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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

Graduate School of Media and Communications

**THE POWER OF SATIRE: AN ANALYSIS OF GADO'S CARTOONS IN THE
STANDARD NEWSPAPERS**

By

KENNETH KIPRUTO NG'ETICH

531588

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in Digital Journalism

Nairobi, Kenya

30/01/2020

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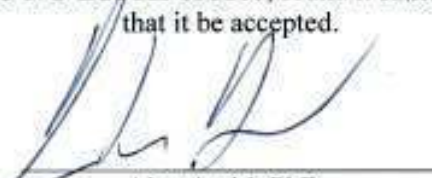
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APPROVAL PAGE


The Aga Khan University
Graduate School of Media and Communications

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Digital Journalism


Members of the Thesis Evaluation Committee appointed to examine the thesis of
KENNETH KIPRUTO NG'ETICH-535188, found it satisfactory and recommended
that it be accepted.



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DECLARATION

I, **KENNETH KIPRUTO NG'ETICH-535188**, declare this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university and that to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. The editorial assistance provided to me has in no way added to the substance of my thesis, which is the product of my own research endeavours.

Keeth

Signature

30/01/2020

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my boys Kiprop and Kigen, and to Caroline, Elizabeth and James.

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ABSTRACT

Editorial cartoons form a key part of newspapers, offering much-needed comic relief to acres of news stories. Godfrey Mwapembwa, popularly known by his pen name Gado, has been described by the Financial Times as East Africa's most important syndicated cartoonist. Yet no extensive scholarly study has been done on the way Gado frames his drawings. This study analysed how politics, politicians and political issues are framed in Gado's editorial cartoons by looking at his illustrations published by The Standard between November 1, 2018 and October 31, 2019. It starts with a brief look at modern trends in editorial cartoons. The study was guided by three objectives: (i) to determine the main characters and symbols in Gado's political cartoons; (ii) to analyse the dominant themes in Gado's political cartoons, and; (iii) to analyse the framing of politics, politicians and political issues in Gado's political cartoons. To answer the research questions, guided by the framing theory, the study collected 60 cartoons through a systematic random sampling technique and employed a thematic analysis to understand and interpret the data. By executing a framing analysis of select cartoons, this study found that characters, symbols and words –the main elements used by Gado to frame the messages in his illustrations- help advance and push the boundaries of press freedom in saying the unsayable and writing the unprintable in a way no other media can do and in ways that are more provocative than in traditional media. The study also concluded that Gado's interpretations of news events deepen and extend newspaper readers understanding of news developments and that by use of simple lines, words, characters and symbols, cartoonists effectively breakdown and communicate complex developments for the masses

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BBI:	Building Bridges Initiative
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
EACC:	Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission
FES:	Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung
KRA:	Kenya Revenue Authority
NCCK:	National Council of Churches of Kenya
ODM:	Orange Democratic Movement
SGR:	Standard Gauge Railway
VAT:	Visual Argumentation Theory