. Thus, after the failed murder attempt, the character of Idi

Amin retaliates by murdering many Ugandans belonging to Obote's tribe. The death toll reported in the narrative rises to thousands of people, especially from the *Acholi* and *Langi* tribes, according to the British English Commissioner (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). Idi Amin centers his attention on these two tribes because they are Christian tribes, who in his view still support former President Obote with the aim of reinstating him back in power. Idi Amin therefore clearly uses tribalism as a political component of his leadership style. Khapoya (1998:192) argues that many African leaders use tribalism "as an excuse to develop extremely autocratic systems, to outlaw political discussion, to foster personality cults, and to ensure that they remained in office as long as possible". Using the example of Cameroon, attorney Jean-de-Dieu Momo also "attributes this lack of outrage against the mass-killing of ordinary [citizens] by their own government to centuries of dehumanization of the black body" (Tchouaffé 2012:200), implying that the African public has become used to and disinterested in individual suffering from violence and pain. Moreover, "tribal politics within the tribally based system of local despotism is actually a form of civil war" according to Mamdani (1996:185). Thus, by constantly assimilating any Ugandan from a different tribe than his, as a conspirator, the character of Idi Amin creates an environment conducive for military and civil unrest in a country. Interestingly, the individual suffering of Nicholas Garrigan at the end of the film is graphically emphasized, as opposed to the voiceless bodies only shown through the medium of photographs, or yet further alienated from the viewer in mere narration by a character. Only Kay Amin, through her physical association with the White character of Nicholas Garrigan, evokes the interest of the audience for her body – initially as a loved body, and thereafter as a mutilated victim of insane revenge.

"The core agenda that African states faced at independence was three-fold: deracializing civil society, detribalizing the Narrative Authority, and developing the economy in the context of unequal international relations" (Mamdani 1996:287). In the narrative, the

character of Idi Amin succeeds, in further deracializing his country of Asian foreign residents, which is based on historical facts. In his spiral of paranoia, he unilaterally decides to chase all Asians out of Uganda. He gives them 90 days to leave the country, even though he was strongly advised not to do so, as Asians were a pillar of the local economy since the colonial era. Apart from Nicholas Garrigan, the only non-Africans that the character of Idi Amin tolerates are representative of diplomatic missions and journalists. Moreover, Idi Amin uses a deceiving pan-Africanist discourse in justifying his political decision of forcing all Asians out of Uganda. He claims that Uganda is for Ugandans, and Asians “are leeches [who] milk the cow, but ... do not want to feed the cow ...” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). He uses this metaphor to imply that the resident Ugandan Asians’ businesses are prosperous in Uganda, but do not reinvest a portion of their dividends in the local economy.

The escalation of violence continues with Idi Amin ordering the killing of his minister of health. He acts after being informed by the ignorant but ambitious Nicholas Garrigan that the minister might be conspiring against him, whereas he was actually trying to close a pharmaceutical deal that would benefit the Ugandan people, as the British Commissioner reveals to Nicholas Garrigan later in the narrative. Nicholas Garrigan’s guilt on realizing his fatal mistake and his frustration grow as the narrative tension intensifies. Concurrently, Idi Amin’s inadequate cognitive understanding of reality continues to emerge in the narrative. As an illustration, he unexpectedly sends Nicholas Garrigan, his physician, to represent him at an important meeting with international diplomats and potential international investors. It is a meeting where Nicholas Garrigan is expected to take decisions on behalf of Idi Amin, but he is not competent to take on such responsibilities, and he was not briefed about the importance of the meeting. On a personal level, the character of Idi Amin suffers from hallucinations and trouble of the personality. Thus, in the same scene, his behavioral traits can abruptly shift from joy, to anger and to suspicion, in one chronological pattern that repeats itself without Idi

Amin being aware it. In a particular example in the film, he grabbed Nicholas Garrigan by the temples, furiously shaking him and asking, “Is there something going on here?” and then hugging him thereafter as if the threatening scene had not happened (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). This bipolar and schizophrenic behavior is repeated in scenes where Idi Amin feels that his legitimacy as a leader is threatened or compromised in some manner. Throughout the film, Idi Amin displays extreme mood swings and unpredictable behavior that motivate the decisions that he takes as a political leader. The most gruesome manifestation of Idi Amin violent behavior is the manner in which his wife Kay is murdered. Her inanimate body, disfigured and near-unrecognizable, is publicly displayed in a local mortuary; for the local population to see as a warning. Masanga, Idi Amin’s chief of security is in the mortuary and shouts to the people present that “this is what happens when you betray the President” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). He is the voice that represents Idi Amin’s repressive regime. Kay Amin’s legs had been cut off and stitched in place of her arms, and the same had been done to her arms that were cut off and stitched in place of her legs. In the following scene, the character of Idi Amin is at the presidential house, with some of his security guards, watching a pornographic Western film. In that scene Idi Amin displays signs of extreme fatigue and the manner in which he addresses Nicholas Garrigan asserts that he is aware that the physician is returning from the mortuary, which further implies that Nicholas Garrigan starts suspecting that Idi Ami might know about the affair. Idi Amin is conscious of his brutal leadership style here, and argues with Nicholas Garrigan that violence is often necessary, because “you must teach people to love their leader” (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). The violent behavioral pattern of the character of Idi Amin has some similarities with the diegetic actions of some characters in *La nuit de vérité* (*The Night of Truth*) (2004) by Fanta Régina Nacro. The plot revolves around the character of Michel, son of President Miossoune, who is murdered by the rebel leader, Colonel Theo. The President’s late son’s

body is mutilated and his genitals are cut and inserted in his mouth. This violent act occurs in a context of power struggle, and after confessing to the crime; Colonel Theo is killed in retaliation by Michel's mother, Edna, who "roasts him alive over a cooking fire" (Petty 2012:151). This film raises several questions, such as whether Colonel Theo's and Edna's actions can be justified because they happened in a context of war and trauma. According to Sheila Petty (2012:151), Edna is a good woman turned avenger by the cruelty of war and Theo is a good man turned murderer by the same circumstances, [however], their responses to their traumas are horrendous, and the very extremity of their actions invites the film's spectator to contemplate what their own reactions might be in the same circumstances.

Thus, African audiences are often exposed to violence in film, as it is very common for cinema from certain countries, according to Dovey (2009:36), to represent violence on screen, as a reminder of the country's colonial or segregated past. In the British colonies, the embryonic and early forms of African states were based on the use of customary law, as customary law was for 'natives' only. The use of violence was encouraged by the British colonial power, and as long as it "could be passed off as customary it was considered legitimate" (Mamdani 1996:286). The use of violence and force has become embedded in the definition of African leadership to some African leaders. Thus, in several independent African countries, military coups have become an accepted means to access political power. "The African continent has experienced more military coups than any other; more than half of African states had military regimes since independence" (Khapoya 1998:209). This misconception of the definition of African leadership is used as a stereotype in *The last King of Scotland*. It is expressed in the abovementioned scene where a female Ugandan character, in a dialogue with Nicholas Garrigan, convinces him not to be afraid, even though a military coup has been perpetrated. She reassures Nicholas Garrigan by telling him that the numerous armed men that he sees on the street "are General Amin's, [and] he fights for the people"

(*The last King of Scotland* 2006). The female Ugandan character and all the extras in the bus or on the streets cheering for the character of Idi Amin, are not oblivious to the fact that he has just committed a coup, but have come to accept this culture of violence where power is taken by force. In this submissive approach by the Ugandan characters, it is implicitly as well as explicitly suggested that if the incumbent has been defeated, then he was not strong enough to be a leader. Further, the acceptance of a new leader is readily assimilated as political change with the naïve assumption that the new President would be a better leader than his predecessor. As discussed further above, this is “the African Story”, retold yet again.

Idi Amin’s mental state is continuously exposed in the narrative, as the plot develops. In several scenes in the film, the camera suddenly moves from steady to handheld, as a form of cinematic tool to underscore Idi Amin’s unstable state of mind. This mentally deranged state of Idi Amin in the film is a narrative fact that is known to the audience and some characters but not to Idi Amin himself. In a clinically sane subject, the imagination effectively allows the person to express him/herself; it also provides a fertile ground for the person’s mind to represent fantasies and desires that are otherwise unrealistic. There is a constant internal fight between on one side the conscious and repressed thoughts, and on the other side the desires, and that state potentially leads to mental disturbances (Allen 1999:125). This state is shown in the film through the Ugandan leader’s erratic behavior. Idi Amin is a complex character who lives in a parallel reality that only exists in his head. In the narrative, Idi Amin reminisces about his past when he fought with the British army, but on the other hand, he also expresses his political admiration for the independent Scotland. His interest in Scotland relates to an anachronic style of army-based leadership, common in African states and encouraged by neo-colonialist forces during the rule of the historical Amin. However, political freedom from the British and a monarchy with himself at the helm are two elements of his self-constructed view on Scotland that the character of Idi Amin

attempts to establish in Uganda. As his dictatorship is consolidated throughout the film narrative, Idi Amin no longer represses his personal and political desires for control and frequently refers to his construct of Scotland for Uganda, but his interpretation is reduced to the idea of a monarch with unlimited powers, wearing kilts and giving Scottish names to his children; Kay Amin's children are called McKenzie and Campbell. Richard Allen (1999:125) explains that it is not uncommon for people to allow themselves to live their fantasies in the real world. In some instances, human behavior would largely be influenced by unconscious and irrational drives. This is a psychological perspective that describes the psychological disturbed logic of the character of Idi Amin who is portrayed in the film, as a person with frequent episodes of paranoia or double personality. In his psychological deterioration and social engagement, the character ironically follows colonial models of historical African leaders who attempted to emulate the manners and physical adornment of the colonizer, while being allowed to enact state power with some violence in the limited capacity of leaders in indirect rule – only here, the colonial motif of the irrational African is stretched to extreme to show his maniacal administration of power. The knowledge and the danger of Idi Amin's unstable nature gradually displaces Nicholas Garrigan's ignorant filial admiration for him, and towards the end of the narrative he is convinced of the violent and despotic nature of the Ugandan leader; narratively, this is where suspense turns into gratuitous horror for the second time, in the hanging scene.

The character of Idi Amin in *The last King of Scotland* is a political tyrant who is what Vladímir Propp (1928) characterizes as a “false hero”. The two main opposing representations in Propp's film characterization are of the hero and the villain. Essentially, a hero attempts to achieve a noble purpose, while a villain does everything in his power to prevent the hero from succeeding. The false hero, on the other hand, is a character who deceitfully presents all the characteristics expected to be found in the hero, when in fact, he is

an anti-hero (Propp 1928:41). The false hero differs from the villain in that the latter is conscious of his destructive nature and does not hide it, whereas the false hero purposely deceives everyone about his real intentions. As a false hero, the character of Idi Amin is a persona in psychological and political decline and his powerful position causes the suffering of his subjects. Since the mainstream audience at best is aware of the historical Amin's reign of terror, it can be assumed recognize the trope of the irrational African leader early in the film, and respond to this in suspense about when the 'beast' will show his true nature.

In the film, Idi Amin develops from a populist to a negative leader. He has terrorized and had people in his country and government killed; he has murdered one of his wives and has attempted to murder his physician. Nicholas Garrigan is finally threatened personally in the late scenes of the narrative; he faces death and escapes through the self-sacrifice of Dr Junju, the Black Ugandan medical doctor who instructs Nicholas Garrigan to "tell the world the truth about Amin, they will believe you, you are a White man" (*The last King of Scotland* 2006). The nature of this diegetic dialogue reflects the director's narrative choice to perpetuate negative African stereotypes, using the filmic tradition of treating the black body as an object, coupled with a tradition of denial of Black civil rights, all of which has become totally naturalized (Tchouaffé 2012:200). *The last King of Scotland* is after all a mainstream film, and therefore uses "spurious harmony" (Modleski 1984:692) as a popular film convention to restore the equilibrium at the end, with Nicholas Garrigan successfully escaping. In explaining Freytag's *dénouement*, Harun et al. (2013:4) argue that a decisive action has to occur in the narrative before the resolution is experienced; this turning point in the narrative is the *dénouement*. As Dr Junju secretly frees Nicholas Garrigan, knowing that he will be executed for this act, the audience experiences the *dénouement* that is needed to attain the full restoration of the equilibrium. Dr Junju's certain punishment for this act remains outside the narrative, but can be predicted as a continuation of the rampant killings

by Idi Amin's associates through the plot. However, the camera again follows the lacerated White body of Garrigan rather than the dignified, death-bound Black doctor in these scenes.

The film narrative presents three main impediments that make it impossible for the character of Idi Amin to be a benevolent president: the legitimization of state and military violence, the tribal divisions inherited from a colonial past and his own schizophrenic nature. Thus, the character's rhetorical assertions that he had been chosen by his people are indeed merely underscoring the opposite, as the audience witnesses a totalitarian leader reason with an ignorant foreigner that violence and power are necessary to govern the nation; thus recalling Hobbes' description of a mere dictator. Although "there was a significant break with the formal institutions of indirect rule, [after the independence] there was no such break with the form of its power" (Mamdani 1996:291). In *The last King of Scotland*, Idi Amin is a stereotypical post-independence Black African political leader who exercises the continuity of colonial indirect rule in his administration of power, which revolves "around a shared axis [which is] despotism" (Mamdani 1996:291). The fictional Idi Amin presents himself as a symbol of political change in Africa and in Uganda, but his oppressive leadership style contradicts this assumption. According to Hobbes, a benevolent dictator on the other hand is an autocratic leader chosen by the people, and whose sole purpose is "to seek peace and follow it" (Lindsay 1651:xi), by avoiding any internal or external conflicts. Hobbes' benevolent dictator is the philosopher's solution to avoid a state of nature which can be understood as a state of perpetual civil war (Lindsay 1651:xx). The character of Idi Amin, on the contrary, perpetuates political and civil instability by exercising what Achille Mbembe (2003:11-40) calls "necropolitics, [which is] a regime of power where sovereignty is decided on the basis of who should live and who should die".

Chapter V – Conclusion

Hobbes' principles of leadership cannot be understood from a political perspective only, in the context of the selected films, and the African leaders portrayed in each film respectively. The analysis of the representation of African leadership in the four films is strongly embedded in a historical, social, economical as well a cultural framework. The African leaders represented in the narratives build a leadership style based on all these structures that are interconnected in the diegeses. Thus, these films, as fictional reconstructions of reality, engage with viewers but also challenge them to decode the symbols, signifiers and narrative constructs that are present in the stories. For this virtual exchange, between the viewers and the filmmakers' motifs, to take place, the films' content have to target audiences that have a personal interest in the stories or the genres. It is important for viewers "to be able to see their reality on the screen, so that they feel that they exist, especially for people who have been colonized, because colonization amounts to reducing the other to a non-being" (Thackway 2003:205). Film narratives can create an aesthetic platform where political and societal concerns are discussed, because films are "part of culture and it is perhaps culture that can encourage people to change [and] question themselves" (Thackway 2003:205). Thus, the type of narrative, the film's *auteur* or the film's genre, inform the degree to which the discourse of change is relevant. Moreover, the distinction between African films and mainstream films on African topics, add to Jean-Marie Teno's definition of film, as a valuable medium for "entertainment and also a great means of raising people's awareness" (in Thackway 2003:205). The consciousness mentioned by the Cameroonian filmmaker, relates to the social exposure that African stories have, and this depends on the audience but also on the industry that produced the film.

In an interview, director Bekolo endorses the preemptive role of African films, when he explains the political stand that he took in realizing *Le Président*:

it is the first time that a movie removes a President. Cinema always arrives afterwards, to tell us [about] the Arab Spring for example. Where was cinema before? Cinema must be forward thinking, open new doors and make the revolutions. I do not want to tell people what happened. I want to inspire those who will make it happen.
(Murrey 2014)

This category of films speaks directly to a continent with language and codes that are familiar. Bekolo's films might be "overtly political, more provocative [and] more sophisticated" (Tchouaffé 2009:62), but succeeds in fictionalizing "the reality of everyday life and contemporary social crises within African society" (Gabara 2006:211). A similar approach is found in some of Nollywood films. In actual fact, "in spite of Nigerian video films' notoriously poor quality, Nollywood represents the first industry in sub-Saharan Africa to succeed in creating a large domestic audience for African film" (Dovey 2009:202). Moreover, recalling a conversation that he had with Sembène, McCall(2007: 96) writes that when asked about Nigerian videos, Sembene 's response was "that the Nigerians had found a way to reach the African audience – and that, he acknowledged – was a very great accomplishment'. In *Who's the King*, from the entire local cast to the choice of topics, director Odife attempts to go beyond the theatrical expected effect, and breaks down with cinematic stereotypes associated with Nollywood productions. Thus, in addition to the entertaining value,

at a surface and political level,... Nollywood films are about the representation of new social structures in conflict with the lasting effects of old ways ... [thus these] films

provide us with the images and language to represent this new imagined community with the same frustrations and aspirations. (Diawara 2010:177)

Further, *Le Président* and *Who's the King* challenge facile stereotypical views of African leaders, “namely those representations popularized in western films of a uniformly dangerous, irrational, womanizing, war criminal” (Murrey 2014). However, these stereotypes are explicit in the narratives and cast of *Invictus* and *The last King of Scotland*.

The Hollywood imageries proposed in *Invictus* have undeniable ties with the recent South African political and racial history. However, they are represented from an outsider perspective entrenched in a history of cinematic bias from Hollywood on films about Africa. The narrative of *Invictus* illustrates, to both South African and International audiences, how the ‘world’ remembers the political leader of Nelson Mandela, and how racial tensions in the country are under state control. Such a fictional representation of a government leader, may contribute to stereotyping of Africa instead of offering a more realistic rendition or a critical insider view of current politics. Moreover, “Africans don’t write their stories in the same way as [non-Africans], whether intentionally or not” (Thackway 2003:206). Thus, depending on the audience watching the film, *Invictus* can be a positive representation of the political and social progresses made by a country or the cinematic product of “Africans [being] subordinated and ridiculed in the fantasies and imagination of the West” (Dovey:206:177). On the other hand, even if in the narrative, the character of Nelson Mandela is depicted as a positive leader, this is secondary to the representation of masculinities in the Rugby team or between the “the racially divided security guards of the president who have to work together” (Wozniak 2014:12). The issues of masculinities in *Invictus* outweigh the general narrative, thus refocusing the value of the film to the social dynamics between conflicting males. Moreover, “their predictable responses to strained relations, but with unexpected outcomes,

are by far more interesting than the political cheer evoked for the presidential character” (Wozniak 2014:24).

The entertainment and popular appeal established in *Invictus* also exists in *The last King of Scotland*, but to a certain extent. The stereotypical Hollywood discourse is the same, but the major difference lies with the character and the historical persona. Just as in *Invictus*, the storyline in *The last King of Scotland* is inspired by historical recounts of an African President and his leadership style. However, contrary to the historical fame of his South African counterpart, the non-fictional persona of Idi Amin is infamously known for his repressive and tyrannical leadership (Sosik & Jung 2010:267). On the other hand, at the end of the film, as a form of conclusion, before closing credits, the director uses documented footage of the non-fictional Idi Amin and gives additional information on when and how his regime was overthrown. By adding real-life footage to a fiction film, the Scottish film director attempts to validate the narrative content as ‘real’. The interconnectivity between the non-fictional and fictional story ascertains the film as a Westernized interpretation of the Ugandan reality, when it is rather “important for people to be able to speak about themselves, so that they don’t just become objects or settings in which other people come to tell their stories” (Thackway 2003:205).

“So often in western films African presidents are reduced to tropes and are only seen through the gaze of the white hero” (Murrey 2014) which is the case in the narratives of both *Invictus* and *The last King of Scotland*. On the other hand, *Le Président* and *Who’s the King* are more representative, not only of their respective industry, but also of the development of an African cinema that transcends the border of its continent of origin. In other words, these African films are growingly consumed by Africans and non-Africans, but the underlying message remains the same, which is the reappropriation of the image of Africa in cinema. Commenting on the new resolute approach by some African filmmakers to produce films that

will also bring to Western audiences, a more authentic representation of Africa, filmmaker Sissako states that:

without wanting to be pejorative, I would say that white people have had the privilege of seeing others without being seen for three thousand years. Today, Africans are making films [and] they can project their gaze elsewhere, outside their continent. (in Thackway 2003:200)

Bekolo subscribes to this cinematic agenda by demonstrating two elements; firstly that

Cameroonian cinema is coming of age and contributing to the making of intellectual tools for understanding the roots and development of the challenges that confront the post-independence generations of Cameroon” (Tchouaffé 2009:57).

And secondly that his “films have a vision to offer not simply to Africans, but to the world at large” (Dovey 2009:217).

In *Invictus* and *The last King of Scotland*, the Hobbesian Sovereign model reflects a one-sided Western narrative that promotes stereotypical representations of Africa and its leaders. Moreover, it indicates a clear cinematic and critical divide between main stream’s perceptions of African leadership, on one hand, and African films’ understanding of African leadership on the other hand.

Thus *Le Président* and *Who’s the King* present to the audience, a non-sensationalized depiction of certain styles of leadership in selected parts of Africa. In this instance, the Hobbesian Sovereign model is a strong narrative motif that suggests that this type of leader is a human phenomenon, which is not only representative of the African continent.

Chapter VI- Findings

This study was a content film analysis with the purpose of examining the modes and processes of representation in *Le Président* (2013), *Who's the King* (2012), *Invictus* (2009) and *The last King of Scotland* (2006). Then various instances of leadership in the four films were analyzed with the aim of investigating the positive or negative role that each African fictional leader played in the relevant films narratives.

The two mainstream films were “Hollywood’s continued stereotypical representation of blacks” (Higgins 2012:201). They were Westernized packaged products about a set image of South Africa and Uganda, in particular, whereas the two African films critically engaged more with their audiences. *Le Président* and *Who's the King* intensively used historical and cultural parallels between fictional and non-fictional reality, in order to build tension and develop the diegesis. In relation to Thomas Hobbes’ political principles of sovereignty, among the four films, two negative and two positive leaders were identified. The characters of the Cameroonian leader in *Le Président*, as well of Idi Amin in *The last King of Scotland*, were both despotic leaders, and the characters of Nelson Mandela and the *Igbo* traditional ruler, in *Invictus* and *Who's the King*, respectively, were the benevolent leaders. The process in establishing whether a ruler’s leadership style was positive or negative revolved around the nature of his relation to his subjects and the existing (active or repressive) structures of governance. The negative leaders defined their political Sovereignty as a mean to oppress their subjects and fulfill personal agendas, whereas the positive leaders successfully attempted to put the general interest of the people before theirs. However, the lasting effects of the different leadership styles, on the population or the leaders themselves, are not explicated in the narratives, and left to the viewers’ imagination. In *Le Président*, the political and personal fate of the leader remained unknown as a new President is sworn into office;

similarly in *The last King of Scotland*, Idi Amin's regime gradually crumbled and the political decline is inevitable. On the other hand, *Who's the King* and *Invictus* both ended with happy scenes of dancing and cheering, which suggested a positive closure of the narratives.

The style and techniques of all the selected films were strongly linked to the director or the film industry that produced the films. *Le Président* is a definite expression of director Bekolo's avant-gardist auteurist trademark; *Who's the King* reproduces Nollywood conventions; *Invictus* illustrated director Eastwood's approach on masculinity and *The last King of Scotland* merely portrayed a subjective representation of Idi Amin.

Bekolo used a neorealist style in his film as he combined both elements of fiction and documentary filmmaking, while director Odife, in *Who's the King*, combined real elements of the non-fictional *Igbo* culture to a fictional story. On the contrary to *The last King of Scotland*, which uses some real archive footage to draw a resemblance between the fictional and non-fictional Idi Amin, *Invictus'* diegesis, though inspired by historical events, is purely fictional.

In the context of the films, the analysis has demonstrated that, in as much as there are secondary historical and cultural factors evident in the fictional narratives, the type of governance was nonetheless attributed to the leader's choice. Thus, according to Hobbes (1651:170), in instances of failed leadership, "the fault is not in [ordinary] men, as they are the Matter; but [lies with leaders who] are the Makers, and orderers of them".

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Africa Addio (1966) Directed by Gualtiero Jacopetti & Franco Prosperi [Documentary]. Italy:

Cineriz.

Annie Laurie (1927) Directed by John S. Robertson [Film]. Scotland: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM).

Amadioha (1998) Directed by Zeb Ejiro [Film]. Nigeria: Zeb Ejiro Production Company Limited.

Aventure en France (1962) Directed by Jean-Paul Ngassa [Film]. Cameroon.

Bonnie Prince Charlie (1948) Directed by Anthony Kimmins & Alexander Korda [Film]. Scotland: London Film Productions.

Borom Sarret (1963) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Sembène Ousmane and restored in 2013 by the World Cinema Foundation in association with INA.

Camp de Thiaroye (1989) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Enaproc, Films Domirev, Films Kajoor, Satpec & Société Nouvelle Pathé Cinéma.

Ceddo (1976) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Films Domirev & Sembène Ousmane.

Chef! 1999, Directed by Jean-Marie Teno [Film]. Cameroon: Produced by Jean-Marie Teno.

Clando (1996) Directed by Jean-Marie Teno [Film]. Cameroon: Arte Films du Raphie, Les Films du Raphia and Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF).

Curious George (2006) Directed by Mathew O'Callaghan [Film]. Scotland & USA: Imagine Entertainment, Universal Pictures & Universal Animation Studios.

District 9 (2009) Directed by Neill Blomkamp [Film]. South Africa: TriStar Pictures, Block / Hanson, WingNut Films, Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit (CPTC), New Zealand Post Digital and Visual Effects Grant, Province of British Columbia Production Services Tax Credit and The Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa.

Emitai (1971) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Films Domirev.

Faat Kine (2000) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Films Domirev.

Guelwaar (1992) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Channel IV, Doomireew, France 3 Cinéma, Galatée Films, New Yorker Films & Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR).

Heremakono – Waiting for happiness (2002) Directed by Abderrahmane Sissako [Film]. Mauritania: Duo Films & Arte France Cinéma.

Hyenas (1992) Directed by Djibril Diop Mambéty [Film]. Sénégal: ADR Productions & Thelma Film AG.

Invictus (2009) Directed by Clint Eastwood [Film]. South Africa: Warner Bros Pictures, Spyglass Entertainment, Revelations Entertainment, Malpas Productions & Liberty Pictures.

Iron Ladies of Liberia (2007) Directed by Daniel Junge & Siatta Scott Johnson, [Documentary]. Liberia: Just Media.

La Noire de... (1966) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Films Domirev & Les Actualités Françaises.

La nuit de vérité (2004) Directed by Fanta Régina Nacro [Film]. Burkina Faso: Acrobates Film, Les Films du Défi & France 3 Cinéma.

La vie sur terre (1998) Directed by Abderrahmane Sissako. [Film]. Mali: Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC), Haut et Court, La Sept-Arte & Procirep.

Le Cercle des pouvoirs (1997) Directed by Daniel Kamwa [Film]. Cameroon: DK7 Communications and Tamo.

Le Complot d'Aristote (1996) Directed by Jean-Pierre Bekolo [Film]. Cameroon: British Film Institute, JBA Production & Kola Case Production.

Le Grand Blanc de Lambaréné (1994) Directed by Bassek ba Kobhio [Film]. Cameroon: Canal+ Productions, Ce.Na.Ci, Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC), Chrysalide Film, L'Agence de la Francophonie (ACCT), LN Productions, Les Films Terre Africaine et Ministère Français de la Coopération et du Développement.

Le Président (2013) Directed by Jean-Pierre Bekolo Obama [Film]. Cameroon: Jean-Pierre Bekolo SARL, Weltfilm.

Les Saignantes (2005) Directed by Jean-Pierre Bekolo [Film]. Cameroon: Quartier Mozart Films.

Living in bondage (1982) Directed by Chris Obi Rapu [Film]. Nigeria: Produced by Kenneth Nnebue.

L'Empire Sonhrai (1963) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Produced by Sembène Ousmane & never commercialized.

L'héroïsme au quotidien (1999) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Produced by Sembène Ousmane.

Mandabi (1968) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Comptoir Français du Film roduction (CFFP) & Films Domirev.

Mary, Queen of Scots (1971) Directed by Charles Jarrott [Film]. Scotland: Universal Pictures.

Moolaade (2004) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Ciné-Sud Promotion, Centre Cinématographique Marocain, CinéTéléfilms, Direction de la Cinématographie Nationale, Films Domirev & Les Films Terre Africaine.

Niaye (1964) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Films Domirev & Les Actualités Françaises.

Pousse-Pousse (1975) Directed by Daniel Kamwa [Film]. Cameroon: DK7 Communications.

Quartier Mozart (1992) Directed by Jean-Pierre Bekolo [Film]. Cameroon: Kola Case Production.

Rob Roy (1995) Directed by Michael Caton-Jones [Film]. Scotland: United Artists & Talisman Productions.

Sango Malo: le maître du canton (1991) Directed Bassek ba Kobhio [Film]. Cameroon: Diproci Fodic and Les Films Terre Africaine.

Shamwari (1982) Directed by Clive Harding [Film]. Zimbabwe: no production company identified.

Sisters in Law (2005) Directed by Kim Longinotto & Florence Ayisi [Film]. Cameroon: Vixen Films (I) & Film Four.

Taaw (1970) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Broadcasting Film Commission & National Council of the Church of Christ.

Tam-Tam à Paris (1963) Directed by Thérèse Sita Bella [Documentary]. Cameroon: Ministry of Culture Cameroon, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

Tears of the sun (2003) Directed by Antoine Fuqua [Film]. USA: Cheyenne Enterprises, Michael Lobell Productions & Revolution Studios.

The bicycle thief (1948) Directed by Vittorio De Sica [Film]. Italy: Produzioni De Sica.

The Constant Gardener (2005) Directed by Fernando Meirelles [Film]. Kenya: Focus Features, UK Film Council, Potboiler Productions, Scion Films and Blue Sky Films.

The King is coming (2012) Directed by Iyke Odife [Film]. Nigeria: production company Solomon Apete.

The last King of Scotland (2006) Directed by Kevin McDonald [Film]. Uganda: Fox Searchlight Pictures, DNA Films, FilmFour, UK Film Council, Scottish Screen, Cowboy Films, Slate Films & Tatfilm.

The Librarian: Return to King Solomon's mines (2006) Directed by Jonathan Frakes [Film]. Scotland: Turner Network Television, Electric Entertainment & Blue Sky Films.

Une Affaire de nègres (2009) Directed by Osvalde Lewat [Documentary]. Cameroon: AMIP & Waza Images.

Une nation est née (1970) Directed by Jean-Pierre Dikongue Pipa [Documentary]. Cameroon.

Who is the King (2012) Directed by Iyke Odife [Film]. Nigeria: production company Solomon Apete.

Xala (1974) Directed by Sembène Ousmane [Film]. Sénégal: Films Domirev & Ste. Me. Production du Sénégal.