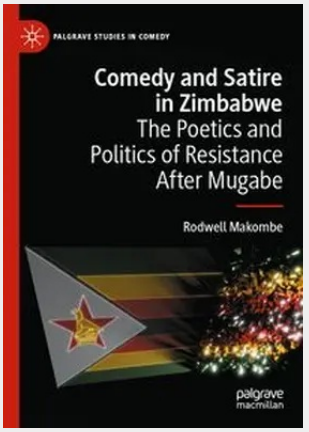
Makombe

Comedy and Satire in Zimbabwe

The Poetics and Politics of Resistance After Mugabe



The book is about comedy, the nation, and resistance in Zimbabwe, following the fall of Robert Mugabe in 2017. It explores how satiric comedies and comic texts in post-Mugabe Zimbabwe contest hegemonic narratives of the nation and authorise alternative narratives from the margins. Drawing on postcolonial theories of the nation, it analyses subversive comedies and social media texts that contest official political narratives in Zimbabwe, including the comedies of four Zimbabwean comedians—Kapfupi and Marabha, Doc Vikela, and Sabhuku Vharazipi—as well as social media texts on President Mnangagwa's Facebook Page and cartoons published by the Zimbabwean newspaper . Primarily found via social media platforms (Facebook and Youtube), these texts centre alternative views and narratives of ordinary citizens, contesting established truths and providing a counter-narration to official hegemonic discourses of the nation.

Where existing scholarship on post-Mugabe politics in Zimbabwe focuses on issues such as the coup, militarisation, and discourses of "newness", little attention has been paid to the forms of resistance used in everyday discourse by Zimbabweans, and particularly via satire and comedy. These comic texts, shared by comedians and normal citizens on social media, can provide a useful alternative perspective to make sense of the politics and political performances that characterize the new political dispensation after Mugabe.

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