

## UNPACKING STANBIC BANK'S PAN AFRICAN BRAND CAMPAIGN USING CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

In this paper, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used to identify features of a Stanbic Bank advertisement in Botswana in order to uncover its representation of Africanness and gender, particularly, black African femininity. The main interest is to illustrate how CDA as an analytical tool can be used to unpack underlying assumptions in texts. In a society that is image saturated, the ability to read the word [image] critically becomes crucial for survival in contexts marked by unequal power relations and prejudice. A critical approach to reading and writing will draw attention to the relationship between language, ideology and power. CDA examines, not only forms of oppression, but is also interested in forms of empowerment through discourse. Drawing on Norman Fairclough's (1989, 1995) three-dimensional conception of discourse, the paper problematizes the advertisement's construction of the African woman, including its representation of Pan Africanism. Although there are questions about CDA's theoretical validity and soundness by theorists such as Widdowson, 2004, CDA still remains useful for promoting critical awareness of discourse and public uses of language and in particular, how public discourse positions readers or viewers..

### Introduction

This paper examines Stanbic Bank's Pan African brand campaign using Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989, 1993, 1995, 2000, 2003). The advertisement sets out to brand Stanbic Bank as an African bank by relying on African symbols and images and visuals. However, an examination of the advertisement using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) problematizes the bank's uses of African texts, symbols and images and shows how the advertisement fails to entrench the bank as an African bank, but rather perpetuates stereotypes and myths about Africanness and black African woman's identity. It succeeds in reproducing and maintaining power relations between South Africa, the originator of the advertisement, and Botswana, the consumer other.

Stanbic Bank is a trading name for the Standard Bank Group (Different from Standard Chartered Bank). The Standard Bank Group trades under the name Stanbic Bank in Botswana, the Democratic republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Stanbic Bank is known as Standard Bank in Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Lesotho, Mauritius and Mozambique and is represented by Union Commercial Bank in Madagascar. In Botswana, Stanbic Bank has branches in most of the major cities of Botswana.

The advertisement as a text is characterized by tension, contradiction and hybridity. In its representation of the African woman, the advertisement sets up a contradictory and hybrid female identity by simultaneously presenting an image of an independent woman and that of a traditional woman. As

part of its branding campaign the advertisement also uses a strategic text capturing Kwame Nkrumah's famous words: "We face neither East nor West: We face forward."

The paper shows how references to Kwame Nkrumah's Pan African words in a commercial advertisement produce a contradictory effect on the viewers. Tension is experienced between the possible Africanising effects of the words and the trivializing and/or a commodifying effect of the way the words are used in the text. Tension is created also by juxtaposing Kwame Nkrumah's words and an image of an African woman. Kwame Nkrumah was Ghana's first President, a revered Pan Africanist (revered almost to mythical proportions) and a pioneer of the liberation of Africa from European imperialism. The placing side by side of two different things can be read as both empowering and disempowering for the woman represented in the advertisement as a black woman. Visually, placing the headline words: "We face neither East nor West: We face forward" next to the woman creates the impression that the words are hers, especially given that the name Kwame Nkrumah is so small and hardly readable from a distance. The juxtaposition of the Nkrumah's words with the woman succeeds in making the woman the centre and originator of the discourse. That indeed seems to build an image of an empowered, speaking woman. But drawing on male discourse, instead of words spoken by significant African women, proves

problematic and can have a subordinating impact on women.

A critical discourse analysis of the advertisement traces a trajectory of unequal economic power relations between South Africa, the source of the advertisement, and Botswana, the constructed consumer other. The paper shows that South Africa is constructed as the economically powerful other, while Botswana is the objectified other.

In order to adequately illustrate how the advertisement operates as a site where gendered discourses are discursively constructed the paper will draw on some aspects of feminist critical discourse analysis.

#### Critical Discourse Analysis: An overview

Critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse analytical research tool (Van Dijk, 1985, Janks, 1997), which can be located within the broader field of Discourse Analysis (DA). Discourse Analysis is an approach to the study of language and texts which draws on a number of areas such as linguistics, literary theory and cultural studies, philosophy of language, sociology and psychology (Luke, 1996). The difference between CDA and DA may be traced in their definitions of discourse and the emphasis on the term critical.

Discourses have been generally taken to refer to all language (spoken interaction, written texts and visual texts) and practices.

For CDA, however, the emphasis is on discourse as social practice (Wodak, 1996) and not just language per se. The idea of discourse as text is grounded in Foucault's (1982) theory of discourse which has several implications for power relations. For Foucault (1982), discourse is not language per se, but is a system that under-girds the language as well as the values and beliefs hidden in language, including the ways such beliefs construct subject positions for people. This thinking underscores a constitutive view of discourse which implies that discourses shape identities and social relations.

Discourses are never innocent in that they involve "coherent use of language, or signs where certain (imperial) interests are promoted at the cost of others- "(Olivier (2003), in C von Maltzan (Ed.), quoting Foucault (1982)). Concerning discourse, Foucault (1972) defines discourses as "systematically form[ing] the objects about which they speak" (p. 49).

Discourse as a social practice also means language use as social action, that is, discourse, is a form with which people might act on the world and upon each other. In addition, discourse as a social practice implies a view of language use as a form of representing the world, and a signifying system. When language use is viewed as social practice, it implies seeing its inevitable role in the domination of others, the reproduction and maintaining of existing social orders, including existing power relations.

Grounded in Foucault's theorization of discourse, CDA specializes in uncovering the close links among language, ideology and power in society and further seeks to show up connections that may be hidden from people and questions the taken-for-granted notions of discourse, identity or gender. CDA aims to expose unequal power relations in public discourse by showing how public discourse often serves the interests of the powerful forces over those of the less privileged (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1990).

According to CDA, texts such as public discourse, including advertisements, are discourses that may enact social power abuse, dominance, and inequality and reproduce and maintain social practices. CDA is explicitly about exposing and ultimately resisting social inequality. The term critical, in critical discourse analysis, signals a view of language that locates language as significant in the workings of ideology and mobilizing meaning to sustain or contest relations of domination in society. Such preoccupation with power issues distinguishes CDA from other kinds of discourse analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1990). CDA proceeds by emphasizing, through an examination of the dialogical relation between language use and social practice, and the relationship between discursive structures and social practice.

Conceptualizing discourses as social practice involves seeing discourse as always constructed and therefore having the capacity to serve particular interests. It also involves understanding how social practices do "control the selection of certain structural

possibilities and the exclusion of others and the retention of these selections over time in a particular area of social life" (Fairclough, 2003 p. 226). Although CDA is preoccupied with issues of power and inequity, there are critics who challenge CDA for not providing in-depth analysis of gender. In order to counteract that criticism, feminist critical discourse analysis is an approach to discourse, which takes into account the concept of gender in more detail. Feminist critical discourse analysis can offer useful insights in the analysis of questions related to gender and representation.

#### Incorporating Feminist CDA

Feminist critical discourse analysis is located within the broader framework of critical discourse analysis, and is a recent development whose foundations can be linked to a general absence of interest in in-depth gender analysis by mainstream CDA theorists such as Fairclough (1989) and Teun, A. van Dijk (1985).

Feminist CDA shares some distinctive characteristics with critical discourse analysis, such as, its critical orientation. However, feminist critical discourse analysis works from a more developed theoretical analysis of gender (Lazar, 2005). Feminist critical discourse analysis views gender as fluid and constitutive. That is, it views gender as a continuum and as shaping and as being shaped by contexts. In feminist critical discourse analysis, just like in CDA, language and ideology plays a significant role in the construction of gender so that language can be used to construct gender

from a particular ideological perspective. Feminist critical discourse analysis will then focus on how language constructs identity and gender. Analysis will therefore focus on how texts reveal unequal gendered power relations. In order to unearth ideological underpinnings in the construction of gender, feminist critical discourse analysis proceeds by showing connections between gender representations or gendered discourses in the text and social and cultural practices, the aim of which is to demystify 'naturalized' assumptions of gender in texts.

CDA draws on Foucault's concept of discourse as social practice and discourses as socially conditioning. However, feminist critical discourse analysis questions Foucault's idea that discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1982:49) for its determinism. The idea of discourse as social practice has the problem of setting out individuals as determined by structures and overlooks questions of agency. To critique the determinist notions of discourse, feminist critical discourse analysis uses Gramsci's notion of hegemony, particularly because his notion of hegemony stresses a degree of agency, that is, the possibility that subjects are not helpless victims of discourse, but that they can act, and that individuals can in fact shape and challenge discourses. The idea that discourses are socially constituted and socially conditioned implies that discourses may be challenged by people.

Feminist critical discourse analysis agenda which challenges hegemony and patriarchy, disallows a single reader position and argues that there are many possible positions from which to approach texts depending on such factors as gender, race and class. Concepts such as multivoicedness and intertextuality of all texts (Bakhtin, 1981) are central in feminist critical discourse analysis and can be useful in analyzing hybridity and multivoicedness in advertisements.

#### Why Advertisements

In this paper, advertisements are viewed as discourses. This is to approach discourses as forms of social practice (Fairclough, 1992). As discourses, advertisements can be used to act upon the world and upon readers or viewers, including the participants in the advertisement. Advertisements are modes of representation and signifying practices, and as such, contribute to the construction of epistemologies of the world and of social identities and subject positions for social subjects and types of self (Fairclough, 1992). This suggests that advertisements have the power to define, mark, classify and to represent phenomena and subjects in a certain way within what Foucault calls 'regimes of truth'. Since advertisements are sites for socialization, producing, maintaining and reproducing stereotypes, they become sites of struggle for meaning and as such, they can become major sources of hegemony. Advertisements need to be analyzed critically in order to expose unequal power relations and to understand the assumptions which under-gird them.

Advertisements function to mediate power relations and can indeed maintain power relations. As public discourses, advertisements participate in the construction and deconstruction of definitions of femininity and masculinity. Goffman (1979) suggests that "advertisements depict for us not necessarily how we actually behave as men and women, but how we think men and women behave". This suggests that one of the critical roles of advertising is reinforcing and /or challenging gender stereotypes. Advertisements therefore offer a useful place for analyzing how identities and genders are constructed and represented in texts.

This specific promotion campaign made by Stanbic Bank was selected for analysis for a number of reasons. First, the campaign was supposed to be part of a series of different advertisements to be advertised over a specified period of time. All these advertisements would be dealing with the theme of Pan Africanism. The opportunity to view the series of campaign over a period of time is useful because it would allow for sustained analysis of issues and would make generalizations possible.

Secondly, the promotion campaign draws on current topics such as gender and African Renaissance. African Renaissance, popularized by South Africa's President, Thabo Mbeki. African Renaissance is a philosophy and an optimistic concept still in formation, which places Africa at centre stage. The concept which is related to Pan Africanism in its quest for solidarity and

transformation through self determination, is still taking shape. It is best encapsulated in the then-Deputy President Mbeki's famous "I am an African" speech in May 1996 following the adoption of a new constitution. The promotion campaign also draws directly on Pan African sentiments, expressed in Nkrumah's words, "We face neither East nor West: We face forward".

There is no agreed definition of Pan Africanism, but broadly speaking, Pan Africanism is guided by principles that seek to set aside cultural differences amongst Africans, including people of African descent scattered all over the world. Pan Africanism is driven by the principle of shared cultural experiences and the need to foster solidarity and resistance to exploitation. Key figures, among many others, include, W.E.B. Du Bois, labeled the Father of Pan Africanism; Jomo Kenyatta, first president of Kenya and Pan African activist and Kwame Nkrumah, Pan African activist and Ghana's first president. Nkrumah is the Pan Africanist to whom the dream of a 'United States of Africa' is attributed.

The promotion campaign therefore presented opportunities for exploring topical issues such as African cultural identity, power, gender, equity and agency, using CDA.

#### A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Stanbic Bank advertisement

Critical discourse analysis represents a wide range of approaches to text analysis and as such there can never be a prescribed method of doing discourse analysis (Huckin, 1997).

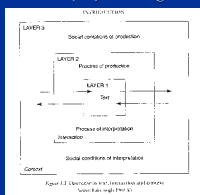
Using Fairclough's (1992), three-dimensional framework, the paper proceeds by examining specific textual, discursive, and contextual features of an advertisement from a bank, the aim of the analysis of which is to uncover hidden power relations, interests served and identities constructed.

Fairclough's three-dimensional framework incorporates three aspects of discourse viewed as interrelated layers, namely: description (textual analysis), interpretation (process of production and reception) and explanation (social conditions which govern processes of production and consumption). The descriptive part of the analysis involves description of the general aspects such as text type and the description of specific linguistic selections, including visual images, in terms of their juxtaposition, their sequences and their layout (Janks, 1997). Interpretation is an analysis of the connection between the discourse processes (the processes of production and reception) and the text. The explanation level includes analysis of the discursive processes. This part involves situating the specific linguistic selections that make up the text within their historical context as well as how they have been socially and historically determined.

The levels of analysis are illustrated in the figure below. Generally, critical discourse analysis may involve two stages, namely: an uncritical or superficial reading of the text and a critical reading of the text which includes taking a step back in order to raise questions, and mentally comparing it to related genres (Janks, 1997; Huckin, 1997).

## FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

Fairclough's three dimensional conception of discourse  
(3D) See Diagram



This paper assumes a critical perspective from the onset because it seeks to examine and challenge underlying assumptions encoded in the advertisement and how readers and participants are positioned and thereby constructed.

Critical discourse analysts have various linguistic tools at their disposal. There are as many ways of organizing text analysis as there are critical discourse analysts. On the whole CDA uses approaches which attempt to ground text analysis in the social realities that inform its construction, production and reception and the way texts socially constitute identities.

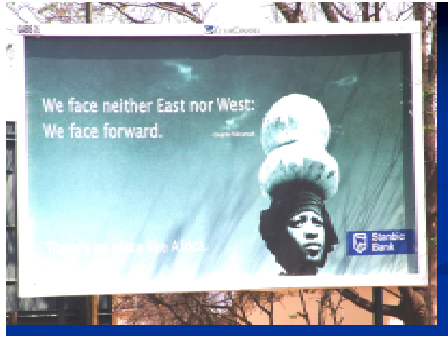
This paper examines only those specific semiotic and linguistic aspects that make up the text and those which are relevant to illustrate how power relations function and how gender identities are being constructed in this advertisement. To do this, the paper draws on the tools presented by Huckin (1997) in his paper, Critical Discourse Analysis. Huckin's (1987) model is based on Fairclough's three-dimensional framework.

The main linguistic headings which Huckin identifies are relevant for analyzing the questions the advertisement raises and for analyzing advertisements in general. The linguistic headings to be used in the analysis of the advertisement include: genre; text structure; omission; framing; foregrounding; discursive differences; back grounding; presupposition; sentence by sentence analysis; topicalization; agent-patient; deletion; insinuations; connotations; labels; metaphor; register; modality.

The paper first analyses the text as a whole, that is, the text type and genre questions, before delving into specific semiotic and linguistic features. Huckin (1997) recommends that analyzing the text as a whole, is a useful entry point into critical discourse analysis because, "this is usually where textual manipulations have their most powerful effect" (Huckin, 1997, p.4). His argument is based on the observation that readers usually do not engage in a close reading of text as an initial response to texts but rather start by focusing on the text as a whole. According to Huckin (1997) "advertisements as genre are usually immediately recognized by their use of attention grabbing language and visual aids, by the way they extol the virtues of some product or service and by their artificially personal tone-- ..." (p. 5).

In line with feminist critical discourse analysis approach to reading and specifically the idea of multiplicity of discourse, the paper acknowledges that there can never be a partial observation for any analytical approach and that this particular analysis is

shaped by sociological and ideological factors: ethnicity, race, gender, class and age.



Level one: Analysis of the text as a whole/the text structure

Examination of the text as a whole involves analyzing aspects of genre and framing of the text. At this level, the text is situated in its genre type or text structure and how the text conforms to it. In general, the organizational properties of the text are examined. Analysis here includes examining the way and the order the elements of a text are combined to constitute a text type. Fairclough (2000) argues that texts are shaped and constrained by social structure and culture. Assumptions about social relationships are built into rules and conventions governing text types. Texts can become useful means of studying systems of knowledge, and beliefs and power relations in society. Examining the text structure or text type of the advertisement might offer insights into the text's assumptions about social relationships and construction of identities.

The advertisement being analyzed appeared in a billboard and is part of a Pan African brand campaign in Botswana, in 2005. The billboard is in colour and appears in strategic places, such as along the main streets in Gaborone. It also appears in newspapers and is heard on the radio. The text is a banking advertisement and is part of a series of campaigns and is part of the first phase of the Pan African brand campaign. The brand campaign is not a typical commercial advertisement selling a specific product, but it aims to build and create a specific image and identity for the bank.

Through branding, viewers are positioned in such a way that they begin to associate the corporation with a particular and specific desired image. For example, through the use of a particular system of signification such as the colour used as the backdrop of the advertisement, green, which symbolizes earth and naturalness, Nkrumah's words and an African woman carrying a pumpkin, viewers are being positioned to associate Stanbic Bank with Africanness. Through the use of the system of signification and the unexpected use of Nkrumah's words, "We face neither East nor West: We face forward" the bank can be said to be creating for itself an African identity.

Taken in their historical and political context these words form what can be referred to as a discourse of decolonization. The use of Nkrumah's words give the text a mythical aura that helps to insert the advertisement in a political and historical



zone, even if they are several times removed from the actual context.

The image of an African woman carrying two pumpkins is imposing and draws viewer attention through its sheer size and position in the advertisement. Besides the fleeting dark clouds above her head, the image of the woman is the only other object that has prominent visibility in an advertisement that has a written text of thirteen words only. A great percentage of advertisements that use women as subjects/participants, use women with model like qualities. One distinguishing feature of this advertisement is that it uses a non-model looking woman but draws on a desexualized, traditional African woman who is carrying two pumpkins on her head. The use of a woman in a banking advertisement has many possible effects. The use of a woman carrying pumpkins, or the use of a woman, for that matter, may brand Stanbic as a bank sympathetic to the plight and struggles of African women. It can also be said that references to Nkrumah's words and to an African woman carrying pumpkins may help to brand the bank in particular ways aimed at advancing the bank as an African Bank and thus create a sense of authenticity for Stanbic bank as a 'genuine' African bank.

However, juxtaposing Nkrumah's words and the African woman has several implications. Reference to Nkrumah's words in this advertisement is a form of decontextualisation. Decontextualisation means that Nkrumah's words are cast outside of any specific setting and are deprived of their historical meaning.

Inserting a historical experience within a contemporary context produces a bricolage of sorts than can have several possible meanings. First, inclusion of Nkrumah's words in a banking advertisement can be read as a celebration of African history and politics and an attempt to invoke a significant piece of history. Nkrumah's words in this advertisement appeal to ideals of the African Renaissance, with its associations of the ascendancy and revival of a giant Africa on the global scene.

At the same time, however, the juxtaposition of Nkrumah's words with banking can in fact have a devaluing effect, since Nkrumah's words are emptied of their historical, cultural and political uniqueness and significance. In addition, removing Nkrumah's words from their historical context has a commodifying effect. Commodification has a devaluing and trivializing effect.

To whom do Nkrumah's words appeal? Nkrumah's words might appeal to those readers with a political, historical and cultural memory of Nkrumah. While these words might appeal to readers with cultural knowledge, their appearance in a banking advertisement might, in fact, have a shocking effect on the very readers with such cultural knowledge. Readers might ask why these words appear in a banking advertisement and hence be alienated from the advertisement in shock and disgust. At the same time, the advertisement might potentially alienate and exclude those

viewers who do not share that cultural and historical memory of Nkrumah's words.

On the other hand, placing Nkrumah's words within a banking advertisement may allow readers to disassemble and reassemble these words in a new historical and cultural context, and thus create possible new hybrid meanings that characterise the hybridity and heterogeneity of postcolonial Africa, that is represented in naming practices, cultural activities such as songs and dance and even in architecture in urban spaces.

As already mentioned, the image of the black woman wearing a head scarf and carrying two white pumpkins can be read as part of that attempt to construct self-authenticity on the part of the bank. But this inclusion can also be part of an effort to construct visibility, voice and space for the black women. By making a black African woman the subject of a banking campaign, the advertisement succeeds in making visible what is generally invisible, and thus marks the bank as 'genuinely' African and 'progressive'.

Why pumpkins? Pumpkins are associated with farming and labour involved in their production, therefore can be read as invoking images of an agrarian Africa. This emphasis on pumpkins and head carrying through visuals may in fact have the effect of freezing Africa in a traditional past and a rural context. How the two pumpkins are balanced on the woman's head is eye catching and conjures up certain ideas about black African women's expertise, strength

and struggle at the same time. This is an image of an unhappy and burdened woman. The advertisement does not allude to the reasons for the woman's struggle and burdens, nor does it answer the question, why does she have to be strong? But she has had to be strong in the absence of male help. She has had to bear the abuse and discrimination silently for a long time. By invoking images of a strong woman, the advertisement inadvertently participates in reproducing and maintaining of stereotypical images of black African woman as strong and hardworking.

Perspective being presented (Framing)

The angle or the writer's perspective, including the relationship between the participants represented in the images, the producers of the images and the viewers may provide useful insights into social relations, how identities are constructed and how power relations are sustained. This advertisement is framed with the aid of visuals. The vast space of green forms the backdrop within which other visuals appear. The words, "We face neither East nor West: We face forward" and the image of the African woman stand out with almost ponderous intensity. It is significant that the woman is not facing the viewers but is presented at an oblique angle.

Kress and van Leeuwen (1990) argue that there is a relationship, which can be theorized among visual images, participants represented in the images and producers and consumers of the images. They identify visual contact between represented participants and viewers as a key factor in

the interpretation of visual images. They suggest that the manner in which participants gaze at the viewers can be useful for interpreting social relations between represented participants such that participants' gaze at the viewers can be interpreted as a request or 'demand. Absence of gaze can be read as an 'offer' made by the producers of the images to the viewers. Kress and van Leeuwen (1990) argue that short shots and long shots construct a close or impersonal social relation with the viewers. While a frontal angle constructs a social relation of involvement and subjectivity. It is their view that side or oblique angles create an attitude of detachment and avoidance of any subjectivity.

The angle with which the black African woman is presented in the advertisement suggests an attitude of detachment and alienation from the viewers. The viewers are not made to identify with the participant represented in the image. Also the woman's face is markedly troubled. Whether the woman is facing east or west is not clear. What is clear is that she is not facing the viewers. Could it be that her refusal to face the viewers is related to the stereotype of the quiet and timid African woman? If that is the case, the advertisement has succeeded in reproducing and maintaining the stereotype of an African woman who is silent and not assertive.

## Presences and Absences

### (i) Foregrounding and Back-grounding

The writer of the advertisement gives prominence and de-emphasizes, through foregrounding and back-grounding, elements in the advertisement. The words, "We face neither East nor West: We face forward" have been emphasized through the use of bold print and font size, while Kwame Nkrumah's name is in small print, and hardly readable. It is only people who have prior knowledge of these words, who can make immediate connection between the quotation and Nkrumah. It is important to ask why Nkrumah's name is not so prominent, and yet he is the speaker of the words. The fact that Nkrumah's name in small font may sell out some clues regarding the advertisement's aims. It would seem that Nkrumah's words have more significance than his name in this advertisement. But the erasure of the author erodes the contextual meaning of these words and succeeds in decontextualising them, which leads to commodification of Nkrumah's words. The question to ask is who is "we" in the words, "We face neither East nor West: We face forward"? (the pragmatics of deixis). Nkrumah spoke these words as a member of the Non-Alligned Movement in the sixties, when Africa was determined to not be aligned to either the West or East, politically. What do these words mean if they have lost their context and author?

The Stanbic logo is in white on a deep blue background. Even while it is tacked away in the corner and in small print, it makes a bold statement of its presence by introducing

a different colour blue and white on a green backdrop. The words “There is no place like Africa” appear like small print at the bottom of the advertisement and in much smaller font than Nkrumah’s words, and in white against a backdrop that fails to highlight these words. Visually the words, “There is no place like Africa” are in smaller font than Nkrumah’s words and they are hidden at the bottom of the advertisement. The question to ask is what is the significance of these words in this advertisement if they are positioned in such a way that denies them prominence? Are they not serving a commodifying purpose and also become a mere token to Africanism?

On the other hand the pumpkins the woman is carrying are fore-grounded. The pumpkin’s colour (white) and the woman’s black head scarf provide a striking contrast and help us focus attention on the load and foreground the woman as the carrier of the load, the thing that is acted on and not the agent. The light from the sun is cast on the woman’s face, focusing on her face like a camera. This has the effect of foregrounding her sadness and struggle. Her eyes slightly raised, look in the distance and not forward in line with Nkrumah’s admonition to look forward.

The head carrying can be viewed as a spectacle. It draws viewers’ attention partly because it is not a typical urban but a rural practice. It becomes subject for gaze in a new context. Through such decontextualisation, the image or the sign of the pumpkins gathers significance in and for itself more

than the “real”. The “real” is emptied of its actual reality. This emptying can lead to a trivialization of rural women’s experience.

#### (ii) Omission

Omission is the leaving out of certain aspects completely. It is a form of backgrounding. What is left out or omitted from this advertisement, as has already been indicated, is the relationship between Nkrumah’s words and banking and the black African woman. That relationship is not immediately clear. Apart from the Stanbic sign in the corner, nothing in the advertisement suggests that this is a banking advertisement.

Who do you ask when the picture does not supply these answers? The fact that the picture cannot supply answers to questions raised may still perpetuate an image of a silent black African woman. On the other hand, a picture is said to be worth more than words. Silence is not necessarily a weakness. This absence of any clues may actually work to perpetuate the myth of a strong and resilient silent black African woman.

#### (iii) Presupposition

Presupposition refers to the taken-for-granted. By using presupposition readers are positioned in contradictory zones. What is taken for granted in this advertisement is the “we” in the words, “We face neither East nor West: We face forward”. “We” can refer to the bank and at the same time the viewers or even the participants. The “we” is ambiguous in terms of its reference and its speakers and has the effect of positioning the

viewers as part of the advertisement and as belonging to the bank through its inclusivity. Further, there is nothing more about the bank, no telephone numbers, nothing else on this advertisement except the words Stanbic. There is the assumption that viewers know about this bank. The logo is self-sufficient. Reading the text, not purely as an advertisement, but as a form of branding might help the reader to understand why that kind of information has been presupposed. Brands are about marking and creating images and identity even with as little information as possible.

#### (iv) Discursive Differences

Discursive differences refer to different text styles. There is more than one style in this text. The advertisement sets up an interdiscursive relation with political statements and selling or marketing style. Nkrumah's words are authoritative, declarative statements which one expects in political rhetoric while the words, "There is no places like Africa," sound like words one would find in a travel magazine or tourist brochure. This mix of styles adds to the hybrid texture and tension in the advertisement.

#### Level two: Detailed analysis of the text at sentential level

This stage of analysis involves examining specific semiotic and linguistic features that involve a sentence-by-sentence analysis of the text. Not all sentences will be analyzed. The paper will focus only on specific sentences relevant for the analysis and the issues being examined. This level of analysis

is the textual analysis level, or the descriptive level in Fairclough's model.

#### Creating Perspective

##### (i) Topicalisation

Just as a text can be framed, so can sentences be framed through what is called topicalisation. Topicalisation is a type of foregrounding at sentence level and not at a general level. The main sentence or topical sentence of the text is "We face neither East nor West: We face forward." The only other sentence is "There is no place like Africa." This implies that the advertisement has relied on visual effects such as colour (green and black are the dominant colours) and the image of the black African woman. The text is clearly, therefore, about creating an impression of Africaness through its visual effects and images.

##### (ii) Agent-patient

Sentences can also reveal power relations. This has to do with agency and subjectification. The question here is, who is doing what to whom and who is depicted as an agent? The 'we' in the topic sentence is not defined. The all-inclusive characteristics make the agent and patient unclear. The "we" could refer to the bank, Stanbic. The "we" can also be assumed to be the viewers or even the participants, the black African woman. The use of we positions viewers and participants as Africans and aligns viewers with the bank and with Africanism and Pan Africanism. It is unclear for whom these words are intended and it is also unclear what "west" and east" mean in this context. If it represents regions or blocks of countries

as it was used by Nkrumah, then Africa has a problematic choice. In a world where west and east are collapsing through globalization, the meaning of “look forward” complicates Africa’s position in relation to the West or East. Post Colonial Africa cannot simply afford to look forward, since Africa depends on both the West and East (See the growing interest of China in Africa). Africa will have to look in both directions and, in it, if it has to survive. This dilemma captures Postcolonial Africa’s identity as problematic.

“There is no place like Africa” has no clear agent. It can be easily concluded that the “we” in the topic sentence is also responsible for making the statement “There is no place like Africa”.

#### Omission at sentence level

##### (i) Deletion

The agents in “There is no place like Africa” have been deleted. Who is responsible for this belief is not announced. It is left to the reader to fill in any interpretations. Could this be an omission done on purpose? The phrase, “There is no places like Africa” is open to divergent interpretation. It could mean several things at once; poverty, crime, disease, natural resources and so on and so on. At another level, the phrase succeeds in casting Africa as unique a place and as a location to be further discovered. Read this way, the statement propels the myth of Africa as unique, and revives stereotypical views of an Edenic and pristine Africa propelled, in travel brochures.

#### The taken-for-granted at sentence level

##### (i) Presupposition

The sentence “There is no place like Africa” is highly manipulative. It succeeds in deleting agents. Such a statement is vague, and difficult to challenge, because the source is missing and lacks of precision. It adds to the ambiguity and contradictory texture of the advertisement. In addition, the sentence, “There is no places like Africa” presupposes that the reader or viewer has traveled and can make comparisons with other places. In addition, the text does not offer the reader or viewer an alternative view or option to disagree. The reader or viewer is not cast as a passive recipient of the text. Presupposition functions, in this instance, to take away power from the reader or viewer.

#### Double meaning

##### (i) Insinuations

The sentence “There is no place like Africa” can be read as insinuation. An insinuation is a statement that is slyly suggestive. In this case, the sentence “There is no place like Africa” could mean several things such as, there is no place like Africa as far as disease is concerned, as far as poverty and war are concerned. It could mean almost anything. Insinuations are difficult to challenge. The writer can claim one meaning and yet the sentence conjures up many interpretations. The writer of the advertisement can, in fact, deny any culpability. The lack of a consistent message regarding the sentence succeeds in taking away power from the viewers

## (ii) Connotations

As already indicated above, the sentence "There is no place like Africa" carries several connotations, among which are, Africa's uniqueness and Africa's poverty and problems. In addition casting Africa as a unique place succeeds in mythologizing Africa and setting up Africa as a spectacle, emptied of content and context.

### Level three: contextualized interpretation of the advertisement

Analysis cannot stop with charting the internal linguistic structures and rhetorical patterns of text and image; it should interrogate the values and ideologies that inform the text, that is, the ways in which the external contexts of production and reception shape the text. And so the paper will attempt to analyze the social conditions which govern the processes of production and consumption. A full discussion of the text should take into consideration, the socio-cultural context surrounding it. This could include the following: social conditions of production, which include the writers of the advertisement and positioning of the billboard.

### The writers

The advertisement was created by an agency in South Africa. It is interesting that South Africa served as a distributing centre. From the interview conducted with a public relations officer in Gaborone, it seems that Botswana, the consumers of the advertisement, had no influence in the production and even the distribution of the brand campaign advertisement. The concept behind the brand campaign originated from South Africa.

The introductory words in a Stanbic Diary 2005 explain this context further. "The Standard Bank Group, recognizing the strategic importance of trade and investment between South Africa and the region, has over the past 16 years, substantially increased its presence on the African continent." This statement can be analyzed for the binaries it sets up and this understanding might help in exploring the politics of production and distribution of this advertisement. South Africa is set apart from the region. South Africa is set as a centre and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) states and the rest of Africa, are the periphery or margin zones. This thinking, that South Africa is not a part of Africa, explains several things regarding this advertisement. One can theorize a centre-margin matrix here, which explains why the advertisement is created in South Africa, the centre. There is a fascination with Africa and the myth of a pristine Africa, as expressed in "There is no place like Africa."

In his *Orientalism*, Said (1978) defines Western fascination with the "other" as an example of western motivation to dominate Eastern society. It is a desire to dominate the exotic and to portray it as the "other". Orientalism is a thinking that divides the world into two frontiers, the Orient (East) and the Occident (West) in which the West always dominates. This is an idea based on the belief that a superior cultural system exists, which the West presents to the Oriental world. Orientalism is therefore not only a constructed image of the "Other" but also a means by which the West exerts domination over the East. Conceptions of

the Orient became justifications for the West to take control of the Oriental. Besides control, the images of the "Other" fuel stereotypes. Drawing on the notion of Orientalism, the advertisement, particularly its emphasis on Africa and on the African woman, can be read as need to dominate the "Other" and the need for fetishes.

South Africa boasts of a strong economy and 'stable' democracy. South Africa prides itself as the super power of Africa. Analysis of this advertisement reminds one that questions of power are never far in South Africa's relations with its perceived "Others".

Another explanation for South Africa's fascination with images of Africaness may stem from South Africa's frantic search for an identity. South Africa, having come out of apartheid, must now carve for herself an authentic identity that unites it with the rest of Africa. Recently, South Africa has been on the forefront in supporting the African Renaissance movement. South African president, Thabo Mbeki's famous statement: "I am an African" may be useful in explaining South Africa's quest for an African identity and therefore South African's fascination with issues of African cultural identity.

Investigations into the composition of directorship reveal that Stanbic Bank is essentially a white-owned bank. The answers to the question, what might be the function of the images of Africa, the typical African woman and Nkrumah mean, or connote, may lead to new areas for research. Critical discourse analysis might be a useful research tool for exploring these questions.

## Conclusion

The paper employed Critical Discourse Analysis to uncover assumptions about Africa and black African women as portrayed in the Stanbic Bank Pan African advertisement. The advertisement's representation of difference or the "other"; works much through what is and, as much as through what is not shown. On the surface, the advertisement appears to promote and identify with "Africanness" through its references to Nkrumah and the black African woman image. It can be argued that the advertisement is unsuccessful in its attempts to entrench itself as an African bank. Rather it succeeds in reproducing and sustaining myths and stereotypes about Africa, about black African women; and about the constructed other.

The Pan African brand campaign would have been successful had the creators of the advertisement avoided commodification and trivialisation of African images and content through decontextualisation. This could be achieved by defining Pan Africanism and by identifying the relevance of Pan Africanism, for viewers or readers who have no historical, cultural and political memory of Nkrumah. When viewers are in the know, alienation is minimized and active engagement is promoted. In addition, the creators of the brand campaign could have made connections between images and text clearer, at least. When viewers are able to make connections between images and words, viewers feel empowered to engage with the advertisement and participate more actively.



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