

ABSTRACT

PETTIWAY, KEON MANDELL. *A New African in the World: A rhetorical Study of Kwame Nkrumah's visual strategy for shaping postcolonial nationhood.* (Under the direction of Dr. Victoria Gallagher).

During the “Year of Africa,” a significant period in African history that began in 1957 (and continued on for several decades), African nations faced the herculean task of decolonization: they had to build postcolonial national identities that displayed African modernity, reimagine colonial identities, and collectivize publics toward a vision of Pan-Africanism. Scholars agree that visual culture and mass media were central to these tasks of nationalism and nation building. Recent scholarship indicates that the Ghanaian nation-state, the first African nation to gain independence from colonial authority, employed a strategic, multifaceted visual and mass media campaign during its process of national identity formation. Ghana based its campaign on the Pan-African ideology, propaganda, and “cult of personality” of Kwame Nkrumah, the first prime minister and president of Ghana. Nkrumah announced “Operation Psychology,” a multi-fronted campaign including “visual aids...interpreting the soul and spirit of [Ghana's] independence,” in the June 22, 1957 issue of the *Evening News*. The campaign included national currency, stamps, documentaries, body performance, art, architecture, and the Ghanaian press.

Historians have studied the visual politics of Nkrumah's campaign as “symbolic nationalism,” and rhetorical scholars interested in public address have considered Nkrumah's visual strategies as an extension of his “Midnight Speech.” These studies contribute multiple perspectives for understanding the nation building in postcolonial Africa, and provide critical frameworks for investigating Ghanaian visual culture during and after Nkrumah's regime. Despite these insights, scholars have understood the influence of Nkrumah's visual strategies

as either propaganda or rhetoric, and there is a gap in understanding how the circulation of official portrait photographs of Kwame Nkrumah served as a central rhetorical strategy of identification for constituting the postcolonial public through a process characterized by both addressivity and propagation. Studying postcolonial visual culture as *constitutive* offers scholars a more nuanced understanding of nation building following African independence, and contributes to historical studies on Nkrumah, rhetorical theories of identity formation, methods for studying visual culture, and strategies for nation branding.

This dissertation argues that official portraits of Nkrumah were central to the ongoing constitution of the “new African” that took shape through a system of identity that was simultaneously and somewhat paradoxically both open and closed. The portraits *addressed* and *invited* people to witness and adopt postcolonial identities and also *propagated* and *forced* identities upon individuals through Nkrumah’s efforts to control the media and repress contestations of the state, particularly through the Prevention Detention Act. This study uses constitutive rhetoric to (a) investigate how portrait photographs of Kwame Nkrumah constituted national identity, and it (b) proposes a new visually informed model of constitutive rhetorical criticism. This study draws upon the following: Jasinski’s conceptually oriented rhetorical criticism, which offers a framework for developing a set of terms and key concepts that dynamically emerge through critical analysis; Jasinski and Mercieca’s (2010) approach for analyzing exterior rhetoric, which facilitates a contextual study of a text as it circulates and articulates across multiple audiences and situations; and Carole Blair’s (1999) theory of material rhetoric, which provides a framework for investigating the symbolism and consequence of texts. By examining Ghana’s visual culture as constitutive, the study interprets Nkrumah’s “Operation Psychology” as an early example of “re-branding” Africa, a

reading that has implications for understanding the rhetoric of branding in recent campaigns focusing on or drawing from African nations. Further, this study contributes a model for investigating visual strategies of identification in postcolonial nation branding. Finally, the study provides a way for designers and design scholars to incorporate the insights of constitutive rhetorical theory and criticism into their work. By doing so, it also provides rhetorical scholars with an expanded visually informed perspective on the relation between instrumental and constitutive rhetorics.

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A New African in the World: A Rhetorical Study of Kwame Nkrumah's Visual Strategy for
Shaping Postcolonial Nationhood

by
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DEDICATION

To Charlene, for being my best friend, confidant, and inspiration. To my family, for being understanding and encouraging me to reach for the stars.

BIOGRAPHY

Keon Pettiway is a rhetorical scholar whose primary interests include racial and postcolonial contexts of public address, visual culture, design culture, and digital media. His current research focuses on the role of portraiture in constituting postcolonial nationhood leading up to and following African independence and liberation, and the implications for cultural intermediaries involved in contemporary nation branding. After graduating from North Carolina State University with a Bachelors of Art in Multidisciplinary Studies with a concentration in Africana Studies, he worked professionally as a graphic and web designer for a number of institutions and organizations, including one of the largest financial services holding companies in the U.S. Prior to pursuing doctoral studies in the Communication, Rhetoric, and Digital Media program at North Carolina State University, he received his Master of Fine Art in Graphic Design from East Carolina University. His work has been published in *Across the Disciplines*, *Media-N: Journal of the New Media Caucus*, and *Communication and Global Engagement Across Cultural Boundaries*.

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CHAPTER ONE

Rebirth of the New African: Transforming Identities After African Independence and Liberation Movements

Identities are complex. They can be both personal and public. They can be both individual and national. They can be projected on us or projected from us. They can unite and divide us. They can be visually and symbolically expressed. They can be materially located or located in the imagination. They can be forced upon us and “incessantly negotiated through discourse” (Bruner, 2002, p. 1). They can be homogenous and defy stable, fixed positions. They offer potentialities for transformation and also have material consequences, resulting in a “*paradox of identity formation*” (Rabin, 2012, p. 394). “The desire to belong to, or create, an alternative community as a response to perceived oppression simultaneously faces the unintentional, unforeseen existential reality that any formation includes some and excludes others” (p. 394). The rebirth of former colonial nations is characterized by this recalcitrance and paradox. For instance, while Jawaharlal Nehru’s “Tryst with Destiny” speech signaled India’s independence from British colonial control at the stroke of midnight on 14 August 1947, India’s independence included a number of contradictions, such as internal turmoil and the challenge of uniting a nation formerly under colonial authority into a collective identity. Similarly, paradoxes of identity formation were defining features of visual strategies for shaping postcolonial nationhood that led up to and following African independence and liberation movements.

In 1960, seventeen countries gained independence from colonial authorities, which has been commonly referred to as the “Year of Africa,” and newly formed governments “re-brandied their countries in further repudiation of their imperial past” (Cannadine, 2008, p. 650). In *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa 1945–1994* (2001), scholars have indicated that cloth, posters, photography, architecture, music, theater, literature, and film were central aspects of anti-colonial and postcolonial strategies in countries ranging from Ghana to Tanzania for negotiating national identities through a range of material practices. Despite possibilities for postcolonial transformation, however, many leaders of the new nation-states were overthrown. Given that some countries “slipped into military one-party dictatorships, which leaned even more heavily on the cult of personality and control of the media” (Cull, Culbert, & Welch, 2003, p. 9), historians have largely considered state-sponsored visual strategies as political propaganda and attempts to create homogenous identities following African independence and liberation movements. This was true in Ghana where opposition from within Ghana and from international governments and publics increasingly labeled the first prime minister’s policies as dictatorial and aiding in a cult personality. What happens when we consider official visual strategies by newly independent nations in postcolonial Africa as more complex rhetorically than propaganda and cult personality? What critical insights, frameworks, and practices can emerge from considering postcolonial African identities as “[n]ot an essence but a positioning” (Hall, 1990)?

In this study, I argue that administrative portraits of Kwame Nkrumah, the first prime minister and president of Ghana, were central to the ongoing constitution of the “new

African” in Ghana and in the wider African Diaspora. While historians and rhetorical scholars have largely considered Nkrumah’s visual strategies as either propaganda or rhetoric, I use constitutive critical analysis to show that portraits of Nkrumah rhetorically shaped postcolonial nationhood following Ghana's postindependence through a simultaneously and paradoxically open and closed system of identity formation. Though constitutive rhetoric has emerged as a productive critical/theoretical framework for understanding how addressing audiences through identificatory appeals “is fundamental to collectivization and to the emergence of nations” (Charland, 2001), recent studies focused on the constitutive influence of visual artifacts have relied upon limited rhetorical concepts and have yet to offer conceptual methods for investigating visual culture. In the following sections, after setting the scene of Ghana’s impact on African independence movements and Nkrumah’s rise to power, I describe the gaps in historical and rhetorical scholarship for understanding the complexity of his visual strategies. Ultimately, I build upon previous scholarship in order to develop a new conceptual framework for analyzing portraits of Nkrumah as constitutive visual-material rhetoric, which has implications for studies on African independence and liberation movements, rhetorical theory and criticism, and design practices for contemporary nation branding.

Setting the Scene of Public Address and Ghana’s Impact on African Independence

Ghana, formerly known as the Gold Coast, is significant for understanding postcolonial national identity formation during “founding moment[s]” (Arendt, 1957) of African independence and liberation during the 1950s and 1960s. Ghana was the first Sub-Saharan African nation to gain independence from British colonial rule, and became “the

most important symbol of an ascendant Third World,” African nationalism, and Pan-Africanism (Meriwether, 2002, p. 165). Though other countries in Africa had gained independence, including Morocco, Tunisia, and Sudan, March 6, 1957, the birth of Ghana, has been commonly acknowledged as the “symbolic date of African independence” (Young, 2012, p. 3). “With the independence of Ghana,” as Enwezor explained, “a powerful psychological and ideological force put in place what would become the main political event of the 1960s. Africa’s decade of independence” (2001, p. 11). At the time of early African independence, the Ghanaian nation-state was deemed the ‘black star of Africa’, and it served as the blueprint for many African nations that gained independence in the 20th century (Fuller, 2014). Following Ghana, other newly-formed nation-states used official portrait photographs as a central visual strategy employed through broader postcolonial public address systems.

One important event of Ghana’s path to independence and Nkrumah’s rise to power as the head of the new nation-state was the creation of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) by J. B. Danquah on August 4, 1947, an anti-colonial political party focused on freeing the Gold Coast colony from British colonial authority. Nkrumah joined the UGCC in 1948, but he would soon form his own political party, the Convention People’s Party (CPP) on June 12, 1949. Two years later, the first general election in the Gold Coast was held in which Nkrumah’s CPP was elected to the Gold Coast’s first legislature, and Nkrumah became first Leader of Government Business and then Prime Minister in 1952. Throughout this period, a number of elections would be held in favor of the Gold Coast gaining independence from British colonial authority. At the midnight hour of Ghana’s independence

on March 6, 1957¹, Kwame Nkrumah delivered what is commonly referred to as the “Midnight Speech.” Prior to Nkrumah’s midnight independence speech, what was up until then known as the Gold Coast had yet to become Ghana. In his public address, Nkrumah declared that Ghanaians were “no more a colonial but a free and independent people” (Worger, Clark, & Alpers, 2010, p. 129). As the first prime minister of Ghana, Nkrumah had to lead the first nation in Africa to gain independence from British colonial rule towards decolonization. Consonant with the symbolic raising of the new flag of Ghana, the former Gold Coast, and the lowering of the old British Union Jack, a reminder of colonial rule, Nkrumah’s speech constituted a vision of Ghana’s transformation into a postcolonial nation. As Nkrumah insisted, in order to help “reshape the destiny of this country,” Ghanaians must “change [their] attitudes, [their] minds” and “create [their] own African personality and identity” (Worger, Clark, & Alpers, 2010, p. 128). Nkrumah delivered a number of speeches over the course of the celebrations, but, as scholars have noted, his independence speech was the defining moment of Ghana’s birth at midnight (Asemanyi & Alofah, 2015; Mensah, 2014; Johnson 2015). Johnson (2015) argued that “midnight speeches” represent an “original genre of postcolonial public address” where independence speeches signaled the transformation of formerly colonized nations into postcolonial nation-states at the stroke of midnight.

¹ The independence celebrations were attended by a host of dignitaries (see Kwame Nkrumah's Contribution to Pan-African Agency: An Afrocentric Analysis, p. 106)

Nkrumah's "Midnight Speech" played a significant role in marking Ghana as a new postcolonial nation-state on the world's stage. At the time of the independence speech, Ghana held a temporary "cynosure of the world's gaze as a pioneer state, as a progressive state and as a harbinger of a new world order in which the ex-colonial world would be fully represented and powerful" (Rathbone, p. 60). For instance, newspapers from around the world circulated headlines such as "Birth of a Nation Makes History, Africa" and "Ghana Seen as Pioneer Nation in African Drive for Freedom." Additionally, televised news and documentaries of Ghana's postindependence included titles such as "A New Nation: Gold Coast Becomes Ghana in Ceremony" and "Ghana New Nation." For Nkrumah (1961), the occasion inaugurated an epoch of Africa's independence from imperialist control. The longer instrumental effect is evident as other decolonized African nations followed Ghana's postindependence celebrations (Rathbone, p. 57), and Nkrumah's declaration made in his "Midnight Speech" — "[Ghana's] independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with total liberation of the African continent" (Worger, Clark, & Alpers, 2010, p. 128)— would be cited and used frequently in public culture (Johnson, 2015).

Though Nkrumah's "Midnight Speech" was a significant for announcing Ghana as a independent nation-state, the road to decolonization required ongoing efforts. "Ghana had a long way to go politically and democratically" after the independence celebrations commenced (Asante, 1996, p. 14). Nkrumah referenced the long game of nation building: "We know we are going to have difficult beginnings, but again, I'm relying upon your support, I'm relying upon your hard work" (cited in Worger, Clark, & Alpers, 2010, p. 128). While Nkrumah's independence speech marked a significant historical moment,

transformation towards postcolonial nationhood required a psychological detachment from “colonial mentality” (Laramie, 1962) in order to fulfill a larger goal: introduce “a new African in the world” (Worger, Clark, & Alpers, 2010). As Charland might have suggested, the postcolonial transformation of the people, publics, and human beings required an ongoing “rhetoric of socialization” (2001, p. 138). Ghana ultimately gained independence in 1957, but controversy erupted months prior to and during Ghana’s independence celebration. Political opponents and chiefs criticized the strategy of placing Nkrumah’s portrait on Ghana’s independence stamps. Despite this reception, Nkrumah’s image continued to become more and more present in Ghana from 1957—1966: it could be found on a wide array of public cultural artifacts including monuments, stamps, and currency.

Following his “Midnight Speech” at Ghana’s 1957 independence, Nkrumah employed “Operation Psychology,” a large-scale postcolonial visual strategy for ‘decolonizing minds’ and asserting political authority in the new postcolonial nation-state that he announced in the June 22, 1957 issue of the *Evening News*. As Janet Hess (2006) notes in *Art and Architecture in Postcolonial Africa*, “In attempting to construct a sense of nationalism that could displace existing political alliances, the administration of Kwame Nkrumah similarly...promot[ed] a specific vision of political authority” (Hess, 2006, p. 17). Just as the Ghana Dance Ensemble (GDE) was a “vital way to disseminate African Personality and Pan-Africanism, within Ghana and abroad” (Schauert, 2014, p. 9), portrait photographs of Nkrumah also circulated widely in Ghana (and across the globe) creating rhetorical visibility of the African personality articulated in Nkrumah’s “Midnight Speech” and “Operation Psychology.” The last move towards etching Nkrumah into public memory

was the creation of Ghanaian cedi currency in 1965, featuring Nkrumah's effigy on the coins and banknotes. However, the 1966 military coup that ousted Nkrumah resulted in strategies to remove his image and name from Ghanaian public life.

In recent years, Nkrumah's political and visual cultural legacy has been resurrected and continues to proliferate, especially following his death in 1972. The effects and influences of portraits and images that circulated during the Commonwealth of Ghana and the First Republic continue to be a source of debate among historians. For instance, Nkrumah's image appeared on the 2007 Ghanaian cedi alongside other members of the UGCC, and the ongoing international use of kente cloth as a marker of Pan-African identity has been credited to photographs of and performances by Nkrumah wearing Ghanaian kente. The continued local and international circulation of Nkrumah's photographs in public culture gives credence to the ongoing transformation of identities since Ghana gained her independence. This process raises questions for rhetorical scholars interested in the processes of social transformation and historians interested in African independence and liberation movements: How was the "new African" introduced in the first sub-Saharan country to gain independence from British colonial control? How did Africans, particularly Ghanaians come to be new Africans? How do portraits of Nkrumah that continue to appear in global public culture function rhetorically?

Purpose

The broader purpose of this study is to examine how national identities have been collectivized through the rhetorical influence of portrait photographs featuring Kwame Nkrumah that have circulated through global public culture, including the cover of *LIFE*

magazine in 1953, Ghanaian stamps and currency after the former Gold Coast colony gained independence in 1957 from British control, and a 2010 Ghanaian banknote. Using a model of a conceptually, contextually, and visually informed constitutive rhetorical criticism, I assert that official portraits of Ghana's first prime minister and president were central aspects of "Operation Psychology," the "visual aids in interpreting the soul and spirit of [Ghana's] independence" (*Evening News*, 1957, p. 2). Nkrumah's "Operation Psychology" was a multifaceted, rhetorical performance of 'addressivity' that included "a variety of symbols to 'brand the flock', forge national identity separate from the colonial past, signal the change to a republic, [and] publicize the establishment of a new government after a...civilian election" (Fuller, 2014, p. 2). Ultimately, a visual constitutive rhetorical analysis allows critics to recognize that official portrait photographs reproduced on stamps, currency, and other visual media function as a significant strategy for constituting postcolonial nationhood and asserting Nkrumah's political authority.

Recent scholarship on Nkrumah's visual strategies have used semiotics and rhetorical criticism to analyze an amalgam of artifacts, including stamps, currency, and other symbols. As Vandi described, Nkrumah used "practically every symbolic device known to the Ghanaians" (Vandi, 1979, p. 72) in an effort to promote cultural nationalism and legitimate his political authority (Ansah, 2014; Essel, 2014; Fuller, 2008, 2014, 2015; Hess, 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2011; Monfils, 1977; Johnson, 2015; Plageman, 2013; Rathbone, 2011; Schauert, 2015; Sheldon, 2011; Wilburn, 2012). What is surprising, however, is the lack of attention to the colonial and postcolonial functions of presidential portraiture before, during, and after independence. For instance, Barbara Monfils (1979) investigated Nkrumah's

campaign as a “multifaceted image” of the African Personality (Monfils, 1979), and Fuller (2014) performed a semiotic analysis of Nkrumah’s strategies featuring “the most iconic representation of any nation state” (p. 16), including the national flag, national anthem, coat of arms, and other symbols. Whereas Fuller considered the campaign as a strategy for “branding the flock” (Fuller, 2014), Johnson (2015) argued that Nkrumah’s strategy functioned as an “address system of the mass state.” This study seeks to extend these lines of inquiry by contributing a rhetorical history of official presidential portrait photographs of Kwame Nkrumah during Ghana’s path to and through African independence and liberation from British colonial control. Recent scholarship on African photography has provided insights on the relation between colonial and postcolonial photography, particularly implications of various genres of photography, including administrative and vernacular photography (Buckley, 2010; Haney, 2010; Kunstmann, 2014; Peffer & Cameron, 2013; Vokes, 2013) for social change. This study extends this work by undertaking a rhetorical inquiry of presidential portraits, drawing upon and contributing to recent developments in rhetorical theory and criticism focused on understanding the constitutive effects of visual modes of public address (Finnegan, 2002; Olson, 2009). Interestingly, despite the fact that rhetorical scholars’ have long been interested in social change and photography, there has been a relative absence of research on colonial and postcolonial photography that circulated during and after African independence and liberation movements. This project adds to the rhetorical historical record of public address and photography by focusing on three goals: (1) investigate the constitutive force of official portrait photographs of Nkrumah as visual modes of public address; (2) develop a new conceptual model of a visually informed constitutive

critical analysis; (3) illuminate the possibilities and paradoxes of early and contemporary nation branding efforts.

First, though studies of constitutive rhetoric have largely focused on the collectivization of national identities through written or spoken texts, publics are not constituted through rhetorical discourse by one single site, event, or text. As Zarefsky (2006) claimed, “single speeches rarely have discernible effects; they work together with many other causal forces and as part of the broad and social and cultural frame in which they are embedded.” For Michael Warner (2002), “[n]o single text can create a public. Nor can a single voice, a single genre, or even a single medium” (2002, p. 120). While formal public speeches continue to represent a core of public address scholarship, “other genres of rhetorical texts,” as Zarefsky stated, “also have been acknowledged as a means of addressing publics,” including texts such as “iconic photographs and popular film, television, and music” (2009, p. 69). The danger of treating a single mode of addressivity as having quantifiable effects is bad rhetorical criticism (Zarefsky, 2006). For critics interested in understanding the effects and influence of public address beyond modes of speech or written communication, analyzing visual images in public culture is one way to study the constitutive force of rhetoric in and through history (Finnegan & Jones, 2006). In the case of Ghana’s postindependence, Nkrumah’s “Midnight Speech” signaled the transformation to a postcolonial nation-state, but visual images also transformed national identities beyond the single event and mode of the independence speech.

While scholars have indicated that Nkrumah used multifaceted strategies to shape postcolonial nationhood, less attention has centered on the rhetorical force of how official

portraiture of the first prime minister and president constituted a public address system that was *the* central visual strategy for shaping nationhood after decolonization as opposed to Nkrumah's "Midnight Speech" during Ghana's independence celebrations. Monfils (1979) and Johnson (2014) have noted that public address was an important aspect of Nkrumah's 'symbolic nationalism'. In addition to "intrinsic" rhetorical strategies for public address (Reddings, 1957), Monfils (1977) noted that Nkrumah's extrinsic rhetorical strategies— "those factors exterior to the speech itself, although of salient significance to it" (Hillbruner, 1966, p. 5)— included visual rhetorical strategies to constitute the "new African." Monfils (1997) posited that "Operation Psychology" was an extrinsic rhetorical strategy of Nkrumah's "Midnight Speech," and served as a multifaceted campaign aimed at composing "a particular image of Nkrumah, and the establishment of Nkrumahism as an African philosophy," including "setting, suggestions and associations" (p. 314). While Monfils attributed Nkrumah's multifaceted strategies to "Operation Psychology," Johnson (2015) referred to Nkrumah's multifronted rhetorical strategies as an *address system*, including radio. Both scholars indicated that Nkrumah's multi-pronged strategies were extensions of his "Midnight Speech" given during the pinnacle of Ghana's independence celebration. Following Monfils and Johnson, I study portrait photography as a central rhetorical strategy of "Operation Psychology," Nkrumah's premiere *postcolonial address system* for transforming rhetorical identities. Rather than focusing on speech as the primary mode of influence in Nkrumah's address system, I investigate portraiture and show how it developed a set of visual commonplaces that had significant rhetorical power for constituting postcolonial nationhood. Drawing from Christa Olson's concept and use of the term, visual

commonplaces in portraits of Nkrumah function as “nodes of social value and common sense that provide places of return for convening arguments across changing circumstances” (2013, p. 4). As I will show, the portraits circulated across modes, resonated within contexts of debates on nationalism, and were elastic over time (Olson, 2013).

Second, I develop a model for doing a constitutive critical analysis of visual culture in order to study the rhetorical influence of portrait photographs of Nkrumah. Rhetorical scholars have used constitutive rhetorical theory as a critical framework for investigating how identities are rhetorically formed, particularly through public address. In this study, I perform a conceptually, contextually, and visually oriented constitutive critical analysis of portrait photographs. Rhetorical scholars have used constitutive critical analysis to investigate visual and digital culture (Duffy, Page, & Young, 2012; Grueber, 2014; Olson, 2013; Stein, 2002; Yartey, 2015). A conceptually and contextually oriented approach to constitutive rhetoric enables critics to refrain from producing mechanistic criticism based upon limited conceptions of rhetoric. Maurice Charland, Kenneth Burke, and James Boyd White have been widely cited in contemporary rhetorical scholarship focused on constitutive rhetoric; however, there has been a need to develop a storehouse of concepts of constitutive rhetoric in order to investigate the multiple ways visual artifacts contribute to collectivizing publics. In this study, I propose a conceptually, contextually, and visually informed model of constitutive rhetorical criticism synthesized from three frameworks that produce a thick description of rhetoric’s influence: Jasinski’s conceptually oriented rhetorical criticism, which offers a framework for developing a set of terms and key concepts that dynamically emerge through critical analysis; Jasinski and Mercieca's (2010) approach for analyzing

exterior rhetoric, which facilitates a contextual study of a text as it circulates and articulates across multiple audiences and situations; and Carole Blair's (1999) theory of material rhetoric, which provides a framework for investigating the symbolicity and consequence of texts. In so doing, I use the model to study how rhetorical identities are shaped and contested through visual culture while also considering tensions between constitutive rhetoric and propaganda.

Studying the role of photographs in Nkrumah's "Operation Psychology" is particularly significant given the tensions that erupted in response to his strategies of minting his likeness on nationalist symbols following decolonization (Fuller, 2014; Hess, 2006). Political opponents used the Ghanaian press to express their grievances about Nkrumah's portrait on national stamps instead of Queen Elizabeth II, and the continued presence of his portraits on stamps, currency, and other media following independence was a factor in the 1966 military coup that ousted Nkrumah. Given audience reception and the fact that Nkrumah and other African leaders enforced censorship laws to constrain the circulation of alternative representations of the state, a constitutive rhetorical study of visual culture following African independence must account for both the constitutive and propagandistic properties of visual artifacts. In the case of Ghana, historians have generally argued that the consequences and implications of Nkrumah's visual strategies resulted in 'cult personality' and political propaganda. For instance, citing Ghanaian scholar Natalie Yowles, Hess noted that "the style of representation favored in commissions of the Nkrumah government was an idealized form of portraiture that was both illustrative and propagandistic" (2006, p. 28). Fuller (2014) investigated how Nkrumah used postage stamps, national currency, museums,

and monuments as “official tools for spreading political propaganda” (p. 189). As Fuller continued, “In the Third World, the iconography of national currencies after independence or a change of regime was preoccupied with the cult of living personalities” (p. 192). Though recent studies that characterize Nkrumah’s postindependence strategies as propaganda have provided an alternative critique different from public address scholarship, historians have labeled state representations of the nation as propaganda without clarifying how propaganda functions or how it is different from rhetoric. Critics must distinguish the relationship between rhetoric and propaganda in order to produce insights on effective practice for contemporary nation branding and to more clearly assess the legacy of early nation branding. Constitutive rhetoric offers critics a robust framework for understanding identity as an ongoing process of collectivization.

To summarize, then, this study addresses four key questions: (1) How does critical examination of official portraits photographs of Nkrumah contribute to methods for analyzing constitutive rhetorics of visual culture? (2) How does critical examination of official portrait photographs of Nkrumah contribute to rhetorical theories of constitutive rhetoric? (3) To what extent does a rhetorical study of the constitutive legacy of official portrait photographs of Nkrumah contribute to explaining how and why Ghanaian visual culture continues to circulate across global publics in contemporary times? (4) To what extent does a rhetorical historical study of visual culture illuminate the paradoxes and consequences of visibility and nation branding? In the following section, I provide a brief critical review of recent studies related to Nkrumah’s visual strategies, focusing on the ways scholars have distinguished these strategies as rhetoric and propaganda.

Official Portraits Photographs of Kwame Nkrumah: An Overview

As historians and rhetorical scholars have illustrated, artifacts of visual and material culture were central to the ongoing process of national identity formation including radio, currency, stamps, film, photography, textiles, dance, music, speech, dress, museums, rituals, sculpture, painting, and monuments (Ansah, 2014; Essel, 2014; Fuller, 2008, 2014, 2015; Hess, 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2011; Monfils, 1977; Johnson, 2015; Plageman, 2013; Rathbone, 2011; Schauert, 2015; Sheldon, 2011; Wilburn, 2012). However, researchers have offered different perspectives on how postcolonial subjectivity was brought into being through these visual strategies and to what effect, leading to more questions than answers. Hess (2001) encouraged critics to account for the complex process of becoming in postcolonial Africa after independence:

There is no doubt, however, that the political and cultural order of the Nkrumah administration was one “of discipline and visual arrangement, of...the organization of everything and everything organized to represent...some larger meaning” (Mitchell 1988:12)...To what end this “reality-effect” was assembled within the formerly colonized world— the objectives and relative benefits, that is, of representation to political subjects in Africa—is a complex issue... it might be useful to speculate on what kind of subject has been constructed, and for what purposes, and what relationship exists between structures of knowledge—resisted, syncretized, created anew—and representations in postcolonial Africa. (p. 74—75).

The question of what kind of subjectivities emerged through multifaceted performances of the nation is key for investigating the dynamics of communication strategies by newly

formed nation-states in postcolonial Africa. In the case of Nkrumah's broader strategies for addressing publics, was it propaganda or constitutive rhetoric? Was it purposed for asserting Nkrumah's political dominance or aimed at decolonization of the minds and bodies of the people by way of naming an alternative way of being in the world? Did it fail or succeed because or in spite of Nkrumah's control of the state information apparatus? What kinds of identities were formed and transformed through this process? Scholars have partially addressed these questions by noting the centrality of portrait photographs in Nkrumah's broader strategies for "constructing and signaling politico nationalism and identity" (Essel, 2014, p. 45).

Portraits of Nkrumah projected a de-colonialized vision of a united Africa, replacing imperialist portraits of British colonial authority on state representations of the former Gold Coast and making Ghana's independence visible. In his semiotic analysis of Nkrumah-era philatelic images from 1957 to 1966, Kenneth Wilburn (2012) described how photographs of Nkrumah accompanied "Ghana's national flag, national seal, the black star, Kente cloth, Pan-Africanism, annual festivals of independence, world leadership, anti-colonialism, economic development, communal African life, and Abraham Lincoln" (p. 27). In *Building the Ghanaian Nation-State: Kwame Nkrumah's Symbolic Nationalism* (2014), Fuller examined "the most iconic representation of any nation state," (p. 16) and illustrated how portraits of Nkrumah appeared on a number of national symbols, such as currency and stamps. In his study of postage stamps developed during the Nkrumah era, Fuller noted that the first stamp "enshrine[ed] Nkrumah as the symbolic head of an emergent Africa embodied by a unique African Personality" (p. 53). Though early productions of stamps in the Gold Coast featured

colonial authority, projecting Nkrumah's effigy on the first stamps of the new nation-state signaled new leadership. At the same time, the stamps promoted a different vision of Ghanaian nationalism based on the ideology of the African personality, "an African socialist worldview that underscored the importance of reviving and celebrating African history, knowledge systems, languages, modes of dress, and other cultural attributes and traditions" (p. 9). The concept of the African personality was central for persuading publics that Ghana was free from colonial authority.

A few scholars have performed close analysis of official portraits featuring Nkrumah. In "Senses of Authenticity: Chieftaincy and the Politics of Heritage in Ghana," Katharina Schramm (2004) compared the cultural politics of heritage in an early photograph of Nkrumah before he became prime minister and president and a later portrait that depicted Nkrumah in a "*kente-toga*" after he became head of the government (p. 159). Though *kente* cloth has been traditionally used for royalty, specifically symbols of chieftancy in the Asante region of Ghana, Nkrumah adopted the cloth as a "powerful identity-marker," which, as Schramm argued, "was the centerpiece of the decolonisation project, since it demarcated the breakaway from colonial systems of value and education" (2005, p. 158—159). While Schramm's analysis of portraits of Nkrumah focused on cultural politics of chieftancy and authenticity of African heritage, Janet Hess's (2012) critical interpretation of an official presidential portrait centered on the ways "masculinity, modernity, and nationalism have come together in complex significations of authority and African identity" (Hess, p. 29). The photograph featured Nkrumah wearing a polka-dot, collarless shirt under a *kente* draped over his body. As Schramm noted, the appropriation of *kente* references a 'traditional' style

related to African royalty and leadership; however, Hess posited that the photograph projected “a range of Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian cultural practices, traditional attire, and clothing associated with non-African political regimes” (p. 30). Hess’s analysis confirmed Fuller’s argument that Nkrumah’s “ability to navigate between and merge with Western modes of nation-building and nationalism and the customs of traditional Africa represents a form of political syncretism” (2014, p. 9). The official portrait differed from representations of modernity and Westernization illustrated in early photographs of Nkrumah, especially prior to his post as the leader of the new Ghanaian nation-state. Similar to Schramm’s assessment that Nkrumah’s presidential portrait projected a decolonized subject, Hess suggested that the performative dimensions of the photograph reconstructed the body as resistance to colonial constructions of the African body.

Despite these more nuanced close readings, most historians have consistently argued that Nkrumah’s strategies resulted in political propaganda or cult of personality (Fuller, 2008, 2014, 2015; Essel, 2014; Wilburn, 2012; Yowles, 1981). For instance, Fuller (2008) argued that the first coins of the newly formed Ghanaian nation-state featuring Nkrumah’s effigy was a form of “mass propaganda” through the dissemination of national currency (p. 525). In the foreword to *Building the Ghanaian Nation-State* (2014), Assensoh noted that Nkrumah’s use of currency, stamps, museum exhibit, monument, and other symbols of the state such as the national flag were “unique tools of spreading nationalist propaganda through the political iconography” (Fuller, p. xvi.). Following Assensoh, Fuller used terms such as “government propaganda,” “tools of state propaganda” or “official tools for spreading political propaganda” (Fuller, 2014). Wilburn (2012) did not explicitly refer to propaganda in his

analysis of Ghanaian stamps during the Nkrumah era, but he referenced Posnansky's (2004) "Propaganda for the Millions: Images from Africa" and Stoetzer's *Postage Stamps as Propaganda* (1953). In "Nkrumahism in Sculptural Archetypes of Nkrumah," Essel (2014) stated that the words "Civitas Ghanaensis Conditor [Founder of the State of Ghana] appeared on coinage that intensif[ied] the silent proclamatory propaganda of Ghana's symbolic nationalism and true independence from the shackles of colonialism" (p. 47)

Yowles explained Nkrumah's strategies this way:

Countless depictions of "Osagyefo"—Father of the Nation, Leader and Teacher—surrounded by workers and farmers with spades and hoes and smiling Young Pioneers, all looking happily forward to a brighter future, appeared on canvas and the walls of public building...The happy image of the nation, confidently striding into the wonderful tomorrow, appealed to the unsophisticated masses, and with its uncompromising message and exaggerated optimism, served as effective political propaganda. (p. 44—45)

For the sake of comparison, Essel's use of the term contrasted with Yowles (1981) conceptualization of propaganda. Essel alluded to an emancipatory project whereas Yowles referred to a system used to manipulate "unsophisticated" audiences. In "Spectacular Nation," Hess (2006b) included a section with the heading label "Portraiture and Propaganda" in an analysis of Nkrumah portraits that circulated through official distribution systems such as propaganda vans and the press. Though Hess did not use explicit terms in the same manner as Fuller, she cited two scholars to argue that "Idealized and propagandistic portraits were also published in the popular press" (p. 20). Citing Yowles (1981), Hess

included the aforementioned block quote that referred to photographs of Nkrumah with the masses of Ghanaian citizens as political (Hess, p. 20, 2006b). Similarly, citing Ansah in Arhin's (1990) *A View of Kwame Nkrumah*, Hess included the following quote about the Ghanaian nationalist press prior to independence: "the most potent instrument used in the propagation of nationalist ideas and racial consciousness (Hess, 2006b, p. 20). Thus, current historical studies of Nkrumah have largely focused on propagandistic effects.

Whereas historians have described the nature and scope of Nkrumah's postindependence communication strategies as propaganda, rhetorical scholars have aligned Nkrumah's strategies with public address. In "A Multifaceted Image," Monfils (1977) argued that the "construction of a particular image of Nkrumah, and the establishment of Nkrumahism as an African philosophy" was mediated through dress, traditional settings, the press, stamps, and currency. Monfils asserted that efforts to project Nkrumah's image as the personification of Ghana was part of "Operation Psychology," a visual campaign developed through Ghana's state information apparatus. Using Hillbruner's (1966) conception of extrinsic rhetorical strategies as "those factors exterior to the speech itself, although of salient significance to it" (p. 5), Monfils implicitly considered "Operation Psychology" as the material embodiment of Nkrumah's speech at independence:

Nkrumah's extrinsic rhetorical strategies in the period immediately following independence were thus directed toward the fulfillment of Operation Psychology. Politically, Ghana was independent, but the resulting symbols of nationhood had not been adequately formulated. (p. 313)

Though Monfils did not directly link “Operation Psychology” to Nkrumah’s “Midnight Speech,” Johnson (2015) conceived of the independence speech as a broader system of public address. As Johnson noted, Nkrumah’s “Midnight Speech” “marked the public address system of Ghana’s mass state” (p. 30) which was further realized through radio. For both Monfils and Johnson, Nkrumah’s independence speech was the catalyst for shaping the persona and political authority of Nkrumah in public culture following Ghana’s independence. Johnson, however, considered the independence speech as the ultimate constitutive event where Ghana came into being. It is within this rhetorical situation that Johnson claimed Nkrumah’s “address system” attended to a number of constitutive tensions following independence. Johnson (2015) studied Nkrumah’s pre-independence efforts at political propaganda as an “address system.” Though Nkrumah employed “propaganda secretaries” in his campaign, Johnson did not unpack how an address system is related to a propaganda system. The difference between the two is important to identify considering that rhetoric and propaganda have at times been used interchangeably to denote trickery or manipulation (Bennett and O’Rourke, 2006).

Historians and rhetorical critics have generally use two strategies—*sylogism* and *rhetorical induction*—to rhetorically construct historical arguments about the effects and influence of Nkrumah’s visual strategies as propaganda and rhetoric. First, propaganda and rhetoric have been defined through syllogismus, namely the process of omitting definitions in the body of the text while using footnotes, citations, and quotations as referents to the definition. This rhetorical construction has led the reader to draw conclusions from common understandings of the term rather than an explication to contextualize the case study under

investigation. For instance, Fuller, Hess, and Wilburn used “propaganda” to describe the nature and scope of Nkrumah’s strategies, however, neither study offered an investigation of the concept to further critically examine its features. However, references to words that indicated the state or government are in close proximity to the word “propaganda” or “propagandistic.” Monfils named extrinsic rhetoric as the conceptual basis of her study of “Operation Psychology,” yet there has been a need to identify the critical and theoretical foundation of addressivity in order to illuminate how the campaign functioned as a form of visual address. The use of the term propaganda by historians has suggested a one-way transmission of information and persuasive intent to fulfil an immediate goal through control. Addressivity, however, is a dialogical orientation of directing an utterance to someone. As Bakhtin (1986) explained:

An essential (constitutive) marker of the utterance is its quality of being directed to someone, its addressivity...The fact is that when the listener perceives and understands the meaning (the language meaning) of speech, he simultaneously takes an active, responsive attitude toward it. He either agrees or disagrees with it (completely or partially), augments it applies it, prepares for its execution, and so on...From the very beginning, the speaker expects a response from them, an active responsive understanding. The entire utterance is constructed, as it were, in anticipation of encountering this response. (p. 95—96)

While Johnson (2015) articulated how Nkrumah’s independence speech and voice was reworked as addressivity through various mediated forms, including radio, one of the most robust terms in his investigation—constitutive—is left unpacked. Investigating Nkrumah’s

portraits as visual address can lead to an understanding of the ways that postcolonial national identities have been constituted through a dialogical orientation rather than merely propaganda.

Second, scholars have used rhetorical induction to align Nkrumah's system of communication with a particular technological medium, namely using archival evidence to draw conclusions about the closed and open functions of Nkrumah's system of communication. Fuller described Nkrumah's propaganda system as a technological feature of artifacts that were easy to mass propagate or be seen by masses of people, including stamps, currency, monuments, and the national flag and coat of arms. For instance, Fuller (2014) claimed that "public symbols of [Ghanaian] nationhood were to be designed for mass consumption both at home and abroad," thus the artifacts provided an effective source of influence on the masses (p. 4). On the other hand, Monfils and Johnson aligned Nkrumah's strategies with his independence speech to argue that his system functioned as a form of address. Monfils used archival evidence in order to show that rituals, dress, speech, stamps, and other practices were integral to Nkrumah's "Operation Psychology." Though Johnson centered on radio broadcasting as a mass mediated technology for spreading Nkrumah's speech, he referred to the system as a form of "mass address" rather than merely a means for propagation. In addition to aligning Nkrumah's system with a particular technology or mode of communication, scholars have used archival evidence to attribute propaganda or rhetoric to the sovereign state rather than a multi-directional production of images from the top and bottom. For instance, evidence gathered from archives in Fuller's studies did not include images that have been altered or re-circulated by publics and counterpublics, such as visual

art by non-state designers and artists. Hess mentioned that Nkrumah's visual strategies were contested by his political opponents, but less attention focuses on the lasting influence or compositional qualities of counter-practices.

Whereas both historians and rhetorical scholars have studied rhetoric and propaganda separately, I suggest that Nkrumah's visual strategies oscillated or simultaneously existed as constitutive and propagandistic. Hence, a preliminary answer to the question of influence and effect of Nkrumah's portraits and broader visual strategies is that the ongoing constitution of the "new African" took shape through a paradoxical open and closed system that *addressed* and *invited* people to witness and adopt postcolonial subjectivities and also *propagated* and *forced* identities upon individuals by controlling the media and repressing contestation of the state, particularly through Prevention Detention Act. For instance, consider the role of the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (GFIC) after independence. Ansah (2014) suggested that Nkrumah saw film as a necessary component for bringing "a new African in the world" similar to the ways "Hollywood had effectively molded...minds to become Americans even if [people] had never been there" (p. 9). Here Ansah indicated a constitutive function of Nkrumah's strategies: the process of being visually and materially addressed through film in order to accept, become, and act out an alternative (in this case, post-colonial) identity. On the other hand, Nkrumah's control of the production and distribution of state media has led critics to consider that the GFIC functioned as a silencing mechanism, a closed system of communication that prohibited competing images. Critics might also consider the GFIC as counterpropaganda to the Gold Coast Film Unit controlled and owned by British colonial authority[∂]. Ansah argued that, prior to independence and the creation of the GFIC by

Nkrumah's administration, "colonial masters had a vested interest in ensuring that the Africans of the Gold Coast saw their role as subjects of the British Crown...[and] one of the tools they successfully employed was cinema" (p. 5). As this brief example indicates, Nkrumah's strategies for addressing publics oscillated back and forth between constitutive rhetoric and propaganda.

Scholars of African and Black studies have offered different perspectives for understanding the contradictions of Nkrumah's nationalist policies and strategies, and provide a basis for reconsidering the influence of his visual strategies from the perspective of identification and constitutive rhetoric. Most notably, Ali Mazrui argued that there were two poles of Nkrumah's ideology: "positive Nkrumahism" and "negative Nkrumahism" (Biney, 2008) The former "bequeathed by Nkrumah provides inspiration and motivation for a better future for Africa and African people" and the former gave way to "a single party state from 1964 onwards and an authoritarian system of government, which led to an increasing concentration of power in Nkrumah's hands as well as undemocratic government" (p. 131). Both poles are "integral[s] aspect of Nkrumah's heritage" (p. 131). Vandi's (1979) critique of Nkrumah's rhetorical symbolism has also been thought-provoking. In his study on "rhetoric of symbolism as a revolutionary base," Vandi (1979) alluded to aspects of Nkrumah's rhetorical symbolism as "political instrument of control," and argued that transformation must take place through identification. Citing Burke, Vandi asserted that future desires for a better social and economic future depend upon the individual realizing or being encouraged to realize herself or himself in agreement with a larger collective unity. "Basic to this proposition is the need to establish identities" (p. 74). From this point, we might say that

Nkrumah's visual strategies had to invite publics to adopt or consider a collective identity that was left open to the individuals who made up the masses to complete rather than being coerced or forced to accept an alternative identity. "Thus, obviously, truths of the masses can only be meaningfully expressed by people *from* the masses" (p. 74). Identification relies upon an open system of rhetorical becoming in order to transform identities through participation, dialogue, and invitation rather than forcing identities through control, repression, and denying freedom to accept or reject invitations of alternative ways of being.

In light of Mazrui's and Vandi's perspective on Nkrumah's ideologies and visual strategies, I argue that a constitutive rhetorical criticism of portraits of Nkrumah accounts for the rhetorical influence of visual images beyond an instrumentalist paradigm of propaganda and provides insights as to the tensions between inviting and coercing publics to adopt an alternative postcolonial identity following African independence and liberation movements. This perspective aligns with Johnson's (2015) view that Nkrumah's "Midnight Speech," mass media strategies, and visual tactics resolved "constitutive tensions" or paradoxes related to building the Ghanaian nation-state into a collective body after independence. Though researchers have long invested in developing conceptual approaches for analyzing propaganda that can be traced back to studies as early as the *Institute for Propaganda Analysis*, 1937, I focus my efforts on offering and performing a visually oriented constitutive rhetorical criticism in order to assess the ongoing rhetorical work that the portraits of Nkrumah continue to do in global public culture since Ghana's road to independence.

Critical and Theoretical Foundations: Constitutive Rhetoric

In early contemporary rhetorical scholarship, key studies of rhetorical criticism have focused on historically situated practices from an instrumentalist perspective, particularly the intentional effects of the speaker (Wichelns, 1925; Wraga, 1945; Bitzer, 1968). In his canonical essay “The Literary Criticism of Oratory,” Herbert Wichelns (1925) wrote that rhetorical criticism is “not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty. It is concerned with effect.” As Black noted, “It is on the discourse as an instrument serving the objectives of the rhetoric” (Black, 1965, p. 77). Despite insights drawn from the neo-Aristotelian approach, critics have challenged rhetorical scholarship centered on intended influence. As Black demonstrated in his analysis of John Jay Chapman’s “Coatesville Address,” there is value in understanding the untapped potential of rhetoric as “a future of influence in shaping our perception” (p. 88). Though Neo-Aristotelianism emerged as a critical framework for investigating the effects of rhetoric, whereby oratory was the primary mode of communication under investigation to understand the force of rhetoric in public culture, the constitutional perspective has provided an understanding of how “rhetorical practice not only helps to produce judgments about specific issues, it also helps to produce or constitute a social world” (Jasinski, 2001, p. 191). In other words, social worlds, and thus identities are continually constructed and transformed as an effect or consequence of planned and unplanned rhetorical practices. They are created and recreated. In the case of Nkrumah's portraits, the constitutional perspective in rhetorical studies provides an understanding of rhetorical influence as a complex and contested process of transforming and collectivizing identities.

Studies that have focused on examining how identities are rhetorically constituted during significant moments of social and political transformation have been quite prevalent in rhetorical scholarship (Charland, 1987; Greene, 1993; Leff & Utley, 2004; Lin & Lee, 2013; Olson, 2013; Thieme, 2010; Zagacki, 2007). A number of studies have demonstrated the relevance of constitutive rhetoric for understanding the transformation of racial, ethnic, diasporic, gendered, and postcolonial identities (Bacon, 2007; Condit & Lucaites, 1993; Drzewiecka, 2002; Gordon, 2003; Jasinski, 2007; Owen & Ehrenhaus, 2010; Tate, 2005; Terrill, 2000). For instance, rhetorical scholarship using the constitutional perspective include Greene's (1993) examination of the ways the 1988 Palestinian Declaration of Independence functioned to create a national identity and Terrill's (2000) analysis of the constitutive qualities of Malcolm X's rhetorical strategies. Increasingly, scholars have used constitutive rhetoric as a critical and theoretical foundation for analyzing the rhetorical influence of visual culture (Duffy, Page, & Young, 2012; Grueber, 2014; Olson, 2013; Stein, 2002; Yartey, 2015).

As a genre of discourse, constitutive rhetoric "simultaneously presumes and asserts a fundamental collective identity for its audience, offers a narrative that demonstrates that identity, and issues a call to act to affirm that identity" (Charland, 2001). Following a Burkean perspective of identification, "identity itself can be seen as rhetorically produced rather than a given that is prior to persuasion and upon which persuasion depends" (Charland, 2001). Identification does not simply exist prior to one being persuaded to act, and identities are not static, stable positions. For instance, in *Black Identity: Rhetoric, Ideology, and Nineteenth-Century Black Nationalism* (2003), Gordon examined how black

abolitionists created practices of empowerment to constitute a rhetoric of Black nationalism through alienation. Most notably, in “Constitutive rhetoric: The case of the *Peuple Québécois*,” Charland (1987) examined the formation of Quebec nationalism by focusing on the ways a “White Paper” constituted a vision of the people as “*Québécois*.” The process of identity formation entails the interpolation of audiences through history and discourse (Charland, 1987; Hall, 1990) and serves as a key concept in rhetorical studies for understanding how publics, national and otherwise, come into being.

As a theory of the rhetorical process of identity formation, constitutive rhetoric accounts for the ways audiences are constituted through identification and consubstantiality (Burke, 1969). While antecedents of constitutive rhetoric can be traced to earlier rhetorical theory and criticism (Burke, 1969; Black, 1970; McGee, 1975), Maurice Charland has made significant contributions to contemporary understandings of constitutive rhetoric. Relying on the work of Kenneth Burke and Louis Althusser, Charland (1987) developed a theory of constitutive rhetoric that accounts for the positioning of subjects “towards political, social, and economic action in the material world and it is in this positioning that its ideological character becomes significant” (1987, p. 141). Citing Stuart Hall, Charland acknowledged that subject positions are never fixed; “contradictory subject positions can simultaneously exist within a culture” (Charland, p. 142). In other words, “while classical narratives have an ending, constitutive rhetorics leave the task of narrative closure to their constituted subjects” (p. 143). From this view, each attempt to construct a national identity (or identities) is not inherently successful given the contradictions and openness of constitutive rhetoric.

Charland's constitutive rhetoric posited rhetorical transformation as a facilitation of three ideological effects: "(1) the process of constituting a collective subject through narratives that foster an identification superseding divisive individual or class interests; (2) the positing of a transhistorical subject; and (3) the illusion of freedom and agency of the narrative's protagonist" (Stein, 2002, p. 174). Burke's formulation of identification "permits an understanding within rhetorical theory of ideological discourse, of the discourse that presents itself as always only pointing to the given, the natural, the already agreed upon" (1987, p. 133). For Charland, "ideology forms the ground for any rhetorical situation" (p. 148). Charland showed that during the Quebec independence movement, "supporters of Quebec's political sovereignty addressed and so attempted to call into being a [collectivized] people québécois that would legitimate the constitution of a sovereign Quebec state" (Charland, p. 134). It is important to note that this interpolation and identification functioned to "generate the conditions of possibility that can structure the identity of those to whom it is addressed" while simultaneously narrating a constitutive vision or image of people québécois (Jasinski, 2001, p. 107).

As a mode of critical analysis, scholars have used two trajectories for studying constitutive rhetoric: interior analysis— internal features of the actual texts—and exterior analysis—external factors beyond the internal features of the text (Jasinski and Mercieca, 2010). Interior analysis involves studying the narrative form of the internal dynamics of texts that exhibit constitutive potential for inviting audiences to consider and ultimately adopt an alternative identity. In his landmark essay, Charland (1987) attempted to outline the "ideological effects of constitutive rhetoric that...are not merely formal effects inscribed

within the bracketed experience of interpreting a text” (p. 141). Drawing from Althusser and McGee, Charland’s sense of ideology is a material practice enacted in the world beyond ideas. For Charland, the moment of interpellation does not occur at the moment of the “rhetorical narratio” (p. 138); it happens through an ongoing, multiple hailing in which the interpellated subject already exists.

Recent studies have illustrated how critics use Charland’s constitutive rhetoric to study dialogic processes of identity formation through visual artifacts, focusing on visual culture as a genre, theoretical application, and critical inquiry of constitutive rhetoric. For instance, Stein’s (2002) critical analysis of the “1984” Macintosh commercial has illustrated how a theory of constitutive rhetoric can be applied to visual culture, and how critics can analyze the compositional and ideological aspects of an artifact’s textual interior. Yartey demonstrated how critics might use visual rhetorical analysis to understand the constitutive force of websites. Visual practices that are constitutive create conditions for leaving “the task of narrative closure to their constituted subjects” (Charland, p. 143). Rhetorical critics can assess the construction or reconstruction new identities by accounting for the ways audiences have accepted or rejected and agreed or disagreed with narratives of future-oriented identities. Moreover, the constitutive force of visual images can be critiqued by accounting for the ways audiences have acted or refused to act upon these narratives over time and across space. While Charland’s (1987) theory of constitutive rhetoric continues to be a fixture in scholarship on constitutive rhetoric, scholars have extended the constitutional perspective beyond Charland to encompass a range of discursive practices, perspectives on rhetorical theory, and modes of inquiry. Though I find studies relying upon constitutive

frameworks by Charland and others quite useful, critics studying the constitutive force of visual culture can produce rhetorical criticism that offers unique insights on rhetorical practice by adapting key concepts of constitutive rhetoric that are applicable for a particular study. Moreover, though there are a plethora of frameworks for studying the internal and external logics of a visual image's constitutive force, fewer studies are available that demonstrate the possibilities of undertaking a visually oriented constitutive rhetorical criticism. In next section, I build upon three frameworks for performing such a study: Jasinski's (2001) conceptually-informed criticism, Jasinski and Mercieca's (2010) model for doing an exterior analysis of constitutive rhetoric, and Blair's (1999) theory of material rhetoric.

Method: Visually Oriented Constitutive Criticism from the Archive

While Charland's theory of constitutive rhetoric has accounted for the ways nationalism relies upon ideological effects and rhetorical processes of identity-making, scholars have also offered alternative conceptual frameworks and theories of rhetoric. For instance, though Charland acknowledged the consequences of constitutive rhetoric, Kenneth Zagacki (2007) pointed out that Charland's theory did not account for multiple contradictions that arise from shaping national identity (2007, p. 276). To get at this more directly, Zagacki proposed "constitutive paradox" as a concept to describe both the contradictions that are a part of identificatory rhetoric and the unintended consequences that may, in some cases, lead to "failed constitutive rhetoric" (p. 272). In his analysis of President Bush's Iraq war public addresses, Zagacki argued that "in the process of trying to create identification between Americans and Iraqis...Bush's discourse contributed to the emergence of conditions that

were in many ways diametrically opposed to the democratic transformation he was promoting” (p. 273). Following Charland, critical rhetorical scholarship by Zagacki and others have illustrated ongoing discourse about the process of identity formation as constitutive.

In “Analyzing Constitutive Rhetorics: The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions and the “Principles of ’98,”” Jasinski and Mercieca argued that Charland’s analysis “concentrates on narrative form, making no effort to trace the White Paper’s circulation or to disclose the way Quebec citizens used it to shape their ‘practices’ or their understanding of social reality” (p. 316). While analyses of “rhetorical interiors,” namely, constitutive invitations that occur at the moment of interpellation, have been well documented in contemporary rhetorical scholarship, Jasinski and Mercieca advocated a broader conception of constitutive invitations as a “rhetorical exterior” that occurs through dialogic, participatory production of identity construction beyond a single rhetorical performance. What follows are three approaches for extending the critical and theoretical foundations of constitutive rhetorical criticism.

Conceptually Oriented Criticism of Constitution: A Thick Rhetorical Lexicon

Conceptually oriented rhetorical criticism fosters a “constant interaction of careful reading and conceptual reflection” (p. 139) between “old” and “new” concepts of constitutive discourse and rhetorical theory. As a form of critical analysis, it offers a “back-and-forth movement between concept and object” that is useful for understanding the rhetorical influence of constituting publics visually and materially. As Jasinski (2001) suggested, “the critic's understanding of the object grows or develops as conceptual thickening helps to illuminate its diverse qualities” (p. 139). Other scholars have used a conceptually oriented

approach to rhetorical criticism, demonstrating its unique offerings for productive insights on rhetorical praxis. For instance, Greene (2009) suggested that a “conceptually oriented materialist theory” was needed to “move beyond taken-for-granted terms of the rhetorical tradition and commit itself to the invention of new concepts that perform untimely interventions into the marrow of the rhetorical tradition” in the ‘material’ turn (p. 44). From this direction, a conceptually oriented rhetorical criticism does not treat “the rhetorical subject...as an effect of a constitutive process of a generalized rhetoricality and more from within a specific apparatus of production” (p. 45). Greene went on to state the “limits of rhetorical subjectivity” (p. 45). It also offers less defensiveness about the scope, nature, and function of constitutive rhetoric. It promotes a “thick” rhetorical lexicon (Gaonkar, 1993) that can be used for a generative approach to rhetorical criticism (Foss, 1989).

In chapter two, I describe key concepts of constitutive rhetorical theory and practice. Burke’s identification has been a cornerstone of the constitutional perspective, and is a direct line for critics using Charland’s constitutive rhetoric. However, over the years, critics have bifurcated identification/persuasion, constitutive/instrumental, public address/multimodal address, etc. In order to “thicken” an understanding of the influence of Nkrumah’s photographs, I do the work of developing a “thick” lexicon of concepts to guide my study. Therefore, in chapter two, I return to “old” concepts and “new” perspectives that have emerged in rhetorical scholarship that require another close look at what has been missed and dismissed through efforts at policing rhetoric’s borders. By doing so, critics can thicken the constitutive scene by moving between rhetorical concepts and objects under investigation and map *topoi* of constitutive rhetorical theory and practice, fostering less defensiveness

about its nature, function, and scope. Constitutive critical analyses of interior and exterior rhetoric are central to this task.

Constitutive Critical Analysis of Interior Rhetoric: Symbolicity and Materiality

The rhetoric of interior has been a mainstay of constitutive criticism. Close reading of the narratives of texts reveals “the various discursive forms which inhabit or reside in the text” (Jasinski & Mercieca, 2010, p. 315). Critics examining the visual logics, commonplaces, and historical references (Finnegan, 2010) can reveal the potential capacity of texts to “[shape] individual and communal identities” (Jasinski & Mercieca, p. 317). From this view, internal logics of visual images rely upon, challenge, or coincide with other texts. In other words, the narratives that constitutive publics through discourse are (inter)textual. As Rose (2016) explained, the wide range “of forms through which a discourse can be articulated means that intertextuality is important for understanding discourse” (p. 256). Jasinski advocated a kind of reconstruction of history that accounts for “both the dynamics *in* the text and the languages and voices that *surround* the text” (Jasinski, 2001, p. 326). Intertextuality provides a grounding concept for guiding how the critic might perform a constitutive criticism of the visual. I assert that Carole Blair’s theory of materiality (1999) offers a capacious framework for understanding the “material, symbolic, and purposeful dimensions of rhetoric [that] may interact, interfere, or intersect with one another” (1999, p. 50). In this way, rhetorical critics might study the symbolic qualities of visual images alongside broader histories of visibility, materiality, instrumentality, and how the meaning of visual texts is dynamically constructed in specific events and across space and time. As Dickinson noted:

Instead, materiality and symbolicity are entwined and enmeshed. Where much rhetorical criticism and theory overemphasizes the symbolic--often to the extent of ignoring or denying materiality--the best work engaging rhetoric's materiality refuses the polarity of symbol and material. Indeed, symbols always and necessarily depend on rhetoric's materiality, for they are always mediated through material forms. For this reason I am consistently shifting between symbolic and the material.

In chapter three, I utilize Blair's six questions about materiality to produce a thick analysis of five official Nkrumah portraits: What are the compositional and symbolic qualities of the texts? What is the significance of the texts' material existence? What do the texts do to (or against or with) other texts? How do the texts act on people? What are the apparatuses and degrees of durability displayed by the texts? What are the texts' modes or possibilities of reproduction or preservation?

To date, only a few scholars have performed a close reading of Nkrumah portraits. However, no studies exist that perform a close reading of both the symbolicity and materiality of a collection of Nkrumah portraits that have functioned as visual commonplaces in his public address systems as prime minister and president of Ghana, as well as commonplaces in global public culture, particularly in the United States, Africa, the Western Asia, and Russia. Moreover, though scholars have recounted the reproduction and circulation of portrait photographs on stamps, currency, as sculptures, political portrait cloths, etc., especially Fuller (2014, 2015), historians and rhetorical critics have yet to 'map' the photographs in *both* circulatory and articulatory practices across time and space. I prefer 'mapping' rather than 'tracing' (Deleuze, G., & Guattari, 1987, p. 12) given rhetoric's

rhizomatic, unconfined, and non-linear structure. Rhetoric eludes a linear historical trace and requires a map that is “susceptible to constant modification” and “fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages...the maximum opening...onto a plan of consistency” (Deleuze, G., & Guattari, 1987, p. 12). A constitutive critical analysis of exterior rhetoric is necessary to map the external factors, ongoing situations, and consequences that impact the photographs' rhetorical influence beyond internal qualities, a single situation, and intentions of the rhetor.

Constitutive Critical Analysis of Exterior Rhetoric: Circulation and Articulation

In their study of the “Principles of '98’,” Jasinski and Mercieca offered three approaches for using constitutive critical analysis to study exterior rhetoric — ways “constitutive invitations become realized, and constitutive legacies established” (Jasinski & Mercieca, 2010, p. 333): circulation, reception, and articulation. For the purposes of this study, I study the interplay between circulation and articulation of portrait photographs. Though rhetorical situations resolve immediate exigencies, “as powerful as a particular rhetorical performance (and resulting text) may be, constitutive rhetorics do not enter the public sphere fixed and fully developed” (2010, p. 319). For Jasinski and Mercieca, “circulation practices produce a constitutive legacy that critical analysis can reconstruct” (p. 320). A common rhetorical understanding of circulation is that publics are not constituted by one single text or situation; they are constituted through ongoing encounters (Warner, 2002) that are connected by an “amalgamation and mixture of many different events and happenings” (Edbauer, 2005, p. 8). For instance, Finnegan explored photographs in *LOOK* magazine “as one response to the complex problems of Depression-era poverty” (2004, p.

201). To this end, Jasinski and Mercieca proposed that critics study articulatory practices of constitutive rhetoric: “When advocates shift a trope, an argument, or a visual image from one historically particular rhetorical situation into a new context or connect it to a new controversy, circulation occurs via specific articulatory practices” (p. 320). Visual rhetorical scholars such as Finnegan and Kang (2005) have broadened the analytic scope of rhetorical exterior by “tracing processes of image and “text” (e.g., specific arguments, tropes, ideographs) [through] circulation” (p. 321), demonstrating the constitutive force of circulation.

In this study, I use three concepts to guide my study of the circulation of portrait photographs: *pre-constitution* (Mahaffey, 2007), *constitution* (Charland, 1987; Arendt, 1993), and *re-constitution* (Jasinski, 1998). In his analysis of George Whitfield’s rhetoric, Mahaffey noted that Whitfield “reached into the course of its audiences, asked them to change their identity, and transformed those who did change so that the genuine constitutive rhetoric of the Revolutionary period would be intelligible” (2007, p. 19). While Mahaffey called pre-constitution the event before the “genuine constitutive rhetoric,” I find Charland’s view of publics coming into being in a specific rhetorical event useful. However, Charland’s perspective is limited for understanding why one rhetorical event may exert more rhetorical force than another. In this study, I focus on “founding moments” of constitution. As Arendt stated there are certain moments of a nation that is “central, decisive, unrepeatable beginning of their whole history, a unique event” (1993, p. 121). Re-constitution sutures pre-constitutive and constitutive events into ongoing socialization, exigencies, and negotiations of identity formation over time and space. “Communities, and the political cultures that

sustain them, face the ongoing challenge of preservation or, in David Carr's terms, "self-maintenance" (Jasinski, 1998, p. 77). These three conceptual offerings allow the critic to fully account for the ongoing processes of constitution beyond one single event or text while also given attention to the particular moments that exert considerable rhetorical power or exist in a *kairotic* moment where a constellation of conditions are possible for transformation and transcendence.

In chapter four, I study a pre-constitutive event (Nkrumah's portrait on the 1953 *LIFE* magazine cover) when Ghana was still the Gold Coast. Though circulation through time and space and articulation in specific rhetorical events are the major foci of chapter four, I do attend to reception in some cases. Jasinski and Mercieca have shown that using evidence of reception "helps reveal...the way many [people]...accepted...[the] invitation to reconstitute and re-embrace this communal attitude. Scholars have studied the reception of Nkrumah's visual campaign (Fuller (2008, 2014, 2015; Hess, 2006a, 2006b). Hess and Fuller both noted resistance by the NLM and the Asanti. Hess focused on debates that ensued in the *Ashanti Times*, and Fuller centered on government documents. In this project, I rely upon archival documents from Ghana's parliamentary debates to indicate mixed reception of Nkrumah's visual strategies. Nkrumah's portraits on stamps and currency raised concerns about dictatorship during his tenure as prime minister and president. These debates continued as Nkrumah's portraits appeared on Ghana's 2007 and 2010 banknotes.

Put together, these three approaches provide a lens for studying how portrait photographs of Nkrumah functioned through rhetorical discourse as a "force in history" (Zarefsky, 1999, p. 29). A rhetorical perspective of history illuminates how social realities

and subjectivities are constructed through intensive and continuous socialization processes of rhetoric (McGee, 1975). Thus, a rhetorical undertaking of history offers an understanding of the ways “rhetoric has enabled, enacted, empowered, and constrained the central concerns of history: human action and reaction” (Turner, p. 8). The rationale for this approach is that a “historically informed rhetorical criticism” (Terrill, 2003, p. 300) allows researchers to study acts and artifacts within the context of historical situations (Foss, 2004). Citing Nicholas Mirzoeff (1999), design critic Rick Poyner noted that “historical inquiry remains central to an understanding of visual culture because signs are always contingent and can only be understood in their historical contexts” (2011). As W.J.T. Mitchell stated, “visual culture has a history, that the way people look at the world and the way they represent it changes over time, and that this can actually be documented” (Mirzoeff, 1999, p. 90). I rely upon archival research to study the historical record of portrait photographs of Nkrumah in visual culture.

The Postcolonial Archive

Archival research is a staple in rhetorical studies, especially scholarship on public address. Though “virtually all of the images described here have been destroyed,” (Hess, 2006, p. 183), the archival sources used for this study offer evidence useful for constructing a constitutive rhetorical history of Nkrumah’s nation branding campaign. This study relies primarily on Ghanaian and international newspapers, documentary films, private collections of images and photographs, and official documents of state agencies and departments in Ghana to study the rhetorical history of official photographs that circulated during and after Ghana’s independence. Additionally, sources from multiple archival collections housed at

educational institutions, national archives, and image databanks, including the John Wilson Fleming African-American Collection are also central to this study.

Summary and Structure of Chapters

In order to clearly address the research questions, the study entails four subsequent chapters. Chapter two introduces the key concepts of constitutive rhetoric that will be used to analyze the internal and external constitutive rhetorical influence of official portraits of Nkrumah. Chapters three and four comprise the main two analyses of portrait photographs of Nkrumah. Both chapters utilize Blair's theory of rhetoric in order to analyze the symbolism and materiality of photographs that have frequently appeared in public culture. Though Jasinski and Mercieca's (2010) framework for studying interior analysis involves closely reading a text's narrative and symbolic structures, Blair's approach offers a lens for understanding how constitutive invitations of a text's interior rhetoric are not only symbolic but also consequential in its intertextuality. While chapter three focuses on a collection of portraits featuring Nkrumah, chapter four employs Jasinski and Mercieca's approach for doing an exterior analysis of constitutive rhetoric in order to study the circulation and articulation of one portrait on the cover of *TIME* magazine. In chapter five, I identify the implications of this study for both rhetorical criticism and design practices of nation branding.

In chapter two, I map five key concepts of constitutive rhetoric—identification, instrumentation, circulation, paradox, and addressivity—in order to argue that a thick lexicon of rhetorical concepts is needed to fully examine the constitutive influence of portraits of Nkrumah. This chapter begins by defining Burke's "new rhetoric," particularly his

identificatory principles as an important resource in contemporary rhetorical scholarship. I assert that Burke's theory of rhetoric provides a foundation for a doing a conceptually, contextually, and visually informed constitutive critical analysis. I define the five key concepts and describe how I will use each as a guide for doing a critical constitutive analysis of visual culture in chapters three and four.

In chapter three, I show that official portraits of Nkrumah continue to exert constitutive influence in contemporary times through the texts' symbolism and materiality rather than merely propagandistic effects. After contextualizing portraits of Nkrumah within broader discourses of portraiture in colonial and postcolonial Africa, I use Blair's six questions to provide a rhetorical analysis of how publics are constituted through the images' visuality and materiality. Whereas chapter three centers on the portraits' symbolicity and consequence primarily in African visual culture, chapter four focuses on what the images do in American visual culture. In chapter four, I analyze one photograph that appeared on the 9 February 1953 cover of *TIME* magazine in order to argue that portraits of Nkrumah constituted postcolonial identities through its circulation by non-state actors and articulation with other visual artifacts. In concluding chapter four, I use key concepts of constitutive visual-material rhetoric to assess the photograph's rhetorical influence.

In chapter five, I establish the extent to which the new constitutive critical framework and concepts developed in this study can be used for analyzing and designing the constitutive potential of contemporary nation branding. Specifically, I suggest how the insights developed herein may serve as an exemplar for approaching, analyzing and designing nation building campaigns as a set of designed communication activities.

Contributions

In the larger corpus of studies on national identity, there is a “relative absence of rhetorical theory, or theories related to the persuasive dimensions of discourse, and this is surprising given that national identity is incessantly produced through rhetoric” (Bruner, 2005, p. 309). This study offers a rhetorically informed study of Nkrumah’s portrait photographs as function of public address through African postindependence. Zarefsky (2009) issued a clarion call for investigating new directions in contemporary public address scholarship, including visual modes of public address and case studies of public address beyond non-Western contexts. First, whereas recent studies of Nkrumah’s photographs perform semiotic and compositional analyses to unravel its ideological content and effects (Fuller, 2014; Hess, 2012; Schramm, 2004; Wilburn, 2012), I provide a reading of the photographs’ visuality and materiality, moving beyond symbolism and accounting for material aspects of images and objects. Second, in addition to rhetorically analyzing the compositional and material qualities of the portrait photographs, I provide a constitutive critical analysis of the production and reproduction of during the Nkrumah era from 1957 to 1966. Historians have either studied the use of stamps as political propaganda (Wilburn, 2012), official state representations of the nation using currency, monuments, flags, and the coat of arms (Fuller, 2008, 2014, 2015), or cartoon strips in state-sponsored newspapers (Hess, 2006) during this period. However, this study attends to the ways photographs were used in specific ‘founding moments’ (Arendt, 1958) from 1957 to 1966, including Ghana’s 1957 independence, founding of the Republic of Ghana, and the birth the Ghanaian cedi.

Third, I offer a study of the circulation and reception of Nkrumah's portrait photographs in public culture following "Operation Cold Chop," the military coup that ousted Nkrumah. Fuller (2014, 2015) has been the foremost historian studying the circulation of Nkrumah's portraits beyond 1966, including the appearance of official portraits on Ghanaian and international stamps and currency since the 1980s. Fuller's study of images beyond the immediate situation of Ghana's postindependence has provided a critical study of the ways images of Nkrumah continue to function in the public sphere. I extend studies of circulation and reception beyond official representations of the state and focus on the ways publics have re-circulated and transformed portraits through visual art such as self-portraits, consumer products such as t-shirts, and the cover of scholarly books. A study of circulation and reception also contributes to recent scholarship focused on rhetorical circulation (Black, 2012; Chaput, 2008; Foley, 2012; Hariman & Lucaites, 2012; Olson, 2009; O'Rourke, 2012).

Finally, I contribute a model for doing a constitutive critical analysis of visual culture. As I have indicated in this chapter, historians have commonly labeled Nkrumah's visual strategies as propaganda, and rhetorical scholars have considered Nkrumah's strategies as a form of public address. Using "continuum of influence" as a conceptual lens for investigating the rhetorical force of visual artifacts, I demonstrate how critics can conceptually map topoi of constitutive rhetoric useful for analyzing visual artifacts used by the state during African postindependence, study visual artifacts *in situ* by investigating production and reproduction, and understand how images and objects continue to function on a continuum of constitutive rhetoric or propaganda beyond immediate rhetorical situations in which they were first deployed. Ultimately, by using the model developed here, critics and

designers can evaluate early and contemporary nation branding in order to develop practices that foster possibilities for human flourishing and social transformation.

Limitations

There are several limitations of this study. First, this study relies upon archival data from institutional archives, scholarly discourses, newspapers and magazine archives, film archives, and other sources. These sources might be limited for understanding rhetorical influence of broader visual rhetorical strategies from 1957 to present given the erasure of memory following the coup that ousted Nkrumah. Fuller (2013) asserted that “All of the media and supporting archival documents...reference[d] in *Building the Ghanaian Nation-State*...are still available to be reviewed by other academics” (2014, p. 15). However, as Hess (2001) noted, “virtually all of the images” described in her study were destroyed after the 1966 military coup. Both scholars illustrated the limitation of using postcolonial archives to study African independence and liberation movements. In my own study, though I did not have access to archives located in Ghana, I relied upon resources available in the United States such as the Library of Congress and digital archives such as Pathé News, an archive of documentaries and newsreels related to the United Kingdom from 1910 to 1970.

Second, this study focuses on state-sponsored administrative photographs of Kwame Nkrumah that recurred throughout “Operation Psychology.” Though visual media aimed at branding the nation was regulated through Nkrumah's state-information apparatus, his visual strategy of using portrait photographs were contested by counterpublics, including opposing political parties and local Ghanaian newspapers. As Celeste Michelle Condit (1999) argued, a critical-historical analysis moves beyond articulations of a “series of causes and effects

focusing on decision making and action by a few great individuals in the context of a nation state” (p. 182). A critical historiography treats history as a “struggle among multiple forces” rather than a classical, traditional, or systems oriented historiography that focuses on singular historical accounts (p. 183). Further study might address this limitation by analyzing how counterpublics used portrait photographs or visual images to contest that state’s official representations of the nation in the likeness of Nkrumah.

Third, while this study begins with Ghana independence in 1957, this project does not account for the ways colonial identities were constituted prior to independence. History proves that these transformations were violent, including the former Gold Coast, and visual culture was central to broader processes of colonization (Edgerton, 1995; James, 1996; Mirzoeff, 2001).

CHAPTER TWO

Constituting the New African: Five Key Concepts

In this chapter, drawing from James Jasinski's (2001) approach to "conceptually oriented criticism," I map key concepts of constitutive rhetoric that will be used in chapters three and four to perform a rhetorical analysis of portrait photographs of Kwame Nkrumah. I argue that Kenneth Burke's "new rhetoric" provides a guide for "thickening" five key concepts useful for analyzing the constitutive force of visual culture: *identification*, *instrumentation*, *addressivity*, *circulation*, and *paradox*. In recent years, rhetorical scholars have used Maurice Charland's constitutive rhetoric as a theoretical framework for critically analyzing how publics are constituted visually and materially (Grueber, 2014; Stein, 2002; Yartey, 2015). A number of critical concepts and theoretical perspectives on constitutive rhetoric, however, steadily emerge in rhetorical scholarship, and thorny debates about the function, scope, and nature of rhetoric's influence continue to proliferate (see Kiewe and Houck's (2015) *The Effects of Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of Effect*). Given that the plasticity of rhetoric requires an understanding that "the field is ever-changing, ever-expanding, unconstrained, unconfined, and largely uncharted," there is a need to "continue exploring new territories" that open up insights about rhetorical practice in new ways (Gray-Rosendale & Gruber, 2001, p. 4). By outlining five key concepts of constitutive rhetoric, I extend ways to do constitutive critical analysis of visual culture.

Rhetorical History of the Constitutional Perspective through Burke's "New Rhetoric"

Definitions of rhetoric have been reformed and re-conceptualized, demonstrating diverse qualities of rhetoric always in transition. The term "new rhetoric" may be redundant or even out-moded in contemporary rhetorical scholarship, but it best encompasses many shifts and turns in the history of rhetoric. Martin Steinmann, Jr. (1967) suggested 'new rhetorics' instead of 'a new rhetoric' "because modern concepts of rhetoric are so diverse that a family of new disciplines rather than a single one seems to be evolving" (p. iii). Despite numerous attempts to contain rhetoric's borders, a number of perspectives have implicitly and explicitly expanded the scope of rhetoric to include a large circumference of human activity. In chapter two of the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle (2010) argued that "in its technical character, it is not concerned with any special or definite class of subjects" (p. 7). Given rhetoric's plurality, it "is notoriously hard to pin down, and arguments about how to define rhetoric and what its scope should be characterize the long history of Western rhetoric" (Lundsford, Wislon, & Eberly, 2009, p. xix). Uniformity or singularity cannot be assumed in any definition of rhetoric.

Defining rhetoric can be immensely frustrating to some and rewarding for others (Swearingen and Schiappa, 2009). Bryant (1953) noted a thorny issue that persists in new formulations of rhetoric's nature, function, and scope: "Very bothersome problems arise as soon as one attempts to define rhetoric, problems that lead so quickly to hairsplitting on the one hand or cosmic inclusiveness on the other" (p. 402). This is evident in definitions of classical rhetoric as "thin and production oriented" and modern rhetoric as "thick and reception oriented" (Kaufer, 1997, p. 247). For Gaonkar (1993), rhetoric was too 'thin' to be

globalized. Despite metaphoric classifications of rhetoric such as “*thin and thick, classical and modern, production and reception*” (Kaufer, 1997, p. 247), these debates, as Bryant suggested, “[yield] lucrative insights into the subject, or at least into the problem” (1953, p. 404). Rhetoric’s nature, function, and scope must be understood as “responses to challenges from emerging fields and existing disciplines or reactions to pressures from the social, cultural, or intellectual climate of a particular period” (Ritivoi, 2008). Put another way, definitions of rhetoric must be transitional given its responsive nature.

Rhetoric is a malleable form able to adapt to unstable conditions. “As a plastic art,” Lundsford, Wislon, & Eberly argued, “it molds itself to varying times, places, and situations” (p. xix). Though rhetoric’s nature, scope, and function is characterized by its plurality, adaptability, and responsiveness, Kenneth Burke’s offered perhaps “the most productive and viable basis for a complete and coherent theory of rhetoric” (Campbell, 1990, p. 97). Through his writings and analyses of rhetoric, Burke persistently loosened the grip of persuasion as the key defining term for rhetoric by orienting its core towards a more dialogic, collaborative understanding of rhetoric centered on identification and human motives. In Burke’s conception of the “new rhetoric,” for example, he responded to “a time when a great nation, with many of the greatest citizens the world has ever known, went mad, and all about us there were such goadings from so many quarters, and they developed from the most trivial of interrelationships” (1984, p. 422). In a time of turmoil, Burke’s aimed his definition of rhetoric at understanding the division of communities and ways to bind social cohesion based on communal understanding and participation rather than ‘pure’ persuasion. Burke’s “rhetorical theory provide[d] a systematic means for tracking down the significance of

different ways of speaking within varied contexts” (Hansen, 1996, p. 51). In “Rhetoric—Old and New,” Burke (1951) rendered traditional notions of persuasion as “old” rhetoric and refigured identification as the “new” rhetoric:

If I had to sum it up in one word the difference between the ‘old’ rhetoric and the ‘new’...I would reduce it to this: the key term for the ‘old’ rhetoric was ‘persuasion’ and its stress was upon deliberate design. The key term for the ‘new’ rhetoric could be ‘identification’ (p. 203).

Burke’s “new” modification may seem ambiguous and conflictual, especially for those misconstruing and misusing his theory of identification as a replacement of the “old” tradition of deliberate persuasion. The “new” rhetoric “at its simplest is also a deliberate device” (p. 203). An explicit form of persuasion, for example, is identifying with the audience when the politician says, “I was a farm boy myself,” (1969a, p. xiv) if he is speaking to an audience of farmers. While the case of the politician is perhaps a recognizable example of persuasion, it subsumes all areas of human activity. Persuasion, as Burke suggested, “ranges from the bluntest quest of advantage, as in sales promotion or propaganda, through courtship, social etiquette, education, and the sermon, to a ‘pure’ form that delights in the process of appeal for itself alone, without ulterior purpose” (p. xiv). We need not look too far to discover this classical view of persuasion in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*: “we look upon [rhetoric] as the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject presented to us” (2010, p. 7). Burke summarized the relation between persuasion and identification this way:

we might well keep in mind that a speaker persuades an audience by use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience. So, there is no chance of keeping apart the meanings of persuasion, identification ("consubstantiality) and communication (the nature of rhetoric as "addressed"). (1969a, p. 46).

Following Burke, scholars have moved beyond the instrumentalist paradigm of rhetoric as purposeful persuasion and rationale or logic. Heath (2001) asserted that the nucleus of Burke's identification is based on "collaboration and mediation rather than with instrumental persuasion and ratiocination" (p. 375). Cisneros, McCauliff, and Beasley (2009) argued that Burke's contribution to rhetoric as constitutive expanded attention "from what rhetoric explicitly does to the ways it defines realities, creates identities, and induces attitudes or actions" (p. 237). In "Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric," Foss and Griffin (1995) interrogated patriarchal biases that underpin theories of rhetoric as persuasion. As Foss and Griffin explained, the rhetoric of patriarchy is embedded in the ways and the extent to which "efforts to change others and thus to gain control over them, self-worth derived from and measured by the power exerted by others, and a devaluation of the life worlds of others" is valued in rhetorical studies (Foss and Griffin, p. 4). The scholars proposed invitational rhetoric as "mutual understanding of perspectives" by creating conditions of safety, intrinsic worth, and freedom that foster "a process of discovery and understanding" between the rhetoric and the audience (p. 10). Audiences are *invited* to

participate in discourse through rhetorical practices that “involves not only the offering of the rhetor’s perspective but the creation of an atmosphere in which audience members’ perspectives also can be offered” (p. 10). From this perspective, the issue for rhetorical critics is not simply about hegemonic practices that continue a classical tradition. The larger problem is about silencing the rhetorical critic’s ability to investigate and provide insights on a diverse range of communication activities. Thus, Burke’s reliance upon traditional notions of rhetoric to offer a new perspective demonstrates the need to orient rhetoric towards a more “thickening” and “opening” of concepts rather than quickly defining its borders and contours.

Rhetoric produces material effects and induces movement in the world regardless of the subject or specific intent (Hauser, 1986). As James Boyd White described, rhetoric is “not merely an art of estimating probabilities or an art of persuasion, but an art of constituting culture and community” (1985, p. 37). From this view, rhetoric “creates the objects of its persuasion,” and constitutes a rhetorical community (p. 35). Put another way, rhetoric exists wherever there is persuasion and wherever there is persuasion there is identification (Burke, 1969a). In the *Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke relied on and marveled at the treatment of rhetoric in Aristotle’s system of persuasion. “Rhetoric,” he admitted, “is the art of persuasion, or a study of the means of persuasion available for any given situation” (1969a, p. 46). In his chapter on “Traditional Principles of Rhetoric,” Burke culled from Aristotle’s persuasion and suggested, “You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his” (p. 55). Whereas some scholars, including Maurice Charland (1987) have used the

precepts of Burke's "new rhetoric" to break from the classical tradition, Burke explicitly anchored his theoretical innovations in traditional rhetorical paradigms.

Burke's modified theory of rhetoric provides critics with a new perspective rather than a new rhetoric (Hocmuth, 1952). Though Burke has been widely celebrated for his reconfiguration of rhetorical theory beyond persuasion, Donald Jennermann (1974) suggested that Aristotle is the "most central and consistent influence on Burke's thinking" (p. 2). Hence, Burke's new rhetoric is "an accessory to the standard lore" rather than a departure or "substitute for the sound traditional approach" (Burke, 1969a, p. xiv). For instance, Burke bound persuasion, identification, and address into a tripartite definition of rhetoric. In the history of rhetoric, the constitutive turn has shifted the nature, function, and scope of rhetoric from persuasion to identification, and Burke's tripartite configuration has allowed critics to account for persuasion and addressivity while placing identification front and center of rhetoric's influence.

In this study, I define rhetoric as constitutive rather than merely persuasion; it transforms identities by both *addressing* its audiences and *persuading* audiences to adopt a future-oriented identity while also creating conditions for *identification*. This definition draws upon Burke's theory of rhetoric and Charland's view that the process of rhetorical identities "is akin to one of conversion" (1987, p. 142). I assert that the transformation of postcolonial identities through visual culture following Ghana's independence was characterized by a constitutive process rather than only persuasion or propaganda. As the leader of a newly formed postcolonial nation-state in the mid 20th century, Nkrumah was faced with the challenges of collectivizing a nation that included many ethnic and cultural

groups, disidentifying with the Gold Coast in order to forge a future of the new Africa², and asserting political authority while still being economically and politically tied to the British Commonwealth. Given these constitutive tensions of building conditions for the emergence of postcolonial identities after Ghana's independence, a constitutive rhetorical criticism of Nkrumah's portraits requires a thick lexicon. In the following sections, I define five key rhetorical concepts—*identification*, *instrumentation*, *addressivity*, *circulation*, and *paradox*—in order to thicken the theoretical and conceptual ground of constitutive rhetoric. I briefly cover the changing nature of these concepts to locate and apply useful terms for doing a constitutive critical analysis of official portraits of Nkrumah in chapter three and four.

Identification

Persuasion has long been held as the key term of rhetoric. It “dominates rhetorical theory and is fundamental to Aristotle’s (384–322 BCE) writing on the subject” (Charland, 2006). As Aristotle defined, rhetoric is “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (2010, p. 6). In *De Oratore*, three hundred years after Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, Cicero defined rhetoric as “Speech designed to persuade.” These oft-cited and classical definitions are threaded through Bryant’s (1953) attempt to sketch rhetoric’s scope and function as “suasory discourse” (p. 404) and descriptions of rhetoric as a “conscious intent to change others” in a given situation (Foss & Griffin, 1995, p. 3). Though

² I use the term “new Africa” instead of “new Ghana” because Nkrumah’s legacy shows that his plight was about the liberation of African rather than the liberation of Ghana only. Although, this resulted in a number of debates about his effectiveness as Ghana’s leader, Mazrui (2003) writes, “Nkrumah was an African hero but a Ghanaian villain” (p. 72). See Mazrui, A., & Mutunga, W. (2003). *Debating the African condition: Ali Mazrui and his critics*. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press.

the neo-classical rhetorical tradition has focused on the rhetor's language to determine if persuasive intent was accomplished, scholars such as Charland (2006) have argued that Aristotle's definition of rhetoric is inadequate for "consider[ing] the role of rhetoric in producing the very identity and character of an audience." Burke argued that naming persuasion as the "essence and end of rhetoric" limited perspectives on human motives and focused attention too much on deliberate design (Burke, 1969a, p. 49). In other words, conceptualizing rhetoric's character as intent or persuasion leads to presupposing audiences as a pre-existing subjects and the function of rhetoric as an "out-and-out action" (p. 50). Under this paradigm, deliberative motives to persuade others do not encompass the plenitude of human activities covered in classical rhetoric (Burke, 1973). As Burke explained, the "classical notion of clear persuasive intent is not an accurate fit for describing the ways in which the members of a group promote social cohesion by acting rhetorically upon themselves and one another" (1969a, xiv). In contrast, the constitutional perspective of rhetoric centers attention on the ways texts create, maintain, or define collective and self-identity towards actions in the world. The communicative interaction between people involves a process of agreement and disagreement (Bakhtin, 1986).

Identification functions as a basic foundation of rhetoric to induce actions and form attitudes, especially in moments of division (Burke, 1969a, p. 41). Where there is division, there is an invitation for rhetorical strategies that strive toward consubstantiality, a moment for transformation by identifying with one another. Burke used his theory of consubstantiality to explain how collectivization is materialized through the process of "acting together" (1969a, p. 21). As he stated:

A rhetorician is like one voice in a dialogue. Put several such voices together, with each voicing its own special assertion, let them act upon one another in co-operative competition, and you get dialectic that, properly developed, can lead to views transcending the limitations of each (p. 203).

Burke's dialectic orientation has shown that multiple voices act upon the other to induce rhetorical influence through a process of identification rather than the merely the rhetor's intent. (Burke, 1969a).

In rhetorical studies, Charland has been one of the foremost scholars extending Burke as a key foundation for understanding how identities are constituted. In "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the "People Québécois"," Charland (1987) relied upon Burke's rhetorical theory of identification to examine the formation of Canadian nationalism by focusing on the ways a "White Paper" constituted a vision of the people as "Québécois." During the Quebec independence movement, "supporters of Quebec's political sovereignty addressed and so attempted to call into being a [collectivized] people québécois that would legitimate the constitution of a sovereign Quebec state" (Charland, p. 134). This process of interpellation "generate[d] the conditions of possibility that can structure the identity of those to whom it is addressed," and simultaneously narrated a constitutive vision or image of people québécois (Jasinski, 2001, p. 107). While Charland positioned rhetoric as a dialectical process in terms such as inscription, insertion, and interpellation, James Jasinski and Jennifer Mercieca (2009) argued that James Boyd White's "understanding of discursive action [was] more dialogic than Charland's (p. 317). In *When Words Lose Their Meanings*, White (1984) argued that a text "asks its readers to become someone and...by doing so it establishes a

relationship with him” (White, p. 15). By conceptualizing the rhetorical interaction between people as a dialectical process of asking, inviting, offering, rejecting, and accepting, Jasinski and Mercieca suggested White’s conceptual register gestured towards “a world of shared agency and self-conscious readers...capable of considering—perhaps accepting, but also potentially rejecting—textual solicitations” (2010, p. 317). It is on the grounds of asking, inviting, offering, rejecting, accepting, disagreeing, and agreeing – rather than manipulating, coercing, and forcing – publics in a process of identification and consubstantiality that transcendence and transformation can occur.

The constitutional perspective has been used to dislodge intentionality or instrumentality. For instance, Charland “attempt[ed] to surmount the model of instrumental persuasion (Jasinski & Mercieca, 2010, p. 316) using Burke’s theory of identification. In the next section, I show that rhetoric’s plasticity is large enough to encompass, and I would add requires, both constitutive identification and instrumental persuasion.

Instrumentation

In the instrumental paradigm, rhetoric is aligned with the pragmatic tradition of suasive discourse (Cisneros, McCauliff, & Beasley, 2009) whereby rhetoric’s effect is a causal outcome of successful persuasive influence. Many rhetorical scholars have moved away from the instrumental or “persuasive” function of rhetoric since the “constitutive” or “constructionist” turn in rhetorical studies (Jasinski, 2001). In this shift, scholars have used Burke’s theory of language to draw sharp distinctions between these two dimensions of rhetoric, resulting in a deep chasm between concepts and investigations of rhetoric’s effects. As I indicated earlier, Burke’s “new” rhetoric, however, was not severed from the traditional

paradigm (Holland, 1959; Day, 1960); it provided a constitutional perspective that redefined the central process of rhetoric. Rhetorical scholars have conceptualized other ways to study the instrumental effects of rhetoric in relation to its constitutive force and beyond an immediate change to attitudes. Hence, any attempt to describe rhetoric as either *instrumental (persuasion)* or *constitutive (identification)* limits critical perspectives on rhetoric and alternative practices for social cohesion or inducing attitudes.

The current model of rhetorical influence based on instrumental effects has neglected measurements of long-term and multiple forms of effects (Stuckey, 2010). Instrumental rhetoric works interdependently in constitutive rhetorical processes, and may be epiphenomenal rather than planned, causal outcomes (Leff, 1986, p. 381 — 382; Jasinski, 2001, p. 191). As Burke described, “the basic unit of action is the human body in purposive motion... a minimal requirement that should appear in every act, however many more and greater are the attributes of a complex act. (1969b, p. 61). For Jasinski, “rhetorical practice fulfills an instrumental function as it helps to resolve situational exigencies and to produce judgments about public issues” (2001, p. 191). Vanessa Beasley (2004), in her analysis of presidential discourse, argued that rhetorical critics “need not look for overt appeals... Instead, critics can look at ways that... discourse subtly reinforces the audience’s presumed collective identity as national subjects” (Beasley, p. 9). To this point, Stuckey (2010) suggested that instrumental effects of rhetoric must not be dismissed too quickly. In “Jimmy Carter, Human Rights, and Instrumental Effects of Presidential Rhetoric,” Stuckey illustrated how investigations of instrumental effects can move beyond measuring short-term impact and consider “a combination of more subtle, indirect, and long-term effects, such as

putting an issue on the national agenda, framing an issue in specific ways, or influencing the national understanding of an issue over time” (2010, p. 294). In “Instrumental and Constitutive Rhetoric in Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Michael Leff and Ebony Utley (2004) asserted that “rigid distinctions between instrumental and constitutive functions of rhetoric are misleading and that rhetorical critics should regard the constitution of self and the instrumental uses of character as a fluid relationship” (2004, p. 37). For instance, Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail” illustrated “a subtle and complex interrelationship between construction of self and instrumental” (p. 38). These studies are representative of Burke’s suggestion that “one or another of these elements [persuasion, identification, and rhetoric as addressed] may serve best for extending a line of analysis in some particular direction” (1969a, p. 46). Studying the transformation of rhetorical identities must encompass both constitutive and instrumental functions of rhetoric rather than dismiss one or the other, and understanding rhetoric as an “address” accounts for the ways audiences are influenced through both processes.

Addressivity

Rhetoric is as an *address* to an audience. As Burke noted, “we come upon another aspect of Rhetoric: its nature as addressed, since persuasion implies an audience. A man can be his own audience, insofar as he...cultivates certain ideas or images for the affect he hopes they may have” (1969a, p. 38). The purpose of addressing audiences is to induce people towards action or motion through language. For Burke, *language* is more expansive than simply rhetoric as speech. “Persuasion,” Burke continued, “cannot be confined to the strictly verbal; it is a mixture of symbolism and definite empirical operations” (p. 161). This includes

an array of acts and “material instruments” as people engage in symbolic action. (p. 161).

While formal public speeches continue to represent a core of studies focused on the constitutive force of addressivity, “other genres of rhetorical texts,” as Zarefsky stated, “also have been acknowledged as a means of addressing publics,” including texts such as “iconic photographs and popular film, television, and music” (2009, p. 69). As Finnegan and Jones noted, studies of public address “might entail the study of artifacts of visual culture as well,” and public address is one way to study images in and through history. To this point, recent rhetorical inquiries of visual culture have demonstrated an interesting new direction in rhetorical studies focused on the constitution of identities and publics through a repertoire of rhetorical performances. These acts are best described as systems of address (Hariman, 2008; Johnson, 2015) rather than individual modes of public address.

Whereas some studies have focused on the constitutive force of one particular genre of visual culture, such as photography (Hariman and Lucaites, 2002; Finnegan, 2003), emerging studies using constitutive rhetoric have moved closer to public address as more than a single artifact or mode of communication. For instance, Christa Olson (2013) suggested that multimodal rhetorical inquires “can foster more robust understandings of national identity and allow us to take better account of the commonplaces and common visions of nationalism.” In *Constitutive Vision*, Olson analyzed the constitutive force of multiple artifacts, including images, letters, policies, and performances for collectivizing Ecuadorian national identity. Stephen Lucas has also urged rhetorical scholars to “think of public address not just as the study of historical speakers and speeches, but as the study of the full range of public, discursive rhetorical acts...considered individually or as part of a

broader campaign or movement” (1993, p. 181). In recent years, scholars have taken Lucas’s idea of a “full range” of rhetorical performances to task by conceptualizing what is called a “public address system” (Folkworth, 2010; Hariman, 2008; Johnson, 2015). Folkworth considered Pietro Arention’s “public address system” as a strategy for “making publics” that included “composing letters, sending them to their recipients, and then subsequently sharing the same letter with a wider audience by publishing them in collections that include letters addressed to dozens of other originary addresses” (2010, p. 73). Most recently, Johnson described Nkrumah’s anti-colonial and post-colonial address systems as “combined repertoire of techniques of efficacy, forms of mediation, and tactics of broadcast,” including radio, dress, sculpture, etc. (p. 105). For Johnson, speech is put in its broader context of a multi-fronted campaign for addressing publics. In addition to modes of rhetorics, addressivity has been described in terms of the events wherein audiences are influenced.

For scholars such as Charland, the moment of addressivity takes place in a particular event. Charland described the White Paper as the event where the “people québécois” were addressed and interpellated. In that moment, audiences were hailed to collaborate in discourse and entered into the rhetorical situation where interpellation occurred. From Charland’s view, the “people” experienced rhetorical effect by being interpellated through a transhistorical narrative. As he stated, “These subject positions are bequeathed by the past, by yesterday's discourses” (1987, p. 147). At the same time, the subject position was constituted within a specific event. As Charland wrote, “Indeed, from the moment they enter into the world of language, they are subjects; the very moment of recognition of an address constitutes an entry into a subject position to which inheres a set of motives that render a

rhetorical discourse intelligible” (p. 147). Conceptualizing rhetoric as an address during an particular event is akin to assuming the presence of the subject who is “an active, practically conscious agent” able to “select and make something present in discourse,” and “able to “read” or interpret the world around him or her” (Jasinski, 2001, p. 456). The process of identification, however, encompass a broader notion of being addressed in a single rhetorical situation. “And often we must think of rhetoric not in terms of some one particular address but as a general body of identifications that owe their convincingness much more to trivial repetition and dull daily reinforcement than to exceptional rhetorical skill” (Burke, 1969a, p. 26). Confining the constitutive force of rhetoric to one specific situation limits a critic’s understanding of how audiences are addressed and interpellated through continual interactions and events.

Circulation

Recently, scholars have expanded the function of constitutive rhetoric beyond a specified event or situation of constitution. In Charland’s analysis, the “people” were hailed and recognized at the moment of enunciation based on presence and ability to interpret and be recognized. This process of interpellation presumes that subjects recognize or least “hear” they are being addressed at a particular moment. Greene (2009), however, argued that “Interpellation cannot be reduced to a particular moment of enunciation, a particular speech act situated in time and place” (p. 46). Greene offered a different understanding of how subjects are interpellated. He wrote: “Interpellation is better conceptualized as the cumulative effect of a process of (re)iteration and citationality” (Greene, “Rhetorical Materialism,” p. 47). Jasinski and Mercieca (2010) and Olson (2013) also argued that Charland’s theory of

constitutive rhetoric relegated identity formation to rhetorical situations. In “Analyzing Constitutive Rhetorics,” Jasinski and Mercieca (2010) suggested that Charland’s theory and analysis was conceptual; he gestured toward how subject positions are formed but did not make an “effort to trace the White Paper’s circulation or to disclose the way Quebec citizens used it to shape their ‘practices’ or their understanding of social reality” (p. 316). Rhetorical scholars have considered circulation as one such cumulative process. As Chaput (2008) argued, rhetoric circulates as it moves through affective power, which moves trans-situationally, transculturally, and trans-historically. From this perspective, instrumental and constitutive understandings of rhetoric based on single situations are limited perspectives.

Visual rhetorical scholars have used circulation as a central concept to understand how national identities come into being. Most notably, in “Performing Civic Identity: The Iconic Photograph of the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima” Robert Hariman and John Lucaites (2002) examined the enduring circulation of a photograph of the flag raising at Iwo Jima, concentrating on the multiple ways publics were constituted. Using an interpretive logic oriented towards constitutive rhetoric and ideological critique, Hariman and Lucaites demonstrated how rhetorical critics of visual culture might illuminate “the constitutive function of public discourse and coordinates multiple transcriptions of the historical event to manage fundamental contradictions in public life” (Hariman & John Lucaites, p. 364). Through examination of the reproduction of the Iwo Jima photograph across many different contexts, Hariman and Lucaites described the polysemic meaning of visual media and the ideological components of further existing narratives, and noted how these narratives constructed three particular political identities—egalitarianism, nationalism, and civic

republicanism. Hariman and Lucaites explained the different ways reproductions of the Iwo Jima photograph gained rhetorical force. “Through their aesthetic appeal and plasticity, they provide the public audience with an emotionally complex, performative resolution of basic contradictions” (p. 366). Hence, the rhetorical force of visual culture is not a simple function circulating visual artifacts.

In his oft-cited essay in *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Michael Warner posited that the public is a “social space created by the reflexive circulation of discourse” (2002, p. 120). Using circulation as a basis for describing the constitutive process of publics, Warner disrupted the sender-receiver or author-reader model of communication by suggesting that texts themselves do not create publics, but public identities come into being as texts circulate through time. Though Warner has been criticized for iconoclastic views of textualism (Finnegan and Kang, 2002), scholars have found Warner’s concept productive to investigate visual culture (Hariman & Lucaites, 2002, 2007; O’Rourke, 2002; Hariman 2003; Finnegan, 2004, 2004, 2010; Olson, 2009; Smith, 2012). Central to Warner’s thesis is the notion that publics and counterpublics are formed through a text’s invitation; it can be accepted, rejected, and contested, resulting in a paradox of constitutive rhetoric. In the circulatory life of rhetoric in public culture, “there are contradictions and perversities inherent in the organization of *all* publics, tensions that are not captured by critiques of the dominant public’s exclusions or ideological limitations” (Warner, p. 81). Charland, citing Stuart Hall, acknowledged that subject positions are never fixed; “contradictory subject positions can simultaneously exist within a culture” (Charland, p. 142). Therefore, constitutive critical analysis of visual culture must account for the publics and counterpublics that emerge from

the paradoxes of constitution—that thorny issue of inviting, asking, encouraging, and offering a different way of being in the world together.

Paradox

In addition to circulation, each of the other three key concepts discussed so far—identification, instrumentation, and addressivity— is marked by constitutive rhetoric’s contradictory nature. For instance, though public address systems could include performances related to a particular rhetorical culture, all performances may not resonate with publics with the same rhetorical power. Garrow (2015) noted that “Two Kennedy aides stood ready to pull the plug on the public address system in case [John] Lewis decided to utter his objectionable words” during his speech at the March on Washington (p. 279). Though Garrow referred to the technological system of address, his description is useful for understanding that address systems, no matter how sophisticated and advanced can be pulled (rejected) from the plug (the people). Taken further, Garrow’s description is a link to Vandí’s (1979) point that mass media resulting in revolutionary education must be controlled by the masses and not an authoritative tool of the state. Likewise, instrumental effects might produce unintended short-term or long-term effects. Just as a long-term effect might be agenda-setting, other agendas might be set in motion as well. For instance, as I will describe later, though Nkrumah relied upon textile performance as a significant form of address, kente cloth and other symbols used at independence has become property of the state. Scholars such as Boatema Boateng (2011) have investigated the production of legal subjectivities that put some publics, particularly Ghanaian producers, in conflict with the regulation and

management of cultural heritage by the state and international laws that govern global markets.

Rhetorical scholars have also provided an opening for understanding the contradictions of identification. In Burkean (1973) terms, “identification by antithesis” is a defining feature of constitutive rhetoric (p. 268). In Charland’s (1987) case study, “There was a strong sense in which ‘Quebecois’ was a term antithetical to ‘Canadien’” (p. 145). “Québécois” resolved the contradiction of French-Canadians by “not being exclusively subjects of the state they collectively controlled...by identifying the populace with a territory and a francophone state, rather than with an ethnic group” (p. 142). Charland argued successful constitutive rhetoric has been accomplished when “new subject positions” are offered “that resolve, or at least contain, experienced contradictions” (Charland, p. 142). Citing Antczak, Hammerback and Jensen described successful constitutive rhetoric this way: “A rhetoric is successful insofar as it reconstitutes and frees audiences to participate in the constitutive conversation for themselves” (1998, p. 46). A successful rhetorical transformation has occurred when audiences adopt an “altered identity and...act out a new way of life” (p. 46). Similarly, Anderson (2007) measures successful constitution according to whether a rhetorical transformation occurred by way of proctoring an alternative identity such as a person converted to a different political ideology. The process of binding social cohesion through identification may also introduce other divisions or contradictory processes that are unnoticeable or difficult to attribute a cause and effect.

By nature, the process of constitutive rhetoric involves the process of interpolation and invitation through a narrative of difference that might produce a failed attempt at identity

formation. In “Constitutive Rhetoric Reconsidered: Constitutive Paradoxes in G. W. Bush’s Iraq War Speeches,” Zagacki (2007) proposed “constitutive paradox” to describe the consequences of “failed constitutive rhetoric” (p. 272). As Zagacki asserted, Charland did not account for the “series of troubling constitutive paradoxes” (2007, p. 276). In his analysis of President Bush’s Iraq war public addresses, Zagacki illustrated the consequences of a *failed* constitutive rhetoric when attempts to develop identification between Americans and Iraqis also opposed democratic transformation during a founding moment (2007, p. 273). In an analysis of American legal and political documents on the subject of piracy, Mills (2014) showed that the pirate is figured as the anti-sovereign, and differentiates the sovereign as just in relation to an antagonist who is unjust (p. 130). Mills asserted that the “ongoing presence of an antagonist to maintain structural coherence” produces negative dimensions of constitutive rhetoric (p. 108). These studies indicate that identification is a paradoxical process; it is based on division and constant re-constitutions of identity (Burke 1969a, 1984).

Implications and Conclusions

In this chapter, I described five key rhetorical concepts in order to remove some of the blockages that have resulted in thin definitions of constitutive rhetoric. In concluding this chapter, I suture the concepts into what I call a *continuum of influence*—an oscillation between rhetoric’s variable functions. In their introduction to *The SAGE Handbook of Rhetorical Studies*, Lunsford, Wilson, and Eberly (2009) noted a variety of definitions of rhetoric, including “‘counterpart’ of dialectic (Aristotle)...the art of speaking well (Quintilian),...the study of misunderstandings (Richards),...the ‘symbolic’ means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to ‘symbols’ (Burke, 1945/1969a, p.

43)” (p. xix). For the rhetorical critic, analyses can move back and forth between concepts to provide thick descriptions of rhetorical practice. This thick description of constitutive rhetorical practice is only helpful if it leads to insight or/and effective rhetorical practice. Therefore, in chapters three and four, I use the concepts to unpack the interior invitations of constitutive rhetoric and the ways publics are constituted through circulation and articulation.

In chapter three, I conduct an interior constitutive critical analysis of three portraits of Nkrumah. As Jasinski and Mercieca (2010) suggested, an interior reading of texts provides an understanding of the ways “texts establish or create relationships” through narrative structures (p. 317). I use three of the key terms explained in this chapter—identification, addressivity, and instrumentation—to analyze the constitutive force of the interior rhetoric of portraits of Nkrumah. While a close reading of the photographs’ symbolic and compositional qualities provides some answers about the ways texts exhibit constitutive potential, Blair’s theory and six questions about materiality provide a deeper analysis of the relationship between symbolicity and consequence, leading to an understanding of rhetorical influence over time and across different publics. Methodologically, Blair’s theory of materiality provides critics analyzing constitutive rhetoric with a framework for merging visuality and materiality (see Rose and Tolia-Kelly's *Visuality/Materiality: Images, Objects and Practices*, 2012). Following chapter three, I use the remaining two concepts—circulation and paradox—to understand the constitutive legacy of an official portrait of Nkrumah that was encountered by global publics on the February 1953 cover of *Time* magazine. Chapter three thus provides a map of the reproductions and consequences that can be used to study a

portrait photography analyzed in chapter four that circulated through the press in the American imagination of African independence and liberation.

CHAPTER THREE

Projecting the New African: Constitutive Visual-Material Rhetoric of Official Portrait Photographs of Kwame Nkrumah

This chapter utilizes Carole Blair's (1999) theory of materiality in order to address six questions about the symbolicity and consequence of three portraits of Kwame Nkrumah. I argue that postcolonial "administrative" portraits of Kwame Nkrumah continue to exert constitutive influence in contemporary times through the texts' materiality. Jasinski and Mercieca (2010) suggested that doing an interior analysis of a text can reveal its rhetorical power for constituting publics. However, narrative meaning-making, and thus potential for identity transformation, is made possible through a text's intertextuality and consequence. Scholars have explored the visuality of "administrative" colonial photography in Africa and the subversive use of "vernacular" photography for contesting personhood (Landau & Kaspin, 2002). Studies have also indicated that strategies such as speeches, photography, sculpture, and protests were used "to disrupt the machinery of colonial economic interests and to undermine legal authority" during early African independence and liberation movements (Enwezor, 2001, p. 11). Fewer studies, however, have focused on the continued influence of "administrative" portrait photographs that were part of the postcolonial state apparatus. Generally, scholars have regarded portraits of African leaders in newly formed postcolonial nation-states as visual tactics used to enforce cult personalities, exert political authority and control of state media. In this chapter, after contextualizing portraits of Nkrumah within a wider genre of "administrative" or "official" photography, and examining

the texts' materiality, I use key concepts of constitutive rhetoric developed in chapter two to analyze how and to what extent the portraits shape identities.

Rhetorical History of Portrait Photography in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa

Portraiture has been a fixture in African visual culture alongside other genres of photography since early technological inventions and practices of photography emerged during the nineteenth century. Photographs of ancient monuments in Egypt were distributed in publications for European markets interested in Orientalist art soon after the daguerreotype was introduced in 1839 (Killigingray & Roberts, 1989; Epigraphic Survey, 1992; Eze, 2008). For instance, daguerreotypes of Egyptian monuments made by Horace Vernet, Frédéric Goupil-Fesquet, and Joly de Lotbinière's were reproduced in *Excursions Daguerriens* (1840—44) and *Panorama d' Egypte et de Nubie* (1841). In fact, Vernet taught Pasha Mehmet Ali, Ottoman Viceroy of Egypt, how to produce daguerreotypes (Haney, 2010, p. 13). Photography continued to proliferate along the African coast during the 1840s as travelling daguerreotypist, including Augustus Washington, an African-American daguerreotypist who opened Liberia's first photographic studio, produced portraits primarily for locals and European settlers in Sierra Leone (p. 26). Later, there was a surge in commercial photography by permanent studios on the coastline and inland, including Senegal, Cameroon, and Zanzibar (Eze, p. 14—16).

Photographic inventions such as the 'dry-plate method' and celluloid film incorporated in Kodak cameras, as well as the Brownie camera, increased the mass production of photography in Africa. Through these technical advancements, various genres and practices of photography also emerged, including missionary photography, travel

photography, scientific photography, and wildlife photography (Killigingray & Roberts, 1989; Eze, 2008; Vokes, 2012). By the 1880s, photography in and about Africa was increasingly produced and circulated in order to expand colonial rule, and photography was used “as instruments of propaganda” (Killigingray & Roberts, p. 204). This is perhaps why other studies on state photography have focused on propagandistic rather than constitutive functions of visual culture. On the other hand, early resistance to colonial photography, including South African pre-apartheid “struggle photography,”³ have demonstrated that photography functioned as anti-colonial and nationalist strategies. As Vokes (2012) explained:

...if photography *had* played a key role in the processes of both colonial and post-colonial state formation (and in modes of resistance to these), then so too it must surely have had significant effects upon wider processes of social change as well—including such things as changing notions of personhood, the emergence of new social imaginaries, the reworking of collective memories, and so on” (p. 12).

Two genres of photography that circulated in colonial Africa and during postindependence—vernacular photography and administrative photography—blurred the lines between the influence of photographs as social change and transformation.

³ Struggle photography” has also been a cornerstone of representing, intervening, and challenging South African apartheid. See Hayes, P. (2009). Santu Mofoken, Photographs: “The Violence is in the Knowing.” *History and Theory*, 48(4), p. 34-51; Krantz, D. L. (2008). Politics and photography in Apartheid South Africa. *History of Photography*, 32(4), p. 290-300; Newbury, D. (2005). ‘Lest we forget’: photography and the presentation of history at the Apartheid Museum, Gold Reef City, and the Hector Pieterse Museum, Soweto. *Visual Communication*, 4, 3, 259-295.

Critical studies of African photography have revealed the complexity of practices by state and non-state actors. Whereas vernacular photography consisted of “images captured by independent, professional photographers who specialised in studio and street portraiture,” administrative photography was typically “commissioned by the colonial governments and consisted of photographs of official state events, civic life, examples of ‘progress’ and portraits for helping categorise individuals into racial types” (Buckley, 2010, p. 147). Though scholars have regarded vernacular photography as a form of subversion and resistance to colonial representation, aesthetic, and governance of the body, the lines between the two genres of photography that circulated in colonial and postcolonial Africa have blurred. For instance, Eileraas (2003) noted that women contested wartime identity card portraits taken during the Algerian revolution through “oppositional looks [that] reconfigured hegemonic relations between power, sexuality, culture, and representation” (p. 811). In Gambia, colonial administrators employed photographers to “provide a vernacular window into colonial policies, procedures and successes” (p. 147). While work developed by local photographers was considered an extension of colonial media, Buckley argued that the local photographers’ “aesthetic practices inaugurated a political consciousness of colonial devolution within the administrative hierarchy,” which resulted in a practice that “actually prefigured the postcolonial state” (p. 148). In this way, vernacular and administrative photography sanctioned by colonial administrations in Africa were produced in paradoxical contexts of power and social change.

Photography was central to multifaceted strategies used for African independence and liberation. During the independence era, as Hess asserted, “architecture, portraiture,

iconography, and other artistic practices and ephemera from this period reveal a history of contested authority, a negotiation between tradition and modernity, and a construction and manipulation of cultural consensus” (p. 2). The portrait photographs analyzed in this chapter are significant for understanding these tensions of influence for three reasons: each image (1) was primarily produced between 1951 — 1961 during Ghana’s path to and through independence and Nkrumah’s transition from Leader of Government Business of the Gold Coast to the President of the First Republic of Ghana; (2) was distributed widely in Ghana and continue to circulate in 21st century global public culture; (3) underwent a process of non-circulation and erasure through “Operation Cold Chop” following the 1966 military coup in Ghana that ousted Nkrumah as president of the Republic. In the following section, I investigate the visuality and materiality of portrait photographs featuring Nkrumah in order to assess the images’ constitutive force for shaping postcolonial nationhood.

Visuality and Materiality of Official Portrait Photographs of Kwame Nkrumah

What are the compositional and symbolic qualities of the texts?

General observations of the three portraits show that, by far, dress is the most distinct visual device in the photographs, and viewers only have access to an upper part of the body. Though two of the photographs are in black and white and one is in color, the lighting gives a distinction to Nkrumah’s face as his body his angled slightly to the right or the left, but never directly facing the camera.⁴ Each of the photographs display a cropped body with facial

⁴ At least three other portrait photographs exist that show Nkrumah facing the camera. One of these images, a half body photograph of Nkrumah, appears on the cover of *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (1957). The second photograph is a full body photograph of Nkrumah featured on the cover of *A Portrait of Osagyefo, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah* (1960) following Ghana’s transition to a republic. The third photograph depicts

expressions of intensity and seriousness as Nkrumah looks forward, gesturing toward the future, yet wearing kente cloth as a marker of identity. These similarities indicate two important symbolic qualities: the composition creates an interaction between the viewer and Nkrumah by directing the way one looks at the portraits and kente cloth is a defining feature of performing nationality and African diasporan identity. To further explore these aspects, I use three approaches for analyzing the interior rhetoric of the images: compositional interpretation, appraisal of an African philosophy of cloth, and visual social semiotics.

Critics can account for the content, color, spatial organization, light, and expressive content of photographs by studying composition. It provides a “way of looking very carefully at the content, form and experiencing of images” (Rose, 2016, p. 101). Portraits of Nkrumah frame his body in two forms of close-up shots: head-and-shoulder composition and half-body composition. It is not difficult to discern the posture of Nkrumah’s full body from the two head-and-shoulder compositions, but the one half-body photograph shows his right hand, clasped over the left, with the left hand resting on his left leg. In the one half-body composition and two head-and-shoulder compositions, the body angles to the right while the shoulder tilts slightly forward. Nkrumah’s head is facing to the left in two photographs and to

Nkrumah sitting in a chair in a similar composition as traditional chiefs. However, the third photograph does not feature Nkrumah in a traditional chair of the chief. In concert with Ghana’s new status as a republic, Kofi Antubuum designed the national Seat of the State and Chair of the State, which symbolized Nkrumah’s political authority as the president of the Republic of Ghana after 1 July 1960, and the premiere chief. “The carved seat-of-state in Parliament House and the chair-of-state in the State House are patterned after the Ashanti stool” (Chantler, 1971, p. 177). In addition to the same arrangement of Nkrumah’s body position, all three of the photographs include a background in an indoor or outdoor setting that differs from the studio photographs of the three images analyzed in this chapter. In short, photographs of Nkrumah looking toward the camera depicts his body set against a background that seems to illustrate an event or Ghanaian setting while photographs featuring Nkrumah looking away from the camera includes a solid studio photography background.

the right in another, but he is not directly facing the camera in any of the three; he is facing forward to the left or right, but never sharply to the right or left as one might appear in a profile composition. This distinction is significant when considering the Convention People's Party's slogan, "Forward ever, backward never," and one of Nkrumah's most circulated statements from his public address in the context of African post-independence and tensions between Africa and East and West relations: "We face neither East nor West, we face forward." Each photograph shows Nkrumah's upper body silhouetted against a solid background, highlighting his personality by featuring details of his textile performance and facial expression.

The lighting in each image creates a glow on Nkrumah's forehead and the center of his face, a treatment that casts a shadow on the sides of his face. This effect also accentuates Nkrumah's facial expression in each photograph. In the first portrait taken when Nkrumah was the Leader of Government Business, the light prominently highlights the top right corner of his forehead and the left center of his face. Nkrumah's facial expression is reserved. He is not smiling or making any bodily gestures. Nor does he have a melancholy expression. However, the direction of the light on his face indicates that he is looking toward something brighter with intense focus and hope rather than extreme exuberance or malcontent about what is to come. The second photograph taken after Nkrumah became Leader of Government Business differs slightly in facial expression. As opposed to the first photograph, his eyes are narrow and the light emphasizes the left center of his face. The light angles toward the direction he is looking, positioning the viewer in towards what Nkrumah's sees. The third photograph, taken after Ghana's independence in 1957, has a similar lighting and facial

expression of the first photograph. One difference is that Nkrumah raises his cheek, which suggests a slight smile or grin. Critics can interpret this expression as partial excitement about Ghana's achievements over three years, but the absence of a full grin indicates discontent given political upheaval in Ghana at the time or a refusal to express a *full* grin that indicates the *full* eradication of imperialism following Ghana's independence. The facial expression provides an opening for others to consider that the future is undone, though one can pause to enjoy successes for a slight moment in the same way that his smile in the third photograph is slightly arches upward but never in a full grin. One other noticeable aspect of the photographs' content is that Nkrumah wears a different undergarment and kente cloth in each portrait. As Schramm noted, "Most of the official portraits would now depict [Nkrumah] in a *kente-toga*, a dress that was formerly reserved to Akan and Ewe royalty," which makes visible the centrality of textile performance for postcolonial identity-formation (2014, p. 158).⁵ Analyzing the rhetorical aspects of Nkrumah's textile performance provides a more complex understanding of the photographs' effects and influence.

While compositional interpretations help explain that cloth is an important aspect of the photographs' content, critics must account for the communicative capacities of Ghanaian textiles. In the case of kente cloth, the communicative capacities are "inherent aesthetics in its symbolic usage, motifs, colours" (Omatseye & Emeriewen, 2012, p. 57). Omatseye and Emeriewen's directive for understanding "the visual effect, as well as the underlying

⁵ It is important to note that Ewe kente cloth was not reserved only for royalty in the same way as Ghanaian kente.

aesthetic symbolism inherent in the African cloth philosophy” is useful here. In the context of portraiture in Nkrumah’s symbolic nationalism, the three photographs illustrate the use of kente as both appropriate and demonstrative of creative potential during the African independence era. As Thomas Farrell (1996) noted rhetoric had long been centered on the “tensions between the appropos and the creative” in the Greek and Roman tradition (p. 116). The compositional use of kente exemplifies this dual function by displaying a marker of royalty, Africanness, and Ghanaianess through the communicative functions and visual eloquence of African textiles.

Kente is a strip-woven cloth, most commonly associated with the Asante peoples of Ghana, as well as the Ewe peoples of Ghana and Togo, with colored patterns imbued with cultural and historical meaning. Kente cloth, and the way it is worn exhibits visual eloquence through its colors and communicative possibilities. Collectively, the colors communicate a political or cultural thought. For instance, cloth can contain a mixture of colors ranging from black (Africa), red (the blood of ancestors), yellow (gold), and green (the forest) (Ross, 1998). Though the Asante had reserved kente cloth for royalty, “Nkrumah and other Ghanaian dignitaries frequently made it a point to depart from Western norms on state occasions by wearing kente, particularly *Asante* kente—the clothing of the country’s most powerful indigenous leaders” (Boateng, 2011, p. 126). On 12 February 1951, Nkrumah wore a *Mmeeda* kente cloth, which meant “something that had not happened before,” after his release from jail for opposing the British government, and three days after his political party was victorious in the elections (*African Art Voices*, p. 10). In 1957, Nkrumah, now the first prime minister of Ghana, wore an *aswiini asa* cloth that was associated with the following

proverb: “My ideas are finished” or “I have done my best” (Magee, 2010, p. 100). The communicative aspects of kente cloths derive from its “warp-stripe” pattern. A traditional kente cloth is made of strips that are woven together to make one pattern. Though there is a lack of consensus about the origin of common strip pattern names (Ross, 1998), Kwaku Ofori-Ansa (1993) provided a list of descriptions and motifs.

The detail of kente cloth featured in portraits of Nkrumah provides insights on the appropriateness and intentions of his textile rhetoric. The three photographs analyzed here feature kente cloth that drapes over a plain collarless shirt in two portraits and a polka-dot shirt in the other. While Hess (2006) indicates that the “collarless garment [is] of the type associated with socialist leadership,” I analyze the collarless shirt within its gendered logics and public consumption. Photographic evidence indicates that the polka-dot shirt has been worn by young men as well, which suggests that the shirt may not be reserved only for royalty but rather for public consumption enabled by Ghana’s textile market. While women traditionally wear three pieces of kente cloth, men wear one long rectangular *ntoma* cloth over the left shoulder. It drapes over a collarless shirt called a *jumpa*, which the Fanti and Ga, two major cultural groups mainly located in Ghana, normally wear. Symbolically, the collarless shirt creates a relationship between Asante kente and other cultural styles of dress.

Critics can use visual social semiotics (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006) as an ancillary to compositional interpretation and an African philosophical appraisal of cloth. It provides a “description of semiotic resources, what can be said and done with images...and how the things people say and do with images can be interpreted” (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001, p. 136). Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) proposed that images create three

particular kinds of relations: “(1) relations between represented participants; (2) relations between interactive and represented participants (the interactive participants’ attitudes towards the represented participants); and (3) relations between interactive participants” (p. 114). For the purposes of this study, two kinds of interactions provided by the authors are useful for studying the compositional and symbolic qualities of portraits of Nkrumah: size of frame and social distance and image act and the gaze.

The photographs illustrate a Janus-faced image: Nkrumah’s body is a site of postcolonial transformation that associates Ghana’s and Africa’s future with a historical legacy of African royalty and triumph. Visually, this is articulated through framing, posture, and dress; as the prime minister and president, the photographs display the personality of Nkrumah as the ‘head Chief’ of Ghana ready to move forward by “anchor[ing] the nation in a glorious historical past, while looking toward a bright future on national unity” (Fuller, 2014, p. 87). As indicated previously, portraits of Nkrumah feature close-up, half-body images. This creates a close interaction with the viewer in such a way that “one can hold or grasp the other person and therefore also the distance between people who have an intimate relation with each other. Non-intimates cannot come this close and, if they do so, it will be experienced as an act of aggression” (citing Edward Hall in Kress & Van Leeuwen, p. 126). In postcolonial contexts, this relationship creates tensions between counterpublics who oppose or experience adverse reactions to the emergence of new African nations. For those in full support and with an urge to welcome this new reality to fruition, the up-close photograph creates an intimate interaction. Publics can see more fully what kind of new African will be brought into being and to what degree publics may continue to find themselves in an open

narrative of an African identity that is associated with royalty, Pan-Africaness, and Ghanaianess. To this point, as the images circulate, publics bear witness to a rhetorical vision that has not yet come to past. The portraits jostle publics to continue toward a path of decolonization beyond the days of independence. The vertical size of the frame facilitates this interaction by creating a relationship between Nkrumah's body and the viewer. Though only half of Nkrumah's body is present, the fact that the frame is vertical suggests that there is more to the embodiment of the new African than is available through the image. It creates wonder and a kind of mystique. What else is Nkrumah wearing? What other ways is he performing the transformation of new identities? As a viewer and potential appropriator of his performance, how should I conduct my own performance of textile identity? As a designer or artist, how should I complete the rest of the narrative if I were to imagine a full picture or translate the portrait into a sculpture? If the photographs were in a horizontal frame then the artifacts could invite viewers to consider what is in the background. However, as the three photographs of Nkrumah make clear, the landscape of the background is not as important as the destination. The background in the images is solid and open so that publics can complete the picture in the background whether they are from Ghana, Nigeria, India, or the United States. The background refrains from fixing the viewer or Nkrumah to one location or destination. To this end, a postcolonial and Pan-African identity is mobile, open, changeable, and not locked to one locale. Nkrumah's textile performance and framing of his gaze invites another kind of interaction: demanding one's attention and gaze.

As the leader of the first nation-state in sub-Saharan African to gain independence from British colonial control, Nkrumah's textile performance redirects the gaze away from

the nation once known as the Gold Coast (and part of the area that was called the “Dark continent”) towards the newly re-branded nation of Ghana. In this way, portraits of Nkrumah function as “demand” images to decolonize the gaze, that is “the participant’s gaze (and the gesture, if present) demands something from the viewer, demands that the viewer enter into some kind of imaginary relation with him or her” (Kress & Van Leeuwen, p. 118). In other words, in demanding something from the viewer, portraits of Nkrumah function as “a visual form of direct address,” and the artifacts “[constitute] an ‘image act’” (p. 117). In photographs of the All-African Peoples’ Conference of 1958, taken by Phillip A. Harrington, a poster hangs on a wall in a room of participants, including Tom Mboya, the organizer of the conference. The poster features an illustrated photograph of Nkrumah similar to the portraits analyzed in this chapter. Written text appears at the bottom of the poster, and Nkrumah points his finger directly at the viewer. The poster is similar to the 1914 “Lord Kitchener Wants You” recruitment poster by Alfred Leete and the 1916 “I Want You for the U.S. Army” recruitment poster by James Montgomery Flagg. The Nkrumah poster explicitly addresses its audience and demands that one interacts with the image even if it is imaginatively. Archival evidence shows that other portrait photographs of Nkrumah that circulated globally and appeared on commemorative texts and state media in Ghana were not modified in this way. Instead of the pointing finger, the direction of Nkrumah’s gaze demands an explicit, yet implicit engagement. For instance, the three photographs analyzed here do not position the viewer directly within Nkrumah’s gaze. The light on Nkrumah’s expression and his body position directs the viewer to look with him slightly to the left in some photographs and slightly to the right in others. I interpret Nkrumah’s gaze slightly to

the left and right as an indication of his non-alignment policy. Nkrumah was not tied to the West or the East, which, in the end, certainly agitated powers such as the United States as there was fear that Nkrumah's socialist platform would not bode well for Western nations. In this way, Nkrumah's gaze refuses to dictate whether the new African should gaze to the right or to left. At the same time, it invites the viewer to engage in a future oriented path since his gaze can be interpreted as a view towards some distant place that has not been reached yet but that is a constant destination. This point is clear as global publics continue to regard Nkrumah as a guiding light towards Africa's future despite his faults as a president. From a non-verbal communication perspective, Nkrumah's angled gaze denies the right to look the new African directly into the eye. In some cultures, staring an important person directly in the eyes is a sign of disrespect. We might consider the interaction between Nkrumah's gaze and his kente performance as another symbolic gesture of royalty and, simultaneously, respect for Ghanaians and the African diaspora.

The gaze at Nkrumah's official photograph is not an inherent failure of looking that is motivated by voyeurism, spectatorship, or masculinity, as is commonly described in literature theorizing or analyzing the gaze (Rose, 2016). A different conception of the gaze is needed to fully consider the significance of the compositional and symbolic qualities of photographs of Nkrumah that circulated through global spaces within and beyond the borders of Ghanaian and African visual culture. As bell hooks writes, "The "gaze" has been and is a site of resistance for colonized black people globally" (hooks, 1992, p. 116). Two concepts are useful for further understanding how publics 'gaze at the new African': the intersectional gaze (Lutz & Collins, 1991) and visual wellbeing (Gallagher, Martin, Ma, 2011). First, given

that hooks and others have considered the gaze as a site of resistance, critics must consider the gaze as an intersection. In their analysis of photographs in *National Geographic* of non-Western people, including Africans, Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins (1991) showed that the “gaze is not...as singular or monolithic as Foucault might suggest” (p. 136). The scholars offered an approach for “exploring the significance of “gaze” for intercultural relations...found in the photograph and its social context” (p. 134). Consider how Ghanaians may have gaze upon portraits of Nkrumah as a site of resistance. Prior to Ghana’s independence, Nkrumah wore kente cloth during the early days of anti-colonial movements in the Gold Coast in the 1950s. In his autobiography (1953), a photograph of Nkrumah after his release from jail in 1951 depicted the leader of the Convention People’s Party draped in a royal cloth that has been long associated with chieftancy. A passage in the 1953 *Time* article “Sunrise on the Gold Coast” exemplified how Gold Coasters gazed upon Nkrumah during the third anniversary of National Liberation Day in 1953:

Suddenly, like the Red Sea parting before the Israelites, the noisy crowd opened. Through a forest of waving palm branches, an open car bore a husky black man with fine-sculptured lips, melancholy eyes and a halo of frizzy black hair. The Right Honorable Kwame Nkrumah (pronounced En-kroom-ah), Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Arts, Doctor of Law and Prime Minister of the Gold Coast, waved a white handkerchief to his countrymen as they fought to touch the hem of his tunic. Then, as the band hit the groove, he jigged his broad shoulders in time to the whirling rhythm, and passed on, exalted. “You see,” cried a delirious Gold Coaster, grabbing the arm of a wondering white man, “it is real—REAL! Real democracy. He is one of us. A

man of the people. Now that you have seen, you must understand: we can govern ourselves.”

The scene of the celebration indicated that “seeing” Nkrumah cannot be understood in the same frame of the Western gaze where photographs of non-Westerners are “intended as a thing of either beautiful attraction or documentary interest and surveillance” (Lutz & Collins, p. 134). The constitutive scene of transforming African identities through the process of looking can best be described as “visual wellbeing” or “the state of feeling healthy, happy, and content, of sensing vitality and prosperity, recognized precisely in one’s experience of objects through the visual sense” (Gallagher, Martin, & Ma, 2011, p. 32). After Ghana’s independence, official portraits were further used to exhibit the African personality and the realization of being independent from colonial authority in the likeness of Nkrumah and his textile performance. As we will see later, portraits of Nkrumah were not simply gazed or looked upon. Visual wellbeing was enacted through the compositional and symbolic qualities, as well as the materiality of the portraits’ existence that could be reproduced on political portrait cloths and performed by the public. In this sense, the possibilities of the portraits for transforming identities are undergirded not only by their compositional and symbolic qualities but also the material aspects of the texts for being reproduced and transformed by multiple political actors beyond the state information apparatus. More importantly, considering the material existence of the texts provides critics with a lens for further analyzing what texts do in public culture and how texts gain affective and rhetorical force through intertextuality.

What is the significance of the texts' material existence?

As a collection, portrait photographs of Nkrumah present a rhetorical vision of the African personality for Ghanaians and the broader African diaspora. In this way, the set of photographs function as a process of “framing” or as an “entire sets of traits that move beyond description to comprise a perspective” (Johnson & Kim, 2009, p. 186). As a “substantive frame” (Entman, 2004), the images define “effects or conditions as problematic, identify causes, convey a moral judgment, and/or endorse remedies or improvements” (Johnson & Kim, 2009, p. 186). As a “procedural frame,” the images function as “evaluations of political actors’ legitimacy” (Entman, 2004, p. 6) but not in the way suggested by Entman, such as political polls. For instance, during the Nkrumah era, portraits of the prime minister and presented evaluated chieftancy and British authority by framing the legitimacy of chieftancy within the scope of the CPP and his political authority. This is significant considering that independence of an African nation during the “Year of Africa” commonly denoted political independence but not necessarily economic independence.

A number of other portraits could have been reproduced on official symbols, especially stamps. For instance, portraits of Queen Elizabeth, including the portrait commemorating her coronation were found on these types of artifacts prior to and following Ghana’s independence.⁶ Additionally, the history of official portraits being reproduced on official state symbols following independence provides an indication of what might have

⁶ See Peter Symes “Portraits of Queen Elizabeth II” retrieved from <http://www.pjsymes.com.au/QE2/default.htm> and *European Stamp Design*. The coronation portrait was taken by Dorothy Wilding. Another coronation portrait was taken by Cecil Beaton.

happened. A brief history of stamps, currency, and other official symbols following decolonization by nations prior to Ghana independence in 1957 shows some on other visual representations of the postcolonial nation-state that might have emerged in place of Nkrumah's portrait photographs. First, cultural symbols might have appeared in place of the portraits. After India's 1947 independence, the lion figure replaced King George. Though Tunisia's banknotes and stamps included various representations of ethnic groups and national culture, the president's portrait appeared on banknotes following Tunisia's transition to a republic. Morocco did not have portraits on banknotes. Instead, architectural views of the city were displayed.

Whereas Nkrumah's "Midnight Speech" has been atomized in public culture, particularly his assertion that Ghana's "independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of Africa," the materiality of official portraits function beyond a symbolic representation of this rhetorical vision. The portraits make visible abstract concepts of the African personality and Pan-Africanism in a form that can be reproduced and transformed by different audiences to meet situational exigencies across different audiences. The concept of "contact zone" is useful for understanding the material consequence of the portraits' existence. The photographs mediate a zone "where the matrix of state power touches the subject's everyday lifeworld" through repeated interaction in public and one's private life (Linke, 2006, p. 216), such as national currency and privately-owned images, and the photographs circulate in "concrete spaces of power...between political actors of various kinds" (Pype, 2012, p. 190). For instance, the South African magazine *Drum* reproduced an official photograph of Nkrumah in an April 1957 issue that also addressed apartheid. In this

situation, the photograph was central for framing the coming of independence by way of Ghana's liberation and its relation to injustices that were happening in South Africa. As a contact zone, the photographs function differently than Nkrumah's words echoed in his independence speech. Publics are able to transform the color, saturation, size, framing, position, and supplementary features of the photographs across different platforms and visual media. In many ways, the materiality of the photographs increases opportunity for publics to engage with the image and its symbolic qualities greater than other components of Nkrumah's visual campaign, such as a sculpture, which is difficult to reproduce, transform, and thus challenge by publics.

What are the texts' modes or possibilities of reproduction or preservation?⁷

The visual arrangement, form, and style of portraits of Nkrumah analyzed in the first question have been remediated as paintings, stamps, sculpture, portrait cloths, and other artifacts. Through this reproduction, audiences experience the materiality of photography through a range of different media. For instance, the materiality of a stamp differs from that of a sculpture. Hence, the preservation of the photographs is accomplished by reproducing and remediating portraits on different artifacts, including stamps, currency, sculptures, digital images, political posters, and clothing which essentially serve to manage the upkeep and stability of photographs. Another mode of reproduction is the use of the photographs as a "visual commonplace," the use of visual images as a means of meeting a situational exigency

⁷ The rapid pace of reproductions of Nkrumah's photographs could also be in due part to "Self-Government Now." While others wanted self-government in the shortest time possible, Nkrumah wanted a more rapid process (See *Kwame Nkrumah: The Fallen and Forgotten Hero of African Nationalism*)

that represents a constant return to concepts made visible and put forth for discussion under different situational exigencies. The texts' apparatuses and degrees of durability enable its reproduction and preservation through physical and digital archives. While historians and rhetorical scholars have noted that Nkrumah's portrait has been reproduced and distributed through a wide range of visual media, the photographs have also been reproduced on less studied artifacts such as political or poster billboards, which along with the other iterations/artifacts, exhibits a different durability. Consider, for instance, the reproduction of billboards following Ghana's independence.

Ghana's independence took place over a week-long celebration from 2 March 1957 to 10 March 1957, and was attended by a number of dignitaries across the world, including U.S. President Richard Nixon and civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. At the opening of the first session of the Parliament of Ghana on 6 March 1957, the Duchess of Kent delivered a speech from Queen Elizabeth II, congratulating Ghana on achieving independence. As Rathbone states, "the state opening...by the Queen's representative, the Duchess of Kent, was, constitutionally, at least, to be the high spot of the celebrations" (2010, p. 66). Though newspapers such as the *Daily Graphic* pre-constituted publics by displaying official symbols of nationhood, including commemorative stamps and the state flag, to readers prior to Ghana's official independence ceremony, independence celebrations would be the defining constitutive event of Ghana's postcolonial nationhood.

While representatives from the British monarchy were present during Ghana's independence celebrations in 1957, the head of the Commonwealth, Queen Elizabeth II was not present. Her absence was significant given that, as Nkrumah stated, some expected the

Queen to come to Ghana and crown the first Prime Minister to symbolize Ghana's status as a sovereign state (Fuller, 2014). In the absence of the Queen, portraits of Nkrumah that appeared on various commemorative texts reified the prime minister as the founder of Ghana and personification of the (post-colonial) African Personality. Later, from 9–20 November 1961, four years after Ghana's independence, Queen Elizabeth II visited Ghana for the first time after the new nation state gained independence from British colonial rule. Queen Elizabeth's visit was partly stalled due to increased internal opposition in Nkrumah's Ghana; there was an attempted bombing to assassinate Nkrumah, and he detained those who opposed his leadership. While the raising of Ghana's flag symbolized the transition of political power from British colonial authority to the new Commonwealth Realm of Ghana in 1957, I assert that Queen Elizabeth II's appearance alongside Nkrumah during the royal tour of 1961 was a defining re-constitutive event for transforming postcolonial identities in the new Republic.⁸

Archival film, photographs, and newspapers indicate that portraits of Nkrumah appeared alongside Queen Elizabeth on commemorative billboards during the royal visit. In one photograph taken by Ian Berry, Nkrumah and Queen Elizabeth ride together in a car waving to a packed crowd of Ghanaians present for the event. In the black and white vertical photograph, a commemorative billboard appears right above Nkrumah and the Queen as they are driving by. In this scene, the physical presence of the two are brought into direct contact with the public and the commemorative billboard that features two half-body portraits of

⁸ The Commonwealth Realm of Ghana became the Republic of Ghana on 1 July 1961 and Nkrumah became the nation's first President.

political authority and national identity. The billboard is divided into two sections. On one side, an illustrated portrait photographs depicts the first president wearing kente cloth as royalty while Queen Elizabeth wears a dress and the royal crown. The gazes of both of these symbols of political authority angle slightly to the left. The billboard symbolizes that Ghana's postcolonial identity is rooted in Africa's glorious past, and the border that separates the two panels indicates a division or separation from the former British authority. Whereas the hoisting of Ghana's flag at independence defines the moment for symbolizing the separation from colonial identities, the commemorative billboard further creates this dis/identification and anti-thesis of being in the world after independence.

What are the apparatuses and degrees of durability displayed by the texts?

Three interesting points emerge about the apparatuses and degree of durability of portraits of Nkrumah emerge from archival data on colonial and postcolonial photographs. First, scholars have noted that archival data on the Nkrumah era (1957—1966) is difficult to locate given the politics of erasure after the coup (Hess, 2006). To my knowledge, Fuller (2014) provided the most complete record of official representations of the state, particularly stamps, currency, and state symbols to date, proving that there are multiple ways of addressing issues related to researching the postcolonial archive. However, given the primacy of Ghana's independence in the international eye, portrait photographs of Nkrumah have survived the vulnerability of photographic decay through its multiple reproductions made possible through an international apparatus of information. Photographs of Nkrumah were produced by Ghanaian administrative departments, but they were also circulated and

produced globally by photojournalists, filmmakers, other state governments, and they are part of private collections.

This leads to a second point: photographs of Nkrumah remain durable through digitization of archival materials. This, however, raises a number of issues. On the one hand, it offers scholars with a range of choices for locating and reproducing the images and obtaining usage rights. For instance, in “Ghana's Independence: Triumph and Paradox” (2008), Apter featured a portrait of Nkrumah after he became the first President of the Republic of Ghana in 1960. The caption indicated that Apter retrieved the portrait from *Ghana Today*. The same image is located in a number of photographic databases, including Getty and Corbis, and it is quite possible that the photograph has been reproduced in Ghanaian newspapers during the Nkrumah era. On the other hand, the digital circulation of portraits of Nkrumah makes it difficult to track the original production of portraits. Publics have used the image without crediting the original source. This is also a problem when using rights-managed photography services. In my own archival research, I attempted to work with a company that owned a reproduction of a portrait of Nkrumah. The representative noted that there is no record of either the photographer or the organization who produced the photograph. One other issue of great concern for historians and critics is the availability of color photographs to make assessments about its rhetorical force. Most of the portrait photographs of Nkrumah located at archival institutions and in digital space only include black and white versions. This is certainly limiting for understanding the degrees to which publics might have been constituted given the centrality of color, meaning-making, and visual eloquence of textile performance in African nations.

Third, the reproduction of portrait photographs of Nkrumah on varied texts, including stamps, commemorative political portrait cloths, posters, and other media indicates that, though these are not original productions of the photographs, the images are vulnerable to decay and wear as they circulate in public culture, continue to be used by publics, and experience inevitable erosion of quality of printed material. At the same time, this vulnerability perhaps adds to the nostalgia and affective power of the images as they exhibit a not too distant past through its materiality, yet are still with us in the present to continue providing a source of invention and rhetorical vision. It is through these three qualities—international apparatus of information, digital durability, and vulnerability through its reproductive capacities—that portraits of Nkrumah continue to exert force with and against other texts.

What do the texts do to (or against or with) other texts?⁹

The reproduction of portraits shows that other political and cultural elements of nationalism *supplement* the photographs. For instance, political cloths featuring Nkrumah's portrait also include the black star, CPP rooster, national emblem, and other flag. The photographs are also supplemented by what seems to be a contradictory narrative of independence and national identity by including Nkrumah's photograph on political cloth

⁹ See "Empires of the Visual: Photography and Colonial Administration in Africa"; "Looking backward or inventing forwards? The vexed condition of culture and tradition in Africa" in *Grasping Africa: A Tale of Tragedy and Achievement* By Stephen Chan; *Social Dynamics: A journal of African studies* Volume 40, Issue 1, 2014 Special Issue: African Photographies: Iterations with Difference I and II. Also, the photograph shows Nkrumah wearing kente cloth as a premiere chief. He declares: "It is in the rural areas that the forces of feudalism are entrenched. There can be no social advancement or complete overthrow of imperialism as long as the vestiges of feudalism still remain in this country" (see "Nkrumah's Theory of Underdevelopment: An Analysis of Recurrent Themes").

alongside figures of British colonial authority. During the early days of postindependence, Nkrumah's portraits reproduced in Ghana's visual culture also *enabled* other African nations to follow in the same manner.¹⁰ Though Nkrumah was later ousted by the military coup of 1966, the visual practices of projecting portrait photographs as a constitutive feature of Ghana's national identity were used by subsequent governments. Most importantly, Nkrumah's textile performance, and the reproductive capacities of his portrait photographs, encourage publics to adopt textile as a rhetorical performance, indeed as a significant aspect of political discourse and cultural expression. The use of portraiture and textile identity *contextualizes* Ghanaian identity as linked to a postcolonial identity and broader Pan-African identity. This point is foregrounded by Nkrumah's famous proclamation that Ghana's "independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of Africa." Interestingly, both vernacular and administrative photographs show people dressed in kente cloth circulated in Ghana's visual culture. During the Nkrumah era, the photographs circulated at the same time his official portraits were distributed in prominent locations in public life and appeared on visual artifacts such as banknotes and coinage. Erin Haney's work on the politics of photographic archives in Ghana demonstrated that images capturing commemorative events commenced not too far from the location of the nation government, yet these "spectacles of holidays and festivals in Accra were kinds of local ritual authority not contiguous with the national statecraft of Nkrumah and other pan-Africanists" (Haney,

¹⁰ Ghana was not the first postcolonial nation to use portrait photographs on stamps. Nkrumah's administration followed Ceylon in placing the prime minister on independence stamps. This link further indicates the importance of independence of South Asian nations, namely India and Ceylon, in providing a template for Nkrumah's postcolonial public address system.

2012, p. 130).¹¹ What is significant about these photographs that display “robust political and ritual activity” beyond the governance of the new nation-state is that these kinds of ‘vernacular’ photographs feature kente as a prominent form of ‘traditional’ kente dress just as ‘official’ state photography captures members of Nkrumah’s cabinet dressed in kente cloth. In these contexts, ‘traditional’ cloth represents African systems of royalty and authority. At the height of independence, as Boatema Boateng argued, these cloths also “became important weapons in the symbolic struggle against the legacy of a colonial Europe that had tried to instill into the Asante and other inhabitants of the territories it dominated, that there was nothing of value in their cultures” (2014, p. 5).

An important distinction between the circulation of administrative portraits of Nkrumah and vernacular photographs displaying leaders or images of Ghana’s national identity is the circuit of distribution, including Ghana’s state information apparatus and international press. During the 1950s and 1960s, portraits of Nkrumah were mobilized by distributing photographs through the state-sanctioned departments. The state-information apparatus was central for distributing ‘official’ or ‘administrative’ photographs, indicating the importance of studying circulation of photographs beyond aesthetics and representation and towards power struggles over circulation (Vokes, 2012). Though administrative photographs circulated in concert with vernacular photographs, such as Paul Strand being commissioned by Nkrumah to produce portraits of Ghana during the first independence

¹¹ Haney’s investigation of private collections of portraits in colonial Gold Coast indicates that this practice likely continued during the time Nkrumah’s portrait photographs were ubiquitous in Ghana’s postcolonial visual culture from 1957 to 1966. See Haney, E. (2010). Film, charcoal, time: Contemporaneities in Gold Coast photographs. *History of Photography*, 34(2), p. 119-133.

government and the first republic, pro-government newspapers circulated photographs of Nkrumah to the public while other newspapers were censored. “The control and dissemination of information...was one way—from Kwame Nkrumah and the Central Committee of the Convention People's Party to the people” (Monfils, 1977, p. 136). As Hess pointed out, “Life-size color portraits were offered by the Department of Information at a low price in virtually every retail establishment, and portraits of Nkrumah were commonly displayed at rallies and in government offices and embassies” (2006, p. 28). For instance, *A Portrait of the Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah* (1960) commemorated the National Founder's Day. The portrait features the President of the Republic of Ghana wrapped in kente with his entire body displayed against a background different than other official photographs of Nkrumah. The pamphlet celebrates Nkrumah's achievements, serving as an authoritative document of Ghana's progress toward freedom. Despite Nkrumah's intentions for propagating images through the state's information apparatus, another system would eventually remove Nkrumah's portraits from circulation: “Operation Cold Chop.”¹²

¹² Paradoxically, the military government that ousted Nkrumah used a page from his policy notebook by implementing draconian strategies that forbade publics to display images of Nkrumah in public or mention his name. For the military government, this was a strategy for ridding the country of evil in a similar fashion that Nkrumah used the Prevention Detention Act to further decolonize Ghana and provide favorable perceptions of the country and his government. It is this contradictory process for shaping nationhood that scholars deem the effects of the state information apparatus as propagandistic. There is more to say, however, about these strategies. Though governments attempted to control media, publics could have kept private collections of photographs and convened in non-public spaces to discuss Nkrumah's legacies, policies, or strategies to carry forward with his plans. Just as this project focuses on the constitutive force of Nkrumah's portraits, scholars might consider how military coups attempted to identify with audiences through constitutive rather than merely violent force.

How do the texts act on people?

In contemporary times, Ghanaian kente cloth has been internationally appropriated as a symbol of African heritage and a significant source of identity formation in Black popular culture.¹³ Popular culture has been identified as a contested site of struggle over cultural hegemony (Hall, 1992). Following insights from Manning Marable Black popular culture embodies a space where the “greatest struggle of any oppressed group in a racist society is the struggle to reclaim collective memory and identity” (Marable, 172). African Americans have historically sought to perform the story of the Black experience and collective Diasporan identity through a host of Black repertoires (Hall, 28; Nelson), but “From the vantage point of racism, black people have no ‘story’ worth telling” (Marable, 172). As indicated in an interview with Reverend Cecil L. Murray, African Americans “were told that we just sprang up—that we’re just here in America with no ties to any nation. And if we do have ties, it’s a heathen culture” (Quick, 260). Despite contradictory evidence of the survival (or lack thereof) of Ghanaian African culture in colonial America (Blackley, 1998), African Americans have affirmed an African Diasporic identity through symbolic and material performances of appropriating Ghanaian textiles as a cultural politic (Boateng, 214). In this context, Ghanaian kente cloth has been adopted as a “monolithic view of African culture, not unlike the idea of Black communal identity” (Quarcoopome, p. 194), to exhibit a shared

¹³ The circulation of Nkrumah’s photographs in black newspapers have been commonly noted as an important media event for displaying notions of Pan-Africanism (Gaines, K. K. (2006). *American Africans in Ghana: Black expatriates and the civil rights era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press). However, in the next chapter, I show that Nkrumah’s portrait photograph in *Time* magazine on 9 February 1953 was also an important rhetorical event for constituting publics and projecting the African personality in the American popular imagination of the new African following World War II and the rise of the Cold War.

heritage rooted in an African identity—blackness as a heritage of pride and dignity. “When you think about it, it was through kente cloth that African Americans first began to show their Africanness. It made us feel real good and real connected with the Motherland” (Quick, p. 247). Hence, wearing kente is a constitutive process of self-identifying with a communal sense of being part of the African Diaspora. The circulation of kente through discourses of Black popular culture, race, and nationalism shows that it has been used in varied contexts, including Christmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Kwanzaa, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday, Black History Month, graduation ceremonies, and everyday dress and political occasions. While it is typical to see kente worn as a form of fashion and dress, kente is also made for shoes, toys, holiday cards, and other products. It is through this material consumption that Diasporan African identity becomes negotiated as an important identity marker of *Africanness*. For Dr. Maulena Karenga, founder of Kwanzaa, the cultural production of kente is about more than pride: “Kente should be projected [...] not as source of pride but as a source of dignity...it represents a certain assumption of dignity by embracing your culture and walking with self-respect and self-understanding that reflects the best of African dignity” (p. 263). Though the use of kente has waned since the 1990s, the recent re-emergence of kente as a significant marker of Black identity in sports¹⁴ raises

¹⁴ In Chapter Five, I consider how constitutive rhetoric can be used for designers engaged in the process of branding national identities. I use a recent case of Nike’s “Power of One” branding campaign to propose ways to use constitutive rhetoric as an inventional tool for “designing identities.” As I will illustrate in Chapter Four, there are paradoxes of identification when cultural intermediaries seek to visually represent nationalities to a broad range of publics. In particular, after analyzing a portrait of Nkrumah in *Time* magazine, I analyze the constitutive rhetoric of its circulation and contradictions, including negative identification of Africanity.

questions about the continued exigencies that Nkrumah's "linked up with Africa" statement addresses and the identities that are continually being negotiated.

Analysis of Constitutive Visual-Material Rhetoric

Critics have consistently argued that Kwame Nkrumah's visual strategies functioned as propaganda and furthered his cult personality, which resulted in failed attempts for transforming publics. These observations have revealed the tensions between instrumental and constitutive effects of using portraiture and photography as visual commonplaces in Nkrumah's "Operation Psychology." Though it is certainly true that Nkrumah "sought legitimacy—for his leadership in the quest for pan-African unity" (Meriwether, 2002, p. 175), his visual strategies continues to constitute a racial and postcolonial identity in line with philosophical and ideological thoughts on Black/African nationalism, particularly Pan-Africanism. One of the most significant rhetorical effects of Nkrumah's "Midnight Speech" in visual culture was establishing identification to transform the colonial Gold Coast to postcolonial Ghana by using photography to depict "a new African in the world."

Addressivity

Portrait photographs of Nkrumah addressed publics through "Operation Psychology," a multifaceted system that was attuned to particular rhetorical cultures. Consider two repertoires of display and performance: Nkrumah's autobiography that has circulated worldwide and commemorative political portrait cloths that were worn in Ghana during the 1957 independence celebrations. The portrait on the cover of Nkrumah's autobiography features Nkrumah prominently on the left, yet enclosed within the red, yellow, and green stripes of Ghana's flag. Though the words across the type read "Ghana," the autobiography

frames Nkrumah as a story of Ghana, and Ghana as a story of Nkrumah. Put another way, by presenting Nkrumah as a marker of the new constituted African Personality, the autobiography is framed as the story of Africa's people and the story of Ghana and Ghana is the story of how Africans are constituted as a people. The Black Star wraps around the book, yet symbolizing the entirety of Ghana's flag. The production of the book is important for understanding the photograph and the flag. *Ghana: the Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* was released during the week Ghana became independent. The flag was hoisted at midnight, though the initial production of the book had shown that the 'becoming' of the Ghanaian nation-state was in flux, and Nkrumah's independence speech would be the defining event announcing the rhetorical vision of what the newly constituted state and her people would become. The portrait on the book cover shows Nkrumah smiling, which expresses a state of joy and happiness. This facial expression is in concert with the events that would take place—Ghana's independence celebrations—on the day the book was released and circulated in public culture. Nkrumah's facial expression on the cover of his autobiography differs from the three portrait photographs analyzed in this chapter, which appeared on currency, stamps, and other state media during the Nkrumah era and thereafter. I interpret this difference as *aprops*: the photograph on the cover happened to be quite appropriate for the situation of independence, and other portraits of Nkrumah with expressions of seriousness fit the occasion for encountering publics in visual culture with a sense that decolonization was a long game, and it would require an ongoing occupation. A visual commonplace of the portrait is that kente cloth and the patterned undergarment defines the contours of Nkrumah's postcolonial body. In recent years, scholars have drawn parallels between kente cloth and

another significant cultural performance of nationhood that addressed publics using portraits of Nkrumah: commemorative political portrait cloths (Gott, 2011; Ventura, 2012). By wearing printed textiles wrapped around the body or made into coats and shirts featuring photographs of Nkrumah accompanied by other nationalist symbols and leaders, including Queen Elizabeth II, audiences are addressed as postcolonial publics and identities are materialized by acting out identities through bodily performance.

On the eve of Ghanaian national independence in 1957, a newspaper article entitled “A Gay Garb for Ghana” alluded to the use of occasional textiles as a political device for the campaign of Kwame Nkrumah and, by extension the new African public or nation-state. One particular commemorative political cloth bearing Nkrumah’s portrait surrounded by an outlined map of Ghana, written texts, the state flag, and flowers is significant for understanding the textile performance as both a political act and a site of self-transformation. The multi-color cotton printed cloth was performed at Ghana’s independence celebration and continues to be worn as a commemorative text in present-day Ghana. The cloth includes a map of Ghana around Nkrumah’s portrait. The black and white official portrait cloth within the circle is centered and prominently featured on the cloth. Though the original portrait photograph featured a solid-colored background, the background of Nkrumah’s portrait is removed. This effect depicts Nkrumah as a seamless figure against the cream background of the cloth that does not disrupt the surrounding symbols. The text “Dr. Nkrumah Prime Minister of Ghana” appears inside the circle and directly below Nkrumah. The outside of the portrait is encircled by repeating patterns of a flower in red, green, and yellow. The words “Ghana Independence Day March 6, 1957” appears atop Nkrumah’s image. The genre of

portrait cloth provides insight on the rhetorical practice of commemorative textiles.

Commemorative cloths bearing photographs of Nkrumah and other leaders were frequently worn as a performance of civic and political identity in Ghana's rhetorical culture. In the political landscape, commemorative textiles are central to public discourse. Writing about portrait cloths in during African independence, John Picton (2010) suggests that the "production of commemorative cloths accompanied independence," and textiles were important as records of this occasion (p. 15). More importantly, the cultural performance of wearing portrait cloths was one of the ways public participated in independence through material practice. As Picton notes, "Different ways were sought to achieve a harmonious and effective alliance between the demands and possibilities offered by a modern global community and the values and beliefs of an inborn African culture." Potentialities for inviting and accepting or denying and rejecting identifications were made possible through multiple addresses, circulation, and uptake of rhetoric through material acts, such as these.

Identification

Administrative photographs of Nkrumah dressed in kente cloth served to address the people as transhistorical and transcultural postcolonial subjects by facilitating a re-memory of the pre-colonial Ghanaian history, using the African heritage as a site of transcultural subjectivity, and providing an *anti-thesis* to colonial representation of the body. The use of kente as a performance of authority, political history, and cultural heritage illustrates that the display of cloth in official portraits of Nkrumah served to constitute a postcolonial nationalism and an African Personality that was both rooted in pre-colonial African history and systems of authority and regality, even as it enacted a transcendent sense of dignity for

all humans. In other words, the visual images provided a *dis/identification* with colonial, imperial, and Western authority that occupied the former Gold Coast, reversing the colonial gaze and reimagining the demarcations of the body.¹⁵ For instance, photographs of the chief in the Gold Coast typically appeared without a shirt under the kente cloth. All official portraits of Nkrumah display him with an undershirt, and challenge the notion of the ‘naked’ or ‘uncivilized’ African that circulated through visual media in colonial Gold Coast. In this regard, the photographs produced *positive identification* by providing not only Ghanaians a future oriented and open-ended identity¹⁶, but also worked to constitute a positive identification for other African nations and diasporic cultures that experienced colonization and marginalization. For instance, in a 1963 portrait photograph of Julius Nyerere, the first prime minister and president of Tanganyika (Tanzania) is draped in a kente cloth. The visual form of the photograph is similar to Nkrumah’s full body photograph on the cover of *A Portrait of Osagyefo, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah*. Nyerere is also featured wearing kente cloth on an illustrated cover of the first 1970 issue of *The Internationalist*. As noted in the question of “How do the texts act on people?,” *positive identification* was also realized in the appropriation of kente by African American audiences within racial contexts in the United States and Black internationalism. While the consequence of circulating and addressing audiences resulted in *positive identification*, these two processes had instrumental effects for

¹⁵ Some might disagree with this argument given that Nkrumah’s use of textile identity was also a tactic for silencing and homogenizing alternative identities in a nation with a vast amount of cultural and ethnic groups.

¹⁶ It could be argued that Nkrumah’s textile performance was closed opportunities for enacting multiple African selves on the local and international stage. Much of Nkrumah’s textile identity is associated with Asante royalty though he is not from that cultural group. One reason Nkrumah adopted Asante was its capacity for exerting political authority.

projecting a new African identity to the world that visualized human wellbeing, as well as Nkrumah's political authority.

Instrumentation

One of the decisions the new leadership faced was renaming the new nation-state. Nkrumah's administration chose to rename the former Gold Coast after the ancient empire of Ghana. Though the geographic location of the old Empire of Ghana is hundreds of miles away from what is known today as Ghana, this renaming was central to situating the African personality in a rich historical legacy of royalty. Similarly, the use of kente cloth in administrative photography serves as a visual synecdoche for African identity and systems of knowledge and culture. While the official presidential portraits reference the royal empire of pre-colonial Ghana, this rhetorical vision is not relegated to a simple 'traditional' history of Africa. The cultural projection of the African Personality was central to making visible "both the peculiarities and commonalities of Africa and the West, which contributed to the symbolic nationalism that he used as a tool to build a Ghanaian national consciousness" (Fuller, p. 190). In fact, many of the national symbols developed under the "Operation Psychology" campaign characterized or reflected Western systems of the monarchy, such as minting a leader's likeness on national currency and postage stamps (Fuller p. 13, 58, 80).

In the broader realm of the African Diaspora, projecting the African personality led to other instrumental effects. For instance, "Nkrumah's visit and reception [to the United States] had a palpable impact on black America" (Meriwether, p. 175). As the "symbol of a rising Third World" (p. 177), Nkrumah's visits symbolized the symbiotic relationship between Black and African nationalism, and functioned to make as visible the "new African in the

world.” As the James Baldwin stated, “I’d be astonished if anybody reacted to newsreels of movies of Africans the way I did. Now there is pride. The shot of Nkrumah getting off his plane has an effect on all other images. It takes a certain sting out of the African savage” (cited in Meriwether, p. 177). Photographs found in the Getty Images Bettmann collection reveal that Americans held posters featuring an administrative photograph of the first President of the Republic of Ghana clad in kente cloth at a rally during Nkrumah’s 1960 visit to Harlem.

Though portraits of Nkrumah certainly exhibited an instrumental orientation, a study of the images’ materiality reveals consequences for ongoing constitution of global publics. In the conclusion of this chapter, I note some implications of the study and conclusions for analyzing portraits in specific rhetorical events to understand their constitutive force.

Implications and Conclusions

In this chapter, I focused on the visual-material rhetoric of three administrative portraits of Kwame Nkrumah. Though historians have conducted semiotic analysis of artifacts featuring Nkrumah’s portraits, I offered an intertextual study of the photographs’ consequence, as well as their symbolic features. The analysis demonstrated the possibilities of constituting audiences not only through its symbolic qualities that are internal to the text (such as direction of gaze, cropping, type of cloth, etc.), but also the exterior factors that created conditions of possibilities for constituting audiences, such as the texts existence among other texts, as well as the ways texts act on the body beyond. In the next chapter, I provide an analysis of the texts’ function in public culture by studying various contexts where the images appeared, accounting for the constitutive force of these images. In so

doing, I use constitutive critical analysis to investigate portraits of Nkrumah beyond the single situation of Ghana's March 1957 independence to account for the ways photographs were produced and performed by multiple actors, resolved different situational exigencies, exhibited potential for constituting publics through its internal composition and symbolism, and made possible identity transformation through its circulation and reception. In his analysis of a 1961 photograph featuring Algerian pro-independence fighters holding a portrait of Charles De Gaulle, Algeria's president at the time, Fysh (2014) asserted that the photograph functions as a visual address of "transpolitical citizenry" (p. 11), showing that a rhetorical reading of images illuminates how photographs addresses publics and transforms identities through participation and acceptance rather than force and control.

In the next chapter, I study three articulations of the Nkrumah portraits to understand how publics have been, and continue to be, constituted through an ongoing process that, while including breaks and ruptures, continues to do rhetorical work nonetheless and exhibit constitutive potential. Jasinski and Mercieca asserted that "Charland, White, and the many scholars who have drawn upon and extended their respective versions of constitutive rhetoric demonstrate the myriad strategies for examining rhetorical interiors" (p. 319). To further explore the constitutive force of the portrait photographs of Kwame Nkrumah, I study the images' circulation and articulation, and focus on the meanings and rhetorical force shifted in various contexts. In particular, I focus on the ways Nkrumah's textile performance pre-constituted, constituted, and re-constituted publics in varied contexts. As already suggested, dress was a significant element of Ghana's rhetorical culture. At the Old Polo Ground, where the Union Jack was lowered, Nkrumah and CPP members stood at the podium as the crowd

swelled with joy. As Nkrumah announced Ghana's independence, his dress of Northern smock symbolized the occasion. At the same time, portraiture of Nkrumah had begun to circulate as Ghana became the first independent nation-state free from British colonial authority. By illuminating different articulations of Nkrumah's portrait photographs and the resulting effects and influence of the uptake of his textile performance, I show how, as publics enter into a relationship and interact with the images, the artifacts exhibit different constitutive potential and legacies.

CHAPTER FOUR

Displaying the New African: *TIME*'s 1953 Rhetorical Re-Circulation of a Portrait Photograph of Kwame Nkrumah and Post/Colonial Discourse

As indicated in chapter three, portraits of Kwame Nkrumah were reproduced through a range of visual media during the early years of Ghana's path to and through independence. This chapter contributes a study of the constitutive visual-material rhetoric of one portrait of Nkrumah that appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine prior to Ghana's independence in 1957 and the "Year of Africa" that occurred in the 1960s. The portrait had similar compositional and symbolic qualities as the images analyzed in the previous chapter. Scholars have indicated that portraits of Nkrumah continue to be circulated internationally through Ghana's and other nation's state information apparatus even after Nkrumah was ousted by a military coup (Fuller, 2014, 2015; Johnson, 2015). Despite insights gained from recent studies for understanding the images' ongoing influence, fewer studies focus on the ways non-state actors have re-circulated portraits of Nkrumah in global public culture. By focusing on a cover portrait of Nkrumah on a February 1953 issue of *Time* magazine, I illustrate how American magazines activated and decentered the Western gaze at the "new African in the world" and how publics were constituted during the birth of newly formed nation-states in Africa. In so doing, this chapter contributes to rhetorical scholarship on the role of photography in American magazines during "founding moments" (Arendt, 1993) of the 20th century such as civil rights (Gallagher & Zagacki, 2007; Johnson, 2007) and studies that analyze visual representations of Nkrumah in the press (Hess, 2006).

Rhetorical History of Visualizing African Independence and Liberation in the Press

The press was a significant site of contesting colonial legacies and forming national identities in Africa¹⁷ (Codell, 2003), and from the outset of Ghana's independence mass media was an important tool for announcing the awakening of a "new African in the world" (p. 128) on the international stage. March 6, 1957 was a monumental event of the twentieth century and for the further decolonization of Africa. In his postindependence speech, Nkrumah addressed the massive crowd and proclaimed that "At long last, the battle has ended! And thus Ghana, your beloved country is free forever" (cited in Worger, Clark, & Alpers, 2010, p. 128). "During the independence celebrations" as Clement Asante noted, "Ghana hosted 124 journalists, 27 photographers, 23 film crew members and 18 broadcasters representing 74 countries who reported the independence activities to the outside world" (Asante, 1996, p. 14). Newspapers from around the world circulated headlines such as "Birth of a Nation Makes History, Africa" and "Ghana Seen as Pioneer Nation in African Drive for Freedom." Additionally, televised news and documentaries of Ghana's postindependence included titles such as "A New Nation: Gold Coast Becomes Ghana in Ceremony" and "Ghana New Nation." In the broader context of decolonization, the mass mobilization of portrait photographs and photojournalism in the international press was central for showing global publics that the "new African is ready to fight his own battles and...is capable of

¹⁷ The press, including newspapers, radio, and film was central not only newly formed African nations and those in transition during anti-colonial efforts towards decolonization. It was also central for nations in South Asia, particularly India and Ceylon. (See *Iconography of Independence*).

managing his own affairs” (cited in Worger, Clark, & Alpers, 2010, p. 128), including the Ghanaian press prior to and after independence.

News discourse in many postcolonial societies was mainly divided into state and private press (Hasty, 2005). In Ghana, the private press countered the state-information apparatus during independence and liberation movements. For instance, prior to independence, Nkrumah used the “*Accra Evening News* as a blatant propaganda tool in the popular struggle for independence in Ghana” (p. 10). After independence, the *Evening News* was remodeled “from anticolonial opposition to national integration and development” (Hasty, p. 10). The private press was largely condemned as enemies of national unity and development repressed and harassed to near extinction under the Nkrumah regime. While privately owned press such as Nkrumah's *Evening News* were used as an anticolonial strategy against British control, Campbell (2003) suggested that the Ghanaian press was produced as a subservient tool for nation building after independence. As Hasty notes:

The newly independent state of Ghana relied heavily on the nationalized “state media” to integrate a diversity of ethnic and regional identities, political factions, and economic interests through a superordinating narrative of national integration and development. In the state press the modern project of development is primarily portrayed as material progress, a continual process of socioeconomic cultivation, accumulation, and distribution under the “benevolent” leadership of the state (p. 11). Nkrumah's use of the Ghanaian press as a strategy for nation building consequently led to hegemonic control over news media by the state. The repressive environment of the Ghanaian press is most notable in Nkrumah’s stringent press policies and actions against

dissenting views. While “political freedom came to the Continent,” as Barton writes, “so did press freedom disappear” (Barton, 1979). These efforts to censor and control the press through laws that suppressed dissent against the government has led scholars to suggest that images of Nkrumah primarily functioned as cult personality and political propaganda.

Though assessments of political propaganda are warranted as Nkrumah used laws such as the Preventative Detention Act and open demonstrations of criticizing the American press, international press have also been significant for projecting the new African personality through a process of re-circulating images of Nkrumah that exhibit “a precise relationship among a body of remarkably similar compositions patterned deliberately after an earlier, almost identical composition” (Olson, 2009, p. 3), including popular magazines in Africa. While Black newspapers have been consistently referenced for describing how photographs of Nkrumah influenced American audiences, weekly magazines in the United States, like the popular magazines in Africa that featured portraits of Nkrumah, were significant sites for displaying the emergence of newly formed African nations and transforming identities.¹⁸

On February 9, 1953, Nkrumah’s official portrait as Leader of the Government Business and Prime Minister of the Gold Coast appeared on the cover of TIME magazine prior to Nkrumah’s “Motion of Destiny” speech on July 10, 1953 (and four years before

¹⁸ The official portraits of Nkrumah in kente cloth also were displayed in the *New York Times* and other major newspapers. Black newspapers were also central for influencing African Americans, including the *Baltimore Afro-American*, *Chicago Defender*, and the *Philadelphia Courier* (Meriwether, 2002). I would also add that the *Daily Graphic* newspaper, a publication in Ghana, displayed a portrait of Nkrumah on the new independence stamp prior to independence. Portraits of Nkrumah also appeared on the cover of *Drum* and *New African* magazines.

independence). *Time* magazine's cover story on Nkrumah was an important media event given that Nkrumah "became the cynosure of the world's gaze in the 1950s," and very few African leaders of anti-colonial movements from "geo-politically unimportant countries...made the cover of *Time* Magazine" (Rathbone, 2000, p. 48). The magazine cover "set[s] a mood, a tone that demonstrates what *Time* considers to be important" (Mcmanus, 1976, p. 195). In the following section, I analyze the visuality and materiality of the 1953 *Time*'s cover featuring Nkrumah in order to explicate its constitutive influence at the end of this chapter.

Visuality and Materiality of a Portrait of Kwame Nkrumah in *Time*, February 1953

What are the compositional and symbolic qualities of the texts?

The cover is surrounded by one thick red border and a series of repeating thin black and white lines. A layered illustration rests within the iconic red frame, featuring a portrait of Kwame Nkrumah in kente cloth is slightly superimposed on top of a black map of Africa inset with textile black textile patterns. The border of the map is outlined in a golden yellowish glow, and the background radiates with an orange circle emulating the rising of a sun. The "TIME" masthead and "THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE" selling line overlaid atop the map of Africa are set in a black, serif typeface. The main cover line and cover credit line are centered in a white box below Nkrumah's portrait. The first part of the main cover line reads "GOLD COAST'S KWAME NKRUMAH" and is set in a black, serif typeface. The second part of the main cover line appears in a black, sans-serif typeface below the first and reads "In the Dark Continent dawn's early light?" The credit to Boris Chaliapin, known

as the “swiftest of *TIME*'S cover artists” is one of many for the son of Russian opera singer Feodor Chaliapin who illustrated over 400 *TIME* covers.

Nkrumah’s eyes and head do not face the camera, which creates a complex relationship between Nkrumah and the viewer. Nkrumah’s body “conveys the absence of a sense of interaction” by not directly looking at the viewer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 43). For many Americans, media representations such as the *TIME*'s cover portrait were perhaps their only encounters with Africa. As a result, media representations play a significant role in the global imagination of the “Other,” and “constituting and framing the expectations of globalization, the symbolic stretching of social relations across time and distance” (p. 15). In the case of the 9 February 1953 issue, this was perhaps the first time audiences had encountered Kwame Nkrumah and the Gold Coast, especially within the political imaginary of African independence and liberation movements. Hence, the first introduction of Nkrumah as the anti-colonial leader of the Convention People’s Party in the Gold Coast was an important one for representing decolonization, displaying the social transformation of colonial identities, and altering and cultivating Americans’ relationship to these changes. Nkrumah’s eyes, however, disallow an intimate relationship with the viewer, and the position of his body illustrates a sense of distance. Nkrumah’s body position invites gazing at the colonial body. “It allows the viewer to scrutinize the represented characters as though they were specimens in a display case” (Kress & van Leewun, 2006, p. 43). Nkrumah’s body position is turned slightly to the left. At the same time, the light in Nkrumah’s eyes captured in the illustration indicates a sense of humanness, which creates a relationship between the viewer and the subject as Nkrumah is looked upon as a body with

vitality and life. In portraiture, including photography, documentary film, and motion pictures, the practice of having light reflected in the subject's eyes is known as eye light or catch light. This essential feature of portraiture "helps draw your audience into looking more closely at the face and eyes of the subject. Having no eye light can imply that the character is dark, evil, duplicitous, is no longer living, or...might be a vampire, zombie, or robot" (Bowen & Thompson, 2013). The map itself has a radiant light on the outside even though the mass of the continent is entrenched in dark matter. Light emerges through the inset strip patterns of the map, which symbolizes kente cloth as a unifying symbol for the emergence of African independence. In this sense, the whole of Africa is united by a common royal legacy that, in this case, is rooted in a distant past of royalty and prosperity that could provide the resources for identity-formation for all African people across the Diaspora.

The symbolic features of the cover portrait inject a vision of African independence on the horizon wherein Nkrumah and Ghana would play a central role in liberation on the whole continent. Furthermore, the use of kente cloth on Nkrumah's body and inside the African map presages how African Americans would later take up kente cloth as a symbolic feature of Pan-Africanity. One other important feature of the cover portrait is its material consequence beyond compositional and symbolic features, particularly the existence of Nkrumah's photographs among other *Time* magazine covers.

What is the significance of the texts' material existence?

The date 9 February 1953 marked the first occasion when *Time* magazine featured an African leader of an anti-colonial movement against British authority. The iconic red border frames the cover story as a "visual drum roll that has the effect of heightening everything

inside it so that the image and the line get enhanced power and relevance and focus” (Stengel, 2013, p. 7). The cover portrait of Nkrumah highlighted the significance of not only the Gold Coast’s independence but the emergence of nationalism that was happening on the continent of Africa. It served two important functions: framing African independence and liberation within the broader geopolitical shifts in the British monarch and circulating as a symbol of African royalty and postcolonial personhood.

While the cover portrait depicts Nkrumah as “being hailed as the leader of not only Ghana but also Africa and all people of African descent” (Rathbone, 2000), he was not the only African leader to appear on the cover prior to the February 1953 issue. Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, appeared twice on the cover. In November 1930, *TIME* featured a cover portrait of Selassie following his coronation as the Emperor of Ethiopia. The historic event was attended by a host of world leaders and representatives from twelve nations, including the United States and the United Kingdom. The coronation was also covered by other U.S. news media, including the *New York Times*, and *TIME* reported that “throughout the world ... Negro news organs hailed him as their own” (“King of Kings,” 1930). In January 1936, Selassie appeared on the cover as *TIME*’s “Man of Year,” a distinction given to the Emperor “who rose out of murky obscurity and carried his country with him up & up into brilliant focus before a pop-eyed world” (“Man of the Year,” 1936). Though Ethiopia has never been colonized by a European power, it was invaded by Italy in 1935. Selassie’s honor by *TIME* Magazine came during the Second Italo-Ethiopian War that lasted from October 1935 to May 1936. In both portraits of Selassie, he is dressed in attire reminiscent of his coronation portraits that depict the Emperor in Ethiopian regalia. While Selassie directly

addresses the viewer in the 1930 portrait as opposed to looking away in the 1936 portrait, the two compositions symbolize the future of Ehtiopian independence. When Selassie faces the viewer in 1930, the viewer enters into a relationship with Selassie's arrival as the new Emperor of Ethiopia. It addresses the public as "Hey, you! I'm here." However, the composition of the 1936 portrait compositionally depicts an Ethiopia in a different transition, one that is at war with Fascist Italy under Benito Mussolini. Similarly, Nkrumah's body position on the 1953 cover depicts the Gold Coast and Africa in transition. Though the material existence of Nkrumah's body and the map of Africa suggests an arrival, Nkrumah's refusal to address the viewer does not suggest a definitive arrival. At the same time, as I have noted earlier in this chapter about Nkrumah's portrait, Selassie's body is positioned as a site of display where the anthropological gaze on Africa becomes activated once again. As reported by *TIME* in the same issue where the cover appeared, "Until 1935 the country was known mainly to foreign savants as a "museum of peoples" who remarkably preserve the habits and customs of their various antiquities" ("Man of the Year," 1936). In contrast to Selassie's portraits, Nkrumah's image is supplemented by a rising sun in the background and a map of Africa in the foreground. Both elements suggest that the Gold Coast and Nkrumah represent a new beginning or the dawn of a new era despite Ethiopia being a symbol of African independence and Selassie's distinction of being named one of *TIME*'s "Man of the Year" in the early 20th century.

The cover's material existence also framed the emergence of African independence within context of other *TIME* covers that illustrated the decline of the British Empire. While Selassie was hailed as the "King of Kings" on the cover of *TIME* in 1930, figures of the

British monarchy have appeared on the cover of *TIME* since its early days of circulation. Most notably, in April 1924, the first cover portrait of King George V featured the monarch in a black and white illustration facing the viewer and framed in a close up body composition. Obviously, the King's dress illustrates a sense of formality and the image is either a painting or drawing. What is particularly interesting is the subtle eye light or catch light in the upper quarter of the King's iris. "The eye is the life of the face, and without enough light falling into it to produce a catch light, there cannot be produced that speaking likeness of the subject" (Raymer, 1902, p. 27—28). The aesthetic effect of the catch light illuminates King George V's personal character that is lauded in *TIME*. The stillness of his facial expression is symbolically transformed as an expression of "the stability of the Monarchy through all the frightful years of his reign" ("Grand National," 1924). King George VI also appeared on the cover of *TIME* several times between the 1930s and 1940s. The March 1944 cover portrait of the new British monarchy is particularly telling of the change in guard in the colonial world after the post-World War II period, as well as the shifting role of the British monarchy. For instance, in the May 1939 *TIME* cover story of King George VI is described as "virtually a highly paid civil servant whose job is to be a symbol of empire" given the looming presence of World War II ("Civil Servant, 1939).¹⁹ The March 1944 cover story on the British Empire following the wake of war between Allied and Axis powers symbolizes transformations that would take place in the postwar period:

¹⁹ Within four months of appearing on the May 1939 *TIME* cover, King George VI declared that the British were officially at war. Later, within one month of appearing on the cover again on May 1944, Allied troops landed at Normandy to fight Nazi Germany on June 6, 1944, which is better known as D-Day.

[King George VI] therefore embodies a hope and a prospect which is all-important to Britons, important to all the world. War has at once tightened and loosened the bonds of Empire. Sovereign, national aims conflict in Canada with a never-dying tie to Britain. Aspirations both regional and national stir New Zealand and Australia. South Africa's great Prime Minister, Field Marshal and Elder Statesman Jan Christiaan Smuts, feels grave responsibility both for Imperial Britain and for the independent integrity of his own country. India, the jewel of Empire, strains away from Empire, yet gives (or sells) men and wealth for Britain's fight. ("Man of England, 1944).

In contrast to cover portraits of depicting King George V, King George VI, and Queen Elizabeth II as symbols of the British monarchy and empire, the existence of Nkrumah's cover portrait makes visible a different power rising on the "Dark Continent" that is neither colonial or precolonial but rather located in African modernity and a royal past. The most distinguishing feature of this transformation is kente cloth draped over Nkrumah's body and covering the map of Africa. Though Selassie represented a sense of independent Africa, the existence of kente frames this inevitably within the context of Asante royalty and the total liberation of the entire continent rather than one model nation. "Though Ghana had a population of less than ten million, Nkrumah, with all his preaching for pan-Africanism, tried to assume the mantle of prospective or, at least, symbolic leader of Africa as a whole" (Meisler, 2007, p. 13). Just as the Allied powers advanced on the front to defeat the Axis powers, the "black front" of African independence and liberation was now approaching upon the colonial powers so-called claim to Africa (*TIME*, "Dominion in Rhodesia," 1953). Queen Elizabeth II might have rekindled hope for the British monarch, but Nkrumah's personality

and the Gold Coast's beacon of light set ablaze a fire for freedom on the continent. This point is visually represented by the rising sun in the background of Nkrumah's portrait, a symbolic notation of high energy and temperature that characterizes the early years of Africa's independence.

Nkrumah is represented as a symbol of Africa in contrast to the King George V and Queen Elizabeth II. This function was primarily facilitated through the rhetorical functions of maps and flags. The March 1944 cover portrait further substantiates the waning of the Empire's reach in the colonial world. The illustrated portrait shows that the King has aged since his photographs first graced the cover on January 1925 as Albert of York and on March 1937 as England's new king. It is clear that the war has hardened the monarch, which becomes visually evident in the details of his facial structure and lines under and around his eyes. The war has not only worn on Britain, but it has also worn on the monarch as the symbol of the empire. Interestingly, the British flag appears behind King George VI, the first time the flag has been used in a portrait of the King or Queen on the cover of *TIME*. However, the flag would appear once more on the February 1952 featuring Queen Elizabeth II as new monarch following the King's death. The main cover title below her portrait reads, "Queen Elizabeth: The crown remains, the symbol lives." Visually, the flag in this cover portrait differs from the one that appeared on March 1944 behind King George VI. It is larger and does not have a shadow around the edge of the left side. Whereas King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II represent symbols of the British Empire, Nkrumah is figured as a symbol of Africa. Neither monarch needs a crown to indicate their royal status, but the African map tucked closely to Nkrumah's head could be read as a replacement for Nkrumah's crown.

While the flag of Great Britain was used to depict the lasting effect of the empire despite World War II, the map of Africa behind Nkrumah symbolized dissolution of the empire's reach by something literally much larger in mass than the island in the United Kingdom.

What do the texts do to (or against or with) other texts?

Though the *Time* magazine was a significant venue for framing African independence in the American imagination, framing is “likely to come into sharpest focus when we compare similar news stories through contrasting media contexts” (Shaefer, 2003, p. 93). In comparing the cover story to *Life*, *Newsweek*, *Look*, and *National Geographic* magazines, all four magazines ran cover stories related to the emergence of a new Africa during the same year as the February 1953 *Time* cover of Nkrumah circulated in public culture and cover stories.²⁰ Additionally, magazines featured cover stories on African independence as newly formed nation-states gained independence from colonial authority throughout the 1960s. Though the *Time* cover shares some similarities with the aforementioned magazines, such as *supplementing* illustrated portraits with a map of Africa, the February 1953 cover also differed from other magazines by *competing*, *appropriating*, *challenging*, and *silencing* other views of how the new African would emerge in the world's political community.

On May 4, 1953, On May 4, 1953, *Life* magazine featured a cover story on “Africa: A Continent in Ferment.” The issue offered readers “an exciting 10,000-mile trip” through Africa “along the route shown on the map, ending up in the southernmost (and currently

²⁰ Additionally, *Life*, *Newsweek*, *Look*, and *National Geographic* published stories on Queen Elizabeth II's 1953 coronation around the same time as cover stories on African independence were published.

newsiest) part of the continent” (*Life*, 1953, p. 9). The entire magazine was dedicated to the special issue and the editors “omitted all of *Life*’s regular features except the most important news story of the week, the prisoner of war exchange in Korea” (p. 9). Three months later, *National Geographic* published a lengthy cover story on a “Safari Through Changing Africa” by Elsie May Bell Grosvenor, featuring three maps and 41 illustrations depicting the “land of new consciousness” (“Africa Making Rapid Changes,” 1953). Though *Look* magazine would publish a cover story on “Africa: The World’s Most Explosive Continent” two years later, it presented “four challenging views of the awakening giant” by John Gunther, Adali Stevenson, Robert Ruark, Edward M. Korry, and a preface by Ernest Hemingway (“Africa,” 1955). A comparison of *Time*, *Life*, and *National Geographic*, and *Look* magazine reveals that each publication use text to *supplement* cover photographs with descriptive words—“safari,” “dark,” “ferment,” “explosive”—to amplify for American audiences imaginations of an ‘old’ Africa that is coming into a ‘new’ age of modernity. As Barthes stated, the “photograph is not only perceived, received, it is *read*, connected more or less consciously by the public that consumes it to a traditional stock of signs” (1977, p. 19). For instance, in the *National Geographic* cover story, Grosvenor referenced some changes taking place in Africa, such as ‘modern’ telephone systems. Grosvenor’s observation described the transformation within logics of modernity related to technological progress. In a 1936 article in *Time* magazine, the author suggested that Africa’s “‘dark heart’ had long since been opened by railways and excellent automobile roads” (“Paradise Lost,” 1936). In *supplementing* the cover photographs with descriptive words of Africa, the magazine covers frame

independence as an awakening from primitiveness and into the dawn of freedom by way of modernity.

Though the February 1953 *Time* cover portrait participated in this framing alongside other publications, it also *challenged* these images by depicting Nkrumah as the leader for bringing Gold Coast and African into independence. Neither portrait on the cover of *Life* or *Look* featured an African who was leading an anti-colonial movement against British authority, which perhaps allayed fears about the welfare of the United States if newly formed African nations were led by anti-colonist that might have sided with the Communist rather than Western powers after World War II and in the midst of decolonization. The material existence of Nkrumah's body signals a shift in the American imagination regarding how freedom would be brought into fruition by someone of 'Black' African descent who would contest British authority while also being amenable to maintaining a relationship with the former colonizer by remaining in the Commonwealth.²¹ The *Time* cover also *corrected* the urgency of independence. The bold letter of the words "TIME" above the African map illustrates that decolonization is not something from a far distant future but rather emerging and already upon us. The "LIFE" masthead that appears in a red block appears in the top corner above the portrait of an African. The masthead works with the image to indicate that the 'face of Africa' that appeared on the cover is representative of African people and the conditions under which newly formed nations would emerge from primitiveness and

²¹ I use the term "black" Africa in the same way that the American press described the continent in order to further demonstrate the ways that Nkrumah's body was visualized in the American imagination of Africa.

backwardness. The “LOOK” masthead above the portrait of the mother looking at her child with an uncertainty about its future addresses and directs viewers to gaze at the photograph with a sense of the sublime; the mother and child invokes a sense of compassion while the word “explosive” in the main cover line defines the photograph and Africa’s transition as potentially dangerous.

So far I have described how the compositional and symbolic features of the February 1953 *Time* cover did rhetorical work alongside both the magazine itself and other major magazines. The potential for influencing publics, however, was largely dependent upon the cover’s durability. The text’s materiality enables its sustained circulation across diverse publics, as well as its preservation over time beyond the 1953 event.

What are the apparatuses and degrees of durability displayed by the texts?

In the article “Woman collects photographs for Time covers,” Judy Hamilton (1981) reported on a *Time* magazine collector’s effort to gather autographs from people who appeared on the cover of *Time*. Marie Rutledge had collected about 200 *Time* covers from the 1950s and 1960s. After sending request to *Time* personalities all over the world, Rutledge received signatures from people such as Iranian Premier Mohammed Mossadegh, Queen Frederika of Greece, Audrey Hepburn, President Dwight Eisenhower, and India’s Vinoba Bhave. Kwame Nkrumah’s cover portrait was also among the list of *Time* magazines autographed. Rutledge’s efforts are important for understanding three important aspects of *Time* magazine’s durability and vulnerability. First, the covers have been collected as commemorative texts that indicate its ability to be stored and archived. Second, the covers are durable enough to travel globally and be transformed by writing on the cover while still

retaining its visual eloquence. At the same time, the conditions of travel indicate a third important aspect of the text's materiality: paper can deteriorate through natural erosion and the ways publics handle the text. For instance, one cover returned "badly wrinkled months after Mrs. Rutledge had mailed it" (Hamilton, 1981, p. 14a). Fourth, and most important for understanding a text's possibilities for preservation, the magazine cover itself is perhaps more durable than the inside pages of the entire magazine. In fact, Rutledge "didn't keep the insides of the magazines, which would have provided the stories to go with the covers" (p. 14a). Given the primacy of *Time* covers for communicating important events in American life, it receives a different printing process than the internal pages. The use of coated paper for the cover sustains its durability while uncoated paper for the inside pages provide less protection for deterioration. As a result, the possibilities for reproduction and preservation of the cover has been retained through its material dimension which also impacts its rhetorical influence as *Time* magazine covers continue to circulate through social media.

What are the texts' modes or possibilities of reproduction or preservation?

Though some institutional archives might have capabilities for storing back issues of newspapers, magazines, and other printed press, *Time* has proactively reproduced the magazine covers and news stories by digitizing entire issues. In 2014, *Time* released a digital archive that offered readers "a week-by-week account of how the world got the way it is today" (Rothman, 2014). The weekly newsmagazine provides readers with more than simply a textual version of the issue, which they do offer online. "TIME's new digital archive allows...the experience of flipping through the physical magazine, showing the graphics, pictures and advertisements that accompanied every TIME magazine story, dating back to

the first issue in 1923.” In addition to all *Time* covers, the portrait of Kwame Nkrumah is digitized along with the full inside cover story. Though publics are able to browse through all magazine issues online, print publications such as *Using Biographies in Your Classroom* (2008) reproduce only important stories of the 20th century. In this case, Kwame Nkrumah’s portraits continue to be reproduced and preserved for multiple audiences to engage with the rise of African nationalism as a significant world event and the significance of Nkrumah and Ghana in relation to it. *Using Biographies* provides teaching resources for using *TIME* magazine covers as personal narratives for social studies education. Narratives of personalities are used to “[encourage] students to place themselves within the framework of history, helping them see that just as the people profiled in this book helped shaped history, they also have the potential to influence the world around them” (2008, p. 5). The personal narrative approach offers students “a window into the greater world,” which differs from institutional narratives that “can leave many students disconnected from the material” (p. 5). The book is divided into two parts: strategy lessons and 60 biographies and cover images culled from *TIME* magazine. Though the book includes heroic figures such as Mohandas Ghandi from “ethnically, culturally, geographically, and vocationally” diverse backgrounds, it also includes controversial personalities such as Adolf Hitler as an “educational counterpoint” (p. 10). This educational setting provides an indication of the diverse audiences and everyday lives that the cover continues to touch. Blair’s question of how texts act on people opens up inquires about what the symbolicity and materiality of texts actually do.

How do the texts act on people?

The portrait of Nkrumah functioned as a “demand” image for bringing American publics into a relationship with the coming of a new age in the 20th century (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). By demanding publics to look at the cover, the material existence of the portrait photographs works to decenter the Western gaze at the African subject. As Hodeir noted of a colonial exhibition, “Seeing [Africans] in their “natural habitat,” the photographer, the portraitist, the journalist, and the simple tourist experienced the “innocent native” as a representative of a former stage of human development” (p. 234). Nkrumah’s appearance on the cover held significant rhetorical power for addressing publics to “enter into some kind of imaginary relation” with Nkrumah, the Gold Coast, and the new African that would appear in March 1957 and thereafter (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). *TIME*’s iconic red border facilitates an interaction between the viewer to bear witness and the cover portrait by creating a direct visual address that compels audiences to enter into a relationship with the subject being portrayed. As a “demand” image, the red border “acknowledges the viewers explicitly, addressing them with a visual ‘you’” (Kress & Van Leewun, 2006, p. 117). As Richard Stengel, Managing Editor at *Time*, put it, the border “grabs you by the lapels and says, “Pay Attention” (2013, p. 7). Though the words “Dark Continent” marks Nkrumah as a racially and ethnically bound African body that has long been a site of tourism and primitiveness in the Western imagination, readers are pre-constituted to not only bear witness to the transformation but also identify with the new African as part of the world’s political community. The red border draws attention to the contents inside the frame even it is for a brief moment. At the time, the Gold Coast was still a colony, but Nkrumah’s cover portrait

provided a moment when American publics came into contact with rising African nationalism, and were invited to reconsider notions about Africanity in the American imagination. Nkrumah's body provided a postcolonial site for witnessing that independence would not simply be granted, bestowed, or given by the colonial authority. Nkrumah's presence signals that the long battle towards freedom would be fought for and attained similar to non-violent strategies for civil rights happening in the United States. In fact, during the 1960s, cover stories about African independence and liberation appeared in the same years as cover stories about significant moments in civil rights.

Analysis of Constitutive Visual-Material Rhetoric

Circulation

In chapter one, I set the overall scene of this dissertation by charting a brief rhetorical history of Ghana's road to and through independence. As I noted, Nkrumah's "Midnight Speech" was one of the defining moments where publics were addressed with a postcolonial identity that was structured by a Pan-Africanist collectivity for civic engagement aimed at building Africa's social, political, and economic legacy after independence. The results of analyzing the material rhetoric of the cover portrait of Nkrumah, however, reveal that "a new African" in the world would be achieved by addressing various publics across spatial and temporal boundaries through interactions with the images. Hence, the portraits exhibit potential for constituting identities through habitual encounters with global publics, providing opportunities to come into contact with the images and enhancing rhetorical force. This identification was made possible through encounters with photographs of Nkrumah wearing kente cloth that circulated through the American press, which I would argue was a

central factor alongside Black newspapers and magazines for materializing kente cloth as the atomization of two statements—“a new African in the world” and “meaningless unless it is linked up to the total liberation of Africa”—made in his “Midnight Speech” at independence.²² At the same time, the cover’s circulation among other magazines resulted in a paradox of negative identification with Africanity.

Paradox

The *Time* cover had several instrumental effects by putting a few ideas on the table: importance of African independence in 20th world history, Ghana as beacon of hope, Nkrumah as a symbol of Pan-Africanism, and the emergence of kente cloth as a symbol of Pan-Africanity. At the same time, they reinforced negative identification of the African continent. Consider the “Foreign News” section in *Time*’s 9 February 1953 issue. The Gold Coast is referred to as “Britain’s pet colony.” The American Colonization Society, the ‘founders’ of Liberia, are lauded for their “do-gooding.” The “colonial elite” of French West Africa are described as “the product of the French policy of “assimilating” educated Africans into French culture.” People from the French Equatorial Africa are defined as “near-savages,” consisting of a “Pygmies and the women shown in the U.S. by Ringling Bros, who

²² In “The presidency as pastiche: Atomization, circulation, and rhetorical instability” (2012), Stephen Heidt uses the term “atomization” to describe the “fragmented nature of presidential texts and the meaning divined from these texts” (p. 623). I find this concept useful for explaining the relationship between photographs of Kwame Nkrumah and the appropriation of his textile performance. A number of scholar credit Nkrumah with popularizing kente (Ross, 1998; Boateng, 2011). I situate this fact within the context of his portrait photographs and broader bodily performance during his visits to the United States. Of course, part of the popularity of kente can also be attributed to long relationship between African Americans and Ghanaians (see Gaines, K. K. (2006). *American Africans in Ghana: Black expatriates and the civil rights era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press). But I argue that photographs created “contact zones” for re-imagining the black Diaspora (see Petty, S. (2008). *Contact zones: Memory, origin, and discourses in Black diasporic cinema*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press).

stretch their lower lips to the size of soup plates. A few Black “elite” are French citizens.” The Belgian Congo is a place where “natives, under hard-working capitalism, have a living standard far above Central Africa's average.” Kenya is described as a place where “whites grow much of Britain's coffee in its exclusive White Highlands, rule 5,500,000 blacks and 100,000 Indians with a strong hand, and now live with guns at their sides in fear of the terrorist Mau Mau secret society.” The article also reinforced imaginations of Africa as a vast jungle ripe for exploiting natural resources and the colonial gaze of tourism. Another indication of negative identification is aligning Nkrumah with tribal qualities exhibited through his textile performance. As noted in the chapter three, kente cloth functions as a communicative device through patterns, colors, and other symbolic qualities of the text. The cover disidentifies kente cloth with royalty and reinterprets the cloth within the Western gaze of associating the new African with old logics of tribal and primitive. This point is clarified by the caption under a portrait featuring the Liberian president and Nkrumah: “PRESIDENTIAL WELCOME: Host and guest (wearing robes of his Gold Coast tribe) meet for the first time before portrait of Joseph Roberts, Liberia’s first president (1847)” (“Sunrise on the Gold Coast,” 1953). Though the cover story mentions that Nkrumah was “born at the jungle’s edge in the mud-hut village of Norkful,” kente cloth is misidentified as a tribal cloth of Norkful rather than Akan royalty.

Implications and Conclusions

As I showed in this chapter, Nkrumah’s portrait participated in a complex web of discourses in the American press related to the impending impact of World War II on the British Empire, fears and questions about the emergence of African independence and

liberation in the post-war period, and global imaginations of Africa mediated through the press. Though scholars have assessed Nkrumah's portraits as either political propaganda or projection of cultural nationalism for Ghanaians provide well-balanced critiques of Nkrumah's ideology, policies, and visual practices, historians and rhetorical scholars have yet to map the circulatory life of his ideas and artifacts in Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian contexts that continue to permeate visual and material culture. Re-circulation challenges critiques of political propaganda as the main effect and influence of images featuring Nkrumah in the press as these images have touched diverse audiences in global public culture and "partisans exercised a circumscribed degree of rhetorical agency in that they attempted to reshape a composition's contingent meanings for different audiences" (Olson, 2012, p. 3).

Visual artifacts might shift tropes or have differing consequences depending upon the locale and rhetorical culture in which audiences encounter the texts. Further visual rhetorical studies of re-circulation could benefit from employing digital research methods to 'map the thickness' of constitutive scenes and further investigate the consequence and rhetorical influence of visual artifacts that emerged through African independence and liberation movements. Though researching the postcolonial archive continues to be a challenge given that some artifacts were destroyed after military coups, presenting a need for locating information in institutional archives that span different continents, nations, and regions, and exist in private archives, digital research methods such as Gries's "iconographic tracking" (2015) provides rhetorical critics with a means for studying how publics continue to circulate and use visual artifacts. Future studies might also focus on the circulation of Nkrumah's portraits in non-state owned Ghanaian or non-Ghanaian press considering that scholars have

generally regarded state-owned publications in Ghana as a “primary outlet for representations associated with Nkrumah” (Hess, 2006, p. 29).

In the next chapter, I demonstrate how “Operation Psychology” functioned as an early form of nation branding, which has implications for the ways critics and designers might investigate present-day efforts for branding identities. I also suggest ways that scholars and practitioners might use constitutive critical analysis to investigate the rhetorical influence of images and other artifacts that circulate through nation branding strategies. Particularly, I articulate how Blair’s six questions for studying materiality and Jasinski and Mercieca’s framework for studying circulation, reception and articulation provides designers with a conceptual approach for critically thinking through the process of designing national identities through processes of nation branding and consumer branding.

CHAPTER FIVE

Designing the New African: Concluding Thoughts

In this project, I offered a critical rhetorical understanding of what might be called *postcolonial nation branding* following African independence. I showed how and to what extent analyzing the constitutive dimensions of visual representations of the nation leads to an illumination of the “present African condition and the unfinished project of decolonization” (Enwezor, 2001, p. 15). Though historians have asserted that portraits of Nkrumah functioned propagandistically, such as distribution through the control of media, repression of contesting representations of the nation, and homogenization of ethnic identities, this project has demonstrated how the artifacts simultaneously functioned constitutively to make visible the possibilities of adopting an alternative postcolonial identity through a future-looking subjectivity that combined a pre-colonial and modern identity fashioned through the idea of the African personality. This study has implications for further examinations of Nkrumah’s visual strategies, extending rhetorical scholarship using the constitutional perspective and offering a conceptual model for studying the possibilities and pitfalls of branding identities.

Chapters one and two specifically addressed the first two research questions: How does critical examination of Operation Psychology using conceptually oriented rhetorical criticism contribute to methods for analyzing constitutive rhetorics of visual culture? How does critical examination of Operation Psychology contribute to rhetorical theories of constitutive rhetoric? Whereas historians and rhetorical scholars have yet to fully unpack the

critical and theoretical foundations of “constitutive rhetoric” and propaganda to fully appraise the nature, function, and scope of Nkrumah’s visual strategies, I explicated and provided a means for addressing that gap through two conceptual tools: conceptually, contextually, and visually informed constitutive critical analysis and a thick lexicon of theoretical concepts related to constitutive rhetoric. In chapter one, I extended methods of constitutive critical analysis for investigating visual culture by infusing Jasinski’s conceptually oriented criticism, Blair’s rhetorical theory of materiality, and Jasinski and Mercieca’s approach for analyzing circulation and reception. In chapter two, I conducted a rhetoric of history/history of rhetoric to locate potential avenues for rhetorical inquiry that could contribute to writing history about visual culture during and through African independence, and mapped five terms of constitutive rhetorical practice that can be used to study the rhetorical influence of visual images. Though scholars have developed theories of constitutive rhetoric and models of constitutive critical analysis, the study revealed that critical constitutive analyses of cases such as this one are needed to provide different accounts of human history and to correct the record with new insights.

Chapter three and four attended to the last two research questions: To what extent does a rhetorical study of the constitutive legacy of “Operation Psychology” contribute to explaining how and why Ghanaian visual culture continues to circulate across global publics in contemporary times? And, to what extent does a rhetorical historical study of visual culture illuminate the paradoxes and consequences of visibility and nation branding? By examining the materiality, circulation, and articulation of portrait photographs, this project showed that visual practices using the photographs continued through varied rhetorical

performances and exhibited both constitutive and propagandistic properties. During Ghana's postindependence and the "Year of Africa," portraits of Nkrumah circulated through multifronted modes of communication, including public and private press, national currencies and stamps, and textile cloth. While scholars credit Nkrumah with popularizing Ghanaian kente cloth as a symbol of African identity (Ross, 1998; Boateng, 2011), I asserted that official portraits of Nkrumah wearing kente cloth was central to constructing postcolonial national and African diasporan identity through textile performance. The 1953 portrait of Nkrumah on the cover of *TIME* magazine illustrated that kente cloth was a significant visual element for pre-constituting postcolonial identities. As I will show in the next section, the rhetorical practice of re-constituting identities through kente cloth continues in Nike's 2015 and 2016 "Power of One" branding campaign. Studying the visual logics of the portraits, broader circuits of production, and the use of visual images in specific situations demonstrated that visual images exist on a continuum of influence depending upon the situation and the images' circulation. In the case of "Operation Psychology," the "Midnight Speech" was a significant "founding moment" (Arendt, 1993) that might have come into being with more force and energy than other moments. The reception of visual images, however, revealed that visual practices can lead to unintended yet highly significant effects over time, as well as contradictory processes for achieving identification. Nkrumah's nation branding campaign was used to constitute publics after independence, however, the coup demonstrated the same strategies may be used to foreclose upon agency and may negate the constitutive possibilities exhibited in the early days of independence.

In correcting the historical record of Nkrumah's photographs as mainly propaganda, the findings of this study has suggested that rhetorical critics should consider analyzing constitutive influence on a continuum as indicated by emerging concepts such as *positive/negative identification*. Certainly, the relationship and/or distinction between rhetoric and propaganda has been of longstanding interest among scholars studying persuasion (Bryant, 1953; Burke, 1935; Jowett & O'Donnell, 2005; Pratkanis and Aronson, 2001; Perry-Giles, 2002; Sproule, 1994; Taite and Thorton, 2000; Youngerman, 1953). In *Propaganda & Persuasion* (2005), Jowett and O'Donnell described propaganda as "the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (p. 7). The authors defined propaganda as a form of communication that conceals purpose and identity, controls information flow, manages public opinion, and manipulates behavior. Constitutive rhetoric differs from propaganda in two particular ways. First, as I have outlined in chapter two, constitutive rhetoric is not based upon the rhetor's intent to induce audiences to action for the benefit of the rhetor. Publics are invited to accept, act out, modify, and event challenge identities that are addressed to them. This requires that means for providing possibilities for communication is not based on controlling information. It is based on opening up spaces where publics can come together to participate in a collectivization on their own accord in a dialogic manner. In the case of addressing audiences through visual means, the purpose is to present an identity that does not overcompensate the current for the future. It presents a narrative that is oriented toward a future looking path, allowing for collectivization rather than division. I have asserted that, while Nkrumah certainly employed propagandistic

strategies such as controlling state media and enforcing laws against political dissent, the narratives presented during the early days of Ghana's independence prior to the coup hailed people to locate themselves in a collective "we" through textile performance and reframing the African personality as an always future state of becoming that acknowledges but provides a means for transcending the ongoing issues of division.

Analyzing the rhetorical force of visual culture for constituting identities provides a fresh perspective on critical studies of African independence, and it also offers insights on design practices that practitioners might employ as critical praxis. Rhetorical paradigms for design research have been prescribed, however, these models are mostly based upon instrumentalist paradigms of rhetoric. The resulting consequence is a limited view of how the rhetorical perspective of design can provide resources for designing campaigns that construct and reconstruct identities. One criterion of doing rhetorical criticism is contributing to rhetorical theory (Foss, 1983). However, rhetorical criticism can also be used by designers to inform a critical practice. While some design scholars, practitioners, and theorists focus on the intentions, rationale, and purpose of a visual artifacts, rhetorical criticism can be used to assess, analyze, critique, and enact conditions for shared agency between multiple audiences (Foss, 2006). Employing constitutive rhetorical criticism as a form of design practice opens rather than close opportunities for identity formation.

Application

Design theorists and critics have argued that rhetoric positions designers to better understand the persuasive dimensions of products for varied audiences (Buchanan, 2007), and offers a "possibility of systematizing the discipline of design to explain how designers

invent and develop the arguments contained in their products and how designers may present their ideas persuasively” (Buchanan 1995, p. 26). Ehses noted that a rhetorical inquiry of design integrates methodology, imagination, and intuition with an “open conceptual vocabulary for confronting communication problems” (p. 1). From these views, rhetoric can offer strategies for resolving immediate design exigencies. Gallagher, Martin, and Ma (2011) provided a path forward for opening rhetorical paradigms of design research to more robust critical inquiries for effective practice. The authors developed a critical framework of *visual wellbeing* based on rhetorical theories of eudaimonia (flourishment) and enargeia (vividness) to examine how and whether the persuasive dimensions of emotional appeals and visual pleasure can promote human wellbeing. Critical frameworks such as visual wellbeing offer practitioners a systematic approach for critical practice that are largely unexplored in design (Lees-Maffei, 2012, p. 3).

Following Gallagher, Martin, and Ma, I offer the critical framework used in this project—constitutive visual-material rhetoric—as an inventional tool for thinking critically about branding identities. Applying constitutive dimensions of rhetorical inquiry to design practice offers insights, strategies, and untapped resources that can lead designers to open dialogic possibilities for future oriented identities while still attending to the exigencies of design practice. Three particular features of the critical framework offered in this project are useful for graphic designers: addressing Blair’s six questions about materiality, studying circulation, and analyzing visual artifacts using rhetorical theory. Using Nike’s “Power of One” campaign, I explicate how each of the approaches extends the critical faculties of design and leads to effective practice.

Over the past few years, Nike has consistently used kente cloth as a significant design element of clothing, shoes, and accessories celebrating Black History Month. In 2016, the collection featured an array of hues and patterns as opposed to the 2015 collection, which featured kente cloth-like textiles in monochrome colors and patterns. As part of its branding campaign, Nike's Black History Month collection included a dedicated online experience complete with profiles of Black athletes who represent "The Power of One" (Nike). The campaign featured a range of products, digital and social media campaigns, video ads, and print materials. In February 2017, the global sports brand will release another collection, which also comes at an important time in America's history where publics are addressing issues of race relations through a range of rhetorical performances, such as using Pan-African colors a sign of solidarity and counterpublics reconsider the limitations of Black History Month by celebrating Black "Futures" Month. How might designers develop the next collection? What critical insights can bring to bear the consequences and potentialities of consumer branding for opening possibilities for identity-formation? While there are a range of problematic issues associated with appropriating culture for consumer products, such as international legal issues in the case of kente cloth (Boateng, 2008), I center on the role of the designer for a moment to provide a set of critical frames that can be used to address the aforementioned questions.

First, designers might use one or more key theoretical concepts of constitutive visual-material rhetoric outlined in this study—addressivity, identification, instrumentation, circulation, and paradox—to provide robust insights on the consequences of a text beyond but still in concert with instrumentation for meeting economic demands. Consider the

paradox and circulation of constitutive visual-material rhetoric of Nike's 2015 and 2016 "Power of One" campaign. A study of paradox reveals that the "Power of One" campaign might produce negative identification by homogenizing Pan-African identity through a rhetoric of nostalgia for African culture. Kente cloth has been commonly known as one of the most popular of fabrics from the continent of Africa. At the same time, the cloth is traditionally associated with Akan in Ghana. Though sales numbers might indicate that consumers are buying the products, a constitutive approach moves designers to think about the contradictions of their design choices. The effects and influence of consumer branding is typically considered similar to propaganda; the intention is only to serve the ends of the propagandists. In the case of Nike's "Power of One" campaign, it is easy to think that the sports brand is primarily interested in fulfilling the ultimate goals of the company. However, designers have rhetorical agency in presenting alternative ways for being in the world and offering strategies and suggestions for campaigns that open possibilities for identity-formation in a way that invites publics to adopt an identity that allows human flourishing.

Studying circulation helps designers understand how visual artifacts that are part of the campaign have circulated across global publics and in a wide range of situations. For instance, designers might study the circulation of kente cloth to reveal that the cloth has been traditionally associated with Asante royalty. Nkrumah's textile rhetoric, however, was taken up by many African Americans since the 1960s. In the United States, African Americans have used the cloth as a marker of blackness, diasporic identity and Africanness (Boateng, 2011). Though the use of kente has waned since the 1990s, the re-emergence of kente as a significant marker of Black identity in sports raises questions about the continued exigencies

that Nkrumah's "linked up with Africa" statement addresses and the identities that are continually being negotiated. In studying circulation, designers gain an understanding of how visual artifacts function in everyday life beyond the confines of one single rhetorical situation.

While one or more of the key concepts are useful for assessing the possibilities and challenges for identification, designers can use one or more of Blair's six questions to unpack the rhetorical influence of a text's visuality and materiality. For instance, Nike uses the same typeface to express Pan-Africanism and blackness in both 2015 and 2016 "Power of One" campaigns. By asking about its composition and symbolicity, we learn that the letterforms are angled and have distinct crossbars and lines that distinguish the letters from traditional letterforms commonly used in English. Symbolically, the angled forms are representative of visual tropes of Africanness that are associated with geometric shapes such as African masks. In considering what the text does against with or other texts, designers might find that African typefaces generally tend to employ stereotypical visions of African culture. Given the responsibility of the designer for shaping the visual logics of the product, he/she might use the critical framework of constitutive visual-material rhetoric to develop products critically and in a way that allows publics to accept or resist alternative identifications visualized by Nike.

Future Research

While the constitutive critical analysis performed in previous chapters and briefly summarized and employed here focus on visual artifacts used in early days of branding the postcolonial nation-state following independence, the use of kente cloth in Nike's "Power of

One” branding campaign has illustrated the continuing force of Ghanaian visual culture for shaping identities through visual culture. Future research on the transformation of African identities should include the constitutive rhetoric of contemporary nation branding by postcolonial nation-states on the continent of Africa. Nation branding, which Simon Anholt called “a necessary part of modern statecraft” (2005), aims to promote a positive perception of nations, at home and abroad, increase competitiveness in the global market, boost foreign direct investment, enhance public diplomacy, and promote social cohesion. In March 2009, Professor Dora Akunkili, former Nigerian Minister of Information and Communications launched the “Nigeria: Good People, Great Nation!” re-branding campaign as a “systematic approach to deal with [Nigeria’s] negative perception” (Akunkili, 2009). The project, Akunkili noted, was “anchored on attitudinal change, re-orientation, revival of our beautiful old cultural values and instilling a renewed spirit of patriotism and hope in all Nigerians.” Six months later, in September 2009, former President of the Republic of Ghana, John Atta Mills created the Brand Ghana Office in order to “stimulate economic, social and psychological wellbeing for all Ghanaians, through developing and implementing a proactive and integrated national and international competitive strategy” (“About Us”). Countries such as Sweden and Estonia have also engaged in formal country or national branding strategies.

Nation branding is a robust site for critically understanding national identity. As Skinner and Kubacki (2007) argued, a place’s brand identity is “closely linked to studies of national identity, which is itself closely linked to the concept of a nation’s cultural and political identity” (p. 305). Kaneva (2011) has urged critical communication scholars to “further theoretical and empirical engagements with this phenomenon [of nation branding].”

In her study of 186 sources on nation branding, Kaneva found that some definitions of nation branding “retain an instrumentalist frame which conceives of national identity as an asset or liability to be managed and deployed by experts in tactical or strategic ways” (p. 122). The instrumentalist perspective misconstrues the process as “social engineering” and “ignores relations of power and neglects the implications of nation branding for democracy” (p. 121). In other words, elites and the sovereignty are able to persuade publics and “manipulate national identities” (p. 121). For Mathias Akotia, nation branding “is more than persuasive rationale;” it is both a form of communication management and social engineering for “national development, wealth creation and social cohesion” (2009, p. 1).

Constitutive rhetorical criticism provides a perspective on nation branding at the intersection of what Kaneva (2011) considers as different “modes of collectivity and identification” rather than simply propaganda, persuasion, manipulation, instrumentation, or statecraft (p. 132). Design culture is one significant site of investigation for understanding the constitutive influence of nation branding beyond paradigms of propagandistic analysis. As scholars suggested, place branding is a network of practitioners who design and manage an organization’s brand image or experience (Hankinson, 2004, 2010; Knott, Fyall, & Jones, 2015). Aronczyk (2008) described this practice of contemporary nation branding as “transposing authority from elected government officials to advertising and branding professionals” (p. 43). On the one hand, designers and other cultural intermediaries may be complicit in the contradictions of national identity formation that are based upon controlling the media, accomplishing the ends of the organization, or constraining possibilities for human flourishing. On the other hand, cultural intermediaries can exert rhetorical agency by

focusing on identification as a key concept and goal for influencing audiences rather than persuasion. For instance, state artists such as Oku Ampofo exerted rhetorical influence by developing representations of the nation-state that “often resulted in work whose commitment to local cultures, and to the ideals of the newly independent nation, was independent of the administrative impulse toward a national and Nkrumah-centered culture” (Hess, 2001, p. 72). As Quarcoopome (2006b) further noted, state artists were not simply “innocent cogs in the wheel of propaganda, not mere practitioners who rendered service for pay” (p. 25). Similar to designers involved in contemporary nation branding in postcolonial Africa, state artists and designers involved in early forms of nation branding following African independence were influenced by their training, education, life experiences, and ideological positions that ultimately shaped how they visually represented the national identity (Hess & Quarcoopome, 2006b; Fuller, 2015). Constitutive rhetorical criticism provides a lens for understanding how certain conditions give rise to identity-formation that are open, unfinished, and influenced by a range of publics and political actors. Furthermore, as I have shown in this chapter, constitutive rhetoric can be used as an inventional tool for design praxis by understanding the consequences of visual artifacts in public culture for transforming identities.

Though public address scholars have long studied the identity formation as a rhetorical process, recent studies of what might be called “constitutive visual-material rhetoric” expand the aperture studying the collectivization of publics through multifaceted strategies of discourse that involve moving images, digital interfaces, and commemorative sites (Duffy, Page, & Young, 2012; Grueber, 2014; Olson, 2013; Stein, 2002; Yartey, 2015).

These studies have suggested that publics and counterpublics engage in a broad range of activities that reinforce and contest national identities that disrupt notions of the state-information apparatus as propaganda. As described in chapter three of this project, publics can materially enact identities through strategies such as political portrait cloths to embody the abstract concept of the “African personality.” At the same time, consequences of visual artifacts such as the official portraits of Nkrumah used by *Time* magazine can result in contradictory processes of decolonizing visions of the “new African” and negative identification with primitiveness and racial logics of “darkness” and “lightness.” Constitutive rhetorical theory, criticism, and praxis forces critics and cultural intermediaries to look differently at visual artifacts in particular situations and over time in order to understand, critique, and ultimately contribute to better designs that create conditions for human flourishing aligned with constitutive rather than propagandistic processes of identity-formation.

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