



Representation of the Big Man Typology in *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin*

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Abstract

This article interrogates the figurative representation of the Big Man typology in the film *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin*. Using textual analysis, the paper examines how the film director grapples with the reproduction and portrayal of the Big Man within the African context. The article establishes that there are several figurative ways in which the Big Man is depicted in the film such as through the use of metaphor, metonymy and heteroglossia. The paper also established that Big Man's mannerisms are not only pervasive but also replicated in his cronies. The article contends that the Big Man syndrome is a teething problem afflicting governance in African countries.

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Introduction: Conceptualizing The Big Man Typology

Mbũgua wa Mũngai (2003) wonders “How does an artist contest the misdeeds of power and at the same time evade the dungeons in a heavily policed state?” This article draws its inspiration from this epistemological question as it interrogates the figurative representation of the Big Man in *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin*. In this regard, the film is read as one of the ways in which the producer carefully but creatively reflects on the practice of leadership and governance in Africa through film. Film is considered a realistic representation of society and uniquely resembles and reflects historical figures and events (Gunning, 1990). In this way, the filmmaker invites the audience to indulge in the grandeur of the film and to reflect on the grandeur as it springs from the immediate reality in society. Implicitly, the film facilitates an interrogation of issues affecting governance in African countries such as the Big Man rule. A number of films that explore the typology of the Big Men in Africa include *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* (1981), *Mobutu* (1999), *The last King of Scotland* (2006) and *A Day in the Life of a Dictator* (2012).

Hyden (2006) avers that the “Big Man” rule can be defined as a form of autocratic rule that is highly personalized and restrained little by modern institutions, which has the effect of making the “supremacy of politics” in Africa extremely risky with high stakes for those who engage in the process and a great degree of uncertainty for the public in general (Hyden, 2006, p. 94). Hyden, further, notes that few patrimonial rulers survived colonization, but also that scholars realized that “despite the disappearance of patrimonial system of rule in Africa, the norms associated with such systems survived among the leaders of the new nation-states” (p. 96). Virtually every ruler carefully selects those he is surrounded with based on the potential for loyalty, often at the expense of competence. A ruler also has to take into account the attitude of the public. If the ruler believes he is not either respected or feared by the public, then he is likely to view them as a threat to his rule. Thus, he strategizes for this eventuality by either manufacturing legitimacy or ruling violently.

While interrogating the leadership of Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, Meredith (2005) points out that the emperor was not afraid to use public funds for sustaining his personal rule. This a common phenomenon among the Big Men in Africa because most of them are less concerned with gaining public legitimacy but reliant on resources and their organizational abilities to continue to perpetuate their autocratic leadership. The Big men also resort to the use of strong-arm political tactics like manipulating elections and brutality to sustain their rule. Meredith’s (2005) description of Moi arap Daniel’s rule of Kenya is a good example. Meredith observes, “In Kenya the risks of speaking out publicly against Moi’s regime were well known. Arrest, detention and other forms of harassment — for journalists, academics, trade unionists and even members of parliament — were the most likely outcome” (p. 400). Moi’s

regime was strongly opposed to multi-party elections, as this would undermine his one-party rule.

Hyden (2006) describes tyrants as the most oppressive. “Tyrants rule through fear. They reward agents and collaborators and turn them into mercenaries. Tyranny, in short, is marked by particularly impulsive, oppressive, and brutal rule that lacks elementary respect for the rights of persons and property” (p. 100). The Big Men are known tyrants and their rule lasts for many years as opposition to such regimes is defused because the rulers adopt political strategies in the absence of strong democratic institutions (Acemoglu, Verdier and Robinson 2004). Meredith (2005) records the 1991 remark of 84 year old Felix Houphouet Boigny, who after 29 years of autocracy in Cote D’ivoire declared that there was no leader other than him and that he did not share decisions with anyone. Such dictatorial leadership with no formal structures leads to violence as citizens develop ambivalent relationship with the state with the consequence of violent contestations in forms of coups and armed incursions (Utas, 2012).

The Big Man rule is characterized by leaders’ decisions taking precedence over laws of the country (Posner & Young, 2007). Such leaders make unilateral decisions that result in economic decline, political instability and ultimately, mass deaths. Idi Amin Dada, the former president of Uganda (1971-1979) is to a large extent the prototype of Big Men of Africa in 1960s and 1970s. After overthrowing Milton Obote through a coup, he launched an eight year dictatorial regime (1971-1979) in which an estimated 300,000 civilians died and the country’s economy declined for decades. This article investigated how, in *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* (1981), Idi Amin is figuratively portrayed as the Big Man.

A documentary on the mindset of Joseph Stalin, Idi Amin and Muammar Gaddafi, *A Day in the Life of a Dictator* relies on accounts from historians and witnesses. This article analyses *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* because it is fiction enacting Idi Amin’s rule. While *Mobutu* would be an ideal choice, it is a documentary in English and French rendering it inappropriate for non-French speakers who may not follow words in French. Further, the documentary does not pass for fiction which is the focus of this article. *The last King of Scotland* based on the novel by the same title, just like *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* is about Idi Amin’s atrocities in Uganda between 1971 and 1979. It, however, falls short of consideration for this article since it tells the Amin story from Doctor Nicholas Garrigan’s point of view, not the Big Man himself. Further, it is an adaptation unlike *The Rise and Fall* that tells the story from Amin’s point of view and therefore suits this article.

Methodology

A descriptive research design within qualitative research was adopted for this article. The article involves analyzing dialogues among different characters, nonverbal

communication among characters, specific aspects of cinematography and stylistic figuration in the film. A descriptive research design therefore allowed the researcher to tease out meaning by examining various aspects under article. Textual analysis was used to analyze data. As a data analyzing process, textual analysis is a way researchers use to gather and analyze information about how human beings make sense of the world (McKee, 2003). This article, using interpretive textual analysis sought to make out the nature of the Big Man as characterized in *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* film. Frey, Botan and Kreps (1999) opine that textual analysis is used to describe and interpret characteristics of a recorded or visual message. Given that the text under article is a film, textual analysis suits this article. Audio-visual messages were transcribed and figurations of the Big Man from shots, conversations and interactions done. Data obtained was organized into stylistic figurations.

Metaphoric Representation of the Big Man

In analyzing the use of metaphor in *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* we look at how the Big Man has been perceived by society using figures of speech and how he himself uses metaphors to express his attitude towards those he rules and his opponents. Not many characters in the text voice their dissent against the dictatorial rule of the Big Man using metaphors. Those that do include diplomats, journalists and Asians.

A Canadian diplomat calls Amin a 'big clown'. This is in response to the Canadian High Commissioner's assertion that the President has refused to let Canada accommodate the Asians he has given marching orders calling them slippery characters. The diplomat quips, "So that is what the big clown says..." A clown jokes. By referring to Amin as the 'big clown' the diplomat seems to suggest that because Amin does not take the case of Asian eviction seriously and so holds the President lowly. This is probably because of Amin's comical character. To the diplomat, therefore, Amin is no better than a clown. Since he represents his country in Uganda at the time, the attitude of Canada to Amin is brought out – they treat him with contempt. Whereas Ugandans revere him and call him Big Daddy, foreigners like this Canadian diplomat do not. The word 'dad' from which daddy has been created is a respectful word for father whereas 'clown' shows disrespect to the president because of his poor governance. By not allowing Canada to help the Asians that he has mistreated, the Canadian is justified to call him a joker. A mid-long shot of two Canadian diplomats discussing Amin outside their embassy allows us to follow this conversation.



Fig 1: Canadian diplomats discuss the conduct of Amin outside their embassy

Dennis Hills, the British writer is arrested for calling Amin a village tyrant and a white pumpkin in his book. A village tyrant would be expected to rule a village. Since Amin rules a country, Hills implies that Uganda is a village ruled by a tyrant. This obviously denigrates the country and its people and therefore portrays the attitude of the former colonizers, here represented by Hills. The character of Amin to them is, therefore, not surprising since he rules a village, not a country. This is how he has been brought up to view an African country like Uganda and its people. Whereas it is unclear why Hills refers to Amin as white pumpkin, it is understandable why he calls him pumpkin. In fiction pumpkin is a common motif. Witches are wont to turn people into pumpkins. In *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* for instance, the horseman uses a pumpkin for the head. This is scary. When Hills describes Amin as a pumpkin therefore, it behoves us to think of the mythical pumpkin in folktales. They are a form of punishment or mistreatment meted on other human beings. Amin subjects his subjects to a lot of torture and oppression – a pumpkin on the heads of Ugandans.

When visited by fellow Britons who want him to recant what he has written about Amin as that they plead for his release, Hills vehemently refuses to apologize saying “Amin must be shown for what he is – monster, tyrant. Whereas ‘tyrant’ is not metaphoric, for that is what he is, ‘monster’ is. Again, this is a fictitious term this time referring to an imaginary ugly frightening creature in folktales. Monster narratives are typically about scary creatures who turn human when they for example want to lure beautiful women. They are told to scare young children. Monsters are cannibalistic and always intent to cause harm. These features aptly fit the character of Amin. As a cannibal he eats the flesh of slain justice Okwiwanuka and a snake. Dennis Hills is not wrong therefore to describe him as such. In a close-up Amin is shown praying to eat flesh he has cut from Okiwauka’s corpse in the close-up below. He is hell-bent to kill as seen in the many deaths he masterminds.



Fig 2: A close-up of Amin praying to eat the flesh cut from Okiwanuka's corpse.

When the American journalists ask the Asian shopkeeper who is going to take over his shop as he gives away his stock in preparation to leave Uganda, he says of Uganda, "This Country will be raped by Amin until it is left barren." Two metaphors are used in this statement – rape and barrenness. A rape occurs when a person forces another to have sex with him or her. This indecent act gratifies the rapists but hurts the raped. Amin is rapist both literary and figuratively. He literary attempts to rape Mary Musuki whom he has snatched from her fiancé. He has figuratively raped Uganda since he forces his way and would not negotiate with anyone on anything that he eschews. His word is law. He wants to force Okiwanuka to make a judgment that favours him, forces Oroya to be his personal doctor and the governor of Central Bank to print more money among many other instances. He has raped the economy since he misuses public resources that he has turned his own. The economy has crumbled, hence left barren.

Bob, one of Amin's aides informs him that in one of the newspapers he has been called Hitler, thus "here is one story that calls you Africa's black Hitler". In response Amin says "Hitler did the world a favour... he should have killed more." Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) masterminded both the World War II and the holocaust that resulted in deaths of over 40 million people. By referring to Amin as Hitler then, the paper compares him to one of the most feared dictators. His response to this accusation

reveals him as a ruthless dictator indifferent to value human life. Indeed Adolf Hitler is said to have had little regard for human life.

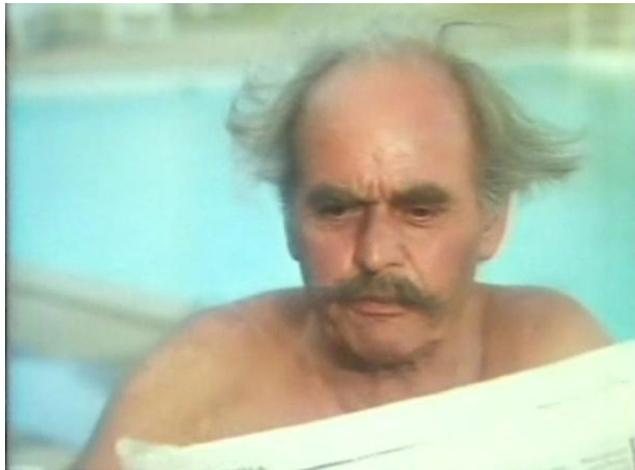


Fig 3: Bob, an Amin aide, reads him the paper that calls him black Hitler.

Some supporters of Amin use metaphors in jest against rebels of the government or perceived opponents. After Amin orders that Ofumbi and his ilk who “plotted to overthrow him” be given VIP treatment, Ali, one of Amin’s confidantes, spares Ofumbi from shooting since he is still strong and says he would instead go to Singapore and suffer longer. Singapore is an island state in Southern Asia, far away from Uganda. Instead of going to Singapore, however, Ofumbi is seen undergoing torture with other soldiers as they load and offload bodies and bury them in mass graves in the forest after being beaten in SRB cells. Their attempt to escape the torture when they are ordered to cover a mass grave with soil fails since most of them are shot. Ofumbi narrowly escapes death and is nursed and treated at the hospital. He survives to tell Dr. Oroya about his brother Philip whose body is buried in a mass grave. This reference of the suffering to the Singapore mutiny implies that the likes of Ofumbi are made to suffer heavily under the Amin regime. To amplify the magnitude of the suffering in ‘Singapore’ the filmmaker uses a medium close-up of Ofumbi enduring the pain of a gunshot after being shot at as he runs away from the mass grave with his colleagues.



Fig 4: A medium close-up of Ofumbi in pain falling after being shot.

Amin's use of metaphoric language largely helps the viewer to understand his character. His perception of his subjects comes to the fore as a result. Upon giving Asians matching orders, sympathetic countries like Canada approach Amin in a bid to plead with him to allow them assist the Asians. He rebuffs such attempts when a Canadian commissioner approaches him calling the Asians parasites, thus, "they are all parasites". A parasite is an organism that lives in or on another and depends on it for survival and sometimes spreads diseases on its host. By referring to the Asians as parasites, therefore, Amin implies that they rely on Ugandan resources for survival. This is not true, however, because the Asians at the time are industrious and philanthropic people who are majorly involved in business as epitomized by the shopkeeper giving clothes to poor Ugandan children. Ironically, therefore, it is the Ugandans who rely on the Indians for survival. The dishing out of the clothes by the Asian shopkeeper represents the philanthropy of the Asians. A medium long shot half-naked Ugandan children receiving clothes from the Asians tells it all.



Fig 5: An Asian shopkeeper (right) donates clothes to Ugandan children.

Looking on are American journalists

Amin treats others with contempt. Even those he admires are victims. During the safari rally for example he admires Sera, a seventeen year old girl training in the army and decides to have sex with her soon after. As he diverts from the main route, he remarks, “I have better things to ride than cars”. Riding is done on vehicles. By referring to the girl as ‘a thing to ride’ Amin shows how lowly he treats women. Riding is done by one person unlike sex where all parties involved are expected to actively take part. Amin expects sera to be on the receiving end as he ‘rides’ her. Further, the word “things” presupposes inanimate objects, not human beings. It is not surprising therefore for Amin to disregard opinions of others. Because he is the President, he is the Big Man and the rest are all small. Obliging, the girl takes Amin’s orders, makes love with him and marries him soon afterwards without question.

Metonymic Representation of the Big Man

In *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin* the viewer is presented with a number of visual metonyms. Most of these metonyms express the might of the Big Man who is treated with reverence everywhere. These visual metonyms therefore advance the reverence with which Amin is treated.

The club that Amin wields in most functions is a tool of oppression and an expression of his might. In Africa most post-independence leaders preferred to fling it before the masses to portray their might. In Kenya for instance, retired President Daniel Arap Moi was associated with it. The club or *rungu* as it is widely known was synonymous with Kenya’s second president. He is touted as one of African’s Big Men of his era. When Amin wields it, therefore, we know that another Big Man is on stage. He flings it at the celebrations that follow his taking over power – at the reception – as he dances with the jubilant supporters and when he addresses the crowd. He threatens anybody attempting to interfere as he is “busy rebuilding Uganda” with it. In a close-up, he flings it to scare those who might attempt to oppose his governance.



Fig 6: Amin threatens perceived opponents to his rule with a rungu.

He also carries it when he confronts the Central Bank governor to sack him for disobeying his order to print more money. Other combative situations include when he evicts Asians and when he orders that Ofumbi and the rest, who “attempted” to overthrow him be given “VIP” treatment. These are situations when Amin expects a confrontation and therefore carrying a weapon like the club becomes necessary. The club is therefore a tool used not only to express Amin’s might the but also as a weapon.

A Jaguar is a carnivorous solitary animal that kills other animals using its canine teeth and powerful paws. It is therefore associated with danger just like the lion and the leopard for instance. In the film, its statue is seen in Amin’s bedroom when he attempts to rape Mary. Just like the jaguar that kills other animals, Amin kills his fellow human beings directly or indirectly. His attempt to rape Mary leads to her death since she stabs herself. The presence of the jaguar, a murderous animal, therefore, foreshadows her eventual death. Since she cannot fight the Big Man who says “Kill me? The greatest African leader” she kills herself not wanting to betray her finance by sleeping with Amin. Her fiancé is killed by Amin’s killer squad as well. A close-up of the statue is displayed to tell this brutality.



Fig 7: A statue of the jaguar in Amin’s bedroom.

A snake and a hen are shown in a cage from where Amin, Bob and Mariamungu pick the snake for their food. Two metonyms here - the snake and the hen. The snake is associated with evil whereas the hen is a meek animal that can be attacked by the snake. It is therefore expected that for their food, Amin and his confidantes would go for the hen. They instead, go for the snake – a python – which is carried and cooked for them. Bob’s comments about this choice are particularly worthy noting thus “the weak, is a swallowed by the strong.” Amin encourages Mariamungu to eat it for it is good for appetite. This appetite must be symbolic since ordinary appetizers are known. Since the three mastermind the killing of others in the country it will be assumed that by eating snake food their propensity to kill is increased. Indeed, the killing of

Okiwanuka is followed by the eating of his flesh in the morgue by Amin. This is probably the appetite he now has – to eat fellow humans. The film director captures a medium long shot of a man carrying the snake from the cage.



Fig 8: A cook carries a snake to be cooked for Amin, Bob and Mariamungu.

A country's flag is associated with the country itself. The sovereignty of Uganda is thus represented in the flag. It is therefore expected that it dons state functions. When Amin marries Sera soon after the Safari rally, the cake that he cuts is donned with the Ugandan flag. Since marriage is a private matter, the presence of the flag represents personalization of state apparatus by the president. The state aircraft in the function also shows how Kelptocractic the president has become.



Fig 9: Amin weds Mary and before them is a cake donned with Ugandan flags.

Heteroglossia and the Portrayal of the Big Man

This article analyzed the many voices, symbols and images of the Big Man in *The Rise and Fall of Idi Amin*. Whereas Amin is the penultimate typology of the Big Man in the film, the typology is replicated in other characters that mimic his characteristics. Having discussed Amin as the Big Man in the preceding section, in this section we look at the replication of the Big Man typology in other characters who include Mariamungu, Bob, and Ali. These other Big Men portray most of the characteristics discussed on Amin as they wield a lot of influence attributed to their proximity to the Big Man.

A close ally of the president, Mariamungu is one of Amin's advisors beside Bob. He wields a lot of power and influence in the government. The arrest of Ofumbi and the other men accused of plotting to overthrow Amin happens because of the scuffle Mariamungu has with Ofumbi in the bar. According to Ofumbi whose side of the story the president ignores, Mariamungu raped Ofumbi's cousin, sparking reaction from Ofumbi and group. Since rape is a serious criminal offence punishable by law, Mariamungu should be arrested and convicted. Ironically, it is those he has offended who are arrested and oppressed. This act of rape by Mariamungu is to be paralleled with Amin's attempt to rape Mary Musuki elsewhere in the film. This further buttresses the fact that power has corrupted the leaders in the film, here represented by Amin and Mariamungu. Indeed, the president and Mariamungu casually joke about it as they eat snake food.



Fig 10: Amin, Bob and Mariamungu serve snake food.

Since he works at the behest of the president, Mariamungu gives orders to soldiers who readily execute them. He, for example, orders to take Okiwanuka's body to the morgue as he complains about the stinking bodies in the SRB cells. He also orders that other bodies be thrown into River Nile and for the beating and shooting of inmates in the cells. When Philip, Ofumbi's confidante, says that he does not know where Bianaku is, Mariamungu orders for his beating. This happens as Ofumbi watches stealthily from a nearby room.



Fig 11: Mariamungu orders soldiers to take Okiwanuka's body to the mortuary for the president to see it and those of others be thrown into River Nile.

Mariamungu leads in the crackdown against perceived opponents to Amin's rule. He accuses Dennis Hills of scandalizing the president before ordering his arrest thus: "Are you Dennis Hills...You write bad things about the president.... A white pumpkin? So this is what you do in Uganda? (To the soldiers) Take him away." Hills is then arrested on orders from Mariamungu.

Apart from Ofumbi and Hills, the other victim of Mariamungu's highhandedness is the mayor of Masaka. When the mayor asks to see the president, Mariamungu tells him, "There is no other president besides me." He then intimidates the mayor and signals the killers to cut one of the ears before Mariamungu inserts it into the mayor's mouth. To call himself president is a case of treason punishable by law. We do not, however, expect Mariamungu to suffer for it since he is the president's right hand man that is favored instead. This is subversion of the law.



Fig 12: Mariamungu (left) signals one of his hirings to cut the ear of the Mayor of Masaka. Fig 13: The Mayor's ear is cut.

When Amin orders Mariamungu to kill all the soldiers from the Lang'i and Acholi tribes, he readily agrees adding, "that was also in my menu," implying that he had similar arrangements as Amin to eliminate the soldiers. He later asks an officer, Ali, in the barracks to identify them before they are paraded and shot. Mariamungu helps to perpetuate the Big Man rule through subversion of the law and cracking down of perceived opponents.

Bob is another close associate and advisor of the president. He is always seen in the company of Amin and Mariamungu planning or strategizing. At the reception, for example, he is asked by Mariamungu to arrange for "soda" for the president at the lounge in statehouse. Later, he identifies the snake to be cooked for the trio. This way, he supports the Big Man rule by taking charge of his welfare.



Fig 14: Bob (left) and Mariamungu arrange for the president's 'soda'.

Figuratively, the snake is an epitome of evil. In the book of Genesis, the serpent is portrayed as being deceptive, having deceived Adam and Eve to break the law given by God. Symbolically then, Bob's participation in the identification and eating of the snake represents his participation in the perpetration of the Big Man rule. He is party to the system.



Fig 15: Bob (right) points at the snake to be cooked for Amin, Mariamungu and him.

Bob updates the president about how he is described in the papers. In one of the papers Amin is referred to as Africa's black Hitler. When he tells Amin about it he dismisses it saying Hitler should have killed more people. When Bob reports that Russians are leaving following his threats, he rushes to beg them not to leave. When Amin's government is finally overthrown, Bob, leaving on a boat, is heard blaming Amin for not heeding his advice, thus, "I wish he had listened to me." He is also seen urging Amin to order for more arms. Bob is therefore a key player in Amin's government and should share the blame of running down the country.

Ali takes orders given to him especially by Mariamungu and executes them without question. It appears he is third in command. When the president orders Mariamungu to kill all Lang'i and Acholi soldiers he passes the message to Ali who also orders other soldiers to shoot them. So when Ali tells the Lang'i and Acholi soldiers, "You are going on an important mission" the killers take the cue and spray them with bullets. Ali then is an important figure in Amin's government without whom some orders may not be executed.



Fig 16: Ali (right) orders a soldier to parade all Lang'i and Acholi soldiers for shooting.

Like Mariamungu, Ali orders arrests of various perceived opponents of the Amin regime. One such an arrest is that of the British journalist questioning the disappearance of soldiers from Lang'i and Acholi tribes. Before doing so, he takes a bribe of a cigar from the journalist. As he orders the arrest, he tells the journalist, "you will now learn about our operations firsthand, not as a journalist, as a prisoner." This way Ali also exhibits one of the characteristics of a Big Man:

concentration of power. Since he is close to the president, he can do what he wishes expecting protection from above.

Ali is the one who falsely accuses Ofumbi and group of planning to overthrow the government adding that Mariamungu has gone to the headquarters to report the matter. Since he favors Ali who is a tribes mate, Amin listens to none of Ofumbi's side of the story. This favoritism is also seen in Ali who has conspired with Mariamungu to falsely accuse the Ofumbi side. Whereas it is Mariamungu who has raped Ofumbi's cousin, he is protected by Ali and Amin as the innocent Ofumbi and group suffer for being falsely accused.

After overseeing the shooting of a few of the dissidents in the full glare of the public, Ali, to scare would be opponents, announces "this is what happens to Obote's men." This pronouncement by Ali tells the public and the viewer that the government does not tolerate any form of dissent from the subjects. Any attempt to question the conduct of Amin and his men is met with the full force of the law but as Ofumbi daringly tells the president who has condemned him to torture, the spirit of the Ugandans cannot be dimmed. He says "You may kill me General, but you cannot kill the spirit of the Ugandan people." This comes to pass when later Ugandans join hands and depose Amin and his government.



Fig 17: Ali announces to the soldiers that they are going 'on an important mission' before they are shot.

Conclusion

The filmmaker has figuratively represented the typology of the Big Man. Through metaphors, for example, rebels express their dissatisfaction with Amin who they view as a joker ruling by coercion. Foreigners show their contempt of the Big Man when they refer to him variously as a village tyrant and a rapist who will make the country barren among other derogatory expressions. Amin and his supporters open disregard for fellow Ugandans is depicted in the metaphors they use. In their metaphors they joke about human life and show open contempt for the rest of the populace.

Metonyms express the might of the Big Man and so help to explain why he is revered. The *rungu* he carries is his weapon whenever he anticipates a combative situation like an attempt to overthrow him. Some like the statue of the jaguar and the snake foreshadow doom as certain characters are killed soon after their appearance on the screen. Personalization of state resources is represented by the use of state apparatuses for individual gain like the president using a state aircraft in his wedding.

The Big Man characteristics are not limited to the character of the president. They are systemic, pervasive and replicated in his close allies. This way, his rule is felt everywhere all the time. Even without him, Ali, Mariamungu and Bob replicate his tendencies. They are protected by the Big Man and wish to protect his rule for personal gains.

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