

## A Study of Metaphors used for Bingu wa Mutharika and Peter Mutharika as Presidents of Malawi and the Impact on their Political Legacy

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### ABSTRACT

Metaphor analysis has been a very attractive area of scholarly research within cognitive linguistics in which different abstract ideas get mapped into tangible concepts. In Africa, it has become common that individuals like presidents are given metaphors to conceptualise their performance in office with the objective world. However, such political metaphors have not received much attention in academic discourse, and research studies that address the impact of metaphors on presidents' political legacy are rare. Therefore, this paper analyses metaphors that Malawians have used in relation to their political leaders by drawing examples from two State Presidents: Bingu wa Mutharika and Arthur Peter Mutharika, and how the legacy of the two eventually has come to be associated with the metaphors. In politics, metaphors are essential because they are the lens through which people view and assess their leaders at both theoretical and functional level. Using the approach outlined by Schmitt (2005), the study analyses four major metaphors, namely: *MOSE WA LERO* (The New Moses), *NGWAZI* (The Conqueror/The Great Warrior), *CHITSULO CHA NJANJI* (The Railway Steel), and *ADADI* (The father/Dad). This paper argues that political metaphors, whether for praise or self-glorification, have an impact on influencing, shaping, and preserving the image of political leaders during their tenure of office which eventually become their legacy. The study acknowledges that presidents' legacy can be traced through metaphor analysis. The analyses can become meaningful and valid in unearthing the history of conduct and performance of individual leaders.

**Key words:** Metaphor, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Bingu wa Mutharika, Peter Mutharika, Malawi

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Metaphor analysis is a branch of Cognitive Linguistics that is concerned with the ways people structure abstract thinking and construct their experiences (Musolff, 2012; Yu, 2013). Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) publication *Metaphors We Live By* is the pioneer work to the study of metaphors, and the understanding is that our conceptual system of how we think and act is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. Therefore, metaphor analysis is not a matter of analysing the language, but also a matter of analysing the thoughts of how individuals understand and experience one kind of a thing in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Guo, 2013). It is mostly a cross-domain mapping from abstract and intangible concepts to concrete and tangible objects. Hence, using metaphor is not a deviation of language, but rather a cognitive tool for people to conceptualise the objective world in thought and action. As such, metaphor analysis entails the analysis of physical realisation of language that is in peoples' mind. It has become almost a tradition in Africa that people coin

metaphors for their presidents mostly as a form of praise and a physical realisation of how the people conceptualise their presidents at an abstract level. In turn, the presidents come to live by such metaphors throughout their tenure.

### Aim of the Study

The study aims to investigate the metaphors Malawians use to conceptualise their leaders by taking a closer look at the ones they have used to refer to Bingu wa Mutharika and Arthur Peter Mutharika as presidents of the country. These two were brothers and ruled Malawi under the same Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). It would therefore be interesting to see if there are any resemblance in the metaphors used for them regarding their performance in office.

### Research Questions

Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

- i) What type of metaphors have the two Presidents lived by?
- ii) What are the semantic properties of those metaphors?
- iii) What is the impact of the metaphors on the political legacy of the two Presidents'?

### CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY (CMT)

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) stems primarily from the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) *Metaphors We Live By* in which they have explored the role that metaphors play in human cognition. Lakoff and Johnson have defined metaphors as understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another by 'mapping' conceptual structures from a relatively familiar, experientially grounded 'source domain' into a more abstract or less well-known 'target domain' (see Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Musolff, 2012; Farrell, 2016). Metaphors are regarded as our principal vehicles for thinking, conceptualising and understanding our physical, social and inner world. This way, metaphors are not only seen as rhetorical flourishing fragments of information but also as essential for the creation of social realities and for self-fulfilling prophecies (Zheng & Song, 2010; Musolff, 2012; Guo, 2013; Yu, 2013). This understanding is in line with the philosophical theory of subjectivism in the Romantic Tradition, which puts emphasis on the importance of the human consciousness and the 'self'.

Philosophically, subjectivism argues that people's senses and intuitions are the only things that can be trusted when dealing with practical activities (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). While subjectivism was originally conceived on the basis of answering moral and ethical questions, it is further noted that personal feelings and aesthetic sensibilities are far more important than truth and reason. For Subjectivists and Romanticists, the language of imagination like that of the metaphor, is necessary for expressing the unique and significant aspects of people's experience. As such, Romanticism scholars such as Shelley, Wordsworth and Coleridge have put emphasis on human feelings and psychological experiences and language (metaphor) as having creative significance rather than a reflective function (Yu, 2013, p.1468). Hence, meaning is viewed as not just arising from the internal structures of an individual and the outside world but also from the interaction between individuals and their environment. Every lexicon, sentence or use of rhetoric that we choose to use are loaded with undertones and overtones that characterise our abstract tendencies which reveal our perspective of the world, and what we hope to gain by means of what we choose to employ.

#### Conceptual Nature of Metaphor: The Metaphors We Live By

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) note that: 1) A metaphor is essentially conceptual in nature. This means that it is not merely a matter of words, but also a matter of thought. 2) The metaphorical linguistic expression is a concrete realisation of conceptual metaphor. 3) Metaphor is the main cognitive mechanism through which abstract concepts

are comprehended and abstract reasoning is performed. 4) Metaphor allows people to understand a relatively abstract or inherently unstructured subject matter in terms of a more concrete or more highly structured subject matter (Yu, 2013, p.1469).

The concept of 'TIME' in English has its conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY, which is linguistically reflected in a variety of expressions. For instance: 1) You're *wasting* my time. 2) That meeting *costs* me two hours. 3) I am *running out of* time. 4) I've *invested* a lot of time in painting. 5) Please *budget* your time reasonably. 6) You should *save* enough time to do the next project. 7) She *lost* a lot of time when she was in the university. This metaphor originated because in modern society 'time' is a valuable commodity. It is a limited resource that we use to accomplish our goals (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In most cultures, work is typically associated with the time it takes, and time is precisely quantified where people are paid per hour, week, or month. In other societies, telephone units, hotel room rates, yearly budgets, interest on loans, and paying one's debt rentals are typically dependent on time (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Hence, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) refer to the linguistic expression TIME IS MONEY as one of the metaphors that we live by.

There is also the concept of 'ARGUMENT' in the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR in the following expressions: 1) Your claims are *undefensible*. 2) He *attacked every weak point* in my argument. 3) His criticisms were *right on target*. 4) I *demolished* his argument. 5) I've never *won* an argument with him. 6) He *shot down* all of my arguments. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) observe that many of the things we do in arguing are partially structured by the concept of 'war'. Even though there is no physical battle, there is a verbal battle, and the structure of an argument: attack, defense and counterattack are strategies of winning a war. The person we argue with is in this case a representation of an opponent. We attack their positions and we defend our own positions. We gain and or sometimes lose ground. If we find a position undefensible, we can abandon it and take a new line of attack. It is in this sense that the ARGUMENT IS WAR structures the actions we perform in arguing, and eventually something we live by.

It is also noted that one of the important features of a metaphor is that cross-domain mapping is systematic. There are ontological correspondences to which entities in the target domain correspond systematically to those in the source domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Guo, 2013, p.476). The mapping is uni-directional and asymmetric; from the more concrete to the more abstract, and they are done partially where not all the properties of the source domain get projected to the structure of the target domain. For instance, in LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor, a "person" corresponds to "traveller", "life state" to "location", "life purpose" to "journey destination", "difficulty" to "impediment to travel" (Guo, 2013, p.476). Once the knowledge of the "journey" is mapped onto "life", we may infer that when facing difficulties in life, some people confront them and proceed to achieve their life goals while others choose to evade them by abandoning their dreams (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Guo,

2013; Yu, 2013). When travellers come across troubles during a journey, they may strive to overcome the barriers and proceed, or they may simply be discouraged and give up.

These three metaphors are examples of the broad spectrum of metaphors we live by, and can be extended to different cultures. However, there is need to narrow down the scope of our study to explore metaphors and their influence on a specific linguistic domain by investigating how people visualise things in real-time contexts such as Malawi. Political leaders have been chosen to be objects of analysis by this study because they largely control and influence lives of the people they rule. Accordingly, the metaphors common people use on their leaders mostly demonstrate how these people visualise the leadership in general. Likewise, the ways the leaders respond to such metaphors become the indelible mark for their legacy.

### **BINGU WA MUTHARIKA<sup>1</sup> (2004-2012)**

Bingu wa Mutharika was democratically elected in May 2004 as the third president of Malawi under the United Democratic Front (UDF) ticket. Bingu's first term of office was economically successful. He set out deliberate policies to combat corruption and improve Malawi's economic policies. He started a direct fight against corruption as he investigated and arrested several prominent UDF officials who were implicated in various crimes. He won donors' confidence, who in turn, re-initiated the flow of aid, which had been frozen over claims of his predecessor President Bakili Muluzi's financial mismanagement (Green, 2008). He later damped the UDF party and formed his own Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), a move that fuelled hatred within the UDF camp. This resulted into chaos in parliament as he was placed under an impeachment motion by the UDF. This rift also saw President Bingu struggling to have the national budget tabled and passed as the opposition members demanded that the seats for the Members of Parliaments who had joined the DPP be declared vacant since they had crossed the floor according to Section 65 of the Malawi Parliament Act (Kondowe, 2014a). However, all the efforts to frustrate him failed because he had an overwhelming support not only in parliament but also from the citizenry. Bingu received several honorary degrees and numerous awards both locally and internationally.

In the subsequent General Elections held in May 2009, Bingu won with unprecedented landslide (66.17%) and that marked the beginning of his second term. It was during this term that he started showing increased signs of a semi-authoritarian leadership style. His record on good governance, human rights, and political tolerance was soon overshadowed by the enactment of a number of draconian laws. Soon his popularity and public trust turned into hate (see Kondowe, 2014b). For example, in July 2011, he used armed police to repress peaceful mass protests which resulted in 20 people dying, and about 500 people being arrested and wounded (Cook, 2017). In 2012, Bingu accused the donor community of falsely labelling him a dictator. He also blamed the donors for financing local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to oust him. He then told the donors

to leave the country and go to hell (Kondowe, 2014b). He refused to accept International Monetary Fund's (IMF) policies to devalue the local currency, which eventually led to acute shortages of fuel, forex and medical equipment, among others. Such negative developments increased Bingu's loss of public trust and popularity. International relations worsened resulting into more and more donors freezing their aid as they argued that the President had no respect for democracy, and that his economic policies were off-track (Kondowe, Ngwira & Madula, 2014, Ntata, 2012). Unfortunately, on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, Bingu suddenly died from a cardiac arrest while in office. Following his death, Joyce Banda, who was the Vice President to Bingu by law became the fourth president of Malawi.

### **ARTHUR PETER MUTHARIKA (2014-2020)**

Arthur Peter Mutharika, the younger brother to Bingu, is a former long-time U.S. resident and a Professor of International Law, who returned to Malawi in 2004, upon Bingu's ascendancy to the presidency (see Ross, 2014; Cook, 2017). He held several cabinet posts in his brother's administration, which include: Minister of Justice; Minister of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) and Minister of Foreign Affairs. His performance in these portfolios brought some questions about his competency in running public offices. While at MoEST, for example, he failed to resolve the impulse at the University of Malawi where lecturers were demanding "academic freedom" from government, leading to stalemate, which lasted for almost eight months. While at foreign affairs, Malawi expelled the British High Commissioner due to diplomatic misunderstandings between the two countries (Ross, 2014).

Peter repossessed the presidency from Joyce Banda through the May 2014 General Elections under the DPP, and became the fifth state president of Malawi. During Joyce Banda's reign, Malawi witnessed the "Cashgate" where huge sums of monies were stolen by politicians through fraud and corruption (Kondowe, Ngwira & Madula, 2014). She also fraudulently sold the presidential jet of which proceeds went missing. These unscrupulous acts hugely damaged Banda's reputation and significantly contributed towards her loss at the polls. Soon after ascending to power, President Peter Mutharika reduced the size of the cabinet from 25 to 18. He vowed to pursue a participatory, consultative governance style, prioritising socio-economic development and inclusiveness, especially for women and the youth (Cook, 2017). He launched a number of projects to stimulate economic development through investment in road infrastructure projects. He introduced the *Malata* ("iron sheets") and cement subsidy programme to increase access to good houses for the ultra-poor. He also made tremendous efforts in stabilising the local currency against major foreign currencies.

However, having served for five years, Peter's first term was expected to come to an end in May 2019 as the country went into another General Election. Nonetheless, unlike his predecessors, Peter's first term period got extended to six years (2014-2020). This was mainly because the results of the polls in which he was declared winner by the Malawi

Electoral Commission (MEC), were highly contentious. This led to massive nationwide demonstration organised by the Human Rights Defenders Coalition (HRDC) alongside opposition political parties demanding resignation of MEC chairperson Justice Jane Ansah for allegedly mismanaging the elections. The opposition political parties had taken MEC and DPP to court arguing that the elections were marred with serious irregularities hence be annulled. The court nullified the outcome of the May 2019 Presidential election and demanded for fresh elections to be held in 150 days. To avoid power vacuum, Peter was asked to continue serving as an interim President until fresh elections are held in May 2020.

It is historical for Peter to be the first presidential candidate in Malawi to have been declared unduly elected by the courts. This was the major court ruling in which the DPP and MEC lost miserably in all their defenses before the con-Court and the Supreme Court of Appeal. Such court case loss and the massive demonstrations that lasted for months are tips on the iceberg of how the nation expressed their dissatisfaction of Peter's first term of office, which would become the legacy he would live by. While some of the previously discussed issues are beyond the scope of this study, they provide a better background for the understanding of the metaphor analysis that follows.

#### METHOD OF ANALYSING THE METAPHORS

The analysis for the metaphors in the current study has borrowed an approach outlined in Schmitt's (2005) work *Systematic Metaphor Analysis as a Method of Qualitative Research*. We have started by identifying the metaphors used in reference to the two Presidents. The basis on which the words or phrases used to the presidents qualify as metaphor is twofold: Firstly, strictly speaking, they can be understood beyond the literal meaning in the context of politics. Secondly, the literal meaning stems from the local area of our sensoric or cultural experience (source area) which gets transferred to an abstract area which is the target (Schmitt, 2005 p. 371). After the identification, we have followed three steps: Firstly, we have identified the semantic properties of the metaphoric concept and their relevance in making interpretation possible. Thus using our corresponding knowledge of the world, we have determined if a connection can be made between the concepts found and the events, thoughts, and actions that took place in Malawi, which relate directly to the two presidents. Secondly, we have investigated if the metaphors have a traceable origin and then linked their relevance as used in the present scenario. Finally, we have assessed the impact and significance of the metaphors on their political actions, which in turn becomes their political legacy.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section has presented results and discussion in line with the aim and the three research questions presented in Section 1.2. First, we have discussed the conceptual metaphors the two Presidents lived by, through investigating their sources, and how people applied them onto each president. We have then broken down each metaphor into conceptual properties

that are semantically potential. In subsection, 6.2, we have grouped the metaphors into two main types and discussed the impact of each type on the presidents' political legacy.

#### The Conceptual Metaphors the Two Presidents Lived By *Bingu wa Mutharika*

During his eight years in office, Bingu lived by three main metaphors: *MOSE WA LERO* (the New Moses), *NGWAZI* (the conqueror/the great warrior), and *CHITSULO CHA NJANJI* (the Railway Steel). The first two metaphors were coined for him by local political commentators, and were mainly celebrated during his first term of office (2004-2009). The last one was coined by himself during the second term of office (2009-2012).

#### *MOSE WA LERO (The New Moses)*

The metaphor *BINGU IS THE NEW MOSES* was coined by Joseph Nkasa, one of the celebrated musicians in Malawi in his song "*Mose wa lero*". In this song, Nkasa likens the features of the Biblical Moses (the abstract) who rescued the Israelites from the bondage in Egypt to Canaan and conceptually mapped them to Bingu (the concrete) to support the view that Bingu was the saviour to Malawians. Consider the following lines in the song:

*Mose wa lero mose wa lero ndi mutharika* (Today's Moses is Mutharika)

*Waliphula dziko pamoto* (He has rescued this country from fire)

*Nthaka yotembeledwa ija yadalitsidwa* (That cursed land is now blessed)

*Nkhani yanjala ndinyimbo yakale* (Hunger is now an old song)

*Ntchito zamanja ake zikumuchitira umboni* (Works of his hands bear him witness)

*Mdala wa masomphenya mtsogoleri* (A visionary man and leader)

The metaphor enshrined in the above lines brings a sharp contrast between Bingu's and his predecessor's (Bakili Muluzi) regime. The Muluzi era was characterised by acute shortage of food, massive corruption, and low education standards, among others. In contrast, in his first term, Bingu achieved a high rate of agricultural production and food security. Most of his initiatives, centered on an agricultural subsidy programme that enabled Malawi to achieve bumper harvest and surplus food; hence the metaphor. Conceptually, the biblical Moses can be analysed to have the semantic properties of [+HOLINESS, +LEADER, +COURAGIOUSNESS, +SAVIOUR]. Nkasa, therefore, turned into an interpreter of divine thought as he mapped these ethereal semantic concepts to that of Bingu (see Dulani, 2008). Bingu was hence likened to +LEADER, + COURAGEOUSNESS, + SAVIOUR president.

Historically, Chinguwo (2018) observes that before Nkasa's song, the metaphor of *BIBLICAL MOSES* was first accorded to the first state President of Malawi, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda on 27<sup>th</sup> July 1976 by Honourable K.N. Banda in parliament. Honourable Banda explained that Kamuzu's

character and conduct could be likened to that of the biblical Moses; hence he deserved the title ‘Moses’. In his remarks, Honourable Banda argued:

*Kamuzu Banda is a true leader who could be compared to Moses. In fact, if you take Moses, you take Kamuzu, no difference....Then later on, Moses went to the wilderness for forty years and later on he was given the job of liberating the Israelites from the yoke of the Egyptians..... Now here is the Kamuzu who left the country at a very young age for South Africa and he stayed in South Africa, stayed in America and stayed in England with the people who can be compared as pharaohs of Egypt....And later on he had to come back to free Malawians from the yoke of imperialism.... So the two leaders are similar in everything and therefore the women of this country are justified when they sing happily that we have crossed our Jordan (see Chinguwo, 2018).*

By extension, the metaphor of THE NEW MOSES, which was once shared by the first president of the nation, shows that the metaphor is well founded, with a strong historical backing hence easily enjoyed by the populace. It can also be argued that Nkasa saw conceptual similarities between Kamuzu and Bingu and decided to extend it to the latter. This brought Bingu to a positive light, and people started looking at him as indeed the MOSES of the day, and that he had come to save them from the problems they suffered in the previous regimes. BINGU IS THE NEW MOSES was thus one of the major metaphors that Bingu enjoyed and lived by during his entire first term.

#### ***NGWAZI (The Conqueror /The Great Warrior)***

*A BINGU NDI NGWAZI* (Bingu is the conqueror/a great warrior) is another famous metaphor that he lived by. Traditionally, the *NGWAZI* metaphor is awarded sparingly. In Malawi, it is only the Ngoni people who accord such titles to their leaders or people who have distinguished themselves. Inkosi ya Makosi Lazaro II accorded the metaphor to Kamuzu Banda and eventually he became the first Malawian president to use the metaphor *NGWAZI*. To most Malawians, *Ngwazi* did not sound like a given metaphor for Kamuzu as it became more popular than his actual name. Later on in 2010, Mbelwa IV of Mzimba district gave the title to Bingu. The conceptual metaphors THE CONQUEROR and THE GREAT WARRIOR, which have the semantic properties of [+STRENGTH, +COURAGIOUSNESS, +FIERCENESS, +PREY] came to be associated with Bingu in the minds of the people. Bingu was seen to have attacked and conquered hunger, and stabilised Malawi’s economy. The ‘*NGWAZI*’ metaphor became prefaced to his name and he formally became to be known as *Ngwazi Professor Bingu wa Mutharika* in all official documentations that came henceforth.

#### ***CHITSULO CHA NJANJI (The Railway Steel)***

Bingu christened himself “Railway Steel” during his second term of office. The metaphor RAILWAY STEEL is a positive self-representation that depicts his [+TOUGHNESS, +RESILIENCE]. Railway steel is not ordinary steel. It survives and resists all forms of pressure by expanding and

contracting. In most public addresses, Bingu proudly referred to himself as, “*Ine ndine chitsulo cha njanji*” (I am a railway steel) which cannot just be pushed anyhow. By using this metaphor, Bingu implied that he cannot just be moved anyhow into accepting neoliberal policies by local and foreign pressure against his own will. It was this metaphor that the nation embraced and associated it with him. When he died, social media was awash with posts and comments about his death as the majority paid tribute to him as ‘*CHITSULO CHA NJANJI*’.

#### ***Peter Mutharika***

Peter mainly lived by one major conceptual metaphor *ADADI* (the Father) throughout his entire first term of office (2014-2020). However, it can be argued that the study has not given Peter a fair deal since results and discussion for him are limited to one term of office (six years); unlike the data for Bingu, which spans eight years of his rule hence affording us a complete picture. Conversely, this study does not necessarily intend to compare the two presidents, but rather to assess the impact of the conceptual metaphors that were used for the two presidents, and how each metaphor impacted their legacy.

#### ***ADADI (The Father/Dad)***

Peter Mutharika was accorded the metaphor of *ADADI* (the Father) in the recent times as the nation drew closer to the May 2019 General Elections. This metaphor came to be known in early months of 2018, when Callista Mutharika (the wife to late Bingu) came in the open to endorse Saulos Klaus Chilima who was the Vice President to Peter Mutharika to lead the DPP arguing Mutharika was aged (Kondowe & Ngwira, 2019). This worsened the working relationship between Mutharika and Chilima and camps emerged. Those who supported SKC argued that he is energetic and youthful and deserved to lead the party. Those in Peter’s camp coined the metaphor *ADADI* (Father) to counter Chilima’s youthfulness arguing that old age is a symbol of maturity, love, wisdom and leadership.

*ADADI* (Father) can socially be described as [+MALE, +ADULT] who has the responsibility to fend, provide and protect his family. The term *ADADI* became a controversial metaphor mainly popular within the youthful party die-hards (DPP cadets) who opposed the idea that Chilima should lead the DPP. They then coined the slogan “*ana achepa! Ife ndife ana adadi*” (these are just young kids; we are dad’s children). This was further fuelled by the Minister of Finance, Goodall Gondwe’s remarks who openly belittled Chilima by saying “presidency is not for babies” (see Ngwira, 2018). Gondwe argued that running government’s affairs like those of presidency require experienced people and not young persons.

#### ***Impact of the Metaphors on the Presidents’ Political Legacy***

Metaphors are very powerful forces that condition the way we come to act and think about ourselves, others, and the world around us. In politics, metaphors are essential because they become the lenses through which we view and assess

our leaders at both theoretical and functional levels. This way, metaphors also become a major influence to help us assess political leaders' legacy. In this section, we discuss the impact of the political metaphors that have been identified. We categorise the four metaphors into two categories namely: *Praise* metaphors and *self-glorification* metaphors.

As the names suggest, we define *praise metaphors* as those that are coined by other people within the society, and they are directed towards their leaders as a form of praise. For instance, *Mose wa lero* the (New Moses) and *Ngwazi* (the conqueror) which Bingu lived by during his first term can be said to be praise metaphors as they were coined by Nkasa, and Chief Mbelwa IV respectively. It has been noted that praise metaphors have a historical connection to the people's local knowledge; hence they are easily accepted and embraced by many. It can be argued that Bingu lived by praise metaphors during his first term due to his massive performance in governance, rule of law, economy, and winning back donors' confidence among others hence the hero, messiah, and saviour. Ironically, this study notes that the praise metaphors that Bingu lived by 'Ngwazi' for example, has a history which is linked to the first President of Malawi, Dr Kamuzu Banda, who was both a hero and villain sometimes. And it was noted that Bingu's actions during the first term of office as well as at the very end of his term were seen to resemble those of Kamuzu Banda; hence the existing metaphors that Kamuzu lived by were easily extended and suited to Bingu.

In reference to Peter, only one notable praise metaphor has been identified in relation to him and his legacy. Despite that data for Peter is limited to one term of office, this study, however, notes that this might be an indication that people did not have much to praise him for during the entire first term. It is noted that Peter has been the calmest leader in the history of Malawi politics especially in the first five years before the announcement of the results for May 2019 General Elections. During that period, he rarely persecuted his political opponents, media groups, or civil societies, even when they insulted him openly; hence deserving the praise metaphor *PETER NDI ADADI* (Peter is a father). Even though this metaphor mirrored the positives about Peter, it was not used by the majority of Malawians, unlike those that were ascribed to Bingu. What is worth noting is the fact that this metaphor was coined soon after the DPP began experiencing camps within it. This means it became more of a campaign tool trying to sell Peter in the 2019 General Elections. It is not surprising then that those people who did not support Peter used this metaphor negatively unlike the party diehards.

As noted earlier, Bingu's metaphor *CHITSULO CHA NJANJI* (the Railway Steel) does not have any historical trace in Malawi. Bingu coined it himself and repeatedly used it and referred to it by himself most often; hence a *self-glorification* metaphor. However, this paper argues that political metaphors whether for praise or self-glorification can influence the way people look at their leaders which eventually becomes their legacy. As Dulani (2008) observes, if people start to praise individuals as demi gods for long, it might eventually get to the point where the individuals begin to believe that they are indeed gods, and infallible. Given the

evidence from the two metaphors Bingu lived by in his first term of office, it is clear that they made him the god.

Listening to DPP-party apparatchiks that embraced the construct 'Mose wa lero' the (New Moses), one could foresee that Malawi was heading towards dictatorship as experienced during Kamuzu Banda's era. The situation was worsened by the landslide victory that ushered Bingu into second term of office, which provided more proof to that conception. It might not be surprising though that his second term reflected his increasing levels of dictatorship; hence the metaphor *CHITSULO CHA NJANJI* (Railway Steel) emerged to reinforce his toughness, intolerance and arrogance, which later became costly as Malawi ran out of fuel and forex (see Kondowe, 2014). He muzzled freedom of expression and attempted to gag the media. His regime registered growing cases of human rights abuses and divisions among tribal lines. In addition, when he suddenly died on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, people held parties and celebrated throughout the country to mark the end of his dictatorship, a very unusual tradition in Africa where the dead are usually mourned.

Conversely, the metaphor of fatherliness that Peter lived by became a weakness on his part to the extent that those around him took advantage of his laissez-faire conduct, and started victimising others. He allowed his henchmen and the youth cadets to become untouchables. They started abusing his fatherly attitude by breaking road-traffic regulation by simply displaying motor vehicle number plates labelled "*ANA ADADI*" and the police could do nothing. In addition, few months to the 2019 General Elections, news had it that DPP cadets were assaulting and harassing the followers of the opposition parties. For example, the Youth Director for UTM<sup>2</sup> party, Bon Kalindo, got beaten in Mulanje while Veronica Katanga was stripped off her UTM clothes in Mangochi. Another UTM member, Allan Ngumuya, got beaten in Blantyre while Edward Govala of MCP was brutally beaten in Blantyre (see Ngwira, 2019; Chiuta, 2019; Nthondo, 2019). All these cases of political violence were mainly linked to the DPP cadets. Surprisingly, President Peter Mutharika never condemned such acts and none from the DPP got prosecuted. There is no any explanation we can afford this other than the metaphor *ADADI* (Father) as being at play. Like all fathers would do, you do not take your own children to prison even when it is at the expense of other people's rights. Under such circumstances, Peter as the *ADADI* was seen to be a surety for DPP cadets' malpractices. This could be the reason Simango (2016) argues that Peter's conduct might be a clear indication that he was forced into politics by his brother and that he was naturally apolitical. Within these contexts, the notion 'ADADI' became an exploited praise metaphor that served the interests of the party zealots in various ways.

Furthermore, soon after announcing the results for May 21, 2019 Presidential elections, the country went into a lockdown due to massive violent demonstrations by the HRDC and opposition parties demanding the resignation of MEC chairperson and other commissioners. Peter Mutharika as 'ADADI' did not rush to intervene nor did he fire the commissioners as the right authority. The demonstrations led

to many people's houses being burnt, government offices being razed; police buildings being torched; human rights activists being hacked among many other gruesome scenes and President Mutharika never offered any tangible solution. Unlike his brother "CHITSULO CHA NJANJI" ("the Railway Steel") who openly condemned any such inhumane acts, the 'ADADI' never took any bold decision that would ease the political tension as he played 'wait and see'. After the recommendation of the Court's ruling that nullified the May 2019 Presidential elections, the Malawi National Assembly passed electoral bills to facilitate the fresh elections. Parliament also assessed the competence of the MEC commissioners and recommended that they get fired. President Mutharika however refused to ratify the bills and fire the commissioners. This perhaps validates the claims that the metaphor *ADADI* (Father) did not portray Peter the "father" of Malawi but rather for the DPP. He was never seen to be proactive for things that concern Malawians but rather those interests that benefit his DPP. This is why the metaphor was positively used within his party context but carried a negative connotation for the majority of the citizens.

## CONCLUSION

The study has analysed political metaphors in Malawi by taking a closer look at the metaphors that the two Presidents lived by. It has already been noted that while many people use metaphors to express their experiences about the world around them, in this study metaphor analysis has helped in assessing how they impact politics, politicians and their legacy. The paper has analysed three metaphors that were used in reference to Bingu namely; CHITSULO CHA NJANJI (the Railway Steel), NGWAZI (the Great Warrior/Conqueror) and MOSE WA LERO (the New Moses); and one metaphor for Peter Mutharika, 'ADADI' (the Father). We have grouped these four metaphors into *praise* and *self-glorification* metaphors. It has been observed that Bingu lived by more positive metaphors than Peter, and that these metaphors were either coined by him (Bingu) or the people. Learning from Bingu's metaphors, the study has established that the praise metaphors made him become a god. Furthermore, during the second term of his office, he coined the RAILWAY STEEL metaphor to signify the growing despotism in him. Conversely, Peter lived by one major metaphor, which has been proved to imply that people did not have much to talk about him due to his calmness and passivity especially in his first five years. This then became his weakness, the same disposition his party zealots exploited to their advantage. Unlike those for Bingu, Peter's metaphor was enjoyed within the confines of his DPP and could not positively be projected by the majority. His actions especially in his sixth year of office seemed to display the "ADADI" characteristics by protecting his party at the expense of the public good.

In general, this paper has argued that metaphors make it possible to uncover both individual and group patterns of thoughts and actions. Even though metaphors do not represent a complete picture of a thing, we have argued that overstating political leaders' qualities by portraying them as 'gods' or 'fathers' and so on has an effect on politics. The

study has also demonstrated how metaphors can help unearth sorts of contradictions between presidents at the different stages of their leadership. We conclude that in politics, metaphors are not just an expression of thoughts, but also of major influence on how people come to view and associate with their leaders. Political metaphors, therefore, remain valid and useful in tracing and assessing presidents' political legacy.

## ENDNOTES

1. Despite that the two Presidents are brothers; there is a slight difference in their family names that needs to be explained from the onset. Bingu was originally born Ryson Webster Thom but later on adopted an African name of Bingu Mutharika in 1960s. He later inserted 'wa' between his names to be called Bingu wa Mutharika to disguise his identity from the first state President Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda who was hunting down his opponents. Arthur Peter Mutharika never made any change to his family name.
2. Initially, UTM meant United Transformation Movement, but later it became UTM party when it got registered.

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