
Political Satire and Laughter in Africa

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Résumé

This paper aims to reflect on "laughter" in terms of political satire in African countries. In African studies, scholars of politics are inclined to highlight tragic or sensational aspects recognized in "international community" such as conflict, corruption, dictatorship, poverty, humanitarian crisis, or failed state etc. Despite such tendencies in research, each Africanist scholar has frequently encountered "laughter" during their own fieldwork taken place in Africa. African people do not only live in tragedies but also enjoys a "normal" life with laughter even repeatedly suffering from human (political) disasters. This is a totally natural phenomenon in human life. In addition, African people do not forget to laugh off, mock, or caricature the political "perpetrators" (dictators) in their satirical humor according to the time and political space. African society is dynamically full of politically imagined laughter as well as other parts of the world (e.g. the U.S. in Trump administration). Political situation influences the character of laughter in African countries. Then, political satire would mirror the political realities and changes through laughter in Africa. This paper tackles to seek the meaning and potentiality of political satire and laughter in African countries.

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