# NEWSMAKING CULTURES IN AFRICA

Normative Trends in the Dynamics of Socio-Political & Economic Struggles

Edited by
HAYES MAWINDI MABWEAZARA
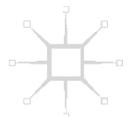
Newsmaking Cultures in Africa

Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara
Editor

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Foreword by Cleophas Taurai Muneri

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For Tanaka and Nyasha

FOREWORD

This book is a clear and bold attempt to ask hard and at times taken-for-granted questions about whether the journalism we find in the so-called developing countries or global South is part of the hegemonic Anglo-American form of journalism or a variant thereof, or if it represents a new journalism whose nuances and characteristics have not yet been substantively explored. The African continent, therefore, presents a cultural context within which journalism can be researched and understood, rather than, as in previous approaches, which relied on theorisation from outside. The question then becomes 'what are the theoretical lenses that can be used to understand the practice of journalism in Africa?' In looking for these perspectives, the book cautions us to move away from theoretical prescripts that put Africa in a straitjacket or essentialises the continent as if it is one homogenous entity. As in any theoretical or scholarly endeavour, the book treads a fine line between arguing against a one-size-fits-all conception of journalism on the one hand, while also establishing broad factors through which journalism is shaped and influenced in Africa on the other.

The African continent therefore presents both opportunities and challenges for journalism researchers, given the difficult and complicated political and economic environment. The broad range of perspectives presented in this volume show that one cannot have a singular approach to understanding journalism and newsmaking cultures in Africa. The extensive and comprehensive examples herein are refreshing, as they show the contrasting newsmaking cultures that prevail in Africa. I am convinced that most readers will find the rich array of examples, which straddle the

length and breadth of sub-Saharan Africa, useful and illuminating, as they concretise key theoretical conclusions that are made in the book. A major strength is that theoretical arguments found in the offerings of the many contributors are buttressed by concrete evidence from across Africa.

This book, then, is not only a nod to the burgeoning growth of scholars researching on journalism and media but is a one-stop shop where we meet instances of the great variety of journalism and newsmaking cultures in sub-Saharan Africa, including examples from Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Botswana and many more. The examples are pertinent and current, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of journalism that moves scholarship away from traditional approaches that tend to regard journalism in Africa as a mere reproduction of practices from Western countries. This is a definite strength, as it shows the ever-changing journalism landscape and the myriad of forces that keep on reshaping, and at times, restructuring the practice of journalism.

While some of the theoretical and empirical viewpoints that are presented in the book, such as the training and education of journalists, as well as politics, economics, technological changes, tabloidisation, conflict and ethical practices can be used to understand journalism in many parts of the world. What the reader will find distinct and revealing here is that these aspects take on a whole different meaning. There are unique aspects of newsmaking cultures in Africa that can only be explained when the above factors are considered in relation to the social and cultural context under which journalism is practised on the African continent. This means that, for example, the question of how technology has been appropriated and repurposed to suit the African experience is not the same as in other parts of the world. For that same reason, if we are interested in getting a broad and full perspective on how conflict has shaped newsmaking cultures or the meaning of tabloidisation, this book is a window through which we can see how these factors are dealt with from an African perspective.

Newsmaking cultures within the African context do not follow a straight trajectory, given that a lot of issues are connected to many different factors which cannot be clearly separated from one another. For example, politics, economics and other cultural practices cannot be disentangled in terms of how they inform journalism practices. Political, economic and cultural frameworks provide the overarching context through which journalism is practised, which in turn raise ethical issues especially with regard to how journalists should navigate political terrain. These ethical

issues are explored in some of the chapters in this book. In as much as technology provides journalists with so many opportunities, it has also become a minefield of ethical challenges to journalism practice. Because of this, newsmaking itself is compromised by the other activities that journalists must often undertake to survive the harsh political and economic environments that characterise much of Africa. This strongly indicates that newsmaking cultures in Africa cannot be conceptualised outside of these ethical shortcomings. To encounter all these varied approaches to understanding journalism in one place makes this book a very useful resource to researchers and scholars. The perspectives are also refreshingly different and sometimes poignant.

The rich array of perspectives on newsmaking cultures in Africa contained within this exceptional book show that a truly comprehensive understanding of journalism entails closely considering a broad range of local socio-cultural factors. The examples from across sub-Saharan Africa provide a strong framework and the basis for new theorising of journalism in Africa and beyond. This is a timely volume which adds to the burgeoning scholarship on media and journalism focusing on the continent; it should be required reading for those interested in a comprehensive understanding of African journalism in its multiple complexities.

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Reinvigorating 'Age-Old Questions': African Journalism Cultures and the Fallacy of Global Normative Homogeneity

Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara

The scholarly pursuit of journalism and its inner workings vary considerably across the globe, yet its Anglo-American pedigree and defining canons are commonly applied with an underlying assumption of global normative[1] consistency and homogeneity (Chalaby 1998; Hallin and Mancini 2004; Hanitzsch 2007). While there are unquestionable global similarities in professional values, the bureaucratic organisation of news organisations and the general routinisation of newsmaking, it is equally true that these professional identities are shaped and coloured by local factors. These local conditions have resulted in practices that challenge and throw into question the sweeping juggernaut and hegemony of Western professional ideologies, including the core principles and values that underpin the profession (Deuze 2005; Hanitzsch 2007; Waisbord 2013). Thus, while at the surface professional practices in the African press 'typify the prevalent and somewhat universal professional normative ideals such as: balance, impartiality and fairness, a deeper analysis shows discrepancies that counter these established ideals' (Mabweazara 2011, 100). Consequently, the claim that professional journalists subscribe to the

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generic ideals of objectivity, professional routines and editorial procedures generalises what are, in fact, differentiated newsmaking cultures, as journalists work in immensely varied and complex circumstances which resist 'any attempts to simplify them' (Mano 2004, 18). This scenario has resulted in an 'arena in which [the] diverse professional ideologies struggle over the dominant interpretation of journalism's social function and identity' (Hanitzsch 2007, 370).

The nature and form of these locally defined professional cultures, especially as they emerge from the global South, remain heavily under-researched in mainstream journalism scholarship. This book thus revisits the subject with a view to offering fresh comparative insights and reflective material on journalism in Africa in the light of increased connectivity and regular journalistic traffic across different parts of the world (Waisbord 2013). Its primary aim, therefore, is not necessarily to break new ground but to reinvigorate and contribute to the nuancing of a well-trodden debate in journalism studies. It seeks to add to 'an analytical grid' that maps out 'diverse journalism cultures onto a set of universal dimensions of global variance' (Hanitzsch 2007, 371) through conceptual and exploratory case studies that provide material for reflection and analysis. In revisiting the longstanding debate on newsmaking cultures in Africa, the book also throws into sharp perspective the question of how we can possibly define conditions and rules of work in specific socio-cultural, political and economic settings. As Waisbord (2013, 13) aptly puts it, '[j]ournalism, its practices and ideals cannot be understood in isolation from a particular social formation'—it is an inherently *contextually rooted* profession.

While the convergence of economics, politics and technological transformations in the twenty-first century is shaking old journalistic cultures in unprecedented ways, we also need to remind ourselves of the fact that change has always been part of journalism, it is far from abnormal. Journalism is a profession that has never known anything but change—it is (and always has been) in a permanent state of flux in response to various contextual factors. So, we need not necessarily obsess with questions of change, and, especially with apocalyptic claims of 'the end of journalism' (Waisbord 2013) at the expense of interrogating and keeping alive 'age-old questions' on journalistic cultures. Journalism may be under extraordinary pressure but longstanding questions on its manifestations across contexts still linger, in fact with more prominence than ever.

Given that journalism as a social practice is permanently located at the crossroads of politics, economics and technology, we must therefore continuously ask how these factors recurrently shape and redefine its established

canons. This book pursues this goal in the African context. It foregrounds the importance of examining how journalism practice in Africa is mitigated by localised factors—the intricacies embedded in the local cultural environment—which collectively give credence to additional theoretical ways and modes of 'repairing the longstanding neglect of journalism's contradictions while attending to the flux of its territory' (Zelizer 2017, 193). A perspective from the South not only broadens and transforms our ways of thinking about the field of journalism but also offers a useful point of departure for the exploration of similarities and differences (Waisbord 2013) in the normative identity of a profession that is permanently marked by internal contradictions and instability across the globe. It further provides 'added value to a more comprehensive theorization of what journalism is' (Deuze 2005, 458), thus dispelling generalisations about the field.

It has to be stated from the outset, however, that by emphasising the notion of 'newsmaking cultures in Africa', this book does not attempt the impossible task of painting all fifty-four states on the continent with the same socio-cultural brush. Far from it. There is ample acknowledgement here that the African continent is a complex mosaic of cultures with equally varied socio-political, economic and historical experiences. There are marked differences and nuances between countries which have significant implications on the operations of the news media. Thus, while the focal point of the book is on Africa as a region, the enormity and complexity of the continent makes it difficult to discuss the entire continent's journalistic cultures in the space available in this volume all at the same time. Nevertheless, the argument collectively advanced is about shared journalistic practices, values, attitudes and beliefs across sub-Saharan African countries, which, when contrasted with other cultures, especially in the global North, reveal differences that are qualitatively generalisable across a range of countries, despite the obvious differences. We return to this important point later, but first, for the sake of clarity, the conception of newsmaking as *culture* needs to be unpacked.

Newsmaking in Africa Conceived Through the Prism of 'Culture'

A fitting starting point is to consider the slippery concept of culture itself, which often drags with it several meanings from diverse intellectual disciplines. Although a coherent and universal definition is difficult, Hanitzsch offers a sound working definition that sees culture as 'a set of *ideas* (values, attitudes, and beliefs), *practices* (of cultural production),

and *artefacts* (cultural products, text)' (2007, 369, emphasis original). This conception points to three basic human activities that underpin cultural practice as part of everyday life: '*what people think*, *what people do*, and *what people make*' (Tharp 2009, 3, emphasis added). While some critics see this definition as underplaying the structuring role of politics (including the role of the state) and economics (material disparities), other researchers contend that culture, like all social elements imbued with a 'cultural dimension', is inevitably implicated in extant socio-political and economic factors, and cannot be narrow-mindedly subordinated to political or economic explanations. This understanding of culture can be stretched to the context of journalism. While the notion of *newsmaking cultures* is something of a well-worn catchphrase, it highlights how particular professional values, attitudes and beliefs provide a set of orientations that influence myriad practical decisions and actions taken by journalists and their editors in their daily routines. As Nadler (2016, 9) explains:

> Thinking of [news] production processes as *cultural* helps to point to a range of factors influencing the logic of production. News production, from this view can be examined as a set of practices informed by a host of *historical legacies and cultural tendencies*, from organisational routines to producers' conceptions about their audiences to news workers' stylistic preferences and assumptions about citizenship and political life. (emphasis added)

At a very basic level, the term 'newsmaking cultures' invokes the social shaping nature of localised factors that influence 'ways of thinking about and doing journalism' (Deuze 2005, 443) on the African continent. It draws attention to the ways in which journalism as a social practice is both socially constructed and reconstituted in the shared realities (values, beliefs and general way of life) of the context in which it is practiced. This view reveals 'the *culturally mediating* nature of news' and acknowledges the 'diverse ways in which "culture" variously conditions and shapes patterns, and forms' of news production (Cottle 2000, 438, emphasis added).

This 'constructivist'[2] approach sees societal structures as intersecting with journalists' exercise of agency in complex ways that challenge and resist the straitjacket of a 'globalised professional'. It acknowledges that journalists are not only individuals who wield their own agency but also cultural beings socialised into thinking and acting in particular ways as both professionals and 'ordinary' citizens. Therefore, journalism as a social

practice cannot be narrowly reduced to the practitioners and institutions that produce it. Journalists' actions and decisions (individually or collectively) are inherently linked to the complex web of social connections—the whole *cultural milieu* that shapes and constrains actions from within and from outside.

In the African context, this cultural milieu relates to the intricacies and influences of entrenched cultural practices and concepts that often filter into the practice of journalism. Indeed, despite Africa's cultural diversity, 'threads of underlying affinity run through the beliefs, customs, value systems, and socio-political institutions and practices of the various African societies' (Sesanti 2010, 347). The notion of *ubuntu*, for example, has recurrently emerged as an overarching cultural compass for understanding what 'Africaness' means (Shaw 2009). It is seen by many as a cultural mindset that encapsulates what it means to be human in Africa, particularly that '[a] person is a person through other people' (Shaw 2009, 493), and one is human because he belongs, participates and shares (Murithi in Obonyo 2011). As a concept, *ubuntuism* directs our attention to culturally mediating foundations described by Nyamnjoh (2005) as the cultural orientation to communal values that focus our critical lenses to the contingent social relationships and worldviews that permeate the context in which journalism is practiced in Africa. It points to the 'defining and patently germane features of African cultural experiences that have implications for the practice of journalism' (Mabweazara 2015, 107) on the continent. As Hanitzsch avers, notions of 'social harmony and unity', which underpin *ubuntu*, and are widely prioritised in many non-Western cultures, quite often 'render ineffective' values and practices that may be deemed sacrosanct 'in certain cultural contexts' (2007, 378).

Granted that a blind adoption of *ubuntuism* and its assumptions of 'a unitary and binding [African] cultural authenticity' (Banda 2009, 235) runs the risk of essentialising or '[freezing] the continent in time' (Obonyo 2011, 8), it nonetheless remains one of the most widely referenced concepts for illuminating the intricacies of African cultural life, which have marked implications for journalism practice on the continent (see Faniran 2014). It constitutes the unquestioned background filter (Schudson 2005) navigated by journalists in their newsmaking routines. Indeed, this entrenched cultural notion can be invoked to explain some of the most distinct professional practices and cultures that relate, *inter alia*, to widespread practices of patronage, clientelism, political parallelism and partisan reportorial routines. (I discuss these in more detail later on.)

These newsmaking practices are manifest in the way that news outlets and their reporters think and act, as well as imitate one another, quite often unconsciously, by sharing 'a recognisable style and other identifiable characteristics, [including] how to define "news" […], how the news agenda should be set, and the modes through which it should be presented' (Nadler 2016, 9). Nadler adds that accounting for cultural factors of news production 'shows that news producers are not simply driven by ahistorical or 'noncultural' factors, such as economic imperatives […] or profit maximization' (2016, 10). Rather, the entire news ecosystem should be seen as immersed in a whole range of cultural factors that shape newsmaking in nondeterministic or linear ways. These factors are, nonetheless, adaptive to various structural influences and conditions, especially the structures of ownership and control and the broader ideological climate which shapes the thinking of journalists, editors and news sources alike.

As noted earlier, by highlighting the centrality of shared African cultural values that shape journalism, I do not take for granted the important differences between countries. Obonyo (2011, 5) reminds us that 'Africa does not provide a clear picture that is easy to diagnose'. Thus, while the pressures connected to the local cultural orientations suggest a homogenous African landscape with a collective singular identity, this is far from being the case. The continent is culturally, politically and economically fragmented, and even notions such as '*ubuntuism* exists in various forms' (Mano 2010, 12). As Obonyo (2011, 4) explains, '[t]here are many Africans, both fitting stereotyping but simultaneously defying uniform description'. For Obonyo, North Africa is more closely aligned to the Middle East than to the wider Africa. 'It engages less in scholarship terms with the rest of the continent' (2). Consequently, conversations about Africa invariably consider Africa south of the Sahara. But even here, disparities informed by 'language and colonial experiences make it somewhat of a challenge to make sweeping statements' (2). There are wide discrepancies between francophone, anglophone and lusophone Africa and, indeed, within each of these regions.

We must, therefore, avoid the 'reductive assumption that African countries, and the myriad array of cultures, religions and languages, can be prescriptively reduced to homogenous sets of continent-wide social and cultural [practices]' (Obijiofor and Hanusch 2011, 53). The enormity and complexity of the continent make it practically impossible to capture the varied contextual influences 'which [sometimes] lie outside journalism

itself' (Conboy 2013, 149) but significantly influence how journalists do their work. Thus, an assessment of journalism on the continent 'needs insight from both the practice of journalism as well as a general awareness of broader cultural trends' (ibid.).

This points to the need for a more broadly encompassing approach that takes into account the complexities of the socio-cultural context in which African journalists operate, and avoids the trap of homogenising practices by overlooking important cultural differences that shape our identities as ordinary, everyday people and as professionals. So, it is important to look elsewhere for critical insights that can enrich our understanding of (African) journalism, and there is no better way than invoking insights from Western journalism scholarship, in particular, *the sociology of news.* This is particularly important given the very fact that journalism as a 'field' of study, has its roots in the West, chiefly in the USA and the UK. In this sense, our attempt to understand journalism in Africa should not be an isolated undertaking. As Livingstone advises, we should not underestimate how much we can learn 'from *different cultures* or what can be achieved [through] the combined creative intelligence' of diverse but related scholarship, sharing 'insights and energies' (2003, 481, emphasis added). Hanitzsch echoes these sentiments in his view that we can only 'speak of journalism culture […] if we assume that there exist other […] cultures to which the former could be compared' (2007, 370).

'Cultural Approaches' to Newsmaking: What We Learn from 'The Sociology of News'

While journalism studies as a discipline generally lacks coherence and largely relies on occupational values steeped in Western empirical experiences (Deuze 2005; Waisbord 2013), all conceived and developed in splendid oblivion of experiences in non-Western contexts, we still can glean some useful insights from Western scholarship, especially in terms of the connections between journalism and its cultural context of production. 'Cultural approaches' to news production as advanced mainly by American journalism scholars rooted in 'the sociology of news',[3] such as Mark Fishman (1980), Michael Schudson (2000) and David Ryfe (2006, 2012), among others, can illuminate our understanding of how African journalism, as elsewhere, mirrors the complexities of its dialectical relationship to the broader social field.

These approaches open up useful insights into the nature of news production by providing frames for 'understanding journalists' vague renderings of how they know "news" when they see it'—the elusive sacred knowledge underpinning 'news judgement' and 'news values' (Schudson 2005, 188–189). This understanding, as Schudson further explains, broadens the scope of news production analysis to include complex social issues beyond organisational and professional spheres, which journalists do not entirely control or anticipate. These wider social issues 'transcend the structures of ownership or patterns of work relations' (2005, 187), which largely constitute the default focal point in most journalism research, by acknowledging that 'journalists live and work within an encompassing social and cultural context that powerfully and implicitly informs their attempts to make sense of the world' (Ettema et al. 1997, 44). Analyses that transcend the structural constraints of media ownership, its political economy and organisational contexts shifts our attention to

> the specific social realities [...] where news sources, news reporters, news organisations, editors and the competing demands of professionalism, the market-place and cultural traditions collect around specific choices of what news to report and how to report it. (Schudson 2000, 175)

Schudson adds that 'the central categories of newsworkers themselves are "cultural" more than structural' (2005, 188). Culture, in this case, 'serves as a template, guide, or map to action' (Ryfe 2012, 17) for journalists, and the professional routines they go through 'exhibit evidence of cultural norms' which are 'part of a broadly shared sense that public life [is] for association, affiliation, and belonging' (Ryfe 2006, 62).

In this sense, the *cultural approaches* to news reinforce the fact that the filter through which news is constructed is 'the cultural air we breathe, the whole ideological atmosphere of our society, which tells us that some things can be said and others had best not be said' (Hoggart 1976, x). This *cultural air* constitutes 'the unquestioned and generally unnoticed background assumptions through which news is gathered and within which it is framed' (Schudson 2005, 189). This understanding brings to the fore the fact that 'among the resources journalists work with are the traditions [...] they inherit from their own cultures, with a number of vital assumptions about the world built in' (Schudson 2005, 190). Journalists therefore

breathe a specifically journalistic, occupational cultural air as well as the air they share with fellow citizens. [Their] 'routines' … are not only social, emerging out of interactions among officials, reporters and editors, but literally emerging out of […] traditions. (Schudson 2003, 193)

In this light, journalists seek to maintain and 'repair' their social relations with colleagues and their broader social context. The 'reality [they] manufacture' in news works to maintain their cultural image as journalists in the eyes of the wider world (Schudson 2005, 190).

News production, therefore, lies squarely within the social relations and interpretive processes that sustain it. This argument is further explored by Fishman (1980, 141), who posits that news is constructed out of 'an amorphous world of happenings' and that there are different traditions beyond the confines of news institutions, which journalists draw upon in performing their duties. These traditions and shared values, in the words of Sigal (1973, 3), are not simply limited to 'the personal political predilections of newsmen themselves' but include 'attitudes widely shared among reporters and editors in the news community, attitudes which might properly be called *the journalist's creed*, or ideology' (emphasis original). Deuze concurs with this view but adds a critical caveat by maintaining that while it is possible to 'speak of a dominant occupational ideology of journalism on which most newsworkers base their professional perceptions and praxis', it is important to remember that this '*is interpreted, used and applied differently among journalists across media*' (2005, 445, emphasis added). The latter point offers deep insight into the news media. It suggests that while traditional boundaries of journalism exist, they are *never stable*. They are in constant negotiation with 'the dominant sensibilities of […] public culture' (Ryfe 2012, 18) and are challenged and redefined by social changes, including technological developments as 'journalism finds itself dancing to the tune of an increasingly networked world' (Ryfe 2012, 18–19).

What we deduce from this is that media globalisation does not always lead to identical journalistic approaches. While there may be similarities in news values, reportorial formats and the bureaucratic organisation of news institutions, there are significant differences and nuances in journalistic cultures, all pointing to the fact that '[t]he globalisation juggernaut doesn't crush local cultures' (Waisbord 2013, 195). Journalism as a 'norm-dependent institution' is therefore 'in constant need of boundary maintenance' and '[s]uch border patrol behaviour works continuously,

regardless of structural changes, and transforms the norms and myths of the profession' (Eide and Sjovaag 2016, 4–5).

Having set the context for a general understanding of journalism as a 'culture' and what Western journalism scholarship says about this, the next section demonstrates how 'cultural' context shapes some of the most distinct elements of newsmaking in Africa. The aim here is not to present an all-inclusive socio-historical account of contemporary journalism practice in Africa but to provide an overview of some of the journalistic practices, values and beliefs that stand out on the continent. This clearly is not an easy task, given the multifaceted nature of the continent, as discussed earlier. In general, however, newsmaking cultures in Africa can loosely be summed-up through the complex dialectical connections between three interrelated elements: '*power distance*', '*market orientation*' and '*interventionism*' (Hanitzsch 2007), all pointing to the multifaceted conditions in which African journalists operate.[4] These conditions spawn news production cultures that are radically different but, at the same time, similar in many ways to established global practices and norms.

African Journalism Cultures: A Complex Mosaic of Practices, Traditions and 'Power Play'

Although the 1990s saw most sub-Saharan African countries adopting multiparty politics, leading to the liberalisation of the media landscape in countries such as Zambia, South Africa, Kenya and Ghana, among others, most of these governments have since rescinded on this liberal agenda (Faniran 2014). The inability to control the news agenda in an increasingly sophisticated media ecosystem has prompted the tightening of the media environment. Skjerdal (2014, 89), for example, highlights how Ethiopia's semi-authoritarian regime has instituted 'numerous measures that serve to restrict rather than encourage a vibrant' media environment. Similarly, Moyo (2009, 60) writes about the curtailment of 'basic civil and political liberties such as the freedom of expression, opinion, association, and information' in Zimbabwe. These constraints not only result in 'self-censorship' but also engender localised 'innovations that borrow from and build on global developments' (Mudhai 2014, 123).

In terms of the political economy of news organisations, the scene in Africa is equally diverse. It stretches from the well-developed and technologically advanced beacons of journalistic excellence in South Africa and parts of East Africa, to fledgling media operations in much of the conti-

nent (Hyden and Leslie 2007). South Africa, in particular, stands apart from the rest of English-speaking Africa; its media infrastructure is predominantly well-funded, with excellent newsroom infrastructure. It 'shares a number of characteristics with Western countries: such as their organisation of the media and standards of journalism practice' (Verweij and van Noort 2014, 100). 'No other country on [the] continent has such a well-developed and sophisticated market infrastructure. What is happening there […] has no direct parallel elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa' (Hyden and Leslie 2007, 19). However, even with this level of development, social divisions between the rich and the poor remain prominent 'because of the social deprivation of the bulk of its citizens' (Verweij and van Noort 2014, 100).

Pointing to some of the distinct conditions in which African journalists operate, Kupe (2004) highlights the poor salaries and significantly limited resources that most journalists have to endure. Similarly, Obijiofor and Hanusch (2011) note that the majority of African journalists are beset by a number of challenges, including lack of appropriate skills, prohibitive costs and inequitable access to relevant technologies, job instability, tight legal and regulatory frameworks and complex political tensions. These conditions, among other factors, coalesce to shape and constrain how journalists conduct their business on the continent. Patrimonial relations and clientelist associations, for example, are some of the most prominent features of journalistic cultures directly linked to the social context in which African journalists operate. In the sections that follow, I discuss these and other key elements of African journalistic cultures in detail.

Politics, 'Power Distance' and Relations of Patronage

While 'patrimonialism' is widely deployed as a catch-all concept for the political ills that engulf the African continent,[5] it nonetheless offers useful insights into journalistic cultures on the continent. In its generic use, it characterises structural relations in which the political elite pervert and twist formal channels for the benefit of their loyal 'clients' (Sneyd 2014). In the context of journalism, these informal patron–client relationships involve 'the discretionary use of public resources by political officials to strengthen personal and/or partisan power' as well as 'favor allied news organisations' (Waisbord 2013, 154). While the complexity or specific characteristics of media patrimonialism in Africa cannot be captured in 'universal explanations' (Waisbord 2013, 156), it is, however, firmly

rooted in entrenched post-independence cultures of corruption, generally known to undercut professionalism (see Muhammad Jameel Yusha'u's detailed discussion of corruption in Chap. 9).

In these contexts, news organisations tend to be bound up in networks of patronage that envelope state structures and institutions. Patronage relations between officials and journalists 'as well as tight-knit linkages between political patrons and business owners' (Waisbord 2013, 159) filter into the news media's agenda, redefining and shaping 'news judgement' and 'news values'. In countries such as Zambia and Zimbabwe, for example, patrimonial relations and strategies have seen the continued imposition of senior editors in state-controlled media institutions. Writing about the Zambian context, Chirambo (2011), observes that the relationship between the former President Kaunda and the controversial British businessman, Tiny Rowland, catalysed a number of developments that ultimately influenced editorial transactions at one of Zambia's leading daily newspaper, the *Times of Zambia*. In Zimbabwe, senior editorial appointments at the state-controlled Zimbabwe Newspapers Group (Zimpapers) have often been associated with 'political correctness' or an individual's alignment with the ruling party's (ZANU-PF) political patronage networks. These patrimonial connections tend to invert the balance of power by placing journalists under the manipulative control of government officials with obvious consequences for professionalism as journalists are 'held to ransom' in the patron–client relationship.

In the same way, some working conditions force journalists to yield to 'intrusive publishers who use their [media outlets] to attain personal or political goals' (Ibelema 2008, 30). It is not uncommon, for example, for stories to be withheld in order to appease advertisers or government officials (Robins 1997). Similarly, stories of governments' attempts to control the private media by refusing to place lucrative state advertising with news organisations seen as 'disloyal' are also commonplace. In Uganda, for example, the *Daily Monitor*, a privately owned newspaper, was denied advertising from the government and state-run companies for much of the 1990s (Balikowa 1995). This approach has persisted to date, with some companies in the private sector avoiding any association with the critical private press, preferring only to advertise with the government-controlled daily, the *New Vision*. This is also the case in Burundi and Rwanda where privately owned newspapers are intentionally denied advertising by government-affiliated institutions (see Fiedler and Frère's discussion of this in Chap. 6).

This 'back-door' control of press operations by governments is not unique to East and Central Africa. In southern Africa, advertisements are sometimes used by politicians to discourage critical coverage. In 2011, a South African government spokesperson announced that the government had approved a communications plan to reward media 'which put a positive spin on what government was doing'. He further qualified his statement thus: 'Clearly the media I am going to focus on is *where I have a base to reinforce my message. How can I advertise in a media that doesn't carry my message?*' (de Waal 2011, emphasis added). These sentiments were also echoed by South Africa's Arts and Culture Minister, who equated advertising in newspapers critical of government and the ruling party, African National Congress (ANC), to 'feeding a crocodile and stand[ing] next to it hoping that it won't attack you' (Hans 2017). This indirect state control of the press has forced some private news organisations to sharpen their 'survival instinct' by pursuing alternative revenue streams and adopting 'aggressive marketing strategies to win over more readers' (Balikowa 1995, 607) and thus remain afloat.

Beyond the foregoing 'soft control' of press operations, journalistic cultures have also been shaped by overt government strategies to muzzle the press. The reluctance to liberalise the broadcast sector, especially the registering of private radio stations, by several governments in Africa is also part of a coercive pool of patronage strategies that linger in the African media scene. Some are registered but not allowed to broadcast news, as seen in the Zambian context, where radio broadcasting licenses are mainly granted to religious and community stations on the grounds that they would not meddle in politics or air political broadcasts (Cammack 2007). Chirambo (2011, 48) observes that licences are 'granted selectively to applicants, with the bulk of licenses directed at applicants of Evangelical Christian persuasions [thus] further limiting the participation of alternative religions and voices in the political public sphere'.

The cultures of patronage are also conceived as sustained by local cultural traditions such as *ubuntuism*, discussed earlier, which generally encapsulates what it means to be human in Africa, especially the orientation to communal values and belonging in which respect for elders and authority is an inherent constituent element (Bourgault 1995; Sesanti 2010; Shaw 2009). Through foregrounding 'the supremacy of the community' and the 'sanctity of authority', as well as 'respect for old age' (Faniran 2014, 152), *ubuntu* is seen as giving 'form and stability to the way people communicate' (ibid.) in Africa. Writing about the immediate

post-independence leadership's desire to control the press as a way of promoting unity and respect for authority, Bourgault (1995, 177) observes: 'they believed that an emphasis on the promotion of unity was *far more in keeping with African traditions. Africans were after all traditionally respectful of authority, and the divisive critic had been customarily viewed as irresponsible and somewhat "unsocialised"*' (emphasis added).

The immediate post-independence conception of a 'free and unbridled press' as 'particularly pernicious' and posing danger by advocating 'anarchic political action' (Bourgault 1995, 177) has lingered on. Countries like Zimbabwe have promulgated stringent laws such as the 2002 Public Order and Security Act (POSA), which restricts the publication of false statements deemed prejudicial to the state or undermining the authority of the president.[6] This desire to control the press has often been associated with the personalisation of state business by political leaders who equate the criticism of government to a 'personal attack' or 'disrespect' (Bourgault 1995). It is a mindset that shows the persistence of what Kenyan historian Atieno Odhiambo refers to as the 'ideology of order', in which ideas that contradict the interests of the state are interpreted as 'dissent' or 'sedition' (see Chaps. 14 and 15 for a detailed discussion of this).

These localised experiences have led to arguments for ethical orientations that are tailored for the socio-cultural context served by African journalism. Francis Kasoma, in particular has been most vocal in arguing for the contentious concept of 'Afriethics', in which '[t]he individualism and divisionism that permeate the practise of journalism in Africa should be discarded [as] not only unAfrican but also professionally unhealthy' (1996, 93). He argues that African journalism should have an inbuilt self-regulatory 'mechanism that facilitates journalists counselling one another' and strives towards a 'journalism with a human face' (ibid.). This approach has, of course, been criticised for its underpinning idealism and doctrine of African exceptionalism, which overlook the complexities of a globalising African media context (Banda 2009).

Material Deprivation, Clientelistic Practices and Economic Aggrandisement

Beyond the constraints shaped by political authorities in their exchange of patronage for support, journalists in Africa are also widely caught up in chains of 'clientelist networks' (Hallin and Mancini 2004, 59) through ties to managers, business executives and other centres of economic power,

which weaken their professionalism. Thus, while 'state-based clientelism' is pervasive, the widespread conditions of material deprivation and poor salaries have created environments in which journalists are confronted with real survival challenges that make them vulnerable to 'pecuniary gestures' (Frère 2007, 244). Most journalists in sub-Saharan Africa are consequently faced with the ethical dilemma of accepting gifts at the expense of key ethical tenets of the profession. Some are brazenly corrupt, with 'coverage bought and sold like tomatoes in […] markets' (Robins 1997, 129) as journalists supplement their meagre salaries.

Writing about the challenges faced by journalists in the war-torn region of Central Africa, Frère (2007) observes that because of the disruption of the economic structures that sustain media institutions (particularly because of economic embargoes), journalists in both the private and public media sectors are lucky to receive any salary at all. This scenario has left many journalists in the region susceptible to the dominant clientelistic practice of 'brown envelope journalism'[7]—the widespread acceptance of cash, freebees and other forms of payments from sources in return for positive coverage. (Terje Skjerdal offers a more nuanced conceptualisation of this phenomenon in Chap. 8.) Although clientelist relations in journalism are predominantly underground, in his earlier work, Skjerdal (2010) observes that there are several examples of instances were brown envelopes are openly handed over to reporters at public events. He notes that in Tanzania 'it is customary for reporters to […] queue up and sign a form to receive a "sitting fee" from the event organizer' (Skjerdal 2010, 370).

The widespread nature of this journalistic culture across Africa is evidenced by the profusion of localised code names for the practice of accepting 'gifts' from sources. Skjerdal (2010, 375) delves into the nomenclature of the culture, identifying localised names such as *mshiko* in Tanzania (Swahili term for 'perks'), *keske* in Nigeria (informal offerings given to journalists by sources), *gombo* in Cameroon and Chad (a common expression for journalistic bribes) and *soli* in Ghana (derived from the term 'solidarity'). He observes that, in some countries, a humorous touch is ascribed to the practice. For example, in Zambia it is called *ndalama yamatako*, literally translated as 'money for the buttocks', which means the contribution is a '"sitting allowance" to ease the pain of sitting through […] press briefings' (Skjerdal 2010, 376). These localised codenames point to deeprooted cultures of corruption outside journalism itself, which we must take into account when attempting to understand cultures of clientelism in African journalism. Writing about Cameroon, Nyamnjoh observes that

'corruption is thriving and the elite few are swimming in opulence from embezzlement and kickbacks' (2005, 123). This scenario creates instability and unpredictability in governance, thus undermining a nation's overall economic health.

Consequently, in countries with strong traditions of clientelism, such as Nigeria (see Chap. 9), journalists and their sources tend to cultivate ties that lead to the sacrifice of 'investigative reporting' and core ethical values (Skjerdal 2010, 388) as journalists and sources respectively pursue mutual interests in *financial gains* and *status*. This state of affairs has sustained 'unprecedented levels of […] state decay, especially through decline in the civil service and the delivery of social services' (Barkan 2006, 18), including the obstruction of processes of democratisation and a 'weak demand by citizens for governments to be responsible' (Cammack 2007, 606).

The quest for economic survival by news organisations and their staffers has also resulted in economic and market orientations that largely follow a populist approach intended to attract readers and viewers. This partly explains the sharp rise in the tabloid press and, in particular, the growing tabloidisation of content in the traditional 'quality' press across Africa (see Chama 2017, and Chap. 4 in this volume), a development that has 'challenged the dominant journalistic norms' (Wasserman 2010, 1). Writing about tabloids in South Africa, Wasserman notes that they are 'driven by commercial agendas and the hunt for profits' derived from a readership largely seen by conglomerates as too marginal to constitute a viable 'market segment' (2010, 93). In related efforts to combat economic challenges, reporters exercise their individual agency by 'moonlighting' for other news organisations (see Chap. 5 for a detailed discussion of this practice).[8]

Although the default approach to evaluating the above practices is to apply universal ethical approaches and norms that bluntly condemn them as proscribed, alternative views argue that the 'peculiar norms of African society' need to be assessed from an African normative position (Skjerdal 2010, 390) as Western journalism ethics are not in tune with the realities of African experiences. For example, the very idea of rejecting gifts and incentives is widely seen as incompatible with 'the value of African hospitality or solidarity' (ibid.) or the communitarian sensibilities underpinning the spirit of *ubuntu* as discussed earlier. It is also for this reason that scholars such as Kasoma (1996) have argued that the peculiarity of the contexts

in which African journalists operate demand 'a set of ethics that are essentially different from Western ("universal") ethics' (Skjerdal 2010, 391).

Political Parallelism, Partisanship and 'Interventionism'

One the most conspicuous features of journalism in Africa is its close connections to politics or the extent to which it typically 'reflects distinct political orientations' (Hallin and Mancini 2004, 28) along party politics in its news content. While partisanship is not necessarily unique to journalistic cultures in Africa, as Hallin and Mancini (2004) have aptly demonstrated in the European context, in Africa, the polarisation of the news media goes beyond party political lines to include identity politics as well as regional and ethnic belonging (Nyamnjoh 2005). Exploring the Cameroonian context, Nyamnjoh argues that 'regional and ethnic tendencies in the media have affected their […] responsibility to act as honest, fair and neutral' (2005, 231) arbiters of the truth. Similarly, Frère reminds us that history provides several examples of how a media environment torn apart by ethnic identity politics can 'incite hatred, provoke violent mass movements, [and] voluntarily manipulate information in the service of war mongering strategies' (2007, 1). Writing about Central Africa, Frère offers a number of examples of how polarised media in fragile states can foster divisions with catastrophic consequences. The 1994 Rwandan genocide, in particular, is presented as a textbook case of how hate speech, especially on radio, can spark genocidal violence (Frère 2007).

Related to the above, the press's brazen alignment to various centres of power across the divide of the state-controlled and the private press is a direct structural and normative legacy of the 1990s. It is closely related to the political economic history of post-independence states, especially the failure by post-independence administrative structures to support liberalised economies, resulting in most news organisations struggling to survive exclusively on advertising. For this reason, the media is tangled in a web of power structures along political, ethnic and regional lines, and more, with direct consequences for professionalism. Journalistic autonomy and a distinct 'sense of social purpose' (Hallin and Mancini 2004, 38) are consequently compromised as journalists seek to please their allies.

The Zimbabwean media scene offers a good example of a brazenly partisan news media culture characterised by marked polarity between the

state-controlled 'public press' and the privately owned press (see Chaps. 12 and 15). The former has championed a kind of reporting that functions as a means to spread government policy and supresses dissenting voices, while the latter parochially gives space to dissenting voices and subjects government policy to heavy scrutiny and criticism. As Chari (2009, 10) puts it,

> [t]he state media is unapologetic in its support for the ruling Zanu PF government while the private press seems to have signed a pact with the opposition to 'hear no evil', 'speak no evil' and 'see no evil' regarding its affairs.

As elsewhere on the continent, election periods in Zimbabwe are always moments of great tension and journalists are subjected to heightened pressure and manipulation along party political lines. The conflicting editorial thrusts characterising these two broad sectors of the press tend to mirror the political and ideological power struggles pervading public discourse in the country. As a result, 'news reporting has become too predictable and readers are forced to read all the newspapers available in order to get [something approaching] the truth' (Chari 2009, 11).

Reinforcing this journalistic culture, the Internet has also facilitated what Kasoma (1996, 99) refers to as a 'journalism of hatred, revenge, and dislike' by targeting personalities of members of political factions, especially in the state-controlled press. This journalistic culture can best be described as 'activist journalism' (Chari 2009, 29) or 'vendetta journalism' (Kasoma 1996, 99). These new tensions online point to the fact that we cannot eschew the transformative impact of digital technologies, particularly how the Internet is reshaping news production practices, as well as the relationships between news organisations and their audiences (see Chaps. 16 and 17). The Internet culture of participation, sharing and openness has resulted in multiple online journalistic cultures that straddle the tensions between the logic of professional control and the unfolding challenges of open participation (see Mabweazara et al. 2014).

In another journalistic dimension, conflict-ridden regions have also seen a surge in 'interventionist' journalistic cultures primarily oriented towards defusing tensions and 'peace building' (Frère 2007, see also Chap. 6). Crucial to this journalistic culture is a reappraisal of traditional news values and the ideals of objectivity and neutrality, on the grounds that the realities of conflict and violence in Africa demand 'a different approach to journalism' (Obonyo 2010, 61). Describing the concerted

efforts by the Kenyan press to publish stories that addressed peace-building following the 2007 Kenyan post-election violence, Obonyo writes:

> following the botched […] elections Kenyan media marked a unique day in their history when on the first Sunday after the elections, and following days of […] violence, all the newspapers carried a similar headline: 'save our beloved country'. On the same day at 6:00 pm, in a 60 minute program the electronic media throughout the country […] implored the nation to return to its senses and restore peace. (see also Chap. 15)

Commenting on this example, Onyebadi and Oyedeji point out that while it highlights the potential role of the media in de-escalating conflict in Africa, it also fundamentally suggests that in the context of conflict, 'reporters should be society's moral witnesses; not "objective" bystanders, who watch and report on the collapse of humanity' (2011, 215).

Conclusion and Summary of the Book

The sorts of professional cultures discussed above clearly abnegate 'impartiality and evenhandedness and explicitly [stand] against "professional" journalism' (Waisbord 2013, 2). They also point to the fact that '[m]edia globalisation doesn't [necessarily] turn local journalism into a replica of the standard professional model' (Waisbord 2013, 195). This illustrates the contested nature of 'professional journalism as a normative horizon' (Waisbord 2013, 2) and the very limitations associated with examining African journalism exclusively through the normative lens calibrated to assess Western journalism. Indeed, we can conclude that a consensus position on what exactly constitutes professional journalism 'for a world of diverse journalistic cultures and occupational ethics pulled in different directions by political, economic, and social forces' (Waisbord 2013, 9) is not easy one to arrive at.

The rest of the book explores the themes discussed so far in greater depth. It is organised into five interrelated parts, carrying theoretically driven studies that use a wide range of evidence and approaches to shed some light on diverse issues implicating newsmaking cultures in Africa. Part I delves into some of the topical issues and conceptual debates on journalism in Africa. In Chap. 2 Ibrahim Seaga Shaw discusses the challenge of developing a journalism curriculum that reflects diverse national and regional journalism cultures in the light of the UNESCO journalism education

model which has been adopted in several African countries. He raises questions on the blanket applicability of this curriculum in a continent as diverse as Africa and argues that an imposed curriculum based on a Western liberal model will not necessarily work. For Shaw, there is need to consider the epistemological importance of divergence in ways that are sensitive to the specificity of 'locale'. In contrast to the predominantly critical reflections on journalistic cultures in Africa, Robert A. White and Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara's contribution in Chap. 3 takes a rather 'optimistic' approach that explores journalistic efforts to challenge entrenched personalistic and neo-patrimonial governance structures bent on strengthening the concentration of political and economic power in the hands of the ruling elite. Using a range of examples, they argue that the press (in association with the civil society and media support organisations) has developed ways of unmasking the democratic pretentions of the 'big man' rule by foregrounding discourses of human rights, freedom of information and rule of law *inter alia.*

Part II of the book focuses on professional practices, cultures and journalistic 'identity'. In Chap. 4, George Ogola examines tabloid journalism culture in Kenya through a close analysis of the phenomenal growth of *The Nairobian*, which points to a 'professional cultural shift' that has consumed journalism in Africa. The tabloid's popularity and success is intricately connected to its focus on 'popular anxieties', the banalities of the everyday and the personal as well as 'civic' issues in sensational ways that can also be seen as 'political'. Shifting to another popular professional culture, in Chap. 5, Mabweazara focuses on how the Zimbabwean economic and political context has nurtured an environment in which journalists clandestinely incorporate extra paid work into their daily routines as a way of supplementing their poor salaries. This practice not only differentiates them from their counterparts in the economically developed countries but also highlights how material deprivation subverts conventionalised notions of professionalism in ways that undermine the lofty expectations that society has of journalists. Taking a cross-country comparative approach in Chap. 6 Anke Fiedler and Marie-Soleil Frère shine a spotlight on how political unrest and instability impact on press freedom in the troubled region of the Great Lakes. Comparing the internal dynamics and intricate experiences of Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, they argue that while in times of crisis and conflict, political interference influences press freedom, in periods of political stability, other factors such as financial bottlenecks become prominent. Focusing on Uganda, Brian Semujju's Chap. 7 looks at how newsrooms in a polarised media

environment cover contentious institutions such as the Uganda Electoral Commission. While pointing to heavy polarisation, Semujju contends that there is no one factor that can singlehandedly explain newsmaking cultures in Uganda, especially when covering politically contentious issues.

Part III addresses the ethical and professional challenges facing journalism in Africa. It begins with Terje Skjerdal's overarching synthesis of research on journalistic bribery in Chap. 8, which identifies two major interpretations: the *professionalist* approach, focusing on causes and remedies of brown envelope journalism, and the *culturalist* approach, which looks at ethical issues as cultural practice. The chapter criticizes both approaches for tending to downplay the distinction between journalistic practice, which often can be unethical, and the journalistic mindset, which typically testifies to positive ethical awareness. The professional dilemmas posed by poor capitalisation of the media in Nigeria is the primary focus of Muhammad Jameel Yusha'u's Chap. 9. He discusses corruption within the press and the implications of poor working conditions in detail, and concludes with suggestions for alternative ways of financing the press in order to curb corruption. In Chap. 10, Admire Mare demonstrates how various pressures from advertisers, shareholders, news sources and editorial management militate against the institutionalisation of ethical business journalism in Kenyan and South African newsrooms. He asserts that context-specific challenges negate the lofty ideals of professional autonomy and objectivity associated with the Western liberal-pluralist foundations of business journalism. Ammina Kothari's Chap. 11 concludes this part with an exploration of various stages of media evolution in Tanzania and their role in shaping ethical guidelines for journalists. She suggests that media operating with limited resources and freedom such as in Tanzania require a hybrid ethical framework which combines established ethical principles with a close consideration of local circumstances.

Part IV explores the complex imbrications between political actors and the media, and more generally the extent to which media reflects political divisions. Wallace Chuma, in *Journalism, Politics and Professionalism in Zimbabwe*, Chap. 12, fleshes out the journalism–politics nexus in post-independence Zimbabwe, identifying key moments and sites where the matrix of influences has played itself out. Chuma also discusses the limits and possibilities for new media ecologies and practices in realigning the journalism–politics relationship in ways that enhance professionalism and agency. Taking a related approach, in Chap. 13, Letshwiti Batlhalefi Tutwane, discusses how the government of Botswana influences and controls the news

agenda in Botswana's public media through periodic instructions to journalists and the widespread culture of self-censorship and direct executive interference. In Chap. 14, Abdissa Zerai and Fitih Alemu offer an Ethiopian account of political polarisation and its influences on journalism. They examine how Fana Broadcasting Corporate, a state-affiliated commercial broadcast organisation, reproduces the privileged worldview of the political elite, while at the same time amassing popularity among audiences and remaining at the top of a 'status hierarchy' created by the disproportionate distribution of capital in the media. In unpacking the 'interventionist' press culture in the form of 'peace journalism' that emerged following the 2013 Kenyan general election, Denis Galava's Chap. 15 argues that this press culture undermined the normative role of the media by ensuring executive probity and accountability as media owners and the political elite collectively sought to protect their economic interests.

The chapters in Part V examine new media and emerging professional cultures. In Chap. 16, Motilola Olufenwa Akinfemisoye interrogates how journalists in Nigerian print newsrooms appropriate new media technologies and 'alternative' media content in their everyday newsmaking practices. The chapter finds that although journalists in these newsrooms appropriate new media technologies and 'alternative' media content, several contextual factors shape and constrain how these appropriations take place. In the final Chapter, Mercy Ette uses the 2014 Ebola outbreak to closely examine how Nigerian journalists are harnessing the potentials of new media in 'domesticating' the coverage of international news. Ette comes to the conclusion that while the Internet and its associated technologies offer journalists opportunities to broaden their professional capacities, they are yet to transform newsroom practices in international news coverage in meaningful ways.

In conclusion, it is important to note that while these chapters are far from providing a complete panoramic view of newsmaking cultures in Africa, especially given that the selection of themes and their angles can only naturally provide a limited sample for a continent as diverse and colourful as Africa, collectively they offer a rich overview of journalism in Africa. The strength of the studies is also hinged on the fact that they are in dialogue with theoretical insights from other regions, especially those from the global North. The book thus fundamentally underlines the necessity of a pluralist comparative approach that connects African journalistic accounts with wider normative and empirical positions. It is therefore hoped that the volume will be of interest to a broad range of scholarly curiosities, beyond those simply passionate about global South issues.

Notes

1. The term 'normative' as used here is interpreted generically to mean ideal standards and values that underpin and inform the social practice of journalism in terms of decisions and actions taken by journalists. These standards relate to the core social and production practices, and even the very nature of journalism. In the words of Duff, 'at their best, norms crystallise cherished values and give us a viable social morality' (cited in Mabweazara 2013, 148).

2. Constructivist approaches take into account the social and cultural realities that impact on social practice, journalism in this case. They emphasise the 'social shaping' nature of practices within specific contexts.

3. This body of research, emerging mostly from Anglo-American scholarship, broadly constitutes the standard against which inquiry into journalism has been evaluated and is referenced widely as the established beginning of journalism studies (see Zelizer 2004).

4. The conditions include weak economic structures tangled in complex political systems, failed economic policies, conflict, over-dependency on foreign funding, and entrenched corruption and patrimonial relationships, among other factors.

5. It has often been seen by critics as reinforcing African exceptionalism which frames the continent as the 'normative other' relative to the economically developed regions of the North.

6. Several editors and ordinary citizens have been arrested and charged under this law. In 2003, the *Daily News'* editor was arrested and charged under POSA for allegedly publishing advertisements insulting the president, see: http://www.ifex.org/zimbabwe/2003/06/27/third_editor_charged_under_public/. Accessed 9 July 2017.

7. The metaphor of the 'brown envelope' is not only used to capture the image of cash stashed in envelopes but also the clandestine and informal nature of the underhand dealings, which often occur at a very personal level.

8. Moonlighting is, however, a much wider culture in African newsrooms; it is not necessarily restricted to journalists working for the privately owned news organisations (see Chap. 5 in this volume).

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Issues and Conceptual Debates

Towards a Journalism Education Model Curricula in Africa: A Call for a 'Glocal' Rather than Global (Universal) Journalism Model

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Since its launch at the World Journalism Education Congress in Singapore in 2007, the UNESCO Model Curricula for Journalism Education has been received with great excitement, with seventy journalism education institutions in sixty countries spanning diverse linguistic and cultural contexts adopting it. However, the model has also been met with criticism regarding its proposed 'universal' application without it taking into consideration local historical situations, cultures and values in countries of the developing and emerging world. Speaking on the Chicago Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication pre-conference UNESCO panel in August 2012, the author expressed concern that the Model Curricula for Journalism Education (hereafter MCJE) may hit some rocks in Africa if they are not revised to offer a more bottom-up approach in their application. I observed that it is becoming increasingly clear that these curricula need a more robust historical dimension to make them easily adaptable to local journalism values and challenges in Africa.

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This line of thinking was equally echoed by another expert, Kim Sawchuk of Concordia University, who, speaking during the Istanbul UNESCO special panel in October 2012, noted that she was 'suspicious of the term and notion of the universal', calling for a pedagogical 'negotiation' in journalism. She called on her counterparts to 'create journalism programmes that work from the particularities of the locale and are sensitive to that locale' (UNESCO Report 2013, 1).

Yet, according to the UNESCO report (2013) on the findings of its two consultative workshops debating the follow-up of the model curricula, the problem of the 'universalising' project appears to be much wider than the 'universal' application of the model itself. The report remarks that 'one of the key challenges facing UNESCO in serving an international constituency is in developing curriculum resources that are representative of a diversity of national and regional experiences, and which afford adaptation in a range of circumstances' (UNESCO Report 2013, 1). The good news is that one of the key recommendations from the two UNESCO workshops organised in 2012 was the need for country or regional-specific contextualisation of the application of the model curriculum. But this does not of course mean that the debate over the problematic 'universalising' project has simply gone away, since, as the saying goes, 'this is easier said than done'.

The principal aim of this chapter is to contribute to this wider debate on the 'universalising' project by extending theoretical criticism of the so-called 'convergence hypothesis' by Hallin and Mancini (2004), informed by their argument that the Western liberal democracy (WLD) model of journalism cannot be applied globally, to underpin recent calls by this author and other scholars for the 'glocalisation' rather than 'globalisation' of the UNESCO MCJE in the developing world. By comparing the challenges of the 'universalising' project in the context of both the so-called WLD model of journalism and the MCJE, this chapter attempts a double interrogation: First, it seeks to problematise the branding of the liberal democracy model of journalism as a Western model and proposes instead for it to be rebranded as the liberal free market model. Second, it seeks to interrogate the 'modernism' thesis, what Hallin and Mancini (2004) called the convergence hypothesis, as nothing more than a myth and to make the argument that rather than converging towards a single modern universal business model, journalism and journalism education models—including the WLD model—are diverging towards relativist geo-cultural or ideological identities. In keeping with the former

interrogation, therefore, we should be talking about 'de-marketising' rather than 'de-Westernising' journalism; while with the latter, we should be talking about a 'divergence hypothesis' (postmodernism) rather than a convergence hypothesis (modernism). Moreover, by comparing and contrasting the WLD model with other models in Europe and the rest of the world, within a critical historical context, the chapter seeks to contribute fresh insights into the broader understanding of the historical and epistemological importance of the increasing divergence or glocalisation of modern journalism.

Apart from being conceived as a contribution to the conceptualisation and theorisation of the dominant WLD and alternative models of journalism—a relatively neglected area of media and communication theory research—this chapter is set to illuminate a critical dimension to understanding how counter-hegemonic, alternative models of journalism reinforce or complement the liberal model by making it less market oriented and therefore more sensitive and responsive to addressing the uneven or unequal power relations inherent in globalisation and modernisation. While Hallin and Mancini (2004) have been critical of the convergence hypothesis, their criticism has largely been limited to their comparing of the WLD model to the other two European journalism frameworks—the North Democratic–corporatist and the Southern European–polarised models. This chapter seeks to expand the scope of this comparison, to include the African and Asian models of journalism. Furthermore, while media scholars have often expressed reservations about the applicability of the WLD model to African countries, there have been a few attempts to adapt it to existing conditions and structures (Akioye 1994; Ansah 1988; Anyang' Nyong'o 1995; James 1990; Mafeje 1995; Obeng-Quaidoo 1987; Ronning 1994, 1995; Sachikonye 1995; Uche 1991, Banda 2009; Berger 2002; Shaw 2009), albeit with little success, due largely to the top-down approach employed. Cameroonian media scholar Francis Nyamnjoh (2005) describes the convergence hypothesis as a 'bandwaggonism thesis', and he criticises African journalists for merely mimicking the dominant liberal model.

In their comparative study of the influence of globalisation and modernisation on journalism ethics in South Africa and India, Wasserman and Rao (2008) look at how local challenges inhibit the top-down application of the market model of journalism ethics. However, they fail to interrogate the convergence hypothesis or recognise the significance and strength of the divergent journalism ethics developing in other parts of the world

and, above all, show their importance to a 'divergent' journalism education. It is part of the aim of this chapter to address this gap in the literature.

Skjerdal (2012) discusses African journalism in the context of three streams: namely, journalism as an agent of social change; journalism as belonging; and journalism as oral discourse. What is more, in order to reinforce the nexus between journalism as a profession and as a culture of public life, Skjerdal (2012, 73) argues that 'journalists are not just members of a professional community' but that 'they also belong to a social community, a cultural community, a political community, and so forth'. Yet, while Skjerdal's work is an important addition to our understanding of the African journalism model, it fails critically to juxtapose it with the so-called 'convergent' WLD model and examine it in relation to journalism education, all of which the present chapter is set to address. Other more recent investigations into newsmaking cultures are equally important, for instance the Hanitzsch and Mellado (2011) comparative study of journalism cultures across continents, which found three strands of institutional roles of journalists—interventionism, power distance and market orientations; and Preston's (2009) five domains of influence on journalism cultures—societal beliefs, values and routines (ranking high up), as well as organisation, political, economic and cultural factors. But these studies have tended to focus on comparing journalism practice across cultures more generally, and not necessarily offering a critique of the top-down approach of imbibing the WLD model precepts and methods of journalism for the rest of the world nor offering a journalism education dimension to the equation. This chapter intends to fill in all these gaps in the epistemology of newsmaking cultures as they relate to Africa and the West.

Banda (2010), for his part, outlines a pan-African agenda for journalism education by interrogating, *inter alia*, three sub-themes of the epistemic ontological foundations of its African form: within its historical context, considering the need to emancipate it from its Western 'bandwaggonism'—to use Nyamnjoh's word—and, above all, the need to instil it with rich value systems unique to Africa. This chapter aims not only to build on Banda's interrogation of these three sub-themes but to go further in demonstrating how together they debunk the myth of the convergence hypothesis or the modernisation thesis in understanding journalism and journalism education, which instead constitute diverse practices of cultural life. However, it also recognises the diversity of cultural practices

in Africa, which may make it difficult to argue for a journalism paradigm that covers the whole African continent—a problem that somewhat contradicts this chapter's criticism of the convergence or modernisation thesis of the WLD model. This theoretical deficit of the postmodernist African journalism model will be addressed in the third section.

By way of setting out the backdrop for the discussion of the challenges or limits of the 'universalising' project with respect to journalism and journalism education, this chapter opens with a literature review that seeks to explore whether there is anything that can truly be called African journalism, and if so, how does it compare to the WLD and other alternative models. The second section explores the links between the African journalism model and the pan-African agenda of journalism education. The final section critically examines the limits of the convergence hypothesis or modernisation thesis in the context of the cultural approach to journalism and journalism education.

1. Is There Anything that can be Called 'African Journalism'?

As noted in Chap. 1, much of the scholarly literature regarding the theories of journalism studies and practice is premised on the tenets of the Western liberal democracy model. 'To the extent that this model is held to be universal, it hinders the analytical theorisation of journalistic precepts that have evolved locally in most countries of the developing world' (Shaw 2009, 491). This section seeks to interrogate this 'universalising' project of journalism by first exploring the question that is increasingly gaining currency in understanding the theorisation of journalism studies and practice as to whether there is anything that can be termed African journalism (AJ)?

There is a dominant view, albeit shared by some African media scholars themselves, that African journalism is lacking in African values, and that African journalists are merely mimicking the dominant neoliberal democracy model of journalism. Kasoma (1996, 95) laments that 'the tragedy facing African journalism is that the continent's journalists have closely imitated the professional norms of the North'. Banda (2009) criticises the Western model for reinforcing neocolonialism in the African media landscape, while Traber (1995) is concerned about its emphasis of individualism and conflict over empathy and community spirit. Cameroonian scholar

Francis Nyamnjoh (2005) argues that the precepts of journalism that currently apply in Africa are

> largely at variance with dominant ideas of personhood and agency (and by extension society, culture and democracy) shared by communities across the continent, as it assumes that there is One-Best-Way of being and doing to which Africans must aspire and be converted in the name of modernity and civilisation. (Nyamnjoh 2005, 3)

Shaw is, however, critical of Nyamnjoh's angle as being too simplistic in reinforcing the modernisation thesis:

> Nyamnjoh's theory presupposes the non-existence of any journalistic precept unique to Africa. This claim frankly but problematically gives the impression that what obtains, or remains, of journalism practice in Africa, is nothing but a holistic replica of the Western liberal democracy model. Nyamnjoh's thesis raises questions such as: What can we say about the form of journalism that existed in Africa before colonialism? Which aspects of this journalism survived the colonial and postcolonial periods, and which did not? Whither African journalism? Modernity, Africanity, or a synthesis of the best of both? (Shaw 2009, 492)

Contrary to Nyamnjoh's claim, and following Louise Bourgault (1995), I argue that there was a form of journalism as it were in Africa (i.e. South of the Sahara, hereafter simply Africa) before the advent of colonialism. Journalism in those times took the form of oral discourse, using communication norms informed by oral tradition and folk culture with communal storytellers (griots), musicians, poets and dancers playing the role of the modern-day journalist. Recalling Rubin and Weinstein (1974, 10), Bourgault notes that 'although governments change, this does not mean that older forms disappear. The same could be said for all forms of communication'—the technological forms change, but the pre-existing styles of interaction may not (Bourgault 1995, 2). Little wonder that Bourgault was critical of communication scholars, like other social scientists, for viewing Africa at the onset of colonialism as a tabula rasa (Bourgault 1995). This claim flies in the face of the unique grounding of the African journalism model in oral discourse, creativity, humanity and agency.

The African oral tradition resonates with the myth of the African ruler as a spiritual symbol of a people. Social values in pre-colonial Africa strongly stressed 'group orientation, continuity, harmony, and balance'

(Bourgault 1995, 4). As Bonnie Wright reminds us, the question 'Who are you?' was meaningless without the additional query 'of where and of whom are you born?' (Wright 1966, 54). This brings to mind the African worldview of *ubuntu* also discussed in Chap. 1; this is an ancient African ethic, a 'cultural mindset' that tries to capture the essence of what it means to be human. 'A person is a person through other people' (Tutu 1999, 34–35). 'I am human because I belong, I participate, I share' (Murithi 2005, 341). It is this *ubuntu* African worldview, largely based on group solidarity and belonging, that informs the oral discourse style of journalism unique to pre-colonial Africa (Worthington 2011).

However, this linking of African journalism to the pre-colonial oral form of African communication has not escaped the attention of critics. Kasoma's proposal of 'Afriethics' (1996) as a basis for African journalism practice was, for example, criticised for being informed by what Nyamnjoh (2005, 91) called a 'romantic reconstruction of the pre-colonial' while Banda and Tomaselli—both cited in Skjerdal (2012, 637)—are concerned about its assumption of a static and exceptionalistic understanding of African culture. In fact, Bourgault (1995), who, despite recognising the existence of pre-colonial oral tradition as a form of journalism unique to sub-Saharan Africa, was critical of what she called the essentially 'mnemonic' character of knowledge in oral society, which she said inhibits innovation 'because novelty represented a possible overload of the human memory circuits' (Bourgault 1995, 12). Bourgault (1995) also criticised the system of patronage created by this African oral culture as the power relations between the 'oral majority' and the 'Big Man', with the griot or storyteller (the African journalist) as the middle-man facilitating the conversation, as being one of dependency, rather than agency—a system that has continued to the postcolonial period (see Chap. 1). Bourgault blamed this patronage for the weak postcolonial African press, which supported and bolstered corrupt systems of political patronage hiding behind 'national interest' (Bourgault 1995, 227). Moreover, the *ubuntu* ideology of African Journalism has also come under attack, for instance on the grounds that it runs the risk of being misused for political purposes (Fourie cited in Skjerdal 2012, 637) or that it could turn into an essentialist and exclusivist ideology. Shepperson and Tomaselli (2009, 483) take the criticism of the AJ model to another level by expressing scepticism over the idea of conceiving of a medium of communication or journalism for a 'people (whether as a nation, a region or a transcontinental

grouping) to attain media independence' without first nurturing and reproducing 'a cadre of competent persons (a class, if you like) who will find their vocation in the social, economic and political structures' that support media production. 'The Third World', they argue, 'cannot hope to develop a media system that is somehow detached from the West until such time as Third World people can independently build, maintain, extend, innovate within and sustainably operate these structures' (Shepperson and Tomaselli 2009, 484).

Yet, Skjerdal (2012, 637) observes that despite these criticisms 'the belief that Africa needs a journalism standard which differs substantially from that of the rest of the world—and particularly from the West—seems to be strong among many media scholars'. And for Shaw (2009, 943), even if this form of oral discourse journalism was 'unique to precolonial Africa', it can still inform and improve today's African journalism to make it more in tune with indigenous thinking (also cited in Skjerdal 2012, 646). Moreover, as explained later in this section, the criticism of the AJ model as largely based on the politics of patronage is grossly exaggerated since it largely imbibes characteristics of antagonistic and combative journalism rooted in the cultural and social responsibility watchdog ethos. Skjerdal (2012, 646) notes that in the context of the orthodox thinking of African oral discourse journalism, 'modern media built upon imported communication forms', which are largely influenced by the powerful 'BIG MEN' of society, are seen as dumbing down of native philosophy. A case worth noting here, according to Okolo (2005, 85), is excessive use of European languages in the African media, which undoubtedly 'greatly helped' to distort the identity of the Africans. This resonates with Ali Mazrui's concern that Western-based curricula, informed by the WLD model's characteristic of detachment, tend to make African journalism students shy away from their history and culture, which makes it difficult for them to critically reflect on the often-problematic policies and actions of their governments 'from the vantage points of engaged and constructive citizenry' (cited in Banda et al. 2007, 158).

Having critically reviewed the debate regarding the historical foundations of the African journalism model, this section will now briefly look at how it relates to the dominant WLD and other alternative models. My alternative conceptualisation of AJ is corroborated by Hallin and Mancini (2004), who argue that the Anglo-American model is not necessarily the one that fits the rest of the world. In fact, Hallin and Mancini (2004) discuss two other models: the Mediterranean or Polarised Pluralist Model

(South European states) and the North/Central European Democratic Corporatist Model (North/Central European states). The Anglo-American model (otherwise called the WLD model) is shared by the USA, Canada, Britain and Ireland. These countries share strong political and cultural ties, and a history of the development of the commercial press with little or no state support. Yet the Anglo-American liberal model is not entirely unitary and homogenous. The USA has a much stronger liberal culture, while Britain has a statist conservatism, liberal corporatism and social democracy orientation. Canada and Ireland have a much stronger culture of national identity, unlike the USA and Britain. A typical feature of the Anglo-American model of journalism is independence from state control, a feature which emphasises the market logic of objectivity and neutrality based on the idea of modernity (Hallin and Mancini 2004). The Southern Mediterranean polarised model shared by Southern European countries such as Spain, Portugal, Greece and France is, on the other hand, essentially partisan and advocacy oriented. Here, journalists have been considered as agents of ideological expression and political mobilisation in the political conflicts that marked the history of Southern Europe. The third model, the North-Central corporatist model is characterised by the co-existence of partisan journalism (dominant in the second model) and a well-developed mass circulation press (dominant in the first model), although, as Hallin and Mancini (2004) put it, the former has substantially weakened over the last generation.

I have also identified a fifth—the Asian model—which developed in China and Japan as early as the time of the founding of the Gutenberg Press (the first printing machine) in Europe in 1450, and then spread to the rest of the Asia-Pacific region (Briggs and Burke 2010). Japanese journalists are bound together in a network of a thousand or so press clubs, all connected to major institutional or industrial sources of power and news. The Chinese media systems that emphasise community values of belonging and association, which are rooted in their communist or socialist ideology, resonate with those of the Japanese, built on consensus and negotiation rather than competition. The African model is very similar to the Asian model, in that both stress group orientation, continuity, harmony and balance, both are largely partisan and advocacy oriented, and, moreover, both are informed by ideological or political group solidarity.

As we can see in Table 2.1, the WLD model of journalism is more state than people centred, despite being based on the market logic of objectivity, which means that it is supposed to be neutral and detached from the

Table 2.1   Differences between the WLD model and the AJ model

Western Liberal Democracy (WLD) model	African Journalism (AJ) model
More state centred	More people and community focused
Journalism of detachment	Journalism of attachment
Emphasis on objectivity	Emphasis on honesty
Less discursive	More discursive

people on which the journalists are reporting, be they politicians or businessmen, other elites or ordinary people. On the other hand, the AJ is more people than state centred, which means that it is based on the principle of honesty, that is, saying things as they are with an emphasis on empathising with the conditions of the people. Here, the journalists see things from the perspectives of the people and are in solidarity with them—evident in the regular use of personal pronouns such as 'us', 'our' and so forth. This model differs from the WLD one, which, rather than attaching to the conditions of ordinary people in society, tends to detach from them but fixes rather on the conditions of the dominant elite and affluent members of society.

There is a plethora of examples of this negative aspect of the WLD model on contemporary newsmaking cultures in Africa. In his agenda-setting and frame analyses of the 2005 presidential runoff elections in Liberia's coverage by two of the country's leading newspapers (*The Observer* and *The Analyst*), Shaw (2007) found that dominant framing of 'qualification and experience' (the frame that supported Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who went on to win the runoff) over that of 'common sense and grassroot popularity' (the frame that supported football star George Oppong Weah, who lost) was supported by elite sources who were mostly influenced by the WLD modernist paradigm. As Jamieson (1992, 180) notes, problems become 'issues when a candidate, the press, or polls say that they are considered important in determining which candidate will win'. The trouble is that when such elitist dominant discourses, which are not necessarily based on reality, are foregrounded, others, such as the criticism of educated but corrupt politicians (alluding to the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's of this world), are either obscured or made irrelevant altogether.

A study by Mercy Ette (2012) on the framing of the twenty-three-year-old Nigerian, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who allegedly attempted to bomb an American airline flying from Detroit, provides a more recent

example of how the WLD model has negatively impacted on African journalism. Ette's research found that the mainstream Nigerian press, more or less following the objectivity (detachment) ethos of the WLD model, framed Abdulmutallab's national identity as being Nigerian rather than highlighting his ethnic identity as Hausa, and 'this was probably meant to convey objectivity by avoiding associations with particular ethnic groups or specific parts of the country'. Ette observes that, given the sensitive nature of the issue, the use of a 'neutral label' for his 'national identity' could have been influenced by the 'need to reduce inter-ethnic tensions in the country'. She argues that 'a realistic portrayal of Abdulmutallab as a Muslim from the northern part of the country could have reinforced ethno-regional differences, especially as the sanctions imposed on the country by the United States were not selective but on all Nigerians irrespective of their ethnic identity and religion' (Ette 2012, 51). Again, we can see how Abdulmutallab's so-called objective (detached) but rather skewed elite mainstream portrayal as simply a Nigerian obscured the reality of his being specifically a Hausa Muslim from Northern Nigeria.

Moreover, Ette's study also found a dominant denial frame in the Nigerian press coverage of the Abdulmutallab saga; the framing denied any involvement of Nigeria in the radicalisation of the young man. Instead, the blame was squarely put on outside influence, specifically the educational institutions that he had attended in London and Yemen. The Nigerian *Daily Trust*, for instance, wrote that the alleged would-be suicide bomber was 'just a devoted Muslim youth who was concerned about his religious duties in addition to his regular studies' (2009); but the paper suggested that the boy was radicalised when away from home. Furthermore, while the Nigerian newspapers were very quick in blaming Western and Arabic institutions for Abdulmutallab's radicalisation, they shied away from criticising his very rich father 'for sending his son abroad at a young, impressionable age' (Ette 2012, 55). Again, we can see how the reality of the role of his Muslim faith and ethnic background as Hausa from the north in the young man's radicalisation were quickly rendered obscure, or irrelevant, because of the 'detached' newsmaking culture of the WLD model. Thus, it is difficult to disagree with Berger, who argues that this WLD paradigm is problematic not only because it is challenged on its own 'Western home turf, but its suitability to Africa is questionable' (Berger 2002, 21–45).

On the other end of the spectrum, the discursive and reflexive storytelling type of AJ rooted in the African cultural values of attachment, belonging and shared humanity—if assimilated by African journalists—would

make them resilient to such manipulative and distortive tendencies of the WLD paradigm. Moreover, in the WLD model, the emphasis is on the presentation of facts; whereas, in the case of the AJ, the emphasis is on discussing these facts with the idea of taking a position for or against. It is for this reason that AJ has a tendency to be subjective and partisan. Little wonder that most newspapers in Africa tend to be polarised along political party lines to this day.

Another point worthy of note is that, contrary to claims by Bourgault (1995), African journalism in the pre-colonial period was not just praise-singing but also combative. In fact, Bourgault's claim of seeing African oral tradition only as praise-singing discourse, creating 'personality cults' around leaders, runs counter to her assertion elsewhere that these oral traditionalists were permitted to criticise their patrons where necessary. This combination of praise-singing and combative journalism survived pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial Africa. Following are examples of combative and praise-singing accounts in the postcolonial period:

Combative Account
    'Another truth about MMD is that they have nothing to offer apart from condemning UNIP and one party state … So what can one expect from a bunch of mandrake dealers, ex-coup plotters, power-hungry elements, dictators, tribalists, fake lay preachers, corrupt and disgruntled misfits.' (From UNIP (Kaunda-controlled) *Eagle Express* just before the elections that ended Kaunda's reign in Zambia (Meja-Pearce cited in Bourgault 1995, 188))

Praise-Singing Account
    'On this blessed day, our prayers rise from our hearts, prayers for you and your family, for all who are dear to you, for yourself, so that we can know that you will be near to us, unequally and totally preoccupied by our continuing improvement and the development of our dear country.' (Bourgault's translation, cited in Badibanga 1979, 42, from Cote d'Ivoire's national daily, *Fraternite Matin* (18 October 1977))

2. The African Journalism Model and the Pan-African Agenda of Journalism Education

This section will examine the links between the AJ model and the pan-African agenda of journalism education developed by Fackson Banda. Speaking at a colloquium at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South

Africa, Banda interrogated the epistemic ontological foundations of African journalism education, *inter alia*, by analysing its three strands: namely, historical context, de-Westernisation and the African communitarian value system. It is the aim of this section to use these three strands to demonstrate the links between the AJ model as proposed here and earlier (Shaw (2009) and largely supported by Skjerdal (2012)) and Banda's pan-African agenda for journalism education.

Historical Context

One of the key strengths of the AJ model is its epistemic ontological foundations, which can be traced as far back as the pre-colonial African oral tradition and the related forms of communication that continued during colonial times—as demonstrated in the first section of this chapter—as well as in the postcolonial period. In a similar spirit, some of the papers presented at the Rhodes University colloquium call for the need for journalism education in Africa to take into consideration the historical context of journalism practice on the continent.

Yet, reservations have been expressed about the largely top-down approach informed by the WLD paradigm. Twelve out of sixteen African journalism educators interviewed in a BBC Trust-funded research project in 2005 by the African Media Development Initiative (AMDI) felt that many NGOs and donor organisations failed to understand the operational environment, resources and/or work practices prior to engaging in a media development project. Citing Zeleza, Winston Mano (2009) refers to the discipline of African history to help, as he puts it, 'undress the emperor'. However, Banda (2009) warns that our search for onto-epistemological justification is fraught with many obstacles, making Skjerdal (2009, 3) ask, 'Should we teach journalism or should we teach African journalism'? Echoing similar concerns, Bevelyn Dube cautions that 'Africanising' journalism education runs the risk of essentialism (cited in Banda 2009). Banda (2009) adds that 'it is important, if only for purposes of systematic scholarly exposition, to tease out the cultural sub-texts of any piece of journalism in order to address the larger questions about what type of journalism education can effectively enhance citizenship, democracy, development, transformation, etc.'.

De-Westernising

The de-Westernising thesis is needed for journalism education in the same way that it is necessary for journalism practice. Training programmes from the West are often out of tune with the realities on the ground in Africa. This calls into question the media development package conceived within the context of the neoliberal WLD model and blindly exported to other parts of the world. Lynch (2008) calls it the 'modernisation' approach 'geared towards the implementation of Western style precepts and methods of reporting'. De Beer notes that communication training requires more than technical knowledge and skills by practitioners, adding that journalists 'need an "internally organised body of knowledge" which reflects a clear understanding of their society and culture and a personal repertoire of intellectual and imaginative skills' (cited in Boafo and Wete 2002, 2). Siebert et al. (1956, 2) posit that to understand the role of journalists in society it is important to know the social structures in which they operate: 'To see the social systems in their true relationship to the press, one has to look at certain beliefs and assumptions which the society holds.'

The African Communitarian Value System

The community values based on the *ubuntu* philosophy of belonging and association discussed in the first section are as important to African journalism practice as they are to African journalism education. I argue that the AJ model is very similar to the cultural approach to news that characterised early nineteenth-century American and British Victorian journalism, in as much as journalism of association and belonging is concerned (Carey 1989; Schudson 1998). Furthermore, since the cultural approach to news resonates with the 'educational' ethos of the liberal theory of the press, which epitomises the 'social responsibility' role of the journalist, it is reasonable to argue that the AJ model deserves consideration in adapting the UNESCO journalism education model curricula to the African context. I strongly suggest that it is far from sufficient, for instance, to have just a passing reference to the history of the dominant neoliberal theory of the press as a BA Year 2 session in the syllabus of the 'Media and Society' module as indicated in the UNESCO MCJE.

However, as Banda (2009) warns, the process of 'Africanising' journalism curricula is not going to be without major difficulties. Similarly, Dube (2009) points to the conceptual difficulties associated with defining what the adjective 'African' really means, proposing that we should be thinking more about a hybridised African reality, reflecting the many influences that have shaped, and continue to shape, the practice, teaching and research of journalism (cited in Banda 2009).

3. Limits of the Convergence Hypothesis or Modernisation Thesis in Journalism and Journalism Education

This final section attempts a double interrogation in the context of comparing the challenges of the 'universalising' project in both the WLD model of journalism and the MCJE: First, it will question the branding of the liberal democracy model of journalism as a Western model and proposes instead for it to be rebranded as the liberal free market model. Second, it seeks to interrogate the 'modernism' thesis—what Hallin and Mancini (2004) called the convergence hypothesis—as nothing more than a myth, and goes on to make the argument that rather than converging towards a single modern universal business model, journalism and journalism education models, including the WLD model, are diverging towards relativist geo-cultural or ideological identities. In keeping with the former interrogation, therefore, we should be talking about 'de-marketising' rather than 'de-Westernising' journalism; while, with the latter, we should be talking about a 'divergence hypothesis' (postmodernism), rather than a convergence hypothesis (modernism).

With regard to the first interrogation, the argument is made that there is a problem in the branding of the Anglo-American liberal market model as a 'Western' model, since it was historically driven more by a free market logic than the Western liberal political ideology of freedom and liberty (Hampton 2001). I have identified four historical stages in the context of freedom of expression and the challenges of state power and capitalism to explain this.

First, early political society was characterised by censorship and licensing by the state and the propertied British aristocracy. These were aban-

doned following pressure from John Locke and the Magna Carta. The second stage saw the introduction of the laws of criminal libel, sedition and contempt, which, although less obstructive, appeared to be an even more repressive control of free speech. Moreover, taxation in the form of stamp duty was also brought in. By stage three, newspapers became independent and self-sufficient via advertising and sales revenues, especially following the cancellation of tax on newspapers in Britain in 1855, thus making way for the mass circulation of newspapers. Stage four saw the development of the press as pure business, with emphasis on non-partisan facts, with the aim of maximising profit, which largely eroded its social responsibility role of holding state power to account on behalf of the public. This has continued until today—the age of the Internet (Hallin 2008). There is a problem, therefore, with the branding of the liberal model of journalism as Western. Because of this, we should be talking about de-marketising journalism and journalism education rather than their de-Westernisation.

In the case of the second interrogation, it is argued here that the convergence hypothesis is a myth, as there is nothing like one universal truth in the world, contrary to the modernist thesis. Hallin (2009) notes that one of the most common assumptions about the future of journalism is found in what can be called the convergence hypothesis. This is the idea that news media worldwide are converging towards a single global model of journalism. He observes that it is often assumed that the global media systems are, strictly speaking, following the modernisation path of the Anglo-American model, otherwise called the WLD model. He notes that while some see this as 'something natural and desirable, as a process of "modernization"; others see it as a process of cultural imperialism or homogenization, reducing cultural diversity not only between societies, but also within them, as all communication institutions come to be dominated by marketplace logics' (Hallin 2009). However, in their earlier work, Hallin and Mancini (2004) warn of the limits of the 'convergence hypothesis' and argue that there is evidence to suggest that the world media systems, including those in Africa and the Anglo-American context, are diverging away from rather than converging towards the liberal model, due to the increase in partisan or advocacy journalism. This is like going back to where it all began during the era of literary journalism, which emphasised opinion over facts—also reminiscent of the cultural approach to the news.

However, some critics may be tempted to see a contradiction in the criticism of the modernism (convergent hypothesis) thesis of the WLD model in this chapter, which argues for an AJ model unique to the continent. In other words, the same arguments that the chapter makes against universalising the WLD paradigm can be raised against any attempt at universalising the AJ model across the different shades of historical and cultural experiences in Africa. Moreover, this deficit will render the AJ model inconsistent with the notion of postmodernism—to which the chapter attributes it. Nevertheless, this chapter recognises that Africa, given its historical and cultural complexities, cannot be reified into a homogenous entity to which an African journalism model can be uniquely attributed. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the AJ model discussed in here is attributed to the oral form of cultural journalism practiced in pre-colonial sub-Saharan Africa, which excludes North Africa (the Maghreb) and South Africa. Additionally, the extent to which the AJ model shares oral cultural characteristics of association, belonging, harmony and humanity that equally cut across the multiple layers of the African colonial and postcolonial experiences potentially weakens any criticism of its being anti-postmodernist.

I have argued earlier in this chapter that the African journalism of belonging and association is very similar to the cultural approach to the news which is premised on the fact that it expresses the structure of 'public life' in another medium (Carey 1989; Schudson 1998; Ryfe 2006) (see also Chap. 1). This resonates with the liberal theory of the press in both its 'liberal' and 'educational' roles, although it tends to lean more towards the latter. Yet, this educational ethos of the press was greatly undermined by the introduction of the commercial press in the mid-nineteenth century. This ideal has struggled pretty much to this day; and this has caused critics to signal the end of journalism. However, Hallin (2009) is not convinced. In his view, despite its increasing commercialisation, there is evidence to suggest that journalism is diverging more away from the modernist approach based on the idea of universal truth or facts than converging towards it.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis, it is reasonable to conclude that this chapter has contributed to Hallin's (2009) criticism of the so-called 'convergent hypothesis' that journalism practised in the world today is more modernist

than postmodernist and to the Hallin and Mancini (2004) argument that the WLD model of journalism does not fit the whole world. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, it is reasonable to conclude that because African journalism practice is informed more by the postmodernist divergent than the modernist convergent form of journalism, it makes sense to support the call, which some scholars and I echoed at the beginning of this chapter, for 'glocalisation' rather than 'globalisation' of the WLD model and the UNESCO MCJE. If, as Hallin says, the WLD model of journalism is increasingly becoming postmodern divergent journalism instead of converging towards the modernist approach, then it makes sense also to orientate the UNESCO MCJE more towards the glocal (adapting it to local journalism structures in Africa and other parts of the world), rather than the global (imposing the WLD model of education on the local structures). Moreover, as I argued in the third section of this chapter, because the African journalism model—based on the ideas of group solidarity, belonging and watchdog journalism informed by the liberal theory of the press—is largely likened to the nineteenth-century cultural approach to the news that emerged in the USA and Britain, there is a problem in branding the commercial journalism that emerged in that period as being the WLD model, and that it should be rebranded instead as the liberal free market model.

The good news is that there have been some recent attempts by UNESCO and media scholars to rescue journalism. For instance, Fackson Banda (2009), the author of a UNESCO *Civic Education for Media Professionals Training Manual*, notes that 'news' practices of the media are intrinsically political, such that they present a definitional flexibility for media professionals to reconsider '"news" in terms of its potential to enhance civic and democratic expression'. Banda makes the case for journalists to embrace the skills and virtues of a civic education, which they can use to educate the public and empower them to monitor and influence public policy. In his book, *Human Rights Journalism*, Shaw (2012, 2) takes this educational role of the press further by emphasising a human rights approach,

> which claims that journalists not only hold the power to inform the public, connect people in different parts of the world and promote public knowledge and understanding of issues and events, but, more importantly, have the moral responsibility—as duty bearers—to educate the public, increase awareness in its members of their rights and monitor, investigate and report all human rights violations.

Other recent journalism rescue attempts have included the emergence of alternative counter-hegemonic journalism models such as public journalism, citizen journalism, peace journalism and global journalism. All these counter-hegemonic journalism models have been influenced by the increasing call for the democratisation of journalism practice informed by communication for social change. I argue that since the liberal 'educational' ethos is very much alive in African journalism, there is no better way of rescuing journalism than adopting a more critical bottom-up cultural approach in adapting the UNESCO journalism model curricula in Africa and other parts of the world.

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African Journalism Cultures: The Struggle for Free Expression Against Neo-Patrimonial Governance

Robert A. White and Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara

The study of journalism in Africa rarely focuses on everyday practices of journalists, especially the 'culturally distinct' practices that underpin journalism on the continent—what this book has broadly termed *newsmaking cultures* (see Chap. 1). The intricacies of these newsmaking cultures are central to this chapter. To understand a 'culture', according to cultural anthropologists, one must enter into the worldview of the concerned people, which functions as a pair of lenses that filters certain aspects of a lived existence or reality. In the African context, as some scholars argue, this worldview is largely dependent on *who you know* and not *what you know*. They argue that it is not just our personal ideals and ambitions that count but the complex structures of power with which we must align ourselves with in order to survive (Hyden and Okigbo 2002; Thompson 2004; Bayart 2009; Diamond 2010).

Above all, we must be aware of the structures of power that relate to the ruling elite, and in particular, to the personage who so often has been

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'president for life', as is typical in a number of African countries. Journalists, especially, must be acutely aware of this structure of power as they decide on *what* issues to cover and *how* to cover them. With every step, the journalist on the continent is asking difficult questions: Will this story pass through the filter of the editor who often represents the interests of the political elite? Will my article bring personal reprisals from the state security agents? Dare I allude to the corruption and mismanagement caused by the latest party appointees in the ministry I am reporting on? Underpinning all these questions is one of the most prominent aspects of journalistic cultures in Africa—the continuous struggle of journalists with autocratic, personalistic styles of governance (Diamond 2010). As Hyden and Okigbo (2002) point out in their *Media and Democracy in Africa*, the major concern in the daily practice of journalism is the repressive neo-patrimonial system of politics on the continent, which is characterised by the centralisation of power in 'an individual to whom all within the system owe their positions' (Thomson 2004, 127). This often entails the discretionary use of public resources by the powerful individual 'to strengthen personal and/or partisan power and favor allied news organisations' (Waisbord 2013, 153–154).

Virtually all analyses of the social, economic and especially political institutions in Africa relate to this neo-patrimonial governance that dominates public life (Bayart 2009; Diamond 2004).[1] The question here is 'in what ways is journalism on the continent affected by the structural relations between governments and news organisations, as well as between officials [or powerful individuals] and reporters' (Waisbord 2013, 155)? Similarly, how are journalists striving towards building a culture that exposes and challenges neo-patrimonial institutions, thereby engendering democratic governance. The bulk of this study focuses on the latter.

In responding to these pertinent questions, it is important to highlight the fact that in democratic societies, the foundations of journalism as a profession rest on its commitment to a number of normative ideals, especially the truthfulness and accuracy of reporting public events. This also includes the general tolerance of freedom of expression, the exposure of human rights violations and non-democratic public procedures (Wasserman 2010, 2012; Diamond 2004). In Africa, these commitments are mainly inculcated in journalism education, newsrooms and journalistic associations but are broadly part of a historical legacy of the colonial times (Omu 1978). As this chapter observes, since independence, African journalists, especially those working for the so-called 'independent' or privately owned

press, have created cultures of resistance to neo-patrimonial rule, despite facing various attacks and even death threats from state security agents (Kasoma 1995). While most post-independence regimes maintained a stranglehold on the public media, virtually controlling all editorial processes (see Chaps. 1 and 13), with the liberalisation of the media sector in the mid-1990s, the independent press tried to bring African nations towards democratic governance, thus reflecting the human rights enshrined in most African constitutions (Kasoma 1995; Bourgault 1995; Nyamnjoh 2005). Many news organisations and professional bodies in Africa over the years have emphasised that the profession must become reflexively aware of its role in order to safeguard and maintain its professional capacity (Wasserman 2010).

In the light of the above, this chapter reviews research on journalism practice in Africa. It specifically focuses on issues directly implicating (and contesting) neo-patrimonial dominance and related efforts towards democratisation on the continent. These issues mainly concern: (1) Confronting the falsity and repressive violence of the 'loving father' image of African neo-patrimonial strongmen; (2) The press, civil society and human rights discourses as a 'united front'; (3) Using the freedom of 'alternative media' to unmask neo-patrimonial repression; (4) Pushing legal reforms to protect journalistic freedom and 'freedom of information'; (5) Challenging the influence of 'political money' on journalistic expression; and (6) Investigative journalism training, the exposure of bad governance and the crippling demands for profitability. In discussing these interrelated issues, this chapter attempts to give concrete examples which project broader values, practices and experiences of journalists on the African continent.

1. Confronting the Falsity of the 'Loving Father' Image of Neo-Patrimonial Governance

Efforts towards accurate, honest and critical reporting on the African continent continually clash with personalistic governance which puts itself above the law and seeks to avoid any form of public scrutiny. As seen earlier, patrimonial rule literally means the pretension of 'fatherly authority', and the media are expected to treat the actions of presidential figures with unthinking, childlike obeisance (Schmitz 2006). In cultivating this image of ceremonial elegance, heads of state put themselves above the rule of law, and anyone questioning this 'kingly', arbitrary governance is made to

suffer the punishment of 'the disobedient child' (Gnonzion 2011). A good example of this is seen during the long reign of Cote d'Ivoire's Felix Houphet-Boigny from 1960 to 1993. He adopted the title 'Le Vieux', the 'Old Man', or, better, 'Our loving father', and was widely known as 'The grand old man of Africa' or 'The sage of Africa'. Houphet-Boigny became a model for Banda in Malawi, Kaunda in Zambia, Mugabe in Zimbabwe, and Kenyatta and Moi in Kenya.

Journalists in Cote d'Ivoire who refused to echo this kingly praise of the president or those showing the slightest disrespect were taken out to the military camp of Seguela for a week of 'mental straightening out' (Gnonzion 2011, 309). These reprisals were seen as 'paternalistic repression'. Later presidents in Cote d'Ivoire ordered critical journalists to be whipped like naughty boys (ibid.). The newspaper *Mwana Halisi* in Tanzania was banned for some time in 2008 by the Minister of Information for reporting the clearly evidenced corrupt behaviour and illegal trading by President Kikwete's son, because it showed disrespect for the president and his family (Masanja 2012).

In the Zimbabwean context, similar cases have obtained where news stories deemed to insult President Robert Mugabe and his family have quite often landed journalists in serious trouble. In March 2017, the editor of a privately owned daily, *NewsDay*, and a senior reporter were arrested and charged under Section 33 of the Criminal Law Codification and Reform Act for a story on Mugabe's health, which was deemed to 'undermine or insult the office of the president'.[2] Similarly, in recent times, a number of journalists from the privately owned press have been arrested and even assaulted in broad daylight for covering protests and demonstrations against the government, as illustrated in Fig. 3.1.

Unfortunately, the journalistic response to this familistic style is often just as personalistic. However, the best response by journalists in Cote d'Ivoire and many other African countries to this self-serving governance has been to form professional associations that monitor irresponsible journalism (Gnonzion 2011). As Gnonzion (2011) further observes, journalists in Cote d'Ivoire, as in many other sub-Saharan African countries, have been at the forefront of fostering a responsible, accurate public discourse based on universal human rights and universal norms of good governance, albeit in difficult circumstances. They have also been working to educate public officials to accept the right and importance of a truthful, critical journalism (ibid.). These developments echo Kasoma's (1995,

Fig. 3.1 A *NewsDay* reporter (right) being manhandled by an undercover police officer for taking pictures of a scuffle between law enforcement agents and street vendors in Zimbabwe's capital city, Harare (photo credit: Shepherd Tozvireva)

542) observations about the role of 'independent' press in Africa. He argues that it

> has broken the myth once held on the continent that *African dictatorial presidents were invincible and could not be criticized*. The once idolized presidents […] have been criticized for wrecking the economies of their countries […]. They have also been criticized for muzzling freedom of the press […]. (emphasis added)

In some cases, journalists in the 'independent' press (in association with the civil society and human rights organisations) have taken to the streets to directly protest the muzzling of the press, as shown in Fig. 3.2.

Journalists in Tanzania have also tried to raise the level of critical, responsible public discourse. Journalist associations working with the Media Council of Tanzania developed the 'Dar es Salaam Declaration on Editorial Freedom, Independence and Responsibility', which has set down norms and guidelines for introducing an objective and accurate evaluation of government and other public services. The Media Council of Tanzania

Fig. 3.2 Zimbabwean journalists and civil society activists protesting against the harassment and detention of journalists by the police (photo credit: Kumbirai Mafunda)

and other organisations have been trying to educate journalists, government, as well as other public institutions to accept the importance of responsible criticism of public action (Media Council of Tanzania 2012, also see Chap. 11 in this volume). Similarly, in Zimbabwe, the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe and other organisations such as the Media Centre have embarked on training programmes intended to strengthen investigative journalism.[3]

In some countries, challenging patrimonial governance has taken the form of criticism of military takeover of the state. The opposition of journalists to military government in Ghana is well documented, but especially revealing of the role and culture of journalists is the study of the systematic contestation of military rule in Nigeria by Ogbondah (1994). The forty years of military rule in Nigeria from the early 1960s to 1999 were a period of continued plunder of the national treasury and brutal repression of any protest. What the military dictators of Nigeria demanded of journalists above all was reverence for the personalistic 'dignity' of the

presidential figure (Ogbondah 1994). Journalists, however, followed their own mandate. They carried on a relentless revelation of violations in the form of imprisonment without trial, enormous theft of national resources and the use of public office for personal gain. During this time, virtually all editors and senior journalists suffered interrogation sessions and even torture. Dele Giwa, one of the founders of the news magazine *Newswatch* that introduced a tradition of investigative journalism, was killed by a letter bomb, but he became a major inspiration of the unwavering criticism of the military dictatorship (ibid.). This continual exposure of the repression and support for human rights groups was an important factor in the return to democratic elections in Nigeria in 1999.

Journalists in Nigeria and elsewhere on the African continent have also sought legal protection for their right to carry out responsible investigation into issues relating to governance and public services.[4] Fortunately, recent constitutions in countries such as Kenya (2010) explicitly protect journalists (Kiptinness 2012). However, the practical application of these legal defences remains a challenge for most journalists on the continent (Dirbaba and O'Donnell 2012).

2. The Press, Civil Society and Human Rights Voices as a 'United Front'

Journalists in the private press have often been linked to civil society organisations that radically contest and challenge the abuse of power by governments in Africa. Neo-patrimonial rule is continually clashing with a rising class of educated people who lead civil society organisations advocating constitutional governance (Bratton 1994, see Fig. 3.2). The centrality of civil society lies in the fact that if isolated journalists attempt to criticise the abuses of African dictatorial governance, they are often quickly silenced, but if they unite with the civil society—legal associations, the church, business associations, women's organisations and so forth—they make an impact in their fight against institutions of patrimonial governance. This united front emerged in many African countries in the late 1980s and through the 1990s, notably in Kenya against Moi and against Kaunda in Zambia (ibid.). The campaign against the tactics of Rawlings in Ghana in the 1980s and 1990s, with the outspoken journalistic leadership of Paul Ansah, shows how proactive investigative journalism

and leadership can have a significant impact on the political culture and institutions of a country (Gadzekpo et al. c. 1995).

Ansah set the tone by avoiding the petty personalistic political infighting and speaking the broader language of human rights from his position as head of the journalism school at the University of Ghana and as the unofficial spokesman of the moral principles of the Ghanaian churches. He also had the advantage of the relatively united support of journalists and media associations in Ghana. Ansah's famous phrase, 'I am going to go to town on that fellow', eventually found its way into the book *Going to Town*, a collection in which Gadzekpo, Karikari and Yankah revealed the journalistic skill of Ansah in coalescing support for more democratic governance. Ansah's criticism of dictatorial rule in Ghana was particularly effective because it articulated well the political culture of an educated middle class.

The highly educated brilliance of Ansah may be less typical than the ordinary journalist, but Ansah and other outstanding journalists developed a language and style widely influential among Ghanaian journalists. In the late 1980s and 1990s, a series of studies revealed a broad range of the efforts by journalists in Ghana representing the civil society challenge to the often-repressive military governance of Rawlings (Boafo 1985; Andoh 1993; Ansu Kyeremeh and Karikari 1998; Asante 1996; Anoka 1997; Hasty 2005). Particularly insightful are the series of personal interviews by Diedong (2008) with Ghanaian journalists regarding the high points of their career.

Another important site of conflict with neo-patrimonial power structures is the questioning by journalists of editorial policies dictated by political leaders. The criticism of Rawlings' regime at times became a confrontation between journalists and editors of leading state-owned newspapers such as the *Daily Graphic*. The willingness to risk even one's employment in refuting editors' directives reveals much of this aspect of journalistic culture. Yaw Boadu-Ayeboafoh, a journalist with the *Daily Graphic*, according to his own account, chose to support the right of opposition parties to begin to form and campaign even when the government's Board of Elections was officially reluctant to allow opposition parties this right. This brought him into open confrontation with the editor of the *Daily Graphic* (Diedong 2008). Day after day, Boadu-Ayeboafoh brought to the editorial planning meetings articles on the demands of the opposition parties to begin campaigning. Finally, after a battle of words in the editorial meeting, he submitted a letter of resignation. Shocked at this

show of values and conviction, the editor wrote a letter supporting Boadu-Ayeboafoh: 'Of all the senior journalists at this newspaper, you are the one I feel so much confidence in' (Diedong 2008, 216).

As often happens, the positions taken by capable journalists can move editors to take risks. Once the editor knew that he had the united support of his staff, he was ready to take a more independent stand. On other occasions, Boadu-Ayeboafoh wrote news articles openly challenging Rawlings and helped to articulate the feelings of Ghanaians who deeply resented Rawlings' oppressive governance.

His journalistic independence is an example of another important value—not being held 'captive' by any political strong man or political party. He could point out freely and honestly how a particular political leader was violating the principles of the Ghanaian constitution. For this, he became much more credible, popular and widely read by the Ghanaian public. In all of this, he was aware of the risks for his career and even to his life, but he was willing to take these risks because of his belief in the importance of public debate for the country. He claimed that he was never arrested because of his popularity, and because if that were to happen it would only increase his credibility with the public (Diedong 2008).

Boadu-Ayeboafoh demonstrates an important perspective in journalistic professionalism, an awareness of the responsibility that freedom brings.

> It is good to be free. But as a journalist, how are you using the freedom to the benefit of the larger society. Are you using the freedom simply because it is freedom and you can do as you wish or because you are free you can do a lot of things for the people. (Diedong 2008, 217)

The question, however, is where do the values of journalists willing to confront autocratic rule come from? In the case of Boadu-Ayeboafoh, he had read widely the major thinkers and writers in Africa. He was particularly influenced by Chinua Achebe.[5] In his words, his fundamental belief

> is underlined by what Chinua Achebe said about the individual who owns the cock in the community. When it crows in the morning, it becomes the property of all. In Achebe's words. 'The cock that crows in the morning belongs to one household, but its voice is the property of the whole neighbourhood'. So, my belief is that regardless of who owns the cock, it serves the good of the community in which it is found. This is the core belief that I have canvassed and shared with the people. Their interests are the things that should inform (us journalists) on the things we write

about. The primary interest of every journalist must be the public interest. (ibid.)

Underpinned by these values and beliefs, Boadu-Ayeboafoh promoted the solidarity of journalists in the face of attempts by politicians to separate and buy them off. He was executive secretary of the National Media Commission from 1999 to 2003. For years, he was a major supporter of the Ghana Journalist Association (GJA) and became its vice-president from 1999 to 2003 (ibid.). In his view, membership to these associations is a key aspect of the independent culture of journalists.

> Membership in the GJA enables journalists to learn from each other. It also enables [one] to reach out to my colleagues because, as you interact with them, you are not regarded as an alien. The seminars and workshops organized by the GJA on pertinent topics are useful in enhancing the standards of media performance. Exposure to all these seminars has had a very positive influence on me. (Diedong 2008, 220)

In Zimbabwe, these sentiments also relate to the important role of civil society and media organisations such the Media Centre (noted earlier), the Media Institute of Southern Africa (Zimbabwe chapter) and the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, which play a key part in the training, resourcing as well as supporting journalists in times of crisis.

It is crucial to note that the culture of neo-patrimonial governance is rooted in the control of wealth to buy compliance, the disregard of legal procedures and the bullying of the opposition into submission. Thus, the attempt to introduce a broader discourse and vision of human rights, constitutional guarantees as well as the rule of law is another important aspect of journalism in Africa. Again, an account from the experience of Boadu-Ayeboafoh in Ghana illustrates how journalists introduce the language of human rights to challenge officials who represent patrimonial rule (ibid.).

In one classic case, Boadu-Ayeboafoh defended old women falsely accused of practising witchcraft in a rural area in northern Ghana. In his view, the district chief executive of the area was judging the situation with the typical power tactics of neo-patrimonial governance (ibid.). When Ayeboafoh spoke to the official about the rumours of the harmful intentions of the so-called witches, the official noted immediately that he did not share the belief that the women should be tortured or even killed.

Instead of concurring with the official plan to punish these elderly women on unfounded suspicions, Boadu-Ayeboafoh wrote a feature article highlighting the fact that these were false accusations. He called for compassion and the need to help these elderly women. Boadu-Ayeboafoh recounts that the article was widely read and that two weeks later he got a call from the Department of Social Welfare inquiring about the location of those accused of witchcraft (ibid.). He further states that his feature led to the introduction of a programme to assist the elderly women falsely accused of practising witchcraft, when in actual fact, they simply had problems of illness, lack of good food and shelter. This was a case of the culture of journalists affirming human rights against the grain of authoritarian officialdom.

3. Using the Freedom of 'Alternative Media' to Unmask Neo-Patrimonial Repression

Most journalists are quietly committed to finding ways of revealing the falsity of cover-ups or outright lies publicised by governments. Yet neo-patrimonial governments have built up such a convincing discourse (largely through the state-controlled media), justifying their autocratic rule as a necessity. Many of the routine news reports in the dominant, state-controlled media are simply a repeat of the patrimonial worldview that falsely portrays political leaders as saviours of the nation. Neo-patrimonial rule attempts to defend its self-enriching forms of governance by inventing a discourse of appeal to national emergency, security and the need for social order (Ogbondah 2002). This insistence on obedience to a higher authority (see Chaps. 1 and 12) masks violations of the constitution, silencing the voice of parliaments and civil society, as well as the protests against such corruption. It is in this light that journalists resort to using alternative media to systematically expose the falsity of neo-patrimonial discourses.

A striking example of this is the skilful investigative journalism of Nigerian news magazines such as *The News, Tell* and *Newswatch* in delegitimating the arguments of the military governments that they were the only force for peace, order and economic progress in Nigeria. This continual debunking led towards the restoration of democratic governance in Nigeria in 1999. While the Nigerian news magazines are not without their academic critics (Ogbondah 2003), a number of studies highlight their

journalistic strategies, which reveal the falsehood of government defences of unjust governance (Torwel 2008). A good example is the debate led by the labour unions and many other sectors of civil society questioning the claim by President Obasanjo that it was necessary to increase petrol prices. The news magazines proffered an opposing view, showing that an increase in fuel prices would cause serious economic hardship for the masses of daily commuters and that the move would, in the end, merely fill the coffers of Obasanjo's friends. At a much deeper level, the investigative journalism created a language that delegitimated the autocratic reasoning of Obasanjo and forced him to back down from the fuel price increases (ibid.).

As noted earlier, journalists in the more independent media have attempted to develop oppositional discourses defending human rights and promoting social justice. The Nigerian news magazines discussed above brought in a new vocabulary of accountability in governance by showing that Obasanjo had not consulted congress regarding the increase in fuel prices. They revealed that he did not inform or consult the National Council of State or the National Economic Council, that most political leaders and economic advisors thought it was a wrong and ill-advised move, that he ignored the Speaker of the House of Representatives, that he overrode his own vice-president and refused to allow the evidence of economic advisors in meetings. The news magazines rekindled opposition by showing that Obasanjo was continuing with his usual style of military governance brought in under the guise of national crisis. At the same time, the news magazines legitimated the democratic voice of the labour unions by emphasising the guidance of economic experts, the support of leading intellectuals in the country as well as the supporting opinion of experienced political leaders (ibid.).

The second discursive battle of the Nigerian journalists with this neopatrimonial style of governance was in showing that Obasanjo's actions were not benefitting the public, as he claimed, but rather himself personally and his clique of friends. Obasanjo typically argued that the hike in the cost of fuel would channel resources into long-term national development plans, although he did not indicate any specific development project or plan. In fact, in most African countries, autocratic regimes benefit the immediate circle of the corrupt leaders and stifle the growth of the most promising productive industries (Ogbondah 2003; Torwel 2008). The news magazines brought out another important fact: An increase in fuel prices would benefit local fuel importers while stifling the growth of local

refineries and other local petroleum-related industries. They created counter-narratives that exposed the falsity of narratives generated by the government.

The investigative news magazines examined each of the government's main arguments for raising fuel prices and provided clear and lucid evidence that these claims were untrue in a way understandable to the general public, including those with low levels of media literacy. In this case, public opinion forced Obasanjo to back down. The news magazines played a major role in revealing the half-truths, smoke screens and other hidden strategies used to get the public to believe the falsehoods of government propaganda (Torwel 2008). They provided the public with the evidence to reject the false government claims. In this sense, the analysis of the news magazines helped the Nigerian public to see more clearly the true nature of neo-patrimonial governance.

It also needs to be stated that the effectiveness of these alternative communicative spaces has largely been facilitated by their exploitation of the Internet and its associated interactive digital technologies, which collectively extend their reach beyond the Nigerian borders (see Motilola Akinfemisoye's detailed discussion of this in Chap. 16). These alternative interactive platforms have been used to challenge entrenched mainstream official discourses, which reinforce neo-patrimonial governance in most sub-Saharan African countries. For example, since the turn of the century, Zimbabwe has seen a proliferation of radical alternative news websites mostly run by journalists 'pushed into the diaspora by the deteriorating political and economic conditions' (Mabweazara 2013, 233).

4. Pushing Legal Reforms to Protect Journalistic Freedom and Freedom of Information

Neo-patrimonial regimes have attempted to defend and increase their concentration of power by retaining the legal systems of the colonial period or introducing new restrictive legislation in the name maintaining public order and security (Ogbondah 2002). Much of this legal system, often in violation of the principles of freedom and rights enunciated in constitutions, aims to restrict the rights of journalists to exercise their profession. Journalists in Africa—particularly those in the private press—work with the constant fear that an article will cause an outburst of anger from some leading politician and that an ensuing invocation of the laws will make it difficult to report corruption and other forms of abuse of power. The continual contestation of legal systems that curtail journalistic freedom

at a number of levels is a core aspect of the struggle against neo-patrimonialism in many African countries.

Tanzania offers one of the most notorious examples of this use of repressive laws held over from the colonial period. The independence government not only kept the colonial legislation against the press but amended it in 1968 to include the power of the president to stop the publication of any newspaper deemed to be against public policy (Masanja 2012). In 1976, the government of Tanzania introduced the Newspaper Act, which not only retained the Penal Code establishing as criminal acts a number of issues, including the publication of false news, incitement to violence, contempt of court, obscenity and criminal libel. It also added the offenses of abusive and insulting language, contempt of court and obscenity. All these so-called offenses are lumped together under the general offense of 'seditious language'. The government of Tanzania also has the power to register, deregister, refuse or ban the circulation of a newspaper (ibid.). The problem is that there is no precise definition of what is seditious. Over the years, the law of sedition has been invoked against issues deemed to emotionally affect or wound public officials. For example, in 1999, the *Majira* newspaper was banned for one week for publishing the proposed 'salaries of government ministers and members of parliament' (Masanja 2012, 338). In spite of protests against the sedition law by newspaper associations, the Media Council of Tanzania and other communication organisations, the parliament of Tanzania, controlled by the Chama Cha Mapinduzi Party for fifty-five years, refused to make any changes.

In general, the media and journalistic associations in Tanzania consider the courts of law and the legal system to be hostile to freedom of expression (Matumaini 2011). Tanzania does not have in its legal parliamentary statutes specific legal protection of free expression in the media (ibid.). In a 2010 survey involving media houses, media owners, training institutions, the Media Council of Tanzania, the offices of Information Services of the government as well as the advocacy organisations Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA, Tanzania) and Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), 81% of the respondents affirmed their fear that there are continued legal threats and intimidation of journalists. Most respondents noted that they are afraid to openly protest because they have limited legal protection.

Regarding freedom of information legislation, journalists and civil society leaders generally believe that if governments can be forced to reveal their activities or disclose key information, this would lead to greater

public pressure for reform. However, as the Nigeria experience shows, unless the legislation facilitates a spirited use of the opportunities by journalists and the media industry to demand the reporting of government practice, 'freedom of information' will have little real impact (Ojebode 2011, see also Chap. 16).

The movement to enact freedom of information legislation in Nigeria had particularly wide support in three major civil society groups, the Nigeria Union of Journalists, the Media Rights Agenda and the Civil Liberties Organization. According to Ojebode (2011), in 1993, these organisations began to create a document entitled 'Draft Access to Public Records and Official Information Act'. With the help of international organisations such as the Article 19 Centre, the movement presented its first draft of legislation in 2000. The legislation was finally approved by the Senate in 2006 but vetoed by President Obasanjo. A new bill was eventually approved by the Nigerian House and Senate and signed into law by President Goodluck Jonathan in May 2011.

The law provides detailed procedures to enable every Nigerian to request information from any public official, agency or institution and, if refused access, the applicant has the right to institute legal action to compel the concerned party to supply the requested information. The legislation also protects individuals and organisations from any recrimination for supplying information (ibid.). When the legislation was enacted, efforts to obtain information were instituted almost immediately by a number of civil society organisations and, quite surprisingly, journalists were not at the forefront of the action. In almost every case, the action became bogged down in endless court litigation. To make matters worse, there is no government supervisory body enforcing the freedom of information legislation, and litigants have to shoulder all legal expenses (ibid.).

An evaluation of the impact of the legislation reveals that, to this day, virtually no person or institution has successfully obtained the information they have sought. One of the most surprising issues is that several journalists are not aware of the legislation and very few have made an effort to use it (Ashong and Udoudo 2012). Journalists surveyed by Ashong and Udoudo highlighted that they have never requested information under the legislation and those who did were not willing to fight the stiff resistance that they encountered. Asked why they did not go to court, the journalists argued that they did not trust the courts and were not interested

in starting the long court process necessary to make the government respond (ibid.).

5. Challenging the Influence of 'Political Money' on Journalistic Expression

The typical characteristic of neo-patrimonial governance is to 'buy' personal allegiance rather than support adherence to legal provisions (Diamond 2010). As illustrated in Terje Skjerdal's and Muhammed Jameel Yusha'u's contributions in this volume (Chaps. 8 and 9, respectively), this is a dominant 'culture' in Africa. There is widespread criticism of bribery in countries such as Ethiopia, Uganda and Zimbabwe, where there is an extremely high degree of concentration of power (Dirbaba and O'Donnell 2012). Equally, however, there is evidence that some journalists on the continent have been intelligent and resourceful enough to find ways to maintain their integrity and commitment to expressing what they think has to be said in order to protect rights and democratic processes in given situations (Maugo 2012). This level of integrity is found in a number of examples on the continent. For example, following the collapse of a church hostel which killed hundreds of worshipers who had gathered to see one of Nigeria's prominent evangelists, TB Joshua in September 2014, Nicholas Ibekwe, a reporter with the *Premium Times* newspaper in Abuja, Nigeria, took to Twitter to expose how the man of the cloth had bribed journalists by handing out envelopes stashed with 50, 000 Naira (about USD\$ 140) so they could write positively about the tragic incident. The journalists were to avoid any reference to the structural defects of the building, which were the real reason behind its collapse. Ibekwe tweeted: 'Last Sunday I was the only journalist who turned down TB Joshua's N50, 000 bribe offered to […] reporters' and backed up his claim with an audio file that apparently confirmed the clergyman paying off journalists. This invited a remarkable backlash from his colleagues who branded him as being 'holier than thou' (Al Jazeera.com 2015). However, while several journalists like Nigeria's Nicholas Ibekwe uphold the value of refusing bribes, many recognise that they do not always live up to this ideal and they find justification for their acceptance of bribes in the poor salaries that they are paid (Mpagze and White 2010).

In spite of the rejection of outright acceptance of bribes, there is much debate as to whether a journalist should accept monetary or other forms of assistance to cover an event that is of public interest but is likely to favour the interests of the sponsor (Skjerdal 2010). The classical journalism

ethics position is that a journalist should never take any remuneration from the sponsors of an event because, inevitably, it will influence the nature of the reporting. Most newspapers in Africa are proud to say that they will finance their own journalistic coverage of an event considered of importance and they absolutely forbid their journalists to take any assistance from the sponsors of an event. However, as Nwabueze (2010) observes, many African journalists now argue that there is no violation of ethics in accepting 'gifts' from sources because their employers cannot provide such assistance and, without the help of the sponsor, the event would never be given media coverage. Many journalists thus readily admit that when they accept some kind of hospitality or other outright assistance in covering an event they will report the event in a way that is reasonably favourable to the sponsor. This, in their view, is only common courtesy (ibid.). (see Chaps. 1 and 8 for a detailed discussion of this culture.)

Related to the issue of bribery and accepting or rejecting remuneration for covering events in ways that favour power elites is the debate around the acceptability of 'development journalism'. Much of the content of media in Africa is the publicity focused on development projects initiated by government and development agencies, closely allied to government planning (Skjerdal 2011). Facts on the development planning and accomplishments of government can be helpful public information, but much of this is an attempt to convince the public that the faltering implementation of development programmes is actually accomplishing something. Such efforts are simply publicity cover-ups of the continuing realities of corruption and the failure to improve rural poverty or effectively deal with massive unemployment in the urban slums.

6. Investigative Journalism Training, the Exposure of Bad Governance and the Crippling Demands for Profitability

In the face of pressures from neo-patrimonial governments, media organisations in Africa have developed a wide variety of institutions to improve the role of the media in the process of political democratisation (Rioba 2012). The key question is whether these reformist institutions have enabled the public to reject concentration of power in Africa, especially given that the immediate goal of most media institutions is the profit on the investment that the owners, including public service media, try to make.

In the light of these challenges, universities that train journalists generally try to devise curricula that prepare their graduates to provide a public service in their professional practice, and often the graduates (especially those that find their way into the private press) are able to generate news that enables the public to evaluate their elected representatives. On the whole, however, young people in the media are not well prepared to bring about the transition from a power-centred society to a more democratic society. Thus, journalists are trained to treat the public as entertainment spectators and not as people involved actively in a democratic governing process in their place of work, community or the nation at large. Writing about this scenario in the Western context, Bourdieu argues that the popular media tend to focus on those things that are apt to arouse curiosity but require no analysis—information aimed only at entertaining and making only modest demands on the audience (cited in Macdonald 2003).

In his summary of the accomplishments in African journalism since the Windhoek Declaration on press freedom, Berger (2011) concludes that the press councils, the continual pressure from organisations such as MISA, as well as the legal protection of journalists are important advances in journalistic capacity to criticise bad governance. Berger also places great hope in the continued improvement of university journalism education in Africa. However, so much depends on the skill of the journalistic leadership and media owners in discovering the key political issues that are of concern to leaders in civil society (ibid.). Journalists must be able to 'orchestrate' a challenge to the concentration of power in the hegemonic leadership of a country by bringing into play the deep-felt symbols of public protest. Although journalists may struggle against neo-patrimonial governance, journalism schools and numerous workshops by civil society organisations have not been able to instil a clear political vision that can enable the profession to provide leadership for the radical change in systems of governance that Africa needs. This has partly been associated with the crippling demands for profitability within media organisations and the challenging economic environments in which they operate in Africa.

Newspaper journalism, in particular, is hit by rising production costs and there is little or no funding for investigative journalism. Most newspaper space is filled by inexperienced journalism graduates who have little training in the investigative journalism that would dig out the injustices and violation of human rights that most countries on the continent face. This pervasive process of 'juniorisation', the reliance on young and inexperienced 'correspondents' (Wasserman 2010) is closely linked to the economic conse-

quences of criticising governments, which in most contexts scares away advertising, the majority of which comes from government or sources linked to government (see Chap. 1). Consequently, the trend is towards light, glamorous lifestyle journalism, travel, health tips, interior decoration and the tabloid content which attracts advertising. The continual exposure and attacks on the corruption of political leaders is more awash with sensationalism than serious analysis of governance-related issues. The media are not reporting the major political decisions (or lack of such decisions) by parliaments and ministries that affect the basic conditions of education, health, housing and employment, but rather they largely focus on internal personalistic squabbles among political leaders (Nyabuga 2012) (see also George Ogola's discussion of this culture in Chap. 4 of this volume). The increasing concentration of political power and economic wealth is also bringing major media organisations into closer association with neo-patrimonial elites who are blocking the reporting of bad governance (Ugangu 2011).

Despite challenging operational conditions, African journalists are not giving up their critical investigative analysis and exposure of injustices by autocratic governments. Rather, they are migrating to media platforms more effective in reaching leaders in civil society organisations. Good examples are the news magazines referred to in Sect. 3 and other specialised newspapers with greater freedom of expression and the chance to work with teams skilled in research and political analysis. Equally, the Internet is offering space for radical alternative news outlets, often run offshore by exiled journalists (Mabweazara 2013). A study in Malawi reports the combination of open discussion radio, mobile phones and social media that reveal issues of bad public services, injustices and public problems and gradually build public opinion that eventually forces government or private agencies to respond (Kaufulu and Burton 2013).

Concluding Reflections: Engendering Journalistic Cultures for Depowering Neo-Patrimonial Governance

It is the thesis of this chapter that despite the challenges faced by journalists (and their media organisations) in Africa, a commitment to supporting the democratisation of governance as well as the realisation of human rights is evident across most countries. What is lacking, perhaps, is the capacity to unite these journalists in movements such as those that emerged in Nigeria in the 1980s and 1990s or through the support that senior journalists like Paul

Ansah received in Ghana during the same period. Journalists who were able to mobilise public opinion found a relatively safe refuge in civil society, which remained untouchable to leaders bent on entrenching their political power. Such journalists did not yield to the pressures of bribery, as so often happens today. They resisted the temptation and found ways to expose corruption by the political elite. It is our submission that contemporary journalists can learn from these efforts of the past in their quest to unmask the dictatorial strategies and institutions sustaining neo-patrimonial governance.

In pursuing this agenda, journalists need to forge ways of raising the critical consciousness of the public on the monopolisation of economic, political and cultural power by cliques of families and business associates surrounding presidential figures. This is often difficult, because the dirty tactics deployed by neo-patrimonial governance are to either buy-off opposition or threaten dissenting voices with death or exile. As seen in the discussion in this chapter, journalists' efforts have been nurtured and supported by professional associations and media organisations. Of particular importance are organisations specialising in investigative journalism training, critical analysis and media rights, such as MISA, and the protective umbrella of civil society organisations as well as human and civil rights movements.

Another key step is to find a voice in the 'alternative media' that have wide acceptance and the confidence of the public, especially among popular movements. Neo-patrimonial elites usually control all the major media and attempt to give the impression of there being critical investigative journalism by revealing the tensions among the elites themselves but without raising awareness of the control systems quietly operating through patronage, physical threat and legal action against popular movements and dissenting voices. A major objective of alternative media is to expose the falsity of discourses that function as smoke screens which strengthen the power and welfare of neo-patrimonial elites.

Most journalists are involved in a range of media, from those heavily controlled by political-economic elites to more radical alternative media. It is important, when there are critical moments of institutional change such as the introduction of a new constitution that provides possibilities for more civil society intervention in public decisions, to rally public opinion to push through these basic institutional foundations for democratisation. Likewise, when there are major political moves to limit basic journalistic freedoms, it is essential to unite all journalists, all media and all major institutions that are committed to defending constitutional rights and principles as seen in Fig. 3.2.

Financial security for both media institutions and their journalists is another major issue that shapes journalistic cultures in Africa (Wasserman 2010). Journalists are thus extremely vulnerable to the neo-patrimonial system of governance by patronage, illegal use of public funds and the manipulation of avenues of upward social mobility. However, no matter how much journalists may debate the influence of 'brown envelopes' and 'freebies' on their journalistic independence (Kasoma 2010), the dominant value is for them to maintain an independent critical stance. Both journalists and media managers increasingly understand that they cannot support themselves only by traditional forms of mainstream public media such as newspapers, magazines, radio and television. Public communication has become an immensely diverse process, and all those involved must therefore explore diverse sources of income in the quest to maintain and increase the flow of information. This diversification of sources of livelihood and imaginative facets of public communication should be a central aspect of journalism as a social practice and, inevitably, a core element of journalism education.

Finally, there should be a concerted effort throughout sub-Saharan Africa to reform legislative instruments with roots in the repressive colonial past as well as lobbying for constitutional reforms that support responsible investigative journalism, media freedom and freedom of expression. Overall, the proposal foregrounded in this chapter is that the strengthening of journalism to give it a stronger voice in the democratisation of political, economic and cultural institutions and, so on, should build on the existing 'best practices' that are an integral part of the journalism culture. Collectively, these best practices can help to disempower neo-patrimonial governance structures.

Notes

1. A particularly good summary of the characteristics of neo-patrimonial rule in Africa is captured by Diamond in his chapter, 'The Rule of Law versus the Big Man' in the book *Democratization in Africa: Progress and Retreat* (2010).
2. 'Zim editor, journalist held over Mugabe "health scare" story', http://www.news24.com/Africa/Zimbabwe/zim-editor-journalist-held-over-mugabe-health-scare-story-20170303. Accessed 30 July 2017.
3. The Media Centre, an independent training organization for journalists, describes its mission as focused on assisting 'in the realization of a Zimbabwe in which the Media and Civil Society are free to exercise their right to the

freedom of expression, association and access to information' (http://www.
mediacentrezim.com/?page_id=413. Accessed 20 November 2017.

4. In Zimbabwe, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) runs a Media
Defence Fund through which legal assistance is provided to media practitio-
ners and institutions 'that find themselves confronted with lawsuits'. The
fund aims at 'protecting media freedom and freedom of expression'. http://
zimbabwe.misa.org/who-we-are/what-we-do/. Accessed 20 July 2017.

5. Chinua Achebe is a Nigerian novelist and poet. His novels range in subject
matter 'from the first contact of an African village with the white man to the
educated African's attempt to create a firm moral order out of the changing
values in a large city'. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Chinua-
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Professional Practices, Cultures and Identity

The Nairobian and the 'Politics' of Tabloidisation in Kenya's Print Media

George Ogola

In 2014, *The Nairobian,* a red-top tabloid published in Kenya by the Standard Group (SG), carried a story headlined: 'A pastor caught in the act—pants down' (*The Nairobian* 24 September 2014). The said pastor had allegedly been found 'in a hotel room with a woman acquaintance who had persistently sought for his private pastoral intercession' (ibid.). The pastor denied any wrongdoing, claiming that he had been lured into the hotel by the married woman in what he suggested was an elaborate scheme of extortion by journalists and the woman's husband. The pastor's complaint to the Media Council of Kenya Complaints Commission about his treatment by *The Nairobian* and its sister TV channel KTN was upheld. In its judgement, the Commission ordered the newspaper to apologise to the pastor for the 'offending story' (*The Nation* 27 August 2015). It noted that the publication of the story was 'not based on a compelling and legitimate public interest consideration'. Instead, the Commission argued, the story 'seemed to be at best a scoop hunter's ruthless pursuit of a tabloid headline, or at worst, a criminally motivated extortionist set-up targeting an individual's private indiscretions' (ibid.) Reflecting on the Commission's judgement, *The Nation*'s public editor supported the

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Commission, further warning that 'the story shows a trend in news reporting (in Kenya) that must be arrested' (ibid.).

The condemnation of *The Nairobian* as typifying the end of 'serious journalism' in Kenya is an issue that has been raised by a number of newspaper columnists and many readers in the country. Several local media commentators and politicians have also expressed their concerns over the state of the country's journalism across the print and broadcast sectors, blaming the 'declining quality' on tabloidisation. Rasna Warah, a columnist at *The Nation*, for example, complains that there has been 'a sexing up of presenters and dumbing down of news which have turned some news bulletins into soft-porn shows' (*The Nation*, 6 September 2016). She argues that the country should be concerned about 'the blatant sexism and dumbing down of content in the English-language stations' (ibid.). Even relatively equanimous commentaries on the tabloid press have only distinguished it on the basis of its alleged sensational and controversial disposition (see, for example, Nyabuga and Booker 2013). The focus, almost without exception, has been on the increasing threat of the tabloid press, more specifically *The Nairobian*, on Kenyan journalism.

And yet, introduced only in 2013, the newspaper seems to have grown in profile and become arguably both the most notorious and one of the most popular newspapers in the country. It began as a weekly sold only in the capital but soon went national. This was at a time when circulation of the two largest national mainstream newspapers, *The Nation* and *The Standard*, had either been stagnant over the preceding ten years, as was the case with the former, or had been steadily declining, as with the latter (Cheeseman 2014; Nyabuga and Booker 2013). While it is difficult to get exact comparative figures on circulation because SG does not subscribe to industry bodies, such as the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC), that verify circulation figures and the Nation Media Group (NMG) only does so with its sister newspaper the *Sunday Nation*, publisher estimates used in a number of studies provide us with a relatively reliable indication of the situation. The daily circulation figures for *The Nation*, *The Standard* and *The Star*, the three main national newspapers, are approximately 180,000, 60,000 and 10,000 copies respectively (see Nyabuga and Booker 2013; Mburu 2013; Cheeseman 2014). Readership is of course much higher, as these newspapers are routinely shared by readers. According to one of the editors of *The Nairobian*, as of 2015, that newspaper was selling more copies than its parent company's flagship daily, *The Standard* (Interview with the author, 14 October 2015). However, this claim cannot be independently verified.

Still, the unprecedented growth of *The Nairobian* and its emergent profile is indicative of a developing cultural shift in Kenyan journalism. This chapter seeks to explain the newspaper's relative success and to articulate the many facets and textures of popular journalism in Kenya. It also seeks, in part, to explore the interface between what is referred to as the 'popular' and the 'populist' in Kenyan journalism, and to discuss how and why it now so readily constructs its publics.

HISTORICISING THE TABLOID PRESS IN KENYA

The attention that *The Nairobian* has attracted is unique but not without precedent. At various points in Kenya's history, perceived 'disruption' of the dominance of the two mainstream newspapers, *The Nation* and *The Standard*, has attracted interest. Quite often, though, this has been short-lived, as most such newspapers have closed without ever threatening the *Nation–Standard* duopoly. The authority of these newspapers has been so total as to literally determine what passes as news and how such news should be told.

Kenya's written press, however, predate the establishment of these two newspapers. Indeed, Ochillo (1993) argues that Kenya's modern print media can be traced back to the 1890s. He attributes it both to the colonial enterprise and Christian missionaries. Most newspapers at the time were in the tabloid format mainly published by European missionaries, the colonial administration and settler businessmen. These included, among others, the *Taveta Chronicle*, published by the Church Missionary Society, *The Leader*, published by the British East Africa Company, and the *African Standard*, published by Alibhai Mulla Jevanjee, originally in Mombasa and later Nairobi. Others included the *Nairobi News* and the weekly *Times of East Africa*, also published in the early 1900s, the *Kikuyu News*, a monthly English journal published between 1908 and 1957, and *Wathiomo Mukinyu*, published by the Catholic Diocese of Nyeri, *Sauti ya Mwafrika* and *Muiguithania* (Mburu 2013). Later to emerge were *Ramogi*, *Nyanza Times*, *Kenya Daily Mail*, *Colonial Times*, *The Observer* and *Baraza*, among many others (Iraki 2010). All these newspapers were activist in some way, used to either protect settler interests or the Asian community or to agitate for freedom, justice and equality (Mburu 2013).

At independence, most such publications had, however, folded. The few that survived became 'increasingly vocal, disillusioned with the pace of change and the political rifts among the political elite' (Ogola 2011, 81).

I have argued elsewhere (see Ogola 2011) that the expulsion, for instance, of Kenya's first vice-president, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, from the ruling party, KANU, after his falling out with Kenya's first president, Jomo Kenyatta, in 1966 saw a crackdown on the alternative media such as the Christian *Target* and other publications including *Pambana*, *Mwananchi* and *Mzalendo*. Ndegwa (1997, 606) has suggested that Kenyatta's aim was to establish the 'nation rather than the ethnic group as the pre-eminent political community' and thus viewed alternative media as a threat to this nation-building project. These newspapers were feverishly critical of the Kenyatta-state and often carried highly sensationalised political stories involving either Kenyatta or members of his administration.

The clampdown was to continue during Daniel Moi's presidency from 1978, such that between 1988 and 1990 alone, nearly twenty publications were banned, including *Beyond Magazine* (1988), *Financial Review* (1989), *Nairobi Law Monthly* (1990) and *Development Agenda* (1989) (see Ogola 2011). In the early 1990s, the Moi regime's informalisation of the state saw the government's legitimacy severely eroded, providing conditions for the emergence of various forms of opposition and ultimately public agitation for political pluralism (Ogola 2011). As Haugerud notes, this period witnessed 'the shattering of previously held silences as an opposition culture stormed the public domain' (Haugerud 1995, 15). Oppositional discourses mobilised around political, religious and cultural groups and were given voice in the existing media and other spaces of public expression. Alternative sites for popular expression emerged, even within the mainstream newspapers through satirical columns such as Wahome Mutahi's 'Whispers'.

This period saw also the emergence of what came to be known as the 'gutter press' but which was in fact the tabloid press. This press was largely funded by opposition politicians to discredit Moi's government. It focused largely on sex and political scandals involving members of Moi's government and perceived-powerful supporters of the ruling party, KANU.

Meanwhile, SG was also acquired by senior KANU operatives following the death of its owner, Lonrho's Tiny Rowland. This acquisition turned the Group's titles into political mouthpieces of the KANU administration, which in turn made them haemorrhage readers. As their circulation declined, to survive, some of SG's titles began to experiment with red-top tabloid journalism, focusing largely on sex scandals, gossip and the occult, with limited success.

Political pluralism also saw the appearance of other newspapers, including Kenneth Matiba's *The People*, which began as a fiercely oppositional investigative weekly in 1998, exposing corruption deals involving members of the Moi government, but soon lost readers when it began to promote the presidential ambitions of its proprietor, Matiba. Started around the same time was the *Weekly Citizen*, which began as an underground leaflet sold mainly in Nairobi (Ong'owo 2011).

The predecessor to *The Nairobian*, though published by a rival media group, was the *Nairobi Star*, now *The Star*. The *Nairobi Star* mainly focused on news from the capital and its fledgling entertainment industry. However, it went national as a daily, rebranding itself *The Star* and adopting a much more varied range of stories. Between 2009 and 2010, this newspaper was distributed free once a month, with the free issue sponsored by the country's leading mobile telephone network provider, Safaricom, through various advertisements inside (Mburu 2013).

Perhaps unsure about the viability of the so-called entertainment market, SG and NMG began experimenting with pull-outs within their main titles. *The Standard* thus carried a Friday pull-out called 'Pulse' while *The Nation* published 'Zuqka'. These two were targeted not only at the country's entertainment scene but also at the youth. It is arguable that it was the success of these two pull-outs that ultimately led to the establishment of *The Nairobian* by SG and *Nairobi News* by NMG, both in 2013. *Nairobi News*, however, folded as a print edition after only six months. It is now published only online. Both media groups had earlier introduced tabloid titles that folded within months after their launch. These included NMG's *sporton!*, a bi-weekly sports newspaper, and SG's *Game Yetu!* Such failures make *The Nairobian*'s resilience particularly unique in what is a very difficult market for the print press. It is therefore important that *The Nairobian*'s emergence is located within this broader history of the tabloid press in Kenya.

Tabloidisation: Populist or Popular?

The perceived falling standards in the quality of mainstream journalism has often been attributed to the process of tabloidisation. Gripsrud (2000, 285) notes that tabloidisation 'connotes decay, a lowering of journalistic standards that ultimately undermines the ideal functions of mass media in liberal democracies'. However, the very term and process of tabloidisation typically invite varied debates. Indeed, Gripsud talks about the 'conceptual

confusion' that attends its usage (286). Many scholars tend to conflate 'tabloid' with 'popular' and 'other' news. This terminological confusion, Gripsrud notes, 'may thus obscure the existence and potential of popular journalism, which is different from the forms most typically associated with the [tabloid]' (ibid.).

In attempting to unpack this confusion, Sparks (2000) proposes three main categories, which he argues may help us to define the tabloid. The first category distinguishes the tabloid 'as a form marked by two major features; it devotes relatively little attention to politics, economics and society and relatively much to diversions like sports, scandal, and popular entertainment; it also devotes much attention to the personal and private lives of people and relatively little to political processes, economic developments, and social changes'. The second defining feature, he argues, 'involves a shift in the priorities within a given media, away from news and information and emphasis on entertainment'. The third talks about 'the shifting boundaries of taste within different media forms' (10–11). According to Sparks, the focus here is not on the type of media output but on the content with which it is filled. He gives the example of the Jerry Springer Show, which takes a game show format but 'talks about the wrong kinds of topics, in the wrong atmosphere', or Rush Limbaugh, who uses the talk show format but adopts a 'populist tone and rightist' agenda (11). Although Sparks agrees that 'a clear and exhaustive definition that will command universal consent, render the issues transparent and allow the debate to move forward is unlikely' (10), his attempted clarification of the definitional issues above is far from convincing. What his attempt fails to grapple with are the inherent overlaps between entertainment and hard news, the multiple ways of storytelling and the shifting boundaries between tabloid and quality forms of journalism. Indeed, a political scandal may very well be about an individual but could also tell a much bigger story about political accountability. Gripsrud (2000, 291), for example, observes that the Oprah Winfrey Show emphasises 'the personal and personalisation as a rhetorical device to discuss critical social issues'. Accordingly, at best, we can only attempt to offer an operational definition specific to a particular study and context. Working on the assumption that there is either a clear distinction between quality and tabloid or a continuum that maps stories on the basis of their standards of quality or otherwise is conceptually unsustainable. Therefore, it is much more useful and perhaps far more illuminating to focus on the debates that have attended the term and process of tabloidisation.

The debates on tabloidisation generally pivot around two opposing perspectives. There are those who see it as a threat to journalism, hence the negative associations, while others see it as a corrective to the alienating character of the mainstream press. For some, particularly in the United States, tabloidisation is seen as 'something coming from outside of the world of proper, respectable journalism. It is an alien form, invading that world and contaminating it' (Sparks 2000, 7).

Wasserman (2008, 1) argues that tabloid newspapers are often accused of privileging entertainment and sensationalism, thus undermining democratic citizenship by effectively 'depoliticizing their readers to the role of consumers'. It is an argument pursued vigorously by Sparks (2000, 8), who warns of 'the limits of tabloid knowledge'. Sparks disparages tabloid newspapers as 'making the practical functioning of a democracy an impossibility because they are unable to provide the audience with the kinds of knowledge that are essential to the exercise of their rights as citizens' (ibid.). He argues, for example, that while 'for many people, a detailed knowledge of, say, Manchester United Football Club is much more interesting than a detailed knowledge of the voting record of an obscure member of parliament on the issue of reproductive rights, it does not follow that a knowledge of sport is more important' (ibid.). Gripsrud (2000, 297), however, disagrees, arguing that 'the notion of citizenship must clearly include more than the narrowly political, just as there is more to a democratic society than the immediate political institutions. Democracy as a social form includes cultural life; various forms of reflection on existential matters or the 'human condition'; the formation, maintenance, deconstruction, and reformation of identities; and so on'.

Frankel, on his part, attributes the process of tabloidisation to the unwelcome effects of new media technologies. He argues, rather unconvincingly, that 'it is hard to avoid the conclusion that our remarkable, convulsive revolution in the technologies of communication has debased our standards of journalism and eroded our capacity for civil discourse. We are wallowing in information—but we are starved of understanding' (1999, 2). This argument seems to ignore the myriad ways journalism, 'quality' or otherwise, has effectively appropriated new media technologies to tremendous effect (see, for example, Fenton 2010; Anderson et al. 2014).

Other scholars, such as Franklin (1997, 3–4), bemoan with remarkable hyperbole the general 'trend towards softer news'. He argues that 'human interest has supplanted the public interest; measured judgement has succumbed to sensationalism; the trivial has triumphed over the weighty; the

intimate relations of celebrities from soap operas, the world of sport and the royal family are judged more newsworthy than the reporting of significant issues and events of international consequence. Traditional news values have been undermined by new values; infotainment is rampant'. Similarly, Bunce (1997, 3) posits that 'public interest journalism is being overwhelmed and marginalised by entertainment and tabloidisation in the information marketplace'.

There is, however, a growing group of scholars who call for a more considered look at the process of tabloidisation and popular journalism in general, warning that such condemnatory judgement, as seen above, is itself populist and closes down the space for a more critical engagement with journalism as a broad church. One of the most ardent defenders of tabloid newspapers and popular journalism more widely is John Fiske. Rather than see popular journalism as escapist and unimportant, he instead sees it as radical and subversive. He argues that 'even those stories dismissed as fantastical offer an alternative reality to the official one and carry utopianized fantasies of emancipation from the constraints of poverty and perceived social failure' (Fiske 1992, 50). Other scholars, such as Wasserman (2008, 1), also insist that 'tabloid media articulate the politics of the everyday for those readers for whom formal politics are often far removed from their lived experience'.

While Sparks dismisses Fiske's celebration of tabloid content, he at least acknowledges John Langer's arguments, which seem much more circumspect, about the subversive character of tabloid news but underscore nonetheless that the mainstream serious news fails to recognise the genuine human needs that are met by other forms of news. Langer (1998, 147) notes that 'the forms of identification and pleasure that are offered by the serious news are both remote from, and alien to, the life experiences of the mass population'. He thus observes that 'other news are suitable for various kinds of subordinate consciousness […] The pleasures they generate and their formal irreverence can destabilise the dominant ideological order established by formal news' (60).

Identifying with this group too is Connell, who identifies a class dimension to the debate. He argues that the anti-tabloid critics attempt to 'universalise their own elite conceptions of news, and of politics as the only valuable kind of news about politics' (Connell 1991, 250–253). Connell further dismisses criticism of tabloids dealing with personalities by noting that

contrary to what has often been claimed about the tabloid press, they are every bit as pre-occupied with social differences and the tensions which arise

from them as serious journalists or for that matter, academic sociologists. The focus on personality and privilege is one of the ways in which these differences and tensions are represented as concrete and recognisable rather than as remote, abstract categories. (82)

Another sympathetic voice is Fairclough (1995, 13), who notes that in tabloids, 'the language, the illusion of familiarity can have a democratising function, opening recondite areas to public discussion and legitimising modes of expression of the non-expert'. Meanwhile, Sparks (2000, 28), perhaps rather reluctantly, also notes that 'all news has a perceived existential utility' and that

> the 'perceived existential utility of detailed information and debate about the politics of the government is much more limited for people whose life experience is made up of being objects of other people's decisions and whose opportunities to exercise political power are infrequent, ritualised and apparently ineffective. Tabloid material in general can easily be understood to have a much greater perceived existential utility than the deeds of geographically and, still more, socially remote politicians'.

Sparks further notes in agreement with Barnett (1998) that in Europe, tabloidisation is 'forcing journalists to think more carefully and flexibly about how to reach people who would be otherwise indifferent to news' (Sparks 2000, 9). In the UK, for example, 'competition drives the British serious newspapers to innovate and find new ways of reaching out both to their existing readers and to potential new ones' (8).

In Africa, this debate follows a similar dichotomy, although with the extensive recuperation of the realm of the 'popular' and popular culture more generally in African media and cultural scholarship, a number of studies tend to give 'political' agency to the tabloid press. For example, in an illuminating piece of research through case studies of South Africa's red-top tabloids, Wasserman (2008, 3) has discussed how 'the coverage of routine and seemingly mundane news stories construct an alternative discourse to that of mainstream newspapers by highlighting the plight of the working class and unemployed whose stories are either ignored by the mainstream or covered from an 'objective' distance'. Wasserman thus argues that 'new tabloid media in South Africa can be seen to fulfil a political role in this broader sense—not only by providing information of the formal political kind, but also through their contribution to social and cultural shifts that have implications for post-apartheid democracy' (7).

He further argues that 'the South African tabloids speak to the section of the population bearing the brunt of the legacies of apartheid, which impact adversely on the extent to which they can actively participate in political debate in the public sphere' (6). Rather than dismiss tabloids as mere escapist entertainment, Wasserman suggests that as a part of popular culture in post-apartheid South Africa, they should force us to redefine our understanding of the public sphere and indeed of politics itself. Citing Hermes (2006, 40), he argues that

> taking the realm of popular culture seriously, is to divest governmental politics of its frightening grandeur; It is to make clear that politics is not something belonging to (informed) elite, that you need to qualify for—but is about who we are, and what we, all of us, want to make of the world we live in. (cited in Wasserman 2008, 33)

Wasserman, however, does offer some cautionary words, noting that although 'the tabloid editors are explicit in identifying their audience as the working class' and that 'this has the effect of drawing a neglected section of society into the mediated public sphere, it is done with commercial rather than political objectives in mind' (10). He also worries about the implications of all expert advice provided for these stories about social ills routinely coming from the middle-class (often white) establishment. He is particularly concerned about 'the value system and frame of reference' regularly used and thus normalised in these stories (ibid.).

The realm of the popular in the media and other cultural sites in Africa is an area now well covered by a number of scholars, who recognise it as an important space as well as means through which important social and political issues are constantly interrogated (see, for example, Newell and Okome 2014; Barber 1997; Ogola 2010). The comedic or entertainment themes inherent in some of these forms often appropriated by the tabloid press, either in form or content, are in themselves scripts with significant political or social utility, speaking directly to their readers' everyday existential anxieties. This chapter therefore discusses *The Nairobian* within the context of this broader debate on tabloidisation.

Sex as Politics

Since independence, Kenya's print media sector has been dominated by two major newspapers: *The Nation* and *The Standard*. In part, this has been made possible because of state patronage. The newspapers' owners

and successive governments have had a largely convivial relationship over the years. I therefore argue elsewhere (Ogola 2011) that, discursively, elite interests have continued to shape public discourse in Kenya as a wealthy politico-economic class dominates mainstream media content (See also Mburu 2013). As a consequence, the 'margins', or those individuals or groups on the economic and political periphery, remain critically under-represented in mainstream media. It is such perceived institutionalised forms of exclusion that have led to reactionary journalisms and press, including the so-called gutter press and lately the growth of citizen journalism in the country (Ogola 2015).

According to one of the editors of *The Nairobian*, in response to the said exclusionary tendencies of *The Nation* and *The Standard*, the aim of the newspaper was to 'break away from the predictability of the Kenyan press' (Interview with author, 14 October 2015). He explains that their strategy was 'to focus on stories which resonate with the man on the street'. The strategy was not just to extend the meaning of the political but also to effectively redefine it. 'Our idea of political scandals relates more to your typical family issues than politics. We are more interested in family disputes than political spectacles' (Interview with author, 14 October 2015).

The newspaper took a deliberate decision to provide alternative front-page news stories instead of politics. One of the editors noted that this gave them 'more latitude to cover a variety of stories' (Interview with author, 14 October 2015). Accordingly, *The Nairobian*'s focus has been on more mundane everyday issues. However, these stories are typically sensationalised and predominantly of a sexual nature, occasioning the kind of complaints that Rasna Warah raises (see chapter introduction). But another of the newspaper's editors contests such criticism. In an interview with the author, he was adamant that these were 'stories about Kenyans and their journey' and that overall, *The Nairobian* is 'tailored on the psychographics of the community' (Interview with author, 14 October 2015).

The following are typical examples of *The Nairobian*'s approach to some 'topical' news stories from just one edition:

'Ruaraka woman in trouble for burning neighbour's breasts' (*The Nairobian*, 26 February 2016). Here, a violent dispute involving neighbours in a Nairobi estate is deliberately sensationalised through reference to superfluous sexualised detail. 'Artists claim four cops fixed him and massaged his balls' (*The Nairobian*, 26 February 2016). In this example,

the focus is as much on the police violence as it is on the precise sexual nature of the assault. In another example, 'Donhoolm man played dead after he was busted by sex blackmail gang' (*The Nairobian*, 26 February 2016); we are told of criminal gang extorting money from men in a Nairobi neighbourhood by using women to lure them into their homes. Once again, sex becomes the organising narrative through which this particular crime story is told.

Other stories speak to everyday 'village experiences', a space often ignored by mainstream press organs, as they typically cover metropolitan areas. However, even these are mainly of a sexual nature. For example: 'Why I slept with my grandfather'(*The Nairobian*, 26 February 2016), 'Makueni elders jailed for putting *pilipili* inside woman's private parts' (*The Nairobian*, 26 February 2016). One of the editors claimed that the focus on sex stories was not an attempt to manufacture tabloid fare but to 'reflect what society actually reads and talks about'. He argued thus: 'Sex defines our lives. Our grandmothers and grandfathers communicate most effectively through sexual innuendo. These are also the topics we talk about in bars and in private' (Interview with author, 14 October 2015). He seemed to suggest that the newspaper merely locates readers within a world that they already inhabit.

Unapologetic about the deployment of the trope of sex in the majority of their stories, the newspaper's editors noted that they in fact wanted to 'open up the bedroom and talk about a range of other taboo subjects including politicians and even church leaders'. They were insistent on wishing to 'open up these conversations', claiming that 'Kenyans are religious but they don't talk about the Church. We have no sacred pastors' (Interview with author, 14 October 2015).

The deployment of sex as a narrative trope is a strategy that has generated much debate in discussions on tabloidisation. Many question whether such sexualised stories, however well-meaning, do in fact contribute to political and civic citizenship. Yet, as John Jewell argues, sex sells in the press. In an article in *The Conversation*, he notes that the use of sex to tell stories, particularly those involving politics, 'is something that delights both the quality and tabloid press' (*The Conversation*, 29 July 2016). Gripsrud (2000, 295) also partly addresses this concern in his discussion of journalism as 'ritual communication'. In a related study, he argues that such stories can be used for 'ceremonial processing of sociopsychological and existential concerns' (ibid.).

What is, however, clear in the case of *The Nairobian* is that is it following a relatively well tested tabloid tradition which almost always guarantees sales. Even then, while most of the newspaper's stories are no doubt sensationalised and might therefore be dismissed as fantasist sexualised entertainment—and some of them are indeed just that—they still tend to generate broader debates around moral and political anxieties relating to, for example, abuse of power, corruption, crime and poverty—issues the paper's editors are particularly keen to raise as signifying the newspapers's 'quality'. This is particularly ironic considering their defence for being 'different'. Langer argues that this kind of approach 'creates a foothold for tabloid audiences to engage with issues that are fundamentally political, but not framed in the way political stories about the powerful and rich are conventionally presented' (Langer quoted in Gripsrud 2000, 299).

The 'Disciplining' Power of Laughter

The deliberate decision not to have political stories on its cover pages does not mean that *The Nairobian* is necessarily apolitical. Instead, the newspaper seems to have chosen an alternative rendering of the political. One of its editors argues that their approach to power and politics is to strip the latter of its invented grandeur and that the most effective way of doing this is to 'humanise' the politician and bring them down to the level of the general public (Interview with author, 14 October 2016). *The Nairobian*'s stories featuring politicians have therefore tended to focus not so much on their political roles but on their 'normal' lives as fathers, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives.

For example, in 2013, a former presidential candidate and government minister Raphael Tuju's marital problems were exposed by *The Nairobian*. Tuju's estranged wife was reported to have been having an affair with a much younger man. Tuju had therefore filed for divorce in a Nairobi court, citing the wife's adultery. *The Nairobian* picked out the most insalubrious bits of the court case for publication. Notable, though, is that the newspaper routinely carries court stories (with extracts of documents to prove authenticity), and seeks comments from those mentioned for balance and right of reply.

In covering politicians, *The Nairobian* typically focuses on such stories that expose their frailties, particularly of the politically powerful. Cases of alleged infidelity are therefore commonplace, as are stories that offer readers

a sense of moral superiority. For example, in a story titled 'Four politicians who have embraced polygamy' (*The Nairobian*, 4 March 2016), well-known Kenyan politicians are revealed to be 'proudly' married to several wives, something many Kenyans find anachronistic to modern life, despite being culturally acceptable in particular ethnic communities. In another example, 'Why my brother wants me dead—Kirinyaga Governor Joseph Ndathi' (*The Nairobian*, 26 February 2016), details of a family feud between a county governor and his brother over an alleged unpaid debt are laid bare.

Scholars such as Bird (1992, 125–126) argue that readers' 'sense of powerlessness can also lead them to derive pleasure from seeing the establishment elite, e.g. celebrities or politicians, falter and prove fallible'. Gripsrud (2000, 298) similarly observes that 'the populism of popular journalism often harbors a disrespect for authorities, which may well produce valuable challenges to those in powerful positions, contrasting the traditionally more respectful forms dominating, for instance, traditional public service reporting'.

In an article on the coverage of the UK's deputy speaker of the House of Lords, Lord Sewel, when he was caught snorting cocaine, John Jewell argues that there is always 'a public appetite for political sex scandals' and 'the pleasure of seeing someone privileged and moneyed get caught' (*The Conversation*, 29 July 2015). Giving the example of Lord Sewel, he notes that 'the exposure of Sewel's hypocrisy was especially delicious because he was hoist by his own petard, damned by his own foolishness and hubris'. Jewell observed that 'such behaviours also fit into an historical narrative which positions Lords of the realm as feckless, out of touch and generally dismissive of the laws which govern the rest of society'. He raises some important points here. The coverage of scandals involving powerful politicians such as those published by *The Nairobian* is fundamentally an indictment of the political class as hypocritical, remote, morally reckless and yet human. When stripped of the invented majesty of power, they can be exposed for what they really are.

In an interview with the author, *The Nairobian*'s editors argued that the mainstream Kenyan newspapers are fearful of covering sexual scandals involving powerful politicians, not because this undermines their tag as 'quality' newspapers but because of their relationship with the political elite. The intimate relationship between the news media and the political class often means that, because of possible political and economic implications, certain transgressions are not reported by mainstream media. The state and its functionaries still exercise control over much of the country's mainstream media, albeit much more subtly than in the past. For example,

the government remains the single largest advertiser in the country. A withdrawal of its adverts from a newspaper can have significant financial implications for the whole media organisation.

The Nairobian's editors argue that they are relatively immune to advertising pressures because they make their money from newspaper sales. Incidentally, the newspaper is put together by a very small team. It only has three full-time staff, with most stories sent in by readers and correspondents based across the country. The staff's role quite often is simply to rewrite, verify or sub-edit stories. They also claim that they are not competing with the established press for readers but are more interested in new readers, mainly first-time newspaper buyers, teenagers and women. But some of these claims are contestable. *The Nairobian* remains part of SG's stable and is thus not independent of the broader structural and ideological limitations within which that media group operates. In addition, the newspaper's stories are used to drive traffic onto the Standard Media's website, making it effectively inseparable from *The Standard* online. In which case, it is unlikely to carry stories that could create problems with advertisers for its sister newspapers.

Incidentally, one of the newspaper's editors also revealed that *The Nairobian* was in many ways 'an amalgam of *Pulse* and Crazy Monday' (Interview with author, 14 October 2015). *Pulse* is a Friday weekly pull-out in the parent newspaper *The Standard*, and has been hugely successful as an entertainment magazine. *Crazy Monday*, on the other hand, is published as a full-page weekly pull-out offering in *The Standard*. It focuses mainly on stories relating to witchcraft and ribaldry. By amalgamating these two approaches to storytelling, *The Nairobian* has been able to please an existing and loyal niche public even as it attempts to construct another. The newspaper also has a page with columns written in *sheng* (a lingua franca commonly used by the youth) and Standard Kiswahili; a column glorifying *matatus* and *matatu* culture; one targeting unemployed youth with a jobs column; and relationship and inspirational columns—a strategy intended to will together a public.

Playing the Public Ombudsman: The Nairobi Defender

In 2015, *The Nairobian* launched a new column called 'The Nairobi Defender'. At the official launch was the country's Ombudsman, who also gave the keynote address. The Ombudsman is a constitutional office whose mandate includes, among other things, a quasi-judicial role in dealing

with maladministration. It can investigate any suspected cases of maladministration in the conduct of state affairs in the country. It also has a specific mandate to promote the rights of minority groups and the marginalised (www.ombudsman.go.ke).

The name of the column and the presence of the Ombudsman at the launch gestured at a very specific mandate that the newspaper was assigning to itself through this innovation. Indeed, one of the editors talked about the newspaper's 'evolution', arguing that in its 'new chapter', it was going to focus more on advocacy journalism than mere reporting of news stories. He talked of focusing on stories relating to Kenyans suffering at the hands of state institutions such as the Police, the Judiciary and big business. 'The Nairobi Defender' column thus focuses on stories with titles such as: 'Jumia online shop refunds Sh. 16k for spoilt tablet' (*The Nairobian*, 13 January 2015), 'Face your customer: Prepaid consumers vs Kenya Power' (*The Nairobian*, 20 October 2015) and 'Samuel Wahome vs Kahama Group of Hotels (K1 Clubhouse)' (*The Nairobian*, 20 October 2015). The column typically features stories about ordinary Kenyans fighting against alleged mistreatment by big business and state institutions. Unlike the sensationalism seen in the regular pages of the newspaper, 'The Nairobi Defender' seems to deliberately avoid racy stories. Instead, it focuses on the more 'conventional' everyday stories but with a distinctive tone of activism.

While this new strategy appears consistent with *The Nairobian*'s new self-fashioned mandate as a 'public' ombudsman, it equally appears aimed at constituting a new public—certainly besides the youth and women, whom the newspaper describes as its core audience. Bird (1992, 125) argues that 'the sense of powerlessness or alienation from the mainstream that tabloid readers experience, linked to their class position in society, gives them a preference for the type of story where the underdog has proved victorious, where fate and luck smiled upon someone with whom they could identify'.

This kind of advocacy journalism can be seen in a number of tabloids around the world, including the UK's *The Sun* and in South Africa's *Daily Sun*. In a discussion of the latter, Wasserman (2008), for example, demonstrates how civic campaigns in the newspaper, such as around the difficulty in getting identity documents from the country's Home Affairs Department have 'a high symbolic value as they acknowledge tabloid readers' status as citizens, quite literally as people that have names faces, and a birthright to membership of the civic community' (34). Advocacy

journalism is therefore a form that not only enables the tabloid press to perform some of its normative functions, through it, such newspapers are also able to constitute publics and perhaps guarantee sales.

Conclusion

The relative success of *The Nairobian* continues to confound many, despite the criticism it still generates within a public that ironically continues to buy it and in the face of a political and media establishment to whom it remains anathema to 'proper' journalism. It is too soon to either understate or overstate the significance of the newspaper; for example, whether it will radically alter or influence Kenya's journalistic cultures, particularly insofar as the coverage of 'quality' news is concerned. Precisely because of this, we may only settle on largely tentative conclusions.

We can argue with some conviction that the relative success of the newspaper points to Kenya's problematic media liberalisation project, where elite consolidation of public spaces for popular expression has led to popular alienation and hence the search for an alternative. That alternative is to be found in the realm of the popular variously manifested, for example, in popular journalism. As is the case with the character of the 'popular', it represents a site as well as a form where normative rules relating to order, variously described, are routinely challenged and subverted. As such, *The Nairobian*, this chapter argues, provides us a window through which to see popular anxieties and an attempted recuperation and crafting of new popular spaces and ways of public expression. The implications for journalism in Kenya and for the politics of citizenship may be varied but this should not distract us from acknowledging this emergent space and form.

Second, although on the face of it contradictory, this chapter concludes that the popularity of *The Nairobian* points to an expansion of the public sphere in Kenya. As an alternative form of journalism, it opens up new expressive spaces, particularly for a group of first-time newspaper buyers: the youth, women and other marginalised constituencies. Unlike Kenya's mainstream press, this newspaper discursively focuses on the mundane lives of relatively ordinary Kenyans. Although these are dramatised, and the melodramatic can indeed distract from the issues being addressed, it is also true that the narrative styles adopted are formats that ensure the newspaper passes as relevant to the experiences of its readers.

Third, we conclude that *The Nairobian* does in fact make a contribution to both civic and political citizenship in the country. It is arguably political in a number of ways; and it engages with institutional politics both formally and informally. The political in the newspaper should, however, not be limited to formal political processes. We have argued, following Wasserman, Hermes and others, that limiting our understanding of politics to formal institutions or political process misrepresent the very nature of the political, and particularly so in Africa. Furthermore, *The Nairobian* is political in the sense that it disrupts and questions the normative. It elevates the personal, employing radical, even if not entirely subversive, rhetorical narrative strategies to mediate both individual and collective experiences. Still, it might be worth exploring how audiences actually use the newspaper to determine precisely what role it plays in the lives of its readers.

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When Your 'Take-Home' Can Hardly Take You Home: Moonlighting and the Quest for Economic Survival in the Zimbabwean Press

Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara

This chapter examines how the Zimbabwean economic and political context has nurtured an environment in which journalists 'illicitly' incorporate extra journalistic work into their daily routines as a way of supplementing their poor salaries and surviving the economic challenges facing the country. Although this practice—commonly referred to as 'moonlighting'—has always been part of journalism practice in Zimbabwe, the severe economic crisis that followed the post-2000 events promoted an unprecedented mercenary approach to journalism. Consecutive years of political crises resulted in severe economic decline, which led to periodic shortages of food, fuel, electricity, medical supplies and other necessities basic for survival. Soaring inflation and currency depreciation became the most visible manifestations of Zimbabwe's economic woes during the first half of 2008. By mid-July, estimates of annual price increases 'exceeded […] 2,000,000 per cent, while the domestic currency lost practically all its value' (ibid.). This precipitous economic decline was closely related

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to a number of complex political developments which created chaos and uncertainty, resulting in the erosion of business confidence and the economic isolation of the country (Gilpin 2008). To '[prevent] their meagre cash resources from completely evaporating' (The Economist 2008), most workers (including journalists), developed imaginative and extremely flexible strategies to survive. Attempts to catch up with the galloping hyperinflation saw the informal economy overtaking the formal one (ibid.).

While this economic situation impacted on the operations of the media, other factors also came into play, particularly the political (and legal) context. In the wake of increasing dissenting voices, which reflected the country's worsening economic problems, the government decided to muzzle the private press as well as prohibit a number of foreign media houses from operating in the country, by promulgating restrictive legislation such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) in January 2002 (Mabweazara 2011, see Wallace Chuma's discussion of this in Chap. 12). Some Western media houses were accused of 'writing falsehoods to tarnish [the government] image at home and abroad' (Mano 2005, 62). These developments prompted the closure of several private newspapers, although a number of publications succumbed because of the biting economic environment. Consequently, some observers argue that journalists in Zimbabwe, as elsewhere in Africa, suffer increasingly from the restrictions of media owners and are often without job security. They are also paid very little and live in direct contact with the deprivation, problems and sufferings of the wider public (see Baglo 2008).[1]

Although the formation of a coalition government between rival political parties in September 2008 brought significant changes in the Zimbabwean media terrain, most importantly the 'loosening' of restrictive media laws which led to the resurfacing of previously banned papers (such as Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe's *Daily News*) and the registering of new ones (such as Alpha Media Holdings' *NewsDay*), still, the repressive political and economic conditions of Zimbabwe highlighted above have had a lasting impact on the everyday professional practices of journalists in the country. In particular, the prohibition of a number of foreign media houses provided space for some public and private media journalists to act as 'underground' foreign correspondents for independent online newspapers as well as for the Western media. To juggle between the incompatible interests of their everyday jobs and the 'underground' employers, journalists resort to the use of pseudonyms as a way of avoiding recognition by

their formal employers and protecting themselves from the perceived threat to personal security by the authorities. This has had marked implications for professionalism and ethical standards, as accountability is buried in anonymity. While journalists justifiably seek economic survival through moonlighting, this has many negative influences on the quality of journalistic practice and weakens their watchdog and critical role in society.

A central argument of this study is that the combination of moonlighting, bad treatment by editors, repressive conditions and poor salaries is undermining the professionalism of journalists not only in Zimbabwe but in many other African countries. These conditions not only differentiate African journalists from their counterparts in the economically developed world of the North but also illuminate how the conditions of material deprivation tend to subvert conventionalized ethical canons of journalism, such as independence and impartiality. The study further argues that while the practice of moonlighting in Zimbabwe is clearly tied to the struggles for economic survival in the context of a severe economic crisis, it also articulates the consequences of a restricted media environment in which stories that critique government policy and expose social ills are forced out of the broader public forum. Such stories find space mainly in 'independent' online publications and foreign media houses which most Zimbabweans in the country (especially in the rural areas) do not have access to.

In examining the impact of economic insecurity and government repression on journalists, the present study draws on in-depth semi-structured interviews with over forty journalists from six Zimbabwean mainstream newspapers: the dominant state-controlled Zimpapers (two dailies, *The Herald* and *The Chronicle* and two weeklies the *Sunday Mail* and the *Sunday News*) and two weeklies from the small but vibrant Alpha Media Holdings (the *Zimbabwe Independent* and *The Standard*). Interviewees were selected using purposive criteria and convenience sampling methods. Central criteria in the selection were to include journalists from different news desks in order to cover all key 'beats', as well as a diversity of positions and roles across the newsrooms. The goal was to make sure that the analysis 'adequately understood the variations in the phenomenon of interest in the setting, and to test developing ideas about the setting by selecting phenomena that are crucial to the validity of those ideas' (Maxwell 1992, 293). Interviewees were selected on the basis of their representation of different professional journalistic roles but working in the same newspaper environments under common conditions, rather than bringing together participants from a variety of newsrooms.

Some of the interviews were carried out in situ, at the journalists' desks in the newsrooms. This facilitated a direct interactive engagement with the reporters and an understanding of the foundational motivations behind their moonlighting activities. As Robert White (2010, 43) puts it, '[i]t is the direct observation and the in-depth discussions with journalists about their practices that reveal the underlying reasons and their socio-political philosophy'. This approach facilitated a close understanding of 'insider' perspectives of practices and cultures relating to moonlighting in the newsrooms studied.[2] The research was carried out between June and December 2008, a period during which Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis reached its peak, following the disputed first round of presidential elections and the subsequent runoff elections.

Moonlighting in Journalism: Framing the Debate

'Moonlighting' generally refers to the second full-time or part-time job taken up by employees for a variety of reasons (Kanyane 2005). Journalists have plenty of opportunities for moonlighting, which may not necessarily be directly related to their core professional activities. As Yehiel Limor and Itai Himelboim (2006, 267) observe: 'Journalists may choose to engage in a variety of additional activities, such as political engagements, working in advertising and public relations, and performing educational and celebrity-type activities such as interviews'. While some moonlighting opportunities will not have the potential for a conflict of interest, others not only pose a conflict of interest but also threaten professional and ethical standards to varying degrees (Lo et al. 2005, 159). In the present study, moonlighting specifically refers to additional journalistic work taken up by reporters to augment their income.

It is important, however, to see moonlighting in journalism through the lenses of its implications for the professional-normative practices of journalism as well as for ethical standards. According to professional norms, 'journalists must avoid situations that create a conflict of interests, whether actual or merely perceived, to remain loyal to their major stakeholder: the public' (Limor and Himelboim 2006, 266). Conflicts of interest arise from situations in which employers have private interests that appear to clash or defeat the objective exercise of official duties (Kanyane 2005). For Sandra Borden and Michael Pritchard (2001, 79): '[a] conflict of interest involves being involved in circumstances that give others reason to worry about whether one's judgement is actually vulnerable to

secondary interests that tend to make that judgement less reliable than others are entitled to expect'. In journalism, conflicts of interest arise in situations where 'there is reason to be concerned that the judgement and performance of journalists might be unduly influenced by interests they have that lie outside their responsibilities as journalists' (Borden and Pritchard 2001, 74). As Franz Kruger (2004, 101) puts it: 'The pay may be good but the cost to credibility are substantial' as some moonlighting opportunities 'set the broader ethical alarm bells ringing' (ibid.). Thus, when a reporter is involved in multiple interests, this may corrupt the primary motivation of the main employer (Borden and Pritchard 2001). In this sense, a conflict of interest interferes with professional responsibilities, judgements and the very reason clients and employers value journalists as 'professionals' who are expected to be objective and independent of any private and personal influences that either interfere or appear likely to interfere with the performance of their core duties (Kanyane 2005). In fact, the very principle of 'independence calls on journalists to remain free of associations or activities that may compromise their integrity or damage their credibility' (Black et al. 1995, 98). It is therefore essential for individual journalists and news organizations to honour that principle if they are to be effective in fulfilling the primary obligation of journalism.

Although conflicts of interest, real or apparent, may arise in many areas, very little research has been done on the professional implications of moonlighting for journalism in Africa. While it is certainly not the only practice that may cause conflicts of interest, it is nevertheless widespread and has received very little scholarly attention. This chapter is thus an attempt to shed light on the 'salience of the phenomenon and its legitimacy on the socio-political and organisational environment of journalists' (Limor and Himelboim 2006, 268).

Newsroom Attitudes and Approaches to Moonlighting

Although there was consensus among reporters that newsrooms are strict on moonlighting, there was no clear formal policy or semblance of homogeneity in terms of the organizations' positions and approaches to the practice. As one senior reporter at *The Herald* noted:

> We are only allowed to write for those organizations where there will be no conflict of interest. You can't write for the *Zimbabwe Independent* or the

> *Financial Gazette*, but perhaps you could write for the *New African* and *The Southern Times* because their editorial policies are more or less similar to ours.

> If you are caught moonlighting for rival organizations you will be dismissed instantly. We have had several cases of people who have been dismissed because of moonlighting allegations.

This scenario is, however, not peculiar to the Zimbabwean situation. Kruger (2004, 100) observes that in the South African context, 'news organisations have various policies: some rule out moonlighting completely, others positively encourage it as long as it does not impact on them in any way'.

A common position across the newsrooms studied, however, was the disapproval of members of staff working for rival groups, especially the use of company resources for these purposes. Newsrooms thus sought to monitor and track emails generated from their computers through the use of spyware—computer software that obtains information from a user's computer without their knowledge or consent in order to identify reporters moonlighting for rival news organizations. At the time of doing fieldwork for the present study, a Zimpapers editor was suspended and subsequently dismissed on allegations of moonlighting after his emails were intercepted and used as evidence against him in a disciplinary hearing.[3] In the light of these circumstances, journalists are extremely cautious in their use of email communication for private business within the newsrooms. This was particularly the case with company emails, which they saw as easily susceptible to interception. As one senior editor at *The Chronicle* explained:

> you see, at the moment there are a lot of suspicions on company email. People suspect that if you use the company email the Information Technology (IT) department can intercept and read your private mails, but if you have a web-based email the belief is that it's more secure. For that reason, I have a company email and a personal web-based email. I prefer to use the web-based […] I don't really feel comfortable with the company email.

The IT manager at *The Herald* confirmed the presence of a system that monitors journalists' email traffic and a general commitment towards censoring journalists' online activities within Zimpapers.

We have a system in place that enables us to see who has generated what email and what content. So, we regularly do random checks for abuse from our main server […] Sometimes if we are not sure about the nature of the content, we simply intercept and quarantine the email […]

Our major challenge, however, is in monitoring the web-based emails. It continues to be a big challenge as *journalists smuggle stories [sic] from our newsrooms to foreign media houses on a regular basis.*

We could be more drastic actually by using stricter ways of controlling and monitoring email traffic, but we want people to be responsible. (emphasis added).

Journalists in the private press were equally cautious in their use of email for moonlighting purposes because of fears and suspicions of snooping. One senior reporter at the *Zimbabwe Independent* explained:

I've got two private web-based emails, one of them is completely anonymous even if I write to you, you will not recognize the email is from me because I use a secret username. It is strictly for private business. *You see for most of us to feed our families, we have to freelance, which is against our company policy* […] you cannot freelance using the company email […]

We are also aware that management has surreptitiously installed malicious spyware on our computers *to monitor who is sending stories where* because they suspect that most of the content on these Zimbabwean news websites is originating from our newsroom […]

So, we use private emails like Yahoo to wire stories abroad and the company email for business related to the newspaper. Essentially, the private email is for business which you don't want to be detected by management. (emphasis added).

Although these circumstances render the deployment of email in newsmaking difficult, journalists 'are far from being mired in "backwardness" or passively awaiting external salvation' (Berger 2005, 1) in regard to using email for their private business. Thus, as noted above, journalists have resorted to the use of private web-based emails for personal business, including filing stories to their 'underground' employers. As one senior reporter at the *Zimbabwe Independent*, explained: '[...] for most journalists to survive they have to freelance and you can't freelance

using a company email. It's a dismissible offence. So, we use private web-based emails like Yahoo with anonymous usernames to wire stories abroad'.

This scenario not only reflects the ethical ambiguities concerning moonlighting that are rooted in the journalists' quest for economic survival but also the newsrooms' attitudes and approaches towards the practice that are anchored in concerns over 'corporate self-interest rather than professional ethics' (Kruger 2004, 101). This points to the 'lack of stable, deep value commitments' in the newsrooms (White 2010, 42). Like their staffers, the newsrooms seem to be only concerned about their private gains, and not the 'noble objective of "serving the people"' (Kasoma 1996, 95) as a whole.

In some of the newsrooms, however, editors struck an informal compromise with their reporters by 'allowing' them to moonlight as a way of keeping the newspapers afloat as well as retaining their key staff under the dire economic conditions in which they are operating. As one reporter at *The Standard* put it:

> Well, we reached an informal understanding with the editor-in-chief of the newspaper after looking at the economic situation that we are living in. We had to come to a compromise on how best to try and survive. Basically, if the truth be told, we are helping out the company by taking up extra paid work elsewhere. Everyone knows that *our take-home can hardly take us home.* (emphasis added)

The laissez-faire approach to moonlighting in some of the newsrooms is thus partly explained by the economic challenges facing the news organisations and their battle to retain key staff in an environment where staffers largely view themselves as subsidizing their employers. However, as this study attempts to show, the laissez-faire culture also encourages a disregard of professional standards. It hampers recourse to professional codes of ethics (as instruments of self-regulation) and results in reporters and editors glossing over ethical violations. As Limor and Himelboim (2006, 280) rightly contend: 'The economic conditions in which African journalists operate turns any form of prohibitions and constraints on additional work into lip service only, as the journalists find themselves unable to abide by these rulings'.

Journalists' Quest for Economic Survival

As noted earlier, moonlighting in the Zimbabwean press is deeply anchored in journalists' quest for economic survival by supplementing their meagre salaries. New technologies (in particular the Internet), play a central role in sustaining this widespread practice (we return to this point shortly). The new technologies become important because the news organizations for which the journalists moonlight mainly consist of foreign media houses and online newspapers with an interest in Zimbabwean issues. The latter are predominantly run by exiled Zimbabwean journalists who have maintained contact with their former colleagues in Zimbabwean mainstream newsrooms. The following extract of an interview with a senior news reporter at *The Standard* is telling in terms of the economic drive towards adopting extra work outside one's regular employment in the mainstream newsrooms.

> Knowing as you do that here in Zimbabwe working as a journalist is tough […] particularly in terms of the salaries we earn, this means that within my main daily business, I have to look for more ideas in order to be able to formulate stories to sell to some outside news websites and get a few extra bucks […] Thus, I would give my newspaper its own piece of the flesh [*sic*] first, and then I would do my other work. Basically, I think we are helping out the company […]

> So, I would say that my work routines revolve around that kind of culture in which I have to browse the Internet in the morning, look at daily newspapers and try and set an agenda that caters for my company's interests as well as mine.

This response typifies the taken-for-granted and almost naturalized explanation of the 'conflicting' professional practice that characterizes news work in the Zimbabwean mainstream press. As already shown, the surge in moonlighting is directly related to the political and economic environment following the post-2000 developments. According to Mano (2005, 62) this era 'presented the media with new political, economic and legislative challenges' which increasingly saw the tightening of the media's legislative environment and the prohibition of foreign media houses from practising in Zimbabwe following accusations by government 'of writing

falsehoods to tarnish its image at home and abroad'. This scenario provided space for '[s]ome public and private journalists [to act] as foreign correspondents for Western media, some of which are traditionally hostile in their coverage of Africa' (ibid.).

This state of affairs promoted the development of 'underground' relationships between foreign media houses (with restricted access to Zimbabwe) and local mainstream journalists who were forced to look elsewhere to supplement their poor salaries. Nyamnjoh (2005, 73–74) observes that poor salaries and working conditions in African newsrooms have 'inevitably led to "prostitution" by journalists or what one may term a hand-to-mouth journalism, if not a journalism of misery. Any bit of money can lure a journalist to write anything.'

In the newsrooms studied, journalists chose to retain their contractual obligations with their regular employers for a number of reasons that include: financial security in case their part-time jobs fail them; to maintain cover from surveillance forces; to safeguard their legitimacy and maintain visibility to prospective foreign media houses; and more importantly, with regard to the present study, to ensure guaranteed and regular access to the technologies that sustain their part-time work, particularly the Internet. As Nyamnjoh (2005, 70) explains, this predicament forces many of the practitioners to opt for a 'Jekyll-and-Hyde personality' that allows them to accommodate the interests of their regular as well as their 'underground' employers.

The 'New' Media and the Professional Implications of 'Moonlighting'

One of the main findings of this study was the centrality of the Internet in facilitating the bourgeoning of 'underground' extra paid work for journalists in the mainstream press. Although moonlighting has always been part of mainstream journalism practice in Zimbabwe, journalists' exposure to international news organizations through the Internet—coupled with the prohibition of foreign media houses from practising in Zimbabwe—has cultivated a mercenary approach to journalism. For most journalists, making money has taken precedence over professional and ethical standards. This development was clearly articulated by one desk editor from the *Zimbabwe Independent* in a lengthy interview at the Harare Press Club:

> The Internet has economically empowered a lot of journalists in Zimbabwe where the majority of top journalists were forced to flee the country. Those

that have remained have managed to use the opportunities offered by the Internet to break into global media organizations that were traditionally very difficult to break into […]

There are people right here in this very club who are doing jobs for *Reuters*, *BBC*, *The Washington Post*, and *The New York Times*: some of the biggest news organizations in the world. It has all been made possible by the Internet. I can say 90 per cent of the journalists operating in Zimbabwe survive through the Internet because these are the guys that feed the outside world with stories. For instance, almost every day we have a story on BBC from Harare and Bulawayo yet the BBC is banned from practising in this country.[4] It's a similar story with the CNN and numerous other media organizations that are banned from practising here; they are being serviced by local journalists […] we are talking here of journalists in Zimbabwean newsrooms. These are journalists that can now be classified as some of the richest guys in Zimbabwe […] some of these guys drink here [in the press club] every day and drive very good cars […] and all these are benefits accrued through the Internet.

Interviewer: But doesn't that whole scenario have negative professional implications?

Journalist: It does to a certain extent, because we have had instances where we discuss rumours in this press club and ten minutes later you find the rumour on the Internet as a story. A case in point was during the March 29 [2008] parliamentary and presidential elections, rumours were circulated here in the press club that Mugabe was losing and that his sister, Sabina, had collapsed and died in shock. In no time at all, there was a story on the Internet that Mugabe's sister had died. Someone had picked it up and written a story under a pseudonym and the editor of that particular news website published it without cross-checking. Embarrassingly, two hours down the line the government was denying it!

From the above, it is clear that although the Internet has provided Zimbabwean mainstream journalists with opportunities for economic survival, the opportunities are fraught with negative professional and ethical implications. Journalists are clearly 'oblivious of the effect of their reportage on society, as long as they make money' (Kasoma 1996, 97). As one desk

editor at *The Chronicle* put it: 'People don't care what they are selling to these online publications […] anything that brings money on the table will go, including unverified information'. Commenting on the impact of the Internet on African journalism practice, Kasoma (1996, 95) writes:

> In a world in which the information superhighway has made journalists practise their profession in a hurry as they strive to satisfy the world's craving for more and quicker news and other information, the humaneness of journalism has increasingly been giving way to the expediencies of cut-throat financial […] competition.

In light of the ethical and professional challenges posed by the revolutionary changes emerging with new technologies, Clifford Christians (2008, 6) calls for an urgent need to develop an 'ethics of integrity' that updates ethical and professional concerns articulated in the pre-digital era among media professionals. For Christians, a new 'media ethics agenda must be developed for the cyber world' (ibid.) of online networking.

It is perhaps important to highlight that the interview extract above reinforces a point noted earlier, that moonlighting in the Zimbabwean mainstream press also reflects the consequences of a restricted media environment in which news organizations that carry stories that critique government policy as well as expose social ills predominantly find space in 'independent' and foreign news organizations that are restricted from practising in the country itself. In fact, at the time of doing fieldwork for the present study, many foreign news organizations deemed hostile to government policies, such as the BBC and CNN, had been banned from practising journalism in Zimbabwe, hence their reliance on local journalists.

Journalists' use of pseudonyms as a way of disguising their identities from their regular employers and protecting themselves from a perceived threat to personal security by the authorities further compromises ethical standards, as accountability is buried in anonymity (Moyo 2007; Chari 2009). Moreover, the speed with which the Internet allows for the publication of stories also fuels the publication of 'unsubstantiated and often highly opinionated stories' (Moyo 2007, 91), as seen in the publication of press club rumours about the alleged death of Mugabe's sister referred to in the interview extract above.

The pressure to maintain efficiency in the face of a demanding workload divided between one's regular employer and the 'underground' employer also led to unprofessional behaviour in the newsrooms as

journalists resorted to 'stealing' stories from colleagues in order to sell them to their underground employers. The entertainment editor of the *Sunday News* described this scenario thus: 'moonlighting has resulted in several problems in this newsroom, people steal stories from each other and sell them to online publications […] there are also growing incidents of fabrications'. Reinforcing this response, one assistant news editor at *The Herald* gave an insightful illustration of how journalists 'stole' stories from each other:

Interviewer: In your experience in this newsroom, have you witnessed any forms of abuse of these technologies?

Journalist: A lot, because of the editorial system that we use […] I will show you something [looks around], you see that reporter, look at his monitor—he is going through other people's raw copies, he is on 'read only', come closer, come and see what I'm talking about [we both move towards the journalist]. Look, now he is in his own 'basket', but [seizes the mouse to illustrate his point] if he moves up here he can see all the stories that have been filed for tomorrow's paper, but he can only read, he can't edit them. So, what he does is, he secretly copies these stories, spices them up [*sic*] a bit and sends them to an online publication that he works for clandestinely, no one can tell he has done it.

The challenges faced by newsrooms in their attempts to monitor and control moonlighting were further articulated by one desk editor at the *Zimbabwe Independent*:

There are a number of challenges that are beginning to emerge in this newsroom because of moonlighting. First, reporters are in the habit of nicking colleagues' stories and selling them to other publications. Even if you were to monitor them there is very little you can do […] because of technological advancements. Journalists will simply use flash disks to transfer stories from one computer to another without being detected. Some even have computers at home and they do their business there without even coming to the newsroom.

The professional and ethical challenges posed by the increase in moonlighting among mainstream journalists were also a result of competition for breaking news among foreign news agencies and online newspapers

with an interest in Zimbabwe's unfolding socio-political crisis. As one reporter at *The Standard* explained, the competition among journalists to be the first to break a story exposed the profession to ethical challenges:

> because of the competition among news agencies and online publications for the Zimbabwean story […] each journalist wants to be the first to break the story and make more money. This has damaged the profession as people don't even wait to adhere to the cardinal rules of journalism: verifying and cross-checking issues.

This perhaps further finds explanation in Edward Wasserman's (2010) observation that: 'News media, especially on the Internet, are developing greater reliance on producers of content who are not full-time employees'. [n]ews organizations thus find it beneficial (and less expensive) to get more and more of their content from people who are not on their full-time payroll. However, '[t]his poses a huge challenge to traditional ways to ensure independence and guard against conflicts of interest' (Wasserman 2010). From all this, it is evident that moonlighting journalists 'focus attention on the potential conflict between a commitment to other employers or extraneous interests represented by additional work' (Limor and Himelboim 2006, 267).

Clearly, the phenomenon of moonlighting points to the challenges that the material realities of working as a journalist for a poor salary impose on journalists in Africa. It highlights how such conditions tend to subvert conventionalized notions of journalistic independence and impartiality. While this practice is entrenched in Zimbabwean newsrooms and has assumed a particular dimension there, research has shown that it is equally widespread in other countries. For example, Limor and Himelboim (2006, 265) observe that the Croatian Journalists' Trade Union has maintained that the country's journalism has deteriorated as a result of extensive moonlighting. The same goes for countries like Pakistan, where journalists are said to double as state agents (ibid.).

Moonlighting is, however, by no means the only kind of conflict of interest that arises for journalists. It is not isolated from related practices that have been seen to 'either compromise journalistic independence or force journalists to negotiate the universal norm of objectivity' (Mabweazara 2011, 114). The practice has close links with other commonly known corrupt practices in journalism. For example, Berhanu Lodamo and Terje Skjerdal (2009, 134) discuss the practices of 'freebies'

(taking items such as free tickets or dinners for the journalist's personal gain) and brown envelopes (the informal transfer of money from sources to journalists) among broadcast journalists in Ethiopia. They argue that these practices are mainly as a result of 'lack of ethical consciousness' (2009, 152) among journalists. Writing about similar practices in Cameroon, Lillian Ndangam (2006, 180) notes that the quest for 'self-enhancement and even self-enrichment' through the practice of *gombo* (a metaphor for various payments, freebies and rewards solicited by journalists) breaches and subverts professional standards. Ndangam sees these practices as being more than ethical lapses and slips but rather as institutionalized and 'deeply entrenched' (2006, 196). In Tanzanian newsrooms, journalists are also alleged to 'indulge in corrupt practices and conflict of interest undermining the credibility of the media in the process' (Mfumbusa 2006, 259). For these reasons, the press in Africa 'has been called all sorts of names, from "cocktail", "bread-and-butter", "cheque-book", "yellow", "attack-collect", "brown-envelope" or "survival journalism"' (Nyamnjoh 2005, 59, see also Chaps. 1, 8 and 9 for a detailed discussion of these practices).

However, these practices highlight the impact of the conditions of material deprivation that differentiate African journalists from their counterparts in the economically developed world of the global North. Nyamnjoh (2005, 65) is thus quick to contend that 'to blame all these shortcomings on the media and their practitioners would be to overlook other factors that make it difficult for even the most committed professionals to excel ethically in the African context'. A number of writers point out that the economic conditions generally prevailing in most African countries have pushed journalists to trample ethical codes in pursuit of economic survival. Writing from a Tanzanian context, Mfumbusa (2006, 267) observes that 'poor and irregular pay encourage moonlighting and acceptance of "junkets"'. Nyamnjoh concurs in his observation that financial hardships have led many African journalists to 'seek positions as stringers for the major Western media' (Nyamnjoh 2005, 87). Against this backdrop, moonlighting in journalism has to be seen in the light of the economic context in which African journalists operate. This differentiates its impact on journalism from comparable experiences in the economically developed countries of the North. Whereas in Western countries the underlying conflict may be between professional interests and the individual right and freedom to work, in African contexts, where journalists are poorly paid, 'professional norms may conflict with the very basic commitment to individual and family survival' (Limor and Himelboim 2006, 268). It is

perhaps important to highlight that political, economic and cultural differences across countries render it difficult to conceptualize an ethics that is 'fundamentally transnational in character' (Christians 2008, 6).

On the other hand, while the practice of moonlighting in Zimbabwe is certainly tied to the struggles for economic enhancement in the context of severe economic crisis, it also articulates the consequences of a restricted media environment in which stories that critique government policy and expose social ills mainly find space in 'independent' online publications and foreign media houses that make use of local journalists (see Mabweazara 2010).

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has examined how the Zimbabwean economic and political context has broadly nurtured an environment in which journalists 'illicitly' incorporate extra (journalistic) work into their daily routines to supplement their poor salaries. With the increased exposure of journalists to international news organizations through the Internet (and the prohibition of selected foreign media houses from practising in Zimbabwe), moonlighting has taken on new meanings that pose critical professional and ethical questions. The pressure to maintain efficiency in the face of a demanding workload divided between one's regular employer and the 'underground' employer has compromised professionalism in the newsrooms, as journalists resort to unethical practices such as 'stealing' stories from one another and plagiarism in order to meet their targets. As Kasoma (1996, 95) puts it, 'the African press, seems to be abandoning the noble objective of "serving the people" for the selfish cause of "serving self". Journalists have a selfish and self-centred approach to journalism rather than a societal one' (ibid.).

Given the challenges that newsrooms face in paying their staffers, one can argue that the answer to the problem of moonlighting does not lie in discouraging or prohibiting the practice (especially in situations where journalists cannot rely on their employers for principal financial support) but in devising ways of ensuring that journalists act transparently and fully declare any activities outside their main employment that are likely to have potential for a conflict of interest. What we perhaps need are well-thought out formal newsroom policies that clearly express the problem of moonlighting and prohibit situations that pose conflicts of interest. However, this can be complicated and controversial, especially when matters of survival are at stake. As Borden and Pritchard (2001, 89) note, the major

challenge is that 'conflicts of interest may escape detection precisely because the secondary interests that oppose themselves to journalists' primary responsibilities are worthy in their own right'. It is, however, crucial that practices that pose conflicts of interest, such as moonlighting, are recognized 'so that they may be avoided—or when this option is not reasonable—so that they may be managed with a minimum of damage to the crucial mission journalists perform' (ibid.).

Most importantly, newsrooms should foreground ethical values and 'the grounding of practices in the form of fundamental commitment to the citizenry or national development' (White 2010, 43), rather than private commercial interests. The individualistic approach by journalists in the practice of their profession could thus change to a more accommodating, societal one, based perhaps on Kasoma's much-contested notion of 'Afriethical foundations', which advocates for a 'society-centred' (1996, 96) rather than a money-centred profession, anchored in 'self-enrichment and self-aggrandisement' (Kasoma 1996, 95). This is particularly important given that: 'In today's world, we are highly dependent on journalists for furnishing information that enables us to make meaningful decisions about our lives, and we have little choice but to trust that journalists will strive to meet our needs and interests in this regard' (Borden and Pritchard 2001, 75). Practices that pose a conflict of interest put into jeopardy this trust. For this reason, secondary interests should not be allowed to interfere with the primary goals of truthful, fair and thorough presentation of news.

More empirical research is needed across cultures if we are to fully understand the notion of moonlighting in terms of its trends and implications for the practice of journalism in Africa. This empirical research can lead to more substantive theoretical propositions that illuminate our understanding of the practice of moonlighting and the rules governing conflicts of interest.

Notes

1. On average, in January 2009, when the Zimbabwean economy was dollarized, the lowest-paid journalist across all the newsrooms was earning US$160 and the highest paid was taking home US$300 per month (Mabweazara 2010).

2. Due to the sensitivity of some of the responses provided by interviewees, I have deliberately avoided using their names, referring only to their generic titles in place of actual names in order to protect their identity.

3. 'Zimpapers Managers Spy on Suspended Editor', reported in *The Standard*, September 27. 2008. Retrieved December 3, 2008 from: http://www.thestandard.co.zw/local/18997-zimpapers-managersspy-on-suspended-editor.html.

4. However, with the formation of a coalition government between opposition and the ruling party ZANU-PF in September 2008, government softened its stance towards foreign media.

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Press Freedom in the African Great Lakes Region: A Comparative Study of Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo

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Drawing on the examples of Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) this chapter considers the factors influencing press freedom in post-conflict societies. Based on Minabere Ibelema, Larry Powell, and William Self's assumption that 'both forces of control and freedom are in a constant state of flux' (2000, 112), we argue that very different dynamics affect the freedom of the press in those countries, albeit in times of political unrest, which include contested elections, mass protests, or legitimation crisis. However, political factors, especially restricting press freedom, seem to prevail over other constraints.

For quite some time, academia has been increasingly interested in exploring the factors that influence the functional and structural architecture of journalistic systems (see, for example, Hallin and Mancini 2004, 2012; Voltmer 2008). While most of this previous research only implicitly

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touches upon the concept of press freedom, there have been numerous attempts to classify media systems around the world by using Press Freedom Indices (see, for example, RSF 2015; Freedom House 2015). Although the latter have been subject to criticism because of their Western bias, static nature, or methodological shortcomings (Behmer 2009; Giannone 2014; Schneider 2014), they still largely dominate scholarly understandings of press structures in contemporary communication studies (see for example Norris 2004; Engesser and Franzetti 2011).

By drawing on the more flexible approach of Ibelema et al. (2000), we are seeking to analyze both the nature of the press systems and the relevant factors influencing journalistic freedom in the (post-)conflict societies of Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC. Our study is based on a 'most similar systems design': The three countries under investigation should help 'to identify the key features that are different among otherwise fairly similar systems' (Esser and Hanitzsch 2012, 13). These three Central African states have in common similar historical pathways (Voltmer 2013), characterized by their colonization by the Kingdom of Belgium, independence in the 1960s, followed by thirty years of (mostly military) one-party rule, and a phase of political liberalization in the 1990s. Moreover, on the other hand, they also share recurring patterns of inter- and intra-ethnic violence, open conflicts, and relentless wars (Reyntjens 2009; Prunier 2009). Although all three countries persistently lag at the bottom of press freedom indices (in 2015, RSF ranked Burundi 156th, Rwanda 161st, and the DRC 152th out of 180 countries), they have, however, developed specific press structures since the beginning of the 1990s, which differ not only with regard to the emerging or existing diversity and pluralism in the broader media sector but also in terms of journalistic practices (Frère and Fiedler 2015). These differences exist because various forces, different legal instruments as well as values, norms, and traditions have been shaping and influencing the press systems of the three countries, determining at the same time the degree of press freedom in each state.

The empirical basis for this study comprises 132 face-to-face interviews conducted with media experts between July 2014 and January 2016 in Burundi (48), Rwanda (24), and in the DRC (16 in Kinshasa, 16 in the North Kivu, and 18 in the South Kivu provinces). Interviewees included journalists (and whenever possible from the entire spectrum—press, radio, television, and online media), media officials, international organizations'

representatives involved in media development projects, members of civil society organizations, employees of regulatory authorities and professional unions, as well as people from the advertising industry.

The interviews were conducted mostly by the authors, with the help of three local researchers, in several stages, and in the context of two different projects: The first wave of interviews was done in July 2014 as part of a baseline study about the situation of the media in the African Great Lakes commissioned by IPGL (Institut Panos Grands Lacs) and the Swiss Development Cooperation (see Frère et al. 2014); the second wave of interviews was conducted in January 2015, March 2015, and January 2016, within the research project INFOCORE funded under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research (FP7).

In most cases, the interviews were recorded and subsequently synthesized and transcribed. Almost all interviewees instantly accepted that the conversation would be recorded and transcribed and that their names and functions would be published. Only in some cases, especially in Rwanda, did interviewees request that their answers be kept anonymous where they dealt with sensitive issues such as censorship, control of the media, or cases of corruption.

The selection of interviewees followed the principle of theoretical saturation, which 'refers to the point at which gathering more data about a theoretical category reveals no new properties nor yields any further theoretical insights' (Bryant and Charmaz 2007, 611). The questions for the interview guidelines were derived from the relevant theoretical framework, that is the approach of Ibelema et al. (2000) to analyzing media systems.

In the light of the above, the present study sought to analyze journalistic freedom in the African Great Lakes region and, as such, provides fresh insights to researchers interested in the transformation of media systems. The first part of the chapter sheds light on the normative concept of press freedom from a theoretical point of view. Building upon previous research, this first section looks into factors that may boost or hinder the emergence of a democratically structured media environment in (post-)conflict societies. With the presentation of the three target countries that then follows—Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC—the first two sections establish the basis for the third section, which highlights the results of the study alongside six main conclusions.

Press Freedom: A Contested Normative Concept

In itself, the concept of press freedom is 'contentious' and there have been dozens of definitions and several attempts to conceptualize and operationalize it in the context of 'media democratization' (Becker et al. 2004, 2–3). Academics have been trying for years to systematize and measure the degree of 'press freedom' and 'independence' using media freedom indices (Becker et al. 2007); notions of *objectivity*, *neutrality*, or *autonomy* are generally key to the analyses. Regardless of the problems inherent in these attempts at measuring press freedom (Behmer 2009; Schneider 2014), it is rarely asked whether the very concept of 'press freedom' is in itself normatively loaded, to the extent that results actually take precedence over analysis (Giannone 2014). Western studies are generally driven by normative-oriented approaches that, according to Benson, 'may promote ethnocentrism and justify the US model of market-oriented, ostensibly objective journalism.' He argues that this model strongly influences international organizations such as Freedom House when they rate 'national press systems as free, partly free or not free, based primarily on political rather than economic criteria' (Benson 2008, 2596).

Furthermore, it has to be taken into consideration that press freedom is perceived differently from country to country (Voltmer and Wasserman 2014; Hanitzsch 2011). This is precisely the reason why Ibelema et al. (2000) have developed an 'alternative model for press systems analysis,' with a view to overcome the 'free/not free' dichotomy. Their objective was to identify 'specific logistical factors and to show that the logistical process is applicable to all countries irrespective of ideology, form of government or level of development.' They identified seven factors that play a role with regard to journalistic freedom:

- the *structural factor* ('economic status and opportunities, diversity in media ownership and educational opportunities');
- the *political factor* ('power distribution and the process of governance');
- the *cultural factor* ('the value systems at any given place that consign everybody's behavior within that context');
- the *relational/managerial factor* ('human relations processes that facilitate the accomplishments of one's objectives with the other', such as public relations and contacts with sources);

– the *technological factor* ('the growth of portable and stealthy tech-
nologies of mass communication' that can enhance 'the capacity
of people to share information');

– the *semantic factor* ('the human capacity to convey information in
subtle ways and to take advantage of inherent ambiguity and con-
tradictions of language');

– the *existentialist factor*, which is defined as an all-or-nothing strat-
egy for journalists ('what one does, to undertake actions on the
basis of personally determined principles': for instance, 'courage'
and 'self-sacrifice' for the sake of the profession) (Ibelema et al.
2000, 99, 103–110).

The most interesting aspect of this approach is that the concept of
press freedom is not understood as something static. According to
Ibelema et al. (2000), the forces conducive to journalistic freedom are in
a constant struggle with the forces aiming at restricting the freedom of
the press. Both forces in a country oscillate between the poles of 'weak'
or 'strong.' When both the forces of control and the forces of freedom
are strong, then 'the press system tends toward conflict.' In this case,
'both forces will battle for dominance, with one eventually emerging as
the dominant force' (Ibelema et al. 2000, 111). This applies, in particu-
lar, to Burundi, where the political system (increasingly authoritarian
and repressive) and the journalistic environment (increasingly liberal due
to international donor support) have developed in diametrical directions
since 2010, leading eventually to the destruction of the independent
broadcasting sector in May 2015 (Frère 2016). When the forces of con-
trol are strong and the forces of freedom are weak, then 'the press system
tends [to shift] towards controlled expression' (Ibelema et al. 2000,
111). This is the case in Rwanda. The DRC offers a strange mix in which
both forces of control and forces of freedom can alternatively be strong
or weak according to the location (in this huge and very diverse country)
or period.

Against this background, the next section presents the conflict cases
and media landscapes of Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC in more depth,
before showing, in the last section, how some of the factors identified by
Ibelema can help us to grasp the diversity and dynamics of the situation of
press freedom in 'post-conflict' contexts, where the tensions between con-
trol and freedom show some peculiarities.

The Media in the African Great Lakes Region: A 'Post-Conflict' Syndrome

It is important not to overlook the fact that Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC share bloodstained histories that have had an impact on journalism and press freedom (Frère 2007). Since 1994, they have gone through brutal wars and conflicts that have resulted in the death of many people and traumatized the general population. A civil war raged between Tutsi and Hutu populations in Rwanda (1990–1994) and Burundi (1993–2006) (Lemarchand 1996; Guichaoua 1995; Remacle et al. 2007). In the Eastern part of the DRC, several armed conflicts (which involved at some point up to nine neighboring countries) have been going on since 1996. Peace was reached either through the victory of one of the belligerents (in 1994 in Rwanda) or through negotiated peace agreements signed between the government and rebel forces (in 2000 for Burundi and 2003 for the DRC), but for about a decade, peace was in part only theoretical, with numerous violent episodes and the persistence of armed groups active at the common borders of the three countries (Tull 2010; Reyntjens 2009; Turner 2007; Autesserre 2010; Vlassenroot and Reymaekers 2004; Nest et al. 2006). The security situation remained fragile and regularly threatened by massacres, rapes, assassinations, and other forms of criminal acts.

The media were targeted in peace and reconciliation policies implemented by the governments and supported by foreign donors, because they had been involved in the conflicts. The concept of 'hate media' was central to the genocide perpetrated in Rwanda in 1994 (Thompson 2007; Chrétien 1995; Kellow and Steeves 1998; Li 2004; Straus 2007) as was also the case in Burundi and the DRC. In the attempts to restore and consolidate peace after 2000, serious steps were taken to reform legal frameworks and media regulations in the three countries, with a view to avoiding a repetition of previous tragic events. Post-conflict governments are often trapped between the necessity to open up the media landscape—in order to allow for tensions to be expressed in media discourses rather than through bullets (as well as to please foreign donors)—and the fear that media discourses may themselves become weapons that fuel conflict. In that context, new press laws were adopted in Rwanda (in 2002) and Burundi (in 2003), while a transitory regulatory body, the High Media Authority, was established in the DRC in 2003 as well. Yet, in many respects, the legal framework and regulatory

authorities have remained toothless or have even been used to repress journalistic freedom (Frère 2009).

Despite difficult economic conditions, a highly volatile security environment and a lack of infrastructure (all of which are commonplace in post-conflict situations), media pluralism has consolidated in the three countries. A diverse range of media organizations currently operate in the DRC (more than 450 radio stations are registered, over 200 television stations, and several hundred newspapers), but the territory is so wide that only a handful can disseminate information over such a large geographical scope. Rwanda and Burundi had, until recently, similar numbers of broadcasters operating: besides the public media, over twenty radio stations and around eight private televisions were on air.[1] The press is relatively developed in Rwanda (fifty-three active newspapers and twenty-three news websites, according to Bonde et al. 2015, 46), compared with Burundi (thirty-six registered papers and six registered news websites, according to Frère et al. 2014).

It is, however, well known that the number of media outlets sometimes has little to do with the degree of journalistic freedom. For this reason, we will attempt, in the next section, to show that press freedom can be assessed very differently in the three countries according to Ibelema et al.'s (2000) model.

The Dynamics of Freedom and Control for Journalists in the Great Lakes Countries

The factors influencing the journalistic freedom in the three countries under investigation vary but are mutually dependent. From our interviews, we can conclude that five key factors play an important part in shaping what can or cannot be said on the 'marketplace of ideas' (Ibelema et al. 2000, 98).

The Political Level: 'Post-Conflict' Political Authorities and the Degree of Tolerance for 'Independent Media' Discourse

In post-conflict societies, political unrest and civil disorder are constantly feared, which can lead the authorities to suppress independent public discourse, as any critique of the government is perceived as 'unpatriotic'.

This is illustrated by a number of examples from our interviews. To start with the most recent case, Burundi: The media sector of this small central African country was, until recently, the representative par excellence of the three states. Due to a strong political commitment of the international community during the civil war, most of the independent and private media were supported through foreign donor funding. As a result, a somewhat diversified and professional media market developed. In particular, the radio broadcast landscape was considered to be a relatively pluralistic space with various broadcasters, including some close to the government, and others associated with the opposition and civil society; most of all there was a degree of freedom to criticize the government as well as to analyze and investigate critical issues (Nindorera et al. 2013, 17).

In May 2015, following huge popular protests and a failed coup d'état after President Pierre Nkurunziza's unconstitutional decision to run for a third mandate, four radio stations and one private television broadcaster, constituting the main providers of independent information in Burundi, were destroyed. This event marked the culmination of escalating tensions between the regime of Nkurunziza and the independent press, whose relations had been gradually deteriorating since 2006 (Frère 2016). According to Bob Rugurika, former director of the oppositional Radio Publique Africaine (RPA) that was burnt down on May 14, 2015, it was the presidential camp's calculated decision to muzzle the press, which explains why even today those radio channels are still not operating. The entire independent press remains under heavy surveillance by state security agents. This is something that was premeditated.

Independent critical perspectives on the government's actions have progressively become unacceptable to the Burundian political authorities. This is despite the fact that the dominant political party (the CNDD-FDD), a former liberation movement, used to have good relations with the Burundian private media when it was still a rebel organization and needed a channel to voice as well as galvanize its political claims.

In the DRC, the authorities also regularly attack press freedom. In January 2015, they suspended Internet and cell phone services, following protests against a new electoral bill and attempts to change the constitution by President Joseph Kabila. Even though the media were not targeted directly (the aim was to prevent protesters from communicating), that suspension made it difficult for journalists to do their work. Faustin Kuediasala, the editor of the daily *Le Potentiel* (the main newspaper in Kinshasa) stated:

It is always difficult to access official sources that's why we need the Internet. […] During these events, it was thorny and no one had the courage to talk to us. People thought that if they talked to us, it could turn against them […] During these three or four days, when the Internet was completely shut down, we were off […] totally off.

Since 2006, the government also decided on several occassions to shut down the transmitters of a number of broadcasters, including that of Radio France Internationale, the UN-backed Radio Okapi, and the main stations close to the political opposition. In Rwanda, the two main independent newspapers, *Umuseso* and *Umuvugizi*, were suspended in 2010 and the acting editor-in-chief of the latter was shot dead a couple of months after.

These examples serve to illustrate that political forces restricting media freedom prevail over other constraints on occasion, and tend to drag the media environment backward to the past era of direct censorship that disappeared with political and media liberalization in the 1990s. However, besides direct repression, political authorities use other means to control the media sector, including legal frameworks and regulatory authorities. In all the three countries, the lack of clarity in their legal texts is a frequently quoted cause for the lack of press freedom. The actual problem lies in the discrepancy between the wording of media texts (by and large they are liberal) and their interpretation by the administration and the judiciary, which are largely politicized and often corrupt. Jean Bosco Rushingabigwi, President of the Rwandan Maison de la presse (Press House), considers that the expressions 'public interest' or 'information that may destabilize national security' mentioned in the new law on access to information adopted in 2013 should be better exemplified and might serve as constraints to the access to information.[2] According to Vincent Nkeshimana, former Director of Radio Isanganiro, the press law in Burundi (which was also changed in 2013) only refers in 'vague terms to certain notions that restrict the freedom of journalists.' This is particularly the case with regard to 'the meaning of notions such as state security, libel and information that put the national economy at risk.' In the DRC, where the press law dates back to Mobutu's days (1996), it can be bypassed by any public authority willing to exert pressure on journalists. For Achille Kadima, a staffer at *Africa News*,

We are in a country where you will be encouraged to tell the truth, but as soon as you do it, some laws will be used against you. In other places, when

there is an embezzlement, you can publish it, you can report on the legal procedure. But here, there is always a malign magistrate who will prosecute you just because you have reported on a public trial. (Kadima 2015)

As far as media regulation is concerned, regulatory bodies have been established in each of the three countries: the Conseil national de la Communication (CNC) in Burundi, the Conseil supérieur de l'Audiovisuel et de la Communication (CSAC), which replaced the Media High Authority, in the DRC, and the Media High Council in Rwanda. One journalist with Radio Maendeleo succinctly expressed the situation: 'the regulatory bodies are not independent at all.' In the DRC, the CSAC, set up in 2011, is considered a politicized structure subject to the control of the executive power. It is perceived as a weapon used by the Ministry of Media and Communication to silence media outlets that are close to the political opposition to President Joseph Kabila. As noted by the director of Radio Maendeleo in South Kivu, 'The CSAC is at the orders of the ruling power and imposes sanctions whenever the governor requests it' (Kamuntu 2014).

Consequently, self-censorship is widespread among the journalists, as most of them want to avoid trouble. Fred Muvunyi, former chairman of the self-regulatory body RMC (Rwanda Media Commission), acknowledged that 'self-censorship is flowing like blood in the arteries and veins. There is no censorship, but there are things that journalists don't do because they are not confident of what will happen' (cited in Harber 2014, 3). Yet, self-censorship, even though it has a major impact on the degree of press freedom, is extremely difficult to assess.

THE STRUCTURAL LEVEL: VARIED ECONOMIC FACTORS IMPACTING ON JOURNALISM

Money (and where it comes from) is always a decisive factor that affects media freedom. Given the weak economies (partially related to previous conflict situations) and the correspondingly limited market for advertising in all the three countries, many media outlets have to work in precarious conditions, which affects their level of freedom.

In Burundi specifically, media outlets have become dependent on aid from foreign development programs for up to 85% of their annual budget (Nindorera et al. 2013). Innocent Muhozi, General Director of Radio Television Renaissance in Burundi, described the situation as follows:

The budget of Burundi depends on external aid—up to 50 percent. As long as the country does not get out of the economic backwater resulting from the structural weaknesses inherent to the Burundi economy, the stalled post-conflict reconstruction, the dangerous increase of corruption and so on, all of which bear negatively on economic growth for companies and on the advertising market, the independent broadcasters of Burundi will remain dependent on sponsors. (Muhozi 2015)

In this respect, the situation of Burundi is the most difficult of the three countries but also the most comfortable at the same time. In this country, the most popular radio stations such as RPA, Bonesha FM, and Radio Isanganiro are largely dependent on, and are beneficiaries of, external aid at many levels, including foreign state subsidies, aid from external partners (international NGOs such as Search for Common Ground, La Benevolencija, or the Panos Institute). Some radio stations depend on funding from international religious networks as in the case of denominational radio stations. The independent weekly *Iwacu*, which remains today the only local independent media source after the radio stations were closed, was created in 2005 and has survived thanks to funds from the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Swiss foreign Aid DDC (Direction du Développement et de la Coopération / Direction of Developement and Cooperation). Therefore, we can talk of an 'externally dependent' journalism economy in Burundi, as funding for practicing the job is mostly provided by foreign donors. In this case, 'extroversion' has a lot to do with the degree of independence from local authorities. Because the Burundian media is foreign funded, it criticizes the government far more than if it depended on the local economy. The same applies to Radio Okapi in the DRC, which is financed by the United Nations.

It is necessary to differentiate here between state and private media. State media in the three countries do not have survival problems, as they depend on public subsidies (and therefore practice a more 'introverted' form of journalism that focuses more on official information). Not only do they get huge sums of public money annually (which, in post-conflict countries, can also be explained by the fact that public media are a precious propaganda tool in times of political unrest), but they also get privileged access to advertisements. Numerous state-owned companies give precedence to the public media to publish their ads. In Burundi, the government's daily, *Le Renouveau,* is never short of official ads and calls for bidders and tenders, which is not the case for the main private weekly *Iwacu*, according to its director, Antoine Kaburahe. And the lack of

advertisers has forced many private publications to close down since 2006.

In Rwanda, state-owned institutions usually grant the pro-governmental papers, *Imvaho Nshya* (a former public daily that was privatized in 2014) and *New Times*, the exclusive rights to their ads. When this led to strong criticism, the ruling authorities in Rwanda justified their choice by arguing that the said publications are regular dailies and have the largest circulation. The scarcity of advertising and the limits to newsstand pricing mean that numerous independent papers are actually selling at a loss.

When this local economic challenge is not compensated for by funding from external partners, it may lead to another form of externally dependent journalism: the practice of brown envelope journalism. Sponsorship can either be transparent, by clearly identified backers, or covert (as in the case of print publications suspected of being supported by key public figures or political parties). The practice of paying for positive coverage is not a peculiarity of post-conflict countries but is widespread in sub-Saharan Africa, as demonstrated by Lodamo and Skjerdal (2009) in Ethiopia, Lilian Ndangam (2006) in Cameroun, or Adjovi (2003) in Benin (see Chaps. 1, 8, and 9 for a related discussion of brown envelope journalism). In this practice, a journalist agrees to be paid for an article by organizers of events, or for the broadcast of a program highlighting the concerns of the sponsor. According to Dieudonné Malekera, Secretary of Proxy Media Libre, this is the rule and not the exception in South Kivu: 'One writes for whoever is going to pay.' This must be distinguished from the current practice in Burundi, where institutions directly sponsor programs and articles on specific topics of concern (such as disarmament, reconciliation, health, or human rights), because in the former case, each journalist negotiates their own terms and gets individual compensation. This has a direct impact on content and the articles eventually become little more than promotion for the sponsor. This practice is called 'coupage' ('cutting') in the DRC (or 'transport' in reference to the transport allowance paid to the journalist) and 'giti' ('tree') in Rwanda. In Burundi, the expressions used are 'per diem' or 'prise en charge totale [PET]' (which, loosely translated, means 'full coverage of expenses'). From the above, we can deduce that the 'externally funded' and 'introverted' journalism economies have a direct impact on the dynamics of press freedom in the Great Lakes region, as they strongly influence the topics covered and the way local and international stakeholders are presented.

The Relational/Managerial Level: Informal Relations Leading to Shaky Professional Values

In this post-conflict environment, the economy is not only slowly recovering, it also has a legacy of 'informality,' rooted in the stakeholders' survival strategies. In the media sector of the three countries, generations of journalists have suffered from a lack of professional stability (no contract, no regular salary, minimal wages), leading to a high turnover at media outlets. Frequent breaches of media ethics are not only due to economic and political constraints but also because a journalist employed without any contract or without regular remuneration is not in the best position to stick to journalistic ethics.

Commenting on this scenario, the Deputy Representative of the Swiss Development Cooperation in Burundi's capital, Bujumbura, explained: 'Many journalists accept that they must work without any contract, without any form of social benefits and for a salary that is not sufficient for a decent living.' She further observed:

> Yet the Labor Code, even though it does not provide specifically for the protection of journalists, requires that contracts must be signed after six months of work in a company. Company managers often deliberately ignore this provision—and in the absence of collective labor agreements, journalists are not able to build up a career in commercial media, because they have no proven track-record in salary and rank. (Ndikumasabo 2014)

In the DRC's South Kivu province, where labor conditions are most precarious, the majority of media outlets neither sign contracts nor pay salaries. For Janvier Museme, the provincial representative of the CSAC, this has major consequences for the relationship between the journalist and his/her sources:

> It is the employer himself who induces the journalists to become corrupt and even to commit breaches as if they were part of the administration. How do you expect a journalist to cover an event when he is not actually coming to cover the event but rather to collect a tip? The first thing he does is to compile a list of the journalists in attendance to submit it to the organizer of the event. (Kilondo 2014)

In this case, the journalist might enjoy freedom at a political level (no repression) and at an economic level (working for a media outlet that has

a sufficient budget), but his/her own professional instability becomes an obstacle to practicing balanced and comprehensive reporting. In post-conflict countries, there are particular risks that media professionals will not take (such as going to unsecured zones), because the informality of the relation with the employer does not provide any security cover in the event that something happens to them while on duty.

In Rwanda, if salaries are paid, they tend to be very low, somewhere between US$150 and US$300 per month (Stapleton 2014). In many private media outlets, journalists are paid irregularly and 53% of the journalists work without contracts (MHC 2014). In Burundi, most private outlets consistently pay their staff, but the salaries are low: 46% of staff on the payroll receive between US$65 and US$150 a month (Nindorera et al. 2013). The situation with regard to contracts is rather blurred and, in most cases, there are many different categories of staff in one outlet. Some people have contracts and others do not or they may have to work within a certain bracket, for instance as a trainee or freelancer, for as long as the outlet sees fit. The consequences for media are easy to foresee and as Jolly Kamuntu, the Director of Radio Maendeleo, a community radio station established in Bukavu (DRC), puts it: 'Certain journalists have no idea about ethics and professional conduct and when cash is paid, these are ignored. The sponsor dictates the information.' Radio Maendeleo, created in 1993, has always tried to pay a regular salary to its staff (around US$100 a month), but the reduction of foreign support threatens the station's sustainability and, in January 2016, wages had not been paid for months.

This fundamental instability of journalists makes it difficult to engage collectively in professional organizations based on a shared identity and values. One notes, for example, that all three countries have a Code of Ethics, as well as a Media Council for self-regulation, but none of these councils operate properly, and none of them could tackle the poverty and informality in which journalists operate. The Rwanda Media Commission, the Observatory of the Burundian Press, and the Observatory of the Congolese Media did not succeed in stimulating a dialogue between the journalists and their employers regarding working conditions (and related ethical issues). Similarly, the main journalists' unions: the Union of Burundian Journalists, the Rwandan Journalists Association, and the Union of the Congolese Press, have not managed to facilitate any meaningful dialogue, even though all of them tried to initiate a reflection on the necessity of adopting collective agreements that would clarify managerial duties and relationships with staff members (Frère et al. 2014).

The Technical Level: The Mobile Revolution and the Empowerment of News Producers/Receivers

Technological progress has deeply transformed the way journalists operate in the post-conflict African countries under study. In particular, the spread of mobile phones in a context where there are hardly any fixed lines has revolutionized practices in news organizations. According to the 2014 ITU data, Burundi had more than 3 million mobile phone subscribers (for 21,669 fixed lines), Rwanda almost 8 million (for 49,612 fixed lines), and the DRC 31 million (for 59.534 fixed lines). Therefore, 64% of Rwandans, 53% of Congolese, and 30% of Burundians have access to a cell phone.

Journalists use their mobile phones to reach sources, make appointments, collect information, contact their newsroom, take pictures, or even record interviews. As Ben Kabamba, from Radio Okapi, explains: 'Each journalist does everything today. We have Chinese mobile phones (USD50), so it is affordable for many people. Journalists can take pictures directly, write something and send it quickly ... That's the new immediacy of information.'

Mobile phones are especially important in an insecure context: Alexis Ndayiragije, from Bonesha FM in Bujumbura, explained how he remained connected while reporting in Cibitoke after a rebel attack in 2015:

> Even before leaving my home, I had to call the colleagues and tell them: 'I am going to the field ... It is dangerous. You have to call me. You have to follow me.' And regularly I would receive calls from the colleagues in the newsroom, and my friends and family.

Reporting equipment is generally in short supply in newsrooms and journalists have to share, which inevitably causes delays in the production of reports. Such shortages are regular in Rwanda and directors admitted that their reporters sometimes use their own devices when they are on duty.

The Internet is also a useful tool to gain better access to information, but local audiences only have limited connectivity. Internet penetration remains low (6% in Burundi and in the DRC; 25% in Rwanda, where the government is implementing an ambitious plan to bring optic fiber transmission to even the most remote villages). The Internet has been employed occasionally to broadcast the content of programs that had been suspended

or prohibited on regular websites, on the airwaves, or in print. In June 2013, when the *Iwacu* website was suspended because of CNC sanctions, another site located outside the country immediately took up its news coverage. Currently, the Burundian journalists exiled in Kigali have launched two daily radio programs, 'Inzamba' and 'Humura Burundi,' disseminated through the Internet, especially via social networks such as WhatsApp, Twitter, and Facebook. In Bujumbura, an anonymous network of journalists called 'SOS Media Burundi,' established as soon as the independent media were closed, operates online, documenting the numerous violations of human rights (Frère 2016).

In the DRC in 2012, when the UN-sponsored Radio Okapi had to stop broadcasting because, apparently, the station had not submitted its list of specifications to the CSAC, many listeners could tune in via the website as an alternative to the radio broadcast.

Even though low-cost 3G devices are currently boosting Internet connectivity, power outages and the scarcity of required infrastructure are major obstacles to the expansion of technologies, and therefore to the daily work of journalists. According to the World Bank, only 6.5% of the people had access to electricity in Burundi in 2012, 16% in the DRC, and 18% in Rwanda. In other words, what is the use of numerous radio stations when there is no generator to ensure that the broadcast can go on in case of power cuts? As Pascal Murhabazi, Station Manager of Radio Tuungane in Minembwe (Eastern DRC) puts it: 'The major challenge for [us] in Minembwe is power … There is not a single electricity supplier in Minembwe.' A survey of the outlets in the region reveals that generators are the major source of electricity and supply from the SNEL (the national electricity company in DRC) is only a stopgap. Highlighting the extent to which generators are used, Kifara Mutere, Director of the radio station Messager du peuple in Uvira, complained, 'We have to replace our generator nearly every year because it is used so much […] You can take a look in our storage room and see for yourself: So many old, broken down generators are piled up in the dark.' Emergency electrical load-shedding in Burundi causes numerous power cuts and forces radio stations to purchase backup generators that use a large amount of fuel and sometimes even cause damage to the technical equipment.

The quality of the broadcast itself is not always up to standard because of insufficient maintenance and the fact that equipment dates back to when these media were first set up. Private radio stations tend not to have

qualified technicians to maintain their transmitters and depend on external specialists, who are expensive and not always available at short notice.

Moreover, the technical dimension of press freedom is not only related to journalistic practices; it also encompasses the way that the audiences are able to receive the information that is disseminated. From the receiver's perspective, mobile phones have also changed the way that information can be accessed and consumed. Nevertheless, at this level, lack of equipment also impedes the reach of the media. In Burundi, before they were closed, none of the private radio stations had transmission that covered the entirety of the national territory. Radio Publique Africaine, Radio Isanganiro, and Radio Bonesha were among the private broadcasters with the most extensive coverage in the country. The directors of these three stations, who were interviewed in the course of this study, voiced complaints about the 'enormous fees' that they had to pay to the regulatory body ARCT (Agence de régulation et de contrôle des télécommunications) and to the public broadcaster RTNB (Radio Télévision nationale du Burundi) for the rental of antenna towers, in order to reach out beyond the capital city. This technical dependency on the equipment from the RTNB made it easy for the government to shut down all transmission out of Bujumbura, as soon as the first peaceful demonstrations started at the end of April 2015.

Technical issues (be they on the side of news producers or receivers) are thus often related to political and governance issues, reflecting the unwillingness of local authorities to provide any more than minimal infrastructure for minimal cost to the citizens.

The Individual Level: 'Peace Journalists', 'Watchdogs', 'Responsible Gatekeepers,' or 'Voice of the Voiceless'?

Journalistic practices and the extent to which they can be qualified as more or less free are not only a consequence of the political, economic, or technical factors discussed in this chapter but also of the perception that African journalists have of themselves in the post-conflict environment. That perception impacts on the limits of what is viewed as acceptable or not regarding professional behavior, the actual construction of stories, and subjects that can be covered (what Ibelema et al. (2000) refer to as cultural, semantic and existentialist factors).

Central Africa provides examples of the best and worst in terms of journalism and its impact on society—from the contribution of the Rwandan RTLM (Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines) to the genocide of the Tutsi people in 1994 (Thompson 2007; Chrétien 1995) to the commitment of Burundian radio stations to reconciliation and peace-building, or the part played by a station like Radio Maendeleo to give a voice to ordinary citizens undergoing continual violence and insecurity in South Kivu. Four models are referred to by the interviewees: the 'peace journalist' (whose role is to contribute to finding solutions and reconciliation in warring communities), the 'watchdog' (willing to denounce any form of public mismanagement), the 'responsible gatekeeper' (who will make sure that information disseminated is not threatening a fragile peace), and the 'voice of the voiceless' (who aims at giving a voice to the unheard majority). These different models are all equally important in post-conflict societies and none of them can be considered as symbolizing more freedom than the other.

On the side of the so-called 'public service' media, 'responsibility' is the major impetus. The staff working for the public media are mostly perceived as having a responsibility to project a positive image externally. This may mean hiding contentious issues, rather than holding public institutions accountable for activities undertaken with public money. Even though they are supposed to address the information needs of the general public, journalists are mere mouthpieces of local authorities.

As for the private media, they often label themselves 'independent watchdogs', even though they have (hidden) connections to political and business interests. Claiming to be 'counter-power', they are generally of 'poorer quality and strength than the more established public media, which maintain significant advantages in terms of access to state financing, advertising dollars, information, professionally trained staff, infrastructure, and materials' (Moehler and Singh 2011, 278). Some of them publish sensationalist and unverified material, sometimes regardless of respect for privacy and citizens' rights. In Rwanda, attempts to investigate and denounce, with a lack of professionalism, have got some of the private media into regular trouble. As the executive secretary of the Media High Council noted:

> There are always isolated cases of abuses of press freedom by individuals, either through ignorance or mistrust … There was a wave of adventurers entering the journalistic profession in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide,

people who had no clue about the job. But later a lot of efforts have been made to improve the level of professionalism. (Mbungiramihigo 2014)

The Rwanda Media Commission has had to rule more than 120 cases since it was established in 2014. Quite often, the complaints made have resulted in a journalist being unable to provide any solid information in their defence after being summoned to appear before this self-regulatory body. We analyzed twenty-six of these cases (the ones documented in English): thirteen were cases of libel, four dealt with the publication of false news, six with refusal to publish a right of reply, one case of plagiarism, and one case of injury. In the seventeen cases from the first two categories, the journalists could not provide evidence of the information published.

The keyword here is responsibility, which is understandable in a context where some journalists have contributed to facilitating a genocide. But the Rwandan government has a very definite understanding of what it means to be a 'responsible' journalist. As President Kagame himself declared in 2012:

The media will be an invaluable partner in communicating our agenda, advancing our interests and being among the key narrators of our story. In addition, by holding both our governments and citizens to account, a responsible media will promote our core values, good governance and democracy.

Such an understanding of the journalist's role, and subsequent threats, harassment, and detentions, push journalists into self-censorship: They hold back information and criticism of authorities in order to avoid trouble.

In Burundi, where the 'peace journalist' and 'watchdog' models have been promoted by foreign donors and NGOs, the urge to position oneself better in the media market has, at times, driven journalists to publish unverified information or to break news or scoops based only on rumors. In April 2014, Radio Publique Africaine announced that the Banque de la République du Burundi (National Bank of Burundi) was on fire. Hundreds of residents of Bujumbura rushed to the location and found no sign of flames or smoke. The news was eventually retracted. Acting too quickly in treating information has become a 'professional pathology,' according to Thaddée Siryuyumusi (former General Director of the RNTB) and Pierre

Bambasi (former President of the CNC). In Bukavu and in Goma in January 2014, certain media outlets republished a rumor announcing that Rwandan President, Paul Kagame, had passed away. This immediately brought people out on the streets to celebrate—until the Rwandan media refuted the story.

Yet, the propensity to circulate rumors is not only rooted in sensationalism (and the wish to sell) but also in the constraints that hinder access to public information in post-conflict countries, where it is hard to establish a practice of transparency and disconnect public communication from propaganda. Although willing to provide the audience with critical information, denouncing mismanagement of public funds or abuses of power, journalists do not always have the capacity to get access to the requisite data or to cross-check. Therefore, it is sometimes their faith in the importance of their role as defenders of citizens' rights to information that leads them to spread unverified stories.

Tshivis Tshivuadi (2015), General Secretary of the press freedom organization, Journaliste en Danger (JED) in the DRC, has fought to bring to parliament a law on access to information: 'It is an important law for journalists because, here, information sources are not accessible. We can talk of the laziness of journalists or their lack of professionalism, but there is also a problem of access to information.' The interviews made it clear that most journalists are convinced that 'good' journalism is important in a post-conflict society, but, while they show different understandings of what 'good' journalism is in such a context, they also emphasize the constraints preventing them from reaching that goal.

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the factors that influence the freedom of the press in three post-conflict states: Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC. At five levels, we observed restrictive measures and actions impeding the work of media professionals. The constraints include political interference, financial bottlenecks, precarious working conditions, technical challenges for both the producers and consumers of news, as well as journalists' self-perception.

Ibelema et al. (2000) have highlighted in their study that the forces striving for media freedom and the forces that want to suppress it are in a continuous struggle. We argue that, within each of these five factors, divergent and convergent forces are permanently at work. This explains why (and more precisely how), in all three countries, there are times when

journalists enjoy more freedom and periods in which they are particularly constrained. In times of conflict, opponents to press freedom are found mainly at a political level, but in post-conflict countries, they can also be identified within media owners, advertisers, sources of information, and among the journalists themselves. Economic constraints, for instance, may have an impact on independent reporting. Journalists are caught in a dilemma: Even if they fight for media freedom on the one hand, they often have to engage in unfair practices on the other, for the simple reason of daily survival.

The present study has also highlighted the fact that it is important, in countries such as Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC, to take into account specific sub-factors that are not included in the analysis of media structures in the Western world. These include, on the political level, self-censorship and the lack of confidence in the way the law is applied by the judiciary; on the economic level, the degree of 'external dependency' or 'introversion' of the journalism economy; on the managerial level, the informality and insecurity of the media professionals; and, on the technical level, the supply of electricity to media outlets and the lack of basic infrastructure. The population's access to the media in post-conflict societies is one component of press freedom that must not be neglected. Press freedom is an asset that can only be met with acceptance when people actually 'have a choice' and can make informed decisions when selecting amongst a variety of media offers in accordance to their own education and political awareness. Ultimately, attention needs to be paid to the different models to which African journalists turn in their professional practices, which are deeply rooted in the experience of war, dictatorship, and the abuses of a state that is violent against the citizens it is supposed to protect.

Using these factors and sub-factors, one can understand why the issue of press freedom in the three countries in fact shows similarities but also major differences, even though the three countries are close to each other in the rankings of press freedom organizations. These variables reveal how the dynamics between freedom and control are constantly evolving in these post-conflict environments.

Notes

1. In May 2015, a political crisis emerged in Burundi, leading to the violent closure of the main independent media and more than 100 journalists fleeing the country.

2. Founded in May 1997, with the support of UNESCO, Maison de la presse's mission is to strengthen the capacity of the Burundian media to host professional media organizations and to meet the training and documentation needs of media professionals.

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Newsmaking Practices in Uganda: A Comparative Framing Analysis of Two Leading Newspapers

Brian Semujju

Global newsmaking practices can be explained using five factors as articulated by Preston (2009). These include (1) *individual influences*, which deal with how personal characteristics and the background of an individual journalist influence newsmaking decisions; (2) *media routines and norms*, where conventional journalistic work is based on the daily newsroom routine practices like meeting deadlines, sourcing and others; (3) *organisational influences*, with which particular media houses draft mission statements and editorial policies to define journalism practice (Doudaki and Spyridou 2015); (4) *political economic factors*, which link the journalist's work or professional behaviour to the nuances of the economy (like advertising) and other powerful political players; and finally, (5) *cultural and ideological power*, the kind of influence that stems from our socio-cultural setting. The influence that journalists derive from social understandings of life can be traced through signs and codes that journalists use to interpret news for the audience. The last factor therefore focuses on the framing of discourse (Preston 2009) to unearth the underlying ideologies informing and shaping newsmaking practices. It is this factor that informs

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the methodology of this chapter. Going by this understanding, what is evident in the discussion that follows, however, is the overlapping nature of Uganda's newsmaking practices across the above five news shaping factors. This lack of a clear-cut dichotomy has led to some research from the emerging democracies to call for a reinterpretation of the normative ideals of journalism to better explain newsroom cultures in particular settings.

In Zimbabwe, for example, although the newsmaking practices may pay tribute to some of the above domains, there are 'unplanned factors' that come in to shape the way that journalists carry out their professional duties (Mabweazara 2011). Kenya and Tanzania show some differences too. The main concern is around whether or not journalism practice should be defined on the basis of nation-building, rendering the practice connectivity and its underlying processes geared towards development (Ogola 2015). The Ugandan view has not received a lot of scholarly attention, something that this chapter attempts to redress. The chapter is far from calling for a redefinition of journalism practice in Uganda. Instead, it seeks to locate the Ugandan practice within an already defined arena, as seen in Preston's newsmaking factors above. With an analysis of the elements of newsmaking practices in two of Uganda's leading newspapers, the *New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor*, the chapter concludes that there is no one single factor that can explain newsmaking cultures in Uganda singlehandedly, especially when covering a politically contentious department such as the Electoral Commission.

An Overview of Uganda's Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission (EC), a government body in Uganda tasked with organising elections, is established by the Constitution (Article 60) and the Electoral Commission Act (1997) with seven commissioners on a seven-year term of office, renewable once (Electoral Commission 2016). The chairman of the Commission at the time of conducting this study, Dr Badru Kiggundu, was appointed by the president in November 2002 to replace Hajji Aziz Kasujja, who had presided over the 2001 election. Before the permanent commission, elections in Uganda were organised by special interim government committees, while on other occasions, leaders assumed power through armed struggle.

Since the permanent commission was created, it has organised four presidential elections (2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016), three of which (except 2011) have resulted in Supreme Court petitions against the EC and the president. Two of these petitions (2001 and 2006) were used by the media

to focus the EC towards the 2011 elections. The circumstances behind both petitions are similar. For example, in 2006, when Yoweri Museveni was declared winner of the presidential election, Kiiza Besigye, the leading contender to President Museveni, rejected the results. Besigye filed a petition in the Supreme Court to nullify Museveni's presidency. The Supreme Court in both cases (2001 and 2006) decided that although there had been some irregularities, there was no need to nullify the presidency of Mr Museveni (Sserunjogi 2016). The analysis of the coverage of the conflict that ensued between concerned parties over the same EC being asked by government to organise another election (2011) informs this chapter's attempt to examine how newsmaking cultures here overlap with the Western five-tier model discussed above. Two local newspapers in question, the *New Vision* (government owned) and the *Daily Monitor* (privately owned), took on the argument, with each covering the EC along a parallel political line.

CONTEXTUALISING THE *NEW VISION* AND THE *DAILY MONITOR*

The *New Vision* has existed since the current government came to power in 1986. Although at its inception the paper was solely owned by government, private individuals were later allowed to buy stakes too. Nevertheless, according to the company's website, 'the majority shareholder is Government of Uganda with a shareholding of 53.3%. The public holds the remaining 46.7%' (*New Vision* 2016). As a majority shareholder, the government can influence management at the paper. For example, the Media Sustainability Index (2008) reports that the paper's former Editor-in-Chief, William Pike, was fired by the government for what President Museveni called 'constant negative reporting from our own paper'. Moreover, before his death, Brigadier Noble Mayombo, who had served as Chief of Military Intelligence, was the paper's chair of the board of directors. The website also notes that '*New Vision* management set an objective and progressive political line, supportive of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) [the party in power] ideals, but critical of failings, as the basis of its editorial philosophy' (*New Vision* 2016). However, as a basis for framing, every story in the paper came to be either about NRM or against any opposing ideology.

The *Daily Monitor*, on the other hand, emerged in 1992 alongside a number of privately owned media outlets in Uganda. Because of the paper's bluntness regarding government policies, it was perceived by the government and its sympathisers as an enemy. For example, in 1997, President Museveni demanded that the newspaper be punished for writing

that the Congolese president, Laurent Kabila, had paid Uganda in gold in order for Uganda to help keep him in power (Mwenda 1997). President Museveni would later maintain that both the reporter and the paper should show him where the gold is or face punishment (Bareebe 2011).

Similar threats and arrests have emerged over the years. On 10 October 2002, the *Daily Monitor* was threatened again for writing that a Ugandan military helicopter had crashed while chasing after rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army, who had defeated government and were amputating and dismembering civilians in Northern Uganda. The paper was shut down and its offices were occupied by state security agents for one week (Balikowa 2006; Tabaire 2007; Rice 2008). At the time of the *Daily Monitor*'s conception, political parties had been banned for nearly seven years. Without opposition political parties, the paper found itself playing the role of the opposition (Tabaire 2007). The government's response to this was harsh. Between 1993 and 1997, all government offices were banned from advertising in the *Daily Monitor*, a move that cost the paper over 70% of its revenue (Balikowa 2006). President Museveni further described the *Daily Monitor* as a paper which writes 'hopelessly' and writes nothing. He also said that his government had finished fighting all the big wars (he assumed power through a guerrilla war) and was left with fighting the *Daily Monitor* (Bareebe 2011).

This background of both papers is crucial in setting the ground for the analysis of the individual and organisational influences behind some of the editorial decisions that shape their content. The contextual factors influence the individual journalists' convictions and operational procedures and can be traced in the news content generated, as the findings in this study show. Before discussing these findings however, the framing theory, which aids the chapter's analysis of the *New Vision*'s and the *Daily Monitor*'s journalism practices, is presented below.

Framing: Theory and Method

Framing happens when the media select attributes of objects according to salience, with these attributes then becoming the public's agenda (McCombs and Reynolds 2002; McCombs and Ghanem 2003; Weaver 2007). Attribute agenda-setting (framing) points out the intention of covering a story by looking at the sources from which a story derived, and the presentation done by the expert journalist. By carefully analysing media texts about the EC, the underlying symbols and their subsequent meaning are laid bare. Most importantly, the signs and codes that appear in such

content represent a bigger picture of how newsmaking cultures in Uganda are inherent in the frames that emanate from sources other than objective observations of media personnel. While the journalistic value of objectivity is claimed by both papers when covering the EC, the sourcing of news (and this points to *media routines and norms* as a source of frames) is influenced by the ideologies that each paper promotes, among other newsmaking influences. Both papers promote ideologies from their shareholders (*organisational influences*) and from 'professional socialization' (Gan et al. 2005, 442) among journalists.

On the other hand, the definition of framing helps to situate the *New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor*'s signs and codes under the fifth factor of the global newsmaking cultures—*cultural and ideological power*. To frame is 'to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described' (Entman 1993, 391). This, therefore, requires journalists to choose socio-cultural attributes that resonate in society as the audience's frames of reference to certain events. The selective attribute of framing is suggestive of the role of the media as gatekeepers (Weaver 2007) and this can be affected by all the five factors that influence newsmaking cultures indicated earlier: *individual Influence*, *media routines and norms*, *organisational influences*, *political economic factors* and *cultural and ideological power*.

In terms of operationalisation, framing analysis is a method for the examination of discourses (Scheufele 1999). Although this definition reduces the approach to content analysis, which Barelson (1996) sees as dealing with 'the what' part of content, framing analysis includes what the communicator says, how he says it and who says it. It is about 'how people use [these] interpretive frames strategically to shape others' meaning-making processes' (Coburn 2006, 346). The focus is placed on the way different forces frame 'a contentious issue' (Creed et al. 2002). As a process, framing analysis in media studies is done by gathering information from media and sorting it out using empirical methods of quantitative and qualitative content analysis (König 2010).

Based on the above arguments, content from these two leading newspapers (by circulation), the *New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor*, was analysed. The selected content was published between 1 March and 15 April 2010, a period during which the EC received sustained coverage due to demonstrations held against it by the opposition at its offices in the capital. The other reason for choosing that period is based on the global news selection behaviour (used in

Uganda) of treating conflict as having a high news value. The conflict between demonstrators and the police therefore fetched a substantial amount of coverage compared to days when the situation was calm.

The underlying meaning of various elements of layout or frame-building (Burgers et al. 2016) was sought by analysing the length and breadth of stories, diction, the nature of space in which items about the Commission were placed, headlines, flags, pictures, cartoons, plus other illustrations. This was done in order to understand the coverage and the influence of that coverage (whether ideological/cultural, organisation, political etc.). This chapter creates two data units to manage the elements that come from the analysis. All references to the EC as a rigging machine for government are put under a theme referred to as 'Rigging Machine' frame unit. The other elements that implied that the EC was competent and that the opposition was just witch-hunting, are organised under a frame unit referred to as 'witch-hunt'. In addition to the content analysis, two journalists (one from each newspaper) were interviewed to make sense of the findings from the content. The journalists were chosen purposely because they specifically cover the EC for their respective papers. So, they were selected because of their expertise on the EC and due to the fact that they wrote most of the stories about the EC during the period under study. Additionally, both journalists agreed to be interviewed on condition of guaranteed anonymity, due to the sensitivity of the issue at hand. The next section discusses how the two papers framed the Commission and the implications of their coverage on newsmaking practices in Uganda.

How the Newspapers Framed the EC: The Salient and the Strong Frame

The EC had eighty items (referred to as mentions in framing research (Dimitrova and Strömbäck 2005)) divided between the *Daily Monitor* (fifty-one) and the *New Vision* (twenty-nine). In March of the period under study, for instance, the *New Vision* ran thirteen stories, two commentaries, one cartoon, one letter to the editor in form of an SMS, and a picture. In the *Daily Monitor*, there were eighteen stories, four commentaries, two letters to the editor, four cartoons, three editorials and one picture. In April, there were fourteen items in both papers. Compared to the first fifteen days of March, there were twenty-two mentions in the *Daily Monitor*. By April of the same period, the paper had decreased its coverage of the EC. On the other hand, the *New Vision* increased its mentions in April to fourteen from

only seven in March. In general, though, the *Daily Monitor* showed more enthusiasm in covering the Commission than the *New Vision*. Although most framing research assumes the influence of the salient frame (Entman 1993; Scheufele 2000), which comes after a newspaper repeats the same message several times (for example, the *Daily Monitor* had fifty-one mentions of the EC while the *New Vision* had twenty-nine), Chong and Druckman (2007, 104) offer an alternative hypothesis by suggesting that in a debate where there is a contentious issue, 'the strongest frame will exert the greatest influence on individual opinion, regardless of repetition'. This helps to inform the fact that although the *Daily Monitor* built more frames to discredit the EC, the paper failed to change public opinion in its favour. The *New Vision*'s frame therefore might have appeared fewer times, but it was stronger and convinced people to understand the EC as competent. The issue of the failure of the salient coverage to win public opinion can be explained further by the fact that since both sides could not have had the same amount of resources (Pan and Kosicki 2003), the political players promoting the EC as a capable entity had more resources than the opposing side.

In addition, the papers employed cartoons to frame the EC. The *New Vision* used two cartoons within the analysis period. The *Daily Monitor*, on the other hand, had five cartoons, with one showing Kiggundu, the Commission's Chairman, sitting in a frying pan while the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) added paraffin into the hot embers. Other layout elements used include: flags, which are placed on the cover page to hint on what is inside a newspaper, opinions (commentaries, editorials and letters to the editor) and kickers. The table below summarises the layout elements used to frame the Electoral Commission (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1   Summary of the separate layout elements used by the *New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor* to frame the Electoral Commission (1 March–15 April 2010)

Items used	New Vision	Daily Monitor	Total
1. Stories	22	27	49
2. Cartoons	2	5	7
3. Pictures	1	1	2
4. Commentaries	2	4	6
5. Letters	1	3	4
6. Flags	1	3	4
7. Editorials	–	4	4
8. Kickers	–	4	4
9. Total mentions	**29**	**51**	**80**

Framing Using Language and Layout

The use of layout elements or media packages such as visual images, graphics, catch phrases (Van Gorp 2005), and figurative devices like metaphors and hyperbole (Burgers et al. 2016) meant that each newspaper directed the relationship between the coverage of the EC and how the audience interpreted it to support a certain side (Scheufele 2000; Lecheler et al. 2009; Zhou 2008). The *Daily Monitor*, for example, used metaphors such as 'bloodshed' and phrases such as: 'MPs taunt government'; 'MPs walk out of parliament'; 'Protests to continue; 'Uganda's EC very incompetent' and 'questionable credibility' to promote a certain view of the EC. Statements like 'MPs taunt government' and 'Uganda's EC very incompetent' fit well into Burgers et al.'s (2016) description of hyperbole. In the first statement, the paper wanted to imply that all members of parliament did not agree with the government over the EC, and yet, the government had the biggest number of MPs in the house. Regarding the second statement, surely the EC that had organised previous elections could not fit the description of being 'very incompetent'.

The *New Vision*, on the other hand, rarely mentioned or used the sort of metaphors and hyperbole employed by the *Daily Monitor*. Instead, the *New Vision* counter-framed by emphasising the opposite of the *Daily Monitor*'s coverage. To promote the view that the EC was being 'witch-hunted', the *New Vision* used phrases like 'opposition did not march out; they went to consult their party leaders'. The paper tactfully presented the idea of MPs walking out of parliament as being to the government's advantage because walking out had been done several times in Uganda's parliamentary history. For example, opposition MPs walked out of the house in 2006 in protest of the president's appointees to the National Citizenship and Immigration Board (Nandutu and Mugerwa 2006); they walked out again on 12 June 2008 after being denied to pass a motion that would ask the Inspector General of Police, Kale Kayihura, to resign (Nalugo et al. 2008); and again in 2009, this time protesting against a government motion, the Supplementary Appropriations Bill, which sought to allocate Sh6.5 billion to the President's Office to promote patriotism. Since there was already an existing frame of reference about the act of walking out by MPs, the paper presented the act as irresponsible, fruitless and as a standard by which to measure the MPs' indiscipline. The reporting of that isolated act of walking out, using historical allusions already in the audience's mind, also known as 'the event-processing schemata' (Entman 1993; Scheufele 1999), means that what occurred was

individual framing—where audiences use their prior knowledge to make sense of an event. The *New Vision*, in a way, influenced the audience's 'learning, interpretation and evaluation' (de Vreese 2005, 52) of the EC by alluding to events that the public still remembered or by reminding the public of other things that happened in the past.

Such historical allusion not only reminded the audience but also the journalists, who happen to be from the same society as everyone else of course. The newsmaking factor at play here is that of *cultural and ideological power*. The mediated socio-cultural environment is full of debates about MPs walking out of parliament, Supreme Court judgements and various other events. Eventually, these cultural and ideological influences shape the way journalists understand life. This alone, however, may not be adequate to explain why journalists take sides in the newsrooms. The ideological influences have to be supported by *media routines and norms*, alongside *organisational influences*, to create the nature of content observed in the data. This is why, for example, a journalist working for the *Daily Monitor* emphasised the decision of the three judges who stated that the irregularities were enough to annul Mr Museveni's presidency, while a *New Vision* journalist emphasised the decision of the majority judges. As another journalist noted, most cover the EC using the information they have, for example the court judgements. To highlight the role of *media routines and norms*, *organisational influences* and *cultural and ideological power* as key newsmaking factors in Ugandan newsrooms, the *Daily Monitor* journalist underplayed the influence of sources, solely attributing the frames to journalists. 'Sources and players are always busy trying to get their story to be told. It's up to the journalist and the entire publication to do the balancing' (Key Informant I 2016).

In terms of prominence, both papers had three front-page stories in March but with different angles. While the *Daily Monitor* flashed 'Lead Donors warn EC over vote rigging', accompanied by a kicker emphasising that donors had asked the polls' body to win the trust of all players, the *New Vision* did not carry any that day. A front-page story is the most powerful one of the day. Hagerty (2002) contends that it has the most universal appeal. The *New Vision* did not run a story on its front-page within that period that falls under the opposing 'rigging-machine' frame category. Instead, it had a second-lead story on the front page of 22 March but talked about by-elections in a county called Rukiga and how foreign observers were going to observe them. The 29th of March saw the *Daily Monitor* run another single-page story, 'Kabale polls divide NRM'. Carried

on page two, the story said that 'Banyenzaki [an MP from the ruling party] had also raised accusations of rigging'.

The above coverage led to a general observation that the EC is construed through two dominant frames. One of them is the Commission as a 'rigging machine' for the government, and the other frames such allegations as an opposition 'witch-hunt.' Such categorisation points to content bias, an idea in the framing research tradition where journalists cover news by presenting only one side of a conflict (Entman 2007). The conclusion made here is that when it comes to a politically contentious issue, like the EC, the *New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor* publish biased content. Additionally, behind such content slanted approaches are two other framing ideas on which Entman (2007, 2010) reflects. One is the fact that content bias is an inherent bias within decision-making where journalists are motivated to report for a particular side due to the influence of their 'personal attitudes and orientations' (Zhou 2008, 118). This is attested by data from two key informants, who said that coverage is a representation of the reporters' perception of the EC. It is such perception that is informed by journalists' societal orientation.

The Influence of Journalists and Politicians

The journalists, in their choice of sources and design elements, were using long-standing knowledge of the relationship between the papers and the government. The *organisational influences* create a hierarchy of editors or gatekeepers who assign story ideas to journalists with specific angles in mind. The journalists therefore try to fit within the overall vision and mission of the paper. The *media routines and norms* eventually work to fulfil the paper's editorial line. Apart from revealing the influences on news, the data indicate the nature of coverage as mostly episodic or generic (Lecheler et al. 2009), emphasising passing events without an assessment of the issues behind them.

However, upstream of journalists' decision-making bias, facilitated by *media routines and norms*, *organisational influences* and *cultural and ideological power*, are the political figures who dedicate resources to slant media coverage of an issue to be in their favour (Entman 2010). The first culprits here are the owners of both newspapers. As noted earlier, the Ugandan government commands the majority shares at the *New Vision* and so it (the government) tries to make sure that journalists cover the EC in a way that reflects positively on all the politicians who are sympathetic to the govern-

ment. The *Daily Monitor*'s ownership, on the other hand, is solely private, with a history of adversarial coverage towards government. The adversarial side was well reflected in the 'rigging-machine' angle of the coverage.

The influence of elites, especially rich political players, can be understood using *political economic factors*, an element already identified to have great influence on newsmaking practices. Although journalists made choices of sources in most cases, there were people who placed themselves as sources in order to promote their own agenda. Therefore, the journalists were not the only sources of frames, since any political message that appears in the media has to have a messenger (Druckman 2001; Lecheler et al. 2009). While creating frames, the sources include words to signify facts, and omit words to signify non-facts (Tuchman 1978). This implies that the elites managed to use media to front their agendas. Consequently, the two perspectives that resonate (the EC being good or bad) in the media represent the position of elites, some of whom benefit from the EC being good while others want it to look bad. Media/journalists fail to recognise the different sources of frames independent of themselves and end up being used by expert framers such as politicians, the rich and famous and other influential people (Entman 1993). 'They (politicians) take things personally and will follow every story with keen interest. If it is a story that would destroy their careers, they would do whatever it takes to kill it' (Key Informant II 2016). Several of these sources represented institutions that have the political, military and financial power to dictate terms to the media.

The two dominating influences discussed, elites and journalists, have been hinted at by Gan et al. (2005, 442) as representing 'professional socialization and journalistic ideology' and by McQuail (2006, 511) as evidencing the constructive variant process (held beliefs). The actions of the two newspapers analysed in this chapter inform of the newsmaking practices in Ugandan media, especially when covering political news stories. Lack of independence from the journalists themselves and the presence of elites determine the direction of political news stories. Framing the EC in a certain way made the public see it just how it was presented by the media (Entman 1993). When the media change the position of attributes and place a different one at the top of the agenda, the public understanding of an issue (for instance the EC) also shifts to match the new emphasis of the media (Weaver 2007; Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007; Lecheler et al. 2009). The negative frames about the EC that the *Daily Monitor* put at the top of its agenda and the positive ones posited by *New Vision* presented a tendentious view of the EC to the

public. This put both newspapers' objectivity at risk. Both lost their fourth estate position by framing as in or out information that could have created an informed citizenry. The papers thus had no basis on which to claim that they were objective, balanced and fair.

The in-depth interviews have further revealed the reasons why the coverage was biased. One reporter commented that 'What you see in terms of reporting in the *Daily Monitor* and the *New Vision* will, in most cases, be a reflection of what reporters and editors perceive the EC to be' (Key Informant II 2016). The reporter admitted that journalists and media workers can be the sources of frames, while another noted that 'newspapers would cover the EC in a certain perspective for fear of being closed by government powers' (Key Informant I 2016). The *New Vision* journalist added that editorial independence is not so much there because there is always political influence over negative stories and demands that positive stories get more space. In general, the major sources of frames were the elites or the politicians who use their direct influence, and the journalists who cover the EC based on their prior beliefs. The source of such beliefs, as the *Daily Monitor* reporter stresses, is that 'the institution (EC) has been mired in so much controversy that in recent years, a good number of journalists are likely to approach it with bias' (Key Informant I 2016).

In the end, Museveni won the election by 68%, while his lead contender had 26% (Ross 2011). The predictions of the framing theory that the resonating frame will manage to change public opinion matches with the outcome of the Supreme Court, which ruled that the EC had violated several laws—citing this as something that dented the process of free and fair elections. It is not very clear, however, if it had any impact on the public's choice of candidate. The public connection can only be made loosely here because the two newspapers sampled are elitist and so are not accessed by 87% of Ugandans, who are semi-illiterate and survive on subsistence farming in rural areas (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2015). The framing theory would predict that the resonating frame managed to change the opinions of those who accessed the information about the EC. This can be connected to the 26% of votes gained by the leading contender and the fact that most of these votes came from urban areas where people have access to both newspapers. It is also possible that people understood the two newspapers as being a supporter of the incumbent government (the *New Vision*) and a supporter of the opposition (the *Daily Monitor*) due to their well-known histories on controversial issues. On the other hand, the possibility that the strong frame does not necessarily need to be the salient one (with most mentions) (Chong and Druckman 2007) is a reason to conclude that the *New Vision*, with more

resources than the *Daily Monitor*, managed to convince the public that the EC was being witch-hunted, leading to fresh victory by the incumbent president.

Conclusion

This chapter has noted that there are well-established factors pertaining to newsmaking practices in the global North. The factors include *individual influence*, *media routines and norms*, *organisational influences*, *political economic factors* and *cultural and ideological power*. However, research from the global South seeks alternative theories to explain newsroom practices that are unique to the developing nations. This chapter has continued from that tradition by undertaking a framing analysis of how two leading newspapers in Uganda, the *New Vision* and the *Daily Monitor*, covered the Electoral Commission.

The findings suggest that Uganda's newsmaking practices can indeed be convincingly explained by the above factors. This was observed in the frames that both papers used to cover the EC. The chapter has shown that the greatest influence comes from beliefs already held (a result of both *individual Influence* and *cultural and ideological power*), which McQuail (2006, 511) calls the constructive variant process. The *Daily Monitor*'s fifty one mentions of the EC, all falling in one frame unit, is evidence of persistence, compared to twenty nine in the *New Vision*. Although this salient or resonating frame would have an impact on public opinion (Entman 2004), the *New Vision*'s mentions were stronger, with more powerful political and economic players behind that publication.

Most importantly, however, the chapter has suggested that framing analysis is a good approach for understanding newsroom practices and their impact on both the practice of journalism and the audience, as it helped the chapter to show how newsrooms in Uganda make choices and how the journalists generally cover political and contentious issues.

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Ethical and Professional Dilemmas

Brown Envelope Journalism:
The Contradiction Between Ethical Mindset and Unethical Practice

Terje Skjerdal

There hardly exists a news culture in Africa that is unacquainted with brown envelopes. This custom, although condemned by professional codes of ethics, continues to ride on newsmaking practices throughout the continent. One must search for a long time to find a journalist in an African newsroom (except in South Africa, to which we will return) who has not been offered a small monetary contribution from a conference convener concealed as transport money or similar in a discrete brown envelope. The practice is so entrenched that local NGOs in some societies believe it is part and parcel of professional journalism and that it is impossible to get media coverage if a subsidy is not offered to the reporter.

As noted in Chap. 1, the prevalence of brown envelopes has led to an increasing interest in the phenomenon among media researchers. There are different motivations for investigating 'cash-for-coverage' (Ristow 2010) reporting. One is the curiosity concerning the impact of economic and social conditions on journalistic practice (e.g. Atenga 2014; Manda and Kufaine 2013; Omenugha and Oji 2008). Another is obviously the interest in professional ethics, often followed by recommendations on

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how to curb incentive-driven and other unethical reporting practices (e.g. Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe 2012; Gokah et al. 2009; Mang'anda 2012). A third angle has been the cultural approach, seeking to describe how gratifications in the source–reporter relationship are representative of an African culture of sharing and clientelism where brown envelopes are not necessarily ethically wrong but sometimes represent quite the opposite (e.g. Hasty 2005; Kothari 2015; Pype 2013). Overall, at the time of writing this chapter, the number of studies discussing brown envelope journalism to greater or lesser extent in the context of sub-Saharan Africa, amount to at least a hundred, with a particular increase in publications since 2010.

What has gained less attention in the research, however, is the difference between normative and descriptive aspects of brown envelope journalism. It is often taken for granted that journalists' engagement with brown envelopes reflects a compliant attitude towards informal gratifications among media professionals. This has led to two opposing interpretations of envelope journalism, one negatively loaded and one positive. On the one hand, researchers have assumed that brown envelope journalism is the consequence of unethical professional attitudes among journalists. On the other hand, scholars in a different tradition rather emphasize that the concerned journalists belong to a society where a system of informal gratification is engrained in the local culture and as such does not pose an ethical problem to the journalists. Both assumptions are, in the argument of this chapter, deficient. Conflating professional practice with the journalists' normative attitude is insufficient because it habitually underestimates the practitioners' ethical deliberation and, worse, risks justifying a practice of which the journalists are generally critical.

With this in mind, the intention of the current contribution is to bring the discussion of brown envelope journalism a step further by exploring the disparity that emerges between the journalistic mindset and professional practice in relation to incentive-driven journalism. In so doing, the chapter will draw on the available body of research that already exists in sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, I will present new research results gathered among journalists in Ethiopia where the attitude towards receiving money from sources was one of the issues investigated. That study detected interesting differences in professional attitudes depending on, for example, gender and whether the media organization is private or state owned, which will form part of the ensuing discussion.

Methodology

An important aim of this chapter is to provide a 'synthesis' of the research conducted on brown envelope journalism in sub-Saharan Africa. This is needed because single studies yield different results when it comes to, for example, the prevalence of corruption in daily reporting practice. After nearly a decade of focused studies on brown envelope journalism, what do we actually know and what distinguishes the different interpretations? The synthesis of research is based on a wide reading of the literature in the area, emanating from all parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

The latter part of the chapter presents new empirical research from Ethiopia, based on the global World of Journalism Study. Survey interviews were conducted with 350 journalists from the local media in a representative selection of state and privately owned media, totalling twenty-seven media companies/outlets. The interviews were conducted face-to-face between March 2013 and September 2015, with a response rate of 85% among the journalists approached. Stratified random sampling was used. Applying a quantitative method when researching an intricate phenomenon like brown envelope journalism implies various limitations (see Skjerdal 2010 for a discussion of issues concerning research methodology in corruption studies). However, the approach caters for a systematic analysis of brown envelope journalism in relation to, for example, demographics and professional values. The study did not have brown envelopes as its only focus but also queried the journalists about work routines, role perceptions, political preferences, religion and more. This enables cross-tabulation analyses which could reveal positive or negative correlations between brown envelope practices and categories of journalists.

A Synthesis of Existing Research

Research in journalistic corruption in sub-Saharan Africa is on the rise, not least observed in the increase of focused studies on brown envelope journalism. A themed issue of *African Communication Research* in 2010 became the first dedicated collection of research contributions on bribery and corruption in African journalism and, arguably, marked a turning point when African media researchers began to show a collective rather than just sporadic interest in brown envelope journalism as an exemplar of broader analysis of journalism culture (African Communication Research

2010). The issue revealed that experiences with brown envelopes throughout the continent were related, but there were also differences between individual countries and professional environments.

The years after 2010 have witnessed a growth in single-country studies of brown envelope journalism, though there has also been a development in comparative studies. It has been argued that brown envelope journalism is one of the issues which deserves particular attention in 'area studies' of journalism in the global South (Waisbord 2015). At this point in time (2016), the total body of research conducted is of such a size that one may start to synthesize findings from different parts of the continent in order to suggest some general conclusions about African brown envelope journalism. This chapter will suggest five such lessons: Firstly, brown envelopes are common in African journalism. Secondly, there are, nevertheless, geographically diverse experiences. Thirdly, although brown envelope journalism is most commonly attributed to poor salaries, the explanation has been problematized by researchers. Fourthly, research contributions tend to lean towards either a professionalist or a culturalist framework. And finally, although research in the area is clearly increasing, it is actually uncertain whether brown envelope journalism is on the rise or in decline. Each of the lessons will be discussed and summarized in the following section, before presenting new research results in the subsequent section.

1. Brown Envelopes are Common in African Journalism

We can safely conclude that brown envelopes are widespread in African journalistic practice. Diverse empirical evidence points in this direction. One indication of the prevalence of the phenomenon is simply the incredible range of local terms used to denote hidden monetary contributions to journalists, for example *gombo* (Cameroon), *soli* (Ghana), *gatu* (Liberia), *coupe* (Democratic Republic of Congo), *camora* (Congo Brazzaville), *mshiko* (Tanzania), *ndalama yamatako* (Zambia), *bahasha* (Kenya), *chipondamthengo* (Malawi) and *buche* (Ethiopia); not to mention Nigeria, where the terminology around incentive-driven journalism is richer than anywhere else, for example *keske*, *kola*, *goro*, *chope*, *jewu* and *kwa* Adio 2001; Berger 2002; Olana 2010; Frère 2007; Gokah et al. 2009; Kasoma 2009; Mang'anda 2012; Mfumbusa 2008; Ndangam 2006; Omanga 2015; Pype 2013; Skjerdal 2010). Because the practice is alive and well,

new terms are continuously added to the vocabulary, such as in Zambia, where *ndalama yamatako* ('money of the buttocks') these days is being replaced by *nichekeleko*, literally meaning 'cut a piece for me' (Gondwe 2014).

Exactly how widespread is the practice is less clear, and it also depends on how narrowly or widely one defines brown envelope journalism. Many reporters find it acceptable to receive transportation money from a source but are far more sceptical about getting paid for killing a story, for instance. This is illustrated by a survey study among journalists in Uganda, which found that 75% of the respondents justified being paid by a source to facilitate the information-gathering process, whereas only 5% would accept payment to change a story (Mwesige 2004). This should not come as a surprise, as the latter represents evident corruption, while receiving transportation money does not necessarily imply a selling-out of ethical consciousness, in the sense that there is no direct intervention in the story after all. Both cases are still generally acknowledged as brown envelope journalism, however. When moving from norms to behaviour and asking about actual involvement in brown envelope journalism, media practitioners expose diverse attitudes. Surveys from Nigeria indicate that between 61% and 84% of the respondents habitually receive monetary contributions from sources in their daily work (Adeyemi 2013; Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe 2009; Kundum 2013; Nwabueze 2010). A study from Ghana found that 63% of the respondents admitted taking brown envelopes, contrasted with 28% of the respondents from Zambia in the same survey (Kasoma 2007). Yet, these figures must be applied with caution. The results will depend on how brown envelope journalism is framed in the question used in the research. Moreover, due to the secrecy surrounding the practice, respondents may not always give an honest answer. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the actual number of journalists accepting brown envelopes is bigger rather than smaller than what the mentioned figures indicate.

At the same time, there is a danger of overstating the prevalence of brown envelopes. The compelling focus on this type of practice could have left the public and researchers alike with the impression that African journalism practice is full of bribery. The fact, however, is that on most assignments, there is no extra monetary contribution to be earned by the reporter. Government offices and agencies in several countries have no tradition for awarding reporters with a bonus for showing up at conferences and events. Many non-governmental organizations, local as well as

foreign, practice a policy of not handing out brown envelopes. Furthermore, various daily journalistic undertakings are not typical brown envelope events, which are usually press conferences and conferences involving an invitation to the wider journalistic community. Assignments where a single journalist is engaged, for example when gathering information for a news story, do not normally induce any incentive. On the other hand, events where donors are involved habitually represent high-risk areas for brown envelopes. In such situations, the undefined space between the donor's and the recipient's responsibility engenders an ethically grey area. The donor has typically given a round sum for the activity and is reluctant to dictate use of budget items on a detailed level. The recipient, on the other hand, is likely to interpret the already assigned 'transportation' item on the budget as an approval by the donor that participants should get some support. More embarrassing than anything, of course, is a situation where the recipient fails in attracting a fair audience for the event. The emergence of a brown envelope is then inevitable, while each party feels that they are not responsible.

2. There are Geographically Diverse Experiences

The findings of various studies, such as the ones referenced above, indicate that brown envelope journalism is not equally dispersed or practised throughout the continent. Rightly, one must be cautious when comparing results from different regions where diverse methodologies and professional conditions could result in distorted analogies. However, in light of the abundance of studies and accounts that have become available, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that brown envelopes are more prevalent in some societies than in others, and that the practice itself differs in nature. The quoted study from Ghana and Zambia is a case in point, where the same methodology was used to yield different results in two geographically dissimilar journalism cultures (Kasoma 2007). About twice as many Ghanaian journalists admitted to taking brown envelopes in comparison with their Zambian counterparts. The practice is documented more than anywhere in a nearby country, Nigeria (see Chap. 9). Although this could possibly be a result of the overwhelming scope of journalism research in Nigeria, both quantitative and qualitative data indicate that the West African country is in the forefront of brown envelope journalism on the continent. To this end, anecdotal evidence recounts how Nigerian journalists do little to hide that they engage in the activity. Even if the

practice is condemned by ethical codes and official society, a report tells how journalists at a workshop arranged by the State Ministry of Information in Anambra Regional State in Nigeria were entirely transparent about their acceptance of money from sources, and even went as far as defending the practice due to what they described as a desperate economic situation (Omenugha and Oji 2008). Furthermore, brown envelope journalism has been documented for longer in Nigeria and the surrounding areas than anywhere else. One of the earliest accounts dates back to Nigeria's Second Republic (1979–1983), when ministers had to bribe their own journalists in the government media in order to secure coverage of events (Uko 2004). The term itself, 'brown envelope', has been claimed to stem from West Africa, insofar as that the usage of the expression as a euphemism for petty bribery is documented in Nigerian and Ghanaian English at least by the 1970s (Bamiro 1997, 110; Okoro and Chinweobo-Onuoha 2013, 132). The indication is that the brown envelope for decades has not been reserved for journalists; it is the mark of a general culture of enticements and bribery.

The most deviating country when it comes to the prevalence of brown envelope journalism in Africa, nevertheless, is South Africa, where the practice is close to non-existent. Veteran journalist and media educator Anton Harber assures that 'the vast amount of journalists in South Africa do not practice brown-envelope journalism' (quoted in Ross 2010, 10; cf. AMB 2013, 66). A scandal involving two journalists from *Cape Argus*, who supposedly received considerable amounts of money to promote certain political actors and bash others (Joseph 2012), probably testifies to the abnormality of such phenomena in the South African press. The incident came as convenient for the ruling party ANC, however, which subsequently used it to argue that the 'ignorance' among members of the media in terms of their acknowledging the rampancy of brown envelopes in South African journalism illustrated that the self-regulation system needed to be replaced by a government-appointed media tribunal (Duncan 2011).

The scarcity of monetary contributions in South African journalism could have several plausible explanations. It could attest to the fact that South African journalists are better paid than others on the continent. It could come as a result of an established professional culture where ethical codes are duly respected and media self-regulation functions like it should. Or it could, on a wider scale, be a manifestation of a society where bribery and corruption are less prevalent than in the rest of Africa. To the latter claim, however, a number of countries in Africa actually score better than

South Africa on Transparency International's corruption perception index, including Ghana, where brown envelopes are well documented.[1] This leads us to a key topic for discussion in the research literature, which has concerned the explanation for brown envelope journalism.

3. THE 'POOR PAY' HYPOTHESIS HAS BEEN PROBLEMATIZED

The most common reason used to explain bribes in African journalism is poor remuneration. There is no doubt that many African journalists are underpaid. Manda and Kufaine (2013) document how the typical monthly salary for journalists in Malawi does not cover the cost of living in the city. Many reporters in the Cameroonian private press go for months without receiving their paycheque (Ndangam 2009). Moonlighting—that is having an 'undercover' job besides your official one—is common in many media environments in Africa, such as in Zimbabwe, where local, underpaid journalists survive by producing stories for foreign news outlets, which are unwanted in the country (Mabweazara 2010, 2011, see Chap. 5 in this volume). Kasoma (2009) sees a direct link between low pay and brown envelope journalism, documenting a statistically significant correlation between payment levels and likelihood of accepting informal contributions on the job among Ghanaian and Zambian journalists.

Despite the endless accounts of economic hardship among African media professionals, various researchers have begun to question the prevalence of poor pay as the predominant explanation for brown envelope journalism. It has been demonstrated that among reporters with similar salary levels and equal working conditions, attitudes to brown envelopes vary (Lodamo and Skjerdal 2009). Individual ethics are thus a complicating factor. Denis Mpagaze (2011) pertinently addresses the issue of well-paid media managers who still engage in bribery, pointing instead to an 'economy of affection' as an alternative consideration for brown envelope journalism. The model of the economy of affection was first proposed by Göran Hydén (1980) to describe how personal reciprocal investment plays a role in East African traditional culture. Transferred to the newsroom, the model describes a situation where professionals can gain approval among their colleagues when sharing benefits with each other, thereby justifying monetary incentives from sources. Ethnographic studies of journalism cultures in Cameroon (Ndangam 2009) and Ghana (Hasty 2005) add to the understanding of *gombo* and *soli* as more than just a breadwinning strategy. Jennifer Hasty (2005) is critical of reducing bribery

and corruption to an issue of self-interest and greed; it should instead be approached as a 'variegated, polysemic, ambiguous, and mobile set of sociocultural phenomena' (343). Yet, others warn against elevating brown envelopes to an intrinsic characteristic of clientele or patronage systems because 'it removes the responsibility from individual journalists and places it on structural factors' (Mayiga 2011, 11).

The journalistic community itself also inclines towards the view that the practice is not a result of poor salary alone. Although professionals may at first appear quick to blame petty bribery on poor working conditions, many of them believe that raising salaries will not curb the problem. Various studies from Nigeria indicate that most journalists do not attribute brown envelopes primarily to poor remuneration and economic hardship but rather put the emphasis on weak professional ethics and poor journalistic training (Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe 2009; Nwabueze 2010; Okoro and Chinweobo-Onuoha 2013). Thus, in the view of some journalism educators, it is time to disregard the 'long held view that it is mainly the meagre salaries of the journalists that prompts them to receive brown envelopes' and instead focus on strengthening and enforcing existing codes in the industry (Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe 2012, 528).

4. Divergence Between Professional and Cultural Interpretations

Research on brown envelope journalism has diverged into two main trajectories: a culturalist and a professionalist approach. The professionalist approach is causal oriented and queries what consequences informal incentives have for journalism practice. Most studies conducted so far belong to this framework. The culturalist approach, on the other hand, considers brown envelope journalism as a complex phenomenon at the intersection between profession and culture and emphasizes the ambiguity and contradictions surrounding the practice. This latter approach is less interested in judging brown envelopes against a set of global codes of ethics. In line with this, Herman Wasserman (2008) suggests that 'instead of labelling this practice as "bribery" and simply condemning it', it is time to consider a 'hybrid ethical framework' (82). The professionalist approach, by contrast, considers incentive-driven journalism as inherently problematic, claiming that it undermines critical journalism; induces unhealthy asymmetry in the source–reporter relationship; favours affluent patrons;

and even brings division in the newsroom—it is prone to behave as the 'the cancer of African journalism', according to the late Francis Kasoma (2000, 96).

The culturalist approach has duly emphasized, however, that brown envelope journalism is not a sharply defined practice. It has different faces and meanings. Pure, prototypical brown envelope journalism is a habit that involves the handover of a trivial monetary contributions from source to journalist in a small brown envelope, in amounts equivalent to, say, a few US dollars. The wider definition includes a whole range of practices where the source–reporter relationship is underscored through the transfer of gifts, incentives, transactions and services of material as well as immaterial value. The freebie is one such incentive, illustrated by the serving of free food and drinks at events. Western journalism rarely problematizes this practice, but African journalists intuitively know that it has value, inferring that the reporter achieves a different position in the relationship vis-à-vis the patron. 'Advertorials' are another incentive, whereby the content of an editorial is influenced by an outside organization in exchange for purchasing advertisement space (Frère 2015). The incentives can thus slide from constituting strictly personal rewards to representing institutional benefits. It is hardly possible for a journalist to be entirely unrelated to these practices, according to the culturalist interpretation. Thus, on the basis of ethnographic work among TV journalists in Congo Kinshasa, Katrien Pype (2013) contends that the 'best' journalists are those who master the game of entering and withdrawing from the patron–client relationships.

5. It is Uncertain Whether the Practice has Become More or Less Prevalent

The general assumption in much of the literature is that brown envelope journalism is on the rise. To give but a few examples, it has been claimed that bribery is escalating in Ethiopian journalism (AMB 2010; Olana 2010); that corruption is increasingly affecting journalism practice in Nigeria (Kundum 2013); and that journalistic integrity has 'been lost in recent years' in Zambia (AMB 2011, 62). Indeed, Francis Kasoma (2000, 97) predicted that the growth of multiparty democracy would lead to a tougher political culture which in turn could mean higher frequencies of bribes offered to media professionals.

The research evidence for this development, however, is somewhat lacking. The African media research environment has yet to produce longitudinal and systematic studies of corruption in the media over time. The claims stated in various research contributions appear to be based on general impressions by researchers, which could be affected by factors such as the tendency to overstate the importance of one's own research. That said, it is not unlikely that bribery in segments of African journalism practice is on the rise, but the claims need to be accompanied, for example, by systematic interviews with media veterans who can reflect on the development over time.

Findings from Ethiopia

The discussion so far has emerged from a synthesis of previous research, referring to both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This section will add to the existing research by presenting new findings concerning journalists' attitudes to brown envelopes in one particular media culture on the Horn of Africa, specifically Ethiopia. The results are drawn from recently gathered data in an extensive survey mapping professional identities among Ethiopian journalists, using the framework of the Worlds of Journalism Study (cf. previous explanation of methodology).

The survey shows, first of all, a high rejection rate among Ethiopian journalists to 'accepting money from sources' (which is the term used for brown envelope journalism in the questionnaire). Overall, 85% of the respondents do not approve of receiving money from sources under any circumstance, while 12% will justify it 'on occasion'. These results depart from similar studies elsewhere on the continent, which tend to show higher tolerance of brown envelope journalism (e.g. the above-quoted studies from Nigeria and Uganda, which indicated acceptance rates of between 61% and 84% for justifying and actually taking brown envelopes). Again, these figures must not be taken as exact science, especially since they involve comparison of different surveys, but they still indicate a direction in the overall attitudes in the respective societies. Importantly, the current research results, which queried journalists' attitudes to brown envelopes, must not be mistaken for actual behaviour. Journalists may reject monetary incentives on the normative level but still engage in the practice in the daily work, either occasionally or regularly. A research report by the Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission suggests that perks and kickbacks are common among Ethiopian journalists, limited

not only to small monetary gratitude but clothes and shoes as well (Corruption and Journalism in Ethiopia 2016). Other studies corroborate that being offered petty bribes is a common experience for reporters in all parts of the local media (Eshetu 2012; Lodamo and Skjerdal 2009). Taken together, these results suggest a discrepancy between the journalists' norms and their actual behaviour.

A cross-tabulation of these attitudes with demographic data yields other interesting results, some perhaps more expected than others. Firstly, when it comes to work experience, the survey reveals somewhat stricter ethical attitudes among experienced journalists than among newcomers. The dividing line comes in around the six-year margin (those having worked more than six years in the profession were less tolerant to brown envelopes than those with less experience). In the group that had practiced journalism for more than ten years, hardly anyone would justify taking money from sources in any situation whatsoever. The same tendency is reflected in the professional standing in the newsroom. Senior positions (editor-in-chief, managing editor, assignment editor and senior editor) are more restrictive than lower positions (producers and reporters) when it comes to accepting money from sources. None of the respondents who belong to the senior position group would 'always justify' monetary incentives. This indicates a positive correlation between journalistic experience and a sense of professionalism, including ethical consciousness.

Somewhat more worrying, perhaps, is the finding that media professionals who have a degree within journalism or a related field of study are more prone to accept brown envelopes than those with no specialization in the area (Table 8.1). Of the journalists with a specialization within the field of journalism or communication, 20% would accept brown envelopes under various conditions, compared with only 10% of those without a specialization (a breakdown of the figures show that those who studied

Table 8.1 Accepting money from sources, education cross-tabulation

	Studied Journalism and/or Communication (N = 183)	No specialization in these fields (N = 146)
Always justified	4.9%	2.1%
Justified on occasion	14.8%	8.2%
Not approved under any circumstances	80.3%	89.7%
	100%	100%

journalism specifically have a 21% likelihood of accepting brown envelopes). At first, this would seem to bring into doubt the value of journalism education, where professional ethics has a prominent place in the curriculum. However, educational data need to be seen together with other demographic data, and those with a journalism degree represent the youngest generation, who also occupy the lowest ranks in the newsrooms and therefore are most susceptible to taking brown envelopes (cf. discussion of age and experience above). It may, therefore, not be the degree itself that is the determining factor but the age of the reporters and the fact that journalists in the lower ranks are more likely to be exposed to brown envelopes when out on an assignment than are editors. It could also indicate that brown envelopes are actually on the rise in Ethiopian journalism, as already proposed by Birhanu Olana (2010), implying that the new generation of media professionals are more opportunistic than the old one. In any case, this ought to become a concern for the journalism programmes in the country, whose *raison d'être* is the professionalization of Ethiopian journalism. Since 2004, the country has experienced a proliferation of journalism programmes, from only one degree course being available at the beginning to eleven undergraduate degrees and two graduate degrees in 2016 (Skjerdal 2011b). Today, many media institutions, especially the state media, require a journalism degree as a minimum requirement to be considered for a reporter's position—partly as a means to raise ethical consciousness in the media houses. While the current survey may reveal some disappointment with journalism graduates in this regard, it must not be forgotten that most of the degree holders (80%) still reject brown envelopes under any circumstance.

An issue frequently visited in the discussion of brown envelope journalism is the question of whether the practice has higher acceptance in societies which cherish culture-bound and relativistic ethics. The current survey cannot address this question on a comparative level, since it is a single country study; however, it can say something about different attitudes within the local journalist population in Ethiopia. To this end, respondents who champion universal ethics ('journalists should always adhere to professional ethics, regardless of situation and context') are marginally more sceptical of brown envelopes than those who lean more towards situational ethics. The opposite result would have been more surprising.

Another expected finding is a positive correlation between acceptance of brown envelopes and acceptance of other ethical 'breaches'. This entails that journalists who justify taking money from sources also justify a

Table 8.2 Accepting money from sources, gender cross-tabulation

	Female (N = 99)	Male (N = 241)
Always justified	1.0%	4.6%
Justified on occasion	9.1%	12.9%
Not approved under any circumstances	89.9%	82.6%
	100%	100%

number of other ethically questionable practices, such as paying people for confidential information, claiming to be somebody else, use hidden microphones or cameras, doctoring photographs and altering or fabricating quotes from sources.

Furthermore, the Ethiopian survey also reveals noteworthy gender differences in the attitudes to brown envelopes (Table 8.2). Female journalists are significantly more sceptical of monetary incentives than their male counterparts. While 90% of female journalists will not under any circumstance approve of brown envelopes, the percentage for men is 83. Of male journalists, 5% will 'always' justify taking money from sources, compared with only 1% of female journalists. The reason for the gender difference is uncertain. What complicates the analysis further is that women journalists on average have been significantly shorter in the journalism profession than men. In line with the above-mentioned variation in journalistic experience, this would normally mean that women, who have been practising for less time, should also have been less ethically conscious. But the opposite appears to be the case. Could it simply be that Ethiopian women in general are more responsible than men? At the same time, a study from Nigeria found that male journalists were offered gratifications more often than female journalists (Kundum 2013, 17). This could have different explanations, including differences in the type of reporting activities in which male and female journalists were involved, or cultural differences in expectations of men and women regarding financial management and ethical behaviour. At any rate, the indication from these studies is that gender does make a difference in both the attitude to and practice of brown envelope journalism.

When it comes to ownership issues, the Ethiopian data found more approval of brown envelopes among journalists in the private media than journalists in the state-owned media (20% versus 14%; cf. Table 8.3) in the 'always justified' category as well as in the 'justified on occasion' category.

Table 8.3 Accepting money from sources, ownership cross-tabulation

	Purely private ownership (N = 66)	Purely state ownership (N = 274)
Always justified	4.5%	3.3%
Justified on occasion	15.2%	10.9%
Not approved under any circumstances	80.3%	85.8%
	100%	100%

This appears to contradict some qualitative research from elsewhere on the continent, which suggests that government journalists are more receptive to brown envelope journalism than are independent journalists. For example, Hasty (2005) reports that *soli* is especially rampant in Ghana's government media, where a mutual relationship between reporters in the state media and officials involves enticements which can 'sweeten' any tendency to critical coverage. Informants in the Zambian media similarly believe that government journalists are especially prone to accepting bribes (AMB 2011, 62). Ammina Kothari (2015), on the other hand, detected no significant difference between state and private journalists in Tanzania in how they resolved the situation of being offered financial subsidies by sources. These diverse results could indicate that the practice of enticements in different parts of the media simply is not similar across the continent. To someone familiar with the Ethiopian media, it might not come as a surprise that government journalists evidence a restrictive attitude to brown envelopes. The official Ethiopian media have put vast resources into in-house trainings and workshops, where journalism ethics and prevention of corruption in Ethiopian society are some of the key topics. Disapproval of receiving money from sources is therefore the 'right' answer for a journalist who is asked about his/her attitude to such a situation. This does not necessarily mean that such disapproval will be reflected in actual practice, however. On this point, the survey did not pretend to describe journalistic performance but rather concentrated on normative ethics.

Concluding Discussion

Normative and descriptive aspects of brown envelope journalism are two different entities, while research has a tendency to overlook or downplay the divergence. Indeed, there could be grounds to argue that the gap

between theory and practice is higher in brown envelope journalism than in other journalistic activity because it involves a practice associated with concealment and secrecy. The important thing here is that the prevalence of brown envelopes in African journalism does not necessarily reflect the journalists' normative attitude towards the practice. Research on journalistic professionalism is prone to conclude that reporters suffer from a flawed mindset apropos professional ethics because they engage in corrupt activities. The remedy is likely to be described as more training and better awareness of ethical codes. The puzzling reality, however, implied from a growing volume of research on African journalism culture, is that the same reporting community might be well aware of professional codes and what good journalistic behaviour entails. In Ethiopian Television, for example, even if knowledge about the editorial policy might be deficient, the journalists still have clear ideas about the problems with unethical practices such as brown envelopes (Bekele 2008). Journalists throughout sub-Saharan Africa have a sense of what ethical journalism looks like, but they behave rather differently.

A few contributions have addressed the 'professional paradox' (Skjerdal 2011a) between ethical reasoning and everyday practice in African journalism environments. From an ethnographic perspective, the incongruity is commonly portrayed as a result of negotiation between cultural expectations, patrimonial authority, family obligations, collegial allegiance, occupational commitment, liberal media ideals and so forth. Kothari (2015) demonstrates how Tanzanian journalists apply utilitarian 'greater good' reasoning to justify taking monetary support from NGOs with the view to report on HIV/AIDS stories which otherwise would have been neglected by the media. To secure professional integrity, the reporters negotiate the terms with the donor organization in advance, making it clear that the organization will not be offered an opportunity to read and edit the story ahead of publication. This situation appears to resemble grant-induced journalism in Western countries, which is not uncommon (cf. Wasserman 2009). An organization or a public agency will, for example, offer selected journalists a grant to cover travel to a developing country to report on issues such as health and poverty. The terms, of course, are that the funding agency has no influence over the final story. At the same time, however, these grants (occasionally called sponsorships, although that term has a slightly different and more problematic connotation) are continuously subject to discussion in the professional community, due to the belief that one enters an ethically grey area whenever facilitation is offered by a source

that has an interest in the story covered. Correspondingly, when Tanzanian journalists negotiate terms ahead of receiving support from a donor organization (Kothari 2015), it is not a sign of ethical degeneration but actually the opposite.

In most conventional brown envelope situations, however, there is no negotiation involved—one just receives the contribution and goes on. Research suggests that many journalists are inclined to take the perk. Studies also reveal that journalists have problems with the practice: They use euphemisms to trivialize its real meaning (Gondwe 2014); they avoid participating in research on the issue (Manda and Kufaine 2013); they claim the custom brings apathy to the professional community (Helander 2010); they admit that it affects journalistic impartiality (Kasoma 2009), that it leads to suppression of important information (Okoro and Chinweobo-Onuoha 2013), causes 'adjustment' of facts (Munene 2008) and skews the tone of coverage to suit the giver (Lando 2013). When portraying African journalism culture, it is fair to pay attention to this critical attitude from the journalism community as well. Journalists may well joke about brown envelopes and outwardly trivialize the practice, but their reservations are also highly evident. Thus, journalism research should make a stronger effort to differentiate between journalists' behaviour (descriptive aspects) and their reasoning (normative aspects) when it comes to professional ethics.

Notes

1. http://www.transparency.org/cpi2015/results (nine Sub-Saharan African countries are perceived to be less corrupt than South Africa according to the 2015 index).

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Poor Capitalisation and Corruption Within the Nigerian Press

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This chapter explores the issue of poor capitalisation and corruption within the Nigerian press. Drawing from interviews with Nigerian journalists, it discusses the challenges the press faces with specific focus on the weak capital base of the media and how corruption within the press itself undermines the integrity of journalism. While the issue of corruption in the press has been extensively discussed (see Skjerdal 2010; Yusha'u 2009), there is little research about poor capitalisation of the press, especially in Africa. Poor capitalisation in this study is defined as the inability of a media organisation to have sufficient capital that will enable it to run its business independently, efficiently and with high degree of professionalism.

As such, the chapter seeks to address the following questions:

1. Does the weak capital base of Nigerian newspapers promote corruption within the media itself?

See Yusha'u, Muhammad Jameel (2010a): Coverage of Corruption Scandals in the Nigerian Press: A Comparative Coverage of Northern and Southern Newspapers. Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Sheffield United Kingdom.

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2. How does the weak capital base of Nigerian newspapers promote corruption within the media?
3. What is the opinion of Nigerian journalists on the coverage of corruption in Nigerian newspapers?

It is important to closely examine corruption in the African press, Nigeria in this case, as it is increasingly becoming a subject of academic discourse—in part, because of its impact on the economy, especially by reducing the incentive for investment and the cost of transactions (Seligson 2002), and through providing an environment dictated by a questionable approach to issues of economic and political magnitude.

The complex nature of corruption has also made it difficult for scholars to agree on a single definition of what constitutes corruption, because of differences in culture, attitude and environment. What is seen as a corrupt act in one society may be normal in another. The attitude in terms of culture and behaviour could include a shift in attitude or ideology from good to bad (Nye 1967). Researchers also tend to look at corruption as an indication of the failure of the system in a given society (Hansen 1998).

In summary, many scholars agree that corruption is simply the use of public office for private gain (Bayley 1966; Jain 2001; Anderson and Tverdova 2003; Bohra et al. 2004). While aspects of corruption within the media have been explored by scholars in various studies of brown envelope journalism, media and corruption, freebies and scandal reporting (Williams 2014; Wasswa and Kakooza 2011; Lodamu and Skjerdal 2009; Yusha'u 2009; Skjerdal 2010; see also Skjerdal's chapter in this book), there is little research on one of the potential causes of corruption in the media—that is, lack of a strong capital base that would enable media organisations to take care of the welfare of journalists. For more literature on studies about corruption, its implications for society and the effort of scholars to study it please see Blundo et al. (2006), Canel and Sanders (2006), Cawthorne (2001), Chang (2005), Chiluwa (2007), Doig and Theobald (2000), Golden and Picci (2005), Humphrey and Lee (2004), Johnson (2004), Klitgaard (1988), Luo (2004), Murphy and Scotton (1987), Olaleye-Oruene (2007), Righter and Burke (2007), Sandcholtz and William (2000), Schudson (2004), Spector (2005), Thompson (1997, 2000), Tumber and Waisbord (2004a, b), Waisbord (2000), Wu (2005), Yusha'u (2010b).

With the exception of a few researchers that allude to the poor capital base of the media in Africa, such as Mabweazara (2015), who makes reference to the weak capital base of the press in Zimbabwe, and Moyo (2004), who focuses on lack of a strong entrepreneurial class ready to invest in the broadcasting industry in Zimbabwe, there is little literature on the poor capital base of the press in Africa. With specific reference to the Nigerian media, Owolabi and O'Neill (2013) have explored the idea of recapitalising the media industry in Nigeria with a view to strengthening its capital base. Their study focuses on underfunding and suggests the need to draw from the experience of Nigerian banks that were merged and recapitalised in 2005. Owolabi and O'Neill further observed that the Central Bank of Nigeria requested the eighty-nine banks operating in the country to recapitalise by having a capital base of 25 billion Nigerian Naira. By December 2005, the banks had merged into just twenty-five banks. The success of this policy, according to Owolabi and O'Neill, was the improvement in the rating of Nigerian banks, where twenty out of the twenty-five recapitalised banks joined the best 100 banks in Africa, and seventeen out of the twenty-five were rated among the best 1000 banks in the world.

Owolabi and O'Neill applied the experience of the Nigerian banks to the Nigerian media landscape. While this could be one of the ways to address the weak capital base of the Nigerian press, their argument misses a major point. The essence of the press is not fundamentally rooted in profit-making; therefore, a corporate approach to the media could act against the interest of the media and the public at large.

Studies by Herman and Chomsky (2002) have questioned the corporatisation of the media, arguing that this encourages the media to satisfy elites interest rather than the interest of the public. Another major weakness of applying the corporate paradigm is its tendency to neutralise what Lawson (2002) described as the fourth estate role of the press, or watchdog journalism and news accountability, or even undermine the ability of the press to engage in thorough investigative journalism (see de Burgh 2000; Yusha'u 2009).

The challenge of a weak capital base is aptly captured by Allison (2013) in an article about lack of resources in African journalism:

> There is not a lot of money in African journalism. As an African journalist, I know this all too well. An example: I was in South Sudan in November, on a trip I was financing myself. Weeks in flea-ridden hostels culminated in a four-day stay at a refugee camp near the border with Sudan. I was the only

reporter there and pleased with myself for getting a story that no one else had. Not so fast. On my last day there, a small plane descended unannounced on the tiny airstrip and disgorged four foreign correspondents in their khakis and combat boots. They represented two of the biggest and best-known international media outlets. They spent a total of two hours in the camp. One of them had filed his story even before he left. As they hijacked my interviews, I chatted to their fixer who whispered to me that they had spent $8000 to hire the plane for the morning. To me, this was an unimaginable sum: their morning cost more than four times my entire two weeks in South Sudan. (Allison 2013, 1)

So, media researchers and practitioners need to think deeply about how to create a balance in addressing the impact of a weak capital base on the media in Nigeria and Africa at large, as this chapter attempts to do.

This study draws on qualitative interviews conducted in August 2007 with twenty-two Nigerian media practitioners. Qualitative interviews were particularly strategic for gaining firsthand information from practitioners as well as for unearthing issues that may not appear in the pages of newspapers (Denzin and Lincoln 1998). A pilot study was conducted prior to the main interviews, with three journalists interviewed for this stage of the research process. They were asked about their views on the coverage of corruption in Nigerian newspapers, whether the newspapers are biased due to regional influences, and their opinion on journalism training and practice in Nigeria. Following the pilot study, an updated interview questionnaire, reflecting the issues that emerged from the pilot study, was generated.

The respondents were selected by means of snowball sampling through the recommendation of others (Wimmer and Dominick 2006). The researcher established contact with selected editors in Nigeria who in turn recommended journalists to speak on the reporting of corruption in the Nigerian press. The analysis of the responses was done anonymously, for several reasons. Firstly, the respondents agreed to conduct the interviews on condition of anonymity. Secondly, to protect the safety and job security of the respondents, some of whom were critical of the newspapers they work for during the interviews. Finally, to avoid associating the responses with particular individuals for the integrity and quality of the research. Table 9.1 provides information about the journalists interviewed and their professional affiliations.

While the purpose of this chapter is to explore the nature of corruption and the poor capital base of the Nigerian press, it is important to provide

Table 9.1 Study respondents, media organisations and their respective portfolios

Newspaper/ownership/ interviewees	Region	Location	The respondents
Trust newspapers/ private	North	Abuja	Five 1. Editor/*Daily* 2. Editor/*Aminiya* 3. Chairman Editorial Board 4. Senate Correspondent 5. Editor/*Sunday*
ThisDay/private	South	Lagos	Two 1. Abuja Bureau Chief 2. Senate Correspondent
The Guardian/private	South	Lagos	Two 1. Abuja Bureau Chief 2. Deputy Political Editor
Daily Times/ government-private	South	Lagos	One 1. State House Correspondent
Punch/private	South	Lagos	One 1. Correspondent
The Sun/private	South	Lagos	One 1. Abuja Bureau Chief
The Nation/private	South	Lagos	Two 1. Chairman Editorial Board 2. Abuja Bureau Chief
New Nigerian/ government	North	Kaduna	One 1. Former Editor
Independent/private	South	Lagos	One 1. State House Correspondent
Columnists/former journalists	North		Five 1. Former Managing Director, *New Nigerian* Newspapers 2. Former Editor, *Triumph* Newspapers 3. Former President, Nigeria Union of Journalists 4. Former Editor, *This Era* 5. Former Editor, the *Leadership*
Anti-corruption official		Abuja	One 1. Former Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission

the context under which the Nigerian press operates. The Nigerian newspaper landscape is very complex. Therefore, to understand the way the press works, and how the issues of corruption and poor capital base came about, it is necessary to look at the history of Nigerian newspapers and the factors that shape their character and operations.

HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE, COMPLEXITY AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN THE NIGERIAN PRESS

Fred Omu's (1978) study of the Nigerian press is one of the major pieces of research that framed the history, struggle, ownership and political intricacies that the Nigerian press went through. Such a study is important in our understanding of the foundation of the Nigerian media and the challenges it faces in terms of poor capitalisation and corruption within the press itself.

Most discussions of contemporary media practice and ownership in Nigeria start from colonial times, which, as stated by Olayiwola (1991, 35), was a period

> dominated by missionaries, colonial administrators, nationalists, political parties, politicians and private foreign organisations. During the colonial period, the press served as a medium of sustained public debate and political protest, an uncompromising advocate of administrative and political reforms, and a seething critic of the excesses of the colonial order. By its political activities, the press not only stimulated the emergence of nationalist movements but also played a prominent role in the constitutional development of modern Nigeria.

A reflection on the history of the Nigerian press reveals that the establishment of newspapers began in 1859 with *Iwe Iroyin fun Awon Ara Egba ati Yoruba* (Newspaper for the Egbas and Yorubas), set up by Reverend Henry Townsend in Abeokuta (Babalola 2002, 405).[1] However, according to Babalola, 'the blossoming of the Nigerian Press started 17 years later in the exigencies of socio-political and economic activities. The first newspaper of this period was by Andrew Thomas, who came out with the *Lagos Times* on 10 November 1880'.

The press in Nigeria has undergone a lot of historical transformations, from an instrument of religious proselytisation, to a mouthpiece of nationalists and a leading voice in the struggle for independence, then changing

into a regional and tribal instrument, to a fighter for the enthronement of civilian rule and strong opposition against dictatorship (See Idimeli 1978; Jones 1979; Oso 1991; Ette 2000; Oyovbaire 2001; Malaolu 2004; Adebanwi 2004; Arnold 2005; Ado-Kurawa 2006).

To understand the causes of poor capitalisation and corruption within the Nigerian press, there are at least two important points that must be noted. The first is the transformation it had to undergo between the late 1960s and the 1970s, with the involvement of the military in politics. The second is the issue of professionalism in the practice of journalism. Both factors have played a significant role in the poor capital base of the newspapers and the corruption that develops within the media itself.

As discussed by Olayiwola (1991), the total acquisition of the *New Nigerian* newspaper, and 60% acquisition of the *Daily Times* by the federal government of Nigeria was one of the game-changers in the ownership of newspapers. This decision by the Nigerian military government had several implications. It stopped a historical wave that would see the two major national dailies become commercially independent and set the scene for other newspapers in post-independence Nigeria. The second implication according to Olayiwola (1991) was the creation of instability in the newspaper industry and the redefinition of journalists as civil servants, rather than independent ombudsmen that act as the conscience of society, as was the case when both newspapers were run as relatively independent entities (see Letshwiti Batlhalefi Tutwane's chapter in this volume for a related discussion in the context of Botswana).

The newspaper industry thus came to rely on government handouts rather than focus on securing its own revenue. The same problems that affect government institutions ended up affecting the newspaper industry. Even the private newspapers that were established afterwards have to rely on government patronage for advertising. Over the years, the journalist ended up being subjected to the same poor remuneration as the government civil servant. While government employees receive bribes, journalists receive brown envelopes, as has been noted by a number of scholars (see, for example, Lodamu and Skjerdal 2009; Yusha'u 2009 as well as Skjerdal's chapter in this volume). This historical trend continues today, with a new tendency emerging where journalists in the private newspapers strive to be appointed as press secretaries and media advisers to politicians (Yusha'u 2010a), partly because the newspapers cannot pay them enough of a salary.

CORRUPTION WITHIN THE NIGERIAN PRESS

The interviews conducted with Nigerian journalists revealed divergent views about the key premise of this chapter—poor capitalisation of the media and corruption within the press itself. The findings suggest the frustration of Nigerian journalists with the challenges of journalism practice in the country. This frustration was expressed even in areas where the respondents believe that they are collaborators themselves by receiving brown envelopes or where their proprietors underfund the media organisations or exploit journalists. Although issues around greed and lack of capital play a role in the newsmaking cultures of the Nigerian press, the respondents wanted to see an improvement in journalism practice by finding a solution to the poor capital base of the Nigerian press and the general corruption within the media industry.

Journalists agreed that reports about corruption are receiving more attention now in comparison to previous years. But they also blamed the media for being part of the problem because of the corruption within the media itself—as indicated in the following response regarding a story on Peter Odili, a former governor of Rivers State in the oil-rich Niger Delta region between 1999 and 2007:

> The media is corrupt—not could be corrupt. Why has nobody said anything about Odili? Come on! let us ask ourselves, the governors we have are not the most corrupt, the ones that have been tried are not the most corrupt. Somebody is paying so that these things do not come out in the open in the newspaper.

The above response is alluding to the allegation that politicians bribe journalists to ensure that stories of their corrupt practices do not get published in the newspapers. From this perspective, it could be argued that the press is part of the problem. This makes the reporting of corruption much more difficult by encouraging political office-holders to take money from the treasury in order to satisfy journalists, who use the privilege of their position to promote or blackmail people. Respondents suggested that there is collusion between the political class and journalists; it comes in the form of favours from politicians, which they use to cajole journalists into pursuing the interests of the politicians.

A journalist from a leading newspaper gave an example with the former Nigerian Vice-President, Atiku Abubakar, who had a corruption case against him, yet received favourable media coverage:

Bitter truth. We are all corrupt whether those we report, whether those of us doing the reporting. You think Atiku got the amount of exposure he got in the media because they love [him]; it is not [out] of love.[2] He was financing it, that is still some other truth.

This interview extract provides an interesting perspective on corruption in the Nigerian press. While previous studies on the complexity of Nigeria have alluded to the regional and ethnic divisions within the country (Omu 1978), the implication here is that corruption is so pervasive that the regional and ethnic complexities tend to be diluted when it comes to bribery and corruption. Atiku Abubakar is from northern Nigeria, while the newspapers that do the reporting are predominantly southern, yet Atiku Abubakar, as espoused by the above respondent, got positive exposure because he allegedly paid his way into the Nigerian press. This form of collusion between politicians, the media and other interest groups is what scholars such as Hallin and Mancini (2004) and Joseph (1988) call clientelism or prebendal politics. This is a situation where group interests and personal connections are treated as more important than formal procedure or respect for independence and impartiality in the case of the press (see Chap. 1).

While it is expected that journalists should uphold the principles of honesty and transparency, it is difficult for them not to fall into a state of corruption, because their survival as human beings takes priority. Although this does not justify any form of corruption, as the BBC (2015) observed, corruption in Nigerian journalism could be at a higher level, to the extent that some politicians have editors on their payroll, so that stories affecting their interests can pass without the journalists asking critical questions.

This poses the question whether corruption within the Nigerian press should simply be attributed to the poor capital base of the newspapers, which accordingly makes them unable to pay their bills, or whether it is a bigger problem affecting the larger society? As discussed by Hallin and Mancini (2004), journalism as a profession and practice should always be located within its political and cultural context. Thus, any discussion of corruption within the press should be viewed as a larger problem that affects the fabric of the society in which journalists are an integral part.

It needs to be noted, however, that the issues raised by various respondents on corruption in the Nigerian press are not uncommon elsewhere, as several chapters in this book demonstrate. According to Skjerdal (2010), bribery and corruption have manifested themselves within journalistic

practice in Africa in various ways (see Chap. 8), the most common being brown envelope syndrome, in which journalists receive favours from their sources. This practice has bedevilled Nigerian journalism for a long time and, while the interviews for this study were conducted in 2007, very little has changed since then in terms of the issues raised by the respondents.

POOR CAPITALISATION

A key question that needs to be asked is whether there are reasons that force journalists to become victims of politicians and thus partake in the clientelist or prebendal culture. According to one journalist, there is indeed a reason that forces some journalists and media organisations to collaborate with politicians in blackmailing or hiding the wrongdoing of others:

> Another problem entirely in the Nigerian mass media, whether electronic or print, is poor capitalisation. Because this poor capitalisation does not allow editorial independence. Most of the organs either in the South or in the North are owned by either business men who have interest in politics, or are owned by political leaders, or some political leaders have invested because of poor capitalisation. Some of these organs depend on daily basis on hand outs from political leaders who are using public funds, that is why so many newspaper stories are sponsored, columns, articles, some of them are full of impurities.

This shows some of the difficulties journalists face, in particular, those who are genuinely interested in promoting the integrity of the profession. And the result of that same poor capitalisation can be seen in the next interview extract:

> If you don't have money to pay your staff, you don't have money to buy the latest software, you don't have money to buy newsprint, it means that you will depend on people who are either in business or in politics to run operations, so how independent can you be? That's part of the problem, corruption in the mass media makes journalists lose credibility in the eyes of members of the public. Some of the newspapers are owned by former governors, how independent can you be when some of those governors are being haunted by Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.

The perspective of this journalist suggests that Nigerian elites have seen the potential of the media in protecting their interests. This partly explains

why they invest in the media. But the implication of that is the politicisation of journalism, and the manipulation of journalists by those who have the capital to establish and maintain media organisations.

While the reality is that the Nigerian political class are conniving with the press to promote their interests, the respondents have strong reservations about that, as suggested in the interview extract below:

> I just find it interesting that the media never beams the searchlight on itself […]. A governor is being tried in Nigeria today for money laundering [and] thieving. The former governor of Abia state, Orji Kalu and this man owns a newspaper—a tabloid. Its accounts were recently frozen by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, and so they were having difficulties running and […] began to link that to the political difficulties of their owner. But for me I saw it a little bit beyond that, if a newspaper is running on the basis of funds acquired fraudulently, what basis does it have to be a newspaper?

Poor capitalisation is thus cited by a number of journalists as one of the problems encountered by the press. They see it as one of the issues affecting the credibility of the profession, because without strong capital there would be challenges that the media would find difficult to overcome. One of the reasons for the poor capitalisation is in the nature of ownership in which politicians and businessmen invest in the newspaper industry without much concern for the welfare and credibility of journalism itself, which in turn affects the output of the newspapers. Looking at the history of Nigerian newspapers as discussed earlier by Omu (1978) and Babalola (2002), right from inception, politicians and interest groups were among the press barons in Nigeria. One journalist from *The Guardian* newspaper stated thus:

> The building block of credibility in the media is trust. If people no longer trust what you put out there because they believe that some political leaders in one opposition party or another are sponsoring what you are broadcasting, there is a problem.

The issue of poor capitalisation has made it difficult to carry out such tasks as investigative and in-depth reporting, which are necessary to keep the public fully informed on the affairs around them. A senior journalist captured the impact of poor capitalisation on journalism practice as follows:

> We are constrained because of poor capitalization. Investigation either in the media or in security services consumes a lot of money […] if you yourself cannot pay your way to where you are going to investigate; it means that the people you are going to investigate can influence you. They can pay you. So, poor capitalization is the trouble with the Nigerian mass media.

This response is consistent with the example cited by Allison (2013) on the challenges faced by African journalists in their daily practice of journalism. Poor capitalisation can thus obstruct the function of a newspaper, especially in a developing country like Nigeria, which requires a lively press that can assess the political situation and provide an honest and impartial account of issues. This Nigerian scenario points to the challenges faced by journalists in much of sub-Saharan Africa. As discussed by Nwabueze (2010), the challenges faced by Nigerian journalists in terms of bribery and corruption raise concern about the ethical role of the journalist, who should be impartial and ensure that the information passed to the public is accurate and bias free. There are other issues, also related to the working conditions and professional practices, that emanate from poor capitalisation and corruption, as discussed in the next section.

Poor Working Conditions and Inadequate Professional Training

Among the issues identified by the respondents, which relate to those raised earlier, is the nature of the working conditions for journalists. A senior editor from the *Daily Trust* highlighted that poor salaries and working conditions encouraged corrupt practices among journalists:

> Corruption in the media is due to poor pay and also in some cases irregular pay and, in fact in, some newspaper houses no pay at all. There are some small newspapers that don't have a pay roll and they say that the reporters ID card is his pay roll, meaning they are encouraging him to go out and seek the brown envelope.

Some of these challenges have been discussed in Chaps. 1, 3, 8 and 10 (see also Yusha'u 2009; Lodamu and Skjerdal 2009; Skjerdal 2010). If media proprietors do not address these problems, then it will be difficult for journalists to uphold the code of conduct of journalism, as discussed by scholars such as Harcup (2007) and Sanders (2003).

Though some journalists might engage in corruption because of poor pay, some may do so simply because of greed, as explained further by the same journalist: 'There is the greed factor and you know when somebody is greedy if you give him a million [Naira] he may want two million, if you give two million, I want three million.'

Another factor that can create problems in terms of what gets reported is the interests of the publisher. The respondents confirmed that politicians and businessmen establish newspapers in order to get access to the government. Therefore, these publishers will make sure that what gets reported does not go against their interests. This point was clearly articulated by a journalist from *ThisDay* newspaper:

> The man who owns the business like I was taught in the communication school is the man who decides. Your interest cannot be higher than that of the man who owns it […] you know the world over, that the man who owns the newspaper would determine his editorial direction.

The comment above raises some questions regarding the independence of the press, because the journalist as a gatekeeper may be constrained by other factors, like the interest of the publisher and the power of advertisers, who may even be more powerful than the publisher himself.

African scholars have discussed journalism practice in relation to the independence of the press. In a study closely related to the present, Mano (2005) conducted interviews with journalists to understand the challenges faced by the media in Zimbabwe, and a key outcome of his research was discovering the power of the proprietors in deciding how news is reported. The implication of this, according to Mano, is the tendency of African journalists to prefer working for international news outlets.

In the present study, one respondent asked rhetorically how journalists survive despite the multiple challenges they face, with some even living a lifestyle beyond their earnings. He argued that somebody must be paying for it.

> The question to ask yourself is how do the journalists survive? How do they manage to drive the cars they are driving? That is the question. Somebody is putting the bills somewhere. A publisher once asked his staff, '*what do you think I gave you that identity card for*?' (emphasis added)

The reference to the identity card pertains to one of the publishers who apparently does not pay salaries on time. He simply tells his journalists that

their identity card is enough to enable them to earn a living. However, another respondent, a former managing director of a newspaper publishing company, and now a leading columnist in Nigeria, offered suggestions on addressing some of the problems affecting the newspaper industry. Hinting at the need to change ethical attitudes in confronting the challenges facing journalism in Nigeria, he argued:

> […] we must eschew tribalism and ethnicity. We must eschew religious bias. Of course, we all have our biases but the most important thing is when you come to do your reporting, try as much as possible to put it aside. It is not easy but you must try. Trying is not too difficult, achieving the end of it, balance; objective, fair reporting is difficult. But at least making the attempt is not that difficult.

In general, the issues raised here point to the need for training, apart from other considerations that must be addressed if journalists are to practice in an environment where the principles of honesty and impartiality are upheld.

The challenging nature of the conditions in which Nigerian journalists operate is best illustrated by recent stories about corruption in the media. The case of Paul Ibe, formerly with *ThisDay* newspaper, comes to mind. The BBC reported the story thus:

> Nigerian journalists are typically paid wretched salaries, and even the pittance to which they are entitled is often owed for months at a stretch. A former editor with Nigeria's *ThisDay* newspaper […] became something of a celebrity in local media circles after an Abuja court awarded him damages against the newspaper's publishers. Paul Ibe had in 2011 filed proceedings against his former employer, seeking payment of outstanding monthly salaries and other allowances. (BBC 2015)

This story is simply one example among many that illustrates the challenges that journalism faces from within. Lack of payment of salaries is common in Nigerian newspapers. Some newspapers in Nigeria have attempted to solidify their capital base and ensure favourable working conditions for their staff; yet, according to a former editor of a leading Nigerian newspaper, journalists from some media organisations were caught by their proprietors colluding with politicians to plant stories in the newspapers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter has examined the issue of corruption in the Nigerian press, as well as the poor capitalisation that undermines the practice of journalism. The chapter contextualised these issues by looking at the historical landscape and the complexity of the Nigerian press. Using qualitative interviews with journalists working in different newspapers, the findings suggested a number of issues. The first among these, which is common in African countries—as discussed in several chapters in this book—is brown envelope journalism (see Chaps. 1 and 8). Corruption in the press has become so pervasive that it has nearly become the norm, as almost all the respondents agreed that it is a major issue which must be addressed.

The second issue that came up in the chapter is how the poor capital base of the Nigerian press contributes to promoting the culture of corruption. It is important to note that the poor capital base of the press is not unique to Nigeria; it is a common feature across Africa and the developing world. Ronning (2009) critically studied the problem of corruption in Africa and how it affects governance structures on the continent. He questions whether the news media is in a position to address the menace of corruption. Ronning's observation is important to the present research, because there is tendency to look at the press in isolation from the society in which it exists.

This chapter shows that while the news media discharges its responsibility as the fourth estate (Lawson 2002), it needs to look at itself critically in order to justify its position as the watchdog of society. As discussed by Hallin and Mancini (2004), the media is part of society, so if corruption is a problem, as is the case with many countries, then the media itself will be affected. Therefore, addressing the problem of corruption in the media and strengthening its capital base has to be looked at holistically.

The third issue is the media–elite nexus, or what Hallin and Mancini (2004) call 'clientelism'; in the case of Nigeria, Joseph (1988) terms this prebendalism. As discussed, right from inception, the media in Nigeria has been controlled by the elites. The first crop of Independence leaders produced by Nigeria such as Nnamdi Azikwe and Obamfemi Awolowo were all newspaper barons. The same scenario obtains in many sub-Saharan African countries.

Despite this challenge, media scholars are of the opinion that the press in Africa should be more creative, by devising ways of accessing capital and the skills necessary to operate independently, so that they can pay workers'

salaries and avoid putting journalists at the mercy of the elites who are ready to exploit the poverty of the journalist. According to Gicheru (2014, 35):

> Access to capital and skills training not only for editorial staff but for those on the commercial and business sides are also imperative if the newspapers are to be sustainable and withstand the pressures from advertising, and indeed, government influence. Print newspapers in Africa must learn from what has happened to the print media in US and Europe and devise new ways and strategies of incorporating these technologies in their operations if they are to remain successful and in business. The strategies adopted must not necessarily replicate those adopted elsewhere but must bear in mind each countries media situation.

Gicheru's study is quite relevant to this chapter in that she discussed a number of issues that could help strengthen the newspaper environment in sub-Saharan Africa. One such issue is access to the capital that can help finance the newspaper industry so that it can be independent. According to her, reliance on the government to provide financing, or on business-persons to invest in return for favours from editors, will not help journalism. She advocated the example of Ghana, where the constitution of the country recognised the establishment of a media development fund.

While the issues raised by Gicheru could help address some of the inadequacies of poor capitalisation and widespread corruption within the press, newspapers in sub-Saharan Africa must be more innovative and should think of alternative sources of capital and financing. There are some other models of journalism around the world that can be adopted and modified within specific contexts to help recapitalise the newspaper industry in Africa. One such model is the BBC model of paying a licence fee. Though not perfect or completely free from government interference, as discussed by Franklin (2004), such a model will transfer the ownership of the newspapers to the public. As such, the journalist knows that the citizens rather than government or media barons pay his salary. National unions of journalists should push for legislation or even constitutional reforms in Africa, so that ways of accessing financing that is independent of the state and media tycoons becomes possible.

Another approach that will be useful in strengthening the capital base of newspapers in Nigeria, and Africa at large, is to consider crowdfunding. Already, the idea of crowdfunded journalism is being promoted, as indi-

cated in a report prepared by Pew Research Centre (2016). Private newspapers that have some form of independence, such as the *Daily Trust* and the *Punch* in Nigeria, or *The Nation* in Kenya, and have a level of credibility with the public, should utilise crowdfunding to strengthen their capital base. They can start with key journalism projects, particularly in areas of investigative journalism or socially driven journalism such as poverty alleviation, maternal mortality and youth empowerment. They can raise funds to work on these projects and build on the credibility of the projects they have executed to generate more funding for the newspapers, while remaining accountable to the public.

Since independence, African media has relied too much on government and private barons. If this system did not work over the last fifty to sixty years of African independence, there is no guarantee that it will work now. More innovative ways of financing are needed to improve newsmaking cultures in Africa. This has to be done by journalists themselves, rather than by relying on third parties who have an agenda that is different from protecting the interests of the public.

Notes

1. Abeokuta is the capital of Ogun State in Nigeria.
2. Atiku Abubakar was the vice-president from 1999 to 2007. Together with President Olusegun Obasanjo, he was accused of diverting money from the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) for personal use by a senate committee.

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'Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place'? A Comparative Study of How Business Journalists Negotiate Ethical Policies in Kenya and South Africa

Admire Mare

Business journalism media has metamorphosed from being just a purveyor of business intelligence to becoming the handmaiden of modern economies. It encapsulates all reporting that is written not only about businesses but also about the economy and financial markets (Roush 2006; Kariithi 2002). Because of the importance of economics and financial issues in modern societies, business news derives from, and is related to, nearly all aspects of human life. As Roush (2004, 5) observes, business journalism has had a profound effect on 'many countries and the billions of people who interact with companies on an everyday basis by purchasing their goods, products, and services.' Despite its late-comer status as a sub-field of the broader journalistic field, a mix up of concepts has meant that business journalism has been seen as an offshoot of 'development journalism' dating back to the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s (Kareithi and Kariithi 2005). Some scholars (Thompson 2000; Parker 1997) argue that there is no such

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a thing as a monolithic 'business' news beat. Others (see Tambini 2009; Roush 2004) note that the broad church referred to as business journalism deals with the reportage of markets as well as monetary and fiscal policies.

In Africa, early business news publications provided colonial administrators with details of crop and livestock prices, information about what ships had entered the port, and what goods they contained (Thompson 2000; Brand 2010). This information, which constituted earliest manifestations of economic news, was crucial for business decisions. As Brand (2010) argues, business news media arose as a response to the hunger for financial and economic information amongst businesspeople and investors. This is largely because it constitutes an instrumental cog in the market mechanism, which provides information for market participants, investors, and corporations (Thompson 2000).

Despite its colonial ancestry, modern business journalism in Africa can be traced to the continent's protracted economic crises of the late 1970s and early 1980s, when the failure of the World Bank-sponsored structural adjustment programs (SAPs) thrust economics into the public limelight in many African countries (Kareithi and Kariithi 2005). Covering policy issues such as privatization, trade liberalization, and the devaluation of local currencies, business journalists emerged from their back benches in the newsrooms to dominate front page stories. At that particular juncture, business reporters became associated with the role of monitoring and scrutinizing the government expenditure, budgetary performance, and implementation targets. Similar to other journalistic genres, business journalists in most African newsrooms also operate on shoe-string budgets and are poorly remunerated (Mare and Brand 2010; Skjerdal 2010). These extraneous factors have been singled out as influencing many journalists to bargain away—in myriad different forms—their independence, professionalism, and ethics, in order to make ends meet (Kariithi 2003; Mare and Brand 2010).

Prior to the 2008 crisis in global banking, markets, and economies (Tambini 2009), little academic research had paid attention to the notion of business journalism ethics. However, the collapse of global economies and prevalence of toxic financial products led some scholars (Mare and Brand 2010; Brand 2010; Tambini 2009) to begin to question the incestuous relationship between business journalism and the operations and behavior of financial and economic markets. Business journalism ethics are concerned with the proper regulation of the relationship between financial

reporters and the market (Tambini 2009). There is no single bundle of business journalism ethics, but trading in stocks of companies that reporters write about is considered unethical. Advocates (Tambini 2009; Roush 2004) of business journalism ethics claim that reporters, by the very nature of their beat, face many situations that could compromise their professional integrity. Business journalism is also embedded in the price-setting mechanism, which affects the market sentiment.

Tambini (2009) has proposed a conceptual model for understanding the rights and duties of business journalists. According to him, business news media has power to influence the prices of individual securities like bonds and stocks (Tambini 2009). He also suggests that there is a reflexive relationship between business reporting and the market. Cognizant of the fluid nature of the relationship between mainstream and business journalism ethics, it is important to reiterate that the former addresses the relationship between society and the media, while the latter seeks to regulate the relationship between news and economic/financial markets. Tambini (2009) argues that business journalism, like any other journalistic subfield, is based on a 'social compact' of rights and responsibilities. These rights and privileges are afforded to business journalists in return for commitments to ethical journalism.

Business journalism has impact on micro (impact of news on stock prices) and macro (impact on broader economic sentiment) levels (Tambini 2009). As Colon (2003) propounds, there are discernible correlations between media reports and stock market movements. This is partly because investors react to business news by buying or selling stocks, bonds, and treasury bills. Business journalism is thus viewed as influencing feedback loops and 'attention cascades' among investors. These practices also contribute to market movements, as investors seek reinforcement for their beliefs and try to anticipate what other investors may do (Tambini 2009; Colon 2003). While the causes of panics and other forms of market behavior ultimately lie in economic fundamentals rather than media representations, scholars (Tambini 2009; Roush 2004) argue that reports by financial journalists do have a role.

Kariithi (2002) points out that developing an ethics code on business journalism in Africa is still critical, especially when one considers the bountiful coverage of corporate entities and personalities. Scholars (White 2010; Tambini 2009) observe that in a context where ethical frameworks are lax or nonexistent, business journalists have the power to influence the stock markets through market manipulation, short-selling, and

insider trading. Research and analysis is therefore required to ascertain the prevalence of such directly corrupt practices, and the effectiveness of measures aimed at preventing them in African newsrooms. Such research is lacking in the African context, partly because business journalism as a subfield is a comparatively recent phenomenon on the continent (Kariithi 2002). Against this backdrop, this chapter seeks to shed light on how business journalists in Kenya and South Africa deal with the ethical dilemmas that confront them in the newsroom. Next, I look at the research setting.

RESEARCH SETTING: SOUTH AFRICA AND KENYA

South Africa and Kenya have traceable colonial ties to the British Empire, although they have experienced different transitional routes. Whereas Kenya got her independence in 1967, South Africa transitioned into a democracy in 1994 following a tumultuous struggle against the apartheid system. Unlike Kenya, which has experienced the 'two-turnover test' (Huntington 1991)[1] despite the regression of 2007/2008, South Africa has not yet and does not look to do so any time soon (McCorley 2013). As McCorley (2013, 123) observes, although South Africa in some respects has been successful in implementing political reforms to develop the complexity of the economy, increased complexity between 1994 and 2016 has not meant that democracy has been ingrained.

Prior to the economic and political liberalization of the 1990s, Kenya was under the dictatorship of Daniel arap Moi, which resulted in a political climate of fear and manipulatable political institutions (see LeBas 2011; Ogola 2011). The country is also riddled with massive corruption and ethnicized party politics (LeBas 2011), which has rendered political institutions fragile and, at worst, generally weak. Although touted as an epitome of consolidated democracy in Africa, South Africa, like many other transitional societies, has not escaped the cancer of corruption and clientelism (Lodge 2014). As Lodge (2014, 16) observes, the ruling ANC party under President Jacob Zuma has developed neo-patrimonial characteristics, including the politics of clientelism, where ANC support is often associated with personal rewards.

Hallin and Mancini's (2004) seminal work offers a standardized measurement for comparing media systems within Western democracies, which has also been applied in non-Western societies.[2] Kenyan and South African media systems can arguably be conceptualized as falling within the

'polarized pluralist' model (Hadland 2007).[3] Kenya fits into the polarized pluralist model because the media system there has a high degree of political parallelism and the state has historically played a central, interventionist role in the media.[4] The media system has also institutionalized an environment in which party politics and the media are closely integrated, despite the over-commercialization of the press (Ogola 2015). The South African media system also falls into the polarized pluralist model, though it retains strong liberal model traits (Hadland 2007).[5] These traits include the massive development of commercial newspapers with little state involvement and the relative dominance of market mechanisms and of commercial media in general.

Like many other transitional societies, Kenya and South Africa are still battling with institutional traces of the old regimes in terms of media transformations (see Ogola 2011, 2015; Rao and Wasserman 2015). Compared to the apartheid era, the South African media system has grown, with hundreds of radio stations, newspapers, and magazines now in existence. The only major challenge is that the media is overwhelmingly commercial in nature, with little public funding, which skews coverage toward upper-income brackets of the population and the issues that matter most to them (Friedman 2011; Rao and Wasserman 2015). Like in Kenya, the liberalized media environment in South Africa has led to monopolistic tendencies (Duncan 2010). The print media are still largely in the hands of the economically powerful white capital.

Similar patterns have also been witnessed in Kenya, largely due to the over-commercialization of the media (Wasserman and Maweu 2015). As Ogola (2015) observes, the Kenyan press system is dominated by a duopoly—the Nation Media Group (NMG) and Standard Group (SG)—relegating emerging media organizations to part players in the sector. Because of the financial precariousness and dependence on political patronage, some of the media organizations were used to mobilize ethnic sentiment, particularly in the 2007/2008 general election, when Kenya descended into violent ethnic conflict (Ogola 2015).

Both countries have recorded steady economic growth rates since the dawn of multiparty democracy, which has provided a solid foundation for the launch of sophisticated business journalism publications (Mare and Brand 2010; Kareithi and Kariithi 2005). In South Africa, business journalism blossomed since the 1960s with the launch of publications like the *Business Times*, *Financial Times*, and *Business Day*. Newspapers aligned with mining capital, such as the *South African Mining Journal*, not only

reflected the ideas and views of the audience but created and articulated the ideology underpinning the development of mining capital (Brand 2010). The *Financial Mail*, South Africa's first free-standing newspaper, was launched in 1959. It was later followed by a string of new titles including the *Business Times*, *Financial Gazette*, and *Finance Week*. The *Business Times* rapidly became the Times Media Group's (now known as Tiso BlackStar Media) most profitable publication and, together with the *Financial Times*, came to define financial journalism in South Africa (Brand 2010).

As far as Kenya is concerned, the first attempt at launching a business journalism publication was undertaken by Njehu Gatabaki in 1978 when he founded *Kenya News* and *International Report* (Kareithi and Kariithi 2005). The first weekly publication devoted to financial journalism was the *Financial Review*, founded in 1986, as a sister paper to the *Weekly Review*. As Kareithi and Kariithi (2005) note, much of the newspaper coverage of 'economic' and 'financial' issues in Kenya during the late 1970s and the early 1980s could in fact be classified as 'development' journalism. In recent years, the country has witnessed significant advances in business journalism, largely driven by the NMG in East Africa.

South Africa and Kenya were chosen because they are home to some of the oldest business newspapers as well as the most vibrant stock exchanges in sub-Saharan Africa (Mare and Brand 2010). The former boasts of the buoyant Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) while latter has the Nairobi Stock Exchange (NSE). These stock exchanges have created a fertile ground for the growth of business journalism publications. For the purposes of this chapter, I focus on *Business Day* (South Africa) and *Business Daily* (Kenya). The former is one of the top-selling daily business news publications in South Africa. It is owned by Business Day and Financial Mail (BDFM), a 50/50 joint venture between Avusa and Pearson PLC. The paper was launched in 1986. With a daily readership of over 120,000, *Business Day* has a circulation of 41,591 copies (SAARF 2012). *Business Day* targets the 7–10 LSM bracket in terms of its niche market.[6] *Business Daily* in Kenya is one of East Africa's most influential business newspapers published by the NMG. The NMG is listed on the Nairobi Stock Exchange and is owned by the Aga Khan family through their Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKDN).

In terms of methodological approach, the present study deployed the approaches of both the most different (MDSD) and most similar systems design (MSSD). The MSSD, on the one hand, compares very similar cases, which only differ in the dependent variable; while the MDSD, on the other hand, compares very different cases, all of which, however, have

in common the same dependent variable (Przeworski and Teune 1970, 33). As Peters (1998, 41) aptly observes, practically, it is difficult to deploy one research design while leaving aside the other.

The empirical data used in this study were gathered through document analysis and in-depth interviews with journalists over a period between August 2010 and December 2015. Document analysis was mainly used to discern and analyze the various kinds of ethical issues outlined in the two newspapers' codes of ethics. The resultant thematic issues gleaned from the codes of ethics were utilized to construct an interview guide. The interview guide was used to facilitate guided conversations. I preferred semi-structured interviews over structured interviews because they allowed me to encourage the respondents to freely articulate their experiences and explanations about a particular phenomenon. In total, twelve purposive and conveniently sampled reporters (five from each newsroom) and editors (one from each newsroom) were interviewed in Johannesburg and Nairobi. Because all of my respondents were fluent in English, I used that language to conduct my interviews in both case nations. An average interview lasted between thirty minutes and one hour, depending on the time constraints on the part of my respondents. Interviews were recorded using a mobile phone and short written notes were also taken as a back-up mechanism.

All respondents were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality; hence, when quoting their verbatim statements, I refer to them as business reporter 1, 2, 3, and so forth. The interview responses were analyzed and categorized on the basis of the key themes gleaned from the codes of ethics. I read and re-read the data, noting down the recurring themes on the basis of the research question and interview guide. As Lindlof and Taylor (2002) argue, the recurring themes in an interview capture the essence of an account and lead us to a practical understanding of meanings and actions. With these issues in mind, next I focus on the conceptual framework.

Conceptual Framework

This study deploys Bourdieusian concepts such as field, habitus, capital, and doxa to make sense of how business journalists from the two African newsrooms negotiate ethical decision-making in their everyday newsmaking practices. These four concepts propounded by Bourdieu share a lot of similarities that are useful in understanding the relations within the journalistic

field. The Bourdieusian frame allowed me to identify and address the ways in which business reporters located at an intercalary position of the journalistic field and the wider political and economic context negotiate their normative ethics in practice. Bourdieu's theorization also constitutes an important bulwark against 'media-centrism.'

Like Giddens' structuration theory, Bourdieu's ideas account for the dialectical interplay between structure (wider contextual factors) and agency (reporters). Bourdieu (1990) is concerned with describing the agent (reporter) not as structuralism's bearer of structure but as a practical operator of constructions of the real. Agents (reporters) are neither totally free nor are they mere puppets of objective social laws (Bourdieu 1990). The notion of journalistic field enabled me to analyze how the business journalism sub-field and other fields in society, such as the economy and politics, interact and mutually influence each other.

A field is defined by Bourdieu (2005, 30) as 'the site of actions and reactions performed by social agents endowed with permanent dispositions, partly acquired in their experiences of these social fields.' It also directs our attention to situations where business journalists are competing with other actors outside their field (such as economists, stockbrokers, advertisers, public relations agencies, and politicians] but also within the field (owners, shareholders, and editors) and against each other. This dovetails with Benson and Neveu's (2005, 1) observation that the concept of the journalistic field offers 'a new way of understanding and explaining the constraints and processes involved in news media production'. The activities and practices of the business news media fall into the general field of cultural production. Journalism is also situated at the 'heteronomous pole' of the field (Bourdieu 1990). This suggests that it is strongly dominated by the external pressure of economic power, which Bourdieu insists has a 'powerful determinative effect … in the contemporary historical context' (Benson 1999, 488).

Bourdieu views society as made up of relatively autonomous but 'homologous' fields: interrelated social systems with competition for accumulation and monopolization of field-specific forms of symbolic capital. The boundaries between various fields are very porous, such that the journalistic field intersects with the political, economic, religious, and other fields and struggles, while capital has the potential to circulate between fields (Bourdieu 1990). For Bourdieu, the (business) journalistic field is seen as part of the field of power; that is, it tends to engage first and foremost with those agents who possess high volumes of capital. These agents include advertisers, analysts, politicians, and public officials.

Bourdieu's notion of the journalistic field is useful for understanding relations within that field, since 'it pays more attention to the potentially asymmetrical relationship between a well as within institutional spheres' (Bourdieu 1998, 21–22).

Habitus refers to the socially constituted system of dispositions that orient 'thoughts, perceptions, expressions, and actions' (Bourdieu 1990, 55). It is a kind of cognitive map that informs behavior but not in a deterministic way, as actors [reporters] retain some degree of agency. There is a dialectical relationship between habitus and field, and it is the interface of the field and habitus that produces practice (newsmaking practices, routines, actions, and beat systems), which are actions, behaviors, or attitudes of agents. These are repeated over time, to the extent that they become habitualized (Bourdieu 1990). The practices in the journalistic field are shaped and constrained by both written (codified professional guidelines) and unwritten rules, constituting what could be described as doxa. Doxa denotes aspects of social existence that are taken for granted or generally viewed as self-evident (Bourdieu 1990).

This study therefore conceptualizes journalistically (un)ethical behavior as a 'structure,' which is internalized as 'habitus' by business journalists within their journalistic sub-field. Through on-the-job socialization, reporters undergo the process of 'habitualization' in different newsroom habitus. According to Berger and Luckmann (1966), 'habitualization' refers to the reproducibility of a human action or behavior with an economy of effort as a result of it being repeated frequently. This demonstrates that journalists internalize the ways of doing things, including undercutting deals with various actors in the journalistic field.

Capital denotes 'actually usable resources and powers' (Bourdieu 1984, 114). There exist multiple species of capital, which are pursued by different actors within the journalistic field. These include political, symbolic, social, economic, and cultural capital. These forms of capital are mutually convertible and cannot be treated as isolated from each other (Bourdieu 1990). For instance, journalists bring cultural capital (in terms of qualifications and professional competence), while owners and shareholders bring economic capital (finance, technological equipment, and so forth), which they can convert to more economic or even political capital; and news sources also come to the journalistic field with cultural, economic, social, and political capital. Those with the most capital (for instance, advertisers and owners) will make/enforce the rules and control the rewards in a particular (journalistic) field.

Discussion and Analysis of Findings

Negotiating Business Journalism Ethics in Two African Newsrooms

This section seeks to discuss not only the respondents' coping strategies when dealing with the 'murky' sub-field of business journalism but also the ways in which they navigate the responsibilities and duties circumscribed in their newsroom codes of ethics. Interviews in Kenya and South Africa show that most reporters lack awareness about the professional and institutional framework within which they operate. Respondents indicated that they are caught between a rock and a hard place, which requires them to play a *watchdog role* in the capitalist economic system while also assuming the *lapdog role* in order to sustain the business model of journalism.

Pressure from Advertisers

From the interview responses, it was found that pressure from advertisers constituted one of the major impediments to ethical business journalism in Kenya and South Africa. Respondents in Kenya observed that big companies exercised influence through withholding their advertisements or advising editors to ensure positive coverage in return for continued advertising contracts. Interviewees identified 'big' advertisers like telecommunications, banking, and insurance companies as well as retail supermarkets as the major buyers of advertising space in newspapers. Thus, these companies used their economic capital to twist the arms of media organizations into acting as their public relations agencies. This supports Roush's (2006) view that advertising has probably had the biggest impact among the external forces acting on the development of business journalism. Although the influence from advertisers usually works in subtle ways, reporters in Kenya revealed that they were under pressure from senior management to quietly tone down on damaging stories involving major advertisers. As Bourdieu (1990) points out, those with limited forms of capital occupy nodes of subordination in the field, while those with more in terms of a particular form or combination of capital occupy the dominant nodes.

Unlike in Kenya, respondents in South Africa noted that major advertisers exerted their influence through cultivating personal relations with members of the editorial management. South African respondents

indicated that it was difficult to tell whether major advertisers cut deals with the editorial management in return for positive coverage. In contrast, in Kenya, some 'big' advertisers had the habit of saying to senior editors things like: 'your guys [reporters] are writing this story, can you stop them?' As some interviewees from Kenya explained:

> Some companies threaten to cut advertising budgets if negative stories are written about them. In most cases, senior editors end up bowing down to pressure to protect the business model of the organization. (Reporter 2, *Business Daily*)

> Advertising is an oxygen pipeline for our existence as media companies hence those who pay the piper calls the tune. At times, you can get a call from the CEO or editor to kill certain stories in order to safeguard advertising revenue. (Reporter 5, *Business Daily*)

It is also clear from the above extracts that the intercalary position that business journalists occupy makes it difficult for them to act ethically, as private newspapers are driven by the quest to make profits. This view is further corroborated by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, 98), who observe that the monopolization of (economic) capital in a given field allows its possessors (for instance, advertisers) to wield power or influence. Threats to withhold or even cut advertising budgets were identified as strategies deployed by powerful corporates to ring-fence themselves against negative media coverage in Kenya. In order to circumvent these arm-twisting tactics of 'big' advertisers, respondents in Kenya revealed that they developed 'everyday forms of coping mechanisms,' like toeing the editorial line (unwritten institutional conventions) and self-censorship, in order to safeguard the advertising revenue stream. A reporter at *Business Daily* put it as follows:

> Although ethics are emphasized in journalism schools, in practice we are faced with serious choices to make. It's either you play the ethics card and lose advertisers and news sources or you bend a little to pressures from within or outside the newsroom.

In contrast, respondents from South Africa were not forthcoming on how they dealt with pressure from advertisers. They observed that such pressure could be occurring, although they were not privy to the details. One of the respondents observed that since advertisers tended to interact

with the marketing and advertising department, it was possible that they could express their dissatisfaction to the editorial management rather than to shop-floor reporters. The following interview extracts are insightful in this regard:

> I cannot honestly rule out the influence of powerful advertisers in shaping the news discourse. I am yet to experience it though. I think advertisers are likely to speak directly to the management or the marketing and advertising department rather than with us. (Reporter 7, *Business Day*)

> I have heard about some companies which cry foul when they receive bad press but I am not sure if they end up using their advertising leverage to bargain for positive media coverage. (Reporter 6, *Business Day*)

Compared to the Kenyan context, responses cited above from South African journalists suggest that although pressure from advertisers cannot be entirely ruled out, it is difficult to describe its manifestation. Access to economic capital in the journalistic field therefore engenders power inequalities between advertisers and media organizations, with the former generally retaining the upper hand.

Pressure from Owners and Shareholders

Compared to respondents from *Business Day* in South Africa, most interviewees from *Business Daily* in Kenya indicated that there is pressure from owners to 'kill' stories that are seen as harmful to the corporate image. Some of the respondents noted that the newspaper had list of 'untouchable' companies. Most of the untouchable companies had interlocking directorships with those who sat on the Nation Media Group board of directors. This means that business journalists were free to cover any other company which is not part of the list of the untouchables. Respondents from Kenya also observed that pressure from owners came through organizationally embedded editors who used their influence or power to foreground certain news stories while turning a blind eye on others. As Wasserman and Maweu (2015) add, this shows that while individual journalists may scrupulously avoid conflicts of interest that may bias their reporting, their employers may be intimately linked to larger corporate interests through interlocking boards of directors and other elite connections. The net result of this pressure is that it creates a newsroom habitus

where certain newsworthy issues are ignored as well as certain companies and individuals being shielded from negative media coverage. In the end, it is arguable that business journalists' ethical 'predispositions …, judgments, and behaviours are the result of a long-term process of [re]socialization … via professional education' (Benson and Neveu 2005, 3).

For instance, one respondent from Kenya complained:

> Sometimes you will just find your story not appearing in the newspaper despite having gone through the necessary checks by editors and sub-editors. This means that someone somewhere yielded enormous power to determine which story sees the light of day. (Reporter 1, *Business Daily*)

This remark chimes with Wasserman and Maweu's (2015) view that at NMG in Kenya there are some shareholders who should be handled with care or whom the *silent policies* dictate should be protected.

In South Africa, respondents observed that pressure from owners and shareholders was exerted through editorial management. As such, editors exerted pressure on reporters to 'protect' certain companies and individuals. Through spiking certain stories, editors were seen as playing a gate-keeping role on behalf of the owners and shareholders. Interview responses indicated that reporters' ethical agency was severely affected by their relatively 'powerless' positions as employees dealing with stakeholders who are endowed with political, cultural, and economic capital. One of the South African reporters noted:

> Newsrooms are generally high pressure zones. We experience most of our pressure from editors who act on behalf of owners and shareholders. They call the shots so in the end they can protect whoever they want without necessarily feeling the burden to explain to you why they didn't publish the article. (Reporter 8, *Business Day*)

Based on the above interview extract, it is arguable that because of the positioning of business journalism at the heteronomous pole of the journalistic field, shareholders, largely due to their economic capital, have a 'powerful determinative effect' on media content and editorial decision-making. The journalistic field can therefore be viewed as a battle zone for access to various kinds of capital or profits and as a space for agents' positioning for various types of stakes (Bourdieu 1984).

Pressure from News Sources

News sources exert control through selective granting or denying of access, the threat or actuality of lawsuits, or by relying on personal relationships with media executives who have the power to shape the news agenda (Tambini 2009). Respondents from the two newsrooms mentioned that they experienced both overt and covert forms of pressure from news sources. Overt pressure from news sources was mostly reported in the Kenyan newsroom, when compared to South Africa. Interviewees in Kenya revealed that there are cases where journalists are literally 'owned' by news sources. Respondents explained that 'rubbing news sources the wrong way' had the effect of one being sidelined from receiving leaked economic data and exclusive interviews with newsmakers. Powerful news sources that were singled out in both newsrooms include stockbrokers, economists, public officials, and chief executive officers (CEOs). As Champagne (1990, 239) posits, these actors are able to deploy their 'media' and cultural capital to influence journalistic events based on the capital that they have already acquired elsewhere.

In the case of Kenya, the country has been characterized as deeply immersed in corruption and patron–client networks, where politicians and businesspeople rely on the media and journalists to cover up their misdemeanors and for good publicity (Mudhai 2007). The following responses are insightful in this regard:

> At times you meet cunning CEOs who try by all means to push their corporate news angles. In this work of ours, if you refuse to budge then he or she will approach the next guy on the line. That person can be strategically located above you, which means if he/she manages to influence that one you have no choice but to run with the story. (Reporter 3, *Business Daily*)

Interviews with business journalists in the two media organizations confirmed that corporate entities exert enormous pressure on the business press, partly due to the embedded nature of the relationship between the financial press and the market. Unlike in Kenya, respondents in South Africa spoke about covert pressure from news sources. Some respondents hinted that there were subtle forms of pressure from news sources, like refusing to grant interviews to journalists viewed as hostile. Covert pressure from news sources was described as emanating from financial analysts, stockbrokers, and public relations firms: 'Because we depend on financial

analysts and stockbrokers to analyze company statements for us, they usually abuse that source dependency to advance their own interests. Some even expect us to send them stories before we publish them' (Reporter 6, *Business Day*).

In light of this, news sources can strategically deploy their cultural capital (knowledge of the internal workings of the financial markets) to have their way over journalists. This dovetails with the view that the journalistic field is characterized by the strategic deployment of power by different social actors (Bourdieu 1990).

Insider Trading

Most codes of ethics on business journalism, especially in the USA and Europe, include strict rules to prevent insider trading (Tambini 2010). Insider trading refers to 'the practice of using information that is not in the public domain to invest in shares for individual gain' (Tambini 2010, 10). In the South African context, insider trading is against the law and in breach of stock exchange regulations. In Kenya, the practice is outlawed by the NSE, although *Business Daily*'s code of ethics is silent on the issue. Respondents from Kenya and South Africa observed that insider trading cannot be ruled out, even in cases where share ownership was regulated through institutional codes of ethics. An interesting case is that of *Business Daily* in Kenya, which is situated in the same building as the NSE. Asked about how the Nation Media Group was dealing with the issue of insider trading, the editor of *Business Daily* had this to say:

> We have not received any complaints thus far. However, I can say there is no concerted programme group-wide to monitor business journalists. I must hasten to say that not receiving complaints doesn't mean it's not happening and will not happen in future. (Business Editor, *Business Daily*)

However, one of the reporters indicated that the close proximity between the NSE and the NMG meant that they had an advantage over other media houses in Kenya: 'The Nairobi Stock Exchange is located in the first floor of the Nation Media Centre. We know the results ahead of everyone because we are strategically located close to the stock exchange and also due to our journalism privileges' (Reporter 4, *Business Daily*).

In South Africa, reporting on companies in which the journalist owns shares was described as violating the ideal of avoiding conflict of interest.

South African journalists observed that although the practice is outlawed, codes were only useful for communicating standards and raising awareness, rather than as an effective tool of policing behavior. One of the interviewees stated: 'Like all corrupt cases, insider trading is hard to detect. Journalists can still own shares through proxies which mean that they can still write about companies where they are interested parties' (Reporter 10, *Business Day*). This response suggests that there are no watertight rules on share ownership and insider trading. Although Kenyan respondents acknowledged the existence of the practice, some of them, when probed further, professed ignorance. This demonstrates that insider trading remains a gray area in both nations' newsrooms, with no firm ethical rules in place to address it.

Market Manipulation

Market manipulation, also known as 'share ramping,' is one of the strands of business journalism ethics that is not specifically addressed in the codes of ethics in Kenya and South Africa. In terms of market manipulation, journalists can have impact on share prices through omission of certain information and spreading rumors as part of strategy to profit from price fluctuations (Tambini 2009). Interviews with reporters in Kenya and South Africa revealed that most of them were aware of the influence that business journalism can have on the prices of stocks and bonds: 'Business information is very sensitive and valuable hence we as business reporters are at an advantage to influence the market' (Reporter, *Business Day*). One important theme that emerged from the interviews is that business journalists know that news reports can influence the market. Respondents in Kenya also acknowledged the 'power' of business news in moving stock prices but kept mum when probed further on the existence of market manipulation.

South Africa respondents acknowledged the potential of news reports to trigger 'bullish' and 'bearish' sentiments in the market. Despite its intercalary positioning within the broader field, the (business) journalistic sub-field applies pressure of its own across society (Bourdieu 1998). This is done through the mediation of knowledge and power across various fields, to the point that news reporting can have a direct effect on the behavior of investors.

Brown Envelopes, Freebies, and Other Gifts

The basic difference between a brown envelope and a freebie is that the former denotes a cash gift, while the latter is a material gift (Skjerdal 2010, 370). Brown envelopes are mostly provided by informants and sources. These unethical practices pose a challenge to editorial independence. Most reporters in Kenya and South Africa acknowledged that the practice of receiving gifts from sources was unavoidable, because their media organizations did not have sufficient resources—such as motor vehicles—to cover news events. Respondents in Kenya also revealed that even the allowance they received while in the field covering news was generally not enough to meet their expenses. Although all the respondents in both countries refused to divulge whether they had ever accepted cash or material gifts from sources either positively to publish or kill a story, they observed that the practice was pervasive in the journalistic field. One of the respondents from Kenya stated: 'In cases where a business organization is trying to hide something, then you expect brown envelope journalism to be the last resort. Envelopes exchange hands on a daily basis in Kenya' (Reporter 4, *Business Daily*).

In light of this, it is arguable that material inducements take place in cases where information is being hidden. Respondents in Kenya and South Africa appeared to make little distinction between freebies and brown envelope journalism. While some of the respondents in Kenya pointed out that taking bribes from news sources was unethical, others justified the practice, citing low salaries and poor working conditions. For instance, at *Business Daily*, reporters took home an average of US$800 per month, while those from *Business Day* earned US$1500 per month. Besides socioeconomic conditions, Krüger (2009) argues that brown envelope journalism thrives even in media-rich environments like South Africa as long as media houses themselves are poor, circulations are small, and the advertising cake is very limited and divided among too many hungry mouths.

In South Africa, respondents observed that: 'Tipping of journalists cannot be ruled out in this profession. Rules maybe set but when managers are not leading by example then junior reporters can also accept freebies. It's difficult to control' (Reporter 9, *Business Day*). Another South African respondent added: 'Not hearing about complaints related to material inducements from news sources does not mean nothing is happening … It may be happening behind our backs' (Reporter 6, *Business Day*).

The institutionalization of the habitus of material inducements and gifts exchange in African newsrooms has been confirmed by a number of scholars (see Ndangam 2006; Lodamo and Skjerdal 2009; Mare and Brand 2010). These studies show that the phenomenon of brown envelope journalism in African newsrooms is very rampant and is mostly fuelled by poor working conditions, greed, materialism, and hunger for media coverage by business enterprises. In Kenya, respondents observed that junior reporters are inducted and socialized into unethical journalistic practices by their senior peers. This indicates that the habitus of brown envelopes become a way of being and doing over time as reporters 'negotiate their field and internalizes roles, relations and expectations' (Bourdieu 1990, 56). The habitualization of brown envelope practices therefore produces a culture which is normalized and reinforced through continuous violation of ethical frameworks. Consequently, the typification of these habitualized actions constitutes social institutions of unethical journalistic practices. As Berger and Luckmann (1966) argue, the institution itself shapes individual actors as well as individual actions.

Because back-scratching practices are steeped in intimacies, one can build on Nyamnjoh's (2013) concept of *politics na njangi* to argue that *journalism na njangi* has been institutionalized in the Kenyan newsroom habitus when compared to the South African context.[7] As Nyamnjoh (2013) argues, the players must be close enough to each other for backs to be scratched—hence the element of intimacy involved—and also for there to be a possibility of back-scratching becoming backstabbing. The phenomenon can therefore be said to represent an informal contract where the benefactor and beneficiary are expected to fulfill certain obligations.

Conclusion

The study has demonstrated that Kenyan business journalists are more upfront and vocal about the ethical dilemmas that they experience compared to their South African counterparts, who, however, do not deny the existence of unethical journalistic practices. Each newsroom habitus is riddled with its own context-specific challenges that provide stimulus for unethical practices. Through habitualization, unethical brown envelope practices have been normalized within the Kenyan newsroom habitus when

compared to the South African case. As Berger and Luckmann (1966, 72) note, 'institutionalization occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors.' Although internal and external pressures are impacting on business journalism practice in Kenya and South Africa, respondents are navigating these ethical dilemmas differently. In Kenya, reporters and editors have devised 'everyday forms of coping mechanisms' to deal with various kinds of pressure. Unlike Kenyan journalists, who experienced overt forms of pressure from shareholders, advertisers, and news sources, South African journalists indicated that they generally dealt with covert forms of pressure. These ethical dilemmas put business journalists in a difficult position, as they end up self-censoring and thereby institutionalizing a new kind of doxa, which is overwhelmingly at cross-purposes with their professional obligations.

Although business journalism practice in the Kenyan and South African newsrooms is relatively ring-fenced from direct government interference, this study has argued that it is not immune to 'capture' from actors with a monopoly of various species of capital within the journalistic field's value chain. As Wasserman and Maweu (2015) argue, commercial interests are increasingly creating conflict within journalists [and owners] as they try to balance their journalistic values and the organizational values of profit maximization.

In order to re-institutionalize ethical business journalism, there is need to ring-fence political and economic factors from directly interfering with editorial decision-making. There is also need for African newsrooms to ensure that working conditions of journalists are commensurate with the prevailing standards of living, so that the temptation of brown envelopes and moonlighting is curtailed. External and internal disclosure, which entails disclosing interests to readers and editors, should also be enforced. Business journalism codes of ethics and lifestyle audits should be strictly implemented to ensure that the profession retains its integrity and credibility.

Notes

1. According to Huntington (1991), a nascent democracy is considered consolidated only once it has achieved two peaceful electoral alternations after the foundation of the democratic elections. Although passing the two-turnover test does not guarantee that the country will not regress back into authoritarianism, it is generally used in indicating whether a new democracy has matured.
2. They compared the media and political systems of eighteen countries in Europe and North America. In the end, they classified them into: the liberal model, the democratic corporatist model, and the polarized pluralist model.
3. The pluralist model has the media integrated into party politics, weaker commercial media, and a strong role for the state.
4. This denotes a situation in which the media very directly reflect the spectrum and culture of a country's political life.
5. The media operate according to the principles of the free market, without formal connections between media and politics and with minimal state intervention.
6. This is a demographic and market segmentation tool developed by the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) to measure the standard of living of audiences. LSM 10 is the highest, and LSM 1 the lowest.
7. In English, this term means 'you scratch my back, I scratch yours.'

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Media Ethics and Journalism in Tanzania

Ammina B. Kothari

Globalization is expanding connections between individuals, communities, and nations around the world, expediting transmission of information and ideas across geographical boundaries. Media globalization in developing countries provides a unique opportunity to explore how journalism ethics are incorporated into reporting practices as newsrooms strive to become more global. The emergence of 'mixed news media,' including social media tools, podcasting, and online publications, allows media practitioners to create news that can be accessed by a global audience, increasing the need for a global version of ethics to guide the process (Ward 2013, 1). When it comes to postcolonial countries, Wasserman (2011, 794) writes, 'African media increasingly have to negotiate the space between ethical norms and practices as these have evolved in a particular socio-cultural and political environment.' Focusing on post-independence Tanzania as a case study, this chapter traces various factors that influenced the evolution of media ethics there, with particular reference to the articulation of a code of ethics for media professionals by the Media Council of Tanzania.

Using archival documents and interdisciplinary scholarship, I examine how media systems established during the colonial period and post-independence

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continue to influence the application of media ethics in Tanzania. With the goal of providing a contextual framework for understanding how journalists practice their profession in a developing nation, the chapter begins with a discussion of how journalism ethics are applied in a postcolonial country, followed by a review of various stages of media evolution in Tanzania, and concludes with an assessment of opportunities offered by continuous influx of information communication technologies to redefine ethics of journalism practice.

APPLICATION OF JOURNALISM ETHICS IN A POSTCOLONIAL COUNTRY

The foundation of journalism ethics is based on the assumption that media plays an important role in society and so its performance should be guided by socially responsible normative approaches (Mare and Brand 2010). Ward (2008), using the normative media approach, describes journalism ethics as a 'type of applied ethics'—where the focus is on understanding: 'the "micro" problems of what individual journalists should do in particular situations, and the "macro" problems of what news media should do, given their role in society' (139). Berry (2012), elaborating the normative component of media ethics, writes that the application of principles is concerned with how media practitioners operationalize 'social and self-responsibilities, duties, rights, consequences, truth, trust, objectivity-subjectivity, public interest, representation and purpose' (83).

Recognizing that dominant definitions and applications of journalism ethics are based on Western media systems, Ward (2008) proposes that we should engage in cross-cultural dialogue, which not only can de-Westernize media ethics but open up space for inclusion of other ethical systems. For instance, 'African traditions of ubuntuism, of respect to community' are more in line with African society and should be considered when examining ethics of African journalists, because it would incorporate local conditions (Ward 2008, 142). Omojola (2008), in his criticism of media scholars searching for a global version of media ethics, points out that we need to remember that journalists' need for a secure job, their ability to work without censorship, support from employers, and cooperation from sources should be taken into consideration when examining their ethics. Likewise, Wasserman (2011, 801) cautions against 'romanticized essential notions of "African ethics"' and instead recommends that scholars first assess the attitudes and norms currently being negotiated in an African

setting to understand what unique factors are influencing operationalization of media ethics and values in daily newsroom practices.

Berry (2012) posits that most of the academic concerns with journalism ethics tend to focus on how information was gathered and how stories have been framed, and not enough on how the final product is received by the audience. He goes on to argue that while 'it is easy to understand how journalism works, it is difficult to define what it *ought* to be doing as a social and political practice' (34). Ethical considerations are guided by what is acceptable socially and politically; therefore, in order to understand how African journalists negotiate their professional roles, Wasserman (2010) recommends that we apply a 'hybrid ethical framework' to construct ethical norms which reflect reality in postcolonial nations. He writes: 'Ethical ideals would be based upon expectations of the 'the good' within such contexts without assuming that the interpretations of ethical norms are the same across dissimilar settings' (Wasserman 2010, 83).

In the case of Tanzania, reporters, editors, and media owners are all governed by self-enforced codes established by the Media Council of Tanzania. On one level, ethical guidelines for journalists in Tanzania are similar to the four principles declared by the Society of Professional Journalists to be the foundation of ethical journalism—'seek truth and report it,' 'minimize harm,' 'act independently,' and 'be accountable and transparent' (2016). Reporters in Tanzania are also encouraged to be committed to 'truth, accuracy, fairness, independence and moral integrity,' according to the code of ethics published on the Council's website (2015a). However, when a closer look is taken at the individual principles recommended for reporters and editors, there is some ambiguity and vagueness, which may be used to condone or excuse unethical behavior. For instance, media managers and editors are advised to 'refuse gifts, awards, favours, and special treatment from sources, subjects, advertisers or others trying to buy influence.' While reporters are urged to 'not allow personal or family interests to influence them in their professional duties. They shall not allow themselves to be influenced by gift or advantage offered to them or by advertising or other commercial considerations' (Media Council of Tanzania 2015a). The guidelines for reporters do not explicitly mention refusing gifts and omit the reference to sources, albeit that reporters are the ones in contact with sources rather than editors.

The differences in these ethical guidelines are not entirely surprising, as everyone in the media knows that it is socially accepted practice for reporters

to receive at minimum transport money for attending press conferences. News sources recognize the lack of resources in the newsrooms, including lack of reliable access to transportation to bring the reporter back to the newsroom in a timely manner. Hence, the ethical guidelines recommend that reporters do not allow the 'gift' to influence the reporting. For the media managers and editors, the guidelines are stricter because interference and incentives from sources could kill a story at the editorial level, as editors are usually the final gatekeepers before a story is distributed to the public. The guidelines also do not address concerns about economic constraints and press censorship and how individual journalists should approach them ethically. Most importantly, however, the ethical guidelines do not address the cultural ideologies that shape many of Tanzanian journalists' ethical responses. Six ideologies highlighted by Shaw (2009) and Ramaprasad (2001) include respect for leaders, praise-singing, participatory nature of communication, fear of men in power, respect for religion and age, and combative response to out-groups. While most of these ideologies are grounded in African culture (see Chap. 1), colonization and independence struggles have also influenced some of them and, therefore, it is important to revisit how the media was used during the colonial period and its effects on Tanzania today.

Importance of Media in Pre- and Postcolonial Tanzania

Rao and Wasserman (2007) recommend that scholars interested in media ethics first 'study the underlying conditions of postcoloniality to which such principles are applied' (31). Given that many of the media practices in post-colonial countries are influenced by how and when media were introduced, in this section, I review four stages of media development in Tanzania.

Colonial Media

During the 1800s, the German colonial government, established in Tanzania (then called Tanganyika and Zanzibar) commissioned the Anglican Church University in Zanzibar to publish a newsletter. Initially, the publication had purely religious content; however, public demand soon resulted in the inclusion of local information as well (Sturmer 1998), ushering the introduction of print news. While the newsletter did not survive for very long due to a lack of personnel, its popularity encouraged

the Germans to establish another newspaper in Tanganyika, the mainland, with the goal of disseminating colonial news and information about World War I to German settlers around the country. The German government had also instituted the policy of using Swahili as a vehicular language to facilitate communication between Africans and colonial administrations, which later came in handy when locally generated media were established.[1]

During World War I, media development was disrupted in most of East Africa, as personnel and resources were diverted to the war effort. When the British defeated the Germans and took over control of Tanganyika, they revived the media with the introduction of the first English-style newspaper titled *Tanganyika News* in Dar es Salaam (Brennan et al. 2007). The newspaper provided information about fashion and entertainment in Europe for British subjects living in Tanganyika and included notes about British trade activities and settlers' achievements. The recruitment of African soldiers into the British army increased Africans' need for information about the war activities, leading to the spread of radio and the establishment of newspapers providing information about the war. None of the newspapers in any of the East African countries, however, included content that had resonance for Africans—most of the writing either promoted the superiority of Anglo-Saxon culture and values or denigrated African 'barbaric' cultures (Ziegler and Asante 1992).

The spread of printing technology around East Africa encouraged other affluent minority groups to establish newspapers targeting specific demographics. For instance, Indians, who had always held middle-men positions in the colonial power structure in East Africa, where able to establish newspapers in Gujarati, providing information for the Indian merchant community in Kenya and Tanzania, focusing largely on news from the Indian subcontinent and on trade activities (Scotton 1978). European settlers, who had either accumulated enough money or found a sponsor from Europe, were also able to establish media in Tanzania that focused on capitalistic ventures and, to a large degree, supported colonial power structures.

World War II allowed opportunities for Africans to establish media in the Swahili language, a movement partly fueled by Britain's policy of channeling money into its colonies in order to expand colonial economy in East Africa. As a result, funding was provided to build schools, community centers, and roads, which facilitated migration of people from rural to urban areas and revitalized the African intelligentsia (Condon 1967). Europeans who had gotten used to wielding the press to propagate

colonial agendas worried that if Africans were able to harness the press, colonial empire would not last for very long. Consequently, they introduced severe media censorship laws to deter publication of any material that would challenge the British rule, incite violence against white settlers, or promote Africanistic ideologies (Shaw 2009; Scotton 1978). Any transgression by African journalists was punished with jail time and, in many instances, printing press machinery was confiscated and destroyed as well (Ziegler and Asante 1992).

In the 1950s, it was decided at a United Nations meeting that the Tanganyikans should have the right to become the majority in the parliament (Condon 1967)—a mandate that energized the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) party headed by Julius Nyerere (Sturmer 1998; Scotton 1978). After receiving international legitimacy, TANU established its own party paper *Mwafrika* that focused on political matters and the struggle for independence (Condon 1967). Nyerere was the editor of the newspaper, and was jailed by the British government for what they considered to be his insolence toward the British Royalty, establishing precedence that political activism and criticism of political leaders cannot be circulated via the media.

Nyerere, a staunch supporter of Gandhian non-violent resistance and socialist ideologies, believed in using the power of rhetoric as a political tool. From prison, Nyerere was able to inspire members of his party to keep publishing the newspaper (Scotton 1978). The consistent publication of the TANU newspaper and its easy dissemination around the country helped to increase the credibility of the party and expand Nyerere's support base. The newspaper contained articles criticizing the British government's delaying tactics in handing power over to the Tanganyikans, leading to an international uproar, forcing the governor to intervene and grant Tanganyika its freedom on December 1, 1961 (Condon 1967). The power of the media and the importance of press censorship were thus illustrated to Nyerere and his followers during their struggle for independence in Tanganyika (Sturmer 1998; Condon 1967), establishing the press as an important vehicle for governance and political control.

Media in Postcolonial Tanzania

After independence, Nyerere, who became the chairman of the Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) political party, and president of Tanzania, reinstituted the British media censorship laws. His justification was grounded in

the Marxist idea of media power—that media should only be harnessed for the public good and only the government can be trusted to control the media's power effectively (Grosswiler 1997; Ramaprasad 2001). Nyerere's goal was to remove all vestiges of colonialism and institute the *Ujamaa* principle,[2] which would allow Tanzanians to recover from the brutality of British colonial rule and reconstruct African values and societies (Grosswiler 1997).

After independence, there was still a number of private media founded during the colonial period, for example *The Nationalist*, controlled by Europeans in Tanzania. Initially Nyerere tried to expand the scope of the TANU publishing house to facilitate the spread of the *Ujamaa* message. However, a lack of trained journalists and the ability to report independently limited *Uhuru*'s (the government newspaper) influence; so, all private newspapers were nationalized to support the government mission (Grosswiler 1997). The importance of media in Tanzania was further heightened by the weak infrastructures left behind by the British—the country's economy was floundering at best, the education system was fragmented, and the country's poor were isolated from the social, political, and economic changes taking place in the metropolis—Dar es Salaam.

In his survey of media and media practices in Tanzania, Kaungamno (1978) writes that media was one of the most effective tools for uniting the Republic. He argues that newspapers were very efficient for dissemination of information to Tanzanians, as they are reusable and affordable. Radio has a wider bandwidth, can reach rural areas, and bridge illiteracy barriers but required possession of equipment from potential audiences to receive information. The importance of radio was also recognized by Nyerere as a tool to mobilize the country to adopt *Ujamaa*. Radio Tanzania in Dar es Salaam was mandated by the government to focus all its programing and content to educate Tanzanians about important issues related to the country's development.

During Nyerere's presidency, the media remained largely nationalized and were considered the government's mouthpiece by the people. The government discouraged establishment of private media, including television, with the argument that all media resources needed to be devoted to the nation's development, and private or foreign media would only hinder this goal. Kamuhanda (1989) criticizes the government's use of *Ujamaa* and development rhetoric as an excuse for media censorship, and argues that double standards and media control undermined the country's progress. He argues that the government was happy to let the press be its

mouthpiece when it wanted to spread political propaganda, but in the case of its foreign policy decisions—which impacts Tanzanians' lives long term—it evoked media censorship laws and denied the media access to information (Kamuhanda 1989). While Nyerere used Radio Tanzania to inform citizens about different national and international policies, the information was limited to the government's perspective on the presented issues and deterred circulation of alternative ideas and viewpoints.

The government's use of media to rebuild the country replicated the colonial practices of using the press to shape the public's understanding of political changes (Hunter 2015). While the press was used effectively to spread ideas about *Ujamaa* and unite the country behind the ruling party, the developmental role of the media was limited. Mwaffisi (1991) argues that while Nyerere and his government had lofty goals of harnessing the media for development, they were naïve in their expectations. The power of the media lay in its targeted communication; if Tanzania was grappling with development issues, then it needed journalists trained to write about development issues in a manner that would educate the public. Mwaffisi (1991) gives the example of healthcare, an issue that affected Tanzania at an economic and social level, yet there were no journalists trained to summarize health information in a format that would be useful for the public to improve their lives.

One-party rule and government-owned media's reign came to an end in the 1990s, when Nyerere gave up his presidency. Pressure from transnational organizations, including the World Bank and IMF, forced Tanzania to adopt a multiparty political system and allow establishment of private media and open doors for importation of foreign media (Ramaprasad 2001; Sturmer 1998).

Media Under the Multiparty System

The media in Tanzania became progressively liberal when operating under the free market system; however, the legacy of the colonial era still influenced media structures, programing, and newsroom practices. Uche (1991) argues that, post-independence, many news organizations were still operating with equipment and infrastructure left behind by the British, and foreigners still continued to influence news content and formatting. Furthermore, while there was more diversity in terms of news organizations, ethical practices were still influenced by censorship and economic

constraints. For instance, Grosswiler (1997), in his interviews with Tanzanian journalists after the introduction of private media, found that journalists were being forced to negotiate between journalism ethics and a struggle for daily survival. Many journalists decided to work for private media which practiced tabloid journalism, because they could not find jobs in the mainstream media that paid enough for them to live comfortably (see Chaps. 5 and 9). Similarly, Ramaprasad (2001), in her survey of journalists in Tanzania, discovered that while most of the journalists supported *Ujamaa*'s founding principles and believed in the power of media as a tool for social change, their actual journalistic work was influenced by organizational constraints, including lack of resources and bureaucratic red-tape.

The free market system and multiparty rule also allowed the media to shift to a market-oriented economy, with news organizations starting to compete for audiences. While in early 1990s, there were only five newspapers and one radio station operating in Tanzania, by 2013, there were over 700 newspapers registered, which included nineteen dailies, forty-one weeklies, and another fifty being published with varied regularity and frequency. There were also 128 radio and fifty-four television stations registered (Mhando et al. 2014). The expansion of the media landscape brought new challenges for journalists as they tried to balance ethical considerations while staying relevant in an increasingly competitive market. Similar to the colonial period, when various publications catered to niche audiences, media deregulation allowed state-owned and private news organizations to target their content to specific audiences, further diminishing editorial freedom. Mhando et al. (2014) explain that commercial interests, similar to political interests, influence the independence of journalists and impinge on editorial freedom. In other words, while the media are operating within the free market, the structures of censorship and editorial control that had been used successfully in the past to shape public opinion and policies continue to exist within the multiparty political system.

Media During the Globalization Era

Globalization increased the transfer of information communication technology to countries such as Tanzania. Media companies also started gaining access to technological advances via the Internet and by sending media

professionals to other countries to receive advanced media training. Economic globalization and renewed interest in Africa also led to a rise in neocolonial activities in Africa. Paterson (1998) argues that broadcast reform pushed by globalization rhetoric allowed Western imperialistic agendas to manifest themselves in Africa again. African media organizations' continuing reliance on the West for technological and educational support opened up new avenues for the promotion of Western values in Africa. The continuing dissemination of free media content provided by the West in Tanzania leads to constant comparison between traditional African values and modern Western lifestyles. Shaw (2009) has argued that as long as Westerners keep telling Africans how to run their countries and define their values, the effects of colonization will continue to be felt in Africa. He refutes the idea put forth by many Western scholars that Africa did not have press freedom or journalism practice before the colonial era, by arguing that oral forms of communication were Africa's version of journalism (see Chap. 2 for Shaw's detailed discussion of this).

When analyzing media practices in postcolonial countries, Shepperson and Tomaselli (2009) state that it is important to first recognize that current media structures in many African countries are influenced by colonial legacies. 'The Third World cannot hope to develop a media system that is somehow detached from the West until such time as Third World people can independently build, maintain, extend, innovate within and sustainably operate these structures' (Shepperson and Tomaselli 2009, 484). While globalization has introduced new technology, and opened doors for training from media professionals in the West, journalists in Tanzania continue to struggle to balance economic constraints, the demands of a free market, and ethical guidelines—where *ubuntu* principles have to be reconciled with press censorship (see Chap. 1) and their responsibility to their audience. Kothari (2015), in her interviews with journalists in Tanzania, found that journalists had to practice a hybrid version of ethics as they negotiated transport allowances and training opportunities provided by news sources and editorial control while working in a resource-strapped environment. The hybrid version of ethics allowed journalists to take advantage of the economic and training support provided by news sources to expand their reporting portfolio, while recognizing the ethical dilemmas, with the goal of using the training and relationships with these news sources to secure funding to focus on underreported stories, especially at the grassroots level.

Digital Journalism: Opportunities for Redefining Journalism Ethics in Tanzania

While journalists continue to operate in a resource-strapped environment, increasing access to Internet/online reporting and publishing tools has delivered an opportunity to revisit how journalists are trained and to redefine ethical practices. According to the 2013 annual report published by the Media Council of Tanzania, the Council, working with the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC), will make available 'constitutional guarantees on press freedom and editorial independence, freedom of expression and right to information' (Media Council of Tanzania 2015b, 6). This 'guarantee' will become stronger once the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs completes writing and approving the Right to Information Bill. These developments will help improve protection for freedom of press in the country and allow journalists to request information from the government, including better access to government meetings and the opening of new venues for data-based journalism. Investigative reporting based on primary documents and interviews will allow journalists to fulfill their watchdog function in society and reduce their reliance on source-initiated reporting.

Most journalists and media organizations have an established presence on social media and the blogosphere today, which helps to facilitate a public discourse on important issues and allows people to work as fact-checkers and gatekeepers for falsified or plagiarized information. Easy access to information published on the web is forcing news organizations to revise ethics related to information gathering, and the Media Council of Tanzania (2015a) has strict guidelines: 'The reporter shall not download, quote from whatever source of information (books, Internet, conversation etc.) and later present quoted material as his/hers' and holds editors responsible for checking for plagiarism before anything is published.

The spread of smart phones and the popularity of social media apps in Tanzania means that news stories are more likely to be circulated widely once published online and any discrepancies will similarly receive significant attention online. Media owners, who heretofore have generally been reluctant to enforce ethical guidelines in newsrooms and are often known for interfering with the reporting process, are starting to pay attention to ethics. For example, while the Media Council of Tanzania's 2013 annual report states that when analyzing responses from a sample of 250 journalists, 41% reported having experienced interferences from media owners

during news reporting, it also reports that in 2013, four media houses have developed and incorporated in-house codes of conduct, editorial policies, and stylebooks (Media Council of Tanzania 2015a).

In order to understand how journalism ethics are applied in Tanzania today, it is important to first describe the legal, political, and economic environment under which media practitioners operate. According to the Freedom in the World 2014 report published by Freedom House, press freedom continues to *deteriorate* in Tanzania, with intimidation of reporters, which in 2013 included attacks and threats and shut downs of news outlets. While the constitution includes provision for freedom of speech, it does not guarantee freedom of the press, which often results in self-censorship and lack of investigative reporting (Freedom House 2015). The Committee to Protect Journalists confirmed twenty-two attacks or threats against reporters in 2013, including the case of Absalom Kibanda, a reporter from *New Habari*, who was severely beaten in March. In 2015, Tanzania ranked 75 out of 180 in the World Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders 2015).

Although political pluralism was introduced in 1992, the founding party of Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) still holds the majority of seats in the national assembly, and while the opposition parties are getting stronger, their struggles are not over. The stronghold of CCM in politics also means that many of perspectives on the role of the media in society that were introduced post-independence continue to resonate today. Economically, the United Nations Development Programme's 'Human Development Report' of 2013 shows that 67% of the population is living on less than US$1.25 a day (United Nations Development Programme 2015). Many journalists operate and survive in an informal economy where they depend on stories getting published in order to earn some money (Mpagaze and White 2010). The lack of press freedom and the government censorship, combined with economic hardships, creates an ethical quagmire for a reporter trying to adhere to journalism ethics.

In Tanzania, training and socialization of journalists and editors has also conditioned them to view mass media as a publicity tool, starting with the post-independence era, where they publicized the benefits of government-sponsored development projects (Ramaprasad 2001). The government continues to rely on the media for raising national awareness about various issues, increasing the chances of journalists, conditioned 'from the decades of socialization under press rules defined by *Ujamaa* and under societal tradition of praise singing, group orientation, concept

of authority and respect for elders and leaders,' to be drawn to the official versions of stories and sources (Ramaprasad 2001, 551). The long-term conditioning of newsroom norms and its effects on news production has been observed in other African countries as well. Mabweazara (2011) found that while journalists in Zimbabwe had freedom to select sources based on trust and confidentiality, 'the practices around source selection were heavily shaped and constrained by the newsrooms' political inclinations' (108). In the case of Tanzania, this conditioning also influences journalists when it comes to making ethical decisions, as research has shown that official sources including politicians, business leaders, and organizations are perceived to be more likely to offer bribes, which could make it harder for a reporter to say no (Mpagaze and White 2010).

One of the biggest ethical challenges faced by journalists on a regular basis is the practice of brown envelopes discussed in earlier chapters, which Skjerdal (2010) defines as rewards for journalistic activities provided by sources, which are 'habitually concealed as, for example, per diem or funds for transportation; the understanding is that they include a surplus rate which the reporter can use personally' (369). The practice in Tanzania is often referred to as a 'sitting fee,' which Skjerdal (2010) argues is habitually 'hidden from official reports and public taxation' (370). Kothari (2015) also found that transport allowances or 'sitting fees' are sometimes extended into expense-paid reporting trips to cover the activities of the news source, which pose a further ethical dilemma for journalists. The money-related ethical dilemma has been an issue of debate among media scholars, with Mwesige (2004) and Nyamnjoh (2001) arguing that poor pay is a factor in journalists' acceptance of such monies, while Lodamo and Skjerdal (2009) blame poor journalistic training (see Chaps. 1 and 8 for a detailed discussion of these issues).

The practice of offering 'transport allowance' or a 'sitting fee' by official sources has created a new problem in the form of '*makanjanja*'—people who pretend to practice journalism but are not journalists. My work with journalists in Tanzania has shown that these *makanjanja* operate by subversive means and use threats of negative media coverage to extort payment. Since many media houses use freelancers to cover press conferences and breaking news stories, it is usually difficult to differentiate between a real and a fake reporter. While journalists in general tend to differentiate 'bribes' from 'transport allowance,' the latter of which they consider to be a perk of the profession (Mpagaze and White 2010), if the *makanjanja* phenomenon becomes mainstream, the credibility of the profession would be undermined and ethical guidelines harder to reinforce.

Media House Training and Opportunities for Ethical Interventions

The Ethical Journalism Network was formed in 2012 to explore how media ethics are applied in the boardroom and newsroom, according to the annual report of 2013 by the Center for International Media Assistance. The report quotes Aidan White, the director of the Ethical Journalism Network, who argues that media ethics need to be valued at all levels of operations. He points out: 'Unless you have a clear message coming from the top—that we are going to be open, honest, ethical, and accountable to the public we serve—it's not going to happen' (The Center for International Media Assistance 2013). Ethical training and ownership of the news reporting process needs be initiated and reinforced at the top, as questions of privacy and security become important the era of global media. More and more content is being distributed online; and data and confidential information is being stored in the online cloud, bringing up the question of who is responsible for protecting privacy of confidential sources or monitoring discussion boards on news sites for libelous claims.

While media organizations generally tend to use the excuse of lack of resources to downplay ethical shortcomings, in-house training at all levels could help to highlight the importance of ethical reasoning needed to access and store confidential data from hackers and government surveillance. This is crucial in light of the new Cyber Crimes Act approved by the Tanzanian parliament in April 2015 (The Citizen 2015), which could limit free speech and the spread of information online, especially social media and the blogosphere, where investigative journalism and important news receive traction. This new legislation, combined with the National Security Act (United Republic of Tanzania 2015), which allows the government to charge anyone with a criminal offense if suspected of revealing 'classified matter,' requires rethinking of regular news-gathering practices and how to accomplish tasks while remaining ethical and law-abiding. In-house training could focus on the limits of social responsibility, freedom of speech, and individual safety and the ethical considerations needed to make informed judgment about which concerns should be seen as most important—the collective good or that of an individual?

Ethics and Journalism Education

In order to reverse the conditioning introduced during the post-independence era and reinforced in some of the nation's newsrooms, it is important to revisit journalism education in Tanzania with an emphasis on ethics in the digital era. According to the annual report by the Media Council of Tanzania (2015a), many of the journalism schools in Tanzania failed to meet the 'MCT/NACTE standards and benchmarks.' While the failure was due to lack of infrastructure, including equipment, teaching materials, and instructor turnover, many of these could be overcome today by utilizing free resources available online. These resources include massive open online courses (MOOCs), the listings for which are curated via https://www.mooc-list.com/tags/journalism, or specialized initiatives such as a data journalism course offered by the European Journalism Centre in 2014. While many of these free resources are founded on normative Western ideologies of ethics, Tanzanian students and journalism instructors can customize the ethical guidelines and best practices to construct a transparent code of ethics that can accommodate both economic constraints and local cultural and political expectations while upholding principles of *ubuntu*. I agree with White (2008), who stresses the importance of incorporating ethics that do not merely focus on news reporting processes but emphasize the moral responsibility of an individual and opportunities for self-empowerment available through media. For example, individual journalists can start by acknowledging their 'sponsors' at the end of their news stories, those who provided economic support to complete the assignment. By being transparent, a journalist not only highlights any potential conflict of interest but also allows their audiences to hold the news source who provided the 'economic' support accountable, opening up a public discourse about the value of news source-funded reporting.

Journalism education that cultivates in students the ability to have a critical dialogue about ethical concepts will allow future journalists to adopt and adhere to ethical values that have global relevance and are pertinent to local values and practices (Wasserman 2011). This model could be further enhanced by creating a mentoring relationship between working journalists and journalism students, which would add implied pressure on practitioners to perform their work ethically as they then have a standard to uphold. Similarly, such relationships will allow the students to learn from real examples of their mentors' work and understand how

media ethics is an applied concept, which requires constant reflection depending on context.

As the global demand for timely and accurate news expands, journalism schools in Tanzania might need to rethink how they teach journalism, including news-gathering practices, as the current environment of freelancing has ethical issues both in terms of low pay and the risk of influence by sources. If journalism schools start to incorporate courses on how to successfully work as an independent journalist-cum-entrepreneur and eliciting crowdfunding for reporting projects, the next generation of reporters will be able to compete in the digital sphere by producing stories that have global relevance. Furthermore, this may allow them to adhere to ethical guidelines with editorial freedom.

Conclusion

This chapter highlights how journalists in Tanzania can take advantage of digital innovation to refine their ethical practices. It builds on the discussion, started by Stephen Ward (2013), regarding the importance of revisiting media ethics and the value of global ethics for understanding how digital news is produced. Being cognizant of political and economic constraints of the target country, any revision of media ethics needs to be approached with cultural sensitivity, especially when discussing the concept of free media and democracy in developing countries (Ward 2013). The concept of 'global media ethics' proposed by Ward (2013) combined with 'virtue ethics,' which focus on pluralistic interpretations of 'judgment call' (Ess 2013, 260), have the potential to resonate across cultural and political boundaries as ethical judgments are guided by best practices based on individual scenarios.

The Tanzanian public is critical of media performance and its lack of ethics but there is never much discussion about who is going to support the process of investigative reporting, which requires time and money. As more newsrooms embrace digital platforms and access to global media becomes ever easier, discussions about ethics will require us to reconcile two divergent points. One, involving an individual journalist who requires access to the Internet to source and publish stories. The other, involving those who will be monitoring media activities and who get to decide what is news, what constitutes free speech, or even the nature of ethically sourced content (Berry 2012), which could be media organizations or owners of online portals, including social media platforms.

As Tanzanian media organizations and individual journalists attempt to refine ethics and news reporting strategies to become part of the global media system, they would benefit from grounding the revised ethics using the philosophical principles proposed by Ward (2005). His recommendation is to commit to provide credible news and analysis; news stories should serve to inform the public and journalistic work should not be influenced by any other agendas, including elite news sources. These philosophical principles have the potential to bridge the legacy of the colonial era that emphasized respect and obedience to powerful sources with a global version of media ethics that encourages a reflexive view of ethics and considers the media to be a tool of the public rather than a mouthpiece of the elites.

In this chapter, I have argued that while colonial and postcolonial media practices and economic constraints continue to hinder adherence to media ethics in Tanzania, digital platforms have potential to reinvent the media in developing countries. Despite government censorship and new policies to limit press freedom, access to the Internet is helping many journalists learn new skills online, garner global attention for atrocities carried out against reporters, and publish work that can hold up to global standards. Looking forward, I have also proposed ways to enhance news reporting strategies, especially data-based journalism, which would reduce dependency on official sources for information and resources for in-depth reporting. While there is value in refining journalism paradigms guided by unique African experiences, I agree with Skjerdal (2012), who argues that African journalists can have universal aspirations while maintaining a local identity, by adapting a global version of media ethics to their work. Tanzania, similar to many developing countries, would benefit from more empirical studies that explore how revised ethical codes in digital-first newsrooms are shaping reporters' and editors' perspectives on the role of media in society and journalism as a profession.

NOTES

1. Swahili media publications founded and produced by Africans.
2. *Ujamaa* (a Swahili term for 'familyhood') was a social and economic policy of village cooperatives based on equality of opportunity and self-help, established in the 1960s by Julius Nyerere, president of Tanzania (see Göran 1980).

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Politics, Political Parallelism and Partisanship

Journalism, Politics and Professionalism in Zimbabwe

Wallace Chuma

For over half a century between 1964 and 2017, Zimbabwe has been ruled by two men, Ian Smith, the last of the colonial rulers, and Robert Mugabe, the founding postcolonial leader. While the circumstances of their leadership obviously differ, what they share in common was the substantial imprimatur they put on the Zimbabwean state and how this shaped many facets of life, including the practice of journalism. They both adopted largely similar, sometimes violent, strategies for coercing the media to toe the line. Where the colonial authorities deployed official censorship and a raft of other laws to control the mediated public sphere, the democratically elected government that replaced it in 1980 deployed a combination of methodologies that featured rewards and punishments for different forms of journalistic practices and outputs as the key modus operandi. A core element in the nationalistic elite that assumed state power at independence's approach to shaping journalism practice in the postcolony was the rendition of the memories of the bloody anti-colonial conflict that preceded independence, and the racism that pervaded colonial society. Although not the only factors influencing journalism professionalism and practice in Zimbabwe, political factors are arguably an indispensable determinant of the anatomy of the journalism in the country.

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There is a fairly substantial body of literature on elements of the post-colonial history of the Zimbabwean media (Saunders 1991; Mano 2008; Chuma 2007), and a picture that emerges from most of that literature is one of three phases of journalistic ecologies. The first phase is the 1980s, characterised by the euphoria of independence and the relative legitimacy of the ruling party and government; the second phase being the 1990s, which witnessed growing public dissatisfaction with the state in the wake of the adoption of structural adjustment programmes and the escalation of poverty; and third being the post-2000 period, commonly referred to as the 'Zimbabwe crisis'.[1] The third phase also witnessed the increase in independent newspapers and other media platforms, thanks to a combination of factors that include the liberalisation process that started in the 1990s, the rapid political deterioration from around 2000 and the proliferation of new media technologies—especially the Internet—which made it possible for diaspora-based citizens to launch media platforms dedicated to reporting the Zimbabwean story.

Theorising the Journalism–Politics Relationship: The Principal–Agent Approach

The relationship between journalism and politics has been one of the most debated in modern times, largely because of the influence that the journalism has or supposedly has in the era of mediated politics, and also because of the influence of political power structures on journalism practices (see, for example, McNair 2003; Dahlgren and Gurevitch 2005; McChesney 2009).

One way of understanding the journalism–politics nexus in an African context such as Zimbabwe would be to appropriate elements of Philip Napoli's (1997) 'principal–agent' approach to the study of media organisations. Although applied at the micro-level of media organisations, the same can arguably be applied more broadly to the study of media practices and media–power relations at a macro-, national level. Borrowing from the agency theory of the media firm, the principal agency relationship is characterised as

> a contract under which one or more persons (the principals) engage another person (the agent) to perform some service on their behalf which involves delegating some decision making authority to the agent. If both parties to the relationship are utility maximisers there is good reason to believe that

the agent will not always act in the interests of the principal. The principal can limit the divergences from his interests by establishing appropriate incentives for the agent and by incurring monitoring costs designed to limit the aberrant activities of the agent. (Jensen and Meckling 1976, 30)

Napoli reminds us that, in this relationship, the ultimate aim is to advance the interests of the principal, which may include maximising profits for the organisation, or some other ends such as advancing particular political causes and agendas. The agent, while expected naturally to advance the interest of his/her principal, may do so but also from time to time engage in what Napoli terms 'shirking' (1997, 208). This is where the agent decides to deviate from his/her brief and act entirely or partly out of self-interest (including, in some cases, professional/ethical interests where the such interests are in conflict with those of the principal) and therefore at variance with the terms of his/her brief. When this happens, of course, there is conflict and the principal may replace the agent. But it is interesting also to note that monitoring the agent to ensure consistent compliance is not a costless exercise, so a strategy that some principals adopt is to ensure the least expenditure in monitoring through hiring agents who share their worldviews (Napoli 1997). Hiring practices serve as a kind of 'censorship in advance', in the sense that the agents engaged in new responsibilities on behalf of the principal with whom they share a similar worldview are unlikely to stray into political territory that brings them into conflict with the principal. That said, it is also true that the principal–agent relationship—like all hierarchical relationships—is a much more complex one, which external factors also play a part in shaping.

Croteau and Hoynes argue that journalism practice, in most cases, occurs in a context that is defined by both opportunities and structural constraints. These constraints, they argue, do influence the behaviour of media professionals 'by making some choices more attractive, some more dangerous, and some almost unthinkable' (2003, 121).

Many studies of the relationship between journalism and politics have generally come to at least two dominant conclusions as regards power dynamics in the relationship: the first view being that the media wield the most power, especially in the era of mediated politics (Dahlgren and Gurevitch 2005); and the other view being that the media are actually subordinate to institutional political power-holders (Herman and Chomsky 1988). Other studies find the relationship to be a more complex and multidimensional love–hate relationship, characterised by careful manoeuvring

(Larsson 2002). As Larsson notes in a study of journalist–politician relations in Sweden, journalists enjoy substantial leeway in the relationship because they can rely on the Freedom of Information Act to access state-held information with relative ease (2002, 25). However, in the case of Zimbabwe and in many other parts of the continent, the hierarchical, principal–agent approach best explains the relationship, and when it comes to newsmaking, by their location in the broader scheme of things, politicians (principals) would strive to be (or enforce their way into being) what Stuart Hall et al. (1978) refer to as the 'primary definers' of news. In the 1980s, in Zimbabwe, for example, the government successfully steered journalistic coverage of state-sponsored atrocities in the Matabeleland region in the direction of the official, sanitised narrative (Nyarota 2006). As the editor of the major daily state-owned newspaper in the Matabeleland region at the time, Geoffrey Nyarota, wrote in his memoirs, 'the government took advantage of the fear and gullibility of the local media, mostly controlled by the newly appointed and inexperienced editors […] to literally get away with murder' (2006, 136).

Shaping Postcolonial Media Ecologies in Zimbabwe

The nationalist elite that assumed power at independence in Zimbabwe styled itself as Marxist-Leninist (although in reality it pursued the same market-led policies of its predecessors), and sought to create a model of journalism that would entrench its hegemony, especially in the public media (Mano 2008). To achieve this, it can be argued that the government adopted at least two strategies. The first was to 'grow' its own 'timber' of journalists who shared the leadership's political agenda, and the second and related strategy was to punish those within the system who occasionally challenged or presented viewpoints deemed to be at variance with the official line. It is important that these approaches be discussed separately.

Growing Own Timber

In Zimbabwe, the anti-colonial struggle and memories around both the racist white rule and the fight against it were critical points of reference in the new political dispensation. The new government, enjoying a popular mandate and legitimacy at the time largely because of struggle credentials, sought to create a journalistic cohort within the country's mainstream

media that would be key to the perpetuation of the struggle memories and, by extension, to the legitimacy and hegemony of Zanu PF. On assuming office, the government made immediate changes to both broadcasting and print sectors of the media under its control, which, in effect, amounted to nearly all the country's media, especially after the state bought a controlling stake in the Zimbabwe Newspapers (Zimpapers) company. These changes included the appointment of new black editors to key Zimpapers titles such as *The Herald*, *Sunday Mail*, *Sunday News* and *The Chronicle*, as well as new managers to run the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) (Mukasa 2003). As one government minister, Enos Nkala, put it at the time, white editors were 'incapable of articulating and supporting a Black government' (quoted in Mukasa 2003, 174) In almost all the cases, the newly appointed editors were either members of the liberation movement that had assumed power, or were closely linked to it one way or the other. The first three editors of the flagship daily, *The Herald*, Farai Munyuki, Tommy Sithole and Charles Chikerema, for example, were all linked to Zanu PF and had received their media training from Zambia, Tanzania and Cuba, respectively. The first group that took over the ZBC had been Zanu PF cadres running the liberation movement's radio station, Voice of Zimbabwe, from exile during the war. For Charles Ndlovu and John Tirivafi Kangai, who were among the post-1980 managers of the ZBC, the task of transforming the colonial broadcaster was largely about replacing it with the Voice of Zimbabwe. They wrote:

> The voice of Zimbabwe (VOZ), now the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC), did not start at the time of our independence. It is a broadcasting service run, conducted and directed by the African people of Zimbabwe. It was launched by our political parties from exile for the purpose of explaining the plight and suffering of the Zimbabwean masses (then under the yoke of colonialism and racialism) in order to mobilise public opinion and support for our cause from friendly countries, organisations and individuals. (Kangai and Ndlovu 1986, 242)

Engaging the services of editors and managers who shared the ruling elite's broad political frame of reference was, therefore, a logical strategy of achieving its core hegemonic objectives without having constantly to monitor compliance. In addition to this strategy, the government also moved to establish local training facilities for young journalists who would, upon completion, be 'deployed' to key government communications and

media outlets, many of whom were experiencing an exodus of white personnel. This was a strategy of 'growing own timber'.

A few accounts from the earliest participants in the government's journalism training programme after independence reflect an almost unquestioning and loyal cohort of journalists being produced to fill the communications and 'developmental' agenda of the postcolonial state (see, for example, Machakaire 2012; Mutandwa 2011). The first post-independence training programme was a six-month crash course on basic journalism run by the Ministry of Information in 1980; it was sponsored by the International Press Institute (IPI) and Africa Educational Trust (AET). A group of twenty-four black journalists went through the course and were mostly 'deployed' to the Zimbabwe Information Service (ZIS)—a subsidiary of the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust (ZMMT)—or Zimpapers or were absorbed in other government departments. Simba Chabarika, one of the pioneers in the 1980 training programme and who later worked for the state media, captured the relationship between the young journalists and the ruling party and state during the early years of independence:

> During political rallies we as journalists were always introduced to the gatherings. I remember very well [Nathan, Minister of Information] Shamuyarira asking me to stand in front of the crowd to introduce me several times in [the small towns of] Chinhoyi, Makonde, Kariba and Kadoma saying to the masses: 'You were used to seeing white journalists here. Now because of independence we have black journalists who understand the lives of black people. We are honoured to have with us people like Comrade Chabarika'. After this introduction I would be expected to chant the Zanu PF slogan, *Pamberi ne Zanu PF*. [Forward with Zanu PF], (cited in Chuma 2007, 93)

Tapfuma Machakaire, another pioneer of the training programme, recalls in his autobiography, entitled *A Nose for News: The Real Life of a Zimbabwean Journalist* (2012), how it felt almost natural for the young trainee journalist to identify with the new nationalist leadership, especially against the background of the colonial experience. He writes of some of their routines while shuttling from place to place during journalism training boot-camps in the countryside:

> Sometimes as we (trainee journalists) were driven back to the assembly point, we would sing *Chimurenga* revolutionary songs in keeping with the

spirit that had gripped the country at the time, but much to the discomfort of our four white colleagues. (2012, 8)

Although 'chimurenga' revolutionary songs were not the preserve of the ruling party, the picture of young trainee journalists doing chimurenga renditions routinely during work fitted well into the overall ruling party strategy of nurturing 'own timber'.

From the perspective of the principal–agent approach outlined above, the state's strategy worked optimally where both the principal and the agent felt their goals and worldviews coalesced. Journalists practising the model of 'patriotic journalism' (see Chuma 2008; Ranger 2005 on the notion of 'patriotic history' in Zimbabwe) would be rewarded for loyalty by political power-holders, who themselves felt that the institutions of journalism were achieving what they had set them to achieve. But what did this harmonious alignment of the principal and agent do to the profession of journalism? Bagdikian (1992, 86) uses the phrase 'tightening' of 'golden handcuffs' to explain US media giant Garnett's decision to issue company stock options to local managers in order to keep them closer and forestall any possibility for 'shirking'. Applied to the Zimbabwe context, it could be argued that the administration of 'golden handcuffs' to acceptable journalism limited the range, diversity and professionalism in reportage, at least within the public media, and this is something that has endured for the three-plus decades that Zanu PF has presided over the state in Zimbabwe.[2]

In her autobiography, *The Power and the Glory* (2011), Grace Mutandwa, another of the early group that enrolled at the journalism school launched after independence, reflects on how journalists often took as given the ruling party's violent approach to opponents during periodic elections:

Violence during and soon after elections became a way of life. We reported it and when we thought it had subsided we moved onto other things. We never really tried to fully question why it was allowed to be something that we took in our stride when it occurred. We never seriously took on the politicians when they encouraged youths to go around force-marching elderly people to attend political meetings or threaten them with violence when they dared question the party that had ruled them since independence […] until 2000 when it almost looked as if supporters of the then ruling party were determined to decimate every perceived enemy, we reported election violence as a given. (2011, 79)

It is, to an extent, a measure of success of the state's strategy of 'growing own timber' that reportage of cases such as violence within the public media took the forms it did. At the same time, it must be pointed out that the 'principal' also made it clear to the 'agent' that aberrance from time to time might be tempting but the repercussions were too costly and, therefore, not worth considering.

Policing Aberrance

Another strategy, linked to the above, was characterised by the occasional excoriation of journalistic practices considered aberrant in the eyes of the government. These interventions varied depending on personalities and cases involved. They varied from public warnings and dressing-downs to outright ejections from journalistic posts held in the state media. In some cases journalists who veered off the line were 'kicked upstairs', a euphemism for being removed from one's job on the pretext of being promoted, and yet with the new 'post' entailing virtually no useful responsibilities.[3] For critical journalists within the sphere where the state had no direct control, that is, the private media, the interventions assumed at least three forms: blackmail, especially during the 1980s where 'offending' journalists were often publicly upbraided and accused of being spies for [then] Apartheid South Africa; violence, in the late 1990s and into the early twenty-first century, where the state adopted coercion as an instrument of controlling the mediated public sphere;[4] and, finally, legal deterrents that came in the form of a slew of laws passed between 2001 and 2007 which created an environment where forms of journalism practice considered offensive to the state would easily be legally disrupted and curtailed.

Journalistic accounts are useful frames of reference for understanding how they interacted with state power-bearers during the different phases of independence. Former Zimpapers chief executive, the late Elias Rusike, wrote in his memoirs of how the minister of information would regularly call him in the wee hours of the morning to complain about published stories even mildly critical of government (1990). When he left Zimpapers to buy into the biggest privately owned newspaper company at the time, Modus Publications (publishers of the *Financial Gazette*), Rusike recalls in his memoirs how the new minister of information, Victoria Chitepo summoned him to congratulate him for the acquisition and gave the following assurance:

It is not my task to tell you what to publish and not to publish. That is your responsibility as a publisher and editor; but what I say to you is that now that the *Financial Gazette* is owned by black Zimbabweans, we should hope that, in the national interest, your reporters would check with us certain stories of a sensitive security nature before they are published. (Rusike 1990, 103)

The assumption here is that there was an expectation that newspapers owned and controlled by blacks practice a form of journalism that was perhaps different from the white-owned ones. And the secondary assumption was, therefore, that blacks who reported in the same way as whites did were 'enemies', and invoking the struggle's characterisation of 'enemy' was enough to legitimise any act of violence on the perceived 'enemy'.

The state constantly made clear to black journalists that criticism—which was often branded an act of 'counter-revolution'—would be understandable coming from white journalists but almost unthinkable coming from black reporters. According to Chabarika:

The state expected [journalists] to report what they saw and experienced, and obviously toe the line. There was no room for criticism. Even if you wrote a story that a community was critical of government (which was rare), you had to be careful how you presented it and be prepared to defend it. Otherwise it was risky bothering yourself about critics of government programmes. (cited in Chuma 2007, 93)

In December 1981, Zanu PF senior official and Minister of Housing and National Construction Eddison Zvobgo publicly warned Zimpapers that the ruling party would 'rout' and 'thoroughly get rid of' the company's 'pseudo-editorial professors', who, besides not having participated in the liberation struggle, were working as 'imperialist agents' (*Sunday Mail*, 13 December 1981). This came after a story considered mildly critical of the government had been published. When, between 1988 and 1989, *The Chronicle* published a series of investigative stories implicating government ministers in a car scheme, the editor of the paper, Geoffrey Nyarota, was 'redeployed' to a less influential post. Through the 1980s, 1990s and up to the present, the state has consistently shown its disdain for critical journalism, preferring instead deferential journalism.[5]

Unionisation and Regulation of Journalism

The long-term success of the ruling party and government in effectively controlling the public press was made possible by the absence of vibrant institutional support systems for journalists as professionals.[6] While the government inherited a 'strong' state that had been a critical vehicle for both social cohesion and coercion, journalism as an institution inherited a weak Rhodesia Guild of Journalists that, for the most part, played to the gallery (Windrich 1981). So hopeless had the Guild been in the face of blatant censorship by the Unilateral Declaration of Independence regime that, in its periodic resolutions, it would make token criticisms of official censorship, accompanied by 'realisations' that censorship was 'in the interest of Rhodesia's national security' (Ibid., 64). What was inherited in 1980 was therefore a journalists' union that was more or less an extension of the state and, given the race and class composition of the Guild, an institution that broadly shared the colonial state's vision.

The replacement of the Guild by the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ) after independence did not alter the prevailing state–media relations. The new coterie of black journalists and editors in the public press, a good many of whom naturally had to be aligned to the ruling party agenda to survive, found little difficulty dovetailing their professional agenda into the ruling party's political and social programme. This had far-reaching implications for their role as journalists and employees. Further, the fact that ZUJ was a member of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), itself an organisation the ruling bloc had successfully brought under its ambit in 1981, did not help matters. Throughout its history, ZUJ had successive presidents from within the public press, although it 'represented' all journalists in the country, including those in the private media. The continued dominance of the public media in ZUJ had to do with the 'democratic' politics of majority rule. The public media in Zimbabwe has always been the biggest employer of journalists and, therefore, the largest catchment area for ZUJ membership, most of which were likely to vote their workmates into positions of authority within the union.

In fairness, it must be acknowledged that ZUJ has, over the years, made some useful interventions in the profession, for example creating opportunities for mid-career training for journalists. However, over the period between 2000 and 2016 past decade or so, the union has been riven by legitimacy issues, including, more recently, allegedly rigged elections.[7]

Dependent almost entirely on donor funding for day-to-day operations, the union has largely been unable to stand up for the lot of journalists beyond the occasional press statement, nor has it been able to stamp its authority on professional and ethical matters in respect of journalism practice.

The other interesting site of political influence on journalism practice was the area of media regulation in the country. In the wake of waning legitimacy at the turn of the century, the government decided to intro-duce a statutory regulatory body to police journalism through registration of both journalists and media houses, among other tasks. The Media and Information Commission (MIC), as it was called, was predictably staffed by the ruling party's sympathisers [such as former *Sunday Mail* columnist and academic, Tafataona Mahoso], and, during its term, the commission superintended over the closure of half a dozen privately owned newspa-pers, including the *Daily News* and *The Tribune* [some of which had refused to register with the Commission because they deemed it illegiti-mate] and a general worsening of relations between the state and the pri-vately owned media.

In 2009, after almost a decade of profound political and economic crisis, Zanu PF and the opposition were pressured into a negotiated Government of National Unity (GNU), which resulted in, among other things, the eas-ing of media–state relations. The MIC was replaced by another statutory body, the Zimbabwe Media Commission (ZMC), which was principally a product of political horse-trading between Zanu PF and the bigger faction of the opposition Movement for democratic Change (MDC). The Commission's responsibilities were more or less the same as its predecessor, although within a very short period, it managed to license several newspa-pers, as opposed to closing them down, as its predecessor had done. While both the major political parties in the GNU seemed to be content with the ZMC, independent media journalists and civil society organisations such as the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) remained firmly opposed to the idea of statutory regulation. Through civil society initiatives, the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe (VMCZ) had already been estab-lished two years earlier to provide an alternative mechanism for journalistic self-regulation in the country. Inspired in part by the South African model of the Press Council, the VMCZ operated on the basis of a panel drawn from the media and the public, which was responsible for issues around arbitration of disputes around journalistic professionalism. The country's major independent news organisations, such as Alpha Media Holdings and the *Daily News*, signed up to this voluntary regulator, while the state media

predictably opted against it. What is interesting to note, however, is that the state media's political principals, Zanu PF politicians, actually regularly approach the VMCZ, seeking redress in cases where they deem stories published by the private media to be unfair or unethical. In several cases, the VMCZ has ruled in favour of the politicians. Interesting here is that the country has a dual system of statutory and voluntary regulation, and, although not recognising the latter officially, the state and its functionaries find it occasionally useful as an institution that can actually address their grievances against a vocal and critical independent media.

The Backlash of Adversarial Journalism

The 'capture' of journalism as the state media by Zanu PF politicians resulted in the adoption of a deferential model of reportage, or what Christians et al. (2009) refer to as collaborative journalism. While this arguably served the government well, in that its version of the crisis enjoyed premium mediation, it also created in its wake a backlash of adversarial journalism from the private media, which was, in many ways and instances, routinely victimised by the state. There is a substantial body of work on the phenomenon of 'polarisation' of the Zimbabwean press (Chuma 2008; Mabweazara 2011) and its impact on the mediation of the country's politics. Adversarial journalism in Zimbabwe has gone through at least two phases. In the early years of the country's economic and subsequent political crisis, beginning in the late 1990s, this brand of journalism represented a critical node for the articulation of alternative narratives of the crisis. At a time when the state media were the dominant sources of political news, adversarial or 'oppositional' journalism enjoyed a substantial level of legitimacy—especially within urban, academic, civil society, political opposition, corporate and other circles—as a useful avenue through which eventual political change could find its way into Zimbabwean politics. This was probably the 'golden era' of this brand of journalism, which, it could be argued, ended with the forced closure of the *Daily News* and its sister publication *Daily News on Sunday* in September 2003.

The second phase of adversarial journalism coincided with the rapid proliferation of online publications both within and outside Zimbabwe, beginning in the period around 2003. A combination of factors that include general economic decline, the closure of publications in Zimbabwe and constant harassment of journalists, led hordes of journalists to flee

into the diaspora, from which they launched several online publications that focused almost exclusively on Zimbabwean news. Many of these publications engaged stringers and freelancers from Zimbabwe, who, in most cases, filed their stories using pseudonyms. Online news platforms such as newzimbabwe.com, zimonline.co.za and newsdzezimbabwe.co.uk, among dozens of others, emerged to fill the alternative information gap created by the closure of a few Zimbabwean-based publications. At their height, especially in the run up to and after the 2008 elections, these diaspora-based publications joined forces with the motley of what was left of the Zimbabwean-based newspapers (especially the *Zimbabwe Independent* and *The Standard*) to challenge the state media's narrative of the crisis. The combination of the diaspora-based publications and independent print publications to contest the official version of the crisis in 2008 has been described elsewhere as 'an array of what in military terms could be described as a combination of both professional armies and rag-tag militias' (Chuma 2008, 25). This is, in part, because, while some of the websites reported professionally, the majority of them were 'highly sensational, fictitious and polemical' (Ibid., 26). Perhaps in retaliation for the government's closure of free media space in Zimbabwe, substantial journalistic content that populated the pages of the 'adversarial' media both online and offline during this second phase tended to be made up of conjecture, opinion presented as fact, exaggeration and, in some cases, outright untruths—all designed to articulate the evilness of the Zanu PF regime. The line between journalism and activism became significantly blurred.

Adversarial Journalism, Genuflection Journalism and the Mediation of the Zimbabwe Story: Reflections on the Present and Future

Few would doubt the vital role that journalism in particular and the media in general play as institutions of the public sphere. In the era where politics is an increasingly mediated phenomenon, it is the media that can potentially connect the institutions of power with the citizenry. And yet, the rise of new media ecologies holds the potential of shifting more communicative power to (connected) citizens, in the process chipping away at the journalist's age-old claim to be the middle-man/woman. These two realities leave us to pose the question of the role and relevance of Zimbabwean journalists in a country going through a complex historical phase where the

authoritarian *ancien regime* seems to be in terminal decay and yet the new dawn is not visible on the horizon quite yet. Since independence in 1980, Zimbabwean journalism has largely been about on which side of the political power-holders one is located, and the result has been a bifurcation of journalism practice: genuflection from the state media and, in general, adversarial journalism from the privately owned media. If this trend continues, will the country's so-called 'noble profession' risk irrelevance? The answer—certainly a harsh one—comes from unlikely quarters: Zimbabwe's then information minister Jonathan Moyo. Giving a lecture to the Zimbabwean Staff College at the beginning of 2015, Moyo is said to have told his audience:

> Most of the time our media reflects what some political players behind media houses would like the public to know as opposed to letting the public know what is going on. We have a media that is practically useless. If you rely on it for information about the state of the country, you will be by choice putting yourself among the ignorant; you won't know what is going on by reading the media. (*The Herald*, 23 January 2015)

While this assessment is certainly too harsh and is doubtless problematic coming from a government minister who presided over the entrenchment of genuflection journalism in the state media and the impoverishment of journalism in the private media sector, it bears out some recent findings about the state of journalism practice and ethics in the country. A study commissioned by the VMCZ in July 2013, for example, found that many journalists believed that their profession was losing or had lost legitimacy in society largely because of a slew of unprofessional practices such as bribe-taking, moonlighting, plagiarism, active involvement in political party activists while also practising journalism, among many others—all of which had become normalised (Chuma 2013).

Conclusion

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, a few things are worth noting in respect of the interface between journalism and politics in the context of an African postcolony. The first is that in a post-conflict 'new dispensation', the narrative of war—told from the perspective of the 'victors'—is given profound salience in explaining not only the past but also the present and future. In these circumstances, journalism emerges as a vital arena

for the rendition of this narrative, and journalists, especially those formerly marginalised in colonial society, see themselves and their work as dovetailing with the political and social agenda set by the politicians. While, in some cases, government applied the 'big stick' approach to even the mildest of criticism, in many instances, the journalists bought into the political agenda largely through their own volition and also by virtue of having participated in the struggle. At the same time, as the liberation movement-cum-ruling party loses legitimacy in the wake of economic mismanagement, it develops predatory and violent tendencies, which results in, among other things, the proliferation of adversarial journalism.

Because the postcolonial state looms large over almost every facet of public life in Zimbabwe, it is able, as 'principal', to exert substantial leverage over the journalistic 'agent' especially in the state media sector, while attracting a form of oppositional response from the independent media that it constantly harasses. The result is a rather impoverished profession which follows, rather than leads or contributes to shaping, the national discourse.

Notes

1. It must be noted that the notion of the 'Zimbabwe crisis' is contested. For many, the 'crisis' is linked to rapid economic decline occasioned by poor policies, including the compulsory seizure of white-owned farms beginning in 2000, as well as subsequent political repression. At the same time, for the ruling party, Zanu PF, this is a period of known as the 'Third Chimurenga', a 'revolutionary' period during which the black majority finally reclaimed their land. The economic decline during this period is attributed not to bad policy but to Western sanctions against the country.

2. Following his appointment as minister of information in 2000, Jonathan Moyo also initiated a raft of editorial changes at both Zimpapers and ZBC, firing many long-serving editors and replacing them with younger journalists.

3. An oft-cited example of this was the 'promotion' of Geoffrey Nyarota at Zimpapers following the Willowgate Scandal. He was removed from his editor's post at *The Chronicle* and promoted to a 'higher' post in Harare with better perks but which only entailed minor responsibilities (see Saunders 1999; Nyarota 2006).

4. In 1999, for example, the army detained and tortured journalists Mark Chavunduka and Ray Choto for ten days after their newspaper, *The Standard*, published a story about disgruntlement within army ranks around

the military campaign in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). A year earlier, the army had arrested journalists from the weekly *Zimbabwe Mirror* for carrying a story related to casualties in the DRC.

5. In February 1998, *The Herald* editor, Tommy Sithole, was fired from his post when he suggested in an editorial that the 'food riots' which rocked the cities of Harare and Chitungwiza were not a result of some external hand but an expression of real anger among the citizens. In December 2013, *The Herald* editor, Caesar Zvayi, was suspended for expressing an opinion on an issue involving the former Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe governor Gideon Gono's decision to engage the legal services of opposition leader, Tendai Biti. In 2015, *The Herald* assistant editor, George Chisoko, was suspended for two weeks for publishing a story that suggested that the Zimbabwean economy was 'dying' (see, http://citizen.co.za/346879/herald-editor-suspended/ accessed, 27 April 2016).

6. A version of the discussion of journalist unionisation also appeared in Chuma (2007).

7. In December 2009, ZUJ held elections at a venue outside Bulawayo, which was only made known to aspiring candidates shortly before the elections, with the result that many of them failed even to make it to the event. The matter was brought to court by the disgruntled parties, with the result that the 'elected' executive opted to step down and fresh elections held. (see: http://allafrica.com/stories/201001110463.html. Accessed 27 April 2016).

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Ideology as News: Political Parallelism in Botswana's Public Media

Letshwiti Batlhalefi B. Tutwane

This chapter explores the state of press freedom in Botswana. It demonstrates the authoritarian nature of the government, both with regard to internal news-gathering and presentation at government news outlets, and in its dealings with the private press. This is achieved through a thematic analysis of issues that have emerged over the years in the study of Botswana's press freedom. These themes include policy statements, transfers/redeployments, institutional arrangements/organizational culture, legislation and manipulation of news/bias and raids/detention. Each of these is discussed in some detail. As the discussion shows, these themes are not limited to Botswana but are an Africa-wide problem. However, in the case of Botswana, they are very significant because the country is often regarded as Africa's success story, a champion of democracy and indeed press freedom. Thus, efforts are made to compare some of the above issues with what obtains in other parts of Africa.

The study draws on policy statements, emergent press reports and historical documents from Botswana National Archives. Literature on African journalism is also used for purposes of general comparison (see, for example, Mytton 1983; Bourgault 1995; Eribo and Jong-Ebot 1997; Barratt and Berger 2007).

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To offer a comprehensive overview, events discussed date from Botswana's independence in 1966 to 2016. Data is also drawn from the author's previous research, in particular, interviews conducted with selected journalists and officials from the state media, most of whom spoke on condition of anonymity. In all, thirty-seven interviews were conducted (Tutwane 2011a).

Conceptual Framework: Bias and Objectivity in Journalism

In analysing the issues highlighted above, the study draws on the concepts of bias and objectivity as broadly articulated by Denis McQuail (2000), who has written extensively on this subject and other issues relating to news content and news production cultures. For him, bias could be both intended and unintended. He defines it as 'any tendency in a news report to deviate from an accurate, neutral, balanced and impartial representation of "reality"' (McQuail 2000) and points out that bias is inevitable and that every news report is subject to audience interpretation and cannot satisfy every audience member. He further submits that, at least in the West, there are norms of objectivity in journalism: There is a standard practice of neutral and informative reporting of events. This concept of objectivity is complex and, thus, problematic. At the simplest level, McQuail (2000) reasons, objectivity means giving factual information in answering the Who? What? When? Where? and Why? questions. However, he continues to advise that one must look deeper and use more refined criteria to analyse news content. One must ask if the facts alleged in the story are accurate and whether they are sufficient to constitute an adequate account for the criterion of completeness. One meaning of accuracy is whether news conforms to independent records of events, be it in documents, eye witness accounts or other media (McQuail 2005).

Another important consideration in analysing news is the issue of impartiality. Many news events involve conflict and are open to alternative interpretations and evaluations, and this applies mainly to political events. The normal standard for impartiality is, therefore, balance in the choice and use of sources. This would help reflect different points of view and the presentation of two or more sides where judgements or facts are contested (McQuail 2005). In other words, there must be pluralism and diversity of voices in news reports. Diversity has three components: 'a wide range of choice for audiences on all conceivable dimensions of interest and preference,

many and different opportunities for access by voices and sources in society and a true or sufficient reflection in media of the varied reality of experience in society' (McQuail 2005).

Finally, McQuail (2005) emphasizes that 'the foremost expectation about media content is that it should reflect or embody the spirit of free expression'. There must be freedom from commercial, political or social pressure. Editorial rigour, the ability of the editor to rise above partisan interests, must be present in a news establishment. It manifests itself in the expression of opinions on controversial issues, willingness to reflect conflict and controversy, following a proactive policy regarding sources and, thus, not relying on press handouts and public relations briefs or being too warm to the powerful but rather giving background and interpretation to issues as well as supplying the facts. McQuail (2005) further points out that news must also be separated from opinion, value judgements or emotive language and pictures. These views are supported by McNair (1998), who argues that the journalistic product is different from any other discourse because it is supposed to be accurate. All steps must be taken to verify facts and they must be presented as truthfully as possible.

Fowler (1991) takes a position similar to that of McQuail (2000, 2005) in his argument that there is no completely neutral news. For him, the institutions of news reporting and presentation are socially, economically and politically situated. He contends that it must be accepted that what is said or written about the world is always done from a particular ideological position. It is in this sense that Fowler talks of bias. However, he prefers the term 'mediation' or 'representation', which he argues are less provocative because they accurately explain the news-gathering and newsmaking processes. He, nonetheless, accepts the term 'bias' as appropriate to refer to 'deliberate distortion for some ulterior motive' (Fowler 1991). Because he identifies with the unintended bias of news production culture as explained by McQuail (2000), Fowler rejects the optimistic notion that in a democracy the press is free to publish whatever it wishes and the public is free to interpret it in its own way. He contends that this would only be the case if there was massive public education and funds available to teach people to engage in linguistic analysis of syntax. He also rejects the view from leftist scholars that bias in the news is an inherent capitalist device that can be removed by radical changes in the financing and procedures of news production. In other words, he rejects the notion that only capitalist-oriented publications are subject to bias. He suggests, for instance, that the *Socialist Worker* is as biased as the *Daily Express*. As we

shall see later from the experiences of Socialist African countries such as Tanzania, Angola and Benin, Fowler (1991) is correct in this disposition. These countries tended to suppress press freedom and centralize media control in the executive (see Chap. 3).

Having said this, as McQuail (2005) rightly admits, Marxist approaches to analysing the media are helpful. Thus, the concepts of *ideology* and *ideological state apparatuses* are deployed in this study. McQuail (2005) accepts that Marxian theory has capacity to define the social world and the world of events. He quotes the work of the leading neo-Marxist, Stuart Hall (1977), who demonstrates that the practice of signification through language establishes maps of cultural meaning, which promote dominance of a ruling class ideology, especially a hegemonic worldview. News masks aspects of reality, especially by ignoring a structured society or taking it as a given. It also produces a fragmentation of interests, which undermines the solidarity of the lower classes. Finally, news emphasizes imaginary unity or coherence by invoking concepts such as 'community', 'nation', 'public opinion' and 'consensus'.

The concept of ideology adopted in this chapter is that of the promotion of the dominant ideas of the ruling class, as used by Althusser and Hall (Laughey 2007). According to Althusser, in his concept of ideological state apparatuses, in a subtle manner, the ruling elites use institutions such as the media as purveyors of ideology, to reproduce and promote ideas of the ruling party (Branston and Stafford 1996). This is the argument in this chapter.

Botswana's Press Operations: Context and Overview

The detention of the editor of the popular Sunday newspaper, the *Sunday Standard*, Outsa Mokone, in October 2014 came as a shock to many, especially in Western capitals, which for many years have described Botswana as a 'beacon of democracy'. The *Guardian* in the UK responded to the incident with a screaming headline: 'Trouble in Paradise for Botswana's Democratic Credentials'. Its Africa correspondent, David Smith, interpreted this development as a seismic moment:

> When the news media turns a penetrating gaze on Africa, Botswana rarely makes headlines. The Southern African nation is best known for diamonds, heart-stopping natural beauty and inoffensive politics. It ranks second behind Mauritius in the latest Ibrahim Index of African Governance. (*Guardian* online, 17 September 2014)

The Americans were also in shock. They were swift in releasing this statement from Washington:

> The United States is deeply concerned by the arrest of newspaper editor Outsa Mokone by the Government of Botswana on charges of sedition […]. The United States strongly values freedom of the press, which is a key component of democratic governance. Outsa Mokone's arrest is *inconsistent with these fundamental freedoms and at odds with Botswana's strong tradition of democratic governance.* (emphasis added) (Harf, Marie, US Department of State, 10 September 2014)

The problem with this American statement and Smith's account is that they are often taken at face value and regarded as facts about Botswana. However, these 'truths' need to be problematized and examined closely, as they are misleading. Accounts of Botswana's democratic credentials are often given by foreign intellectuals, politicians and journalists, most of whom parachute into the country only once in a while but posture as experts giving an accurate assessment of the country's democratic health (see for example Lewis n.d.; UPI online 1984). This is akin to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) paternalistic diagnosis of African economic problems argued in Joseph Stiglitz's *Globalization and its Discontents.*

To foreigners not so much informed about Botswana's political landscape, this was a grotesque development. However, in May 2015, hardly seven months later, the government proved that this perception was a wrong one. It showed defiance and resoluteness when it not only took in for questioning the editor of another paper, *Botswana Gazette,* Lawrence Seretse, and the reporter, Innocent Selatlhwa, and managing editor, Shike Olson, but also their lawyer, Joao Carlos Salbany, who was briefly detained. The latter, a South African national, was subsequently declared a security threat; his residence and work permits were not renewed in early 2016 and he had to leave Botswana.

Taking an approach similar to the attack on the private press in President Yoweri Museveni's Uganda (see Brian Semujju's chapter in this volume), officers from the corruption busting security agency, Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC), swooped on the offices of the *Botswana Gazette* with a search warrant following a story by the popular private publication alleging corruption between senior members of the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and some top civil servants. The security agents sealed the offices of the newspaper overnight and,

armed with a court order and search warrant, which the lawyer (Salbany) had earlier objected to as defective, were able to take away computer hardware from the *Gazette*, alleging that Section 44 of the DCEC Act, forbidding disclosure of ongoing investigations, was violated (Fig. 13.1).

These two incidents (and several others not discussed in this chapter) underline Botswana's frenzied commitment to the suppression of press freedom and the intimidation of journalists. This is complemented by a stranglehold on the public media and control by the Office of the President, which is the focus of this chapter. It is for this reason that in their latest measurement of media freedom in Botswana, under the auspices of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), civil society activists have described Botswana's democratic streak as 'no model' for Africa or the rest of the world: 'However, if democracy depends on a free, diverse, plural and independent media, then Botswana is no model, and dark clouds hang over the industry and country' (FES 2015). In 2013, a year before the detention of Outsa Mokone, who was arrested for sedition (as discussed above), the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) had already expressed a similar conclusion that Botswana's media democracy was far from exemplary:

Fig. 13.1   A security officer from the DCEC walks away with computer hardware from the *Botswana Gazette* in May 2014, while journalists look on (photo credit: *Weekend Post*)

Whilst Botswana continues to receive praise in the international arena for its governance, excellent democracy and low levels of corruption, in truth there is still much to be improved to ensure all citizens exercise their right to free expression and have access to information. (MISA 2014)

By contrast, the Western media monitor, Freedom House (US based), still classifies Botswana as 'free' in its press freedom index and, following the arrest of Mokone, the country has only fallen three steps, from position 41 to 44. In this regard, the best way to gauge Botswana's press and democratic situation is to look at government policy statements, policy behaviour and legislation and evaluate them as to whether they make the grade for quintessential democratic practice, as organizations like Freedom House seem to suggest. These variables are discussed in the sections that follow.

Policy Statements and Pronouncements: 'Indicating Right and Turning Left'

In January 2013, the then Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration Mokgweetsi Masisi (now vice-president of Botswana) made a bold policy statement, clarifying to all and sundry that journalists who work for the public media are *civil servants who report to government and promote the interests of government.* He described them as 'the mouthpiece' of the government of the day (*Botswana Daily News* online January 2013). This statement was significant because, hitherto, there had not been any open government pronouncement on the press, at least in recent times.

Before that, in 2009, the controversial former director of the Department of Broadcasting Services, Mogomotsi Kaboyamodimo, had made it clear that government journalists take instructions from their employer. He explained that these journalists were governed by the Public Service Act and would not resist instructions from the Office of the President (Radio Botswana News at 7:00 a.m., 24 September 2009). Following this pronouncement, Kaboyamodimo was elevated to the position of deputy permanent secretary in the Office of the President and is responsible for the public media, which operates as state media. His office is situated on the first floor of the Mass Media Complex, where all the public media is housed: Botswana Television (BTV), Radio Botswana 1 (RB1) and Radio Botswana 2 (RB2), *Daily News*, *Kutlwano* and Botswana

Press Agency (BOPA). It is, however, important to emphasize that, in Botswana, just like in many African countries, the public media is, at best, perceived by the ruling party as state media (because it is run as such) and, at worst, as ruling party media. Thus, in Kenya, Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) was once labelled KANU Broadcasting Corporation (named after the ruling party) (Eribo and Jong-Ebot 1997).

In the case of Botswana, Masisi and Kaboyamodimo's views above are fundamental, because they point to a policy continuum. These must not be read in isolation as they feed into the agenda of the postcolonial government of 1966. It is this agenda that foreign observers seem never to have been aware of. In 1968, the government of Botswana under the leadership of Seretse Khama, the founding president and father to the current president, took a deliberate decision to run Radio Botswana as a state broadcaster and *Daily News* as a mouthpiece of the ruling party, following the recommendations of a consultant, A.J. Hughes. He had recommended continued publishing of *Daily News* to support government activities and that publicity for the activities of opposition groups should be avoided wherever possible (Hughes in Tutwane 2011b). Hughes also advised that the government should not be cited by public media in response to opposition accusations but should rather be given a platform of 'a self-contained statement rather than as a reaction to opposition activity' (Hughes in Tutwane 2011a, 128). As Papathanassopoulos and Negrine (2010) put it, it is thus appropriate to describe policymaking in Botswana as 'incremental […] building on past rules'.

But before one goes into the historical context, it is perhaps appropriate to look first at the recent history. Presently, there are concerns from the opposition, the private press (and even public media employees), civil society, the legal fraternity and media monitoring bodies that the ruling party and cabinet ministers abuse the public media, especially Radio Botswana and Botswana Television.

FES (2015) expressed concern about the involvement of the Office of the President in the affairs of the public media, arguing that this office hinders the public media from performing its watchdog role:

> Direct control by the Office of the President of state-run media outlets, especially broadcast media means that this office oversees all production processes and that these media routinely fail to conduct one of their sacred duties, holding power to account. The arrangement explains, to a higher degree, the overwhelming focus in coverage by state-run media on the presidency.

This heavy government involvement in the media has shocked many observers, but it is not without historical precedence or context, and those who followed developments closely at the inception of BTV in 2000 would not be surprised. The only thing that can surprise observers and those who were privy to the policy position at that time is the stark contrast between the policy pronounced then and what obtains now. The government of President Mogae had promised Botswana a professional public service broadcaster committed to democratic ethos.[1] In 2004, former Director of the Department of Broadcasting Services, Habuji Sosome, was quoted on the BTV official website with this promise of professionalism and public service:

> Although Government-owned, *Botswana Television operates in accordance with the conventional norms of a public service broadcasting organization* [emphasis added]. BTV enjoys a reasonable degree of editorial independence that allows it to portray Botswana's political and socio-economic fabric as it is. (Mosime 2007)

Not to be outdone, the then head of news and current affairs at BTV, Felicitus Mashungwa, added that BTV was committed to fairness, accuracy and balance in its reporting:

> We at BTV News are committed to giving you fair, accurate and balanced reporting. In line with the country's Vision 2016, BTV News aims at ensuring that Botswana are properly informed, educated and become innovative. To those who wonder about editorial independence and integrity we say, watch us and judge for yourself for indeed the proof of the pudding is in the eating. (Mosime 2007)

These policy pronouncements were backed by BTV editorial guidelines, which were likewise posted for all to see on the station's website:

> As employees of the Department of Broadcasting Services and the Department of Information Services we recognize the fact that the state media organs Botswana Television, Radio Botswana, *Botswana Daily News*, *Kutlwano* and the Botswana Press Agency—are funded by the *public and therefore exist to serve the public*. We also believe that to effectively serve the public *we need editorial independence backed by a high degree of responsibility and accountability. This calls for the adoption of editorial guidelines and codes of ethics.* (emphasis added) (BTV Editorial Guidelines, in Mosime 2007)

The man who was given the task of setting up BTV and who gave it its name, Kevin Hunt, was also assured that the station would be modelled along the lines of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (Hunt in Mosime 2007). However, before long, he found himself up in arms against a collective of old-guard citizen journalists, mostly former Radio Botswana employees, who felt that the British national was going against the grain.

A senior engineer later disclosed that, in their opinion, Hunt was violating a cabinet memorandum that had established BTV as a government department. He also accused the veteran broadcaster of flouting established procedure (Sosome in Mosime 2007). As the television project team leader, Hunt initially had a lot of influence at a very high level; he controlled a large budget and was given the latitude to employ technical staff that were needed to get the station off the ground, most of whom were expatriates. Even for the core broadcasting staff, Hunt wanted new blood, as opposed to inheriting the old-guard from Radio Botswana, in the process annoying the 'Concerned Group', as the old-guard called itself.

Unfortunately for Hunt, the project that had started construction in January 1998 was behind schedule and failed to air in time for the October 1999 general elections (Hunt 1999). By 2000, construction was still going on, following a strike by at least 500 construction workers. Hunt was replaced by Simon Higman as BBC resources were brought in to rescue the project. Other expatriate staff feared for their future and resigned in quick succession. Some left before the station went on air on 31 July 2000. Within four years of BTV's coming into existence, Sosome had changed his language and stated bluntly that BTV was a government facility after all, and had to follow the official line: 'There is no media that is not controlled by certain interests', he declared. He dismissed editorial independence as 'just mere semantics' (Mosime 2007).

Chris Bishop, the expatriate head of news and current affairs, was forced to resign in frustration in May 2001, just a day before World Press Freedom Day, when he attempted to exercise editorial independence. He had wanted to broadcast a documentary about Marietta Bosch, a South African woman who had recently been hanged after a murder conviction by the High Court of Botswana. The Office of the President blocked the documentary by instructing Bishop to pull it. Its place was taken by a wildlife documentary. The next section discusses transfers and redeployments as measures meant to control editorial content.

TRANSFERS AND REDEPLOYMENTS AS A MEANS OF EDITORIAL CONTROL

Another popular approach used by the executive arm of government to deal with dissent is to redeploy or transfer those viewed as anti-government. This is an old system in the civil service in Botswana and does not apply only to the media. In 1996, the then Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, Ponatshego Kedikilwe, transferred Bapasi Mphusu (then chief press officer), to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, to work as the acting registrar of companies and later public relations officer (PRO) in the Department of Tourism. He hardly had any training to work as registrar but that did not matter to government, as long as he was no longer a threat to the interests of the higher authorities. He was, however, brought back in 2003 and eventually became the director of broadcasting services in 2005. All the same, he was finally pushed out altogether and transferred to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) as an administrative director in 2008. Subsequently, there were other high-profile transfers, such as that of Head of News and Current Affairs, Montlenyane Baaitse, who was transferred to be PRO at the Ministry of Trade and Industry in 2008, Radio Botswana's General Manager, Felicitus Mashungwa, who was transferred to the Ministry of Education as a deputy director in 2009 and BTV's Assignment Editor, Buyani Zongwani (now director of the Media Institute of Southern Africa, Botswana Chapter), who was redeployed to the Ministry of Trade and Industry in 2009.

In 2012, Sakaeyo Janie, a veteran broadcaster and by then a fresh graduate of the Department of Journalism at the University of Botswana was redeployed from his position as head of news and current affairs at BTV and transferred to the Department of Women's Affairs as gender affairs officer. He contested the transfer in court and was reinstated in the ministry. He is now station manager at Radio Botswana 2. Another officer who was expecting to take over Janie's job, Joshua Ntopolelang, was also transferred. He was redeployed to the Ministry of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources as PRO in 2014. Ntopolelang took the matter to the Industrial Court, arguing that the transfer was politically motivated as he was deemed to be pro-opposition. He has also been reinstated.

Institutional Arrangements and Organizational Culture

The culture of censorship noted above is common within the public media in Botswana. Research shows that this has been the case from the formative days of Radio Botswana and Botswana *Daily News* at independence in 1966 (Tutwane 2011b). According to a former director of information and broadcasting from the late 1970s, Boitlhoko Setshogo, stories that were potentially irritating to government were always avoided. It did not matter if they were truthful or not. In this way, the public was fed ideology as news from the beginning. News was biased. In 1968, the government had already taken a decision to run Radio Botswana as a state broadcaster as opposed to a public service broadcaster. As a presidential directive in 1968 proffered, 'Radio Botswana should be run *as a government department, not as a public service corporation. It should have a policy directive similar to that of the Information Department*' (Tutwane 2011b, emphasis added). These developments echo a similar situation in immediate post-independence Zimbabwe in which 'the new government […] came to see the public media as important tools for consolidating its political authority. It went about setting new boundaries and guidelines for the state media' (Saunders 1999).

While censorship is predominantly effected through government interference, by and large, it is self-censorship that is dominant, as one journalist pointed out in an interview (Anonymous journalist, cited in Tutwane 2011a). The workers at both the Department of Broadcasting Services and the Department of Information Services can perfectly second-guess government authorities. Of their own accord, senior journalists monitor the young reporters and weed out any stories that are potentially offensive to government. Another reporter in the government-controlled press averred that young journalists who have worked for a few years in the government establishment know both the green-light and red-light signs in their stories. Given that television is generally viewed as powerful because of its immediacy, it is monitored more closely by the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Kaboyamodimo, with journalists working under his very nose.

According to the former minister responsible for the media, Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi, a policy decision was taken at the inception of BTV to give the president and the vice-president twenty-four hour coverage whenever they needed it (Venson-Moitoi cited in Tutwane 2011a). Conversely,

opposition leaders have been denied coverage or only given very little. This scenario emerged in the 2014 general elections, when even major events such as the memorial service of the late vice-presidential candidate of the new Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) party were not broadcast. Many other significant national events have been ignored by both BTV and Radio Botswana. Sometimes, government journalists come and take pictures but they are never broadcast on BTV or published in *Daily News.*

Senior members of the ruling party are also known to call Radio Botswana to complain about stories. This used to be a problem for the popular Radio Botswana morning show programme, 'Masaasele'.[2] When they do so, the journalists are normally instructed to do them favours. In this way, journalists were sometimes caught in the cross-fire between the dominant faction of the ruling party and the other factions. As one journalist for the government press explained, 'The word of the party always prevailed over the journalists' (Anonymous journalist, cited in Tutwane 2011a). The next section considers legal enactments that constrain press freedom in Botswana.

Legislative Censorship

In 2012, the government silenced all critics and put to an end any legal avenue to make the government account for bias and favouritism in the public media with the enactment of a new law. In terms of Section 31 of the Botswana Communications Regulatory Act (BOCRA) 2012, the public media is firmly in the hands of government and exempt from regulatory oversight. It is exempted by this law from the need to have a licence to operate and it is described in the statute as a state broadcaster. 'Notwithstanding sub-section (1), a state broadcaster shall not require a license to operate' (Section 31 (2)). This contrasts with Section 68 on the postal service, which refers to a public postal service. Just like the DCEC Act, the Act establishing BOCRA, a super-regulator that oversees broadcasting, telecommunications and postal services, this statute gives the regulatory body authority to raid, search and seize property such as books and broadcast tapes if it is suspicious that a crime is about to be committed or has been committed.

This statute is riddled with many other clauses that do not promote freedom of expression or good governance. Section 19 (1) is a confidentiality clause that precludes disclosure of information about the affairs of the

BOCRA by an officer in the discharge of his/her duties. Although the clause that follows it exempts liability on grounds such as requirements of other laws, court orders and investigation of offences, it does not anticipate disclosure to expose corruption, maladministration or any other undesirable conduct. This is worsened by the fact that Botswana does not have a freedom of information law, thus denying journalists access to information required for them to write accurate stories. In 2012, the BDP-dominated parliament rejected an opposition-sponsored private members bill seeking to introduce freedom of information.

The Act also gives the minister responsible for the media a lot of power in the affairs of the otherwise independent regulatory body. It assumes that the minister is a technical expert and empowers him or her to make regulations on type-approval of telecommunications equipment (Section 84). This contrasts with the scenario in most developed countries, like the UK, where the broadcast and telecommunications regulator, Office of Communication (Ofcom), has policymaking powers.

In terms of Section 91 of the BOCRA Act, the minister is also empowered to rescind *any decision* of the authority if he/she is of the opinion that it adversely affects security of the country or relations with foreign governments. Finally, Section 94 gives the minister wide powers to make regulations 'prescribing *anything* under this Act' (emphasis added) that needs to be prescribed or which is necessary or convenient for the furtherance of the objectives and purposes of the Act or to give force and effect to it.

This controversial statute comes in the wake of another one enacted four years earlier, the Media Practitioners Act (2008). It was intended to preserve the maintenance of high professional standards within the media (Section 3 (1)) and regulated mainly the print journalists. The Act established a media council to be the regulatory body for journalists. The council's governing body is the executive committee, which is appointed by the relevant minister. This Act, therefore, has problems similar to the BOCRA Act discussed earlier.

The executive committee is answerable to the Minister in the sense that at the end of each financial year it is required to submit an annual report indicating activities and operations of the council. In the event that this is not done, the minister has the power to dissolve the executive committee (Section 34 (2)) and appoint an interim one. Similarly, although the council, through its executive committee, has the power to make regulations through a special resolution, the minister is empowered to make regulations by statutory instrument.

The complaints committee excludes journalists, which is rather a grotesque state of affairs. Instead, it comprises a chairperson (a member of the public) and eight other representatives of the public. These eight are precluded from employment or financial interest in the media but should have 'serious interest in the furtherance of the communicative value of the media' (Section 11 (1) (b)). It is difficult to imagine that the public can understand media issues better than media people. Normally, a complaints committee would have a mixture of both journalists and lay people—as is the case with the oldest press council in the world (Sweden) and the Press Complaints Commission in the UK.

Apart from these two pieces of legislation, there are many others that constrain press freedom in Botswana. The principal one is the Penal Code, which dates back to 1964, prior to independence. It has various provisions, ranging from criminal defamation to sedition and unlawful publication. These offences created by this statute carry both fines and custodial sentence. Whereas previous administrations have not used them, the current one has shown alacrity to invoke this law and prosecute journalists.

In addition to the unprecedented sedition charge against Mokone, discussed earlier, in another novel development, a young journalist, Daniel Kenosi, was hauled before a magistrate court in May 2015 on a charge of criminal defamation over a story that he had written regarding another citizen. This created double jeopardy because there is already a provision for civil defamation under private law. The government had not explained its interest in this matter, which necessitated an unprecedented intervention in criminal law. The state has since withdrawn the charges. The next section discusses bias and manipulation of news in Botswana, located within the wider African context.

Bias and News Manipulation: Botswana and the Wider African Scenario

In the light of the above discussion, one can deduce that news in Botswana's public media is biased. It is not a fair and accurate representation of facts about what is going on in the country. McQuail (2000) defines bias as 'any tendency in a news report to deviate from an accurate, neutral, balanced and impartial representation of "reality"'. This bias can be intended or unintended. In the case of Botswana state-run media, it is intended. Furthermore, as it does not occur occasionally but happens systematically,

it can be described as ideological. The preferred meaning of ideology is the Marxist one, which describes it simply as the prevailing ideas of the ruling or dominant groups (Laughey 2007).

This propagation of the ideas of the rulers or dominant groups, some scholars rightly argue, amounts to authoritarianism (Fourie 2011; Good 1996). Fourie (2011) argues that under authoritarianism, the main function of the media is to 'publicize and to propagandize the government's ideology and actions'. He adds that 'the media is primarily seen to be an instrument and mouthpiece of government' (Fourie in Hyde-Clarke 2011).

The Botswana scenario, as illustrated above, makes an interesting comparison with other African countries, from neighbours in Southern Africa to West Africa, East Africa and North Africa. The first thing that one notes is the bureaucratic arrangement of treating the public media as state media and operating it as a government department. Africa is littered with many such examples, as in Lesotho, Malawi, Kenya, Angola, Egypt and many others. To vindicate Fowler (1991), even those leaders professing to hold a higher moral consciousness as Marxists failed the test. Examples of this are Mathieu Kérékou in Benin, Julius Nyerere in Tanzania and Agostinho Neto in Angola. Nyerere's government dissolved the largely independent Tanganyika Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) and incorporated it as a government department under the Ministry of Information and Tourism in 1964. The Portfolio Minister, Idris Wakil, explained that the purpose was to promote development, national building and to educate the public. Through this shift, the government wanted the people to get 'good news concerning the country's development' (Mytton 1983). When this move was debated in parliament, most ruling Tanzania African Union (TANU) ministers and MPs made it clear that they wanted the public media to speak with one voice and to give only the government perspective.

In the Botswana case, Former President Quett Masire, then vice-president at independence in 1965, is similarly quoted as saying that his government wanted only its voice heard on national radio. Masire said that they 'only wanted to be heard and were not interested in hearing anyone else' (Tamado 2005).

In Benin, President Kérékou (r. 1972–1991) did not tolerate the private press. He nationalized private newspapers, as did Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana. Having adopted Marxist doctrine, the public media in Benin was directed to serve government interests only (Eribo and Jong-Ebot 1997). Kérékou's Marxist counterpart in Angola, President Agostinho

Neto (1975–1979) of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), adopted Marxism as official policy in 1974. No private newspapers were allowed during his leadership of Angola (Eribo and Jong-Ebot 1997). Just like in Tanzania, in Nigeria, the public broadcasting model left by the British colonizers was soon abandoned and was replaced by an agency under federal control. In Malawi and Zimbabwe, it was retained in name only as the executive took control of running the public media (Bourgault 1995; Mytton 1983).

With a government department or agency in charge of the media, it is very easy now for either direct daily control to be exerted or for it to be done indirectly through self-censorship. In the case of Botswana, as we have seen above, both forms operated. The redeployment of undesirables ensured that only the 'right people', keen to take government instructions, remained in key editorial and management positions. Employing journalists as 'civil servants', as is done in the countries mentioned above that run the media as a government department, ensures that they take instructions from government. Placing them under a permanent secretary and under the aegis of the Office of the President means that pluralism and diversity as enunciated by McQuail (2005) cannot be achieved. Equally, legislation reinforces this institutional arrangement and makes sure that the courts can hardly intervene, as their jurisdiction is ousted by statute, such as through the BOCRA Act 2012. Similarly, McQuail's proposal for editorial independence in a democratic set-up would not avail in Botswana.

Objectivity also fails because factuality of news reports, as well as the accuracy and the ability of the news to conform to independent records of events, cannot be guaranteed. Mytton's (1983) work in Tanzania and Nigeria highlights this. A governmental system becomes partisan and can even be a battle ground for opposing factions within the same party. The Tanzanian national paper, *The Nationalist*, was used in the 1970s to publish embellished speeches of cabinet minister Oscar Kambona, 'whilst doing less justice to other ministers' (Mytton 1983). In Nigeria's federal system, a lot of broadcasters were employed along partisan and ethnic lines in various states. Nigerian Television (NTV) was also federally organized and controlled and sometimes the Office of the President gave instructions not to broadcast certain stories, as was the case with two state governors who were expelled by the People's Redemption Party led by Governor Aminu Kano (Mytton 1983).

As seen earlier, news reports in Botswana also tend to be paternalistic. They mostly put forwards what the government wants the people to hear. Speeches by the president are routine on BTV and all state media, as was the case under Nyerere in Tanzania and Kaunda in Zambia. In the case of Zambia, even the president's so-called 'theory of humanism' was allocated a full programme called *Nation and Humanism*, which was highly technical and a lot of listeners found boring (Mytton 1983). In Botswana, the president often has special programmes on both radio and television, sometimes disturbing popular programmes such as 'Matlho-a-phage' (a political debate programme) and expensive African Nations Cup paid-up relay.

A governmental department employed to run the public media can be used to misinform or distort facts. Again, Mytton (1983) gives the example of an incident in Nigeria where a federal newspaper, the *New Nigerian*, was used in 1980 to deny a BBC story that had reported an alternative version that a victim of riots, Muhammad Marwa Maitatsine, had apparently died in police custody, whereas the police had told an enquiry that he had died in a shoot-out in the melee of ensuing violence. Mytton observes that 'Quite apart from the misreporting here, and the extraordinary exaggeration, the tribunal cost nowhere near three billion naira—the piece is notable for its lack of concern for the facts' (1983). The Botswana public media is routinely used to rebut private media reports and sometimes to criticize the opposition.

It is in this respect that McQuail's schema of intended bias or Fowler's 'deliberate distortion for some ulterior motive' thesis exists in Botswana. So, the bias in Botswana's public media is generally intended and used to feed the ideology or ideas of the ruling party. The interference is not daily but largely internalized by the employees through self-censorship, as proffered by Louis Althusser, thus making Botswana's official media ideological state apparatuses. The presence of the deputy permanent secretary right in the premises of the government media enclave, as noted earlier, reinforces this well-cultivated atmosphere of subservience to government.

The diversity dimension articulated by McQuail (2005) hardly fits into Botswana's contemporary situation. As we have seen above, the managerial and editorial personnel in place do not facilitate a wide range of choices for the audience, as sometimes programmes are removed from the schedule or opposition activities are recorded but not shown on national television. There are not many opportunities for access to diverse voices and sources in this society. Typically, controversial news items and investigative

journalism are shunned by the public media. This media also fails the McQuail (2005) criterion of reflecting a true or sufficient picture of the varied reality of experiences in the Botswana society. The news is monotonously pro-government and pro-ruling party. The public media's agenda fits Fourie's (2011) authoritarian criterion of publicizing and propagating the government's ideology and actions.

Conclusion

It is proper to acknowledge Fowler's (1991) argument that the institutions of news reporting and presentation are socially, economically and politically situated. The news production processes thus have the ability to colour news and, hence, it is difficult to speak of completely neutral news. The very process of selection of news itself assumes some kind of bias, this is the unintended kind suggested by McQuail (2000). However, in the Botswana situation, intended bias is dominant. In light of this, the chapter has demonstrated that Botswana's official media is controlled and manipulated by the ruling party and senior government officials. It has also shown that there is a policy continuum rooted in authoritarian media control. It has also demonstrated in different ways how control and manipulation is achieved. These include, but are not limited to, transfers/redeployments, legislation and institutional arrangements. Under institutional arrangements, the culture of self-censorship is an important practice that sustains the status quo. The highly valued democratic concept of press freedom, a giving a robust platform for debate and editorial vigour, is seriously deficient in the Botswanan system. Self-censorship is endemic. Objectivity, impartiality and accuracy, important standards for news in the West (McNair 1998; McQuail 2005), are hardly observed in Botswana's public media.

Instead, as the Marxist line taken in this article would claim, news in the country masks various aspects of reality, especially by ignoring the structured nature of the society or just accepting it as a given. It also produces a fragmentation of interests, which undermines solidarity of the lower classes. The news in the public media is dominated by the elites, especially cabinet ministers, permanent secretaries and the president of the country. In this context, the news emphasizes imaginary unity or coherence by constant reference to nation-building and patriotism.

It is thus fair to include Botswana in the same league as mainstream Africa, where press freedom is less valued and treated with contempt.

The incidents and practices from Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Angola, Benin and other African countries discussed in this chapter bear an uncanny resemblance to the Botswana situation. Broadcasting, especially at BTV, with its power of immediacy, is even more controlled and manipulated. Bourgault (1995) rightly concludes that television in Africa is not meant to serve the public interest but that of the leaders. 'By the 1970s, TV broadcasting in Black Africa, where operative, tended to have two functions. It was serving as the president's personal address system (or that of the party in power), and it was providing cheap entertainment'. Four decades later, this scenario has not changed at all. Television remains an ideological state apparatus.

Notes

1. State media is a media apparatus that is run as a government department and is often controlled by the ruling party to promote its own interests. Public service media, or public media, on the other hand, is media apparatus that exists to promote interests of the public, principally to promote citizenship. While it is characteristically overseen by government and given its funding by public coffers, in countries committed to liberal democratic rule, such as the UK, it is never treated as property of the ruling party.
2. This morning programme was a phone-in show conducted in the vernacular Setswana language and it had many followers. It gave the public a chance to confront cabinet ministers and other senior government officials.

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The Journalistic Field in Ethiopia: Where Partisanship and Credibility Cohabit

Abdissa Zerai and Fitih Alemu

The political history of modern Ethiopia has been replete with narratives of national oppression, inequality, and lack of political freedom. Particularly, the monarchial regime and the reign of the military dictatorship were often seen as epitomizers of such unflattering narratives. In bids to change such a political trajectory, at different points in time, citizens had taken up arms against the existing system. But it was not until 1991 that the armed struggle bore fruit. Spearheaded by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), four ethno-nationalist armed groups joined hands and removed the military dictatorship in 1991. They formed an umbrella organization known as the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and set in motion a new democratic dispensation for the first time in modern Ethiopian history.

In one of its first liberalization efforts, the transitional government nullified the existing pre-censorship law and recognized citizens' rights to freedom of expression and freedom of the press in 1992, and further codified such rights in the 1995 constitution. Empowered by the new

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democratic dispensation, the private press proliferated. However, the euphoria of the new era and the honeymoon between the private press and the new government did not last long. The emerging private press soon became increasingly confrontational and positioned itself more as oppositional vis-à-vis the new government (Styan 1999; Shimelis 2002). In turn, the new government used the media under its control as a mouthpiece for the dissemination of its policies and viewpoints, and accused the nascent private press of being the Dracula of the old regime reincarnated in the form of a private press that was bent on undermining the legitimacy of the new regime. It then clamped down on the private press, further deteriorating the already fragile environment. This was followed by the resuscitation of the private press, albeit only for a brief period.

After the 2005 general election, which saw the unprecedented success of the opposition in winning a significant number of parliamentary seats, the relation between the government and the private press once again deteriorated as the government accused the private press of being in cahoots with the opposition, resulting in the closure of critical papers, and the imprisonment or exile of a number of journalists (Stremlau 2012, 2014). Following this debacle, the government introduced a series of new laws (Mass Media and Freedom of Information Proclamation, 2008; Anti-Terrorism Law, 2009; Charities and Societies Law, 2009) that have had a chilling effect on the functioning of the private press (Skjerdal 2012; Binyam 2013). Summarizing Skjerdal's (2012) observations pertaining to the phenomenon, the trajectory of the environment of the private press under the EPRDF could best be characterized as liberalization—coercion—selective liberalization—and then renewed coercion.

On the broadcast media front, however, the picture has been quite different. The liberalization of the media environment under the new political dispensation did not affect the broadcast media until 2007, when the first two licenses for private radio stations were awarded (ownership of television broadcasting to date is under the monopoly of the government). As noted in a *Reporter* article (Amharic version) on May 13, 2016, currently there are twenty private commercial radio stations operating in the country. At the time when the two licenses for the operation of commercial radio stations were issued, a third license was also awarded to a controversial radio station allowed to operate as a commercial station. This station constitutes the focus of this chapter and below we provide a brief context and overview of its evolution.

The origin of Fana Radio dates to the period of the armed struggle against the military regime. During this period, the station had run for a brief time with the name 'Ye Democraciyawi Mekonenoch Demts' (The Voice of Democratic Officers), under the management of the then rebel wing known as Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) in Hagere Selam (FBC Annual Publication 2014). As rebel media, it had been used as a voice of rebellion and agitation against the existing system. Following the collapse of the Derg in 1991, it was established as a permanent station housed in Mekelle (the capital of Tigray Regional State) under the name Demtsi Weyane (Voice of the rebels) (FBC Annual Publication 2014).

In October 1994, it was expanded to a national station as Radio Fana, with increased transmission time. After it secured a license to operate as a commercial media house, it was restructured into a share company under the name Fana Broadcasting Corporate, with the endowments of the four political parties that constitute the governing coalition being the sole owners of the shares. Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC) is now a commercially registered, profit-making media complex with more than twelve local FM radio stations broadcasting in forty-one different local languages (FBC Annual Publication 2014). Since 2010, FBC has put in place a complex and decentralized organizational structure that is in accordance with its continuously expanding radio broadcasting business. At the time of writing this chapter it was preparing to enter the television market, as soon as the government was ready to award television broadcasting licenses to private entities. As a media entity affiliated with the regime and one led by a management body that not only shares a similar world view as the governing elites but also has a stake in the continuation of the status quo, Fana proudly subscribes to a *development journalism* model, which the incumbent regime openly prescribes for media under its control and indirectly exerts pressure on the private media to embrace.

In Ethiopia's polarized political environment, it does not take much to observe the spillover of such a polarization onto the media field (Hallin and Mancini 2004). For instance, the government-controlled and/or affiliated media often projects itself as an ally of the government, claiming to subscribe to the development journalism model, whereas the private media portrays itself as an independent monitor of power along the lines of the conventional *liberal watchdog* model. The private media accuses the government-controlled media of pandering to the regime in power (Hailegebriel 2005), and the government media criticizes the private press

for behaving as political opposition to the current system and the private broadcast media (i.e. radio) for its focus on trivia. Such trading of accusations between the two groups has contributed to the bifurcation of the journalistic field in the country, damaging the credibility of the journalistic profession in the eyes of the general public.

Amid such an unflattering media environment, however, FBC seems to be faring well both materially and symbolically. According to the ERIS (Electoral Reform International Services) audience survey conducted by Ward and Ayalew (2011), radio was considered the most important and reliable source of information by the respondents, followed by television and word of mouth. Nearly half of the respondents (47.6%) noted that news and current affairs was the program they had most often listened to in the last three months and identified Fana FM as their favorite radio station among the commercial stations (Ward and Ayalew 2011).

In a country where there exists acute political polarization and where the centralized media is invariably seen as the mouthpiece of the government and the commercial broadcast media (i.e. radio) is more infotainment oriented, this comparatively favorable attitude of the public toward Fana as a reliable source of serious information, such as news and current affairs, regardless of the station's close association with the ruling coalition, defies conventional wisdom. As such, the situation merits serious examination. In the light of the above, this study closely examines how a media house that is in cahoots with the government strives to maintain credibility in the eyes of its audience. In addressing this general question, the study seeks answers to the following specific questions in light of Bourdieu's field theory framework: (1) What norms govern the determination of newsworthiness at FBC? (2) How does the journalistic field interact with other social fields in the news production process at FBC? And finally, (3) How does the interaction of the journalistic field with other fields enable and/or constrain journalistic professionalism in Fana Broadcasting Corporate?

In order to answer these questions, the study employed an ethnographic approach carried out during a two-month period, with participant observation as its principal data collection tool. This was supplemented through semi-structured interviews with selected informants. In addition, documents such as brochures and manuals produced by the media house were also consulted. The study has further benefitted from the insights gained from the researchers' extensive interaction with policymakers, media leaders, and journalists over a four-year period from 2012 to 2015.

The main site of the study was at the FBC media house headquartered in Addis Ababa. Given that FBC has six newsrooms at its headquarters, only one was sampled for this study through the judgmental sampling technique. Thus, the news magazine (*Zena Metshet*) department was selected as an observation site. Based on convenience and judgmental sampling techniques, twelve journalists were also selected for interviews from among twenty-one subjects working in the news magazine and online news departments. In the selection process, due care was given to the inclusion of subjects who held key positions such as the editor-in-chief, news director, editors, key individuals whose ideas carried more weight (as witnessed during the participant observation sessions), and reporters/foot soldiers.

As a participant observer, one of the two researchers attended editorial meetings of the newsroom every morning for about two months, from April 14 to June 13, 2015. The researcher attended morning editorial briefings to determine the major constructs out of the newsroom setting, and engaged in some story developments and discussions, as well as evaluations of news stories. As a complement to the observation made in the news magazine department, the participant observer also worked as an assistant in a much smaller news department to gain a more authentic grasp of the journalists' experiences. This was a two-week participation in the website news department, which consisted of five journalists and followed similar news briefing procedures as the main research site. The experience of this participant observation shaped the subsequent interviews. The interview guides for the participants were pre-sketched with basic guiding questions. Once the interview started, however, follow-up questions were posed by the researcher as the situation demanded. The duration of the interview with each subject ranged from a minimum of fifteen minutes to a maximum of fifty-seven minutes. The interviews revolved around the following key issues: demographic information, journalistic taste, self-perception of professionalism and professional autonomy, institutional identification, and workplace social experience, among others.

Since participant observation and in-depth interviews call for the researcher's involvement, some ethical issues were reviewed and kept in consideration throughout the study. After acquiring all the necessary formal permissions from the media house and later from the director of the news department, the researcher responsible for participant observation disclosed herself to the members of the newsroom and explained the purpose of the

study to the target group on the first day of participant observation. Then, she secured permission for the participant observation, individual interviews, and voice-recording from the group. Accordingly, all except two informants were voice-recorded during the interview. But care was taken to avoid identifying names in the note-taking process as well as during the interview-recording sessions. Both in the data collection and in the analysis phases, informants' identities were kept confidential as well.

The Conceptual Terrains of Bourdieu's 'Field Theory'

The field theory as a theoretical construct is credited to the well-recognized French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu. In Bourdieu's (1998b) field theory, society is understood as being composed of different fields which, although related, are fairly separate, as each field has its own specific logic. In further explaining this point, Bourdieu (1998b) asserts that every field lives up to its own laws and practices, thus demanding specific analysis. According to Bourdieu (1998b, 83–84),

> We have social universes which have a fundamental law, a *nomos* which is independent from the laws of other universes, which are *auto-nomes*, which evaluate what is done in them, the stakes at play, according to which to evaluate what is done in the stakes at play, according to principles and criteria that are irreducible to those of other universes.

As noted by Hovden (2012, 58), Bourdieu sees a social field as a specific social microcosm created by long processes of social differentiation, or 'the site of a logic and a necessity that are specific and irreducible to those that regulate other fields.' According to Neveu (2007, citing Bourdieu 1998b), a field exists when it triggers 'field effects.' Elaborating on this point, Willig et al. (2015, 3) assert that a social space comes to work as a field when the institutions and characters that enter it are a part of and feel its stakes, values, and debates, when one cannot succeed in it without a minimum level of practical or reflexive knowledge of its internal rules and logics. In the logic of Bourdieu's (1998b) field theory, journalism can be understood as a sub-field within the larger, more general field of cultural production.

It is often maintained that the journalistic field derives its autonomy from associated fields through professional codes of ethics that enshrine

commitments to freedom of speech, the public's right to know, and accurate and unbiased reporting (Webb et al. 2002). However, the field is, nonetheless, central to the structures and play of power because it is inextricably connected to, and interacts with, a number of other fields, such as political and economic fields. And the nature of such an interaction has a bearing on the level to which journalistic professional autonomy can be exercised and the nature of the journalistic product that accompanies it.

As a field is a social world, with its own sovereigns and subjects, there are possibilities as well as constraints that come with these relationships. Accordingly, the structure of objective relations between social agents defines what they can and cannot do. To describe the power possessed by agents, Bourdieu (1998a) uses the concept of *capital*, of which he distinguishes four types: *economic* (money), *cultural* (skills, abilities, knowledge), *social* (networks), and *symbolic* (prestige, reputation). Comparing the battles in social fields with a game of cards, Bourdieu (1998a) argues that the different forms of capital are, on the one hand, the stakes (i.e. the prize for winning) and, on the other hand, the aces that determine the chance of winning.

Another key concept in Bourdieu's field theory is what he calls *habitus*. Bourdieu's (2002) account of habitus refers to the ways in which our social background and position are manifest in their embodiment. It is a system of predispositions, a matrix of schemes, judgments, and behaviors, and thus an organizing principle of practices (Bourdieu 1997). It is a concept of how an agent is well fit in a given field and used to its norms (*doxa*), so that they come naturally as predetermined routes of work.

For Bourdieu (2002, 29), habitus is similar to what has been traditionally called 'character' but with an important difference: habitus is 'a set of acquired characteristics which are the product of social conditions.' As such, we can refer to the habitus of an individual, but it will always be primarily framed as individual variants of a more generalized collective or group identity. The concept of habitus is aiming at long-lasting schemes of perception, thinking, and acting, and thus emphasizes that recent experiences are shaped by past experiences (Meyen and Fiedler 2013).

Furthermore, habitus can also be described as a 'socialized subjectivity' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) or a 'structured and structuring structure' (Bourdieu 1994). Bourdieu uses this notion to describe the dispositions people have, and everything that has shaped them since their earliest childhood. Habitus determines what is achievable, that is, the way that a journalist perceives the world and judges other people, his taste and val-

ues, ways of thinking and acting, and even how he appears and moves his body. For this reason, the concept of habitus is also a key to understanding the work of a journalist.

From Bourdieu's (2002) point of view, capital determines experiences and therefore habitus. This is also interesting because the social position (one's own capital possession in comparison with others) also determines habitus. According to Bourdieu, the habitus is not innate but is fed by the experiences that agents have. Habitus is simultaneously the result of primary and secondary socializations and thus rarely stable and unified (Bourdieu 1997). With the growing importance of journalism education as an entry into the profession, a significant part of the training of future journalists can be described as a process of habitus transformation.

Regarding behavior of agents and their commitment to the 'game,' Bourdieu (1998b, 74–77) claims that there is an imposition of the structured game (editorial policy, newsroom guides, etc.) on the mind structure of the agent. Socialization or learning, in this case, is how the structure develops itself on the agents. In his sociological work, Bourdieu (1998b, 73) contends that intellectuals or agents who have set themselves to be separate and 'extraterrestrial' are really not so; far from being disinterested or neutral, they are engaged in knowledge generation with interest. According to Bourdieu (1996), what drives them is not rational behavior but their commitment to the game, their forecast of a chance for success in that field, their belief that the game is worth playing—or, in other words, their *illusio*, which is another key concept in his field theory. For Bourdieu (1992), illusio is the investment of self in the game. It is the fact of being invested, of investing in the stakes existing in a certain game through the effect of competition; and it only exists for people who, being caught up in that game, possess the disposition to recognize the stakes at play. Using the word 'investment' in the double sense of psychoanalysis and of economy, Bourdieu (1992, 79) is of the conviction that illusio is for a social setting what libido is for human biology.

Looking at journalism as a field, thus, means understanding journalism as a semi-autonomous field, with its own logics of practice, as an ongoing game or struggle over defining what is journalism, what is good journalism, and so forth (Bourdieu 1998a; Willig 2012). These symbolic establishments are made in the assumption of field theory through what Bourdieu calls (journalistic) *doxa*, that is, the unspoken, unquestioned, taken-for granted understanding of the news game and the basic beliefs guiding journalistic practice. Doxa concerns the common experience that the

world seems self-explaining and self-evident to us. It is the taken-for-granted social practice, the seemingly natural, which we rarely make explicit and which we rarely question (Bourdieu 1998b).

The general doxa of social practice can be described as 'the universe of the tacit presuppositions that we accept as the natives of a certain society' (Bourdieu cited in Schultz 2007, 11). The journalistic doxa, as Shultz (2007) argues, refers to the beliefs and values by which the agent abides, resulting from his/her deep attachment to the field and its values. Journalistic doxa comes naturally from the illusio for engagement with full energy in the game (Bourdieu 1996, 1998b). Thus, field theory's key concepts, such as habitus, doxa, illusio, and capital, are of significance in making sense of the workings of the journalistic field and in understanding how journalists embed themselves in their particular organizational culture, and the bearing that such culture might have on the production of news.

The rest of the chapter presents the study's findings, focusing specifically on the following thematic categories: norms that govern newsworthiness, interaction of the journalistic field with other fields, and journalists' views of their professional setting.

Norms Governing Newsworthiness at Fana

Under this sub-heading, an attempt is made to look at the norms or doxa that regulate the determination of what constitutes news at Fana. Based on the data, there are two central norms that govern newsworthiness at this media house and these are discussed below.

'Public Interest' as Determinant of Newsworthiness

In the editorial meetings at FBC, one of the nodal points around which the discussion of news that is worthwhile to produce centers on 'the people/listeners.' Typically, each editorial meeting starts with the discussion of news stories aired the previous day. The editorial members are given a chance to comment on their colleagues' stories by positioning themselves as listeners, rather than professionals. Then, one by one, the members would begin their commentaries with a phrase such as 'As a listener, I think …' followed by comments that focus on the news content. For instance, in one of the editorial meetings, a reporter expressed the sense of pride he felt over the previous afternoon's news story featuring the

commemoration of a grand road construction project which would benefit the public. Referring to the previous day's news report, another reporter leveled an accusation against Kebele (the lowest administrative structure) officials in his neighborhood for suspending an inner-city road construction project which would have been instrumental in improving the lives of people living in the area.

In another editorial meeting, a reporter stressed that the audiences listen to the station's news bulletin because it is the best news program available in the country in terms of giving priority to issues that directly affect the lives of the listeners, and, hence, the journalists 'should live up to that expectation.' During the editorial meetings, the editor-in-chief regularly reminded the members that 'we should think about what the people are expecting to hear' in determining newsworthiness. When journalists working in the news magazine department were asked what comes to their minds first while writing news, they invariably identified 'the public' or 'the listener.' For example, one of the reporters noted,

> We cover the public's complaints. Our project stories center around the people. On the other hand, it is also about the corrective measures that the government takes in response to the news reports. To give you an example, the mayor [of a *woreda* city] was removed from his position because of Fana's news report. So, in one way or another, every news story is done for the good of the people. At the same time, we report what good things the government is doing since the government does what it does for the benefit of the people. The government is in charge of what happens in this country.

In most of the editorial meetings that the participant observer attended, strong commentaries were regularly forwarded, by the members in general and by the editor-in-chief in particular, regarding the need to consider the public in every step of the work. As can be observed from the preceding accounts, one of the norms or doxa that determine newsworthiness in Fana is 'public interest.' The problem is that journalists at Fana invariably stressed their commitment to serving the 'public/people's interest' as if the word 'public/people's interest' is unproblematically transparent. There are many publics and diverse groups of people that cannot be collapsed into a generic and singular 'public' or 'people.' It is, thus, important to interrogate who the 'public' is as conceived by Fana, and whom such 'public' includes and whom it excludes.

Within the framework of a developmental state's politico-economic system that the incumbent claims to have been building, and whose vision FBC shares, dependable and reliable forces of change are identified as peasants, pastoralists, civil servants, students, a significant segment of the educated class, women, small-scale merchants, day laborers, and the unemployed (GCAO Document 2012, 68). As over 82% (Skjerdal 2012) of the Ethiopian population is made up of peasants and pastoralists, it goes without saying that these two social groups constitute the overwhelming majority of the incumbent's political base. On the other hand, the business class is among those described as forces with the proclivity for rent-seeking and that would potentially stand in the way of the developing democracy's politico-economic system due to its alleged infatuation with market fundamentalism (GCAO Document 2012, 68–69). Thus, 'the public/people' in Fana journalists' articulations mainly refer to the incumbent's social base, which does not include the private business class.

Such social base-related biases were often reflected by the nature of issues deemed or not deemed newsworthy at the editorial meetings. For instance, at one of the editorial meetings, a reporter who was a relative newcomer suggested a story regarding Internet fraud, which, according to her, was depriving film producers of considerable amounts of money and thereby affecting the entertainment industry. She added that the story would help create public awareness about the issue. Her explanation of the project was unceremoniously interrupted by the editor-in-chief, who just moved on to another issue. Although the editor-in-chief did not explicitly say so, it was obvious that the social class that the reporter believed to have been affected as a result of the said Internet fraud was not of primary concern for the editor-in-chief, and, by extension, for the media organization for which he worked.

As individual interviews with the news magazine department journalists and editors show, almost all the interviewees considered themselves to be guardians of the masses and a bulwark against abuse of power by elites. They all concurred that they enjoyed producing news stories that involve abuse of power and corrupt practices by both the political class and private investors. They also believed that the media house they work for, that is, Fana, prides itself for its fearlessness in taking on such powerful groups.

A closer look at the output of news production at the media house, however, shows the rarity of investigative reports on the political class in the upper echelons of power. When critical pieces on the political class were produced, they invariably tended to focus on those at lower levels in

the power hierarchy. In other words, they targeted policy implementers rather than policymakers. As fundamental structural, policy, and systemic issues were immune from scrutiny, problems associated with abuse of power and the practices of corruption within the governing class were portrayed as isolated administrative problems committed by a few 'bad apples.' As a mechanism for restoring public confidence in the system, Fana would go after these 'bad apples' and hold them accountable whenever necessary. In so doing, it contributes to the legitimization and protection of the integrity of the whole political system. On the other hand, more sustained critical news reports from Fana journalists tended to focus on corruption and malpractice in the private business sector. Such reporting practices by the media house appear to be consistent with the ideological underpinnings of the developmental democracy system, which has characterized the private business class as susceptible to rent-seeking behavior and, hence, an impediment to the success of the developmental democracy project (GCAO Document 2012).

'Positive' News as Determinant of Newsworthiness

The notion that the government works for the best interests of the people and, hence, that its endeavors should deserve positive spin is a common-sense and taken-for-granted doxa or subjective belief that regulates the newsmaking process at FBC. In the editorial meetings, it was a common experience that when potential news stories were suggested, serious and exhaustive discussions of angle, content, and sourcing were conducted before officially sanctioning the assignment. However, when discussing news stories that featured government officials and institutions, no such discussions were deemed necessary. The only points of discussion considered for such government-related issues were giving out the assignment or determining the time needed to do the story. The working assumption was that the government works in the best interests of the public, and media coverage of its activities ought to give primacy to news stories that portray the government in a positive light. As a result, stories that would potentially depict the government in a negative light were not deemed as newsworthy, thus leading to journalists' complicity in the exclusion of stories considered to have critical overtones.

At one of the editorial meetings, for instance, a reporter proposed to work on a story that focused on mental health issues. He presented tangible numerical data to support his initial argument that awareness of mental health issues has not been adequately engendered in the country.

The reporter noted that he intended to investigate what the concerned authorities were doing with regards to this awareness problem and the challenges that mental health institutions were facing. But the editor-in-chief was quick in his disapproval of the proposed story through his body language; he added 'we have done this too many times,' and swiftly moved onto the next issue.

During another editorial meeting, the editor-in-chief spoke at length about the care that should be taken when covering sensitive political issues. He then referred to a recent public demonstration held in opposition to a development plan proposed by the government, which was covered by a private commercial media outlet. The editor-in-chief accused the protestors of being irresponsible and a serious threat to the development endeavors of the government and called them criminals. He then went on to explain the noble intentions of the government in designing the proposed plan. Continuing where the editor-in-chief left off, another editor added how the private commercial media outlet allegedly contributed to the controversy and, hence, the stabilizing role that fell on the shoulders of Fana in order to diffuse the tension.

What can be discerned from the accounts noted above is how the media house uses symbolic violence and gatekeeping to keep journalistic staff in line. According to Bourdieu (1998b), when a holder of symbolic capital uses the power this confers against an agent who holds less, and seeks thereby to influence or alter the agent's actions, he/she exercises symbolic violence. From Bourdieu's (1998b) perspective, symbolic violence is fundamentally the imposition of categories of thought and perception upon dominated social agents, who then take the social order to be just. It is the incorporation of unconscious structures that tend to perpetuate the structures of action of the dominant class. The dominated then take their position to be 'right.'

With respect to the selective nature of news reporting in Fana, where positive stories were not only favored but also valorized and where negative stories were largely deemed unfit to air, a reporter attributed the phenomenon to the station's philosophy of journalism that guides its practice, and noted the following:

> Both our government and Fana are now focused on development journalism. Such journalism would not dare to obstruct the government's performance by dwelling on negative stories. Rather, it would encourage the government's successes by highlighting them; when it points out government shortcomings, it would do so in a constructive manner, and also show

directions as to how such shortcomings could be addressed. This is the experience I have acquired in here.

As witnessed during participant observation, stories that came from official government sources were most likely to gain immediate approval for airing, with little or no discussion of the newsworthiness of the issues. Irrespective of the fact that the media outlet considers public interest as sacrosanct, ordinary citizens were rarely used as news sources in Fana's bulletins. On the contrary, government officials constituted the bulk of news sources for the stories produced by the media outlet.

Being the most dominant commercial broadcast media organization in the country, the implications of Fana's newsmaking practice for the news-making culture in the Ethiopian media industry cannot be underesti-mated. As players in the industry see Fana's adoption of 'positive' news as paying off, they could, for example, be tempted to emulate it and, by doing so, unwittingly fall prey to the very system that they are supposed to hold accountable.

To sum up, the key point is that, on one hand, Fana's deployment of the discourse of the defence of 'public interest' and the celebration of 'positive' stories as the governing norm or doxa for newsworthiness is consistent with the habitus of the social field, that is, the journalistic field is skewed towards development journalism. And such a skewed journalis-tic field is mobilized by Fana to provide a philosophical basis for the jour-nalistic work that aims at supporting the system. On the other hand, Fana's selective watchdog role, that focuses on lack of good governance at the lower administrative levels and corruption and malpractice in the pri-vate business sector, might have given the impression that it stands on the side of the voiceless and thereby generalising positive perceptions of the media house from ordinary citizens, who often constitute the bulk of the incumbent's political base.

Interactions and Associated Ramifications of the Journalistic Field with Other Social Fields at Fana

In transitional societies such as Ethiopia, where there is sharp political polarization, the journalistic field is weakly differentiated from other social fields, making it vulnerable to instrumentalization by the more powerful social fields. In order to examine the nature of journalistic professional

autonomy at FBC, it is, therefore, important to look into the nature of interactions between the journalistic field at Fana and the political and economic fields in today's Ethiopia. Such an examination also presupposes looking into the structural opportunities and/or constraints that such interactions have created for Fana vis-à-vis other similar media organizations within the journalistic ecosystem in Ethiopia. Since different media organizations possess different capital, which, according to Bourdieu (1998a), includes economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital, their competitive advantages largely hinge on the nature of their capital.

As outlined in the introductory section of this chapter, Fana Radio traces its roots back to the armed struggle that eventually overthrew the Marxist military junta in 1991, and gave birth to the current political dispensation. Following the victor's control of state power, the radio continued to function as the ideological apparatus of the new government. When the new media law that provided for the establishment of private commercial radio broadcasting came into effect in 2007, Fana became one of the few media organizations that secured a for-profit radio broadcasting license. Soon, it was restructured into a share company under the name 'Fana Broadcasting Corporate,' with the endowments of the four political parties that constitute the governing coalition being the sole owners of the shares.

FBC is led by a veteran of the armed struggle, who himself used to work at the original radio station that was housed in a cave. He is also a member of and a key player in the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)—the dominant of the four political parties that constitute the governing coalition. As an insider to the government in power, the organization's leadership plays a key role in policy debates and works in close partnership with the party leadership, the leadership in the Government Communications Affairs Office, and media regulatory bodies. It places itself at the forefront of the symbolic struggle for ensuring the hegemony of the developmental state politico-economic order. Connected by a shared vision, the media organization's leadership works in tandem with the political leadership. As a result, key players in the political field periodically get invited to the media house as trainers and speakers and play an important role in the socialization of the workforce into the governing elites' privileged worldview, thereby ensuring its sustained reproduction.

As literature on developmental states shows, the role of the state is seen as central to economic and social development of a country (Johnson 1987; Woo-Cumings 1999; Mkandawire 2001; White 2006).

In a developmental state politico-economic system, the state directly intervenes in the economy and shapes the direction of economic development. As such, the developmental state is neither socialist nor free market but something different—it is a plan-rational capitalist developmental state which links state interventionism with rapid economic growth (Woo-Cumings 1999). Consonant with the developmental state politico-economic model, the state plays a dominant role in the Ethiopian economy, and controls key economic sectors either directly or through parastatals and party-affiliated endowments, with a relatively weaker and subservient private sector. This means that FBC is not only in cahoots with the political field but is also linked strategically (via the political field) to the economic field, with important ramifications on the distribution of capital between the media organizations within the journalistic ecosystem of Ethiopia.

Fana's connection with the political class, for instance, enhances its social/political capital in the sense that it provides the media house and, by extension, its journalists, with unfettered access to official sources for a dependable supply of 'raw materials' for news production which are hardly accessible to other private commercial media organizations. The media house's reliance on official sources and its use of these sources as the basis for news reporting serves two mutually beneficial purposes. On the one hand, as McChesney (2003) stresses, such practice gives those in political office considerable power to set the news agenda. On the other hand, it serves a utilitarian purpose for the media house, in terms of the practice by having an important added benefit of making the news fairly easy and inexpensive to cover.

In addition to being cost effective, the media house's ability to dependably and reliably feature important public officials in its reportage increases it symbolic capital. The media house further leverages its symbolic capital to boost its economic fortunes. It does this in at least two ways: first, as the government plays the dominant role in the Ethiopian economy, big businesses controlled by the government see the media house as their strategic ally in ensuring the perpetuation of the new politico-economic order, and, hence, channel their advertisements to the media outlet. Second, as the private sector is relatively weak and subservient to the political field, its success largely hinges on its relations with the government. Since a number of big projects, among other things, are commissioned by the government, winning project contracts is a matter of life and death for the private sector, which necessitates cultivating good relationships with

the government. The private sector, thus, sees doing business, by way of advertisement, with the media outlet favored by the governing elites as one way of making a positive impression on the government. This means that the playing field is disproportionately skewed in favor of the target media outlet.

The increase in Fana's economic capital also positively affects its cultural and symbolic capital from the perspective of the media house as well as its workforce. For instance, Fana's better economic position enables it to acquire better trained manpower in sufficient numbers, provide its staff with quality technological infrastructure and the required training in using the infrastructure for carrying out their day-to-day responsibilities, and to put in place attractive incentive structures to retain its workforce. According to a study by David Ward (2011), Fana has by far the largest number of journalistic staff among all private commercial media houses and also boasts of having the highest-paid journalistic of workforce in the country. It can, therefore, be argued that, as a media house, the privileged interaction of Fana with the political and economic fields has enabled it to amass various important elements of capital, among which a properly trained journalistic workforce is one. But how does the workforce feel about working in this social space with respect to professional journalistic imperatives?

THE JOURNALISTS' VIEW OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL SETTING

As interviews with the journalists and editors in the news magazine and the online news departments clearly show, journalists almost invariably attributed their journalistic professionalism to the autonomy they enjoy in the social space where they work. One journalist noted, 'The system is both encouraging and supportive […] given that, whether to take advantage of the system or not is up to the journalist's commitment and interest.' Another senior journalist added, 'I really, really like the profession, and there is no better media than this [Fana] to serve the public very well.' Yet another senior journalist concurred with his colleagues by saying, 'I plan my own stories, and receive comments on my projects from the editor. Nobody else decides what news story I should work on […] so I work in a free work setting, so, I am happy.'

As can be observed from the interviewees' accounts, the journalists invariably believed that their professional setting has granted them the necessary autonomy for the exercise of their journalistic profession. It was also seen as instrumental in their dedication to and self-investment in the 'game,'

which, in turn, has contributed to their professional growth in the field. What was apparently missing in the journalists' appraisal of the professional setting, however, was the mention of the conditions under which such professional 'autonomy' was made possible.

As Bourdieu (1996) argues, social agents do not engage in gratuitous acts; they do what they do motivated by self-interest, which means that all reasonable actions by human agents have ends, mainly of an economic nature. What drives the agents is not necessarily rational behavior but their commitment to the game, their forecast of a chance for success in that field, their subjective belief that the game is worth playing and defending, or, in other words, their *illusio*. The autonomy granted by the field is thus conditioned and ultimately an illusion. Autonomy only remains as long as agents believe in the ordered arbitrariness of doxa and continue to make investments in the field through conformist practice. In other words, for social agents operating in a particular social field and whose behavior is in a clearer sense defined by 'the rules of the game' and the circulation of specific forms of capital, the autonomy of individual agents can only be granted as long as these agents act within the doxic confines of the field (Jansson 2015). However, as soon as the agents want to fulfill a function outside the confines of the doxa assigned to them by the field, they rediscover the limits of their autonomy (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

In order to avoid such a dissonance, Bourdieu (1990, 54) argues that individuals learn to want what conditions make possible for them, and not to aspire to what is not available to them. The conditions in which the individuals live generate dispositions compatible with these conditions. The most improbable practices are, therefore, excluded as unthinkable, by a kind of immediate submission to order that inclines agents to make a virtue of necessity, that is, to refuse what is categorically denied and to will the inevitable. The perceived professional autonomy of Fana's journalists is, thus, the outcome of their willing adherence to a predetermined doxa imposed by the media house through socialization and the agents' continued commitment to and self-investment in the 'game,' which guarantees the continued reproduction of the institution's privileged worldview.

Conclusion

Owing to the heightened political polarization in the country, the journalistic field in Ethiopia is weakly differentiated from other social fields, notably from politico-economic fields that dominate the other fields.

This phenomenon has made the journalistic field vulnerable to the vagaries of the politico-economic fields, as these fields constantly seek to instrumentalize the journalistic field for their own ends. Such a state of affairs has resulted in the bifurcation of the journalistic field into the government-owned and/or government-affiliated media sphere and the privately owned commercial media (especially the press) sphere, where the former is often accused of being in cahoots with the ruling elite, while the latter is accused of being in the camp of the political opposition, eroding the credibility of the journalistic field in the eyes of the general public.

In the broadcasting sector, television has exclusively remained in the hands of the government, while radio ownership has been extended to private entities. Due to the heavy regulation of the broadcast media and a limited access to information from official sources, the private commercial radio stations have often focused on noncontroversial infotainment programing formats. Unlike other private commercial radio broadcasting media houses FBC has, however, carved out a unique position where it has succeeded in practicing news journalism that not only ensures the reproduction of the privileged worldview of the governing elite but also garners more favorable reception from the audience. This success is largely attributable to its privileged association with the political and economic fields, and the resultant unequal distribution of different forms of capital—notably, the political, economic, cultural, and symbolic capital—which has created status hierarchies within the media field, thus situating Fana at the top of such hierarchy within the commercial radio broadcasting sector.

The acquisition of these types of capital in an environment where the media field is weakly differentiated from politico-economic fields points not only to the accumulated financial and human resources, reputation, and prestige but also to the editorial privilege and superiority that the government confers on the privileged media type and organization. As Bourdieu (1996) points out, the position of a media organization in the field determines its space of structural opportunities. This space of opportunities is at once enabling and constraining. It affords opportunities for innovative action while at the same time imposing a structure that delimits what can be attempted (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008; Sukosd and Wang 2013). In this sense, the privileged position of Fana, and the various forms of capital it (and by extension its journalistic staff) has amassed as a result of such a position, has provided its journalistic staff with a certain degree of editorial privilege that enables them to dare covering particular

issues that other commercial radio broadcasting media houses would not risk. It provides Fana's editorial staff, relative to others in the same media ecology, a room for some form of experimentation within their journalistic work, where they selectively mobilize their watchdog role toward the defense of partisan political interests in the name of 'public interest' as the norm governing news value, and legitimize the status quo by structuring the discourse of system support in the guise of 'positive' news, as a determinant of newsworthiness.

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From Watchdogs to Hostages of Peace: The Kenyan Press and the 2013 General Election

Denis Galava

On the back of the controversial 2007–2008 presidential elections and the subsequent post-election violence, in which much of Kenya's media were implicated, both directly and indirectly, a new narrative emerged that seemed to redefine the role of the media in political coverage ahead of the 2013 elections. Located broadly within Johan Galtung's 'peace journalism' (Galtung and Ruge 1965, Galtung 1975), this emergent form of journalism tried to obliterate conflict from political stories in a deliberate attempt to institutionalise a new (apolitical) ethos in election coverage. This was unprecedented: the media thus became direct mobilisers for peace. Conspicuous in this peace juggernaut was the absence of questions on reform, justice for victims of post-election violence and accountability.

This chapter investigates the fundamental drivers of the peace narrative in the Kenyan press. It locates the narrative within the political, social and economic dynamics preceding the 2013 election coverage. Because media development in Kenya is irrevocably tied to broader political and economic factors (Nyamnjoh 2005; Ogola 2011), the chapter explores how these factors were embedded in and fundamental to this peace narrative,

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to understand why the media embraced peace journalism. The chapter also explores organisational factors within newsrooms that were crucial to the institutionalisation of the peace narrative. It does this by investigating the process of newsgathering and gatekeeping at the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard*, to establish why and how some stories were used and others not.

In the period leading to the elections of 2013, there was a strong identification of the business sector with peace journalism. Even the presidential debates, organised by the media and the private sector, became a platform for such peace journalism (Moss and O'Hare 2014). The relationships between the private sector, media and political actors, through shared business interests (Herman and Chomsky 1988; Ogola 2009, 2011; Makokha 2010), mean that the three are strongly linked. It can be argued, a priori, that peace journalism as promoted by the private sector served specific political interests. The question is the extent to which there was self-awareness of this fact on the part of all the actors, particularly the media, and whether this was a partisan promotion of a section of the political interests or a promotion of the common good.

This study hopes to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on newspaper framing of conflicts by applying Galtung's peace journalism concept on the coverage of the 2013 elections. Notably, most of the research on the media and conflict in Kenya has focused on the role of radio, Internet and mobile phone technology in promoting peace or escalating violence. Not much effort has been dedicated to analysing the press coverage. Scholars like Mbeke (2008), Ogola (2009), Makokha (2010), Long et al. (2013), Oluoch and Ohaga (2014), have attempted to analyse the role played by the media in general but still give minimal attention to the press. Moreover, much of what exists on peace journalism in Kenya focuses on text alone and this can be reductive because context is ignored.

News and its Owners: The Political Economy of the Media in Kenya

Historically, Kenya's media have struggled for freedom of expression. Under the Jomo Kenyatta regime (1963–1978), the media were part of the 'nation-building' fad and too much scrutiny of the government was deemed 'unpatriotic' (Makokha 2010; Ogola 2011). The Moi government, which came to power in 1978, set out to check political dissent

and consequently seriously curtailed press freedom. It became even worse after the failed 1982 coup. The government not only harassed the media through sedition trials but also banned critical publications such as *Beyond* magazine in 1988, *Financial Review* in 1989, *Development Agenda* and *Nairobi Law Monthly* in 1989 and 1990 respectively. Between 1988 and 1990, about twenty publications were banned in Kenya (Mbeke 2008).

The situation changed in 1991 with the reintroduction of multiparty-ism. This led to the liberalisation of the media sector, allowing the existence of more newspapers, radio and television (Ogola 2011). When Mwai Kibaki took over as president in 2003, the media enjoyed further freedoms, culminating in the widespread new phenomenon of private vernacular radio (Ogola 2009, 2011). However, the coverage of mega security scandals unsettled the state, leading to the raid on the Standard Group in 2006, and worsened the media–state relationship. The relationship appears to have come a full circle in the first half of Uhuru Kenyatta's presidency, with a return of the 'development ideology' experienced during the Jomo Kenyatta years. Consequently, the media is increasingly under pressure to conform to the establishment's notion of patriotic and nation-building responsibilities.

However, despite the apparent tensions between the media and the state, the relationship is not always antagonistic. Media owners and the state enjoy a cordial relationship, which often determines the way they operate. With the increasing mediatisation of political power (Coleman et al. 2009), politicians seek to have media owners on their side. Some have even invested in the media themselves. For example, the principal shareholder of the Nation Media Group, the Aga Khan, is close to both the Kenyattas and the Mois (Ogola 2009). Former President Moi acquired a major stake in *The Standard* during his reign. The Kenyatta family runs MediaMax, the fourth-largest media house, with stakes in newspapers, radio and television. Kenya's largest broadcast house, Royal Media Services, belongs to SK Macharia who was arbitrarily granted licences for television and vernacular radio stations by the Moi and Kibaki regimes. This confluence of interests between business and the political elite suggests that the news media have become part of what Herman and Chomsky (1988) call the 'national security state' in which businesses, the state and the media work together to advance their notion of public interest.

Contextualising Peace Journalism

'Peace journalism' is primarily about editors and journalists making choices about what to report and what to avoid, particularly within the context of conflict or perceived conflict. Although first used by Galtung in the 1970s, in recent times, 'peace journalism' has been given its contemporary meaning by scholars such as Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick, who argue that 'peace journalism' takes place whenever editors and reporters 'create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value nonviolent responses to conflict' (Lynch and McGoldrick 2005, 5–6). Galtung contrasted this approach with traditional reporting such as 'war journalism' because of the focus on the outcome—winners and losers—in a conflict (1975, 2002a, b). The assertion that journalists actively take part in conflict resolution challenges the journalistic canon of objectivity that calls for truthful, accurate, fair and balanced reporting. While urging journalists to be peace activists, Iggers (1998) and Carruthers (2000) argue that factual reporting is a chimera because media coverage is influenced by factors such as patriotism, politics, ethnicity, censorship, gender, advertising and propaganda, all of which prevent objective reporting. Hammond (2002) observes that in certain situations, the classic definition of objectivity can mean neutrality, and neutrality can mean supporting all manner of injustices.

Acknowledging the merits of peace journalism, Wolfsfeld (1997) and Hanitzsch (2004) argue that it professes nothing new beyond repeating the hallmarks of good journalism anyway, and that asking journalists to suppress bad news and privilege positive news or to be emotionally attached to the events that they are covering always opens room for manipulation. Journalist David Lyon (2007) observes that peace journalism could compromise the integrity of journalists as impartial reporters. The task of journalists, he argues, is 'always to seek to find out what is going on, not carrying any other baggage. If there is conflict resolution we report on it in context. We do not engage in it' (Lyon 2007, 4).

Framing Peace

Theoretically, peace journalism is supported by the framing theory, which explains how the media present news to influence public perception (Herman and Chomsky 1988; Entman 1993). Tuchman (1978) observes that the mass media actively set the frames for readers and viewers to

interpret and discuss public events. 'To frame', according to Entman, 'is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described' (Entman 1993, 52). For Tankard et al. (1991, 3), a media frame is 'the central organising idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration'. Sources also have a big influence on how journalists report news (Herman and Chomsky 1988; Coleman et al. 2009).

In the news production process, editors make decisions about what stories to publish or not (Shoemaker and Vos 2009). Although different editors may make different (gatekeeping) decisions, research suggests that assessments of newsworthiness are broadly consistent and result in comparable judgements about what should pass through the gate. The implication of the 'gatekeeping' role is that journalists define social 'reality' and also shape the way that the public perceives that 'reality' (White 1950).

In carrying out their gatekeeping role, journalists are mostly guided by professional ethics. News values also play an important part in determining what should be allowed through the gate.[1] Peace journalism is itself a form of gatekeeping, as it requires the suppression of information which, even though journalistically sound (accurate, balanced, objective, correctly attributed and so on), has the potential of fuelling conflict.

METHODOLOGY

Content analysis and interviews were the two main research strategies adopted for this study. The unit of analysis was the individual story—news, editorials, opinion articles and letters to the editor. Content analysis was used because it is appropriate for analysing a large number of texts (Gerbner 1969) and the statistics derived from such quantification 'are used to make broader inferences about processes and politics of representation' (Deacon et al. 2002, 116). Although content analysis is used widely, it has certain limitations, such as not being able to provide answers to 'why' questions. The study applied the second method of inquiry, interviews, to overcome this limitation.

Through content analysis, this study sought to assess the extent to which the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* employed peace/war journalism frames in their coverage of the 2013 elections. Kenya has seven daily

and seven weekly independently owned newspapers. The two leading newspapers, the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard*, were chosen because they are the most popular and have a higher circulation and readership than the others.[2] Kenyan newspapers play an important role in shaping not only public opinion but also that of other media in the country (Ogola 2009, 62). Herman and Chomsky (1988) argue that the media are tiered and those at the top set the agenda. In Kenya, the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* occupy the top tier and newspaper stories often provide the template for discussion on television, radio stations and social media.

The content analysis covered three weeks, between 23 February and 15 March 2013, representing the peak of the 2013 general election. Given the tensions in the country (Elder et al. 2014), this period provides a good object for this study on how the press framed the election. A sample of 214 articles—120 news, 16 editorials, 50 letters to the editor and 28 opinion pieces—were used. The researcher deliberately chose to study more news stories than the other categories because news stories comprised the bulk of the newspapers' reporting of the campaigns and provide a better yardstick for assessing messaging, tonality and bias in coverage (Herman and Chomsky 1988; Bougalt 1995; Wasserman and Mwende Maweu 2014). Letters to the editor and opinion articles, most of which are contributed by readers, were also included because, as gatekeepers, editors ultimately decide what is published. Their choice may reflect a certain bias—in this case, their preference for peace or war journalism frames—as well as acting as a barometer for the discourse dominant in the public.

The coding was based on Johan Galtung's (1986, 1998b) war/peace journalism classification. Galtung identified thirteen indicators of war journalism and thirteen indicators of peace journalism. The categories were simplified into two: approach-based criteria and language-based criteria by Lee and Maslog (2005). Approach-based criteria are (1) reactivity, (2) visibility of effects of war, (3) elite orientation, (4) differences, (5) focus on here and now, (6) good and bad dichotomy, (7) party involvement, (8) partisanship, (9) winning orientation and (10) continuity of reports. Language-based criteria are (1) demonising, (2) victimising and (3) emotive. Based on these categories, questions were set to help the coder decide which frame—'war', 'neutral' or 'peace' journalism—was

present in a particular category. Every time an indicator was identified, a score of 1 was recorded on the coding scheme. For example, for visibility of war effects, if a story focused on 'casualties, death toll, damage to property' and ignored 'emotional trauma, damage to society', a score of 1 was recorded on the war journalism section. But if a story focused on the latter, or on both aspects, a score of 1 was recorded on the part of peace journalism. In the end, the scores were tallied. If the total war journalism indicators were more than the peace journalism indicators, the story was classified as war journalism, and vice versa. When the scores for both war and peace journalism indicators were equal, the story was recorded as neutral. Due to the small number of samples involved, coding was conducted by the researcher and no inter-coder reliability test was conducted.

For the interviews, the study involved thirty-five semi-structured interviews with journalists, media executives and media owners. The respondents were selected based on their role in the coverage of the election either as reporters, copy editors, gatekeepers or policymakers. By understanding how reporters were briefed and debriefed, their interaction with the politicians and other sources, as well as how the stories were used, we get unique insights into the tensions that shaped the coverage of the elections.

The peace journalism campaign started at the height of post-election violence in January 2008 with the 'Save Our Country' editorials (Ogola 2011) and was institutionalised in 2012 when the Kenya Private Sector Alliance and Media Owners Association, which comprises proprietors and chief executives of media houses, made it the benchmark for political reporting. Speaking to the two lobbies revealed their motivations for supporting it and the intrigues that led to its cooption into the official government narrative. The researcher assured respondents of anonymity so that they could comment freely.

The Findings

The *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* overwhelmingly used peace journalism frames in reporting the 2013 general election. Out of the 214 stories analysed, 55% used peace journalism frames, 30% used war journalism frames and 15% employed neutral frames. These findings deviate from

Galtung's argument that journalists use war frames when reporting in polarised/conflict environments (Galtung 2000).

Prominence of Peace/War Journalism Indicators

The most salient indicators of war journalism were a focus on here-and-now (51%), elite orientation (48%) and visibility of war (38%) (see Fig. 15.1). The stories focused more on the elite—politicians, electoral commission, civil society activists and business leaders—as actors and sources of information, while ignoring the ordinary citizen. Through a here-and-now perspective, the stories reduced the election into a battle to capture the state without providing background information for or interrogating the claims made by the politicians. For instance, the stories
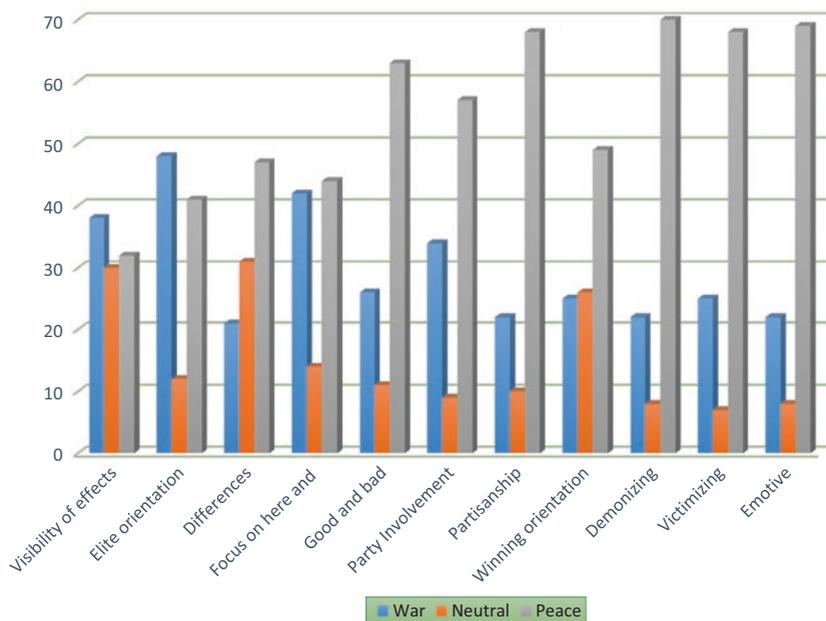
Fig. 15.1   Overall Prominence of War/Peace Journalism Indicators

involving the front-runners, Mr Uhuru Kenyatta (Jubilee Coalition) and Mr Raila Odinga (CORD Coalition) only reported about their political rallies and did not try to hold them to account over their public record. Moreover, although Mr Kenyatta and his deputy were running despite facing charges of crimes against humanity at International Criminal Court (ICC), out of eighty-three stories that talked about their campaigns, only six (two each for letters to the editor, opinion and news) questioned the merit of people facing such serious charges seeking the highest political office in the country. The electoral commission also enjoyed the same treatment, with prominence being given to what the commission was saying, and not the challenges that had marred voting and counting. This suggests that the media avoided reporting contentious issues and gave prominence to the official narrative coming from politicians. The war journalism stories also emphasised the visible effects of the political tensions, such as families being evicted or abandoning their homes, houses and property being destroyed, campaign rallies being disrupted, people injured or killed in violent attacks and police arresting protestors, among others, but ignored the invisible effects of the conflict, such as the trauma resulting from violence.

The most prominent indicators for peace journalism were avoidance of demonising language (70%), avoidance of emotive language (69%), non-partisanship (68%) and avoidance of victimising language (68%). That the journalists avoided taking sides (non-partisanship) implies that, to a large extent, they presented facts without siding with any party. This finding was especially interesting because during the 2013 election campaigns, the media were accused of bias. It would, however, be misleading to assert that the stories were utterly devoid of bias, because even with a story appearing to be 'neutral',[3] it could still be biased. Bias can, for instance, be expressed through choice of sources (Scheufele 1999)—in this case, giving prominence to voices that advocated the peace narrative.

No Difference in the Two Newspapers' Framing

Overall, there was no significant difference in the *Daily Nation*'s and *The Standard*'s framing of the election. The *Daily Nation* had 54% peace journalism-framed stories, 1% more than *The Standard*, which had 53%. The *Daily Nation* had 35% war-framed stories and *The Standard* 31%,

while *The Standard* had more neutral stories (19%) compared to the *Daily Nation* (14%). This is not surprising, considering the fact that the papers used the same news sources.

Difference in Framing Between the Two Papers by Indicators

The most pronounced difference was in the 'focus on here-and-now', where 56% of the stories in the *Daily Nation* and 34% in *The Standard* were framed as war journalism. The newspapers had identical framing (19% each) for visibility of war—that is, focus on skirmishes, disruption of campaigns, forced evictions and damage to property. *The Standard* had more stories focused on elites (52%) than the *Daily Nation* (44%). This means that both papers equally focused on elites as actors and sources of information. Generally, there was little difference in the salience of the various indicators in terms of peace journalism framing in the two papers.

Both newspapers did not divide the actors into bad and good, with 68% of *Daily Nation* stories and 60% in *The Standard* taking a peace perspective. This was replicated on the issue of party involvement, with 60% of stories in *The Standard* and 54% in the *Daily Nation* had 38% framed as peace journalism.

A Case for 'Accidental Peace Journalism'

Was the strong peace journalism framing a reflection of the peace campaigns that dominated the 2013 elections or genuine interventions by journalists to promote a new approach to reporting? A closer examination of the salient indicators for peace journalism shows that the reporting was not proactive—or what Galtung refers to as interventionist (1998, 2000). The five top frames for peace journalism—an avoidance of demonising language (70%), an avoidance of emotive language (69%), a non-partisan approach (68%), avoidance of victimising language (68%) and avoidance of good and bad dichotomy (63%)—although important in Galtung's (1986, 1998a) framework for peace journalism, are mere extensions of the objectivity credo: reporting the facts as they are. Whereas these are important indicators of fair and accurate framing of stories, they do not provide evidence of journalists seeking creative solutions to the conflict (Galtung 1986, 1998a). For example, objectivity simply demands that journalists speak to all parties while reporting a story. Although this

speaks to the need for balance and fair play—a significant step forwards in the peace journalism matrix—it does not take the story significantly beyond reporting the facts (Lee and Maslog 2005).

Therefore, the pattern of salient indicators supporting the peace journalism frame falls short of Galtung's characterisation of peace journalism as an advocacy and interpretative approach 'that creates opportunities for society at large to consider and to value nonviolent responses to conflict' (Lynch and McGoldrick 2005, 5–6). That the prominent war frames in both newspapers were a focus on here-and-now (51%), elite orientation (48%) and visibility of war effects (38%) suggests that journalists tended to not ask questions, cultivate new sources, contextualise stories and challenge dominant narratives. They merely refracted events as they happened, without engaging with the actors or privileging the voice of the ordinary people. In other words, the reporting was based on a platform of peace but the factors promoting that peace were neglected. The minimal focus on ordinary people means that journalists did not establish whether the narratives spun by the elite reflected the reality on the ground (Shinar 2007). Moreover, by excluding the ordinary people and downplaying backgrounds and contexts, the coverage obscured long-standing structural inequalities and other historical injustices. However, this does not mean that the grievances were forgotten (Elder et al. 2014) because any attempts at peace journalism—such as stressing national cohesion and economic stability without discussing the causes of ethnic suspicion and the post-election violence—only ended up reifying war journalism frames. Galtung (2000, 2002a) has referred to this state as negative peace—absence of war/fighting but in a polarised environment boiling with unresolved grievances that could explode anytime. Consequently, the framing of the 2013 election was what Shaw, Lynch and Hackett refer to as accidental peace journalism: 'news patterns that resemble those of peace journalism, but that are contingent by-products of routine news imperatives in specific situations' (Shaw et al. 2011, 11). In other words, it was a consequence of the environment—the pervasive peace campaigns and political and commercial interests of the business and ruling elite—and not a proactive attempt by the press to contribute to lasting peace.

The following section explores various reasons why the media employed peace journalism in the 2013 elections. It draws from exclusive interviews with media owners, managing editors and political reporters who actually covered the elections to provide insights into a narrative that has redefined the practice of journalism in Kenya.

From Watchdogs to Hostages of Peace

Although no single study has expressly implicated the (mainstream) media for inciting Kenyans to violence, journalists and media executives report that they were afraid to let Kenyans down again and saw the 2013 election as an opportunity to redeem themselves and regain public confidence. In many ways, this was a case of deterrence through fear and memory. As one editor put it:

> Post-election violence was very scarring and it was absolutely inevitable that our coverage of 2013 would be tempered by that experience. Being part of the political landscape, we examined ourselves and asked questions. Did we even unwittingly influence things in any way? Could we have handled it differently?

This peace narrative was manifest in steering clear of hate-speech, 'irresponsible' campaigns and scaremongering characteristic of previous elections. Cheeseman (2008) and Murunga (2011) observe that the post-election violence was as a result of historical and economic inequalities and that the clashes were bound to happen, implying that the media could have, at worst, only exacerbated the tensions. On the other hand, Makokha (2010) and Ogola (2011) argue that the dominant narrative seemed to be one that broadly indicted the media and effectively engendered self-censorship in 2013. Consequently, journalists became overly cautious in their coverage, focusing on the prevention of violence to such an extent that they censored themselves while reporting news. Incidents and irregularities were often softened when reported due to fear of strong reaction from the public and fear of being labelled as inflammatory, while editors were forced to carry weak political stories and mute criticism in order not to offend the politicians and their supporters. It is noteworthy, though, to state that some editors and media managers covertly 'refused' to adhere to the peace journalism chorus, but such were few and far between, and the peace juggernaut effectively engendered self-censorship as discussed in the sections that follow.

See No Evil, Hear No Evil

A lot of effort went into trying to 'balance' the reporting. Every negative story about one of the coalitions necessitated reporting on something negative about the other, ostensibly to avoid any accusations of being

partisan. Many critical stories were 'killed' after journalists failed to find equally detrimental news on the other coalition to qualify a story for publication or broadcasting. This pressure was tantamount to appeasement and the media lost their credibility as critical and interrogative voices. It also compelled journalists to mediate, manufacture and manipulate news at the expense of accurate, objective reporting. Some editors have defended the decision to manipulate news as a heightened sense of responsibility to the public, rather than self-censorship or production of peace propaganda. This was aptly captured by an editor who pointed out that 'the media had a shared agenda with Kenyans *to save this country from disintegration* and we provided a platform to achieve that goal through balanced reporting' (emphasis added). This instrumentalist approach to journalism suggests that the desire to keep the peace at all costs turned the Kenyan press into hostages of peace, worried more about maintaining the status quo and self-preservation than exposing factors that threatened it.

Executive Gatekeepers

Just before the polls, the Media Owners' Association (MOA) signed a 'gentlemen's agreement' pledging to avoid content that could incite ethnic tensions. In the words of one editor, this included 'some tough decisions, like delaying live broadcasts … We recognised that we were very influential and that we had to weigh our decisions, stories and timing so that we do not fuel any fires'. In theory, the decision to delay live broadcasts was meant to allow editors and reporters time to verify statements and to dissuade politicians from using live broadcasts to propagate hate messages. In practice, however, it disrupted gatekeeping processes in the newsroom and undermined accurate reporting by asking editors to make moral judgements about what was palatable and what was insidious and did not serve the public interest. Traditionally, editors use news values to decide which story to publish and which one to kill, but peace journalism required the suppression of information which, even though journalistically sound, had the potential of fuelling conflict. This inevitably disrupted the gatekeeping process and opened it to executive manipulation. As one editor recounted:

> There were days when I felt like telling the CEO to come and run the newsroom. He was on phone every minute, directing what to cover or not. At times we took his word, at times we ignored [it] but it made my work very difficult.

The most cited incident of gatekeeping gone wrong took place on 2 March 2013, two days before the general election, when a leading mobile telephone company and the electoral commission held a dry run for electronic transmission of results. The system collapsed within two minutes of going live but the incident was not reported. Political reporters said that the story was 'too hot' to file. As one reporter explained:

> I did not even call the news desk, we had been briefed to avoid stories that could bring trouble and look for news that stressed national unity in line with the peace journalism campaign.

Similarly, another political reporter stated:

> The company's CEO called the chairman of Media Owners Association within our earshot … A few minutes later I got a call from the managing editor summoning me to his office. I briefed him and he told me not to write anything about the dry run.

Given the failure of the electronic system during the actual election, information about a pre-existing problem was both newsworthy and pertinent material.

Editors interviewed said that the story was not used in the 'national interest', without unpacking exactly what the national interest was in this case, if it was not publishing the story. Though one could argue for the nobility of the sentiment, it appears to have been tainted by the fact that the editors had tactically redefined national interest to become a euphemism for incidences of receiving stories that they could not publish for political and business reasons. While the publication and broadcast of news on the collapse of the dry run might have caused anxiety among the public, the intervention by journalists to deny the public the news robbed Kenyans of the opportunity to assess the preparedness of the electoral commission to manage the elections. By withholding this news from Kenyans, the media raised public expectations of the integrity of the exercise through false pretences and, paradoxically, undermined journalists' ability to critically interrogate the vote-tallying processes when the electoral commission eventually owned up to a system failure in transmitting the results. Moreover, the fact that the CEO of the mobile telephone company called the media executives in the presence of journalists was not

only meant to intimidate them but also shows how big advertisers leveraged their positions to avoid negative news. If this was the case, then the peace narrative was instrumentalised to provide a cover for the media to protect the commercial interests of the owners. Another reporter described how his exclusive story was reduced following a brief by a partisan editor.

> When I confronted the editor he told me the boss had changed his splash at night. He was in fact more upset than me. That day I lost faith in our news processes and also learnt the editor's word was never final.

While acknowledging that self-censorship was rife during the elections, most reporters said that they published the 'killed' stories on social media using pseudonyms, or declined to take assignments that were 'too sensitive' to be covered by their media houses. Notably, there were no strong professional associations that they could turn to for recourse because the Kenya Union of Journalists (KUJ) and the Editors Guild were taking the cue from media owners. As one journalist put it: 'KUJ is dead and the editors appeared powerless to stop media owners from dictating how to cover the elections so we could not register our dissatisfaction with the Editors Guild.'

Journalists interviewed said that the newsrooms were not polarised along ethnic lines in 2013 as was the case in 2007. In one of the few instances where ethnicity was cited as a factor in decision-making in the newsroom, a managing editor recalled how his team posted a story at midnight, claiming, wrongly, that the Coalition for Reform and Democracy presidential candidate Raila Odinga had conceded defeat. Mr Odinga had called a press conference at 11:00 p.m. but cancelled it. He was trailing Mr Uhuru Kenyatta of the Jubilee Coalition by over a million votes, and there was speculation that he was either going to concede defeat or demand a recount before the official results were announced. Instead of waiting for the news, the journalist decided to make it up. One senior editor explained thus:

> It's fortunate not many people were awake at that time, we would have been in real trouble. When I demanded an explanation, the line editor on duty said it was inevitable that Odinga had lost the election. I suspended him that night, but the damage had already been done.

Enter the Peace-Entrepreneurs

Peace journalism was also propagated by local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) whose representatives literally camped in the newsrooms to promote their agenda. One political reporter recalled that at three months to election they would hop from one hotel to another, collecting allowances from workshops on conflict reporting. A managing editor commented: 'Since 2008 not a week passed without this or that group inviting journalists for training on conflict reporting. Some even gave us budgets for training and wanted us to start awards for peace journalism'. This suggests that peace journalism became an economy of its own and journalists were attracted more by its monetary promise than normative values, raising questions about the quality of the training and, to an extent, the intentions of the organisers. The economy driven by civil society through media trainings could, therefore, be seen as a business imperative in which certain NGOs stayed afloat by deliberately courting the latest donor trend in town, which, in the season following post-election violence, was engagement with issues of media and violence.

Shared Interests of the Business and Political Elites

In mid-2012, media owners and representatives of the Kenya Private Sector Alliance met in Nairobi and developed a roadmap for national reconciliation and stability. Among the decisions made was a commitment that newspapers, TV and radio stations would give voice to respected public figures. Referred to reverentially as Peace Elders, their primary role was to urge Kenyans to keep peace and also mediate any conflicts. The Elders were also to act as a bridge between the private sector and government. The team comprised of entrepreneurs, religious leaders and retired public service elite. A former permanent secretary who was privy to the project stated:

> I was summoned to the State House and found four *wazee* [elders] with the President. He told me to listen to them and work with them. We had a very long discussion in my office. We had the same fears and aspirations for Kenya, so it was very easy to agree on the way forward.

This statement is important because it explains how the personal business interests of the owners of capital converged with state interests for

stability under the guise of peace journalism. In the words of a chief executive of a media house:

> The peace and stability witnessed in the last election was because of the wise leadership we provided. We agreed that the most important stories had to be run by me. I couldn't trust the journalists to see the big picture for peace. In fact, we as the media owners are very happy that our efforts paid fruit.

In many ways, the chief executive echoes here the sentiments of the four *wazee* at State House. It is a mindset borne out of the years that historian Atieno-Odhiambo (1987) described as having been dominated by 'the ideology order'. During the reign of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel Moi, ideas that ran contrary to the interests of the state were labelled as 'dissent' and 'sedition' and their perpetrators were detained without trial or forced to flee into exile. This ensured that there was never any alternative thought to that of the state, allowing for a perfect, unopposed single-party state (see, for example, Ogola 2011). Similarly, during the 2013 elections, ideas that challenged the dominant narrative of peace and stability were seen as 'unpatriotic' and meant to 'incite the public to violence'.

Beyond the Dialectics of Peace Journalism

The foregoing illustrates that by appearing to pander to the feelings of guilt and the recriminations over the post-election violence, and by tiptoeing past the noose of the International Criminal Court, the media allowed external factors to influence journalistic decision-making (Shoemaker and Vos 2009). They became hugely encumbered and impotent, and in not giving priority to contentious issues—such as reform, justice for post-election victims, land allocation and other historical injustices—provided no opportunity for debating how to resolve them peacefully. In essence, this was the single largest wave of surrender of editorial independence and discretion by the journalists. It distracted them from playing their normative role of holding the government to account and providing accurate and 'truthful' reporting that people needed to make informed choices (Galtung 1975, 2006; Herman and Chomsky 1988; Curran 2000; Nyamnjoh 2005; Ogola 2011; Long et al. 2013).

Indeed, the corporatisation and sanitisation of the news—with chief executives and media owners meeting and agreeing on a one-size-fits-all strategy—foreclosed other options for coverage. First, it imposed

uniformity and undermined opportunities for greater diversity in coverage, thereby limiting opportunities for journalists to seek and apply creative approaches to advancing national cohesion and also reporting contentious issues. Also lost was the opportunity for Kenyans to critically engage with one another on the dialectics of peace: What peace? For whom? Why? Such debate would have been healthy, because while Kenyans agreed on the need for peace, the question of what that 'peace' entailed was never settled. Perhaps to one person 'peace' meant surrender or blocking out bitter memories, but to another, 'peace' was retribution for historical injustices. The fact that these options were not immediately available for discussion implies that Kenyans ended up with a negative peace borne out of uniformity and not persuasion. Secondly, the effect of peace journalism was a corporate homogenisation that resulted in loss of brand differentiation among media houses. This is problematic not least because it illustrates how the peace juggernaut collapsed gatekeeping processes in the newsrooms but it also underscores the perception that the agenda was set from outside the newsroom (Shoemaker et al. 2001). 'Journalism' should be practised without adjectives, 'peace', 'conflict' or otherwise; all that should be asked of reporters and editors is that stories be well researched, balanced and informative.

CONCLUSION

Whereas Galtung envisaged it as a framework for creating opportunities for nonviolent responses to conflict through open debate, peace journalism as practised in Kenya in 2013 was a form of gatekeeping that required the suppression of information which, though journalistically sound, had the potential of fuelling conflict. This study suggests that this was a deliberate ploy by the media owners and political elite to 'set the bounds of debate' (Herman and Chomsky 1988) and to foreclose any attempts to engage critically with, and interrogate, contentious issues of accountability, justice and reform that may have engendered conflict and violence (Wrong, 2008). The omission was calculated to fulfil the media's 'societal purpose' that Herman and Chomsky describe as to 'defend the economic, social and political interests of privileged groups that dominate the domestic society and the state' (1988, 298). Kenyan media owners are owners of capital (Makokha 2010; Ogola 2011) and the spectre of political violence threatened their investments, hence the need to work together to secure those interests through 'peace journalism'.

NOTES

1. News values are factors that influence the media's news selection criteria. Galtung and Ruge (1965) identify twelve such values.
2. *The Nation* has three flagship titles: *Daily Nation*, *Saturday Nation* and *Sunday Nation*. According to an internal annual circulation report, the papers sold an average of 147,000, 152,000 and 166,000 respectively in 2015. *The Standard* also has three flagship titles, which, according to the 2015 annual circulation report, had average sales of 56,000, 47,000 and 51,000. Both papers have lost up to 30% sales since 2013. The third newspaper, *The Star*, sells around 12,000 copies daily.
3. A reporter presenting both sides of the story without appearing to support either of the sides.

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New Media and Emerging
Professional Cultures

'We Cannot Bite the Finger that Feeds Us': Journalists' Dilemmas and the Appropriation of 'Alternative' Media in Nigerian Print Newsrooms

Motilola Olufenwa Akinfemisoye

That the proliferation of new media technologies continues to impact on journalistic practices is not new. Although there has been substantial scholarship about how journalists use these technologies as well as how they are 'revolutionising' journalism practices, particularly in Africa (Mabweazara 2010, 2011; Jordaan 2014; Mabweazara et al. 2014), scant attention has been given to the dilemmas journalists face as they appropriate these new media technologies. One finds that scholars are quick to blame the challenges of access to these technologies, poor remuneration and other complexities that constrain how journalists in many African newsrooms appropriate new media technologies.

In writing about these new media technologies and journalism practice in Nigeria, scholars have mostly adopted a technological determinist stance which celebrates the Internet, for instance, as 'revolutionising' the Nigerian mainstream media (Kperogi 2011). While one cannot necessarily disprove that the proliferation of new media technologies has

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seen concomitant changes to how journalists gather news, for instance, such remarks need to be set within the context of prevailing local circumstances. In literature dedicated to the prevalence of social media and emerging online journalism practices in African newsrooms, it comes as a surprise that the creative and localised appropriations of these technologies receive scant attention. There is not much, either, on local context imperatives that go beyond the 'revolutionising' debate and looks at how journalists are grappling with the challenges that come with not only appropriating these new technologies into their everyday newsmaking practices but also incorporating the various 'alternative' journalisms trending online. In particular, there is little empirical scholarship on how and whether these appropriations are enabling an 'open' and 'inclusive' media sphere, including how the process of appropriation is taking place. Thus, there is a need to rethink how journalists in African— Nigerian print newsrooms in this case—perceive the supposed 'openness' and 'democratisation' of the media space that the proliferation of new media technologies is believed to be capable of in the light of contingent contextual factors.

The impact of new 'alternative' media on mainstream journalism has been dubbed as transformational (among other such celebratory labels) in a scenario where journalists are becoming 'gatewatchers' (Bruns 2008) together with everyone else, with the audience becoming the 'people formerly known as the audience' (Rosen 2006, np). Some scholars have also argued that the proliferation of new media technologies is redefining journalism practices in Africa and enabling what Beckett (2008, 120) terms an 'African Networked Journalism', which encourages inclusive and collaborative journalistic practices. This calls for caution. This is, in part, because beyond most of the binaries that have marked the discussions of what these alternative media mean for journalism practices, there is the need to focus attention on the complexities and contradictions that shape and constrain how journalists in African newsrooms appropriate the new media. This is to ensure that such discussions 'situate these emerging trends and practices [about journalism in Africa] within the context of African realities' (Nyamnjoh 1999, 15). While the (disruptive) impact of alternative media cannot be ignored, it has aided a number of innovations across various newsrooms, it remains important that the debate stays open to discussing other, wider context-induced experiences of journalists in African newsrooms.

Through an ethnographic study of four Nigerian print newsrooms, this chapter illustrates some of the localised appropriations of new media technologies. It highlights some of the complexities, challenges and dilemmas that journalists in Nigerian print newsrooms negotiate in appropriating new media technologies and the attendant 'alternative' media content that circulates on these platforms in their everyday newsmaking practices. In focusing on how Nigerian print journalists respond and react to the presence of new media technologies and 'alternative' media content, the chapter uses 'alternative media content' and 'alternative journalism' interchangeably. For the purpose of scholarly delineation, these terms are used within the context of this chapter loosely to refer to 'newsworthy information or content provided by *outsiders*, who may not necessarily be affiliated to any mainstream media organisation or paid for engaging in such contribution' (Akinfemisoye 2015). 'Alternative' media is therefore used to refer to the platforms specifically mediated by new media technologies, where newsworthy information is circulated by those not necessarily linked to mainstream media organisations.

This study takes root within the theoretical field of the sociology of journalism. It is premised on the assumption that to understand how and whether the proliferation of alternative media and its associated journalisms are impacting on the institutional practices of journalists, a sociological approach, which takes into consideration the relationship between both internal and external factors, remains pivotal. While the sociology of journalism approach has mostly been influenced by Western media scholarship, it is still a useful approach for interrogating newsmaking practices in Nigerian newsrooms, for a number of reasons. The institutional journalistic practices in many African newsrooms have their roots in and are influenced by practices in the United States and the United Kingdom (Mabweazara 2015). This might, in part, be because journalism training on the African continent was introduced and patterned after that of the West. For instance, studies of the syllabi of many communications departments of universities across Africa show that journalism education continues to draw largely from Western models (Mano 2009; Salawu 2009). Moreover, Mabweazara (2015, 107) observes that 'African journalists continue to seek examples of "best practices", training and education from Western countries'.

However, the point needs to be made that while most of the institutional practices in many African newsrooms follow those of Western newsrooms, they have their distinctive features and have evolved their own unique traditions and characteristics. As Bourgault (1995, 20) observes:

> The traditional oral tradition, the discourse style it fostered, and the value systems it nurtured disappeared neither with colonialism nor with independence which followed it. African traditional culture simply became intermixed with the alien forms thrust upon it. African traditional forms are, prima facie, forms of communication, and they are suffused in and through both the practices and the content of the mass media of Black Africa.

Nonetheless, one of these well-established theories, the sociology of journalism, provides useful insights for interrogating how Nigerian print journalists are appropriating alternative media content in their everyday newsmaking practices. Kupe (2004, 355) also lends credence to this argument, pointing out that the 'theories of media production—including sociology of the media—that are well developed for Europe and North America appear to be applicable to our context'.

The rest of this chapter proceeds in four sections. The first begins more broadly with a discussion of the media liberalisation project in Africa and the mixed reactions it has generated. While highlighting some of the contradictions that have emerged with the liberalisation process, it focuses on new information and communication technologies (ICTs) and how they have permeated various aspects of life in Africa, particularly journalism. The second section describes the methodological approach. The third, more substantive section, discusses the centrality of the mobile phone in Nigerian print newsrooms, as well as some of the challenges, particularly the impact of organisational and socio-political bottlenecks, that shape these journalists' appropriation of new media technologies and alternative media content in their everyday newsmaking practices. These discussions highlight issues of journalists' self-censorship as well as how they negotiate and navigate these challenges. The chapter ends with a reflection on what these findings mean for newsmaking practices in Nigerian print newsrooms.

THE MEDIA DEMOCRATISATION PROCESS: A STORY OF CONTRADICTIONS

The 1990s, arguably, remain significant for the sweeping democratisation reforms in Africa. They not only triggered the deregulation of the media sector and the adoption of political pluralism but also coincided with the proliferation of new media technologies. While the media, prior to this time, had become extended government mouthpieces, this period heralded

the entry of private players into the media sector. As Banda (2010, 8) puts it, there was 'a rekindling of the African private media capital […] presenting further opportunities to grow media as businesses and to inject pluralism into local media spaces'. For Nigeria, as elsewhere on the continent, the deregulation of the media sector witnessed a flourishing landscape with the establishment of many radio and television stations (Hyden and Leslie 2002). More newspapers and magazines also came on the scene, 'firmly establishing an era of print media independent of party and government ownership' (Agbese 2006, 1; See also Ibelema 2003). This meant a more open mediasphere that encouraged the participation of new voices.

However, while the media democratisation process was meant to energise the media to hold governments accountable, it did not necessarily usher in the new era that was anticipated. Rather, the process itself was fraught with many contradictions. Although the media reforms minimised the direct influence of the state on the media in many African countries, these governments devised ways of muzzling the press. For instance, in Nigeria, it was during this period that many repressive laws that hampered press freedom, such as the Nigerian Press Council Decree No. 85 of 1992 and Newspapers Decree No. 43 of 1993, were promulgated. Journalists were arrested, imprisoned and in some cases assassinated. As a consequence, many Nigerian print journalists went underground between 1993 and 1998 (Agbaje 1993), practising what has been described as 'guerrilla journalism' (Agbese 2006; Dare 2007). This involved a 'hit-and-run style in which journalists operating from hideouts continued to publish opposition and critical journals in defiance of the state' (Olukotun 2004, 78). This period also coincided with the proliferation of new information and communication technologies on the continent. For journalism in Nigeria, these technologies were harnessed in organising the underground journalism practices (Agbese 2006). Thus, the media in Nigeria witnessed phenomenal growth during the 1990s.

In spite of adopting one form of democracy or the other, from the 1990s onwards, in many countries in Africa, journalism has continued to face challenges that undermine the democratisation project. As Obijiofor (2015, 122) puts it, African journalists are still 'an endangered breed'. For example, in Kenya, the government in 2007 proposed a harsh bill that was meant to regulate press activities in the country. Although the bill was eventually scrapped (Obijiofor 2015), the fact that it was even considered suggests one of the ways in which African governments have continued to muzzle the press. The story is the same in other parts of the continent,

where repressive laws are being enacted to curtail the freedom of the press. For example, Ogola (2015, 94) observes that 'The Gambia has one of the harshest laws on the right to freedom of expression in Africa.' Elsewhere on the continent, the story is scarcely different.

For journalism in Nigeria, the repressive atmosphere in which journalists functioned before 1999 with the return to civil rule still lingers. In spite of the passing of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Bill into law on 24 May 2011, eighteen years after it was first proposed by 'three major civil society groups: the Nigeria Union of Journalists, the Media Rights Agenda and the Civil Liberties Organisation' (Ojebode 2011, 269), the FOI Act has neither provided journalists with more freedom nor is a 'democratic' and 'inclusive' press yet to be seen. Journalists are often harassed while on duty, with there being several cases of beating and assault (Obijiofor 2015, 125–126). This is in spite of having freedom of the press enshrined in the country's 1999 constitution. To date, there have been several attempts by the state at curtailing press freedom. In June 2014, for example, many prominent national newspapers were banned from circulating in some cities including the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.[1] Although this ban was soon lifted, the fact that there was an initial ban is reflective of many cases in Africa where the ruling class has seen to it that the press is muzzled and made to do its bidding (see, for example, Ogola 2011, on the political economy of the media in Kenya). Thus, while one cannot ignore that the media democratisation project in Africa made way for a multiplicity of voices, the absence of an enabling environment where journalists are free to perform their societal duties is still a reality for many African journalists.

The proliferation of new information and communication technologies in the 1990s came with celebratory and glowing praise about the role of these technologies in shaping various aspects of life in Africa (Banda et al. 2009). For some, it signalled Africa's way of 'leapfrogging' several stages of development, with ICTs serving 'as the engine of economic growth in Africa, affording hitherto technologically backward societies an opportunity to leapfrog some stages of development, to achieve an "information society" or "knowledge society"' (Banda 2010, 10).

However, the assumption of 'newness' with reference to these technologies is problematic. Within the African context, not only is it reductive to distinguish between old and new but it in fact ignores the socio-cultural context, which remains important for such discussions. As Nyamnjoh (2005, 4) argues 'Africa's creativity simply cannot allow for

simple dichotomies or distinctions between old and new technologies, since its people are daily modernising the indigenous and indigenising the modern with novel outcomes'.

As elsewhere on the continent, Nigerian newspapers have not 'shied away from exploiting digital technology' (Mudhai 2011, 681) in their newsmaking practices. Most newspapers in Nigeria have a presence online by means of websites and accounts on various social media platforms. With the media organisations being online, including presence on various social media platforms, especially Facebook and Twitter, there is some engagement and interaction taking place. Yet, while the engagements might be taking place through these platforms, an important question is raised about whether comments made by readers beneath stories published on these websites are necessarily indicative of the democratising of the media space. A tentative answer perhaps might be seen in Ogola's (2014) study of two community radio stations in Kenya. He found that there are those who would rather engage with the more traditional media than 'post on Facebook'. In the case of Kibera residents in Kenya, the peculiarity of the radio—its orality—meant that it was already part of existing local communicative practices (Ogola 2014). This suggests that the process of appropriating new media technologies and alternative media content, as I show later in this chapter, is fraught with contradictions.

Nonetheless, there have been attempts at harnessing the opportunities that the Internet affords by setting up a paywall system on media websites. *Punch* newspaper, for instance, attempted a paywall system on its website in May 2009, where readers were asked to pay a subscription fee of 1500 Naira (approximately £5) per month to access its online content. Although this proved unsuccessful, with *Punch* reverting to making its online content free, the experiment in itself suggests that Nigerian print journalists, as their colleagues elsewhere on the continent, are proactively and creatively appropriating these new ICTs for their advantages (Akinfemisoye and Deffor 2014). It should also be pointed out that the idea of the paywall remains controversial, even in the economically developed Western contexts (Williams 2014).

Methodological Approach

Although most studies on the Nigerian press favour the quantitative survey approach (Salawu 2009), I believe that beyond the fancy survey graphs and statistical tables that these studies generate, ethnographic immersion

in newsrooms remains pivotal in gleaning insider perspectives on how journalists appropriate new media technologies. As Cottle (2009, 267) argues, ethnography of newsrooms makes the researcher privy to 'behind the scenes of media output [and] reveal[s] the complex of forces, constraints and conventions that inform the shape, selection and silences of media output'. It is in this light, therefore, that the data employed for this chapter stem from newsroom observation and in-depth interviews with journalists in four Nigerian print newsrooms, spanning a nine-week period between February 2012 and April 2013. The *Vanguard*, *Punch*, *The Guardian* and the *Nigerian Tribune* are privately owned national dailies, which are relatively popular among the Nigerian reading public. In learning of the process of new media technology appropriation in Nigerian print newsrooms, this study used a triangulated approach. I interviewed journalists across various beats and hierarchical positions within the newsroom structure. Participants were drawn from the managing editors to sports journalists, crime reporters, news editors, political journalists, health reporters and online journalists. Again, the process of gathering data from journalists working in four Nigerian print newsrooms run by different owners and management also serves as a means of triangulation. As Singer (2009, 191) observes, 'such triangulation increases confidence in the interpretation of findings [and] it is particularly useful for exploring the "why" as well as the "what" of a subject'.

A total of about 125 journalists were involved in this study, either by observation or through the in-depth interviews. However, for reasons of space limitations, only some of the ethnographic material is used in this chapter. Interviews with these journalists were semi-structured and participants were selected using a snowball sampling method. This was important for this study because accessing a document that holds the details of all current print journalists in Nigeria would be an almost impossible venture. While most of these journalists are members of associations such as the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), the database is not frequently updated. Transfer from one bureau to another, and journalists taking up political appointments as media assistants to politicians are some of the reasons that the NUJ list was not a feasible option in selecting participants for this study. Therefore, this meant that a snowball sampling approach was found most suitable. As Deacon et al. (2007, 55) explain, 'snowball sampling is mainly used where no list or institution exists that could be used as a basis of sampling'.

Thus, my 'key contacts' played important roles during the selection process. In each of the newspaper organisations visited for this study, my first port of call was the office of the editors, with whom I had exchanged correspondence before my arrival in Nigeria for the fieldwork. All participants in this study also used new digital technologies accessed either through their newsrooms or via personal mobile or BlackBerry smartphone or a combination of both. This was a necessary criterion in ensuring that those who actively use digital technologies in carrying out their duties took part in the study. In line with the ethical approval obtained for the study, participants were anonymised. Given that there are several journalists on a particular beat, I adopted an abstraction strategy that only mentioned the roles of the journalists so as to give context and show their level of authority.

The next section presents some of the findings and is subdivided into two parts. The first discusses the pervasiveness of the mobile phone in Nigerian print newsrooms and its localised appropriation in the newsmaking practices of these journalists. The second highlights the ambivalences of Nigerian print journalists towards appropriating alternative media content in their newsmaking practices and some of the contextual factors that partly explain these ambivalences.

Embracing Mobility: The Mobile Phone as 'Note Pad' and Journalists' 'Extended Arms' in Nigerian Print Newsrooms

Across Africa, mobile phones have not only been described as the 'most potent tool for alternative communication' (Moyo 2009, 556), but their ubiquity has also earned them the title of the 'new talking drums of everyday Africa' (de Bruijn et al. 2009). Their pervasiveness in Africa has also made the continent the fastest-growing market with regards to mobile telephony, with the latest figures from the International Telecommunication Union suggesting about 70% penetration (ITU 2014). In Nigeria, for instance, 'until 2001, the telecommunication services […] were accessible only to the rich few' (Ojebode 2012, 1). Mobile phone penetration has risen exponentially. From barely 0.042% penetration with about 19,000 fixed phone lines for a population of around 45 million in 1960 (Ojebode 2012), the Nigerian Communications Commission puts teledensity in Nigeria as of December 2016 at 110.38%

with over 235 million connected lines (Nigerian Communications Commission 2017).

Journalism in Nigeria (as elsewhere) has not existed in isolation from these trends. In the newsrooms sampled for this study, journalists explained some of their creative appropriation of the mobile phone in their everyday newsmaking practices. According to a reporter at *Punch*:

> My phone is now my note pad and it is very important for my job. I am now able to send my editor stories from the field via BBM [BlackBerry Messenger]. I start writing my story on my BBM and I send them as chat messages to my editor. Unlike before when you will most likely write it on a note pad and get to the office to start making sense of it, my BlackBerry phone serves as my note pad. If I get stuck in traffic on my way back to the newsroom, I know that my story would have more chances of making the deadline than if I decide to be there physically to hand-in my story. I also have some contacts on my BBM who serve as sources when I am planning a feature story or give me more story angles to work with. I can send my story idea to the contacts in a BBM group as a broadcast message. If I send it to the members of the group and six out of fifteen respond, then of course I have what I need for my story.

This excerpt demonstrates an emerging trend in Nigerian print newsrooms, where the mobile phone occupies a central position in the newsmaking practices of journalists. The mobile phone is now regarded more or less as a 'note pad', replacing for the reporter's traditional notebook and pen. It also serves as a bridge for linking with potential news sources. There is also a sense in which the BlackBerry Messenger application not only serves as a platform on which to take notes but is also used to overcome the limitations of time in shortening or completely circumventing the wait for the stories to arrive at the news editor's desk. This is significant in explaining not only the creative appropriation of the mobile phone but also how it is encouraging engagement with ordinary citizens. Again, whether the engagement with citizens via the mobile phone necessarily translates into a 'decentring' of the media space is another question entirely. Nonetheless, the fact that this reporter noted that he can send his 'story idea to the contacts in a BBM group as a broadcast message' points not only to the permeation of the mobile phone in Nigerian print newsrooms but also its creative appropriation.

A crime reporter at the *Vanguard* also shared similar sentiments about the centrality of the mobile phone, and particularly her BlackBerry, in news-gathering:

> I'm not sure I can survive on this job without my BB! It fastens [speeds up] information gathering and you can easily get across to someone who becomes your eyes in the field. I'll give you an example. There was a case of a female banker who was alleged to have killed a LASTMA official.[2] By the time I got to the scene, there was no evidence I could use in writing my story but I wrote a skeletal report and posted a request on BBM for anyone with useful information on the incident to get in touch with me. You needed to have seen the responses I received; some people who were there at the time of the incident took pictures and some even had video footage of what happened. This helped my investigation more and I was able to write new angles to this story.

These comments made by the crime reporter highlight how the mobile phone is increasingly occupying a central position in the news-gathering process for journalists. The excerpt also underscores how the mobile phone's ubiquity serves to provide an information reservoir which these journalists can access when the need arises. This finding thus corroborates Nyamnjoh's (2005, 209) observation that the mobile phone 'has become like the long arm […] capable of reaching even the most distant "sons and daughters of the soil"' and serving as journalists' 'eyes' in gathering newsworthy information. Another senior editor at *The Guardian* remarked:

> If there's a story I want to confirm, I can immediately put a call through to the appropriate quarters. They can say 'hold on, I will do you an email'. That way, you don't only have the information but you also have it as a record. They can't deny it in future.

In an attempt to avoid publishing stories that have not been verified, journalists make quick calls to the 'appropriate' official sources to confirm the story. When these news sources decline such calls or even refuse to comment, that also becomes part of the story, as another crime reporter at *Punch* explained: 'if they (official sources) don't answer your calls, you simply include it in the report that "at the time of filing this

report, the Police Public Relations Officer had not returned our earlier calls"'.

Thus, the mobile phone not only occupies a defining position in the news production process in these newsrooms, it also opens up other alternative media tools, such as the email, providing access to newsworthy information. Accordingly, while there are other 'talking drums' in Nigerian print newsrooms, the findings from the excerpts above evidence that the mobile phone is indeed now one of the lynchpins of everyday newsmaking practices in Nigerian print newsrooms.

Some of the journalists interviewed were, however, ambivalent towards deploying the mobile phone and the content it delivers in the news production process. A senior editor at *Punch* explained:

> Sometimes we get a tip-off through a text message that an important government official has been flown abroad for medical attention. Even though we feel it is our duty to keep people informed, we still have to investigate and place phone calls to those involved […] There have been cases where we have to choose top editors to look into the details of a story we get via text message before it can be published. It's just because some people may just want to blackmail these officials and we don't want to be the tools that would be used to do that.

A news reporter at the *Vanguard* also pointed out:

> There are times, though, when this BB can land you in serious trouble if you don't verify the information you receive. Recently, someone posted on BBM that there was an explosion. I had to visit the scene only to discover that it was a lie. There are instances when people mislead you with the information they send to your BBM […] people are always trying to cover up something or blow other things out of proportion.

These comments highlight how the mobile phone is also gaining a reputation as a tool for spreading rumours and untruths in Nigeria. Furthermore, this reputation is not unique to Nigeria; it has also been observed in Cameroon (Nyamnjoh 2005) and Zimbabwe (Moyo 2009). So, journalists still resort to fact-checking and verification even when they get tip-offs through their mobile phones. Thus, while the mobile phone may be ubiquitous, it is adopted and very much used in the traditional sense of an information tool. Stories or tip-offs received via the mobile phone are still subjected to a rigorous gatekeeping process, moving

through the established hierarchies before they are 'allowed' a space in the newspaper.

Thus, while the mobile phone is deployed by journalists in Nigerian print newsrooms to follow-up stories, content derived from it is also checked to assess the veracity of such information. Consequently, there is a sense in which the appropriation of the mobile phone in Nigerian print newsrooms has forced journalists to 'engage' much more with the audience. While this relationship is no longer necessarily hierarchical but rhizomatic, it remains fraught with a number of contradictions.

'It's Not a Tea Party': Navigating Proprietorial Interference and Associated Fears in Nigerian Print Newsrooms

Underpinning Nigerian print journalists' appropriation of content from alternative media sites in their everyday newsmaking process is the element of fear that is implicit in the way they steer clear of content that, for instance, undermines their proprietorial interests or pits one religion against the other. A senior editor at the *Vanguard* puts it this way:

> We are in a peculiar country and because of ownership, it's not every news story that we can publish. This is the only newspaper that is owned by a professional journalist and maybe *ThisDay*.[3] So, most of the owners of the newspapers in Nigeria are politicians or those who have served in government. Because of that, there are so many things that you have to pretend not to know. This is because if we write a story, we have to put a byline and your life will be in danger.

Contrary to this editor's claim, it cannot be accurately stated that only the *Vanguard* and *ThisDay* are owned by professional journalists. While this may be true of newspapers in the southern part of Nigeria, there are a number of newspapers owned by professional journalists in northern Nigeria. Nonetheless, these comments highlight how proprietorial interference shapes journalists' appropriation of alternative media in their newsmaking process, even when information gathered in such a way may be true. That they have to 'pretend not to know' further emphasises that a number of negotiations mark the construction of news in these newsrooms particularly around understanding who the untouchable 'sacred cows' are. As such, one finds that 'proprietor[ial]

policies and politics', as Mano (2005, 56) puts it, shape journalists' appropriation of alternative media content in their newsmaking practices.

The responses in the extracts above are also typical of those of journalists in other Nigerian print newsrooms. Sharing similar sentiments, a senior editor at the *Nigerian Tribune* responded thus:

> Alternative media is helping to focus our attention to what is happening especially in revealing some hidden government agenda. But until we have leaders who are ready to be accountable, those who are selfless and who have the love for service, our hands are tied. There have been many instances where we simply ignore such 'tips'. It's simply because at the end of day, if you go ahead to publish what you saw online, it can be easily denied. You know Nigerians like to share information, as events start happening, people start sending stories but it depends on you as the editor to decide what to do with those stories. We have to consider the interests of the publishers and owners of *Tribune* before using information from these online news sites. Will it hurt them? Will it hurt some of the people in government who are our benefactors? I know it's a lot to consider but we have to make money too. That's why we have problems because the job of the media is to expose wrongdoings. But how can we do that? We are afraid of assassins, trailing one about, sponsored by the state and all that. One is at times handicapped or even turning the blind eye [*sic*] or withdrawing into our shell.

Although the concerns of the editor in this excerpt were not universally shared in all the newsrooms visited for this study, they nonetheless highlight some of the dilemmas that journalists in these newsrooms face. The fact that most of these journalists, as the editor in the extract above explains, have to consider the interests of the newspapers' publishers speaks to how proprietorial interferences shape and constrain how alternative media content is appropriated in the newsmaking process. This finding also chimes with Kupe's (2004, 354) observation that '[a]dvertisers and owners have often replaced [the Nigerian] government as censors or opened a more insidious front of censorship' (see Chap. 1 for related experiences in South Africa and Uganda).

During my fieldwork in these newsrooms, I observed that many of the journalists frequently visited various alternative media sites, particularly social media such as Facebook and Twitter, while at work. Although there were instances where some of the news reports had their origins in information gleaned online, some of the journalists maintained that collaborat-

ing with alternative media practitioners, such as bloggers or ordinary citizens who actively tweeted during dramatic events such as elections, was not a practice they would encourage. Reflecting on how collaboration was negotiated in spite of the massive citizen engagement with alternative media during the Nigerian elections of 2011, a senior editor at the *Vanguard* argued thus:

> There can't be any serious collaboration with all those people writing all over the place. They are free to write whatever they like on their blogs and the like but it's different with journalism. It's not a tea party and not everyone is invited. It's not for the ill-trained and that's why the media has to protect itself from scavengers. Yes, many people sent us a lot of tweets and photos during the elections and this really augmented our roles as journalists. It helped widen the scope of our reports but it also helped us to do what we had to do anyway. We had to report!

What is significant about this editor's claim that 'not everyone is invited' is that in fact, during these elections, the *Vanguard* did the opposite of what these comments imply. There were reports on its website that actively solicited citizens' photos and commentaries of how the elections were progressing in their areas.[4] The comments above, therefore, suggest that inviting the audience to send reports, for instance, does not necessarily translate into an 'open' and more 'inclusive' newsmaking process. Rather, such 'invitations' create the illusion of inclusivity.

Many of the journalists interviewed also explained that the adoption of content circulating on platforms made possible by the proliferation of new ICTs in Nigerian print newsrooms is inflected with local exigencies. The need to remain in the good books of those who oil the financial wheels of these newspapers means that these journalists are forced to follow predetermined templates in reporting newsworthy events. Referring to how this played out in reporting the elections of 2011, a senior editor at the *Nigerian Tribune* explained thus:

> The presence of alternative media helped in covering the 2011 elections. You see, we had a lot of information from different sources but do we have listening leaders? But it's just that the Nigerian media hmmn [takes a long pause]. There is a problem (takes another long pause and whispers in Yoruba[5]): *Ṣé ìwọ ọmọ yìí kò ní tú àṣírí wa ní ìlú òyìnbó báyìí* [loosely translated: hope you will not blow our cover when you get back to England?] […] The issue is, some of the media houses have been bought off, the

survival instinct, and the poverty instinct is not helping matters at all. What you find now in Nigeria is that virtually all the main media houses that claim to be independent depend on government's money and there is a popular saying among journalists that '*owo ijoba l'o dun na*' [loosely translated: government's money is sweet to spend]. Most of the so-called politicians have the media in their pockets and to publish a story that is anti-government is to ruin that relationship [...] We had a lot of information from various blogs about discrepancies during the election. Sahara Reporters and some other websites were able to post such on their websites but how many of such stories were we able to publish? Where ballot boxes were snatched or even stuffed before the day of the election, so who are you to publish such stories?

During the interview with this editor, the responses, pauses, silences and rhetorical questions (some of which I have reproduced in the extract above) are reflective of the distinctive and particular conditions that shape newsmaking practices in Nigeria. These conditions also highlight some of the challenges that these journalists face, especially when it comes to reporting events such as elections, where the Nigerian press still has a crucial function. The use of rhetorical questions and, particularly, how this respondent is worried that the presence of information from various alternative media outlets is unlikely to change the dynamics of how the media in Nigeria reports, is significant. It further highlights the fact that, in stark contrast to the idea that the adoption and appropriation of new media technologies might necessarily enable much more collaborative and open newsmaking practices, the process is not straightforward in Nigerian print newsrooms. In a context where journalists are owed many months' salaries by media owners, most of these journalists are left with little choice than to become puppets in the hands of politicians, some of whom have editors and journalists on their payrolls.[6]

Thus, one finds that despite the fact that most Nigerian newspapers claim to be privately owned, parochial and partisan newsmaking practices easily become normalised. Many of these journalists, therefore, yield to the temptation of publishing 'fawning editorials', as Ibelema (2008) puts it, playing to the tune of 'intrusive publishers who use their [media outfits] to attain personal or political goals' (Ibelema 2008, 30). Some of the journalists I interviewed attested to carrying out such practices, with one journalist at *The Guardian* stating: 'Let's face it, government is still the greatest dispenser of favours and we are not saints yet'.

Conclusion

This chapter has shed some light on how journalists in Nigerian print newsrooms creatively appropriate new media technologies and alternative media content, and how this is reflective of both changing and fixed news-making practices. The evidence from the interviews discussed has highlighted some of the contextual factors that shape and impinge upon journalists' appropriation of the mobile phone, for instance, in their news-making practices. Thus, the mobile phone at once becomes a note pad for these journalists and also serves as a reservoir and 'extended' arm through which information can be pulled in when such need arises. The chapter has also discussed some of the journalists' ambivalences towards appropriating content that circulates on various alternative media sites. While there are attempts at promoting collaborative news-gathering with the way some of these journalists adopt the mobile phone, there is also a negotiated resistance to editorial diversity and the inclusion of the other 'voices' who do not oil the financial wheels of these media organisations. Added to this is the pressure not to bite the hand that feeds, which has seen many journalists turning a blind eye to alternative media content that may be true but runs counter to proprietorial interests. Indeed, where such content is appropriated in the newsmaking practices of these journalists, particularly in reporting the elections of 2011, it is done under the constraining influence of organisational and contextual (mainly political and economic) imperatives.

In summary, this chapter has shown that while new media technologies continue to proliferate, the social, cultural and political atmosphere in Nigeria, together with institutional professional factors, continue to shape Nigerian print journalists' appropriation of alternative media. As such, it remains useful to qualify claims of collaborative newsmaking practices in Nigerian print newsrooms and in particular the notion of an 'African Networked Journalism' (Beckett 2008, 120). This is because such collaboration is fraught with contradictions, asymmetrical power relations and is sometimes fundamentally ambiguous.

Notes

1. There were indications that on Friday 6th and Saturday 7th June 2014 the Nigerian government had confiscated and destroyed copies of about four national newspapers scheduled for distribution across some cities in the

country and including the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The media felt they were targets of the military because they had exposed the military's inability to rescue the over 200 girls abducted in Chibok, Borno State. See: http://www.punchng.com/news/gratuitous-military-sss-assault-on-the-press/.

2. LASTMA is the acronym for Lagos State Traffic Management Authority, set up by the Lagos State government to control traffic congestion. By virtue of their job of controlling traffic and issuing fines to offenders, LASTMA officials are not necessarily the favourites of many commuters in Lagos and they have been attacked on occasion http://www.punchng.com/metro-plus/thugs-motorists-attack-lastma-officials-in-lagos/ More on LASTMA here: http://www.lastma.gov.ng/.

3. *ThisDay* is another privately owned newspaper in Nigeria.

4. The news text published on the *Vanguard*'s website on 2 April 2011 had the headline 'Today's Election: What is happening in your area?' More can be found here: http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/04/today%E2%80%99s-election-what%E2%80%99s-happening-in-your-area/ [Accessed November 20, 2011].

5. Yoruba is one of the major languages spoken in Nigeria.

6. A number of media owners in Nigeria are notorious for owing journalists salaries. A report published by *Premium Times* on 7 July 2015 told of how members of the Nigerian Union of Journalists besieged the premises of *ThisDay* newspaper because journalists had been owed salaries for nine months. More on this report here: http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/186261-journalists-protest-against-thisday-over-non-payment-of-salaries.html [Accessed 17 November 2017].

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Reality Check: The Nigerian Press and the Potential of the Internet in the Domestication of International News

Mercy Ette

The Internet has been celebrated as a powerful tool for journalistic practices and a global medium for gathering and disseminating news and information. It has become 'invaluable to journalists—providing not only stories—but also a rich array of tools' (O'Sullivan 2012, 44), thus making it 'easier for journalists to research and report their stories' (Willnat et al. 2013, 168). Expansion and development of news distribution infrastructures have also enabled news access anywhere in the world (Clausen 2004). Against the backdrop of this near utopian conceptualisation of the potential of the Internet and other communication technologies to revolutionise journalism, this exploratory study examines how and if Nigerian journalists are harnessing the resources of such technologies in news production processes in general and in the domestication of international news in particular. The discussion is predicated on the understanding that media technologies, ranging from the Internet and smart phones to other mobile communication devices, offer journalists unprecedented access to

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a plethora of sources of information, the building blocks for news, and also equip them with the capacity to tell stories in innovative ways. As a result, print versions of newspapers and other traditional news platforms have been repositioned to reflect such technological developments. From this standpoint, it could be argued that the emergence of media technologies signalled a significant shift in the way in which information is garnered, packaged and disseminated. This shift is evident in the variety of ways in which news is disseminated now: through the likes of multimedia presentation, interactive forums and social media platforms.

The diffusion of media technologies in Nigerian newsrooms began in 1996 (Kperogi 2012, 2016) and, over the years, Nigerian journalists have been progressively adopting these technologies for news production and dissemination processes (Akinfemisoye 2014). Farooq Kperogi's study of the evolution of online journalism in Nigeria highlights growing investment in online news delivery (2012), as more news media organisations have acknowledged the potential of media technologies to facilitate work efficiency in news production. These technologies are 'not only redefining normative values and ideals but also are shaping the structuring of the working day' (Mabweazara 2013, 147–148). While the extent to which media technologies have enabled journalists to overcome 'barriers associated with the traditional ways of doing journalism' (Mabweazara 2013, 135) or truly transformed newsroom practices is debatable, there is no question about their impact on news-gathering and information dissemination. There is evidence of increasing use of the Internet as a news platform as well as a tool for journalistic practices. Since most mainstream newspapers in Nigeria have online presence and periodically update their news stories on the web, the Internet has become a critical resource for journalists. It is now a common trend to publish breaking news stories online before they appear in print. Moreover, stories of events happening in distant places are routinely reported on websites.

Nigerian newspapers' forays into online journalism began in 1996 when the *Post Express*, now defunct, recycled its print content to an online platform (Kperogi 2012). Other major newspapers soon followed but most of them were still stuck in production practices that were best suited for their print versions (Kperogi 2012) and were merely transferring 'the traditional way of doing things to the web, repurposing not only their content, but also their journalistic culture' (Deuze 1999, 219). At the time of writing, in March 2016, all major Nigerian newspapers had functional websites that were updated regularly and most of them also used

Twitter, Facebook, Google+ and other social media platforms to promote their stories and to interact with their audiences.

The Internet, with its seemingly limitless possibilities, offers Nigerian media organisations an array of tools for communication and potentially liberates journalists from 'a long-standing dependence on a few powerful information providers and the "mainstream" discourse they offer' (Paterson 2007, 57). The array of alternative voices relatively accessible on the Internet means that journalists can obtain information from and about distant places for their local audiences. Thus, places that ordinarily would have been invisible in the news can now make headlines. In other words, 'the virtually unlimited web space allows news professionals to publish stories about countries that were rarely caught on the radar screen of conventional outlets' (Wu 2007, 540). Nigerian journalists, just like their counterparts in other parts of the world, can maximise the potential of technology to gather, package and disseminate international news. They are also capable of extending the depth and breadth of their coverage through the use of 'hyperlinks and hypertext, as well as through the participation of users, who may be found in different geographical locations' (Siapera 2012, 131). Although studies have pointed to limited use of hypertext links in news generally (Karlsson et al. 2015), the capacity to offer both external and internal links within reports is readily available to Nigerian journalists. Itai Himelboim, for example, argues that 'by using hyperlinks, news organisations can overcome political and financial barriers and present information from around the world. Individuals and organisations can turn public awareness toward their causes if news sites link to their information' (2010, 374). This possibility enables news organisations to extend their reach to audiences beyond their geographical space and offers their readers access to sources of information linked to stories. It is this perception of the potential of media technologies to broaden and enrich the professional practices of Nigerian journalists that informs the discussion that follows.

Context of Study

The discussion in this chapter concentrates on the Nigerian press coverage of a single but multilayered story, the outbreak of Ebola in four West African countries. The Ebola story was local, regional and international in dimension. Although the outbreak was confined to four countries in West Africa, Ebola was a global health threat as intercontinental transmission could not

be ruled out due to the fluidity of national borders and the freedom of movement of people. Against this backdrop, the fight against the spread of Ebola required strategic information dissemination as well as a medical and scientific attack against the virus. The information dimension was particularly important because public attitude to an epidemic can be shaped by media coverage. In 2007, for example, a study of trends in American attitudes towards infectious diseases suggested that the media play a pivotal role in public reactions to global health threats (Ho et al. 2007). An analysis of poll data in the United States of America about public attitude to four infectious diseases indicated that attention to news coverage was 'event driven, peaking when there were new human or animal cases, and decreasing rapidly when the diseases seemed to have been contained' (Ho et al. 2007, 671). Thus, it is logical to argue that the media's coverage of Ebola was a vital component of initiatives to control and contain the outbreak and that keeping the virus in the news was critical for sustained public awareness.

Although Ebola had smouldered in parts of West Africa for several months, it only made international news headlines on 23 March 2014 when the World Health Organisation (WHO) identified the virus as the cause of an outbreak of haemorrhagic fever that had killed more than thirty people in Southern Guinea in the previous month. The outbreak quickly snowballed beyond Guinea when the virus jumped borders to reach Mali, Sierra Leone and Liberia. It reached Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, in July, when an infected Liberian man arrived in Lagos from Monrovia. He died five days later. Four of the nine doctors and nurses who became infected while treating him also died within a short time. News of Nigeria's first case of Ebola 'rocked public health officials around the world' (Cooper, *The Independent*, 21 October 2014) because, as Jeffrey Hawkins, an American diplomat, said at the time: 'the last thing anyone in the world wants to hear is the two words "Ebola" and "Lagos" in the same sentence'. That juxtaposition, he explained, 'conjured up images of an apocalyptic urban outbreak' (Boseley, *The Guardian*, 20 October 2014). The WHO put the risk of an epidemic in Lagos in perspective when it noted that, as Nigeria's most populous city, a disease outbreak would be 'a powder keg' because 'the number of people living in Lagos—around 21 million—is almost as large as the populations of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone combined' (WHO, 20 October 2014). Ebola outbreak in Nigeria would have been the most explosive epidemic imaginable. However, the government's prompt response and coordinated emergency measures curbed the spread of the virus, and Nigeria,

unlike other affected countries, successfully contained the outbreak and registered only a small number of casualties. The country was certified Ebola-free by the WHO on 20 October 2014, exactly three months after its first case of the disease.

Once the country was free of the virus, it could be argued that Ebola was no longer newsworthy in a local context. However, so long as the epidemic was running in West Africa, Nigeria was still at risk of another outbreak as resurgence was a possibility. As one official explained: 'no state could afford to be complacent. There's always a threat that we could be infected again by individuals travelling from affected states' (Cooper, *The Independent*, 21 October 2014) because 'the Ebola in one country remains a threat to another' (Okeke, the *Leadership*, 22 July 2015). Public awareness of the epidemic was, therefore, critical and news organisations had a social responsibility to keep their readers informed about the Ebola situation in affected countries as a strategy to discourage complacency. As Ho et al. (2007, 671) noted, public perceptions of threats are 'usually the highest in the early stages of major outbreaks. The public becomes more complacent when the outbreaks seem to be under control'.

Methodological and Conceptual Approach

This study is concerned with the ways in which five Nigerian newspapers covered the Ebola outbreak as an international story. The aim was to examine how and if the newspapers utilised the Internet and other media technologies to ferret out information from local experts to domesticate their reports and make news of the Ebola epidemic in other countries relevant to their local audiences. For the purpose of this study, international news was conceptualised as 'new and breaking stories of international significance' (Paterson 2007, 64) about events happening outside Nigeria or involving other countries. Stories that contained 'any foreign nations or names of foreign nationals [...] or involved a foreign country or foreign national' were categorised as international (Wu 2007, 544). In this context, only stories of the Ebola epidemic in other West African countries were coded international. By-lines, locations and sources named in stories were used to determine relevant data.

Domestication is operationalised in this study as a strategy to make far-away 'events comprehensible, appealing and relevant to domestic audiences [...] by constructing the meanings of these events in ways that are compatible with the culture and the dominant ideology of societies they serve' (Gurevitch et al. 1991 cited in Clausen 2004, 28). Essentially, domestication

requires particularisation of international events for local resonance. This can be done by applying local frameworks of interpretations, using local experts to contextualise issues, introducing local nuances and appealing to the sensibilities of local audiences. It entails contextualising the contours of international events and issues in ways that make such information useful and meaningful to domestic audiences. To domesticate international news requires presenting it 'within frames of interpretation of local audiences' (Clausen 2004, 27).

Media technologies, if properly harnessed, can facilitate this by enabling journalists to gain direct access through their mobile phones, social media platforms and emails to domestic actors capable of providing value-added information. Newspapers can also provide internal and external hyperlinks to relevant and related stories online to achieve greater resonance. In short, to make an international event newsworthy, it 'must be anchored in a narrative framework that is already familiar to and recognisable by newsmen as well as by audiences' (Gurevitch et al. 1991, 206). Against this backdrop, it is common practice for journalists to use shared frameworks of understanding in the coverage of international events to make the news more accessible and meaningful to their domestic audiences. Consequently, the news media actively determine the frames of reference that audiences depend upon to understand public events (Yang 2003), because the news frames influence the way in which people think about issues raised in news reports, and this is particularly significant in the coverage of distant places.

This study utilised a combination of research methodologies: quantitative and qualitative analysis of media texts and semi-structured interviews with six editors and journalists to interrogate how their newspapers utilised media technologies for the coverage of the Ebola outbreak as an international story. The respondents were purposely selected to represent major national newspapers in the country. The number of respondents is undeniably small, and this could be seen as a limitation, but it must be noted that a larger sample size would not have significantly altered the outcome of this study given that the focus was on journalistic practices and not on individual journalists. Interviews were conducted by email and on telephone to tease out insight from the journalists about their use of media technologies in news production processes in general and for the domestication of international stories in particular. Included in the email interviews were questions about the sourcing of international news, on the factors that determine selection of news items and on the extent of rewriting of agency copy for domestication. Email interviews were supplemented

by telephone discussions, during which the respondents were probed for detailed explanations to clarify claims that they made in their written responses. They were also prompted to reflect upon and evaluate their professional practices and news production processes. As Gray explains, the interview method is 'a powerful tool for eliciting rich data on people's views, attitudes and the meaning that underpin […] behaviours' (Gray 2014, 382).

The study focused on Nigerian press coverage of the outbreak of Ebola epidemic in four West African countries between January and July 2015. This time frame was chosen to avoid the outbreak period in Nigeria, when coverage was imperative because of the threat of the epidemic. As Ho et al. acknowledge, media coverage of an outbreak of an infectious disease is usually 'fragmented and event driven, peaking in relation to newly reported human infections […] and then fading into periods of noncoverage' (2007, 673). A study by Mowafa Househ, (2015), for example, showed a sharp increase in the dissemination of information about Ebola when events occurring in the United States suggested the possibility of the virus reaching the country. Coverage, however, subsided once the threat was no longer acute. In the case of the present study, once Nigeria was declared Ebola-free, the outbreak was no longer an event-driven story and, in the absence of 'what-a-story' cases, journalists had to be innovative and enterprising to make the story of Ebola in other countries meaningful to their domestic audiences. Harnessing the potential of media technologies such as the Internet, mobile phones, blogs and social media platforms was one of the most effective means of telling compelling stories as the journalists could tap into a diversity of sources for information, provide links to relevant materials and provide a forum for interactivity among their readers.

Data selected for discussion comprised Ebola-focused stories published on the websites of five national newspapers, *The Guardian*, *Punch*, the *Daily Trust*, the *Vanguard* and the *Leadership*. The publications were selected to reflect major location hubs of Nigerian newspapers. Three of the newspapers, *The Guardian*, *Punch* and the *Vanguard*, are published in Lagos, the southern hub and the nerve-centre of the Nigerian newspapers business, and two are based in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory and the northern hub. *The Guardian*, which was founded in February 1983, is one of the most prestigious newspapers in the country. It claims to be the flagship of Nigerian journalism. It is widely available in many parts of the country and is perceived to be a 'favourite of the intellectuals' and 'respected for its independent, sober views' (Olukotun 2004, 71). *Punch* was first published

in 1971 and today is one of the most popular dailies in the country. Its tabloid-like editorial style has earned it high status across the country. The *Daily Trust* is the widest-circulating English language newspaper in northern Nigeria, and has become a recognised voice for the northern part of the country. The *Vanguard* started as a weekly in June 1984 and went daily in July of the same year. According to alexa.com, an Internet company that 'audits and makes public the frequency of visits on various Web sites' https://www.alexa.com/topsites/countries/NG, it has the tenth most-visited website in Nigeria and is the number one newspaper website in the country. The *Leadership* also started out as a weekly newspaper in 2004 and became a daily publication on 1 February 2006. It is one of the major publications in Nigeria's capital city.

Data collection entailed extracting articles from the websites of the five newspapers using a simple search term, Ebola. As the study focuses on use of media technologies for news production, it was apt to examine online stories. Moreover, access to printed copies of the papers was not possible. Only news stories that focused on Ebola were selected and those that only made passing reference to the virus, for example in a list of viruses or diseases such as malaria, were excluded. After eliminating stories that were published outside the time frame or did not focus specifically on Ebola, 349 articles were identified as being relevant for the discussion. Each article was taken as a unit of analysis. The quantitative dimension of the study was a simple count of origin of stories in terms of by-line, location of events and identity of expert voices used in the copy. This strategy was used to differentiate between local and international stories about Ebola. A qualitative approach involved analysing evidence of domestication using a framework identified by Alasuutari et al. (2013). The modes of domestication suggested by Alasuutari et al. include 'appealing to emotions, linking the events with compatriots, reporting on statements, moves and acts by domestic actors; and implicating domestic politics' (Alasuutari et al. 2013, 699). Based on this framework, each story was examined to identify local voices or experts and sources, linkages to domestic issues and the use of a local framework of understanding. For instance, reports of volunteers from other countries who were serving in Ebola-ravaged areas were examined for references to Nigerians who had also made personal contributions to the fight against the virus.

It is important to stress that while 'international news increases the awareness and interconnectedness of social and political information and actors across borders' and 'technological development and the distribution

of news through international news agencies enable the global diffusion of information about events' (Clausen 2004, 27), news is only relevant when it resonates with audiences. Domestication enables journalists to frame events in distant places within the local context (Ette 2012). Put differently, events happening in faraway places are brought home through the process of domestication to make them familiar and intelligible to a domestic audience. Domestication of international news 'in a broad sense […] contributes to the travel of ideas across national and regional borders' (Alasuutari et al. 2013, 693). The upshot of this strategy is the need to make information useful and pertinent to readers. In the case of the Ebola story, it meant keeping the epidemic on the news radar in ways that could sensitise Nigerians to be aware of the risk of resurgence.

Ebola in the News

To examine the ways in which media technologies were used in the coverage and the domestication of stories about Ebola as an international story, each relevant article extracted from the websites of the five newspapers was examined to identify the origin of information and to whom it was accredited, and also for evidence of domestication. From a simple count of the articles, it was apparent that despite the time frame of the study being a non-peak period of the epidemic, the five papers regularly published stories about Ebola during the period in question, an indication of the newsworthiness of the issue. Of the total number of stories in the sample, 107 were published by *The Guardian*, 73 each by *Punch* and the *Leadership*. The *Vanguard* and the *Daily Trust* had fewer international stories at 55 and 33, respectively. Most of the stories published by *The Guardian*, *Punch* and the *Leadership* were either news agency copy or sourced from other news organisations such as Al Jazeera and the BBC. Some stories were press statements from the WHO website. Although some of the stories carried the by-line of journalists, the stories were often repackaged press releases or statements by organisations on the frontline of the epidemic, for example Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), an international medical and humanitarian organisation. Stories that had the by-lines of local journalists but no local context were still treated as agency copy because they were not domesticated. Most of the stories in the *Vanguard* and the *Daily Trust* were not explicitly accredited to agencies but the content linked the copy to the WHO and news agencies.

Overall, 76% of the stories in *Punch* were agency copy. The *Leadership* had 74% and *The Guardian* 63%. Of stories in the *Vanguard* and the *Daily Trust*, 9% and 2%, respectively, were clearly identified as agency copy. Each newspaper credited at least four agencies or organisations for all the Ebola stories it carried during the period. For *Punch*, the main sources of stories were Al Jazeera and the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN). The *Leadership* also depended mainly on NAN for its stories. Most of the agency copy in the *Vanguard* identified WHO and Agence France Presse (AFP), while the *Daily Trust* had stories from Reuters and the BBC. *The Guardian* obtained 50% of its Ebola stories from AFP, the world's third-largest international news agency, based in Paris, while 10% were from NAN. Some stories were not clearly credited to specific organisations and were identified simply as agency reports. A journalist at one of the newspapers said that 'most news stories are based on press releases or taken from NAN or other media outlets'. Another respondent explained that newspapers obtain most foreign stories 'from local and international news agencies, some by subscription and others whose policies allow us to use their materials'.

While there were variations in the origins of stories and issues covered, none of the stories that were credited to news agencies were domesticated. The majority of the stories lacked resonance or continuity, even when they had close bearings on local news. For example, on 10 July 2015, *Punch* published a story about a Tanzanian nurse who had returned home after serving in Liberia. The 400-word story gave a detailed account of how the nurse had placed herself under a twenty-one day quarantine on arrival from Monrovia without any prompting from the country's health authorities because she 'feared that joining her family and shaking hands with relatives and friends could put many Tanzanians at risk of infection'. Interestingly, the story also referred to five Tanzanian physicians who had been on the same mission to Liberia under the auspices of the African Union and returned home two months before the nurse. However, there was no mention of 250 Nigerian volunteers who had also served in Liberia and Sierra Leone, even though *Punch* had covered their return to Nigeria on 24 May 2015, which was within the time frame of this study.

While it is common practice for newspapers to depend on agencies for stories when they do not have a reporter on the scene, what is significant here is the absence of any evidence of domestication of the stories and no attempt to involve local actors. A phone call to local sources and experts, or an Internet search for relevant and related stories could have yielded original and extra information that would have broadened the scope of

agency copy. This enhancement was possible through effective utilisation of communication technologies. Stories quoting sums of money in foreign currencies, for example, could have been domesticated through conversion of the amount into the Naira, the local currency. In a story about the impact of Ebola on the African Cup of Nations football tournament, the *Vanguard* reported: 'We got a $30,000 (£19,700) bonus for qualifying and I gave that money directly to charities fighting the disease. At the Africa Cup of Nations we want to fight for the people who are struggling due to Ebola' (16 January 2015). Readers who were not knowledgeable about currency exchange rates would not have known the significance of the amount of money. The story consequently lacked apparent cultural proximity, consonance and meaningfulness. Overall, failure to domesticate stories meant that the reports were basic factual accounts of events devoid of undertones that could have appealed to the sensibilities of their audience.

Beyond the Utopian Expectations of the Internet

As detailed above, a key finding of this study is the lack of domestication of international news in Nigerian newspapers. Where agency copy was repackaged, changes were minimal. This was confirmed by a respondent who explained that repurposing agency copy is limited to changing 'the English in use from American to British; changing headlines to suit our audience perception'. Another respondent said that repackaging was limited to ensuring that the 'story conforms to one's house style'. The absence of meaningful domestication of the Ebola story can be seen as evidence of lack of investment in original reporting through the use of media technologies. The Internet, for example, simply provides access to the portals of news agencies and other media outlets but does not empower reporters to explore other frontiers for information. As Farooq Kperogi argues, news organisations in Nigeria are not keeping up with 'the dizzying pace, multimediality and interactivity of twenty-first-century news' (2016, 23). One respondent, however, expressed a strong view in support of the dependence on news agencies for pre-packaged stories:

> Over the years, we have discovered that the Western media have shown expertise in story writing and even in our journalism schools we attempt to teach what the West has done. So, there's hardly any reason to doubt their skills in story writing and presentation. However, we have noticed that they

express some bias in the presentation of their facts, and even in their commentaries and analyses. What we do is to check diverse websites to cross-check how international stories are reported and we pick the most objective of them.

This view reveals a lack of understanding of the importance of domesticating international events, especially in the case of a national health threat like an outbreak of an epidemic. The issue is not the quality of writing but the fact that reporters are not exercising their personal and professional news judgement and, rather, have inadvertently outsourced their responsibilities to news agencies. But it has to be acknowledged that the work environment and organisational structures in Nigeria undergird this dependence on agency copy, a situation that validates Mabweazara's (2015) observation that the practice of journalism reflects socio-cultural and organisational imperatives of the work environment. The environment in Nigerian newsrooms appears to be whittling down professionalism in the area of international news coverage, due to lack of resources. As one respondent explained: 'We lack the capacity and the resources to send reporters to other parts of the world for them to do original stories for us. Unfortunately, the cost of sending reporters abroad is near prohibitive, so we have to rely on foreign reportage'. Media technologies offer journalists viable opportunities to overcome this near-total dependence on news agencies by opening up access to local news sources who can provide original information, facilitating the domestication of international news.

According to one respondent, journalists get their news alerts from the Twitter accounts of foreign journalists and they monitor breaking news on other international news organisations' websites. They also 'receive alerts from Google, Reuters, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) and Agence France Presse (AFP)'. These alerts determine the range and types of stories that they cover. While this approach reflects common practice in coverage of international news generally, the point being made here is about the failure to go beyond simply 'shovelling' agency copy, without contextualising stories to make them meaningful to local audiences. The Internet, Himelboim argues, 'provides new means for news media to contribute to informed citizenry by pursuing their social role to disseminate news and views' (2010, 383). This was not evident in the coverage of the Ebola outbreak as an international story. What the papers carried out in their coverage could be described as 'second-hand journalism' (Quandt cited in Hanitzsch and Quandt 2012, 435).

One of the objectives of this research was to delineate how and if journalists exploited the capacities of media technologies in their coverage of Ebola as an international story. This objective was informed by the view that 'technologies have assumed a taken-for-granted role in facilitating the communicative practices at the heart of newsmaking, as well as extricating techno-savvy journalists from the tedium of traditional newsgathering methods' (Mabweazara 2013, 139). As the discussion so far suggests, the Internet played a key role in news-gathering and dissemination of information about the virus by primarily enabling journalists to gain access to portals of news agencies in which their newspapers had subscriptions, to download pre-packaged material, and to trawl the websites of other news organisations for stories. A respondent explained that journalists typically obtain 'international news for publication in the newspapers through the Internet. We monitor news on various websites, including BBC, CNN, Yahoo, and diverse online publications.' On the overall use of technologies, another respondent stated: 'We are still toddlers as far as the use of media technologies is concerned because unlike in the West where innovations are taking place regularly, we have to cope with the minimal technologies in Nigeria'.

While the Internet offered the journalists unprecedented access to information, the communicative potentialities of the technology were not put to use in the coverage of the Ebola epidemic as the newspapers discussed here demonstrated limited use of the features of the Internet that could have added value to their stories. Their websites had limited interactivity and, as Kperogi observed in 2012, they all lacked 'sophisticated web presence' (Kperogi 2012, 448). However, there was evidence of the use of social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter, a development that Akinfemisoye observed during an ethnographic study of newsroom cultures in Nigeria.

> As new digital technologies become widespread, journalism in Nigeria is adopting these technologies in news production and dissemination processes. For instance, all major national dailies in Nigeria have an online presence on social networking sites and operate functioning websites where online versions of their newspapers are published. (Akinfemisoye 2014, 64)

Social networking sites, Akinfemisoye notes, 'have become new news beats' (2014, 70). This dependence, it seems, is not limited to garnering information for stories but also to simply lifting complete reports for publication. Akinfemisoye's view that Nigerian journalists are 'going

beyond just breaking news to providing more in-depth and interpretative reports' (2014, 73) was not reflected in the coverage of the Ebola outbreak. While journalists may be tapping into the potential of new media technologies for local news, they are not maximising them in their coverage of events and issues in distant places. Moreover, they are not creating synergies by utilising the Internet to expand and broaden their readers' understanding of international stories.

One of the assumptions about the impact of new media technologies is the limitlessness of the web. This technology offers news organisations space to present news in a variety of ways and to broaden the scope of their coverage of events and issues. John Pavlik, in his proposal for innovation in news media, asserts that the 'diffusion of mobile, networked technology among the public is enabling a wide spectrum of innovation opportunities for news media to create effective new contents forms for news' (Pavlik 2013, 185). Pavlik goes on to argue that 'developing and employing innovative methods of newsgathering and reporting represents an essential area of news media growth and adaptation in the twenty-first century' (Pavlik 2013, 186).

The discussion so far has shown that Nigerian newspapers are yet to evolve to this level of innovation in the use of media technologies, as most of the newspapers are yet to fully adopt some basic features of online journalism, such as hypertextuality and multimediality. While the participatory potential of the Internet appears to be in use, insofar as audiences are granted opportunities to contribute to the news discourse through accessible comments spaces, this has not enhanced interactivity. In fact, most of the Ebola stories did not attract comments from readers. One editor acknowledged that there was limited interactivity on the website but asserted that engagement with readers is common on social media, such as Facebook. It seems that Jay Rosen's suggestion that the 'people formerly known as the audience' (2006) are now capable of actively engaging in the mediascape is still an unrealised proposition for the Nigerian newspaper audience, as the level of interaction between journalists and audiences continues to be minimal in terms of media content. There is no evidence of audiences playing active roles in the collection, production and dissemination of information and news in any of the papers examined.

The optimism associated with media technologies sometimes appears utopian for Nigerian journalists and newspaper audiences, for several reasons. Although Nigerian journalists, just like their counterparts in other parts of the continent 'have not shied away from exploiting digital

technology in sourcing news and information' (Mudhai 2011, 681), the increasing use of new technologies, such as the Internet and smart phones, has not resulted in domestication of international news, as the coverage of the Ebola epidemic shows. Paterson is right to argue that the Internet provides 'mostly illusory interactivity and mostly illusory diversity' (2007, 63).

Communication technologies may enable innovation by offering journalists opportunities to embellish their stories through frequent updating, hyperlinks, interactivity and multimediality (Deuze 2003), but in the coverage of the Ebola outbreak, these features, which Mark Deuze argues are critical for online news, were not harnessed by any of the newspapers. Interactivity, for example, enables audiences of online journalism to actively engage with the information provided. This, for some newspapers, is possible through invitations extended to readers to contribute to the comments section. In more advanced settings, audiences can influence how content is presented to them. As far as coverage of the Ebola virus was concerned, interactivity was nonexistent. When comments were made, they were usually posted by people simply using the platform to advertise their businesses. For instance, a recurring comment was about an opportunity to purchase bags of cement from a factory.

Another feature that can transform news and information online is hypertextuality, which Deuze defines as the capacity of journalists to connect stories 'to other stories, archives, resources and so forth through hyperlinks' (Deuze 2003, 206). Hyperlinks, Kperogi explains 'connect readers to related materials within the same websites and/or that lead readers to external sites relevant to the content being presented' (Kperogi 2012, 448). Siapera describes this feature as a basic component of online content and as an

> essential part of good online news production because it enables journalists to include background and further information on the subject they are writing. At the same time, it can also be used to increase the credibility of the article since the links can be used to back up and support claims made in the article, as well as to refer readers directly to sources. (Siapera 2012, 137)

This feature was missing in the coverage of the outbreak. Furthermore, although the majority of the information was retrieved from websites, there were no links to those sources and the newspapers did not provide links to relevant and related stories on their own websites.

Another common feature of online news, according to Deuze, is multimediality, 'which is the technical capacity for news content to be delivered in multiple platforms' (Kperogi 2012, 448). Multimediality compels journalists to identify which format or formats best convey a certain story (Deuze 2003, 206). Wu, for example, asserts that 'with Internet as the medium, the working environment and the approaches of storytelling for journalists have changed dramatically. This change might result in a different presentation of news—particularly international news' (Wu 2007, 540). This was not apparent on any of the websites examined. Overall, not even one of the newspapers harnessed the potential of such media technologies for their storytelling. There were no audio or video clips to complement texts, and photographs used were mainly stock images. As Kperogi notes, 'most Nigerian newspaper websites lack multimedia and hypertextual capabilities, and are therefore incapable of telling twenty-first-century stories which are increasingly not only video-and-audio-based but also "networked" and interactive' (2016, 25). This apparent failure to unleash the full potential of the Internet and other media technologies in the coverage and dissemination of news about Ebola reinforces the argument that the diffusion of such technologies has not been as transformative as debates on the subject suggest.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined how and if Nigerian journalists exploited the potential of new media technologies to domesticate the coverage of a multilayered story, the Ebola outbreak in four West African countries. While there was no doubt that the Internet had widened the scope of news production processes in terms of access to information, and enabled the journalists to become astute information brokers as far as sourcing for news from other media outlets, the reality is that they were not harnessing the full potential of the technology to domesticate their stories. The appropriation of the technology reflected the economic and socio-cultural constraints that Nigerian journalists face. Respondents remarked that due to shortages of reporters in the newsroom, there is no time for extensive reporting or proper follow-up of stories. Moreover, one respondent said that, due to low wages, reporters lack the incentives to invest time and energy in reporting and, as a result, they simply publish press releases or lift stories from other media organisations.

Although the sample used for this analysis is small, the results strongly suggest that access to the Internet and other communication technologies has neither resulted in innovative journalistic practices nor in the use of a diversity of sources for international news. Rather, what emerges from the discussion is evidence of limited use of media technologies. From the viewpoint of the potential of the Internet to revolutionise journalistic practices, this study comes to the conclusion that the utopian expectations are not being met in Nigerian newsrooms due to socio-economic constraints and the lack of investment in original reporting of foreign news. But this limited exploitation of the capacities of the Internet is not peculiar to Nigeria. Previous studies point to similar trends in other parts of the world, especially in terms of the use of hyperlinks (Himelboim 2010, Karlsson et al. 2015).

From this discussion of press coverage of the Ebola epidemic, it is clear that journalists did not attempt to reconstruct information from news agencies within local frames of understanding. Although the Internet offers journalists great possibilities, in practice, most do not exploit the potential at their disposal. Consequently, the newspapers are not developing innovative ways of reporting international events. This could be attributed to a number of reasons, including lack of expertise and insufficient infrastructure, but it seems that even basic journalistic skills of interviewing local experts for information that could link events to domestic politics and issues are missing. For example, breaking news about preliminary results of tests of an Ebola vaccine, which was described as exciting and promising, was not domesticated with comments from Nigerian experts, despite Nigeria's engagement in the campaign to end the epidemic.

New media technologies might offer Nigerian journalists more options and potential to repurpose information and news more creatively but they have not made significant changes in the newsroom culture. Although it is definitely easier now to verify and validate information through interaction with news producers, Nigerian journalists are not exploiting these opportunities. While the Internet is a viable and a reliable news source due to its capacity to offer limitless information, coverage of the Ebola outbreak suggests that the Internet is yet to have a significant impact on reporting international events. This reluctance to maximise the potential of new media technologies could redound to poor or limited technical abilities or expertise. Given that explanations for the limited use of the potential of media technologies cannot be extracted from the websites, this issue might be a good launch-pad for further on-the-ground research on the Nigerian press and the instrumentality of media technologies.

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[1]Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.