

Cartooning as a multimodal agenda setting strategy in Tanzania's presidential election: examples from the social media platforms

Abstract

(Word count 153)

Cartoons can be an effective way of commenting on different matters of some importance. They can be fun, but at the same present issues that would otherwise be difficult to say using the everyday prose, because sometimes one would be required to even provide hard evidence. This article presents a socio-semiotic analysis of the 2015 Tanzania's presidential election presented through political cartoons as a form of text. Being one of the stiffest elections in the country, the cartoons suggest that the nation was circumvented by corruption, unaccountability, and favouritism on the part of government institutions. More prominently, Dr John Pombe Magufuli, the ruling party's presidential candidate in the election was shown to be in a stiff competition with his colleagues in his own political party - CCM, and also with Edward Lowassa who crossed over from the ruling party to the opposition side, who became the flag-bearer of the opposition coalition - UKAWA.

Keywords: agenda setting; political cartoons; presidential election; social semiotics;

Tanzania

Word count 6703

1. Introduction

Cartoons have for a long time been used as a popular method of commenting on various social events in Tanzania, as is also the case in many other parts in the world. In the 2015 presidential election, cartooning was used hand-in-hand with the mainstream methods of communication

such as newspapers, radio and television. What was more livening was possibly the presence of the social media such as *facebook*, *whatsapp*, *twitter*, and *instagram*, among others. The presence of the social media livened even more the penetration and visibility of cartoons, as will be made apparent in the following sections.

The use of visual communication, including cartoons, has been found to be a more efficient way of communication than the verbal one. Morrison (1969:253) summarises all communication that uses visual symbols in the following statements

... due to the nature of the communication process, there is substantive reason to believe that non-verbal symbols can transmit meaning more directly than can verbal symbols. All thinking begins with seeing; not only through the eye, but with other formulations of sense perceptions, of sight, hearing or touch, normally all of the senses together.

It is important to say at this juncture that the choice of cartoons as a textual way of expressing information by cartoonists is partly because it is both attractive, funny, enjoyable, and thought provoking, and partly because it may be used as excuse to using the more direct methods of mentioning people's names and openly criticizing their acts. There are various types and categories of cartoons, each serving a particular purpose. For example, Ibili & Sahin (2016:508) identify seven types of cartoons; political, illustrated, gag, comic book, commercial, animated, and television. This said, the publication of political cartoons on Tanzania and elsewhere in the world has not always been a smooth process. For example, in 2015 the Government of Tanzania banned the Nairobi-based *The East African* for publishing what was referred to as a "disrespectful" cartoon (<http://cbldf.org/2015/02/tanzania-bans-newspaper-over-disrespectful-cartoon/>). Likewise, the Government has on several counts banned some newspapers because of their cartoons' themes. For example McCabe (February 24, 2015) has this to say in that regard:

Mwambene declared the cartoon was in bad taste and disrespectful to both the president and the Tanzanian government, and he also accused the paper of “having a negative agenda against Tanzania” — an agenda that openly and vocally criticizes corruption, cronyism, and incompetence in the Tanzanian government.

This vetting of political cartoons is not unique to Tanzania alone. Elsewhere in the world, the power of cartooning has caused serious rows and disasters. For example in 2005, the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten published cartoons depicting Prophet Mohammed, and this led to protests by Muslims in Asia and Europe.

In this work, we are making reference to the 2015 election because this happened to be one of the most sensitive elections in the country. The election was highly competitive; and the ruling party which had been in power since independence, was scared of losing. TACCEO (2016: xxv) describes the election as follows:

..... the 2015 [election] was the most sensitive in the country’s history. For instance, it was for the first time that almost everyone, including the political scientist gurus failed to predict the winner of the presidential position, especially between CCM and UKAWA.

These cartoons which we are using here were those which were found online (e.g. , and were also commonly shared through the social media, and particularly on WhatsApp and Facebook (e.g. www.uchaguzitanzania.or.tz; www.facebook.com/chaguzitanzania). The focus is on cartoons that featured Dr John Pombe Magufuli, but in relation to other presidential candidates and other political heavyweights before, during, and in the immediate aftermath of the voting day. Apparently, the cartoons used here were those drawn by four famous Tanzanian cartoonists; Masoud Kipanya, King, Said Michael, and Kilasi (<https://www.google.com/search?q=election+cartoon+images+Tanzania+2015>).

The presence of the cartoons in the social media was particularly interesting for the youth, most of whom possess smart and android phones. Incidentally, it happened that in the 2015 Tanzania's presidential campaign made a wide use of the social media, and particularly WhatsApp. This made it possible for most of the election information to travel faster than would have been the case with traditional media such as newspapers, radio and television. This was also made possible due to the fact that the use of mobile phones in Tanzania is very high. For example, it was reported by the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) that by 2015 it had registered 17,263,523 million internet users in the country; while by March 2021, the number had risen to 29,071,818 users (tcra.go.tz).

Regarding the usefulness of cartoons, it has been argued, for example by Walker (2003:19) that cartoons have an immediate sociological resonance by providing a representation of 'now', which gives them their temporal relevance. The relevance of the political cartoons during the election time can appropriately be viewed as textual extension of civic action, which was change of the status quo. But depending on the specific issues at a particular moment in time, other themes like iconization of individuals, stereotyping, corruption and the like may also become apparent. Cartoons are in that sense objectify up-to-the-moment discursive realities in a particular society.

As for the choice of cartoons featuring Dr John Magufuli, the reasoning is based on the fact that he was the flagbearer of the Tanzania's ruling party CCM, which had been in power for more than 50 years at the time of the 2015 election. The Tanzania's ruling party has been in power since Tanzania became independent in 1961. Besides, this election was possibly the stiffest

presidential election ever witnessed in the politically pluralist Tanzania. The stiffness is partly attributed to the fact that many Tanzanians wanted a change in the political regime in the country. The stiffness of competition in the campaign is acknowledged even by the Chairman of the Tanzania Electoral Commission, Retired Judge Damian Lubuva, who argued that since the beginning of the multi-party system in 1992, the 2015 election has had the stiffest competition of all the elections held in the country (REDET 2016, 44). In a way, many people were eagerly awaiting the demise of the party. This is because the incumbent Government was widely blamed for rampant corruption, inefficiency, embezzlement, favouritism, and nepotism. Indeed, the nation was anxious to see whether or not Dr Magufuli was going to win or lose in the election. The cartooning artwork, systematically but metaphorically and ironically echoed the public debates of the day.

Looking now at a brief history of Tanzania, the country is a united republic formed by a union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Tanganyika got independence from the British in 1961, and Zanzibar also from the British on 19 December 1963, but was declared a constitutional monarchy under the Sultan of Zanzibar. Through a coup, Zanzibar attained self-governance on 12th January 1964 from the Sultan. After independence, Tanganyika was under the rule of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) party, under the leadership of the late Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, while Zanzibar was under the rule of the Afro-Shiraz Party (ASP) under the leadership of the late Sheikh Amani Abeid Karume. Tanganyika and Zanzibar united in 1964 to form the now Tanzania, and the two parties, TANU and ASP joined to form *Chama cha Mapinduzi* (henceforth CCM) (the Revolutionary Party) on 5 February 1977. At that time the nation was ruled under a single-party system.

During Nyerere's term in office, his government was famous for fighting corruption, embezzlement, subjugation and all kinds of evil against its citizenry. This was strengthened by Nyerere's belief in socialism articulated through the 1967 Arusha Declaration. Apparently, due to economic hardships experienced by almost all socialist countries in the 1980s, Nyerere relinquished his office to Ali Hassan Mwinyi who accepted the conditionalities imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on developing countries as a condition for aid release. In 1985 Ali Hassan Mwinyi, also from CCM, became the second president of Tanzania, and adopted a liberal economy famously referred to jockingly as *rukwa* (free range).

During President Mwinyi's tenure, a big economic gap between the rich and the poor emerged. Consequently, the majority of the people, who also happened to be poor, lost hope in their Government and in the ruling party as well. It was also around this time when CCM leaders, together with government leaders, accumulated a lot of wealth because of their association with corrupt business people and engagement in illegal deals. In simpler terms, both the state and the ruling party were captured by wealthy people and multinational companies (Husmann and Mmuya 2007, 178; Jingu 2013, 169).

In 1992 Tanzania adopted multiparty political system, and consequently, the CCM government started to face a lot of opposition from newly formed parties. The first competitive presidential election was held in 1995. In that election Mr William Benjamin Mkapa narrowly won the election, thanks to the support availed to him by Mwalimu Nyerere who was still in Tanzanians' hearts. Mkapa worked hard and somehow put the economy in good shape, mostly by privatising almost all the major means of production. People's lives improved a bit, and Tanzania was now accorded some trust internationally.

In 2010 there was another presidential election, but the opposition still could not win. It is noted though that the ruling party's victory dropped from 80% in 2005 to 57% in 2010. As such Kikwete won again, and Tanzanians' lives worsened, and they vowed to vote the ruling party out. It is important the author acknowledges these developments which highlights the beginning of dwindling of ruling party's support.

This state of despair earned the opposition parties an added advantage, as people believed that change of the status quo was the only solution. To make matters even better for the opposition, the CCM government refused a proposed constitutional reform bill which would iron out some anomalies in the Government. Due to this reluctance, some opposition parties formed a coalition famously known as *umoja wa katiba ya wananchi* (UKAWA) which can be translated as "defenders of the people's constitution". The four parties which formed UKAWA were: CHADEMA (*Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo*) (literally Party for Democracy and Development), CUF (Civic United Front), NCCR-Mageuzi (National Convention for Construction and Reform) and NLD (National League for Democracy). For the first time UKAWA became a formidable opposition coalition, which during the election had only one presidential candidate.

On another note, it had been expected that in the 2015 presidential election the ruling party would nominate Mr Edward Lowassa their presidential candidate. This is because Mr Lowassa was the most popular and influential person in the ruling party, and whom most Tanzanians expected would be nominated for presidential candidacy. However, his name was removed at the very last moment from vieing. This was during the nomination process, which was a very final stage. As a result of his removal, Dr John Magufuli, who was not very famous in the ruling Party, was nominated presidential candidate. Fortunately for Dr Magufuli, he was known for being hard working, not engaging in corruption, and also for having no factions in the ruling

Party. As an anecdote, Lowassa had in 2008 been forced to resign as Tanzania's prime minister, in connection with his being accused of taking part in a dubious electricity production contract scandal. Lowassa had served as prime minister for only two years.

While the electoral civic processes were unveiling with time, the media, and especially the social media, keenly took part in reporting and penetrating public opinion. From their reporting, one could see that they were in a way reflecting popular views held by majorities of the Tanzania's citizenry who needed change. Whatsapp and blogs became very popular and powerful means of spreading campaign information, and particularly among youngsters. Cartoons were one powerful channel of summarising messages which reflected civic debates because of their appeal in terms of amusing, ridiculing, and commenting as well. Regarding the power of political cartoons, Göçek (1998:1) has argued that political cartoons have multiple attributes and unique capacity to simultaneously represent ideas and resist control.

On another note, in the 2015 presidential election, 23 political parties participated. All these parties were based in either parts of the United Republic of Tanzania; the Isles of Zanzibar and Tanzania mainland. However, out of the 23 parties only two exerted real competition, attracting huge multitudes of listeners in their campaign rallies. These were the ruling party, *Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM)*, (the Party of Revolution), and *Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA)* (Party for Democracy and Development). CHADEMA, which had a presidential contestant, also unofficially represented the UKAWA Coalition which comprised four parties (CHADEMA, Civic United Front [CUF], National League for Democracy [NLD], and NCCR-Mageuzi). According to Tanzania's Electoral Laws, political parties may cooperate but does not allow one party's presidential candidate to represent other parties.

On an unexpected event, Mr Lowassa joined CHADEMA after his name had been removed as the CCM's presidential candidate. CHADEMA was the strongest opposition party in the

Country, and it had the support of the UKAWA coalition in their nomination of the presidential candidate. In less than a week's time of joining the Party, Mr Lowassa was nominated presidential candidate, with four opposition parties as a coalition behind him. Due to the seeming power of the UKAWA Coalition and Lowassa's personal attributes, it was expected that Mr Lowassa was going to defeat the infamous Magufuli so easily. This expectation was strengthened even more by the fact that each party had their own media coverage (TACCEO 2016:119).

During the campaign time the nation was passing through serious suspense, because it was at this when many influential politicians abandoned the Ruling Party and joined the opposition. Because of the situation on the ground at that time, many Tanzanians opined that Dr Magufuli did not have enough breath to go for the race. As TACCEO (2016:94) put it, “.. many people were not happy with the government of the ruling party because of corruption scandals and other evils”. Due to this situation, Magufuli asked voters to vote for Magufuli as a person, and not necessarily for the party. As such, the nation was divided between the two camps, UKAWA and CCM. Furthermore, the fate of Dr Magufuli was also going to be the fate of the ruling party. It was also this suspense that enticed the cartoonists to comment on the socio-political situation through their art work during the election process.

The current study employs the social semiotic theory of language which was developed by scholars like Hodge and Kress (1988), Van Leeuwen (2005) and Bezemer and Jewitt (2009), among others, from Michael Halliday's work titled *Language as social semiotic* (1978) in the systemic functional grammar. Besides, Butt et al (2003:5) the evolution of language, in line also with Halliday (1985) postulation, achieves three main purposes, namely *ideational* (experiential and logical), *interpersonal*, and *textual*. The ideational language function is about what has happened, is happening, and will happen. Secondly, the interpersonal function is about

expressing a point of view, and also interacting with others. Finally, the textual function of language is that of presenting the ideational and interpersonal functions in a clear and coherent way. O'Toole (1994) puts it that the application of the social semiotic theory has been extended to studies of, among other things, language and visual images.

Further to the application of the socio-semiotic theory, van Leeuwen (2005:3-4) explains how social semiotic resources can be applied in producing and analysing text. In the social semiotic theory, semiotic resources include actions and artefacts which people use to communicate, and can be produced by means of voice, pen, ink and paper, fabrics and so forth. In addition, Hodge and Kress (1988:18) argue that signs only exist within 'the concrete forms of social intercourse', that is to say, signs act as communicative texts involved in social interchange of communication. This is the reason why social semiotics prefers the use of semiotic resources to signs. The use of signs presupposes that signs have fixed meanings, which is not the case according to social semiotics. Thus, in our current study, the cartoons are our semiotic resources, produced during the Tanzania's 2015 presidential election process. In our process of meaning making, we consider mainly the semiotic resources' contexts of production and consumption, timing, manner of production, and their semiotic potential for meaning making. Meanings are not always fixed, but are also not haphazardly arrived at. There must be clues that lead to arriving at plausible meanings. In the case of cartoon analysis, the clues include the organisation of images, shapes, colours, themes, etc. It is these clues that help in the interpretation of political cartoons which were produced during the presidential electoral campaign.

2 Procedure

In order to get cartoons that would sufficiently serve my purpose, I asked all my contacts who were WhatsApp subscribers to share all election-related political cartoons featuring Dr Magufuli,

which they got from their other networks. The contacts were from two chat groups of my former school mates (one with 30 members and the other one with 40 members). I got a big number of such cartoons, from which I purposively selected seventeen (17) of them, and present them in 14 figures. I selected the cartoons which in a way unveiled electoral campaign events. These same cartoons are also found in website, and the artist who prepared them (i.e. Masoud Kipanya) was contacted, and permission to use them was granted. As such, even their arrangement in this work is chronological, based on the political event on the ground. This kind of collection is also supported by Van Leeuwen (2005:6) who holds that the appropriateness of a collection will depend on the purpose of the inventory that one needs to make.

The analysis of the findings follows different inventories prepared on the basis of the semiotic resources. As Van Leeuwen (2005:4) guides, the preparation of the inventories depends on the observation of the cartoons in terms of who does what, where, when, physical behaviour, style of dress, and so forth. Their interpretation is based on their semiotic potential affordances, which are the potential uses of the cartoons in question (originating from their observable features).

3. Findings and Discussion

In this part I present seventeen (17) political cartoons presented in fourteen (14) figures in relation to the 2015 presidential election-related processes which were collected from the social media, namely WhatsApp. The coverage period of the cartoons is just before, during, and immediately after the election. The textual meanings derive from the shapes of the caricatures, dress colours used, the sizes of the cartoons, actions semiotics and any other combinatorial representations, and the positioning of the participants regarding his role as an agent or patient. Morrison (1969:253) has argued that “All thinking begins with seeing; not only through the eye,

but with other formulations of sense perception, of sight, hearing or touch, normally all the senses together”. Morrison also agrees with earlier philosophers that thought is tied directly to experiences – to specific, concrete objects.

3.1 Findings

Coming now to the findings, Figure1 shows that there were many members of the ruling party, CCM, including Dr Magufuli and Mr Lowassa who aspired to become president. In Figure 1 they are awaiting nomination by relevant organs of the Party. From texts in Figure 1, the nomination organs are *Kamati Kuu* (the Central Committee) and *Halmashauri Kuu* (the National Executive Committee). The awaiting was at the very beginning of the campaign process, when it was not known yet who the flag bearer was going to be.

Dr Magufuli is also presented as waiting for the nomination process to happen, with his hand under his chin. The cartoons also show him as immersed in deep thinking, while several of them seemed to be at ease.

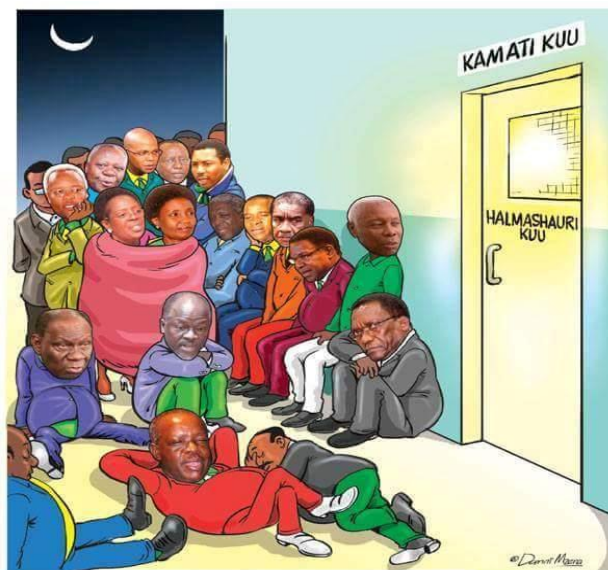


Figure 1

From Figure 2 onwards, Dr Magufuli is already nominated presidential candidate by his party. In Figure 2 itself, Dr Magufuli is sitting down on the sofa, his chin on one of his hands, watching television which shows his main campaign rival, Mr Edward Lowassa. Looking at Dr Magufuli's cartoon, one sees him as scared and unsure of the race. On the right hand side, Mr Lowassa, is shown as a huge and powerful opponent, with enlarged arm muscles and chest, and his size is even bigger than that of the television screen.

On the art plane Dr Magufuli's caricature is accompanied with an exclamation mark and a question mark as well.

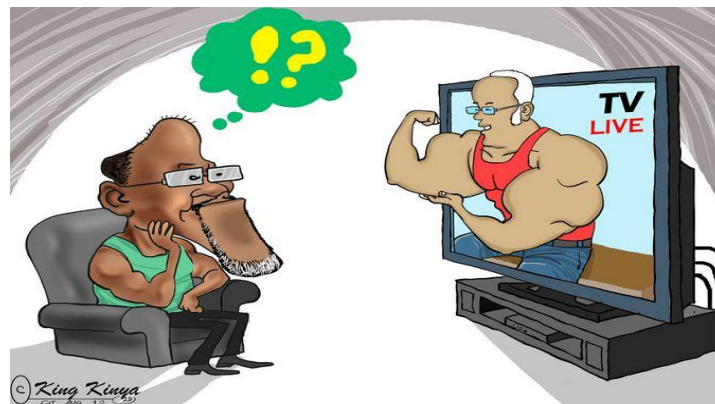


Figure 2

Figures 3 and 4 show Dr Magufuli as a desperate person who, from the texts, suffers from insufficient publicity. Starting with Figure 3, for example, the text shows a newspaper with Lowassa's picture on the upper page. The accompanying text, *nahitahi* publicity, *Kwa hali ilivyo nahisi robo tatu ya CCM ni Luwasa!* (I need publicity. In view of the prevailing situation I doubt that three quarters of CCM members are Lowassa's followers) presents Magufuli as complaining of being least know, and that most people from his own party support the opponent. The reply from the person Magufuli is complaining to *labda hata wewe* (maybe even you) (Figure 3) is an

irony that maybe Magufuli himself is supporting Lowassa from the opposition camp. This situation is also covered by Hongo et al (29 July, 2015:4) who argue they [CHADEMA] will be nuts if they won't accept Lowassa in their party because "he has many followers in the country, three quarters of parliamentarians support him". Additionally, in Figure 4 Dr Magufuli is also complaining that for the whole week newspapers have covered only Lowassa. This portrayal of Dr Magufuli is to do with the feeling that he was not receiving as much coverage in the media (both on television and in newspapers) as his main opponent.



Figure 3



Figure 4

Figure 5 is a series of related cartoons presenting three boxing rounds, corresponding approximately to different stages in the campaign process. In the first round it is not apparently clear who of the two is overpowering the other. The cartoons are more or less of the same size, and both opponents are in good shape. However, in the second round, Magufuli's opponent is bigger in size, and Magufuli is punched and has fallen on the ropes of the boxing ring. This falling down occurs during the second round of the game. In the third round, Magufuli is revived, and is actually overpowering his opponent who is pleading to his opponent for a slowdown of the game. It is again in the third round where Magufuli's opponent is calling for

assistance from the doctor. This call for a doctor, features the public claim that Lowassa was medically not well to contest for presidency.

Behind Lowassa's caricature appears a man with a knife, possibly intending to stab him. The caricature features Dr Wilbroad Slaa, who had expected to be nominated by CHADEMA, but was unexpectedly not nominated by his party. Initially he had worked hard to build CHADEMA's reputation; and for him, Lowassa came as an enemy. So the irony here is that, while Dr Slaa had always been against the ruling party, Dr Magufuli's party, this time, Lowassa who was representing the opposition became his arch-rival. But from the size of the cartoons, one sees that, when Lowassa appeared stronger, knocking down Dr Mafuguli, Dr Slaa's presence was even stronger (a bigger cartoon, with a knife, and even closer to the Lowassa).



Figure 5

In Figure 6, the then incumbent president is standing aloof, pulling a cart with several bags of unfinished business from his term in office. The unfinished businesses include are a new ship, a fly-over in the city of Dar es Salaam, a new rail way, and a regional business hub in Kigoma *Dubai ya Kigoma*. Since the fight was still going on, and since he did not know who was going to be the winner, he tells them *Oya nasubiri mpigane halafu mshindi nitamkabidhi hii mizigo*

hapa. (Hey, I am waiting for you to go on fighting, and then I will give he who wins this baggage”.



Figure 6

In Figure 7 the campaign process getting tough. Dr Magufuli is pressing up as part of the process, and from afar the incumbent President, who is also from Magufuli's own party, is asking, *Dokta kampeni inaendelea vizuri?* (Doctor, is the campaign progressing well?). In response, Magufuli is complaining that he (Kikwete) had made promises which he did not honor, and now the campaign is becoming tough form him (Magufuli): *Huoni ahadi zako zinanitesa..? Napiga pushap lakini bado hawanielewi tu..!* (Can't you see that your promises are giving me hard times? I am even doing press-ups but still they don't understand me!)



Figure 7

Figure 8 onwards present Dr Magufuli after he had won the election and sworn in President of Tanzania. Figure 8 shows Dr Magufuli starting to question issues which had not been done well by his predecessor. One of the most burning issues which remained pending was the election process in Zanzibar. The main opposition party in Zanzibar, the Civic United Front (CUF), claimed to have won the election in Zanzibar, but the electoral commission nullified the results. This led to a delicate political situation in Zanzibar, and Magufuli was expected to address the problem. Dr Magufuli is wondering about the *Zenji* (Zanzibar) unfinished election business, and is asking his predecessor, *Huu mzigo vipi?* (What about this baggage?). In response, the outgoing President, mockingly adopts Dr Magufuli's slogan of *Hapa kazi tu!* (It is all work here!), with a slight modification *Hapo kazi tu!* (It is all work there!), and leaves for Msoga, his home village.

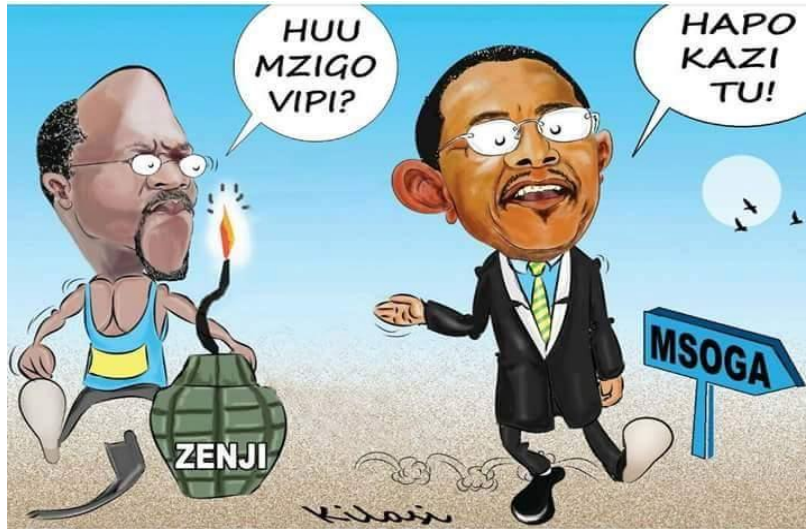


Figure 8

In Figures 9 to 14, the cartoonists provide commentaries of Dr Magufuli's performance in the immediate aftermath of the election. Figure 9 for example is about Magufuli's appointment of the prime minister. The fact that Tanzanians already had some expectations of who the next prime minister would be, the appointment of an infamous person to the position led to the mocking of the process. As such, when President Magufuli appointed Mr Majaliwa Kasim Majaliwa, Prime Minister, and many people would not believe that Magufuli was serious. This was partly because Mr Majaliwa was a low-profile person. The cartoonist is mocking Dr Magufuli by prescribing one attribute of the prime minister, *Asiwe mchapakazi ili asikufunike*. (He should not be hardworking lest he outshines you). In response, Dr Magufuli says, *Yote nayajua hayo mdogo wangu* (I know all that my younger brother).



Figure 9

Figure 10 relates to an instruction which Dr Magufuli had given, particularly to government employees not to travel abroad without a good reason. This was done as an austerity measure, to show that his new government was different from previous regimes. At around the same time of the announcement the Tanzanian national football team, Taifa Stars, travelled to Algeria to play the Algerian national team on 17 November 2015. Regrettably, Taifa Stars disgracefully lost by a defeat of 7-0 goals. The cartoonist made fun of the Taifa Stars defeat by associating it to their travelling abroad against Dr Magufuli's instruction. To that effect, Dr Magufuli is made to be telling Taifa Stars, *Mi si nimekataza safari za nje? Kilichowapeleka Algeria ni nini? Ndio mkome sasa ... Mtaisoma namba* (Didn't I stop travelling outside the country? What is it then that made you go to Algeria? That'll now stop you.. You'll learn it the hard way)



Figure 10

Figure 11 presents Dr Magufuli driving a *tingatinga* (road construction machine). This follows his background as Minister for Works. The text attached to the cartoon says *naanza na ikulu yenyewe ipo barabarani!!!* (I am starting with the state house itself, it is on the road!!!). When he was Minister for Works he was famous for demolishing buildings constructed along the road reserve land. The cartoon is a kind of predicting what he is going to do during his tenure.



Figure 11

When Dr Magufuli assumed office he declared war against all kinds of inefficiency in the government. In Figure 12 he is seen with a catapult, metaphorically used to catapult officials

who mismanage public offices. Such offices include the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA), Muhimbili National Hospital, Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA), etc. Some of the managers of these offices are heard saying *Bora tujiachie kabla hatujapigwa manati* (We better let go of ourselves before we are catapulted).



Figure 12

As part of his economic austerity plans, Dr Magufuli also stopped unnecessary visits in foreign countries. He decided not to go abroad himself unless the visit was extremely necessary. So in Figure 13 his two predecessors, Benjamin Mkapa and Jakaya Kikwete, are discussing his decision. So Mkapa is asking Kikwete *Mbona mwenzako yeye hajasafiri nje mpaka dakika hii?* (Why hasn't your colleague travelled abroad up to now?). Since Kikwete was fond of travelling abroad himself, this is what he says, *Si bure, nahisi hana hata passport* (It is not without a reason, I guess he does not even own a passport). Magufuli responds by saying *Hapa kazi tu* (Here, it's all work).



Figure 13

In Figure 14 Dr Magufuli who does not want to travel abroad willing is pushed to go there. The text says, *Mzee nenda ng'ambo kidogo ukaone ladha ya urais*. (Old man, go abroad for you to try the taste of being president).



Figure 14

Discussion

As I have already indicated in the methods section, the selection of the cartoons for the current article reflected the different stages in the presidential electoral process. What follows under this subsection is the discussion of the cartoons, and the discussion is guided by the social semiotic

perspective. In so doing, both the political landscape and public debate about the status quo in relation to the citizenry's hopes and worries are taken onboard.

Fear and ambivalence is one of the themes that political cartoons are expressing. Looking at Figure 1 for example, the art plane shows a very big number of contestants. In fact, there were 42 CCM members who contested interest in the presidential seat. In terms of information packaging in sentences, information which is presented first in a sentence is the topic or given information, and that which comes last becomes the focus or new information (Leech and Svartvik 2002:211). In social semiotic analysis, cartoons comprise text, and the order of what is presented first and what comes final matters. Magufuli's caricature is put in the middle of the plane. This is to say that he was not even considered in the sentence structure as a possible nominee.

The theme of fear also features in Figures 2, 3 and 4. These three cartoons were given during the early days of the campaign season. In Figure 2, for example, the cartoonist is using overstatement as a strategy to amplify Magufuli's arch-rival's looks. So Lowassa is televised as bigger than the TV screen, and with enlarged arm and chest muscles. Magufuli's arm under his chin is an expression of being scared. But in Figures 3 and 4, it is apparent from both the caricatures and the accompanying texts that Magufuli is scared of not receiving enough media coverage. The fact that the texts mention the opposition candidate, Luwasa and Lowassa, also point to the fact that the mass media were in favour of the opposition candidate.

Another observation is that of slim difference in terms of the strength of the two presidential contestants. Figure 5, for example, summarises the election processes in its entirety. When the race started, it was not clear who was stronger than the other. However, at some point in time, it became clear that the opposition was receiving a lot of coverage in the Media. Mwambungu (3-9

August, 2015:20) writing for the African, had this to say about Lowassa's power, "... Lowassa's entry into the opposition has jolted CCM, but jolted may is a mild term – caught CCM pants down and now it has panicked". In the art plane, this attribution corresponds to the second round of the boxing game when Magufuli fell down.

Considering the fact all the cartoons were drawn by the same cartoonist, it is appropriate to argue that the cartoonist made an objective observation in accordance with the unfolding of events. As such, in the third round, which was the final round of the boxing game, Lowassa is weakened to the extent of pleading for a slowdown from his opponent, but also for extra assistance from a doctor.

The fact that the nomination of Dr Magufuli was considered incidental by many people, both within and outside his own party, there was this feeling that he was abandoned by his party to do most of the campaigning himself.

Figure 6 is a cartoon showing that the outgoing president was taking his time, pulling a cart full of baggage containing unfinished businesses from the outgoing government. This cart is a collection unfavorable attributes of the government - a government which is inefficient in the performance of the outgoing government. It is also an expression of indecisiveness. According to the presentation of information on the art plane, the point of departure (the given information) is Jakaya Kikwete, the outgoing president. Furthermore, the placement of Magufuli on the far right makes him new information – he is actually the attention of the information packaging. However, what is more interesting is that the outgoing president is not worried about his own candidate, Dr Magufuli. This abandonment of the CCM candidate is proven by the fact that two contestants, Magufuli and Lowassa, were fighting, but he did not care who was going to win.

Saying “Go on fighting, I will give these bags to whoever wins” is an expression of caring the least about what was happening to his own presidential contestant.

In Figure 6 the incumbent president is pulling a cart, seemingly, carrying the status of the government he is leading but containing the promises he had made during his two terms. Some of those promises, which are also reflected through his campaign motto *maisha bora kwa kila Mtanzania* (good life for every Tanzanian), were to provide a better education; take electricity to all corners of Tanzania; reconstruct roads; improve communications networks; and provide water for every Tanzanian (Valy 2005). Apparently, many of the promises had not been fulfilled. The cartoonist put a caption, saying, *Oya, nasubiri mpigane, halafu mshindi nimkabidhi hii mizigo hapa*. (Guys, I wait as you are fighting, then I’ll give the winner these bags – bags of his previous campaign promises). When Dr Magufuli came to power his main undertaking was to correct such weaknesses. A website (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/01/tanzania-cost-cutting-president-john-magufuli-twitter>) under the title “What would Tanzania's cost-cutting president do? Twitter responds” was prepared in praise of his austerity measures.

There were also general complaints that the media were biased in favour of the opposition contestant. This was worrying as the media were already viewed as taking sides. This complaint also featured when the Dr Magufuli was being given a certificate of victory. The cartoonist presupposes that Dr Magufuli was complaining about this situation, *Naona wiki yote hii ni Lowassa tu, mie je?* (I see that the whole of this week is Lowassa, what about me?).

When Magufuli was already sworn in, there were problems with the Zanzibar results. The Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) decided to cancel the election close to the end of the counting of votes. The situation was such that the opposition party seemed like it was going to

win, and the suspicion was that ZEC was in favour of the ruling party. This situation was ideally supposed to be overseen by the outgoing president, but it would not do it. The cartoonist is concerned about the outgoing president going to his village of domicile, where he was going to live. Behind him was the issue of the Zanzibar conflict.

Finally, the culmination of business-as-usual habit and ensuing of new work habits are observed. Observing the cartoons showing Magufuli after being sworn in president particularly from Figure 10 to 14, Magufuli is controlling foreign travels, observation of the law (e.g. not traversing reserve land), fighting unaccountability in the government and public offices, etc. Edwards (1997, 3-4) makes an important observation in the understanding of political cartoons. He argues that cartoonists sometimes take potshots at their target, exaggerate their characteristics, and invent new incongruities. Nevertheless, because political cartoons are satirical, not everyone can understand them so easily. In this regard, Gruner (1965) contends that “.. If one is not aware of the evaluation or concept exaggerated in a piece, its witwork does not work” This is why it is important to provide additional contextual information

Conclusions

As the article attempted to show, the cartoonists have tried to narrate the presidential election process as closely to what was happening on the ground as they could. Using a number of text strategies, such as overstatement, parody, and information packaging, the cartoonists have to a large extent been able to comment, ridicule, and/or congratulate events in the 2015 presidential election processes, and particularly in connection with Dr John Magufuli. Since text is used to represent their users’ experiences of the world around them, including the worlds in the users’

own minds to describe events, states and the entities, text producers are sometimes immersed in the societal camps from which they draw their ideas.

The fact that the production of political cartoons occurs in the social milieu, and is influenced by social events at their material time of production, the cartoons used here provided personal opinions of the processes, events, or individuals. Very often the evaluations are subjective, but influenced by public dialogue, but there were also many instances of subjectivity. But more importantly, the cartoonists have been able to comment on issues which they could not have said in other platforms. For example, issues of corruption, media biases in coverage, and inefficiencies in governance could not have been said, thanks to the artwork.

Sources of the cartoons

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https://www.google.com/search?q=katuni+za+Magufuli+2015&tbm=isch&ved=2ahUKEwi6jpPs3YLYAhULaRoKHTIfBz0Q2-cCegQIABAA&oq=katuni+za+Magufuli+2015&gs_lcp=CgNpbWcQA1CJ0glYp-YJYP-GCmgAcAB4AIABkQqIAZgukgEHNS0zLjIuMpgBAKABAaoBC2d3cy13aXotaW1nwAEB&sclient=img&ei=b7b_YPqaNovSabK-nOgD&bih=458&biw=994&rlz=1C1SAVI_enTZ540TZ578#imgsrc=gUgbpHKCZCeNSM

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