

Abstract

Political intolerance is a recurrent feature in any general election in Kenya. The charged political atmosphere during elections has often seen heated verbal tiffs among politicians and supporters of opposing political leanings degenerate into intimidation, violence, eviction of tenants from their houses, discrimination at the workplace, denial of job opportunities, and even murder of political opponents, among many other atrocious acts. This article explores how popular artistic productions deployed by the National Super Alliance (NASA) coalition in the run-up to the 8 August 2017 general elections to galvanise the electorate in its nationwide campaigns implicitly sparked intolerance among their political opponents. The article examines popular art forms such as popular songs, cartoons, memes and popular religious songs that centre on this historical period in the country and are directly associated with the NASA coalition. The article shows how these creative art forms morph into vehicles of political aspirations, codifying political visions and manifestos. They become central to political struggle and contestations over power, and when reconfigured, potentially anchor political intolerance.

Keywords:

Reconfiguration, popular art, tolerance, political intolerance, Kenya