'Alive with Possibility':

Brand South Africa and the Discursive Construction of South African National Identity

Yasuko Murai
MSc in Global Media and Communications

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ABSTRACT

Nation branding has become an increasingly popular practice adopted by governments around the world over the past decade or two. It is based on the notion that just as commercial brands gain consumer loyalty by associating their otherwise indiscernible products with certain images and emotions, countries can use similar techniques to compete on the world stage for tourism and investment. While reputation management by governments is not particularly new, the creation of nation "brands" with logos, slogans and consistent messaging can be regarded as a unique product of postmodernity and globalization that presents a host of new questions about the construction of national identity in the marketplace of nations.

This paper explores the phenomenon of nation branding—particularly the domestic or internal aspect of this practice—with the case study of Brand South Africa, a major initiative launched by the South African government in 2002 to project a unified and positive image of the country. Set against a theoretical framework of the concept of the nation, the discursive construction of national identity, and major debates surrounding the practice of nation branding, in addition to background on South Africa's recent history and current social, political and economic climate, this study applies critical discourse analysis to Brand South Africa's domestic advertisements. The aim is to identify what discourses are mobilized in constructing South African national identity in the context of globalization and country branding—in other words, how South Africa is being 'sold' to South Africans as the country seeks to enhance its image abroad. The analysis demonstrates that while the advertisements promote hope, unity and citizen participation, they also portray the South African citizen as a de-politicized individual whose primary responsibility is to celebrate the country's political transformation and demonstrate loyalty to the post-apartheid state's goals of nation building. These results suggest that nation branding, far from being a superficial trend with solely benign implications, operates under a fundamental tension between brand consistency and meaningful public discourse.

INTRODUCTION

On July 11, 2010, as the FIFA World Cup in South Africa came to a close with a triumphant ceremony in Johannesburg, media commentators around the world marveled at the country's success in hosting a global mega-event.[1] In the eyes of many, the tournament's relatively smooth progression demonstrated that, despite great international skepticism, South Africa is a modern, capable and important player on the world stage.

For the International Marketing Council (IMC) of South Africa, the tournament served a greater purpose beyond temporarily boosting tourism or building infrastructure. Indeed, the World Cup provided a platform for the global launch of Brand South Africa, a major collaboration between the South African government and the country's private sector to create and promote a unified and positive image of the country ('South Africa United,' 2010). It is hoped that the World Cup provides major stimulus for brand growth that encourages foreign investment and tourism long after the football fans have gone home. As IMC CEO Miller Matola proclaimed at a post-World Cup event for South African business leaders: 'Internationally, the World Cup has rebranded South Africa and disaggregated different African countries...During the post-event, there will be a significant improvement in the way we are perceived abroad' ('World Cup Added Value,' 2010).

'Nation branding' have become buzzwords in recent years, as governments of countries ranging from Spain and Estonia to India and Singapore have enlisted the advice of private marketing and advertising firms to create unified, distinct and consumable 'brands' for their territories and people, complete with logos and slogans, to promote investment and tourism in a competitive global environment. Debates over the implications of this growing trend include a wide range of views—proponents applaud nation branding's ability to spur economic development (Anholt, 2005), inspire national pride and unity, or bring an end to violent nationalism (Van Ham, 2001) while critics attack its reductionism, anti-democratic nature and inability to address more pressing problems that countries face (Jansen, 2008).

This paper explores the phenomenon of country branding and addresses ongoing debates on the topic by taking Brand South Africa as a case study and applying critical discourse analysis (CDA) to its communication materials—specifically, its television advertisements (ads). With the worldwide attention that the country has been receiving due to the World Cup, in

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[1] See for example: "South Africa and the World Cup Changed Forever" (*BBC*, 12 July 2010); "In Host's Success, Change Triumphs" (*New York Times*, 11 July 2010)

addition to the country's status as an extremely diverse and young democracy overcoming the legacy of apartheid, South Africa presents an especially intriguing case study of this trend.

This study seeks to add to a small but growing body of literature on nation branding, which has not been a common topic of research outside of marketing journals and manuals. Specifically, it is hoped that the present paper will make a potential contribution to the understanding of this process by focusing on one particular aspect that merits further investigation: internal branding as applied to nations.

Nation branding serves two purposes—to promote the brand internationally to investors and tourists, and to promote it domestically to the very people who inhabit the country. Crucially, a country's citizens are the 'media of the message' who must 'live the brand' in order for it to succeed (Aronczyk, 2008: 54). Taking Anderson's idea that the nation is an 'imagined community' (1983: 6) that exists discursively, the nation brand's internal communications materials can be seen as a resource for country branding practitioners to promote a certain worldview and sense of national identity among the country's citizens. While how a country is 'sold' to international audiences through media representations has been explored previously in critical tourism literature, including the case of South Africa (see for example Cornelissen, 2005; Wels, 2004), the phenomenon of constructing the 'self' to sell to the 'self' raises interesting questions of how national identity is defined within the context of globalization and country branding. In particular, examining how Brand South Africa's ads establish a shared sense of time and progress, refer to the nation as a monolith, and portray good citizenship provide insight into the implications of country branding for citizen participation and empowerment in South Africa in particular, as well as for nation building and democracy in general.

THEORETICAL CHAPTER

This chapter outlines some of the major debates surrounding the concepts of the nation, national identity and nation branding. It also includes background information on post-apartheid South Africa and the Brand South Africa initiative, which constitutes an integral part of the current government's development strategy.

Nations, National Identity and Their Construction Through Discourse

Before discussing what nation branding is, this section seeks to address some questions of what 'nation' and 'national identity' mean in the first place.

The Nation

There is no widely accepted definition of the nation or of its origins (Calhoun, 2007: 40). 'Nation' refers to both the modern nation-state and, in more general and vague terms, 'a local community, domicile, family, a condition of belonging' (Brennan, 1990 cited in Hall, 1996: 616). Thus a nation does not necessarily have a state, and it is the aim of nationalism as a political principle to combine culture and polity (Gellner, 1983:1). In this paper, South Africa as a nation brand refers to the nation-state, though the country can be considered as a state consisting of many nations (Bornman, 2005: 388).

While some scholars argue that nations are rooted, at least on some level, in historic, ethnic or cultural ties and therefore have a natural basis (Smith, 1998: 142), most contemporary scholars agree that the nation is a construct and a product of modernity. Anderson describes the nation as 'an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (1983: 6). While one never encounters most members of one's nation, one still knows that they exist and feels a sense of camaraderie towards them. He explains that the emergence of print-capitalism in Europe in the 16th century played a crucial role in enabling this simultaneous 'imagining' of fellow citizens across time and space—that is, it led to the creation of national consciousness (Anderson, 1983: 36). Hobsbawm and Ranger agree that the nation is a construct but take a more extreme perspective by arguing that it is a product of 'social engineering' (1983: 13), and that nation-building elites create a sense of national cohesion and continuity through 'invented traditions' (1983: 14) such as the use of ceremonies, flags, anthems and myths. Gellner also shares the view that nations are not 'awakened' but are rather deliberately invented to give political legitimacy to a standardized 'high culture' that can accommodate the conditions of industrialism (1983: 46-48). Whether

a nation is primordial or invented, however, is not necessarily the most relevant question. Anderson critiques Gellner's emphasis on the fabrication of the nation because, in fact, there is no such thing as a 'true' community; he writes, 'communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined' (1983: 6). The different ways in which a nation is imagined constitutes national identity.

Discursive Construction of National Identity

National identity, like the concept of the nation, is difficult to define—it exists in multiple forms, and it is fragile and fluid (Wodak et al., 1999: 4). Guibernau presents one useful definition: 'National identity is a collective sentiment based upon the belief of belonging to the same nation and of sharing most of the attributes that make it distinct from other nations' (2007: 11). Thus national identity allows one to understand the nation to which one belongs in relation to other nations, and in terms of who belongs and who does not. How, then, is this 'collective sentiment' instilled in the minds of those who constitute the nation? Regardless of whether one sees nations as naturally existing or completely invented, Aronczyk points out, national identity must be constructed and reproduced using 'four architectural pillars of praxis: rhetoric, image, symbol, and ritual' (2007: 112).

Hall argues that the nation can be understood as a 'system of cultural representations' (1996: 612) that produces meanings about belonging to, and identifying with, that nation. In other words, national identity is a discursive construct. Common strategies used to construct national identity include the creation of a national narrative (Hall, 1996: 613), reference to a vague 'national spirit' (Kolakowski cited in Wodak et al., 1999: 25), the evocation of collective memory (Smith, 1998: 67), establishing a shared sense of time and space (Wodak et al., 1999: 26), the use of symbols like flags and anthems (Guibernau, 2007: 25), the creation of a common enemy (ibid.), and the establishment of clear guidelines for good citizenship (ibid.). In contrast to the emphasis on evoking a perceived common history or culture, Habermas argues that national identity in multicultural communities can be defined by citizen allegiance to the state's democratic institutions—in such cases, what unites various groups in solidarity is not language or ethnicity but 'constitutional patriotism' (2001: 74). It is important to note, however, that marking a clear distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism is misleading; as Wodak et al. demonstrate in their study of the discursive construction of Austrian national identity, both can be mobilized simultaneously (1999: 189).

If national identity is constructed through these various strategies, the question then becomes: who constructs it, and how is this identity reproduced and perpetuated in society?

Guibernau acknowledges that a national culture is formed with some 'bottom-up contributions' but asserts that elites play an 'irreplaceable role' in constructing national identity (2007:18). Similarly, Wodak et al. argue that the national identity of an individual is manifested in, and is at the same time shaped by, everyday social practices. They cite Bourdieu's claim that the state has symbolic resources (such as control of the education system) that give it considerable power in constructing and instilling a unified national identity, which individuals then internalize and reproduce in social practices through emotional, mental and behavioral dispositions—what he terms 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1994 cited in Wodak et al., 1999: 28-29). Indeed, the nation as a collective imaginary is not only reinforced through elaborate state ceremonies organized in a top-down manner but also through banal practices such as hanging the national flag in public spaces or using 'homeland deixis' (Billig, 1999: 38, 107). The media, of course, play a pivotal role in reinforcing national identity as a part of everyday practice. Not only does media consumption constitute a kind of group ritual akin to 'attending a mass' (Carey, 1992: 20) that provides orientation and a sense of fellowship, media content also utilizes discursive strategies of national identity construction.

Nation branding, with its use of images and rhetoric disseminated in mainstream media, can be understood as an example of the state mobilizing its symbolic resources, especially through its partnership with private advertising and marketing agencies, to construct and instill a specific sense of national identity. Some of the debates surrounding the context and implications of this phenomenon will now be discussed.

Nation Branding: Definitions, Context, and Implications

What Is Nation Branding?

Nation branding, or 'the interpenetration of corporate and state interests in creating and conveying national identity through a specific branding and marketing process' (Aronczyk, 2007: 105), has become a widespread global trend starting in the 1990s. Its basic premise is that just as private corporations brand their products, associating them with certain images, values and emotions in order to gain a competitive edge in a sea of similar goods, governments can apply the same concepts to their countries (Olins, 1999: 3). In other words, 'countries can be products' that 'compete in the market for tourists, factories, businesses and talented people' (Kotler, 2002: 258). Nation branding guru Simon Anholt, who refers to nation branding as developing a 'Competitive Identity' strategy (2007: 3), cites Joseph Nye in claiming that it is the 'quintessential modern exemplar of soft power' (2003: 13).

The process of nation branding involves a long-term partnership between the government and private sector to define the brand's 'essence,' or core idea, and the consistent projection of this message through every communication—with a strong visual focus—from the country to the world (Olins, 1999: 23-24). Clear and unswerving messaging involves the joint efforts of every government department, including culture, industry, education, transport and foreign affairs (ibid.). Elaborate systems that measure the value of place brands are used for benchmarking, including the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index[2] and Futurebrand's Country Brand Index[3]. It seems that nation branding is becoming increasingly commonplace—as Olins writes, 'politicians everywhere in the world now realise that every nation has an identity—they can either seek to manage it or it will manage them' (1999: 26).

Nation Branding In Its Context: Globalization and Postmodernity

Some branding consultants argue that countries have always engaged in branding activities with the re-making of flags, anthems, and rituals (Olins, 2002: 242); it is simply a new name for an age-old practice. However, while the importance of managing a country's image and reputation is not new, nation branding can be linked to a distinct shift in the structure and role of the state in the age of globalization. Harvey describes the postmodern condition as one of great volatility and ephemerality in which images play the primary role in driving economic competition and identity formation (1989: 288). The collapse of spatial barriers due to technological advances, or 'time-space compression,' has intensified global flows of capital and produced a homogenizing effect on local cultures, rendering geographical uniqueness more important than ever (Harvey, 1989: 294). This distinctiveness is essential not only for economic competitiveness but also for a sense of collective identity in a rapidly shifting world (Harvey, 1989: 302). In such an environment, the production of a unified nation brand image appears to be a logical solution that can create 'edge' in the global marketplace in addition to generating a sense of belonging for those who inhabit the territory.

In addition, and on a related note, nation branding can be contextualized within a greater trend of neoliberal thought, under which market logic comes to dominate state activity and corporations play a greater role in cultural policy decisions (Aronczyk, 2008: 45; Cornelissen, 2008: 675). Neoliberalism, which national governments have increasingly adopted since the

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[2] for more information see: http://www.gfkamerica.com/practice_areas/roper_pam/nbi_index/index.en.html
[3] for more information see: http://www.futurebrand.com/think/reports-studies/cbi/2009/overview/

1970s, can be understood as a 'theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade' (Harvey, 2005: 2). Within this framework, integrating the country into the global economy by creating a friendly environment for investors—one of the primary aims of nation branding—is equated with the national interest (Harvey, 2005: 79). Indeed, nation branding appears to be perfectly congruent with the prevalence of market logic when one considers Jansen's observation that 'the primary motivation, the raison d'être, of nation branding is commercial ambition' (2008: 122).

Implications of Nation Branding

Country branding practitioners and proponents argue that the practice generates a range of positive results. Anholt describes country branding as a purveyor of justice because it creates and reallocates wealth on a global scale; developing countries can mobilize symbolic resources when it lacks material ones to attract investment, thus '[distributing] the benefits of globalization more fairly' (2003: 165). In addition, he argues that nation branding builds patriotism and a common sense of purpose among the population (2003: 134). Van Ham also presents the benefits of country branding by declaring that the trend of 'style over substance' (2001: 3) signifies a 'move from the modern world of geopolitics and power to the postmodern world of images and influence' (2001: 4). In sum, it is argued that country branding creates national unity, levels the global economic playing field and has a pacifying effect on international relations.

Such claims may indeed be true; at the same time, they overlook the continuing relevance of power relations and tensions that underlie this practice. Indeed, questions of reductionism, private versus public gain, and the need for control that accompanies the dual nature of nation branding make the process an important topic of investigation.

Reductionism is an inevitable outcome of any nation branding exercise. As Anholt writes, 'the simpler the message, the better chance there is of getting people to take it on board...the simpler the better' (2003: 126). Of course, nations are not simple; they are heterogeneous and full of contradictions, and branding would obscure or ignore these complexities (Jansen, 2008: 136). Another tension underlying nation branding is that of public versus private gain. If, as nation branding proponents argue, the nation brand is a public good, and '[i]f a public good is by definition an object of democracy...what happens when this *public* good falls under the authority of *private* branding and advertising agents?' (Aronczyk, 2008: 43). In other

words, how can private entities be held accountable for the management of something that is supposed to produce equitable gain for all?

Lastly, and most crucially for the purposes of this paper, the dual function of nation branding—'selling' a coherent and distinct national identity to audiences not only internationally but also domestically—presents the fundamental problem of control. Corporations with strong brands succeed by relentlessly pushing their employees to stay on message (Anholt, 2003: 130). When this strategy is applied to nations, citizens are treated as 'media of the message' who must 'live the brand' (Aronczyk, 2008: 54) even though, of course, they are participants in a civic entity and not employees of a corporation. It can then be argued that, by privileging a particular representation of a nation, 'nation branding affects the moral basis of national citizenship' (Aronczyk, 2008: 43). In a similar vein, Van Ham emphasizes that branding is not merely about selling a product (the nation), but also involves 'managing identity, loyalty and image' (2002: 255); he concedes that, '[i]n democratic countries, such a close coordination of a country's message may well result in a (be it perhaps benign) authoritarian system' (2002: 267). There seems to be an inherent tension between the drive for corporate-style brand consistency and democratic participation that is largely overlooked in the marketing literature on nation branding, and the analysis focuses on this particular aspect.

Now that the major debates on nation branding as an increasingly popular practice have been addressed, the case of Brand South Africa will be examined.

The Case of South Africa and the Brand South Africa Initiative

Building the 'Rainbow Nation': Continuing Challenges

After a long history of colonial rule and systematic oppression under apartheid, South Africa held its first democratic elections in 1994 and peacefully inaugurated a new government under the leadership of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC). Central to the new post-apartheid regime's nation building project were its adoption of a new national flag, a new national anthem, and a new Constitution—considered by many to be the most progressive in the world (Bornman, 2006: 384-385). Notions of the 'New South Africa' and the 'Rainbow Nation' that inspires the world have come to define this new era, as have discourses of South African exceptionalism, progress, reconciliation and unity (Lazarus, 2004: 610-611).

South Africa is still in a crucial phase of nation building (Gumede & Dikeni, 2009: 4). Especially given its heterogeneity and divided history, the country's national identity is by no means 'natural'—it must be constructed and perpetuated to maintain cohesion. The South African government faces the difficulties of nation building that other multicultural societies confront, but its obstacles seem particularly challenging. As Bornman writes: 'Most analysts are unanimous of the opinion that South Africa can be regarded as a complex, divided and heterogeneous society characterized by deep-seated racial, ethnic, cultural language and religious differences overlapping with large-scale socio-economic disparities' (2006: 387).

To be sure, despite the country's incredible achievement of peacefully transitioning to democracy as well as the progress it has made since, 16 years on many difficulties remain. While black South Africans occupy positions of leadership and influence in government and business, racial inequalities and tensions continue to exist (Mbembe, 2008: 6), and the overall gap between the rich and poor has intensified (Marais, 1998: 7). Unemployment is high, with some estimating figures exceeding 50% for black youth ('Post-World Cup Reality,' 2010). Crime rates are also high, with violent attacks against African immigrants becoming particularly alarming (Neocosmos, 2006: 117). Furthermore, while the HIV/AIDS epidemic seems to have stabilized in recent years, the lack of widespread access to proper prevention and treatment services presents the need for strong government leadership ('HIV/AIDS in South Africa,' 2010).

The country's ongoing challenges, many of them interrelated, have resulted in negative press coverage worldwide and an overall decline in tourism since its peak in the 1990s (Cornelissen, 2005: 681); they have also coincided with disillusionment among many sections of the population, including those active in civil society (Gumede & Dikeni, 2009: 6-7). The government's efforts to brand South Africa address these negative perceptions. Before turning to Brand South Africa, however, some background on the government's development strategy will be discussed.

South Africa's Post-Apartheid Government and Neoliberalism

While a comprehensive review of the post-apartheid regime's policies is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to highlight one aspect of its strategy that is especially relevant to contextualizing Brand South Africa—its shift to a neoliberal approach to macroeconomic policy.

Scholars often point out the post-apartheid government's 'neo-liberal turn' in the 1990s (Harvey, 2005: 3; Lazarus, 2004: 612; Magubane, 2004: 661; Marais, 1998: 85). This change is most evident in its abandonment of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in favor of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy in 1996 (Lesufi, 2005: 22-23). This marked a shift from an economic policy that advocated a strong role for the state in the development process ('growth through redistribution'), and one that was championed by the liberation movement, to a market-led approach with a greater focus on the private sector playing the leading role in reconstruction ('redistribution through growth') (ibid.). The strategy can generally be characterized by the withdrawal of the state from economic activities, including the provision of social services and regulatory roles in trade, financial markets, and labor markets (Lesufi, 2005: 26).

The ANC's shift to neoliberalism has not gone unchallenged and continues to be contested, including by those in allied political parties or even within the ANC itself (Lazarus, 2004: 613). Opponents argue that the ANC's commitment to the working-class majority has become compromised (Magubane, 2004: 661). Some policymakers posit that it is only a temporary strategy, that it will achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth in the long term, or that it cannot be helped considering the apartheid economy that the government inherited as well as the global market conditions into which the new South Africa was born (Lazarus, 2004: 615-616). In any case, there is considerable agreement among many economists and policymakers that thus far, neoliberal policies in South Africa have succeeded in serving the interests of capital but have largely failed to serve the interests of the poor; as a result, they have played a role in exacerbating economic disparities within the country (Lesufi, 2005: 32; Marais, 1998: 105; Ballard, 2005: 79; Magubane, 2004: 662). The marginalized have by no means been silenced, however; grassroots social movements working within and outside legal parameters have flourished in South Africa on issues such as privatization, landlessness, and lack of access to education and medical services (Ballard, 2005: 85-87).

Brand South Africa: 'Alive With Possibility'

The discussion in this section so far demonstrates that the South African government faces a dual agenda. It must construct a unified national identity out of great heterogeneity, a history of division and continuing inequalities; at the same time, it must make South Africa competitive in global markets (Ives, 2007: 159). The Brand South Africa initiative seeks to fulfill both of these goals.

The International Marketing Council (IMC) of South Africa, a government-funded agency established by the Presidency in 2002, has the main objective of 'marketing South Africa through the Brand South Africa campaign'—specifically, it seeks to 'create a positive and compelling brand image for South Africa' in order to boost trade and tourism ('Who We Are'). The IMC's board of trustees consists of business leaders in industries such as tourism, communications and mining, as well as government officials and prominent members of civil society (ibid.).

According to Anitha Soni, chairwoman of the IMC, the organization sought the advice of heavyweight corporations such as Unilever to construct a unified brand image; she explains, 'We thought if we were a company listed on the London Stock Exchange, how would we take ourselves to market?' ('South Africa United,' 2010). The resulting brand, with the core idea of 'South Africa—Alive With Possibility,' is communicated through the IMC's external branding efforts including advertising campaigns in broadcast, online and print media such as CNN and the *Economist,* as well as networking through its offices in London and Washington, DC ('Who We Are'). There is also an internal branding dimension; according to Yvonne Johnston, marketing professional and former CEO of the IMC, the organization's domestic strategy is to 'develop campaigns ensuring that South Africans live up to the brand promise' (2008: 9). Mass media advertising is a central component of this strategy (ibid.). Indeed, the importance of having a country's people 'live the brand' as discussed in the previous section is a prominent feature of the Brand South Africa campaign. In discussing the ongoing activities of the IMC, Johnston declares, 'We will continue with efforts to *sell South Africa to South Africans* [emphasis added]; the 2010 event [the World Cup] makes the need to mobilize national support for the brand even more imperative' (2008: 13).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Having discussed the concepts of the nation, national identity, and nation branding, as well as some background information on post-apartheid South Africa and its nation branding campaign, some assumptions underlying the research in this paper will be presented.

First, this paper takes Anderson's (1983) view that the nation is not a naturally existing entity but a community that is 'imagined'. This is inarguably true of South Africa, a heterogeneous country with no inherent cultural or ethnic cohesiveness within its borders. Second, national identity is understood as a discursive construct that is manifested through strategies such as the evocation of a common past, present and future, the use of invented traditions and symbols of unity, and the delineation of citizen responsibility. Third, while the construction

of national identity is a dialogical process, this paper takes into account the view that institutions such as government agencies and marketing firms have considerable symbolic resources in communicating a specific national identity, especially through mass media. This national identity can then be internalized by members of the nation and expressed through everyday social practices. Fourth, this paper questions the assumption that nation branding is a superficial trend, or that it produces solely benign consequences; rather, it approaches nation branding as a growing phenomenon in the age of globalization that embodies fundamental tensions. Fifth, because the ads examined in this paper are geared towards South African audiences, the analysis is set against the country's history and its current political, economic and social context. This background, especially South Africa's transition to democracy in the 1990s and the ANC's embrace of neoliberal policies in its aftermath, is key in contextualizing the discourses mobilized in these ads.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

There have been past studies on the international marketing of South Africa as a tourism destination. Postcolonial critiques of place marketing point to themes such as primordialism, including emphasis on wildlife and romanticized landscapes (Cornelissen, 2005; Wells, 2004), and the commodification of heritage, including the creation of numerous post-apartheid monuments and the commercialization of Zulu culture (Marschall, 2004), that are used to sell South Africa to Western consumers. In contrast, this paper seeks to approach nation branding from a different angle and examine the *internal* branding strategies of Brand South Africa. If corporations push their employees to internalize the brand for successful and consistent messaging, how does this translate to the context of nation branding—are citizens now employees of the nation? If South Africa is sold with the appeal of primordialism or exoticism to tourists, and with the lure of dynamism and opportunity to investors, what appears on the other side of this coin? Domestic nation branding still requires thorough examination (Van Ham, 2002: 269); shedding light on this aspect could make a potentially valuable contribution to understanding nation branding's implications for nation building, democracy, and social progress. Thus the research question for this study is as follows:

> **What discourses are used in constructing South African national identity in the Brand South Africa television advertisements geared towards South African citizens? How are South African national identity and national citizenship defined in a branded and globalized world? Who or what is emphasized or legitimatized, and who or what is excluded or obscured?**

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section outlines and justifies how the research question was operationalized. It explains the specific approach of critical discourse analysis undertaken, discusses the selection of texts and research tools, and addresses some weaknesses of the methodology.

Why Critical Discourse Analysis?

As discussed in the theoretical chapter, national identity is not a naturally occurring concept but is rather 'the product of discourse' (Wodak et al., 1999: 22). Because the objective of this paper is to critically examine how national identity is constructed in South Africa's nation branding campaign, it follows that critical discourse analysis (CDA) serves as the most appropriate method to address the research question.

While CDA encompasses a wide range of approaches, the present paper primarily draws from Fairclough (1995) and his three-tiered analysis of text, discourse practice and sociocultural context. Whereas some approaches to CDA focus predominantly on the use of written or spoken language, it is logical and necessary to integrate linguistic and image analysis in today's increasingly multimodal contemporary culture (Chouliaraki, 2007: 690). Fairclough does include audio-visual text in his understanding of discourse (1995: 54), but because the examined texts have a heavy visual component, the present analysis is supplemented by Rose's (2001) guide to visual analysis.

A point of departure for critical discourse analysis is that one's understanding of the world is produced through discourse. Language use, and other communicative activities that create meanings, are social practices that are simultaneously 'socially shaped' and 'socially constitutive' (Fairclough, 1995: 55). Summarizing Foucault, Hall explains that discourse can be understood as 'a system of representation' (Hall, 1997: 44) that does not merely reflect reality but rather *produces* knowledge from a certain position of power and presents certain claims to truth at a certain historical moment (ibid.). Thus texts are never neutral; they can reproduce or transform social relations, identities, and systems of knowledge (Fairclough, 1995: 55) and are inseparable from power dynamics in larger social and cultural contexts. The aim of CDA, then, is to systematically analyze media texts to uncover and explain underlying power relations and hegemonic assumptions that may not be immediately obvious (Fairclough, 1995: 54; Wodak et al., 1999: 8). Accordingly, CDA would shed light on how the Brand South Africa ads feature particular discourses that privilege a certain form of

national identity and present a framework for thinking that potentially excludes, obscures, or legitimizes various actors and ideas in the context of wider social structures.

In the early stages of this project, content analysis was rejected as a possible method. Though it has the advantages of being quantifiable and replicable (Hansen et al., 1998: 95), thus allowing for a more systematic examination of a larger number of texts, the level of analytical depth necessary to address the research question made CDA a more suitable method. Interviews with people in the Brand South Africa offices were considered, as they may have been able to provide more contextual information surrounding the initiative; in addition, interviews with a sample of South African viewers would have provided valuable information on the polysemic nature of the ads. It is important to acknowledge that production and reception practices are integral to the process of meaning making (Rose, 2001: 16); however, because it is beyond the scope of this study to cover all three sites, the current analysis is limited to the texts.

CDA's greatest flaw is the researcher's subjective position, which creates a need for reflexivity (Rose, 2001: 161-162). My perception of South Africa, or any other country, is inevitably shaped by my personal experiences and the discourses to which I have been exposed. Therefore it is important to state that I am not a South African, and this could shape the way I perceive the texts examined. While I am addressing my potential bias by applying systematic analysis to the text with a set of themes and Fairclough's levels of analysis, I am nonetheless 'decoding' the messages present in the ads (Hall, 1980: 130). What I understand to be the 'dominant readings' (Hall, 1980: 134) of the texts perhaps could have been supported using data gathered from interviews or focus groups, but again, adding another method was not feasible for this paper; it could certainly provide useful insight in an expanded version of this project.

Selection of Texts

The Brand South Africa ads created under the guidance of the IMC were aired on various television channels in the country and are available on the Brand South Africa website. Due to limited space, only three ads are analyzed here. Each ad is part of a different series, though they all fall under the IMC's domestic branding effort. Demonstrating that common themes run throughout each of these campaigns, examining where their discourses link, and contextualizing them in larger social and political debates, are effective ways of understanding and summarizing the IMC's internal branding efforts as a whole.

The first ad chosen, 'Today I Woke Up' (see Appendix A), was unveiled in 2003 as a kick-start to the building of patriotism and good feeling among the population. It features a wide range of prominent South Africans, from Presidents Mandela and Mbeki to well-known athletes and musicians. The second ad examined, 'Team South Africa's Champions' (see Appendix B), specifically addresses preparations for the FIFA Confederations Cup and FIFA World Cup, which South Africa hosted in 2009 and 2010 respectively. It is unclear exactly when this ad began to air, but it can be assumed that it began months before the kick-off of the Confederations Cup in June 2009. The third ad examined is entitled 'It Starts With You' (see Appendix C). It promotes the Movement For Good, an initiative founded by the IMC, along with South African media companies and non-profit organizations, to endorse the idea that individual actions can amount to positive change in society ('About the Movement'). The ad began airing on South African television in February 2009 ('South Africa United,' 2010).

Print advertisements were not used for two reasons: First, very few of them were available on the Brand South Africa website. Secondly, television is the most widely used media form in South Africa, reaching 80 to 90 percent of the population in a given week (Ives, 2007: 157). Thus it can be argued that television is the ideal medium for articulating a new identity for South Africa, or in other words enabling the popular 'imagining' of the nation (Ives, 2007: 158).

Design of Research Tools

Each ad, instead of comprising a series within one specific campaign, is a part of separate campaigns under the umbrella of Brand South Africa's internal communication efforts. Because each text is of a different style and format (for example, one of them has only music and no voice-over, and each ad features different people i.e. famous athletes, actors portraying ordinary citizens, or political figures), it was initially a challenge to analyze them together as one coherent sample. However, upon close and repeated viewing of the text and transcription of the voiceovers, considered along with major debates that arose in the literature on nation branding and nation building in post-apartheid South Africa, three major themes and strategies in the construction of national identity emerged. They are as follows:

1. Evocation of progress and renewal
2. Assumption of national unity
3. Delineation of citizen participation and responsibility

Each theme is supported by various features in the texts' audio aspect, visual aspect, or both. Creating a shared sense of the past, present, and future, with an emphasis on renewal and transformation, is a common occurrence; the assumption of national unity, which constructs the nation as a monolith with a shared goal and orientation, is another. The ads also present various forms of participation and responsibility on the part of the audience, in some cases more explicitly than in others. All of these themes fit into the larger social context by interacting with discourses on the nation, nation branding, and South African national identity.

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

The following analysis is organized by theme rather than by ad. The specific features of the texts that support these themes are interpreted with concepts such as deixis and intertextuality, as well as consideration of image composition and semiotics. The interpretation is then linked to the wider sociocultural context in the discussion.

Evocation of Progress and Renewal

The shared perception of a common past, present and future is crucial to the construction of national identity (Wodak et al., 1999: 26). Each ad utilizes shared time as a point of national orientation, either by depicting a collective past or creating a sense of progress, renewal and transformation.

Out of the three ads, 'Today I Woke Up' is the only one that explicitly refers to South Africa's history. Specifically, collective memory of the apartheid era is evoked, notably in two instances: the opening shot in which Nelson Mandela looks out through the bars of his former prison cell on Robben Island, and the shot of Hector Pieterson's mother standing behind her son's grave.[4] Using iconic figures of the struggle against apartheid, these scenes recall past tragedies and injustices that unify the nation in its remembering and shared understanding of history (Billig, 1995: 70-71).

The spoken text and images in the ad convey a sense of renewal and transformation. Brand South Africa's slogan and core idea that appears in the end of the ad, 'Alive with possibility,'

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[4] Hector Pieterson was killed at the age of 12 by South African police during the Soweto uprising of 1976. The photo of his death circulated in global media, and he became a symbol of the liberation struggle.

highlights the country's achievement of a peaceful political transition and points to its bright future (Cornelissen, 2005: 684). Furthermore, the repeated refrain, 'I woke up in a place…' as well as the recurring dichotomy of 'Yesterday/today' (such as 'Yesterday, I was burning with frustration…today, I'm growing big business') (see Appendix A) emphasize the difference between how things were *then* and how they are *now*. The images coinciding with this spoken text further highlight the stark contrast between yesterday and today: for instance, as the voiceover asserts: 'Yesterday, I was digging for gold. And today I'm wearing it,' the Olympic gold-medalist marathoner Josiah Thugwane runs past a mine (see Appendix A). Such juxtapositions, common in commercial advertising, highlight the striking differences between 'before-and-after' moments (Messaris, 1997: 186). Other images imply a new beginning. During the entirety of the ad, the sun is rising over vast, untouched landscapes; in one shot, a piece of green grass is sprouting in a barren field; in another, a heavily pregnant woman looks at her stomach. Using Barthes's terms, these things have certain 'denotations' (dawn, grass, pregnant woman) but also have 'connotations' (beginning, renewal, birth) within a larger cultural context (Barthes, 1967 cited in Hall, 1997: 38-39). Taken together, all of these elements create a sense of euphoria and celebration.

In 'Team South Africa's Champions,' a sense of the past, present and future is portrayed in a different manner but still accomplishes the goal of creating a shared time orientation. The ad begins with a colorful and energetic scene of the South African national football team celebrating a goal at a stadium, which is filled with cheering fans. From there, the ad continues in rewind, revealing the behind-the-scenes people who made this moment possible—those who 'lay the grass,' 'construct the stadiums,' and 'turn the soil' (see Appendix B). The opening shot, however, captures a moment that has not yet occurred; it is depicting an anticipated moment in the future, the successful hosting of the FIFA Confederations Cup in a brand new stadium, towards which South Africans are encouraged to work. Indeed, the ad represents the literal transformation of an undeveloped landscape to a new football stadium in which a celebratory moment is occurring, albeit in rewind-mode. Thus by portraying the construction of a modern stadium as a symbol of progress, the ad reinforces the discourse that global sporting events are crucial springboards for international image enhancement and accelerated economic growth.

'It Starts With You' also orients viewers toward a common and improved future. Like 'Today I Woke Up,' it begins with a scene of dawn—the sun is rising and birds are chirping as a boy, the protagonist, opens the curtains—indicating a new beginning. The ad continues to show a sequence of events throughout the day; the boy sets off on his bicycle and accomplishes various good deeds in his local community such as cleaning up public spaces, reporting a

robbery to the police, and delivering books to a children's hospital (see Appendix C). The soft, soothing music, the long shots of mostly unpopulated landscapes (urban and natural), and the evocation of childhood innocence (as depicted, for example, when the boy and girl coyly smile at one another), all contribute to a sense of peacefulness, hope and an open future that builds throughout the ad. The closing text, 'Movement For Good: It Starts With You,' announces the beginning of a new era of progress, an effort to improve South Africa even if through everyday actions.

Summary and Context of Interpretation

The depiction of a distinct break from a shared, troubled past, as well as of transformation and progress, draw from and support the post-apartheid government's discourse of the 'New South Africa'. The transformed South Africa is described as a society that provides new opportunities, has the ability to host the FIFA tournaments, and consists of citizens who do good deeds. The assumption, especially in 'Today I Woke Up,' is that the country has emerged from its problems and is on a steady projectile towards a new, utopian era.

This emphasis on transformation not only creates national cohesion through a shared understanding of time, but it also reinforces discourses on South African exceptionalism. The claim that South Africa is unique because of its peaceful political transition, in addition to its status as a democratic and developed country in relation to the rest of the continent (as demonstrated, for example, in its ability to host the World Cup), serves to build confidence among the populace and distinguish South Africa, especially from African states which can be seen as the other (Neocosmos, 2006: 142-143). Furthermore, the discourse of exceptionalism legitimizes the current state and its policies by suggesting that the leaders of the new South Africa will not fall into corruption or create inequalities, even in the face of evidence that points to the contrary (ibid.; Marais, 1998: 121). Thus while these ads can build confidence and orient the viewer towards a better future, they can also exclude reflexivity and questioning of the current state of affairs.

The Unified Nation As Primary Point of Identification

Representation of the nation as a unified entity is a fundamental prerequisite for constructing national identity (Hall, 1996: 617). While the national narrative based on common time as discussed in the previous section serves a unifying purpose, creating a sense of national cohesion also involves depicting the nation as one harmonious entity, a monolith, that exists in relation to the rest of the world at large. This means reconciling a nation's heterogeneity

with an idea of 'the family of the nation' (Hall, 1996: 617) as an alternative and common point of identification for people of different socio-economic, ethnic or gender backgrounds. All three ads feature rhetoric and images that reinforce the notion of South Africa as an already unified whole.

One rhetorical device that depicts South Africa as a monolith is the repeated personification of the country in 'Today I Woke Up'. For example, the voiceover states: 'I woke up in a place that flows with courage…That laughs, that's cried,' and 'Today I woke up in a place that said to me: be free' (see Appendix A). The use of personification in constructing national identity 'implies intra-national sameness and equality' (Wodak et al., 1999: 44) and calls upon the viewer for 'identification with an anthropomorphized nation' (Wodak et al., 1999: 43). Here South African territory is described as a unified actor who addresses its people with one voice and feels collective emotion. Furthermore, the nation-as-actor is framed as existing in relation to the rest of the world. Nationalism is both an inward-looking and outward-looking exercise in that members of a nation seek to distinguish themselves through particularities, but through these particularities, seek to be accepted on a universal level (Billig, 1995: 85-86; Hall, 1996: 615). This outward-looking orientation and sense of South African exceptionalism on the world stage are highlighted as the country is described as 'a place that sings with courage to the rest of the world,' and as 'a place whose cheering can be heard on the other side of the world' (see Appendix A). Thus the consciousness or perception that South Africa as one actor addresses the rest of the world, and at the same time is being evaluated by it, is evident in this text.

South Africa as a unified entity acting in concert is also assumed to exist in the text of 'Team South Africa's Champions' through deixis, or 'a form of rhetorical pointing' (Billig, 1995: 106). The voiceover begins with an 'addressee-exclusive we' (Wodak et al., 1999: 45), presumably constituting the IMC, by listing various people that 'we' are celebrating; the team, the fans, and the workers (see Appendix B). The voiceover eventually integrates these groups to form the national in-group by continuing to state that 'Each one of us is a part of Team South Africa. Each one of us, in our own small way, makes the dream possible' (see Appendix B). 'Us' evokes South Africans as a unified group—this time inclusive of the fans, the team, and the workers—that is described to have one common dream, 'the' dream. What 'the' dream entails is not explicitly stated, but the assumption is that it does not need to be— hosting the FIFA tournaments as everyone's goal is a given, an already existing truth. Furthermore, reference to the viewer as 'a vital part' of 'Team South Africa' (see Appendix B) suggests that he or she above all belongs to the national team, whether they are workers, football players, or presumably the creators of the ad. On the other hand, if one is not behind

efforts to host the tournaments, one is not playing for the 'team' and exists in an antagonistic position to the nation. In addition to references to the national 'team', the line 'what are *you* doing to be a great host?' (see Appendix B) also demonstrates awareness that the country is about to be placed in the international spotlight. As with 'Today I Woke Up,' the implication is that South Africa is going to be evaluated as a whole by the world—and it is the South African people's collective effort that will make this a success. All of these rhetorical features, if subtly, serve to indicate sameness and create a dominant point of identification, orientation and exclusion.

Images in these two ads also reinforce the notion of the national family. Some cultural symbols of the 'New South Africa' that are mobilized in the ads include: the national anthem, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu and the rugby player Joel Stransky[5] (in 'Today I Woke Up'), as well as the national football team and national flag (in 'Team South Africa's Champions'). By recognizing the historical events and ideas with which these symbols are associated, the intended viewer can establish a connection and identify with the post-apartheid state. In particular, the flag and anthem are symbols that simultaneously distinguish the post-1994 South Africa as a distinct, new entity but also let the country 'flag its own universality' (Billig, 1995: 86) in a world system in which the nation is the primary manifestation of a collective unit.

South African unity is also depicted through the harmonious representation of various people in the ads. 'Today I Woke Up' features ordinary people (as played by actors) along with famous artists, athletes, and politicians of various backgrounds. 'Team South Africa's Champions' presents a diverse group of fans cheering together, as well as people in different jobs (the fans, the football players, the stadium workers) united behind a common goal. In 'It Starts With You,' there are young and old, black and white, boys and girls, and policemen and citizens coming together with the shared aim of doing good deeds in their communities. For example, in the scene inside the hospital, nurses read to a group of black and white children in close-up shots that allow the viewer to establish a sense of warmth and intimacy towards those represented (Kress & Van Leeuwen cited in Rose, 2001: 44) (see Appendix C). This personalization helps to integrate the viewer into the scene and the sense of community and inclusion that it conveys. Furthermore, the last scene in the ad in which the boy's friends join him in front of his house, and in which they all bicycle away together in the same direction with smiles on their faces, reinforces the idea of teamwork and unity (see Appendix C). The

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[5] Joel Stransky kicked the winning goal for the Sprinboks when the team won the 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa. The victory marked a watershed moment as the country united behind a team that previously only had the support of the white minority.

Movement for Good's slogan, 'Noka e tlatswa ke dinoka (a river swells from little streams)' ('About the Movement') is communicated through such images; the gist of the campaign is that the nation can be mobilized to induce great change if all individuals come together and form one entity, 'an unstoppable force' (ibid.).

Summary and Context of Interpretation

The ads treat various South Africans as integral parts of a national whole, whose primary point of identification is national citizenship. South Africa is a nation that speaks as one, feels as one, and works as one—much like an ideal brand. This is consistent with the idea of the 'Rainbow Nation,' a national family united in its diversity; such inclusivity is a primary goal of the new government that seeks to recognize all members of the nation, not solely the white minority as under apartheid. While this discourse, common in nation building language, encourages cooperation and celebrates unity under one rallying point of the nation, it can potentially gloss over the continuing struggle for equality and inclusivity in the country (Lazarus, 2004: 620). In other words, by depicting unity as a given and an already achieved condition, the ads obscure actual marginalization and existing divisions that need to be addressed before they are treated as resolved. Furthermore, the often outward-looking orientation of this national unity, demonstrated in the awareness that South Africa is being evaluated by the world, privileges one vision of the monolithic state (in this case, the one defined by Brand South Africa) as the primary point of individual identification. Thus those who do not agree with the claims set forth in the ads are excluded from the national collective; there is little room for the consideration of diverging viewpoints, such as that 'the' dream is not necessarily to build football stadiums, or that the country does not necessarily speak with one voice.

Delineation of Participation and Responsibility

As Guibernau argues, the successful construction of national identity crucially depends on the state's ability to disseminate 'a clear-cut definition of a "good citizen"' (2007: 25), especially through its education system and media. The Brand South Africa ads do this by delineating the responsibility of citizens and guidelines for participation—in some cases more explicitly than in others.

One way that a South African citizen's agency is depicted is one's ability to place faith in the country. For example, in 'Today I Woke Up,' a Zulu woman says as she stands in a rural setting: 'even if I have nothing, this place can give me everything'; this is immediately

followed by a shot of Desmond Tutu standing against a magnificent backdrop of dawn at God's Window[6] and proclaiming: 'All I need to do is believe' (see Appendix A). This sequence places the woman in a passive position—she is stating that as long as she has faith, 'this place,' awe-inspiring in its beauty, will provide for her. Indeed, the ad consistently depicts South Africa as a kind of savior—the lights of dawn streaming down from the sky and the aforementioned personification of the country throughout the ad contribute to this. For instance, in another scene with an actor depicting an ordinary person, a pregnant woman hanging her laundry looks up to the sky while the voiceover states: 'I woke up in a place…that says, "it's ok"' (see Appendix A). It is as if South Africa is someone in the heavens reassuring its people to believe and to take comfort. This veneration of South Africa, or rather the concept of the 'New South Africa' to which these people 'woke up,' depicts a top-down relationship between the people and the custodians of this new nation.

The other two ads are much more explicit in portraying ideal citizen participation and delineating their responsibilities. As mentioned in the previous sections of this analysis, 'Team South Africa's Champions' clearly equates supporting preparations for the FIFA tournaments as a prerequisite for being a part of the nation. Despite the linguistic techniques of inclusivity described in the previous section (such as 'Each one of us is a part of Team South Africa'), the ad's creation of a hierarchical relationship between the speaker and the worker ultimately creates ambivalence. First, the way that the worker is depicted suggests that a good South African citizen works hard towards building the stadium but does not do much else; throughout the commercial, he never looks directly into the camera, and he never says anything. Thus he is not given much agency beyond doing his job. Moreover, the dramatic music and the visual slow motion as goes to work and shovels dirt, complemented by the voiceover applauding him as a 'champion' on 'Team South Africa,' are rather condescending in their exaggeration. The hierarchical relationship between the worker and those applauding him is reinforced when, in the last shot, the camera looks down upon the worker lying in bed (Kress & Van Leeuwen cited in Rose, 2001: 44). The aforementioned last line of the voiceover that accompanies this image, 'what are *you* doing to be a great host?' extends the delegation of responsibility from the worker to the viewer. It addresses the viewer directly and creates a sense of urgency about his or her obligations to project a positive image of South Africa to the world. In sum, the ad frames participation in World Cup preparations as an issue of citizenship responsibility.

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[6] God's Window is a famous vantage point in the Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve in the province of Mpumalanga.

'It Starts With You' also clearly outlines the qualities of a good citizen. The boy who does community service all day is depicted as an everyday hero—the first thing he does when he wakes up is put on a cape as he stands in front of the mirror in his bedroom. When his friends (who were previously playing football) decide to join him, they are also wearing capes—indicating that they, too, are now heroes. Similar to the depiction of the worker in 'Team South Africa's Champions,' praise for the ordinary citizen can be seen as condescending and infantilizing, especially since the ideal citizens as shown in this ad are all children. In addition, the role of the state in relationship to the ideal citizen is portrayed, albeit implicitly, in this ad. The boy's activities throughout the day include crossing rail tracks and a large bridge, drinking water from a public fountain, aiding policemen, and going to a children's clinic. These references to infrastructure and services suggest that just as the state provides for the people—a promise that is 'intrinsic to the post-apartheid state's nation-building project' (Peberdy, 2001: 24)—the average person is expected to do his or her part.

The main message of the ad, which is that the movement for good 'starts with you,' presents the viewer with agency and responsibility—he or she has the power and obligation to create good in the community, even if through small actions like helping a neighbor with heavy bags. While charitable good deeds are promoted, it is one form of participation that is emphasized. Interestingly, on the website for the Movement for Good (the initiative founded by the IMC that this ad promotes), there is a list of characteristics of 'an active citizen for good'. Notably, number one on this list is 'speaks positively about South Africa'. Others include 'upholds the Constitution and the laws of the land,' 'participates in our democracy' and 'does not bribe or buy stolen goods' ('About the Movement'). The prioritization of staying on message—not voicing dissent or describing current conditions in the country in a negative manner—fits in with the idea that citizens are the 'media of the message' (Aronczyk, 2008: 54) whose consistency and loyalty are essential in the success of the nation brand. Thus, according to the campaign, a South African citizen has a controlled level of agency. Considered in the context of local social movements and initiatives flourishing in the country today, such as those over evictions, water and electricity cut-offs or lack of access to medicine (Ballard, 2005: 85), the ad's portrayal of what a citizen is capable of doing, or is allowed to be doing, appears narrow.

Summary and Context of Interpretation

According to these ads, a good citizen demonstrates loyalty and places faith in South Africa, makes sacrifices for goals presumed to be in the national interest such as hosting global sporting events, and contributes locally through community service and adherence to the rule

of law. Of course, none of these characteristics are necessarily detrimental or problematic; again, what is excluded is critical thinking and questioning of the assumption that citizens could have other roles, like participating in political dialogue, or that the state could have other roles, like addressing competing voices on controversial issues. In particular, the emphasis on faith and loyalty can build confidence and provide a sense of comfort, but it is not conducive to a diversity of views. As Neocosmos argues, the 'deified' state in hegemonic political discourse forecloses social debate (Neocosmos, 2006: 99). Indeed, as Aronczyk points out, in the process of nation branding 'the political realm is problematic. Its inherent messiness—diverse and competing interests, struggles over policy and regulation… interferes with the cohesive, coherent images that experts attempt to convey' (2007: 115). Accordingly, these ads promote individual participation or personal responsibility on the part of the viewer but do not emphasize political agency and establish a top-down relationship between state and citizen; thus they present a limited form of empowerment.

Concluding Discussion of Interpretation and Analysis

'National identity and nation brand are virtually the same thing: nation brand is national identity made tangible, robust, communicable, and above all useful' (Anholt, 2007: 75)

The analysis above has illustrated that in order to construct an assimilated national identity, Brand South Africa's ads establish a common sense of the past, present and future with particular emphasis on renewal and transformation; mobilize symbols and rhetoric of unity to depict South Africa as a monolith; and define citizen responsibility and participation. While these strategies could encourage a sense of camaraderie and hope by building on discourses of the 'Rainbow Nation' and the 'New South Africa,' they can also create ambivalence by addressing the South African citizen as a passive and de-politicized individual whose primary responsibility is to celebrate the country's political transformation and demonstrate loyalty to the state and its goals. National identity as defined by these texts creates new bases for exclusion—those who do not agree with the claims set forth in the ads, or those who do not share the collective history or citizenship status of South Africans, are considered to be outsiders. Furthermore, the omission of controversial issues as well as allusions to South African exceptionalism further bolster the status quo and do not leave space for critical engagement on the part of the intended viewer. Thus it can be argued that in the context of nation branding, national identity is 'useful' (to use Anholt's word) not only in the sense that it builds national pride and goodwill but also in the sense that it creates a platform to establish legitimacy for the government and unite the populace behind South Africa's goal to become a key player in the global economy.

One surprising aspect of the results was how little the intended audience—the ordinary citizen—was given a voice. In other words, despite the language and imagery of inclusivity, empowerment and participation, and the emotion that they convey, hierarchy was consistently established between the citizen and the state. This could be a reflection of what some scholars call the post-apartheid regime's 'statist' approach to development (Gumede & Dikeni, 2009: 7-8), in the sense that the state has assumed the aspirations of progressive voices in the liberation movement and absorbed the role of civil society; the resulting top-down demand for loyalty to the state is perhaps an inevitable part of the nation building project. On a more general level, the perpetuation of hierarchy could be explained by the hegemonic discourse of a world order in which nation-states are responsible for the behavior of their citizens and present normative guidelines for membership in the national collective (Bishop & Jaworski, 2003: 267). It can be concluded that internal nation branding draws from, and further reinforces, this assumption.

CONCLUSION

This paper examined Brand South Africa as a case study of the phenomenon of nation branding—specifically, internal branding as applied to nations—by applying CDA to its domestic communication materials. The findings suggest that while the Brand South Africa ads promote unity and hope by presenting a vision of a transformed national family working towards a common future, they also represent South African national identity as one of sameness, loyalty and passivity while emphasizing South African exceptionalism and obscuring existing societal divisions.

The analysis critically highlights the often-overlooked assumptions that these texts convey by identifying the latent contradictions between the goals of nation branding on the one hand and the goals of democracy and public discourse on the other. As Calhoun argues, 'The decisive question about nationalism…is whether it can thrive with the nation open to competing conceptualizations, diverse identities, and a rich public discourse about controversial issues' (2007: 98). Internal nation branding, at least in this case, presents a streamlined and alluring national identity for citizen consumption but does not seem to accommodate the conditions that he describes. While of course South Africans should celebrate the country's transition to democracy and the progress it has made since, and while the uplifting visions of harmony and unity in purpose is a source of inspiration, the question is to what *ends* are these ads striving? Progress, unity, participation and responsibility are all

desirable characteristics in a society and presumably would constitute any nation building effort. The problem is that when these elements are mobilized so as to improve South Africa's *marketability*, thus overshadowing the need to acknowledge and address systemic problems through active political discussion or grassroots participation, genuine progress is undermined.

This study suggests that nation branding is not simply an inconsequential phenomenon with well-designed logos and feel-good patriotism but an issue worthy of critical examination. While nation branding could indeed boost tourism and foreign investment, and these things can contribute to the common good, its inherent need to reconcile consistency and diversity should be problematized. As more and more governments prioritize reputation management to gain a competitive edge in a branded and globalized world, thinking of ways to enhance public discourse and participation in the very process of constructing and communicating a nation brand, in addition to developing alternative sites for articulating national identities, could be promising avenues of research that shape the future of this growing trend.

As mentioned in the Research Design and Methodology chapter, another interesting area for further research would be audience reception of these ads. As the construction of national identity is a dialogical and fluid process, how South Africans of various socio-economic, ethnic and gender backgrounds perceive the discourses put forth in the ads would shed light on the multiple interpretations that could arise upon viewing these texts. Furthermore, such data could reveal the extent to which nation branding reinforces a strong sense of national identity in the age of globalization and its pluralizing effect on individual identities (Hall, 1996: 628).

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APPENDIX A. 'Today I Woke Up' Script

This script was featured on the website of Yvonne Johnston, former CEO of the International Marketing Council of South Africa who oversaw the creation of this advertisement. Script and video can be retrieved from: http://www.yvonnejohnston.co.za/video.html

'Today I Woke Up in South Africa'

We open on Nelson Mandela looking out of the bars of his cell and cut to a long shot of him standing on the beach of Robben Island. The very first rays of light are just beginning to break over the Cedarberg in the distance. We hear him speak.

Former State President Nelson Mandela: Today I woke up in a place that said to me, "Be free!"

We cut to Zanele Situ (our first Paralympic Gold medalist) holding a javelin proudly outside her house, with a medal round her neck.

Zanele Situ: I woke up in a place that said, "Be what you want to be". I woke up to a dream….

We cut to a fairly wide shot of the Paralympian swimming gold medalist, Natalie du Toit, sitting on the edge of a swimming pool that is slowly becoming illuminated by the dawn rays. She is putting on her swimming cap, preparing to start her morning training.

Natalie Du Toit: And I realised that I'm stronger than I was yesterday

We cut to a small figure jabbing and hooking with boxing gloves on and we realise that it is Baby Jakes.

Baby Jake Matlala: I woke up in a place where it's the size of your heart that counts, not your fists

We cut to a dusty road near a mine in Ermelo. There is lone figure running in the distance with the silhouette of a mine shaft breaking the horizon in the black blue light of dawn. We hear the voice of Josiah Thugwane.

Josiah Thugwane: Because yesterday I was digging for gold, and today I am wearing it

We see Sam Motsuenyane standing in a burnt field…

Sam: Yesterday, I was burning with frustration…now I am growing big business

We cut to Zola 7 standing alone on an empty stage in the middle of an empty field as the sun begins to peak over the horizon.

Zola 7: I woke up and realised that I don't need a gun to make you listen

We cut to a rural village surrounded by magnificent rolling hills in Kwa-Zulu Natal, kissed by dawn's first light. We see a woman working in a vegetable garden. She begins to speak.

Zulu woman: And even if I have nothing, this place can give me everything,

We cut to Archbishop Desmond Tutu standing at God's Window, looking out over the valley as the sun begins to rise.

Archbishop Tutu: All I need do is believe.

We cut an empty Ellis park at dawn. Just back from the 22m line we see the figure of Joel Stransky, clad in Springbok kit. He is drop-kicking, as he did in the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

Joel Stransky: Today I woke up in a place whose cheering can be heard on the other side of the world.

We cut to Jomo Sono punching the air and doing a victory dance on an empty soccer field.

We cut to a hill in Kwa-Zulu Natal. As the light washes onto the golden grass, we see two figures doing a tribal Zulu dance in unison, one is black and the other white. It is Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu.

Johnny Clegg: A place where my brother,

Sipho Mchunu: is my brother no matter what.

We cut to a shot of Hector Pieterson's mother standing at his monument in Soweto. In the background we see the luminescence of first light washing over Orlando.

Mrs. Pieterson: Today I woke up in a place that flows with courage

We cut to a lone road slicing through the arid Karoo landscape. We see David Kramer and two other artists playing blik guitars.

David Kramer: That laughs,

We cut to a very old black man standing looking at Battle of Isandlwana gravestone in Natal. He is wearing a suit and holds his hat at his chest in homage. The dawn light is breaking and we hear him speak.

Old man: That's cried,

We cut to the rooftop of a block of flats in Hillbrow. We see a heavily pregnant woman putting up washing in the morning light. She stops, sees the sun peaking over the horizon, gives a little smile and we hear her voice.

Mother: That says, "It's okay."

We cut to another sweeping shot of Table Mountain and we see Abdullah Ibrahim sitting at a beautiful black grand piano. The rays are just beginning to touch the Flats and Abdullah is looking out over the land and sea. We hear him speak.

Abdullah Ibrahim: Today I woke up in a place that sings with hope to the rest of the world.

We cut to President Mbeki standing in his garden, having a personal moment to himself before the day's responsibilities begin. He is rolling his sleeves. He stops for a moment as the sun begins to peak over the mountain in the background. He smiles to himself proudly and sentimentally.

State President Thabo Mbeki: and I smiled because South Africans are creating a new dawn every day.

We cut to a majestic shot of amaMpondo standing high up on Cathedral Peak, arms stretched towards the heavens. We sweep down and around them, catching the virgin rays of the new day.

We see close-up of the flag flying. And hear the strains of Nkosi Sikelela in the background.

VO: Today, I woke up in South Africa.

South African Flag dissolves into: SOUTH AFRICA. ALIVE WITH POSSIBILITY

APPENDIX B. 'Team South Africa's Champions'

This script was transcribed by the author. The video can be retried from:
http://www.brandsouthafrica.com/marketing-materials/243-video-team-south-africas-champions.html
The entirety of the ad is in slow motion.

'Team South Africa's Champions'

Opening scene: inside a football stadium, members of South Africa's football team are celebrating a goal. The crowd is cheering.

Voiceover (VO): When we celebrate the team who make the goal possible,

Shot of stadium stands to show fans in South African jerseys cheering

VO: We also celebrate the fans, the people who choose the teams.

The rewinding begins (and goes on for the rest of the ad). The football team disappears to show a man on a tractor.

VO: Those who lay the grass…

Shot of large truck with a construction worker coming out of it.

VO: Who construct the stadiums…
(music begins)

Shot of a sign that reads: "Danger: Construction Site," and a man shoveling dirt

VO: or turn the soil. We celebrate them as champions. They all play a vital part to get South Africa ready for the FIFA Confederations Cup.

Cut to a train station platform. The man previously shoveling dirt emerges, still moving in rewind, getting off the train and walking along the platform to his home. He is carrying a shovel. (music crescendo)

VO: Because each one of us is a part of Team South Africa.

Man leans his shovel against the outside wall of his house. Shot of him inside his house, walking into his bed.

VO: Each one of us, in our own small way, makes the dream possible.

Man lying in his bed. Aerial shot of his face as he sleeps.
VO: What are *you* doing to be a great host?

(cheering and vuvuzela sounds in the background)

Shot of the Brand South Africa Logo with the written text beneath: Alive With Possibility

VO: South Africa: Alive with possibility.

APPENDIX C. 'It Starts With You' Script

This ad has no voiceover and features soft music (acoustic guitar and singing) throughout. The description of events has been written by the author. The video can be retrieved from:
http://www.brandsouthafrica.com/marketing-materials/228-it-starts-with-you-video.html

'It Starts With You'

Dawn. A light goes on in an upstairs room of a house.
(birds chirping, guitar strumming starts)
A young black child gets out of bed, opens the curtains in his room and looks out the window.
He puts on a red cape, adjusting the string around his neck in front of his mirror. He turns out the light.
Cut to the child loading his bicycle with white bags.
Cut to child bicycling out of his neighborhood with a helmet on his head.
Cut to a scene in a township: the child is helping an older black woman carry her large bag home. They arrive at her house, and a young girl (perhaps the woman's daughter) emerges in the doorway. A close up shot of her face as she smiles at him; he smiles back before bicycling away.
Cut to child bicycling by a field in which his friends are playing football. They wave at him, signaling him to join, but the child keeps bicycling.
Cut to child bicycling across railroad tracks and then over a large bridge.
Cut to seaside landscape (sounds of ocean waves and birds)
Close-up of shot of child as he picks plastic bags off wire fences.
Cut to scene of boy drinking water from a public fountain, taking a break.
Cut to child bicycling down a wide road, through an unpopulated urban landscape.
As he turns a corner, the child encounters two men running away from car as the car alarm goes off.
Cut to child gesturing to two police officers (black, men), pointing in the direction in which the two men were running. The police car drives away from the child with the siren on.
Cut to a local clinic. Child appears with bags full of children's books at the reception; the receptionist smiles.
Close-up shots of child patients (black and white, boys and girls, some with visible injuries) and nurses (black and white, women) reading to them inside the hospital.
Cut to child bicycling into sunset.
Cut to child back in his bedroom, sleeping face-down on his bed with his sneakers still on.
His parents take off his shoes, tuck him in and close door as they watch over him.
Cut to another scene of daylight: child looks out of his window to find that the kids he encountered the day before (black, boys and girls) are there outside smiling and waving, wearing capes and hats.
Camera pans above the children for aerial view of street as the children all bicycle away in the same direction.
Text appears on black background: "Movement for Good: It Starts With You"