

Brother Time Study Guide

Stereotypes

What are the basic ethnic stereotypes of the movie?

What role do stereotypes play in ethnic relations in Kenya?

How are these stereotypes reversed in the movie?

- a. Hint: Think about the likely ethnicity of the university student.
- b. Hint: Think about the relation between the two neighbors, Wainaina and Mutai.

History

When did Kikuyus move to the Rift Valley in large numbers?

How did the rivalry between Kikuyus, Kalenjins and Luos emerge?

What is the “land issue” in Kenya?

What does the university student mean when he says “the land is simply getting smaller”?

What were the different views among Kenyans about the land belonging to the white settlers?

The 2007 Election Campaign

What were the main political parties and candidates contending in the Presidential election of 2007?

What ethnic groups supported each party?

According to the pre-election polls, which party was expected to win?

Why did university students go to the villages before the election?

What had been the role of universities in Kenyan politics before the 2007 election?

What is the difference between ethnic politics and issue-based politics?

The Election

What were the early reports of the election results?

What was unusual about the announcement of election results?

Were there indications of clashes before the results were announced?

According to the movie, what happened when the results were announced?

The Clashes and Reconciliation

Does the film take a position on who was responsible for the violence?

What is the Kikuyu account of the origin of the clashes?

What is the Kalenjin/Luo account of the origin of the clashes?

Is there any way that both accounts could be true?

How long did the clashes last before the resolution?

Before the reconciliation, how did the clashes change in character?

Hint: What typically happened after an area had only a single ethnic group?

What was the nature of the reconciliation that halted the clashes?

Who mediated the reconciliation?

The Characters: Wainaina and Mutai

What are the tribal affiliations of the main characters?

What is meant by "Brother Time"?

What was the basis of the long-time friendship of Wainaina and Mutai?

How does Wainaina feel about his home place?

What is Mutai's view of his 'new' home, living next to Wainaina? How does it differ from his earlier home?

Hint: Where is diversity of viewpoints greater?

Did Mutai and Wainaina ever come into personal conflict?

What happened to Wainaina immediately after the election results were announced?

How did Wainaina and Mutai reconcile? Was the filmmaker's version of their reconciliation real?