



## **Birthing Fake Journalism: Problematizing Online Fake Political Analyses during 2017 Electoral Period in Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

In order to predict the future of African political environment, it is significant that we make meaning of the fake journalism that disseminates propaganda that shapes the continent political contours. Since in Africa, political trajectories determine the social and economic system, it is arguably significant to pay attention to such functional political discourses. The study objective was to examine the value of fake journalism exemplified by the fake political analyses experienced in Kenya during the 2017 electoral process. Paying attention to the 2017 general elections in Kenya, the research analyzes political propaganda from fake analysts targeting the Jubilee party (for the incumbent regime) and National super alliance (NASA); (a coalition of parties forming the country's opposition). The study adopted the propaganda theory in understanding the functions of the phenomenon. The researchers sampled 14 propaganda videos uploaded on YouTube by fake analysts before, and after 2017 elections in Kenya. The videos were transcribed and then analysed using critical interpretative approach where the literature, theory, and propaganda video analyses experienced were compared and inferences drawn to make meaning of the past, present and future implications for media, politics, and society. The findings of the study indicate that fake analyses played a critical role in shaping the political contours in Kenya as they disseminated ethno-politics and all its forms and manifestations such as ethnic blocking, ethnic profiling, ethnic agenda setting, and hatred, just to mention a few. These findings are significant to the government and alternative media regulators. The study largely benefits the mainstream media who are supposed to be a voice to counter alternative media propaganda with objective journalism.

**Key Terms:** Fake Journalism, Fake analyses, Political Propaganda, ethno-politics

### **Introduction**



In Kenya, ethnicity has proved to be a resource for political domination, consolidation, and manipulation thus a recipe for ethnic tensions, competition for resources and conflicts. Most parts of Kenya are dotted with ethnic conflict especially after every general election, a situation that was not there before 1991 (Yieke, 2011). Ethnicity in Kenya is highly institutionalized and has been termed by many scholars as a curse. In Yieke's (2011) analysis of the 2007 post-election violence, ethnic tensions build up when senior politicians, in their political rallies towards elections, "issue inflammatory statements and utterances, asking for people to go back to their ancestral lands or they be forced out" (p.9). Munene (2013) argues in the same line that post-colonial leaders in Kenya such as Jomo Kenyatta, Tom Mboya and Oginga Odinga consolidated their followers by retreating to their ethnicities whenever they wanted political influence and security and by doing this, they normalized ethnic politics in Kenya.

The normalized ethnic politics in Kenya has been passed on to the current political generation because five decades later, political dominance in one's community defines a politician's negotiation power in the national politics. In the era of political coalitions, no one can manage a top position in a coalition unless they have a substantive following from their ethnicity, which they can bring on the table. How did this come to be? According to Munene (2013), president Moi created ethnic consolidation logic by fronting political lords where for example all Luhya who opposed Musalia Mudavadi such as Kijana Wamalwawere branded the enemies of Luhya community. Those who opposed Katana Ngala in the Coastal region, Uhuru Kenyatta in central, Kalonzo Musyoka from in lower Eastern region, William Ruto in Rift Valley, just to mention a few were termed as enemies of their communities and that was made public through public media which had dominance of broadcasting political information at the time.

Over 50 years after independence, and close to two decades of multipartyism the institutionalization of ethnicity in Kenyan politics is unmistakably done through ethnic discourse, which is majorly produced by politicians and largely disseminated through the mass media. In the run up to general elections, the media is always in search for political news. Given that this is found around political circles, their catch is mostly ethnic discourse and political rhetoric, which the audiences are in search corridor for during such a time. During this period, the political players realize that the only way to get free coverage by media is by engaging in sensational ethnic talk, name-calling, and chest thumping. Like any other sensational content, ethnic discourse has utility value; the media transforms it into high demand news items (Peters, 2016). Moreover, the audience is in search corridor for information from and about their prospective leaders and ethnic content works well for their gratification. The media, being the most reliable institution at this time for informing the people uses this content to consolidate their audience base, which they so much need for their economic purposes. The more the audience a media has, the higher the value for their promotional airtime and space to the advertiser. This brings onboard the political economy of ethnic discourse production, dissemination, and consumption to the media during electioneering process.

In 2017, Kenya was preparing to go to polls for their general elections scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> August. The run up to the general elections was dominated by political propaganda, which were supposedly geared, to create voting block loyalty. However, a closer relook at the propaganda reveals that the propaganda were meant to radicalize the citizens with a consciousness of absolute loyalty through fake analyses. The propaganda from the opposition side ranged from



those against the incumbent government's projects, the articulation of corruption scandals the citizens suffered under the incumbent government, the human rights violation by the incumbent government, the vision, and mission of the alternative government. Propaganda from the incumbent affiliates included: propaganda of perennial losers, those of recycled leadership, propaganda of hunger for power, and those of fake Joshua (Raila Odinga – opposition leader) and Canaan (the promised Kenya under Raila Leadership). Moreover, there were more glaring propaganda of the expected elections outcome such as the incumbent government can only win through rigging, that the incumbent had set ready all infrastructure for rigging elections through the electoral body, courts and armed forces. Most of the propaganda circulated had radical messages informing citizens to be extra vigilant and guard their votes from being stolen for the incumbent government was good at rigging. These propagandas, among the many this study will analyze were consumed by the masses as gospel truth. The concern of the study is not whether they were true or false, but how they shape post-election Kenya and the future of African democracies.

It is significantly hardy to realize that if we understand the current political status of Africa, we can accurately predict the futures of African political governance. Thus, by unpacking the political propaganda we come across every time there are elections campaigns in our countries, can diagnose the needed social and economic policies for African transformative agenda (Wilson, 2001). Kenya is a significant site to make meaning of the future of African politics due to the importance attached to politics and efforts put in place to achieve ever-elusive trust and credibility of elections. For instance, in 2017, Kenya held one of the most expensive elections in the continent, hitting a high of KSH 100 billion (USD 1 billion) but still, the ideals of free, fair, and credible elections were not felt; at least making it plausible that such concepts are functions of the mind. More visible in the 2017 elections were the mediated political propaganda that split Kenya into almost diametrically opposed sides whose expectations were too high to perceive any election outcome free, fair and credible unless the electoral commission applied the golden mean rule. This study will bring to light the future of Africa under such politically radicalizing propaganda by first analyzing the political propaganda by NASA coalition and Jubilee party during and after the 2017 elections in Kenya.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In this research, the propaganda theory was used to understand how the masses are manipulated and their political attitudes are shaped through political propaganda to an extent of radicalizing them into extremist social and economic attitudes toward an opposing side. In their book *Manufacturing Consent*, Herman and Chomsky argue that propaganda model investigates how inequality of wealth and power are used to filter out news for broadcast and print which shape the reality on the minds of the populace. In this study, propaganda model will be used to analyze political propaganda used to promote a collective political mood, attitude, action, and expectations of the political outcome toward the 2017 general elections in Kenya. Just the way Herman and Chomsky showed how the government and dominant private interests get their messages across to the public through media, the study will seek to show how dominant political sides (created through two horse-journalism) use political propaganda to consolidate powerful unbreakable blocks leading to a political radicalism. Thereafter, the six filters of propaganda model applied to mass media will be subsequently applied in political communication process and messaging for the utility purposes of this study. It is hoped that this study will have found a



new direction and application of propaganda theory in interpreting a not so far away phenomena of political communication from the conventional application in mass media research.

**METHODS**

**Sampling Propaganda Video Clips**

The researcher used purposive sampling of propaganda videos circulated as political analyses. The videos were classified into two—Pro-NASA propaganda and Pro-Jubilee Propaganda. All the videos were downloaded from YouTube and classified into those done before elections and those done after elections. The researcher sampled six (6) Pro-Jubilee propaganda videos and eight (8) Pro-NASA propaganda videos. Table 1 is a summary of the sampling of propaganda videos.

Table 1 Sampling Propaganda Video Clips

		<u>Online</u> <u>Content/Show</u>	<u>Pre-election</u> <u>(before 8<sup>th</sup></u> <u>August)</u>	<u>Post-Election</u> <u>(After 8<sup>th</sup></u> <u>August)</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	Pro-JUBILEE	The Fifth Estate	1	5	6
2		Kenya News Alert	1	3	4
3	Pro-NASA	Chris Kumekucha BlogSpot	0	4	4
			2	12	14

**Observation Schedule**

The researcher did observation before and after elections earmarked propaganda videos uploaded on YouTube. For the video to pass the criteria for selection, they were to contain content and implications for ethno-political journalism. For propaganda videos, they were supposed to contain ethnic overtones and undertones directed to opponent political party of candidate for the party. Out of this observation schedule, the researcher selected 14 videos.

**Mainstream and Alternative Media Synergy in Fake Journalism**

Mainstream media refers to various mass media that influence large masses and shape the prevailing issues in the society (Chomsky, 1997). These are large news conglomerates, which produce newspapers, own broadcast media and they have elite audience and thus power to set tone for other small news organisations with little resources. According to Chomsky, an elite mainstream media sets the agenda and the other media follows it loyally. Alternative media differ from large established conglomerates in terms of their content, production and distribution (Downing, 2001). Alternative media takes the forms of print, audio, video, and internet among others as could be exemplified by YouTube, WhatsApp message, twitter, Facebook, and other media, which are hosted in the internet, and internet enabled gadgets like telephony. Whereas the mainstream media functions largely for “government and corporate interests” (Herman, & Chomsky, 1988; Lievrouw, 2011), alternative media exists for the interests of the political and ethnic minorities, and tend to be conservative and liberal in their worldviews (Atton, 2002). Alternative media has been seen to challenge the dominant beliefs and values prescribed by the mainstream media in a counter hegemonic manner (Carpentiere, 2011). However, the current trends do not have mainstream media and alternative media pull in different directions. In a more



synergized matter, alternative media, and mainstream media work together especially during elections period by providing information at different levels and at different ecologies. For example, while mainstream media may be highly controlled and has legally established gatekeepers, the alternative media is less regulated and has freedom to broadcast the fears of the mainstream media for the good of the society – sometimes.

The way the mainstream media and the alternative media relate symbiotically is of relevance to this study. Undoubtedly, both set agenda for each other, it does not matter who gives the shot first but the underlying factor is each prophesy to the other about the most suitable mood of the audience and society in general. If there are divided interests and preferences, they ensure each segment is served to their satisfaction with their preference as well as being made aware of the other side's preference so they can have the spirit of consumption competition.

The mainstream media and the alternative media are of the same kingdom, their spirit is the same, but their manifestation is different. The mainstream media is controlled by their policies not to be explicit but that does not mean they cannot juggle as much implicature as their audience cannot handle. The alternative media take the implicature to another extreme level of explicitly telling the implied and showing the picture in three-dimensional descriptions.

When the mainstream media brings onboard analysts and panelists, they want to produce a live show of reporting the opinions of the elites who represent the society. The media has no control of what the elite says but there is always the consideration of their political interest to ensure whatever extreme a panelist could go in exposing the opposite political side is neutralized forthwith. The media then turns to the audience to decide based on the discussions or what can be called political opinion contestations some which leave the studio table banging as red eye ball to eyeball altercations are involved.

These shows, tagged as analyses are breeding grounds for opinions and mood setters in the country. For those in alternative media and live in the villages, shopping centres and market places. The altercations then go live on social media and YouTube as the bloggers knows what the audience wants. They depending on the side they have interest in Marshall their efforts to outdo the rivals. If you want to do business, align it with your hobby. If you want to blog about politics and succeed blog for the party, you prefer and against the side, you prefer. You will do it from your hear and you will have more emotions than you can handle. You will have unlimited access to the bad and the ugly side of the rival and if you can blog it, you will attract both hatred attacks and praise in equal measure both of which play part to consolidate audience base whom you can claim ads.

## **DATA PRESENTATION**

Data presented in this section was obtained as transcripts of the YouTube propaganda videos made by Kenyan fake analysts for Kenya audience during the 2017 electioneering period. The data was grouped into two: those, which by nature of their perspective are pro-Jubilee (The Fifth Estate), and those, which are by nature of their perspective, are pro-Nasa (Kenya News Alert and Chris Kumekucha).

### **Ethno-politics Production by Propagandist Analysts**



The political analyses from the two sides are deemed both professional and sometimes guttering by listeners and viewers. What is so conspicuous in these analyses is the reflection of what is in the minds of the ethnicized Kenyans and are ready to celebrate by supporting whoever has the bravery to say it and what is in the mind of the balkanized mainstream media and given a chance would broadcast it. In these videos, released biweekly or weekly, the creators said what the mainstream media could not say. The fanfare video clips, spread through other social media such as WhatsApp messenger, Facebook among others, carried messages meant for ethnic groups in either of the two political sides, NASA or Jubilee. Like the mainstream media, these analyses deliberately leave out other presidential contestants and concentrate with Uhuru Kenyatta (Jubilee) and Raila Odinga (NASA) – The so-called two horses in the race.

#### Mutahi Ngunyi and the Fort Hall School of Government

The fifth estate is a digital media for political analyses made and produced by a renowned political analyst Mutahi Ngunyi. Mutahi Ngunyi is well known by Kenyans for his popular theorizing of ‘tyranny of numbers’ during the 2013 electoral period and even before then, the media created him as a person whose analyses could be reckoned with because he analysed politics and offered predictions with accuracy, intelligence and all his analyses were deemed balanced, unbiased and plausible. It is the trust that Kenyans placed on him that before 2013 elections and after he decided to exploit, becoming a declared supporter of jubilee and one time their political adviser.

During the 2017 electioneering period, he was openly drumming up for Uhuru Kenyatta and spoiling for Raila Odinga. In one of the videos entitled “From Hero to Zero\_ Raila will have a Bitter Christmas” of December 23, 2017, he confesses, “the fifth estate was started to expose Raila’s lies.” Mutahi does his analyses with what he calls ‘young African scholars’ whom he has trained to be vicious and articulate in their presentation of selected issues. In their introduction, the video starts, “This is the fifth estate, a conversation between young African scholars from fort hall school of government and Professor Mutahi Ngunyi.”

What is more conspicuous in the analyses of the fifth estate is the lamping of Raila Odinga with his ethnic group, the so called the ‘Luo Nation’ or the people from Luo Nyanza or from Kisumu; Kisumu being the capital city of the former Nyanza province where Raila Odinga hails from and where since independence, the opposition has been strong. Majority of his analyses, which he releases every Saturday are directed to the opposition and must mention opposition and or Raila Odinga by name or sometimes the principals in the opposition coalition or grouping. On the other side, he called the other part of the ruling coalition with such names as Uthamaki (the kingdom), the GEMA, and the house of Mumbi, the Kikuyu Nation and so on.

#### **Video 1: Tyranny of lies: why Uhuru will defeat Raila August 5, 2017**

In a video entitled *Tyranny of lies: why Uhuru will defeat Raila* released on 5 August 2017, exactly three days to elections Mutahi Ngunyi uses ethnic approach of tyranny of numbers to predict elections outcome giving Jubilee government a plus in their expectations. Mutahi argues that it is not possible for incumbent presidents in Africa to lose elections “unless they are incompetent”. The video gives the following breakdown of 2017 elections prediction based on pure ethnic analysis: According to Mutahi Ngunyi, Jubilee and NASA starting point votes are



different and shows that NASA will lose to Jubilee. He summarised that Gikuyu, Embu, Meru association (GEMA) has 5.6 million and Kalenjin nation has 2.3 million votes. Based on this statistic, they hypothesised that Uhuru's starting point would be 7.9 million votes. He further breaks down NASA votes as; the Luo nation, Kamba nation and Luhya nation votes all add up to 6.9 million and that is Raila's starting point. Mutahi reminds Kenyans "Raila is a constant factor in violence equation" and downplays the ten million strong narrative by NASA. He advises Uhuru that NASA will bully him out of power through a 'tyranny of lies' and that jubilee must not allow it.

### **Video 2: Should Raila concede defeat?**

**August 11, 2017**

Exactly three days after completion of August 8 elections, Mutahi Ngunyi's Fifth Estate released a video on YouTube titled "Should Raila concede defeat?" in which he argued that after losing elections, Raila is facing the Samsonian blues; he wants to die but die with people. The analyst says his Fort Hall School of Government celebrate the victory of Uhuru Kenyatta. Mutahi paraphrased summarily Deuteronomy chapter 7 for jubilee government advising that Uhuru should "destroy your enemy, make no covenant with him, show no mercy to him for you shall receive no mercy from them". He argues that that was the time for Uhuru to finish Raila "once and for all". He hypothesised what would happen to the 6.7 million Kenyans who fell to Raila's lies. He advised them that if Raila does not concede defeat, the country must show him no mercy because Raila will show country no mercy.

### **Video 3: Forget Supreme Court, secession is next expert**

**August 26, 2017**

On August 26, 2017, a clip entitled "Forget supreme court, secession is next expert". The clip attacks David Ndii and calls him a voodoo expert, an intellectual from Kiambu to preach secession. The secession project is known to breed ethnic cleansing especially now that it is meant to install emperor Odinga, the king of poverty. They termed David Ndii as "Angry and ignorant voodoo expert, a Kikuyu intellectual from Kiambu who has mortgaged his morality for Raila." The analysis sends a message again to 6.7 million NASA voters, that they "must live with the consequences of their choice as choices have consequences". They also argued that Raila is serving notice of possible ethnic cleansing and Uhuru should stop the secession nonsense for the last time. He finalises that Raila is dreaming because he is old; blaming his failure to thieves and a computer that breeds leaders.

### **Video 4: The fall and fall of Raila Odinga**

**Nov 18, 2017**

On Nov 18, 2017 the fifth estate released a clip "The fall and fall of Raila Odinga". It came after the Supreme Court had nullified the August 8<sup>th</sup> elections and ordered repeat elections. Mutahi in the analysis blames Supreme Court for cancelling elections arguing that the elections were over and that the Maraga court will be blamed forever. The analysts in Mutahi's school posit that Raila is condemned to roll the stone of president up the hill like Sisyphus, the founder king of Corinth, forever with no success. They also argued that the West have rejected Raila as he is a warlord whose only currency of political transaction is violence. They add that the people rejected Raila; he asked 1 million people to risk their lives when he was coming back from West but received only 9000 people. The clip repeats the same advice to Jubilee that "Uhuru should



show Raila no mercy, should not make any covenant with Raila, he should destroy him decisively”. They argued that Uhuru has the monopoly of power and should handle Raila like a person brandishing a sword. That if Raila swears himself in, he should be “charged with high treason and instead of country burning, Kisumu will burn and, in any case, we are used to that”.

### **Video 5: Not yet Uhuru for Raila and the Luo Nation**

**Dec 9, 2017**

On Dec 9, 2017, a clip entitled “Not yet Uhuru for Raila and the Luo Nation”. This video clip was in reaction to the already announced swearing in of Raila Odinga in defiance of Jubilees victory and the country was going through hard situations, tensions were high and country divide along ethnic lines as per the two political oligarchies. It is during this time that Mutahi and his analysts uploaded their regular clips arguing that December 12<sup>th</sup> will be Independence Day for the Luo nation because Raila will swear himself in. They argued that swearing in “Raila will energize Kisumu people to massacre”. He also attacked media and television analysts and panellists “who move from one television to another analysing Uhuru from the cleverness of their head instead of an informed undertaking”. He issued what he called a message for the Luo nation, that “on 12<sup>th</sup> December, you can bury Raila or continue carrying his York.”

### **Video 6: From Hero to Zero - Raila will have a Bitter Christmas**

**23 Des 2017**

The most ethnic revealing of all Mutahi’s analyses came on 23 Des 2017, entitled “From Hero to Zero\_ Raila will have a Bitter Christmas.” Coming as a summative issue for the year 2017, the clip was deemed a Christmas gift to our leaders and lists Chebukati as a man who deserved respect as he had a moment of doubts but kept the quest and for that he is gifted a chicken (a befitting delicacy for his tribe). The fifth estate installs Chebukati as a man of the year though they said he needed a kick like a foolish chicken, which has been taken to the market, tied but on reaching there, not able to notice it is free until it’s kicked. This is symbolically used for Chebukati.

Uhuru Kenyatta is given the statement of the year award equating the Christmas with that of 2007 where people travelled home for Christmas but hell broke loose and people died. They said that 2017 people refused to fight even when Raila has provoked Kenyans using economic sabotage and swearing in threats. The credit is given to Uhuru for being a statesman. Uhuru is gifted with a machine gun and a Sheppard rod. As commander in chief, they left Uhuru to use the machine gun as he wished.

For the rod, Uhuru was to use it whenever Raila uses fake snakes from witchcraft and to divide the Red sea if caught by Pharaohs’ army. William Ruto is gifted a donkey for best supporting role and advised to not listen to the people. The gift of the most cheated award of the year goes to Kalonzo, Wetangula and Mudavadi. They argued that Raila has failed twice and is still standing and is gifted for being in love of failure. He is born to run for election and fail and is gifted by the Forthall School of Government for the most heroic failure in politics as he makes failure look very good. Raila is also gifted with the mirror to talk to the man in the mirror and tell him to change his ways.



The most disastrous act of the year is gifted to Mr. Maraga who allegedly attempted a civilian coup, which failed. He is gifted a scarlet letter, a gift of stigma and a gift of shame to wear it as long as he lives. The most deluded act of the year given to Akombe the traitor and the school does not wish her well, “may she experience everything she wanted the nation to face”. Mutahi Ngunyi concludes the video by saying “we wish those who like us a prosperous new year. We wish Somalis, Kikuyus and Kalenjin and jubilee people from Mombasa a prosperous new year full of Kenyan shillings, and not happiness. For those who don’t, we wish them a happy new year. This is because NASA people like happiness and *Tibim* things, happiness is overrated. You cannot feed your children with *Tibim* and happiness.”

Samuel Okemwa in the Kenya News Alert TV

This is a media produced in form of videos posted on YouTube and the producer is called by name Samuel Okemwa. Kenyans online argue that he does his videos from Minnesota, United States. One online commentator said that Samuel “has been busy stroking the embers of ethnic hatred on social media” from wherever he produces his videos he is in touch with every political move in the country and thus making it believable that he does so from Kenya. His attacks are fierce and are directed to kikuyu community who are deemed supporters of jubilee. He is Raila Odinga and NASA extremist, reducing NASA to be a fight of Luo tribe.

### **Video 7: MeruRevolution\_Gema has politically exploited Meru and Embu while benefiting Kikuyus. Wake up NOW!**

In another video called, “MeruRevolution\_Gema has politically exploited Meru and Embu while benefiting Kikuyus. Wake up now!” the speaker takes the viewer to a rally in Meru whose background music is *wamerutumeamka* (Meru people we have woken up). *Wameruwameamka! Waembuwameamka! (The Meru people have woken up)*. The writer with agility starts his clip by arguing that for long time they were put in a bag called GEMA (Gikuyu, Embu, Meru Association) and they have been used by Kikuyu as voting toys and machines. He says “Kikuyus have been telling Meru people to vote them and when they get power, they forget them”. That Meru and Embu are exploited economically and politically but when it comes to elections, they are told they are GEMA which is a fraudulent organisation because they do not find themselves in the government. The speaker urges that Meru people should not be supporting Kikuyu and then be forgotten; that Embu and Meru people should leave Jubilee which is Kikuyu and Join NASA.

### **Video 8: Moses Kuria is truly a devil that kikuyu always glorify as long as he insults Luos: Moses Kuria calls a medical camp to cut Luos**

**Jan 22, 2018**

Jan 22, 2018 he released a video entitled “Moses Kuria is truly a devil that kikuyu always glorify as long as he insults Luos: Moses Kuria calls a medical camp to cut Luos”. Moses Kuria has been in and out of prison and has found himself in public criticism for hate speech especially against the Luo community whom he stereotypes as uncircumcised and not fit to be president. The speaker analyses a picture featuring Moses Kuria wearing doctor’s dustcoat and interprets it as meaning Moses Kuria is ready to circumcise Luo people. The speaker says the picture represent deep rooted tribal hatred and animosity. The speaker in the clip morns that some people are allowed to do this and nothing happens to them. He interprets this as “Moses Kuria is holding



scissors meaning *hii makasi ndio anataka kutumia kutahirisha wajaluo.*” The other guy alongside him has dreads and represents *mungiki.*”

### **Video 9: Revealed kikuyu Mungiki criminals used during elections**

**Jan 24, 2018**

There are very many boys mugging and stealing in Nairobi. That jubilee brought Mungiki in the name of Nairobi business community from Nyeri, Thika, Murang'a and elsewhere to protect their interest and help police to attack and kill NASA supporters. Now the elections are over, the boys are looting without fear because they work with police. When you brought kikuyu youth in Nairobi, now they are stealing and maiming citizens. *Hawa vijana wakikuyu wanasubkuana kuhangaisha waturundisha nyeri, rundisha muranga na thika, rundish amahali mlitoa, hatutaki ujinga sasa (take these mungiki boys to nyeri, muranga na thika where you brought them from, they are mugging people in Nairobi)*

### **Video 10: Kenya is now Kikuyunized. It's now official Uhuru want GithuMuigai to replace Maraga**

**February 15, 2018**

In a video uploaded on 15 February 2018 entitled “Kenya is now kikuyunized. It's now official Uhuru want GithuMuigai to replace Maraga”, the speaker analyses that our judiciary is under attack and it is now official that Maraga is to be replaced by a kikuyu called GithuMuigai. He says that Rafael Tuju, a man without a portfolio is working under the instruction of Uhuru Kenyatta to pave the way for the GithuMuigai to become Chief Justice. He intimates that “Uhuru has put all state departments under the control of Kikuyus; he has kikuyunised the statehouse, police, parliament, office of the attorney general, everything in Kenya is under kikuyus and Kalenjin are outside” he says that Kikuyus make decisions for all forty two tribes and that Kenya will be a total dictatorship under GithuMuigai while Kalenjins are duped that they are in government.

Chris *Kumekucha* Videos

### **Video 11: We Will Get out of Uthamaki and Vote Raila, Ameru Now Say**

**September 5, 2017**

The same rally is captured and analysed September 5, 2017 by *Kumekucha* Chris in a video entitled, “We Will Get out of Uthamaki and Vote Raila, Ameru Now Say”. *Kumekucha's* video features Munya holding hands with NASA principles and he interprets this to mean that Meru people are coming out of uthamaki (a kikuyu word for kingship). The speaker enumerates that NASA principle Raila Odinga will get between 150-200 thousand votes in Meru because they are not satisfied by Jubilee rigging claims.

### **Video 12: Shocking, Unexpected Reason Why Luos Are Being killed**

**October 14, 2017**

In a video dated October 14, 2017 *Kumekucha* entitled Shocking, Unexpected Reason Why Luos Are Being killed, the speaker posits that thugs have been given police uniform, guns with instructions to harass, beat up and steal from innocent Kenyans. He says desperately “We say no! You shall not kill Luos. The struggle continues.” The video takes the reader back to claims of body bags being taken to Kisumu and not any other place in Kenya. He also analyses that there is evidence that Luos are being killed in Kisumu and bodies dumped in Lake Victoria. He also



posits that during the time of Jomo Kenyatta, there was a Jomo oath taken by Kikuyus and the oath was against the Luo community because of their intelligence and ability, education and thus was viewed as immediate threats to Kenyatta's presidency.

### **Video 13: Deep inside the mind of a kikuyu voter, by a kikuyu, shocking! October 19, 2017**

In another video dated Oct 19, 2017 *Kumekucha* Chris Deep inside the Mind of a Kikuyu Voter, By A Kikuyu. Shocking! The speaker analyses that Jubilee supporters are the quickest in accusing others of tribalism or ethnicity. He says that the behaviour from the Kikuyu community cannot be in vain and that it is a result of an oath taken by Kikuyu people against the Luo community. He analyses an article where the writer gives an incidence of a kikuyu reaction after hearing the Supreme Court had cancelled presidential results. He says according to the article, the kikuyu passenger:

Cursed Maraga, cursed Kisii people collectively, he insinuated how Maraga and Kisii community were foolish and idiots ...and blamed jubilee political barons for allowing a non-kikuyu to ascend to chief justice position.

He says that this incidence uncovers the underbelly mindset of kikuyu people. He also refers to another incidence where his Kikuyu friend is quoted saying:

Yes, the government of Uhuru has been corrupt, incompetent and messed but as a Kikuyu I cannot vote for that Luo, as Kikuyus we are called to vote for one of our own it doesn't matter if it's a drunkard, a thief of plain inept... he is ours, that is whom God has given us.

He also quotes a long-experienced lawyer from central Kenya upon hearing the supreme court judgement saying:

Where we have reached now, it matters not whether Uhuru has won or not...we must defend *uthamaki*, by all means and any means necessary that is not a point for discussion or rationalisation.

He argues that these statements are an outflow of what goes on in the mind of a kikuyu voter and that even educated people think like that because of oaths.

On September 4, 2017, *Kumekucha* uploaded another video clip with the title Why We Must Give Kikuyus a Break Part 1. In this clip, he goes back to the oaths taken by kikuyu people against the Luo community. He says the oaths were administered by Kenyatta in 1968 and were the cause of Kisumu massacre when Kenyatta visited Kisumu and no one knows how many people were killed. Seven days to elections, on August 1, 2017 *Kumekucha* released a video titled Raila Leads in Latest Poll but this is How Uhuru Can Win. In the analysis, he refers to *Infotrak* poll that put Raila ahead of Uhuru by 1%. He uses the poll statistics where Uhuru was leading in central, rift valley and north-eastern while Raila Odinga was leading in Luo Nyanza, western, coast, Nairobi and eastern regions. He concludes that Uhuru is very thin on his support.

### **Video 14: Why Only the Gikuyu Can Save Kenya Now Feb 11, 2018**

On Feb 11, 2018 *Kumekucha* uploaded another video entitled Why Only the Gikuyu Can Save Kenya Now in which he argues that kikuyu people is a blend of all other tribes. Referring to kikuyu mythology of origin, he argues that kikuyu people came into existence through nine daughters whose husbands were from other tribes because kikuyu did not have boys according to



their mythology. Given this understanding, he argues that Kikuyu people are the only people who are a representative of all communities in Kenya.

## **DISCUSSION**

The propagandists concentrated on Jubilee or NASA and their candidates, Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga or their close principles in their analyses and ignored any other candidate, political party or alliance. This way, the fake analysts produce an ideology that governs their audience and normalises their sensational ideals. According to Adorno and Horkheimer (1979), such mass media disseminate beliefs, which represent imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence as also demonstrated by Louis Althusser in “ideology and ideological state apparatuses” where he argues that an ideology that an individual accepts governs them.

The propagandists, at extremes resorted to referring to the presidential candidates and supporters of Jubilee or NASA by their presumed ethnic signatures, names and referents. For example, the Kikuyu nation and Jubilee, Uthamaki, *nyumbaya Mumbi* (House of Mumbi), the Luo nation and their support for Raila Odinga, the Mt. Kenya region, the Luo Nyanza, the western vote and so on. The fake analysts entrench ethnic ideology that the audience later find it hard to drop for alternatives. This is in line with the argument of Adorno and Horkheimer (1979) that mass media produce mass ideology, which masses have no choice but to accept. They contend that Mass culture ideology is not a product of consumer demand but created by the mass media (of whatever form) in order to create demand for the products of capitalism while killing independent thoughts and pluralism.

They also explicitly reduced Kenya into a battle between two tribes, the kikuyu (referring to Uhuru Kenyatta) and Luo (referring to Raila Odinga). Capitalising on ethnicity as their ideology, these fake analysts use video clips posted on YouTube and other internet sites for their own benefit such as viewership consolidation, power and influence consolidation and this forms the political economy of such productions. It is assumed that these propagandists are hired by political formations to speak to their audience on what they want to hear and spoil for the opponent. The acceptance of explicit ethnicity in these video clips a reflection of the culture of Kenyan audience.

The propagandists, knowing that the online platform is less controlled and enjoying its anonymity are free to describe their target audiences’ opponent by name and the titles of the videos bear such referents as Raila Odinga, Uhuru Kenyatta, Luo, Kikuyu, Uthamaki, and Gema. Still it is important to note that they borrow from the mainstream media and continue the propagation of already set agenda of whom the audience should think about as the most important person, political party or alliance and events. Agenda setting theory by McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972) informs that the mass media (whether mainstream or alternative in the case of this study) tells or even implies to the society what issues are important in such a way that although they may not tell their audience what to think, they set for them what to think about (Cohen, 1963).

This is later to be given another reality by Max McCombs in 2014 interview where he argues that mass media may not only influence the audience on what issues to think about, but may go further to tell the public “how to think about some issues and even what to do” (Griffin, 2014).



The propagandist analyses were meant to the end of telling people what to do with the ‘unfit’ candidate; Mutahi Ngunyi in a video entitled *Tyranny of lies: why Uhuru will defeat Raila* (August 5, 2017) advises Uhuru Kenyatta to out-bully Raila. In another video entitled *the fall and fall of Raila Odinga* (Nov 18, 2017) Mutahi Ngunyi directs that “Uhuru should show Raila no mercy, should not make any covenant with Raila, he should destroy him decisively” (Ngunyi, 2017).

Samuel Okemwa in his Kenya News Alert TV video entitled *MeruRevolution\_Gema has politically exploited Meru and Embu while benefiting Kikuyus. Wake up now!* (June 19, 2017) advises that Meru people should not be supporting Kikuyu and then be forgotten - that Embu and Meru people should leave Jubilee, which is Kikuyu and Join NASA. In another video entitled *Revealed Kikuyu Mungiki criminals used during elections* (Jan 24, 2018), Samuel Okemwa orders Jubilee to “take these *Mungiki* boys to Nyeri, MuranganaThika where you brought them from, they are mugging people in Nairobi”. The voice of these propagandists is taken as the voice of their political support followers and their order of action is borrowed as an ideology to reckon with during electoral process.

The mobilization strategy through propaganda is the fifth filter in Herman and Chomsky (2002) propaganda model based on handling an external enemy or threat. The theory has it that the mass media mobilizes the society (in this case NASA or Jubilee followers) against a common enemy (which is the opponent party and their member’s ethnic group). According to Herman and Chomsky (2002), the does this by demonizing opponents of a favorable policy by manufacturing consent on behalf of a few elites who are deemed beneficial to them. As a result, any form of sponsored journalism (whether mainstream or alternative as in our suspect online propagandist fake analyses) according to the propaganda model is never objective or service to the society but to the elitist’s interest. Kimenyi (1997) and Orvis (2001) explains why this is possible in Kenya, arguing that Kenyan politics have been ethicized since independence and it has been a trend normalized by the citizen over time and taken by media for appropriation. This appropriation has, as seen in 2017, been graduated to internet audience. Given the argument that mass media producers tend to favour the demand side rather than the supply side (Fridkin, Kenney, Wintersieck, 2015), the fake analysts prey on the high demand of ethnic hatred by the supporters of the political affiliations they chose to support.

## **CONCLUSION**

The propagandists concentrated on Jubilee or NASA and their candidates, Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga or their close principles in their analyses and ignored any other candidate, political party or alliance. The blogger propagandists, at extremes resorted to referring to the presidential candidates and supporters of Jubilee or NASA by their presumed ethnic signatures, names and referents. For example, the Kikuyu nation and jubilee, Uthamaki, *nyumbaya Mumbi* (House of Mumbi), the Luo nation and their support for Raila Odinga, the Mt. Kenya region, the Luo Nyanza, the western vote and so on. The fake analysts entrench ethnic ideology that the audience later find it hard to drop for alternatives. The propagandists, knowing that the online platform is less controlled and enjoying its anonymity are free to describe their target audiences’ opponent by name and the titles of the videos bear such referents as Raila Odinga, Uhuru Kenyatta, Luo, Kikuyu, Uthamaki, and Gema. The propagandist analyses were meant to the end of telling people what to do with the ‘unfit’ candidate; Mutahi Ngunyi in a video entitled *Tyranny of lies: why*



*Uhuru will defeat Raila* (August 5, 2017) advises Uhuru Kenyatta to out-bully Raila. In another video entitled *The fall and fall of Raila Odinga* (Nov 18, 2017) Mutahi Ngunyi directs that “Uhuru should show Raila no mercy, should not make any covenant with Raila, he should destroy him decisively” (Ngunyi, 2017). Samuel Okemwa in his Kenya News Alert TV video entitled *MeruRevolution\_Gema has politically exploited Meru and Embu while benefiting Kikuyus. Wake up now!* (June 19, 2017) advises that Meru people should not be supporting Kikuyu and then be forgotten - that Embu and Meru people should leave Jubilee, which belongs to Kikuyu and Join NASA. In another video entitled *Revealed Kikuyu Mungiki criminals used during elections* (Jan 24, 2018), Samuel Okemwa orders Jubilee to “take these *Mungiki* boys to Nyeri, Muranga and Thika where you brought them from-- they are mugging people in Nairobi”. In summary, the political players found it useful to consider seriously ethno-politics because it had political economy benefit of wide coverage and political advertising and party brand promotion to them and to the media during the 2017 electoral process. It also reduced their cost in two ways—by ensuring free media coverage and obtaining free promotion under the cover of their political party, political party leader, and their ethnic group. The findings also indicated that propaganda videos provided fake analyses that used extreme ethno-politics and their analyses revolved around NASA and Jubilee and their ethnic groups constituting their leadership, thus normalizing ethnicity during electoral process. Through the fake analyses, the media consumers were derailed from objectivity in their way of voting and conducting other affairs related to electoral process. The mainstream media through television political analyses and the alternative media through propaganda videos were critical in setting an ethnic agenda that the audience considered extremely important for elections.

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