Review of: "Animation and YouTube as Alternative and Counterhegemonic Digital Public Sphere in Zimbabwe"

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I found this paper very interesting, with a great case-study. Though the author notes that various approaches have been taken to study platforms, counter publics and the digital in Zimbabwe, this is a unique case study I have yet to come across in the literature.

There are a few places where the paper could elaborate:

1. It would be great to have some clear definitions of how the author is defining and conceptualizing "counter publics" early on, and how it fits (or not) doesn't with current and former understandings on "publics" in the literature. This might also help to highlight what this particular study offers as an intervention to the field at large, beyond this case-study and this particular region.
2. It's clear that this is a textual analysis/close reading of images, but a quick description of method would be helpful here, as well as why the author thinks this approach is the most appropriate one for 1) this case study and 2) different/or in the tradition of how other scholars have "read" similar visual material, like newspaper cartoons in Zimabbwe (i.e. Wendy Willem's previous work). Does the method change because of the particular case study/medium/current political context? What are some limitations (i.e. how does one deal with the issue of multiple possible readings and ambiguities)?
3. Really enjoyed the connection to satire and humor but would have liked to see a discussion on the role of humor earlier on in the piece. It seems both theories about "publics" and "humor" are key to analyzing this material, and a discussion of which ones the author is drawing from would be great earlier on in the piece. The Mbembe and Ncube citations fit quite well, though I am wondering if there are other/more recent theorizations on humor and publics more specific to the socio/political contexts that perhaps complicate or play with the Bakhtinian approach. If there aren't, it might also be useful to mention that and speculate on why/if that limits how one reads what is happening in this case study.

Overall, this is very exciting work, and I am looking forward to reading more!