

**ENTANGLEMENTS OF GLOCALISATION: REPRESENTATIONS OF**

**K'NAAN'S SONG WAVIN' FLAG DURING FIFA 2010 WORLD**

**CUP AND THE RE-IMAGI(NI)NG OF AFRICA**

by

**Advice VIRIRI**

Executive Dean - Arts & Senior Lecturer

**Midlands State University  
Faculty of Arts  
P. Bag 9055, Gweru,  
ZIMBABWE.**

Cell : +263 773 632 916

Fax : +263 54 260233

E-mail : [viriria@msu.ac.zw](mailto:viriria@msu.ac.zw)

&

**Agnella VIRIRI**

Assistant Lecturer

**Department of Music and Musicology**

**Midlands State University  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
P. Bag 9055, Gweru,  
ZIMBABWE.**

Cell : +263 773 632 917

Fax : +263 54 260233

E-mail : [viririag@gmail.com](mailto:viririag@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

*The paper interrogates the FIFA 2010 World Cup in South Africa's activated discourses of football pilfering unstable worldviews on global cultural flows. The World Cup on the African continent demonstrates the glocalisation cycle in world order as a conjunctural hegemonic historical process. This entails an encounter encompassing multifaceted angles of borrowings from film and media, culture and sexuality, politics and economy, class and gender and between the continent and Europe. It is the continent's colonial encounter with Europe that spurs this study's intellectual breeze from various disciplines of media, film, and theatre arts studies. When embraced by the metanarrative quest for what colonialism means in the historical memories of Africans, it offers a multiplicity of versions in their splendid diversities. As the biggest soccer extravaganza was performed on the African soil, the great expectation was to celebrate glocalisation and project Africa positively with the ramifications of football as the vehicle of ideologically uncontaminated flows of enjoyment. It goes on to unpack the global hegemonic constructs of Africa and takes cognizance of the intricate and nuanced mechanisms through which international dissemination of commercial advertising of the Coca-Cola video of Knaan's song **Wavin' Flag** mediated through a contradictory site of enjoyment. This renders images of the media painting Africa to degenerate into repertoires of mockery and sarcasm, dramatic irony, resistance and sensuous dimensions pregnant with racial innuendoes. It further explores how these prevailing power relations between individuals, teams and nations affect the life chances of individuals during the FIFA 2010 World Cup and thereafter. The paper bears testimony to the world that Africa's benchmarks for measuring its progress are evident through music and what not.*

## Introduction

Historically, the African continent has been misrepresented and stereotyped by the Western media as a “crocodile-infested dark continent where jungle life has perpetually eluded civilisation” (Ebo, 1992 : 15). Yet paradoxically, Africa is considered as the cradle of humanity. This chapter has a daunting task of correcting negative images of (mis)representation of Africa by the Western media’s reportage on African people. To be independently self-conscious is to reject the image that was self imposed by the oppressor. Without this rejection the individual subject is divided in the sense that he lives as the system would like him to live and yet he would like to, be something else. It is high time that Africa ceases to be considered as less important. However, in order for African people’s consciousness to grow, this article is part of the revolutionary literature that gives the rationale that the existing system is imperative. In their ‘moral’ duty to civilise Africans, most pioneers who introduced film production to Africa did not distribute what was considered ‘harmful’ films that depicted negative aspects of Europe. In this fashion, Nottcutt, founder of the Bantu Educational Cinema Experiment puts the following argument:

With backward peoples unable to distinguish between truth and falsehood, it is surely in our wisdom, if not our obvious duty, to prevent as far as possible the dissemination of wrong ideas. Should we stand by and see a distorted presentation of the white race’s life accepted by millions of Africans when we have it in our power to show them the truth. (Nottcutt cited in Diawara, 1992: 1)

The films that were projected intended to ‘educate’ adult Africans to understand and adopt to the new atmosphere of colonialism. It is against this background that film was not a priority for the developing African continent hence most African countries have not been fully exposed to film culture. The missionaries’ productions of paternalistic and racially prejudiced cinema treated Africans as children who needed to mature into adulthood. Father Van den Heuvel reiterated in writing what he impliedly presented in his films:

For this audience that we call primitive, we must make films for Africans. The scenario will be simple and will deal with few characters. The characters will be easily distinguishable from one another, and they will each have well-defined habits. The spectator must be able, without great effort, to identify with the heroes whom he will

imitate. There is an advantage, thus of having [African] actors performing in [an African] setting.

The technique for such films will generally be analogous to the one used when filming for children. The content will, however, be different. The projection time, as for children's films, must not be long. Fifteen minutes to half-hour screening may be followed by an intermission which will be used to explain what has been shown and what will follow. The scenes will follow each other in a chronological manner; no flashbacks or flashforwards. Dream sequences will be banished. The ideal is a film in which the action takes place in one day (Van den Heuvel cited in Diawara, 1992: 17).

The racist metaphorical allusion of referring Africans as children presupposes the existence of a permanent father-figure with an obligation to provide for his children's needs and above all to protect, guide and exercise control over them. This paper therefore shows the necessity of taking serious measures that enable the creation of an authentic African cinema.

This revolutionary momentum interrogates the FIFA 2010 World Cup in South Africa's activated discourses of football which were pilfering unstable worldviews on global cultural flows. The World Cup on the African continent demonstrates the glocalisation cycle in world order as a conjunctural hegemonic historical process. By glocalisation, I mean the idea that people live in world of cultural hybridity, in which they borrow from other cultures while maintaining aspects of their own. This is not to say that people develop a "third space," but that they do, in fact, change their worldviews when they encounter and make meaning out of new stimuli, thus reflecting Mikhail Bakhtin's concept that the self-awareness emerges through social interaction / contact with the "other." For this interaction to occur, people must be at the local level, where interactions become meaningful. In circumstances where this revolutionary consciousness does not exist, where the oppressed live in the duality of being or not being like the oppressor, there is a tendency to direct the anger not against the system, but against each other. This observation is made clearly by Frantz Fanon in his book, *The Wretched of the Earth* he writes:

The colonized man will first manifest this aggressiveness which has been deposited in his bones against his own people. This is the period when niggers beat each other up and the police and magistrates do not know which way to turn when faced with the astonishing waves of crimes in North Africa. . . . While the settler or the policeman has the right the live long day to strike the native, to insult him and to make him crawl to them, you will

see the native reaching for his knife at the slightest hostile or aggressive glance cast on him by another native: for the last resort of the native is to defend his personality vis a vis his brother.

This fury against each other can only end when the individual subjects have gained a revolutionary consciousness. True, the material conditions lay the basis for the rise of consciousness. In this way revolutionary consciousness is heightened in the movement. This chapter contributes towards this consciousness as it is primarily addressed to the oppressed; to organise themselves in order to fight the oppressive reality of the Apartheid system. It demands that they reject the image of reality prescribed for them by the oppressor and replaced with action against the system. One African historian noted that:

we flatter ourselves imagining African peoples as primitive or barbarous prior to European interference in her affairs, and that it is we who have civilized them. But it is theory that lacks historical foundation... The Empire of Ghana flourished during Europe's dark ages; Mali and Nigeria had highly complex civilizations prior to European military intervention and colonial adventurism in Africa.

When embraced by the metanarrative quest for what colonialism means in the historical memories of Africans, it offers a multiplicity of versions in their splendid diversities. As the biggest soccer extravaganza to be performed on the African soil, the great expectation was to celebrate globalisation and project Africa positively with the ramifications of football as the vehicle of ideologically uncontaminated flows of enjoyment. It goes on to unpack the global hegemonic constructs of Africa and takes cognizance of the intricate and nuanced mechanisms through which international dissemination of commercial advertising of the Coca-Cola video of Knaan's song *Wavin' Flag* mediated through a contradictory site of enjoyment. This renders images of the media painting Africa to degenerate into repertoires of mockery and sarcasm, dramatic irony, resistance and sensuous dimensions pregnant with racial innuendoes. It further explores how these prevailing power relations between individuals, teams and nations affect the life chances of individuals during the FIFA 2010 World Cup and thereafter. It bears testimony to the world that Africa's benchmarks for measuring its progress are evident through vuvuzelas, state-of-the-art stadia, music and what not.

## Glocalisation and its Entanglements

As has been noted by a number of African film historians, it is an existing truism that the history of film and that of colonisation neatly intersect in a remarkable way. The interesting parallel is that the end of the nineteenth-century experienced the official introduction of the cinema with the simultaneous partitions of the African continent into Western Colonies as was witnessed at the Berlin Conference. This twin process, one in the realm of the arts and that of the geopolitical arena, meet in that “on one side and on the other, it was all about limiting gaze and space, by the boundaries of States or the frame of the camera, this obscure room from which exits so many marvels and so many monsters, used to so many ends” (Hafner cited in Moudelino, 2000:131).” This figuratively marks the beginning of the twentieth century opening up to the victory of the European technology, in the twin exploitation of Africa as a dark continent and the dark room. KNaan’s song chosen as an anthem for the FIFA 2010 World Cup is a symbolic historical event which ushers in a radical transformation of the African indigenous peoples into actors of this international spectacle. Africa has finally humanised its dehumanisation by resisting to be colonised. This chapter assesses Coca-Cola’s dehumanising video clip’s extent it is possible, in Molefi Kete Asante’s terminology, to “step outside one’s history” in a “final emancipatory gesture” (Asante, 1990 : 5). It is quite pertinent not to forget that ‘the local’ and ‘the global’ do not explain acquired experiential realities. What this means is that there is very little to be gained by avoiding the methodological challenges that the global moment pose. One strategy that has been effected is to retreat back into the local, a move that is typically rationalised by asserting the capability of “native” cultures to remain self-confidently intact, determinedly diverse, in the face of a victorious, homogenising world capitalism. Comaroff and Comaroff (1999 : 295) adroitly express it thus:

Apart from being empirically questionable, this depends upon an anachronistic, ahistorical idea of culture. Of culture transfixed in *opposition* to capitalism—as if capitalism were not itself cultural to the core, everywhere indigenized as if culture has not been long commodified under the impact of the market. In any case, to reduce the history of the here and now to a contest between the parochial and the universal, between sameness and distinction, is to reinscribe the very dualism on which the colonizing

discourse of early modernist social science was erected. It is also to misrepresent the hybrid, dialectical, historically evanescent character of *all* contemporary social designs.

Entanglement is a word commonly used in quantum theory to refer to the way how particles of energy/matter are correlated so much so that they predictably interact with each other regardless of how distant apart they are. Glocalisation is the sum total of the entanglements of the global and the local. It is this inter- connectedness that Friedman (2005: 325) writes that “ [t]he more you have a culture that naturally glocalizes - that is, the more your culture easily absorbs foreign ideas and best practices and melds those with its own traditions - the greater advantage you will have in a flat world.” Friedman’s notion of a flat world is one where countries exchange cultures and ideas seamlessly regardless of time zones and borders mostly because of advancements in technology. During the FIFA 2010 World Cup, as the world flattens it was common cause and only natural that cultures will come into more and more contact. The technological advancements that have flattened our world are through films like KNaan’s song’s video which is viewed as essential to the distribution in Africa of negative images produced by cultural outsiders, the Europeans. This chapter becomes a criticism of the impact of this type of film portrayal to the African audience typical of FIFA 2010 World Cup viewers. Paulin Vieyra (1975 : 242), a film-maker and critic has a suggestion that:

The danger of these films could be greater in Africa than in the Western world ... They create mental habits, completely opposed to what would be preferable to invent for the young nations in the midst of development... A certain genre of films has a dreamlike function here, essentially destined, it seems, to prepare the ground for all possible propaganda.

Since cultural transmission is a two way process, it can occur in the face of the dominant culture actively attempting to reject the culture of the outsider or colonised. The most successful cultures are those that are most malleable and accepting. Glocalisation leads to acculturation, which is a process full of colonising the mind effect. In making the video clip on an African song, Cocacola could have greatly reflected on the conjunction between reality and illusion, and not this propensity to confuse African reality. This is characteristic of the colonial project inherent in the media and seriously exacerbated by the emergence in Africa of these dangerous

imported films. This ends up representing to FIFA 2010 World Cup viewers a Manichean perception of the world.

## **The Cancerous Image of Africa**

The continent of Africa has been represented with all sorts of images from various angles of analysis and perspectives. This chapter further communicates African ideas, mythologies, dreams and aspirations as an empowerment drive of her human activities. The negative portrayal of Africa as the subject, creates a world image which totally serves Western capitalistic insatiability while instantaneously denigrating the continent's global image. It is an image of relentless attack on Africa by outsiders, primarily Europeans, whose abiding motivation is profit. That image is as dark as the pervasive fear conjured up in their minds. Africa, on the other hand, does not highlight the lacunae in media perception of herself, but she projects warmth and welcome. K'Naan's song was supposed to exalt this African personality's cinematography. Despite Africa's denigrations as a dark continent, the soccer extravaganza dubbed the FIFA 2010 World Cup testifies to Ben Okri's (cited in Gray and Noome, 2006 :1) apt and well revealing observation that:

... beneath the strife of our age, internecine warfare, tribal antagonisms, religious intolerance, racial violence, the disharmony of the sexes, beneath all these, lurks the most ordinary discovery that we are human, and that life is holy.

Africa has been painted with all sorts of metaphors loaded with negative images coined from the West describing it as a heart of darkness, uncivilized, vast black hole, unnewsworthy and Walcott's (1992 : 28) metaphors on the Caribbean history deserves space to explain the history of Africa which also underwent slavery and colonialism :

Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love that took its symmetry for granted when it was whole. The glue that fits the fragments, the cracked heir looms. Whose restoration shows its white scars. This gathering of broken pieces is the care and the pain of the Antilles, and if the pieces are disparate, ill-fitting, they contain more pain than their original sculpture, those icons and sacred vessels taken



for granted in their ancestral places. Antillean art is this restoration of our shattered histories, our shards of vocabulary, our archipelago becoming a synonym for pieces broken off from the original continent.

This “gathering of broken pieces” was the assemblage at the FIFA 2010 World Cup providing the “glue that fits the fragments, the cracked heir looms. Whose restoration shows its white scars...” through how Westerners continued to denigrate Africa especially through misrepresenting Knaan’s song *Wavin’ the Flag*. A Zimbabwean researcher, writing on Knaan, an Ethiopian, whose song was played on the FIFA 2010 World Cup held in South Africa, all being African countries, are held together by a glue that mediates the continent’s consciousness into shape.

### **(Mis)representations in Re-imagi(ni)ng Africa**

Racial stereotypes are powerfully conveyed to the generality of the people through popular culture of the day, especially the adventure fiction, music and visuals set in various corners of the colonial empire, especially K’Naan’s video of his song *Wavin’ Flag* that was set by Coca-Cola. This video clip’s a value-laden discourse, coupled with the unbearable bare-footed young African directed at a mass audience, does more collective harm than if it was not for the FIFA 2010 World Cup. This heinous act sort of moralises the paternalistic relationship between coloniser and the colonised. This image of Africa becomes one of a collage of light and darkness, of pride, resistance and humiliation that is rooted in the values and world view of the 19th century. There is need to achieve a journalistic professionalism in order to attain a balanced, objective, and fair reportage on events as they take place anywhere in Africa, characteristic of the FIFA 2010 World Cup held for the first time in Africa, but :

Africa's negative and contrived image, promoted in the Western Media, pervades the psyche, pre-empting behaviors, infers worthlessness, disregards African humanity, and devalues the mind, while it attenuates human spirituality and connectivity: key ingredients in equitable planetary wealth sharing. (Chavis, 1998:4)

This entails an encounter encompassing multifaceted angles of borrowings from film and media, culture and sexuality, politics and economy, class and gender and between the continent and Europe. It is the continent's colonial encounter with Europe that spurs this chapter's intellectual breeze from various disciplines of media, film, and theatre arts studies. The FIFA 2010 World Cup bonanza in Africa formulated an imag(in)ed sense of what to expect in global relations where the sight of K'naan's song at a world's soccer extravaganza provided the much desired spectacle appropriated by powerful images of the wider world where everyone actively partook in it. It is this chapter's thematic concern to visualize and imagine a more fascinating and compelling world's popular event like this FIFA 2010 World Cup being held in the African continent. Comaroff and Comaroff (1999: 295) put it that:

The processes involved in the rise of novel forms of planetary integration and compression – especially in the electronic economy, in mass communications, in flexitime flows of labor and capital, in the instantaneous circulation of signs and images in the translocal commodification of culture, in the diasporic politics of identity – challenge us by representing the most fundamental question of our craft: how do human beings construct their intimate, everyday life-worlds at the shifting intersection of here, there, elsewhere, everywhere.

As an increasingly popular world event played in Africa, there were rich imaginative implications articulated in different dimensions whose modes of consciousness demonstrate the fragility of an antagonistic world. Objectivity and fairness, which are the hallmark of media, also come into play to show what reality is being reflected when the Western media chooses to take a discourse that sustains negative portrayal of Africa. These derogatory images of Africa in the Western media, more often than not, are deeply troubling psychologically and emotionally. Typical of both explorers and anthropologists during the colonial era, the Western media, according to Maynard (1992 : 9) “are empowered to paint an image of Africa by listing its deficiencies with respect to Western norms”. In addition to this, Michira (cited in Amoako, 2008:7) rightly observes that:

There has been, for a long time now, a systematic trend of misrepresenting Africa in the West, and the powerful Western media has been responsible for this. The Western public has been exposed to these patterns of

misrepresentations, which in turn have been solidified into stereotypes or generalizations about what Africa is all about.

Hachten (cited in Amoako, 2008:16) offers some valid suggestions about how Africa can overcome the existing problem of misrepresentation and achieve both economic and political transformation:

If Africa is to develop economically and politically in the coming years, Western news media must do a better job of reporting events there. But even more important, African nations must acquire free and independent news media of their own—news systems that utilize the new information technologies—communication satellites, global television, high-speed computer exchanges—that most of the world now uses.

The Western audiences are not interested in Africa but are just driven by greed and the spirit of conquest. It is a chicken and an egg situation. If there was coverage, people would become more interested. The FIFA 2010 World Cup becomes a terrain upon which Africa will be invented, reinvented, constructed, reconstructed and deconstructed through music which is inseparable from life itself.

## **Representation of the FIFA 2010 World Cup in Africa**

South Africa's hosting of the World Cup in 2010 did not only benefit the country's infrastructural development which saw the erection of five new stadia but the hugely popular event did Africa pride. Africa is paradoxically poor when its incalculable natural wealth is barely available to its indigenous populations but are jeopardised by the insatiable Western appetite. Despite all this benevolence, the African continent and her descendants are derogatorily rendering a symptomatic digest of the racial stereotypes on which the Western literature thrives on by reducing the African to naught as:

a bastion of disease, savagery, animism, pestilence, war, famine, despotism, primitivism, poverty, and ubiquitous images of children, flies in their food and faces, their stomachs distended. These “universal” but powerfully subliminal message units, beamed at global television audiences, connote something not good, perennially problematic unworthiness, deplorability, black, foreboding, loathing, sub humanity, etc (Chivas, 1998 : 1).

Africa has been robbed of its dignity and meaning but arguably Africa’s defining characteristic is its strategic importance to so called industrialised nations; her indispensability and relevance to world development, global technology, and the wealth of nations, derived from uncontrolled African bounty and benevolence, which are not praised in the media. Today’s media is even more controlling, powerful and influential.

### **K’Naan Warsame, the African Singer**

K’Naan Warsame was born in Mogadishu, the capital city of Somalia during the beginning of the country’s civil unrest. The rapper’s childhood was one of a survival tactic in order to avoid death hence his obsession in listening to the hip-hop music that his father used to send him from America. At the age of 13 years, K’Naan, his mother and the family that had remained behind in Somalia left to join friends in Harlem, en-route to Rexdale , Ontario in Canada, were his kith and kin where. It was after the improvement of his English in Canada that he began rapping with a distinction that saw him travelling around the whole world. His linguistic competence is superb thereby enabling him to negotiate between African (Somalia) and European (Canada) cultures through code-switching. Homi Bhabha (1994 : 86) articulates that the strategies of mimicry and mocking threaten the civilising mission where mimicry is loaded with “resemblance and menace” and is an alternative of mode of colonial discourse. K’Naan’s (whose name means traveler in Somali) travelling around the world enabled himself to network and created linkages to the extent that he became a household name. This is no little wonder why this singing enterprise necessitated his track, *Wavin’ Flag* to become the anthem for FIFA 2010 World Cup. Its choice for such a big event realistically shows that every performance is a unique and separate function which requires to bear the signature of the poet singer. This world event,

of necessity, required an African traditional creative artist like K'Naan whose vocal nuance provided a degree of excellence to the song. The words of the song, *Wavin' Flag* are as follows :

Give you freedom, give me fire, give me reason  
Take me higher, see the champions, take the bold now  
When I get older, I will be stronger, they will call me freedom,  
Just like waving flag  
And then it goes back and then it goes back, and then it goes back and then it goes back  
Oooo! Oooo! and everyday.

Celebrations around us, every nation all around us  
Singing forever young, singing songs underneath that sun  
Let's rejoice in the beautiful game,  
And together at the end of the day  
WE ALL SAY  
In the streets are exciting us  
As we loose our inhibitions.

The song *Wavin' Flag* has patterns of sequences whose lines offer parallelism developed to serve K'Naan as a credible craftsman. The complexity and artistry of the anthem will serve to illustrate the African singer's potentialities in adding style to a cadential rhythm. The words of the song offer vivid adornments which is enough proof to show how the anthem is suited for the FIFA 2010 World Cup. The song's quest for freedom, (" Give you freedom") fiery energy to reason ("give me fire, give me reason") would propel a competitor higher and ultimately becoming victorious. This descriptive detail adds the poetic zest for a conqueror whose happiness has a cumulative effect of showing strength by waving the flag of one's country. The skillful singer's connections of the lines is so intricately woven into each other thereby exuding a strong sense of balance through alliterative language (the "g" in give) coupled with assonance. The repetition of the word "give" and the phrase "And then it goes back" three times lays bare the cadence of the anthem. In "*When I get older, I will be stronger*" and also the same in "... *at the end of the day, we all say...*" there is internal end rhyme. This provides a perfectly natural and artful intend in how this song is composed in order to extol the syncopation which brings a comparative stability and an acoustic pattern to African music.

It is this song, *Wavin' Flag* that Coca-Cola has distorted and framed it negatively. Race used to be a crucial factor of the rhetorical matrix between “sameness” and “difference” during Africa’s colonial era. This is often mediated through other loci of differentiation which includes gender, class, religion and sexuality. These can be mobilised by colonial ideology through a variety of permutations. This racially structured Manichean colonial worldview provides no real discursive justification for such colonial social practices of portraying an African this way. This disregard of Africa, shows an ultimate allegiance to the metropolis. Adam Lively’s (1999 : 113) crowning argument for the supremacy of the European is quite regrettable:

Ascending the line of graduation, we came at last to the white European, who being most removed from the brute creation, may, on the account, be considered as the most beautiful of the human race. Where shall we find, unless in the European, that nobly arched head, containing such a quantity of brain, and supported by a hallow conical pillar, entering its centre?...

This chapter’s ability to forcefully call the shots of “sameness” (they are like us) or “difference” (they are not like us) during the FIFA 2010 World Cup shows illuminating discourse on people’s attitudes of race as exemplified especially in the adulteration of African music like K’Naan’s song by the Western agents. The purpose of the chapter is to correct these imbalances in the way how Africa is represented. For Foucault, history deploys “in a temporal series, the analogies [or similarities in function] that connect distinct organic structures to one another”. African history should not be represented from the depths of the density derived from its darkened past but “the depths from which all beings emerge into their precarious, glittering existence ” (Meihuizen, 2002:63) . The words of the song reflect K’Naan’s dispositions and abilities whose ruminations reproduce the dynamics of African artistic culture which is thought provoking. K’Naan’s song offers the secretive nature of African music’s continuing vitality which:

... is communal and inviting, drawing in a range of consumers young and old, skilled and unskilled. It allows for the spontaneous and authentic expression of emotion. It is integrated with social life rather than set apart, natural rather than artificial, and deeply human in its material significance. Its themes are topical and of sharp contemporary relevance, sometimes humorous and satirical, sometimes sad and affecting, often profound.

It is the repertoires of K'Naan's song that celebrate a close affinity between language and music. The song shows the coexistence of African musical tradition whose diverse provenance provides a window onto the contemporary African mind. It is through knowledge of the impact of colonialism that the nostalgic African past reminds the researcher of the "importance of rhythm in the music of Africa is an unquestioned principle: in fact, it bulks so large that African music could perhaps be set off as a musical culture area dominated by this concept and opposed to other equally large musical culture areas" (Agawu, 2003 : 57).

### **(Mis)representation of K'Naan's Video on Song, *Wavin' Flag***

The depicted FIFA 2010 World Cup tournament was charged with a sensuous dimension where the bare-footed African's evasive conflictual visibility during the match is intriguingly loaded with racial innuendos. Film is an autonomous performance image which is phenomenologically negotiated in the theatrical media. The Coca-Cola's celebration of the FIFA 2010 World Cup's setting is closely linked to Erika Fischer-Lichte's argument in relation to the pantomime *Sumurun* by Max Reinhardt which states that the crucial performative dimension:

... of spectators was ... to create their own reality. As a consequence, theatre was no longer to be defined through its representations but through the processes of construction which it triggers. Since this capacity is not restricted to theatre (or art in general), yet is explicitly focused and marked by it, I call it theatricality (Gal, 2009 : 191).

This article's approach is to create and humanise the battered African image, shaping and reshaping it through K'Naan's significant FIFA 2010 anthem song entitled *Wavin' Flag*. The song contributed abundantly to the African spiritual and socio-cultural growth of spectators and participants. It is the fetish of skin colour embedded in colonial discourse that Homi Bhabha (1994 : 78) clearly avers that it is the most visible of fetishes and is the key signifier of cultural and racial difference in the stereotype which facilitates colonial relations. K'Naan's song sets up a discursive form of racial and cultural opposition. The visual of the song portray a white boy and black boy playing soccer. For the white boy, the fetish of color prejudice empowers the

visual's discourse. He is playing the game with soccer boots, giving him the sense of superiority which triggers racial prejudice. Often, Coca-Cola Company does not know the effect of this image on the video clip as it is disseminated to the world. In the words of Wolfgang Sachs:

The mental space in which people dream and act is largely occupied today by Western imagery. The vast furrows of cultural monoculture left behind are, as in all monocultures, both barren and dangerous. They have eliminated the innumerable varieties of being human and have turned the world into a place deprived of adventure and surprise; the "Other" has vanished with development. Moreover, the spreading monoculture has eroded viable alternatives to the industrial, growth-oriented society and dangerously crippled humankind's capacity to meet an increasingly different future with creative responses. (1992:4)

The representation of the young African black boy in the video clip is refracted in the shattered mirror of the Western decentered subjectivity which depicts a biased identity formation reflected in these colonial attitudes. Coca-Cola's intense and aggressive targeting of youth markets in increasingly globalised commercial cultures is evident when the film degenerates into a simple diatribe against the African continent. The film, shot documentary-style does not use the tools of social realism as it becomes a fetish reference to a young black African whose role contributes to a commonsensical confusion between the text and the sociological reality where the film is supposed to be a transparent representation of reality. It is not coincidental that the young black African is the only one who plays soccer barefooted. Failure to diagnose this banalised artistic form would be to ignore the meaning of the film as depended upon assumed cultural understandings of the African sociological reality. Today's youth are the ones that are acculturated into global media where numerous contentious aspects of contemporary Western culture are crystallised. Indeed, there is a social structural disinvestment of the black youth and the resultant emergence of a distinct marginal identity divorced from his socio-cultural context. This concept and image of 'youth' in this globalised world is itself very much a product of the commercial media where globalisation is evident in some unlikely manifestation of cultural syncretisation that is taking place. Besides the young people's distinctive patterns of media use and practices of commodity consumption that have come to set 'youth' apart as a distinct cross-cultural group, Western funding privileges certain representations of African culture often devoid of any popular sensibilities. This hip-hop anthem by K'Naan could have been advertising images



of black pride and not this racial inequality which is so deeply entrenched so as to mobilise protest.

## **The Complexity of Class During FIFA 2010 World Cup**

The complexity of the class variable still remains a contested terrain. The Marxist conception views class as the most powerful sociological reason that leads to social conflicts. This conflict helix is a class struggle between proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Marx views the structure of society in relation to property ownership which is manifested in three great classes: the bourgeoisie (who own the means of production such as machinery and factory buildings, and whose source of income is profit), landowners (whose income is rent), and the proletariat (who own their labor and sell it for a wage). Class is defined just by ownership of property and not by one's income or status. It is therefore a theoretical and formal relationship among individuals who constitute that society. Sherry Ortner once viewed the class variable as "extraordinarily elusive" (2003:10). This Ortner attributes to the fact that class is often completely subsumed by discourses of race and ethnicity (1998:4). Pierre Bourdieu (1984: 102) states that class formations are in most cases homogeneous entities:

... defined not only by its position in the relations of production, as identified through indices such as occupation, income or even educational level, but also by a certain sex-ratio, a certain distribution in geographical space (which is never socially neutral) and by a whole set of subsidiary characteristics which may function, in the form of tacit requirements, as real principles of selection or exclusion without ever being formally stated (this is the case with ethnic origin and sex).

One's position in society should not be connected to income or occupation because it is class which "shapes one's sense of self, one's tastes, one's picture of the world and its possibilities" (Ortner, 2003 : 13). The plausible argument cemented by both Ortner and Bourdieu's corollaries is that the impossibility of discussing class without making reference to the notions of gender, race, age, history, culture and geography, would be tantamount to trying to square a

circle. K'Naan's song provides that musical taste which is constitutive of the above mentioned factors. K'Naan's *Wavin' Flag* presents the power dynamics where Africa's historical and its social constructions are deeply entrenched in racial discrimination which propagates the leveling of class.

## **Whither Africa's Entanglements of Glocalisation ?**

In 2000, *The Economist* described Africa as the "Hopeless Continent," a nickname based on an evaluation of the numerous disadvantages that characterised the continent, namely, poverty and disease, cycles of conflict, military and dictatorial one-party states, and many more. Comaroff and Comaroff also added to the negative portrayal:

And from everywhere come stories of not-quite-human transactions in the corporeal. Postcolonial Africa is replete with accounts of the way in which the rich and powerful use monstrous means and freakish familiars to appropriate the life force of their lesser compatriots in order to strengthen themselves or to satisfy consuming passions (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1999: 282).

Paradoxically, in 2011, *The Economist* referred to Africa as the "Rising Continent" with the March 2013 issue of the magazine contained a special report on Africa as the "Hopeful Continent." It is not surprising these days that Africa is variously referred to in positive terms such as emerging, rising and hopeful (Kimenyi, 2013: 1).

In the past, relationships for many African countries were dominated by the former colonial powers. The new twist today is that new players have begun to engage Africa in a very big way. Notably, China and India are tremendously investing in the continent. China's priorities have yielded strong diplomatic relations and political ties with African states whose ideological aspiration is anchored on the "solidarity among the Third World countries" (Sun, 2013 : 6). As a result of this intervention, the continent has rapidly expanded into the economic arena. China's focus on Africa's rich natural resources will, no doubt, fuel its domestic economic growth. For fear of being outdone, increasingly Russia, Brazil, Turkey, Iran and many others have increased

their diplomatic and commercial engagement with Africa. This increased interest in Africa by these new actors has been due to the realisation that Africa has so much to offer.

This chapter represents agency which occupies the discourse of everyday language in Africa. It therefore produces what a Malawian poet, Jack Mapanje describes in his introduction to the anthology as an alternative voice. Like Mapanje's verse, this chapter :

...spans some ten turbulent years in which I have been attempting to find a voice or voices as a way of preserving some sanity. Obviously, where personal voices are too easily muffled, this is a difficult task; one is tempted like the chameleon, who failed to deliver ... message of like, to bask in one's brilliant camouflage. But the exercise has been, if nothing else, therapeutic; and that's no mean word in our circumstances (Msiska, 1995 : 80).

After all efforts have been tried and tested, it is writing of a book chapter like this that accords the present researcher some enunciative possibility and some expressive autonomy in this zone of occult instability that we live in. The ability to host an event of such a magnitude is enough testament of Africa's preparedness and its preoccupation with the reestablishment of the African personality whose glorious past should be a springboard into the future. A true African should completely forget about the complexes of the past and be more prepared for the future. There is need for a changed mindset which is imaginatively aggressive to engage in futuristic perceptions of fulfilling the African dream. In order to achieve this Ebong (1986 : 71) recalls, Africa :

... is ripe for a revolution. It is not the promiscuous, violent, bloody revolution of permissive wantonness to life and property, nor is it the cultural revivalism of black humanity asserting itself in protest against the indifference of the West. The revolution for contemporary Africa presupposes the reorganization and the restructuring of the African mind and psyche.

There will not be any future if one continue to be bothered by the Conradian view of Africa as a dark continent as shown in *Heart of Darkness* where David Livingstone as one of the many churchmen sent on a mission by the London Missionary Society with the ultimate goal "to subordinate Africa to the dominance of the European order ... and to do so by replacing native

economy and society with an imagined world of free, propertied, and prosperous peasant families” (Harrow, 2006 : 56).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has tried to show that *Waving Flag* video clip should function as a new spectacle that replaces the colonial agenda by inscribing a new African history which articulates, invents and reclaims a crucial African gnosis. It has further managed to challenge academics with the problem of carrying out ethnography of this mega event staged on the African soil, the FIFA 2010 World Cup, on an awkward scale, neither unambiguously “local” nor obviously “global” — but to be treated on a scale in between that and which captures their mutual determinations and inclusive of their indeterminacies. African film must be used as decolonising weapon and this is no little wonder why Mbye Cham (cited in Moudelino, 2000: 133) succinctly puts it that “African film is in a way a child of African political independence. It was born in the era of heady nationalism and nationalist and anti-colonial struggle.” The projected image of the African black boy was meant to entertain an enthusiastic indigenous African audience. This colonial politics of the West is typical of the mobile cinemas during the colonial era. Fredrick Jameson’s (1987 : 69) “Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism” puts it that:

Third world texts, even those which are seemingly private and invested with a properly libidinal dynamic- necessarily project a political dimension in the form of a national allegory: the story of the individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society.

The song’s video depicts an African black protagonist whose portrayal is disrupted by negative images of a barbaric idiot who has haunting childhood memories that are deliberately provocative in order to stimulate debate. This research has sought to bring to the fore the submerged African identity to African consciousness. The context of the delineation of this black

character should be explicitly African and not the total unrelated underlying subliminal meanings that viewers decipher.

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## Biography

Advice Viriri is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Film and Theatre Arts and also Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Midlands State University. He has researched and published in reputable journals, whose findings were presented at both local and international conferences. His research interests are in African Literature, Film and Theatre. Socially, he is an interesting team-worker who is not only focused in his approach but has a personality that reflects maturity.