

**RECONSTRUCTING THE MEANING OF STELLA NYANZI'S
LITERARY LANGUAGE ON FACEBOOK**

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DECLARATION

I, Tibakuno George, declare that this study is a product of my effort and it has never been submitted to any institution of higher learning for any formal award. All the cited sources have been acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my lovely parents, Kawuma Scovia and Basalirwa Elizefani.

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ABSTRACT

This study unravels the literariness of Stella Nyanzi's language in her Facebook posts to debunk the view held by some critics that Nyanzi is vulgar. The study was guided by three objectives: Stella Nyanzi's use of sexual allegories in her Facebook posts to portray poor governance; her use of satirical elements and juxtaposition to attack poor leadership, and the use of buttocks and genitalia metaphors to expose the weaknesses of leaders. The study was library-based and employed qualitative methods of data collection and analysis such close reading and documentary review. The study draws from the formalism literary theory to analyse the language of Stella Nyanzi's Facebook posts, and how they effectively depict poor governance. The findings of the study show that Stella Nyanzi uses sexual allegories to expose corruption, poverty, overstay in power, police brutality, dictatorship, and unfulfilled promises that those in power make; it shows how she interweaves the satirical elements with graphic descriptions of sex activity to defamiliarise familiar vices such as corruption, hypocrisy and inequality in Uganda. The study also examines Nyanzi's use of Juxtaposition to show how she uses it to contrast dissimilar items to put out her message. The study concludes that Stella Nyanzi effectively uses literary language to defamiliarise what has always been familiar and ingeniously presents strong issues associated with leadership and governance such as corruption, dictatorship and brutality in a rather peculiar way. Finally, the study recommends a connotative reading of Stella Nyanzi's Facebook posts to fully understand her message on Uganda's state of leadership and governance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Background of the Study

This study reconstructs the meaning in Stella Nyanzi's Facebook posts by analysing the literary devices such as sexual allegories, satire, juxtaposition, buttocks and genitalia metaphors that she uses. In so doing, it makes a departure from readers and critics who have analysed her posts denotatively. These critics have christened her posts on Facebook unpleasant on moral grounds. Therefore, the study demonstrates that she uses her posts to speak to the authority and hold them accountable on different issues in the Ugandan society. The study also explores how she criticises the current regime artistically on matters concerning governance, corruption, overstay in power and other bad governance related themes.

To speak to the authority in most African countries before a plethora of social media platforms such as Facebook, twitter and many others were created was problematic. There was a huge barricade between the authority and the ones under it. Those who needed to express their grievances to the authority had to publish a book, buy airtime on radio and television or get a column in a newspaper. Alternatively, they had to stage political rallies or demonstrations to speak to the authority in order to make it aware of their predicaments. This was not always easy. Radio and television programme managers always engaged in self-censorship for fear of losing their licenses. Political rallies were always quashed with untold brutality from both the military and the police. Publishers declined to publish books critical of an incumbent's regime for fear of arrests and all forms of harassment. If they agreed to publish, it would take them so many days to finally publish a book. Yet, some events such as corruption scandals, police brutality and election violence needed instantaneous responses from writers – a thing not all traditional media platforms would make possible. Then came social media and everything changed. Writers have found it easier and cheaper to express themselves from anywhere at any time without stringent measures.

Currently, social media has towered over and above every other communication platform the world has ever had. Facebook for instance, has become popular among writers because they use it with ease to put out their grievances without any kind of censorship. Wael Ghonim, a prominent Egyptian activist, in his biographical book, *Revolution 2.0: The Power of People is Stronger than the People in Power: A Memoir* argues:

Do you know why the media are attacking Facebook? Because it does not receive bribes to publish false stories. And it does not succumb to security pressure and delete a story. Facebook became our means to express our opinions, ambitions, and dreams without pressure from anyone. Now our message reaches as far as their biased newspapers. But our message is our own. We are Egyptian youth who love one another, care for one another, and have a voice. (92)

The above, explains how social media platforms such as Facebook are heads and shoulders above other communication platforms in helping writers speak to the authority. Ghonim centres on Egypt though, whatever he says, is a reality reflected in most of Africa as well. Writers find it easier to speak to the authority using Facebook. He stresses that it has eliminated all the challenges that come with using traditional means of communication. He also adds that Facebook has not only given them a voice but it has also enabled them to voice their story.

Similarly, apart from using social media spaces to express their grievances, African writers are using these platforms to ignite conversations and debates about certain things considered elephants in the room in their societies. As a result, the itinerary on mainstream media has been shaped by what is always trending on social media. As Mutsvairo, in *Digital Activism in the Social Media Era Critical Reflections on Emerging Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa*, explains:

Social networks like Twitter and Facebook, as well as messaging platforms such as Whatsapp, have become crucial spaces for the expression of dissent, the mobilization of activists and conduits to influence mainstream media agendas. (vi)

Social media enables writers to share stories about different challenges in their societies. These challenges in most cases include police brutality, corruption scandals, mysterious murders, and many others. The media houses always ignore some issues considered politically sensitive due to the

reasons highlighted in the previous paragraphs. However, when they notice that the conversations on these issues have been started on social media, they are left with no choice but to dive into the murky waters of these concerns. In other words, Facebook empowers writers to influence bulletins in newsrooms. A case in point, Stella Nyanzi's posts that showed how lack of pads affect the performance of school going girls were given attention on social media first. Later, the mainstream media started picking interest in the plight of these girls and different interventions to this problem were discussed. One of the reasons why the mainstream media was hesitant at first to cover these stories is that they did not want to be seen as though they were faulting the head of state. During his 2016 election campaigns, he made a pledge in which he promised that he would offer free pads to school going girls if he was elected (Rukundo 253). Covering the plight of girls in light with this fact meant going against the authorities.

To conglomerate the above, Pătruț comments on the power Social media gives writers and their followers in *Social Media in Politics: Case Studies on the Political Power of Social Media* thus:

In the digital context, the individuals can be active, and they can produce and manipulate contents in an easy and quick way. consequently, they stop being dependent on info-communication hierarchy, assuming the control over the contents that interest them. As producers of online contents, the active participants become, consequently, leaders of opinion and creators of noise and buzz. (v)

As stated in the above extract, people in this era of social media have become the producers of information unlike in the recent past (prior to the creation of Facebook and other social media platforms) when only the bourgeoisie and the government had control of it. People on social media are now on the lookout for information that is in line with their interests, challenges and triumphs in their society. Writers use the power social media gives them to ignite debate among the people about the issues concerning how they are governed.

In the same vein, social media has broken the monopoly and hegemony traditional media had on information. Accessing information is unrestricted than ever before. Besides, people exchange ideas

with ease. As Clinton puts it in her speech, *Remarks on Internet Freedom*:

Now, in many respects, information has never been so free. There are more ways to spread ideas to more people than at any moment in history. And even in authoritarian countries, information networks are helping people discover new facts and making governments more accountable. (2)

Clinton's observations mirror what happens in most African countries. Writers are using social media to enlighten people about the power they have, their rights and what ought to happen in their societies as opposed to what their leaders are offering them. They also speak to the authorities and ask them to account for the challenges in the societies that they lead.

In 2006, Facebook was introduced to the rest of the world.¹ Different people have used and still use Facebook to communicate with others and express their views. Some creative writers in Uganda use Facebook for literary expression. Statistically, there are about 2, 289, 000 Facebook users in Uganda as of October 2019². Stella Nyanzi has 207, 374 followers on Facebook (as of November 2018 as shown on her Facebook timeline) Majority of her followers are Ugandans. The ever-increasing numbers of Ugandans on Facebook has worried the state. This has seen it put laws, which many have interpreted as limits on online freedom. In 2018, the Ugandan authorities introduced a tax on social media platforms. Malaba Tom and Mugerwa Yassin note:

Faced with an increasingly critical citizenry, the government has slapped new taxes on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Skype and Viber to stop what the President has called lugambo (gossip).³

Malaba and Mugerwa demonstrate that in imposing a tax on social media platforms, the state intends to limit criticism from its citizens online. This indeed shows how the state is not accommodative of the freedom of expression on social media platforms.

Facebook posts fit into the framework of popular arts. In her book, *Popular Arts in Africa*, Karin Barber makes different illustrations on what popular arts entail. Her observations include their style, power and their audience. Her observations can be used to categorise Facebook in popular arts as expounded below.

Firstly, popular arts are inclusive, and give writers the advantage to be as creative as they can be. In this same line, Barber argues that popular arts exploit means of technology at their disposal. (5) This is exactly what happens as authors maximise Facebook to create posts. She further argues:

Popular arts is a category that seems to be characterised, above all by its inclusiveness and its apparently infinite elasticity. It has accommodated not only forms generally recognised as arts - such as theatre, instrumental and vocal music, paintings and sculptures, written fiction – but also such diverse phenomena as decorated bread labels. (5)

Facebook enables the reader to interact with the author in the comment section at any time. Besides, anyone can contribute content and information without the restrictions that come with mainstream media. The consumers and producers of information interact together freely.

Further observations by Barber on popular arts show how Facebook fits in their framework. She observes that, “they combine elements from the traditional and the metropolitan cultures...” (13). Through Facebook, writers can interweave aspects from modern and traditional cultures. They heavily borrow from two far-flung cultures or more to weave posts in a creative manner. To illustrate this, Stella Nyanzi’s Facebook posts are a hybrid of Kiganda culture that allows Nalongos (mothers of twins) to use “vulgar language” to express themselves and the modern culture (that allows her to use Facebook and employ narrative techniques). Since Facebook, like all other popular arts is not restrictive on all elements of expression, writers highlight their ideas and grievances with ease.

Closely related, Facebook enables writers to express themselves freely. This makes it to fit into the popular arts framework. Popular arts have the power to communicate which explains why those in power (Barber 2) always repress them. In Uganda for instance, in February 2016 the state shutdown social media platforms during the election period⁴. This was an attempt by the government to weaken the power of social media. The state had no way of controlling who posts what; they chose to shut it down. This was its way of putting hurdles around these platforms to hinder people from expressing their views online.

Most disgruntled people in Africa turn to popular arts to tell their stories since their states deny them space on mainstream media. As Baker puts it:

In Africa ordinary people tend to be invisible and inaudible. In most African states, numerically tiny elites not only consume a vastly disproportionate share of the national wealth, they also take up all the light. Newspapers, radio, and television offer a magnified image of the ruling class that controls them. Not only does the ruling class make the news, it is the news. (3)

In line with the above, in most African countries, the ordinary people's struggles are denied enough coverage on mainstream media. Most of these countries are capitalistic economies where owners of media houses tell the stories of the elites in order to get money from them in form of advertisements and program sponsorships. This makes them to be bent towards highlighting the stories of those who determine their profits input. However, people have now turned to popular arts such as Facebook to tell their own stories and to create their own news. They also follow influential writers who tailor posts to suit the struggles they grapple with on a daily basis. They cheer on anyone who sternly speaks to the authority and utilise the comment sections on the writers' posts on Facebook to not only engage in political discussions and debates but also tell their real experiences to their nation and the rest of the world.

Popular arts play a big role in the enlightenment of people since they are conduits of information. They help them to be conscious of whatever goes on in their country. As Baker puts it:

Truly, popular art, in this view, is art which furthers the cause of the people by opening their eyes to their objective situation in society. It "conscientizes" them, thus preparing them to take radical and progressive action. It is contrasted with "people's" art, the spontaneous expression of the ordinary people who have not yet been conscientised. (7)

The above excerpt mirrors what goes on in most African countries, the people are getting enlightened and have less fear in speaking to the authority. The days when only politicians spoke to the authority are long gone, as people have learnt that they too can send a message to the authority, a thing that the digital era activists and writers have helped them discover. The people are more alert and are always

sharing information about things mainstream media houses ignore. These may include police brutality, election rigging and extra-judicial murders.

1.1.1 Stella Nyanzi: Social and Literary Background.

Stella Nyanzi was born in Jinja, Uganda on June 16, 1974 to Joseph Nyanzi, a medical doctor, and Harriet Nyanzi, a social worker. She commenced her education at Gayaza Junior School. On accomplishing her primary level, she joined Gayaza High School for her secondary education. From 1993 to 1996, she was at Makerere University where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication and Literature. In 1999, she attended Federal University of London where she got a Master of Science in Medical Anthropology in 2000. She went on to attain a PhD in Social Anthropology from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in 2008. Her interests during her PhD study and up to do date are in sexualities, reproductive health, health policy, youth and children. Her education background in literature, sexuality and queer studies is reflected in her posts on social media as she takes advantage of these disciplines to uniquely speak to the authority.

She is currently a research fellow at Makerere University. She first got the glare of massive publicity in 2015 during the presidential campaigns when she tailored posts on social media using sexual allegories and metaphors to criticise the state for perpetuating election violence, bribery and election manipulation.

In 2017, she gained more attention from both local and international mainstream media outlets when she wrote various posts in which she equated the first family to various sex organs for their failure to deliver a presidential campaign pledge. The head of state had promised that his government would provide sanitary pads to school going girls if he won elections. Shortly after he was announced winner of the election, he backtracked the pledge, which led to Nyanzi's critical posts that culminated into her arrest on April 7, 2017. She was charged with offences in the Computer Misuse Act 2011, in

particular cyber harassment and offensive communication, which entails one guilty if they use obscene, lewd and lascivious language. She spent a whole month in prison.

Nyanzi blames the government for the death of her parents. This also explains why she cannot stop speaking to the authority whenever the state fails to offer welfare to its citizens. First, she says that her father died in 2014 due to failure to find medicine at PHC III medical facility at Kiyumba Village while being driven to Masaka Hospital in search for medicine that could have cured him. She went on to criticize the government's priority of buying bullets and teargas yet people lack medicine in public health facilities. She says that her mother too died due to the government's negligence of the health sector:

Did I seek her forgiveness in 2015 when my mother, a long time NRM cadre and retrenched social worker, died from failing to get an ambulance to transfer her from our home in Kizungu to Masaka Hospital? She fell down and died as neighbours struggled to find adequate transport to take her to hospital, after learning there was no ambulance for her. If the Musevenis bought less armoured Black Mambas and FWD SUVs, less jet fuel and convoy diesel, but more ambulances for our emergency medicine, my mother would be living today. I reject the forgiveness from her tiny vagina and tinier brains. (30th March, 2017)⁵

This explains why Nyanzi uses Facebook to write literary pieces about the health sector and the state's priorities in the face of the dire situation in public hospitals.

Furthermore, Stella Nyanzi posts on Facebook to portray and criticise corruption, brutality, religious hypocrisy and dictatorial tendencies in the Ugandan society. She is candid, assertive, bold, outspoken and unreserved in her posts, a blend of factors that have made her a household name. Many Ugandans admiringly talk about her as others consider her posts disgusting, vulgar, profane, lewd, uncouth, and offensive.

Unlike Stella Nyanzi, most Ugandan writers are only talked about in lecture rooms, classrooms and in literary circles. The discussion about her work has penetrated into media houses, homes, commuter taxis and all public places because of her language. Her language has generated debate in the public spaces as some say it is obscene while others consider it literature and great. Those who consider it

obscene do so because she uses words like ‘vagina’, ‘penis’, ‘buttocks’ and descriptions of these parts. They do not contextualise her usage of these words.

Stella Nyanzi uses sexual allegories, buttocks and genitalia metaphors to capture the attention of the authority. She defamiliarises the political situation in Uganda to give it a fresh outlook to generate debate and conversations about things that have gone amiss in her society. She argues:

Anyone who knows my timeline on Facebook knows that when I write in the so-called clean language, my likes and shares are very small. When I write using graphic language, which I have no problem with because I never created these words; I get hundreds of likes, comments and shares. A language like Luganda is over 1,000 years old and the English language is even older; so, I didn’t create these words but I found them; let’s use them.⁶

This demonstrates that Nyanzi uses sexual allegories, buttocks and genitalia metaphors as techniques to grab the attention of her readers. Her activism cannot be possible without followers so, she has to find means to reach the authority she *speaks to* and the people she *speaks for*. Her language has made her receive attention and responses from the authority and people in her society.

Furthermore, Stella Nyanzi is bent towards changing the status quo since her posts contest power. She rallies people behind a resistance of the authority that she argues has failed Ugandans. She time and again reconstructs authority by showing what ought to be happening as opposed to what the authority offers. She isolates herself from the ruling class and identifies with the marginalised by ensuring that she tells their tale. Her posts are always about marginalised groups in society for example the poor, girls, women, and the unemployed youth. She is unsympathetic towards the authority, which she blames for the woes of the suffering groups in the Ugandan society.

Nyanzi’s posts are set at a time when the ruling National Resistance Movement has transformed from being democratic to dictatorial. In 1995, the current regime promulgated Uganda’s fourth constitution. This won the ruling party supporters and there was hope that Uganda was heading to a better future where the rule of law would be fronted ahead of anything else. The previous regimes of Milton Obote and Idi Amin had stifled democracy (Reuss and Titeca 4). However, the ruling

National Resistance Movement created an atmosphere that frustrated the constitutionalism it had orchestrated in the 1995 Fourth Constitution. A case in point, in 2005 and 2017 majority of its members of parliament voted for the removal of the term limit and age limit from the constitution respectively. Political pundits, as shown in the literature review have interpreted these scenarios as the head of state's way to strengthen his grip on power. The fact that there is no law to check how long a head of state should rule has created an atmosphere of hopelessness. In writing her posts, Nyanzi is responding to the National Resistance Movement's transition from democracy to dictatorship.

Besides, political pundits have pointed out that the National Resistance Movement is less appealing to the majority Ugandan youths in their early thirties and below since, they did not witness the dictatorship of the past regimes. Reuss and Titeca argue:

...demographically Uganda went through major changes: 78% of the population is below 30 years of age, and was therefore born during the NRM regime.¹ These 'Museveni babies' have never experienced any other president and government and have never experienced nationwide turmoil, and, in the face of their search for jobs and livelihoods, are less impressed by the 'liberation argument'. (1)

The above situation has triggered an atmosphere of pessimism among the largest group of the population, the youth. This has piled pressure on the state that has resorted to consolidating itself in power further.

The National Resistance Movement rule has been synonymous with many corruption scandals in Uganda in recent years. The ruling party has based on patronage politics to consolidate its power as shown in the literature review. This has ignited a lot of backlash from Ugandans who feel cheated by their leaders. The state has taken a step to stop corruption by using the Anticorruption Unit and the Inspectorate of Government to end corruption. However, the corruption scandals keep raring their heads in the newspapers regardless. Some critics, as shown in the literature review argue that these bodies only reprimand low ranking officials leaving the top ones scotch free. This has caused an

atmosphere of hopelessness among the citizenry and it comes as no surprise when Nyanzi comes out to use Facebook to condemn corruption.

In addition, some critics have also shown that the ruling party is using the electoral commission, parliament, judiciary, police and the military to control and consolidate itself in power. Political commentators have demonstrated that the current regime setup fails institutionalism in Uganda since the ruling party uses these institutions to strengthen its grip on power. This has caused anxiety among the citizens. Nyanzi writes to criticise the state for failing institutionalism to take root in Uganda.

Judging from how she writes her posts, Stella Nyanzi is definitely a literary writer. She consciously and purposefully employs narrative techniques in her Facebook posts, which makes them to transcend ordinary speech. These narrative techniques, like shown earlier include metaphors, allegories, satire and juxtaposition. Formalist theorists argue that what makes a given work literary is its literariness. This is seen when a literary piece of work contains narrative techniques and a unique usage of words. Nyanzi's literary works mirror this formalistic principle.

Moreover, she is not the only one who has used metaphors and allegories before; other prolific writers have employed these devices to make themes in their works more perceptible. For instance, Jonathan Swift uses allegory, metaphors and satirical elements in his literary essay, *A Modest Proposal* in which he suggests that new-borns should be eaten. His essay intends to criticise the British misrule in Ireland. However, some people who read his essay at the time thought he was an advocate of cannibalism, which was far from his intension. Ayi Kwei Armah in *The Beautiful Ones are Not Yet Born*, uses descriptions of faecal matter to criticise the postcolonial African leadership in Ghana for failing the expectations of Ghanaians. Critics have commented on literary works of writers who use excremental language. In his essay, *Excremental Postcolonialism*, Esty Joshua comments thus on *The Beautiful One are Not Yet Born*

To put this another way, Armah uses excremental language form an extended Freudian unmasking or desublimation: odorizes money, converting it into shit and forcing readers wealth as polished waste. He

reduces the comprador's foreign fancy hotels, and luxury goods to excremental status-denouncing them as the cruelest form of excess. In a system entirely nomic balance, shit flows through the novel like an alternative rency, a cruel displacement of productive capital. The shit gleam are figurative expressions of underdevelopment consumption, of failed modernization in the streets... (33)

The above can help explain how writers use what some critics consider vulgar language metaphorically to criticise vices in their societies. Therefore, Nyanzi has also used excremental language in her posts to condemn corruption, overstay in power and other bad governance related themes that she thinks are reflected in the Ugandan society.

1.2 **Statement of the Problem**

Most studies in literature have focused on the four genres namely poetry, drama, novels (prose) and oral literature expressed graphically in books or orally. This study examines posts on social media in particular Facebook as another platform for literary expression. It focuses on Stella Nyanzi's posts on Facebook in prose form, which most critics such as Andrew Mwenda and Father Simon Lokodo have knowingly or unknowingly misinterpreted. They have branded her language immoral, obscene, profane, uncouth, abusive, lewd and vulgar, yet she purposefully employs literary devices to make the subject she addresses more perceptible to her readers of her Facebook posts.

This study therefore analyses Stella Nyanzi's literary language on Facebook. It focuses on her use of satire, juxtaposition, sexual allegories, buttocks and genitalia metaphors to address the theme of bad governance in Uganda.

1.3 **Scope of the Study.**

The study focuses on Nyanzi's language on Facebook. It examines sexual allegories, satire, juxtaposition, buttocks and genitalia metaphors that she uses to speak to the authority.

The study analyses her political posts on the Ugandan society that she posted from 2015 to 2018. More still, this study applies formalist literary theory to reconstruct Nyanzi's language on Facebook. In so doing, it studies posts whose language has been considered vulgar by some critics.

1.4 Objective of the Study.

The general objective of this study is to reconstruct the meaning in Stella Nyanzi's literary language in her posts on Facebook.

The Specific objectives are:

1. To analyse how Stella Nyanzi uses sexual allegories in her Facebook posts to portray overstay in power, greed for power and dictatorial tendencies in Uganda.
2. To examine the satirical elements and juxtaposition in Stella Nyanzi's Facebook posts by exploring how she uses these narrative techniques to criticise individualism, misuse of the taxpayers' money and the unfulfilled promises that leaders make.
3. To analyse how Stella Nyanzi employs the buttocks and genitalia metaphors to make leaders accountable and to expose their weaknesses.

1.5 Hypothesis.

It is hypothesized that:

Stella Nyanzi employs sexual allegories, satire, juxtaposition, buttocks and genitalia metaphors to underscore the theme of bad governance and make it more perceptible to the readers.

1.6 Review of Literature.

When Nyanzi's posts went viral, some critics in Uganda were concerned about her language. They explained that it was offensive. Andrew Mwenda, a renowned journalist and a political analyst in a Facebook post asserts:

Stella Nyanzi's vulgarities are a sign of a deep seated intellectual inferiority complex. She is unable to respond to intellectual arguments. So she retreats to indecent, obscene and vulgar words and phrases to advance her empty arguments. She is a pseudo intellectual with nothing to offer but is instead projecting her insecurities through vulgarities. (1 April, 2017)⁷

Mwenda's argument on Nyanzi's language is misplaced and misdirected. He analyses Nyanzi's Facebook posts denotatively yet she simply uses sexual allegories, buttocks and genitalia metaphors to speak to the authority, and expose the plight of people in her society in a defamiliarised manner. One has to analyse her words connotatively in order to understand her concerns. She is not a pseudo-intellectual as Mwenda argues because, she skilfully mashes up her sexuality scholarship with literature in her posts to mirror whatever goes on in her society.

In the same vein, Father Simon Lokodo, the Minister of Ethics and Integrity in Uganda while appearing on NBS TV *morning breeze* program on 10th April, 2017 says: "The language Dr. Stella Nyanzi uses is profane and immoral. She infringes on the rights of people with her language." Lokodo's submission just like that of Mwenda is misplaced. Nyanzi's language is neither immoral nor profane. The onus is always on the readers of literary texts to deeply analyse them in order to best understand what the words therein connote as opposed to basing on their denotative meanings. Both Mwenda and Lokodo have based on the denotative meaning of Nyanzi's posts to brand her vulgar, obscene, profane and abusive. This study therefore critically analyses Nyanzi's language in a connotative manner with literary lenses to reconstruct the meaning therein.

Writers employ various literary devices in an attempt to fulfil their aim of criticizing many things that have gone amiss in their societies. Nyanzi is not an exception. She is a writer who employs various literary techniques to speak to the authority. This makes the language in her Facebook posts to be

different from that of everyday speech. One has to analyse the literary devices she employs to understand her message. Cook and Okenimpke in their book, *Ngugi wa Thiong'o: an exploration of his writings*, quote Ngugi's argument thus:

I would use any and everything I had ever learnt about the craft of fiction-allegory, parable, satire, narrative, description, reminiscence, flashback, interior monologue, stream of consciousness, dialogue, drama – provided it came naturally in the development of character, theme and story. (120)

Indeed, Nyanzi lives by this principle. She uses sexual allegories, satire, juxtaposition, buttocks and genitalia metaphors to weave her literary works in a bid of exposing the challenges people in her society face and to speak to the authority that she claims is behind the dire situation in her society. Her language therefore is elevated. It has to be analysed in a connotatively since it is literature and not ordinary speech.

In response to Nyanzi's arrest in 2017 on grounds that she used offensive language, Rukundo wrote an article, *'My President is a Pair of Buttocks': the limits of online freedom of expression in Uganda*, in which he demonstrates:

The wording of the Computer Misuse Act's provisions is certainly prone to attack. Words like 'obscene', 'lewd', 'lascivious' and 'indecent' in section 24 and 'disturb the peace, quiet' in section 25 are not defined in the Act. This, it can be argued, makes the offences unclear contrary to Article 28(12), which requires that offences be clearly defined. (264-265)

Rukundo's submission exposes the lacuna in the Computer Misuse Act that is used as a basis to apprehend Nyanzi for calling the head of state "a pair of buttocks". Since the provisions are equivocal and broad, the act fails to set a barricade between what is obscene and what is not. This makes the act liable to misuse since the authority can use its loopholes to curtail online freedom in future like it has done Nyanzi. Besides, the act does not give a criterion on how the meanings of words will be reached to bring out their obscenity. Yet in reality, words have both denotative and connotative meanings.

In line with the above, in the aforementioned article, Rukundo criticises the government for using section 24 and 25 of the Computer Misuse Act of 2011 to limit freedom of expression online. His submission is based on what happens to Nyanzi:

Her case is emblematic of the shrinking space for free expression in the Ugandan cyberspace. While the Internet is frequently hailed as a tool for individual free expression, this is not the case in Uganda where the state is using the Computer Misuse Act, specifically sections 24 and 25, to limit online freedom. (252)

Rukundo observes that the act is unlawfully used to curtail online freedom in Uganda. Yet the internet is designed to offer power to people to express themselves in ways they feel comfortable. His remarks amalgamate with Ngugi's in *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams: Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa*, in which he asserts, "Art, on the other hand, in its beginnings was always an ally of the human search for freedom from hostile nature and nurture." (28) Nyanzi uses literary art to express herself and expose what the people in her society grapple with. Using the act to limit this freedom and that of others like her is going against her freedom of speech and literary expression. Rukundo asserts further:

...it is often argued that freedom of expression promotes free discussion which is necessary for democracy to function effectively as citizens need to be exposed to a range of ideas in order to make good judgments. (256)

Basing on the above argument, Rukundo demonstrates that the state's continuous use of the Computer Misuse Act of 2011 to arrest and harass its critics thwarts democracy from flourishing in the country. Consequently, this hampers the exchange of ideas, views and opinions.

In relation to the above, the reason why we have what Rukundo has termed, a "shrinking space for free expression in the Ugandan cyberspace" can be best understood through Ngugi's observations in the aforementioned book:

The more absolutist the state, the less it is likely to ask questions of itself or entertain questioning by others...such a state has a narcissistic image of itself as the holder of absolute truth. In other words, absolute power is

taken for absolute knowledge. Such a state regards those who ask questions as rebels, subversives, madmen. (15-16)

Ngugi brings to the facade the fate of writers who speak truth to an authority that is not interested in being criticised and questioned. The resilient writers who criticise and question the state are seen as “madmen”. Since the state has the power, it is always influencing its own kind of truth. This is exactly what happened to Nyanzi when she criticised the head of state for failing to provide pads to school going girls like he had promised during the 2016 election campaigns. She was arrested in 2017 as a result and was branded a mad person by the state. It also attempted to carry out a mental examination on her. To explain this further, Ngugi gives an example of a Kenyan writer called Abdulaif Abdalla who was arrested in 1969 for asking “Kenya, where are we heading?” (17) This in other words demonstrates that states always want to muffle questions and criticisms from writers.

Renowned writers have expressed themselves using sexual metaphors before. Their works have been included on the literature syllabus in Ugandan secondary schools over the years. Okot P’Bitek, a renowned Ugandan poet metaphorically uses words that describe parts of the male organ; his works are enjoyed in literary circles in and out of Africa. In his poem, *Song of Lawino*, his narrator, Lawino says:

A man’s manliness is seen
in the arena,
No one touches another’s
testicles. (43)

In the above, Okot P’Bitek uses the word “testicles” metaphorically just like Nyanzi uses words such as vagina, buttocks and clitoris. This demonstrates that she is not vulgar but like her predecessors in the writing arena, she uses these words to put her message across. However, when Nyanzi used sexual metaphors like other writers have done over the years, she was arrested in 2017. This prompted Rukundo to write, “Moreover, the language that Dr Nyanzi used can be considered creative and artistic expression which should not be restricted.” (266) Rukundo’s observation questions why

creative and artistic expression should be limited yet it heavily depends on the implied meaning as opposed to the denotative meaning.

In the same line, Nyanzi's posts are always pregnant with a message to those in authority. Writers write to be heard and use different styles at their disposal to uniquely package their message. When Nyanzi was arrested because she wrote a post in which she equated the head of state to "a pair of buttocks", it showed that the state was curtailing freedom of expression since she had a message as Rukundo puts it:

In Dr Nyanzi's case, her Facebook post was a reaction to the president's statement in which he had denied being a servant of the people of Uganda. While her statement was certainly caustic, acerbic and impolite, the vulgar content in itself did communicate a message. The president's words had been autocratic and threatening, and, in a young democracy like Uganda, worrying. For a law to require her to respond politely would defeat the purpose of free expression as a check on power. (266)

Rukundo observes that indeed the words Nyanzi uses to describe the head of state might denotatively be seen as vulgar. However, he acknowledges that they have an inferred message that the state should focus on since she is free to express herself in any way she deems fit to check power.

African proverbs are packed with metaphors. It is against this background that some people express themselves using sexual allegories and buttocks metaphors in their speech. Criticising Nyanzi for her choice of words is therefore misplaced since she is not the only one who has metaphorically used the language in question before. Charles Onyango-Obbo a renowned columnist and a political analyst in an article *A 'Pair of Buttocks' and the Big Silent War Over the Museveni years*, describes Nyanzi as, "...an amateur when it comes to spinning catchy and dramatic lines about the nether regions. The master is...President Museveni himself."⁸ He goes ahead to describe instances in which the head of state uses sexual allegories and buttocks metaphors:

In December 2015, Museveni, this time publicly, again drew inspiration from the derriere region to issue a memorable warning following clashes between former Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi's fans and NRM supporters in Ntungamo.

“If you put your finger in the anus of a leopard, you are in trouble”, Museveni said, as he warned in a televised statement that the Amama supporters would pay dearly. And from there, he earned the nickname the “leopard”.⁹

In making this case, Charles Obbo defends Nyanzi’s sexual allegories and metaphors, since she uses them metaphorically like the head of state. In light with this background, Rukundo argues, “Restricting artistic expression simply because it is done online would not be realistic.” (267) Nyanzi’s critics have done so selectively since none of them has come out to criticise the head of state for using the word “anus” publicly.

In the same vein, Nyanzi embeds literature with her sexuality scholarship to speak to the authority. She gives people in authority metaphorical names to relate their actions and policies to what the organs produce. In doing this, she defamiliarises issues in her society in order to grab the attention of those in power and the masses. Nyanzi defamilairises bad governance, unfulfilled pledges from leaders, corruption, unemployment and police brutality in her society. Her aim is to grab the attention of most people in her society to the aforementioned challenges. This kind of language actually makes her posts to trend on social media, televisions, radios, in homes, lecture rooms, taxis and other places in society because a good number of people who read them clearly see how they mirror their society.

In line with this, writers always find ways of packaging their message to grab the attention of their readers. Ngugi wa Thiong’o asserts:

Art on the other hand, is revolutionary by its very nature as art. It is always revising itself – the avant-garde overthrowing old forms. Even in the work of the same artist there is a constant struggle to find new expression – a continual striving for self-renewal. (13)

Writers are always in search of better ways of expressing themselves to reach their audiences. In other words, they want to innovate new ways of expression. It is from the revelation in the above quotation that Nyanzi’s works can be viewed.

According to the Kiganda Culture, a Nalongo (mother of twins) has the license to use what people call obscene language. Nyanzi in a Facebook post says:

In Buganda, Nalongos have the customary license to profane. If you do not know what Kiganda customs are, do not open your big mouths. (5 April, 2018)¹⁰

Nyanzi is using graphic language because her culture permits her. However, it should be noted that she uses this kind of language in a creative way to communicate as opposed to abusing people. Her knowledge of literature has helped her tailor posts to fit into the frame works of allegories, metaphors, juxtaposition and satirical elements.

Some critics have come out to support Nyanzi by revealing that her posts have a message that most Ugandans can identify with. Uwitware, a renowned journalist posted on her personal blog to assert:

I do not condone Nyanzi's vulgar language but I stand with her on the points that matter to me as an ordinary Ugandan. I don't care what others think of me, for all I know, in my line of work I have travelled this country, spoken to the poorest of people, who cannot even afford a meal a day. On the other side of life, I have seen Government officials enjoy a luxurious life oblivious of the dying population.¹¹

In the above, Uwitware agrees and demonstrates that Nyanzi's posts portray the grim picture of the plight of the poor in Uganda. As a journalist, she admits she has encountered poor people who struggle to have a meal a day in a country where the rich, especially those in power have done nothing to intervene. Instead, they live luxurious lives with their backs to a dying population. In her entire blog post, she admits that school going girls suffer greatly due to lack of pads like Nyanzi emphasises in her posts.

There is still an ongoing debate on the use of social media to speak to the authority. Some critics strongly believe that states in Africa are not moved by the efforts by activists to speak to them on social media since, as critics submit, they have control of the traditional media outlets in their grip.

Mutsvaairo strongly argues:

However, it is important to highlight that several governments in Africa will not be bothered by what people are saying online as long as they still control conventional media outlets such as radio, TV and newspapers because they know not everyone is able to understand social media especially for political purposes. (12)

Although governments still control conventional media, one would disagree with Mutsvairo's submission. African governments are bothered about the cyberspace since they have less control of it. Ngugi says, "The post-colonial state has fear of the uncontrolled space..." (64). They are bothered about the freedom of expression that the internet gives its users and therefore work around the clock to curtail and limit this freedom. They have resorted to threats, arrests, harassments, and shutting down the internet when the political tensions are at their pinnacle in order to hamper the freedom it offers. In fact, Nyanzi was arrested for speaking to the authority through Facebook. If the state was unbothered, it would not have arrested her for criticising those in power. The traditional media houses are no longer the only source of information and therefore the authority knows social media has taken over.

The role of literature is to reflect what goes on in the society. Most literary writers' works are not born out a vacuum, they mirror the challenges of the times they live in. The artist not only mirrors the situation in a given society but also becomes a voice of the voiceless as Ngugi puts it, "Writers in contemporary Africa are saying what the majority can actually see but about which they remain in enforced silence." (28) In other words, Ngugi's words imply that there is a continuous effort by the state to stifle voices of the people. The artist therefore defies this to speak out. Hans Christian Andersen's story "*The Emperor's New Suit*", offers the best illustration herein, two conmen lie a flamboyant emperor that they can make him a splendid suit that will help him know who is foolish, wise and simple in character. However, they weave nothing at all and pretend to have. For fear of being seen as foolish, the "honest" officials that the Emperor sends to check on the progress of the cloth lie that it is splendid. The emperor too sees nothing of the cloth but for fear of being branded foolish, he not only pretends to see the cloth but also pretends to wear it. He even sees himself in the mirror naked but pretends to see a splendid cloth. This is typical of most leaders in Africa who oppose reality for fear of admitting their weaknesses. To show off his "new suit", the flamboyant Emperor makes a procession as people cheer him on about how beautifully dressed he looks. However, as Andersen puts it:

"But he has nothing on at all," said a little child at last. "Good heavens! listen to the voice of an innocent child," said the father, and one whispered to the other what the child had said. "But he has nothing on at all," cried at last the whole people. That made a deep impression upon the emperor, for it seemed to him that they were right; but he thought to himself, "Now I must bear up to the end." And the chamberlains walked with still greater dignity, as if they carried the train which did not exist. (240)

This situation shows us that the artist should be given the freedom to express himself in any way to check on power which might be making mistakes and in unnecessary fear of being criticised. The emperor continues making mistakes simply because he wants to be seen "wise". The child in this story is representative of writers who mirror what they see. When Nyanzi reminded the head of state about a presidential campaign pledge he made in which he promised to offer girls with sanitary pads she was arrested. She is the Andersen child who speaks out truth to the authority and instead of working on the issues she addresses the state arrests her.

1.7 Significance.

Unlike earlier criticism of Stella Nyanzi's Facebook posts, this study examines her language from a literary perspective. Therefore, it considers Facebook as another medium of literary expression. The aim of this study is to help readers of Nyanzi's Facebook posts to appreciate the way she uses language to decry predicaments of the Ugandan society. It unravels the prejudice on her literary posts by some critics who view them as vulgar.

1.8 Theoretical Framework.

This study applies formalism literary theory to reconstruct the meaning of Stella Nyanzi's language on Facebook.

Formalism emanated from numerous literary activities that the Moscow Linguistic Circle and the St. Petersburg based group, Opojaz engaged in. As its name suggests, formalism is a literary theory that concerns itself with form and devices that make electronic, oral or written pieces literary. The major protagonists and advocates of this literary theory were Victor Shklovsky, Roman Jakobson, Boris

Eikhenbaum, Osip Brik and Yury Tynyanov. Precisely, their major concern rotates around the language of literature and how peculiar it is.

On the face of it all, formalists concern themselves with the analysis of literary language through identifying features that set it apart from non-literary language. They strongly believe that authors use language peculiarly from its everyday usage. As Eagleton puts it:

The formalists, then, saw literary language as a set of deviations from a norm, a kind of linguistic violence: literature is a ‘special’ kind of language, in contrast to the ‘ordinary’ language we commonly use. (4)

Eagleton’s observation herein clearly shows that the formalists were interested in showing the distinct features of literary pieces that set literature apart from ordinary language. The formalists drew a divide between literature and ordinary language. In non-literary language that is commonly used in reports, textbooks, newspaper and magazine articles, writers therein endeavour to be unequivocal in their communication to avoid ambiguity. On the other hand, in literary discourse, writers twist ordinary language to deviate from meanings attached to it. This gives words more associations that can be used to get another or other new meaning(s). This is in line with the sentiments of Jakobson who is quoted by Newton in *Twentieth- Century Literary Theory: a reader* to have stated, “The subject of literary science is not literature, but literariness, i.e. that which makes a given work literary work” (21). This depicts the fact that formalists consider the literariness in pieces of work which explains why they perceive the language used in literature unique from any other kind of language.

In line with the above, Stella Nyanzi’s work has features that set it apart from ordinary language. She uniquely uses language that is different from everyday language. In analysing Nyanzi’s works, one has to be on the look out of the literariness therein. However, failure to pay attention to the literariness in her work reduces it to ordinary speech there by making it communicate differently as opposed to the writer’s intension. Like other literary writers, she uses words to deviate from their primary meanings thereby giving them new ones. For instance, she uses the word “vagina” to mean a woman, Uganda or Ugandans in her posts.

Formalists believe that what makes literature different from non-literary language is the defamiliarisation concept, which makes ordinary language strange, unfamiliar, peculiar and bizarre.

This concept was emphasised by Shklovsky in an essay, *Art as Technique*. In which he states:

The technique of art is to make objects ‘unfamiliar’, to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged. (24)

In the above excerpt, Shklovsky crystal clearly demonstrates how the language of fiction distorts and estranges non-literary language to unfamiliarly present objects in our everyday life. He also submits that literature gives a fresh perception of a familiar object which makes it unfamiliar. This is the beauty of art since it makes the perception of a given work difficult resulting in a prolonged comprehension. Shklovsky further explained this function of defamiliarisation when he argued: “Art removes objects from the automatism of perception in several ways.” (24) This quotation helps to crystal clearly develop the idea of the previous one. In simple terms, defamiliarisation insulates objects in literary pieces from being perceived as they are in real life. The objects are given new traits that deviate from their primary ones. The author therefore sways their meanings away and gives them a new one(s) to shield them from a programmed perception.

The above is reflected in Nyanzi’s style of writing. She greatly defamiliarises ordinary language. This gives a fresh outlook of the themes she tackles in the eyes of the reader. Journalists, politicians, musicians, writers and many other people have portrayed the theme of bad governance that she dwells on in her work. However, she defamilairises this theme. For instance, she uses an allegory of a tired housewife to show how this woman is representative of Uganda and how her husband is symbolic of the head of state. She also allegorically portrays Uganda as a prostitute who is struggling with a stingy client who has now possessed her. The stingy client is symbolic of the head of state for, he has removed all limits to his rule and wants to rule Uganda as long as he wishes. These instances are used by Nyanzi to estrange the Ugandan situation to make the theme of bad governance more distinctive.

Relatedly, formalists believe that objects and images used in literature are meant to give us visions as conduits for us to get their meanings as opposed to the primary meanings we attach to them. As Shyklovsky puts it:

An image is not a permanent referent for those mutable complexities of life which are revealed through it; its purpose is not to make us perceive meaning, but to create a special perception of the object- it creates a 'vision' of the object instead of serving as a means for knowing it. (25)

Shyklovsky's argument is relevant. Many a time objects and images in works of literature do not have a denotative meaning attached to them as they are perceived in real life. Instead, as Shyklovsky argues, the images and objects are havens of ideas that an author communicates. Therefore, the author creatively makes the images and objects to be conduits of his or her ideas as opposed to them being indicators of the original or primary meanings attached to those images in reality. This, in the due course lengthens the perception of the images and objects. Shyklovsky further argues:

...the author's purpose is to create the vision which results from that de-automatized perception. A work is created 'artistically' so that its perception is impeded and the greatest possible effect is produced through the slowness of the perception. (25)

This means that writers engage in making the perception of their works less automatic to avoid giving away the meanings of their pieces of work easily since this is the source of literariness in their works. The more one labours to figure out the vision and ideas in a given object the more interesting the work of art becomes.

In the same vein, Jakobson weighs in on this matter to elaborate how words used in literature do not necessarily reflect the meanings attached to them in real life. Bertens in *Literary Theory: the basics* quotes Jakobson's argument:

Poeticity is present when the word is felt as a word and not mere representation of the object being named or an outburst of emotion, when words and their compositions, their meaning, their external and inner form acquire a weight and value of their own instead of referring indifferently to reality. (31)

The above quote talks about poetry but it can still be used in understanding the formalist perception of language use in prose as well. Just like his counterpart Shklovsky, Jakobson elaborates how words do not reflect meanings that we attach to them in real life. The meanings of the words in a piece of work are best understood if one analyses how the author has used them least they end up viewing the author's literary pieces as an "outburst of emotions".

As illustrated above, in literary works, the objects mentioned are merely conduits of visions. This is reflected in Nyanzi's works. She uses different objects as symbols of different things in her society. If one attaches meanings to the objects she uses as how they are in the real world, her work loses the meaning that she aims to front. Critics such as Andrew Mwenda view her work as an outburst of emotions because they base on the denotative meaning in her works. Her posts are meant to depict different themes in her society.

The formalists also came up with two terms that is fabula and syuzhet to explain the intricacies of forming plot in literary discourse. This was their other way of demonstrating how language in literary pieces is quite poles apart from the non-literary one. As Shklovsky puts it:

The concept of plot (syuzhet) is too often confused with a description of the events in the novel, with what I'd tentatively call the story line (fabula). As a matter of fact, though, the storyline is nothing more than material for plot formation. (170)

Shklovsky, the brain behind the idea of showing the difference between the storyline and the plot explains how the storyline is a material for plot. An author manipulates a given storyline to tell the story artistically and peculiarly. He or she twists the plot to capitalise on suspense in order to make his work less predictable, which results in the piece of work unique. The writer defamiliarises the plot by twisting the events therein. While the storyline can be presented in ordinary language, the plot is creatively stretched which makes a literary piece to gain its literariness. Eagleton's observations are not far flung from Shklovsky's. He uses an analogy to elaborate how the narrative structure in literary discourse is different from the one used in everyday language. He demonstrates:

Most of the time we breathe in air without being conscious of it: like language, it is the very medium in which we move. But if the air is suddenly thickened or infected we are forced to attend to our breathing with new vigilance, and the effect of this may be a heightened experience of our bodily life. We read a scribbled note from a friend without paying much attention to its narrative structure; but if a story breaks off and begins again, switches constantly from one narrative level to another and delays its climax to keep us in suspense, we become freshly conscious of how it is constructed at the same time as our engagement with it may be intensified. The story, as the Formalists would argue, uses 'impeding' or 'retarding' devices to hold our attention... (4)

This clearly illustrates how writers structure the plots of their stories (fabula) to creatively come up with a literary piece of work that is rich in suspense, an element that insulates it from an automatic perception that can easily be found in everyday language. Eagleton therefore explains that literary pieces receive much attention when the plot is twisted to create suspense.

Formalists believe that literary works are a store of devices which authors use to make works of literature unfamiliar. These devices make the difference and make the works attain their literariness.

As Eagleton argues:

The formalists started out by seeing the literary work as a more or less arbitrary assemblage of 'devices', and only later came to see these devices as interrelated elements or 'functions' within a total textual system. 'Devices' included imagery...narrative techniques, in fact the whole stock of formal literary elements; and what all of these elements had in common was their 'estranging' or defamiliarizing' effect. (3)

To formalists, devices play a vital role in making familiar objects unfamiliar since they renew language. This in turn makes the literary piece stand out of the crowd of many other written, oral and electronic discourses that are non-literary in nature. The narrative techniques include satirical elements, imagery, symbolism, stream of consciousness, nomenclature and many others.

Stella Nyanzi's works are a store of different narrative techniques that she uses to bring out her message. She uses allegories, metaphors, juxtaposition and satirical elements to make the theme of bad governance more perceptible to the reader. The narrative techniques in question also help her to defamiliarise scenarios and challenges in her society.

The above explains why Formalism literary theory was chosen for this study. Nyanzi's works have been analysed denotatively by some critics, which robs them of their literariness and gives them a meaning that is out of context. To contextualise her works, one has to view her words as conduits of her messages. She has successfully made familiar themes in the Ugandan society such as voter bribery, maladministration, corruption, deception, and other bad governance indicators to look unfamiliar in her works. Therefore, the tenets of the theory in question are used to reconstruct the meaning in her literary language in her Facebook posts.

1.9 Research Methodology.

1.9.1. Research Design.

The study is library-based, using a qualitative approach in its amassing, interpreting and analysis of data.

1.9.2 Primary Sources.

The primary source is Nyanzi's Facebook page where her posts from 2015 to 2018 were got. The posts herein majorly address the theme of bad governance and its indicators such as corruption, broken institutions, brutality, patronage, violence during elections and misuse of public resources.

1.10.3 Secondary Sources.

Secondary sources mainly include e-books, textbooks, scholarly journal articles, magazines, newspapers and blogs. These were accessed and downloaded from www.libgen.pw, and www.google.com mass media websites and from fellow researchers through e-mails.

1.10.4 Data Collection method.

Close reading and document analysis data collection methods were used to analyse and record data from both primary and secondary sources. The analysed data was recorded in notebooks and stored in Microsoft word documents.

1.10.5 Data Analysis.

The data was recorded and analysed in chapters in the following ways.

In chapter one, works that relate to Stella Nyanzi's background, the political context that she writes about, Uganda's history, theoretical framework were critically analysed to contextualise Stella Nyanzi's style.

The data in chapter two was mainly Nyanzi's Facebook posts in which sexual allegories are employed. Secondary sources were used to contextualise Nyanzi's pieces of work.

In chapter, three Stella Nyanzi's Facebook posts in which buttocks and genitalia metaphors are used were analysed to reconstruct their meaning.

In chapter, four Stella Nyanzi's Facebook posts that have satirical elements and juxtaposition were selected and analysed. Secondary sources were used to contextualise the message in her Facebook posts.

In chapter five, the study was summarised and reviewed. Recommendations and findings of the whole study were made by basing on the information in the previous chapters.

The data in chapter two to four was analysed basing on formalistic tools of analysis. Nyanzi's Facebook posts were analysed to explore how she uses literary techniques to put her message across.

NOTES

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10. Uwitware Tumusiime Getrude. “Stella Nyanzi Only Did What We Have Feared to Do.” Trusiz, 2 April 2017, <https://trudiz.wordpress.com/2017/04/02/stella-nyanzi-only-did-what-we-have-feared-to-do/> accessed on 3 April 2017

CHAPTER TWO

SEXUAL ALLEGORIES

2.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses Stella Nyanzi's use of sexual allegories in her Facebook posts. Childs and Fowler define an allegory as:

It is often defined as an 'extended metaphor' in which characters, actions and scenery are systematically symbolic, referring to spiritual, political, psychological confrontations. (4)

From the above quotation, one can tell that an allegory contains actions that are representative of ideas or visions. Stella Nyanzi uses these in her works symbolically to depict the theme of bad governance. This style helps her to defamiliarise known occurrences in the Ugandan society.

Writers have always masked messages about their societies with allegories to make what is already known in the public domain anew and fresh. On Facebook, writers employ all sorts of literary techniques to sway and direct people's attention to their posts. Nobert Mao, a politician, asserts in an article, *Stella Nyanzi: Has Social Media Gone Haywire*:

...social media is overcrowded. There is information overload so those who want to be heard have to unleash a shrill shout that can be heard above the cacophony of competing voices. Therefore, Stella Nyanzi has to use strong language and target powerful people in order to command the attention of her social media followers.¹

Most writers have an intention of writing literary pieces for people out there to read them. However, social media has an overload of information that is sport, entertainment, economic and political in nature. Nyanzi writes to criticise those in authority. To make her literary pieces stand out of the many posts from different fields, she uniquely tailors her posts and wraps her message in sexual allegories – a factor that has made them to go viral. This has helped her gain massive coverage from both local

and international news agencies. When the people in authority condemned her pieces of work and arrested her, it implied that her message had been heard loud and clear by her intended audience.

Writers have always used allegories in their works. Jack Mapanje in his poem *The Song of Chicken* allegorically portrays how post-colonial leaders betray the expectations of the citizens that they fight for during colonialism. In a different twist, the leaders after helping their country attain independence turn against their own people. George Orwell in his novel, *Animal Farm* allegorically uses animals to represent the failure of the Russian Revolution of 1917.

The focal point in this chapter is on Stella Nyanzi's posts that graphically describe sexual activities such as intimate sex and rape. She uses these allegories to expose the voids and loopholes in the decisions and actions of those in authority.

The sexual allegories she uses are a hub of her criticism of the authorities. She protests against corruption, poverty, overstay in power, police brutality, dictatorship, and the unfulfilled promises that those in power make. Nyanzi is not the first person to write and criticise those in authority. Politicians, academicians, journalists, social critics, singers and some writers have openly talked about the weaknesses of those in power. However, they have not gained as much attention as Nyanzi has. What has made her gain this attention is her use of sexual allegories that defamiliarise familiar challenges of the Ugandan society. In a magazine article, *Stella Nyanzi's Obscenity War*, Amos Zikusoka, a communications expert observes:

People are drawn to unusual things. There is discontent, poverty, income inequality. People are always talking about these things. But when someone says the same things in a different way and gets a lot of attention, people say that they are saying these things in an even better way. (12)

The above observation unequivocally speaks volumes about why Nyanzi has managed to garner attention and a huge following on her Facebook account. Readers always want to read something unique even when it is about things that they are already familiar with. It is therefore safe to conclude

that Nyanzi uses sexual allegories as a bait to get her reader's attention and pass on her message to them.

The language Nyanzi uses is only a vehicle that carries her message to those in power. She gives her critics a glimpse into why she uses language that makes reference to sexual activities. She argues:

...As a writer, I mobilised my prowess to speak truth to power. As a post-doctoral scholar of human sexualities, I deployed my knowledge to colourfully illustrate the plight of the majority of Ugandans. As a Facebooker, I bought my MBs and wrote one dissenting post after another to highlight my pain and frustration with the incumbent, as well as my love and hope for the strongest opposition leader. And as a Muganda Nnalongo, I utilised my cultural prerogative of graphic license to speak in tongues that the common Ugandan understands. Stop pretending to be shocked at my words... (February 3, 2016)

Nyanzi demonstrates that her language is meant to highlight the challenges that Ugandans face. She also shows how she uses her knowledge of human sexualities to tailor posts to criticise and highlight weaknesses of those in power. Therefore, unlike what her critics say, her language is just a conduit of her message to those in power.

The word rape is synonymous with Nyanzi's works. In the *Encyclopaedia of Rape*, Smith Merrill (ed) defines rape as: "the penetration of a vagina, or other orifice, by a penis (or other object) without the consent of the woman or man being penetrated." (ix). In the case of Stella Nyanzi's works, the word rape is used to represent one major element of rape, the lack of consent. Therefore based on her literary pieces, rape can be defined as taking an action on a person without their consent or approval. She demonstrates that the ones in power rule people without their approval in Uganda. Nyanzi presents rape as an act by those in power to enforce their agenda on the masses without their consent. She views it as a form of dominance by those in power on the seemingly weak and vulnerable people. She presents those in authority as rapists who are greatly motivated by self-serving objectives.

Nyanzi uses the word prostitute and prostitution terminologies to demonstrate that leadership should have a limit. Just as a prostitute keeps changing clients from time to time, Nyanzi suggests that

leaders in Uganda should be changed after a given period. She therefore uses these terms as a way of criticising the National Resistance Movement's overstay in power.

2.2 Intimate Sexual Allegories

Stella Nyanzi illuminates the head of state as a leader who is power hungry, greedy and addicted to power, which he endeavours to consolidate at all cost. She demonstrates:

I am trying to make love with Mzee, but his thoughts are far away plotting about how to win again in the 2016 elections. His dancing-stick is dead asleep. I try to touch his man-boobs and tickle the old nipples with my hands, but he's tightly clad in his bullet-proof vest until a time when Uganda is safe enough for him. I try to tickle his arm pits, but he is firmly holding the coming draft budget document under one armpit. I abandon the idea of foreplay with his torso and try to French-kiss His Excellency. He pushes me away, makes an ugly face by folding his lips and then telling me that the mouth was made for eating food only. I lie back, close my eyes and invitingly reveal my beautiful bosom, hoping that he'll reach down and touch me. Nothing happens... (March 5, 2015)²

In the above extract, Nyanzi claims that the head of state is more interested in having his grip on power than anything else. No wonder his "dancing-stick", which is symbolic of his penis, fails to erect even after the narrator has laboured to tickle his sensitive nipples, armpits and done everything possible to sexually turn him on. This is simply because his mind is preoccupied with plans on how to win the 2016 elections. This shows that he is determined to rule Uganda for many more years. She depicts him as a leader who is so much interested in consolidating himself in power through his failure to appropriately respond to the intimate moment that the narrator sets and instead firmly holds onto a draft budget all the time. Her reference to the budget in this allegory is meant to show that the head of state uses the budget as a tool to consolidate himself in power by allotting more funds to institutions such as the military and the police that contribute to his strong grip on power. In an article, *New-Breed" Leadership, Conflict, and Reconstruction in the Great Lakes Region of Africa: A*

Socio-political Biography of Uganda's Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Oloka-Onyango comments on this budgetary issue in a direct way:

...defence spending has grown to overshadow any other sector as a proportion of national expenditure. Even attempts by donor governments to cap military spending have been unsuccessful. As a consequence, Uganda under Museveni has built a formidable military machine, one that has insinuated itself into nearly all aspects of national social and political life. Museveni's belief in the military is demonstrated by not only his continued leadership of the army...but also his recourse to the military in dealing with essentially political and economic affairs, such as elections... (37 - 38)

Onyango expresses his displeasure with how the state uses the budget to offer many funds to the military ahead of other vital sectors. He also demonstrates that the head of state uses the army to deal with almost all affairs, which has enabled him to consolidate himself in power. It is important to note that Onyango uses language denotatively to talk about the same things Nyanzi points out allegorically. In the post, Nyanzi further demonstrates the backlash her narrator gets when she attempts to kiss the head of state. He pushes her away claiming that the mouth only serves the purpose of eating food. Through this, she paints him as rigid, traditional and opposed to simple change in lovemaking. This symbolically shows that he is a rigid leader who cannot let go of power since he is totally against any kind change. Besides, this scenario also explains how conservative he is yet as a leader, he has to be flexible and open to new ideas.

Closely related to the above, Nyanzi vividly describes the head of state as egoistical. She portrays him as a leader who wants to use different institutions for his own good as opposed to influencing them to develop Uganda:

...I slowly open my eyes and look at the president. In his other hand is a mini pistol which Mzee never lets go... not even after he removed military fatigues and started donning flowered shirts. Quarter-pins never release their guns. I want to make slow passionate love with Musanvu, but he's so used to screwing our nation, its systems and public institutions that he only remembers how to give a quick fuck for his own release. Instead, I blow his sad unloved trumpet, causing him to quake and roar in spiritual tongues mixed with Kinyakitara riddles and proverbs. And yet even at the height of his orgasmic ecstasy, Museveni still clings tightly onto the national budget,

his pistol and thoughts of standing as sole party candidate for presidency in the 2016 elections.

He throws a thick wad of new notes at me, as he heaves up his camouflage boxer shorts and marches to the bathroom. Alas, it may be too late to teach the president about mutual love and loving. (March 5, 2015).³

Nyanzi's further description of the head of the state's reaction to an intimate moment portrays him as egoistical. This is because he is more into getting in control to gain sexual satisfaction without minding about satisfying his sexual partner. Here, she implies that he is selfish since whatever he does is simply tailored to help him fulfil his own desires. She also allegorically puts it that he does not know how to "love passionately" since he is "so used to screwing our nation, its systems..." to demonstrate that he uses government institutions for his own good in order to consolidate himself in power. The narrator shows how the head of state dresses and goes away after she has sucked his penis and made him reach orgasm. He does not labour to satisfy the narrator yet in reality, all lovers labour to satisfy themselves passionately. His failure to passionately make love to the narrator is unmissable; Nyanzi intends to show that he cares less for institutions and only uses them for his own satisfaction. Scholars have observed that the head of state has and continues to use institutions such as the military to consolidate himself in power. This frustrates the efforts of institutions to be autonomous since they end up being used to play political games in favour of the head of state.

Rubongoya in his book, *Hegemony in Museveni's Uganda: Pax Musevenica* asserts:

Since the NRM came to power as a military organization under the command of Museveni, it has remained under his tight control. Notwithstanding earlier attempts to build a national army, the primary goal of the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) is to serve and promote the interests and survival of the NRM and the political fortunes of President Museveni. (172)

Rubongoya's observation brings to the fore how the head of state has and continues to use the military to safe guard his stay in power contrary to the fact that the military has to protect all Ugandans and their property. The forces end up engaging in partisan politics and focus on consolidating the incumbent in power. This in turn makes whoever raises dissenting voice to be seen as an enemy of the state. In line with this, in her book, *Museveni's Uganda: Paradoxes of Power in a*

Hybrid Regime Tripp notes, "...rather than being sources of security, these forces became a source of insecurity for many, especially those in the political opposition." (4) In the post, when the narrator makes the head of state to reach sexual climax, he still holds onto his mini pistol, a budget draft and, he is still deep into thoughts of standing as a sole party candidate for presidency. These actions infer that the head of state is power hungry and nothing matters to him more than consolidating himself in power even after thirty years since this seems to be his sole purpose. He does not even think about how he can solve the plight of the masses. All that goes on in his mind is more about his selfish desires to rule Uganda for as long as he lives.

Nyanzi demonstrates her aspiration for change in leadership through an intimate sexual allegory as she narrates:

If I ever fall in love again, it will be only with a fine man from the opposition! I cannot waste my love hormones, womanly desires and pleasurable juices on love for a man supporting the status quo. My sweet love is reserved only for the ballsy men of the opposition. My big black nipples will only tantalise a lover opposed to Museveni's military dictatorship.

Instead of expensive satin bed-sheets, our bed of love will be draped with colourful protest banners from previous protest demonstrations. Our nighties will be chosen from the heaps of freely distributed tee-shirts carrying revolutionary slogans and filling our wooden drawers. Our den of love will have protest posters stuck onto the lengths and breadths of all its walls. Our passionate groans of love-making will harmonise pirated whatsapp copies of melodious rhythmic music sang by today's freedom fighters.

After drawing hope from each other's orgasmic releases, we shall softly discuss the demise of Togikwatako, debate about Tubalemese, reminisce about Black Monday or Black Tuesday or even Walk to Work, and compare notes about our hope for Uganda. Holding each other tight, we shall drift into sleep amidst articulations of our dreams for the post-Museveni era. (January 14, 2018)⁴

In the above post, Nyanzi, through her narrator shows her strong need for change and therefore shuns anyone who supports the continuation of the status quo. The narrator says she cannot waste her love harmonies for a man who is in support of the status quo even when he is to put her in a bed of "expensive satin bed sheets". This poignantly shows that nothing materialistic can make her stand the

head of state's hegemonic rule. Besides, she is not interested in getting a man in support of the current situation for fear of being comfortable with luxurious things yet corruption and maladministration continue to gain ground. Instead, she joyously wishes to make love with a man who is opposed to the status quo, even if it means making love with him on "colourful protest banner", having tee shirts with revolutionary slogans as nighties, and having to share a room with protest posters stuck on the walls. This clearly shows that she is discontent with the act of the head of state overstaying in power. She wants to focus on seeking for change – a thing that results in her wanting to surround herself with material inscribed with words of protest against the status quo. Her emphasis on the protest banners that she wishes to pin on the walls of her room with her lover points to an existing voice of dissent and protest among the masses who yearn for change. The narrator says that she groans revolutionary "melodious rhythmic music sang by freedom fighters" during lovemaking. This in a crystal clearly points to the fact that there is a struggle and continuous pressure from different activists on the head of state to let go of power after being at the helm of it for over thirty years. Nyanzi clearly paints a picture of a typical end of a sex session in which the couple engages in conversations and sleep offs between the sex rounds. The narrator, different from everyday lovers, intends to have political conversations at the end of sex rounds with her opposition leaning lover about different protests that have been carried out in agitation for change as opposed to having conversations on their love life. This shows how obsessed she is with change that instead of having intimate conversations, she would rather have political ones with her lover. She also longs for sleep-offs at the end of sex rounds that will enable her to dream about a post current-regime era. The entire post expresses Nyanzi's frustration about the lack of change in political leadership in Uganda.

In addition, Nyanzi offers praises to the head of state and reclaims them at the same time. She acknowledges that he was a great leader in his first few years of his regime but then raises doubts as to whether he is fit to continue ruling Uganda, a country he has ruled for over thirty years. She warns that his overstay in power poses a great danger to the stability of Uganda:

When a condom expires because of staying too long in its packet, it is highly risky to use it, no matter how much you are consumed with the fires of love. If one of your condoms has ever broken inside your lover's enclave, you know how dangerous this is. Just as you would dispose of expired condoms, please vote out this thirty-year-old presidential regime. It is expired! It is breaking apart inside Uganda... (February 8, 2016)⁵

In the above post, Nyanzi equates the head of state to an expired condom because of his protracted rule. According to her, letting the head of state to continue ruling Uganda is as dangerous as using an expired condom for a sexual activity. She further explains that if an expired condom is used, it can easily break in a woman's private parts no matter how one is "consumed in the fires of love" with her. This poses a danger to the woman's health. The condom herein is a referent of old age and overstay in power that are associated with the head of state and the woman is a representative of Uganda and its masses. Nyanzi therefore demonstrates that having the head of state rule for five more years is risky for Uganda. This is because like an expired condom, he is aged and has outlived his purpose, which makes him less effective and productive as he used to be a few years ago. An expired condom cannot effectively insulate one from catching a sexually transmitted disease, in a scenario where one engages in a sexual activity with an infected person, or from getting pregnant. This is because it is susceptible to breaking at any point during sex. Nyanzi implies that giving the head of state more years to rule is risky because it poses a great danger to the economy, education and health sector or any other institution which will seriously affect the masses. This is because the more he overstays the more he uses patronage politics to consolidate himself in power. This breeds corruption, impunity and greatly affects the economy. Scholars have shown how in using patronage politics leaders end up messing up the economy. Mwenda and Tangri in their article, *Patronage Politics, Donor Reforms, and Regime Consolidation in Uganda*, demonstrate:

In Uganda, the requirements of patronage for a political leadership bent on remaining in power have meant that accountability, openness, and probity in government actions have been liable to be subverted. Constitutional provisions to insulate public institutions from the influence of patronage politics and corrupt actions have been of limited impact. For example, the 1995 constitution provides for a leadership code of conduct and an 'ombudsman', the Inspectorate of Government (IG), to

prevent corruption in public life. However, the head of the IG has invariably been staunch member of the ruling NRM... (461)

The above is an illustration of how patronage politics, which is born out of the head of state's protracted rule, has greatly affected the economy, as huge sums of money are lost. He has awarded top government posts to the cadres of the ruling party, which hinders proper accountability of funds. As Mwenda and Tangri argue, it is impossible for the inspector general of government to probe corrupt officials whom he/she shares a party affiliation with. Nyanzi in equating the head of state to an expired condom implies that he has outlived his time of political leadership. She suggests that leadership should be for a stipulated time so that another person can take on the mantle to effectively rule unlike the current state of affairs that is breeding patronage politics.

In the same vein, Nyanzi further demonstrates the danger of having the head of state to continue ruling Uganda for many more years:

...When an ovary grows old, it stops producing fertilisable eggs, no matter how reproductive it was in its prime years. No amount of sex can make a menopausal woman conceive from her own ova. Just as you would not expect your grandmother's grandmother to reproduce in your lifetime, please stop expecting any productive leadership or governance from president Yoweri Museveni. Although he refuses to admit it to himself, and although his friends, families and sycophants do not love him enough to tell him, Museveni has ruled Uganda enough. He is tired. Please vote for regime change in Uganda... (February 8, 2016)⁶

Nyanzi likens the head of state to an old ovary that cannot reproduce no matter how fertile it was in its prime years. Like in the previous paragraph, Nyanzi offers praises to the head of state and reclaims them. She acknowledges that he was once a productive leader but now he is tired and there is need to replace him with someone else who is fresh. She therefore asserts that the masses should expect nothing from him since he has outlived his strength, productivity and effectiveness. She demonstrates that the head of state is like a menopausal woman who cannot get pregnant from any amount of sex. The sex here is symbolic of leadership tenure. Nyanzi concludes that it is futile to

expect productive leadership from a head of state who has outlived his effectiveness. Acemah, a political scientist in his article, *Making Sense of Uganda Politics in 2062*, observes:

First, 33 years ago at an Organisation of African Unity Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, NRM's sole presidential candidate lectured African leaders on the topic, "What is Africa's problem?" After analysing the problem, he concluded correctly that Africa's problem is leaders who overstay in power and received a standing ovation from hundreds of delegates attending the conference. In a tragic irony of history, he has succumbed to what he vehemently condemned in 1986.⁷

In the above, we clearly see that the head of state many years ago acknowledges that when a leader stays in power for long, he creates problems for his country. Acemah goes on to conclude and highlight the irony in the head of state's views that he made thirty and so years ago since he has failed to leave power posing a problem for Uganda.

Furthermore, Nyanzi expresses how disgruntled, tired and displeased she is with the way the head of state ignores responsibilities required of him. She allegorically puts it:

Ssenga, my marriage to the NRM disgusts me these days. I am returning the butiiti waistbeads you gave me on the night of our marriage. Even these soft nkumbi cloth no longer have any value in my life. This husband no longer knows what his responsibilities are to me his wife. I am so fed up of this gu-man that whenever he comes to bed with his drum-stick, the drum beat from my skin can only be the hollow mourning of a new widow. Ssenga, my first love for my husband the NRM died a long time ago such that whenever he touches me with holy adult lust, I feel ugly, used and abused. Ah-ah, there is nothing for me in this marriage, Ssenga. Making love with the NRM is so painful that we always first fight for my panties before he tears them off my thinning thighs. Over the years, I have been variously hurt so badly by my husband - the NRM that even the akachabali no longer brings the rivers of life to our marriage. I am so fade up with my husband, the NRM that even the doggy-style you taught us no longer brings any electric charges running between my belly-button and thighs. Ssenga, this month I am divorcing the NRM and voting for a new young lover... (February 2, 2016.)⁸

The above post is a delicate ridicule offering applauses to the head of state and in the same breath reclaiming them. The narrator, a tired housewife is symbolic of Ugandans or Uganda. She wants to return sex enhancing accessories to her "senga", an aunt in Buganda who teaches a girl the dos and

don'ts of marriage. The sex accessories include, nkumbi cloth which is a piece of cloth used by a woman to clean her husband's penis after sex and the butiti waist beads are worn by women in bed to signal to their men that they are in mood for sex. In wanting to return these to her "senga", the narrator simply shows how tired she is with the marriage. She acknowledges the fact that her husband, who is emblematic of the head of state, once loved her the way she wanted and fulfilled his responsibilities. Allegorically, Nyanzi glimpses into the past when the current head of state became a leader in 1986. She indicates that he loved, cherished and effectively ruled Uganda. However, thirty-years later, she shows how he has forgotten his responsibilities. When she portrays the husband of her narrator as one who tears off her knickers whenever he wants to make love with her, she is simply highlighting the unending friction between the head of state and the masses he leads. It is reasonable to argue that it is ironic for a husband to tear off knickers of his wife before making love. This depicts the fact that the married woman has not given her husband consent to have sex with her. Since the married woman here emblemises the Ugandan masses, it is safe to say that Nyanzi indicates how the masses no longer want the head of state to continue being their leader – he has now turned to ruling them through forceful means. Nyanzi describes the tired-married woman's thighs as thinning to depict Uganda's diminishing strength in terms of the economy, security, governance, education, and health. The tired-married woman also complains of the failure of "akachabali" to bring her desired happiness in her sex life like it used to whenever her husband did it on her. "Akachabali" is an act that is done during sex in which a man rubs his manhood on the clitoris, labia minora and labia majora of a woman to sexually entice her. It is highly cherished by some women as it makes them reach orgasm. This therefore is symbolic of the things that the head of state continues to do and say but no longer make the masses happy like they used to in the past. The failure of the doggy sex style to make the woman feel electric charges running between her thighs like it used to in the past is representative of the lack of confidence and excitement about his leadership style. This is because it is now predictable and no longer yields much expectations among the masses who need change in

leadership. Precisely, Nyanzi demonstrates the disgruntlement of some Ugandans through this allegory of a tired-married woman.

2.3 Rape

Nyanzi draws a nexus between political leadership and sexual intercourse to demonstrate that without consent, people suffer a lot under a leader they do not want:

For me as a heterosexual woman, political leadership is just like sexual intercourse. Both must be consensual to be good. Sex without consent is rape. Leadership with neither the consent nor the will of the masses is as bitter as rape. How can the fucker enjoy if the fucked receive no pleasure from the fucking? Oh God, this fuck from Museveni is bitterly painful! There is no drop of joy or pleasure in these things of dictator Museveni's NRM banging and banging and banging us without consent. The thing is not sweet at all... It is as mechanical as if the regime were a wooden pestle crashing ground nuts in a mortar. Foko-foko-foko-foko-foko-foko-foko-foko-foko... when will the bitter fucking of this militant dictatorship end... (December 6, 2017)⁹

In the post, Nyanzi likens sex to political leadership. She demonstrates that just like sex, political leadership should have the consent and support of the masses in order to be enjoyable and legitimate. She shows that without this, political leadership turns out to be like rape. She describes the experience of the Ugandan masses with their leader as “bitter rape” to bring out the painful plight they are going through. Her choice of words, “banging us without consent” demonstrates how the head of state rules the masses and brings out a typical rape situation in which a rapist uses a lot of force that creates a “bang” sound. Therefore, the word “banging” symbolises the force and dictatorial tendencies that he uses to consolidate himself in power. She continues to show her frustrations when she says “when will the bitter fucking of this militant dictatorship end?” In other words, she illustrates how he uses militarism to consolidate himself in power and does not care about the consent of the masses anymore. In the previous paragraphs, it has been shown that the state uses the military to engage in partisan politics to curtail dissenting voices. Rubongoya argues:

The consent of the people—the *res publica*—is key to a democratic system of government. Consent is the basis for political legitimacy because it is indicative of a society’s recognition that existing or emerging political institutions are appropriate for meeting their demands (9)

He portrays the fact that consent is the basis for political legitimacy, meaning that its absence depicts the existence of an illegitimate head of state. Rubongoya’s observations are not far flung from Nyanzi’s. They both agree that for a smooth regime to continue there must be consent from the masses.

In the same vein, Nyanzi assertively demonstrates how the weaknesses of the head of state can be contagious to other government organs and Uganda at large. To illustrate this, she equates his actions, in his thirty-year rule to an infected person who engages in sex without a condom and ends up spreading a sexually transmitted disease to another person. She says:

Voting for Museveni to rule Uganda for five more years is as dangerous as lying back, spreading one's lascivious thighs and succumbing to a wreckless rough rider to tear delicate tissue, wound and infect one with STDs in the name of love. After thirty years of condomlessly raping every decent organ of Uganda's governance and spreading his corrupt and tyrannical germs all over the society, we need protection from the incumbent. Pitiably Uganda will have to live for years with the unplanned and unwanted products from Museveni's condomless rape. Put a stop to the condomless rape of Uganda by a wreck less president infected with autocracy, corruption, nepotism, and misrule... (February 14, 2016)¹⁰

In this post, she equates the head of state’s rule to a rape which implies that he uses a lot of force to politically control Ugandans against their will. In simple terms, she portrays him as a leader who lacks political consent from the people he rules. When she says that he rapes decent organs, she insinuates that he undermines the autonomy of other institutions and shows off his weaknesses in public. This, as she demonstrates has led to the authorities in the other organs to be “infected” with his “sexually transmitted diseases” which are emblematic of his flaws that end up being adopted therein. These flaws include corruption, autocracy and misrule. She warns that the current-head of

state's continued rule, will live Uganda with "unplanned" and "unwanted" products from his "rape". These "unwanted" products are symbolic of more catastrophic and regrettable challenges that might result in letting him rule for more five years on top of his thirty-year tenure.

In addition, Nyanzi demonstrates how the head of state has retrogressed from being a good leader he was to be like his predecessors who violated people's rights in Uganda. To illustrate this, she uses a sexual allegory of a man who rescues a woman from her abusive ex-husband thirty years ago only to behave like the ex-husband he rescues her from thirty years later. She asserts:

Being raped daily by a dominatrix lover who wooed you thirty years ago normalises this violence. Simply because the lover liberated you from brutal ex-husbands, washed the pus oozing from your wounded body, bought you nice dresses and gave you a Banco bed to sleep in peace, does not erase the violence and lack of consent with which he rapes you these days.

Your lover of thirty years ago became your sick rapist the day he paid our impotent elite a few glittering coins to tear presidential term limits out of the constitution. Where are the remnants of those coins, you traitors? We are stuck with a despot who does not see that the elastic in his pants and underwear got tired many years ago. The children are seeing his wrinkled manhood that violently pounds Mother Uganda, year after year after painful year.

You are being raped, Uganda. Vote yourself out of this exploitative marriage. The ballot can redeem us; will redeem us. Although the rapist skilfully rigs, if all our ballot papers leave his slot clean, we shall salvage our remains from this lover of thirty years ago. (January 30, 2016)¹¹

In the above post, Nyanzi admits that the head of state liberated Uganda from dictatorship however, she criticises his overstay in power against the will of the masses. She allegorically presents him as a lover who rescues a woman from her brutal husband. The woman who is brutalised herein symbolises Uganda and her ex-husbands signify Uganda's ex-heads of state. It is therefore clear that Nyanzi is heaping praises on the current-head-of-state for having rescued Uganda from his violent, brutal and tyrannical predecessors thirty years ago. On the other hand, she is concerned with his unpopularity thirty years later. Her choice of the words "dominatrix lover" to refer to him infers that he enjoys dominating, consolidating and possessing what he wants. Therefore, he is ready to do

whatever it takes to continue being the president of Uganda. She also alleges that he pays “impotent elites” to tear term limits from the constitution so he can rule, as many years as he wishes. The impotent elites are the members of parliament, that she alleges receive bribes to help him obliterate the term limits from the constitution – this, according to her is like rape because it lacks the consent of the masses. She also terms legislators “impotent elites” to show that they are unproductive and ineffective since they are easily corruptible. In showing that the head of state bribes legislators to continue ruling, she demonstrate that he lacks the support of the majority. The lack of elasticity in his underpants shows that he is no longer fit to continue ruling, the wrinkled manhood that is exposed due to this is symbolic of his old age. Through this referent, Nyanzi queries his effectiveness in the face of so many challenges that come with being a head of a state. No wonder, she terms his rule as painful to show the plight of the masses under his rule. She is against a long serving head of state who does not give way to others to take the mantle of leadership. The same issue has been voiced by other critics, Rubongoya stresses:

Today the governance structure in Uganda is not different from that of the 1980 to 1986 period, despite Museveni’s 1986 promise to bring about fundamental change. A convergence between Obote II and Museveni II/III has occurred. Uganda’s experience under Pax Musevenica³ (i.e., the 20 years of NRM rule) has not produced revolutionary change, it is instead reminiscent of the hegemonic regimes of preceding governments. Over time, Museveni has acquired the status of an imperial president and some government structures have taken on a modus vivendi of a police state. (04)

Rubongoya’s discourse is in line with what Nyanzi points out. It is clear that the head of state has replicated the leadership style of the previous presidents that he rescues Ugandans from especially that of Obote. Oloka-Onyango also weighs in on this issue and he says, “when Museveni looks in the mirror, he must see Obote.” (37) Nyanzi therefore writes her post to condemn the fickleness of the head of state which plunges Uganda back to the past he rescued it from.

More still, Nyanzi equates the Ugandan head of state's rule to a continuous rape that must be desisted and rejected. She rallies the masses against the regime, which she says has made their lives difficult.

She says:

...Rather than fold our tools of resistance, now is the time for all of us opposed to the raping regime to summon our reserves of strength and double up our efforts. Rather than wither with despair, now is the time to engage higher gears of our contestation against all forms of bad governance. Considering that the enemy has elongated his years of gang-raping our country, we must make it extremely difficult for abuse of state power to just happen. Starting last night, we must resist harder. Rather than quietly bending over, spreading our legs and yielding to this regime's raping, we shall scream louder, scratch deadlier, kick harder, punch uglier, even pepper our vaginas, and variously wound Museveni's phallus of abuse... (December 21, 2017)¹²

Nyanzi wrote this post at a time when majority of the members of parliament had voted in favour of the removal of the age limit from the Ugandan constitution. The post is a social protest against what Nyanzi terms “rape”, like in the previous paragraphs, she considers the head of state's actions as similar to those of a rapist. Nyanzi suggests that like a rapist, he has dominated the political leadership of the country to the extent of pushing for the removal of the age limit from the constitution that deterred people beyond seventy-five years from ruling Uganda. She also intimates that the removal of the age limit has no consent of the masses. In response to this, Nyanzi calls on the masses to resist the head of state's hegemony. She says that Ugandans should not “bend over”, “spread legs” and “yield to the regime's rape”. This allegorically means that she asks Ugandans to stop being subordinate to him and his henchmen like a helpless woman who is being raped would. She therefore asks Ugandans to scream louder, scratch deadlier and kick harder – strategies a woman would use to fight off a rapist. However, these are symbolic of strategies the Ugandan masses can use to put an end to the head of state's regime.

Consequently, Nyanzi depicts the head of state as a leader who is addicted to ruling Uganda using forceful means. She also demonstrates his selfishness by asserting that:

Uganda's dictators are akin to the serial rapist whose violent tumescence is constantly erect because of an addiction to omulondo - the local aphrodisiac. The militant dictators led by Museveni have become as

addicted to violent power as a sex addict afflicted with akasagazi. With the constant erection caused by political kasagazi, they rape every orifice of Uganda.

They are so addicted to violently misgoverning Uganda that they erroneously think that the masses love and enjoy them. While we have screamed ourselves hoarse as we tell them that we are fed up of the abuse of the militant dictatorship, the rapists are planning to increase their violent tenure from five years to seven years.

Being "totally fucked over" is when Musevenists not only succeed at getting the presidential age limit removed from the constitution, but also extending the presidential term limit extended from five painful years of rape by Museveni to seven painful years of rape by Museveni... (December 7, 2017)¹³

Nyanzi posted the above in December 2017 at a time when majority of the members of parliament had voted in favour of the removal of the age limit from the Ugandan constitution. She asserts that the head of state is addicted to violent power like a serial rapist is to violent sex. She therefore demonstrates that he is more interested in getting whatever he wants through forceful means without the will of the masses. She criticizes him for having an insatiable appetite for power which has seen him and his henchmen suggest for an elongation of their term of tenure from five years to seven years. She is frustrated because this is done without the consent of the masses and this makes it more of a selfish venture that the authorities engage in to continue having their grip on power. She demonstrates that those in authority have been clouded by their addiction for violent power to the extent of mistaking the masses' voice of dissent for love and enjoyment. This is similar to a rapist who chooses not to mind about a woman's scream for help as he erroneously thinks that she is enjoying the sex even when pain is written all over her face. Nyanzi consequently portrays the head of state as one who enjoys seeing the masses helpless as he imposes his rule on them.

More still, Nyanzi portrays the experience of the masses with their head of state as painful, hostile and bitter. She also presents him as a leader who has been corrupted by power absolutely. She says:

Having ruled Uganda for thirty long years, and now demanding for five more years as president, Yoweri Museveni is like a virile man who - after chewing a big piece of the mulondo herbal aphrodisiac - humps away at a woman in Missionary Position without ceasing, even when she begs for reprieve. Even when the neighbours hear her shrill cries of complaint and

disgust, they do nothing to intervene because they think that this is consensual mutual sweet pain.

Yoweri misinterprets her muffled moans of painful fatigue as joyous ecstasy. He misreads her fearful bodily tremors as orgasmic spasms of release. He mistakes her resigned silence as godly submission to his will. He misconstrues his prolonged acts of raping Uganda as God-given conjugal rights. Power corrupts as absolutely as omulondo thickens the manhood.

Somebody tell the incumbent that his manhood is no longer wanted between the sweet thighs of Mother Uganda... (February 9, 2016)¹⁴

In the above post, Nyanzi depicts the head of state as a leader who has lost his conscience to his unlimited love for power that makes him rule Uganda without ceasing. She equates him to a man who has been empowered by “Mulondo” (a local aphrodisiac that rises a man’s drive for sex) to hump a woman in a missionary sex position without ceasing. The woman in this allegory is symbolic of the masses who are tired of the head of state’s overstay in power. The missionary sex style that the man uses on a woman without ceasing is symbolic of the monotonous head of state’s leadership style. This discourse portrays Ugandan masses as bored, tired and exhausted by one style of leadership. Nyanzi demonstrates that he has been using one leadership style for the last thirty years and therefore has nothing new to offer to the masses that are tired and desperate for change. The woman’s requests for a reprieve are similar to the protests and campaigns that have been held by the masses as they agitate for change. Nyanzi demonstrates his obsession for power through his failure to decipher the fatigue, pain and the bodily fearful tremors from the masses. Instead, he perceives them as signs of love and political support. Besides, his failure to decrypt the resigned silence of the masses might also speak to how he is detached from reality and the silence to him means godly submission to his will. Nyanzi suggests that his failure to interpret the signs of disgruntlement among the masses points to his lack of clear judgement of the voices of dissent hovering in the public spaces. The silent neighbours who hear the shrill cry of the woman being raped and do not intrude are symbolic of the quiet neighbouring countries that do not intervene when Ugandan masses riot and demonstrate to showcase their frustrations. The head of State’s manhood in the thighs of Uganda is symbolic of what

is encumbering Uganda from moving forward and also shows how Ugandans are stuck with his rule which has frustrated their freedom and ability to develop.

2.4 Of Sex with prostitute allegories.

Nyanzi asserts that the head of state imposes himself on a citizenry that is tired of him for having ruled for a long time yet his term in office is time bound. She uses a sex allegory of a prostitute and her client:

Dictator Museveni is like that sticky client of a sex worker who enjoys the fuck-service so much that he forgets that it is time-bound. Whether it is in the posh five-star hotels of the city, or on the dim-lit streets and back-way alleys of Uganda, no matter how much a client pays, all that a sex worker offers is either a short or a long. A short is a quickie - like Godfrey Binaisa or Yusuf Lule's short-lived regimes. A long may have two or four rounds, each with a different style, but again, the client eventually ejaculates, pulls out, wears his pants and leaves the sex worker's space. The long would be akin to Idi Amin or Milton Obote's longer reigns.

But this dictator Museveni has been enjoying the humping and pumping of this sex worker so so so much that he is now addicted to her very tired pussy! He refuses to ejaculate. He refused to withdraw. He refused to wear his pants. He refuses to leave. His bare bottoms have been exposed overly long. His wrinkled bent shafting spear has been busy humping poor old Uganda for the last thirty-two years. Even when Ugandans protested from the pain of being over-banged, the dictator repeatedly reminded them that he paid for their services...

...Any good sex worker knows that a clingy client is dangerous... (April 12, 2018)¹⁵

In the above passage, Nyanzi masks her message in prostitution terminologies to paint a picture of the Ugandan political situation. She relates the head of state's long stay in power to a client who cannot stop having sex with a prostitute even when his time is up. The client is representative of the head of state and the prostitute in the post is symbolic of Uganda or Ugandans. She assertively criticizes him for overstaying in power. In the real sense of it, a prostitute gets one client at a time and whoever gets addicted to her only makes her feel under control and owned. Prostitutes, just as Nyanzi puts it, are associated with time bound services (short or long) just like leadership is or should be. The constitution, before it was amended had a term limit and an age limit, which were repealed.

She therefore implies that the head of state has done all it takes to continue being a leader of a nation that seems to be fatigued with his regime. The bare bottoms that he exposes are symbolic of his weaknesses that he showcases as he labours to consolidate himself in power. When he refuses to ejaculate it implies that he is not yet satisfied with ruling Uganda. In this post, Nyanzi exposes the head of state's insatiable appetite and greed for power.

Furthermore, Nyanzi argues that the head of state and his henchmen engage in voter bribery. She criticizes this practice and equates him to a man who buys sex from prostitutes and convinces himself that he is loved:

...Museveni and his campaigners are in a frenzied dash to buy love from everyone perceived to have a vote. Their mania is akin to a man who habitually pays money to sex workers and consequently deceives himself that he is loved because he ejaculates inside their tired condom-protected orifices. Bribing corrupt members of his party during this election period is as vain as paying his wife for sex. Giving poverty-infested Ugandans financial, material and status bribes - whether we solicit or not, whether we support him or not - is as insane as paying another man's wife for love. We love Besigye, not Museveni.

We must show the incumbent regime how badly we desire regime change. No amount of bribing us will erase the memories of our dead mothers, sisters, spouses and daughters who died unnecessarily while giving birth in public hospitals devoid of medicines, equipment and staff. Even when we eat that money, we will not forget the millions of Ugandans who died at the hand of this government's callous mismanagement of public services and security issues... (February 12, 2016)¹⁶

In the post, Nyanzi wonders why the head of state has to pay money to voters. She illustrates how his action is equivalent to a man who pays prostitutes for sex and convinces himself that they love him because they let him have sex with them. In doing this, she questions the popularity of a head of state who pays a lot of money to people and convinces himself that he is loved so much. She observes that his act of paying his party members to vote for him is like a man paying his wife for sex. This is meant to query his popularity even in his own party. The act of using money in 2016 general elections to influence the outcome of the elections by the ruling party was also mentioned in a report by the Commonwealth Observer Mission in which they state:

...the increased prevalence of money in politics for the 2016 elections mirrored the scenario in 2011, with the added development that an

amendment made to the Public Finance Management Act 2015, which enables the Executive to access supplementary financing without parliamentary approval, raised concerns that these funds could have potentially ended up financing the incumbent's campaign. (7)

More still, she mocks the head of state for bribing masses who are in support of the opposition candidates. To her, this is akin to a man who pays another woman's wife for sex. All this shows how he is less popular and less effective. She also highlights how he bribes voters but fails to ensure that public hospitals have enough facilities to reduce would be deaths. Consequently, Nyanzi criticises the head of state's priorities that see him use money to consolidate himself in power rather than the addressing the needs of the masses.

2.5 Conclusion

Nyanzi uses sexual allegories to capture the attention of her readers on Facebook. This narrative technique enables her to make familiar Ugandan challenges anew which makes it easy for her to communicate to those in power and the masses.

The language Nyanzi uses exposes the head of state as power hungry, addicted to power and egoistical. She demonstrates how this humpers development as he only cares about consolidating power at all cost which leaves the masses vulnerable to many challenges that are economic, political and social in nature. She shows how he uses the budget to allocate funds to institutions that help him retain power such as the military and the police. In most case, when heads of state concentrate on consolidating power, they become ineffective in elevating the masses' standards of living.

Consequently, Nyanzi decries the violence the state metes out on the masses when they dissent and agitate for change. She blames the head of state for this as she exposes him as egoistical and addicted to ruling Ugandans through violent means. She demonstrates that this emanates from lack of political consent, which makes him to resort to bribing legislatures and using the military to rule the nation. This kind of situation has made the state to waste a lot of time on politicking instead of working on the grievances of the masses. Nyanzi suggests that term limits be restored so that heads of state do

not get comfortable in power. To stress this suggestion, she equates political leadership to sex with a prostitute, which she says is time bound just as presidential tenures should be.

Nyanzi illustrates the fickleness of the head of state from a caring and liberating leader to a violent, selfish and disinterested leader. She applauds his efforts of rescuing Uganda from dictatorial governments but she is worried about how he has ended up being like his predecessors. Therefore, she warns that having him rule Uganda will plunge Ugandans into more suffering since he now acts like a rapist who only cares about satisfying his own desires.

However, it should be noted that there is a weakness in Nyanzi's choice of words such as prostitute to symbolise Ugandans. This can be offensive to moralists who read her works without engaging the literary techniques that she uses. The word prostitute can also be misinterpreted to mean that Ugandans are disloyal and unsettled and just want to change leaders without assessing their worth. In one way or another, the use of the word prostitute enhances Nyanzi's message.

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CHAPTER THREE

BUTTOCKS AND GENITALIA METAPHORS

3.1 Introduction.

This chapter is an insight into Stella Nyanzi's use of buttocks and genitalia metaphors in her posts on Facebook. It examines selected samples of her posts that are seriously immersed in vivid descriptions of genitalia and buttocks out of the thousands that she has on her Facebook timeline. She uses these metaphors to criticize those in authority as she vehemently paints a picture of a corrupt, brutal and dictatorial lot.

A metaphor can be defined as the use of an object to best describe another or an idea. Writers, since time immemorial have used metaphors in their writings to comment on a plethora of issues in the societies they live in. Jack Mapanje, a renowned Malawian writer who strongly criticized Kamuzu Banda's rule urges writers who express political dissent to opt for the use of metaphors, in order to survive censorship. In his article, *Leaving No Traces of Censure* he argues:

We are forced to find alternative strategies for survival,
alternative metaphors for the expression of our feelings
and ideas. (76)

Writers use metaphors to express their feelings and ideas on what goes on in their societies. However, when Mapanje used metaphors, he was imprisoned just like Stella Nyanzi. Some critics, as shown in chapter one view her language as a hotchpotch of abuses and vulgarities towards those in authority, a notion this chapter is tailored to debunk. Nyanzi uses metaphors as a conduit of her message to those in authority. The metaphors help her attract attention to her pieces. Besides, there is nothing new that she says that has not been talked about before. Musicians, cartoonists, politicians and radio presenters have pointed out the issues she rises in her posts way before she did. The only thing that makes her stand out of the crowd of political dissenters is her use of buttocks and genitalia metaphors. Her language herein is meant to grab the readers' attention. Her use of genitalia and

buttocks metaphors is not born out of a vacuum or abusive to those in power, she has a message that this chapter analyses.

Stella Nyanzi comments on economic, social and political affairs in her society through buttocks metaphors. She uses the word “buttocks” to metaphorically mean that those in authority are backward, unproductive and less effective. The word in her posts stands for anything that lacks substance. The logic behind this argument is that the buttocks are hind parts of the human body. They are also used to pass faecal matter, which in most cases is unproductive and disastrous since it carries germs that can cause cholera and other diseases. She uses excremental language to demonstrate how the head of state’s stay in power breeds underdevelopment and negatively influences leaders in different institutions. Generally, she uses words such as shit and farts to show that the head of state’s leadership style keeps backfiring thereby affecting the progress of Uganda.

Furthermore, Stella Nyanzi is not the first writer to use excremental language to communicate. Ayi Kwei Armah in *The Beautiful Ones are Not Yet Born*, uses words that describe faecal matter to criticise corruption and bad governance in Ghana. Writers use this kind of language since it is vivid and helps them to put out their message.

Nyanzi uses the metaphors of vagina, clitoris, ovaries, fallopian tube, and uterus as referents to criticise those in power. She exposes their shortcomings namely, overstay in power, dictatorship, violence and injustices. As it will be demonstrated later in this chapter, Nyanzi uses the metaphors in question to show how female genitalia are life-giving organs and can be got rid of in order to prevent children from suffering under the National Resistance Movement’s leadership. She also makes mention of the word vagina in reference to women in power to bring out their unmotherly nature. The unshaven vagina in Nyanzi’s language means the mess that has accumulated due to the ruling party’s overstay in power. She also uses the metaphor of a chubby vagina to depict women in power who have failed the people they lead especially their fellow women due to their greed.

Generally, in equating the authorities to buttocks and the genitalia, Nyanzi stresses how inhuman and inconsiderate those in power have become as majority of Ugandans grapple with many challenges.

3.2 Buttocks Metaphors.

Firstly, Nyanzi views the head of state as a leader whose ideas and actions are retrogressing. On 26th January 2017, the head of state while presiding over the commemoration of the National Resistance Movement day in Masindi is quoted on Daily Monitor website in an article; *I am Not Anyone's Servant*, to have stated that:

I am not an employee. I hear some people saying that I am their servant; I am not a servant of anybody. I am a freedom fighter; that is why I do what I do. I don't do it because I am your servant; I am not your servant. I am just a freedom fighter. ¹

In response to the above statement, Nyanzi took to Facebook on 27th January, 2017 to type a counter discourse to criticise the head of state for the statement he had made, “Museveni matakoo nyo! Ebyo byeyayogedde e Masindi yabadde ayogera lutako...” This loosely translates into ““Museveni is very much a pair of buttocks. When he spoke in Masindi he was speaking as buttocks do.” Biologically, buttocks make the middle behind section of the human body therefore; she implies that his view is retrogressing and backward. She is against his act of distancing himself from the servant role that any leader has to play. The head of state's remarks herein is contrary to what he says in his inaugural speech as president in 1986 in which he states:

It is not a favour from any government: it is the right of the people of Africa to have democratic government. The sovereign power in the land must be the population, not the government. The government should not be the master, but the servant of the people. (3)

However, Nyanzi's counter discourse, which was a criticism of the head of state's remarks, angered the authorities. They responded by arresting her on April 7th 2017 and charged her with abusing the person of the president, misuse of the computer among many other charges. This put her in the same cohort of other writers who faced arrests for criticising and speaking truth to a sitting head of state. These include, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o who was arrested under president Daniel Arap Moi's regime for

his uncensored political message in his 1977 play *I Will Marry When I Want*. Jack Mapanje faced detention in 1987 for publishing a metaphor packed poem collection entitled, *Of Chameleons and Gods*, which unmistakably criticised Hastings Kamuzu Banda's regime. This clearly shows how voices of dissent from writers are stifled by African heads of state. The fate of the post-independence African writers is commensurate with Wole Soyinka's remarks in his prison memoir, *The Man Died*, in which he asserts, "Books and all forms of writing have always been objects of terror to those who seek to suppress truth." (xxvii)

Relatedly, Nyanzi uses buttocks metaphors to demonstrate that the head of state is unproductive. As she puts it:

...I mean, seriously, when buttocks shake and jiggle, while the legs are walking, do you hear other body parts complaining? When buttocks produce shit, while the brain is thinking, is anyone shocked? When buttocks fart, are we surprised?

That is what buttocks do. They shake, jiggle, shit and fart. Museveni is just another pair of buttocks. Rather than being shocked by what the matakoo said in Masindi, Ugandans should be shocked that we allowed these buttocks to continue leading our country. (January 28, 2017)²

In the above passage, Nyanzi uses the words "shit" and "fart" – products of buttocks, to metaphorically demonstrate the unproductive message the head of state gives to insulate himself from his servant role. She shows how irrational and insensitive he is in the face of many challenges and instead of using the National Resistance Movement Day to show the way forward, he decided to detach himself from who he really is to the nation – a servant. In light with this, Rukundo in his article, *My President is a Pair of Buttocks': the limits of online freedom of expression in Uganda* argues:

The president's words had been autocratic and threatening, and, in a young democracy like Uganda, worrying. For a law to require her to respond politely would defeat the purpose of free expression as a check on power. (266)

Rukundo defends Nyanzi's counter discourse against the head of state's in which he distances himself from his responsibility. He condemns her arrest and concludes that it contravenes with

freedom of speech and robs people of the opportunity to “check power”. After demonstrating how irrational and insensitive the head of state is, she implores Ugandans not to be shocked by what he says but wonders why they have let him to continue leading their country.

Nyanzi blames the head of state for the shortcomings in the judicial system, economy and the office of the presidency. As she asserts:

...He shits in our democratic elections. He shits in our governance. He shits in our judiciary. He shits in our economy. He shits in our cultural values. He shits and farts all over our military. He shits in our foreign relations. He is now even publicly shitting in the meaning of the position, roles, duties and posture of the presidency... (January 30, 2017)³

In the above extract, Nyanzi clearly argues that the head of state is destructive. She states that, “He shits in the judiciary,” to create an impression that he has greatly destroyed the image of the judiciary and is to blame for the shortcomings therein namely, case backlog, injustice and corruption. She goes on to blame him for the challenges in the economy which include the ever-shrinking value of the shillings against the United States dollar, high inflation rates, and many other economy-related challenges that Ugandan masses grapple with. Her criticism penetrates into the office of the presidency as she claims that the head of state “shits” in the “meaning of the position, roles, duties and posture of the presidency,” to imply that he has fallen short of the responsibilities of a head of state. Political commentators have time and again talked about the inefficiencies of the judiciary system and hinted on the failure of the office of the presidency to influence effective running of institutions. In his book, *Regime Hegemony in Museveni’s Uganda: Pax Musevenica* Rubongoya observes:

Corruption by top government officials has trickled down into the lower echelons of the institutions of the state and has also become the normative basis for any transaction, be it official or private. Newspaper reports in Kampala are awash in stories about “ghost policemen,” “ghost teachers,” and “ghost students.” However, while some lower-level officers are charged and tried, high-profile officials seem to find ways of escaping the law. (165)

In the above quotation, Rubongoya exposes the weaknesses in the judiciary and the office of the presidency by demonstrating that it has failed to put high-profile officials on trial yet some lower-level officers are tried. The failure to curb down these corruption practices damages the economy as a lot of money is lost and institutions such as the health sector fail to be effective as money meant to be used to effectively run hospitals is embezzled. Nyanzi's criticism of the head of state for failing to follow his duties and roles emanates from the fact that he has failed to influence the judiciary to crack a whip on high profile officials who have and continue to embezzle state resources with impunity.

Stella Nyanzi debunks the claims the head of state makes about the salary he earns per month and supports the doctors' action to agitate for more pay. On 1st May, 2018, the head of state used the labour day commemoration in Sembabule to criticise doctors who were striking over low pay and poor conditions in the hospitals. He also said that he receives 3.6 million per month as salary and sees no need for the doctors not to work for the money they are paid. In response to this, she debunks:

...The ugly pair of buttocks conveniently forgot to reveal that the entirety of its exorbitantly corrupt lifestyle is paid for by government revenue painfully bled from Ugandan tax payers. We pay for the expensive houses, monthly utility bills, grandiose house-keeping staff, escorts and security detail, huge fleet of heavy-duty transport, food, and health costs that the pair of buttocks incurs. We even pay for its pocket money used to stuff brown envelopes and oil its buttockish handshakes. And so, the 3.6M/= are a bonus over and above the huge chunk of funds that the pair of buttocks receives monthly.

Does the pair of buttocks take Ugandans for fools? Does the pair of buttocks think that our medical doctors and nurses would strike against poor pay and bad working conditions if they were given decent accommodation, utility bills, safe transport, security, pocket money and a bonus akin to what it receives? Does the pair of buttocks think that Cuban doctors cannot put down their tools when faced with dire conditions similar to their Ugandan colleagues? Cuban doctors... (May 2, 2018)⁴

In the above post, Nyanzi continuously refers to the head of state as a pair of buttocks to emphasize her views about him that is to say, unproductive and ineffective. She describes him as an "ugly pair of buttocks" to show her disgust towards the comments he made in Sembabule. The description also implies that he has a sinister and unpleasant personality since he lives a lavish lifestyle but he is insensitive towards the plight of the doctors. She goes on to assert that he lives an "exorbitant corrupt

lifestyle” which does not fit in the kind of salary he claims to receive. In making this contrast, she exposes the lies in the head of state’s claims since Ugandans facilitate his lavish lifestyles. Through rhetorical questions she wonders if the striking doctors would strike if they lived the kind of life style that he lives. This is meant to demonstrate that he is selfish as he only cares about himself and ignores the dark plight of doctors instead of finding a solution. The head of state informed the nation that he would replace the Ugandan doctors with Cuban doctors. In line with this, Nyanzi wonders if the Cuban doctors would not strike if they were faced with the same dire conditions their Ugandan counterparts face. In this post, Nyanzi emphasises that the head of state is unproductive and unrealistic as she refers to him as “a pair of buttocks” five times in this short post.

Furthermore, Nyanzi criticises people for their indifference as everything goes amiss in the country. She asserts that she will continue to voice her grievances as opposed to being silent:

If you want to praise Museveni for shitting all over Uganda, go ahead! I will not stop you. If you prefer to tell Museveni that whenever he gases into Uganda's affairs, you enjoy his fart as one enjoys perfume, go ahead! If you want to look on in silence whenever the buttocks publicly excrete on Ugandans, go ahead! It is your prerogative. (January 30, 2017)⁵

Nyanzi makes a grotesque image of people enjoying “fart” from the head of state as though it were as pleasant as perfume. This is meant to expose their aloofness whilst incompetence gains ground. The “fart” is symbolic of what has backfired because of the head of state’s shortcomings. She mocks the people who choose to be silent as he “excretes” on Ugandans. The excreta herein are symbolic of the bigger challenges and mess the head of state has heaped on Ugandans. In demonstrating that he excretes in public, Nyanzi metaphorically shows that he no longer does the negative things in secrecy. Everything is in the public domain and he has lost his guilty consciousness just like anyone who excretes in public. Metaphorically, when one excretes in public, they take people in the society for granted and fails to put into consideration what they will go through to deal with the excreta. Therefore, Nyanzi asserts that the head of state takes Ugandans for granted and is insensitive about

their plight by doing things the way he wants – a thing that has flung them into challenges in dealing with the mess he creates. She vows to speak out about the head of state’s weaknesses.

In addition, Nyanzi criticises the authorities for stifling voices of dissent. She paints a picture of a government full of people who have zero tolerance to criticism. To explain this further, Nyanzi gives us a short insight into what led to her incarceration in 2017 that lasted for almost a month:

When I facebooked the bare buttocks' truth of his utterances about not being our servant but a freedom fighter, I was abducted, thrown into jail, accused of silly charges and threatened with mental examination... (August 7, 2017)⁶

When Nyanzi criticised the head of state for having said that he is not a servant but a freedom fighter, she was arrested. Her description of the charges as “silly” suggests that the people in authority ignore the truth she posts about them and impose cooked up charges on her. The people in authority claim they arrested her for calling the head of state “a pair of buttocks” – a phrase they said was offensive to the person of the president. They deliberately ignored the issues she raised in her posts. She asserts that she posted the “truth” therefore she concludes that the government has zero tolerance with those who oppose the status quo. Her incarceration was an unequivocal signal to other critics that intend to speak the truth to those in power that they will go through hard times. She also affirms that the state attempted to take her through a mental examination as an attempt to paint her as insane in order to water down the issues she puts across in her posts. Writers before Nyanzi have gone through similar circumstances. A point in case is Jack Mapanje, who was arrested for metaphorically using the words “chameleon” and “weaverbird” in reference to the actions of the Malawian president, Banda Kamuzu. The issues he raised were ignored and he was confined in prison for over three years. The conundrum of African writers who criticise sitting presidents has been explored by Ngugi in his book, *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams: Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa*, in which he says:

The more absolutist the state, the less it is likely to ask questions of itself or entertain questioning by others. Like those supposedly wise Athenians, who were so sure of their wisdom that they were not willing to learn

anything from Socrates, such a state has a narcissistic image of itself as the holder of truth. In other words, absolute power is taken for absolute knowledge. Such a state regards those who ask questions as rebels, subversives, madmen. (16)

Ngugi's discourse points to the fact that the writer's space for expression in contemporary Africa is always shrinking. He exposes the moral weakness of the people in power who are against any kind of truth that is against how they run the state. He also shows how those who speak truth to power are branded madmen. Nyanzi too was branded mad by those in power so as to make her views inferior and put down her spirit. The incarceration of Nyanzi depicts those in authority as intolerant to criticism and cruel. This therefore makes checking power very difficult for writers in Uganda.

3.3 Female Genitalia metaphors

On the face of it all, Nyanzi portrays her pessimism and frustration about the head of state's protracted rule Uganda. As she puts it:

If Museveni wins the presidential elections in February 2016, I will slowly remove my panties, sit by my burning charcoal-stove, roast my clitoris crunchy black, and use the burnt piece as a crayon to colour the Ugandan flag all black. (January 29, 2016)⁷

The above post came in at the time Uganda was preparing for elections in 2016. In the post, Nyanzi clearly shows her displeasure with the head of state winning the elections. She hyperbolically shows that she would roast her clitoris if he won. The clitoris is an external part of the female genitalia that generates a lot of unimaginable pleasure for a woman when rubbed repeatedly. This means that it is an important body part for any woman in her sex life. Her action of roasting her clitoris metaphorically means that she can do anything to forego any kind of pleasure just to see the head of state won by his political opponents. This brings out her distaste towards him. Furthermore, she is ready to use the burnt piece of her clitoris to colour the Ugandan flag all black. This act indicates that she considers Uganda's future bleak and blank if the current head of state continues to rule. Besides, darkening the two bright colours plus the crested crane in the Ugandan flag also insinuates that she is no longer proud of her country since it is under a leader that she considers incompetent. Nyanzi in

other words portrays her pessimism about Uganda's future through her intentions of darkening the Ugandan flag using her burnt clitoris.

Relatedly, Nyanzi demonstrates her lack of pride in being a mother and a citizen of a country whose head of state has ruled for over thirty years. As she puts it:

...If Museveni wins this presidential election, I swear to God, I will pull out my fallopian tubes, ovaries and uterus, make them into a beautiful necklace and sell them wrapped in the national flag to the lowest bidder on e-bay. Where is the pride and honour in being a Ugandan citizen ruled for over thirty years by the same man? (January 29, 2016)⁸

Nyanzi's willingness to pull out her fallopian tubes, ovaries and uterus demonstrates her lack of enthusiasm in her womanhood in case the head of state wins the election. This brings out her lack of pride in being a mother in a country whose future is uncertain because of a leader who is unwilling to leave power. Therefore, she does not wish to produce more children for fear of ushering them into a country full of hardships brought up by a leader who has overstayed his welcome. Her resolve to pull out her uterus, ovaries and fallopian tube also illustrates how she is fed up, sick and tired of the status quo. Apart from her resolve to pull out her internal womanly organs that give life, she is willing to sell them to the lowest bidder on an online global market called eBay. She wants to sell valuable and hard to replace life-giving organs to the lowest bidder because she attaches no value to them, and does not care about the money. Her intention of wrapping them in the national flag metaphorically brings out her lack of pride in Uganda.

In addition, Nyanzi shows how disastrous overstaying in power by heads of states can be for a country through an unshaven-vagina-metaphor:

On Sundays I always shave smooth my mons pubis. I get a healthy amount of perfumed Veeto hair-removing cream and wipe down that glorious platform. When I was living in poorer times, I would use a brand new Nacet razor blade and shave clean my emancipating triangle, going in and out of all the downtown nooks and crannies. But Uganda, you are shabby and overgrown with tough long unsightly curled kaweke hairs sprouting thick and dangling heavily all over your pussy. Miaaoooww! Miaaoooww! You have not shaved your pubic hair for thirty long years,

you dirty old woman! Museveni and the NRM have become a stinking thick forest of overgrown pubic hair crawling with lice and crabs in your executive. To be healthy, you need a clean shave Uganda. Take the sharp razor blade of your ballot paper, Ugandans, and shave out the overgrown hairs of the incumbent regime that are blocking and clogging your vital adult organs. Shave out the dirty pubic hair... (February 7, 2016)⁹

In this post, the unshaved pubic hair that she describes as dirty is symbolic of the head of state's overstay in power. In showing how the unshaved pubic hair has turned out to be a safe haven for the lice and crabs, she intends to demonstrate the dangers of his protracted rule. The lice and crab are symbolic of the parasitic nature of the ruling party cadres and his relatives who benefit from his overstay in power by engaging in corruption and rewarding themselves with top government jobs. In branding the ruling party members as lice and crab, Nyanzi emphasises how their parasitic nature makes them to misuse the tax payers' resources. She also describes the pubic hair as "kaaweke," poor quality hair that is usually sparsely spaced on a person's head or around their private parts to imply that the head of state's thirty-year rule is unproductive for Uganda. Besides, the description of Uganda as "shabby" points to a huge mess that has been created by the ruling party's overstay in power. The shabbiness also brings out the head of state's failure to eliminate many challenges that have come with his protracted rule. In showing how pubic hair covers the vital organs, Nyanzi seeks to comment on the head of state's act of domination of the Ugandans for over thirty years. She concludes by asking Ugandans to vote him and restore order in their country. Tangri and Mwenda argue:

Yet although valuable in helping to secure the political incumbency of ruling elites, the dynamics of patronage politics - using the state and its resources to maintain themselves in power - proved economically highly damaging. Politicized economic resource allocation as well as state sector corruption were among the most important domestic factors behind the severe economic and fiscal crises that befell African countries in the 1970s and 1980s. (450)

Tangri and Mwenda denotatively expose the danger of overstay in power. They clearly demonstrate how the practice has escalated misuse of state resources as the head of state uses exorbitant amounts

of money to consolidate him in power and has also created room for corruption and impunity. They warn that this in the long run can prove to be injurious to the economy.

Similarly, Nyanzi uses metaphors of genitalia to show her distress with the head of state for overstaying in power. She paints him as a burden and a thorn in the flesh of Uganda's progress. As she puts it:

...should our land remain under the thirty-year curse and Yoweri Museveni wins the presidential elections, I will abstain from sex and masturbation until he goes off the presidency. I will take wet clay and plug my birth canal. I will firmly close up the gates to my womanly pleasure spots with concrete cement and seal them off with Super Glue... (January 26, 2016)¹⁰

Nyanzi's description of the head of state's thirty-year rule as a curse in the above post implies that his thirty-year rule is characteristic of aspects that make Ugandans to go through a lot of suffering. When she asserts that she is going to abstain from sex and seal off her womanly pleasure, she is using exaggeration with the intent of pouring out her frustration and disappointment with having the current-head-of-state rule for more years. No wonder, she did not seal off her womanly pleasure spots when the head of state was declared winner of the 2016 election. This therefore shows that her use of genitalia metaphors is meant to help her drive her message to the people in power to look at the consequences of the political decisions that they make. Her resolve to abstain from sex also brings out the psychological torture that emanates from the ruling party's protracted rule therefore, she cannot engage in sexual activities that need a stress free mind. Similarly, her resolution to seal her vagina, an organ that is important in reproduction portrays how she considers it useless. She does not want to engage in more births of children who will end up suffering under the hegemonic rule of the current head of state. Nyanzi therefore denounces the head of state's act of overstaying in power and attacks him for whatever has gone wrong in Uganda.

Furthermore, Nyanzi attacks women in power and depicts them as ineffective, incompetent, and myopic. She also questions their role in fighting the challenges that come with a dictatorial regime:

Having a vagina and ovaries does not necessarily make one a good national leader. As a Ugandan woman, I am totally disappointed by the political choices of the two women heading the Ministry of Health during this intense period of industrial action by medical doctors and (now) interns. What sort of power-corroded women are Jane-Ruth and Diana? We know that they have vaginas, but what is their politics in the face of a corrupt militant dictatorship that under-values and underpays public health workers? Rather than side with the doctors who are negotiating for better pay and contesting against poor working conditions, both the Minister and the PS haughtily raised their noses at the strikers and intimidated them to call off the strike which was labelled as 'illegal' and 'misguided'! These women echoed dictator Museveni's earlier empty threats to declare a state of emergency if the doctors laid down their tools. (November 14, 2017)¹¹

Nyanzi posted this post at the time when doctors had laid down their tools and asked the government to work on their demands. Their demands included a better pay and improved medical supply in public hospitals. In mentioning the words, “vagina” and “ovaries” in the above post, Nyanzi intimates that the minister of health and her permanent secretary are mothers who gave birth and this should make them more understanding of the poor conditions in the health sector. Nyanzi simply means that these two women in authority are better placed to understand that the poor health conditions in most cases affect women who give birth. She argues that as women they should work on the plight of the doctors because majority of their patients are women and children. She presents them as people who have lost their womanhood. This is because they have ovaries and the vagina, organs that play a big role in reproduction of children but have failed to understand that challenges in the health sector seriously affect women like them and the children they produce. She also asserts that they are intimidating doctors to go back to work yet as women, they have to be kind and understanding of the issues they raise. She questions their stand in the face of corruption and dictatorship as she criticises them for re-echoing the threats of the head of state to the doctors who have genuine grievances.

Correspondingly, Stella Nyanzi questions the influence and role of women in power in eliminating the plight of their fellow women in Uganda. She asserts that women in authority are greedy and egocentric:

It is not enough to merely have more vaginas in parliament and cabinet. Museveni's women do not represent the masses. Those women flagged before us whenever we cry about the huge gaps in gender parity in Uganda, were empowered only to fill their big bellies with more loot from the public... (May 9, 2018)¹²

In the above passage, she points out that it is not enough to just have “more vaginas” in parliament and cabinet. The word vagina here emblemises women. She consequently asserts that the women in authority are just given top government posts yet they “do not represent the masses”. She believes that they are just given the posts, especially those in cabinet so as to cosmetically show the public that the ruling party is gender sensitive. She terms the women as the head of state’s women in order to show that they serve his selfish needs not the masses’. She therefore questions the role of the women leaders in the current state of affairs and argues that they are in leadership only to enrich themselves as the masses they lead languish in poverty. Scholars have weighed in on the head of state’s selection of women to take up power positions. Aili Mara Tripp, a political scientist, in her book, *Museveni’s Uganda: Paradoxes of Power in a Hybrid Regime* argues:

Museveni also brought women into key cabinet positions and had a woman vice president, the first in Africa, for ten years. The 1995 constitution had an extraordinary number of clauses addressing women's rights. Thus, at the outset, the NRM won the approval of large numbers of women who were convinced that this was a government that was committed to improving the status of women. (2)

The tail end of the above passage paints a picture of a head of state who brings women into cabinet positions as a bait to gain more political support from women. This demonstrates how he uses the women in question to achieve his selfish gains of consolidating himself in power. It comes as no wonder therefore when the appointed women like those Nyanzi criticises serve his and their selfish gains. This leaves out the women who are hoodwinked to think that they are top on the ruling party’s agenda.

To conglomerate the above, Nyanzi focuses on the minister of lands to bring out her greed. She illustrates how she uses her position of power to fulfil her egoistical reasons:

...Amongi Betty is another of Museveni's plump vaginas in power. In addition to being an MP and Minister of Lands, she is also a land grabber, a land thief, a dirty dealer of land deals, a con artist, an evil legislator of wicked land law reforms, and a property misappropriator. Having joined Museveni's cult of eating vaginas without a conscience, she got swollen with so much power that shamelessly drove her to support the oppressive loot of land in Apaa and Amuru. Feeling as empowered as a vagina at the top of Uganda, she ignored and dismissed the plight and shame of nude protesting women whose sole livelihoods relied on that land. This vagina even had the audacity to touch the cherished Mailo of the Baganda. Iiiiwoooo... (May 9, 2018)¹³

She describes the minister of lands as a “plump vagina” to give an impression that she is well fed on tax payers’ money, corrupt and less effective. She paradoxically points out that she has turned into a land grabber of people’s land instead of protecting it from land grabbers. She unequivocally demonstrates how she supports what she calls “the oppressive loot” to steal land from the poor women of Apaa and Amuru, ignoring their quandary and the fact that their livelihood depends on it. Her repetitive use of the word “vagina” is to emphasise that the minister of lands is a woman yet she ignores her responsibility of protecting her fellow women who suffer a lot without land. In fact, land gives them a platform to engage in subsistence farming for food and small scale farming to generate income for basic needs. Succinctly, Nyanzi asserts that the women in power are greedy, selfish and insensitive. She puts the head of state’s choice of such women leaders under the spotlight to poke holes in his selection. She also attacks most women in authority who she terms as the head of state’s “cult of eating vaginas” to show that they are more interested in satisfying their selfish gains than emancipating their fellow women, which should be their fundamental goal. Therefore, Nyanzi scorns the head of state’s women empowerment drive in leadership as the women he empowers only satisfy his and their needs.

On the other side, Nyanzi appreciates the efforts of a woman in power, Catherine Bamugemerereire, the chairperson Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters who is focused on eliminating land-related challenges of the masses. She appreciates her for exposing the selfishness of the minister of lands:

As much as I struggle with facets of Justice Catherine Bamugemereire's land probe commission, I am glad that Amongi's thieving vagina was plucked, shaved, probed, fingered, pounded, salted, spiced, boiled, steamed, fried, toasted, roasted, baked and served up for the Ugandan public to see clearly. After dodging the summons repeatedly, she showed up in her land grabber's capacity. When the shameful magnitude of her theft dawned on her, she stopped comprehending English and asked for a Luo translator. Behold the timeless curse of nude women is at work! (May 9, 2018)¹⁴

In the post, the word “vagina” is used metaphorically. The vagina of the minister of lands is her innermost private part which is ideally known to her and her husband. However, in the post Nyanzi creates a situation in which she says that it is plucked, baked and served up for the Ugandan public to see. Metaphorically, this illustrates how the minister of lands’ innermost character trait of greed is exposed by Justice Bamugemereire. Character, like private parts is hidden from many and known by a few people close to someone. This post is a hesitant celebration of the commissioner of the lands committee for working hard to uncover the dirt in the ministry of land through exposing the dark, hidden and innermost side of the minister of land. It is ironic that the person who is supposed to help protect people’s land from land grabbing is the same who engages in grabbing it. Nyanzi therefore shows how Ugandans are in danger because of the head of state’s cabinet choices that do not serve the interests of the masses. The minister of land therefore is presented as greedy and incompetent since she serves her selfish gains.

More so, Nyanzi hesitates to celebrate the firing of Kale Kayihuru as the inspector general of police. She points out that the *modus operandi* of police will still be the same under another inspector general:

Somebody suck my clit! Yoweri Museveni called the recently expelled IGP a bean-weevil and people are bubbling in tongues with excitement. Why does Museveni's insulting of his greatest fixer do nothing for me? Nothing is twitching. I am not wet at all. No juices are running inside my pussy. These insults that follow the long overdue firing of Kale Kayihura are the worst form of fumbling a lover can give to Uganda. I would be turned on if Museveni demilitarised the police forces. If all the security soldiers were identified and kicked out of the police, my clit would stand erect. If the unqualified criminals appointed and promoted

by Kale Kayihura were expelled from the police, my labia minora would get engorged with vaginal juices. If the current crop of police officers and men, all rank and file were appraised, retrained and re-classified based upon their experience, qualifications and training, the strands of gray hairs on my mons pubis would glisten with thick juice from the excitement of my womanhood. If the budget for the police forces was revised to focus on equipping police officers with requisite skills for investigation, intelligence and community policing, as well as improved salaries and improved working conditions for all police personnel, my womanhood would throb with joy. If the expenditure on tear gas, bullets, and anti-riot merchandise was revised to improve the barracks conditions, I would cum with excitement. (March 9, 2018)¹⁵

Nyanzi's desire to have her clitoris sucked metaphorically brings out her quest for joy since she finds nothing interesting in the head of state firing and subsequently referring to Kayihura as a bean weevil. She does not celebrate his description of the former inspector of police because it changes nothing in how the police is still being run. She actually points out that Kayihura until his firing has been a great player in helping consolidate the head of state in power. The dryness in her vagina brings out her sadness and worry about the unprofessional nature of the police that is full of army men and less qualified police personnel. She therefore says that her vagina will be wet (to mean she will be happy) when the police's budget is revised, the institution demilitarised and trained to focus on the issues the masses face. She also says that she will cum with excitement when the force provides better salary and living conditions to the men and women therein. The word cum here is metaphorically used by Nyanzi to demonstrate that she will be comfortable when there is an overhaul of the police for the betterment of all Ugandans. In a report, *Gen Kayihura vs Ochola: Same Approach to Handling Opposition*, Stephen Kafero observes:

The optimism which filled much of the commentary and public reaction now appears to be gone, just more than a year later, with many political actors, especially in the Opposition, saying the modus operandi has remained the same and in some cases gotten worse.¹⁶

The above shows how Nyanzi's worry has turned out to be a reality. The current inspector general of police like Kafero asserts has retained the same blueprint that Kayihura used to run police. The institution in question is still very brutal to the opposition as Kafero argues.

Nyanzi demonstrates the implications of high water prices on people in the low class especially the women through a vagina metaphor:

...When water is paradoxically accessible because NWSC has put piped-water in an area, but also too expensive to afford, many women will choose to wash their faces that are visible to the public and neglect their genitals which are hidden from view. When water is scarce, the hands of the women who prepare the food you eat will remain with traces of the amalgam the fingers interact with during okutawaaza. When water is scarce, the men, women, and children of Uganda will eat bits of dirt, sweat, mucus, blood, germs and possible infections harbouring in our unclean genitals. Selah!

If the prices of water remain exorbitantly high, Ugandans will continue to eat the residues from the pussies of women. If water scarcity continues because of the dry season, Ugandans' food will continue to be flavoured with spices unconsciously picked from the genitals, labia majora, labia minora and buttocks of women who prepare food with hands inadequately cleaned after okutawaaza. The logic is simple and straight forward. Making water both accessible and affordable saves the population from eating dandruff and sweat picked from the mons pubis of Uganda's women... (February 21, 2018)¹⁷

Through the above post, Nyanzi shows how horrifically high prices affect the domestic life of the masses. She uses a vagina metaphor to drive her message to those in authority who are solely responsible for the high water prices since they impose heavy taxes on water. She grotesquely demonstrates the ramification of high prices imposed on water through a vagina metaphor. She shows that if water is not accessible and affordable to everyone, people will end up eating food contaminated with mucus, germs, dirt and a lot more that remains in women's fingers after failing to use enough water in cleaning their vaginas. Nyanzi indirectly implicates those in authority for their failure to mind about the masses who find it hard to keep buying water at a high price. Their failure to get water lays a fertile ground for them to get communicable diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea, typhoid and dysentery. The post also paints women as vulnerable in situations of scarce water since they suffer due to lack of enough of it as their biological set up dictates that they use more of it. The post, without saying it is challenging those in authority to revisit taxes on water as the repercussions are dire not only to women but also to the rest of the people who eat food that they have prepared.

3.4 Penis Metaphors

Nyanzi questions the silence of religious leaders in the face of what she calls the head of state's dictatorship. She also wonders why they consider her immoral for using metaphors of genitalia:

...you snakes! I dare you to go ahead using me as the perfect example of national immorality. Instead of using your powerful platforms to emancipate the minds of oppressed Ugandans through the teaching of liberation theologies, you are busy castigating me for doing your work. Instead of challenging the reign of a satanic evil gang of gun-swinging despots and their greedy family members, you are busy receiving their bloody tithes and praying for God to multiply these offertories. Shame on the churches in Uganda for offering your erect penises into the continued service of raping our nation. Shame on all believers who support the Musevenis' dictatorship. Amen... (May 21, 2017)¹⁸

In the above passage, Nyanzi queries why the religious leaders criticise her over the kind of language she uses. She criticises them for using her as an epitome of immorality yet she is playing their role of emancipating the minds of the masses and criticising the weaknesses of the state. She wonders why they have continuously been silent as those in authority continue to oppress Ugandans. To her, this means that they offer their “erect penises” into the continued service of raping her nation. This is symbolic of the religious leaders who have thwarted their role of scrutinising what those in authority do which automatically implies that their silence means they approve of the injustices that are inflicted on the masses. Therefore, this makes them accomplices as Uganda is being raped. The word rape here is also symbolic of the lack of consent from Ugandans to their leader who is ruling them against their will. Nyanzi demonstrates that these religious leaders are exploitative, ungrateful and materialistic and are more interested in getting tithe from the masses but do not help in critiquing those who oppress them. On Daily Monitor's website, Zac Niringiye, a retired Anglican Bishop in his article, *Religion and Public life in Uganda Today: Time for Honest, Frank Conversations* argues:

At one of the two Namugongo shrines, it is likely that one of the prelates, presiding on the occasion, will warmly welcome the President. “We thank you, Your Excellency”, he will say “for your efforts in transforming the country, especially in the areas of security, roads and electricity. But we urge you to deal with corruption. As for us, our job is

to pray for you and your government. We thank you for supporting the Church to improve Namugongo. And your Excellency, we want to assure you that as religious leaders, we do not get involved in politics.” It will be lost on him as well, that the young men, now celebrated as martyrs, were burnt to the stake for defying political authority! Yet it is the taxpayers’ money he gives, and therefore, money from the citizens.¹⁹

The above is Niringiye’s prototype of what religious leaders say and do. He criticises them for failing to engage in political conversations to criticise the injustices orchestrated by the leaders on the masses. He condemns their greed and lack of awareness of the power they hold. He scorns them for always telling the head of state that their job is to pray for him not to engage in politics.

3. 5 Conclusions

Nyanzi uses words such as buttocks, vagina, clitoris, penis and other genitalia related organs metaphorically to criticize the people in power that she finds blameworthy. Her targets are people she claims are corrupt, selfish, dictatorial and unproductive.

In line with the above, Nyanzi uses the aforementioned mentioned metaphors to demonstrate that the views the head of state makes are retrogressing, irrational and unproductive. She therefore blames him for the shortcomings in all institutions. She exposes her pessimism about him continuing to rule Uganda as he shows how disastrous it is for Uganda’s future.

Furthermore, Nyanzi criticises the indifference of many Ugandans as leaders subject the masses to injustices. She also criticises religious leaders for being silent as leaders oppress Ugandans and instead condemn her for criticising the state. She reminds them of how they have a strong platform they can use to denounce oppression. She vows to continue criticising those in power no matter what.

Women in power are criticised by Nyanzi for doing little or nothing to eliminate the plight of their fellow women. She points out that the women in leadership positions grab land, are careless about the health of their fellow women and indifferent towards the challenges they go through. She however,

celebrates Catherine Bamugemereire, the Chairperson of Inquiry into Land Matters for exposing the minister of land's act of grabbing land from poor women.

Nyanzi attacks the state for stifling voices of dissent and taking away people's right of freedom of speech. Her arrest in 2017 when she criticised those in power indeed showed that the state was not ready to entertain criticism.

More still, Nyanzi equates leaders to buttocks and genitalia metaphors to show how inhuman they are in the face of a plethora of challenges in the country. She questions their humanity in the face of poor healthcare, high standards of living and broken systems.

Lastly, while Nyanzi's use of buttocks and genitalia metaphors is very powerful in depicting bad governance in Uganda, moralists can see them as infectious to children who read her posts and detrimental to their moral growth.

NOTES.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SATIRICAL ELEMENTS AND JUXTAPOSITION.

4.1 Introduction

Satire is one of the commonest literary styles that writers use to disparage politicians and their societies. In his book, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* Abrams argues:

Satire can be described as the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn, or indignation. (Abrams 275)

This undoubtedly brings out what satire entails. It involves exaggeration, ridicule, irony, humour, mockery, scorn, contempt and amusement. Writers use satire to depict human vices in their bid to show what ought to be done. This literary device pegs the reader onto a literary piece as he or she makes an effort to dig up the writer's intention. It should be noted that in their attempt to use satire, writers indirectly put their message across, often a time some readers misunderstand it or fail to get the message.

Satire is used by writers to not only point out, condemn, mock and ridicule the vices in their societies but to also put a barricade between their societies as they are and how they think they should be. This blends well with Cuddon's argument in *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* on who a satirist is:

The satirist is thus a kind of self-appointed guardian of standards, ideals and truth; of morals as well as aesthetic values. Who takes it upon himself to correct, censure and ridicule the follies and vices of society and thus to bring contempt and derision upon aberrations from a desirable and civilised norm. (827-828)

From Cuddon's argument on who a satirist is, one can crystal clearly view a satirist as one who takes it upon himself or herself to set moral standards that he wants his or her society to comply with.

Whoever breaches these moral standards is ridiculed, mocked, burlesqued and lampooned by a satirist.

Nyanzi uses her satirical posts to show what she thinks has gone wrong in the political governance of her country, Uganda. She interweaves satire with graphic descriptions of sex activity or the reproductive organs to defamiliarise her literary works.

There is no doubt that Nyanzi uses satire to lampoon hypocrisy, dishonesty, dictatorship, greed, corruption and inequality. She uses her works to attack individuals in her society who she thinks exhibit the aforementioned vices or those that do not fit into the frame of her moral standards. This chapter focuses on three satirical elements namely irony, ridicule and mockery.

Ridicule and mockery are some of the commonest satirical elements that Nyanzi uses to condemn the weaknesses of political leaders. Writers in order to demean the status of people in their societies especially those in authority use ridicule and mockery. Nyanzi uses these two elements by presenting her characters as laughing stocks through their actions and decisions with an intention of bringing out her message and attempting to alter the perception her readers had on the people she mocks and ridicules.

According to Childs and Fowler, “Irony is a mode of discourse for conveying meanings different from, and usually opposite to, the professed or ostensible ones.” (123) In other words irony is the desired action that we do not see presented by characters in a literary piece of writing. Nyanzi uses this technique to condemn the undesired actions that leaders engage in as shown in detail in the subsequent paragraphs.

Juxtaposition on the other hand is used by writers to enable a reader view two dissimilar things in order to draw his or her own conclusion. The writer may vividly describe the appearance or attributes of two items to make it easy for the reader to get his or her message. According to Cuddon in the aforementioned book, juxtaposition or contrast is: “the juxtaposition of disparate or opposed images,

ideas, or both, to heighten or clarify a scene, theme or episode.” (191) Therefore, the reader has to read between the lines in a situation where the writer juxtaposes or contrasts two different items in order to understand his intention. Nyanzi uses juxtaposition to criticise and scorn political leaders who she thinks have failed to do what they ought to do.

4.2 Satirical Elements

4.2.1 Ridicule and Mockery.

To begin with, Nyanzi satirically portrays the head of state as inefficient, futile and bungling. At the same time, she assertively ridicules and mocks those who are content with status quo:

...When your woman's belly swells from fibroids, cysts and other deadly masses, do you call a clan meeting to announce that she is carrying your heir? Singing "Steady Progress, No Change" to Museveni's thirty-year old presidency is like showing off the benign tumours in your woman's uterus simply because they are not yet malignant. Don't you see how he has infected the state house, police, army, central bank, parliament, judges, schools, hospitals and every gullible Ugandan brain with his madness? There is no heir in a fibroid... (February 1, 2016.)¹

In the above, Nyanzi ridicules people in Uganda who praise the head of state yet to her, there is nothing to praise him about. She equates his supporters to a man who would quickly inform his clansmen that he is yet to get an heir since his wife is pregnant yet in reality his wife's stomach is a cesspool of "fibroids, cysts and other deadly masses". The "fibroids, cysts and other deadly masses" that she uses in this literary piece symbolize the futility of the government's long stay in power. The man who announces his wife's pregnancy without proof is a replica of the head of state's propagandists and henchmen who are quick to justify his long stay in power by exaggerating his achievements. She uses the woman's pseudo pregnancy to expose his failure to foster development. When she says that he has infected most institutions she intimates that he has failed to offer a fertile ground for them to offer better services. In addition, through her words, "there is no heir in a fibroid," she intimates that Uganda's future is bleak and blank. An heir symbolizes hope. Metaphorically, his

absence shows that there is no hope for a better future in the progress and development of Uganda. Nyanzi also demonstrates that the head of state has negatively infected the state house, police, army, and the central bank because of his shortcomings and failure to inspire good governance in Uganda. Mwenda and Tangri in their article, *Patronage Politics, Donor Reforms, and Regime Consolidation in Uganda* make similar observations:

Politically loyal officials have filled an array of senior positions, and public administration has clearly become an arm of government politicians...Politicization has also produced a highly corrupt state apparatus as senior personnel and their close associates have been involved in much private appropriation of public resources. And, finally, there has been a virtual absence of scrutiny over resource allocation: government ministers and top administrators have run largely authoritarian and unaccountable public institutions. (455)

Mwenda and Tangri both suggest that the failures in the public institutions emanate from the head of state's actions. Whilst Nyanzi does not show how this is so, Mwenda and Tangri in the above passage also show how the head of state's practice of appointing his political loyalists has given birth to officials who run public institutions with impunity since there is no scrutiny on what they do. Mwenda and Tangri therefore suggest that these political loyalists have turned into a corrupt and authoritarian lot – resulting into crippled institutions. Besides, the fact that the head of state considers loyalty ahead of ability, the appointed people end up failing institutions due to their lack of knowledge and ability to effectively run them.

Closely related, Nyanzi goes on to criticize and ridicule the head of state's henchmen and supporters for claiming that he has greatly fostered development in Uganda yet reality on the ground shows the contrary. She writes:

...When your babies' stomachs swell with worms or kwashiorkor, do you rejoice because you are doing a great job feeding the future generation? Singing about how the NRM gave us UPE without books, built many health centres with neither staff nor hospitals... (February 1, 2016.)²

Nyanzi wonders why some people would be claiming that the ruling party has achieved a lot yet there is nothing to write home about. She wonders if the ruling party supporters and henchmen were

parents would claim feeding their babies well if their stomachs got swollen with worms and kwashiorkor. In asking this rhetorical question, she satirically points out that the ruling party has caused more glitches and hitches than they have achievements. In fact, she insinuates that there needs to be more resources to rectify and overhaul what has gone wrong as a result of the head of state's overstay in power for more than thirty years. This is shown through the image of a baby's swollen stomach as a result of kwashiorkor and worms. For a parent or guardian to cure the infected baby, he or she has to deworm and incur more costs to cure the kwashiorkor. If this is not done, the baby can face dire ramifications. Without a doubt, the baby is a referent of Uganda while the worms and kwashiorkor symbolise the weaknesses and shortcomings of the ruling party that she implies are impediments to Uganda's growth. More still, she ridicules the ruling party supporters who boast about Universal Primary Education schools which harbour pupils without books. Nyanzi suggests that there can never be proper learning if students cannot read books and write notes given to them. She also exposes the lack of medics in the hospitals that the ruling party supporters and henchmen are always praising.

In addition, Nyanzi portrays the head of state as a leader with an insatiable appetite for power through a symbol of an archaic dance. She ridicules his fickleness, overstay in power and use of violent means to consolidate himself in power:

Each time we danced, the best dancer would take the big radio and choose the next number to dance to. The dance master in a big brimmed hat, with a hairy pot-belly sticking out of his yellow tee-shirt, tight buttocks peeping above camouflage shorts and small legs planted in solid army-boots always wins the dance competitions. For thirty years, we have had the same dance master. All the young dancers only know his dance moves and his kilingala music. When he was younger, he was dashing and could cut the dance strokes charmingly with such gusto and style. Today he just shuffles while uncoordinatedly shaking his small tight buttocks. He lost agility in one knee that no longer bends. without pain. Rather than dancing his presidential heart to victory, the longterm dance master has troops of bemuscleed youths who use their strong ankles and big feet to trip other dance opponents to the ground using engwaala...We are tired of kwasa kwasa. We want to dance zouk or kizumba or azonto. Who will save the dance from the aged dance master (March 17, 2015)³

Nyanzi humorously expresses her worry about the head of state's failure to leave power after thirty years. Her hint on the kwasa kwasa dance is to show how long the head of state has ruled Uganda. Mukuna in *The Genesis of Urban Music in Zaire* shows that Kwasa Kwasa is a dance move that was introduced in 1986 by the Empire Bakuba (80). Coincidentally, the current head of state took over power in 1986 as the dance started to rock Africa. Nyanzi's reference to Kwasa Kwasa dance in this post is unmistakable. She wants to show that the dance went out of fashion whilst the ruling party that came around its trending years is still here – over thirty years later. Through the uniting, refreshing and entertaining attributes of a dance, she shows how peaceful the elections were in the nineties since the head of state was popular and participated in them with “gusto and style”. Politically, by using the two terms, she suggests that he was effective and hardworking – qualities that won him votes during elections then. However, she shows a twist in the organisation of elections many years later. She exposes the violence that mars elections that used to be as peaceful as a dance in the past. She ridicules the head of state for the shrinking space for dissenting politicians who are manhandled by the army for attempting to challenge the status quo during elections. In line with Nyanzi's observation, electoral observers and political pundits have repeatedly pointed out the issue of intimidation of those in the opposition by the state's security apparatus. In their article, *Uganda's 2016 Elections: Not Even Faking It Anymore* Abrahamsen and Bareebe note:

The election campaign, as in 2006 and 2011, was characterized by incidents of intimidation... While brutality and intimidation by the police and other security agencies are a familiar feature of Ugandan elections, the violence unleashed by the so-called Crime Preventers in the 2016 campaign was an innovation. (03)

Abrahamsen and Bareebe expose a worrying trend of brutality and intimidation during elections in Uganda that has been happening since 2006. When Nyanzi mentions that she is tired of Kwasa Kwasa, she symbolically shows that she is tired of the head of state's practice of overstaying in power. Her preference of zouk, azonto and kizumba dances is symbolic of her need for change and an end to the head of state's rule that has lasted for three decades. The aforementioned dances are more recent unlike the Kwasa Kwasa that she associates the head of state with.

Nyanzi mocks the head of state for his endeavours to continue having a strong grip on power by using the legislature to amend the constitution to his advantage. She humorously notes:

After our Members of Parliament are paid to amend the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda by removing the presidential age limits, I propose that one of the NRM babies tables another new bill. Since the idea is to have Museveni ruling Uganda forever, this bill will go much further than the treacherous amendments of merely removing presidential term limits, or age limits. Oh yes! We shall call the bill:

"A BILL TO ENSURE THAT MUSEVENI RULES UGANDA FOREVER AND EVER."

The short name of the bill will be either:

"THE ANTI-PRESIDENTIAL EXPIRATION BILL OF 2016" or

"THE MUSEVENISM ELONGATION BILL OF 2016".

1. This private member's bill will ensure that Museveni rules Uganda long after he is either demented and senile, or even dead... (July 7, 2016)⁴

Nyanzi posted the above at a time when the debate on amending the age limit was at its pinnacle. She proposes a bill that can make the head of state rule forever without any limit. The bill in actual sense ridicules his focused strategy to have a strong grip on power by amending articles in the Ugandan constitution to continue ruling for as long as he wishes. She says that the bill should be tabled by one of the "NRM babies" to assert that their decisions are irrational like those of babies. She writes this satirical post at the backdrop of two events, one, a discussion on amending article 102(b) that deterred serving presidents from ruling beyond 75 years and the removal of term limits back in 2005. Her sentiments are not far flung from what political pundits and analysts have said before about the head of state's intentions to prolong his rule and how he strategically achieves it. As Abrahamsen and Bareebe assert in their aforementioned article:

As the NRM holds over 70 percent of the parliamentary seats, any such proposal is certain to sail through if introduced. If so, it will not be the first time the constitution is amended to serve Museveni's hunger for power. In 2005 a constitutional provision that limited the presidency to two terms was removed after Museveni gave every MP Shs5 million, in what was widely perceived as a case of direct bribery. (13)

Abrahamsen and Bareebe's prediction was accurate. Majority of the ruling party members of parliament and some from the independent cohorts voted in favour of the removal of the age limit (article 102(b)) from the constitution. They also note that the ruling party enjoys majority seats in

parliament which makes it easy for the head of state to bribe them to amend and pass anything into law in his favour. One of Nyanzi's proposed titles, "The Anti-Presidential Expiration Bill of 2016" scorns the head of state for thinking that he will never "expire" at all. An article in the bill proposes that he should rule even in death which is impossible. She ridicules the head of state for using all resources to remove articles in the constitution that put a limit on a serving head of state's tenure in power yet he cannot remove the reality that awaits all mortals – death.

Closely related, Nyanzi continues to ridicule the head of state for his determination to keep consolidating himself in power at all costs:

...Even in death, Museveni must continue ruling Uganda. Neither old age nor mortality will end this presidential term because better the devil you know than some angel you don't. Museveni's death must be fought tooth and nail. A branch of Special Forces Unit will be recruited, trained, armed to the teeth to fight the spirit of death, and any purveyors of the same morbid spirit. Anyone plotting to deaden Museveni will be treated to the 'shoot to kill' order... (July 7, 2016)⁵

Nyanzi further scorns the head of state for assuming that he can rule forever. She argues that he is human and will not amend the "constitution of his death" because, like any other human being he is mortal and susceptible to death. She sarcastically shows that no amount of training can make his soldiers so skilled to kill the spirit of death. She concludes that the head of state cannot use his power as a leader of Uganda to fight and remove everything in his way that might block his path to continue having a strong grip on power.

Nyanzi continues to mock the head of state's strong obsession for power by giving him a glimpse into the reality of life – death and its aftermath:

...Preserving the cherished traditional customs of the people of Uganda demands that the corpse must be disposed of by one's family. So be it. However, a team of mortuary specialists must remove vital body parts of Museveni to sit in State House and continue ruling Uganda. To that effect, a pair of canines, a piece of oblongata, an auricle, a palm, a single big toe, and his powerful manhood (including all the presidential hairs, rod and both balls) must expertly be removed from his body for embalming.

After embalming, these presidential essentials will be sat in his beloved hat, and taken to all venues and occasions necessitating Museveni's intervention... (July 7, 2016)⁶

Nyanzi sarcastically shows that the country will move on even when the head of state is dead. When she says that his vital body parts will be expertly extracted from his corpse to make them rule the country, she is simply scorning his endeavours to gain life presidency. It is obvious that body parts cannot rule a country. She therefore scorns his overzealous desire to have a strong grip on power at all cost for life.

4.2.2 Irony

Nyanzi depicts Uganda's broken systems. She wonders why the members of parliament and ministers are paid a hefty sum yet they do not play a huge role in the decision making of important national matters. She argues:

Why do we have Members of Parliament with full salaries and benefits, if every decision must be taken by the president? Why do we have ministers with full salaries and allowances, if the last word on anything and everything comes only from the president? Why have fully paid technocrats sitting in public institutions, if the only decision maker in Uganda is the president?

Remember how he rushed into the oldest public university last year and closed Makerere University, as if he was either the Chancellor, or Minister of Education? This time he gate-crashed the policy decision of switching off all sim cards not re-registered with national identity card numbers. It did not matter that UCC, parliament and the relevant minister were all embroiled in determining this matter. Museveni jumped in to the rescue and decreed a new date for turning off the un-re-registered phone sim-cards. Without solutions to the bottlenecks in the national ID project, no amounts of deadlines will solve the masses' inability to re-register our sim cards. Wonderful silliness, just!

This here, is another very good illustration of how our country degenerated into a pure autocracy. There is only one big Grand Father in this Mafiaso state. There is only one power center with one big old pair of bums at the very apex. It is the duty of every other public officer to reverently lick the bums and their products, as if this is the greatest nourishment in the land. You castrated impotent parliamentarians, ministers and public officials masquerading as decision makers in Uganda! Whoever bewitched you was naked and thorough. (May 22, 2017)⁷

In this post, Nyanzi ridicules the head of state's autocracy. She presents him as the fountain of every decision. Yet members of parliament and cabinet ministers who are pivotal in decision making are left without any role to play. She therefore portrays him as a leader who has no respect for institutions. She wonders why ministers and members of parliament continue to get a hefty sum in terms of salary and allowances yet the head of state is the alpha and omega of each and every national decision. She cites instances in which he has rushed in to make personal decisions before deliberations with his subordinates. For instance, when he closed Makerere university in 2017 and when he kept on extending the deadline for simcard registration after the Minister of Information Technology had made a deadline prior to his. She insinuates that the members in the executive and legislature are merely observers instead of being actors in matters of national importance. She therefore questions why the tax payers' money is misused by the state in terms of salaries to ministers and members of parliament whose powers and roles have been usurped by the head of state. In her book, *Museveni's Uganda: Paradoxes of Power in a Hybrid Regime* Tripp observes:

Most institutions that could challenge some of the more undemocratic aspects of the government are weak and have been manipulated, co-opted, or undermined...but the general weakness of the legislature and the power of patronage have made parliament fairly defenceless against assaults on its integrity... (30)

Tripp's observations also show that the head of state is independently running the state which has made most institutions weak and redundant. This has left a huge gap in the governance of the country since no one can challenge undemocratic aspects that emanate from his decisions. It is clear that Nyanzi intends to criticise him for assuming he is the fountain of each and every decision in the running of the state. She clearly shows that this has led to the breakdown of institutions and has robbed them of their sovereignty and integrity.

Furthermore, Nyanzi criticises the serving government for using state resources during election campaigns to lure voters into voting for the incumbent. Worse still, she demonstrates how these resources are given to the beneficiaries on the eve of presidential elections yet they lack prior knowledge and skills in the projects that they intend to invest in:

...In 2011, just before the presidential elections, we were given huge envelopes of money for our SACCO if we promised to vote for the Movement. That money helped the women in our SACCO to buy domestic fowls, Heifers, Angorra goats and pigs for commercial rearing. In this week's SACCO, the chairperson of the group told us to write down our names if we have a plan for investing in more developmental projects. If we write down our names it means that we are signing up to vote for the Movement. We shall also receive a yellow tee-shirt to wear when the president comes to our village for his campaign rally.

Last time I got heavy-duty money for buying chickens and building their house, but then I did not get the financial and management skills to manage the poultry farm I invested in. So I lost my birds before making the profits. This time round, I am going to register for piggery. I noticed that there is much less work required to rear pigs for sale. Women who vote for the Movement get small-small money to push us in our developmental projects. Even if the projects fail, it does not matter, as long as Mzee Musanvu gets the vote. Movement oyee (March 17, 2015)⁸

Nyanzi perceives the above practice as a case study of incumbents using state resources to strengthen their grip on power. In their article, *Do Anti-Poverty Programs Sway Voters? Experimental Evidence from Uganda* Blattman, Mathilde, and Fiala argue, “Uganda, for example, has a semi autocratic regime that tries to use programs and patronage to insulate itself from political competition.” (03) This shows that the state uses resources to bribe voters so as to win elections. It is ironic for the state to give resources to groups of voters without any prior guide on how they will use the resources given to them. Besides, Nyanzi wonders why the state does not give the groups in question resources without ulterior motives for instance, during off presidential campaign seasons so that the women in the groups are trained and given resources no matter their political affiliations. The tail end of the above post portrays the head of state as egocentric since his intention is to get votes from women groups with less care on whether their projects will be successful or not. The entire post demonstrates the wastage of state resources by the ruling party in its bid to consolidate itself in power and shield itself from political competition.

4.3 Juxtaposition.

This section features posts in which Nyanzi contrasts dissimilar views, reactions, statements, situations from people about certain aspects in the Ugandan society in order to make her message

clear. She interweaves juxtaposition with descriptions of sexual activities. She uses juxtaposition to bring out the theme of poor governance.

Nyanzi juxtaposes the minister of education's advice to locals in Kyenjojo district with Dr. Kizza Besigye's advice to Ugandans. She posted this post at the time when legislators were discussing the amendment of Article 102(b). She writes:

JANET'S THREE HYMENS VERSUS KB'S RED NECKTIE:

While Janet Museveni was busy bragging about how her three daughters' hymens remained intact until their marriage nights, Dr. Kizza Besigye - dressed in a red necktie and red Fez - was telling people, "Togikwatako!"

While Janet Museveni was telling young girls in Kyenjojo district that she made her daughters sign 'True Love Waits' slips as virginity pacts which they later presented to their husbands for permission to deflower them, Dr. Kizza Besigye was telling people of Uganda to protect the constitutional provisions for presidential age limits through, "Togikwatako!"

While Janet Museveni was orgasmically reminiscing about the good old days when communities raised children unlike today's immorality, Dr. Kizza Besigye was busy warning all Ugandans against the present-day immorality of amending Article 102b. For emphasis, he said, "Togikwatako!"

While Janet Museveni went on rampage rebuking parents who settle cases with rapists or defilers after accepting money from them, Dr. Kizza Besigye was working hard to sensitize the masses about the looming rape and defilement of Uganda's constitution by gang-bangers intoxicated with entrenching the dictatorship. He said, "Togikwatako!... (October 16, 2017)"⁹

Nyanzi juxtaposes the Minister of Education's address to the locals in Kyenjojo with that of Besigye (a former presidential candidate) to Ugandans. Whilst the former challenges girls in Kyenjojo to keep their virginities intact until marriage, the latter calls upon Ugandans to shun the endeavours of the state to change article 102(b), a constitutional article that curtails Ugandan heads of state from ruling beyond seventy-five years of age. Nyanzi's use of juxtaposition is meant to show us that unlike virginity that can be broken when a girl is ready to get married, article 102(b) should be kept intact for Uganda's political stability. She also contrasts the minister's worry about the present day immorality in communities among the young with Besigye's plea to Ugandans against what she calls the "immorality" of amending article 102(b). She intimates that the minister is part of the immorality since she is a leader in the ruling party and she has no moral authority to point fingers at immoral people. The word "togikwatako" is a Luganda word that translates into "do not touch it" (in this case

she refers to article 102(b)). Nyanzi goes ahead to liken the rapists that the minister talks about to the state authorities who are attempting to change the constitution. She protests against the state's attempts to remove the article in question from the constitution without consent from the citizenry. She uses the words gang-bangers to refer to the authorities who are attempting to amend the constitution without proper consent from most Ugandans.

Nyanzi juxtaposes her use of what her critics have described as obscene language with the failings of the state and some of its institutions:

...Who is more obscene than members of parliament whose treacherous votes in parliament are buyable with a few pieces of silver? What is more obscene than the reduction of medical doctors to death singers who diagnose Ugandans with late-stage cancer yet the only cancer-treatment-machine is broken for months and months on end? What is more obscene than UPE and USE... (March 30, 2017)¹⁰

In the above excerpt, Nyanzi juxtaposes her language with the failings of different state institutions. She demonstrates that members of parliament are easily corruptible yet as legislators, they ought to exhibit competence in whatever they do. She argues that her critics have to question the integrity of the members of parliament that she writes about instead of her language that she uses metaphorically. She paints a grim picture of the health sector. At the time she posted this post, the cancer-treatment-machine was down as cancer patients got stranded and some died due to the lack of the vital machine. It is ironic that the doctors who are supposed to treat patients and give them hope instead give death announcements to victims who are yet to succumb to cancer. She also criticises the dire situation in Universal Primary Education and Universal Secondary Education by terming them as “obscene”. Nyanzi's sentimentalities are in line with existing literature that demonstrates the low standard of Universal Primary Education. Acemah, a political scientist in his article, *Reflections on 33rd Anniversary of NRM* observes:

...Sabalwanyi praised UPE and launched a book titled, “Universal Primary Education: Transforming Uganda” to commemorate 20 years since the UPE project started in 1997. If UPE is so good, how come the political class and especially the ruling elite of Uganda prefer to send their children to very expensive private schools here and abroad?

It is hypocrisy and dishonesty of the highest order for anybody in the NRM government to allege that UPE is a success story. UPE is qualitatively a failure. Ugandans deserve a lot better... (3 February, 2019)¹¹

The name “Sabalwany” that appears in this quotation refers to the head of state and it means that he is the king of all fighters. Acemah reports the head of state boasting about the achievements he has gained for Ugandans through the Universal Primary Education project on 26th January, 2019. In response to his claims, he wonders why the political class shuns the aforementioned program for very expensive private school both local and international. He also demonstrates that the program has failed and it is not worth any celebration. He adds that Ugandans “deserve a lot better”. In demonstrating the short comings in different sectors of the state, Nyanzi intends to call upon critics, political pundits and the people in authority to comment on her message and ignore the kind of language she uses because, it is a conduit of her message.

4.4 Conclusion.

Nyanzi satirises those in authority. She tackles greed for power, corruption, voter bribery, violence and a failed government system where decisions are made by one person, the head of state. She unmistakably questions the state’s priorities in the face of many challenges. In her attempt to lampoon, mock, ridicule and scorn those in authority, she draws a line between how her society is and what it should be. She ridicules the head of state’s henchmen for exaggerating his achievements. She demonstrates that he has been inefficient for a great part of his thirty and so rule. To illustrate this, she points out that his weaknesses can be seen in the Universal Primary Schools that are occupied by students who do not have books and hospitals that lack medics. More still, she ridicules the head of state’s greed for power that has seen him bribe the legislature to lift the term limits and age limit. She concludes that no matter how strategic he has become to remove all limits to his grip on power, he will not stop the limit to all mortals, death.

In addition, Nyanzi exposes and criticises the head of state for creating a situation in which he is seen as the alpha and omega of every decision in Uganda. It is from this moment that she questions why members of parliament and ministers get a hefty sum yet they are redundant as he plays the roles they are meant to play. She also criticises the state's use of state resource during election campaigns to bribe voters.

Lastly, she also uses Juxtaposition in which she contrasts dissimilar items to help her readers to vividly get her message. She juxtaposes her choice of language with the shortcomings of the state. In so doing, she shows that her language is only a "vehicle" of her message which highlights the state's shortcomings.

NOTES

1. Stella Nyanzi, Facebook post, 1 February, 2016
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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The study analysed Stella Nyanzi's literary language in her Facebook posts. It focused on juxtaposition, satirical elements, sexual allegories, buttocks and genitalia metaphors. Her Facebook posts were analysed using formalism theory's defamiliarisation. This chapter presents a summary of the study and makes recommendations.

5.2 Main Findings and Conclusion

In chapter one of this study, it was hypothesized that Stella Nyanzi employs sexual allegories, satire, juxtaposition, buttocks and genitalia metaphors to underscore the theme of bad governance and make it more perceptible to the readers. The study's findings have confirmed this hypothesis. Stella Nyanzi uses sexual allegories to mask her message in her posts. She creates posts with descriptions of intimate sex, rape and prostitution scenarios to estrange the instances of corruption, mismanagement of funds, overstay in power, brutality, selfishness, voter bribery, and maladministration. These instances had become automatic for many in her society. However, the way she packages them invigorates how people see them. The study's findings reveal that many writers before Nyanzi depicted instances of bad governance as well. However, she stands out of the crowd of other writers since she masks her works in a different style that commands attention. Therefore, the study established that the sexual allegories that she uses are simply a conduit for her message to those in authority. She uses the sexual allegories to wrap her message therein so as to send it to those in authority that she finds blameworthy. She paints a grim picture of how things are in her society and gives suggestions on how they ought to be.

In addition, Nyanzi uses buttocks and genitalia metaphors as a hub of her message to those in authority. She uses words such as buttocks, vagina, clitoris, penis and other words that describe

genitalia related organs to criticize those in power that she finds culpable. Her targets are people in authority who she thinks are corrupt, selfish, dictatorial and unproductive. She calls them buttocks, vagina and many other names of genitalia to metaphorically show how their characters correlate with those of the already mentioned body parts. Through these metaphors, Nyanzi suggests that since the people in power have degenerated into body parts, they can no longer be trusted as leaders. She attacks those in power for stifling voices of dissent which she says robs Ugandans of their freedom of speech. She mainly focuses on the challenges of the hoi polloi in particular who have greatly been affected by what she calls injustices inflicted on them by those in power. On the whole, Nyanzi, equates leaders to buttocks and genitalia metaphors to show how inferior and unproductive they have become in the face of a plethora of predicaments in Uganda. She questions their humanity in the face of poor healthcare, high standards of living and broken state systems.

Nyanzi uses satire to censure the actions and decisions of the people in authority. She attacks greed for power, corruption, and a breakdown of institutions, voter bribery, violence and a failed government system where each and every decision is made by one person, the head of state. She demonstrates how the current head of state's regime is similar to the previous regimes that are associated with corruption and social injustices. In equating him to his predecessors, she shows that nothing fundamental has changed in his leadership style. In her posts, Nyanzi illustrates how the head of state has become a shadow of his former self. She criticises his overstay in power by showing that his leadership has failed to inspire development as more and more of his henchmen engage in corruption. She also unmistakably questions the state's priorities in the face of many challenges. In her attempt to lampoon, mock, ridicule and scorn those in authority, she shows how her society is currently and how it should be.

More still, Nyanzi uses Juxtaposition to describe the appearance or character of two dissimilar items to deliver her message picturesquely. Through this literary device, she addresses dishonesty, poor education system, corruption and the failure of the legislature to play its role as it ought to. Nyanzi

uses this style to disclose the lies that those in power tell to the people they rule. Therefore, she shows that there is a mismatch between what leaders say they do and what they actually do.

Critics who rushed in to judge Nyanzi's language as immoral knowingly or unknowingly did not consider the fact that her posts are literary in nature. Formalists believe that literature is different from other kinds of writing. One has to read literary pieces with the intention of looking for the connotative meaning of words because they are defamiliarised. The defamiliarisation concept makes ordinary language strange, unfamiliar, peculiar and bizarre. To make her literary pieces stand out of other posts from different fields on Facebook, Nyanzi uniquely tailors her posts and wraps her message with satirical elements, juxtaposition, sexual allegories, buttocks and genitalia metaphors. These narrative techniques have made her posts to go viral. This has helped her gain massive coverage from local and international news agencies. When the people in authority condemned her pieces of work and arrested her, it implied that her message had been heard loud and clear by her intended audience.

When Nyanzi was arrested in 2017, it was a sign of the dwindling space of freedom of speech in Uganda. This was after she had criticised the head of state and his wife for failing to deliver a 2016 presidential campaign pledge in which the state was to offer free pads to school going girls. This indicated that the state detests dissenting views. Nyanzi's arrest is an indicator that the state prefers people who support whatever it brings on board. The state prefers literature that reflects only the positive image of its leaders. However, this would mean that the artist is indifferent to people's predicament. Artists, like a mirror reflect the goings-on in their societies as they are in their works. When they ignore the truth and cosmetically paint situations in words to please the state, it only shows how aloof they are in front of reality.

5.3 Recommendations

This study has shown how critics of Stella Nyanzi's posts have knowingly or unknowingly interpreted them as immoral, profane, uncouth, obscene, offensive and abusive. Her message has been ignored and the focus has been put on her language yet she only uses it connotatively. In line with the research findings above, the following recommendations were born:

- Critics of works of literature should refrain from basing on their denotative meaning because this robs writers of their creativity, as they fear for their works being misread.
- Heads of state and those in leadership positions should accept criticism and receive it as an opportunity to improve their leadership abilities to suit the common people's desires.

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