JOURNALISTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLES AND IDENTITIES WITH REGARD TO THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT

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Andrew Steve Tumuhirwe Kanyegirire

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Abstract

This qualitative study features in-depth interviews with selected continental African journalists and offers exploratory insights into how they perceive themselves in terms of their journalistic roles and/or sub-identities with regard to the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). The study also examines correlations between their perceptions and their news stories on NEPAD. Grounded in the libertarian and social responsibility theories of journalism, and reading these theories from the standpoint of Africa, this study posits the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development journalism sub-identities to explain the respondents’ journalistic identifications. Hence, the study explores how the journalists respond to NEPAD’s (pan)-Africanist and development journalism interpellations. The study draws on postcolonial theoretical perspectives to address questions concerning African identity and the wider NEPAD/African context of research. Findings indicated that the journalists perceive a role for themselves as neutral-objectivist information disseminators as well as social agenda enactors that conscientise their readers about NEPAD. Thus, the journalists tend to implicitly portray a pluralistic understanding of their roles that enables them to balance the ideals of journalism against the development and Africanist aspirations of NEPAD. Although the journalists were found to uphold oppositional stances towards NEPAD, they do not question it from outside of its own neo-liberal discourse. In fact, they still represent themselves as aspiring to its Africanism and remaining sympathetic to its development plans. Overall, they exhibit multiple identifications, and yet they often tend to lean towards their neutral-objectivist journalistic sub-identity. Ultimately, they prioritise the dominant libertarian-professional model of journalism over and above NEPAD’s interpellations. The study also examined the journalists’ interpretations of what they do and the apparent translation of this into their stories. Although in both their stories and interviews
discourse they showed a broader orientation towards libertarianism, the findings show that the link between the two is not straightforward.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction
This research represents one of a few studies to explore how selected African journalists understand their roles with regard to regional initiatives. This study examines journalists’ understandings of their journalistic role identifications with regard to the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). In light of NEPAD’s claim to be the blueprint for African development, the study is focused on exploring the perceptions of selected journalists in Africa of what roles in terms of their journalistic sub-identities they think they uphold when reporting on the initiative. Related to this, is the question of how they position themselves in relation to NEPAD’s journalistic and culturalist appeals. Journalists’ news content on NEPAD is also examined for insights into these two issues with focus being placed on the links between journalists’ role perceptions and the potential translation of this into the news content.

The research focus is part of a wider interest amongst journalism and media scholars regarding the influence of individual role perceptions, media routines, organisational factors and socio-cultural influences on journalists and media content (Reese 2001; Zelizer 2004). While the consideration of such influences, whether independently or collectively, is important and is a recurring theme throughout this research, in this study the focus is primarily on examining journalists’ individual self-definitions concerning their journalistic and cultural identifications in reference to NEPAD. In addition, the study examines the extent to which, if at all, such influences are visible in their news content. To be more specific, whilst there are several factors that may shape their role perceptions and their news content, this study specifically looks at these issues from the point of view of the journalists’ personal orientation in terms of their journalistic and cultural identifications vis-à-vis NEPAD. This study draws on theories and concepts of journalism, cultural and media studies and postcolonial theory to examine these issues. Scholarly literature is sparse on studies that take on such interests in Africa and it is in this sense that this thesis attempts to contribute to work in this area. By relying on the insights of journalists in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa, an attempt is made to take journalism – in theory and practice – and journalists as the key point of focus for research into this study. The research treats journalists and media content as logical and relevant objects of study in journalism and media studies.
1.1 Initial background and contextual considerations

The first types of media in Africa appeared during the colonial era in the form of newspapers that were published by Europeans for Europeans and were consequently used to propagate, maintain and retain colonial rule (Legum 1966: 440; also see Mytton 1983). By the time of independence in the 1960s, many African countries had a fledgling indigenous nationalist press that was aggressively anti-colonial (Hachten 1971; Omu 1978). After gaining independence, the press was for many years simply used as a mouthpiece of the government. Few post-colonial leaders tolerated an outspoken and independent press to rival the official state-run media (Hyden and Leslie 2002; Hachten 1971). With political and cultural reification high on the agenda, governments in Africa went on to reduce the role of the media to promoting/furthering national development and unity. The role of African journalists was to promote national sentiments and development (Odhiambo 1991:22; see chapter 2 for elaborations).

On the one hand, this reduction of media to the role of development was aided by Cold War big power politics, and skewed rhetoric on national development programmes that assumed total government control of all media of communication as a requirement for national progress and development (Berger 2002; Kariithi 1994). On the other hand, the prioritisation of development was aided by the dominance of modernisation theories, which highlighted the correlation between communication and development (Rostow 1960; Schramm 1964; Lerner 1958). As is elaborated on in chapter 3, by the 1980s calls for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) of more representative information flows from the South to the North (Schiller 1981; Melkote 1991), it had also become apparent that development journalism had failed. The media had not delivered development. Instead, under the control of governments, they were operating as state propaganda machines that were maintaining corrupt and repressive regimes (see Odhiambo 1991; Uche 1991; Kariithi 1994).

The economic liberalisation of African economies in the 1990s brought about a rapid growth of privately-owned media as evidenced by the proliferation of new, independent newspapers and broadcast stations (Hyden and Leslie 2002). This transformation of the mass media landscape was enhanced by the pro-democracy movement, which was characterised by an emphasis on press freedom and media independent of government control. Democracy-driven considerations concerning political pluralism, human rights and freedoms and not those directly linked to

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1 Not all African countries followed the same pattern and at the same time as is laid out in this section and it is in this regard that the section simply aims to provide a generalised and introductory commentary concerning the African media landscape (also see chapter 2).
development were now being seen as the new priority (see Kasoma 1995; Blake 1997; Hyden and Leslie 2002). In turn, recent journalism and mass media studies on Africa appear to indicate that the mass media in Africa, and particularly the print media, helped to promote the processes of democracy and civic consciousness in the 1990s (see Kasoma 2000; Ferguson 1993; Kpundeh and Riley 1992; Ziegler and Asante 1992; Berger 2000, 2002; Hyden and Leslie 2002). Despite the opening up of the airwaves in Africa in the 1990s, privately-owned newspapers have – unlike the partisan state-controlled publications – become an important source of public information, debate and in some cases a voice of opposition as they reach out to the minority elite that influence decision-making (see Kupe 2005; Kasoma 1995; Ronning 1994). Still, as will be noted in chapters 2 and 3, this is not to say that all the press in Africa is today independent from the interests of politicians and business and neither has the press completely managed to shed the legacies of control by governments. These dynamics have in varying degrees impeded the development of democratic journalism in the post-colony (see Ferguson 1993; Mwesige 2004; Berger 2000).

Hand-in-hand with the 1990s drive towards democratisation was an economic framework with neo-liberal dimensions. This culminated in a formal regional initiative framed in pan-national terms in the shape of NEPAD. With its emphasis on development and democracy, NEPAD has set itself up as aiming at poverty eradication and the acceleration of Africa’s integration into the global economy (NEPAD 2001). At a continental level, NEPAD is recognised by donors and African leaders as a development vision of the African Union (AU) (NEPAD 2001:1; also see Gelb 2001; AU 2004). NEPAD also places emphasis on issues such as security, regional co-operation, democracy and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) that allows member states to assess each other on governance (NEPAD 2004a; Cilliers 2002; Mbeki 2003a). A key influence on NEPAD is South African President Thabo Mbeki’s 1990s pan-Africanist emphasis on the ‘African renaissance’, in reference to the rebirth of African self-respect and unity (Cheru 2002; Ahluwalia 2002; Moyo 1998). It can be argued that NEPAD with its self-proclaimed emphasis on reducing poverty, improving governance and conflict resolution can be seen as the formal continuation of the 1990s drive towards economic and political liberalisation (NEPAD 2001; also see Melber 2002).

Although the social, economic and political implications of NEPAD and the ‘African renaissance’ have been critically analysed by a long list of academics such as Bond (2002), Adesina (2002), Melber (2002), Anyang’ Nyong’o et al (2002) and Vale and Maseko (1998), most of these analyses do not address the role of journalism and the mass media in relation to NEPAD. With a
few exceptions such as Makgoba (1999), Games (2006), Kupe (2005) and Mogekwu (2004), the limited attention to the role of African journalism and mass media in NEPAD and the ‘African renaissance’ is in contrast to the aforementioned insights about the role of the mass media in Africa with regard to promoting democracy. It also contrasts with the substantial writing, for instance, on development journalism in Africa before the 1990s.

1.2 Objectives and statement of the problem
This research sets out to investigate the perceptions of selected journalists in Africa with regard to their journalistic sub-identities and/or roles – neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development – of journalism and their cultural identities in relation to NEPAD’s appeals. Four goals ensue from this objective. Firstly, and most important of all, the study seeks to investigate what journalists conceive as their journalistic roles in relation to NEPAD. This includes exploring how journalists understand NEPAD in terms of the roles and functions of journalism particularly bearing in mind NEPAD’s appeals towards socially responsible journalism particularly as in the shape of development journalism. Secondly, is the goal of investigating how journalists understand their sense of belonging in relation to NEPAD. In part, the aim here is to investigate the extent to which NEPAD’s African identity appeal has had a bearing on how they understand who they are. Thirdly, and to a lesser extent, the study aims to analyse news stories on NEPAD for insights into the journalistic roles at the level of content. The attempt here is to use these insights as entry points for identifying some of the topics that could be probed further during the interviews with the journalists. Fourthly, and at a lesser extent, this research attempts to draw out correlations about the possible correspondences between journalistic and cultural identifications, and the potential broad correlations between these identifications and the news content.

1.3 Interest and significance of the study
Such a study can help contribute towards an understanding of the identifications, roles and functions of journalists in Africa and of the social forces that shape them in their varied contexts. As is expanded on particularly in the next chapter, there is a scarcity of research concerning how journalists in Africa perceive their responsibilities and/or locate themselves in relation to regional integration projects in an African context.

1.4 Methods of the study

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2 See chapter 11 for the fuller considerations concerning the significance of this study.
To achieve the above goals, this study relies on the research methods of qualitative content analysis and in-depth interviews. Given the continued relevance of print media as a resource for information, I analyse major print media publications in South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda and interview print media journalists who cover NEPAD-related stories in these countries. In the qualitative content analyses, my interest is in the evaluative features and elements of selected news stories concerning NEPAD for insights into the journalistic and cultural identities that are portrayed and constructed in the content. The analyses are focused on the five most recent stories that were written by a selected pool of journalists who reported on NEPAD in 2005. Interviews with the same journalists and relevant proponents and analysts that frequently engage with NEPAD were taped, transcribed and thematically analysed for key insights into the focus of this study.

1.5 Theories

Broadly, the theoretical fields used to build bridges in this study include journalism theory, development communication, cultural and media studies and the postcolonial theoretical perspectives (Siebert et al 1956; Melkote 1991; Hall 1977; Bhabha 1994a). The study draws on the libertarian, social responsibility and development communication approaches to journalism to make sense of the normative trajectory of the roles of journalism in society. In attempting to address questions of African identity, context and content of the news, this study draws on specific concepts from cultural studies and postcolonial theory. On the one hand, the grouping and inclusion of such various perspectives represents an attempt to make sense of the diversity of journalism practice in contemporary Africa. On the other hand, the interconnectedness of some of these overlapping, intertwined and highly dialectical fields derives from a common questioning of relationships that are often taken for granted in the interplay between journalism theory and practice not only in the local-global nexus, but also at the trans-national level across nations (see Shome 1996; Shome and Hegde 2002). The use of such diverse reference points is part of an attempt to arrive at a context-relevant and reflective conceptual model and analytical position – see chapter 11 – through which we can make sense of the views of the journalists on their role perceptions and wider identifications with reference to NEPAD and the potential correlations between these and their news stories.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Including this first chapter, the thesis consists of eleven chapters. Chapter 2 identifies and reviews literature and research studies that explore role theory and journalists’ role perceptions. Chapter 3
then goes on to explore and identify the theories on the roles of journalism with an emphasis on
the African context. Chapter 4 draws on the concept of ‘hybridity’ to introduce this study’s
approach to identity and then goes on to explore the potential correlations between journalists’
perceptions of their roles, cultural identity influences and the content of their news stories. At this
stage, the study also initially draws attention to the importance of a context-driven approach that
focuses on the journalist when it comes to thinking about how selected journalists see themselves
with regard to an initiative like NEPAD at a particular time and within the African context. By
introducing the nexus between NEPAD, journalism and mass media in Africa, chapter 5
highlights the NEPAD framework and how it attempts to hail journalists as Africans and as
socially responsible journalists who are specifically oriented towards development journalism. At
a broader level, the chapter frames this study’s regional socio-economic context before going on
to elaborate on the case for an analytical position that focuses on the individual journalists’ views
in studies such as this. Chapter 6 outlines the methods of research, analysis and data collection.
The qualitative content analysis findings are presented and discussed in chapter 7. Chapter 8
presents the findings from interviews with specific reference to the respondents’ views concerning
NEPAD’s African identity, whilst chapter 9 presents their responses concerning their journalistic
role perceptions and the link between these and NEPAD’s Africanist appeals. Chapter 10 provides
a deeper discussion of the discourse in the interviews. Lastly, in chapter 11, titled Conclusion and
Implications, I present a conceptual model and related theoretical considerations that grew out of
this study. The chapter also deals with the significance, limitations and recommendations of the
study.

1.7 Use of key concepts
In this section, my attempt is not to provide exhaustive definitions to some of the recurring
concepts in this study, but rather to point out the way in which they are applied in light of the
research questions of this study. Some of these concepts, as in the case of ‘development’,
‘globalisation’, ‘ideology’ and ‘discourse’ are often used indiscriminately, vaguely and without
consensus in debates on a whole range of subjects. In other instances, they are used without any
attempt to define their usage in a given context. These concepts are caught up in competing
agendas and understandings about what they mean. The descriptions of usage that follow can be
seen as understandings that are based on: (a) my reading position from the vantage point of view
of someone who is in post-colonial Africa; and (b) the interests of this study concerning
continental African journalists. These concepts are applied and reconstituted to fit the African
context as is elaborated on throughout this thesis.
Democracy and democratisation: in this study, democracy is thought of in terms of democratisation and that is in reference to a process that looks beyond good governance and multi-party elections to include issues of equity, media freedoms, political participation, justice and the oft-neglected aspect of socio-economic growth and equality (see Chabal 2002; 1998; Adam 1993). This understanding of democracy goes beyond voting in party political systems to include questions of representation and participation across various levels of society (Fanon 1963:164-165). Hence, the understanding of democracy adopted here takes on board a participatory approach to democracy that includes issues to do with development or what Adam (1993:501-502) drawing on Fanon (1963) refers to as ‘democratised development’.

Development: the modernisation approach of the 1950s and 1960s was based on the view that countries in the South or ‘periphery’ could catch up with the rich West or North and/or ‘core’ by going through a series of stages to reach economic growth (Rostow 1960; Melkote 1991). This modernisation approach was challenged by the ‘dependency school’, which drew on experiences in Latin America to argue that the problem of the countries on the periphery was to do with how they had been and were still being exploited by the West on the basis of a dependent relationship (Frank and Gills 1996; Melkote 1991). In this thesis, the approach to development is aligned towards the participatory paradigm, in which development is conceptualised as a participatory process of social change that relies heavily on people’s involvement (the beneficiaries of development) in bringing about social and material advancement (Maleke 1996:25). Broadly, this thesis adopts a human development perspective to development whereby emphasis is not only on economic growth, but pertinently also on key criteria such as health, education, equality, and freedom (see UNDP 2001; Kiely 1995). Development in this study includes economic growth and the improvement in the quality of life indices. Development is read as a process that is incomplete and not a stage of completion that has to be arrived at by all countries.

Ideology, hegemony and discourse: the term ideology is at times used in the Marxist-Althusserian sense to refer to a system of meanings and conceptions of the world through which the dominant institutions – and power holding groups – work in order to legitimise and maintain the current order, which is then made to appear as ‘natural’ (Althusser 1971:128). As is elaborated on in chapter 4, the powerful groups in society do not necessarily set out to deliberately control people and their beliefs – this is not to say that this does not happen – and neither do they exclusively rely on forceful means in order to maintain the status quo. Rather, the shaping of our beliefs and
the predominance of one social group over another subordinate one is based on the willing and active consent of the latter in what Gramsci (2000) referred to as the process of hegemony. However, for Gramsci (cited in Hall 1982:73), hegemony is not a straightforward issue of one powerful group dominating another. Hegemony is characterised by negotiation and struggles between both groups. In other words, “consent must be constantly won and re-won”, given that people have the potential to resist dominant ideologies (Fiske 1992:291). Thus, in this study, ideology is for the most part seen as being flexible and as including socio-cultural processes and relationships and not only economic ones. Note that hegemony relies on the use of specific discourses to stabilise and maintain power relations in society. Discourse is here-within used to refer to a particular way of talking about and understanding the social world – or an aspect of the world – through certain values, beliefs and categories (Deacon et al 1999; Phillips and Jorgensen 2002). Briefly, discourse is considered to be an institutionalised way of thinking that is determined by socially produced rule-bound sets of statements that impose limits on what is accepted as meaningful (Foucault 1972). For example, as will be discussed in chapter 5, two distinctly different discourses can be used about NEPAD initiatives describing them either as ‘sub-imperialist’ or ‘pan-Africanist’. Often, different discourses, each of them representing particular ways of thinking about the world – say media discourse and medical discourse – are engaged in a constant struggle with one another to achieve hegemony, that is, to fix language’s meaning in their own way (see Phillips and Jorgensen 2002; Fairclough 2001). I go on to elaborate on these nuances in chapters 4 and 5.

Postcolonial/ism, postcoloniality and post-colonial: I distinguish between ‘post-colonial ’ and ‘postcolonial/ism’ – without the hyphen – by using the former adjective to denote the social transformations that resulted from the colonial encounter and that are today manifested as the post-colonial nation-state (see Ashcroft 1997; Alhassan 2004), whilst the latter is used to denote a critical literary-cultural-media studies field. ‘Postcolonial’ theory in ‘Third World’ scholarship is often used in reference to the study of literature, identities and culture at the global and the local (Alhassan 2004:36). Here-within, I do not use the term ‘postcolonial/ism’ to refer to say ‘postcolonial literature’ which could be understood as literature from the former (African) colonies as if this is all they have in common (see McClintock 1994), but rather in reference to a critical-inter-disciplinary theoretical perspective. That is, a perspective that can help us make sense of the complexity of: (a) contemporary identities in Africa; (b) the journalist in the post-colonial African context; and (c) journalism and media practice in such a context. In this regard, this study defines postcoloniality as a “designation for critical discourses which thematise issues
emerging from colonial relations and their aftermath, covering a long historical span (including the present)” (Shohat 1992:101). Such a conception helps to resolve the superficial understanding of post-colonial as the period that comes after colonialism. Treating the post-colonial as a social formation (and as a conjuncture) that has its roots in the colonial encounter(s) before political independence is fruitful because we are then able to interrogate the onset of say development and state-ledjournalisms as being linked to the developmentalist colonial state in Africa (see Mamdani 1996; Legum 1966). To be more specific, I use ‘post-colonial’ to refer to lately colonised sub-Saharan African societies which regained their political independence in the last five decades. This qualification is important, as categories of ‘Third World’ and ‘developing countries’, tend to box the Latin American and Asian experience with that of Africa and in some instances can even hide the previously colonising relationships between Asian and African countries (hooks 1992:93; also see Mamdani 1996). In other situations, as can be noted in some of the inferences in chapter 5 and in the discussion of the findings in chapters 7 to 9, these categories can also obscure intra-African hegemonic and sub-imperialist relationships between African countries (see Miller 2004; Bond 2002; Moyo 1998).

Therefore, for the purposes of epistemological and academic rigour, we need to particularise our discussion on journalistic roles, identity and NEPAD. Particularising discussions on post-colonial Africa will call for abandoning the general categories such as ‘developing countries’ and ‘Third World’, thereby enabling us to look at the differing experiences of journalism, mass media and NEPAD in the contexts of Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda and post-Apartheid South Africa. The term post-colonial may be applicable to these five countries, but analysing these experiences from the point of view of individual journalists practising in varied situations of late colonialism calls for a specifically focused, reflective and context-driven analysis that does not set out to collectivise their experiences. In addition, whilst bearing in mind the relevance of African post-coloniality say, for instance, with regard to diasporic African communities, in this study the post-colonial is foregrounded towards the condition of continental sub-Saharan Africa (see Mbembe 2001; Wright 2002). For the sake of convenience, I sometimes refer to the post-colonial nation states as the post-colony (see Mbembe 1992) and by this usage, I do not mean to suggest that the society under discussion is not measuring up to the designation nation-state.

Pan-Africanism, (pan-)African identity and pan-Africanist: the concept of pan-Africanism is often used here to refer to post-Cold War trends in the post-colony – as is characterised by the ‘African renaissance’, African Union and NEPAD projects – towards the common goals of collective self-
reliance and African (economic, political, cultural) unity in the context of globalisation (see Cheru 2002; Young 2001). In doing this, I have borne in mind that the concept has historical roots as a cultural and political movement towards decolonisation, socialism and African unity as was called for by Kwame Nkrumah (1962) and Julius Nyerere (1962). Thus, the term is also used here-within to invoke a collectivist notion of ‘Africaness’ or ‘Africanism’ or romantic notions of ‘Africanity’ and/or to be more specific a ‘pan-African identity’. I use pan-African identity to articulate a shared pan-Africanist conception of a comprehensive global African identity that embraces both the African continent and the African diaspora (Wright 2004:50-51,149-150) as it has been variously articulated in the discourses of negritude by Senghor (1956) and Cesaire (1969), Afrocentrism by Asante (1990) and even those which examine ‘hybrid’ Africanness as in Gilroy (1993). Therefore, I at times use the terms pan-African identity and African identity synonymously particularly when I am referring to the essentialist conceptions of Africanity. Bear in mind that, although this study takes the view that African identity(ies) is (are) fluid and diverse, more often than not, when I refer to African identity I am actually referring to continental sub-Saharan Africans. Rather similar to the way in which I foregrounded post-coloniality towards the continent, this should not be taken to mean that I subscribe to a rigid dichotomy between the continent and the African diaspora and/or that I am advocating a hierarchisation of Africanness which puts continental Africans at the top whilst placing diasporic Africans at a lower position. My reason for this foregrounding is because the scope of this study is focused on continental Africans and also because I am most familiar with the cultures and criticism of continental Africa more specifically Uganda and other English speaking African countries. In general, I have a lot more to say about such regions than about Arabic Africa, Francophone Africa and the diaspora. In some instances, I also use the term pan-Africanist/ism to imply a socio-cultural and political discourse and/or utilitarian Africanist criticism position that sets out to unify, reconstruct and uplift Africans (see Wright 2002; 2004).

Mass media and African media: in this study ‘mass media’ is used in reference to the institutional print, radio and television media as mediators of public communication (including information, advertising and entertainment) whilst bearing in mind that there are other important forms of communication such as plays, griots and community meetings (see Berger 2000; 2002a; Mushengyezi 2003). Although I go on to problematise the essentialist notion of ‘African’, in the context of this study’s interests with regard to the nexus between journalists, media content and NEPAD, African media is used to refer to locally owned media that also produce high levels of local content that address African issues from an African-centred perspective (Kupe 2005:202).
Journalism, journalists, journalistic identity and African journalists: journalism as a profession is often read as being based on a set of constructed ideal-type values that define journalists as: public servants or watchdogs, objective, neutral and fair disseminators of information, autonomous and independent practitioners, timely collectors of information and as professionals with a sense of ethics (Deuze 2005:446-447). It is in this regard that journalists tend to refer to themselves as disseminators, messengers, neutral observers, advocates, development educators, watchdogs and informants amongst others (Weaver 1998). As is expanded on in chapters 2 to 4, in this study, all these assigned roles of journalism are re-read here as the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development roles and/or sub-identities (see chapters 4 to 11) which I then go on to categorise under the umbrella term of ‘journalistic identity’ (see Deuze 2005; Carpentier 2005 for related insights). At some level, ‘journalistic roles’ and ‘journalistic identity’ are seen as being in a dialectical relationship with the roles in particular being read here as the expressions of this identity of journalism. Also, note that the roles and the corresponding norms and values of journalism generally account for journalism’s ideology and that in this study, libertarianism accounts for the dominant journalistic ideology (see chapters 8 to 11). Journalism is here-within treated as an autonomous form of communication that performs specific functions for society that exclude other – paid for – forms of public communication such as public relations and advertising. Here, journalism does not include forms of communication that deal with the specific interests and communicative needs of an organisation or target group, but rather those that deal with the overall welfare of the public (Scholl 1996:333; also see Nagara 2004). The sphere of journalistic practice and identity therefore excludes advertisements, public relations statements, political party announcements, special interest magazines and non-periodical publications, but includes news stories which in this study also include editorials and commentaries that are published in the daily and weekly newspaper periodicals in Eastern, Western and Southern Africa. Thus, this study considers editorial staff that select, gather, write, edit and process information that is, editors, reporters, writers and columnists as journalists (Scholl 1996:335; Hanitzsch 2005:496; also see chapter 6).

Individual journalists and their news stories are, in this research, used as the point of departure for making sense of the research questions being raised in this study. As is expanded on in chapter 4, this study works from the point of view that journalists like other individuals, groups and practitioners in society operate in a context that is influenced by socio-cultural factors, institutions and ideologies (see Thompson 1988; Reese 2001; Carey 2000). Journalists are seen as being
influenced by and in turn influencing the socio-cultural contexts (which they share with their audiences) in which they practice (Schudson 2003:13; see also Bourdieu 1998a). Briefly, I see the question regarding the journalistic sub-identities/role perceptions that are deployed in the coverage of NEPAD as a dynamic social process that will be shaped and determined by the personal perceptions, organisational structures, routines and the wider societal-cultural norms of the context in which an individual journalist practices. If who journalists are influences and partly shapes the content of the media, one should care very much about their views and identity conceptions in a regional environment that is characterised by the pan-African appeal of NEPAD. This is because of the role that they can play in the success or failure of a development plan such as NEPAD (see Kotze and Steyn 2003). The reference to African journalists is used broadly here to refer to journalists who live and practice in the context of the post-colony. However, this is not to suggest that they see themselves as ‘Africans’, or that they lack diversity say in terms of ethnicity, gender, class, language, nationality and religion; and/or that all they have in common is being on the continent (see Nyamnjoh 2005; chapters 4, 8 and 9).

*Neo-liberalism and globalisation:* the term ‘neo-liberalism’ is used in this study to refer to the contemporary adoption of the free-market doctrines associated with the classical ‘liberal’ economists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (such as Adam Smith and David Ricardo). The term ‘Washington Consensus’ is often used synonymously with neo-liberalism because the United States (US) government, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), all based in Washington DC, are such forceful advocates of these reforms (Chang and Grabel 2004:14). They have been joined in the campaign to spread neo-liberalism by the governments and business communities of many industrialised countries, and by many reformers within developing countries as well (Bond 2002; Adesina 2002). The term globalisation, a process which is driven by neo-liberalism, is used in this study to refer to a process of re-structuring with shifts in the relations between different scales of social life – global, national, regional and local. This means that globalisation is here-within conceptualised as a multi-dimensional process, which restructures not only the economic scales or arenas of a society, but also importantly its political, cultural and social arenas with changes in the global or local dialectic (Fairclough 2002:163; see also Bourdieu 1998b).

1.7 *Assumptions*

In designing my research plan, I made certain assumptions concerning journalism, journalists’ conceptions, and news story production/construction and identity construction. Firstly, based on a
review of studies that explore the nexus between journalists’ role conceptions and news content, I assumed that these conceptions could shape the news stories that journalists ultimately report (see Graber 1993; Weaver and Wilhoit 1986; Henningham 1997; Dillon 1990). However, only a few studies, such as Culbertson (1983), Stark and Soloski (1977), Weaver and Wilhoit (1996), Dare (1983), Bergen (1994) and Zhu et al (1997), have actually attempted to show a specific relationship between journalistic identity conceptions in terms of roles and news media content. In fact, in this study the attempt is made to analyse journalists’ role identifications mainly through the framework of one to one interviews in a framework that also analyses the actual news content produced by the interviewees for insights that can be used to identify some of the potential topics of interest during the interviews phase of the research. Secondly, on the basis of studies that explore the nexus between journalists’ behaviours, their national identity as a form of cultural identity (see Gavin 2001; Nossek 2004) and relevant patterns within the African journalism community, I assumed that there were potential correlations between journalists’ conceptions, their cultural identity constructions and news story content in relation to NEPAD. As is highlighted in the findings, these correlations are not straightforward, although there is broad ‘predominantly libertarian-orientation’ in the news stories and in the interview data. Thirdly, I assumed that journalists’ perceptions of their roles and their senses of self are not fixed, but rather prone to change in relation to the structures of the context(s) – regional culture, social and political system and media institution – in which they work. Here, the findings suggest that their identification are characterised by moments of contingency and plurality. Fourthly, I assumed that the perceptions in reference to NEPAD could shift depending on the NEPAD-related issue being covered at that time and also depending on the time and period of coverage. As we shall see in chapter 8, the journalists’ responses concerning the APRM in particular are characterised by discourses of differentiation and nationality.

1.8 Conclusion
This chapter has laid out the broad foundations for this thesis. It briefly introduced the context of the study, the research problems and its significance. Then the research questions were presented, the structure of the thesis was outlined and the key definitions and assumptions were given. On this basis, the thesis now proceeds with a literature review and the theoretical approach of this research.
CHAPTER TWO
ROLES AND NEWS CONTENT

2.0 Introduction
Journalists have to deal with various considerations composed of socio-cultural influences, organisational pressures, readers’ interests, new technologies and their own individual perceptions in taking up their role in society. All these factors have important implications for the role of the journalist. Influences such as individual role perceptions, which are of interest to this study, are also assumed to manifest themselves in journalists’ news content. The purpose of this chapter is to examine literature on the roles of journalists and the potential enactment of these roles in their work. The chapter explores studies on journalists’ roles, their role perceptions and the nexus between roles and news content. At this point, I would like to point out that a thorough review of media, communication and journalism journals and other research literature reveals little previous work on the specific focus of this study in the context of the post-colony. Nevertheless, the studies presented here have general relevance to this study. These studies fall into two main categories of firstly, role perceptions and secondly, roles and news content. However, the chapter is comprised of three main sections. First, for the purposes of contextualising our discussion to Africa, I expand on the background in section 1.1 by briefly presenting the historical role shifts of journalism and mass media practice in the post-colony. Next, I then present a review of studies on journalists’ role perceptions followed by an exploration of the dearth of literature and studies on journalists in Africa. The chapter concludes by suggesting that although journalists’ role perceptions can influence the shape of their news content, the link between these perceptions and the content is contradictory and therefore not a straightforward issue.

2.1 Historical trends of role shifts in the African media
The media has played a variety of roles in the history of post-colonial African journalism. Over different time periods, the general trajectory of message content has been from a nation builder, development advocate, propagandist state mouthpiece and the more recent rise of the trend towards the neutral and watchdog perspectives (see Pye 1963; Ainslie 1966; Mytton 1983; Domatob and Hall 1983; Ziegler and Asante 1992; Kasoma 1995; Hyden et al 2002). While such changes have historically taken place steadily from decade to decade, they also have been

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3 This periodisation is for conceptual and analytical purposes only, these roles are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Although these periods appear to be sequential and all-encompassing, elements of each can in varying degrees – depending on the context at hand – be noted in the African media landscape and beyond (see Table 1 in Appendix A and Figure 1 in Appendix B).
influenced by debates such as the 1970s and 1980s concerns over information flows from the post-colony to the ‘North’ and the end of the Cold War (UNESCO 1980; Schiller 1981; Galtung and Vincent 1992). To this, we can add the early 1990s movements for civic consciousness and human rights as indicators of democratisation (Ansa 1998; Chabal 1998; Hyden et al 2002).

2.1.1 Nation builder (1950s-60s)
As indicated in section 1.1, the first newspapers in Africa appeared during the colonial era and they were typically published by Europeans for Europeans. Gradually, the press came to be associated with the determination of foreign rulers to retain their power (Legum 1966). In time, an indigenous nationalist press took hold in some countries such as late 1950s Ghana and Nigeria where it early on grew to make its presence felt as a voice against colonialism. By the time of independence in the 1960s, many African countries had a fledgling indigenous nationalist press that had been aggressively speaking out against colonialism (Hachten 1971:141-183; also see Ainslie 1966; Omu 1978). The press in particular had a close relationship with the nationalist leaders of the day and thus supported their causes. The leaders on their part saw the press as an essential tool in the fight against colonialism (Hyden and Leslie 2002:33).\(^4\) Echoing these sentiments, the pan-Africanist Kwame Nkrumah (1965) argued:

In this respect…the true African…newspaper a collective educator – a weapon, first and foremost, to overthrow colonialism and imperialism, and to assist total African independence and unity (cited in Domatob and Hall 1983:9-10).

Hence, post-independence nationalist leaders such as Nkrumah, Ghana’s first president, and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya carried on seeing the press as a key messenger of political, nationalist and cultural philosophies that did not have the blemish of foreign origin, East or West (Odhiambo 1991:22).

Hence, the initial identity of the post-colonial African press was indisputably that of building the nation. The place of the press and other mass media in society was viewed as that of uniting the nation by enabling people in the post-colony to “work out their social and cultural destinies” (Ainslie 1963:19; see also Pye 1963; Hyden and Leslie 2002). This emphasis on nation building had also grown out of the belief that Western governments had previously used the press as an outlet for propaganda aimed at maintaining their own political interests. The nationalists therefore felt that they must respond in kind, that is, by controlling the media to reflect anti-Western and

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\(^4\) Radio was well controlled by the colonial administrators well into the 1960s, it had a limited reach and in the absence of strong indigenous versions it was used to educate, inform and entertain the European colonialists and the educated African elite (see Mytton 1983; Kivikuru 2001; Hyden and Leslie 2002).
Africanist positions (Hyden and Leslie 2002:20-21). The idea paralleled African socialism/s such as undugu in Kenya or ujamaa that is familyhood or community on the basis of agrarian socialism in Tanzania, humanism in Zambia, communalism in Ghana, and other variants of such terminologies that suited the contemporary temperament and sense of purpose (see for instance Nyerere 1962). It was a period of political and cultural reification of the ideology of nationalism, national identity and pan-Africanism (Odhiambo 1991:22; see also Berger 1992; Nkrumah 1963). The role of the mass media and journalists was seen as being to promote nationalist sentiments and pan-Africanism with the aid of the same media institutions and operative principles that had been used by the colonialists (Nkrumah 1965). Similar to the colonialists, the nationalists also used the media to promote and maintain the values – political, social, economic and cultural – of the day with particular attention being directed to the elite in the new urban areas (Golding 1977: 293-294; see also Mytton 1983; Kivikuru 2001).

2.1.2 National development (1960s-70s)

The initial nationalist trend in the post-colony was blurred with development as the new catchword for the newly independent countries (Hyden et al 2002; Kivikuru 2001). In a rather implicit and indirect fashion, the dominance of the ideology of modernisation thinking in the late 1950s went on to influence the 1960s ‘development decade’ (Rostow 1960; Chabal 1994). Rostow’s (1960) blueprint modernisation for economic growth proposed five stages of growth – traditional society, preconditions for take-off, take off, drive toward maturity and the age of high mass consumption – that were based on the historical experiences of north-western Europe and the United States (US). On their path toward capitalism (and away from communism), the countries in the post-colony were expected to emulate the advanced industrial countries. The mass media – radio, publicly delivered speeches and the press – were expected to play a critical role in promoting the innovations and values of modernisation, which would in turn transform the peripheral traditional societies into modern ones (see Lerner 1958; Schramm 1964; Melkote 1991). On the one hand, this reduction of media to the role of development was aided by Cold War big power politics, and rhetoric on national development programmes that assumed total government control of all media of communication as a requirement for national progress and development (Berger 2002a; Kariithi 1994). On the other hand, the prioritisation of development lent itself to the dominance of modernisation theories, which highlighted the correlation between communication and development (see Rostow 1960; Schramm 1964; Lerner 1958). It is also worth noting here that the post-colony became receptive to the rhetoric of development in part because this was to an extent already standard policy in development planning inherited from the
colonial state. This policy was carried out hand-in-hand with the aforementioned role of mass media in nurturing national unity and culture. The post-colonial nation state’s mandate became one of building an ‘imagined community’ of citizens through development (Alhassan 2004:79-80; see also Mamdani 1996; Anderson 1983).

The level of diffusion of media technologies, especially radio and television as well as newspapers, became the yardstick for measuring development. In addition, there was an assumed close reciprocal relationship between mass media growth and literacy rates (Lerner 1958: 61-5). The essence of mass communication – as in the modernisation paradigm of development – was to transfer the new ideas, and knowledge and approaches from the rich countries to the post-colony. This notion, however, also contradicted the nationalist role of the media. In addition, as we shall see in chapter 3 on development theories it also came under attack from critics such as Frank (1969) of the ‘dependence school’ and Freire (1970) of the participatory approach. The dependence school challenged the modernisation theories’ classical economics standpoint by arguing that colonialism and modernisation had enriched the West at the cost of the periphery. The dependence and the participatory schools called for consideration of external and socio-cultural factors respectively, in thinking about development and communication. However, both the modernisation and dependency perspectives shared the notion of media as an instrument to promote development (Melkote 1991; Shah 2003). The fuller point here is that having initially taken on the role of nation builder and promoter of national unity, mass media, the press and journalists in the post-colony were expected to take on the role of communicating indigenous development against information concerning Western type development (Domatob and Hall 1983). This emphasis on communicating development, which I explore further in chapter 3, led the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to prescribe at least a minimum of 50 radio sets, 100 copies of dailies, 20 cinema seats and 20 TV sets for every 1000 inhabitants of a developing nation (UNESCO 1961:16). Rural newspapers with a focus on health, literacy projects, nutrition, hygiene and education were set up to help initiate social changes that would go on to lead to development (Kivikuru 2001:149-150). Overall, the role of the press and the African journalist was that of promoting national development by disseminating ‘developmental’ messages to the nation. Communication was in this sense based on a “hierarchical, one way, and top-down” approach (Melkote 1991:206; also see Servaes 1991).

2.1.3 Propaganda machine / mouthpiece of the state (1970s-1980s)
In the post-colony, as suggested above, the roots of propagandist media practice can be traced back to the period of European colonial rule. By the 1970s, well-established governments and states in Africa had started entrenching their grip on the operations of the press and the mass media all in the name of development. Few governments tolerated an outspoken, independent press to rival the official, state-run media. In general, then, post-colonial Africa had little more than a staid, government-controlled press for many years (Hachten 1971; Hyden and Leslie 2002). The indigenous publications, which had been active at the time of independence, had by the 1980s now closed down or been bought by more powerful media corporations or in many cases simply been taken over by the ruling parties and governments in power (Hyden and Leslie 2002).

National development was elevated as the priority objective of the press so that considerations such as democracy and the right to criticise policy were seen as contrary to the role of development. It was an easy transition for governments to start using the press to promote official propaganda (Hyden and Leslie 2002:8; see also Hachten 1971). This was despite warnings such as that by 1960s journalists like Kelvin Mlanga, editor of the government-owned *Zambia Mail*, which had previously been independent, who warned that:

> It is my view that a newspaper owned and run by the state for the sole purpose of spreading Government propaganda is valueless. A newspaper must have freedom to disagree…with Government…if a Government wants to keep its finger on the pulse of public opinion, it is vital that there should be a free press in the country; for it is only in such a press that the true feelings of the public can be portrayed (cited in Ainslie 1966:19-20)

Under the control of governments, the mass media and journalists, some of whom were aspiring politicians went on to operate as state propaganda machines that were now maintaining corrupt and repressive regimes that did little for development and indeed often deepened underdevelopment (Ainslie 1966:137; see also Odhiambo 1991; Uche 1991; Kariithi 1994).

The 1970s were also a ‘period of pessimism’ for communication and development (Melkote 1991:16). As part of the criticisms from the dependency school, the mass media as cultural industries were also seen as promoting the aims, objectives and cultures of the West (see Schiller 1981; Dos Santos 1971; Beltran 1976). This led to the 1980s NWICO calls for more representative information flows from the ‘South’ to the ‘North’ (Uche 1991:3; Hyden and Leslie 2002:22). African experiences in particular were read as being under a state of cultural imperialism (Schiller 1981; Melkote 1991). The call for new information patterns and associated positioning of the state as a bulwark against cultural imperialism gave further impetus to government control of the press in the perceived interests of African culture, national unity and once again development (Hyden and Leslie 2002:10). By the mid-1980s, despite the fact that
mass media were operating as state propaganda machines and that modernisation had failed, the rhetoric about the development role of the mass media was still well entrenched in the post-colony (Kariithi 1994). But under this state of officialdom the idea of mass media for development became perverted, in that ‘national development’ became an excuse for suspending individual liberties, the expansion and entrenchment of state capitalism, and the growth of un-wieldy bureaucracies fraught with corruption, nepotism and patronage (Odhambo 1991:22; also see Servaes 1991; Kariithi 1994; section 3.4). Overall, even in those countries with well-developed, privately-owned publications such as Kenya and Nigeria, governments were controlling the mass media and compelling them to serve primarily as instruments of official propaganda (Ziegler and Asante 1992; Ochieng 1992). The subject matter of media content – development, cultural renewal and unity – understandably lost its lustre. The obstacle to development came to be diagnosed as a political issue with its roots in a lack of democracy (see Blake 1997).

2.1.4 Contemporary journalism (1990s onwards)

By the end of the 1980s, the so-called ‘lost decade’ – in terms of economic and political development (see Kiely 1995), observers of the African media landscape were highlighting the legal, administrative and censorship hardships faced by journalists. Under repressive regimes, many journalists were also prone to personal harm. These trends left the public short of independent or interesting debates of public issues and analyses of pertinent problems in society (see Hyden and Leslie 2002; Kasoma 1995; Ochieng 1992). This state of affairs was in the 1990s slowly accompanied by the identification and mobilisation of large groups of people in political parties, civil societies and a growing belief in a liberal-democratic model of progress (see Chabal 1998; Kasoma 2000). These waves of change were characterised by a push for democratic forms of government, economic expansion and growth, industrialisation, development and urbanisation (Chabal 1994, 1998). This push mirrored the international environment where statist regimes in Eastern Europe were overthrown, and neo-liberal interests replaced Cold War policies towards Africa (Stiglitz 2002). It is within this social context that the region went on to experience a marked growth in the continent’s private media because of economic and political liberalisation, access to digital production technologies and changes in state media policy (Hyden et al 2002; Kasoma 1995). These changes have renewed interest in the relationship between mass media and society in post-colonial Africa particularly within the donor community (United States of America, European Union), which has been instrumental in funding the new economic drive of the 1990s (Kasoma 2000:57-60; see also Berger 2002a).
Therefore, much contemporary mass media in Africa is often analysed in relation to the role that they have played in promoting the processes of democracy and civic consciousness (see Hyden et al 2002; Berger 2000; Ronning 1994). Privately-owned newspapers in particular – unlike the partisan state-controlled publications – have become an important source of public information, debate and in some cases a voice of opposition as they reach out to the minority urban elite that influence decision-making (Louw and Tomaselli 1994:64; Ferguson 1993:32; also see Kivikuru 2001; Kasoma 1995). In line with this emphasis on democracy, Blake (1997:253) argues that “democratisation” should be the “dominant imperative for national communication policies in Africa in the 21st century”. For Blake (1997:254), Africa in the 1990s was in a period that has witnessed the effective dislocation of the development ethos as the driving force: “the overall agenda is democratisation and development is but an item on the agenda”. However, as Blake (1997:254) added, “this is not to say however that development imperatives no longer matter”.

Nevertheless, the trend towards democratisation does not necessary mean that all sectors of the press in Africa are today independent from the interests of powerful politicians, business individuals and donors (Kpundeh and Riley 1992; Berger 2000). Neither am I saying here that the press has not at times fauluted on democracy. In some instances as in the case of the Rwandan genocide, the mass media and journalists in the post-colony have incited violence. In the context of the Rwandan genocide, although radio coverage by Radio des Mille Collines was singled out for inciting the hatred that led to violence, several small and new publications – some of them owned by individual journalists – were also accused of using an ethnic framework to inflame what was essentially a political struggle (Kellow and Steeves 1998:107-117). Involved in arguments and counter-arguments, journalists both at state-owned and privately-owned publications identified themselves primarily along the fault-line of ethnicity and thus went on to spread rumours and panic by using a kill-or-be-killed frame (Kellow and Steeves 1998:116-117; also see African Rights 1995).

It has also been argued by Kasoma (1997) that many private newspapers and journalists that were in the 1990s preaching about press freedom, human rights and democratisation were in fact practising ‘yellow journalism’ with rumour mongering, intrusion into private lives and an uncritical attitude towards their sources (1997:296; also see Bourgault 1995; Kivikuru 2001). The new private publications that have emerged, some of them founded and owned by individual journalists, have at times degenerated into self-censorship and the partisan and parochial forms of journalism that were characteristic of the 1980s (Kasoma 2000). Overall, there are debates as to
whether they really have brought onboard strong new voices that are representative of the
citizenry (Kivikuru 2001:152; also see Nyamnjoh 2005; Hyden et al 2002; Bourgault 1995; Kupe
1997; Ferguson 1993). In addition, some commentators such as Kivikuru (2001) and Ramaprasad
(2001) have identified a continued interest in the role of development in both the partisan state-
controlled and in some private publications in countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. In
broadcasting, state-controlled stations – many of which as in the case of radio have the widest
reach and greatest penetration (unlike the new urban radio stations) – have also maintained an
interest in development content (see Kasoma 2000). In relation to this, the new community radio
stations many of which – similar to the 1960s rural newspapers – are mandated to provide content
that is relevant to the immediate needs of their mainly rural community listeners, have also been
implicitly skewed towards meeting the development and educational-oriented needs of their
listeners (Lewis and Booth 1989). However, the style of reporting for instance with regard to the
print media, is the same as it was in the 1960s. The reportage is still top down, detached and
donor and politically-oriented. There are no follow-ups and the stories are still heavily reliant on
general policy statements (Kivikuru 2001:136; see also Bourgault 1995).

In summing up this section, what the discussion above could indicate is that mass media practice
in post-colonial Africa has – depending on the context – been boxed into the role of developer,
propagandist, advocate of democracy and/or nation-builder (see also Hyden et al 2002). However,
Attempts to describe the more recent media trends are faced by some difficulties. Although the
media landscape has opened up with many privately-owned newspapers and radio stations
becoming more outspoken than before about issues concerning civic consciousness, we can also
note that the ‘independent’ media, which has grown out of the 1990s, is at times contradictory and
even prone to taking on positions that are contrary to the interests of democracy. Much of the
discussion thus far has looked at the role of media as an institution. What then about the roles of
the agents within these institutions? In the next section, I explore studies on journalists’
perceptions towards journalistic roles. The backdrop of the African experience is the vantage
point for assessing general literature on roles and the body of writing that covers mainly Western
experiences.

2.2 Journalists’ role perceptions

2.2.1 Influences on media content

A significant amount of media sociology research explores influences on the accuracy of mass
media portrayals of the world (Shoemaker and Mayfield 1987:1, 5). Such research has tended to
focus on the sociological profiles, individual attributes, roles, newsroom organisational structures and routines faced by journalists (see Gans 1979; Gitlin 1980; Hirsch 1980). Influenced by the 1950s American studies by White (1950) on gate-keeping and Breed (1955) on social control in the newsroom, such research has also been bent on the micro-level aspects of journalism by describing how individuals (journalists) within a social context produce news. Drawing on this research, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) and Reese (2001) developed a model of influences on mass media content, which offers a helpful framework for exploring the intertwining of five different levels of analyses including individual journalists’ perceptions, media routines, organisational structures and policies, influences from outside the media organisation and ideological influences (2001:177). These influences are ranked hierarchically from the ideological and other macro-system-level factors to the more micro characteristics of individual journalists. According to Reese (2001:178-179, 183), although these influences can operate simultaneously with some being more determinative than others depending on the context, they can also be ranked hierarchically with each preceding level subsuming the one before, suggesting that the ultimate level should be an ideological perspective (also see Shoemaker and Mayfield 1987; Shoemaker and Reese 1996).

In this study, the focus is for the most part on the journalists’ role perceptions-orientations that are often operationalised broadly in terms of their ‘neutral’ or ‘participant’ roles (Shoemaker and Mayfield 1987:11-12) and the wider socio-cultural and ideological influences. However, in this and the next two chapters aspects of journalists’ socialisation to the routines of news production and the various internal and external pressures will also be highlighted in the explorations on journalists’ role perceptions (also see chapter 8 on the interview findings). While research in the US has been associated with a liberal-pluralist approach that is bent on collecting empirical data on journalists and their perceptions, other researchers in Europe and Africa, political economists, cultural studies theorists and those exploring the sociology of news production have focused on ideological influences by addressing questions of power exerted by the wider societal structures. Here – as is exemplified in chapter 4 on identity – the concern is to do with how media symbolic content is connected with larger social interests and how meaning is constructed in the service of power (see Hall 1978; Thompson 1988). Having briefly highlighted the levels at which forces that shape media content can operate, in the next three main sub-sections I review the literature concerning journalists’ role perceptions.

2.2.2 Roles, journalistic roles and role perceptions
Academic inquiries into individual journalists’ role perceptions provide a viable starting point for this study, in so far as it is aimed at exploring journalists’ self-definitions with regard to the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). Researchers in this area appear to suggest that understanding the attitudes, perceptions, views and overall philosophies of journalists on aspects of their work can contribute to analysing issues such as news construction and their general mass media practices (see Wu et al 1996; Zhu et al 1997; Akhavan-Majid 1998). This observation is at some level based on the literature on role theory, which informs understandings about role perceptions. Role theory has developed through several decades of theorising and empirical research. In brief, in the structural-functionalist approach, the main issue is that roles function as expected behaviours that are collectively understood and created by society for the purposes of being upheld by the social actors that occupy the positions to which the roles are in reference (see Parsons 1966; Goffman 1959; Biddle and Thomas 1966). Goffman (1959) suggests that the society into which we are born presents us with a series of roles, which are patterns of behaviour, routines and responses, like parts in a play. They are a set of expected behaviours that are predicated on norms as definers of what is appropriate and acceptable behaviour (Jones et al 1966:171). The point here is that journalists are offered a range of social-journalistic functions to perform. The role of journalists, for example, involves behaviours that result in the orderly production of news. It is in this regard that a journalist is expected to investigate issues without fear or favour, write stories and to uphold the protection of his/her sources of information all of which is not necessarily expected of a builder.

Extant studies of journalists’ roles in Western societies have tended to highlight norms and values such as objectivity, facts and a watchdog stance as being essential to the practice of journalism (see Janowitz 1975; Drechsel 1983; Weaver 1998; Deuze 2004). In this case, these rules of behaviour and values (as a reflection of norms) define the roles that journalists act out or perform in society (see Deuze 2001; Goffman 1959; Parsons 1966). The point is that for a society in which these kinds of functions are understood to be part of a journalist’s role, anyone observed performing these activities would be judged to be and/or identified as a journalist. Although roles are seen as being rigid, static and inflexible in the functionalist approach, they are to an extent still seen as being in interaction with each other for instance as in the case of the ‘journalist’ and the ‘editor’. According to Berger and Luckman (1966:106-107), every individual (in this case a journalist) is born into an objective social structure that is posited by significant others as objective reality. Thus, the roles that are taken on by journalists are selected and mediated by other members of society who define and select these roles in accordance with their own location in the social structure
and by virtue of their individual characteristics. In addition, roles can be semi-permanent – ‘journalist’, ‘student’, ‘writer’ – and transitory and that they are not only tied to occupational positions (see Parsons 1966; Goffman 1981). For instance, if I take on the role of a ‘journalist’ this does not mean that I cannot take on the role of a ‘friend’ at another time. This fluidity can be noted more fully in the interactionist approach to roles, whereby they are conceptualised as being flexible and open to negotiation (see Goffman 1981; Berger and Luckman 1966). Interactionists tend to argue that roles are often ambiguous and unclear. From this point of view, a role is not prescribed as such, but is something that is constantly negotiated between individuals and within groups. As will be noted in chapters 8 and 9 on the interview findings, there are moments of (un)certainty, plurality, conflict and even negotiation when it comes to role-taking. For example, journalists in the post-colony were at the time of independence expected to take on the roles of actively promoting nationalist sentiments and pan-Africanism, the fulfilment of which would potentially put them into conflict with the more libertarian and objectivist elements of their journalistic identity (see Nyamnjoh 2005; Ebo 1994; Nkrumah 1965). In a sense, their definitions of what is done by a journalist, a nationalist and a pan-Africanist at times have to be (re)negotiated. Hence, in interactionism, roles, similar to meanings and self-definitions are constructed and negotiated through processes of interaction (see Meyer 1994; Goffman 1981). However, it must be said that even here roles are at some level still seen as being static and as providing general guidelines for (inter)action.

It is in this regard, that roles are generally normative, in so far as they regulate behaviour. As Coyne (1984:260) argues, “a role is not just a repeated format, but a format to-be-followed, a guide. To enact a role is, wittingly or unwittingly, to invite expectations of further conformity”. Thus, journalistic role perceptions amount to informal rules for how the news media ought to function. As might be expected when norms are at stake, the nature of journalism’s function has been contested (see Zelizer and Allan 2002; Hyden et al 2002). That is to say, some see journalism’s function or role as disseminating facts, some see the role as interpreting those facts and still others see the role as that of advocacy or even nationalist liberator. In a sense, roles by definition regulate behaviour through a two-stage process in which they must be conceived and then enacted (Biddle and Thomas 1966). In other words, journalists must form some understanding of what their role is and this role perception then guides behaviour. Therefore, behaviour is the enactment or concrete manifestation of the role conception. In this case, role enactment is the way that a journalist writes a story and/or presents a news story (Biddle and Thomas 1966).
Based on the above, it can be posited that journalists’ role perceptions therefore refer to the expected types of behaviour and norms that journalists think they are supposed to exhibit. The actual work of the journalists is expected to provide evidence of whether or not these perceptions are carried over into the workplace (see Deuze 2001; Drechsel 1983; Drew 1972). Journalistic roles are what regulate and constitute the creation of professional, occupational and even more broadly institutional journalistic identities. It is in this sense that journalistic identity is in this study treated as the collective integration of what is posited here as the neutral, social agenda, watchdog and development roles – and/or sub-identities as I refer to them later – of journalism. Overall, in this study, the term journalistic role is posited as having two meanings. Firstly, journalistic roles are defined as the kinds of activities that society determines to be appropriate for individuals holding their kind of positions in society. Secondly, individual journalists’ roles are also analysed as the ways in which journalistic identity may be expressed. I will expand on this latter issue in chapter 4, but for now, I would like to reiterate that one of my interests in journalists’ perceptions is to do with which roles the individual journalist sees him or herself performing with regard to his or her reportage on NEPAD. Such views could provide insight into journalists’ self-image and self-reflective perspective on their coverage of NEPAD. In line with this, as is highlighted in sub-section 2.2.4 below, my interest is to a lesser extent also in analysing newspaper content on NEPAD for insights into the ways in which the journalists covering NEPAD present their stories.

2.2.3 Individual journalists’ studies

The current literature on journalists’ perceptions makes it difficult to make inferences about journalism and mass media practice in Africa for two reasons. Firstly, few studies observe in detail the changing journalism patterns in Africa from a longitudinal perspective. Although some comparative studies on ‘global journalism’ which include perspectives on journalists in Africa, Asia and Latin America, such as Weaver (1998) and Merrill (1995) have recognised transnational similarities, in journalism practice, few have looked at the nexus between role perceptions, cultural norms and content. In addition, few have explored the ways in which journalistic traditions from the Western-context are adopted and adapted to other contexts (see Herscovitz 2004). Secondly, although one can draw inferences from some of the studies in the West such as Weaver and Wilhoit’s (1986; 1996), which use large samples, it might be inappropriate to simply import these theories and methods from the West into Africa (see Berger 2002a; Tomaselli and Shepperson 2000). However, for now, I would like to suggest – as is highlighted throughout this
study – that this literature has influenced related studies on journalism practice in Africa. Hence, it is in that sense that I draw inferences from these studies. Briefly, I draw on extant Western studies on journalists’ views and self-belief systems in as far as such research can provide a good point of departure for attempts such as this that are aimed at making sense of selected individual journalists’ perceptions concerning their roles. In fact, the findings from these studies are today often used as an index to gauge the intrinsic features of Western journalism practice in comparison with that of other contexts (see Weaver 1998; Mwesige 2004; Herscovitz 2004; Ramaprasad 2001). Since journalists’ beliefs about their journalistic roles could provide insights into the overall operation and nature of coverage of the mass media, the current study puts emphasis on studies that explore their role perceptions.

2.2.3.1 Review of the studies

Some media scholars have argued that there is a worldwide phenomenon whereby the least studied aspect of the social communication process is the communicator (Starck and Yu 1990; Pollard 1995). In fact, individual journalists in particular have not been very attractive to media scholars as a research subject in journalism (Ettema et al 1987) whilst in other instances the influence of journalists’ personal beliefs in news reporting has been relegated to the bottom end of the ‘hierarchy of influences’ on media content (Shoemaker and Reese 1996). The assertion here is that organisational and ideological influences will subsume and/or indeed negate the influences of personal values on media content (Reese 2001; Wu et al 1996). Some of the earliest studies recognising the necessity of making sense of the opinions of journalists were done in the West as far back as the 1930s. However, journalists did not attract serious attention among media scholars until the 1970s. Johnstone et al (1976) published a study in this area focusing primarily on the idiosyncratic aspects of journalists. For the first time they mapped out the comprehensive characteristics of US journalists. The Johnstone et al (1976) study paved the way for the Weaver and Wilhoit (1986, 1996) studies. Through repeated large-scale surveys and interviews, these three studies have contributed to deepening understanding about US journalists, both from cross-sectional and longitudinal perspectives. Their efforts to probe the characteristics of individual journalists provided cumulative and productive documentation in this field.

The research by Johnstone et al (1976), and Weaver and Wilhoit (1986:105; 1996) indicates that US journalists have conceived and enacted one or more discrete roles. As Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) acknowledge, these roles are not static types and they are also products of their time. Johnstone et al (1976:131) found ideological journalistic positions described as valuing
“objectivity versus subjectivity, detachment versus advocacy, observer versus watchdog and libertarian neutrality versus social responsibility”. They went on to identify two journalistic role conceptions – ‘neutral’ and ‘participant’. The neutral role is defined as the neutral-reporter type who puts the burden of creating news and news judgment on others. The participant type reporter is more independent in his or her news judgment and will use social concerns in considering newsworthiness (see Drechsel 1983). This dichotomy was challenged by findings from Weaver and Wilhoit (1986), and Culbertson (1983) all of whom argued that three role types are more likely and these included: the interpretive, dissemination, and adversarial roles. The interpretive role is similar to the earlier participant role, while the disseminator role values getting news quickly to the widest possible audience. The adversarial role refers to a watchdog mindset or approach. These three roles tended to appear in particular contexts. In general, US print journalists tended to favour the interpretive role more than did broadcast journalists. Reporters generally favoured either the interpretive or adversarial, while editors leaned toward disseminator roles (Dillon 1990:369-372). In their follow-up study in the 1990s, Weaver and Wilhoit (1996:140) added a fourth role – populist mobiliser which they describe as “giving ordinary people a chance to express their views on public affairs”. However, the interpretive or investigative role “remained the larger perception of American journalists” (Weaver and Wilhoit 1996:137). This role combined investigating government claims, analysing, interpreting complex problems, and discussing public policies in a timely way. This was followed by the disseminator role, which combined getting information quickly to the public and avoiding stories with unverified content (Weaver and Wilhoit 1996). Overall, similar to the Johnstone et al (1976) study, Weaver and Wilhoit (1996:116) consider the roles not to be mutually exclusive, given that close to a third of the journalists saw themselves as both interpreters and disseminators.

As will be expanded on in the next chapter, the Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) ‘disseminator’ role is akin to Johnstone et al’s (1976) ‘neutral’ role in as far as they are both based on the notion of ‘objectivity’ with its emphasis on reporting the ‘truth’ without the interference of opinion and unverifiable ‘facts’ (Janowitz 1975:618; see also Zelizer 2004). In brief, from this perspective, the journalist can be seen as an impartial observer who gathers, processes and imparts news in such a manner that it can be read as a vivid and concrete replica of the news event (De Beer 2004:194). According to DeFleur and Dennis (1991), the notion of objectivity is an ideal that is used by journalists as part of an attempt to separate facts from opinion whilst also presenting an emotionally detached view of the news. In addition, journalists use it to strive for fairness and balance by giving both sides an opportunity to reply in a way that provides full information to the
audience (1991:388). In both the disseminator and neutral roles of journalism, journalists maintain a relationship of detachment and neutrality when handling information (Weaver and Wilhoit 1996:137; also see Johnstone et al 1976).

In general, some of these early studies pertaining to journalists’ role perceptions were heavily connected with values and norms such as fairness, objectivity and the adversarial role. These are all values that sustain the emphasis on journalists as the ‘fourth estate’ and their position as watchdogs over government and business. As a result, studies of journalists’ role perceptions frequently centred on these issues. In some cases, the research questions were linked to investigating the suspected liberal bias of journalists by measuring their political voting behaviours (Lichter and Rothman 1981), political leanings (Parsons 1976) and perceptions regarding general social issues (Henningham 1995; 1998).

According to Weaver and Wilhoit (1996), role conception distils journalists’ “view of news journalism’s basic purposes” (1996:133). In addition, they also refer to roles as “journalistic functions” and role conceptions as “core ‘belief systems’” (1996:137). Johnstone et al (1976) put it even more bluntly – they identify role conceptions as ideologies. While journalists might not agree with being referred to as ideologues or as having core belief systems (see Zelizer 2004), Rothman and Lichter (1987:383), writing about nuclear energy news flows, concluded that journalists’ ideologies influenced their coverage of nuclear energy. Others such as Herman and Chomsky (1988) have also insisted on the liberal capitalist bias of journalists and the potential reflection of this bias in the news content such that the media maintain elite-liberal views in society. Inspired by the outcomes of these studies, some researchers have tried to determine the connections between journalists’ liberal-tilted ideologies and their reflections in the news products (Bergen 1994; Herman 1999).

However, due to the complexity of linking the liberal bias with reportage, no solid findings have uncovered empirical connections between the ideological tilt of journalists and the potentially affected news content (see Reese 2001). This result led inquiry into a different mode. Thus, as is explored further in the next two sub-sections, the role orientation of working journalists has become one of the popular approaches in this field. The notable difference between this trend and the previous studies is that, while the former measured the ideological tilt of journalists and its impact on news accounts, the latter concentrates on the general role conceptions of journalists (Wu et al 1996; Zhu et al 1997; Akhavan-Majid 1998; Gleissner and De Vreese 2005). Frequently
related to the libertarian and social responsibility theories, the analyses of this approach trace the
way in which journalists envision their roles in society (Gade et al 1998). In a sense, one could
argue here that the interests of inquiry have gone back to the question of role perceptions perhaps
suggesting that the issue of liberal bias should be a separately researched issue.

In addition, in attempting to highlight the liberal bias of journalists and the potential reflection of
this bias in the news content there is a tendency to conflate journalism and mass media roles. As
argued in section 1.7, in this study I see journalism as a dynamic social process that is shaped by a
socio-cultural context that is in turn also influenced by journalism. Conceptually, the task of
journalism is seen here as being vested in carrying out an autonomous form of communication
that is taken on specifically by journalists who are supposed to be acting on behalf of the public
interest (Scholl 1996:333; also see Berger 2000; Deuze 1998). The mass media on the other hand
are institutions that mediate information which includes advertising, public relations statements
and entertainment, that is not necessarily reducible to the role of the of the journalist (Berger
2000:83). Ideally, journalists are therefore different from public relations staffers, advertisers and
corporate communicators, given that public relations is for the most part a paid-for deliberate
attempt to promote the welfare of a certain party regardless of intrinsic merit, social virtue or the
public interest (Nagara 2004:174-175).

Therefore, while we might be able to trace the liberal orientation of media content – including
adverts – for instance through the analysis of the content, we should not necessarily take it for
granted that this link is obvious at the level of journalism practice even though journalism
operates within a media institutional context (see Berger 2000). The two are not the same.
Moreover, different journalists, and at different times, may practice a variety of roles, sometimes
even at variance with their media house as a whole. The interest in journalists’ role perceptions
has gone hand in hand with the interest relating to their views on the role of the mass media in
society (see Weaver and Wilhoit 1996; Gavin 2001). For example, investigating the role
perceptions of journalists in China, Taiwan and the US, Zhu et al (1997:84-96) found that media’s
role as an ‘information provider’ was the most popular and least controversial across all three
societies. The view that the media should play a role of ‘interpretation’ was also very popular
among the mainland Chinese journalists, but much less so among the American and Taiwan
Chinese journalists. Analysing the different journalists’ responses regarding the perception of
‘interpretation’ among the three countries, Zhu et al (1997) concluded that societal factors such as
the political system play a central role in distinguishing mainland Chinese journalists from the
American and Taiwanese journalists (1997:84). The point here is that societal and institutional influences can be highly significant in influencing journalists’ role orientations.

2.2.3.2 Studies in the international arena
The US studies have become an index for gauging journalists’ role perceptions in and across nations. In fact, a year before Johnstone et al (1976) published their work, Fjaestad and Holmlov (1975) in Sweden (cited in Shim 2002:32-33) had also produced a study on their domestic press. They investigated how Swedish journalists envisioned their role by developing ten role indices, from which they drew three general functional descriptions: a ‘participant’ press based on watchdog and/or social responsibility concepts, a ‘neutral’ role with emphasis on objectivity, and ‘political partisanship’. Their findings indicated that the participant role was the one most endorsed by Swedish journalists. Indices such as ‘political campaigning’ and ‘political mobilisation’ which related to ‘political partisanship’ did not draw much support from the Swedish journalists. By contrast, their colleagues in Germany stressed the ‘analysis’ role according to a study by Kocher (1986). Using-face-to-face interviews, the Kocher (1986) study, which compared British and German journalists, provides additional knowledge on the similarities and differences among European journalists. Kocher (1986) interviewed British and German journalists in order to examine their role perception, professional motivations and evaluation of the norm of objectivity. He found that German journalism traditionally places high value on ‘opinion’ and less on ‘news’. British journalism, in contrast, sees itself particularly in the role of ‘transmitting facts’, like the neutral reporter in American journalism (Kocher 1986:43). According to Kocher (1986), British journalists concentrate more on the channel role – within which the reporter sees him or herself as a neutral reporter of events and a mirror of the public’s thinking, while the German journalists stress the advocacy-oriented role (1986:59-61). Advocacy roles include those of ‘a spokesman for the underdog’, ‘a proponent of new ideas’, and ‘a guardian of democracy’. In particular, the greatest difference in the respective views of the roles taken by British and German journalists came from the responses about the role of the journalist as an ‘educator’. Close to two thirds of the British journalists strongly identified with the role of the journalist as ‘educator’ whilst only a fraction of the German journalists did so (Kocher 1986:54-55).

According to Donsbach and Klett (1993:57), Germany is like many other continental European countries, in that it has been oriented towards the ideology that objective, or even neutral accounts of reality are not possible. Contrary to the US, where a liberal consensus still holds that objective
reporting is possible in journalism, European philosophy claims that an individual’s subjectivity would always determine the outcome of his/her accounts of reality. Studies such as those by Kocher (1986), Weaver and Wilhoit (1986), and Donsbach’s (1983) on British and German journalists’ conceptions of their audience have tended to show that historical differences yielded different role perceptions of and procedures for handling the news. German journalists, unlike their British and US counterparts see themselves in a more politically active role. Because of this, they are much more likely to make news decisions based on their subjective beliefs (Kocher 1986; Donsbach and Klett 1993). These tendencies are to an extent supported by different newsroom structures. For instance, in Germany there is no clear role division between reporters, editors and commentators. Professional control is therefore exerted to a much lesser extent, which facilitates subjective news decisions (Donsbach and Klett 1993:57).

Donsbach and Klett (1993) investigated journalists’ notions and definitions of objectivity in the US, Germany, Sweden, Italy and the UK. In their study, they found that the professional norm of objectivity was still alive in the US and the UK. US journalists in particular were found to adhere to a ‘common carrier’ role, whilst those in continental Europe were adhering to an ‘investigative’ stance of seeking the ‘truth’ behind assertions (Donsbach and Klett 1993:79). These distinctions could be due to the differences in socio-cultural context and the differences in the development of the press in these countries (Donsbach and Klett 1993:80). Based on some of the differences one can assume that the journalists in different countries, and journalists within one country, but with different role perceptions, hold different notions of objectivity. In addition, it is very likely that the belief in the predominance of ideology slowed the evolution of the objectivity norm in mainland European journalism.

Generally, comparative studies have tended to find similarities in how journalists perceive various aspects of their work – ethics, roles, values and working conditions – while also recognising that cultural norms affect how they perceive the practice of journalism (Weaver 1998). Studies concerning journalists in Asia, Africa and Latin America have highlighted role similarities and also identified broad Western influences that are often infused with local-cultural norms for the purposes of meeting the journalistic needs of the local condition (Mwesige 2004; Herscovitz and Cardoso 1998; Ramaprasad 2001). In fact, studies of journalists’ role perceptions have tended to indicate a close, but distinct relationship between a journalist’s views, content and domestic cultural attitudes (Nossek 2004; Zandberg and Neiger 2005). In other words, journalists are not entirely neutral-objective disseminators that are not influenced by their socio-cultural context.
Shamir’s (1988) study on the role perceptions of Israeli journalists serving the quality press found that most of them were ready to place the nation’s morale and image, as well as a broad definition of the national interest, before their own professional values (1988:594). More than half felt that they needed to consider the country’s national morale (Shamir 1988:591). According to Shamir (1988:594), “from the broader theoretical perspective, this study shows that perceptions concerning the role of the press in society are culture bound”. This could also point to a perception of national interest as not being in conflict with the professional ideals of the journalist. This point of view is similar to the findings of Wu et al’s (1996) research, which compared Russian and US journalists’ attitudes to professional values and perceptions. The research team employed categories of three key journalistic roles – the ‘timely disseminator’, the ‘interpreter’, and the ‘adversary’. Their findings showed that the disseminator role was the dominant one endorsed by US and Russian journalists, followed by the interpretive role.

However, Russian journalists put great emphasis on the role of media as an agenda setter for political affairs. While only 4.5% of American journalists considered this role important, more than half of the Russian journalists’ responses marked it as crucial. The researchers assumed this was an effect of Russian national tradition, which sees journalists as elite members of the intelligentsia who are also independent social leaders (Wu et al 1996:538). Pertinently, they found that journalists adopt a relative view of their profession influenced by various historical and cultural traditions and defined by their political, economic and social environment (Wu et al 1996:534-548). In a study on the role perceptions and attitudes of Egyptian and Arab journalists on freedom of the press, Amin (2002:125-135) found that press freedom was often downplayed in the name of cultural preservation. Thus, most Arab journalists tended to defend Islamic societies, traditions, values and Arabic customs and heritage. What some of these studies appear to show is that journalists’ behaviour is context dependent. On the other hand they also appear to support Herman and Chomsky’s (1988) claim that journalists may be willing to concede professional norms to elite national interests.

Herscovitz (2004) compared Brazilian, US and French journalists’ perceptions on roles and ethics with an interest on foreign influences on Brazilian journalism. He found that Brazilian journalists perceived themselves first as disseminators, then as interpreters of information and to a lesser extent as adversaries of government officials (2004:84-85). Drawing on Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) for the US and McMane (1998) for the French journalists – in as far as these two journalism cultures (norms, values) are seen as the main influences on Brazilian journalism based on social and historical considerations – Herscovitz (2004:74-78) argued that the three sets of
journals subscribe to a combination of interpretive and disseminator roles. On close analysis, particularly with regard to the presence of foreign influences on Brazilian journalism, Herscovitz (2004) pointed out that in their search for a Brazilian national model, journalists have sought a Brazilian interpretation of both French and American models, but lacked a clear perspective on how to deal with what they have learned from foreign sources (2004:84-86). The result is a pluralistic view of their role in society in which the interpretive and the disseminator roles are combined by Brazilian journalists in their perceptions.

Shafer (1996:10-11) found that Philippine journalists were aware of the conflict between ‘development’-oriented journalism and the traditional Western or ‘free press’ model of journalism. The journalists expressed complex views on their own role and the role of their newspapers in the community and national development process, the potential for abuse of the press by those attempting to appropriate or promulgate the development model to their own ends, and the relative advantages of an ‘interventionist’ journalism model over an ‘adversarial’ and ‘objective’ one. As is expanded on in the next chapter, the interventionist model is in this sense similar to the social responsibility approach to journalism in as far as they require the journalist to actively intervene in some manner, to bring about socially valued outcomes (Ward 2004:90-91).

According to Shafer (1996), Philippine journalists who said that economic development must be promoted first and foremost and that greater controls on journalists could be applied to accomplish it tended to support the ‘development’ journalism model. They generally refrained from taking an ‘adversarial’ position in their news stories and editorial commentaries, although they might have preferred the ‘adversarial’ role under improved economic and political circumstances. Journalists who said they advocated and practised development journalism said they did so because they believed it to be the best model for serving their readership and because development stories were provided free to their newspapers by government information agencies. In addition, they also felt that it was physically safer to practice development communication than it was to engage in ‘adversarial’ journalism (Shafer 1996:10). Social-cultural and contextual factors can be seen as influencing the views held by Philippine journalists (see also Zhu et al 1997 and Mwesige 2004 on journalists and ‘safe’ roles).

However, Berger (2000:81-99) commenting on the democratic role of journalism as being distinct from that of development argues that despite contextual differences, objectivity, neo-liberal and watchdog-oriented journalism is alive in both the ‘first’ and ‘third worlds’. Berger (2000:90-91) argues that even in the presence of continued calls for the role of development in the ‘third world’ (see section 3.4), the watchdog – ‘Fourth Estate’ – role is present in many developing countries.
because of the absence of democratic conditions (Berger 2000:90-91). In other words, it is in countries where media are under the control of repressive governments and local authoritarian elites, that the ‘Fourth Estate’ role of journalism is still prioritised by journalists in the post-colony. Berger (2000:91) asserts that:

Far from fostering information, governments maintain a deliberate scarcity in order that critical information can be excluded. While the ‘First World’ may be concerned that various ideals of journalism are threatened by globalisation…in the ‘Third World’ the bigger threat is typically government control.

In general, this prioritisation of Western-oriented journalistic roles in contexts such as Africa, is in line with finding by Weaver (1998:456) who compared journalists from 21 countries only to find that their role orientations were for the most part skewed towards the Western objectivity values – fairness, impartiality, detachment – of journalism (see chapter 3 for a fuller discussion on objectivity).

It is evident from the literature that there is a wide variety of dissimilar yardsticks and indices that are used by scholars to measure journalists’ roles. These yardsticks have hindered researchers in this field from reaching a solid agreement on how to discuss their studies. In analysing journalists’ role perceptions, some scholars identify the journalist’s job of ‘educator’ as ‘informant’ (Kocher 1986), while others label it ‘instructor’ (Fjaestad and Holmlov 1975). Similarly, some prioritise the ‘democratic’ role of journalism (Berger 2000) and others classify the ‘interpretive’ function as the prerequisite for a ‘socially responsible press’ (Weaver and Wilhoit 1986). However, the absence of clear-cut categorisations is to an extent due to the varied contexts of journalism research and practice. Although one could make the case for all-encompassing and easy-to-use common categorisations that can help us distinguish journalism from non-journalism and/or compare journalism in different contexts, it can also be argued that such general common categories could stifle the dynamism of journalism in theory and practice whilst also leading to generalisations across contexts (see Ward 2004; Nagara 2004). Crucially, it is also evident here that journalists adapt the journalism principles that they pick up from various influences whether internal or external as in the influences of other countries to the conditions in which they work. I go on to expand on this in the next sub-section and in chapter 3. However, a key point here is that journalism is the dramatic result of conflicting forces, some internal and some external (see Reese 2001; Herscovitz 2004).

In summing up this section, what it suggests is that journalists may subscribe (even simultaneously) to various (and even contradictory) roles (Berger 2000:83). The micro roles of
journalism are variable and ever shifting with various roles having relevance across nations and regions depending on the character of the specific local context. Still, by focusing on such contexts it can be seen that there are journalists in Germany and Sweden who stress the ‘analysis’ role (Kocher 1986) whilst some of those in China and Russia put greater emphasis on the ‘agenda setter’ (Chen et al 1998; Wu et al.1996). There are those in Israel, Egypt and the Philippines who uphold national unity and development-oriented roles (Shamir 1988; Amin 2002; Shafer 1996) whilst others uphold the adversarial function (Berger 2000). Those in Brazil appear to uphold a pluralistic view that oscillates between disseminator and interpreter (Herscovitz 2004). By contrast, many US editors and journalists show a strong preference for the interpretive and disseminator roles (Johnstone et al 1976; Weaver and Wilhoit 1986, 1996). In general, traditional US and UK journalism can be seen as leaning towards the “just-the-facts” style of neutral reporting, in which the journalist is not “an actor on the political stage, but simply a paid and necessary witness, the vicarious eyes and ears of its public” (Hazel 2001:94).

2.2.4 Journalistic roles and news content

Much of the research into role perceptions is more interested in psychographic type factors that shape role perceptions than in how role perceptions shape news. For instance, the studies by Johnstone et al (1976) and Weaver and Wilhoit (1986, 1996) mainly focus their attention on the causes of role perceptions by looking at education, politics, and experience as predictors in role adoption. Henningham (1997) explores how personality shapes journalists’ role perceptions, and Dillon (1990) considers the place of career values in predicting role perceptions. Still, an assumption behind such research is that journalists’ role perceptions shape the news stories that journalists ultimately report. If a journalist conceives of his or her role as interpreting complex problems, news stories will subsequently be written with a significant amount of interpretation, which is either in the journalist’s own voice or in his or her selection of content. Graber (1993) states this assumption when she posits that journalists’ news stories will vary based on their role perceptions. Shoemaker and Reese (1996:101-102) also argue that the way in which journalists define their jobs will affect the content they produce. For them, journalists who see themselves as disseminators or neutrals would write very different accounts of an event from those who see themselves as interpreters or participants. De Beer (2004:195) asserts that the arrangement and/or omission of ‘facts’ on a news page reveals the reporter’s personal opinions, role perceptions and intentions, as well as those of the news medium and the society in which the journalist operates.
To a lesser extent, this study also explores this assumption by examining journalists’ NEPAD news story content, which is mainly used here to help identify specific points of interest that can be probed during the interviews concerning the role perceptions after which correlations can then be drawn between the news content and the perceptions. Still, the idea here is that if role perceptions help shape the news, that shape should be identifiable in the news. In other words, the content of news stories should bear the traces of journalists’ role perceptions. However, only a few studies have attempted to show a relationship between journalists’ role perceptions and news media content. Culbertson (1983) surveyed a wide array of journalists to ascertain their role perceptions and to discern preferences for various news forms, for length of stories, and other factors. The study, despite interesting findings – a correlation between role conception and news construction – relied on the self-reporting of journalists and not on the content, which those journalists produced. Starck and Soloski (1977) studied journalism student reporters to judge whether role perceptions, among other factors, influenced news writing. They identified the reporters as ‘high participant’ if they “think the press should play a highly active role in society not just reporting the news, but analysing and interpreting its significance” (1977:121). ‘Low participant’ reporters “think the press should play a somewhat active role in analysing and interpreting the significance of the news” (1977:121). ‘Neutral’ reporters “think the press should present facts as objectively as possible without analysis or interpretation” (1977:122). They found that ‘low participant’ reporters wrote the most comprehensive, objective, fair, and accurate stories. The study found a relationship did exist between role perceptions and the kind of news story that the student produced (Starck and Soloski 1977:124-125).

Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) surveyed journalists about role conceptions and separately evaluated news stories that reporters considered their best work. Although journalists saw themselves either as adversaries, interpreters or disseminators of news, their stories were predominantly reflective of the interpretive role. In addition, in the Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) follow up study, the journalists mainly endorsed the interpretive role over disseminator and adversarial. However, the disseminator role emerged as the most dominant in their samples of best work submitted (McMillin and Weaver 1996:217). In both instances the studies identified different pictures of the main role that was perceived and that which was enacted by the journalists (see also Bergen 1994). Dare (1983) cited in Kirat (1998:345) studied the news content of the Nigerian news agency (NAN) as well as the role conceptions of its journalists. He found that the international wire services set the agenda of the news agency of Nigeria and that, although the journalists of NAN conceived of the role of the press as that of developing Nigeria, their content tended to show
their “uncritical acceptance” of journalistic values that are predominant in the US and Europe. Overall, the aforementioned studies appear to suggest that journalists’ role perceptions may not always correspond with the roles manifested in their stories.

In focusing on journalists’ role perceptions whilst linking them to news content, Zhu et al (1997) caution that journalists are not entirely honest and/or certain about their self-reporting. For example, in their study essentially no journalists admit to valuing an entertainment role, although the content of the news appears to suggest otherwise. In relation to this, Mwesige (2004:69-96), using the Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) approach, investigated the role perceptions of Ugandan journalists. He found that Ugandan journalists highly valued the Western journalistic functions of information, analysis and interpretation and investigation of official claims. However, the endorsement of these functions is not directly reflected in what they produce. For instance, although most private radio stations in the country have taken on an entertainment-based programming format, only a minority of journalists rated entertainment as an important role. In addition, although the newspapers provide some investigative and interpretive stories, for the most part, they are filled with hard news, opinion columns and features.

Based on the aforementioned in this sub-section, we can already note that a direct link between journalists’ role perceptions and the enactment of those roles in news content is not a straightforward issue. However, given that organisational, institutional and ideological pressures frequently intervene in the news-making process of individual journalists, one must therefore continuously ask to what extent the journalists’ role definitions affect the storylines (Altschull 1994; Shoemaker and Reese 1996). In a sense, what this means is that in pursuing the question of how journalists’ role definitions affect their stories one has to bear in mind the other influences in the hierarchy. The ‘hierarchy of influences’ model enables us to systematically focus on (a) specific level(s) whilst also bearing in mind the value of each level thereby deterring us from the tendency to exaggerate any particular level, according to say a favoured national-ideological, political and/or disciplinary leaning (Reese 2001:177-179). Overall, the point here is that the extent to which the journalist can shape the news, depends on the other levels and the interaction between them (Reese 2001). In this study, an attempt is made to draw on the approaches of the aforementioned studies by interviewing journalists for insights into their role perceptions whilst also analysing their news content for traces of their role orientations. However, the study adopts an approach that is close to that of Gleissner and De Vreese (2005) with regard to linking the analysis of the news coverage to the interviews with journalists. Hence, as is expanded on in
chapter 6 on research methods, this study relies on a qualitative interview approach in its attempts to discern the journalists’ role perceptions. The content of their news stories is also analysed for correlations and implicit manifestations of their role perceptions in their news stories.

2.3 Dearth of literature on African journalists
The Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) approach to US journalism has in the past decade been employed in over 21 countries by researchers conducting research on journalists in countries in various contexts including Africa using rather similar questionnaires (Deuze 1998; Mwesige 2004; Ramaprasad 2001). Some of these studies have also attempted to remain sensitive to the specific political and press dynamics of their local contexts. Based on a survey of 139 journalists, Ramaprasad (2001:539) provides an attitudinal profile of Tanzanian journalists at a time when Tanzania was evolving from a one-party, socialist, controlled press system to a multi-party, capitalist, relatively free press system. Ramaprasad (2001) found that Tanzanian journalists rated Western journalistic functions – accuracy, analysis, investigation and entertainment – highly, and they placed considerable importance on the public affairs benefits of their jobs. At the same time, their perceptions of the role of the press – portraying the country positively, using traditional media, ensuring rural coverage and thinking of news as a social good, all for national development – were also important to them (2001:539, 551). Based on these findings she argues that despite evidence of a Western concept of the press, Tanzanian journalists had not yet fully shaken off their years of socialisation under ujamaa and the one-party state (Ramaprasad 2001:539). Similar studies on Tanzania such as that by Grosswiler (1997) also saw Tanzanian journalists as being oriented towards the ‘third way’ which is in reference to the influences of Marxism and socialism, Western ideas of press freedom whilst also leaning toward a collectivist socialist model.

Although Mwesige (2004:87-88) relied on the Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) approach to confirm the presence of roles similar to those in the West, he also found that Ugandan journalists showed strong support for an “advocacy or populist mobiliser role” - a function that is for him also “consistent with some of the aspirations of the advocates of development journalism”. Overall, based on these findings he therefore casts doubt on the view that African journalists are still beholden to the top-down interpretation of development journalism that was prevalent in the 1970s. He goes on to add that even if his study had asked questions about journalism and national development, “it would not have subtracted from the evidence that Ugandan journalists do not see themselves as working for the patronising outlets that development journalism inevitably led to” (Mwesige 2004:92).
The positions presented by Ramaprasad (2001) and Mwesige (2004) support the earlier view held in varying degrees by Weaver (1998) and Berger (2000), with regard to journalists’ reliance on the neo-liberal, watchdog and objectivity-oriented journalism in the post-colony. In other words, despite differences in social-cultural context, journalists in Africa appear to uphold role perceptions and are faced with challenges that are not too dissimilar to those of their counterparts elsewhere (Hachten 1993; Wahl-Jorgensen 2005). One can infer here that these studies are proposing a line of thought that supposes a global view of journalism whereby it is presumed that the corresponding ideas and values that are carried by journalists are similar or even universal across contexts. Weaver (1998:464-465) himself, however, warns against taking on such an extreme view by arguing that there is too much disagreement on professional norms and values to claim an emergence of “universal occupational standards” in journalism. In fact, if we bear in mind the different historical, cultural and social contexts in which African journalists live and practice, we can note here that contextual influences will inevitably lead to differences in terms of their role perceptions. In fact, despite the prioritisation of watchdogism, there is also the suggestion that although the development role is not prioritised as such by many journalists, its relevance to national development is still taken seriously (Ramaprasad 2001; Berger 2000; Kivikuru 2001). For the most part, what the aforementioned literature and studies appear to suggest is that journalists in the post-colony see value in the journalistic characteristics, roles and norms that are similar to those of their colleagues in the West. However, they apply these in a variety of ways so as to give meaning to what they do within their specific context (Deuze 2004:279; see also Berger 2000; Ramaprasad 2001; Mwesige 2004).

Despite these studies, there is a dearth of literature on African journalists, that is literature and empirical studies that are placed within the specific socio-cultural and historical context of the journalist in the post-colony (see Ebo 1994; Eribo 1996). However, there are some cross-regional assessments of journalism practice across nations in Africa from which we can draw insights that can help us gain a bigger picture of journalists’ roles and journalism practice in Africa. Bourgault (1993:69-92), in a wide-ranging survey of the mass media in Sub-Saharan Africa, identified common journalism dynamics across the region. Some of these included the publication of distorted reporting and outright attacks on opponents. Bourgault (1995:223) also noted that many journalists had “responded to their new (1990s) liberties by producing a proliferation of opportunistic newspapers laying themselves wide open for the charge of unprofessional conduct”. Pertinently, her study led her to argue that, “opinion press has long been the model” in
Francophone Africa where “some journalists are...resistant to an information press. And Anglophone West Africans lean to a more garrulous and popular variant of the opinion press, a wildly partisan style of journalism” (Bourgault 1995:223-4).

There are other important studies that were carried out between the 1960s and the 1980s, from which we can also gain insights into the roles of African journalists. For instance, some of these studies characterised Cameroonian, Nigerian, Ghanaian, Kenyan journalists and their media as being resilient and at times adversarial during the hostile environment of 20th century journalism in Africa (see Ainslie 1996; Omu 1978; Mytton 1983; Odhiambo 1991). More recently, collections of work by Nyamnjoh (2005), Hyden et al (2002) who review some of the past studies, and others such as Kasoma (2000), Tomaselli (1995), Eribo (1997), Ronning (1994), Berger (2000, 2002), Blake (1997) and Odhiambo (2002), have explored the nexus between the African media and democracy. Writing in the context of late 20th and early 21st century post-colonial Africa, this literature tends to work from the assertion that the press has grown to take on broader democratic-oriented roles and that many journalists appear to be in favour of the watchdog and neutral roles of journalism. In addition, these studies also highlight the view that African journalists are faced with a whole range of top-down and bottom-up pressures. These include bribes, language, donors, self-censorship, sources, issues of class and status, ethnicity, politicians, public officials, advertisers and owners all of which have combined to compromise their function in society (Berger 2002a:32-33; also see Odhiambo 2002; Kasoma 1995, 1997). In sum, journalists are working under tremendous pressures. In addition, the economies in many countries are still so bad that most of the people, including the journalists and intellectuals, are preoccupied with the daily search for economic survival in many African countries (Kasoma 2000; Eribo 1996). Many journalists in Africa experience these common conditions within which they also work from a common frame of possible roles ranging from disseminator to advocate of development. It is important to bear in mind such contextual considerations in studies such as this one concerning journalists’ perceptions and wider identifications given that, as argued so far, journalists are influenced in their perceptions by the domestic socio-cultural conditions in which they practice.

2.5 Conclusion
The purpose of this chapter was to examine literature on the roles of journalists and the considerations concerning the nexus between their role perceptions and their news content. The bulk of the studies here appear to hold the view that journalists – and not just those in the UK and
the US, but also those in the post-colony – see value in taking on the Western-oriented neutral and watchdog roles of journalism. This is not to say that contextual differences have no role to play here or that journalists apply these roles in the same way across regions. In fact, the literature so far leads us to suggest that despite journalists’ preference for certain roles, journalism practice and identity in contemporary post-colonial Africa cannot easily be reduced to simply one role – the process is more nuanced than that. In the context of Europe, in general the suggestion is that the interventionist roles of interpretive-participant journalism are much more popular, which is at least in part due to the way in which journalism developed within the European context. In addition, although there are few studies that fully explore journalists’ role perceptions and how these perceptions could potentially find expression in news content, those that do, such as Graber (1993), Culbertson (1983) and Starck and Soloski (1977) suggest a close link between journalists’ role perceptions and news content. We can conclude – as per Reese (2001) – by saying that other influences such as the newspaper’s organisational structure and national-cultural values render the reality of the nexus between role perceptions and news content as being indirect, mixed and more like a process of mediation. In the next chapter, I introduce the theoretical influences on the roles or what I will later refer to as the sub-identities of journalism.
CHAPTER THREE
THEORETICAL INFLUENCES

3.0 Introduction
In this chapter, the aim is to introduce and review the theoretical pillars to the roles of journalism. As is illustrated here-within, many scholars trace the theoretical orientation of the ‘watchdog’ and ‘neutral referee’ roles to the libertarian theory, ‘participant’, ‘public’ and ‘advocacy’ to social responsibility, whilst the ‘development’ functions are associated with both social responsibility and development communication. The literature is presented within the context of studies that explore in terms of theory and practice, journalists’ roles perceptions, role definitions and the characteristics of news under these roles. An exploration of this literature is important here given that it is on the basis of such influences that I draw up the operational role definitions of this study. The chapter indicates that the role boundaries upheld in the philosophy of journalism, whereby the libertarian pluralist paradigm stresses ‘objectivity’ whilst the social responsibility-oriented paradigm makes room for ‘intervention’ and ‘subjectivity’, preclude each other particularly in terms of theory and practice. However, in practice these role differences are not always clearly mapped out as might be expected due to a range of social, structural and contextual influences. In fact, the assertion here is that when thinking about journalistic identity in all its totality and diversities, both the objective and subjective strands need to be considered and included. The chapter also highlights the view that in spite of the extant literature it is still difficult to go beyond broad correlations between journalists’ roles and news content. Few efforts have actually expanded the literature towards the analysis of news content with regard to roles.

3.1 Normative type approaches
Journalism theory at large is rooted in the West and is largely influenced by modernist intellectual and institutional structures. Influenced by the Enlightenment period’s emphasis on scientific truths that are valid across all of time and space, modern Western thought has for the most part been universalist (Van Rensburg 2001; Said 1995). Briefly, at the heart of Enlightenment was a faith in positivistic scientific methods, humanism and an emphasis on individualism. Positivist thinkers argue that knowledge and theories can only be based on general universal statements – ‘laws’ – whose truth can be assessed through systematic observation and experiment (Keat and Urry 1975:13-14). In a sense, this meant that scholars – as neutral analysts – could arrive at

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5 By theory, I am referring to “sets of ideas of varying status and origin which may explain or interpret some phenomenon” (McQuail 1987:15).
universal societal explanations, provided that the data were handled through set procedures. The best way to record and observe these facts, it was believed, was through measurement rather than through intuition and feelings. It was through these methods that empirical evidence – that is, observable facts – would ultimately be argued (Van Rensburg 2001:5). Underlying these explanations of society is the notion of progress upon which it was asserted that European institutions and structures which were taken to represent the fulfillment of humanity’s basic needs, represented a pattern that was applicable everywhere (Van Rensburg 2001). In relation to this, scholars and practitioners have tended to come up with or rely on ideal type universal approaches to the role of journalism, mass media and communication practice in society.

These trends can be noted for instance, in the ways in which Cold War international politics helped spread the dominant libertarian model, through US efforts to offset Soviet ideology in the post-colony. Communication, journalism and media practice as – we shall soon see – were often presented as a means of development along Western economic and political lines (Pye 1963). Professionalism was propagated in tandem with liberal normative theory, as expounded in Siebert et al’s (1956) four theoretical approaches to the press.6 The free press crusades of that period did not merely legitimate the professional model, but also served to advance ideological, political and economic struggles. While the professional paradigm became a standard measure against which to judge all journalists, it also became a yardstick for democratic practices. Overall, these trends can be noted with regard to the mainstream libertarian and social responsibility approaches that are often presented as being part of the chief ‘normative’ models of the press (Siebert et al 1956; Nerone et al 1995). In fact, as is illustrated below, libertarian and social responsibility theory often influence the literature on the role of journalists in society.

Broadly, normative theories describe desired criteria or values such as ethical standards, purposes and public service roles against which media systems may be structured and evaluated (see McQuail 1987; Odhiambo 1991; Hyden et al 2002). To be more specific, normative theories in general tend to define what the media should do in practice. It is against this backdrop that the theoretical influences in this chapter are reflected upon in as far as they rarely correlate with actual conditions on the ground. Indeed, this is the reason why normative theory is normative. On the other hand, one could also argue that, because such theories are ideal types, they should not be

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6 Siebert et al (1956) outlined a universal type approach to the press by highlighting the authoritarian, libertarian, Soviet-communist and social responsibility theories as the chief ‘normative’ models of the press. By ‘press’, Siebert et al (1956:7) were actually referring to all the media of mass communication, including television, radio, and newspapers as societal institutions and not the practice of journalism per se (see Berger 2000).
judged on the extent to which they correspond with the actual socio-political environment, but rather on a fundamental ideological basis, much the same way as one would argue for a political, democratic and ideal system that is not extant. However, in this chapter, in light of the interests of this study, an attempt is made to examine the reflections on theory at both the normative (ideal) and empirical (actual practice) levels. In fact, it is in this sense that the chapter attempts to account for the gaps between journalism role theory and the potential performance of these roles by the journalists. The point here is that ‘normative’ is not automatically identical to ‘empirical’.

3.2 The Libertarian Theory

Libertarianism is associated with the Enlightenment influenced free market ideologies of Adam Smith, John Milton’s arguments on the right to free discussion, the free marketplace ideas of John Stuart Mill, and John Locke’s views on popular sovereignty, particularly in as far as they presupposed certain inalienable individual rights including press freedoms (Siebert et al1956:43-50; see Chang and Grabel 2004). The aspirations of Enlightenment are at the root of the libertarian modernist project in so far as emphasis is placed on the concepts of individual freedom from government intrusion, liberty and the discovery of ‘truth’ through reason and science (Grossberg et al 1998; Wuliger 1991). These interests have influenced the concept of a libertarian and unhampered press, which is expected to help the public discover ‘truth’ whilst also taking on the ‘fourth estate’ function of protecting public interests, all of which has gradually grown to become widely accepted as a major tenet of journalism practice (Altschull 1994). According to Siebert et al (1956:51, 74), libertarianism tends to demand two duties of the press: to serve as a watchdog, as an “extralegal check on government” in the interest of the rights of the individual and to serve as an “instrument of public education” since the success of democracy is posited upon an informed electorate. A key aspect in this process is the press’s freedom from government controls or domination (see Curran 2000; Eribo 1997; Wuliger 1991).

With the establishment of a theoretical basis for the modern concept of freedom of expression, the press developed the theory of objective reporting to fulfil its function as a ‘truth’-seeking and non-partisan information medium (McQuail 1994; Janowitz 1975). It is in this sense that objectivity – which has long been a central tenet for positivist researchers – gained ground particularly in the US and Europe as a key aspect of good professional journalism (McQuail 1987; Zelizer 2004). As is expanded on below, the notion of objectivity sees the journalist as a neutral, detached and unbiased mirror of reality. By relying on values such as balance, fairness and impartiality in their reportage of the facts, journalists are required to erase their own experiences and to report in such
a way as not to alienate various groups in society (Knoppers and Elling 2004:66). To put it another way, to be objective, journalists must somehow rid themselves of their own subjectivity, and give a fair and balanced representation of different sides of the story while using the right facts to put issues into context (Hazel 2001:94; see also Tuchman 1972; 1978). In the libertarian view, focus is on hard news – which is the basic ingredient of the daily news media – defined as “serious and timely stories about important topics”, and not so much on soft news which is described as “feature or human-interest stories” (Fedler 1997:95). It is in this regard that the newsworthiness of stories in the libertarian approach is often based on the importance of events, their prominence, frequency in line with deadlines, proximity and oddities or unusualness (Fedler 1997; Rich 2003). For hard news, the emphasis is mostly on factual events, rather than on issues, processes and opinions. By tying news to facts, the hard news format gets journalists to rely on the statistics and quotes from official, institutional and authoritative sources whose views can be packaged as reliable, accurate, valid and significant information for the audience (Oosthuizen 2001; Branston and Stafford 1996).

As noted before, the press in the post-colony has historically struggled to establish the libertarian principles of freedom and the related objectivist stance in journalism. Privately-owned newspapers in particular constantly have to deal with state efforts aimed at restricting their functions. In fact, the post-colonial press has at various stages been characterised by its political partisanship whether aligned to the government or to the opposition (see Kasoma 2000; Nyamnjoh 2005). All of this may have slowed down the establishment of the notion of objectivity. In theory and practice, the viability and relevance of libertarian theory to the public has come under criticism particularly as the press grew to become an outlet for commercial information. This “altered the nature of the marketplace of ideas by making the press’s major role that of a marketplace of goods and services” (Picard 1985:14; see also Golding and Murdock 2000). Over the next two sub-sections, I go on to identify two different journalistic role emphases that are influenced by libertarianism.

3.2.1 Neutral role of journalism
Grounded in the libertarian theory and the emphasis on objectivity, the neutral or information disseminator role of journalism has emphasised the function of the public servant who seeks the ‘truth’ and reports the ongoing social issues to the public in a neutral manner (Janowitz 1975; Berger 2000). For Janowitz (1975:618), this stance is based on the view that the search for objectivity and the separation of fact from opinion is the main reason for the existence of the
press. For Johnstone et al (1976), in the neutral role of journalism, reporters maintain a relationship of detachment when handling information. In doing this, the journalist uses various sources to adequately convey all sides of the story. Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) see the disseminator role as “a meshing of two key roles: getting information to the public quickly and avoiding stories with unverifiable ‘facts’” (1996:137). The neutral emphasis in journalism has also found expression in the neo-liberal role of journalism. According to Berger (2000:85), the neo-liberal role makes its contribution to the functioning of democracy through its commitment to reflecting pluralism and diversity. The neo-liberal role is in this sense based on Mill’s marketplace of ideas insofar as focus is placed on providing a platform for open debate between different and diverse voices (Berger 2000:85). For Berger (2000), and Hyden and Leslie (2002), this refined neutral perspective is also influenced by social responsibility theory and the concept of the ‘public sphere’ (Habermas 1989; see section 3.3), given that journalism is expected to foster a discursive realm in which journalists bring to the fore issues of public interest in an open and free fashion. In a sense, the democratic imperative of the individual journalist is to be objective, by reflecting pluralism and diversity whilst the media as a whole should at least also include a wide range of news and views.

Overall, the neutral or disseminator and neo-liberal approach is in many ways a response to the authoritarianism of previous eras and is therefore rooted in libertarian principles (Siebert et al 1956:3; see also Nerone et al 1995). Ideally, under the neutral and neo-liberal roles, journalists are expected to enjoy full independence from the government and full autonomy within their media organisations (Siebert et al 1956:43-46). Journalists working from this approach are seen as “neutral referees in the contest of political forces” (Berger 2000:85). As neutral referees they do not let their private interests and value judgments get in the way of reporting ‘facts’-as-they-are (Schudson 2000). Therefore, this role relies heavily on the professional ideologies of editorial independence, objectivity, fairness, balance, freedom of expression and access to information held by the state. These are necessary conditions given that journalists are to a large extent expected to institutionalise a liberal communicative space or forum for a marketplace of ideas (Berger 2000). With regard to the news writing, the journalists are to observe a strict adherence to news writing conventions such as the inverted pyramid and news judgment as the primary canon for a detached and neutral journalist/m (see Shim 2002; Schudson 2000). The neutral and disseminator approach to news is frequently associated with values such as not alienating the various groups in society,
timeliness and the transmission of information in a quick mode (Weaver and Wilhoit 1996:137; see Fedler 1997).

Based on these assertions, in terms of operational definitions, in the context of the post-colony, this study refers to the neutral and neo-liberal role as description of news that is based on facts and events, news that is concerned with issues of interest to the widest possible public and news that is given to the public quickly. The news story is presented through the basic rubric of the facts, that is the 5W’s and 1H format and the inverted pyramid style through which the news story is presented in a way that grabs the attention of the reader whilst also delivering the main information quickly. The key issue here is the emphasis on objectivity, fairness, independence and stories where factual content can be verified (see McQuail 1987; Oosthuizen 2001; Mwesige 2004). McQuail (1987:131) refers to objective news as characterised by factualness and impartiality. Thus, “factualness refers to a form of reporting which deals in events and statements which can be checked against sources and are presented free from comment”. Impartiality refers to a story’s balanced treatment of competing interests, that is to say, to “equal or proportionate time/space/emphasis” (1987:131). In the next sub-section, I explore the criticisms of the neutral role.

3.2.1.1 Insights and criticisms

It is crucial to bear in mind here that the critiques of the neutral, disseminator and/or neo-liberal role have tended to accept their normative aspirations, and focused mainly on how these are undermined by practical realities. This is distinct from a normative critique as such, for example, as is represented in social responsibility and development-oriented approaches which are discussed later in this chapter. As such, the objectivist emphasis in the neutral role is often criticised in terms of practice. In addition, the bulk of early journalism studies took the framework of a libertarian ‘functionalist’ approach in as far as news is simply analysed as neutrally serving the function of informing citizens about what is going on in the world so that they can make

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7 From a normative point of view, it is worth noting that these values are not necessarily or exclusively intrinsic to the neutral approach to news writing. In practice, neutrality can at times require withholding a story till other sources are tapped, or the dissemination of information that is targeted primarily to a niche elite audience within the wider public (see Donohue et al 1995 on the latter).

8 Although I draw on the influences from earlier studies to formulate operational role definitions for this study, I do not use all the Johnstone et al (1976) and Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) classifications on neutral-disseminator, participant-interpreter, populist mobiliser and adversarial journalism. This is because not all their statements are relevant either to the context of the post-colony and/or to the specific interests of this study. In a newly liberal post-colonial press period, such distinctions although present have not always developed along the same lines as those in the West (see Berger 2002; Ramaprasad 2001 and chapters 9 to 11). See chapter on Research Methods and Appendix G for the extended list of statements applying to the definitions of the roles for this study.
informed decisions in a democracy. However, scholarship on journalism has also benefited from many landmark humanistic based studies that have generated insightful observations and criticisms about the complex practice of journalism and media production. For instance, as is expanded on in chapter 4, researchers on the sociology of news production and cultural studies theorists have focused on the ‘routines of newsgathering’ and the ‘ideological influences’ in the practice of journalism to conclude, for example, that journalists construct the news (see Molotch and Lester 1997; Tuchman 1978; Hall 1978; Shoemaker and Mayfield 1987). Tuchman (1978) identified the news as a social construction of reality, and recognised the media organisation as its symbolic manufacturer. Different media researchers have emphasised different elements of such news construction. Gans (1979) concluded that, in constructing the news, journalists defend the economic, political, social and cultural hierarchy in society. Lichter et al (1986), and Herman and Chomsky (1988) who work from a political economy perspective, see the news as a by-product of the liberal nature of individual journalists at elite news media. These writers view the media as a commercial, political agent that deliberately maintains the capitalistic ideology of the ruling class.  

Tuchman (1978), Hall (1978) and Schudson (2000) show how the processes of newsgathering, sourcing and selecting events are employed by journalists to socially manufacture the end product of news. News is for the most part the events that are selected as newsworthy by journalists, based on socially constructed conceptions of news, which are in varying degrees influenced by the socio-cultural context. Hence, news is not selected and constructed in a vacuum given that journalists operate within the limitations, pressures, structure and norms of a society (Oosthuizen 2001:463). The argument here is that news is not a transparent “window on the world”, but rather a constructed reality and that journalists reproduce the news in the interests of the dominant elite interests in society (Branston and Stafford 1996:161). News is in this regard conceptually analysed as a purely constructed ‘discursive’ reality deriving solely from routine journalistic practices that are objectifications or externalisations of journalists’ self-driving meanings (Tuchman 1978; Hall 1977). In terms of our thinking about news content, this potentially means that journalists do not always cover the diversity of interests in society (Oosthuizen 2001:459). With regard to roles and news

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9 The political economy position is at some level similar to that of the 19th century literary theorists – TS Elliot and FR Leavis – who argued that the media was detrimental to the moral order. Later on, the 1940s Marxist Frankfurt School – Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer – felt that the power of the mass media over the population was enormous and very damaging (Gauntlett 2003:19-20). For now, we can note that all these positions share the view that the media are powerful social institutions that are able to “inject” their audiences with their messages and thus affect their behaviour—often by leaving them apolitical (Strelitz 2002:11-13; also see chapter 4 on the concepts of ideology and hegemony).
content this means that the inclusion and exclusion of ‘facts’ in news reveal the author’s or editors’ opinions and intentions, as well as those of the news organisation and the society in which the journalist operates, so objectivity is not entirely possible (De Beer 2004:195).

Overall, the argument here is that journalists are in practice not objective ‘neutral referees’ or ‘disseminators’ of the ‘truth’. They are not necessarily the neutral producers of news content that they purport to be (Tuchman 1972; 1978; Frome 1998). Here, objectivity is often attacked because it obscures the subjective values that guide the journalist and assumes that they have no effect on journalism practice. From a normative point of view, the belief in objectivity assumes that there is a ‘real’ world out there, the ‘facts’ of which can be accurately reported on by journalists who are for the most part assumed to be oblivious of their subjective influences (De Beer 2004; Hazel 2001). In practice, objectivity would appear to be an impossible task for journalists given that by deciding to select an item for the news, the journalist is potentially making a decision about other items that cannot make the news for that day. In this regard, in making the decision to use a particular news account the journalist is actually taking a position on it in so far as s/he is prioritising it over others. As such, to say that objectivity is possible is “to imply that an unarguable interpretation of an event exists prior to the report” (Branston and Stafford 1996:167-168). In this regard, Frome (1998) has gone as far as to suggest that there is no such thing as objectivity. As it turns out, the notion of objectivity is inherently and conceptually complex. It “is not a single unitary ethic” that can be employed by journalists (Hazel 2001:94).

It is in this sense that the notion of objectivity has generally been criticised in various academic disciplines as researchers became doubtful about their own ability to be objective whilst also claiming that the search for objective reality and the ‘truth’ led to a retreat from personal and political responsibility (Janowitz 1975:619; Tuchman 1972:676). In practice, the notion of objectivity is criticised for not promoting “as much digging into contrary views” as does the alternative of advocacy journalism (Frome 1988: x; see below on advocacy). Glasser (1992:181) goes even further by saying that:

Objective reporting has stripped reporters of their creativity and their imagination; it has robbed journalists of their passion and their perspective. Objective reporting has transformed journalism into something more technical than intellectual; it has turned the art of story-telling into the technique of report writing. In addition, most unfortunate of all, objective reporting has denied journalists their citizenship; as disinterested observers, as impartial reporters, journalists are expected to be morally disengaged and politically inactive.
Igers (1998:91) asserts that “although few journalists still defend objectivity, it remains one of the greatest obstacles to their playing a more responsible and constructive role in public life”. Janowitz (1975:619) argues that objectivity as an ideal in reporting is impossible or at least doubtful, and that the task of the journalist is to represent the viewpoints and interests of competing groups, especially those of excluded and underprivileged groups. In addition, Tuchman (1972) cited in Janowitz (1975:619) has pointed out that journalists can emphasise objectivity as a strategic ritual to protect them from being accused of bias and to show that they are working in the public interest. The notion of objectivity has also been seen as producing and prioritising news content with a preference for official sources and ‘facts’ rather than context, processes and structures (Glasser 1992; Sigal 1973). According to Entman (1989:3), despite all the talk about the ideals of fairness and balance, objectivity actually makes journalists more susceptible to elite sources and their views thereby facilitating the manipulation of news slant.

It must be said that journalists do not always take the notion of objectivity to mean that they are impartial reporters of events, but rather, that they can rely on the values of fairness and impartiality to report on the world in as timely and balanced a way as possible (De Beer 2004:196). In other words, objectivity in journalism has established itself more like a flexible and practical organisational imperative or belief according to which journalists are required to perform their work (see Ward 2004; Hanitzsch 2004). In reality then, for the neutral-role journalist, objectivity involves a series of routine values and norms through which, for instance, s/he attempts to reach out to the various groups in society whilst also justifying his or her professional behaviour and activity (see Zelizer 2004; De Beer 2004; Knoppers and Elling 2004; Tuchman 1972). Here-in also lies one of the reasons why the neutral-role approach to journalism in general has maintained a sense of popularity given that its framework on reporting on the world is flexible, not too complex, non-confrontational and adaptable to change across contexts (Siebert et al 1956:71; see also Weaver 1998; Mwesige 2004). In the next sub section, I introduce and explore the watchdog role as influenced by libertarianism.

3.2.2 Watchdog / adversarial role of journalism
Overall, since the libertarian view treats government as the key dominating and all-powerful entity interested in hiding the truth, journalism practice has tended to prioritise the function of keeping an eye on the institutions of government. As such, one of the main functions of journalism in a democratic society is to act as a watchdog that monitors the full range of state activities whilst also exposing abuses of official authority (Berger 2000:84). Simply put, state
surveillance is in this case the basic social function of the media (Siebert et al 1956; Graber 1993). From this point of view, once journalists become subject to extreme regulation by the state and the powerful in society they can end up losing their bite as a watchdog. However, when it is unrestricted, this kind of journalism is centrally attached to the ‘fourth estate’ spirit of monitoring government actions by scrutinising the powerful and sometimes this is taken to include both government officials and businesses (Curran 2000:121; also see Berger 2000).

Weaver and Wilhoit (1996:139) consider this adversarial role of journalism to function as a “melding of two items: being constantly sceptical of public officials as well as business interests” - summarised as “scepticism of those in power”. This role is usually linked to investigative reportage, in particular on political affairs. Ullman (1995:3) maintains that this kind of adversarial, watchdog and investigative journalism has an “element of exposing wrongdoing, of uncovering violations of law, regulation, codes of standards, or even common sense decency”. In fact, for Waisboard (1996) modern journalism has been influenced by investigative reporting which inevitably evokes the model of an autonomous watchdog press. Ansah (1988:13), in a view supported by Ronning (1999) and Hyden and Leslie (2002), argues that in the context of the post-colony, in the absence of other checks on the government, the press in particular should take on the role of watchdog in an attempt to stop governments from “falling into complacency, unresponsiveness and irresponsibility”. In line with this, Hyden and Leslie (2002:12) argue that the privately-owned newspapers that emerged in the post-colony in the 1990s have played a primary role in the process of democratisation by probing government policies and behaviour. As suggested in the previous chapter, the popularity of this role for journalists in the post-colony has a lot to do with the control of the media by governments and the elite in society. Ideally, this role’s guidelines offer the journalist an opportunity to expose abuse and create room for critical voices (Louw and Tomaselli 1994; Kasoma 2000).

Mwesige (2004), however, reminds us that although there is value in this role and that African journalists tend to rate it highly, this is not always translated into practice. As suggested before, although Ugandan newspapers do provide investigative and interpretive stories, by and large the traditional 5W’s and 1H reporting of the neutral role remains predominant. This discrepancy between the role conceptions that Ugandan journalists endorse and their actual practice could be due to the socio-economic, legal and political regime under which they operate in as far as it forces them to ‘play safe’ with the neutral approach. To illustrate, Mwesige (2004:87) argues that:
Reporting the speech of a government minister in the traditional format (who said–what–when–where) is much safer than adopting an interpretive frame that tells that audience what the minister’s speech really adds up to.

This stance is similar to the Philippine journalists who endorse the development role and the US, Chinese and Taiwanese journalists who endorse the media’s role of information provider in part because these roles are seen as being safer and less controversial than the sceptical adversarial role (see Shafer 1996; Zhu et al 1997). Again, we can note here that contextual – socio-cultural and political – factors play a central role in influencing journalists’ roles.

Based on the above descriptions, in this study the operational definition of the watchdog role refers to news stories that contain a sceptical narrative with a tendency to represent issues in terms of conflict or distinct oppositional power groups. That is, it designates stories that adopt a sceptical-critical-investigative narrative towards the public (and in theory also the private) sector (Mwesige 2004; Berger 2000). To this effect, Protess et al (1991:293) aptly explain that an investigative-watchdog story has “an evolving cast of characters” with “patterns of wrongdoing” exposure of public wrongs and an aspect of righting the wrong. It is important to note that such adversarial news does not necessarily lose track of the objectivity values of fairness and impartiality and timeliness. Crucially, such news would also stay away from stories where news content cannot be verified (Mwesige 2004). While this is clearly not a formula that describes all stories in this category, it still gives the narrative summary of a watchdog story as it is understood in this study.

3.2.3 Critiques of the watchdog role

With the media increasingly being criticised for having failed to inform the public as citizens – in part due to commercial pressures, Curran (2000) argues that while the watchdog role is important it is time-worn and not as clear-cut as it seems. As such, he contends that it would not be correct in present times to make it the paramount role of the journalist (2000:120-123; also see McQuail 2000; McChesney 1999). Furthermore, the watchdog role tends to focus on government as the sole object of press vigilance. Curran (2000:122-123) attributes this to the old view of government as the seat of power and centre of oppression:

This traditional view takes no account of the exercise of economic power and authority by shareholders in private business. The issue is no longer simply that the media are compromised by their links to big business: the media are big business themselves.
Curran calls for a revised conception in which the media are conceived as a watchdog on both public and private power. The fuller argument here is that many media are now profit-oriented and stand to gain from a business-friendly government (Curran 2000:123). In other words, the media have commercial imperatives and may, therefore, not always be able to watchdog the system of which they are part (Nerone et al 1995:26). To put it another way, journalists and their news organisations may not necessarily be the independent watchdog that either they or members of the public imagine them to be. Instead, according to Donohue et al (1995:115-117), they might sometimes serve as ‘guard dogs’, a metaphor which suggests that they “perform as a sentry not for the community as a whole”, but for dominant local powers, groups and interests. In sum, journalists are in this case, not seen as being guardians on behalf of the public, but rather defenders of the ruling class (Donohue et al 1995).

At the normative level, the critique here also appears to be directed towards the objectivist assumption that as ‘watchdogs’ operating in a presupposed ‘free’ market environment, journalists are not influenced by state, cultural and commercial interests. The criticism here is that as watchdog journalists they are not sovereign entities that are free from socio-structural influences (see Hanitzsch 2004). This is to an extent due to the libertarian belief in the view that only through the free competition of ideas can truth come to the surface (Siebert et al 1956). As suggested in section 2.2.4, journalists have to deal with a range of bottom-up and top-down pressures. In practice therefore, journalists are not necessarily autonomous from the interests of political forces, owners, advertisers and other vested interests (Berger 2000:84-85).

Notwithstanding this, the watchdog normative conception remains as an influential model. In the next two sections on the social responsibility and development-oriented approaches to journalism, these criticisms of the values of the libertarian-influenced journalism are expanded on in terms of theory and practice.

3.3 Social responsibility theory

The social responsibility theory has its origins in the US’s 1947 Hutchins Commission of Inquiry into the proper functioning of the media in a democracy (Siebert et al 1956; Nerone et al 1995). A key reason for the Commission’s inquiry was to look into the freedom of the press in the US. The findings of the inquiry signalled the lack of diversity in media for accommodating different public voices, the inability of the press to be ‘independent’ and the undermining of responsible reporting mainly due to the increasing monopolisation of press ownership (see Siebert et al 1956; McQuail 1987; Blevins 1997). However, whilst retaining broad normative values of libertarian theory they
went on to recommend an alternative approach that was designed to serve as a set of operating principles for professional media practice (Nerone et al 1995:19).

In its recommendations, the Hutchins report put forward five standards of media performance required of a free and responsible press. First, the press needs to provide a “full, truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day’s events in a context which gives them meaning”. Second, the press should serve as a “forum for the exchange of comment and criticism”. Third, the press is urged to offer a “representative picture of constituent groups of society”. Fourth, the press is expected to present and clarify the “goals and values of society”. Finally, it must provide “full access to the day’s intelligence” (Siebert et al 1956:87-92). Later labelled as ‘social responsibility theory’ by Siebert et al (1956:75), the Hutchins report came to be one of the central philosophical pillars for journalism and media researchers to evaluate the role orientation of working journalists (see Janowitz 1975; Weaver 1998; Merrill 1995; Hyden et al. 2002; Mwesige 2004).

In a sense, the significance of the report lies in its recognition of media responsibility as a social concept rather than a personal one. According to Merrill (1989:68), before the Hutchins Commission, media responsibility had been assumed to be “something that was somehow automatically built into a libertarian press”. Lambeth (1986:6-7) also argues that, “in contrast to the laissez-faire posture of a libertarian press, a socially responsible press is defined as having a positive duty to exercise freedom of expression”. While the libertarian theory primarily focused on negative freedom, which rejects any interference or restrictions by the government, the positive freedom in the social responsibility theory emphasised the ultimate goal of the press as enhancing the participation of the public by listening to and conveying a wide variety of voices (Siebert et al 1956:93; also see McQuail 1987; Wuliger 1991). Such a concept gave social responsibility its “active connotation that changes the right of free expression from a natural right as in libertarian theory to a moral right, with the attendant quality of duty or obligation” (Thurston 1979:21).

Merrill and Odell (1983:160) also view social responsibility as being of a:

…higher level, theoretically, than libertarianism – a kind of moral and intellectual evolutionary trip from discredited old libertarianism to a new or perfected libertarianism where things are forced to work as they really should work under libertarian theory.

As Altschull (1994) indicates, social responsibility theory is firmly grounded in the utilitarianism in which moral accountability enjoys its supreme virtue. Since utilitarianism aims at the implementation of moral justice in real life, which secures the greatest pleasure for the greatest number, it is assumed that the press, in the utilitarian view, is asked to execute more active,
progressive and participant performance on behalf of social and political justice (Shim 2002:11, 47-50).

Concurrently, journalists should be participants in the political process, not merely reporters of the passing scene. As guardians of the public welfare, therefore, they are expected to spur political action when necessity prevails (Shim 2002:50; see also Graber 1993). The journalist is not restricted here from actively participating or intervening in social and political processes to bring about socially-valued outcomes for the greater good. Hence, social responsibility-oriented journalistic roles can be seen as ‘interventionist’. According to Ward (2004), interventionist journalism are also at times referred to as ‘attached’ because they have a strong attachment to a social or political cause and they tend to reject, question or devalue objectivity and neutrality in journalism (2004:90). In this approach, the focus is on issues or processes that occur over a longer period, for example nation building, identity construction, poverty reduction and national reconciliation. Thematic-oriented rather than event-oriented, and interpretive, rather than descriptive reportage is frequently expected in social responsibility-oriented journalism (Shim 2002:53). This is where social responsibility theory comes in to suggest a normative alternative that moves beyond the libertarian emphasis on events and news that can be delivered quickly, by insisting instead on feature and human-interest stories that investigate public problems (see Nerone et al 1995; Fedler 1997).

In sum, social responsibility theory provides the philosophical ground for journalism and media reformers by discussing the necessity of extending the journalist’s function on behalf of social and political change. The model is based on the idea that media has a moral obligation to society to provide adequate information for citizens to make informed decisions. The main difference between the libertarian theory and the social responsibility theory is that the latter suggests that someone (the media, government, the public) must see that media perform responsibly if they do not do so voluntarily (Nerone et al 1995:90-93).

Before going on to explore the social responsibility-oriented journalistic roles, it is worth pointing out some of the criticisms of social responsibility theory, given that they apply in varying degrees to the roles discussed in this section. As suggested in section 3.1 one of the problems with normative models such as social responsibility theory is the way in which they attempt to impose ideal prescriptions that may not necessarily be in line with the actual social phenomena (see Nerone et al 1995; Kasoma 2000). Hence, social responsibility theory has been constantly
challenged as to its viability, applicability and feasibility, among journalism practitioners and academics (Merrill 1974; Picard 1985). Altschull (1994) criticised the whole concept for its lack of practical guidelines. For him, the term social responsibility is “devoid of meaning” and its “content is so vague that almost any meaning can be placed on it” (1994: 446). Likewise, Lambeth (1986) indicates that the theory does not give sufficient description of how the press and the journalists are to embody its social task. For him, the theory “contains little that would assist individual journalists in daily ethical judgments they have to make. There is no general framework that can be applied to specific decisions” (1986:7). In addition, bearing in mind the interests of this study, it can be argued that despite the anxious suggestions for a sound and reliable press, in-depth reporting and public-oriented journalists, few efforts have actually been made by academics and practitioners to elaborate on the influence of social responsibility theories on journalists’ daily practices and news content. This in a sense, then, obliges us to reflect on the impact of social responsibility theory on news content and on journalists’ role perceptions as is suggested by this study. In the next sub-section, I introduce three journalistic role emphases that can be identified within social responsibility theory.

3.3.1 Participant-interpretive, advocacy and public-civic roles of journalism

One tradition in journalists’ role perception studies and literature on journalists identifies the participant-interpretive, populist mobiliser and the advocacy roles of journalism as the beneficiaries of the social responsibility theory (see Johnstone et al 1976; Weaver and Wilhoit 1986, 1996; Janowitz 1975). These roles of journalism seek the active and progressive performance of the journalist in society. Reform rather than reflection, change rather than the status quo, top the list for journalists taking on these roles (Altschull 1994; Weaver and Wilhoit 1996). Although a diversity of concepts and thoughts are identified among media scholars attempting to distinguish the libertarian and social responsibility-oriented ideals, several perspectives share common values in defining the roles that are influenced by social responsibility theory (see Table 1 and Figure 1 in Appendices A and B respectively). In exploring these roles, I start by introducing the participant-interpretive dimension.

3.3.1.1 Participant-interpretive role

There is a growing body of literature describing participant-interpretive journalism as entailing active and creative performance by journalists in developing newsworthy information (Johnstone et al 1976; Weaver 1998; Weaver and Wilhoit 1996). Weaver and Wilhoit (1996:137) describe this role as “a blending of three important roles: investigating government claims, analysing and
interpreting complex problems and discussing public policies in a timely way”. This view suggests that information is occasionally withheld by sources in neutral and information disseminator journalism. Hence, the journalist has to play a socially-oriented interventionist and proactive role. To do this, the journalist must sift through the information for the real story and understand the event in context. In participant-interpretive journalism, journalists are expected to be actively involved in the process of news production (see Altschull 1984; 1994). According to the Johnstone et al (1976) study, investigative, analytic and interpretive reporting calls for journalistic activities in which “the shape and character of the news are structured more by the efforts of the newsman rather than by those of news sources” (1976:117). Therefore, the journalists’ task must be extended to provide the background and interpretation necessary to give events meaning.

Participant-interpretive news values involve the use of various angles by journalists in their attempt to highlight alternative newsworthy issues. While this is primarily linked to the attitude and perception of a journalist in exploring news materials, this kind of practice is also involved in the way in which journalists approach their story subjects (Shim 2002). With regard to social conflict issues, for instance, participant-interpretive journalists attempt to approach the story from a multi-perspectival standpoint (Gans 1979), since they all create and bring “their own contribution to the definition of reality” (Janowitz 1975:619). In line with the social responsibility-oriented news values, participant-interpretive news frequently precludes the quick transmission of shallow facts whilst emphasising on the giving of background and context to the facts through analysis. Conceptually, working from within such a role allows for a wider and broader pool of sources. This is important since media critics argue that journalism has lost its ability to relate to a whole generation of citizens, especially the poor and working classes due to poor source diversity (see Herman and Chomsky 1988; Lambeth 1998; Kivikuru 2001). In the next sub-section, dealing with another form of social responsibility journalism the character of the advocacy role of journalism is explored.

3.3.1.2 Advocacy

The ideal here is that the journalist must get involved in the “advocacy process”, and try to resolve community problems by effective representation of alternative definitions of reality (Janowitz 1975:619; see also Berkowitz 1997). According to Janowitz (1975), the advocate journalist acts as a participant in social and political processes. The rise of this role grew out of the 1960s and 1970s social movements in the West and in the post-colony for a renewed emphasis
on problems of civil rights, political and economic freedom and development as part of an attempt to prevent their recurrence in the future (see Melkote 1991; Shim 2002). Therefore, the journalist highlights the barriers to socio-political change in contemporary society and the difficulties that certain segments of society have in achieving their legitimate self-interests (Janowitz 1975; Berkowitz 1997). In doing so, the journalist becomes an advocate for those who are denied powerful spokespersons. In line with this perspective, some studies have stressed the necessity of extending the function of the press into issues and matters of social and political change (see Frome 1998; Ferguson 1993; Janowitz 1975). The advocacy model of journalism clearly challenges the libertarian stance in so far as it entails greater pro-activity than the neutral role and yet it endorses aspects of the watchdog role for instance with regard to investigating social problems and exposing abuse of power, but without necessarily becoming either adversarial, oppositional or propagandist reporting as such (Janowitz 1975; Berkowitz 1997).

In the context of the post-colony, Mwesige (2004:88) finds a high rating by Ugandan journalists for this “advocacy or populist mobiliser role”, a function that is for him also “consistent with some of the aspirations of the advocates of development journalism”. The support for this role in Uganda is found to be much greater than that for the adversarial role. In describing the South African version of advocacy journalism, which was practiced through the alternative press during the Apartheid era, Jackson (1993) argued that these alternative newspapers opposed the established papers’ claim that they practiced an ‘objective’ approach to gathering and reporting news. For him, the alternative publications took on ‘committed’ or ‘advocacy’ journalism. Far from regarding themselves as neutral observers of the scene, these papers openly embraced a viewpoint. According to Jackson (1993:9):

They say that journalistic neutrality or objectivity is a myth under any circumstances; to claim to practice such journalism in South Africa is naïve self-deception at best and outright dishonesty at worst.

Bear in mind here that the upholders of the advocacy model do not question the existence of an objective reality that can be portrayed through a factual account. Rather, their criticism against the liberal-neutral stance of journalism focuses on the role of the journalist as a mediator of this reality (Berkowitz 1997). The journalist, according to this perception, must serve his readers by bringing silent voices to the centre of the public image whilst also exposing the consequences of the contemporary power imbalance (Janowitz 1975; also see section 3.4.4 on similarities between advocacy and development journalism).
Similar to the participant-interpretive role, in advocacy journalism, investigative reporting is employed as a device for overcoming the shortcomings of objective reporting.\(^{10}\) This is in the sense that investigative reporters are expected “to go beyond the statements and report the hard, often hidden facts of a political or dispute process” (Donsbach and Klett 1993:56). The idea here is to move beyond the two-sides to a story format by taking on a more critical and political role. This line of thinking is based on the view that there are barriers to social political change in society and that it is the role of the advocacy journalist – as well as other institutions such as the education and judicial systems – to intervene particularly on behalf of marginalised groups to ensure them their legitimacy as citizens (Janowitz 1975:620-621).

Rather similar to the participant news values, advocacy news traces certain issues with in-depth research over long-time periods. This type of news reporting calls for the use of historical and other research techniques to investigate and unravel the causes, implications and meanings of social problems (see Shim 2002). This model of journalism goes against the grain of the libertarian neutral approach of journalism both in the Western and post-colonial contexts. Journalists who practice such in-depth research are likely to be educators, instructors and activists rather than mere professional informants.

### 3.3.1.3 Public journalism

The eroding confidence of the declining press readership, coupled with the continued attack on the libertarian stance in journalism practice, prompted the 1980s rise of public journalism in the US. Public journalism is also at times referred to as civic journalism, community journalism or conversational journalism depending on the context at hand (see Lambeth 1986; Lauterer 1995; Black 1997; Rosen 1994a; Blevins 1997). The proponents of this role of journalism argue that journalism has failed in its aim of serving the public interest and instead recommend the practice of public journalism through which they call for greater active involvement of journalists in the community in the interests of facilitating dialogue and civic consciousness. In this way it is hoped that journalism can then go on to reflect and express the cultural diversity and substantive concerns of a given society (see Charity 1995; Rosen 1999). This is a major shift from the way journalism had traditionally been practiced in the West.

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\(^{10}\) Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) attach an investigative value to the participant-interpretive role. This value is in varying degrees also prioritised in the advocacy and watchdog roles (Waiboard 1996). In a sense, as is indicated in Table 1 and Figure 1 in Appendices A and B respectively, apart from sharing similar values, some of the roles discussed here share similarities in theoretical influences and they are therefore not mutually exclusive.
Blevins (1997:1-13) provides a connection between social responsibility theory and public journalism, in so far as the recommendations of the Hutchins Commission call for reportage that investigates the facts, is inclusive and representative of the wider societal goals and values (see also Altschull 1994; Charity 1995; Siebert et al 1956). This understanding of news went on to become a key aspect of interest in public journalism. In addition, the roots of public journalism can also be related to recent concerns such as the work of the critical theorist Jurgen Habermas (1989) on the demise of the ‘public sphere’. Habermas (1989) uses the notion of the ‘public sphere’ to refer to “the sphere of private people come together as a public” (1989:27). For Habermas (cited in Goldsmiths Media Group 2000:39), the media should be judged on their ability to facilitate democratic participation in society through such a public sphere. The ideal public sphere is seen as being a free, unbiased space within society, characterised by freedom from both state and corporate control. It is through the mass media that people may participate freely, on an equal basis, in discussions relevant to the ‘public good’ (Curran 2000:135; McQuail 2000:158). According to this model, an informed, participating citizenry depends on mass media which play a public service function (see also McChesney 1999).

Overall, based on these influences, public journalism therefore proposes to bring more democracy to the newsgathering and reporting business. The idea is to get the public involved in debates concerning the day’s news (Merritt 1995; Charity 1995). This form of journalism advocates encouraging citizens who are not normally engaged in democratic political processes to participate in the creation of solutions to community problems with the aid of journalists (McQuail 2000:159; see also Shafer 1996). To do this, the journalist has to take on an attached journalistic stance through which s/he, as a member of the community, can move beyond simply acting as a neutral informer or a watchdog over government by getting the community to engage and debate with itself across various fault lines of say religion (Rosen 1994a:11). The idea here is not only to solve shared social problems through media practice, but also to build a sense of community (Charity 1995; Rosen 1994a). This emphasis on the role of the public as participants and not simply as recipients in the media and democracy nexus has led Ward (2004:74) to argue that “the ultimate goal of public journalism is the wellbeing of the public”.

In addition, for public journalism to work, its proponents argue that journalism practice will have to rethink traditional libertarian routines and news values such as objectivity, fairness and balance since they promote a detached journalistic stance, all of which limits the journalist in his/her attempts to genuinely reconnect with the public (Rosen 1994b:376). In other words, news values
such as prominence, timeliness, conflict, oddity and news writing forms such as the 5W’s and 1H will have to be reworked in favour of an approach that encourages journalistic attachment and issues-driven news about social problems and successes (Merritt 1995:127-133). It is in this sense, that public journalism is for the most part not normatively congruent with classic libertarian principles (see Berger 2002a).

Still, it is pertinent to bear in mind that public journalism does not rule out the intervention of government in the public interest and that some of its proponents do recognise that in practice there is value in maintaining an objective stance in news reportage. With regard to the latter, Ward (2004:73) argues that although the idea of public journalism is a normative one in that it lays out criteria for an ideal form of journalism that is not empirically evident, in practice journalists have to rely on some sense of ‘facts’, ‘truth’ and ‘objectivity’ in order to fulfill the ideals of public journalism. In other words, although journalists are subjective, in practice they attempt to fulfill their ethical duties by holding onto some of the guidelines of fairness, objectivity, balance and accuracy through which they can makes sense of the reality that they are reporting on (Ward 2004; Gans 1979). In this regard, Charity (1995:12) reminds us that public journalists are not “radicals departing from the canons of their profession, but traditionalists attempting a return to first principles”. The idea is not to give up entirely on objectivity in practice, but rather to rethink its normative values and norms as a framework for serving the public interest.

With regard to the role of government, one of the key distinctions between the libertarian model and the social responsibility model is their view of the role-division between the press (the media) and the government (Nerone et al 1995; Wuliger 1991). While libertarianism champions distinct roles between the two institutions, with the press performing its role primarily through its watchdog functions towards the government, social responsibility is not hostile to the idea that both the press and the government have a nation-building function, and thus cooperation between the two institutions is seen as sometimes desirable and necessary (McQuail 1994; Berger 2000). This can be seen for instance in public service forms of journalism for social democracy that are supported by the state. However, due to the history of the rhetoric on national development and mass media in the post-colony serving as a cover for the political control of journalism, many journalists in Africa have tended to be wary of the social responsibility role. In their experiences, this has been used primarily as a tool of domination and political propaganda in the name of the public interest (Berger 2000:94; also see Mwesige 2004; Kivikuru 2001; chapters 8 to 10).
Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) find evidence of public or civic journalism taking hold in the shape of ‘populist mobiliser’ role, which they describe as the development of intellectual and cultural interests of the public, setting the political agenda whilst also “giving ordinary people a chance to express their views on public affairs” (1996:140). In their study, although this role was adhered to by a small fraction of the journalists interviewed, Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) concluded that the spirit of the public journalism movement had set itself up among the journalists’ core values. For Tanzanian journalists it could be argued that aspects of the public journalism role can be found in the importance they ascribe to the educational role and their continued adherence to the “*ujamaa* view of journalism” whereby news is treated as a social good (Ramaprasad 2001:546-547).

News that actualises a public journalism role tends to contain views of “ordinary people” in that it attempts to include views from a variety of “layers of civic life” and from different types of community leaders (Pew Center for Civic Journalism 2000:10; see also Charity 1995; Weaver and Wilhoit 1996). In the process, views will not be collected or prescribed only in their dramatic extremes, but reflect the diversity of the wider community. According to the public journalism literature, this will lead to stories, not just on problems, but also those with “constructive ideas and solutions” (Pew 2000:33).

Public journalism has attracted fierce criticism from some of the more traditional libertarian-oriented journalists. Many argued that public journalism was exactly what they have been doing for many years without necessarily giving it a new label (see Nerone et al 1995). Others also of a libertarian persuasion contended that public journalism was breaking all the rules of impartiality and autonomy and should therefore be avoided or re-articulated (McDevitt 2003). In addition, Blevins (1997: 3-9) argues that similar to the Hutchins Commission, public journalism is grounded in the work of scholars and their perceptions of powerful effects that undermine high culture with trivial forms of entertainment. Public journalism also presupposes a socially and politically active, culturally aware and economically stable public that is able to respond to its own desire for information or to institutions propositions articulating collective interests (Hardt 2000: 215-216). In relation to this, people may not necessarily want to be guided by newspapers into problem solving, hence public journalism as such can be seen as a form of paternalism toward readers, a criticism that is often voiced with regard to public service broadcasting. In the next section, the attempt is to point out the operational definition and to raise the implications of the aforementioned social responsibility-oriented roles with regard to the interests of this study.
3.3.2. Insights and operational definition

Conceptually, the tradition in journalism studies identifies the participant, advocacy and public roles of journalism as the beneficiaries of social responsibility theory. As suggested in the previous three sub-sections, these roles share some similarities, for instance with regard to endorsing a more active role for the journalist, news that looks beyond facts and events to include in-depth investigative reportage and an approach to news as socially relevant information through which people can meet their potential. In addition, the roles can in varying degrees, all be criticised for imposing ideals that are not entirely applicable in a political economic context that is characterised by bottom up and top down pressures (see Nerone et al 1995; Kasoma 2000). Nevertheless, there are some differences such as the consideration that although both the participant and advocacy roles prioritise the investigative function, the former does not necessarily require the journalist to operate as an activist and advocate for a specific target group whose concerns need to be brought to the fore of public discussions. On the other hand, public journalism in particular calls on journalists as citizens – and not as advocates or activists per se – to tell ordinary people’s stories and mobilise the community’s potential to solve problems. It is in this sense that public journalism is often attached to the wider processes of democratisation in society (Charity 1995; Gunaratne 1996).

In this study, I rely on a broad definition of ‘social agenda’-driven journalism to classify the participant, advocacy and public forms of journalism, in so far as they are normatively committed to intervening in the process of news production in the interest of enhancing social and political agendas for the greater good of a community or target group. The interventionist role in this case refers to in-depth news that contains the diverse views of ordinary people, news that reflects the concerns of the wider community, news that analyses social problems and conflicts, news that develops the intellectual and cultural interests of the public and news that highlights solutions and successes. In classifying the social responsibility roles as ‘social agenda’ (as distinct, here, from a development agenda), I have borne in mind as is elaborated in chapter 5 on media and NEPAD, that there is a strong emphasis in the current African context on the interventionist – development, advocate and educator – roles of journalists in NEPAD (NEPAD 2005; Kotze and Steyn 2003).11

In doing this, I have drawn on statements from the literature and studies cited in the previous chapter and in section 3.2 (see Weaver 1998; Berger 2000; Mwesige 2004; Ramaprasad 2001; Kotze and Steyn 2003:4-5) on African elite perceptions on the African Union and NEPAD, they found that the majority of elites in South Africa, Senegal, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Algeria, but not Zimbabwe, placed the media (and business) in the top four groups with the most influence in advocating NEPAD (see chapter 5).

11 In a study by Kotze and Steyn (2003:4-5) on African elite perceptions on the African Union and NEPAD, they found that the majority of elites in South Africa, Senegal, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Algeria, but not Zimbabwe, placed the media (and business) in the top four groups with the most influence in advocating NEPAD (see chapter 5).
Weaver and Wilhoit 1996). The point here is that I have attempted to rework the statements in order to arrive at a context relevant operational definition or label of ‘social agenda’ journalism as a category to be used in this research. My aim here is to avoid using participant, advocacy and public journalism as labels because – as is argued here – they do not fully designate the nuanced emphases of social responsibility-oriented journalism in the context of NEPAD and the post-colony. However, that is not to say that they have no relevance at all. In fact, in drawing up the ‘social agenda’ label – and indeed the operational definitions relied on in this study – I have considered the view that although journalists in Africa operate in a different socio-cultural and political economic context to that of the West, many appear to uphold journalism values and role perceptions that are similar to those of Western journalists. They have adopted several ideals from the Western and post-colonial journalism models which they have then adapted to their local context (see Hachten 1993; Mwesige 2004; Ramaprasad 2001; Berger 2000; Wahl-Jorgensen 2005). These considerations guided my efforts in arriving at role definitions that are in line with the interests and contextual considerations of this study. In the next section, I introduce development journalism, which can be seen as being different from social agenda journalism and yet it is a subset of social responsibility in as far as it is expresses related concerns about the libertarian approach to journalism practice particularly in the post-colonial context.

3.4 Development journalism: influences, concerns and role definition

In this section, the concern is to do with the broader exploration of development journalism, which is related to the theories of social responsibility and development communication. The origins of development journalism are often linked to journalists in 1960s Asia who began to promote the concept of ‘development journalism’ in reference to using the media as a tool for national development (Gunaratne 2000; Maganaka 2004). To start with, we can note that the attempt to use media as tool for development grew out of the 1960s emphasis on development communication in the ‘South’. It is to some of these theoretical emphases that I now turn.

3.4.1 Development communication: modernisation theories

Under the influence of the 1950/1960s modernisation theories, the linkage between the mass media and development was argued for by Pye (1963), Schramm (1964) and Lerner (1958) who prioritised the role of communication in the achievement of national integration and economic development. But development was, in this case, conceived of in the neo-classical framework of

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12 Note that some modernisation research was politically motivated. According to Thussu (2000), seminal work such as that by Lerner (1958) that linked the media to modernisation, stemmed from a covert project funded by the American administration.
economics, that is, in terms of economic growth and industrialisation with an emphasis on a plethora of independent variables and indicators (Berger 1992:6-7). Theoretically, modernisation theories described the historical-materialist development of the US and Europe, and set them up as the model of economic, social and cultural development for the post-colony (Rostow 1960; Kiely 1995). Drawing on the modernisation perspective, Schramm (1964) and Lerner (1958) focused on the linear link between social-cultural values and development, through which it was argued that the difficulties in the post-colony were related to the existence of information deficits and traditional culture that inhibited the adoption of modern attitudes and behaviour as indicators of development (Lerner 1958:72-73).

Because the problem of development was believed to be an information problem, communication was presented as the instrument that would solve it. As theorised by Lerner (1958) and Schramm (1964), communication meant the transmission of information. Exposure to mass media was one of the factors (among others such as urbanisation and literacy) that could bring about modern attitudes (Lerner 1958:50; Schramm 1964:20). The mass media were seen as information multipliers through which post-colonial governments could transmit behavioural-changing messages to the masses persuading them to alter their ways so as to evolve towards development (Shah 2003; Schramm 1964). It is in this regard that Pye (1963:20) argued that in order to modernise, sovereign countries needed to follow “a single well-established communications approach”. This linear transmission or persuasive model of communication defined the field for years to come as development communication grew to be seen as a purposive form of communication that identified the main problems of the post-war world in terms of a lack of development or progress equivalent to Western countries (see Shah 2003). Since the 1950s, numerous studies have provided diverse definitions of development communication. Some of the perspectives that have criticised the modernisation approach have influenced these definitions. It is to some of these criticisms particularly in the shape of dependency theory, a key influence on development journalism, to which we now turn.

3.4.2 Dependency, NWICO and participation

Against modernisation theories, dependency theorists who were informed by Marxist and critical theories argued that the problems of underdevelopment were not internal to the post-colony, but were determined by external factors and the way former colonies were exploited by the West in the world economy (Frank 1969:4, 221). Thus, they felt that the problems of the underdeveloped world were to do with overall structural socio-economic and political factors rather than the result
of the lack of information (Hornik 1988). Briefly, this dependency stance would go on to influence the set-up of a series of African-led development initiatives that were based on the principle of ‘collective self-reliance’, for instance, as in the case of the Lagos Plan of Action, which was adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1980 (Anyang’ Nyong’o et al 2002; also see chapter 5).¹³ Later on, dependency theorists also saw internal structures as being responsible for the problems of ‘underdevelopment’. Issues to do with unequal land distribution, class and status, lack of credit for peasants, and poor health care services strongly limited the possibilities for an overall improvement in social conditions let alone the role of the mass media in development (Frank and Gills 1996; Wallerstein 1979). In other words, in prioritising the mass media as having a central role in introducing development, the behaviourist modernisation theories had, for instance, ignored the structural issues of media ownership and control in the interests of profit and not so much social change (Hornik 1988; Dagron 2001).

Crucially for dependency theorists, modernisation theories as applied in the post-colony were also seen as being based on alien premises and methods, and on Eurocentricity (Beltran 1976). The mass media as cultural industries were seen as promoting the aims and objectives of the general capitalist system. The global flow of information was seen as coming from the ‘core’ to the ‘periphery’ (Alhassan 2004:47; see also Dos Santos 1971). Such concerns were expressed during the UNESCO-sponsored debates about NWICO in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It is in this regard that the MacBride Commission was asked to look into the concerns of the ‘Third World’ countries. This led to calls for improved news flows about the post-colony in both the ‘First’ and ‘Third’ worlds and increased ‘Third World’ control over communication assets and local media in their own countries and in the ‘First World’ (Galtung and Vincent 1992:18, 104; see also Gunaratne 1996). Echoing the concerns of the Hutchins report, the MacBride Commission made recommendations on issues such as the nexus between media and democracy by highlighting the right of the public to participate in communication, the social responsibilities of the media and the harnessing of the media to support national development (Stevenson 1994:223; Gunaratne 1996:12-14).

¹³ Although the theories of underdevelopment and dependency are often read as having risen out of the works of Latin American theorists, African scholars went on to draw on and expand on these critiques of modernisation and the hegemony of global capitalism. By the 1970s, the underdevelopment paradigm was dominant in the works of various Africanist theorists including Rodney (1972), Amin (1977) and Leys (1975) whose post-colonial context appeared to confirm the arguments of dependence. These sentiments went on to find expression in many of the development programmes of the 1980s. Dependency theorists describe the two unequal groups of economies in the current global economy with the aid of the terms ‘core’ and ‘periphery’. Prior to the 1990s, some Marxists criticised dependency theorists for not giving the state-socialism of the Eastern bloc its own category/group (Dos Santos 1971). History has done away with this criticism given that the more recent talk is to do with the dominance of neo-liberalism.
Representatives from the post-colony proposed ‘national communication policies’ that emphasised the need for governments to control media structures and oppose domestic and foreign elites and business interests (Hyden and Leslie 2003:20-21). Generally, the NWICO perspective put the state at the centre of development mobilisation. In the face of imperialism, the state was seen as a defender of indigenous rights and knowledge, a promoter of national culture and self-determination (Kasoma 2000:36; see also Alhassan 2004). The NWICO position implicitly prioritised a harmonious and not adversarial relationship between the press and the government whilst also enhancing the development role of the mass media – interpreted as one in which the media were expected to actively report on and promote government development projects (Servaes 1991; Kariithi 1994).

The NWICO debates ultimately also brought the key issue of ‘participation’ to the fore as it became evident that the media were not the only key players in development and that for the most part development initiatives would not work without the involvement of people (Gunaratne 1996; Galtung and Vincent 1992). Influenced by Freire’s (1970; 1974) ‘pedagogy of the oppressed’ in reference to the idea of liberating education whereby communication was conceived of in terms of dialogue and participation (Mody 1991:27), it was felt that development communication required grassroots participation and sensitivity to cultural diversity and context, all of which were ignored by modernisation (Waisboard 2001; White et al 1994). The value of this approach is in getting community members with indigenous knowledge, rather than ‘professionals’ and ‘experts’, to be in charge of the communication processes (Berrigan 1979:12-13). Hence, the current aim of development communication is to remove constraints for a more equal and participatory society (Shah 2003). Some recent specific definitions state that the ultimate goal of development communication is to raise ‘the quality of life’ of populations, including to increase income and well-being, eradicate social injustice, promote land reform and freedom of speech, and establish community centres for leisure and entertainment (Melkote 1991:229). In thinking about these orientations to development communication, it is worth bearing in mind that the actual meaning of development shifts according to paradigm. As noted so far, in the neo-classical or modernisation framework, development is analysed in terms of economic growth, but the dependency paradigm looks beyond this to highlight cultural expression and equality. The participatory approach takes on a holistic stance that includes growth indices, quality of life and the participation of the recipients of development (see Berger 1992; Kiely 1995; UNDP 2001).

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14 Even today with the state ‘out of favour’, there are renewed calls for the values of indigenous knowledge systems and oral traditions through notions such as the ‘African Renaissance’ (see NEPAD 2001; Tomasselli and Shepperson 1999).

15 Fanon’s (1963/2001) participatory approach to democracy and democratising development can be read as an indirect influence on Freire’s (1970) ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ (see also Adam 1993).
Against this backdrop of development communication broadly, where does journalistic communication fit in? In a sense, development journalism can be read as a sub-field of both social responsibility theory and development communication, and indeed it needs to be understood in relation to the modernisation-dependency and participatory paradigm in development communication (see Gunaratne 1996; Maganaka 2004). In the next two sub-sections, I explore the role of development journalism in terms of its functions, news content, criticisms and operationalisation.

3.4.3 Development journalism: definitions and concerns

Drawing on the dependency approach, the criticisms of modernisation and the outcomes of NWICO, media scholars, practitioners and governments in the post-colony argued for a development model of journalism that was in line with the major concern of nation building in their countries (see Domatob and Hall 1983; Edeani 1993). The argument was that the detached roles of neutral and watchdog journalism, which focus on events, oddities and negative news, did not provide information about how structures were operating to produce conditions of poverty for people in the post-colony (Galtung and Vincent 1992:50-51). The libertarian approach to news was also criticised for attaching too much value to the political, social and economic freedom of the individual when what was required in the context of recently independent countries, was an emphasis on community, cultural unity, development and nation building (see Gunaratne 2000; and also Nyamnjoh 2005 for recent criticisms). The aim was to steer journalism towards informed discussion of the economic and social problems central to challenges of development in the post-colony (Righter 1978:188-189). In line with the NWICO proposals, the Western adversarial version of the press as a ‘fourth estate’ and the emphasis on press freedoms, which were seen as being out of place in the context of the post-colony, were equated with “press-government harmony” whereby the media were to be used to support the state’s development efforts (Gunaratne 2000:5). This notion of press-government harmony can – as we shall soon see – be found in some definitions of development(al) journalism. As such, journalism was then to be purposely used to foster specific areas such as education, health care, government plans and budgets, land reform, industry, agriculture, African cultural values, social welfare and the environment whilst also informing the population (Kariithi 1994:30; also see Domatob and Hall 1983).
The phrase ‘development journalist’ was initially coined by Chalkley (1968) cited in Maganaka (2004:1-13) who asserted that besides simply disseminating information and interpreting it for the audience, the development journalist had a third task – a positive one – that could be referred to as promotion. In other words, besides simply disseminating the facts of economic life and interpreting them, the journalist could also promote them and bring them home to readers. Chalkley (1968) argued that as a development journalist:

You must get your readers to realise how serious the development problem is, to think about the problem, to open their eyes to the possible solutions – to punch that hole in the vicious circle (cited in Maganaka 2004:2).

The aim is to go beyond reporting the news by taking on an interventionist stance through which the journalist can promote national development. After nearly four decades of theorising, an authoritative definition of the concept of development journalism remains elusive. In relation to this, the contested nature of what development means has led some scholars to refer to this orientation in journalism as ‘developmental’ or ‘development’ journalism, phrases that are sometimes used interchangeably when the authors actually have the other term in mind (see Gunaratne 1978; Domatob and Hall 1983; Fitzgerald 1990). The difference in interpretation of these two concepts can be analysed in relation to the extent with which they ignore the participatory paradigm and instead rely on the idea that governments have to control the media to achieve national development in what Sussman (1978:77) refers to as ‘developmental journalism’. Here, the idea is that the media, as an instrument of nation building, should support the state’s development efforts. In this approach, the flow of messages takes on a top-down authoritative form of communicating development. Thus, according to Wete (1986:6), in a definition that takes on aspects of the transmission model and the libertarian disseminator role, the importance of development journalism lies in its utility as a “vehicle” to spread information and knowledge widely and quickly through the news media, thereby facilitating the process of development. Jamias (1975:13) argues that the three main ideas defining the evolving philosophy of development journalism include that it is “purposive communication”, value-laden, and pragmatic. For Edeani (1993), development journalism puts emphasis on the coverage of events, policies, national development programmes and activities dealing with the improvement of the life of the people. These interpretations tend to look at development journalism from the point of view of disseminating government-oriented information to the people in the interests of development (see Melkote and Steeves 2001; Waisboard 2001).
On the other hand, are those interpretations of ‘development journalism’ proper as is argued by Ogan (1982:7), that focus on the ‘critical’ examination, evaluation and reporting of the relevance, enactment and impact of development programmes by an ‘independent’ mass media especially local small media and adds the caveat that this should be independent of the government. Having said that, her conception of development journalism also leaves room for the local media in particular to willingly buy into the government’s development plans. Gunaratne (1978) cited in Gunaratne (2000:10) argued that, “the democratic ‘Third World’ governments could promote developmental journalism better through fostering a socially responsible independent press rather than through media subservience”. For him, democracy requires the press to take on an investigative strand in their reportage. He refers to what he calls development(al) journalism as a key aspect of a new journalism that involves “analytical interpretation, subtle investigation, constructive criticism and sincere association with the grassroots” (Gunaratne 1996:3). Here Gunaratne (1978; 1996) appears to use the terms developmental journalism and development journalism interchangeably and yet he is referring to the concerns of the latter as is spelt out in this study. He argues that development(al) journalism is not compatible with either the libertarian concept, which in his view prioritises the detached neutral role of the mass media, or the Siebert et al (1956) authoritarian concept, which stifles criticism of political machinery and the officials in power and imposes a top-down approach. In this case, the journalist is seen more as a participant who voluntarily promotes and explores the interests and concerns of the public. Aggarwala (1979:181) argues that development (journalism) news should not be seen as being identical with “positive” news about state-led development projects. In covering the development newsbeat, a journalist should critically examine, evaluate and report on the relevance of a development project to national and local needs, the difference between a planned scheme and its actual implementation, and the differences between its impacts on people as claimed by government officials and as it actually is (see also Maganaka 2004). The proponents of this second approach tend to exclude those instances whereby the government intentionally controls the media for the purposes of development or communication that takes on a top-down approach.

In this second approach, emphasis is also on news as a process. Aggarwala (1980:26) refers to development journalism as “the reporting of development process rather than events”. Normatively, the definitions and overall objectives of development journalism determine that its adherents value a type of news that is different from the libertarian hard news. So, rather than highlighting events, development journalists are in this case supposed to spend more time and efforts on covering process news because issues of national development and community
participation are processes. To cover process news, journalists have to collect information over a more extended period of time and do some research (see Aggarwala 1980; Wete 1986; Mwaffisi 1991). They have to understand the development process, provide information or knowledge helpful to the development, and look at the process critically and find out the problems. They have to raise the consciousness of the people about national development and mobilise people to participate in the development process. Here, development journalism is seen as a horizontal process that is based on participation and the sharing of information between various groups in society (Shah and Gayatri 1994; Maganaka 2004).

In addition, some definitions – especially those that have a developmental media-subservience orientation – tend to take on a cultural reading of the potential values of development journalism. According to Domatob and Hall (1983:16), ‘African development journalism’ does not only strive to inform and educate, but to also motivate the people. Viewed from this perspective, development journalism is seen as an instrument for spiritual, cultural and mental emancipation from a legacy of thinking bequeathed by colonialism. ‘African development journalism’ is related not only to material achievements, but also to transcendent and aesthetic cultural values as well (see also Domatob 1988). For Mwaffisi (1991:87), the development news produced by African journalists must serve as a stimulus to national pride and unity because, for the young nations, such pride and unity are very important for development to occur. Rather similar to Nkrumah’s (1965) ‘African journalist’ who must work towards political independence and African cultural unity, the ‘African development journalist’ is in this regard also seen as someone that must work against neo-colonialism by adopting an Africanist journalism that is based on African thought (Domatob 1988:156-157). Here, the ‘African development journalist’ is seen as someone that must represent the cultural authenticity of the ‘African’ (see Mwaffisi 1991; Domatob 1988; Domatob and Hall 1983; chapter 5 on NEPAD’s interpellations).

As highlighted before in sub-section 3.4.2, we can note here that the meaning of development in these orientations to development(al) journalism appears to change according to whether it refers to state led development or efforts aimed at cultural reification and nation building or those that are focused on participant democracy, equality and social welfare. Bearing in mind these variations, Galtung and Vincent (1992:163-5) argue that the aim of the development journalist is to explain complex development processes in simple terms that people with low literacy levels can understand, to provide not just information about community problems, but to also highlight potential solutions, and to empower citizens to improve their own lives and their communities.
Overall, in line with social responsibility theory, the development journalist intervenes in the process of news production with the aim of motivating people to solve problems through their active involvement in communication (see Maganaka 2004; Gunaratne 1996). However, as we shall soon see, in the context of the post-colony development journalism in general (or what some scholars refer to as developmental) has for the most part focused on the media as a key component of promoting nation building and cultural unity for the purposes of development. Still, it shares similar concerns with the broader social responsibility model in as far as it normatively questions the self-righting potential of the libertarian approach in the interests of social and political causes (Gunaratne 1996:16). In the next sub-section, I look at the issue of journalists’ perceptions towards the role of development and the enactment of this role in practice coupled with an exploration of its criticisms and role definition for this study.

3.4.4 Practice, criticisms and operational role definition

In terms of the role perception of development journalism, Ramaprasad (2001:546-547) found that although Tanzanian journalists saw their function as primarily being to provide accurate, timely, investigative news and analysis, they have been unable to shed the social responsibility – *ujamaa* – imperative and the role of national development. In her interviews she found that Tanzanians, particularly those who started journalism during the era of socialism, believed in the national development role of the press. Some of them endorsed a “feeling of social responsibility”. Similar to their endorsement of an educational role, Tanzanian journalists rated the press’s role in national development highly (Ramaprasad 2001:547). In relation to this, although Mwesige (2004) did not ask Ugandan journalists about their role in development, he notes that they endorsed the advocacy or populist mobiliser role in ways consistent with some of the aspirations of the advocates of development journalism. In the Shafer study (1996:10-11), besides being aware of the differences between the free press model and the development model, journalists in the Philippines who endorsed the development role did so in part because they believed it to be the best model for their context and also because it was safer than the adversarial role.

The critique of development journalism has tended to operate at both the levels of theory and empirical reality. In terms of theory, proponents of the libertarian approach influenced by the concept of the marketplace of ideas tend to argue that development journalism detracts journalism from its political democratic priority of facilitating expression, information and participation. Implicitly, the argument is that development is a function of government and that journalists, as
neutral observers and watchdogs on behalf of society, should simply monitor government’s efforts on development (Stevenson 1994:18; see also Curran 2000). In practice, development journalism has been criticised for operating as a mouthpiece of authoritative states and for negating the values of objectivity and impartiality, which are for the most part seen as the basis of professional journalism practice (Ward 2004). The most vehement attacks are from libertarian media scholars who accuse development journalism of serving as a pretext for governments to take control of the media at the cost of genuine media freedom and free speech (see Stevenson 1988; Sussman 1978).

It is the case that in the post-colony, many governments used development journalism to co-opt and coerce the media into positive and promotional reportage. Critics argue that government officials used this stance to deflect the press from engaging in the kind of watchdog reporting that challenges the political or economic status quo, or that uncovers government incompetence, corruption and malfeasance (Shafer 1996:4; see also Kasoma 2000). It is in this regard that Kariithi (1994:30) refers to development journalism as a “dying field”. In addition, Fitzgerald (1990) describes development journalism as “the idea that the press should be cheerleaders for developing ‘Third World’ nations” (1990:49).

In drawing up an operational role definition for development journalism it is important to bear in mind that such definitions tend to vary with regard to context and the interests of the study. In a meta-research case study of development journalism, Fair (1988) found that there was no consensus in terms of conceptualising development journalism among the 20 studies analysed. Most often, development journalism was operationalised by “topics or categories of news that were considered to be development journalism” (1988:169). In this study, development journalism is operationalised mainly in terms of nationalist-statist-regionalist development in reference to news that promotes NEPAD economic development policies, news that portrays a positive and self-reliant image of a united Africa and news that outwardly encourages peoples’ participation in NEPAD on the basis of African cultural unity (see chapter 5). In doing this, I have borne in mind both the normative ideals and practical realities of development journalism in the African context. Thus, whilst I am aware that development journalism can include critical investigations of policies and their impacts and that it can also be influenced by social responsibility theory, development communication (top-down and participatory) and implicitly by libertarian theory, this operationalisation is influenced by the current post-colonial context of the media and NEPAD (see chapter 5). In other words, as is set out in Figure 1 Appendix B, in theory and practice, I see development journalism as including investigative and even straight-ahead transmission type reportage say on government projects whilst also holding onto its social agenda.
and development-oriented tasks of, for instance, motivating people to solve their problems and nation building through development. Still, for the most part, my operationalisation, which is borne out of the context and interests of this study, bears in mind that in practice, development journalism in the post-colony has often been deployed to positively portray and promote economic development initiatives. Pertinently, I have drawn on influences from Gunaratne (1996), Domatob and Hall (1983), Ramaprasad (2001) and Galtung and Vincent (1992). In the next section, by way of conclusion I sum up the main points from this chapter.

3.5 Conclusion: insights and implications

The foregoing literature review indicates that the libertarian theoretical approach is the context underpinning the neutral and watchdog normative roles of journalism. Public, participant, advocacy or what I refer to as ‘social agenda’ journalistries are influenced by social responsibility theory. Development journalism is in this case associated with both social responsibility and development communication in its top-down and participatory modes. The review indicates that libertarianism, with its emphasis on straight-ahead reportage, and social responsibility theories, which pursue the active involvement of journalists in empowering the public towards social causes, do not share similar values as to how journalism should achieve its normative role across different socio-cultural contexts. However, in practice the boundaries between the roles of journalism are not always met or clearly mapped out as is suggested in theory. Journalists tend to be more pluralistic in their role conceptions than is often thought by researchers (see Weaver and Wilhoit 1986; Weaver 1998; Ramaprasad 2001; Mwesige 2004). In theory, the theoretical influences in general tend to ignore the extent to which journalism is influenced by socio-cultural and structural constraints that might deter them from acting on the ideals of their roles (see Hanitzsch 2004; Ebo 1994; Nyamnjoh 2005). As such, news descriptions and journalists’ accounts are context-influenced selective constructions in relation to the state of affairs that they depict (Heritage 1984:150). I will go on to expand on this issue in the next chapter when we consider the nexus between journalistic roles and/or sub-identities, content and cultural identity considerations.

What should be clear from this chapter is the diversity of roles available to journalists, and that these may often pull in different directions. A development role interpreted in a top-down way can contradict a liberal watchdog role. Both are very different to a neutral role, and neither necessarily sits well with a participatory role or a neo-liberal pluralistic one. It is the task of this
thesis to probe the way selected continental African journalists that report on NEPAD, deal with these potential tensions in role adherence as regards NEPAD.

Overall, bearing in mind the review in this chapter it is still difficult to make connections between journalists’ perceptions, their behaviours and news content. Some studies portray journalists as society’s watchdogs over government and big business, while others argue that journalists are pawns of the powerful and yet others still argue that journalists take on interventionist roles like those of development. In relation to roles and news content, it must be said that by thinking of the relationship in terms of the mainstream ‘watchdog’ or ‘neutral’ or even in terms of ‘social agenda’ roles, a study could go on to miss the wider influences of a reporter’s context plus the specifics of news values, cultural norms, routines, beats and sources. These roles have emerged from studies that work from within libertarian, social responsibility and development communication theory all of which tend to rely on the libertarian values of democracy as the yardstick for journalism. In practice, the way in which these roles shape newspapers content across various contexts is rather unclear. Still, this study works on the assumption that the content of news stories could in some way bear the traces of journalists’ role perceptions. In the next chapter, I explore this study’s approach to identity and the potential correlations between this and the roles of journalism (or what I refer to as journalistic sub-identities) and news content.
CHAPTER FOUR
JOURNALISTIC ROLES, IDENTITY AND CONTENT

4.0 Introduction
This chapter explores the potential correlations between journalists’ roles perceptions, their cultural identities and the potential expression of these identifications in the content of the news they produce. In doing this, the chapter relies on concepts that are linked to a cultural studies approach towards identity, journalism and mass media practice. Divided into six related sections, the first section maps out this study’s approach to cultural, national and journalistic identity. This section also explores how journalistic roles are re-read here as journalistic sub-identities. By drawing on inferences from relevant literature concerning journalists’ dispositions on transnational topics and the news content on such topics, the second section suggests that when faced with issues that invoke cultural identity, some journalists may take on attached and partisan forms of journalism. However, this is not to say that there is a direct link between specific journalistic role perceptions, journalists’ cultural identifications and their news stories. The third section introduces the concepts of ideology, discourse and hegemony before going on to highlight how journalists and the mass media construct and mediate dominant or collective senses of belonging and how their views and news content are often analysed for identity constructions. With the aid of the concept of ‘interpellation’, the fourth section accounts for how journalists may actually come to take up various identity positions, including journalistic role-taking as an aspect of ‘identification’. Section 5 draws on the postcolonial theoretical concept of ‘hybridity’ to map out this study’s approach to African identity. The sixth part concludes the chapter by making the case for a context-driven analytical approach to journalism, journalists, news content and cultural identities.

4.1 Identities: cultural, national and journalistic
Based on the previous chapters it can be posited that some studies concerning journalists have pointed out transnational similarities in journalistic role orientations and the theoretical influences on journalism practice (Weaver 1998; Merrill 1995), whilst others have recognised that contextual and cultural influences affect how they perceive their roles (see Nossek 2004; Amin 2002). In the post-colony, journalism would also seem to be the result of various internal and external socio-cultural and politico-economic forces that have to be navigated by the journalists (see Kasoma 2000; Nyamnjoh 2005; Ebo 1994; Kareithi and Kariithi 2005). However, what is often left under-addressed at this level is how and whether journalists attempt to address such influences by strategically enacting their views through their news stories. In fact, not much has actually been
said about how African journalists perceive the interplay of their internal cultural influences with
the various external influences and how this affects their role definitions concerning journalism
practice. In thinking about these questions, one has to take on issues relating to how journalists
approach the multiplicity of their identities – in this case the cultural and the journalistic – and
how they adapt these to the conditions in which they practice. How does this interaction work?
More pertinently, for the purposes of this study, how do journalists navigate and/or negotiate
these senses of who they are in the context of NEPAD and how, if at all, are these linked to their
news stories?

4.1.1 Cultural and national identity

In attempting to look into the questions posed above, in this and the next sub-section my attempt
is to point out what I mean by cultural and national identity whilst also confirming what it is that I
mean by journalistic sub-identities and their connection to the roles of journalism. Briefly, social
identity generally refers to individuals’ labelling of themselves as members of particular groups
such as regional, national, cultural, occupational, gender and so forth (see Tajfel 1981; Hogg and
Abrams 1988). According to Tajfel (1981:254-267), social identity is composed of three elements,
which include categorisation, identification and comparison. In the first instance, we label others
and ourselves into categories such as student, journalist, ‘black’ and Christian all of which helps
us to make sense of who we are and who the others are. In the second instance, we identify with
groups that we see ourselves as belonging to. The point here is that sometimes we think of
ourselves in terms of group identifications as in ‘us’ against ‘them’, whilst on other occasions and
depending on the context at hand we think of ourselves in terms of ‘I’ against ‘he’ or ‘she’ (also
see Rivenburgh 1997). Identification therefore assists a person, for instance, a journalist, in
defining who s/he is by developing the perception that s/he shares the same identity with other
members of his or her category. The fuller point here is that the processes of thinking of ourselves
as group members and also as unique individuals are both aspects of the identification.

In the third instance, we compare the ‘in-groups’ that we identify with against the ‘out-groups’ to
which we do not identify by assigning positive attributes towards the former (Tajfel 1981:254-
255). In other words, this opposition is socially produced through attribution of particular
characteristics to one or the other side of the binary. Attributes that are deemed undesirable are
projected onto the other group, and in this way, they are externalised. As will be highlighted
below in the discussions concerning identification and African identity, this process of
designating what is outside the self or group is also what defines the self or group. It is the
moment of identification (see Hall 1997). This relational binary opposition between ‘us’ and ‘them’ is at the heart of all identity. According to Derrida (1972/1981), there is no neutrality in these binary oppositions given that relations of dominance are built and inscribed into them. There is always a relation of power between the two poles, in fact, as he argues, “we are not dealing with...peaceful coexistence...but rather with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs...the other or has the upper hand” (1981:41). The opposition is maintained through processes of naturalisation and exclusion, for instance, as in when national flags, national anthems, national days, nationalist history and other symbols were (and are still being) deployed by the post-colonial nation to naturalise the community of the nation in the process of nation-building and national cultural formation (Fanon 1963:133-138). These processes are not arbitrary: in order to be sustained, identity has to be constantly reiterated, verified and naturalised – often through processes of boundary maintenance and differentiation.

Therefore, although this study treats cultural identity as being predicated on an assumed set of commonly shared characteristics, everyday practices and ideas as markers of shared cultural identity, it is pertinent to note that culture is also seen as being determined by difference (see Tomlinson 1991; Kupe 1995; Gilroy 1997). To elaborate, individuals who feel that they belong to the same culture – as in reference to an expression of their daily lived experiences and practices (see Williams 1966), share this view because they rely on a common set of norms, but this awareness is only possible when they realise the absence of these norms in other cultures. Hence, cultures define themselves in relation to or in opposition to other cultural groups (see Hall 1994). It is in this sense that cultural identity is often seen as tending towards diversity, differentiation, the recognition of multiple identities and the potential “for cultural self-expression, and it is in principle a source for activation” (Kivikuru 1995:371-377). This cultural activation and/or articulation of identity finds expression through a range of multiple selves and group categories that characterise the social matrix such as race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, occupation, national origin, national culture and region in relation to the different social worlds that we inhabit. Hence, in this study, the broadest level of identity is treated as being cultural identity (see Hall 1996; Gilroy 1997). However, this is not to suggest that cultural identities are devoid of an assumed set of common characteristics. Remember that identities whether cultural or occupational are at some level based on commonalities.
Anderson (1983:15) deals with the issue of assumed commonalities more fully in his explanation of the sense in which the nation as an expression of national culture is an “imagined political community”:

> It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.

Thought of in this way, national identity is posited as a “mental construct, an imaginary complex of ideas” the image of which is “real to the extent that one is convinced of it, believes in it and identifies with it emotionally” (Wodak et al 1999:22). However, for this to happen, one has to participate in the idea that identity is based on a shared sense of cultural practice (Hall 1996; 1994). In fact, for Anderson (1983), media, such as newspapers effectively work to create an imagined sense of bounded spaces like ‘South Africa’ and ‘Africa’ in which a number of anonymous actors see themselves as being engaged in various similar activities such as the reading of newspapers. Through the imaginative processes of the print media Anderson (1983) notes, “fiction seeps quietly and continuously into reality, creating the remarkable confidence of community in anonymity, which is the hallmark of modern nations” (1983: 40). The implications of this for the analysis of media content and the construction of identities and particularly for post-colonial African identities are explored more fully below in sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.5 respectively.  

For now, I would like to point out that according to Tomlinson (1991:80), Anderson’s assertion concerning imagined commonalities “immediately locates national identity at a certain level of abstraction”. More pertinently, for him:

> (A)ll cultural identities – be they national, regional, local – are, in one way, of the same order. They are all representations (in the sense that imagination is a representative faculty) of belonging. . .Where people think beyond the immediate presence of others, which is today almost everywhere, they ‘imagine a community’ to which they belong. (1991:81).

This serves to remind us that identities, whether cultural, occupational or professional, are based on an imagined sense of belonging along the ‘us’ and ‘them’ type of relational categories and yet they are also predicated on differentiation, distinctiveness and diversity both at the level of the group and individual. For instance, post-colonial national identity was for the most part deliberately constructed in the new nation states as a strategy towards national cultural unity, and relied on the suppression of different cultural, ethnic and language groups (see Fanon 1963; Kupe 1995). Hence, national identity as an expression of cultural identity at the level of the nation, is

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16 As is illustrated below and in the findings of this study, post-colonial national identity often takes on another meaning of a pan-African identity that looks beyond the nation (see Nkrumah 1962; Fanon 1963; Gilroy 1993).
conceptualised here as a social construct that operates on and relies on the collectivity of a multiplicity of dimensions that are constantly changing through processes of exclusion and inclusion. Thus, whilst national identity is based on the collectivism of the nation in terms of certain common characteristics and the conception of a territory that is demarcated by a border (see Schlesinger 1991; Gellner 1983), it is not always fixed – given that it is influenced by the multiple identities in the collective. In the next sub-section, I explore more specifically, what is meant here-within by journalistic sub-identities.

4.1.2 Journalistic roles, ideology, identity and sub-identities

As was posited – albeit briefly – in chapters 1 and 2, in thinking about journalistic identity as an umbrella term for the roles of journalism, the question of journalistic role/s is conceptualised here-within as having two meanings. To reiterate, journalistic roles are conceptualised as the kinds of activities that society determines to be appropriate for individuals that take on the positions in society that are defined by those roles. In addition, individual journalists’ roles – as they are informed by the related norms and ideal-type values of journalism – are also analysed as the expressions of journalistic identity. This dual understanding is influenced by role theory whereby the role of the journalist is based on a set of discursively constructed ideal-type values that make up journalistic ideology, which defines, and guides journalistic practice (see Janowitz 1975; Tuchman 1978; Deuze 2005). Deuze (2005:446-448) has crystallised as the public service ideal, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy and ethics as the values and elements that can be conceptualised as being component parts that make up this ideology (see also chapter 3).

As asserted before, it is on the basis of the aforementioned values that some scholars have come to see journalism in theory and practice as having an occupational ideology of its own, which is often invoked when they speak of a global view of journalism. Although Weaver (1998:468), cautions against strong claims for an emerging global view of journalism it is fair to say – as his work actually suggests – that journalists tend to have a shared understanding of the values of journalism even if they adopt them and adapt them differently to give meaning to what they do in their varied contexts. Therefore, whilst journalism is in this study seen as being flexible and prone to reinvention it is worth bearing in mind that what typifies more or less universal similarities in journalism as a profession can be defined as a shared occupational ideology among journalists (see Kasoma 2000; Nyamnjoh 2005 for exceptions). It is against this background that one could at some level refer to a global consensual occupational journalistic ideology that guides journalistic work and is perhaps more visible and dominant at the global level than at other levels.
Bear in mind that when I refer here to ‘journalistic ideology’ I am not exclusively referring to ‘ideology’ in the Marxist Althusserian (1971) sense – as I do in section 4.2 below – whereby it implies the distortion of the real conditions in which we live. Briefly, for Althusser (1971:111, 154-155), ideology is the representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. This is because ideology, which mainly represents the beliefs of the economically dominant class, is seen to be acting on the consciousness of individuals to interpellate or hail them into subject positions that only serve to maintain the existing relations of capitalist domination as the real ‘natural’ ones (1971:128). Neither am I, primarily thinking of ideology in the Gramscian (2000) sense whereby it is characterised by negotiation, conflicts of interest and struggles (see section 4.2). I am simply referring to ideology in the sense of a sum of ideas, values and beliefs of a particular professional occupational group that are often relied upon to exclude and marginalise other beliefs and groups as part of an attempt to define and provide a common-sense practice for the profession (see Deuze 2005; Fairclough 2001). As we shall soon see in the findings and discussions chapters, the journalists in this study tend to prioritise the libertarian strand of this journalistic ideology over and above social responsibility and even Africanist ideological influences on journalism, which are treated as being subordinate to libertarianism.

Note that Althusser (1971) to an extent does not merely see ideology as being about the expression of the economic base, but also as a practice – rituals, customs, values, patterns of behaviour – reproduced through what he calls the ‘ideological state apparatuses’ in reference to institutions such as education, religion, the state, the family and the media amongst others. He contends that it is at the level of ideology that the reproduction of the entire system of the relations of production characterising the capitalist mode of production is secured (also see Lechte 1994). Whilst the references to patterns of behaviour can be related to the value patterns of journalistic practice, I am not using the ‘ideology’ in ‘journalistic ideology’ to refer to a dominant capitalist worldview that is to be toppled through a class struggle as is done by Marxists (see Marx 1959/1992). Journalistic ideology is in this case in reference to the values, norms and codes of conduct that guide journalistic practice and identity, as is agreed upon by those members of society that perform the roles of a journalist, which are at some level made available to them (the journalists) through interaction with other members of society. Whilst I tend to see the libertarian strand of this ideology in particular as being hegemonic, the reviews in chapter 3 serve to remind us here that journalistic ideology in general is fraught with its own internal contradictions.
conflicts and struggles concerning the practicality, relevance and applicability of its normative ideal-type values (also see 4.2 below).

Pertinently, it is on the basis of the ideal-type values that the institution of journalism is seen as fulfilling a variety of normative roles, without which the realisation of a democratic society may be impossible (Berger 2000). The values give legitimacy and validity to journalism, and journalists often rely upon them in their self-definitions of who they are and what they do in practice. Hence, they tend to refer to themselves as disseminators, messengers, neutral observers, advocates, development educators, watchdogs and informants amongst others (see Janowitz 1975; Tuchman 1978; Weaver 1998). In this study, the roles of journalism are conceptualised as the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development roles, which I then go on to categorise under the umbrella term ‘journalistic identity’. The roles are seen as the (practical) expressions of this identity of journalism. The idea in this is that an overarching notion of ‘journalistic identity’ can include varying roles that can amount to ‘journalistic sub-identities’ when they are invoked (also see Deuze 2005; Carpentier 2005). The validity of a concept such as ‘journalistic identity’ can be illustrated by some of the protections of journalism in Africa and by the public’s perceptions of journalism. For instance, the African Union’s 2002 ‘Banjul Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression’ deals with a range of issues concerning journalistic professionalism, materials, sources, sectors, ethics and freedoms (ACHPR 2002). Remember here that journalistic roles are actually normative in so far as they regulate, constitute and create the professional, occupational and institutional identity/ies of journalism. Therefore, I am relying on journalistic roles as a logical point of entry into thinking about journalistic identity.

In referring to ‘journalistic role’, ‘journalistic sub-identity’ and ‘journalistic identity’ in the ways that I have, I have borne in mind that the use of the terms ‘role’ and ‘identity’ is an issue that is related to specific epistemological frameworks. Based on the literature review in chapter 2 and the forthcoming reviews in this chapter, one can posit that as a concept, role is more popular in sociological (functionalist) approaches, while identity is more situated in cultural and media studies (constructionist) approaches. Hence, broadly speaking I generally see the concept of role as being linked to Goffman’s (1959) notion of actors performing parts in a play. Here, action is seen as being static and detached from the self. It is about what you do or enact. Taking on certain roles (parts) in society (a play), refers to doing certain things and not others as is determined by society. As has been hinted at so far by Anderson (1983) and as is elaborated on below in section 4.2, this is different from the way in which identity is analysed in cultural studies where it refers
to the socio-culturally influenced constructions of the self (Hall 1996). This suggests that journalistic sub-identities and journalistic identity are at some level also socio-culturally embedded constructions, and thus are the outcomes of the activities, practices and (spoken) expressions of journalists. It is also in this sense that I see Fairclough (2001) and Foucault (1978) as preferring to think of ‘social roles’ as ‘subject positions’ and ‘self’ respectively, in as far as the latter references make room for the creative and active strands of agency through which individuals, teachers, journalists and so on (re)produce their identity(ies) in society.

In addition, remember that the concept of journalistic identity helps us to answer the question concerning who the journalist is and ought to be as is measured by some discursively constructed cultural ideas that find expression through their roles and/or sub-identities. Thus, at a broader level, the roles are deployed here to differentiate, distinguish and identify journalistic identity from other occupational, professional and institutional identities. I have tried to be as careful as possible in using ‘identity’ as a concept related to the subjectivities and self-definitions of the journalists, whilst the word ‘roles’ is used when describing their specific practices without necessarily and immediately focusing – at that given place and time of usage – on the repercussions of these practices for their identity constructions. However, when the thesis shifts to the nexus between roles (as practice) and identity as in this chapter and the follow up chapters, the words identity and even more specifically sub-identity(ies) are often preferred.

Nevertheless, the aforementioned line of thinking concerning roles and identities should not be taken to mean that I subscribe to a rigid one-dimensional type relationship in which roles are simply seen as the practical ramifications or expressions of identity. I have unpacked journalistic roles and journalistic sub-identity in the ways that I have as part of an attempt to answer the questions of this study and to make sense of the reviewed literature from the vantage point of the post-colony. In fact, I see roles and identities as being engaged in a dialectical relationship in which each of these two categories has the potential to engage, affect and (re)produce the other. Individuals have available to them a number of roles and identities which they can move in and out of and they choose these in accordance with the situation at hand. Depending the context, certain roles and identities may at times be more pronounced than others (see Goffman 1981; Khan 1983; Meyer 1994). The nexus between roles and identities is at some level based on a fluid, negotiable and interactive relationship whereby taking on say the role of a ‘journalist’ may affect one’s self-definition in terms of one’s individual or collective sense/s of belonging and vice versa. In elaborating on this, it is worth thinking about Althusser’s (1971:128-131, 174) concept
of interpellation or hailing, which – as is discussed more fully below in sub-section 4.3 – refers to a dual process whereby discourse specific identities or subject positions are created and, more importantly here, how they hail or place concrete individuals into them. It is a process by which journalists as subjects of the system could, for instance, be drawn into a particular identity category that comes with a set of roles, rituals, values and patterns of behaviour that are to be enacted at times even unconsciously by the journalist for the necessary functioning of the status quo.

The point here is that the identity positions that we are hailed or positioned into at a particular moment can influence the roles that we perform. For example, if I get subjected (in the Marxist sense) into a ‘pan-Africanist’ identity category this may have implications as to whether I will take up a journalistic role that requires me to maintain objectivist professional distance or one that allows me to advocate the specialist interests of Africans. On the other hand, if I tend to take on ‘libertarian-oriented’ journalistic roles this might also have implications as to whether I could see myself as a ‘pan-Africanist’. The fuller point is that identity (sense of self) can exist and be (re)produced through (practical role) performance and that social practice involves the discursive construction of identity. In fact, discourse, when thought of in the Foucaultian (1980) sense of talk, utterances or written text, can be referred to as discoursal action, that is, social practice meaning that discourse is also the home for agency, action and identity (Fairclough 2001:24, 32). Hence, similar to the ways in which culture is linked to practice, identity can be related to practice or performance, as in “something that people do” (Alvarez 2002:3) and this includes the acts of speaking and writing (see chapter 6). This also relates to how identity is at times thought of in terms of what you do, what you say and what you have in terms of possessions (see Goffman 1959, 1981; Tajfel 1981).

Bearing in mind that role-taking is not a straight forward process, interpellation or more specifically identification is, as we shall soon see, also characterised by moments of contradiction, negotiation, conflict, ambiguity and even rejection with some identity categories being prioritised, rejected and others are being (re)created. Bear in mind that there are multiple roles and identities circulating in society – depending on context – and that individuals tend to identify themselves and fulfil these positions depending on how ‘other’ members of society see and define them. In general, whilst I tend to see (journalistic) roles as the practical orientations of (journalistic) identity, I am also aware of the potential power of identity in influencing roles. Thus, although roles and identities are not the same it can be suggested that they are involved in an interactive
dialectical relationship and that at some level they are both constructed and negotiated through processes of interaction (see Meyer 1994; Khan 1983).

4.2 Journalistic roles, content and identity: an overview

National identity – as an expression of cultural identity at the level of the nation – like other aspects of identity, is often competitive in that it can trigger inter-group discrimination just by the awareness of another nationality. Rivenburgh (1997:81) argues that national identity is usually active in the media depictions of other nations since other nations are evaluated in terms of the home nation’s perspective. Those considered “more like us” in terms of economic philosophy, political system, values, language and so forth, tend to be evaluated more favourably relative to those “least like us”. Gans (1979:20) has identified how national identity affects news values when he observed that stories that depict threats to the nation become newsworthy when:

…the stories…focus attention directly on the nation as a unit, since specific stories often judge individual happenings in terms of their consequences for the country as a whole. Foreign news involving American foreign policy readily invites a view of the nation as a unit vis-a-vis other units as well...Typically, such stories conceive of the nation in anthropomorphic terms; and when the news is tragic or traumatic, it becomes the nation-cum-individual whose character and moral strength are tested.

The argument here is that journalists may call on their individual self-conceptions as members of the collective social groups (in this case the nation) in their constructions and presentations of reality for large portions of the audience. It is in this regard that issues concerning sports, economics, conflicts and wars, culture and transnational initiatives such as the European Union (EU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) are often depicted in mass media in the form of discourses on belonging and on nationalism and globalisation. Journalists and the media reporting on such initiatives have – broadly speaking – often been found to adopt an interventionist-nationalist stance in their reportage because of their attempts to navigate their journalistic and national identities (see Zelizer and Allan 2002; Nyamnjoh 2005).

Drawing on Anderson (1983), we can posit here that seeing oneself as belonging to the identity category of ‘journalists’ as writers of the news lends itself to one’s imagining countless others who are simultaneously engaged in the same activity. However, faced with tensions between their identities as journalists and the limited role choices that come with such a position and the particular influences of their national identity positions, journalists may often tend to effectively endorse and reinforce ethnic-national identity in a context in which its naturalness might otherwise be challenged (see Billig 1995; Thetela 2001; Zandberg and Neiger 2005). Journalists belong to and are influenced in their journalistic role perceptions by the beliefs of the society in
which they practice and might, therefore, be expected to frame the national cultural in-group to
which they belong in a more favourable light than the out-group, which is treated as the ‘other’
(see Zelizer and Allan 2002; Gans 1979).

Aspects of this ‘othering’ can be found in an analysis of journalism in the US at the time of and
journalists took on a ‘patriotic’ and nationalistic ‘us’ against ‘them’ type of reportage during this
period, which has continued to interfere with their impartiality, objectivity and ability to inform
their readers about the complexity of US transnational relations. In relation to this, Waisboard
(2002:206) argues that:

News organisations became saturated with patriotic spirit after September 11. More than just
an unwilling prisoner or passive supporter, journalism was mobiliser of national identity.
Rather than convey the horror and document the tragedy without taking sides, journalism
became an ‘American’ journalism that constructed and reinforced national identity vis-à-vis
the attacks.

Those journalists who attempted to hold on to some sense of neutrality were ridiculed for their
disloyalty and treacherous behaviour. As a result, according to Zelizer and Allan (2002:15), some
of them then “sought to align certain preferred discourses of patriotism with professionalism”.
This is perhaps not surprising given that, as Schudson (2002:41) argues, many journalists in the
US tend to reject neutrality during times of “threats to national security”, in “moments of tragedy”
and in “moments of public danger”. Faced with an attack on the ‘nation’ to which they see
themselves as belonging, US journalists turned to the role of patriotism so as to provide
reassurance to a community facing insecurity and anxiety (Waisboard 2002). After the September
11 attacks, they positioned “patriotic identity by articulating the ‘Other’ as …the
perpetrators…defined as different and excluded from the national community. It was a moment to
reinvigorate American nationalism in a post-Cold War era, a time of fragmented and fractured
identities” (Waisboard 2002:205-206).

In relation to this, in an analysis of four events of political violence classified as foreign news in
the press in the USA, Britain and Israel, Nossek (2004:350) found that journalists and editors
relied on two distinct frames - a national ‘frame’ and a ‘professional’ frame. When the journalists
defined the acts of political violence as ‘ours’, they tended to prioritise their national identity in
preference to the objectivity ideals of journalistic professionalism. On the other hand, when they
identified a news item as being ‘theirs’, professionalism was prioritised (Nossek 2004:343, 363).
Thus, according to Nossek (2004:343), the more:
‘national’ the report is, the less ‘professional’ it will be, that is to say, the closer the reporters/editors are to a given news event in terms of national interest, the further they are from applying professional news values.

Zandberg and Neiger (2005:131-141) in their analysis of Israeli journalists’ coverage of the Al-Aksa intifada in early October 2000, a period of “severe crisis”, argued that journalists as members of one of the conflicting parties were faced with the dilemma of having to balance their professional allegiances towards objectivity and neutrality against those of patriotism towards the nation. Faced with this dual allegiance – “between the nation and the profession” – at a time when the nation was perceived as being under threat, the journalists prioritised their sense of belonging to the nation over their identification with their journalistic identity (2005:132). However, as the crisis calmed down, the journalists tended to revert to their journalistic identity. It is in this regard that Zandberg and Neiger (2005:138-139) assert that:

(the) journalists avoid identity crisis because they are never in a situation of being loyal to the two communities at the same time…journalists’ identities are not fixed and clear, but fluid and unstable, and we see journalists as neither members of the professional community nor members of the national hegemonic community – but as moving constantly between them.

The aforementioned can be linked to the writing by Gans (1979), Zelizer and Allan (2002) and the arguments of political economists such as Herman and Chomsky (1988) who argue that the media generally handle any tensions between their journalistic values and the need to meet national ends by evoking a belief system such as patriotism. According to Herman (1999), news coverage of the North American Free Trade Treaty (NAFTA) – despite the public opposition to NAFTA and the bailout of US business investors in Mexico – was for the most part characterised by a patriotic form of journalism with the initiative being portrayed as a “barometer of America’s faith in itself” (1999:183-186; also see 2003). In fact, US journalists, who are often thought of as endorsing the libertarian-oriented interpreter and disseminator roles towards journalism (see Johnstone et al 1976; Weaver and Wilhoit 1996), have been found to adopt a cross between patriotism and adversarial journalism in their reportage on the trade accords concerning NAFTA and the ‘permanent normal trade relations’ (PNTR) with China (Skonieczny 2001:1-21).

In a sense, one of the points being made here is that for those journalists working on beats that cover intra-cultural, regional and transnational issues, journalism is a practice that potentially brings them into contact with other communities, nationalities and international issues. More fundamentally, in the course of this, their journalistic identity may routinely – but not always – be subsumed under their national and regional identities as expressions of cultural identity. When
their journalistic identity meets the other cultural identities, they may experience the activation of their ethnic, national and regional identities (see also Waisboard 2002; Fair 2003), the result of which can be patriotism and patriotic type journalism as potential points of identification.

To gain a fuller understanding of how journalistic identity interacts with national and regional identities and/or group identities, I turn to the earlier 1950s/1960s context (1950s/1960s) of the post-colony. As asserted before, journalists – some of them nationalist liberators and ‘native intellectuals’ (see Fanon 1963) – often drew on the symbols of national culture and unity, a process that relied on an inward look that glorified the past and tradition to arrive at a new sense of optimism, national identity and ‘Africanness’. More recently, these sentiments have found renewal in the ‘African renaissance’ (see Nyamnjoh 2001; Ahluwalia 2002; Mbeki 1996). The battle cry for ‘African Unity’ as was called for by leaders such as Nkrumah, Kenyatta and Nyerere and which had previously effectively mobilised the masses against the colonial masters, was in the discourses of the nationalist liberators also transformed into a continental pan-African cultural battle (see Nkrumah 1963; Domatob and Hall 1983; Odhiambo 1991). Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1983:80) provides some insights into this cultural battle at the national and continental levels when he argues that the colonial experience in Africa created a binary opposition between the “two great cultures in mortal conflict: foreign imperialist; national and patriotic”. He adds that:

… of the different nationalities often inhabiting one geographic state, there emerged people’s literature, music, dance, theater…in fierce struggle against foreign imperialist literature, music, dance, theater…imposed on colonies…. Thus the major contradiction in the third world is between national identity and imperialist domination (1983:80).

Although the boundaries between these ‘two great cultures’ are much more blurred than is suggested here, it can be argued that journalists were faced not only with the potential tension between their journalistic and national identities, but also with the tension at the (pan-)African identity level in so far as the cultural battle had some resonance – beyond the ‘geographic state’ – at the continental level. In other words, similar to many other group categories in the newly liberated societies, journalists were expected to take it upon themselves as part of their national duties to build up and affirm a national identity and by automatic extension also a (pan-)African identity in their reportage against the Francophone, Lusophone and Anglophone cultures of the colonialists (Fanon 1963:172-173; also see Fair 2003). To do this required them to be nationalists and Africanists and then journalists afterwards. Consider, for instance, Fanon’s (1963:199) thoughts on the link between national and pan-African identity in the (1950-60s) context of the post-colony:
This problem of national consciousness and of national culture takes on in Africa a special dimension. The birth of national consciousness in Africa has a strictly contemporaneous connexion with African consciousness. The responsibility of the African as regards national culture is also a responsibility with regard to African-Negro culture.

Therefore, in the interests of nation building and the construction and maintenance of national identity, and at a broader level African identity, the other identity categories – class, ethnicity, religion – were often subsumed and directed towards the specific interests of the nation, the African continent and even the African diaspora. To do this, journalists were faced with the prospect of having to endorse forms of journalism that are interventionist and broadly, not in line with the wider libertarian approach to journalism, which prescribes the maintenance of professional distance (Ward 2004). Having said that, in the later context of the post-colony those identity categories that were seen as being subsumed under national and pan-African identity, such as ethnic identity, started coming to the fore. In the case of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, journalists relied on a systematic distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in the shape of ethnic-nationalism to report on and incite violence. Here, faced with the role dilemma of, for instance, taking on a neutral or nation-building stance and the call to ethnic belonging, the result was a divisive and ethnic-driven journalism (see Kellow and Steeves 1998; Nyamnjoh 2005). Therefore, journalists may endorse those journalistic roles that can either make room for their cultural identities or those that can be driven by the cultural identity conception of the societal group to which they see themselves as belonging to at that given time.

Note that interventionist journalism being at odds with libertarian journalism may characterise not just African ethnic-national identity instances, nor pan-African identity in others, it is also to be found elsewhere. Thus, further afield, in a study on the views of British reporters on the EU-Brussels newsbeat, Morgan (1995) found British journalists to be engaged in a strained relationship with the EU. According to Morgan (1995), most British journalists on the beat expressed reservations about the quality of their coverage with some reporters arguing that, “the coverage is very nationalistic – EU news still comes from British government sources”. Another added, “we squander EU sources for national stories – we can’t stand back” (1995:326). In sum, the bulk of the British press corps was found to be adversarial about the EU and hostile towards it and the process of European integration (Morgan 1995; also see Gavin 2001; Anderson and Weymouth 1999). British journalists on their part felt that most Italian journalists were not sceptical in their posture towards news sources, the French were seen as promoting their national policies through the EU whilst the German and Dutch posture was seen as being “highly
politicised, but also sceptical of their national leaders and policy positions” (Morgan 1995:331-332). This state of affairs led Morgan (1995:338) to argue that, “Union news is no longer foreign news within members’ countries, but has been nationalised and treated accordingly”. In addition, within a sample of texts in the British press on European integration, Hardt-Mautner (1995:177) reports how *The Sun* deployed sceptical headlines such as ‘*Euro Idiots*’ and ‘*Up Yours Delors*’. In a sense, British journalists subverted the neutral role and took on an ‘attached’ and sceptical stance in their reportage through which they could invoke the collective national identity and interests of the wider British community to which they belong.

Drawing on Bhabha’s (1994a; 1994b) analogy of ‘hybridisation’, which is explored more fully in section 4.3, the aforementioned studies and analyses serve to remind us that roles and identities co-exist, interact and intersect with each other. As was posited in the previous sub-section, journalists fulfil multiple roles in society and this self-definition (identity) is subjective, and yet it is an interactive process between the individual journalists and society. For instance, the journalist as ‘pan-Africanist’ recognises similarities between him/herself and others on the continent, but also, the same continental collective of Africans as a society may generate strong rules and values about journalistic roles and norms that in turn shape his/her self-definitions. Similar to other people, journalists may assume many roles in society – teacher, pan-Africanist, commentator and politician – and it is in this sense that they all belong to and identify with more than one group. They therefore have multiple identities, each influencing them to behave in certain ways as they strive to negotiate or fulfil the role functions that come with each identity. Khan (1983:100) argues that such multiple identities require multiple loci of commitments. Journalists (as individuals) may handle these commitments by cognitively constructing a hierarchical arrangement of identities such that some identities are more salient and accessible than others. At any given time, therefore, some commitments are more pressing, have higher priority, and are more intense in the sense of duty they elicit (Khan 1983:100-101).

This recognition of multiple identities that relate to different aspects of people’s lives reminds us here of the importance of the notion of identity negotiation whereby the individual in this case as a journalist negotiates with society as to the meaning of the various identities in his or her life. For example, the identity of ‘journalist’ could be negotiated against those of ‘nationalist’ and ‘politician’. In addition, with regard to the question of the nexus between content, journalistic and cultural identities, the above analyses suggest to us that it is not simply a case of libertarian or social responsibility-oriented roles and journalists’ activation or not of their journalistic and/or
cultural identity positions. It is more a case of which role/s depending on the news issues and context at hand will enable the journalist to express, if at all, his or her prioritised sense of self at that given time, which in this study also includes their journalistic identity.

In the next section, I present a review of cultural studies’ theoretical concepts that have influenced the ways in which scholars often analyse and approach identity constructions.

4.3 Ideology and hegemony

4.3.1 Language, texts and meanings

Viewing cultural identities as imaginative representations of belonging as is done by Tomlinson (1991) is suggestive for understanding the media’s role in imagining and constructing identities. It is in this regard that scholars concerned with how journalists invoke, naturalise, represent and construct identity positions in media content, have in varying degrees drawn on methods of analysis that are associated with qualitative content analysis. In doing this, scholars often rely on the cultural studies tools of ‘semiology’, that is an explanation of the way that texts are made to mean through structures of language consisting of signs, myths or narrative (McQuail 1994:244), to show how mass media are not simply reflective of society, but producers of meaning in society. Meanings are conceptualised as being made through our creation and interpretation of signs. A sign consists of a physical form, which the sign takes, that is the signifier and the signified that is the mental referent association which it represents (Jensen 1991:27). For example, bearing in mind the ways in which I have tended to use the word ‘Africa’, we can understand the sign ‘Africa’ in terms of the physical form and order of the six letters (signifier) and also in as far as, it mentally refers to something (signified) other than itself, that is, a geographical space that is not ‘Europe’. If signs stand for other things, such that these other things are brought to mind when the sign is used, then we have a case where a system of signs acts as a code for some objects. It is in this regard that media are seen to be constructing realities and subjectivities in and by language, a process defined as a signifying practice, with the media as signifying agents (Hall 1982, 1977).

In cultural studies, language is often analysed as a social practice or discursive process, a mode of action that is always socially situated “in a dialectical relationship with other facets of ‘the social’…it is socially shaped, but it is also socially shaping or constitutive” (Fairclough 1995a:131). From this viewpoint, (language use as) discourse is seen as constitutive of social reality in a general sense. Language as discourse and as social practice is conceptualised as being contextual, varied and indeterminate in so far as it socially determined. Remember that social
practice actually involves the construction of identity and activation of agency, meaning that it is through language that identities are constructed. From this viewpoint, language, identity and the meanings of texts are not seen as being fixed, in that they are part of a discursive process that is dependant on and constitutive of the socio-cultural and historical context in which they are made to mean (Fiske 1987:15). In fact, the meanings in language as discourse, which is a home for agency, are in this case taken to be in competition with each other. Because language is polysemic – having more than one meaning, texts are polysemic. Hence, texts – a newspaper article, interview transcript, film or radio programme – as the products of the process of text production, can be labelled as either open or closed, depending on the range of different readings available (Eco 1978). The idea that there is no single meaning as such to be found in a text, means that the challenge is to determine all the layers of meaning in a text, not only the dominant reading which positions the reader or prioritises a given identity, but also the alternative readings, even if they are contradictory to the dominant form. The fuller point here is that the analyst, by unfolding the layers of meaning in a text, is uncovering the ideological force of these meanings.

Hall (1977:315-347) highlights in his work the close relationship between language and ideology particularly in as far as the latter is seen to exist in and through language. Here, ideology can be thought of in terms of the power of language to shape perception and knowing such that social actors accept their roles, identity and meanings in society as being ‘natural’ or divinely ordained. I am referring here to ideology in the classical Marxist sense as in reference to the ‘ruling ideas’ (meanings, beliefs and values) of the ‘ruling class’ (those who own the means of production), which work to justify and control the ideas circulating in society (Marx 1992:45). This contention gives rise to the concept of false consciousness where ideology is seen as an obscurant to the real conditions of society in as far as it legitimates the position of the ruling class not only to this class, but also to the other classes such that they all get to see their circumstances as real (Marx 1992). However, remember here that for the critical-cultural studies theorists’ language is not simply one-dimensional, it is polysemic implying that ideology may not always be interpreted in terms of being absolute. In fact, in contrast to the Marxist standpoint of ideology as a false consciousness that operates exclusively in the realm of class and economics, ideology as was described by Althusser (1971) can also be made sense of at other levels of society such as the media, culture and beyond.

It is in this regard that Hall (1977; 1982) breaks with classical Marxism by adopting Althusser’s (1971) notion of ideology as limiting, but not causal and by employing Gramsci’s (2000) concept
of hegemony. As was posited before, for Althusser (1971; 2000) ideology is the representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. It is the process by which the relations of production are reproduced. However, according to him, subjectivity and ideology are so closely related that he goes as far as to say that, “the existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing” (1971:131). That is, ideology turns individuals into subjects (see Lechte 1994; sub-section 4.2.3 below). By relating ideology to subjectivity, Althusserian Marxism, with its inbuilt notion of the relative autonomy of ideological production through a variety of institutions including cultural ones provided a move away from the economic based one-dimensional model of dominant ideology that is associated with Marxism. However, Althusserianism itself was limited by its tendency to view the cultural field purely as a realm for the functioning, production and reproduction of dominant ideologies. The ideologies worked so that individuals saw themselves as self-determining agents, whereas ideological processes were in fact influencing them (see Phillips and Jorgensen 2003). This left little space for moments of contestation or resistance and it led to the cultural studies turn to Gramsci’s (2000) theory of hegemony.

Gramsci (2000:105-109) employs the notion of hegemony to argue that the power of the ruling class over others does not simply operate in terms of some economically determined dominant ideology, but also through persuasion and compromises with the marginalised groups in society (also see Phillips and Jorgensen 2003; Hall 1982). Thus, hegemony as a ruling ideology that binds society together relies on consent and negotiation and not so much on violence and force to maintain its hold onto society. This can operate to the extent that even those groups that are subordinated by such ideology start to look at it as being ‘natural’ and ‘commonsensical’ (McQuail 2000:96-97; see also Hall 1982; 1977). What happens is that meanings and power relations in society become naturalised to the extent of not being questioned. For example, in line with the ideology of the ‘African renaissance’ and NEPAD, some people on the African continent may feel or imagine that they are the same and that they are faced with shared problems and interests irrespective of class, gender and cultural differences and yet they are aware of these distinctions. Hegemony works to obscure such differences and yet it makes room for resistance given that:

Consent must be constantly won and re-won, for people’s material social experience constantly reminds them of the disadvantages of subordination and thus poses a threat to the dominant class...Hegemony... posits a constant contradiction between ideology and the social experience of the subordinate that makes this interface into an inevitable site of ideological struggle (Fiske 1992:291).
Therefore, in contrast to the Marxist approach whereby one totalising ideology is read as being in control, Gramscian analysis led cultural studies’ theorists concerned with journalism and mass media issues to argue that there are many ideologies at play and that individuals can resist media messages (Morley 1992; Fiske 1992). It is this regard that Hall’s (1980) encoding and decoding model raised the argument that media texts do not exclusively operate in terms of domination. Media recipients can interpret and even resist them in ways that are in contrast to the ways in which they were encoded (1980:136-138). However, employing Gramsci’s (2000) formulation of hegemony as obtained by social and cultural leadership, Hall (1977) also argued that hegemony works through ideology: the dominant classes define reality; the defined reality becomes institutionalised; through institutionalisation, it becomes the lived reality and it is not hidden as such (also see Grossberg and Slack 1985:87-90).

The positions presented here offer us a range of insights. To start with, we can infer that identities conceived as specific forms of (social) identities are discursively, by means of language and other semiotic systems, (re)produced, transformed and even opposed (Hall 1977). The discursive constructions of identity through language shape and reflect their socio-historical contexts. Hence, behind the notion that journalists construct the news is a strong view that they integrate their social identity into stories in so far as their reality judgments are inextricably linked to their journalistic values and role perceptions (see Nossek 2004; Rivenburgh 1997). In addition, although many journalists may not purposefully set out to subvert a position in favour of the dominant ideology that permits a narrow diversity of meanings (see Morley 1992; Herman and Chomsky 1988), journalists may none the less still be able to provide subordinate and alternative positions through the space for negotiation and resistance that is provided by hegemony. I expand on these nuances in section 4.4. However, for now we can note that journalists do not always reflect some prior hegemonic ideology, instead they formulate (with many contradictions and their own contestation with ideologies) a fluid set of inscribed subjectivities that may serve the powerful in society. However, these representations are negotiated inscribed subjectivities (see Fairclough 2001). Journalists are contradictory characters pulled in many directions and making decisions at varying levels of self-awareness. The next sub-section explores more closely the ways in which texts are often analysed for insights into the construction of collective identity positions.

4.2.2 Analysing identity constructions
The study of identity construction situates itself within the larger framework of discourse analysis (see Wodak et al 1999; Ricento 2003; Fairclough 1995b). This framework can be read as being diverse in character because there is no single coherent theory in the field. In fact, in some instances as is done in this study, scholars draw on variations of qualitative content analysis – thematic, narrative, discourse and semiotic textual analysis – to analyse written media texts and spoken texts in their transcribed forms for insights into media representations and constructions of identity (see Fairclough 2001, Robertson 2003; Billig 1995; Hall 1980). In general, by employing close readings of texts scholars attempt to make sense of what is both explicitly reported and implicitly represented as identity. More often than not, the evidence of this has been noted in terms of the language, stereotypes and the ways in which news stories are organised and written—including the phrases used in headlines and in the overall coverage, the topics, the actors, the tone of voice, the sequence and so on (see Fairclough 1995b, 2001; Fowler 1991). As is suggested in the previous sub-section, the assumption here is that preferred reading positions concerning (collective) identity dispositions affect the language used by journalists and the mass media, and that the impressions gained by the analysis of news texts can provide insights into these dispositions. Remember that it is through language use as discourse and social practice (what you do), that identities are constructed, meaning that by closely scrutinising text fragments, the discursive construction and mitigation techniques of identity can be revealed. Also, bear in mind that the discursive constructions of identity shape and reflect their socio-historical contexts and that discourse in general constitutes social practice and is at the same time constituted by it (see Fairclough 2001).

Therefore, to unravel the work of ideology and dominant identity positions in media texts, critical-cultural studies scholars, often rely on semiotic textual analyses of media texts. The idea here is that the semiotic structure of news texts can tell us about social hierarchies of power and difference in the wider socio-cultural context. By examining the circumstances of text construction (who, when, where and how) analysts are able to gain an understanding of the contextual social relations, with regard to why certain ideologies and groups have obtained – and maintained – dominance over others (Fairclough 2001). This is particularly the case when scholars take on a deeper analysis of the texts, using the techniques of critical discourse analysis (van Dijk 1993; Ricento 2003). Text analysis in general provides methods for specifying the linguistic features of different types of discourse units and the way they are tied together through constructive strategies of inclusion and exclusion into larger units of meaning through which identities are constructed. The linguistic strategies that are often of interest here include the use of
personal pronouns that are used to establish in-group and out-group membership, among other things (Fairclough 2001; 1995b; also see chapter 6 on research methods for elaboration).

Narratives as particular types of discourse that emerge during interviews have also been focused on in the approach to the analysis of identity constructions. Studies show that during interviews people often use the – story telling – narrative form as a tool for linking the events of their lives (Alvarez 2002:2-3). Through narratives, people organise their temporal experiences and make them meaningful. Once again, remember that what we say as discourse is in many ways constitutive of the social context, meaning that the narratives being told can be read for insights into the social hierarchies of power and difference in the wider socio-cultural context. Some researchers therefore see narratives as a politically motivated way of seeing the world whereby certain interests are privileged over others (see Alvarez 2002; Fowler 1991; Fairclough 2001).

They are relied upon to create believable explanations for the teller’s actions. To better understand narratives, theorists have developed definitions describing the structure and function of narratives. However, the focus is not simply on the structural features of news reports or the associated themes and frames that can be identified in interviews, but also on the meanings that are encoded in the texts as well as the social structures in which they are encased (Robertson 2003:4-5). Some suggest a somewhat narrow definition where narratives are stories about specific past events (see Labov 1972). These stories follow a chronological sequence where order of events move in a linear way in time. However, for Robertson (2003), creating a narrative also implies selecting incidents so as to suggest some relationship between them. Thus, in narrative analysis emphasis is usually on the analysis of a chronologically told story, with researchers focusing on the linguistic features of (news) stories, common patterns, themes, frames and even binary oppositions for insights into identity constructions (2003:4-8).

‘Us’ – ‘them’ binary oppositions are of particular interest here in as far as they are often used by journalists and sources to establish group identities. Drawing on the work of Levi-Strauss (1969), media scholars have used the notion of opposites to help explain how journalists, in as much as they may address the call to ethnic-national identity, look to the ‘other’ as a group against which they can define their identity (Wigston 2001:152). In other words, we make sense of concepts and ideas by contrasting them with their opposites. Thus, as we shall soon see in chapters 6 to 11 concerning the news stories and the discourse of the interviews, ‘African’ identity is often contrasted again ‘Western’ and/or ‘European’ identity. Hence, it is in this sense that binary oppositions can reveal identity constructions in the text.
Influenced by the work of Barthes (1993), scholars also often look for the dominant identity positions through myths. For Barthes (1993), meanings are made on three levels, the denotative, connotative and mythological. Myths in particular take social-cultural differences and make them appear natural. He uses the terms denotation and connotation to imply the natural (literal) and the ideological meaning of a text. Signs and their connotations are brought together in ‘myth’, which refers to how texts are structured to send particular messages to the readers that make certain ways of thinking about concepts appear natural (Robertson 2003:7). It is in this sense that Hall (1982) sees Barthes’ work as putting the accent on the masking and connotative powers of myth which allows ideological power to be realised. For example, NEPAD may denote a continent wide African-led development framework, but connote foreign prescriptions of neo-liberal type structural adjustment programmes. It becomes mythical if taken to mean some essential ubuntu, humanism and/or ‘African consciousness’ that is driving Africans to pan-African projects (see chapter 5 on NEPAD and chapter 8 on the interviews findings). The denotative meaning of a word or concept is thought to be relatively fixed. Connotation, on the other hand, particularly with regard to media texts, works on the tendency of the audience to “fill in the blanks” with what they already know from their wider socio-cultural experiences and influences (Robertson 2003:7). Meaning making at this level is an ideological process in the sense that in being invited to insert ourselves into the missing space, something in the text signifies (hails) us, and our meanings are then made to appear as obvious (Williamson 1978:74). The distinctive quality of myth is that it appears to be exclusively true and factual, rather than one of a number of different possible meanings.

While some forms of text analysis often stops “at the sentence” (Wigston 2001:175) in as far as they focus on the internal linguistic structures of texts that collectively constitute the meaning of the text, discourse analysis, particularly in its critical strand, examines text within the wider social context along the lines of ideology, power and inequality (van Dijk 1993:253). Through discourse examination, topics of power inequalities usually along the identity fault-lines of race, class, gender, sexuality and occupation are exposed. Critical discourse analysis often works to demystify what is taken to be ‘common-sense’ by defamiliarising it and signalling its functions and consequences in sustaining the social order. As Fowler (1996:10) suggests, critical discourse

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17 Ubuntu is today used in the Southern African context to refer to a certain essential humanism / brother-hood. As an ideological term ubuntu is in this instance actively used at a time of political and cultural reification of national identity particularly in South Africa (see Netshtizenze 1999). Note that although undugu and ujamaa in 1960s Kenya and Tanzania were state-led socialist ideologies, they were also used to the same effect (see Odhiambo 1991).
analysis goes “beyond the formal structure of language as an abstract system, toward the practical interaction of language and context”. Insights from such an approach can help us understand, for example, the processes by which coherent models of African identity/ies are developed in the contemporary context of NEPAD, given the complexity and inherent contradictions in such an abstract notion.

Researchers have in varying degrees relied on aspects of the aforementioned approaches to gain insights into the ways in which meanings around identities such as ‘African’ are produced, and to explain how they work, their power and how they are made to appear as ‘natural’ in media texts and beyond. The point here is that there is a close relationship between news texts, interviews as texts and the wider socio-cultural positions and that if telling stories is a way of reinforcing cultural identities – our place and everyone else’s within a culture (Tambling 1991:70) – one can posit that we can gain some insights into the journalists’ values and preferred identity positions by analysing their texts. The specific methodological approach of this study towards the analysis of identity is spelt out in chapter 6, but at this stage, it is important to note that this study applies a mixture of specific qualitative content analysis tools – thematic analysis, binary oppositions, linguistic features – to analyse identity constructions and the wider social-historical context within which they are framed. In addition, it is also worth bearing in mind that the aforementioned position concerning NEPAD’s essentialist version of ubuntu can be contested and negotiated in the Gramscian sense. Some journalists may buy into the view that NEPAD is a pan-African project, others may see it mainly as a neo-liberal plan of global capitalism whilst others may take on a position that is in between. These inferences lead us to another question – through exactly what mechanisms do constructions of belonging get to be incorporated, if at all, by people as personally or collectively held senses of belonging? More specifically, how do ‘African’, ‘Kenyan’ and ‘Rwandan’ journalists identify, for instance, with NEPAD’s discourse? Pertinently, this also relates to how NEPAD speaks to journalists in terms of journalistic sub-identity/ies of say ‘Liberal’ and/or ‘Development’ journalism. For an understanding of this, in the next section, I elaborate more fully Althusser’s concept of interpellation before going on to spell out this study’s approach to African identity.

4.4 Interpellation and identification

In thinking about how journalists can potentially be drawn into a given identity category which in this case also includes journalistic identity, this study draws on Althusser’s (1971) concept of interpellation. For Althusser (1971:128-131, 171), interpellation concerns a dual process whereby
identities or subject positions are created and, more importantly here, how they hail concrete individuals into them. It is a process by which we organise ourselves with regard to the subject positions offered by a given discourse. For instance, as in when advertising discourse and media representations address audiences as particular kinds of subjects as in the shape of ‘you journalists there’, ‘we in the African community’ or ‘we libertarian journalists’ it takes on the shape of an ideological practice – in the Marxist Althusserian sense – that attempts to interpellate individuals as subjects (Pajnik and Lesjak-Tusek 2002:279). These forms of explicit address may operate as attempts to resituate the audience, to reposition them within the particular network of meaning which structures a given discourse. This is what Althusser meant by the notion that structures work via address to interpellate people into particular subject positions. Althusser (2000:31-33) uses the situation in which a police officer hails a person: “Hey, you there!” He argues that this address may effectively reposition the person hailed as a particular kind of subject (maybe a ‘suspect’), interpellating that person within a particular structure of authority. Similarly, when I use the term ‘we libertarian journalists’, I could be inviting you the reader to see yourself as a member of a particular community of which I am suggesting that you and I are both members. In this respect, I am resituating or interpellating you within the libertarian journalistic discourse. I may use ‘libertarian journalists’ broadly to include the watchdog and neutral-oriented journalists. Alternatively, I may use the term more narrowly to convey a smaller community of neutral-objectivist journalists. Of course, when I invoke the term ‘libertarian journalists’ to refer to these particular communities of journalists, you may accept the invitation (to identify yourself as belonging to some libertarian journalistic community) because you already, in part, see yourself this way. Wherever this is the case, the ‘libertarian’ rings true, and it does so because the address seems less an attempt to resituate you than a benign recognition of an already commonly shared set of understandings about what it means to be a member of this journalistic community and indeed a neutral or watchdog journalist.

In many ways, the importance of Althusser’s (1971) arguments with regard to how one is subjected as an ideological effect is that people are not always conscious of being socially positioned as subjects, and therefore they tend to see their own subjective identities as somehow standing outside of and prior to society (Fairclough 2001:85). Herein also lies the ambiguous character of interpellation. For example, you are hailed as an ‘African’, as an active subject (or a ‘suspect’ in Althusser’s police officer example) and yet you are also subject to a societal discourse (‘Africanism’ in my example or ‘authoritarianism’ for Althusser). However, as argued so far in this chapter and more specifically by Hall (1980) and Foucault (1980), there are usually several
conflicting discourses and subject positions at play within society. The subject is positioned in different ways by different discourse, for instance, and I draw on personal experiences here, at one moment I am a ‘student’, at another I am a ‘man’ and at another an ‘African’. Often these shifts go unnoticed and the individual may not always realise that s/he occupies different subject positions during his/her daily-lived experiences (see Fairclough 2001; Phillips and Jorgensen 2002). Furthermore, it is at those moments when we identify with a given interpellation that we can refer to as the moment of identity and/or identification, that is, the moment when we take up an identity position (Hall 1997:9; see also 1996). What facilitates this is when concrete individuals already feel that they are naturally part of the in-group that is being hailed. For instance, for an individual to be successfully hailed as an ‘African journalist’, s/he may often already feel that s/he is part of and/or aspires to be part of an “imagined community” – to borrow Anderson’s (1983:30-35) phrase – of other fellow African journalists.

A key issue to understand about such ideological practices (in the Marxist sense) is that they can be used to maintain the status quo, or as Thompson (1988:370) aptly points out, ideology is concerned with “the ways in which meaning and power intersect…ways in which meaning may serve, in specific socio-historical contexts, to sustain relations of domination”. However, ideology can also serve change by coming from a resistance perspective or because of the role of contradictions within and between interpellations and ideologies. Here we can note that, in attributing too much power to grand structural ideologies – religion, state and family – and none to individuals, the Althusserian approach to ideology, as has been argued before, does not create much room for resistance, negotiation, opposition and alternate expressions (Hall 1985:99). This is in contrast to Gramsci’s (2000) hegemony, Hall’s (1980) encoding / decoding model, and as we shall soon see, Foucault (1978) on power or indeed Bhabha’s (1994b) hybridity – all of which make room for local agency to resist dominant ideologies. For Foucault (1978; 1980) in particular, individuals are both subjected to and have the agency to negotiate power relationships within various discourses. In many ways, these theorists are all attempting to come to terms with the contradictory, socially constructed subject.

More specifically, Hall’s (1980:136-138) encoding / decoding model accounts for at least three major decoding positions – of dominant, negotiated and oppositional – through which a text can be read. Hall reminds us here that not all individuals are successfully interpellated by particular ideologies. It is in this regard that we may discover, for example, that when I invoke ‘African identity’ to refer exclusively to continental Africans, a group from which you the reader may see
yourself excluded, you may reject this depiction. This is because it does not convey your sense of being as an African. Note, of course, that you may still see yourself as an African, but your sense of belonging may also depend on a different understanding of what that term means. There are moments when we can consciously buy into or oppose an interpellation. For instance, we might discover, hypothetically, that while some journalists have been successfully hailed into the discourse on NEPAD, others are taking on a negotiated reading, whilst still others have endorsed an oppositional reading that rejects, for instance, a narrative built around NEPAD’s ‘African interest’ and see it instead as an ideological frame for ‘class interest’ (see Adesina 2004). The point here is that individual, group and institutional readings, positions and identifications now become an empirical question rather than an implicit assumption. Our self-understandings may vary from one situation to another. The process of identification can be discursive such that there are moments when we reject – do not identify – with particular identities (see Hall 1997).

Overall, these considerations are relevant here for our understanding of how journalists and the mass media rely on discursive strategies to translate representations of belonging into personally held senses of belonging, which are to an extent based on already shared understandings of belonging. By focusing on the notion of interpellation we can get to understand how mediated identities are not just represented, but also made real, that is, incorporated by people as lived (collective) identities. As analytic concepts, interpellation and identification are clearly useful when it comes to thinking about how individuals can get to be subjected to dominant ideologies whilst also bearing in mind that they can reject them. This is particularly important when it comes to making sense of, for instance, the way in which political projects and attempts at regionalisation such as NEPAD may potentially interpellate reporters, editors, journalists, media owners and the public into a particular worldview. It is pertinent to hold onto the discussions on identity in this section as we explore the links between journalistic and cultural identity and news content. In the next section, I introduce this study’s approach to African identity, which is mainly read here through a cultural studies and postcolonial theoretical perspective.

4.5 The (re)making of African identity: power, postcolonialism and hybridity

By thinking of meanings and ideology (including dominant ideology) as being in constant negotiation, cultural studies raises question marks about the modernist project and its Enlightenment aspirations of a monolithic path to the ‘truth’, ‘objectivity’, fixed ideology, collective identity, factual explanations and their survival in society (Hall 1982:67). This rupture in the unity of the modern tradition can be attributed to the ‘postmodern turn’ and the
poststructuralist ‘linguistic turn’ in cultural studies, whereby the structuralist view of language as being stable, fixed and totalising is read as being flexible in an environment of a plurality of meanings depending on the context at hand. For example, the word ‘African’ can, in certain instances be used to refer, as in Barthes’ mythical sense, to a romantic inspiration and a quasi-spiritual identity and yet in other instances, be a symbol for pessimism, doom and gloom.

Therefore, meanings change from discourse to discourse depending on the context in which language is in use (Phillips and Jorgensen 2003:11-13l). This approach has de-centred the universalism and empiricism of modernism in favour of multiple perspectives, languages, deferred meanings, subjectivities and the construction of fractured identities as advocated by the critical works of Lyotard, Derrida and Foucault to name just a few (see Lechte 1994; Derrida 1986). This indeterminacy can be specifically traced to Foucault’s (1972) analysis of the multiple and varied relationships of power at play in different situations, which sought to displace the conventional identification of power with domination.

Foucault’s work is often divided into three chronological phases of an early archaeological discourse / knowledge phase, a middle genealogical power / knowledge phase and a later ethical subjectivity phase (see Phillips and Jorgensen 2003; McLaren 2002). Although these phases can be read as being distinct in terms of method and emphasis, they do overlap with questions of subjectivity in particular cutting across the three shifts in emphasis (McLaren 2002:5). In thinking about discourse, Foucault (1980:131) sees discourse as being generated by statements – utterances – that establish rules about what is true and false. Foucault (1978) is in this regard interested in the regimes of knowledge that prohibit, limit, exclude and include certain utterances when it comes to determining what passes as being meaningful in a given historical epoch. In other words, meaning is constructed within discourse, which defines and produces knowledge and governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about (see Phillips and Jorgensen 2003). Thus, what we consider to be the truth / knowledge is not a reflection of reality as such but a discursive construction whereby different discourses, institutions, laws, scientific statements and moral and philosophical propositions struggle for the right to determine the truth or truths (Foucault 1980:194). As was argued before, the key thing to realise here is that discourse as social action or practice actually looks beyond the utterance to include the “framework of understanding, communication and interaction which is in turn part of broader socio-cultural structures and processes” (van Dijk 1997:21; also see Fairclough 2001).
Furthermore, for Foucault (1990) discourse is the means by which institutions brandish power through processes of definition and exclusion that are, in themselves, regulatory. It influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others (1990:1130-1131). By highlighting the way in which ideas and social action is limited, Foucault establishes a link between discourses and power and between power and knowledge. However, in Foucault’s analysis power and discourse are treated as being open and fluid. To elaborate, according to Foucault (1978:93), “power is everywhere…it comes from everywhere” and if “one is always in ‘inside’ power, (which constitutes its own discourses) there is no ‘escaping’ it” (1978:95). Having said that, this ubiquity of power does not preclude resistance. Foucault (1978:95-96) adds that “resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power” or to put it another way, resistance(s) are “not outside of power” (Foucault 1980:131) and they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations. In this analysis, power is not thought of as being exclusively negative, fixed, repressive or one-dimensional, it is also productive, positive, unstable and relational (Foucault 1978; 1980). Power runs through and between things, it is discursive, it produces knowledge, the social world and the varied ways in which we experience our sense of being (Foucault 1980:119). However, power is not absolute, and even though people are subjected to power, they have the agency to negotiate power relationships within various discourses (Ryba and Wright 2005:204-205).

Similar to the Gramscian stance of power in terms of hegemony as being characterised by negotiation and even resistance from marginalised groups, power is in this case no longer perceived as only repressive, nor is it understood in purely material or institutional terms along social structures such as class. Instead, power is productive, and creative of subjects, identities, roles, meanings and ideologies (Abrahamsen 2003:198). As a result of this analysis many critical cultural-postcolonial theoretical scholars consider identity to be a discursive phenomenon and tend to assume that cultural identities are social constructions. It is also in this regard that subordinate groups are not necessarily seen as being trapped in the same position on the identity hierarchy. They can employ creative strategies, such as determining new criteria for inter-group comparison that will reflect more positively on their group or finding an alternative group for comparison, to compete for superiority with the dominant group. In addition, identities (in the plural) are in this case, seen as sites of struggles over meaning, as constructions and as moments of identification and not so much as predefined collective wholes. Spivak (1990), Gilroy (1991), Bhabha (1994a), Appiah (1995), and Hall (1994) are all critical of the Enlightenment notion of the individual as an autonomous subject and they also reject a deterministic Marxist view that social
identities are determined exclusively by economic and material factors. As has been suggested so far, identities are for the most part the result of subject positions within conflicting discourses. Thus, identities are constructed on the basis of varied, differentiated and shifting discourses all of which makes them incomplete, decentred and fragmented, but not completely open (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002:108-109).

In thinking about African identity, the postmodernist-Foucaultian-cultural studies influence can be noted in Bhabha’s (1994a:33) notion of ‘hybrid’ identities in postcolonial theory. Drawing on Foucault’s analysis of power relations, Bhabha focuses on the specific colonial and neo-colonial relations of power, which were left out of Foucault’s perspective. Bhabha (1994a:72) uses Foucaultian analysis to point out the strategic nature of discourses and to undermine binary antagonisms of colonised and coloniser, which could be subverted by being inverted. He uses Foucault’s theories of power to underline his own emphasis on difference, which is focused on the contestation of difference and the articulation of “diverse ‘subjects’ of differentiation” (Bhabha 1994a:73-74). Here, it is also relevant to elaborate briefly on postcolonial theory. Shome (1996:41) defines postcolonialism as a “critical perspective that primarily seeks to expose the Eurocentrism and imperialism of Western discourses (both academic and public)”. Pertinently, postcolonialism is not simply about theorising the problems and contexts of de/colonisation, but “its focus and its critical key goals, first and foremost, are interventionist and highly political” (Shome and Hegde 2002:250). As is suggested in chapter 1, the strength of postcolonialism stems from its eclectic disciplinary mix of theoretical positions, that is, its ‘hybrid’ character in so far as it transcends the oppressive and inward looking nativistic conceptions (of identity) by opening up spaces for other potentially resilient expressions of (identity) subjectivity (Said 1993; Bhabha 1994b). The focus here is not on repressive categories as in the shape of the Eurocentric universalism that characterised the European subjugation and denigration of African peoples and identities (Mbembe 2002:258), but rather on continuities, fluidity and the ways in which they open up spaces of resistance. The discourse on hybridisation disrupts fixed boundaries and essentialist categories by exposing their porousness whilst highlighting the extent to which for instance, cultures are interrelated (Bhabha 1994a:1-2).

The postcolonial connection between postmodern perspectives such as Bhabha’s appropriation of Foucault’s theories is used here as a tool for understanding contemporary discourses within the discursive field of African identity. It is in this sense that this study draws on Bhabha’s (1994a:33-37) analytic concept of ‘hybridity’, whereby African identities whether ‘diasporic’ or
‘continental’ are not necessarily looked at as being singular, but rather as being inherently unstable, neither ‘eurocentric’ nor ‘indigenous’, but something else that is always in the making. Such an approach calls on to us to realise that African people are spread throughout the world, as in the diaspora. Just as there are African-Americans today, there are European-Africans, Asian-Africans and Arab-Africans (Gilroy 1993; 1997; Memmi 1965). This also reminds us that ‘African culture’ like most cultures is not fixed, it is dynamic, ambivalent and it evolves and develops over time. It has been affected by interaction with other non-indigenous cultures (see Memmi 1965; Achebe 1988; Fanon 1963). For instance, in looking back at the influences of Christianity and traditional beliefs on his childhood, Achebe (1988) asserts, “that we lived at the crossroads of cultures. We still do today” (cited in Abrahamsen 2003:204). Hence, Achebe cited in Ahluwalia (2001:33) argues that, “African identity is in the making. There isn’t a final identity that is African. But at the same time, there is an identity coming into existence. And it has a certain context and meaning”. Despite the teleological strands of this understanding of African identity, we can argue that it is always in the process of becoming and not a fixed state of sovereign subjectivity as such. Here we can note that questions of identity are often underpinned by this tension between essentialism (purity) and anti-essentialism (hybridity) (Gilroy 1997:314-318).

This inclusive approach to Africani ty has influenced the works of scholars such as Diagne (2002), Mbembe (2002) and Nyamnjoh (2001) who have set out to re-think Africani ty as an open question that is to be experienced and traversed through everyday practices which are experienced by Africans. The idea here is not to think of the ‘African’ in ‘pure’ homogenous terms as if s/he is imbued with some essential core of ‘ubuntu’. Rather, the idea is to think of the African as a subject of multiple discourses and identifications, a member of numerous socio-cultural groups, constantly negotiating the changing fault-lines of the nation, language, religion and spaces such as the town and the village (Nyamnjoh 2005; Wright 2002). Despite this, s/he is also still part of a wider imagined community of Africans that is broadly influenced by a particular socio-cultural and historical context. The fuller point here is that while hybridisation has affected and impacted on African identity, the influences of the other identity groups has been vital in maintaining the distinctiveness of Africani ty. In other words, French-speaking, English-speaking, Spanish-speaking or Portuguese-speaking Africans are still able to relate, share an imagined similar worldview and interpretation as Africans despite their differences and varied influences. In a sense, Africans are diverse people that recognise their Africanness through a shared sense of
history, culture and consciousness of being in the African world (Gates 2004; Gilroy 1993). I will attempt to raise some of the implications of hybridity and the disruptions set forth by postcolonialism for our understanding of the nexus between journalism, mass media and NEPAD in the next chapter. For now, I would like to conclude by pointing out some of the relevant inferences that can be made from the issues raised so far in this chapter.

4.6 Conclusion: context, multiplicities and travelling journalism

In this concluding section, I make the case for a context-driven approach in which journalistic and cultural identity are read as socio-culturally influenced processes that are stable and grounded, for instance, as in the case of the ideal-type values of journalism and yet also fractured in so far as they are applied and interpreted differently in various contexts. In addition, although dominant hegemonic identities can be noted in society and media content, they are also open to negotiation. In thinking about these nuances, the first point here is that based on the insights from the cultural studies-postcolonial theoretical fields, it can be posited that identities are contingent and fluid. They are influenced by a range of discourses and subject positions that offer a multiplicity of identification points, which provide the possibility of subjectivity, agency and individuality. Therefore, whilst I have conceptualised journalistic identity as being influenced broadly by libertarian and social responsibility theory in terms of the specific sub-identities of neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development journalism. The literature review also indicated that depending on the context at hand one could also posit ‘patriot’, ‘nationalist liberator’ and ‘pan-Africanist journalist’ as potential journalistic positions. Thus, although some scholars have talked of a global view of journalism, the suggestion here is that as journalism travels in theory and practice from one context to another its values, norms and ethics tend to come into contradiction with each other due to differences in their interpretation and deployment. This serves to remind us as was argued in chapters 2 to 3 that journalism tends to emerge or mutate to fit the circumstances of specific locales, times and populations. In other words, because the specific socio-cultural and political concerns and interests of the post-colony might be different to those of Europe these differences are bound to influence the ways in which journalism is understood and practised in these regions.

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18 Although Gilroy (1993) proposes an inclusive notion of African identity that includes both continental and diasporic Africans almost similar to the one that exists in some versions of pan-Africanism and Afrocentrism, his approach is different in that it is not premised on an essential ‘black African identity’, but on a combination of double consciousness (continental and diasporic connectedness) and hybridity.
The second point concerns the issue of identity conflict, tension and negotiation. Journalists, similar to other individuals, have multiple identity options, each influencing them to behave in certain ways as they strive to negotiate or fulfil the specific practical role requirements that come with each identity option. Depending on how dominant and relevant the identities are to the context at hand, some identities would then be brought to the fore whilst others would be downplayed though not silenced as such (see Khan 1983). It is in this regard that we can get to see how journalistic identity is at times negotiated against national, ethnic and pan-African identities. It is also in this sense that, influenced by the concept of hybridisation, journalism practice from a postcolonial perspective moves away from looking at the (African) journalist in isolation as a singular, unified individual whose role is universal in the way that libertarian-oriented journalism tends to do (see Deuze 2005). Instead, the journalist is considered to be a subject of multiple discourses and yet s/he is also read here as having the agency to negotiate the identity conflicts, tensions and power relationships within various discourses. Therefore, I tend to see journalistic identity as being constituted by roles or sub-identities of a watchdog, neutral, social agenda or development journalist whilst bearing in mind that at a meta sub-identity level there could also be room for other positions to come to the fore depending on the context (see chapters 9 to 11).

Thirdly, in attempting to make sense of this study with regard to a post-colonial context that does not easily fit into generalisations, one option is to focus on journalists that are reporting on NEPAD as this study attempts to do, whilst the other is to use broad analytic categories as in Weaver (1998) that can be replicated in various countries. As suggested before, whilst there is theoretical and methodological strength in the studies reviewed in chapters 2 and 3, this thesis draws on and also deviates from the Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) approach proper. The reason for this is due to the fact that this study’s research questions are bent on exploring the understandings of journalists in relation to their perceptions, identifications and their news stories. It is, therefore, not fundamentally focused per se on profiling journalists or measuring the scale of their responses to particular role values, norms and attitudes even though the latter is a key aspect of this study. Broadly, such an approach requires one to explore at some level the contextual influences that are faced by journalists. In other words, investigating what roles they endorse is for me not simply about collecting psychographic data concerning their profiles or ratings about this or that role. Rather, it is about how they understand, opine and respond to NEPAD’s ideological interpellations in terms of their journalistic and cultural identifications within the post-colonial context of NEPAD. I expand on this issue of context in chapter 5.
In sum, this chapter attempts to provide insights into how journalists mediate and navigate their journalistic and cultural identities and the question of how, if at all, such subject positions are evident in the content of their news stories and their perceptions. The tone emerging from the literature and the studies is that depending on the issues at hand, journalists can enact those journalistic roles and senses of belonging that enable them to express their cultural and journalistic identity. However, the chapter also notes that there is no necessary direct link between specific cultural leanings, journalistic sub-identities and the news content. By deploying the concepts of interpellation, identification, hegemony and hybridity, the study treats the question of identity as being contingent and fluid, individual and yet also communal with various identities and corresponding roles coming to the fore depending on the issue at hand. This leads the chapter to argue that to make sense of how identity is played out with regard to the journalists in the context of NEPAD, one has to take into account the individual context of the journalists and this requires that we view journalists as negotiating a multiplicity of identities. In the next chapter, I highlight the NEPAD, journalism and mass media context of this study.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONTEXT: NEPAD AND THE MASS MEDIA

5.0 Introduction
This chapter aims to explore the nexus between NEPAD, journalism and mass media practice. In doing this, I take on a review approach through which I also frame relevant aspects of the social, economic, political and cultural context of Africa as a region. I start by presenting the origins, influences, criticisms and debates concerning NEPAD. This is followed by a discussion on the potential links between journalists, media and NEPAD. This discussion is spread across two sections that more specifically explore the ways in which NEPAD discourse creates specific journalistic and cultural identities that may be occupied by journalists. Drawing on insights from the previous chapter particularly in the shape of postcolonial-cultural studies theory, the discussion goes on to raise the implications of this for our understanding of NEPAD and the journalism, media and NEPAD nexus. The chapter then goes on to elaborate on the relevance of a context-driven and reflective analytical approach that focuses on the journalist in the post-colony when it comes to understanding the potential links between journalists and the NEPAD discourse.

5.1 Enter NEPAD: historical context, influences, origins and aims
There is a history to the political and economic union of the African continent, the most influential of which was the pan-Africanism of Kwame Nkrumah, who argued that Africa must unite, and that the early independence of Ghana was meaningless without the liberation and unification of the entire continent (Nkrumah 1963:132-140). Many other African leaders from the independence generation shared these views, though some of them, as in the case of Julius Nyerere preferred a more incrementalist and economic sub-regions approach to unification (Anyang’ Nyong’o 2002:20). Still, there was a strong insistence on unification and collective self-reliance as an answer to colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism all of which culminated in the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) at the height of the Cold War. The OAU managed to maintain Africa’s diplomatic unity and not be split into two opposing Cold War blocks at a time when some countries were still under colonialism (Mafeje 2002:74-75).

On the economic front, one of the key features of development in the 1960s was the central role that was to be played by the state in building social and economic infrastructure and providing social services to the impoverished people of the continent (Baah 2003:1-2). It is in this regard that Ghana, Zambia (humanism) and Tanzania (Nyerere’s (1962) ujamaa policy that prescribed
the values of self help and agrarian socialism) in particular went on to make improvements in terms of their social development through African socialist development plans (see Berger 1992; Stiglitz 2002; Baah 2003). However, as Cold War politics gained ground, the socialist approach was soon superseded by the neo-liberal policies of the international financial institutions of the Word Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) particularly in the case of Kenya (Anyang’ Nyong’o et al 2002; Berger 1992). With regard to economic unification at independence, many African states were integrated financially and economically and some shared sub-regional politico-economic institutions, such as the East African Community (EAC), the Franc Zone in the former French West Africa and the Central African Federation. In the absence of genuine sub-regional economic unity, with the exception of the franc zone area, by the 1980s most of the unions had collapsed (see Anyang’ Nyong’o et al 2002).

By the 1970s and 1980s, many countries were liberated, but these were also decades that were characterised by political instability, military coups, one-party governments, dictatorships and the heightened influence of Cold War politics in African affairs (Baah 2003:2-4). Faced with the onset of an economic crisis – huge foreign debts and declines in social development – and the failure of the international financial institutions’ free market policies, African countries tried to reverse these trends by calling for a new international economic order (NIEO) through which they could craft self-reliant, culturally relevant and state-influenced development strategies (Adedeji 2002). Despite these attempts, the challenges of the 1970s proved too difficult for African states to overcome. Africa was now faced with a deepening economic crisis that was not helped by the 1980s failed structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) which were prescriptions of the international financial institutions (Baah 2003; Stiglitz 2002).

In such a context, African leaders found it necessary to transform the focus of the OAU from political liberation to economic development (Mafeje 2002; Adedeji 2002). Hence, throughout the 1980s and 1990s African governments went on to design a series of pan-African socialist-oriented “indigenous development paradigms” which they felt were relevant to the needs of their people (Adedeji 2002:35). These attempts at intra-African economic cooperation and integration were in varying degrees influenced by the dependency theoretical perspective, the collective self-reliance of pan-Africanism and by the NIEO and NWICO perspectives about the state being at the centre of development (see Miller 2004; chapter 3). These initiatives included the Lagos Plan of Action (1980), the Final Act of Lagos (1980), Africa’s Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (1986-1990), the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programme (1989), the
African (Arusha) Charter for Popular Participation and Development (1990), the Abuja Treaty (1991) and the Cairo Agenda (1994) (Adedeji 2002:35; Adesina 2002:1) amongst others. The failure of most of these plans due to the lack of political will and the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War set stage for the ascendency of a dominant economic and political model influenced by neo-liberalism (Chabal 1998:293-294; also see Fukuyama 1992).

Note that the continued construction of Africanist development plans throughout the 1990s and into the 21st century has gone on to influence the transformation of the OAU into the African Union (AU) and in some ways even the eventual design of the blueprint for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). Still, the ascendency of neo-liberalism through globalisation has also influenced NEPAD.

Faced with the failures of the autocratic developmental state, structural adjustment programmes of modernisation and falling growth rates when other regions such as Asia were on the rise, “a new breed of African leaders” entered the 21st century with proclamations of an “African Renaissance” for the region (Moyo 1998:11; also see Mbeki 1996; Ajulu 2001). These leaders – such as Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria – took it upon themselves to play an integral role in trade, geopolitical and multi-lateral negotiations and relations between a united Africa and the EU, the US and the United Nations agencies (see Moyo 1998:9-12; Taylor and Nel 2002:163-180). These proclamations, coming after the end of the Cold War, coincided with a heightened process of social and economic transition in central and eastern Africa and the continuing political and economic transformation in South Africa (Vale and Maseko 1998; Nabudere 2002). They also coincided with increased transnationalism, communication networks and the triumphalism of neo-liberal ideology and its prescriptions for the adoption of a liberal-democracy, free markets, privatisation, foreign investment and flexible labour relations (see Fukuyama 1992; Bourdieu 1998b; Daniel et al 2004). It was out of this regional-global context that NEPAD was proclaimed in Abuja, Nigeria in October 2001. This was a year after the Constitutive Act of the AU had been adopted in July 2000 and a year before the formal launch of the AU as the replacement of the OAU in July 2002 (Nabudere 2002; Kotze and Steyn 2003). The Constitutive Act of the AU has provisions for economic and monetary union, and specifies that the Union shall have entities such as an African Central Bank amongst others. The AU has incorporated all states on the continent at the same time, rather than basing its regionalism on a core of hegemonic state(s) (see Anyang’ Nyong’o et al 2002).
As stated in the introductory chapter, NEPAD, which – in its own terms – is aimed at poverty eradication and the acceleration of Africa’s integration into the global economy, is the “African-owned” and “African-led” development vision of the AU (NEPAD 2001:13) although it is yet to be formally and institutionally integrated into the latter. Specific goals are to achieve economic growth of 7% per year and to meet the millennium development goals (MDGs) agreed upon by the United Nations (UN) in 2001, through investments in certain priority sectors such as ICTs (NEPAD 2001:1, 24-25; also see AU 2004). To be more specific, NEPAD is the result of related and continued pan-African development initiatives such as the Millennium African Recovery Programme (MAP) and the Omega Plan, both of which led to the New African Initiative that then led to NEPAD in 2001 (see Nabudere 2002; Melber 2002; Adesina 2004). A key influence on the evolution of NEPAD is South African President Thabo Mbeki’s emphasis on the ‘African renaissance’, which can be noted, for instance, in his “I am an African” speech (Mbeki 1996:1). The phrase ‘African renaissance’ is read here as being in reference to the rebirth of African self-respect, unity and identity thereby leading to a renewed pan-Africanism (Cheru 2002: xii-xiii; see also Ahluwalia 2002). However, beyond cultural recognition, the rebirth also refers to economic and political improvement. In other words, the cultural renaissance of Africa is to go hand in hand with the spread of liberal democracy, stronger economies, trade and regional integration (see Vale and Maseko 1998; Ajulu 2001). Melber (2002) and Ahluwalia (2002) have identified the ‘African renaissance’ as a key philosophical foundation for NEPAD. The translation of the ‘African renaissance’ into policy concepts and programmes to some extent led to the gradual phasing out of the term itself within the predominantly political and public discourse, leading to the introduction of NEPAD.  

To an extent, NEPAD with its emphasis on development and democracy has been part of the new drive in Africa towards democracy (see Blake 1997) and ‘self-led’ sustainable economic development (Mkandawire 2002). NEPAD (2001:16-18) declares that democracy and good governance are preconditions for development. Part of the idea here is that liberal democracy, peace, good governance, political stability and the rule of law should help create the right environment for greater investment, economic growth and development (Chabal 2002:447-448). Thus, NEPAD’s conditions for development include security, regional co-operation (NEPAD

19 For an in-depth look at the origins, evolution and influences of NEPAD, see Nabudere (2002), Adesina (2004) and Melber (2002). See also Anyang’ Nyong’o et al (2002) on the earlier pan-African development initiatives and their linkages to NEPAD. The introduction of NEPAD into the international arena can be dated to the briefing on the MAP provided by Mbeki to the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, January 2001. In his presentation, he qualified MAP as “a declaration of a firm commitment by African leaders to take ownership and responsibility for the sustainable economic development of the continent” (Melber 2002:6-7). Mbeki was supported by Olusegun Obasanjo, Ben Mkapa of Tanzania and Abdoulaye Wade (see Melber 2002).
2001) and an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) through which member states periodically assess each other on human rights, economic, political and corporate governance, liberal democracy and socio-economic development. The APRM, which grew out of NEPAD, was formally launched in 2002 by the AU at its Durban summit (see Herbert 2002; 2003; Cilliers 2002; Mbeki 2003a). Signing up to the ‘peer review’ is open to all member states of the AU, but it is voluntary. By the time of the AU summit in Khartoum, Sudan, in January 2006, only 25 out of the 53 member states had signed up to be assessed (see Table 2 below; Fabricius 2005; NEPAD 2006). Overall, the APRM is meant to show a commitment to improving governance and socio-economic development in specific countries and more broadly in the continent, through shared experiences, the reinforcement of successful and best practices and the identification of deficiencies and the related programmes of action (NEPAD 2006; Herbert 2003). However, it is in this regard that the APRM may also implicitly be used here as a criterion by donors and investors to inform their considerations about partnerships with countries in Africa. In a sense, in return for upholding the conditions of the APRM African countries are expected to receive increased foreign direct investments, aid, debt relief and fairer trade access from donors and foreign investors as part of an attempt to fast track Africa’s path towards the MDGs (Kotze and Steyn 2003:109; see also Herbert 2002). For instance, with regard to NEPAD’s focus on information and communication technologies and bridging the digital divide through initiatives such as the NEPAD transnational e-schools project, it is those countries that have signed up to the APRM that have been prioritised by donors and multi-national information technology firms in the implementation of the project (see Dawes 2004; Mutaizibwa 2005).

Table 2: Countries that have acceded to the APRM as at March 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Algeria</th>
<th>Cameroon</th>
<th>Rwanda</th>
<th>Angola</th>
<th>Zambia</th>
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<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Republic of Congo</td>
<td>Sao Tome &amp; Principe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NEPAD (2005a; 2006)

The bulk of the journalists interviewed in this study are from the countries that have signed up to the APRM. The expectation here is that they might be more aware of NEPAD and the APRM through their media coverage than those journalists from countries that have not signed up to be reviewed.
NEPAD plans to use sub-regional trade blocs such as the revived EAC and SADC to implement its programmes (see NEPAD 2001; Gelb 2001). Although countries are expected to strengthen, create and integrate national, sub-regional and continental structures that support development and democracy (NEPAD 2001:18, 56), NEPAD argues that because of Africa’s marginalisation from global trade, there is:

need for African countries to pool their resources and enhance regional development and economic integration on the continent, in order to improve international competitiveness. The five sub-regional economic groupings of the continent must, therefore, be strengthened (NEPAD 2001:20).

This attention to cross country regionalism, which has coincided with the 1990s retreat from the stand-alone developmental state, is often highlighted as a response to globalisation. The idea here is that regional blocs can act as avenues for improving economic welfare whilst addressing the common challenges of globalisation (see Viner 1950; Balassa 1961; Mansfield and Milner 1997). The suggestion is that if a state aligns itself with other countries, it has a better chance of progressing toward economic development (Miller 2004:178). It is in this sense that NEPAD focuses on regional economic integration and cooperation (see also Gelb 2001; Kubalasa 2003).

In addition to the regional claims there is a “call for a new partnership between Africa and the international community…to overcome the development chasm that has widened over centuries of unequal relations” (NEPAD 2001:2). The concept of ‘partnership’, implying a pooling of efforts, and sharing of burdens, at the global and continental levels, and a mutual responsibility and common interest by a people (Dogonyaro 2002:323-326; NEPAD 2001:20), is today often used to describe a new era in North-South relations in which donors no longer seek to impose their vision of development on recipient countries. Instead, ‘partnership’ suggests that they are now partners in strategies determined and owned by recipients themselves such as NEPAD (Abrahamsen 2004:1453).

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21 In terms of unification, at the 5th AU summit in Sirte, Libya, in July 2005, president Muammar Gaddafi proposed the setting up of an all-Africa government. The same leader had in 1999, at an OAU summit in Sirte, called for the acceleration of integration in Africa, which contributed to the set up of the AU (Tajudeen 2005).

22 Regionalism is in reference to the ideas, identities and ideologies related to a regional project. These ideas can take on different forms and processes of expression, for example through the set up of a customs union, a regional parliament or a common market (Marchand et al 1999:897-898). These processes define regionalisation.

23 Economic integration refers here to a process through which the economies of individual states gain access to each other’s markets through trade and investment. Cooperation refers to a plethora of schemes including integration in which states with common interests share resources and act as a unit in external economic relations (Balassa 1961; Cheru 2002).
These developments have implications for the ways in which we think about NEPAD and the potential – collective or personal self-definitions – identifications of the journalist in Africa all of which are explored more fully in section 5.2. For now, it is also important to elaborate on the issue of pan-Africanism. To start with, the pan-African universal claims of the ‘African renaissance’, the AU and NEPAD projects have rekindled hopes for a united response to the continent’s economic and political problems similar to the ways in which the early nationalist leaders at the time of independence had invoked unification in the interests of national independence and pan-Africanism. By calling on African states to peer review each other, pool resources and be self-reliant, NEPAD is invoking one of the key principles of pan-Africanism in which the people of one part of Africa are seen as being responsible for the freedom of their brothers and sisters in other parts of Africa (see Young 2001). In fact, ‘black’ people everywhere were to accept the same responsibility (see Fanon 1963). At some level, this is the same idea that is the basis of the AU in so far as it is inscribed in the Constitutive Act of the AU (AU 2004).

Similar to the ways in which Nkrumah (1963) argued that there could be no freedom and independence in one state without freedom and independence in all of Africa, NEPAD suggests that there can be no genuine development and peace in one country unless there are rights, security and governance in neighbouring countries (NEPAD 2001). However, whilst Nkrumah in particular promoted an African political identity over and above the territorial, tribal and national identity boundaries, history has moved on in that, although NEPAD is oriented towards African unity and economic integration, it also on paper at least prioritises partitioned sub-regions as a response to 21st century globalisation.

Further, one could posit that whilst the earlier version of pan-Africanism and the related development initiatives of collective self-reliance were in direct opposition to the West, European identity, modernity and neo-liberalism, NEPAD’s project of pan-Africanism is infused with both modernising capitalist development values and the less repressive aspects of indigenous African culture. On the latter issue, it is in this regard that the NEPAD (2001) policy document sets out to highlight the relevance of African cultural heritage and value systems to the continent and indeed the world. Consider the following:

Culture is an integral part of development efforts on the continent. Consequently, it is essential to protect and effectively utilise indigenous knowledge…The New Partnership for Africa’s Development will give special attention to the protection and nurturing of indigenous knowledge, which includes tradition-based literacy, artistic and scientific works, inventions…designs, marks, names and symbols, undisclosed information and all other tradition-based innovations and creations…(2001:35).
This consideration of culture in development can be related to the culturalist aspects of nationalist ideology, the dependency paradigm, the NIEO and NWICO approach towards the state as the protector of national culture, socialist-oriented African development plans, the participatory model and even aspects of development journalism (see Berger 1992; Nkrumah 1965; Domatob 1988). The point here is that African culture is pointed out as a key motivating factor and element in development. In NEPAD, emphasis is also placed on “paleontological and archaeological sites” (in Kenya, Ethiopia and South Africa) as evidence of the view that Africa is the “cradle of humankind” (NEPAD 2001:3-4). NEPAD argues that:

As part of the process of reconstructing the identity and self-confidence of the peoples of Africa, it is necessary that this contribution to human existence be understood and valued by Africans themselves. Africa’s status as the birthplace of humanity should be cherished by the whole world as the origin of all its peoples. Accordingly, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development must preserve this common heritage and use it to build a universal understanding of the historic need to end the underdevelopment and marginalisation of the continent (2001:4).

As is expanded on below, this potential tension between the idealised and emotive roots of an African (past) identity and modernity appears to underpin NEPAD’s expression of Africanism. Broadly, this potentially also means that within the context of NEPAD, ‘African identity’ can be re-read as possessing an inherent modernity-Africanism characteristic, whilst the earlier expression of ‘African identity’ tended mainly towards Afrocentrism. In other words, whilst the African journalist of the 1960s to the 1970s was expected by the nationalist leaders to link journalistic identity to nation building and pan-African identity, the journalist interpellated by NEPAD’s discourse could potentially be read here as being faced with the ideologies of modernity, tradition, sub-regionalism and African regionalisation in a globalised world. However, despite some of these contradictions and complexities, there is a sense in which NEPAD elevates and sets out to ‘reconstruct’ a ‘common’ supranational (pan-)`African’ identity – against those identities that tend to highlight the multiplicity of the African – albeit as a key strategy for attaining economic development and cultural rejuvenation. In a sense, the pan-African universal claims of the ‘African renaissance’, the AU and NEPAD contrast with, and oppose the particularistic and place bound identities of nations, locales and even sub-regions. Having briefly introduced the NEPAD framework and its discourse, in the next sub-section I highlight some of the criticisms concerning the initiative and its mode of deployment.

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24 The work of Fanon (2001), Nyerere (1962) and Nkrumah (1970), who were interested in decolonisation, African socialism(s), African political and economic emancipation and pan-Africanism, can be read as constituting early African-centred articulations of development with an emphasis on the ‘culture’ aspects of development.
5.1.1 Criticisms, concerns and counter-debates

The initial optimism about NEPAD’s framework has in the past few years met with criticisms from civil society, unions, the media, academics, religious groups and sections of the business community over its neo-liberal ideology and for having excluded them in drawing up its framework (see Bond 2002; Adesina 2004; PwC 2002; NBM 2003). To start with, NEPAD requires US$64 billion per year in funding, the bulk of which is expected to come from the West (Anyang’ Nyong’o et al 2002). Still, NEPAD tends to lean more towards investment from the private sector and not so much from aid from foreign governments. However, the criticism here as argued by Mkandawire (2002:118) and Tandon (2002:139) is that by relying on foreign direct investments from corporate entities, NEPAD may not be able to prioritise funding towards initiatives that are oriented to the basic needs of most people. Similar to aid and development assistance, foreign direct investment comes with conditions that may not be in the interests of the local industries and sectors. Besides, the emphasis on external funding is potentially at odds with the ‘self-reliance’ espoused by NEPAD. This dependency on foreign assistance has led critics to argue that NEPAD is not ‘African-owned’ and that because it endorses the neo-liberal values and policies of donors, the unequal balance of power between Africa and the West within the partnership is already perpetuated from the start (Abrahamsen 2004:1457; see also Olukoshi 2002).

At this stage, it is fair to say that some of the criticisms towards the neo-liberal aspects of NEPAD tend to prioritise the issue of external foreign direct investment whilst ignoring the internal – intra-regional investment and hegemonic dynamics – which could be equally disadvantageous to the less politically and economically influential countries. Besides, by focusing exclusively on the neo-liberal economic edge in NEPAD, scholars appear to have paid less attention to issues to do with African culture, the youth and information and communication technologies, all of which are considered by NEPAD (2001). Even less attention has gone to media and press freedoms, which are present, but not fully developed in the NEPAD document (see section 5.2 below). The 2001 NEPAD policy document broadly addresses certain issues that are pertinent to journalism and media practice such as democracy, human rights and the media’s role in the use of information and communication technologies as a tool for bridging the digital divide (NEPAD 2001:24). In other instances, the media are singled out as one of the voices that ‘reinforced’ the 1990s drive towards neo-liberal democratic principles (NEPAD 2001:9). Furthermore, in practice under the peer review mechanism, some of the stakeholders to be consulted include journalists and mass media practitioners. Despite this, NEPAD and by implication the peer review framework are both
silent on freedom of expression and media freedoms as key criteria for good governance (see Berger 2002b; Berger 2003; IFEX 2005).

In general, based on the entry into the rest of Africa by South African businesses, Bond (2002:1) argues that NEPAD is a South African ‘sub-imperialist’ project (also see Lesufi 2006). To elaborate, due to the increased foreign direct investment from South Africa (SA) into the rest of Africa, the country has grown to become one of the dominant forces over the African economy. Post-Apartheid South African capital can be found in the media, telecoms, mining and infrastructural sectors of the rest of Africa. South African exports to the continent grew from R5 billion in 1992 to R44.5 billion in 2002. As a result, the rest of Africa “had by 2001 become South Africa’s fourth-largest export market” (Daniel et al 2004:343-344). However, there is still a huge imbalance of trade between SA and its trading partners in the rest of Africa.25

Note that the entry of South African capital into the rest of Africa does not necessarily go hand in hand with the sentiments of the top South African corporate, public and civil society officials with regard to NEPAD. In their study on elite African perspectives – in Nigeria, Senegal, Algeria, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa and Zimbabwe – on the AU and NEPAD, Kotze and Steyn (2003:58-60) found that the elite in South Africa expressed relatively lower levels of support for African unity than their compatriots in those same countries that are being invested in by South African businesses.26 Caution is needed in drawing inferences from such a finding because one also has to bear in mind that slippery terms such ‘African unity’ and even regional initiatives such as NEPAD may actually mean different things to different people, depending on the context in which they make sense of these issues. Accordingly, it should be taken as tentative when Kotze and Steyn (2003) report that, when asked about the prospect of Africans speaking as “one voice at international forums”, respondents in South Africa and Zimbabwe showed little support for the statement. On another note, most respondents except those in South Africa were in favour of the view that “Africa’s ultimate aim should be the political unification of Africa”. To the extent that this is reliable information, Miller (2000:14-19; also see 2004; 2005) asserts that South African

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25 Besides fears in some countries about SA taking over and stifling their local businesses (Bond 2002), officials in African countries trading with SA have raised concerns about the trade imbalance. During the March 2004 Cape Town launch of the entry of Uganda’s coffee into the SA market, Uganda’s then Minister of Trade and Industry Prof. Edward Rugumayo expressed this concern to his South African colleague, Minister Alec Erwin. Interestingly, the entry of Uganda’s coffee onto the South African market via Shoprite was in itself part of an initiative to counter the trade imbalance between the two countries (Rugumayo, Interview 9/3/2004).

26 The elite respondents were taken from eight societal sectors. That is, key members of the private sector, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations (CBOs) and civic organisations; the public sector; professional-academic or analyst; trade unions; the political sector; the media and the church. The respondents in all the countries showed greater familiarity with the AU than NEPAD.
firms that are currently ‘recolonising’ the region with their bad labour and business practices have exploited the ideology of the ‘African Renaissance’ – *ubuntu* and African identity – and the economic framework of NEPAD to justify their investments. Miller (2004:177) argues that notions of modernisation are at the root of the Africanist claims of South African capital.

Such criticisms were also raised about the ‘African renaissance’ by Moyo (1998:11-12) who argued that it was neither a concept nor ideology “but a dangerous catch-all phrase” used by big business – particularly within SA – plus politicians and the donor community to sell every product or service as an expression of the ‘African renaissance’. For Vale and Maseko (1998:271), the discourse of the ‘African renaissance’ appears to treat Africa as an untapped resources market waiting for South Africa as a regional “agent of globalisation” to come in and invest in the region. This modernisation drive of South African capital has also led to queries concerning the political implications of the regional role being played by South Africa and the stronger economies in Africa in their control of economic resources (see Lesufi 2006; Ahwireng-Obeng and McGowan 1998). Overall, it is in on the basis of the above criticisms that Bond (2002), Taylor and Nel (2002), Adesina (2002; 2004) and Lesufi (2006) question NEPAD and by implication the ‘African renaissance’ on the grounds that they constitute an extension of neo-liberalism and the failed macro-economic policies of the SAPs and tied aid known as the ‘Washington consensus’.27

Furthermore, with little headway being made in reference to the implementation of NEPAD projects, coupled with similar criticisms in the media and from NEPAD founding member Abdoulaye Wade, NEPAD is often seen as a “disguise for a pact among elites in the African South and the G8 North” (Melber 2004:35). It is in this sense that Adesina (2004:126, 141-142) argues that NEPAD is a class-based neo-liberal project that is in line with the interests of the African elite, whose class aspirations are not dissimilar to those of the donors and corporates in the project of globalisation. Rather than representing a commitment to the broad population of Africans, the charge is that NEPAD represents the self-interest of indigenous elites, thereby running counter to the very principles of unity, ‘Africanness’ and democracy on which it is founded.

27The ‘Washington consensus’ represents a collection of developmental policies promoted by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The policies put emphasis on export-driven trade, privatisation, open markets and competitiveness (see Stiglitz 2002; Baah 2003). Critics argue that since the 1980s, such policies have on their own terms failed to increase economic growth and only served to increase poverty and the marginalisation of Africa (Chang and Grabel 2004; Adesina 2002). Indeed, the poorest ‘developing’ countries performed worse at every level of per capita GDP during the neo-liberal era than in the preceding interventionist decades of the 1960s-80s (Chang and Grabel 2004:17-19; see also Baah 2003).
In fact, in the Kotze and Steyn (2003:4-5) study, it was found that the majority of respondents, except those in Zimbabwe, agreed with the statement that it is only the ruling elite that is actively involved in promoting NEPAD. The elite in Nigeria, South Africa, Senegal and Algeria – countries that were involved in drafting and designing the initiative – displayed more awareness and confidence in NEPAD’s ability to improve the economic prospects of their individual countries and the region (Kotze and Steyn 2003:43-49). What this could indicate is that what might be in the interests of dominant powers such as South Africa and Nigeria may not necessarily be in the interests of smaller ones like Uganda. In relation to this, respondents in South Africa, unlike those in Uganda and Zimbabwe, felt that their country would benefit from NEPAD. Further, the majority of respondents in Algeria, Senegal and again Uganda and Zimbabwe agreed with the statement that “NEPAD does not embody the economic aspirations of all Africans” (Kotze and Steyn 2003:49, 4).

Despite the above criticisms, there are some counter issues to bear in mind. Firstly, one could argue that NEPAD is not necessarily a direct continuation of structural adjustment programmes and that in its insistence on private capital and trade, the idea is to avoid a repeat of the developmental state and its corruption, elitism, bureaucracy and ethnic patronage, all of which curtailed socio-economic growth (see Bayart 1993; Chabal 2002). Secondly, bad leadership aside, it is also evident that the inclusion of the APRM in NEPAD is a break with past initiatives, particularly in so far as it is a sign of a commitment towards peace, security and democracy as essential criteria for collective regionalism (see Herbert 2003). Thirdly, most of the criticisms are silent on an alternative development strategy in the place of NEPAD.

What all this demonstrates is that NEPAD as the dominant contemporary incarnation of pan-Africanism is far from having universal support. It is, instead, highly contested. It is important to keep track of the issues raised in this section particularly in so far as they inform our understanding of the wider socio-cultural influences on journalists’ self-definitions of their identities with regard to NEPAD. These debates, criticisms and counter-debates have implications for our understanding of identity and interpellation in African discourse around NEPAD. The fuller point here is that not only are journalists faced with contesting identities in terms of their journalistic identity, and between this and the Africanist ideology of NEPAD, but also different views within Africanism and NEPAD’s strand of Africanist identity. Thus, the resultant role perceptions of the journalists are likely to be determined in a fluctuating hybridisation of
contradictory identities. In the next section, I go on to explore more specifically the nexus between mass media, journalism and NEPAD.

5.2 NEPAD’s interpellation of journalists and the mass media

5.2.1 Some initial considerations
As indicated, the social, economic and political implications of NEPAD have been critically analysed by academics, but most of these analyses do not address the mass media and journalism in relation to NEPAD. This limited attention paid to the role of journalism and mass media in NEPAD or as to how African journalists relate to NEPAD’s discourse is in contrast to the substantial writing for instance on development journalism in Africa before the 1990s (see chapter 3). With regard to the actual engagement of the media with NEPAD, we can note that when comparing the levels of knowledge on NEPAD between various sectors, Kotze and Steyn (2003:46) found members of the media to be in possession of high levels of knowledge relating to the initiative. Whilst there might be limited academic and public attention towards the role of the mass media and journalism in NEPAD, media owners and senior media practitioners on their part appear to have engaged with the initiative at some level (see Kotze and Steyn 2003).

However, the NEPAD secretariat (which is based in South Africa) and the corresponding sub-regional and national NEPAD units have on occasion been criticised for ignoring the mass media’s role in NEPAD (Oji 2006:1-3). The secretariat’s relationship with journalists has at times been strained or “confrontational and, at worst, distant” (Kouakou 2003:45). However, the secretariat in conjunction with the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), has been engaged in a series of ‘communications’ and ‘reporting’ NEPAD workshops and strategies targeted towards media houses and journalists across Africa (Herbert 2003; NEPAD 2002). In other instances, countries such as Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya have carried out related awareness campaigns through their NEPAD national units (see NEPAD 2004c; Oji 2006). Having said that, both at the regional-secretariat and at the national levels, NEPAD is poorly resourced and this has slowed down co-ordination efforts across the region (Herbert 2003; Kaye Interview 2005; Mageria 2005). In attempting to make sense of the above one could posit here that the transnational co-ordination and communication problems that are experienced by NEPAD may have implications for the ways in which journalists approach and identify with NEPAD’s Africanist sentiments or even its claims towards being a ‘new partnership’ that is unlike the poorly co-ordinated old ones. The above also serves to remind us that NEPAD is an initiative that has the potential to provide contestation.
5.2.2 The socially responsible journalist: advocacy, development and promotion

With regard to the specific role of journalism and mass media in the NEPAD initiative, it is helpful to bear in mind that discourses tend to create their own sets of subject positions that are to be occupied by those who operate within them (Fairclough 2001:85). NEPAD literature, NEPAD officials and indeed some of the reviewed literature that raises issues concerning the mass media and the initiative tend to prescribe social responsibility-oriented journalistic roles in the reportage on NEPAD. In doing this, these prescriptions also appear to be driven by an essentialist conception of what it means to be an African, a stance that is line with NEPAD’s discourse. I deal with this latter issue in the next section. For now, the attempt is to illustrate that, based on NEPAD’s communication strategies coupled with the discourse put forward by NEPAD’s proponents, NEPAD expects journalists in Africa and their media to take on advocacy, positive-promotional and even Africanist development-oriented role positions in their coverage of NEPAD (see NEPAD 2004c; Mbeki 2003b). A particular example of the aforementioned is when, following a media workshop in Bamako, Mali, the NEPAD Secretariat argued that:

NEPAD goals and objectives should not be transmitted as givens to people, but as vehicles to change their lives. All Africans have the responsibility for making a contribution to achieve the NEPAD dream of developing a new Africa (NEPAD 2004c:1-2).

In this regard, Saul Kaye (Interview 2005), Head of the NEPAD national unit in Uganda, had this to say during an interview:

Your role here is in terms of awareness campaigns: informing people not only in Uganda, but also across the continent about what it [NEPAD] is, for you to be able to come and articulate where we are and for you to be able to put it out in the media for people to know what’s happening. I think that way you will be making a positive contribution to furtherance of NEPAD/APRM in this country and in Africa.

In another interview, Shope-Linney (Interview 2006), Communications Manager at the Secretariat, exemplifies this interventionist stance by asserting that when telling the NEPAD story, journalists in Africa should be oriented towards “advocacy and analysis”, and that “they should look at issues in-depth, be supportive, and promote where they have to”. She explains that reporting on NEPAD should be “different from reporting that is normally done on hard-core news”. She insists that:

I think journalists should be able to explain to the layman what NEPAD is and what it stands for. If you go on the streets and ask people, ‘Have you heard about NEPAD?’ They will say ‘yes’, but ask them what it means and they will say, ‘I don’t know’. So there is that question of explaining to the layman…What are our responsibilities as individual Africans on the continent with respect to NEPAD? What are our expectations of NEPAD? (Interview 2006).
According to Shope-Linney (Interview 2006), it is because of the African journalists’ failure to support and promote Africa that NEPAD stories are not being told. She reasoned that, “you see there are many positive stories that are not being told for instance, about the way in which many African countries are today making improvements in their GDP levels” (Interview 2006). Still, during the interview she also cautioned that this emphasis on positive stories should not be taken to mean that, “they should not be critical”. For her, “in their being analytical, they can be critical, but let them be objective, fair and accurate and let them do good balanced journalism. Let them point out the bad things on the continent and highlight some of the positives that they ignore” (Interview 2006). For the most part, in her view, the critical stance should not be the dominant identity as such.

In thinking about the journalistic roles that are being prioritised in the above examples, it is worth remembering as is highlighted in chapter 3, that the development role requires journalists to deliberately take on an attached and active position in reporting on development-oriented projects, health care and education issues (Kariithi 1994; Ward 2004). The idea is for the journalist to intervene in some manner, to bring about socially valued outcomes (Ward 2004; Hanitzsch 2004). In other words, the journalist eschews objectivity and becomes an advocate – a change agent – whether for the marginalised and those in need, or for a governmental initiative like NEPAD. This interventionist position is not only in contrast to NEPAD’s mainstream liberal path to development – which is steeped in Smithian free market ideologies of libertarianism – but is also in opposition to the libertarian ‘neutral’ and ‘watchdog’ stances of journalism practice in the post-colony (see Ramaprasad 2001; Berger 2000; Mwesige 2004). The implication of this is that some journalists could meet such a role with resistance, particularly when one bears in mind that such an interventionist role of “developing a new Africa” and “positive” stories on Africa was previously used by the state to curb media freedoms and stifle criticism in the name of development (see Kariithi 1994; 5.2.2.1 below).

Another example of this interventionist perspective particularly in terms of the development journalism interpellation can be noted in the following. After the presentation of the review reports for Ghana and Rwanda at the third summit of the peer review forum in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 2005, the APRM secretariat expressed its disappointment at the mostly negative coverage of the event by the press (NEPAD 2005b). It was felt that the press had only focused on the “shortcomings identified in the review reports” whilst ignoring the positives and that the press
also lacked a proper understanding of the review process (NEPAD 2005b:2-3). The APRM secretariat went on to add that:

…the press has a critical role in supporting the APR process and disseminating accurate information to the general public. The press can and should educate the masses on the positive aspects of the process and highlight the very good and positive developments happening in the African continent (NEPAD 2005b:3).

Furthermore, during a January 2006 APRM sensitisation workshop for the Nigerian media, the country’s media was singled out by its national APRM chapter for expressing an “improper appreciation of the issues involved in the APRM process” (Oji 2006:1). The event was aimed at seeking “media support in (the) effective implementation of the Mechanism in Nigeria” (Oji 2006:1). In a similar vein, Kouakou (2003:44) highlights the promotional and “indispensable” role that can be played by the mass media in branding NEPAD. For him, the media are part of the information conduits by which Africans can get to understand and participate in NEPAD.

Further, in their study Kotze and Steyn (2003:4-5) found that the majority of elites in all countries, except Zimbabwe, placed the media in the top four groups involved in advocating NEPAD. More specifically, the respondents in South Africa, Nigeria, Senegal, Algeria and Uganda regarded the government as having the most influence in advocating NEPAD, followed by the media (2003:51; see Table 3 below). One could infer from this that the elite appear to see the African media as having an important role to play in NEPAD.

Table 3: African decision makers’ perceptions about the influence of various groups in advocating NEPAD in their countries

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<th>South Africa</th>
<th>Nigeria</th>
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<td>Highest</td>
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The high rating that is accorded to the role of the African media in advocating NEPAD could imply here that the media by the nature of their roles as informers, watchdogs, educators and advocates are in this case seen as possessing as much influence and power to promote and advocate NEPAD as do the governments and sub-regional blocs. The advocacy nature of this role is similar to the aforementioned prescriptions on the promotional and development roles that can be played by the African media in educating ‘the masses’ about NEPAD’s ‘positive’ aspects. The relevance of this high regard for the media becomes vivid when we consider the finding that, when asked to indicate their most frequently used sources of information, daily newspapers were ranked first in all countries surveyed (Kotze and Steyn 2003:4-5). This finding is in line with this study’s general focus on print media and the assertion in chapter 2 that despite the 1990s opening up of the airwaves in the post-colony, privately-owned newspapers in particular are a key source of information for the minority urban elite that influence decision-making (see Louw and Tomaselli 1994; Kivikuru 2001; Kareithi and Kariithi 2005).

Pertinently, in thinking about how the NEPAD discourse could potentially interpellate journalists into socially responsible journalistic sub-identities it is worth bearing in mind that the positions of the NEPAD critics might also have a bearing on interpellating journalists into related sub-identities or even the libertarian roles of neutrality and watchdogism. Based on views of the critics concerning Africa’s exclusion from global trade, journalists may end up interpreting their views as a call towards the adoption of interventionist roles – on behalf of the marginalised and all Africans – with regard to NEPAD. On the other hand, they could see such criticisms as a call towards taking on an oppositional-critical-watchdog stance against NEPAD’s African essentialism or its liberalism, which could be read as a sell-out of Africa or as some form of contrived pan-Africanism. The fuller point here is that the journalist, therefore, will probably be subjected to a myriad of interpellations by the pro and anti – NEPAD stances. Having attempted to explore the way in which NEPAD and its supporters and at some level even the critics’ discourse might influence journalists, in the next sub-section the aim is to take stock of some of the implications of these issues with regard to the interests of this study.

5.2.2.1 More than one role for the journalist

As noted, there is a tendency for NEPAD, its planners and supporting governments to prescribe that journalists and the mass media should take on ‘advocacy’ or ‘developmental’ journalism roles in their reportage of NEPAD. In doing this, they implicitly downplay the view that this could be at the expense of other essential roles such as the sceptical ‘watchdog – adversarial’ stance which
prioritises investigating the abuse of power by the state, big business and civil society. Bear in mind that journalists are in reality a lot more pluralistic in their sense of belonging and role orientation (see Weaver 1998; chapters 8 to 10 on the interview findings and discussions thereof). For instance, in taking on a ‘social agenda’ role of conscientising the public as citizens about NEPAD whilst also encouraging them to participate in the initiative, the journalist may at some stage have to take on the neutral role of providing straight-forward event-based information to the audience or endorse a watchdog role of exposing negative aspects in NEPAD. In other instances, a journalist may practise a participant democratic role by canvassing views of civil society or marginalised people.

With regard to the call for a ‘promotional’ and ‘positive’ approach towards reporting NEPAD, one can argue here that this is actually a conflation of the roles that are performed by mass media, journalism and public relations (PR). As argued in chapters 1 through to 3, although journalism, mass media practice (which includes advertising) and PR are all forms of public communication, journalism unlike the other two, does not traditionally engage in communication of private, government or sectarian information for self-interested organisational ends (Nagara 2004:174; see Scholl 1996). Another point here is that, in the context of the post-colony (statist) development and positive news approach towards NEPAD could conjure up a legacy of political control and domination in the name of the public interest. Social responsibility influenced journalism, particularly development journalism have, as elaborated in chapter 3 and sub-section 5.2.2, previously been used by authoritarian states to curtail and reign in critical views from the press. In the name of development, ‘nation building’ and national unity, journalists and the mass media were reduced to the role of mouthpiece of the state (see Kariithi 1994; Aggarwala 1979). This stance can implicitly be noted in the aforementioned calls – see NEPAD (2005b); (Shope-Linney Interview 2006); Oji (2006); NEPAD (2004c); Kouakou (2003) – on the press to ‘promote’, ‘appreciate’ and portray the ‘very good and positive’ aspects of NEPAD and the APRM and not so much the negative so as to bring about ‘change’ in peoples lives. The parallel here, as before, is that development journalism and its socially-oriented goals of using the media to develop ‘the country’ or now, the ‘continent’, could easily be reduced to serving the interests of powerful leaders, regional hegemons, businesses and the elite whilst stifling criticism and alternative voices.

In thinking about the high rating for the mass media by key African decision makers, it is also worth remembering that when NEPAD was drawn up, its ideas were first presented to the
international donor community before explaining it to or involving the local African beneficiaries, including the press, for whom it had been drafted (Herbert 2002, 2003). Despite this, there is the likelihood that in those countries that initiated NEPAD – South Africa, Nigeria, and Senegal where the national elite showed high levels of knowledge regarding NEPAD (Kotze and Steyn 2003) – the media were early on able to cover NEPAD more frequently than the media of other countries which had no initial direct role in it. Bear in mind that journalists and the mass media tend to prioritise those issues and phenomena that are close to the interests of the nations, regions or cultural groups to which they belong (see Gans 1979; Thetela 2001). In fact, as noted in chapter 4, when journalists become part of an in-group, the objectivity norms may often be downplayed in favour of nationalist, patriotic, partisan or attached journalism. However, this is not to suggest that coverage in the three countries concerned was automatically rendered in national-interest terms, but that the media agenda as regards NEPAD is potentially likely to have been influenced by the priorities of the elite concerning NEPAD. Considerations concerning this coverage and the actual analysis thereof follows in chapters 6 and 7. In the next section, I go on to explore more closely, how NEPAD interpellates journalists into Africanist identity positions.

5.3 The ‘African’ journalist

It can be posited that NEPAD’s orientation to call upon journalists to report in positive, advocacy and developmental terms is at some level implicitly related to NEPAD’s interpellation of African journalists as ascribing to a singular and all consuming ‘African’ identity that subsumes all other potential identifications including a national one (see NEPAD 2004c). Based on the above reviews concerning NEPAD it is evident that there is ongoing invitation from NEPAD’s discourse – partnership for Africa, African-led, African-ownership, African peer reviews – to position individuals into Africanist identity positions. To be more specific, NEPAD argues that:

There must be African passion when communicating NEPAD. Messages need to appeal emotionally to Africans, touch their hearts and generate change in their behaviour (NEPAD 2004c:1-2).

In line with this, Mogekwu (2004) suggests that the mass media should promote the ideals of NEPAD and its African identity claims by addressing the challenge of xenophobia, which is evidently in opposition to the pan-African elements of NEPAD. Mogekwu (2004:243-245) prescribes that the mass media should make:

a serious and sustained effort to emphasise areas of similarity among groups while de-emphasising the…differences that promote discord. In their day-to-day selection and dissemination of news, the mass media should pay attention to this responsibility.
Related views have often been raised by Mbeki (2003b) as in the case of the 2003 meeting of editors from across Africa when he argued that in the context of NEPAD, journalists had a responsibility to inform their audiences about the positives of the continent, its commonalities and not just the negatives (also see Mbeki 2001). Mbeki (2003b:1-3) asserted that:

I am, of course, proceeding from the assumption that you were African before you became journalists and that despite your profession, you are still Africans...Central to the conceptualisation of the African Union and its development programme, NEPAD, is the collective determination to promote African unity and the political and socio-economic integration of our continent. This is informed by the conviction that the peoples of Africa are interdependent and share a common destiny. It makes no sense that they should be separated from one another by ignorance of one another. Indeed that dangerous state of unknowing, which leads to prejudice and superstition against and about one another, would make it impossible for us to achieve the goal of African unity. As Africans, I presume that you are at one with this old African objective and would therefore see it as one of your central tasks to report Africa to the Africans, reporting Africa as Africans.

The idea here, as is also highlighted by Kouakou (2003:44-45), is that journalists and mass media in Africa “can encourage a greater dialogue among Africans, create a shared sense of vision” and ubuntu – the ideology of which can be used to tackle social problems such as xenophobia. In doing so, the assertion is that they will also be creating a public forum for discussions on NEPAD all of which could expand the ‘African-ownership’ of NEPAD (Kouakou 2003; Mogekwu 2004). In terms of the interests of this study, a more salient consideration is that these responsibilities of the journalist are derived from the African identity conception that Mbeki seeks to invoke / interpellate. To be ‘African’ is to have an old historical role of pan-Africanism, and this predates and subsumes ‘journalistic identity’ for Mbeki (see also Domatob 1988 and chapter 10).

It is in this sense that NEPAD attempts to hail, organise and reposition journalists, editors and media owners into Africanist subject positions. Similar to advertising as an (Althusserian) ideological interpellation, NEPAD calls onto them to respond as Africans with an assumed consensus on what this means. NEPAD takes on the shape of an ideological practice that interpellates its target audience of partners in Africa and beyond including individual journalists in Africa, as subjects of its discourse. It treats ‘African identity’ as being natural, intrinsic, unquestionable, commonsensical and as always already there. As such, NEPAD ideology operates more broadly than just at the level of the journalist. Crucially, when NEPAD (2001:3-4, 35) appeals to the nurturing of indigenous traditional African culture or to Africa as the “cradle of humankind” or to “reconstructing the identity and self-confidence of” Africans, it hails all potential respondents as (pan-) ‘Africans’ – or as the ‘Other’ who should also join this ‘partnership for Africa’. Even without directly addressing journalists, it incorporates them in its
mobilising appeal for a homegrown revival for the continent. To be ‘African’ is to support a continental project, and currently NEPAD. To be an ‘African’ communicator, your identity is that of practising social responsibility journalistic roles with an emphasis on development. I return to the implications of this in the next section.

For now, I would like to point out some key points to bear in mind at this stage. Firstly, I would like to posit that NEPAD can be read as positing the pan-African journalist as someone that must represent and protect the cultural authenticity of the ‘African’, a stance that is similar to the culturalist strands of development and development journalism whereby development news was expected to stimulate national and African cultural unity (see Mwaffisi 1991). Secondly, as suggested in chapter 4 and as we shall soon see in the findings, it is also possible that not all continental (or even diasporic African) journalists would be successfully interpellated by NEPAD’s ideology. In fact, as has already been suggested by Kotze and Steyn (2003), the African elite (including media practitioners) are not entirely in unison about the ‘Africanist’ claims for unification and integration as proposed by the AU and NEPAD. To illustrate further, while some African leaders such as Olsegun Obasanjo promote the dominant discourse on NEPAD, others such as Abdoulaye Wade and indeed some governments such as those of Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe have taken on a negotiated reading that accepts the basic premises while challenging certain aspects of NEPAD. Namibia in particular has argued that it already has in place structures that are in line with the APRM. Some African academics are taking on an oppositional reading in which NEPAD is read as a cover for hegemons, sub-imperialism and elite interests (see Bond 2002; Adesina 2004; Lesufi 2006). How journalists respond to these diverse Africanist and NEPAD interpellations in light of their journalistic identifications and more specifically, what roles they perceive for themselves in NEPAD bearing in mind its interpellations is the primary focus of this thesis.

In the next section, I draw on the analytic concept of ‘hybridity’ to highlight more fully the implications of NEPAD’s African identity interpellation with regard to the interests of this study.

5.4 Hybridity and ‘third spaces’: examining journalistic identity, Africanity and NEPAD

Drawing on the discussions in chapter 4, in this study the African is seen as a being in a state of hybridity and as a subject of multiple discourses, languages, religions, identifications and as a member of numerous socio-cultural groups that may include the tribe and the village to mention, but a few (see Wright 2002; Appiah 1992). However, critics of such Foucaultian-influenced post-colonial assertions argue that such an analysis does not effectively account for the influence of institutional and structural foundations of power (see McLaren 2002). Dirlik (1994:346-347) argues that because of its anti-foundationalism, postcolonial theory does not adequately address issues to do with “capitalism’s structuring of the modern world” or even those concerning the world outside of the subject. In relation to this, Mafeje (2000:66-72) in a discussion on Africanity argues that hybridity – which can be read as a new essentialism given the way in which it has risen to subsume the discourse on subjectivity and identity – obscures key differences in the exercise and distribution of power in the contemporary era of globalisation. In rejecting a unified identity whilst positing identity as being almost everywhere, hybridity has been criticised for leading to relativism and nihilism all of which potentially leaves the African in a state of being apolitical resulting in quietism and domination (Abrahamsen 2003).

In fact, Afrocentrists and African nationalists have defended the essentialist conception of Africanity by arguing that it has political value particularly in those situations where it has been used positively to debunk the negative connotations that are associated with Africanity (Asante 1990; Dougan 2004). This strategic essentialism or inversion from negative to positive can be noted in Nkrumah’s (1970) positing of ‘traditional African culture’ as what was to become the foundation on which Western and Islamic values were to be added to fashion a postcolonial pan-African ideology (also see Foucault (1972) on inversion). More specifically, this approach was influenced by the earlier negritude works of Senghor (1956) and Cesaire (1969) who appealed to emotion and deployed myths of primordial essence such as community and cradle of humanity to unite and mobilise the multiethnic African societies against colonialism (cited in Dougan 2004:34). Such mythical influences went on to take centre stage in the efforts of the early post-independence nationalist leaders of the post-colony such as Nyerere (1962) and Nkrumah (1963) who relied on such essences to create and maintain unity and loyalty towards the new states and the region at the time of independence. These primordial feelings and attachments towards historical and cultural belongings, which still run deep in many African societies, can be noted in the essentialist conceptions of Africanity, in NEPAD’s culturalist strand and in the ways in which they have been strategically deployed by recent post-colonial leaders to justify authoritarianism.
and the one-party state (see Gyekye 1997; Chabal 1998; Dougan 2004). Overall, the Afrocentrists and African nationalists decry the loss of purity, tradition and Africanist standpoints as is proposed by hybridity. The point here, as is drawn on by the proponents of NEPAD, is that there is political value in a unified African identity for the purposes of enacting such a continental-wide initiative (see Chinweizu 1999; Mbeki 1996).

Still, for the postcolonial and cultural studies theorists, arguing that identities are hybrid does not necessarily mean that collective cultural identities whether national, regional or local are unimportant (see Hall 1994; Gates 2004; Hegde and Shome 2002). In fact, Foucault does not reject identity as being politically irrelevant. The skepticism for him is to do with the way in which essentialist identity categories are used to subjugate, oppress, normalise and consolidate power (cited in McLaren 2002:118). Therefore, hybridity is not “the ultimate denial of origin, subject, race, class and indeed nation” as is asserted by the critic of postcolonialism, Adebayo Williams (cited in Abrahamsen 2003:206). Rather, it is the recognition that cultural identities are not fixed and that appeals to a collective and unique African identity can obscure subjugation and authoritarianism. As has been aptly argued by Said (1993), in his critique of negritude, such positions that advocate and celebrate a return to origin, tradition, African purity and passion are not only impossible to articulate in theory and practice, but they also work to disempower, given that they can reduce all action to a single essentialist project (cited in Ahluwalia 2001:30-33). The idea of preserving some pure culture has played a key part in Africa, where it is precisely in the name of narrow conceptions of masculinist and ethnic-national identity that some of the continent’s most violent post-colonial projects have been conceived and legitimised (see Kellow and Steeves 1998; African Rights 1995). Recognising the fluid and hybrid nature of African identities serves as an antidote to some of these tendencies.

This emphasis on fluidity and constitutive relationships invites us to think critically about how NEPAD’s discourse essentialises Africanity and how it portrays sub-imperialism and how these nuances are in turn accepted, negotiated or rejected by individuals, including journalists, to create spaces for other aspects of subjectivity – all of which are necessary steps towards a politics of diversity and inclusion in NEPAD. Working from such a position enables us, for instance, to realise more fully how intra-African sub-imperialist exercises – which have been highlighted by

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29 In December 2005 President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda rationalised the decisions concerning the extension of presidential term limits, his interest in contesting for third term and the arrest of an opposition leader in terms of his desire to set up a united East Africa Federation in line with the broader project towards a united ‘black’ Africa (Mwesige 2005).
the critics of NEPAD – are supported, maintained and camouflaged under the rubric of an essentialist notion of Africa. The argument here is that the regional political and economic stronghold of countries such as Nigeria, Libya and South Africa in parts of Africa could constitute in this instance an example of sub-imperialism that is being exercised by modernists outside of the Euro or Anglo modernity (Miller 2000; Shome and Hegde 2002). These considerations also serve to remind us that power and the relations of power are discursive and they reproduce new ways through which we can get to experience our sense of being and it is in this regard that these relations can be expressed and (re)located at a plethora of levels. These levels could include: the geographical space as a centre of capital and accumulation, the power and command of money, corporations, military strength and natural wealth – all of which can be deployed to empower some groups whilst disempowering others (see Miller 2004; Foucault 1980).

In turn, with regard to journalism practice this also implies that the individual journalist is not only faced with the power of the various identity interpellations or the empowering opportunities that are presented by hybridisation, but also with the power of the editor, audiences, sources, media owners, heads of states, national and regional NEPAD secretariats and private firms. To this we can also add the wider regional publics, all of which could have implications for the ways in which the journalist responds to NEPAD’s interpellations (see chapters 8 to 11).

Having said that, the link between hybridity and the potential for resistance serves to remind us that in pushing for a strong sub-imperialist argument as is asserted by Bond (2002), there is a tendency to suppress and treat local agency in the rest of Africa as being apolitical and unable to resist the dominating tendencies of South African capital. Drawing on Miller (2005:140), one could argue that although local African businesses are struggling to compete against the entry of South African capital in their countries, they are to an extent actively resisting this capital through the setting up of local business federations. This is mirrored at the level of workers’ unions. In addition, even though regional organisations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the EAC account for low intra-African trade and economic activity, this does not mean that they are politically powerless and unable to protect their local sectors and workers from the perceived negative aspects of the entry of South African capital (see Alli 2005). The point here is that processes of economic imperialism which have been raised about NEPAD are complex and not entirely based on a one-way flow of powerful financial capital. Even though people and groups can be subjected to some form of economic domination, they also have the agency to resist. The fuller point is that this is potentially more like a process of negotiation – in
the Gramscian sense – which is characterised by both resistance and the maintenance of hegemonic systems. This insight may also have a bearing on how journalists themselves respond to the complex and competing character interpellations of NEPAD.

Further, through this emphasis on negotiation one can posit that some critics of NEPAD (and the ‘African renaissance’) adopt a cultural interpretation of these initiatives, in so far as they see the purity of African culture as being in danger from the Western modernist cultural and economic values of NEPAD (see Moyo 1998; Vale and Maseko 1998; Miller 2004). Here, global cultures are treated as being all powerful and dominating, and African culture as if it were singular and uncontested. There is also a tendency here to equate modernisation with westernisation. However, Achebe (1988:110-115) argues that maintenance and utilisation of traditions in general need not be in contradiction to a process of modernisation. He points to a process of modernisation and the creation of a modern cosmopolitan identity, on the one hand, accompanied by a process of traditionalisation on the other, as a viable and productive paradox. Here, traditional culture is not simply seen as a source of stability, but rather as an avenue that can actually promote change.

Achebe’s (1988) line of thinking is in tune with Bhabha’s (1994a) view that cultural practices whether at the global or the local are neither ‘eurocentric’ nor ‘indigenous’. They involve a “third space” of processes of cultural transformation and hybridisation (1994a:33). For Bhabha (1994a:34-38), it is in this regard that postcolonial theory provides a “third space” for analyses such as this that are attempting to make sense of questions relating to the boundaries that are often used to describe (cultural) identity. This ‘third space’ or new hybrid identity operates as an ambivalent subject-position that asserts ‘cultural difference’ instead of ‘cultural purity’. Bhabha argues that this ‘third space’ position is an “in-between space” through which “we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves” (Bhabha cited in Childs and Williams 1997:142). As an ‘in-between space’, it serves as an antidote to essentialism and the polarities of for instance, colonising European identities and colonised African identities (see also Ashcroft et al 1995; Appiah 1992). However, this is not to say that hybridity is devoid of any sense of essentialism or ‘imagined community’. Social identity whether regional, occupational or cultural relies on some sense of purity and essentialism and it is this that defines the ‘us’ and ‘them’ type of relational categories that are intrinsic to identity. Cultural difference is not the denial of

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30 This interpretation can be related to the early nationalists’ stance towards traditional African culture (Nkrumah 1970), the dependency-NWICO approach towards the protection of culture in the ‘periphery’ and the culturalist strand of development journalism (Domatob and Hall 1983; Mwaffisi 1991) in which development journalism is seen as African journalism that protects traditional cultural values from the modernist strand of development.
essentialism (sameness) as such, but the recognition of diversity, agency, expression, difference and the process of hybridisation.

With regard to this study, this recognition of ‘third spaces’ in culture at some level has relevance for our understanding of identity with regard to occupations, professions and institutions particularly within the context of the post-colony. It serves to remind us that although journalistic identity is seen here as being contingent in as far as it is guided by self-evident roles, values and practices that define it, there is also some fluidity in that it can be reconstructed to provide other potential points of identification. There is always room for negotiation and there is always some tension for instance between the libertarian and socially responsible journalistic ideologies. Thus, although the hegemony of journalistic identity is read here as constituting the neutral, social agenda, watchdog and development sub-identities, the deconstructive strands in hybridisation remind us that journalists fulfil multiple roles and identities and that there are a number of counter-hegemonic or intermediary positions that can come to the fore (Carpentier 2005:207; also see Zandberg and Neiger 2005).

As an alternative space, the ‘third space’ between essentialisms blurs the limitations of boundaries, challenges essentialism and crucially engenders new possibilities and meanings. It is productive in that it makes room for the expression of new identities, some of which are in opposition to dominating tendencies. The ‘third space’ challenges us here to take on a critical perspective that rethinks the naturalised assumptions about culture and identity from an ‘us-them’ dualism to a mutual sense of ‘both/and’ and/or ‘beyond’ (see Bhabha 1994a; Diagne 2001; Nyamnjoh 2001). This further encourages us to take on critical reflection in thinking about how continental journalists negotiate NEPAD’s ideological interpellations with regard to journalistic and cultural identity. NEPAD and its critics must confront the fact that Africans have fragmented identities and identifications along the various categories of class, gender, race, sexual orientation, region, village, tribe and caste to mention but a few (Nyamnjoh 2005:36-38). This is not to say that there is no over-arching (pan-)African identity that can be seen to come to the fore depending on the issues at hand. It is more like a case of competing identities. In addition, this also serves to remind us that the concerns to do with cultural imperialism which have been raised about NEPAD are complex and not entirely based on a one-way flow of powerful modernist socio-cultural values. For the most part it is a process of hybridisation (see Appiah 1992, 1995) although this negotiation may well be within the context of some interpellations being more dominant than others– as with the pro-NEPAD position in comparison to the critics’ one.
In summary, based on the insights in this section we can note that hybridity is useful for analysing multiple identities as in the context of the post-colony where people are constantly moving across and between boundaries. Having said that, I am aware of the criticisms raised against such positions in so far as they tend to neglect powerful structural, institutional and material conditions that would in this case be faced by the African journalist in his/her daily-lived experiences. However, as indicated by my discussion so far in this study, I do not draw on the perspective of hybridity within a socio-cultural-political vacuum and neither do I overly celebrate the liberatory potential of hybridity. Although my focus is on the individual journalistic identity and African identity conceptions, I have tried to discuss these issues whilst bearing in mind the wider contextual influences. What I am interested in is the negotiation of cultural identity and journalistic sub-identity and the potential production of new identities, if at all, that is recognised by hybridity. Informed by such a standpoint one can get to realise that the tension between modernity and tradition which is characterised by NEPAD has found expression in two inter-related and yet distinctive journalistic ideologies, the first of which pulls towards the global-universalist libertarian strand of journalism whilst the other, which addresses the shortfalls of the latter, looks towards social responsibility. The interplay of these nuances is the specific focus of the findings and discussions in chapters 7 to 11. In the next section, I go on to conclude this chapter by highlighting the relevance of a context-reflective-driven approach towards the nexus between journalism and NEPAD.

5.3 Conclusion: multiplicities, context and reflection

To reiterate, the aforementioned emphasis on ‘third spaces’ and the breaking down of boundaries and beyond, opens up not only cultural identity issues, but also our understanding of journalism practice – in the context of the post-colony – to questions of hegemony, multiplicity in terms of influences and renegotiation at the level of the journalist. Thus, although the approaches of libertarian and social responsibility theory can be seen as being broadly Western, and those of development theory as being rooted in the post-colony, assessing all their influences on the roles of journalism – as was highlighted in chapter 3 – is not a straight-forward issue. Journalists in the post-colony can in varying degrees and at various times adopt and adapt the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development dimensions of their journalistic identity to meet the local conditions of the contexts in which they work. This also encourages us to analyse journalistic identity as being dynamic and not constant, given that the journalistic role boundaries, although well entrenched in theory, are not adopted similarly by all journalists. The reason for this is that
the journalist is inevitably deeply bound to the cultural politics of belonging, location and agency in an environment of internal organisational influences and external cultural pressures and structures of domination (see Reese 2001; Nyamnjoh 2005). For instance, within the contemporary context of the post-colony, the dynamics of transnationalism, the AU and NEPAD invite us to understand journalism and journalistic identity as being rearticulated to the continent and through new logics under transnational relations of capital and culture (see Nyamnjoh 2004; Kupe 2005). In such a context, journalists would be faced with multiple identities, each influencing them to behave in certain ways as they strive to negotiate, fulfil or resist the role requirements that come with each identity. It is in this regard that depending on the issues at hand, some journalistic identities would be more salient than others would.

In other words, it is through the dynamism of cultural codes that journalistic identity is experienced, lived and upheld or contested by journalists. Thus, rather than focusing too much on norms, patterns and the coherence of journalism in theory and practice, researchers could also focus on ambivalences, subjectivities and contradictions at the level of the journalist. Doing this requires the researcher to take on a qualitative approach that focuses on the journalist as an individual within complex and even contesting communities of identity, that is, an approach that enables the journalist to share his or her social thoughts and views with the researcher. This study attempts to adopt such an approach as is described in the next chapter.

Furthermore, the idea here is to think about how the journalist in the post-colony straddles between the variegated worlds of journalistic identity and the call to other senses of belonging and the ways in which such processes posit emergent identities and roles for the journalist and the potential effects of this on how s/he relates to NEPAD. The idea is to think of journalism and identity in particular in terms of contingency and negotiation whereby the values, norms, definitions and foundations of each process are read as being fixed and yet also fluid. This requires us to constantly rethink and revise them within the context of the post-colony. The attempt here is to arrive at a theoretical and methodological position that focuses on the individual journalist, without losing sight of the wider common socio-cultural, political and professional influences.

With regard to the interests of this study, the aforementioned means that the journalists’ views and indeed the practice of journalism within the context of the post-colony are for the most part, interpreted from a reflective point of view. Such a position recognises that the practice of
journalism in the post-colony hinges on the journalists’ own identity, perceptions, context and location, neglect of which renders any findings as markedly de-contextualised (see Spivak 1990; Slembrouck 2004 and Steier 1995 for inferences; also see the conceptual model in chapter 11). From this perspective then, the importance of being reflective is to recognise that what the journalist writes about, how he or she decides what to write about, results in part from his or her own discursively shaped values and to an extent on how he or she reflects on and makes sense of these. To elaborate, this empowers me here to explore questions such as how do the journalists’ own subject positions, in terms of culture, ethnicity-nationality, citizenship and occupation affect their identity and vice-versa? The fuller question here is: How might these factors affect the journalists’ role perceptions and the content of their news? How do they help the journalists decide what to write, how to write and when to keep silent? Taking on such a self-questioning turn raises the issue of agency with regard to the subjectivities of the journalists and their social, historical and political positions and the influence of these on their role perceptions as journalists.

By locating the journalist and the regional and local context of his/her work, we can get to make sense of processes and questions relating to identification and the uptake of Africanist and journalistic identities with regard to NEPAD and the enactment of both in the content of the news. For me, this calls also for a critical-reflective realisation that what I as a researcher choose to study, and how I choose to study it, results in part, from my own discursively shaped values. In a sense, this means that at some level I also have to bear in mind my own subjectivities and historical and political positions and how these might affect my own understanding of the journalists’ views. For instance, as in chapters 8 to 10 when the interviewees enact self and others, vis-à-vis (‘I’) the interviewer, who is often presumed to be a researcher, an academic and an African. My point here is that such an approach encourages us to place ourselves within the research process and ask how this might affect our perception of the findings (see Slembrouck 2004; Steier 1995). In the next chapter on research methods, I go on to highlight how this study’s research approach and procedure attempts to do this.
CHAPTER SIX
METHODS

6.0 Introduction

Previous chapters have provided the theoretical influences and overall context of NEPAD within which this research takes place. This chapter discusses the choice of research methods employed in carrying out this study. At this stage, it is important to reiterate that the primary aim of this study is to investigate selected journalists’ perceptions of their journalistic roles and cultural identities with regard to NEPAD bearing in mind its interpellations. Although the study gives pointers to these issues through the journalists’ reportage on NEPAD, the study mainly relied on interviews with the journalists as the main entry point for addressing the interests of this study. In doing this, data for this study was gathered in two phases, the first of which relied on a qualitative content analysis of news stories that was used to identify not only the potential journalists that could be interviewed, but also the themes that could be interrogated during the interviews which accounted for the second phase. In doing this, the methodological approach of this study is broadly qualitative. The chapter starts with a brief discussion of the qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches. This is followed by some clarifications and assumptions concerning the qualitative research approach taken in this study. The next section provides an outline of the approach to the analysis of content and a discussion concerning the selection of newspapers and the corresponding journalists. This is then followed by a section that deals with this study’s approach to the interviews. A concluding statement then sums up the chapter.

6.1 Methodology, methods and research design

This study explores the extent to which NEPAD’s interpellations have had a bearing, if at all, on how journalists perceive their journalistic sub-identities and Africanist sense of belonging and to a lesser extent if these constructions echo in their stories. To do this, as I shall explain throughout this chapter, it is useful to employ the qualitative research approach. Under the influence of the interpretive tradition, which insists on the interpretation of the meanings that people give to their actions as the basis of social knowledge, the qualitative methodological approach looks to make sense of the world by focusing on the ways that people make meanings of the world (Bryman 1988; van Rensburg 2001). The sine qua non of qualitative methodology is the emphasis on seeing the world from the point of view of the actor, that is, the people being studied (Bryman 1988:61) as in the case of this study’s emphasis on journalists’ understandings with regard to NEPAD and its significance for their identities.
In contrast to this, the quantitative methodological approach, which is influenced by positivism, insists on measuring social facts, which assumes we can examine or measure observable causal relationships, patterns, trends and themes in terms of quantities, size, frequencies or even intensity (Deacon et al 1999:7; see also Denzin and Lincoln 1994). While quantitative studies often focus on hunch testing, the analysis of fixed measurements and causal relationships between variables, qualitative research is underpinned by the interpretive tradition of inquiry, which is characterised by phenomenology, symbolic interactionism and ethnography (Bryman 1988:50, 63). Therefore, in terms of usage, the term methodology is employed here-within to refer to the philosophical assumptions and theories that inform and support the way in which a particular research method is used (van Rensburg 2001:1). Methodology refers to more than research methods, techniques and data collection strategies such as surveys or interviews; it refers to the theoretical orientations that influence these methods (Harding 1987:2). More specifically, methodology provides the reasons for using such methods in relation to the kind of knowledge or understanding that is being sought by the researcher (van Rensburg 2001; see also Harding 1987).

In attempting to provide coherent answers to the research questions asked in this study, it was necessary to employ research methods that can facilitate access to features of the stories on NEPAD and the in-depth explanations of journalists. Thus, the research stage of this study is designed in two inter-dependent phases, whereby the first one partly informs the second. The first phase titled ‘The analysis of selected news stories on NEPAD’ provides a qualitative reading of stories (including commentaries) for inferences regarding journalistic identity and Africanist identity constructions in the selected stories on NEPAD. The data gathered included stories on NEPAD between January and December 2005. Note that in the case of this study, the content analysis is used to help identify journalists that could be interviewed and to provide potential insights into issues that can be probed in the interviews, and is therefore not an equivalent set of data that could serve to triangulate the data gained in the interviews. The second phase, which as noted was informed by the first, is titled ‘Qualitative in-depth interviews with journalists who cover NEPAD’, and seeks qualitative insight through thematic analysis of role perceptions and identity conceptions based on the in-depth perspectives of journalists who report on NEPAD. The interviews were conducted between December 2005 and September 2006. More detail on these phases is provided later in this chapter.

In my attempt to locate this study within the context of NEPAD, these two research phases were preceded by an in-depth review of policy documents on NEPAD (see Deacon et al 1999; Altheide
The documents consulted included the 2001 NEPAD policy document, APRM documents, the NEPAD e-newsletter, speeches by NEPAD enactors and NEPAD outreach and communication papers (see Appendix C for full document listing). My focus with regard to these documents was on their significance and meanings in relation to their textually inscribed-subject positions – that is, on their preferred reading positions in relation to the identity positions that should be occupied by journalists (see Althusser 2000; Fairclough 2001; Hay 1996). As was demonstrated in chapter 5, it is partly on the basis of this literature review that inferences were made about how NEPAD’s ideological interpellation hails journalists in Africa to respond to it as ‘Africans’, with a particular inflection thereof, and as journalists that report on it through the development lens of social responsibility-oriented journalism. The inferences made from this analysis of documents were not only helpful in generating themes for probing in the content analysis and the interviews, they were also used to help build up a wider picture of the journalism-media-NEPAD nexus in the post-colony.

In sum, based on the problem of research aims, purposes and goals of this study, I have had to employ and rely mainly on the qualitative research methods of qualitative content analysis and interviews. The fuller point here is that the aims and goals of the study are what eventually determine the research methods and design elements that are deployed (see Bryman 1988; Riffe et al 1998). Before providing the detailed methodological discussions for the study, I would like to highlight the methodological considerations and clarifications that guide the approach of the research phases for this study.

6.1.1 Methodological considerations regarding the two phases
Firstly, this research is not looking to extrapolate findings over the whole population of journalists in Africa. I am also not looking to compare this study – as a case – with others. I am interested in journalists that regularly report on NEPAD, that is, those who can provide answers to the questions raised in this study. Secondly, this study has not looked in-depth at other important variables in the hierarchy of influences (see Reese 2001) such as editing, logistics, and time constraints in turning stories around, other stories competing for space, media freedoms and political and private influences. Neither does it fundamentally explore political economic considerations concerning media ownership and advertising. This may limit the depth of my research, but it does not invalidate my focus on journalistic sub-identities and cultural identity particularly African identity within the context of NEPAD.
This study has been written from a particular reading position informed in varying degrees by libertarian, social responsibility, development and emerging inter-disciplinary postcolonial theoretical approaches to journalism, identity and mass media whereby certain aspects have been prioritised as the focus whilst others have been left out. I have also interpreted NEPAD, African identity and the resulting data through these theories. In a sense, you the reader will have done the same by way of making sense of my analysis to build your own interpretation. The fuller point here is that our ability to understand and fully grasp the meaning of news stories and journalists’ thoughts is inextricably linked to a wealth of background knowledge that researchers consciously or unconsciously bring to the text in the construction of meaning (see Eco 1979; Hall 1980; Spivak 1990). Our ability to read the stories on NEPAD and the journalists’ views as being grouped under neutral, watchdog, social agenda or development journalistic sub-identities depends upon our foreknowledge of journalism in the context of the post-colony, which was touched on in chapters 2 and 3. In addition, reading NEPAD’s deeply ingrained Africanist claims as a guise for promoting ‘modernisation’ – see the critiques in chapter 5 – depends upon our competence in teasing out meaning embedded in the text (interviews, documents and news stories on NEPAD) whilst bearing in mind the social relations of its context that is, the interplay between content and the wider socio-cultural context. In fact, some would argue that our very ability to deeply understand the stories and the journalists’ perceptions in reference to NEPAD depends upon us having shared the same experiences as they have, hence the emphasis on seeing the world from their point of view (see Eco 1978).

Finally, in thinking about the overall approach to the interviews, it can sometimes prove difficult to accurately reconstruct the actual thought and production process that journalists portray. This study is limited to providing a time-specific snapshot of personal journalistic and subjective views about NEPAD. The journalists’ interpretations show to what degree they are the product of their time and of the prevailing journalism, media and NEPAD context. It is this subjectivity that allows for the reconstruction of ways of thinking about NEPAD. Values and subjectivity are regarded as integral to inquiries that are bent on making sense of issues – such as NEPAD – through the eyes of respondents (van Rensburg 2001:16), who are in this case the journalists. Taken together, the interviews form a discourse about NEPAD in relation to the roles of journalism and its purpose. However, as will be shown in chapters 8 to 11, this discourse is not uniform, and it contains contradictions, journalistic and cultural identifications and those that are pro-NEPAD or oppositional towards the initiative. The actual nexus between journalism, media and NEPAD, then, is one of contingency and negotiation between different parties and
considerations. In the next section, I present a detailed account of this study’s approach to the content.

6.2 Newspaper selection, timeframes and allAfrica.com

To start with, my concern with regard to the in-depth reading of the news stories on NEPAD is ultimately qualitative, in that I am not looking to extrapolate findings from the entire collection of African newspaper coverage of NEPAD, and neither am I looking to compare various newspapers’ coverage of NEPAD. To reiterate, my interest is in the NEPAD news content of those journalists whose newspapers regularly report on NEPAD, that is, those who can provide answers to the questions raised in this study. Bearing this in mind, seven English language newspapers were chosen mainly according to a combination of factors concerning circulation, national and regional and/or geographical dispersion, their regular coverage of NEPAD issues and the presence of specific journalists that regularly report on NEPAD. The newspapers include *Business Day* (South Africa), *The Mail and Guardian* (Southern Africa), *The East African* (Eastern Africa), *The East African Standard* (Kenya), *The New Times* (Rwanda), *Accra Daily Mail* (Ghana) and *This Day* (Nigeria). All seven newspapers are considered prominent publications in terms of circulation, content and readership in their respective contexts (see allAfrica.com 2005). For further description of these newspapers, see Appendix D.

Geographically, my attempt was to select, as much as possible, a group of newspapers that were widely dispersed and also, as is indicated in the NEPAD database on allAfrica.com, consistently reporting on NEPAD. Although all these newspapers’ countries have acceded to the APRM, their selection was at some level based on the view that they represent countries that can be seen as key proponents or not of NEPAD, meaning that their content and journalists could potentially provide insightful diversities in terms of their identifications with regard to NEPAD’s journalistic and African identity interpellations. The newspapers – and journalists as is discussed later in section 6.4 – represent different cultures, countries and distinctive histories from across Africa, with some countries holding a lot more political and economic influence than others do when it comes to NEPAD.

Therefore, in this study, qualitative content analysis concerns the in-depth reading of NEPAD news content with emphasis on the evaluative elements in the stories as part of an attempt to gain an insight into the ways in which the stories are portrayed in terms of the social agenda, watchdog, neutral and development journalism roles. In addition, the analysis of this NEPAD news discourse concerns an exploration of how meanings around NEPAD’s Africanist identity
positions are mediated, constructed and enacted. In doing this, the study analyses seven English language newspapers’ coverage of NEPAD accessed through the allAfrica.com news portal, a large electronic distributor of news and information from Africa (allAfrica.com 2005). The site gathers news content material from more than 130 newspapers, news agencies and media organisations around Africa. It also posts over 1000 stories daily in English and French whilst also offering well over 900,000 articles in its searchable archive (allAfrica.com 2005). It is therefore regarded here as an information search, locate and retrieval product that provides access to news stories, op-eds and commentaries.

In deciding to draw on the archived news content from allAfrica.com’s NEPAD database, I bore in mind a plethora of considerations. To start with, due to the absence of basic and readily accessible data and information regarding the number of journalists across the continent – with a few exceptions such as Egypt, South Africa and Kenya – I found it necessary to refer to online news archives for insights into African print media coverage of NEPAD. In addition, during the piloting of this study in 2005 my initial explorations indicated that mainstream African print media with online versions of their newspapers such as This Day in Nigeria, The Star in South Africa and The Nation in Kenya regularly upload and archive their NEPAD stories onto their sites. However, this is not the case with the entire population of African newspapers. My continued search for online news sites and visits onto news portals in Africa led me to realise that not all newspapers are online themselves, although many are still nonetheless reflected on allAfrica.com. In some instances, those that are online are not fully interactive or regularly updated. Some do not even provide an archive to their content. Due to a combination of reasons concerning costs, skills and resources, newspapers that are online tend to dump content from their hardcopies onto their online sites without reworking the content for the new medium and online audiences (see Olukemi 2004; Jensen 2001). However, while not all print from the hardcopies is transferred online it can still be posited that what is online is likely to have appeared in print.

Therefore, to avoid simply concentrating on those countries with newspapers that regularly update their websites, which could have potentially limited the spread and diversity of news stories selected, I decided to monitor the content on NEPAD by relying on the advanced search option on allAfrica.com to retrieve stories from the NEPAD database. By drawing on allAfrica.com, the attempt was to arrive at a situation that would give some indication of NEPAD reportage across a diverse range of countries that are – as I shall soon explain – at different stages of their engagement with NEPAD. Besides, allAfrica.com’s NEPAD database, which stores full texts of
articles, was in this case easily used to identify, obtain and process large amounts of data very quickly. This enabled samples of news stories to be collected for analysis and in-depth reading. Rather than having to search through one or two newspapers from countries that are widely dispersed across Africa – a costly process that would have taken up time in yielding results – with allAfrica.com I had the option of using key words to search for a sample of stories from the site’s existing NEPAD database.

It is in this regard that the spread of newspapers providing content to allAfrica.com can be seen as a representative sample of mainstream African newspapers from which seven were purposefully and subjectively selected in line with the aims of this study. Sampling concerns the mapping of some general dimensions of content and/or a process concerning the systematic selection of cases for inclusion in a research project (see Neuman 2000; Pauly 1991). In qualitative research, the researcher might first skim the sampled content to discern the moments and time frames of most relevance, then go back and read in-depth the coverage at those key moments (Pauly 1991:12). The timeframe of coverage was established as January 2005 through to December 2005, a time-period that marks the fourth year of NEPAD. Crucially, 2005 was the year when NEPAD’s African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) was at the peak of its enactment to date, in that for the first time, there were over five countries – Ghana, Rwanda, Mauritius, Kenya and South Africa – going through various stages of the review process (see NEPAD 2006). As such, a good number of stories particularly within the last six months of the year dealt with the APRM as an aspect of NEPAD. It is worth noting here that the early media coverage of NEPAD in 2001 to 2002 was optimistic and at times emotive in as far as the initiative was also often seen as a progression of the ‘African renaissance’ ideology (see Kupe 2005). By the time of the first review of NEPAD in 2004, this optimism was arguably being replaced with some criticisms (see for instance Dawes 2004). However, the recent implementation of the processes of the APRM by the five mentioned countries and the continued presence of more countries on the APRM list seems to have renewed media interest (see NEPAD 2006; Herbert 2002; 2003). Therefore, it would also not be surprising to find the APRM being singled out by journalists as one of the priority aspects of NEPAD.

6.2.1 Retrieval of content from allAfrica.com

Once the time frame was established, all articles within the 2005 period from the seven newspapers dealing with NEPAD were collected with the aid of the advanced search option for which I was charged $95 by allAfrica.com for a year’s access to their archive. This search option was used to locate stories from the NEPAD database on allAfrica.com, which lists headlines, and
lead paragraphs of the stories (with links to the full story) from newspapers in Africa. To be more specific, when I used this search option to retrieve relevant stories from the selected newspapers in the identified database, this kind of analysis involved the following steps:

1. Search for words: (NEPAD)
2. Search boundaries: (documents containing all of these words)
3. Refine my search by: Publishers (*Accra Daily Mail*)
   Category (NEPAD database)
4. Sorting options: (In reverse chronological order)
5. Display options: (Headline and first few sentences)
6. Date: (in this time period: the last year or Jan 2005 - Dec 2005)
7. Go Search (Story listing as per (4))
8. Full length story (make note of Author’s byline)
9. Analysis

To explain some of these steps in more detail, in step one I chose NEPAD as the key word and in step 3, I selected the newspaper of interest and the appropriate database to search and not the entire archive as such. I selected the NEPAD category because I was interested in stories on NEPAD, not stories with casual or one-time mentions. Still, it would have been possible to be more selective at step 2 and used the boolean “minus” search boundaries. However, I also did not want to miss out any relevant stories so instead I mainly decided whether a story was centrally dealing with NEPAD or not on first reading the story at steps 7 to 9. This search strategy produced 144 articles from the seven selected newspapers (see Appendix D for the list of newspapers). Because this study is interested in the nexus between journalists’ perceptions of their journalistic and cultural identities in reference to NEPAD and to a lesser extent the correlations between these perceptions and their news stories on NEPAD, not all of these stories were considered. Remember that I was only interested in those journalists that regularly report on NEPAD at the seven newspapers. To qualify this, the stories of those journalists with five or more story entries in 2005 were selected for analysis in steps 8 and 9. I then further narrowed down to the five most recent stories that were written by those journalists who most frequently reported on NEPAD. In part, the reason for this was that my objective here was not quantitative as such and therefore I simply required only a small and manageable number to work with. On the other hand, given that few journalists actually had more than eight back to back stories on NEPAD, five stories was seen as a reasonable number for gaining insights into the journalistic and Africanist
identities. This left me with 35 stories for my final analysis, enough to provide a qualitative sense of the discourse that would guide me in my interviews (see Appendix D).

In carrying out steps 1 to 9, it was apparent that, although most stories produced by the search procedures were centrally to do with NEPAD, in some instances the stories were not really dealing with the content of interest. For instance, there were articles with a focus on NEPAD and yet they were centrally bent on the activities of a given personality without linking them properly to the initiative as in the case of ‘Charming Graca’s grand resolve to change Africa’ in *East African Standard* 12/10/2005. In other cases, as in ‘Listen to the African Voice- AMREF Boss’ in *The New Times* 13/6/2005, there were extended references to NEPAD and yet the story was centrally about other initiatives such as the Blair Commission for Africa. In such cases, these stories were not considered and focus was then diverted to the next story in the journalist’s body of work. Generally, this search strategy was followed for the seven different newspapers. In the next section, I go on to spell out how the qualitative content analysis was conducted.

6.3 Qualitative content analysis: stories, interviews and the NEPAD context

This research stage of the study explored the extent to which the selected stories on NEPAD exhibit the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development roles of journalism as they were conceptualised in chapter 3 in terms of the broad libertarian and social responsibility journalism theories. In carrying out a content analysis of a selection of stories on NEPAD, I was reading and exploring these stories for a limited number of content features to determine the strength of story elements in terms of the journalistic roles. This stage of the research also examined the stories as texts for the construction of NEPAD-associated (pan-)Africanist identity positions (see section 6.3.3 below). This reading of stories for journalism identity orientations and African identity constructions served to inform the interviews, which are this study’s main research tool.

Qualitative content analysis, which is often used in a wide range of analytic methods such as discourse analysis (see Brown and Yule 1983; van Dijk 1993), is a method that combines the systematic analysis of large bodies of text as in quantitative content analysis, but with a more holistic approach to the text (Dhoest 2004:395). As suggested in chapter 4, it is in this regard that qualitative content analysis often tends to focus on the process of meaning production at the level of the text whilst bearing the wider socio-cultural context within which they are made to mean (see Wigston 2001; van Dijk 1993). According to Dhoest (2004:395), it is a kind of discourse analysis, not in the strict sense of the analysis of linguistic, spoken or written texts, but in the
wider sense of an in-depth reading of cultural products – such as texts, that is news stories and transcribed interview talk – as meaningful discourses. It is in this study particularly useful for identifying the circumstance of text construction – sources, topic, themes, format and binary oppositions – all of which can give direction to the presentation of the story in terms of journalistic sub-identities. However, when I switch to the distinctive analysis of texts for African identity constructions, I tend to rely on linguistic and constructive strategies that are often associated with discourse analyses. In fact, although the approach to the texts is not embedded in critical discourse analysis which focuses on the links between texts, interactions and context as is advocated by Fairclough (2001:21-22), my analysis, as will be noted in chapter 7, implicitly draws attention to the relationships between NEPAD news texts and the wider power relations and ideological influences. Influenced by the insights from the cultural studies-postcolonial theoretical perspectives presented in chapters 4 and 5, this analysis of news and interview texts also provided me with a point of departure for making sense of the inscribed-subject positions and constructed cultural identities of journalists in relation to NEPAD (see Fairclough 2001; Hay 1996).

In thinking about the aforementioned in this section, it is worth bearing in mind that journalists and the mass media play an important role in the mediation and construction of identities through practices of naturalisation and opposition. In addition, although this study is in varying degrees influenced by the previously reviewed studies (see McMillin and Weaver 1996; Weaver 1998; Herscovitz 2004), the approach to the interviews and the stories has specifically been designed to address the interests of this study. In the next two sub-sections, I explain more fully the way in which the stories were read in-depth.

6.3.1 Journalistic sub-identities

Through the close reading of news texts on NEPAD, I was able to look for story elements, features and themes that could provide insights into the orientation of the stories in terms of journalistic sub-identities. As such, the unit of analysis, that is the amount of text to be read and analysed (Neuman 2000:296), is the actual news article on NEPAD. A story about NEPAD is defined as a story that centrally deals with NEPAD as the main topic. That is a story that mentions NEPAD or a closely related topic in the headline, lead and in which the bulk of the paragraphs in the story are dealing with NEPAD or the related topic (see van Dijk 1988). Based on prior engagement with the stories and the review of documents on NEPAD, such topics include specific issues and events – such as the APRM, information and communication technologies (e-schools
project), a schools feeding program, NEPAD summits, the Millennium Development Goals and agriculture – that are key to the priorities, emphases and frameworks of NEPAD (NEPAD 2001). However, news stories were not the only items collected. Statements of opinion such as commentaries were also included. Commentaries accounted for two of the 30 collected stories. The suggestion here is that although stories are the primary method that newspapers use to disseminate information and ideas, journalists, editors and columnists tend to present their individual viewpoints on a particular issue through commentaries. It is in this sense that the commentaries can be expected to be and were indeed more ‘partisan’ and less ‘neutral’ than some of the news reports. Despite these differences in genre, because these commentaries were from journalists that regularly cover NEPAD, they were read as being part of the totality of stories that were written by the journalists.31

Once the articles had been selected, they were printed out, bound according to newspaper and then analysed. For tracking and identification purposes, each news text was initially coded for the general variables of (see Neuman 2000:295-296; Appendix F):

1. Case Number
2. Date of publication
3. Publisher
4. Headline
5. Author or Journalist’s name

The analysis for journalistic sub-identities called for a sequential and multiple reading of the news texts. The first step entailed multiple reading of each text as in steps 8 and 9 in section 6.3.2.1, to gain an understanding of the stories, while making general descriptive notes about the content of the articles (see Alozie 2005). The articles were then read a second time for insights into the topic, source diversity, story type and themes, all of which are considered to be important features of content in terms of providing insights into whether a story is presented in terms of the watchdog, neutral, social agenda or development dimensions of journalism (see Weaver 1998; Hanitzsch 2005).

After this, each story was then read in accordance to the operational definitions of the four types of journalism being explored in the content on NEPAD. The operational definitions take the form of a statement that is based directly on key aspects of the role definitions in chapter 3. To

31 With regard to the story entries of dedicated columnists that tend to comment on NEPAD (see sub-section 6.4.1 below), their commentaries were collected outside of the format in sub-section 6.2.1 and were read separately for general insights. Their ‘commentaries’ were not considered as part of the ‘news stories’ to be analysed in-depth.
elaborate, neutral role stories were identified as straightforward, quick to read, hard news stories that were based on events and with little personal opinion from the journalists. Largely, those stories portraying the watchdog role were defined as critical-investigative stories that expose some limit, wrongdoing or abuse of power in relation to NEPAD and its framework (see section 3.2). Social agenda stories (a version of social responsibility that is nonetheless distinct from those of development) are read as analytic or interpretive or background stories that deal with socio-political problems, their potential solutions and those that reflect the concerns of the wider community. A key rationale for such stories is the advocacy and educational functions of journalism for the purposes of public enlightenment concerning NEPAD (see section 3.3).

Development-oriented stories were enacted as those stories that positively promote or portray NEPAD as a framework for African unity and development whilst also evoking at some level, the public’s attention and participation in it as ‘Africans’ (see section 3.4).

To discern this focus on journalistic sub-identities, the chosen texts were broadly analysed for the recurring theme/s, discourses and story patterns with emphasis being placed on the way in which the stories were being presented along the lines of the neutral, social agenda, watchdog and development type story elements that are associated with libertarian and social responsibility-oriented journalism theories. Briefly, a theme can be thought of as a focal point in which attributes share some “big idea” quality, “a theme is some concept or theory that emerges from your data” (Bogdan and Biklen 1992:196). According to van Manen (1990:78), “theme analysis refers then to the process of recovering the theme or themes that are embodied and dramatised in the evolving meanings and imagery of the work”. My theme analysis was associated with both the news texts and as we shall soon see, the interview transcripts as well. In both cases, but in varying degrees, my interest was in identifying recurring evaluative elements, words and values that can be associated with the journalistic and African identity positions. With regard to the former, during the reading of the news texts, a preliminary list of key words was developed inductively, based on focuses and patterns that recurred across the articles. For instance, if a story was mainly reliant on a narrative that relied heavily on phrases that inferred scepticism, investigations, abuse, failure, exposure and negativity, such a story was described as embodying a critical-investigative narrative that is in line with the watchdog orientation. Those that embodied references to good governance, advocacy, education, public, civil society, debate, support and citizenry to mention but a few, were described as being oriented towards the social agenda dimension of journalism.
More specifically, the texts were analysed for the following features: topic, sources, format and story type in as far they could give direction towards the presentation of the story in terms of journalistic identity. See Appendix E for the full listing of dimensions of content that were explored. In attempting to identify the topic category, my interest was in the degree of diversity of topics in the news story bearing in mind the assertion that libertarian – neutral and watchdog – journalism tends to deliver a narrow scope of topic categories to their readers unlike those of – social agenda and development journalism. With regard to identifying the sources, voices, news actors and their references, my focus was on the first, second and third sources respectively, given that journalists tend to place sources that are considered more important or those presenting a preferred reading position at the top end of the story. Note that as suggested in chapter 2, the press tend to rely heavily on official-authoritative sources whose views are often placed at the lead end of the story (see Sigal 1973; 1986; chapter 7). Remember that the attribution of news statements to official sources is a key aspect of the values of factuality, profoundly affecting the structuring of news stories with respect to the construction of complex embedding relationships between voices – interviewees, reports, documents and so on (Fairclough 1995b:93). These voices and their discourse is often implicitly represented by journalists in terms of an ordered hierarchy of voices with certain sources being used to frame and contain others (Deacon et al 1999:177).

Sources are often used to validate, undermine or discredit those points of view that are prioritised in news stories. It is in this regard that despite the appearances of ‘balance’ and ‘factuality’, which are important to creating an impression of objectivity, it is often easy to divide voices into ‘protagonists’ and ‘antagonists’ (Fairclough 1995b:82). In the view of libertarian journalism, the lack of diversity in news sources is understood to suppress the participation of a wide variety of voices from various sectors of society whilst in socially responsible journalism the emphasis is ideally on the diversity and plurality of voices especially those that are often marginalised in society (see chapter 3). The issue of interest here is whether the stories show any orientation towards these journalistic ideologies in terms of sources. The assumption here is that libertarian-oriented stories would tend towards government personnel, NEPAD officials, business, lawmakers, experts and public officials as sources whilst socially responsible stories might progress towards a diversity of voices that includes voices from civil society, academics and documents as sources (see chapter 7). For the purposes of the analysis of the news texts in this study, a source was defined as a person, organisation or record cited by reporters. Sources were identified as such when news reporters either quoted them directly or paraphrased comments and information from a person or organisation or document, with or without attribution (Tuchman
1978:21, 29; also see Appendix F). It is assumed here that the way in which the voices in the story are arranged and deployed in relation to each other can provide insights into the ways in which the story is generally framed in terms of the journalistic sub-identities.

In addition, analyses into the voices in the story – those who do or do not get to speak or whose views journalists represent – also highlights the complexity of disentangling and aggregating source discourse, and the journalists’ own discourse or mobilisation of selected constructions for story coherence. It is also in this sense that we can get to see how it is that news reports are intertextual in as far as they draw on and discursively adapt other texts which have been generated outside of immediate journalistic activity, such as documents and press releases which often work to sum up and explain social phenomena (Fairclough 1995b:75). Note here that people, journalists, sources, and writers of press releases draw upon certain ideologies in discourse to make sense of the world and in doing this they make intertextual and historical links with prior texts or text types within their experience (see Deacon et al 1999; Fairclough 1995b). Through the analysis of such intertextual relationships, we can get to establish potential links between the story topics, source views and NEPAD media discourse in general to other discourses in society. As was suggested before, discourse reflects and refracts predominant ideologies in and through the text (van Dijk 1993). Hence, according to Fairclough (1995b), intertextual analysis is a bridge between the news text and discourses in society. “It is about how the speech and writing of others is embedded within media texts” (1995:75). Remember that this representation of various voices in news discourse is at times characterised by a processes of hierarchy. In this study, as I will soon illustrate with the aid of an example, intertextual relations are not only analysed for insights into the preferred reading positions, voices, identity constructions and discourses that inform the news story, they are also relied upon to identify the specific points of view that inform those instances when journalists invoke their viewpoints. Pertinently, the totality of the voices in the news stories are for the most part seen as projecting the viewpoint of the newspaper and not so much the journalists.

In terms of the story format, which is interpreted within the realms of summary and narrative leads, the summary lead is identified as providing information as effectively as possible in the basic rubric of the inverted pyramid which is based on the 5W’s and 1H (Where, When, Who, What, Which and How) format. In this study, this lead is identified as being frequently associated with the libertarian approach to news writing. The narrative (soft) lead, which is heavily associated with the story telling techniques of setting scenes, providing background whilst also
making room for the opinions of journalists, is associated with the values of social responsibility news writing. The ‘story type’ element is in this case, in reference to the differentiation of news genres into ‘hard news’, ‘feature article’, ‘commentary’ and ‘interview’ (question and answer) which are used mainly as basic identifiers of types of news texts (Hodge 1990:22). As was argued in chapter 3, with the exception of the ‘hard news’ category which is oriented to events-based news and the requirements of the libertarian perspective, the other three all make room for the journalists’ opinions in so far as they are influenced by the social responsibility perspective. Issues-based stories are usually dealt with in more depth than those based on events, and they are more likely to incorporate interpretation and analysis. Having highlighted the approach to the analysis of the identification of the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development sub-identities, in the following sub-section I highlight, the analysis concerning NEPAD’s African identity ideological interpellation.

6.3.2 African identity constructions: marker words, references and construction strategies

According to Fairclough (1995b), the best way to begin identity-oriented research is by asking oneself the following questions: “What are the participants (voices) in the text, and how are they constructed? – What relationships are set up between participants” (1995b:203). The voices are treated as the social agents, that is, the people who are present in the setting and who construct identities. In this study, more often than not, the voices in the news texts drew on or spoke to the regional or continental, pan-African and collective resonance of NEPAD. To find a linguistic feature that reflects these voices – a relevant marker of identity needs to be discerned. Ricento (2003), Fairclough (2001; 1995b) and Wodak et al (1999) have all tended to rely on the use of pronouns in identity construction as their point of empirical entry into such analyses. In short as is asserted by Fairclough (1995b:145), “pronouns as always are worth noting”. This is because, the use (or absence) of personal and possessive pronouns, ‘us’, ‘we’, ‘ours’ and ‘you’, in particular, is often read as an important identity marker in many identity analyses in so far as they – by establishing in-groups or out-groups – explicitly serve the goal of identity construction. It is in this regard that I directed my attention, albeit more broadly, to the language strategies – pronouns, words as identity markers, binaries and identification references – that are used to shape, position, (re)imagine and construct Africanness.

Almost all of the texts analysed contained at least one (ex)implicit marker with potentially African (identity) connotations. This is in the nouns such as ‘Africa’ and adjectives like ‘Africans’, pronouns and even references to collective and shared identifications and experiences.
To elaborate, with regard to the identity markers and references, my interest included the depictions of the term or word ‘Africa’ as an identity construction, the symbols which may draw attention to a story’s African status and the ways in which different actors, problems and events are used to position and naturalise African identity (see Hall 1980; Barthes 1993). Such an exercise required me to identify the recurring patterns, the repetition of certain words and identification references. In doing this, specific discourses related to NEPAD were deployed in the shape of four themes that were identified in chapter 5 as potential markers of Africanist identity positions. These included references to and images that evoked pictures of:

- primordial essences such as ‘ubuntu’, ‘cradle of humanity’, ‘traditional’ African cultural values and ‘indigenous’ knowledge systems
- ‘African renaissance’ (African cultural rejuvenation)
- pan-Africanism (African unity, collective self-reliance, patriot/s, shared experiences)
- Africa as a territory, continent, space, place and any constructions or definitions of Africans in the context of NEPAD were also noted.

‘Us’ – ‘them’ binary oppositions were of interest here in as far as they are often used in media discourse to establish group identities. Sources and journalists often draw on the binary oppositions – which for Levi-Strauss (1969) can be read as expressions of contradictions in society – of ‘Africa’ and the ‘West’ to differentiate a common and distinctive African identity. However, drawing on Derrida (1981), it is worth reiterating that there is no neutrality in binary oppositions given that relations of dominance are built and inscribed into them. In fact, in the post-colonial context of NEPAD, the representations of these binaries – as will be demonstrated in some of the news texts that are analysed – often take the shape of ‘colonisers’ and ‘colonised’ and ‘industrialised countries’ and ‘poor countries’ (also see Said 1995; Memmi 1965). Therefore, part of my interest here was to analyse those instances when NEPAD’s overarching African identity (Us) is contrasted with the ‘Other’ (Them). On the other hand, the potential interest here is also to do with the ways in which NEPAD’s version of pan-Africanism (that is at some level characterised by a tension between modernisation and tradition) finds expression in media discourse.

In the analysis of identity in texts, scholars tend to look out for the broader constructive strategies that are often used to link linguistic strategies – pronouns – to identity categories. That is, the constructive strategies that are used to construct and establish African identity “by promoting unification, identification, solidarity and differentiation” (Ricento 2003:617). These included the
strategies of unification and cohesion, which emphasise unifying common features through moments of inclusion, differentiation and exclusion, and strategies of avoidance, which downplay intra-national differences and discontinuities or disruptions (see Ricento 2003; Wodak et al 1999; Fairclough 1995b). As is demonstrated in the next chapter, there are also strategies of transformation, which aim to transform national identity and its components into another identity (Ricento 2003:617). In general, by examining the constructions of identity in the stories, this analysis was also intended to gain insights into whether NEPAD’s collectivist African identity positioning has found its way, into the news discourse and if so, how it is represented. Informed by the cultural studies-postcolonial theoretical perspective, my interest here is not only in the text as such and what it says about Africa(ns), but also in the unspoken underpinnings, the cultural assumptions, connotations, denotations, constructions and ideological underpinnings embedded in the text and how these relate to my wider contextual conceptions concerning NEPAD. The following is a brief example of each type of analysis.

6.3.3 Analysing news texts: evaluative elements, constructions and some considerations
In order to enhance the reader’s understanding of the way in which I analysed the stories, I present a news story that was published in *This Day* (TD). As will also be noted in chapter 7, those words, pronouns and elements of journalistic writing such as the 5W’s and 1H which can provide us with insights into the cultural and journalistic identities being examined are often highlighted in bold and underlined as part of an of an attempt to draw out their relevance for the analysis. Consider this coverage,

“Nepad peer review group visits Nigeria”:
1. Country Support Mission of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), a programme of New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) to promote good governance, will visit Nigeria between March 21 and 24 to assess the preparedness and capacity of Nigeria to proceed with the country peer review process.
2. The Senior Special Assistant of Nigeria NEPAD Steering Committee and APRM Coordinator, Ambassador Isaac Aluko-Olokun, at a media sensitiation workshop on APRM yesterday in Abuja disclosed that no region in the world has done political peer review the way Africa is doing, adding that it will serve the good purpose of assuring development partners that Africa is not only ready to monitor itself but is also ready to develop good governance to manage its people and resources.
3. Commending African leaders including President Olusegun Obasanjo for acceding to APRM, Olokun said APRM demonstrates the aspirations of African leaders for good governance and its primary mandate to encourage participating member states to adopt policies.
4. The Ambassador said the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Ufot Ekaette, will on behalf of Federal Government sign a Memorandum of Understanding with CSM to delineate duties and responsibilities of the various participants in the Nigerian secretariat of APRM.
5. The four thematic areas of APRM, according to Olokun, include democracy and political governance, economic governance and management; socio-economic development and corporate governance.

According to my analysis, this story is identified as embodying aspects of the neutral journalistic dimension, which mainly provides a straightforward, quick-to-read hard news presentation of the event/s (including those in the future) with few personal opinions from the journalist. In terms of
the previously identified story elements, the story presents the APRM as the focal topic. In addition, although some aspects of the ‘when’ and ‘where’ are in paragraph two, the story is written in the summary lead format. It is also mainly reliant on official sources, all of which is in line with the neutral – or at least non-critical – strand of libertarian journalism (see section 3.2). With regard to the construction of Africanist identity positions, in the above story Africa is presented as a (collective) region that is inhabited by a ‘people’. In paragraph 2, the region or continent = ‘Africa’ – as the first place to do peer reviews – is contrasted or opposed against the rest of the ‘world’. It is in this regard that Africa is in this case referred to as being unique and/or indeed ahead of other regions by the official source. This article ignores the fact that not all African countries are doing peer reviews. It thus constructs a false unity. The reviews in the region are presented as serving a ‘good purpose’ potentially meaning that those ‘Other’ regions (the world) are the ‘development partners’ as distinct from intra-African partners. However, there is a sense in which the continent is also presented as being made up of various and different – ‘member states’ – countries. Yet in many ways, the source in particular constructs a collective African identity with recurrence of phrases such as ‘monitor itself’, ‘manage its people and resources’ and ‘aspirations of African leaders’. The source must have some idea of what he means when he refers to ‘itself’ and ‘its people’. However, by employing a linguistic strategy of vagueness in meaning, he simultaneously employs a strategy of avoidance by ignoring intra-African diversity in terms of languages, cultures, values, and beliefs. As was posited in chapter 5, (pan-)African identity constructions rely on the strategies of collectiveness, self-reliance and unity.

In thinking about my overall approach to the analysis of the stories, there are some considerations to bear in mind. Firstly, not all stories that were categorised as exhibiting neutrality, embodied summary leads or relied only on official sources. Neither were all stories that are analysed as portraying the social agenda elements exclusively features or written with narrative leads. Strong dichotomies between watchdog, neutral, social agenda and development might be misleading. It is rather a question of, ‘predominantly watchdog’, ‘partly development’ or ‘mixed’, depending on the features detected in their totality. Despite this, many stories could be analysed in terms of the broad characteristics of social responsibility and libertarian journalism as the primary axes along which to analyse journalistic sub-identity. Secondly, most articles briefly addressed the issue of

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32 Remember that connotation particularly with regard to media texts, works on the tendency of the audience to “fill in the blanks” with what they already know from their wider societal and ideological influences (Robertson 2003:7).
‘Africanness’ or ‘African identity’ and this was usually done in one or two sentences within the context of a separate topic(issue). Few of the articles explore at any length the issue of African unity, shared belongings and heritage. Thirdly, there is no single correct interpretation of texts, because a researcher’s reading of a text, like a journalist’s, is filtered through the lens of the researcher’s own experiences and opinions (Alozie 2005:66; see also Steier 1995). According to Alozie (2005), an analyst’s interpretation of a text is only one probable understanding from a subjective position, and it may not necessarily be the assessment that is offered by others. The point here is that my readings are informed by the reviewed literature, other studies that have looked into related issues and by my own self-reflection about the aims of this study and how to best address them in my context, all of which it is hoped will bring some level of credibility and validity to the findings and analyses. Finally, whilst we can say that the identification of the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development sub-identities in the NEPAD stories, provides us with a sense of the roles being performed, this is not to be misunderstood as determining the journalists’ perceptions and viewpoint. Hence, this study mainly relies on interviews to gain insights into this aspect. The qualitative content analysis is used here to inform the interviews after which correlations between the two will be made. The text analysis provides a reading of what is in the text and how it is presented, but it does not necessarily reveal the aims, intentions or plans of the journalists who wrote the stories. To do the latter, I had to rely on interviews as is laid out in the next section.

6.4 Interviews

The content analysis on the one hand helped me to generate potential questions for the qualitative interviews and on the other to identify correlations between the NEPAD news stories and the interview responses from the journalists (see chapter 11). However, for the most part, this study relies on interviews to probe how journalists perceive their roles in NEPAD and how they relate to its interpellations. Interviews were ideal for investigating these types of issues because they provide considerable latitude for the interviewees to provide detailed descriptive information concerning their experiences and understandings (Kvale 1996; Seidman 1991). To elaborate, qualitative interviewing enables the researcher to learn about things that cannot be observed directly by other means of verification, validation or commentaries on data obtained from other sources (Lindlof 1995; Connole 1998). Interviews often enable the researcher to get closer to the people that are being investigated, thereby reducing the possibility of imposing inappropriate conceptual frameworks on them (Bryman 1988:3). They allow for the understanding and explanation of processes and ambiguities and potentially for the discovery of new insights that are
not easily explained through measures of observable words, themes and variables. Thus, they offer the advantage of enabling the interviewees to discuss processes and events in their own words (Dhoest 2004:395-396). In addition, the evolving nature of interviews, which are not always fixed in structure, allow for the addition and revision of questions as the interview proceeds, all of which allows for the exploration of underlying, often implicit, factors in the practice of journalism (see Lofland and Lofland 1995). Although the information obtained is focused, it is important to keep in mind that “all interviews are reality constructing, meaning-making instances” (Holstein and Gubrium 1995:4). As suggested at the start of this chapter, interviews are indicative of a particular way in which social research can be conducted depending on the research questions.

The study uses in-depth, personal interviews conducted and audio taped to gain journalists’ individual journalistic role perceptions in reference to NEPAD bearing in mind its journalistic and Africanist identity interpellations. While text analysis was the analytical tool used to inquire into the portrayal and construction of these identities in the NEPAD news discourse and in the interview transcripts, the focus on journalists’ perceptions, views and decisions on the coverage of NEPAD mainly requires the use of interviews, albeit with the aid of thematic analysis. Furthermore, no other qualitative research method – ethnographic, informant, respondent or focus group (see Lindlof 1995) – was considered suitable for inquiring into the more sensitive areas of journalists’ views on matters such as their self-identifications. A focus group – as opposed to the privacy accorded by the one-on-one conversational format of the in-depth interviews (including telephone and email follow-ups) – might have distorted the data collection process, as interviewees might have been less willing to discuss individual and organisational decisions in the presence of other interviewees, some of whom are potential regional competitors. Further, the research questions raised in these interviews do not require or rely on the in-depth and contrasting data that is often generated by focus groups. Besides, from a research point of view it would require a lot of time and logistical support to carry out focus groups with journalists that are located at media houses in different countries.

In keeping with recommendations of Lofland and Lofland (1995) to structure the interview guide to facilitate guided conversations, the interviewees were asked for open-ended responses to a series of directed questions (see Appendix G for the interview guide). According to Lindlof (1995), the respondent interview has a standardised protocol and high content comparability, and all interviewees are asked roughly the same questions in nearly the same order, which helps
minimise interviewer effects and assure greater efficiency of information gathering, whilst also allowing for a freer, conversational flow to the interviews.

To start with, the topics to be investigated were grouped into three specific sets with each set leading up to the next or building up from the previous one (See the sections in the interview guide in Appendix G). These included:

(i) On how the interviewees identify with NEPAD’s Africanist sentiments (section 1).
(ii) On the interviewees’ perceptions of their journalistic sub-identities (section 2).
(iii) On the interviewees’ views of how their responses towards NEPAD’s Africanism and journalistic sub-identities – at (i) and (ii) are held up when they are faced by NEPAD’s socially responsible journalism interpellations particularly as in the shape of the (African) development journalist (section 3).

I started with the question of Africanity because, as suggested in chapter 5, NEPAD within the context of the post-colony tends to posit all individuals (journalists) as Africans first and then something else second. I am mindful, however, that a different order of questioning commencing with journalistic identity would have implied a starting interpellation that might have generated different responses to the final question. However, it is significant that this study is mainly focused on examining the ways in which ‘journalists’ as an already existing ‘identity’ category are constituted, if at all, by NEPAD’s sentiments. I also reasoned that the ways in which journalists would set up or prioritise their collective or personal identification references with regard to Africanity could provide potential points of entry into their identity negotiations all of which could be probed at (i) and (ii) and maybe even some orientation towards their identities at (i) and positions at (ii). Thus, for the first set of questions on the interview guide in Appendix G, journalists were probed on specific questions about NEPAD’s Africanist claims: that is whether they identified with NEPAD’s African identity interpellation, if they saw it as an African-led initiative, their views concerning the process of Africans peer reviewing Africans and NEPAD’s unification appeal.

For the second set of questions, journalists were asked general and specific questions regarding their own descriptions of their journalistic sub-identities. Briefly, they were asked whether they saw themselves broadly as disseminators of information, watchdogs (sceptics and investigators), advocates and educators for public enlightenment or as promoters of (national or regional) development and cultural unity. In addition, based on the insights from chapters 2 to 4 about a global view of journalism whereby, for instance, journalists in the post-colony prioritise
journalistic values that are read as being Western, journalists were also asked to indicate which journalistic sub-identity statements, in their view, were more important than others. This was done with the aid of an answer scale that ranged from 4=‘extremely important’ to 1=‘not important at all’ coupled by in-depth explanations to account for the rating (see chapter 8; see also Weaver 1998; Ramaprasad 2001). My aim here was to gain further clarity with regard to the interviewees’ self-definitions concerning their own journalistic sub-identity.

With regard to the third set of questions, bearing in mind their conceptions at (i) and (ii), journalists were probed further for their own description and understandings as to whether NEPAD’s ‘African development journalist’ ideological interpellation affected or influenced, if at all, their role perceptions with regard to NEPAD and their approach to the NEPAD story. In doing this, the journalists were asked for their reaction to Mbeki’s (2003b) view concerning their responsibilities as ‘Africans’ and then as ‘journalists’ in NEPAD. Specifically, they were asked whether they as ‘journalists’ saw it as their role as ‘Africans’ to promote and support NEPAD. It is because of NEPAD’s Africanist sentiments that journalists as Africans are called upon by the discourse to take on socially responsible-oriented journalistic sub-identities particularly as in the shape of development journalism in their reportage of NEPAD. Journalists were also asked what journalistic sub-identity/ies they think they should adopt when reporting on NEPAD. At all these stages (i, ii and iii), examining what journalists say in terms of who they are and what they say that they do in reference to NEPAD helps us here to understand not only how they have constructed their identities, but also how they perceive the hierarchical order of different identities. The next sub-section spells out more specifically the interview procedure and selection of respondents.

6.4.1 Influences, the selection of respondents and interview procedure

To prepare for the journalist interviews, alongside the news text analyses, information was also sourced via interviews with the NEPAD secretariat in South Africa, the National Planning Authority (NPA) in Uganda and with the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA). The results of these interviews were factored in the journalistic interview design as follows. As was indicated in chapter 5, these three voices are in varying degrees seen here as representing the interests of NEPAD (as an independent body), government and the broader African publics all of whom are stakeholders in NEPAD. These entities, which are all in varying degrees enacting or engaging with NEPAD on various aspects of its policy framework, were seen as being able to
provide situated information regarding the media-NEPAD nexus. The following is the description of the relevant stakeholders interviewed:

Ross Herbert, Analyst / Head of the NEPAD and Governance Project, SAIIA
Saul Kaye, Executive Director NPA and NEPAD/APRM Co-ordinator, Uganda
Thaninga Shope Linney, General Manager Communications, NEPAD Secretariat

Their interview questions were not as fixed in structure as those pertaining to the journalists, but rather built around some of the key themes that were to be interrogated with the journalists. It is in this regard that these three interviewees were asked for their thoughts on:

(i) NEPAD’s progress
(ii) NEPAD’s Africanist sentiments
(iii) The role of journalists in NEPAD
(iv) The link between journalists, Africa and NEPAD
(v) Media coverage of NEPAD

Also see Appendix G.

For the purposes of this study and bearing in mind that in-depth interviews require a lot of time and thereby can make it impractical to interview a large sample of respondents as in surveys, I used purposeful-sampling techniques as advocated by Morse (1994), Seidman (1991) and Kvale (1996) to help me select interviewees to provide relevant information. According to Morse (1994), the sample of informants to be considered for selection should not only be knowledgeable about the study issues, but they should be capable of engaging in a directed conversation on the issues at hand. As is argued in chapters 1 to 3, in this study the identity of journalists is excluded from that of other public communicators such as publicists and advertising copywriters. In this study, editorial staff that gather, write, select and process information such as reporters, editors, columnists, agency writers including freelancers – but excluding sub-editors – are referred to as journalists (see Scholl 1996; chapter 1).

More specifically, the choice of journalists interviewed for this study was based on a range of criteria that would enable me to contextualise the journalists’ perceptions (see Deacon et al 1999). The operationalisation of which journalists to select for interviewing, was produced in this four-step format. Firstly, focus was on those journalists whose bylines appeared frequently in the stories on NEPAD at the selected newspapers. However, my specific interest was in those whose five most recent stories on NEPAD had been analysed in the first phase of this study. Secondly, I also considered writers and columnists and commentators – who are not accounted for in step 1 –
that regularly wrote on NEPAD and those who had established themselves as writers on closely linked issues. Thirdly, editors at those desks dealing with stories on NEPAD and writers from news agencies that sent copy to the selected newspapers were also considered. Fourthly, journalists who were not necessarily in my target group of journalists with five stories at the newspapers, but were deemed knowledgeable about NEPAD by virtue of their engagement with NEPAD, through, say NEPAD media workshops, were also considered. The pertinent point here is that their responses could provide me with an effective way for checking myself against drawing easy conclusions from the views of the respondents in steps 1 to 3 (see Seidman 1991).

On reading the selected content on NEPAD, I quickly realised that most of the potential respondents were male, thus at steps three and four – without losing sight of the main aims and goals of this study – a specific attempt was then made to include female respondents. In doing this, I wanted to see whether there would be any gender specific insights that could be drawn out of the respondent’s discourse on NEPAD. This would enable me to identify and probe, where relevant, for gender aspects that might correspond to the gender of the journalist, and this would in turn entail some exploring of the topic at the level of subjectivity particularly in terms of NEPAD’s interpellations. However, as the findings show in chapters 8 to 9, identifications along the fault-line of gender did not appear to play a dominant role in how the journalists perceived of themselves vis-à-vis NEPAD.

Whilst this four-step process led me to narrow down to 13 journalists, I also bore in mind that the number of interviews to conduct would to an extent depend on the levels at which further interviews would yield little new knowledge (Kvale 1996). I am also aware that studies of journalists’ views and understandings such as those done by Amin (2002), Manssour (2003) and Larsson (2002) relied on 9, 28, and 21 interviews respectively. In many interview studies the number of interviews is between 10 and 25 (see Kvale 1996; Seidman 1991), however the issue of numbers most often depends on the research problem and the presence of new data. Drawing on this assertion, it is evident here that with regard to this study, the number of journalists to be interviewed is a function of the research interests, questions and design of this study with its focus on those journalists that regularly report on NEPAD at the seven selected newspapers. For the qualitative purposes of this study, the number thirteen was judged appropriate, and that little would have been gained from a larger figure.
The following is the description of those journalists that were derived from the first stage of the four-step format:33
Kent Mensah, journalist Accra Daily Mail (ADM), Ghana.
Iyefu Aodba, This Day (TD), Nigeria.
Jonathan Katzenellenbogen, Business Day (BD), South Africa.
Brendan Boyle, The Sunday Times (ST), South Africa.
Lucas Barasa, The Nation (TN1), Kenya.
The following is the description of those journalists/commentators that were derived from the second stage of the four-step format:
Jean Jacques Cornish, Regional Affairs Reporter, The Mail and Guardian (MG), South(ern) Africa.
The following is the description of those journalists that were derived from the third and fourth stages of the four-step format:
John Kaninda, Editor, Business Day Africa, Regional.
Emily Aggrey Nyarko, Freelancer, Accra Daily Mail / Ghana News Agency (GNA), Ghana.
Esther Nakkazi, Freelancer Nation Media Group / The East African (TEA), East Africa.
John Chiahemen, Southern Africa Bureau Chief, Reuters (RT), Southern Africa.

The interviewees were contacted at the end of 2005 to arrange for the interviews. The letter sent to these journalists, requesting the interview, is presented in Appendix H. Interviews, including telephone interviews lasting 45 minutes were conducted between December 2005 and September 2006. The interviews were audio taped for later analysis. None of the interviewees had any objections to being identified by their full name in the study. However, for the purposes of convenience during the analysis, description and discussion of the findings in chapters 7 to 11, the respondents are mainly identified by the nature of their media organisation and their function in the organisation. The next sub-section looks at how the transcribed interviews were analysed.

33 From here on, with the exception of some instances in chapter 7, the interviewees are often identified and referred to on the basis of the acronyms that are associated with their media houses / newspapers. Also, note that the interview with John Chiahemen (RT) below did not follow the strict format that was laid out in Appendix G given that some of the questions, for example: 3(a), 6 and 9 were dropped as they were not specifically relevant to his journalistic work and cultural identifications. Thus, as will be noted in the findings he comes across as an occasional source and yet his views are still relevant, valid and particularly insightful with regard to the broader research questions in this study.
6.4.2 Thematic and textual analysis of interviews

Before going on to point out how the interviews were analysed, it is worth reiterating here that in qualitative content analyses particularly in their narrative and (critical) discourse analytic dimensions, both the written and spoken discourse are not only forms of social practice, but are also texts. It is in this regard that interview talk (in the form of transcripts as texts) is in this analysis treated as discourse and as social practice. The interviews as spoken narratives are homes for agency and identity (see Fairclough 2001; van Dijk 1993). With the aid of thematic analysis, the transcripts of the interviews were analysed for patterns, pronouns and meanings. According to Huberman and Miles (1994:8), the recurring patterns or themes in an interview capture the “essence” of an account and lead us to a “practical understanding” of meanings and actions. Thematic analysis was applied here to analyse the raw data from the in-depth interviews.

Listed below are the two waves of analysis of the interviews and the related five-step analytical process that was used to reduce the interview data. Note that, similar to the approach taken in reference to the nine-step format concerning the retrieval of data from allAfrica.com in subsection 6.2.1, this process was not always followed as is laid out below in terms of the order of the steps. The researcher went back and forth between steps until the process yielded the most dominant frames (see Lofland and Lofland 1995; chapters 8 and 9). In the first wave of analysis, a system of note cards was deployed to write down impressions of things said in the interviews. In addition, a coding scheme was developed and the codes written down in parentheses in the right-hand margin of the transcribed interviews. Different coding categories were developed, narrowing them down after every couple of interviews. This process involved the following three-step analytical processes:

1. Identify, track and (re) read all answers carefully, remembering the purpose of the question, study objectives and discussion topics.
2. Make rough categories of all answers that seem to belong together and create a theme or frame label in the form of one key word, phrases or even secondary (sub) themes.
3. Number or code keywords, themes and frames in the data according to the broad discussion topic it pertains to and make notes in the margins to define sub-topics and secondary themes.

In the second wave of analysis, the identified keywords and themes within each topic were narrowed into sub-topics and secondary themes for the purposes of in-depth analysis.
4. List all keywords that belong to a certain topic within each sub-topic developed in each secondary theme.

5. Inductively interpret the dominant or most meaningful categories within each theme. The categories were then placed on compilation sheets using key words and sentences clear enough to recall the meanings made by individual interviewees. This format allowed the researcher to go back and forth between the summarised individual respondent’s data and the original transcribed data when needed.

From a qualitative perspective, the analysis of the interview data presented in chapters 8 to 9 has a rich, creative and evolving context. In fact, it is in the nature of qualitative studies that the design, data collection and analysis stages are not rigidly separated (Lofland and Lofland 1995). The first two interviews that were conducted (which in this case included those with the respondents derived from stage four in the four-step format) were treated as the pilot phase of the interview study. On recording and transcribing the data from these interviews, it emerged that my descriptions concerning the neutral, watchdog, development and social agenda roles of journalism needed to be re-worded and/or developed further. Based on the pilot interviews it was also evident that some specific questions, for instance, those concerning the journalists’ perceptions of their audience’s expectations towards NEPAD, which elicited little relevant information, needed to be dropped. Thus, following on from this pilot phase, the responses were compared to previous responses, as they were being recorded and transcribed. The texts were examined for emerging themes, patterns, repetition, commonalities or novelty in responses. All this allowed for a useful and meaningful development of concepts and interpretation over the five to nine months of the interview process.

In analysing the interviews for identity discourse, it is worth elaborating here that identity as an emergent and yet selective mental construct can be constructed in the talk or text that is produced by the interviewees. As speakers communicate linguistically, they choose from a wide range of identities that are made available to them and which the speakers then respond to depending on how the identities best fit the situation at hand (see Khan 1983; Goffman 1981). In one moment, a speaker (as interviewee) may be a journalist concerned about a deadline, in another moment the same speaker may be an activist campaigning against African debt. These shifts are discursive and dynamic, but they are still particular and specific representations of the self. The speakers’ identities, multiple selves or subject positions can be produced, sustained and opposed during the interviews. Hence, the interview, as a discourse genre, is a critical site in which identity is
performed in the sense of something that is done through speaking or writing. This performative view of identity sees the speaking subject, as the producer or even product of his/her own identity through discourse (Fairclough 2001:86-87). This understanding of identity construction is of relevance here because in the interview genre – unlike political speeches or educational discussions – the speaking subject verbalises individual thoughts, intentions and self-definitions. It is through the in-depth interview that self-reflection and self-knowledge and self-examination are obtained. As will be noted in chapter 8, as interviewees explain, they tend to tell a story that constitutes them as individuals who are making sense of their identities through recollection. In other words, in narrating how they respond to NEPAD’s interpellations, they define themselves as the implied subject generated by the narrative. The interview requires the speakers to detail their actions, problems, hopes and needs in regard to work/life. Through the elicitation of responses to NEPAD, the subject as journalist is constituted as the object of knowledge and given meaning. This performance functions to construct the identity of the speaking subject. In this sense, it is through linguistic expression that social identities and relations are produced (Alvarez 2002:3-4).

As we shall soon see, by drawing on this integrated approach towards the analysis of identity in news texts, I was able to discern the ways in which various voices and subject positions are reflected in the pronouns used by the interviewees. To reiterate, personal pronouns like ‘I’ the speaker, ‘we’ the group, ‘you’ the audience and possessive ones such as ‘my’, ‘mine’, ‘our/s’ and ‘your’ can serve the goal of identity construction (Fairclough 1995b). The personal and possessive referents can be used to construct a sense of self. As is illustrated in the next three chapters, the use of the personal pronoun ‘we’ – including all its dialect forms and the corresponding possessive pronouns appears to be of utmost importance in the discourse about Africanity. ‘We’, is often used to refer to ‘the Africans’ of today or more broadly a pan-African ‘we’. However, there are instances when it used precisely to refer to ‘we’ the journalists or ‘we’ the NEPAD officials. An inclusive ‘we’, is inclusive of the reader and the writer or speaker, as opposed to an ‘exclusive’ we, which refers to the writer or speaker plus one or more others, but does not include the addressee(s) (Fairclough 2001:106). Therefore, at all stages of the analysis I made it a point to ascertain that I identified as best as I could the exact referents of these pronouns. The referents of the pronouns can differ quite widely, particularly when one bears in mind the variations in the local socio-cultural contexts of the journalists and their newspapers.

Although the discourse from the interviews was informed by insights from the news text analyses, this data constitutes the primary basis for an answer to this study’s questions. It enables an
analysis that, in the context of journalism practice in the post-colony, attempts to identify and make sense of the ways in which journalists reporting on NEPAD respond to its ideological interpellations in terms of journalistic and cultural identifications. Informed by the libertarian and social responsibility theories, the journalistic sub-identities were categorised here as the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development strands of journalistic identity. With regard to the African identity constructions, the interview discourse is approached mainly from the perspective of ‘hybridity’ whilst bearing in mind that identities in general are relational, fluid and yet also contingent. For the most part, the insights that can be made from this study were read from the vantage point of the post-colony.

6.4 Conclusion
This chapter has provided an elaboration of the overall qualitative research approach, design and methods that are employed in this study. This approach, which is based on qualitative content analysis that is then used to generate ideas for the interviews as main research method, is the result of the aims and goals of this study. In doing this, the chapter has prioritised a qualitative approach through which we can gain insights into the journalists’ role perceptions in reference to NEPAD. The findings and analysis of this study are presented in detail in the next four chapters.
CHAPTER SEVEN
FINDINGS OF THE TEXT ANALYSIS

7.0 Introduction
In this chapter, the emphasis is on the first phase of the research titled ‘The analysis of selected news stories on NEPAD’, which attempts to provide a close reading of the content in terms of journalistic identity and for insights regarding the construction of a collective African identity. The findings and analyses reported in this chapter provide a descriptive account of the topic, focus, format, story type and source evaluative elements of the content in terms of the broad axes of social responsibility and libertarian journalism. This is then followed by an exploration of the findings concerning the construction of Africanness. The picture arising out of this chapter is that the newspapers adopted a broadly libertarian ‘global’ journalism approach in their coverage of NEPAD. Still, the content also bears elements that are specific to the pan-African context of NEPAD. When it comes to making qualitative sense of the ways in which the news texts are presented in terms of the specific sub-identities of neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development journalism, there is a mixture of identities coming to the fore with some socially responsible journalistic elements making their presence felt. These nuances are explored more fully in chapters 8 and 9 when I present and discuss respectively the results of the qualitative interviews.

7.1 Analysing newspaper content: some initial considerations
In analysing newspaper content, I was interested in identifying pointers and themes for informing and developing questions around which journalists could be probed during the interviews. In doing this, I was focused on exploring two major issues, that is, the way in which stories are presented along the broad axes of libertarian and social responsibility journalistic identities and the way in which symbols or words in particular are used to construct, mediate and (re)imagine pan-Africanity or draw attention to a story’s African status. Doing this involved a time-consuming and labour intensive exercise through which I had to pay attention to specific words or the categories of words used and their potential meanings as per the interests and context of this study. This was particularly so when it came to identifying and defining markers and words concerning Africanity. The key problem here is that the meaning of words is rarely straightforward, such that the interpretation of even apparently obvious categories can be notoriously slippery. For example, with regard to some of the stories analysed in The Nation (TN),
it was clear that the words ‘Kenya’ and ‘Kenyan’ were in reference to a country, nation and specific national identity. However, in the context of a discussion concerning the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), a source, voice or author in the same publication using the terms ‘our people’, ‘self-assessment’ and ‘African’ would at some level also be making statements about the pan-African status of the topic at hand. In both cases, it is assumed that the national and African identities are always and already there as a collective. As was posited in chapter 6, in order to cope with this I carried out multiple and sequential readings of the stories so as to record details on the markers of Africanness. These included ‘African’, ‘pan-Africanism’, ‘continent’, ‘people’, ‘South’ and ‘region’ which might, depending on their context, signal the use of an African frame of reference. Articles that portray these words and identification references are analysed in section 7.4.

7.2 Description and analysis of content: evaluative features and thematic discourses
In presenting and describing the findings, I start by looking at the selected features of content. In general, NEPAD was framed as a harbinger of development through modernisation, democracy and partnerships between Africa and other regions and yet it is also spoken about as a pan-African initiative. The bulk of the content analysed relied on official NEPAD and government sources whose references drew on discourses of neo-liberalism, liberal democracy and pan-Africanism as is the case with much other discourse around NEPAD. The coverage does not stray from NEPAD’s ideology with only a few stories (including commentaries) providing narratives that question NEPAD. The journalists and their newspapers present a coherent message that is clearly situated within the dominant NEPAD discourse. As was noted in previous chapter, those words, phrases and elements of the news texts that are focused on during the analysis of the texts, are often underlined and even highlighted in bold as part of an attempt to draw out their relevance for the analysis of journalistic and cultural identities respectively.

7.2.1 Topics
With regard to the central topics, ‘APRM’ was the subject of major concern to the newspapers, and no other received as much attention – see Table 4 below. This was followed by NEPAD, which was recorded as the main topic for six of the news texts. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, the selected newspaper’s countries were in 2005 at various stages of their peer reviews and this may have played a decisive role in influencing their print media to devote space to APRM issues and events. The newspapers in Kenya and Rwanda, which were completing their self-assessments, and South Africa, which was starting its review process, focused on the APRM
much more than the other publications. As will be noted in the following examples and analyses, the APRM is reported as a pro-democracy initiative that is crucial to the long-term success of NEPAD in terms of peace, growth and investments. The idea here is that the principles of liberal democracy should be able to pave the way for economic growth, trade and investment (see Chabal 2002). However, it is also portrayed as a pan-African initiative. For example, in *This Day (TD)*, two stories in particular refer to the APRM as a demonstration of the “aspirations of African leaders for good governance” and the positive role that can be played by Nigeria in “sharing” its review experiences with other countries.

**Table 4: Topic distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AU (Unification)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRM</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African nationalism / Pan-Africanism</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICTs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No single main topic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the story ‘Graft has gone up, say Kenyans’ in *TN*, the journalist concludes by commenting that:

Kenya is among four countries chosen by the New Partnership for African Development (Nepad) for the APRM survey, which looks at the country’s performance in political, democratic, socio-economic and good corporate governance. Rwanda and Ghana have already presented their reports, but Mauritius was rejected for alleged government interference. The others are Rwanda, Ghana and Mauritius.

Besides the trans-national and shared responsibility elements that can be noted in the above extract, it is also evident here that there are concerns about the role of governments in NEPAD and its initiatives. As I will go on to show in the sections on sources, sub-identities and African identity, the implementation of the APRM has been contested by civil society. Evidence of this can be found in ‘Police block Nepad members from office’ – *TN*, ‘Peer review won’t bring Mugabe to heel’, ‘Skewed SA peer review feared’, ‘Mozambican takes over as Nepad CEO’ and ‘New helmsman aims to propel Nepad into action’ in the *Sunday Times (ST)* and ‘Ideological tug-of-war starts over SA’s first peer review process’ in *Business Day (BD)*. These stories, which include features, hard news and commentaries show – in varying degrees – a key tension and struggle between governments and civil society over the control and direction of the peer review processes and by extension NEPAD. In some cases, the pros and cons of NEPAD were debated.
However, even in such mainly social responsibility-oriented stories, these struggles concerning the control of the implementation of the APRM were not the central topic of the story. Neither were the narrowly constructed views concerning NEPAD as the initiative that will “propel” Africa into development and democracy fundamentally questioned in the reportage.

In another *TN* article titled ‘Families to write Narc report’, the APRM is framed as an initiative that enables the public to “give their views…on democracy, economic management and social services” to their leaders. In *TD*, one of the headlines reads that ‘APRM, veritable tool for good governance – envoy’ and the author comments early on in the story that:

The APRM is a mutually agreed instrument, voluntarily acceded to by member states of the African Union, as an African self-monitoring mechanism, by encouraging participating states to ensure that their policies and practices conform to agreed political, economic and corporate governance values.

The link between the APRM and good governance is also evident in ‘Senseless coups have made Africa poor’ – *Accra Daily Mail (ADM)*, where an official in charge of the APRM is quoted as saying that, “NEPAD and the APRM seek to ensure democracy…through prevention and reduction in conflict…corruption…they also seek to promote socio-economic development…governance and management”. In ‘$3.2 Bn needed for APRM reforms’ again in the *ADM*, the journalist attributes the following to the minister in charge of NEPAD:

He said the administration’s decision to accede to the APRM has yielded positive results for the country. “It has demonstrated a great deal of respect for good governance on the part of the administration. It is one of the reasons Ghana was selected to access the Millennium Challenge Account, NEPAD school-feeding programme, NEPAD e-school programme to bring technology to senior secondary schools in Africa,” he said.

As was pointed out in chapter 5, the APRM is expected to be used by intra-African and international donors and investors to inform their ‘selection’ as to which countries can get to benefit from specific NEPAD projects. Similar tones of reference concerning the APRM and NEPAD as an initiative for liberal democracy and economic growth – in this case – were noted in the *NT* story titled ‘Nepad team satisfied with APRM progress’ in which an unnamed NEPAD delegate from Mali relates Rwanda’s participation in the reviews to its having “leapfrogged in development and good governance”. With regard to the APRM, the logic here as is presented in the aforementioned NEPAD content, is that democracy will improve the opportunities for economic development in Africa never mind that the reviews are voluntary and that not all African countries are participating in them.

Other topics included Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to which *BD* in a story titled ‘India, Nepad in talks over satellite network’ argues that such initiatives, including NEPAD’s e-schools project, have “considerable potential to deliver education and heath care to
rural and resource-poor areas with the advantage of offering large cost and time savings”. In another story in *TN*, titled ‘Schools Internet team picked’ the author writes, “The ministries of Education, Finance, Health, Information and Communication and Planning were supporting Nepad’s e-initiative to help fight poverty, Prof Mutahi added”. In both instances and in related stories with references to technological innovations, sources and journalists implicitly frame ICT’s as a solution to problems and as being important to attaining development. In the first story, India is also seen as providing technology for Africa to progress towards development. Other topics that received less attention include Corruption, Gender, African nationalism and/or pan-Africanism, Economic issues, Agriculture and Unification.

In one particular case, the story titled ‘Senseless coups have made Africa poor’ in the *ADM*, was categorised as comprising more than one main topic. The text portrays a predominantly summary lead in as far as it actively positions the 5 W’s and 1 H features within the first two sentences of the story. Consider the following:

1. The Executive Secretary of the National Africa Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council, Dr Francis Appiah, has said that despite Africa’s endowment with natural resources, internal factors such as “senseless coups, wars and conflicts,” have made the continent poor.
2. Speaking at an African Peer Review Mechanism and National Development Planning Commission workshop on the relevance of the APRM to the GPRS II document last week, Dr Appiah said that Africa would have been better-off today if it had not passed through the hands of dictators who muzzled the press and ensured a “culture of silence” coupled with corruption, maladministration and abuse of human rights.

In this news text, the lead sentences deploy direct quotes and they set the scene for the rest of the story by providing some background information about the topic at hand. In this study, these storytelling techniques are often associated with narrative lead and feature type stories. However, for the next three sentences or paragraphs, this event-oriented and predominantly hard news story goes on to prioritise and rely mainly on the voice of the APRM official. The story proceeds by focusing solely on what was said through a series of ‘factual’ quotes and ‘statistical’ figures concerning the historical factors that have made Africa poor. In paragraphs 6 to 9 the source goes on to suggest NEPAD and the APRM as a potential solution to Africa’s problems. In the last two paragraphs (10 to 11), the second official source in the story spells out how Ghana is going to start its World Bank-influenced and agricultural-based ‘Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2’.

The link between these last two paragraphs and the rest of the story is not particularly clear. This story reads as if it is about NEPAD, the APRM, poverty and economic development, agriculture, other priority sectors and or even as being about peace and security. It is in this sense, that the story was analysed as having more than one main topic to do with NEPAD.

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Overall, although some topics such as ‘poverty’ and ‘peace and security’ did not receive that much attention, they tended to appear as the sub-topics around which the central topical themes were framed – this was also evident with regard to the ways in which sources drew on pan-Africanist discourse. Based on the aforementioned, we can say that the bulk of the coverage focused on a narrow range of topics. Issues to do with labour and unions, the millennium development goals (MDGs), trade agreements and HIV/AIDS received little attention. In fact, even within the focus on the peer reviews, emphasis is limited to issues of political governance with little or no focus on corporate and economic governance, which are equally important aspects of the review process. The main topics are presented as a coherent message that is clearly situated within the dominant neo-liberal NEPAD discourse.

7.2.2 Focus: events, issues or both

With regard to the focus of the stories, half of the reportage was made up of predominantly event-centred texts, that is, descriptive content that focused on what was said at an event. These events included meetings, press conferences, media sensitisation workshops, report launches and APRM country support sessions. The emphasis was often on recent events, immediate past events from the day before or events in the immediate future (see the underlined statements below). Consider the following examples:

From *TN*,

‘Police block Nepad members from office’:

1. Local members of the African Union’s overseer group, Nepad, were for the second day denied access to their offices yesterday, threatening the success of appraisal of Kenya’s economy and governance.
2. Ms Grace Akumu who heads the 33-member Kenya Chapter…told reporters that police sealed off their secretariat….in the morning.
3-4. She said police also locked the…APRM team out of the secretariat on Wednesday “for questioning the use of funds for the process.” Ms Akumu, who addressed the press outside the building.

From *ADM*,

‘Women call for equal opportunity’:

1-2. Gender activists have called on governments in the West Africa Sub-region to increase the number of women in ministerial and management positions. Speaking at a sensitisation workshop organised by the Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD…women said male dominance in every sphere of society in the sub-region has marginalised women for far too long.

In *TD*,

‘Envoy, SGF laud FG’s efforts’:

1. Leader of African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) team to Nigeria, Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat, yesterday commended President Olusegun Obasanjo's efforts in the fight against corruption…

And also in *BD*,

‘Business ethics in Africa on the table’:

1-2. The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (Nepad) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are to try this week to come up with new ideas on how multinational corporations and
governments can promote ethical business practices in countries where there is pervasive corruption and weak governance. One of the aims of a conference to be held in Addis Ababa this week …

The above event-centred stories (the last one being a commentary), many of which have summary leads tended to report on the latest developments and the immediate past and were more often than not analysed here as predominantly neutral stories that were based on what was said by one or two sources (see section 7.3). This also serves to remind us here that journalistic writing and reporting is a practical activity that is based on daily routines such as meeting deadlines which often direct journalistic work towards immediate past events and not so much towards writing about processes and issues which often require a lot more time, resources and research (see Shim 2002; Aggarwala 1980). On the other hand, this could also be due to NEPAD’s own mode of deployment. As a multi-pronged transnational initiative, NEPAD finds expression through its events and project launches across various countries. Therefore, events are important to NEPAD. However, it should be remembered that it is the daily-lived experiences and processes that drive issues of development and democracy (see Adam 1993). Events are the sub total of processes and this might explain the focus on events in the NEPAD media discourse. In addition, NEPAD’s broad framework, aims, goals and institutional-organisational structure cuts across already existing sub-regional economic communities thereby making it a big and at times complex and multifaceted topic that challenges journalists to unpack it. Bearing these issues in mind, news coverage on NEPAD was, for the most part, event-centred with This Day, Accra Daily Mail, and The Nation standing out in particular on this issue. However, there are also ten stories that were analysed as being centred on both issues and events and these were for the most part found in The New Times and The Sunday Times. Examples include: ‘Peer review won’t bring Mugabe to heel’ – in the ST, which is based on a ‘recent interview’, whilst also dealing with issues arising out of information gathered during a series of events (procedural issues) concerning a weeklong APRM visit. ‘Nepad earmarks women’s emancipation’ – in the New Times, deals with an event in the shape of an ‘exclusive interview’ and issues from a report. ‘African fish industry ‘in crisis’ – Accra Daily Mail, deals with two events (a fish summit), and an interview and two documents.

The five stories that dealt predominantly with issues as distinct from events were found in Business Day and again in The Sunday Times. Interestingly, stories that relied on both events and issues and those focused on ‘issues’ are the same stories that were more often than not in-depth or delivered with a narrative lead. These are the stories that provided a plethora of voices and entry angles into the story. They were also more likely to present debates about NEPAD whilst also making room for commentary (see 7.2.3 below). These included lengthy stories such as ‘New helmsman aims to propel Nepad into action’ and ‘Ideological tug-of-war starts over SA’s first
peer review process’ which appeared in *ST* and *BD* respectively, whereby attempts are made to provide analysis concerning NEPAD’s pros and cons. However, this does not mean that all issues-based stories were analytic, informative and that they had narrative leads. As we shall soon see, there are event-oriented stories with summary leads that are presented as features. What the findings suggest at this stage is that there are few issues based and in-depth type efforts concerning the processes behind NEPAD in the selected newspaper content.

### 7.2.3 Format

In terms of the lead orientation of the content, on analysing the news texts it became evident that the summary lead was the preferred mode of delivery for the journalists reporting on NEPAD. It is in this regard that most stories are considered here to be relying on the inverted pyramid style in as far as the ‘what’, ‘where’, ‘when’, ‘why’, ‘who’ and ‘how’ were deployed early on in the construction of the stories. There were some variations when one or two aspects of the 5W’s and 1H could not specifically be located at the lead end of the story. However, even in such instances the stories were read as being fashioned on a predominantly summary lead. Summary lead stories are also the same stories that were more likely to portray a hard news-event type orientation. By contrast, the number of stories (7) with narrative leads – which are often associated with social responsibility-oriented journalism – was comparatively much lower than that for summary leads. Narrative lead stories tended to deploy the storytelling techniques of setting scenes and developing characters by relying on dialogue, and even personal points of view. Consider the following:

From the *ST*,

‘New helmsman aims to propel Nepad into action’

*My No 1 task is implementation, implementation and implementation*’

1. *He thinks Leon Schuster’s Mr Bones is the funniest thing on film* and a good book is a sci-fi novel that features space farming in 2150.
2. *His idea of a good time* is an all-day family beach picnic with dancing to music he created himself, or by his locally famous cousin, Jose.
3. Professor Firmino Mucavele, chief executive since August 1 of the Midrand-based New Partnership for Africa’s Development, is a man who likes to get out, to celebrate people, and to have fun.
4. Right now, though, he is just a little bit worried about bringing his family across from Maputo to Johannesburg, a city whose welcoming heart he has yet to find.
5. “On a typical Sunday in Mozambique we go out. Maputo is expensive for you, maybe, but we have places we know that are not so expensive.”

From the *NT*,

‘Nepad team satisfied with APRM progress’

1. The fourteen-man team of experts from the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) have lauded Rwanda's initiative in fostering good governance and other developmental activities in the country.
2. According to information available, the team happily noted that since Rwanda acceded to the APRM process, the country had registered tremendous development, particularly in the areas of good governance. These areas cited include governance, unity and reconciliation, Gacaca jurisdictions and economic recovery among others.
3. The high-level team led by Cameroonian Professor Dorothy Ngeuma…
From BD,

‘Top Nepad job for Mozambique’s Mucavele’

1. Leading Mozambican agricultural economist Firmino Mucavele has been appointed CE of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (Nepad) secretariat.
2. The appointment comes nearly a year after Wiseman Nkuhlu, who has also acted as President Thabo Mbeki’s economic adviser, said he wanted to step down from the post to move into the private sector.
3. Mucavele, who has a distinguished academic record, is an adviser to Mozambican President Armando Guebuza.
4. He has had a close relationship with Nepad since the release of the founding document in October 2001. Mucavele was part of a team that helped develop...

On reading these entries, it is evident that rather than sticking to the ‘inverted pyramid’ style, the writers of the stories adopted a sequential and anecdotal approach to writing the intros, aspects that are in this case associated with narrative leads. By their nature, such leads tend to subordinate ideas – such as those associated with facts and statistics – to drama, issues, personalities, conflicts and commentary. As can be noted in these examples, one could posit that such leads are deployed when the writer is telling the story through action, dialogue, and colourful language that is often used to construct beginnings, middles and endings, and plots.

Story type analysis – see the next sub-section – presents another tendency worthy of consideration among reports that were written with predominantly summary or narrative leads respectively. Stories with narrative leads were for the most part features and commentaries that dealt with and referred to issues or ‘both’ issues and events. As cautioned before, this does not mean that there are no feature type stories with summary leads and an event-orientation. An example is: ‘Schools Internet team picked’ – TN. The story describes an event at which experts in charge of Kenya’s e-schools project were introduced to the public. The writer also provides some background information about the initiative. Another example is: ‘African fish industry ‘in crisis” – ADM. The story is centred on two events, an interview and two documents through which the benefits of fishing to development are highlighted. In another story titled, ‘India, Nepad in talks over satellite network’ – BD, the author refers to an event at which the Indian government and NEPAD proposed the set-up of an ICT education network between Africa and India. The author of the story links this to the e-schools NEPAD initiative. Other stories with summary leads with reference to events which are actually features include ‘Nigeria signs MOU to roll out Africa peer review mechanism process’ – TD and ‘Nepad experts here’ – NT (see section 7.3).

7.2.4 Story type

Of the 30 stories that were selected for analysis, 15 were coded and analysed as portraying a hard news story orientation, whilst 13 and 2 were analysed as predominantly features and predominantly commentaries respectively. No entry was categorised as an ‘interview’ in the
‘question and answer’ format. The two commentaries included ‘Business ethics in Africa on the table’ and ‘Top Nepad job for Mozambique’s Mucavele’ both of which appeared in Business Day. In the former, Jonathan Katzenellenbogen draws on liberal democracy discourse to opine positively on the relevance of an upcoming conference organised by NEPAD and other global institutions with regard to the set up of “frameworks for good behaviour by multinationals in Africa, in the hope [that] this will improve the investment climate on the continent”. Whilst the commentary highlights the issue of multinationals that violate business ethics in Africa, the key issue here is the progressive link between governance (democracy) and investment (development). In the latter story, we are presented with a profile of the new head of NEPAD, his credentials and experiences. However, halfway through the piece, the author comments about some of the challenges faced by NEPAD. There is a sense in which his views connote the idea that there has been competition for the ‘top Nepad job’ and that the AU and NEPAD have been at loggerheads on this and possibly other issues. Consider the following:

8. The long wait for the post could indicate the political sensitivity among African heads of state over the appointment.
9. Nhukulu – who has been the Midrand-based secretariat’s CE since the launch of Nepad -- will remain on the steering committee.
10. Mucavele’s appointment comes at a time of mounting impatience with the Nepad secretariat over the slow implementation of cross-border projects.
11. He will also have the task of speeding up Nepad’s peer review programme, which still has to make public its initial batch of country reports.
12. In addition, Mucavele will have the politically difficult task of managing the secretariat’s relationship with the AU. Public servants in the AU tend to view Nepad as a programme of the AU, but Nepad staff insist that it is a programme of African heads of state.

Similar to the ST story about NEPAD being ‘propelled into action’ and as was also discussed in chapter 5, the concern here is to do with the slow implementation of NEPAD projects.

With regard to predominantly feature stories, many of them were in varying degrees informative, analytic and interpretive accounts that had more than one voice in the story at times even including the journalists’ own viewpoints. Thus, they were not straight-forward short descriptive news stories that focused solely on what was said by official sources in the ‘he or she said’ format. Such reports included: ‘Graft has gone up, say Kenyans’ – the story which appears in The Nation is about the findings of an APRM self-assessment report concerning corruption in Kenya. It is based on the views of government, academic or expert and NEPAD sources and yet it brings forth the views of ‘the people’ and ‘civil society’ with the aid of a survey report and a press statement respectively. Centred on events and issues, this lengthy story also has a summary lead. The story moves beyond the debate as to whether corruption is up or down, to include a key issue that is at the core of the APRM and that is the contestation between civil society and governments about the transparency of the peer-review self-assessment. This contestation is brought to light in another
predominantly feature *BD* story titled ‘Ideological tug-of-war starts over SA’s first peer review process’. Consider the following paragraphs that taken from the report:

1. If Government ever thought that SA’s peer review process would be an uncontested affair, it was probably wrong.
2. The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NePAD) exercise calls on countries to examine their economic and political systems, corporate governance and socioeconomic development.
3. SA’s self-assessment is emerging as a potential battlefield between government and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), and between NGOs themselves.
4. Government has made 10 of the 15 seats available on a panel overseeing the peer review to civil society groups, but there is still unhappiness about control of the process and ideological differences between the bodies involved.
5. Some NGO activists say people appointed to the peer review’s governing council will take their cue from government.
6-7. So far 25 African countries have voluntarily signed up for a review. It begins with a self-assessment by a country and ends with a review by African heads of state who have signed up for the exercise.
8. Most NGOs are critical of government’s macroeconomic policy, its failure to make inroads into poverty, its trade liberalisation policy, its AIDS treatment programme, and its quiet diplomacy toward Zimbabwe.
9. All these issues could emerge as hotly contested areas when the assessment report is written.
10. The mutual suspicion and the fraught relationship between government and NGOs was apparent when President Thabo Mbeki questioned at the launch of the peer review process whether these organisations could be truly African if foreign funders set their priorities.
11. The latest tussle between government and NGOs is over the extent to which government can control the writing of SA’s final report.
12…15…
16. Civil society organisations will be pressing at tomorrow’s council meeting to ensure that they have influence over the management of the process, as well as the editing and writing of the report.
17. Zanele Twala, executive director of the South African NGO coalition, which represents thousands of civil society bodies, says she is worried about the structure guiding the review.
18. A number of NGOs believe government currently controls the secretariat and the editing of the report. “We can’t have it all in government,” Twala insists. If there is not adequate civil society representation on the secretariat, she says, “we would be just rubber-stamping the thing”.
19…20. Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, who chairs SA’s peer review governing council, has signalled that civil society will be allowed a role.
21. Speaking earlier this week she said, “government would not cook alone” and that “different spices” would “make an interesting product”.
22-23. They are also suspicious that government may use mass participation in the peer review as a means to campaign for elections.

While this story portrays a sceptical investigative narrative in which NEPAD (more specifically the APRM as the topic) is presented in terms of conflict and oppositional groups – for instance with regard to sources, news actors and voices in the story – patterns that are linked a watchdog orientation, this story is for the most part analysed as portraying social agenda aspects. The language in the story draws on war and military discourse. There is talk of ‘a tug-of-war’ that has started, ‘uncontested’ affairs, ‘hotly contested’ issues, battlefields, tussles, struggles for the ‘control of processes’, ideological differences, ‘unhappiness’, mutual suspicion and fraught relationships. However, the story does not expose wrongdoing or the abuse of power as such, but rather, it provides background to the processes and power struggles concerning the APRM in South Africa all the while citing some of the social and political problems and tensions that surround it, particularly the issue of representation, participation and inclusiveness. The central theme of the story is to do with debates concerning the control of the APRM process. It is in this
regard that NEPAD and the APRM are presented as a contested claim. The significant sources in the story are either implicitly proposing or opposing the roles being played by civil society and government. The specific identity constructions in this story are explored section 7.4 below. This informative, analytic and in-depth story provides background and personal author opinions well into paragraphs 10 to 15. The report deals with issues and events (those in the past and the future), has a narrative type lead, and a diversity of voices including the author’s own all of which is in this study associated with the social responsibility perspective, which is a key influence on social agenda journalism. Remember that a key rationale for such stories is the advocacy and educational functions of journalism for the purposes of public enlightenment concerning NEPAD.

In ‘New helmsman aims to propel Nepad into action’ – in the ST – the author comments and draws on a diversity of sources and voices: donors, civil society, governments, presidents and experts. This is a profile of the new head of NEPAD, but this informative feature also provides historical background information and it also highlights some of the debates concerning the success of NEPAD. The author writes that:

9. For him, the challenge will be to reinvigorate the Nepad ideal of a pan-African programme for development premised on improved co-operation, better governance and a renewed commitment to people ahead of politics.
10. The initiative — widely credited to South African President Thabo Mbeki — has captured the imaginations of richer nations desperate to help Africa reverse the spiral of decline that makes it the only continent to have grown poorer over the past 20 years.
11. Stirred by British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s Commission for Africa, the leaders of the G8 highly industrialised nations promised after their Gleneagles summit in July to double assistance to Africa to $50-billion a year by the end of the decade.
12. Nepad, they said, would be a preferred vehicle for effective development partnerships.
13. But, after a flying start, Nepad is bogging down in the bureaucracy of development theory. Mbeki’s catchy promise of an African renaissance is ringing a little hollow as planners wrestle with trans-regional initiatives derailed by conflict or lingering anti-democratic autocrats.
14. Donors seeking partnerships want to know that they are buying growth and not just adding to unsustainable debt.
15. Unfairly perhaps, Zimbabwe looms over everything Nepad does. The political destruction of a successful economy belies the best efforts of planners and presidents trying to secure a place in a globalised world.
16. “The problem in Zimbabwe is giving a bad image to what we are doing, but it is not holding us back. Cyprus gives Europe a bad image, but it does not hold them back. For us, it is the same,” Mucavele said.
17. His response is to try to draw Zimbabwe into the African Peer Review Mechanism, something he says he is already actively promoting. So far, Zimbabwe’s President Robert Mugabe has shunned the peer review, which encourages self-critical analysis of successful and failing policies, inviting partners to comment on performance.
18. Only four years old, Nepad is seeking to reverse declines rooted in centuries of colonial abuse and domestic mismanagement, says Mucavele. That will take time.
19. “We have changed the paradigm of development from passive to active participation in a more African process of development,” he says.
20. Going forward, Nepad’s success should be assessed less by favoured Western measures and more by the health of Africa’s nations.

The story is made up of 35 paragraphs, and I elaborate here because it brings out many elements that are part of the NEPAD discourse: liberal democracy and development, Africanness (‘us’ - ‘we’ as in the words in bold), partnerships, globalisation, the post-colonial quest for a participatory African development initiative and the sentiment that NEPAD is indeed a ‘new’
initiative that aims to ‘reverse’ the old. But, it also provides us with a rare example of a story that highlights – particularly in the comments of the author – some of the criticisms concerning NEPAD, the ‘destruction’ of a formerly ‘successful’ Zimbabwe, lingering conflicts, anti-democratic autocrats, bureaucracy, the voluntary nature of the APRM, NEPAD’s reliance on donor funds and more broadly the continued (re)construction of development parameters in the post-colony. However, there is a sense in which the cited source in particular presents counter arguments to some of these concerns. Consider the way in which he resists and reverses the criticism concerning Zimbabwe to expose the hypocrisy of those who stereotype, collectivise and ignore the multiplicity of agency and identity in Africa when ‘bad’ conditions in one country are generalised to the entire continent and yet the same standards are not applied when it comes to Europe. In addition, although NEPAD is proclaimed here as an ‘active…African process of development’ in contrast to it being a ‘passive’ modernisation economic growth model as is argued by the critics of NEPAD, we are not told how it is active other than through the APRM self-assessments. It is pertinent to note that the articulation of these criticisms concerning NEPAD and the related counter-discourses is not the result of a cumulative change in the tone of the article in question (and the reportage in general), rather, the views are presented at some stage of this story which is mainly about the new head of NEPAD. In general, few stories attempt to question the viability and desirability of NEPAD from outside of its own discourse. In fact, as in the case of the aforementioned story, these concerns are embedded within larger topics in which the criticisms are a smaller aspect of the story rather than the central topic.

Other features include: ‘Peer review won’t bring Mugabe to heel’ and ‘Skewed SA peer review feared’ both from the ST, ‘Nepad experts here’, ‘Nepad team lauds Kagame’ and ‘Nepad team satisfied with APRM progress’ in the NT. Some of these reports include documents, academic or expert and civil society sources and they bear traces of the active involvement of the journalist through his or her own voice. Note that there were also a few hard news stories with more than one source. There were also some hard news stories with traces of commentary and analysis. However, they were analysed here as portraying a libertarian, predominantly hard news orientation because in this study such stories are associated with stories that are either quick to read, or those that are predominantly event-centred with a narrow range of sources. These included, ‘Police block Nepad members from their office’ – TN, a predominantly summary lead story that is slanted to the views of one source who decries the interference of government and the authoritarianism of the police in the APRM. Another one is ‘Comic book guide to assist SA peer
review’ in BD, and ‘Nepad earmarks women’s emancipation’ in the NT, a story that deals with an event, an ‘exclusive interview’ and issues information from a report (see also section 7.3).

7.2.5 Sources

Content and thematic discourses confirm and illustrate the ways in which official sources and voices dominated the reportage. The selected coverage of NEPAD used significantly more official NEPAD sources – holders of a NEPAD or APRM post or office or those that spoke as such officials – than any other source category. This accounted for 24 references in the reportage. However, since these are stories about NEPAD, this is in itself not entirely surprising. They were closely followed by government sources – 17 references – as the second most visible source category to which journalists resorted for their reportage on NEPAD. Official sources were followed by the academic or expert sources and civil society or activists. Lastly, we also had a few documents – press releases and reports. On occasion, as in the cases of the commentaries, the journalists did not clearly mention the sources of their citations, references, or comments and these are stories that were read as containing ‘Other’ – unknown – sources, although in the case of the commentaries, this stands for the voice of the journalist. However, even in some of the stories that had clearly identifiable sources it was not always obvious as to where the journalist was getting the primary information from that he or she was referring to, particularly in those articles with traces of commentary in what were categorised here as predominantly hard news type stories. Such cases include ‘Nepad study on leadership begins on Tuesday’ in TN, ‘MPs want a role in review, but Nepad man balks’ in ST, ‘Cabinet appoints Nepad advisor’ in NT and ‘Comic-book guide to assist SA peer review’ in BD (also see section 7.3). In such cases, I avoided drawing any inferential conclusion, which might damage the reliability of the analysis, by sticking to the main sources that are referred to in the article. In doing this, what I also did was to identify and make note of the potential voice/s that were being inferred by the journalist in such cases. Overall, news sources from within the business sector occupied the lowest position.

In thinking about sources, I would like to reiterate two things. The first is that powerful official sources are, more often than not, the dominant sources in the production of news (see Sigal 1973; Hall et al 1978). This is in line with the findings of this analysis particularly with regard to the prominence of NEPAD, and government sources. As Gans (1979:81) reminds us, “the economically and politically powerful can obtain easy access to, and are sought out by, journalists; those who lack power are harder to reach by journalists and are generally not sought out until their activities produce social or moral disorder news”. Secondly, drawing on Gramsci
(2000), one could argue that those sources with access to the journalists are likely to advance their self-interests, thereby participating in the construction and maintenance of hegemonic NEPAD discourse. Some predominantly hard news stories in particular, are solely based on what was said – ‘facts’ – by one official source from NEPAD or government. In such stories, both sets of official sources can be found to be explaining, proposing and advocating NEPAD. Speaking about the APRM in *TN*, Kenya’s minister for NEPAD says that, “It will target various households and will collect details on economic expenditure, growth and poverty reduction strategies. It will then be compiled”. In Nigeria’s *TD*, Ghana’s Ambassador to Nigeria is quoted as saying that, “We believe these processes, as home grown processes, will impel us forward into true nation states, joining the rest of the world for human progress”. Speaking about the technicalities concerning NEPAD and its mechanisms in Ghana’s *ADM*, the minister for NEPAD who is quoted at length in a story concerning the cost of the APRM, defends the role of government in the reviews by arguing that it is not in their interests to manipulate the APRM. He goes on to add that such a thing would defeat the purpose of the whole process. He is cited as saying that, “If we work hard to uncover our weaknesses then we would do well to address them. To come out with a true picture of what is on the ground, the government then set up an independent APRM Council to oversee the process”. The author also writes that, “he dismissed scepticism that the mechanism would not work”. In addition, we are later on told that:

Unlike previous programmes that were imposed on us by donor countries, Africans initiated NEPAD/APRM. He said: “NEPAD is a partnership for mutual accountability and respect. The old type of relationship that is master-servant relationship, giver-and-taker should be put aside. That does not mean we would not depend on donor support. We would continue to work with them, but it is not a donor conditionality.”

Based on the insights that were raised in chapter 5, we can posit here that the source is drawing on the discourse of partnerships, pan-Africanism, globalisation and more narrowly NEPAD. NEPAD is in this case presented as a ‘new’ initiative by ‘Africans’ that aims to invert the ‘old’ relationships between Africa and the ‘donors’ that were informed by processes of subjugation and yet it is also still dependent on ‘donor support’ which is in itself influenced by relations of power. However, in some instances predominantly hard news stories that are reliant on one official government can also be seen to be reacting to civil society criticisms about the ‘dominance’ of governments in the APRM processes. This is the case with regard to the *ST* stories with the minister in charge of the reviews saying in one of the stories that ‘Government would not cook alone’ in reaction to the criticism.

Generally, official sources – presidents, prime ministers and NEPAD officials – emerge as the protagonists in most stories (hard news or features) items, followed by the supporting actors of
civil society and experts. In This Day’s ‘Nigeria signs MOU to roll out Africa peer review mechanism process’ the head of the regional APRM mission in Nigeria commends the country on its ongoing reforms advising that it share its experiences with rest of the continent (also see 7.4). In Rwanda’s New Times, the regional head of the mission concludes the review by saying that: “Mr. President, we are happy that your country, Rwanda, sets the paradigm of good governance in Africa. We are happy with our two-week assessment and have noted the commitment shown by the entire population in adherence to the pillars of good governance”. In reaction to this, the president encourages other countries to join the APRM, as it is “the only way to foster democracy and development”. In the Sunday Times, South Africa’s president is quoted as saying that: “It is essential that the people themselves should own this programme of action and work to implement it, so that they do indeed continue to act as their own liberators, determined to decide their future”. In an Accra Daily Mail story, a NEPAD source refers to NEPAD as “an African initiative aimed at promoting growth and alleviating poverty” through which “a majority of African countries have the potential to move into a middle-income status in the nearest possible time”. “NEPAD is a concrete development framework that adopts a programme of action for victory for growth and defeat of poverty”, he argues. The author then writes that:

He added that among the strategies tabled for increase in growth and poverty reduction are reforms in the economic sector that would “make Africa competitive based on sound and prudent economic management and government.” Dr Appiah said NEPAD and the APRM seek to ensure democracy and good political governance through prevention and reduction in conflict, effectiveness and accountability of the public service and combating corruption. He said they also seek to promote socio-economic development, corporate governance and economic governance and management... He said... “So when we are taking measures to move away from that state it is ridiculous for our critics (not) to look down on the real facts”.

Briefly, you will have noticed by now that in most of the accounts presented so far, the connotation is that NEPAD and its mechanisms are equivalent to economic growth and progress. In addition, they are seen as a modernising initiative through which post-colonial countries (in the ‘South’) can transform into “true nation states” like the successful high-income countries in the ‘North’. In the race to become like the donor countries, NEPAD is presented as the initiative that will enable the post-colony to leapfrog towards the final stage of development in the “nearest time possible” through trade, aid, less state intervention, investment and technology. In a sense, the ‘North’ is portrayed as the best and final stage of development that is to be emulated by the post-colony. In fact, even when the binaries of “master-servant” or “giver-and-taker” are resisted and replaced by “mutual accountability and respect”, power relations can still be (re)distributed onto this assumed level playing field (see Foucault 1978). In addition, the continued reliance on “donor support” also leaves room for the ‘North’ to carry on being represented as the helper and the ‘South’ as being in need of assistance. This modernisation, stagist and economistic-oriented notion of development which positions Africa at the low end of the hierarchy of development is
nevertheless still infused by an ideology that sees NEPAD as an African-centred (re)definition of development. As is highlighted in chapter 5, herein lies one of the potential tensions of NEPAD concerning its Africanity and modernisation and yet – as ‘hybridity’ and Achebe (1988) remind us – these two do not necessarily have to be in contradiction with each other, they can be negotiated and appropriated to meet the needs of the post-colony.

Despite the aforementioned concerning official sources, note that they do not all speak as the political exponents that convey NEPAD-related messages at events. In some predominantly feature type stories with a diversity of sources, besides simply advocating and explaining NEPAD, some of the official sources can be found to be contesting the role of governments in the APRM as in a story in TN, or even playing the role of mediators between government and civil society as in the ST story. In the former, as one ministry official denied that corruption had risen another said, “Many of those implicated in graft are still free and the government has to try hard to bring them to book” as part of the APRM exercise. In the latter, the head of the country survey mission to South Africa is often cited as affirming the view that government should not overstep their mark in the APRM as in the headline ‘MPs want a role in review, but Nepad man balks’.

Civil society and academic or expert sources come across as groups – especially the former – that are disappointed in and sceptical about aspects of NEPAD. This was noted in the social responsibility-oriented predominantly feature type stories that had a diversity of sources. In Kenya’s TN, a former local APRM national governing council chairperson now speaking on behalf of civil society cautions that: “The minister should be prevailed upon from delivering a flawed APRM Kenya Report”. In South Africa’s ST, a representative of civil society argued that: “Parliament’s insistence on a separate process would fuel perceptions that the government was trying to control the review”. Concerning the latter, an expert with a public accountability organisation is quoted as saying: “To my mind civil society was blind-sided by the Department of Public Service and Administration in this process.” Academic or expert sources more often than not also came across as advisors and consultants on issues of development and democracy. In the ST, an expert advises the new head of NEPAD to “raise his profile and that of the organisation”. “Nepad does not need him to boldly innovate, it needs him to consolidate. He must reassert the Nepad brand and cultivate the media. He needs to make Nepad accessible,” we are told. Note that, there are some predominantly feature type stories that did not have a diversity of sources (see 7.3 below).
Overall, the official sources – NEPAD and government – usurped newsroom resources, leaving very little room for subjects and interpretations outside the formal framework of regional and political institutions. They propose economic growth, modernisation through ICT’s (leapfrogging) with the ‘West’ or ‘donors’ or the ‘North’ being seen as the final stage of development. With the exception of a few voices – including those of the journalists – in *The Nation*, *The Sunday Times* and *Business Day*, NEPAD is not seriously critiqued in the same way as is done by its critics. In addition, the sources tend to blend its neo-liberal strand with pan-Africanism, a characteristic that was also raised in chapter 5. Voices that are silenced include independent sources that are for or against NEPAD, the people who must live with the consequences of NEPAD and radical civil society. The civil society and expert voices that are included are part of the mainstream. They are seen as being legitimate – in so far as they work with government on NEPAD – in that although they may counter aspects of NEPAD, they also work within the realm of the dominant hegemonic neo-liberal discourse of NEPAD given that it is rarely opposed in terms of its basis. Hence, they might actually be reinforcing it.

Remember that journalists tend to prefer official sources because of the routine nature of their work in so far as it is driven by deadlines, meaning that they often find themselves relying on official sources that are easy to contact and yet also regarded as informed, credible and legitimate (also see Molotch and Lester 1997). In fact, as can be noted from the above analyses, some of the stories had little intrinsic newsworthiness in that they simply provided a platform for government officials as politicians – and national NEPAD officials some of whom are politicians – to project their images and messages. It is also in this regard that most stories emerge as pseudo-news or reports of pseudo-events orchestrated by institutions and governments’ agencies where speeches are delivered and then handed out to journalists for re-writing as stories. Hence, one could posit that it was mostly when authoritative-official sources created a news event that served as a news peg for journalists, that NEPAD became newsworthy. In fact, it can be stated that journalists spoke more often with official sources than they did with those directly affected by NEPAD. Consequently, as is elaborated on in the next section, the content of the messages is less balanced and diverse than its elements and features might suggest. What kind of picture does the news coverage on NEPAD impress upon us in terms of the journalistic sub-identities? It is to this that I now turn.

**7.3 News content and the journalistic sub-identities**
Based on the aforementioned descriptions we can posit that the reportage tends mostly towards libertarian journalism of neutral reporting. On the other hand, on reading the qualitative analyses it is also evident that the picture arising is not as straightforward as that, and that it is more ‘mixed’ than definite. In fact, the issue here is not so much whether the reportage is libertarian or socially responsible as such. This is because, the findings already show that unlike the shared values, beliefs and occupational ideology concerning journalists as ‘objective’, ‘balanced’ and ‘ethical’ transmitters of news, the analysis signals that journalists’ routines often prioritise the selection of certain sources, topics and events over issues. For instance, NEPAD and government voices dominate the reportage – meaning that the selection of who gets quoted is not necessarily always based on the balanced treatment of competing interests leading to “equal or proportionate time/space/emphasis” with regard to sources in the content (McQuail 1987:131). However, this should not be taken to suggest that there are no key differences in the content given that journalists’ reliance on official sources, for instance, was not evident or dominant in all publications, as in the case of the *Sunday Times*, which has few references to government sources. On the other hand, even though social responsibility-oriented stories showed signs of diversifying their views, they also broadly reflected NEPAD within a narrowly constructed frame of reference. The point here is that although we can track certain features and themes (discourses) in the reportage as tending towards libertarian or socially responsible journalistic sub-identities, the mutual exclusivity between these is not always distinct. The reportage tends to show a ‘mixture’ of identities along the neutral-development continuum.

7.3.1 Libertarian sub-identities: neutral messengers and watchdogs
To start with, predominantly neutral-oriented stories are in this thesis operationalised as straightforward, quick to read, hard news stories that were centred mainly on events and with little personal opinion from the author (McQuail 1987). These are the stories that were delivered with predominantly summary leads and with content that was based on a narrow range of one or two sources. They include:
‘Families to write Narc report’ – *The Nation*
‘Nepad study on leadership begins on Tuesday’ – *The Nation*
‘Minister urges border operators to work harder’ – *The Accra Daily Mail*
‘Nigeria signs MOU to roll out Africa peer review mechanism process’ – *This Day*
‘Envoy, SGF laud FG’s efforts’ – *This Day*
‘Nepad peer review group visits Nigeria’ – *This Day*
There are also some stories that are analysed here as predominantly neutral, but with some elements and presentation styles that can be associated with socially responsible – social agenda and development – journalism. These include:

‘Graft has gone up, say Kenyans’– The Nation, a feature length story with three separate source categories, but which mainly sticks to what was said with little background and analytical information which could portray a social agenda narrative of enlightening the public.

‘Schools Internet team picked’– The Nation, is also a feature type story that deals with an ICT project with the official sources being paraphrased in the ‘s/he said…s/he said’ format as they express the commitment of government to the e-schools project.

Others are predominantly neutral hard news stories with a development orientation as in ‘$3.2 Bn needed for APRM reforms’ – Accra Daily Mail, and ‘Programme for African leaders rooted in Nepad’ – This Day, in so far as they – in varying degrees – invoke participation in a NEPAD-related initiative on the basis of some common Africanness (see section 7.4 below). However, the stories stick to what was said with little interpretation or analysis or background information concerning the projects and NEPAD coming in from the sources or the journalists. ‘Nepad earmarks women’s emancipation’ in The New Times, is a predominantly hard news story – which could pass for a feature in length – with a social agenda orientation, but it is based solely on what was said by one official source in the ‘s/he said’ format without analysis, background and commentary. The same goes for the following story ‘Cabinet appoints Nepad advisor’ in the same publication in so far as it reads more like a personal statement from the official source and yet there are aspects to the story that are informative particularly with regard to Rwanda’s role in NEPAD. To the above I would also add the following predominantly neutral hard news stories, ‘APRM, veritable tool for good governance-envoy’ – This Day and ‘Women call for equal opportunity’ – Accra Daily Mail, where the former can be read as portraying a development identity of promoting NEPAD whilst the latter portrays the social agenda aspects of educating the public.

Lastly, are those stories that are categorised as predominantly neutral and yet they are presented with aspects that portray a watchdog narrative: ‘Police block Nepad members from their offices’ – The Nation, and ‘MPs want a role in review, but Nepad man balks’ – The Sunday Times. Both stories read as sceptical and investigative narratives that pit characters – government, NEPAD and civil society – against each other. These predominantly hard news pieces are presented as stories that are righting the wrong, exposing some wrongdoing and the abuse of power and conflict but
they read more like follow-ups to already ongoing struggles. For instance, with regard to *The Nation* story, which is framed by authoritarian discourse, the author prioritises the voice of one source, a member of the civil society and yet in the story she speaks as an APRM/NEPAD official. The story is neither short nor long, there are no traces of commentary and yet although it is centred on events, issues of conflict and tension are explored with the government and police being portrayed as authoritarian and brutal actors ‘blocking’ democracy. The story is slanted towards the views of one main source – only the last two short paragraphs are attributed to the police source.

What we can say about the above 16 stories is that journalists showed a tendency to report on NEPAD with official sources whilst presenting most of the stories predominantly within the mainstream framework of the neutral sub-identity of libertarian journalism in which the emphasis is on events, summary leads, hard news and the immediate past. However, there are still some texts that are written and presented with traces of socially responsible journalism, meaning that although these stories show a predominantly neutral tendency, at a lesser level they also show a ‘mixture’ of sub-identities that cannot be easily disregarded. With regard to the watchdog sub-identity, although there are follow up stories that adopt an adversarial tone, few come across as investigations of leaks or exposures of some abuse of power that has been going on over time. However, there are traces of instances where one could posit that the source’s responses were in a sense a reaction to some bold hostile questions from the journalists particularly as in the cases of the stories in *The Nation* and *The Sunday Times* in the previous paragraph. As we shall see in the next sub-section, the human interest kind of story that looks behind the ‘facts’ and statistics to give a fuller and deeper sense of NEPAD was not always present in the selected reportage offered by the five newspapers.

7.3.2 Socially responsible journalistic sub-identities: social agenda and development

Some news stories shifted away from a descriptive, event-centred orientation towards an interpretive, analytic, and issues-centred direction. As was presented in section 7.2, most of the stories with narrative leads and a diversity of sources showed an orientation towards socially responsible journalism. They – in varying degrees – had background information and reflective interpretations that are recognised here as holding more educative, intellectual, active and evocative messages that may invoke participation. It is in this regard that the following stories were read here as predominantly social agenda in as far as they portray advocacy and educational responsibilities for the purposes of public enlightenment concerning NEPAD. Such articles
include the commentaries ‘Business ethics in Africa on the table’ and ‘Top Nepad job for Mozambique’s Mucavele’ in Business Day and the following stories:
‘New helmsman aims to propel Nepad into action’ – The Sunday Times
‘Peer review won’t bring Mugabe to heel’ – The Sunday Times
‘Mozambican takes over as Nepad CEO’ – The Sunday Times
‘Skewed SA peer review feared’ – The Sunday Times
‘African fish industry ‘in crisis’ – Accra Daily Mail
‘Nepad team lauds Kagame’ – The New Times
‘Nepad team satisfied with APRM progress’ – The New Times
‘Nepad experts here’ – The New Times

Although the bulk of these stories have at least two or more sources, with the content being centred on issues or ‘both’ issues and events, not all of them are delivered as social agenda stories in exactly the same way. For instance, they do not all have narrative leads, as in the case of the last entry from the NT and neither do they all provide in-depth analysis and interpretation of the issues. Rather, they are categorised here as stories that tend towards a predominantly social agenda orientation.

In addition, there are also some stories that are read as predominantly social agenda, but with a mixture of elements and presentation styles that can be associated with watchdog and development journalism. These stories include: ‘Ideological tug-of-war starts over SA’s first peer review process’ and ‘Comic-book guide to assist SA peer review’ both from Business Day. The latter is a predominantly hard news story in which the author relies exclusively on one government source. The story is about how South Africa is preparing for its APRM self-assessment. It also provides background information to the reviews and the struggle for control of the exercise in South Africa. In parts, it reads like a personal commentary through which the competing voices of civil society, the public and government are introduced. It is in this sense, that this story is also seen as portraying a watchdog sub-identity even though it is predominantly social agenda in orientation. Likewise, in ‘India, Nepad in talks over satellite network’ – BD. This is a feature story categorisable as a predominantly social agenda text and yet it also presents a development identity in so far as it promotes the network and the e-schools initiatives as having the potential to induce development particularly in the rural areas. Whilst this story, which has traces of personal commentary, does not draw on a strong pan-African rhetoric, it still presents Africa and NEPAD as having the potential to be self-sustaining. In fact, the story at some level, advises African countries to participate and take charge of the satellite network.
With regard to the development identity, few stories can be read here as being predominantly
development with the exception of ‘Senseless coups have made Africa poor’ – Accra Daily Mail,
which I explore in detail in the next section on African identity. Remember that in this study,
development stories are often associated with socially responsible journalism elements, with a
strong emphasis on the positive promotion or portrayal of NEPAD as a framework for African
unity and development whilst also evoking at some level, the public’s attention and participation
in it as ‘Africans’. As will have been noticed many of the stories that were analysed in this sub-
section and in 7.2, contain socially responsible journalism elements and they were also often
framed by Africanist development discourse. However, in many of these cases – as is also
explored further below – this discourse was not always the predominant one in the stories. In a
sense, traces of the development journalistic sub-identity were often noted across the reportage
and yet it was not necessarily the predominant one.

Overall, whilst we can say that some of the reportage is oriented towards socially responsible
journalism, when considered in reference to the findings in the previous section the analysis
generally creates a picture that is not as straightforward as it might seem. Caution is required
when it comes to reading too much into the broader findings concerning the tendencies towards
libertarian or socially responsible journalism. Pertinently, there are texts that portray a mixture of
sub-identities. Although some stories are reflective and in-depth, we have to bear in mind that the
journalists and their newspapers, for the most part, still maintained conventional norms in news
selection. In fact, even when the voices quoted were diverse, they were picked from a common
sector of sources. Put another way, the reportage showed its efforts to go beyond bureaucracy and
beyond meetings, and attempted to provide a creative, participant, educational and even
intellectual mode of coverage, but failed to present a wide variety of NEPAD issues to the public.
In general, the reportage is mixed, but it shows a broad orientation towards libertarian ‘global’
journalism (see Deuze 2005). In the next section, I explore the issue of African identity
construction.

7.4 The wandering ‘African’: essential, fluid and different.

7.4.1 Marker words and identification references
In analysing 30 articles for the construction of African cultural identity, my attention was directed
to the language strategies – binary oppositions, words as identity markers and identification
references – that are used to shape, position, (re)imagine and construct Africanness. Such markers
included the nouns ‘Africa’ and adjective ‘Africans’, the binaries ‘Africa’ and the ‘West’ as well as the use (or absence) of personal and possessive pronouns, ‘us’, ‘we’, ‘ours’ and ‘you’. In doing this, I had to identify the voices in the story and to the related intertextual discourse relations, that is, the way/s in which various sources and voices (see Fairclough 1995b) – including the authors – are used to position and naturalise Africanness in media discourse. African identity specific themes that were listed in chapter 6 are also noted. As posited before, I also relied on the identification of the constructive strategies of unification and avoidance that are used to construct a common African identity and even those of exclusion when the differences between, for instance ‘Europe’ and ‘Africa’, are prioritised. In other cases, national identity and its components is transformed into another identity – a pan-African identity.

Whilst almost all of the articles contained at least one explicit marker with potentially pan-African identity connotations, not all of them are analysed here. For the purposes of gaining in-depth insights into the overall strategies being used to build up a pan-African identity, those stories (including commentaries) with specifically extended references that connote and denote Africanness are the ones that were selected for in-depth qualitative analysis. It is in this regard that in the next sub-section, I focus mainly on four texts, which demonstrate how African identity is constructed, justified and even contested. Whilst the emphasis is particularly on the discursive construction of Africanness (sameness), I also highlight key instances of differentiation. Where relevant, I also draw on short references from a few other news texts. The majority of these texts are from stories that have been analysed here as portraying socially responsible journalistic news elements, which are broadly seen here as being more likely to make room for the journalists to add their own comments, than say libertarian journalism. In adding their own comments, they can be seen to play a role in the text in the sense that their commentaries can at times be perceived as an indication about how they feel about the subject at hand, thereby assuming a specific position or identification. It is to these analyses that I now turn.

7.4.2 Extracts and analyses
The analysis that follows is not meant to be exhaustive; rather, it demonstrates some of the ways that Africanness was sought, (re)imagined and at times achieved in the reportage on NEPAD. The analysis shows the ways in which dominant social groups in society promote consensus about Africanness. They are the ones who have the power to speak for others (Fairclough 2001:106). Also, note that the following discursive constructions of Africanity shape and reflect their socio-historical contexts and vice versa. The first text is the predominantly development-oriented story
titled ‘Senseless coups have made Africa poor’ – Accra Daily Mail, written by Kent Mensah, a story with more than one main topic.

“Senseless coups have made Africa poor’

1. The Executive Secretary of the National Africa Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council, Dr Francis Appiah, has said that despite Africa’s endowment with natural resources, internal factors such as “senseless coups, wars and conflicts,” have made the continent poor.

2. Speaking at an African Peer Review Mechanism and National Development Planning Commission workshop on the relevance of the APRM to the GPRS II document last week, Dr Appiah said that Africa would have been better-off today if it had not passed through the hands of dictators who muzzled the press and ensured a “culture of silence” coupled with corruption, maladministration and abuse of human rights.

3. “We cannot give victory to growth and defeat poverty when there are senseless coups and wars on the continent,” he said pointing to pockets of instability in countries like Cote d’Ivoire, Togo, Liberia and Sudan’s Darfur.

4. He said: “Of the 75 least developed countries 52 are African countries, 28% of Africans face famine, malnutrition and more than 50% of Africans live under a dollar a day. Also, Africa has the highest infant mortality rate in the world compounded with six million refugees and 20 million displaced people.”

5. Dr Appiah did not blame the state of Africa’s poor situation on internal factors alone. He said external factors like unfair trade practices, debt crisis, colonialism and interference in the internal affairs of African countries by the western world have all contributed to the dismal situation of Africa.

6. However, he said with the advent of NEPAD, an African initiative aimed at promoting growth and alleviating poverty, majority of African countries have the potential to move into a middle-income status in the nearest possible time.

7. “NEPAD is a concrete development framework that adopts a programme of action for victory for growth and defeat of poverty,” he said. He added that among the strategies tabled for increase in growth and poverty reduction are reforms in the economic sector that would “make Africa competitive based on sound and prudent economic management and government.”

8. Dr Appiah said NEPAD and the APRM seek to ensure democracy and good political governance through prevention and reduction in conflict, effectiveness and accountability of the public service and combating corruption. He said they also seek to promote socio-economic development, corporate governance and economic governance and management.

9. He said NEPAD is never forced on African leaders as conditionality from the affluent world but it is “owned by Africans.” He said: “It is a complete insult to say that affluent countries are forcing us to accede to APRM. Who wants to be poor? So when we are taking measures to move away from that state it is ridiculous for our critics to look down on the real facts.”

10. The Acting Director-General of the National Development Planning Commission, Dr Regina Adutwum, said the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy II would be enforced fully from next year with greater focus on agriculture.

11. She said besides agriculture; tourism, music, and the transportation sectors would be given the needed attention to push Ghana towards the middle-income status in 2015. She assured the public that much success had been chalked in the GPRS I, and it is the hope of the NDPC that projections of the GPRS II would be achieved.

Here, in just 542 words exists a notion of ‘African/s’ as a collective group of people or countries invoked on nine occasions. ‘Africa’ as a spatial territory and place is mentioned eight times whilst the ‘the continent’ as a collection of countries appears twice. ‘Us’ as a collective group of people is invoked once, ‘we’ appears twice, whilst ‘our’ and ‘they’ come up once each. ‘They’ in this case is in reference to the mechanisms, structures and institutions of NEPAD and the APRM.

However, who are the ‘African/s’, the ‘we’ and the ‘us’ being referred to? Initially (paragraphs) 1-2, the source in the article refers to Africa as a geographical location – a territory that is rich in natural resources. This is carried on into 3 when we are told of a ‘continent’ that is made up of countries. However, it is also here that ‘we’ is introduced for the first time. The use here appears to be ‘regional or pan-African’ which is line with the African resonance of this story, but we
should not take this for granted given that in the context of the *Accra Daily Mail* it may be ‘we’ the nation of Ghana that is being invoked. The references to ‘African countries’, ‘African leaders’ and ‘African/s’ in 4 to 9, for the most part, suggest that the referent is ‘Africa’ as a shared and common geographical territory that is inhabited by a people with a collective group identity. These referents can be extended to the ‘we’ and ‘us’ in 9, for instance, as in ‘we’ the Africans. Yet the pronouns in 9 may actually not be suggestive of the whole of Africa because the same sentence continues with a single use of ‘our’ (critics), which is less straightforward. Remember that NEPAD has received some of its most scathing criticism from African academics and civil society organisations. The, ‘we’ and ‘us’ in 9 seems to relate to ‘we’ the ‘African governments’, or ‘us’ African leaders. Here we are confronted with a mainly singular notion of ‘Africans’ and who ‘we’ might be, but by an array of possible ‘Africans’ and ‘we’s’ to which we must bring some interpretative knowledge (see Robertson 2003; Barthes 1993). In cases such as this one, we the readers are faced with what we might call a hybrid or wandering sense of ‘we’ or Africanity. Binary oppositions are in this story used effectively to construct a particular version of African identity. Consider the following oppositions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African countries</th>
<th>Western world</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>internal factors</td>
<td>external factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poor</td>
<td>affluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>least developed</td>
<td>middle income</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Africa’ is contrasted and defined against the ‘West’. It is also evident that these oppositions are not neutral. Whilst there are links between them, they are influenced by relations of dominance whereby Africa is for the most part represented in a less favorable way than is the West. Having said that, the West is also at some level seen as being detrimental to Africa due to its historical role in the post-colony (also see chapters 8 to 10).

The second text titled ‘African fish industry in crisis’ which was categorised as portraying a predominantly social agenda journalistic sub-identity is also taken from *Accra Daily Mail*. It reads that:

1. Fishing is vital to *Africa*, supporting annual exports worth about $3bn. Fish is also crucial to the health of 200 million *Africans*, providing a source of inexpensive protein. The Fish For All summit, which started yesterday in the *Nigerian* capital Abuja, will seek sustainable ways of reviving Africa's dwindling fish stocks while protecting employment in the industry.
2. Ahead of the meeting, research organisation *WorldFish Center* warned that stocks were so depleted that a 20% increase in fish farming would be needed to maintain consumption at its current level. Replenishing the continent's fish stocks is crucial to safeguarding *Africa's* food security, development agencies will argue this week.
3. “*We* need to appreciate that our fish have a critical role to play in *Africa's* development,” Professor Richard Mkandawire, senior agricultural advisor for the New Partnership for *African* Development (Nepad) told the *BBC*’s Network *Africa* Programme.
4. Fish catches have fallen sharply across the continent in recent years, resulting in a significant decline in consumption. Scientific bodies believe small-scale fish farming is the answer to building up fish stocks, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

5. “We are talking about ponds on people’s farms, not enormous fish farms of the kind you see in Scotland and elsewhere,” Patrick Dugan, the Center’s deputy director-general, told the Financial Times.

6. Increased investment would improve the preservation and packaging of fish and speed up its route to market, especially in coastal areas. Fisheries are a major source of employment in Africa, with up to 10 million people working in the industry.

7. Fish also has a key role to play in sustaining public health, Professor Mkandawire added, supplying a vital source of protein for HIV sufferers. In that regard, it was vital that governments across Africa worked together to improve management of stocks.

In this example, the references to ‘Africa’, ‘continent’ and ‘African/s’ is initially in relation to an unquestionable shared territory that is inhabited by a collective group of people with a common identity. However, things get complicated in 4 when the author refers to ‘sub-Saharan Africa’. The connotation here is that ‘the continent – Africa’ may not really be a collective given that some section/s are not sub-Saharan. We the readers are not really told what is meant by this phrase, which countries it refers to and or even as to why this ‘sub-Saharan Africa’ should receive special mention when talking about depleting fish stocks. At this stage one cannot help but query as to whether, when the author was initially referring to ‘Africa’, he was actually implying ‘sub-Saharan Africa’. Then again, this is perhaps rebutted by the two references to ‘the continent’ in 2 and 4. ‘We’ is invoked twice and so is ‘people’ whilst ‘our’ and ‘you’ appear once. The people in 5 and 6, is a subject position that is created for fish farmers and sectors workers in Africa. In 3, the ‘we’ and ‘our’ is in reference to a pan-African people with shared concerns, responsibilities, goals and benefits, which in this case are in reference to fish. It is not clear as to exactly who the ‘we’ and ‘our’ are in reference to, but it is assumed that they exist and that we the readers know who they are. In 5, ‘we’ is used in a more narrowly constructed fashion to refer to either an institutional identity – ‘the Fish centre’ – or a group identity of scientists, which in this case would also include the NEPAD official. The ‘you’ is in reference to both the author of the story and the potential audience of readers. In terms of oppositions, Africa (small ponds) as a location or territory is contrasted, differentiated and defined against Scotland (large fish farms). Here, the specific identity of the ‘we’ and indeed ‘Africa’ itself is more ambiguous bearing in mind the (territorial) reference to ‘sub-Saharan Africa’.

The third key text also includes a predominantly social agenda story with traces of commentary and it is taken from the Sunday Times.

‘New helmsman aims to propel Nepad into action’

…9 For him, the challenge will be to reinvigorate the Nepad ideal of a pan-African programme for development premised on improved co-operation, better governance and a renewed commitment to people ahead of politics.
10. The initiative — widely credited to South African President Thabo Mbeki — has captured the imaginations of richer nations desperate to help Africa reverse the spiral of decline that makes it the only continent to have grown poorer over the past 20 years.

11. Stirred by British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s Commission for Africa, the leaders of the G8 highly industrialised nations promised after their Gleneagles summit in July to double assistance to Africa to $50-billion a year by the end of the decade.

12. Nepad, they said, would be a preferred vehicle for effective development partnerships.

13. But, after a flying start, Nepad is bogging down in the bureaucracy of development theory. Mbeki’s catchy promise of an African renaissance is ringing a little hollow as planners wrestle with trans-regional initiatives derailed by conflict or lingering anti-democratic autocrats.

14-17 Donors seeking partnerships want to know that they are buying growth and not just adding to unsustainable debt....

18. “We have to be closer to Zimbabwe to understand exactly what their problems are,” Macavele says. “It is through that mechanism that people can learn from each other, that countries can be invited to talk. When they are in APRM we can review their policies, we can see what they are doing and we can monitor their development.”

19. “We have changed the paradigm of development from passive to active participation in a more African process of development,” he says.

20. Going forward, Nepad’s success should be assessed less by favoured Western measures and more by the health of Africa’s nations.

21. “Democracy is when you provide the things that benefit the majority of the population. That creates harmony and happiness. Africans like to be happy, to dance, to have music,” he said.

In this extract, the personal pronoun ‘we’ clearly has different referents according to the way in which it is being used by the NEPAD source. In its inclusive or exclusive usage, the source indirectly creates a range of potential subject positions – the people, NEPAD – that include him at each turn as someone who identifies with these positions. In doing this, he is then also able to speak for and on behalf of the various referents in ‘we’. The first ‘we’ in 18 appears to refer to the rest of Africa excluding Zimbabwe and or more generally as a pan-African people that are willing to learn from each other and look out for each other’s interests. However, the ‘we’s in the follow up sentences and those in 19 appear to be in reference to NEPAD officials and structures and yet there is also a sense in which the last ‘we’ refers to a collective group identity of Africans who are in charge of their own development. The ‘you’ is also invoked by the source to refer to ‘you’ the audience of readers, including the author or even the elected leader as provider of democracy. The pronoun ‘you’ is often used to refer to people in general and that its usage relates to solidarity and commonality of experience (Fairclough 2001:149) for instance, as in the case of the ‘majority of the population’.

In this extract, the head of NEPAD uses ‘you’ in a way that aligns his views and precepts as being in line with the interests of the ‘people’ in general. He is then able to represent himself as one of the ‘people’ as someone who knows and represents the experiences, beliefs and aspirations of the people including the readers. When we think of the way in which he uses the ‘we’s’ and the ‘you’ in all their totality one could posit here that he is implicitly attempting to bring NEPAD and the experiences of the ‘people’ to the status of common experience. ‘They’, is used in reference to the
countries that have signed up to the APRM whilst ‘their’ is in reference to the same countries. The source implicitly portrays an Africa that is differentiated in 19 to 21 and yet the emphasis is for the most part on unification, cohesion and inclusion – participation, majority, African/s, Africa’s – which emphasise the common features of an ‘African’ identity as being different from a ‘Western’ one. In the extract, the author also pays specific attention to the pan-African identity strand of NEPAD in 9 and 13 with a reference to the ‘African renaissance’ and yet at some level he also contests its economic and cultural rejuvenation appeals when he cites its challenges. Binary oppositions are also used effectively in this extract to construct Africa as a location / territory and a people. Consider the following:

Mbeki       Blair
Africa       G8
poor         richer nations / highly industrialised
African      Western
need assistance helpers / donors

Again, we get to see here the ways in which the negative characteristics are attributed to Africa (in-group) whilst the positives are associated with the West (out-group).

The fourth extract is another predominantly social agenda-oriented story with lots of commentary and it is taken from Business Day.

‘Ideological tug-of-war starts over SA’s first peer review process’

1-2. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) exercise calls on countries to examine their economic and political systems, corporate governance and socioeconomic development.
3. SA's self-assessment is…
4-5. Some NGO activists say people appointed to the peer review's governing council will take their cue from government.
6. The African peer review mechanism has been heralded by donors as the most important aspect of Nepad in improving governance and accountability in African countries.
7. So far 25 African countries have voluntarily signed up for a review. It begins with a self-assessment by a country and ends with a review by African heads of state who have signed up for the exercise.
8-10. The mutual suspicion and the fraught relationship…was apparent when President Thabo Mbeki questioned at the launch of the peer review process whether these organisations could be truly African if foreign funders set their priorities.
11-12. The governing council, the panel overseeing SA's peer review, meets tomorrow.
13. In Ghana, the peer review exercise was open…. In Rwanda, the process was heavily dominated by government.
14. While there are guidelines for countries to prepare for peer review…
15. As a political and economic giant on the continent, and a young democracy, SA's review and final report will be closely watched in Africa and further abroad.
16. Civil society organisations will be pressing at tomorrow's council meeting to ensure that they have influence over the management of the process…
17. Zanele Twala…says she is worried about the structure guiding the review.
18. A number of NGOs believe government currently controls the secretariat and the editing of the report. "We can't have it all in government," Twala insists. If there is not adequate civil society representation on the secretariat, she says, "we would be just rubber-stamping the thing”.
19. She says while the secretariat and writing functions…
20. Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, who chairs SA's peer review…
21. Speaking earlier this week she said, “government would not cook alone” and that “different spices” would “make an interesting product”.

22. Some activists are suspicious that government wants a report filled with accolades to avoid embarrassment about areas where there has not been good progress, to promote its role in Africa, and because of the local government elections next year.

23. They are also suspicious that government may use mass participation in the peer review as a means to campaign for elections.

24. “Our role is to make sure we tell it as it is and we come up with a programme of action which addresses weaknesses in areas where the country is not doing well, like public health and corruption,” says Twala.

25. “For us the report is about what we are not doing well.”

This report, which has, references to ‘Africa’, ‘African countries’, ‘the continent’ and ‘truly African’ evokes and denotes an African collective. South Africa’s president, who is cited as referring to a ‘truly African’ (civil society) identity that is not ‘funded by foreigners’, invokes this further. Note that this can be seen as a contradiction given that NEPAD and its strand of pan-Africanism are also beneficiaries of donor funds, all of which could in this case connote that NEPAD is also not ‘truly African’. More pertinently, Mbeki as a speaker in the story presumes to know and speak for all ‘true Africans’ as such. His utterance unquestioningly takes for granted that there exists a homogenous authentic African-group with a shared mentality. The assumption here is that the traits of this African identity would characterise every member of the imagined group equally and that it is because of such traits that we can tell who is ‘truly African’ or not. However, there is also mention of countries such as Ghana, Rwanda, Zimbabwe and indeed South Africa, thereby highlighting the ‘national’ identity perspective in Africannity or that there is diversity and difference in ‘Africa’. More pertinently, in line 15 South Africa, which is seen as the ‘giant on the continent’, is presented as being outside of Africa when the author says that it “will be closely watched in Africa” or in 23 when we are told of “its role in Africa”. Here, South Africa as a nation with a specific national identity is presented as being different and distinct from Africa or even outside of Africa. The self-perception (or even denial or avowal) here – which seems to operate more at the more abstract and not so much the geographical level – is that South Africa is not in Africa.

Unlike the previous report, in this extract the personal pronouns ‘we’, ‘they’, ‘our’ and ‘us’ appear to refer to members of the civil society sector. Reference to ‘she’ denotes a female gender identity that is constitutive of the sources in the story. With regard to the ‘people’ in 4-5, it initially comes across as being ambiguous and yet it is, I think, more specifically in reference to those members of the governing council that are not from civil society. Binary oppositions are in this extract used effectively, to map out the boundaries of Africanness through active strategies of inclusion and exclusion – ‘African’-‘foreign funders’ and ‘donors’-‘Africa’ which are in this study read as being particularly influenced by dominant-subjugated power relations in the post-
colonial context (see Bhabha 1994b; Said 1995). Here, Africa is treated as being natural, intrinsic, unquestionable, commonsensical and as always already there. However, there is also acknowledgement of tensions or differences within the collective as in reference to South Africa’s (re)colonisation of the continent and also in the ways in which it is at times positioned as being outside of ‘the continent’. This serves to remind us that NEPAD’s ideology and discourse has the potential to be (re)located and find expression at a plethora of levels such as the geographical territory or even at the level of a shared sense of belonging in terms of an imagined community.

I now turn my attention to three short extracts that are relevant to the analysis at hand. The first one is a predominantly neutral story titled ‘Nigeria signs MOU to roll out Africa peer review mechanism process’, in This Day. In the report, national identity is transformed into pan-Africanism when the source is paraphrased as saying that “Nigeria has a responsibility for the African continent and he [the source] impressed on the Federal Government to look beyond its boundaries and share its experiences with others”. The article continues in this format:

“What I hear is exciting and I suggest that what you are doing should be shared with other African countries. Do not be over conscious of what you have. You have a responsibility for this continent. We need you, so in all humility share it. You are a great nation and you have a role to play in Africa, so your mission should not be limited to Kaduna, Enugu or Abeokuta. Nigeria should no more look at its national boundaries but share and have a broader view encompassing all of Africa” he said.

Here, the ‘you’ form of the pronoun is for the most part in relation to Nigeria as a nation with a collective national identity where the people (including in this case the readers) are assumed to be Nigerians. However, at some level it can be read as being used to exclusively refer to the leadership in Nigeria. The ‘I’ form reflects the presence of the speaker, whilst the ‘we’ is in reference to other African countries (excluding Nigeria) and yet when ‘Africa’ is invoked in the last sentence, Nigeria is included in the collective.

In a Sunday Times predominantly social agenda story titled ‘Skewed SA peer review feared’ the journalist refers to shared self-assessments to connote the pan-African strand of shared responsibilities. The source (South Africa’s president Mbeki) says that, “It is essential that the people themselves should own this programme of action and work to implement it, so that they do indeed continue to act as their own liberators, determined to decide their future”. It is not clear in the full text as to whether the people in this case are the ‘South African’ people or more generally the ‘African’ people. However, because the text is taken from a South African publication, we can assume that ‘the people’ is in reference to South Africans, bearing in mind that Mbeki is their political leader. But, because Mbeki has taken up the role of being the face of NEPAD in and outside of Africa, one could also implicitly assume that he is at some level transforming South
African identity (common national people) into a pan-African one and that his views are in relation to the entire continent. In addition, a subject position for the reader(s) is constituted indirectly through the way in which Mbeki represents the aspirations of all ‘the people’, including the readers. Pertinently, the assertions that Mbeki makes about ‘the people’ also highlight his relationship to the readers. As a leader, he implicitly claims the authority to tell people what ‘they’ should do or – since he is himself part of ‘the people’ – the right to articulate on its behalf its ‘own’ perceptions. This for the most part has the effect of distancing Mbeki from ‘the people’, marking him off as having special authority, being the leader (see Fairlough 2001).

In sum, the picture emerging out of this analysis is that whilst ‘we’, ‘Africa’ and ‘African’ in particular are often used to invoke a common territorial, social, cultural and political identity that finds expression through pan-Africanism, there are also indications that these marker words are used exclusively to invoke difference. They are prone to being ambiguous. Bear in mind here that in the context of the post-colony, the meaning of pronouns such as ‘I’, ‘we’, ‘you’ and adjectives such as ‘African’ is obscure and slippery and yet these terms are often used in newspaper text to construct and (re)imagine individual and collective identities. However, it might also be the case that the non-specific ‘we’, ‘you’, ‘us’, ‘our’ and ‘the people’ within the context of news texts on NEPAD operates precisely through its ability to simultaneously transform different categories into a contingent pan-African identity. In other words, they can be used to obscure or facilitate shifts between differences leading to a singular common identity. Although this textual exegesis cannot fully tell us what was in the minds of the journalists and the sources, in this analysis it appears to have given us a variety of different versions of what may have been in the minds of the various voices with regard to Africanity. It also demonstrates the ways in which the voices were able to shift between distinct and explicitly local, national and regional contexts to that of Africa and even the diaspora. Pertinently, a key consideration here is that the fluid ‘we’, ‘us’ and the ‘Africa/ns’ are really not about sloppy journalistic standards or confusion, but an essential aspect of the way in which Africanity is maintained via a constructive ambiguity about what it is. In the next section, I conclude the chapter.

7.5 Conclusion
The findings suggest that a basic model of libertarian or socially responsible newspaper content is simplistic. None the less, the analysis shows that in this sample, the content in general is broadly oriented towards libertarian journalism. The newspapers did not really present competing reports, instead, the majority of accounts conformed to a narrowly constructed view of NEPAD in the
hard news and summary lead formats with focus on what was said by the official sources. However, some of the content also shows an orientation to socially responsible journalism in which some alternative voices are presented in feature-narrative lead type stories with commentary from the journalist. These are the same stories which appear to show the ways in which journalistic ideology was adopted and adapted to the post-colonial context in those texts where Africanity was invoked at a great length. For the most part, the sample of content appears to show a ‘mixture’ of sub-identities and this might also explain here the low ‘predominant’ presence of development and yet many stories bear references that invoke its operationalisation. Whilst the newspapers presented a coherent NEPAD message which is clearly situated within the dominant neo-liberal development discourse, it would appear from the content that journalists do not necessarily set out to intentionally portray NEPAD in this or that light or to be ‘pro-African’ in its coverage.

The findings in this chapter concerning journalistic and African identity in the texts have informed the interview structure and analysis. It is in this regard that the interview guide in Appendix G specifically looks into some of the main themes that have been identified in this chapter. These include: the APRM as a key NEPAD topics (question 2), the tendency for nationality to be transformed into African identity (question 3) and the low presence commentary in the texts and the predominance of news elements that invoke neutrality (see question 5). In addition to this, is the absence of voices that criticise NEPAD outside of its own neo-liberal discourse (see questions 1(a) and (b)). It is also in this sense that interview guide includes questions that point to the multiplicity or fluidity of identities (see questions 3 and 9). Further, as is presented in the next four chapters, nuances in the news texts concerning the ways in which NEPAD is maintained and even presented as an answer to Africa’s development challenges which were borne in mind during the actual interviews were also evident in the interview findings. Crucially, it is also on the basis of the findings in this chapter that correlations were then made between the journalists’ news stories and their role perceptions as is discussed in chapter 11. Generally, it is in this regard that the content analysis on the one hand helped me to generate potential themes to interrogate during the qualitative interviews and on the other to identify correlations between the NEPAD news stories and the interview responses from the journalists.
CHAPTER EIGHT - INTERVIEW FINDINGS
RESPONSES TO NEPAD’S AFRICANIST SENTIMENTS

8.0 Introduction
In this chapter and the next one, the emphasis is on presenting and teasing out some of the main trends concerning the second and main phase of the research concerning ‘qualitative depth interviews’. The chapters attempt to deal with the three main interrelated sections that correspond to the topics about which the journalists were asked to provide in-depth responses. These include: 1) identifications, if at all, with regard to NEPAD’s African identity sentiments; 2) identifications concerning the journalistic sub-identities; and 3) their responses towards NEPAD’s socially responsible-oriented journalistic interpellations particularly in the shape of development journalism in light of their positions at (1) and (2). The findings obtained from the exploratory, open-ended and in-depth interview questions provided a basis for an inductive thematic analysis of the data collected in this study. By relying on the journalists’ own words, this research sets out to provide a qualitative understanding of how a selection of continental journalists from countries that are posited as being varied in terms of their commitment to NEPAD, perceive their journalistic identity in terms of the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development sub-identities. The main aim is to find out what they see as their journalistic functions in NEPAD and how they respond to NEPAD’s ideological interpellations. More specifically, this chapter deals with the first of the three topics about which the journalists were asked to provide in-depth responses whilst chapter 9 deals with the second and third topics. However, the chapter starts with a summing up of the general approach to the data analysis.

8.1 Approach to the presentation and analysis of the findings: an overview
As discussed previously, the news content analysis alone could not have provided an understanding of the journalists’ identifications. It is in this regard that the researcher asked 13 journalists about their self-understandings in reference to NEPAD’s interpellations whilst bearing in mind the findings from the analysis of the stories. We know, through recent scholarly research, that at least some journalists in the post-colony portray and approach journalism in ways that are relatively similar to their counterparts elsewhere in Europe and America (see chapter 3). However, as argued in chapter 4, little qualitative work has been done concerning whether their views change, if at all, when they are faced with particularly culturally inward-looking initiatives and projects such as NEPAD (and the ‘African renaissance’). Generally, the findings indicate that although the journalists – as interviewees and respondents – enact questioning stances towards
NEPAD, they rarely interrogate the initiative’s neo-liberal development agenda. Similarly, although aspects of NEPAD lead them at times to see themselves in terms of their national identities, they still present themselves as identifying with or aspiring to its (pan-)African identity. The findings indicate that whilst the journalists are indeed, broadly oriented towards a global libertarian model of journalism (see Deuze 2005), NEPAD also places them into a situation in which they have to balance the ideals of this model against the development and culturalist interpellations of the ‘continent’, which are more directly linked to the socially responsible model. The result is that beyond their strong identification with the libertarian journalistic sub-identities there is also an implicitly pluralistic or hybridised view of their journalistic identity. The bulk of these issues are discussed in-depth in chapter 10, which attempts to provide a deeper analysis and discussion of the main findings.

For the most part, chapters 8 and 9 provide a first level exploratory presentation and analysis of the findings. This includes reading the data for themes, key words and cognitive patterns that are necessary for the development of conceptual frames that can more effectively direct us towards theoretical insight. That is, a theorisation about how a contemporary pan-African initiative such as NEPAD can influence continental journalists’ self-understandings of journalism (see Figure 2 chapter 11). Those findings that did not offer noteworthy or salient insights into the three stated research topics were not reported in this chapter. Only the most relevant belief statements were generally reported. In the findings presented below, the indented and single spaced remarks are verbatim comments transcribed from the tapes of the telephone and face-to-face interviews.

Answers to open-ended questions often represent the most commonly collected type of qualitative data (see Kvale 1999). Also note that interviews as spoken narratives are at this stage also thought of as homes for agency and identity performance which is posited here as a process of putting your preferred self forward depending on the issue and/or in relation to the other, which could also include the audience at hand (see Goffman 1959; Fairclough 2001). Statistics, beyond some associations concerning averages in the form of frequency in chapter 7, do not have much presence in the findings. The task of this study is to identify and develop or build up on concepts and theoretical grounding that can only come forth using an inductive approach (see Bogdan and Biklen 1992). The point of reference here is an inductive approach which is based on the interpretative paradigm whereby social reality is seen as being created and maintained by the subjective experiences of people (see Holstein and Gubrium 1995). This approach to the findings
enabled the researcher to identify the breadth and depth of the interviewees’ self-understandings with regard to NEPAD.

It is in this sense that exploratory inductive research or qualitative analysis in general, unlike its counterpart (deductive reasoning), is more concerned with emergent themes. In chapters 8 and 9, this includes the collection and content-thematic analysis of the narrative data. Any attempt to quantify the predominantly qualitative data collected for this study would contradict the overarching interpretative research orientation. Having completed a sizeable number (13) of in-depth interviews, an attempt to statistically interpret the data would be wrong. Such an illogical approach would undercut the interpretive design and create a methodological paradox (see Bryman 1988). Instead, for qualitative analyses, the identification of emerging themes was necessary to create an understanding of journalists’ perceptions of their journalistic roles. Logic dictated the reporting of interviewees’ responses to questions about Africanity, journalistic identity and the nexus between the two within the context of NEPAD. Selected accompanying comments in the interviewees’ own words are presented with the findings of each topic around which questions were framed.

The aforementioned approach to the interviews gave rise to a 109-page transcribed document from the interviews. The transcribed data contained rich and insightful information. Interviewees are identified in the findings by the initials (in italics and full caps) of the newspapers that they represent. In studying the transcriptions for identity construction, I relied on the two waves of analysis in chapter 6 to identify extracts with insights into how the pronouns I, you, ours, we and they as discursive labels were deployed by interviewees to enact self and others vis-à-vis the interviewer, who is generally presumed by the interviewees to be a researcher, an academic and an African. In addition, constructive strategies, nouns, adjectives, marker words and identification references as spelt out in chapters 6 and 7 were also focused on for their potential insights. For the purposes of analysis and discussion particularly as in chapter 10, which specifically attempts to link the findings to the theoretical considerations, I have highlighted in bold those words that will for the most part be relied upon to discuss in-depth the various moments of identity construction. Those extracts which both implicitly and explicitly highlight the respondents’ articulation of Africanity and journalistic identification respectively, are focused on. The first category is the

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34 This excludes the 16 in-depth interviews with the proponents of NEPAD as in Kaye (Interview 2005) and Shope-Linney (Interview 2006) and an independent analyst of NEPAD as in Herbert (Interview 2006) (see chapter 6 for fuller explanations).
focus of this chapter whilst beliefs concerning journalistic identity are mainly dealt with in chapter 9.

8.2 Thoughts on NEPAD at inception and thereafter

First-level analysis of the narratives related to the journalists’ attitude towards NEPAD at the time of its inception and thereafter. It is in this regard that the analysis offered two broad themes of ‘enthusiasm’ and ‘scepticism’ – which are the focus of this sub-section. Most of the respondents offered the view that they were ‘enthusiastic’ about NEPAD when they first heard and/or started writing about it. Some of the comments in this regard are as follows:

It is a good thing that African leaders are coming together to solve their own problems other than waiting for foreigners to step in and assist…in that respect, I was enthusiastic. (TD)

When I first heard of it, you know it arose out of Mbeki and the ‘I am an African’ speech and so I was very enthusiastic about it…Whites were very cynical about it saying it is another waste of money. (ST)

I was very positive about it…the people who were behind it like President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and a few others had just come into power so I saw it as a change for Africa. (TN1)

However, a few others such as NT were not certain of how to make sense of NEPAD:

When I first heard of NEPAD, I was working in Rwanda. I asked myself: ‘what is this NEPAD? What is this new thing coming to change that other plans haven’t changed’? So I was asking myself: ‘Is NEPAD going to change our people’s mindset? Is it going to change the civil strife in our continent? Is NEPAD going to change the hunger situation and poverty on our continent’?

Clearly, NEPAD, in the minds of several of these interviewees, is an initiative that they were ‘enthusiastic’ about, particularly during the early stages of its implementation. However, five years after its conception, during the actual period of this research many of the respondents revealed that they were sceptical about NEPAD. The four dominant themes along which they expressed their scepticism / criticisms were: 1) lack of political will; 2) the view that NEPAD was in the interests of the West and some powerful African countries; 3) the absence of NEPAD development projects, and linked to this; 4) the absence of NEPAD stories that can be told. I will not list the interviewees’ comments concerning these sub-themes at length for the reason that they are a recurring aspect of the journalists’ comments and they will become more evident as the chapter unfolds. However, we can note early on here that the concerns raised by the journalists with regard to NEPAD are rather similar to some of the views of the critics in chapter 5. For example:
I have lost enthusiasm it has remained at the stage of an idea and a vision there is not much that is being done in terms of implementation…Nothing has been done…I was quite disappointed when about two years ago Wiseman Nkuhl u said: “NEPAD is not a project, it is just a vision”. I mean why spend so much time on just a vision if you are not willing to implement it? (BDA)  

As a journalist, the thing that strikes me (about NEPAD), is how much the behaviour of our various governments is driven by self-interest. I see a collection of countries in cahoots with the old donors using NEPAD to entrench their interests. (TN2)

A few such as NT were still ambivalent about it:

Right now, I am sorry to say I have mixed feelings because since the advent of what we would call the ‘new partnership’ we could say a lot has changed in terms of development, but not everyone knows what NEPAD is and those who know…are not ready to communicate. I am also part of the blame: I am a journalist and I do not think I have done much to disseminate information about NEPAD and I think we need to revise that trend and become more proactive about it as it is a hope for Africa.

It is evident that NEPAD speaks to the individual and collective interests and aspirations of the interviewees as journalists, individuals and Africans. Unlike TN2, many – despite their criticisms – see NEPAD as having held some hope for Africa in so far as they link it to addressing Africa’s problems. With regard to the specific construction of identities with the aid of pronouns, nouns and adjectives as identity markers, it is also evident that most speak from the position of ‘I’ to indicate the everyday self in the larger picture of social identities construction. In this case, the ‘I’ statements are used to enact the self or present the self’s beliefs in positive, negative or ambivalent terms vis-à-vis NEPAD. The ‘I’ form reflects the presence of the speaker, but in some instances particularly as in the cases of NT, TN2 and BDA, the ‘I’ statements explicitly refer to their presence or identifications as journalists. In these instances, they are enacting themselves primarily as journalists and not so much as Africans. Bear in mind that interviewees often design their discourse in relation to the interviewer’s perceived social identities – both in the situated-specific local and wider social-global contexts – which in this study are often presumed to be African, researcher and academic.

ST appears to use ‘you’ inclusively to refer to the interviewer as the immediate addressee and the audience of people at large. In fact, he might even be referring to ‘you African people’ and this is because he is at this stage narrating how he was drawn into NEPAD through its precursor the ‘African renaissance’, which is symbolised by Mbeki’s ‘I am an African’ speech which drew on the plurality of Africanity. ST also uses ‘you’ to align his individual experiences and enthusiasm about NEPAD as being in commonality with the interests of all the – African – people that were,  

35 The first Chief Executive of NEPAD.
unlike some ‘Whites’, not ‘cynical’ about NEPAD. Later on, ST will subtly position himself as ‘White’, but at this stage, he does not seem to identify with those ‘Whites’ that he labels as ‘cynical’. At some level, he is rejecting an identity category that is often assigned to him by ‘other’ identity groups within the context of multi-racial South Africa.

On the other hand, BDA uses ‘you’ narrowly to refer to the managers of NEPAD – who have in his view failed to implement NEPAD. In doing this, he distances himself from this group of people. What BDA is doing is to signal a sense of solidarity with the experiences of the recipients of NEPAD’s development – the ordinary people – in Africa. NT and TN2 seem to deploy ‘our’ as a replacement for ‘Africans’ in its singular sense as a united people with commonly shared experiences, but note that NT appears to initially deploy ‘we’ inclusively to refer to Africans in general and then exclusively to refer to ‘we’ the ‘journalists’. In doing this, both journalists seem to include the interviewer, themselves and any other addressees that see themselves as African(s), but this is not always explicitly clear particularly with regard to NT. NT had previously – in her first extract – used ‘our people’ narrowly to refer to the people of Rwanda and yet she also appears to link this category to the rest of the people on the continent of Africa. It all gets more complicated when she then goes on to say that ‘not everyone knows what NEPAD is’, but who exactly is this everyone that she is referring to. Is it her immediate audience in Rwanda or is it everyone in Africa? Is it also possible that she is actually referring to everyone in the world that does not know about NEPAD? Whichever it is, what is evident is that she defines an identity distinction between those who are ignorant about NEPAD, and herself as one of those in the know.

Further, notice the ways in which ‘donors’ for TN2 or those that TD refers to as ‘foreigners’ who come in to assist are in both cases constructed here as the ‘other’ that are part of the problem of NEPAD and yet they are also part of the solution as carers and givers of development assistance to Africa. Binary oppositions, ‘African leaders’ against ‘foreigners’ and ‘our governments’ against ‘donors’, are used effectively in some of the extracts to construct Africa as a location or territory that is inhabited by a people – ‘Africans’ – that are all in need of development assistance from the ‘donors’ irrespective of their differences in terms of social-inequality. In much media discourse, it can be posited that negative characteristics are often attributed to Africa whilst the positives are associated with Western donors. However, the involvement of the ‘donors’ in Africa’s development is also seen here particularly for TN2 as being detrimental to the post-colony. Even so, an ‘us’ and ‘them’ type identity is constructed with TN2 aligning himself and
journalists per se as part of ‘we’ [‘us’] the journalists. As will be highlighted throughout this chapter, these oppositions are a key constant within the interviews and we can already see here that the interview discourse is indeed a site for the construction – production, sustenance and opposition – of multiple, individual and group identities. In the next section, I present the findings concerning the responses to NEPAD’s African status and identity.

8.3 Responses to NEPAD’s Africanism and African identity interpellations

8.3.1 African status and appeal

Generally, to ascertain journalists’ identifications with regard to NEPAD’s (pan-)Africanist interpellations, they were asked a series of closely related and yet divergent questions concerning whether they saw NEPAD as embodying the collective interests of Africans and also whether they saw it as prioritising a common African identity over and above national, geographical and ethnic identities. With regard to the former, which is the focus of this sub-section, three dominant themes were identified from the analysis of the informants’ responses. These included: 1) African-led / owned development plan; 2) collective political and social imperatives; and 3) unifying cultural and contextual considerations. Underlying these themes was a whole range of secondary reasons for identifying with NEPAD’s African status (see Table 5 below). The themes in the responses can be summarised in the following table:

Table 5: Contributing factors in identifying with NEPAD as being for all Africans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African-led / owned development plan</th>
<th>Political and socio-economic imperatives</th>
<th>Contextual considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceived by Africans</td>
<td>The African Union</td>
<td>Shared socio-historical and cultural context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan-Africanism and an African consciousness</td>
<td>Africans peer reviewing each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africans are finally responsible for their own development / destiny</td>
<td>Sharing resources for development</td>
<td>Shared territorial-geographical-place identity (‘our continent’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One common voice with which to interact when speaking to the donors</td>
<td>Regional integration: trade and investments</td>
<td>The African Union</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of informants’ comments are as follows:

…it speaks for all Africans…I have seen some of their programmes on ICTs. They have started connecting some schools in about 11 countries….it is in the interests of all Africans
and not a few countries…Africans must speak with one voice in the international arena because united we succeed and divided we fail. (TNI)

Mbeki is trying to get Africans to take themselves more seriously to take responsibility for the problems of the various African countries…he has to create or allow space for the creation of an Africanism, common African ideals and common African values. This is not to say that we are all one, but that that which binds Africa – as that which binds Germany to Italy to France in the European Union – is based on a commonality even if it is just geographic. (ST)

The comments of the informants also offered a range of other reasons through which they negate, or express their ambivalence about, NEPAD’s African status (see Table 6 below). The explanations in the responses can be summarised in the following table:

**Table 6: Factors underlying the ambivalence / negation of NEPAD’s African status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of political will on the part of leaders</th>
<th>Regional political and economic differences and insecurities</th>
<th>Not representative / inclusive or African-owned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A partnership with the donors and the African elite, but not the people</td>
<td>NEPAD is reliant on donor funds</td>
<td>The African Peer Review Mechanism ends up differentiating us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven by a few powerful African countries / South African sub-imperialism</td>
<td>NEPAD is idealistic and not practical</td>
<td>Poorly communicated to the ordinary people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, one can consider the following comments, which are generally similar in tone to the criticisms presented in 8.2:

NEPAD has created a club within a club in Africa and it is divisive…I think that it promotes the ultimate good…but it has created some divisions within Africa and renewed jealousies that have always existed towards the new South Africa – understandable ones: fear of gigantism and fear of domination. (MG)

I think NEPAD is for the countries and presidents – South Africa, Senegal, and Nigeria that were its architects. It seems to be benefiting just them and tailored around their interests, but it is great that Africans came up with their own initiative. (TEA)

It does not embody the interests and aspirations of all the people. Africans themselves have not heard about NEPAD. You have to be in the elite or you have to be very curious about what is happening on the continent to understand. There has not been any effort to popularise NEPAD and bring it down to the people – so how are you going to take the interests of the people into your heart whereas you have not made any efforts to educate them about NEPAD?…there is a lack of making it available to the people. (BDA)
Similar to the critics of NEPAD, the excerpts cited above show that the journalists are also questioning NEPAD’s inclusiveness, the self-interests of some of the leaders at its forefront, its failure to roll out projects and perceived South African sub-imperialism. In addition, they also appear to be aware of the related intra-regional hegemonic dynamics that are characterised by power relationships in so far as the countries at the forefront of NEPAD are seen as being more economically and politically powerful than the others. In defence of those countries which are at the forefront of NEPAD, some of the respondents argued that those countries which were complaining had to be more ‘proactive’ about getting involved rather than simply criticising.

Another respondent from Ghana, had this to say:

> We don’t expect all countries to be party to the idea. I think somebody must start, and then the rest of the African countries follow up. Of course, we shouldn’t also forget that we have different cultures and political backgrounds. Some people have a chequered political background. So, Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria take the lead and I believe that others will join them. (ADM)

Other respondents, such as another Ghanaian – similar to Mkandawire (2002) and Tandon (2002) – also went on to extensively question NEPAD’s reliance on donor funds, which come with restrictions that negate its ‘African-led credentials’:

> We are still dependent on the donors to support us. So, it can still be their initiative…I don’t know why NEPAD should depend on donor support…we could say that they colonised us and they have taken so much from us so they have to contribute to it. I believe that we can do it on our own. I am not an expert. I do not know how, but I believe we can if we want to. (GNA)

As previously illustrated in chapters 5 and 7, the preceding narratives demonstrate that there are shared understandings about NEPAD and its African status. However, the initiative does not have universal support amongst the interviewed journalists. Evidence of this can be noted in those instances when some of the journalists point towards differences within Africanity or even when they express divergent opinions about what NEPAD means, what it stands for, its identity, in whose interests it is and whether it is committed to participatory African development and a pan-Africanist agenda. For example, ADM, ST, TN1 and BDA’s comments show that they are aware that Africa is far from being singular, in that it includes different countries with different cultures, political backgrounds and agendas that may deter African countries from coming together to collectively support NEPAD. There are divisions and diverging interests, hence ADM positions those African countries – unlike Ghana – that are not committed to NEPAD as the ‘others’. It is in this regard that the findings in this sub-section also point towards moments of differentiation and even the plurality and diversity of Africa.
Still, it is also evident that the journalists use the referents of the pronouns and constructive strategies of unification to enact a singular sense of Africanity and to situate shared beliefs about NEPAD within the wider historical context of the post-colony. Briefly, GNA uses ‘they’ narrowly to refer to the ‘donors’. In her comments, use of ‘they’ – the donors and colonisers – is set up against ‘we’ and ‘us’ (the ‘Africans’) – the colonised recipients of aid – in a constructive strategy that highlights an instance of ‘othering’ in that GNA uses the third person plural ‘they’ against the first person plural ‘we’ (see Fairclough 2001). Similar to ADM’s and ST’s, use of ‘we’ and even TEA’s use of ‘Africans’ she presupposes, assumes and takes for granted shared aspects of socio-cultural context and history, for instance, that she and I the interviewer (in my sensing of the interpellation) are ‘Africans’ in the sense that she is referring to. In doing this, she also (re)creates new contexts by projecting the interviewer and herself into the African category, while placing ‘others’ into the categories of ‘colonisers’ or ‘donors’ irrespective of the differences between and within them. As in the cases of TD and TN2 in the previous section, GNA also appears to present the ‘donors’ as an out-group in a positive light as the givers of aid or those who ‘support’ Africa. However, they are also negatively constructed as the ‘colonisers’. The recipients of aid, that is the in-group that GNA identifies with, is portrayed negatively as needy and ‘dependent’, but they are also positively constructed as a united group of people who can make it if they rely on their ‘own’ collective – ‘our’ – resources.

BDA initially uses the ‘you’ form of the pronoun to refer to both the interviewer and any other addressees, that is presumably all ‘African people’. However, the follow up ‘you’s’ and ‘your’ in the latter part of his comments are more narrowly used in reference to the NEPAD Secretariat, national NEPAD units and the leaders at the forefront of NEPAD. Once again, he uses the ‘you’ to distance himself from the African elite groups that are at the forefront of NEPAD and to enact himself as being committed to the interests and concerns of the ordinary ‘African people’ who are yet to be included in NEPAD.

By relying on constructive strategies of ‘othering’ and ‘unification’, such as ‘one voice – united we succeed’ and ‘the people – common African values’, the respondents construct an overarching sense of pan-Africanism. The intra-continental and national differences are referred to, but the commonalities are prioritised to construct a collective sense of Africanism, which is presented as being crucial to NEPAD’s success. This elevation of a common African consciousness is, as we shall soon see in chapter 9, one of the more consistent themes of the
findings. It is at this stage also important to remember that Africanism has often been strategically deployed both by the nationalists and pan-Africanists in the interests of pursuing some common goal such as nation-building and African unity (see Nkrumah 1963). As was suggested in chapters 4 and 5, this strategic essentialism of Africanity was essential for anti-colonial struggles and the construction of post-colonial identities (see Dougan 2004; also see chapter 10). However, Gyekye (1997) and indeed some of the journalists in this study (see chapter 9) caution that many African leaders also tend to invoke Africanism and essentialise Africanity for the purposes of curbing the spread of multi-partyism, criticism and media freedoms. These nuances can contradict journalistic identity and some of the journalists identify them as the reasons why they uphold the neutral sub-identity. At this stage, it is evident that the journalists at some level do uphold a certain sense of ‘Africanism’, as being unique and exclusive particularly when it is contrasted and opposed against other peoples and places. Having presented a sample of the findings concerning NEPAD’s broad (pan-)African status and appeal, the next sub-section presents more specifically the findings concerning how the journalists’ conceive of NEPAD’s African identity.

8.3.2 African identity

With regard to the findings concerning NEPAD’s prioritisation of a common African identity – traditions, heritage, culture and origins – the data show that some of the respondents identified with such a view. Underlying this identification towards Africanity are four listed themes as summarised in Table 5 above. These include: 1) African (cultural) unity as in putting differences aside in relation to the rest of the world; 2) territorial-place-geographical identity as in ‘the continent’; 3) Shared socio-historical and cultural context; and 4) similar to the previous sub-section, a broad and at times differentiated appeal to pan-Africanism (also see chapter 9).

Consider the following:

Yes it aims at bringing Africans together despite their varying ethnic backgrounds so as to solve the socio-economic problems bedeviling the continent – which are more or less the same. This is important because we can only succeed if we are united and we work as a team. Join forces and share what we have despite our weaknesses and our strengths. That is the only way we can succeed, but not through divisions. (TNI)

This is now really from a cultural identity perspective and I identify with it because it is a pan-African development agenda, a unified development voice that looks inside towards our culture then outwards to our relationship with the international community. (TD)

It is a continental initiative and not so much a national one or one that is divided by other forms of belonging. This can be seen in the collective will of our leaders in sticking to its priorities and agenda. (TS)
NEPAD as part of the African Union is more or less like a football team. When the players are playing on the football team, we need a collective view so that they can gel…In spite of the other African countries’ reservations and the different cultures, they have never come out to openly or rightfully condemn NEPAD. (ADM)

As was illustrated in chapter 5, NEPAD represents one of the most recent re-incarnations of a common African identity. Yet, some of the informants had an aversion to what they saw as a false sense of Africanity. Consider the following questioning assessments:

It can be seen as possessing an African identity because Africans conceived it, but the way in which it has to work will be Western. Why? Because it is about the economy and it is about development. Africa has never really come up with its own concept of economic development. We had our own economies before colonisation and unfortunately, their evolution was stopped…NEPAD is African in…creation, but it will have to operate according to the rules set up by the West. (BDA)

In a way, it is a commonly African initiative, but again that commonality is still minimal and it does not really strike me as African, but as South African. (TEA)

I think at some level there is something that can be appreciated about NEPAD in the historical sense of Africans coming together, but again I think this is being used to serve personal interests at a leadership level. (TN2)

Of importance here is the way in which many of the respondents rely on: 1) pronouns ‘we’ and the possessive ‘ours’; and 2) nouns, adjectives and binary oppositions such as, our culture – international, inside – outside and African – Western to discursively construct a sense of Africanness (sameness as in ‘us’). However, they also invoke differences including intra-continental and intra-national ones when they deploy the binary oppositions: ‘national’ – ‘continental’ and ‘African’ – ‘South African’ all of which points to the diversity and plurality of African identity.

One of the salient findings in this sub-section is the way in which for BDA, NEPAD connotes ‘Western’ type development prescriptions that are grounded in neo-liberalism. This view can be linked to the respondents’ earlier criticisms about NEPAD. According to BDA, the colonial interruptions of the ‘West’ in Africa are responsible for the death of Africa’s ‘own’ indigenous and traditional pre-colonial economies. There is a certain sense of mystification and myth creation that is being deployed here, in that BDA is at some level drawing on primordial feelings concerning a pure, truly indigenous and contextually relevant African economic framework whose ‘evolution’ – progress and development – was curtailed by colonialism. BDA looks towards Africa’s history to highlight that – similar to the ‘dependence’ school and the socialist-oriented “indigenous development paradigms” of the 1980s (Adedeji 2002:35) – development, as we know it today, is a Western concept with a history of colonial exploitation. It is this discourse
that he draws on to question NEPAD’s African identity credentials. Nevertheless, it is evident that even if we were to consider the cases of BDA, TN2 and TEA who tend to question NEPAD’s Africanity, the journalists in general do not explicitly reject NEPAD’s brand of common African identity. Some of them recognise that there is diversity in Africanity whilst also acknowledging that there is a certain sense of commonality. Differences and other ‘forms of belonging’ are often downplayed to strategically construct and prioritise NEPAD’s African identity, which some of the journalists implicitly present themselves as identifying with and/or even aspiring to. In the next sub-section, I present a sample of the responses concerning the APRM and its pan-Africanism.

8.3.3 Views on the pan-African appeal in the context of the APRM

Questions concerning the APRM were at some level designed to help tease out any recognisable differences in the informants’ perceptions of NEPAD’s pan-African appeals. The aim here was to find out what they thought of the implications of their countries being assessed by national representatives from other countries and how this linked, if at all, to the construction, reaffirmation and/or hierarchisation of African identities. To put this in context, the words of Thaninga Shope-Linney (Interview 2006), Communications Manager at the NEPAD Secretariat, are salient: “the main objective of the reviews is to look at how we can assist each other, share lessons learned…that is the main purpose…so that African countries can all be seen to be addressing their individual and collective development”. For Ross Herbert, a NEPAD/political analyst at the SAIJA, the APRM attempts to operationalise NEPAD at the level of the nation state. He explains: “The APRM is going after those things that are most important. It is the most interactive element in NEPAD of actually galvanising a national conversation about what do we do” (Herbert Interview 2006). It is within this context that the journalists also saw the APRM as: 1) a positive and practical representation of NEPAD as an initiative that prioritises democracy; 2) a positive representation of an African region that is committed to good governance; 3) the idea of Africans taking charge of their own destiny by reviewing each other on issues of governance.

When asked more specifically whether it is realistic for the APRM to appeal to the pan-African principles of mutual trust, shared benefits and the idea that people in one part of Africa are responsible for those in other parts, many of the informants identified with these principles. Some went to great length to link these principles to their own lived experiences and local contexts within Africa. Consider the following:

For example, like an individual, unless someone tells you that you need to stand up and see another aspect of yourself, you would not know where you have gone wrong. I think the peer review mechanism is the best component of NEPAD. (NT)
For me, I am happy that there has been a paradigm shift. You know our societies historically relied on the force of shame and the sanction of your clan and your elder. So to the extent that we didn’t have a peer review in that sense it was very un-African that we didn’t have it...historically it’s something which makes sense to me. Why did we have superstition? It is not because we were unscientific...superstition was a policing mechanism: if you do this, your hand will fall off; and if you steal, your family will be cursed. So my own sense is that the logic of this APRM is that then you need to reorganise power in such a way that the force of cultural sanction comes to apply at the micro level in the shape of the peer reviews in a modern sort of way. (TN2)

You see the pan-Africanism of it and the good governance was for me part of the initial excitement about it. These things were not addressed before. (BD)

We do have some differences and divisions, but I do not see them at the level of the APRM/NEPAD...You know the old divisions between countries...it is not like the 1970s...when say Tanzania used to view Kenya as a capitalist. I think those kinds of leaders have come and gone. We have to speak as one common voice and not as Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania. (TN1)

Still, the same respondents who were welcoming of the APRM and its pan-African and democratic credentials went on to express the view that, similar to NEPAD – of which it is part – the APRM also lacked a practical edge to it, as it was ‘voluntary’ and not ‘punitive’. Some felt that the review exercise would infringe on their national sovereignty whilst others asserted that it was divisive and simply representative of a ‘club’ of elite African countries that were using the reviews to pursue their narrowly defined political and economic interests and not those of Africa in general. A few even felt that the APRM was not conceptually African in the sense that the international financial institutions imposed it as a condition for obtaining loans and aid. Consider the following in response to questions concerning whether they saw the APRM as being pan-African in its interests and its approach:

I don’t think so, because if this were the case all African countries would have joined by now...am sure this will only happen if there are more countries participating in it which would then also make its pan-Africanism more collective. (TD)

APRM is more or so around differentiating and breaking down Africa the bad Africa brand and saying that we have gradations across Africa...There isn’t anything very stern in the peer review process. There isn’t a lot of room for South Africa to say to Kenya you are screwing up in this way unless it has come up somewhere in the assessment process. It is an elite club...the club for the performers in Africa and the benefits are that you will get foreign aid and investment more easily. So definitely there is an inequality amongst the countries. They are not all the same...there is an inequality and it is deliberate. (ST)

Well, I think it is like we being in an office...one department can never say: ‘Well these are the stated rules’. We will never abide by it. No. No one can come into our business and say that do this. I believe that the APRM is not compulsory, but that it is good for us all to be on board. (ADM)
One good illustration of the **Western** standards is the APRM. It is copied on the **OECD** peer review mechanism standards. It is copied. It is copied. Even the **African Union**, it is also copied on the **European Union**. The engine of that evolution is the **West** and **we** cannot deny it. **we** cannot run away from it…so **you** cannot just say it is **African**. Yes, **Africans** are conceiving it, but it will have to work the **European** way if it is to be accepted by those who have to finance it. *(BDA)*

**We** are responsible for each other up to a certain degree and **I** say this because even now there are bad things happening in neighbouring countries – wars, disease and famine whilst other countries with plenty are looking on. Then what happens is that the **Europeans** and **Americans** come in to help the less well off **African** countries whilst their neighbours with plenty are looking on. But like **I** said before, the thing that is actually standing in the way of this **pan-African** feel is that NEPAD has not been well publicised. It is poorly understood and my audience don’t know it. *(TEA)*

A key point of consideration here is the ways in which the personal pronouns ‘we’ and ‘you’ can be used ambiguously to refer to different in-groups depending on how the interviewees use them in situating their beliefs about the APRM. **TN1**, **TN2**, **ST**, **TEA** and **BDA** use ‘we’ inclusively to refer to ‘Africans’ or a ‘common’ and united pan-African people that are committed to each other’s welfare. However, the ‘we’ in **ADM**’s case is used more narrowly to refer to ‘we’ the employees who in this case could be his fellow journalists at **ADM**. The ‘you’s are for the most part in reference to both the interviewer and the potential audience of readers of this study. Having said that, in **ST**’s comments he uses ‘you’ to refer exclusively to Kenya(ns) and also to those countries that have signed up to the APRM. **BDA** uses ‘you’ to refer exclusively to the researcher and/or even those who claim that NEPAD is ‘African’.

Further, unlike **BDA** and the critics in chapter 5 who questioned NEPAD/APRM on the grounds that it is based on neo-liberalism and the APRM is based on the liberal democratic ideals of the donor countries, **TN2** turns this relation upside down and directly links the APRM to traditional African cultural values, practices, knowledge systems and history. **TN2**’s stance is in line with the culturalist strand of NEPAD and the ‘African renaissance’. In fact, whilst critics see NEPAD/APRM as serving the interests of donor countries and as not being ‘African-owned’ and ‘African-led’ (Anyang’ Nyong’o et al 2002), **TN2** explicitly narrates that it is ‘un-African’ that ‘we’ – ‘Africans’ as a united and singular group of people with commonly shared experiences – had not thought of this before. In doing this, he inverts the political and cultural meanings of the APRM from negative to positive in the sense that rather than seeing the mechanism as a foreign imposition it is now linked through a moment of strategic essentialism to the very consciousness of Africanity (see Dougan 2004). His use of the ‘we’ personal pronouns is generally in reference to a common identity category of Africans. However, there are instances when he uses ‘you’ and
‘your’ to exclusively refer to me as a presumed African individual/interviewer and sometimes to refer to any other (African) addressees to whom a superstition tradition is assumed to apply. However, the last ‘you’ in his extract can be interpreted as being in reference to African leaders.

Generally, the findings concerning the APRM suggest that even though the journalists are aware that not all countries are involved in the reviews, their comments still point towards a sustained appeal or aspiration towards pan-Africanism particularly with regard to the idea of shared responsibility on issues of democracy. It is evident that their discourse concerning the APRM also points to the heightened articulation of political, economic and cultural identity differences in Africa and yet the continued appropriation of binary oppositions between ‘Europe’ and ‘Africa’ actually works here to re-affirm a level of essentialised conception of Africanity and the construction of an ‘otherness’. The findings in the next sub-section also highlight this question of differences particularly with regard to national and African cultural identity vis-à-vis NEPAD, but for now, it can be posited that the journalists’ discourse on identity in this entire chapter has been characterised by essentialist and anti-essentialist (multiple) conceptions of Africanity.

8.4 Africanity versus national identity when engaging with NEPAD

Many respondents suggested that, more often than not, when dealing with NEPAD they tend to locate themselves primarily in terms of their national identities and not so much in terms of an overarching African identity (see Table 7 below). However, these identifications with nationality are not as straightforward as they might seem. In some instances, there are moments of ambivalence when Africanity is prioritised over and above national identity and yet even in such cases nationality is not entirely rejected. In fact, in many cases, the aspiration to national identity is used as the stepping-stone for identifying with Africanity. Three secondary and accompanying themes that are seen here as being influential in shaping the interviewees’ responses include: 1) journalistic work and responsibilities; 2) shared and common socio-cultural-historical experiences and attachments (continental/national); and 3) unique and different socio-cultural-historical experiences and attachments (continental/national).

Table 7: Nationality and Africanity in reference to NEPAD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equally Ghanaian and African (ADM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All of the above (TS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwandese, Kenyan and African (NT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Ghanaian than African (ADM2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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More Ugandan than African (TN2)
More Nigerian than African (TD)
More South African than African (MG)
More South African than African (BD)

More African than South African (ST)
More African than Congolese (BDA)
More African than Ugandan (TEA)
More African than Kenyan (TNI)

In line with the categories in Table 7, informants offered the following comments:

**Nationality over Africanity with some contradictions:**

As a **Ghanaian first** and as an **African** I am proud to be an **African**, but I am sometimes sad to be an **African**, because of we are far back in development. We are far back in development. I would wish to go around everywhere in Ghana and see tarred roads with pavements that sort of thing that is why. I am also curious to find out if the country can set itself out as an example on the continent…I want to commit myself to Ghana and see what we can do. If we can do it, it means Africa can do it… If it is good for us, then it is good for Africa…I want to look at Ghana first before the rest of Africa. (GNA)

My life, my history and professional experiences are defined by my life in Uganda. (TN2)

I am **Nigerian first** as that is my nationality. The truth is that I know very little about the rest of Africa and I suppose that those are some of the cultural aspects that NEPAD should try to correct and change…making us more like our brothers’ keepers…irrespective of boundaries as in the APRM. You know I do feel disconnected at times from the rest of Africa. I know that I am an African, but I see myself first as a Nigerian and then as an African. This is because I am politically, economically and culturally disconnected from the rest of Africa. (TD)

I am more South African than African, there is no doubt about that. I am South African first, but I think we have an identity as Africans. There is no other group of people…that will ever say I am an Asian, Latin American…you don’t get people saying I am a European. They don’t, but for us when the World Cup is on we don’t know a thing about Togo, we have always known more about Belgium and Burundi that is the way we were raised, but when Ghana, Togo and Cote d’Ivoire perform, I mean we talk about them as if they were our own compatriots. So emotionally, we are tied to the heart and I love that. I really love that. (MG)

President Mbeki has been the leader of NEPAD and that is of interest to our readers. We are a South African newspaper and readers are interested in that…but also you have to look at the questions of: What does it mean for us? What does it mean for our neighbours? What does it mean for South African companies? and what does it mean for Zimbabwe? So you know we – I am – a bit parochial, but you see most news people are parochial…we are reporters for our readers so that is our angle. So that is my…our perspective on it. (BD)
In their commentary, the respondents often rely on the ‘I’ personal pronoun to enact the self in the discursive construction of national identities. Their narratives particularly as in the cases of BD and GNA show an emotional attachment to the nation and its boundaries as the place of work, birth or simply as the place and space that has for the most part defined their socio-cultural and historical experiences. The respondents see themselves as sharing these experiences in common with other people within the nation. It is in this regard that the intra-national and unequal positions of different social and ethnic groups within the nation are at this stage downplayed and invisible. What is constructed here is intra-national sameness and similarity.

This activation of national identity with an emphasis on national interests and one’s native country can be illustrated by BD’s comments. Not only does he invoke ‘President Mbeki’ as the leader of South Africa, he uses ‘we’, ‘our’ and ‘us’ fluidly to refer to South Africa, South African reporters, South African readers and South African companies whilst constantly linking these referents to his own experiences as a South African journalist. The binding commonality here is South Africa. Despite this, when he uses ‘our’ to refer to Zimbabwe and other neighbours of South Africa, he deploys the constructive strategy of transformation to change this well-established and essentialised South African identity towards a sub-regional Southern African identity. In fact, whilst some respondents seem to be unequivocal in their identification with the nation, MG and GNA in particular appear to perform a paradoxical national identification given the propensity with which they shift between nationality and Africanity (also see chapter 10).

In GNA’s comment, the ‘we’s’ at the beginning of the extract are mainly in reference to Africans as a ‘people’ with a common identity and shared development challenges. However, towards the end, she uses the ‘we’s’ and ‘us’ to prioritise her national identity as a Ghanaian – an identification that does not presumably apply, for example to myself as an interviewer hailing from Uganda. Nevertheless, she then goes on to quickly transform this Ghanaian national identity into an African identity when she explicitly links Ghana’s potential successes as being a success for all Africans. MG does the same although he does this in a round-about way, in that he for the most part uses ‘we’, ‘us’ and ‘our’ to refer to South Africans and yet there are instances where he uses ‘we’ more inclusively to refer to ‘we Africans’. Still, he also distances not only himself as a South African, but also all others that share this South Africaness with him (‘us’), from the other Africans in other African countries – Ghana, Burundi, Togo and Cote d’Ivoire – when he reduces and collectivises these countries into the category of ‘them’.
Africanity over nationality with some contradictions:

When I deal with NEPAD, my sense is that I am an African not a South African. I think that I approach NEPAD with a sense of optimism or commitment to Africa. I do not go into it as a South African trying to see what to get out of it...I am interested in it because I feel African...I am writing about it for a South African audience. (ST)

Africans have conceived it and it is quite good that originally it is made up of two embryos – the Omega plan and the Millennium plan – that were merged together into one. One plan was from Francophone Africa and the other from Southern Africa...I cannot within the concept of NEPAD see myself as a Ugandan or Nigerian. I have to see myself as an African. (BDA)

I feel more African than Ugandan. Maybe because I do work for a regional newspaper and I also write for other newspapers that are not in Uganda so that makes me feel more African than Ugandan. (TEA)

First, I see myself as an African, then secondly a Kenyan. Despite being a Kenyan I belong to a continent called Africa and the boundaries that divide matter less. (TN1)

The respondents in this category are prioritising a common regional, continental or territorial African identity over and above nationality in the context of NEPAD. They tend to do this with the aid of the ‘I’ statements and adjectives like ‘African’ and even references such as ‘regional’. In their narratives, identifications to national identity are not necessarily demolished, but they are downplayed in favour of a common African identity. The respondents are aware that there are differences and even subtle contradictions within the collectivity of Africa, but they deploy a strategy of unification to construct an almost coherent model of Africanity.

Hybridity:

I see myself as a Ghanaian because we have a culture, principle and history that make us different from people from other African countries. Moreover, once I am a Ghanaian it automatically qualifies me to be an African. It is the Ghanaian citizenship, which guarantees my being an African. Therefore, it behoves me to defend my being an African...to defend the interest of the two anywhere I find myself. (ADM)

I see myself in terms of all of the above. Ours can only be unity in diversity of ethnicity, nationality, race or sex. Each one of the labels is a component of the whole that makes a continent, nation or ethnicity. (TS)

That is who I am. I think it is also because of my work across the region, which criss-crosses the countries in ways that reflect my own sense of who I am as an – East – African. (NT)

This category includes those respondents whose comments are characterised by ambivalence, uncertainty and hybridity. Similar to some of the other respondents in the above categories, they also appear to uphold other conceptions that are not neatly aligned to nationality or Africanity as
such by drawing attention to identifications such as ‘East African’. However, their comments generally tend to confirm that they actually see themselves as being located between nationality and Africanity and/or as possessing a plurality of identities vis-à-vis NEPAD. In their comments, they are at some level ambivalent about being into one identity category at the exclusion of another. The respondents do not appear to have a consistent and rigid sense of their own national and African identities. They seem to oscillate between and within various subject positions whilst also contradicting those self-same positions that they move in and out of as if in a state of hybridity.

In general, the excerpts in this section clearly show the ways in which informants implicitly drew on the three secondary themes that were identified at the start of this sub-section when speaking about nationality and Africanity (also see chapter 10). They rely on pronouns such as ‘I’, ‘we’, ‘you’ and ‘our’ and ambiguous adjectives as in ‘African’ and identity markers such as ‘Francophone Africa’ to construct contingent and even shifting identities. Evidently, nationality and nation-states – at least within the context of NEPAD – are seen here as a key site for the construction of identity. In other instances, these markers of identity are deployed in line with constructive strategies to facilitate shifts between differences, leading to a singular common pan-African identity. Still, the excerpts also portray instances of contradictory selves with regard to some of the informants’ self-understandings in reference to NEPAD’s African status.

### 8.5 Conclusion
Based on the findings in this chapter it can be posited that the journalists seem to simultaneously uphold differing identity positions to facilitate their explanations – with regard to NEPAD, the APRM, Africanity – in different contexts. It is in this regard that they appear to maintain a broad appeal towards pan-Africanism and yet they are also aware of (national) cultural differences within Africa. In fact, there are also moments when they themselves enact these moments of differentiation. As is elaborated on in chapter 10, the key thing here is to realise that they often uphold dual identities and that they tend to move in and out of different identity categories. This serves to remind us that African cultural identities in general are not fixed since they are always in the process of becoming (see Achebe 1988). The next chapter deals with the journalists’ role perceptions and specific responses concerning how these are affected, if at all, when they are faced with NEPAD’s journalistic interpellations.
9.0 Introduction
This chapter presents the findings concerning the journalists’ identifications with regard to the journalistic sub-identities and their specific responses towards NEPAD’s socially responsible-oriented journalistic interpellations, particularly in the shape of an Africanist development journalism. In general, the first-level analysis of the findings shows that the respondents often see their identity as being contingent, but there are also moments of multiplicity and ambivalence vis-à-vis NEPAD, all of which points towards the construction of identities as a context-specific and less than certain-process. For the most part, the journalists present and enact themselves as ‘neutral-objectivist journalists’, and yet at other moments they see themselves as ‘Africans’, and as ‘journalists’ who uphold a plurality of journalistic roles in yet another. At some level, as part of an attempt to meet the competing demands of their profession and their wider social-cultural context, they seem to move in and out of various identity categories.

9.1 Self-identification with regard to journalism
This study explored the broad conceptions of the respondents about journalistic sub-identities through a three-step format. The first step was to get a sense of what they generally considered the ideal roles of journalism and in turn whether they again generally saw themselves as measuring up to those roles in their journalistic work. The second step concerned whether they primarily saw themselves as neutral or opinion-oriented type journalists. The third step was to discover what the informants considered as the important roles for them to enact based on 10 journalistic role statements which are related to the social agenda, neutral, watchdog and development journalism. At each stage of this three step-format, informants were encouraged to provide examples in their commentary. As a result, the informants provided extensive narratives concerning their understandings of journalism.

9.1.1 The ideal role/s of journalism
The questions asked in this section included: 1) what is the ideal role of journalism? and 2) in practice, how do you see yourself in relation to that role? Responses to the first question were primarily oriented towards the libertarian stance whereby journalism was linked to the following functions – to inform, be a watchdog and to be the voice of the people. However, in some cases respondents also prioritised socially responsible journalistic functions as being important in the
context of the post-colony, which is seen here as being in need of development. Although the respondents do not necessarily state it, a public-service ideal that is often invoked here as being general to – neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development sub-identities – the responsibilities of the journalist in Africa irrespective of his or her specific journalistic sub-identity. Below is a selection of their comments:

**Table 8: Personal beliefs concerning the ideal role of journalism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Libertarian-oriented</th>
<th>Social responsibility-oriented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disseminate facts through updates and hard news</td>
<td>Educate the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of the people / Platform for diverse views</td>
<td>Enable people to participate in decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be a watchdog and a critic</td>
<td>To provide analysis through which people can understand issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To inform</td>
<td>To inform the public for the purposes of development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To inform, to educate the people that is the classic traditional role of journalism. (*BDA*)

To educate, inform, be the voice of the people and to play the part of a watchdog. (*TD*)

In my view, the ideal function is to educate the public, ensure that my readers in general have access to current and factual information to create a platform that would allow them to participate in decision-making. (*ADM*)

I mean to inform, to analyse, to criticise, you know, to entertain and to amuse. Journalism is a product that is bought by the public. So there is a market and you have to appeal to that market, but it’s very interesting once upon a time as a journalist in the apartheid era if you’d asked me what our job was I could have told you that in a sentence our job was to break down the system of apartheid. (*MG*)

To inform through updates and hard news and to also educate and make the public understand issues so that they can make the world around them better. (*GNA*)

…journalism is about news and information…In Africa or South Africa, I think that journalists have a strong obligation to provide information because this is an information poor society and I imagine that it only gets worse as you move further North. (*ST*)

For many of the respondents the functions that they initially mentioned as the ideal roles of journalism were also the same ones that they saw themselves as performing and/or aspiring to perform in practice. For instance, having initially insisted on the educating the public, *ADM* now had this to say about what he does in practice:

For instance, I developed a story idea on APRM/NEPAD and interviewed the chairman of Ghana’s APRM council… All the radio and TV stations used it. It was through that story
that the public got to know that the government did not accede to the APRM because it wanted to be painted white, but rather to win more votes. The story created a platform for the APRM governing council to educate the public and to correct the damaging impression.

Others, such as ST went on to explain at length that what he was doing now was oriented towards the ideal of providing information. Consider the following:

I have spent most of my life completely at the news end with Reuters. It is just…the numbers and the facts. Reporting through the struggle here – that was about news and information, but it was couched in the form of news…when I was a young journalist we were evangelistic, we were all White. We believed that what was happening in the country was wrong and we believed that we knew what Argus readers should know and we were going to tell them. I do not believe that anymore, now I like to present information that I think people might wish to know, but I don’t have the sense that ‘you better read this because that’s good for you’.  

Having previously prioritised the straightforward disseminator function of journalism, BD explained that his was a position that was “guided by the bottom line and the needs of the readers at Business Day”. He added that, “You see, we do not always have the time to focus on in-depth pieces which are time consuming and costly. So I gravitate towards the provision of the facts as they are”.

Some of the respondents expressed ambivalence and uncertainty about exactly what it is that they saw themselves as doing in practice when held up against what they saw as the ideal. These included NT who had prioritised the function of being able to look beyond simply “informing people and disseminating news”, and argued that as much she wanted to enact that stance it was important to remember that, “we work under pressure from our editors”. Despite this, she argued that, “we still try to do the right thing as is required of us and not as is required by our editors, but as someone that is compelled to do the right thing as an African journalist”. Another interviewee in this category is MG who, having previously referred to journalism as “a product” that had to be made appealing to “the public and the market”, confessed that he was “not sure” what his journalistic function was in the “new South Africa”. However, when pressed on this issue, he revealed that one of the reasons as to why he left the “mainstream” was because “many journalists…were focused on making 12% return on capital” for their proprietors. He also went on to add that, “I think we should be more than that, but I also understand the financial imperative”.

TEA also expressed an uncertain stance:

I have not put much thought into what I do as a journalist or how I do it, but what I usually do is to tell the two sides of the story, to prioritise on the most relevant aspects of the topic

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36 The Cape Argus is an afternoon daily newspaper in Cape Town, South Africa.
and to make sure that I do not give the audience a raw deal. You know they have to be kept abreast of the most relevant and important things.

It is evident that the interviewees for the most part appear to prioritise the values of libertarian journalistic ideology – as a forum for the exchange of views, criticism and information (see Nerone et al 1995) – particularly as in the shape of the neutral sub-identity and not so much watchdogism as the ideal roles of journalism in society. However, when asked more specifically, about what they do in practice in the context of the post-colony, some of them appear to shift their focus towards the social agenda and the development functions. Others are not even entirely sure about what they are doing although they seem to be keen on journalistic functions that are linked to the social agenda role of enlightening the public so that they can improve their welfare.

Another key finding is that the journalists’ judgment about the role of journalism is influenced by the context in which they live, their own personal experiences and their own conceptions of what it is that their readers need and even the media organisations that they work for (see also Shoemaker and Reese 1996). Some see their work as a product that is to be sold to the market – public, readers, audience in general and others see themselves more like social agenda journalists who are out to educate their readers. It can be posited early on here that the journalists find themselves trapped between their professional ideals, the media owners’ profit-motives and the development needs of their socio-cultural context.

The bulk of the respondents speak in the present tense with the aid of the ‘I’ statements. However, they are not necessarily presenting an essential self as such, but rather a preferred identification – ‘I’ the journalist – selected from within the wider range of identities that might be available to them in their context. Whether it is ‘we’ the White South African journalists (ST), ‘us’ the African journalists (NT) or ‘we’ the factual journalists (BD), the respondents are strongly articulating an aspiration towards broader journalistic identity. The next sub-section deals with the responses from the journalists concerning the two broad extremes of ‘neutrality’ and ‘opinion’.

9.1.2 Neutrality and opinion

In this section, respondents were asked to indicate which of the broad statements – underlined – most applied to what they saw themselves as doing in their journalism.

Neutrality: Tell the story as it is – based on factual evidence from sources, leaving the public to make up their own minds about aspects of their lives based on what is written

At Reuters, what we say is that we report the facts for our clients. It is not journalism for the fun of it. (RT)
Otherwise, I will end up losing my validity and that of the newspaper. (BDA)

News must be news. News is news. If I gave my opinion the story would be edited if I put in too much. Facts are facts. You do not want to be accused of bias…you want to try to get your opponent [a chance] to give their opinion. (BD)

I am more inclined to tell the story. My requirements and daily schedule do not leave room for me to start influencing the people. Besides, my readers may start doubting what I produce if I start taking sides (TD)

I see myself as a journalist who listens critically from opinion leaders or experts and tells the story as they see it. I gather both sides of the story and I always keep in mind that I am informing the public and that I need not impose my views on them. I need them to know the bare facts so that they can make their own decisions. (ADM)

I don’t speak for anybody. I don’t campaign. I think Africa is capable of a renaissance and I come to it thinking that I think Mbeki is good for Africa. But if he screws up, I will write critically about him. I am on Africa’s side, I am not an Afro-pessimist, but nor am I then going to blinker myself. I find some balance. (ST)

I would have to be in the first category. The second category [opinion] is all very well if you work for something like a state broadcaster or a party run newspaper. I am an independent journalist, but very much a commercial journalist. I could not afford the luxury of taking or proselytising a campaigning line…nobody would buy my pieces. I have to let the public make up their own minds. (MG)

I think if I start to push this or that agenda then there will be no difference between me and the governments that we are supposed to be checking against. (TN2)

In as much as I want them to make the right decisions…I do not see it as my goal as a journalist to start opining personally about what the audience should do. That is why I have only written a few commentaries and mostly for The Monitor newspaper. (TEA)

Opinion: Actively take sides and include both facts and even your own views in the story, for the purposes of getting people to act on issues that you (journalist) see as beneficial to the public

I want to push an agenda instead of just looking at an issue and reporting what is there. We want to know what is happening, its impact on the people and whether we are in the right direction? I want to ask these questions. (GNA)

I want to get involved and push things forward. For instance, at the paper that I am working for at the Nation Media Group, I am a permanent staffer, but I always go out of my way to do some feature stories and I am not paid for them. I do them to help the community, to uplift my people and to educate them – this is outside of my work assignments. So I think I fall in the second category. I do not just work for pay. (TN1)

Based on the extracts in this sub-section, one gets the impression that the majority of respondents strive to hold onto the values of the libertarian model of journalism with its emphasis on neutrality, facts, balance, objectivity and keeping the government in check as is expected of a free press (see Berger 2000). In contrast, few journalists see themselves as performing opinion-
oriented news journalism through which they can more directly influence public discourse or the 
politico-social agenda for the benefit of the public particularly with regard to development. 
However, ST expresses a continental partisanship to defend a neutral journalistic practice 
regarding projects like the ‘African renaissance’. In addition, only two respondents specifically 
asserted that they saw themselves as taking on functions that fall within ‘both’ categories. These 
included TS, who revealed that he often wrote about the abuse of power and corruption and that 
for him it was not simply enough to do journalism for the sake of “telling the story”. As he 
argued: “If I say bad roads are killing our economies, I should be bold enough to sit in our CDF 
committee to show my rural people the way. If there are no desks in a primary school next to my 
home, instead of complaining I should help raise funds to buy desks.” Similarly, NT felt that 
when she is dealing with “straightforward news”, she does not need to influence the public. 
However, when dealing with a feature or an analytical story on ‘HIV/AIDS’, she would strive to 
put in her own thoughts. Hence, she opined that: “I think this influences the public”. In both cases, 
the implication is that the respondents do attempt to provide opinion, analyses and interpretations 
of complex problems to the public whilst also making room for factual reportage.

At this stage, it is worth noting that the continued presence of the ‘I’ personal pronoun also 
indicates at some level the extent to which their work is influenced by their own personal 
decision-making and individual conceptions about journalism. The personal decision-making 
attitude which is highlighted by the ‘I’ statements in as far as they denote the presence of the 
speaker as a journalist suggest to us here that journalists may actually have some leeway when it 
comes to selecting news and news sources and the presentation of the news. However, they do 
this whilst bearing in mind the needs and expectations that are posed by their organisations, the 
readers and journalism’s ideology in general. The bulk of the respondents draw on this ideology 
particularly in its libertarian strand to support their preferred stance with regard to neutrality or 
opinion-led journalism. The references to ‘validity’, ‘facts’, ‘balance’ and ‘two sides of the story’ 
illustrate the journalists’ desire to uphold the dominant professional libertarian model of 
journalism whilst also creating the impression that the inclusion of opinion would be against the 
norms, ideals and values of their profession (see chapter 10 for implications of this).

Furthermore, despite the strong orientation towards ‘neutrality’, the journalistic stances being 
enacted by the respondents are not as stable as they might seem. Not all respondents who saw 
themselves as belonging to the first category were explicitly certain about it. For example, during

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37 CDF stands for Community Development Forum.
this stage of the interview, ADM also reasoned that neutrality is what he does when dealing with what he referred to as “strait-jacket stories” whilst adding that he sometimes pushes for an agenda, but only in his “commentaries”. BD also revealed that: “If I want to influence the public I can go and write a feature or I can go on the opinion page or I can write an editorial”. This association of opinion with features, analysis, interpretation and stories that are reflective of social agenda and development journalistic, is also evident in TEA’s response concerning why she has written a few ‘commentaries’. The implicit assertion here is that stories that push for an agenda are less ‘objective’ and less factual, unlike those that conform to the libertarian news approach. Stories that are based on facts are implicitly associated with ‘hard news’ whilst features and commentaries are related to analyses and in-depth news, which create room for opinions (see Rich 2003; Fedler 1997; discussions in chapter 10). I now turn our attention to the findings concerning the journalists’ responses to the journalistic role statements.

9.1.3 Importance of journalistic identity statements

Bearing in mind their individual standpoints as presented in sub-section 9.1.2, informants were asked to respond to, rate and comment on the importance of ten journalistic role statements. The statements were designed to provide insight into the journalists’ attitudes towards the attributes of libertarian and socially responsible journalism. Informants responded to each of the statements based on a simple 4-point Likert-type answer scale: 4=extremely important; 3=quite important; 2=somewhat important; 1=not important at all (see Table 9 below). Beyond simply rating the statements, informants were probed on their choices as part of an attempt to elicit commentary and explanations from them with regard to their rankings. It is in this regard that the statements, which generally reflect normative functions concerning the responsibilities of journalists, as they are understood in this study, and by academics, practitioners and the public, were deployed here to further extrapolate the interviewees’ self-understandings with regard to journalistic identity. Remember that in this study, journalistic identity is read as an umbrella for the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development roles / sub-identities of journalism and that this identity finds expression through these roles (see chapter 4). However, the statements do not strictly equate to neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development journalistic identities, as they are operationalised in this study. For instance, statement 4, which is in this study considered to be a feature of all journalistic identities – see Appendix B – is for the purposes of analysis nevertheless treated as being associated mainly with the watchdog sub-identity.
*Note that higher scores equal greater importance on the scale of 1 to 4.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>STATEMENTS</th>
<th>ADM</th>
<th>TD</th>
<th>BD</th>
<th>BDA</th>
<th>TN1</th>
<th>TN2</th>
<th>MG</th>
<th>TEA</th>
<th>NT</th>
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<th>ST</th>
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Table 9: Importance of journalistic role statements
As in chapter 3, some statements extrapolated responses that addressed more directly issues of media freedoms, journalistic independence, government control and self-restraint whilst others tended towards public service and issues of poverty. Some statements elicited responses that highlighted event-led and conflict type reportage whilst others gave rise to considerations concerning issues-led and problem-solving reportage and even an Africanist agenda. The findings show a predominant and broad endorsement of both the neutral and social agenda journalistic sub-identities and to a slightly lesser extent development journalism. All the respondents except TS rank the neutral dimension as being the most important (mean = 3.62 on a four-point scale). Within it, ‘Avoid stories with unverified content’ had the highest mean of 3.66, indicating its prime importance. The other libertarian-oriented function of timely, accurate and neutral information took second place. Drawing on the literature review in chapters 2 and 3, it is evident that these two basic functions have often been rated highly in other studies and they are also seen here as being representative of the key values within journalism’s consensual ideology and the emerging global liberal dimension of journalism. Eight respondents rate the social agenda dimension as being quite important whilst nine respondents rated development journalism as being important. Only four rated the watchdog dimension highly.

Social agenda journalism was rated as second in importance (mean = 2.93), with the individual statement ‘To provide analysis and interpretations of issues to the public’ sharing second place overall with the libertarian function of timely and accurate information, whilst ‘Discuss regional or national policies’ was ranked as one of the third most important individual statements (mean = 3.16). However, overall – across all respondents – the statement, ‘To influence public agendas through opinions’ was rated as the second lowest function with a mean of 2.33. The development dimension, which attempts to capture the post-colonial view of development journalism, whereby journalists support the continent and its leaders in their development efforts and also go on to provide a positive and united portrayal of the continent, took third place (mean = 2.75). In this cluster, the statement concerning the portrayal of the continent was not rated highly (mean = 2.5) whilst the statement concerning the support for development was rated highest (mean = 3). In fact, united and self-reliant portrayal of the continent was the third lowest rated function overall (see chapter 10 for implications).

The final journalistic sub-identity, watchdog, which represents the distinct ‘fourth estate’ role that media in general are seen as playing in democratic societies, was rated lowest in importance with a mean of 2.58. The individual statement ‘Investigate claims and statements made by government
and business’ was in this cluster, ranked as the highest. ‘To be an adversary of government and business through criticism’ was overall the lowest rated item (mean = 2). To get more insights into the answers concerning the journalistic functions, respondents were asked why they rated this or that function as quite important or not and to also describe how they practiced – depending on importance – the listed journalistic functions. Not all respondents had something to say about each statement that was presented to them. In some cases, the respondents preferred to explain their choices across the board in one general comment rather than an individual explanation for each statement.

9.1.3.1 Opinions on importance of statements

Some of the comments offered pertaining to beliefs about journalistic functions include:

Statement: To provide quick, timely and neutral information

*Extremely important*
This is…because my readers often want to be kept abreast and updated on a daily basis. (BDA)
That’s my lifeblood I couldn’t survive without it. (MG)
Yes. That’s fine by me. If it’s more of PR for government then I will not do it. I think as a journalist I am supposed to serve the public and not the government or whatever institution maybe having an agenda. (GNA)
The information that comes to us we have to pass it on to the community. (TNJ)
Every journalist should know that his or her role is to inform the public. (TEA)

*Quite important*
I think this is what I strive to do besides all else. (TD)
Of course. However, quick and timely do not apply so much to what I am doing now at weekly newspaper, but neutral does. Normally that would be highest in what I do. (ST)

Statement: Avoid stories with unverified content that is not factual

*Extremely important*
Every journalist must avoid such a story. That is what we should uphold. It may not be the case, but that is what we should do. You have to deal with facts and they must be accurate and correct. (GNA)
A journalist needs to know that he is supposed to go out there, get news, work on it, then find the facts and disseminate them to the people. (TEA)
That is it. I mainly aim to tell a balanced objective story. (ADM)
That is a key function that holds the profession together. (BDA)
Again, you know your credibility is what you live by – absolutely important. (MG)

To be an adversary of government and business through criticism

*Quite Important*
I think I am referring here to being a watchdog and not so much an adversary which is ‘I am against you – you are the enemy’ and I don’t feel that at all, but I do feel like a watchdog which I think is important in what I do. (ST)

*Somewhat important*
That one is very tricky. Not quite an adversary although it is also very important. (BDA)
I don’t find myself in concession with government. I write what I see, what I hear, what I am able to research into. (GNA)

Not important at all
No. Why would I be an adversary? I think that is to say that whatever they say you are against it like an opposition. No. I wouldn’t see it that way. I certainly would not want to be a tool or a lapdog, but nor I would not negate everything that they do. I think you need to lash and praise. (MG)

Statement: Investigate claims and statements made by government and business

Extremely important
I think if you are an investigative journalist, you need to be cynical if you are my kind of journalist. You need to be at least sceptical, you need to look for the personal agendas. (ST)

Quite important
Of course, I have to and I do not want to limit myself to government alone, for government to set the agenda for me to follow all the time, that is why I gave it a 3. (GNA)
That’s the role of newspapers from a practical point of view for me. I do not have that time, but it is obviously a vital component of the newspaper. (MG)

Statement: To influence public-oriented social agendas by providing opinions

Somewhat important
If it is in the interests of the public, obviously. I am a human being with feelings: sometimes when I am writing a balanced piece I often feel that I would just like to leave this out because I hate what this person, country or party is doing, but I leave it in simply because of balance. I do not delegate to myself the role of shifting people’s feelings in a certain way. (MG)
I am not one for putting forth a political agenda, but in this case, if it is a public agenda I may do so. However, I have rated it low because it can be a grey area. (GNA)

Not important
If I want to influence the public I can go and write a feature, or I can go on the opinion page or I can write an editorial. There is a certain grey area of interpretation, and you are always open to accusations of opinion rather than fact. (BD)

Statement: To provide analysis and interpretation of issues to the public

Extremely important
It enables me to do comprehensive analysis and interpretation for the reader to understand issues that the news report would not have touched on. (ADM)
You have to provide analysis and interpretation of issues. (GNA)
To enable my readers understand the issues well, to identify loopholes and to suggest solutions. Sometimes I do commentary and analysis. We have a daily column for special reports, both in the print and online editions. I have been featuring there, but I am not paid for that, we write about 1500 to 2000 words for free. (TN1)

Quite important
Very much so and particularly in print – you know that the public believes that it is adequately informed by what it hears on radio and sees on television. The only way that print will survive is if it is able to analyse and explain the whys, the how’s, better than those two media can. Give real value to the people buying print. (MG)
At Business Day, one can do what we call the scene, a leader page feature. One needs the time, but it can be done. It is not a problem. (BD)

Statement: To discuss regional or national policies that are being developed

Extremely important
Yes, people must understand why this policy is a benefit to them. That is my main interest. To let people understand an issue. (GNA)

Quite important
Yeah absolutely. At some stage, you must understand that many people will turn away from that. Maybe the majority of your readers will not, but again for credibility you need to do it. (MG)
It is my role as a journalist to educate and inform the public. (TN1)

To support marginalised or disadvantaged people

Quite important
For me this also includes me being a teacher and a guardian that is committed to improving society. (TS)
Yes, we have responsibility for that. For instance, if I talk about education, if there is a problem somewhere, whatever is causing a lack of education in that community I should be able to highlight and bring that out so that it is addressed by whoever is responsible. Yes, government has the role to educate the people and inform them, but we must be part of that process. (ADM)

Somewhat important
This does not take the bulk of my work and my news because I mostly inform, but whenever it comes, it is important. (BDA)
Again, you are getting into the issue of advocacy. I have to say as a journalist maybe it is important. As a South African maybe we would not have survived if we had not had advocacy journalism. Don’t even get me started on the subject of Western Sahara for example. I try whatever I can in solidarity with those people, but as a journalist, I realise that you can only tell that many stories about it. The copy editor will say: ‘This is the second one in six months, we don’t want another one’. (MG)

Statement: To support regional/continental development

Extremely important
This is for me very important in the context of NEPAD especially with the collapse of the WTO talks. You know regional integration will come up as a very important issue especially in terms of protecting regional interests. (BDA)

Quite Important
I am not going to become a champion of this or that African initiative, but I think that they are good things. I want to write about them because the world needs to know about them, but I am not going to go out there and propagate and cheerlead. (ST)
That is broad, but then I deem it as a national government responsibility. (GNA)

Somewhat important
Again depending on the nature – private or not – of your publication. (MG)

Not important

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38 WTO stands for World Trade Organisation.
That is not the journalists’ job. It is not. That is the job of the government. I know often governments perceive the media as a constituency to do that, but our job is to report and to find stories that would be of interest to the readers, it is not to support an agenda that the government puts in front of us or someone else no matter how worthy the agenda is.
Governments tend to push for this, but they are just scared of journalists being critical. Our job is to tell the story and it is a simple job. (BD)

Statement: To portray self-reliance and unity of the continent

*Extremely important*
Then again, this is very important, but I am not going to pretend that it exists when it does not, but where I think that it is there I will portray it. (ST)

*Quite important*
I rate it highly. (GNA)

*Not important*
These conceptions are just way off. We would not be able to sell newspapers if we became the equivalent of the SABC39 in print. We have a fairly good perception of what our readers want to read and our sales are up. We continue to earn money, pay our salaries and to reward the shareholders so we stick to what journalism is about. (BD)
You are getting into the advocacy role. I think again if you do write about NEPAD and emphasise the need for self-reliance I mean we are a long way from it obviously, but this is something that I for one would have to be careful with. (MG)

The respondents’ comments concerning the journalistic role statements show a tendency for them to portray more favourably and align themselves to those functions that relate to the libertarian interpellation of journalism. Libertarian journalism particularly in the shape of the neutral sub-identity is enacted here as being indicative of what it is that a professional journalist is expected to do by his/her peers and society. It is evident that the statements which are rated lowly include the three statements – ‘provision of opinions to influence social agendas’, being an ‘adversary to government and business’ and ‘portrayal of the self-reliance and unity’. They are all potentially seen as being at odds with the ‘neutral-objectivity’ journalistic standards. Clearly, these same statements are also responsible for the journalists’ commentary concerning the emphasis on their total independence as they strive to enact themselves towards objectivity. Thus, whilst the majority believe in independence for the journalist, there is somewhat lower support for the idea that journalists are watchdogs and more specifically that they are adversaries to government and the private sector. Still, the respondents’ commentary throughout this entire section indicates their relative endorsement of a variety of functions that are influenced by both the libertarian and socially responsible journalistic ideologies (see also Weaver 1998). The point here is that the respondents can also be seen to invoke an overarching public-service ideal in particular as one of the strong components of journalistic ideology in general. This ideal is seen as key aspect of

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39 SABC stands for South African Broadcasting Corporation, which is South Africa’s public service broadcaster.
journalism irrespective of specific journalistic sub-identity enactment. This is made more evident for us in light of the finding that none of the four journalistic identities was below 2 = ‘somewhat important’. In fact, of key importance in terms of this study’s concerns, is the relatively high rating and acceptance in the commentaries that is given to social responsibility journalistic values, which may imply loss of professional autonomy, susceptibility to NEPAD’s African development journalism and the consideration of broader socio-cultural influences.

In addition, if we compare the responses in this section with each other in terms of the sub-sections we can identify five key themes in journalists’ perceptions of the role statements: namely, 1) personal decision-making; 2) professionalism (values, freedom and audience expectations); 3) media type, sector and ownership; 4) journalism in practice/news work; and 5) responsive, but not attached. Some of these themes were initially identified above in 9.1.2 and they will also be explored in chapter 10, but for now, we can tease out some of the following considerations. To start with, the personal decision-making attitude was once again identified in the majority of the comments and that it includes the selection of journalistic identity statements based on personalised ‘I’–statements. The implication here is the journalists do have some leeway to enact independent decisions in their professional activities, aspects of which can be equated with job autonomy. At some level, as is illustrated by their comments, the journalists decide what they do by considering their own personal interests and likes. Professionalism refers to the reliance on traits that are associated with the libertarian/professional model of journalism be it a vocal critic of government and/or the voice of a plurality of competing publics in the market place of ideas and journalistic values – balance, facts, credibility, validity and accuracy. Furthermore, these same values are more often than not, attached to the private media whilst the absence of autonomy, and conversely the orientation to propaganda and cheerleading is associated with government media. It is in this regard that some of the respondents specifically relegated the role of development to being the exclusive responsibility of government media including government and even public-oriented media organisations.

As in some of the studies reviewed in chapters 2 and 3, the journalists almost unanimously support the values of neutrality. However, they vary much more in their acceptance of the social responsibility norms, although they seem to rank them relatively highly. Herein also lies an interesting consideration whereby these seemingly divergent positions may actually represent two separate and not incompatible journalistic dimensions, rather than a single freedom/responsibility dimension. The ‘responsive, but not attached’ factor further elaborates on this consideration in the
sense that many of the journalists seem to be sympathetic to the development needs of the continent. Some of them even aspire to, or believe that they are, responding to the challenge of development through their journalism. Despite this, they do not actually see themselves as agents of development. Bearing in mind the influences and constraints – personal preferences, media routines, lack of resources – that they are faced with, not many are willing to let go of their neutrality so as to get as actively involved as Freirean (1970) participant and advocate journalists who use their profession to enact social change. It is as if freedom, responsibility and development are separate dimensions. In the next section, I present the findings concerning the ways in which the journalists’ conceptions of NEPAD, their journalism and cultural identities are transformed, if at all, when they are interpellated more directly by NEPAD.

9.2 Self-identification with regard to journalism and Africanity

At this stage of the research, the aim here was to find out whether the journalists saw themselves as they did in chapter 8 and section 9.1 in this chapter, when dealing specifically with NEPAD. In doing this, the interviewees were asked to respond to whether they: 1) conceived of their journalistic functions with regard to NEPAD in the same way as they had indicated in 9.1; 2) perceived it as their journalistic responsibility to support and promote NEPAD as Africans; and 3) felt more like journalists or Africans when dealing with NEPAD. Whilst NEPAD interpellates them primarily as Africans who should be in favour of development journalism, most of them see themselves as neutral-oriented journalists above and beyond anything else. However, this conception is far from exclusive and not necessarily stable – there is room for a plurality of journalistic identifications to come into the picture.

9.2.1 Journalistic functions with regard to NEPAD

For many of the respondents, the neutral-objectivist functions that they conceive of as the ideal and even see themselves as enacting – informing, disseminating – and the related social agenda functions are the same ones that they see themselves as performing with regard to NEPAD, with a few also highlighting the ‘fourth estate’ dimension of the watchdog role. Some of the comments concerning the maintenance of these sub-identities included the following from BDA: “I mainly inform and educate. The classic journalism role, but I also analyse”. However, he then goes on to reveal that he for the most part, aspires to enact social agenda journalism:

To promote and support – is still a form of journalism. I see journalism as being made up of two concepts, information and opinion. Because as much as I may have the duty to inform the people I also have the duty of educating them by analysing ideas and that’s why my newspaper does the important thing of allocating space to opinion and editorial. It is very important because beyond one event and a given report, there is the
context in which things happen and that context needs to be analysed. If you don’t analyse the context in which events take place then there is no use in informing because the information will also not achieve its objective of educating the people. (BDA)

Similarly, TD asserted, “a lot of what I do for now is to inform the people and educate them about NEPAD which is still new to many of them”. Staying in line with his previous and consistent prioritisation of the ‘fourth estate’ stance, TN2 argued that, “I think the idea should be for us to check those in power and to keep the citizenry informed about what is due to them”. Some respondents simply expressed how it is that they draw on conventional neutral-objectivist norms in news selection even though the sources used are in this case overtly diversified to highlight an implicit orientation towards socially responsible news elements. For example, NT comments that:

I have some limits, but my role in disseminating news to do with NEPAD is to inform the public. But I would first verify my facts because I would not want to quote what is not correct. Like if I am reporting on e-schools projects, I will involve a number of people – the project initiators, the beneficiaries and the NEPAD people themselves. It is an holistic effort. (NT)

A key finding here is that those same journalists that have showed an orientation towards social agenda functions or even a sense of uncertainty about their journalism also went on to portray similar sentiments in this area of the research. Such respondents include ADM who commented, “it is my responsibility as a journalist to let people at the grassroots level understand the concept of NEPAD and to appreciate it better”. Clearly, ADM sees it as part of his journalistic responsibilities to intervene in telling the NEPAD story for the benefit of the marginalised in society. He adds: “Most people are sceptical about the success of NEPAD, and as a journalist my role is to let policy makers know how the layman feels and how best they could re-strategise their implementation approach if necessary”. To this, we can add TS who sees himself in this case as “a teacher and a guardian that is committed to improving society”. According to him, this is why his “journalism on NEPAD mainly deals with issues and analyses” since he wants to help the audience to understand and appreciate the initiative.

Other respondents were ambivalent about their journalistic functions vis-à-vis NEPAD. For example, although TEA previously saw herself as subscribing to NEPAD reportage that “mainly” provided readers with the “latest developments”, that is “basically major NEPAD events and summits” including “prominent personalities”, she also expressed regret about taking on such an approach to the NEPAD story. She felt that her reportage was “still very limited”. When asked to elaborate, she reasoned that: “it [reportage] rarely involves taking on a long view or a bigger
picture outlook. It is still very limited in that way”. Initially, TEA enacts a neutral journalism identity. However, I think that the continued references in her narrative to what she does as being ‘very limited’ on the one hand connotes that she is aware that she is not reporting on NEPAD as a process. She decries the absence of in-depth, analytical and feature type reportage in her journalistic stance to NEPAD. On the other hand, it also suggests an aspiration on TEA’s part to take a more active, less ‘limiting’, more participatory and interventionist journalistic stance so as to go beyond simply reporting on NEPAD events and personalities. It is almost as if what she is doing now is standing in the way of her enacting a more interventionist identity in her journalism.

Another respondent, GNA, is perhaps more pluralistic than uncertain in her journalistic conceptions vis-à-vis NEPAD. At first, she saw herself as performing social agenda journalism that is oriented towards “long analytical stories”. However, she also covers events such as meetings, “but that’s just for the office”. She revealed that left to her own devices she would prefer to do “in-depth stories”. On being asked to elaborate on her thoughts, GNA said:

  So far, it has been just to investigate what it is about, what it can do for the country. Not entirely critical. I did one on APRM and another on whether there are investment opportunities in NEPAD. That is why I usually see my position as a blend of so many things. These include: keeping the watchdog perspective; trying to see where the donor support for NEPAD is going; and keeping an eye on the progress made so far. Then of course, I also like to create awareness. That is why for me it is a blend of many positions.

GNA comes across as a journalist who takes on a mixed set of journalistic functions that are often associated with the disseminator, watchdog, public and even development strands of journalism – tell many people, keeping an eye, create awareness, investigate, promote, let the people understand (see Weaver 1998; Ramaprasad 2001) – with regard to NEPAD. This also includes investigating NEPAD albeit not from an ‘entirely critical’ stance, but rather to show whether it is making a difference in people’s lives. She displays role flexibility and the capacity to tolerate the (un)certainty of plurality in journalistic – ‘blend of many’ – identity(ies). Clearly, we can already see here that in the minds of TEA and GNA, when their journalistic identities are confronted by NEPAD, they become less stable than they may have previously let on about their journalistic stances in general. GNA in particular sees herself as subscribing to a position of plurality. Overall, the tendency towards moments of ambivalence, plurality and the aspiration to move beyond the ‘limits’ of the neutral-objectivist stance in the context of NEPAD will become more recognisable in the next two sub-sections when we consider more closely how the journalists respond to NEPAD’s interpellations (also see chapter 10 for discussions).
9.2.2 ‘African’ journalists in support of NEPAD?

9.2.2.1 Predominantly libertarian with contradictions

The majority of the respondents felt that it was not their responsibility, whether as Africans or journalists to promote and support NEPAD in their journalism. However, as we shall soon see, some of them express these sentiments with less certainty than others. At some level, the respondents appear to be deploying some level of negotiating skills in coming to terms with NEPAD’s interpellations. On the one hand, these attempts seem to involve explicit and often successful efforts to separate themselves as neutral-oriented journalists from the challenges of development which are faced by the wider post-colonial societies to which they belong. On the other hand, this can also be read as a strategic attempt on their part to downplay any suggestion that they are not committed to the dominant libertarian professional model of journalism, and/or even Africa in general. Consider the following:

You know that is almost like an accusation that you are not patriotic enough because you are not writing about it. I think that impugns one’s efforts and it is almost simplistic because I try to write about it, but you know the facts of the matter are that my job is not to promote anything. It is straight-ahead journalism and that is it. (BD)

That tension arises sometimes with something like this where you go into it with a basic acceptance that it is a social good, that it is a good thing. Maybe a journalist should have no opinion at all and say that I don’t give a damn whether it works or not. I don’t know if many people are quite that neutral about the world that they live in. (ST)

ST went on to elaborate on his stance by arguing that even though he sees NEPAD as a “good thing”, he makes it a point not to self-censor. He comments that:

You have to remain sceptical if not cynical. You need to look for personal agendas and remain conscious of why people take certain positions if you write about anything with passion you have to be careful that you don’t dodge the bad news. You’ve got to focus on staying open to what is in front of you not what you expect to see.

Similarly, TS who had until this stage of the interview predominantly presented himself as a social agenda journalist, was keen to insist, “there is really no conflict here for me as it is possible for me to push for NEPAD without losing track of what is expected of me as a journalist by my audience and society”. According to him, “we cannot just support NEPAD as Africans, if we did that we would be missing the point”. TS is adamant that “we have to write about NEPAD with independence of mind that is the only way it can gain respect. If we get it right the whole world, not just Africans, will support NEPAD”. At the Reuters news agency in South Africa – an outlet that ST credits with having taught him how to practice precision journalism which is based on facts, the 5Ws and 1H and limited opinions – RT also argued that he did not see any tensions between his journalistic stance and the need as an African to support NEPAD. Drawing on a
journalistic model that prioritises information delivery and the bottom line, he referred to what he does as “risk analysis” journalism. His primarily concern was to provide a service to his clients and not to promote or even negate NEPAD. *RT* explained that he simply reports the facts for his clients. He argues that:

*We* have people who pay a huge amount of money for our services. *Our* core clients are financial institutions, brokers, stock exchangers, and investment bankers… They are looking for an insight into the countries we cover as a basis for making their investment decisions. So whether we are covering a political story… at the back of our mind is how our clients should interpret this.

*RT* asserted that this approach had for the most part worked in favour of NEPAD with regard to their coverage, given that his agency, which is often accused of focusing only on bad news in Africa, had initially set out to highlight the investment opportunities in NEPAD to its international clientele.

Further, *MG* reasoned that the idea that African journalists should support NEPAD is a strategy that could once again be used by African governments to avoid criticism and curb press freedoms as they had done before. For him, although there is a case that can be made for development journalism, “there are other things that we should also be doing such as looking at the shortcomings of NEPAD – so it is a balance”. Having said that, *MG* went on to oppose this view by commenting that, “a responsible journalist would need to spend a lot of time on development, but frankly these things are normally sponsored by the government or by corporates looking for government favours”.

*TN2* opined that those journalists, who saw it as their function to promote, support and advocate NEPAD were journalists whose vision was “coloured by the history of the African Union”. He saw their journalism as being driven by a “casual disinterest” in so far as it was based on NEPAD and African Union events that were relied upon by the journalists to fulfil their own Africanist agenda of illustrating that “something positive is happening and that Africa is doing something”. He insisted that, “there is an inability for them to see it as a process that needs analysis” and this is because of their “attachment” to it coupled by the “historical demand to portray it as a success”. As a result, they end up reporting on it as “an event, which you cover like a football match”. In addition, similar to some of the earlier responses concerning the NEPAD story, *TN2* commented that the absence of feature-length and analytical NEPAD coverage might be due to the complexity, impenetrable nature and “cumbersome processes” that make up the NEPAD story. He
advises that what journalists need to do is to “unpack it”, adding, “but I think that it’s almost impossible. We need to keep it simple before pin-pointing a national or African angle”.

Overall, the journalists’ responses in this sub-section are broadly oriented towards neutrality. Despite this, they also continue to or aspire to perform social agenda functions, particularly in terms of how they come to report on the NEPAD story. They appear to be aware of the journalistic dilemmas – ‘tensions’ – that are posed by NEPAD’s interpellations and they address these by sticking to the professional libertarian model of journalism with its emphasis on neutrality. Having said that, some of them are adamant about taking on such a detached journalistic stance because they feel that this is exactly how the NEPAD story should be approached if it is to succeed. Unlike the attached stance, which they equate with censorship and propaganda, they see this detached stance as a commitment to NEPAD and Africa in general (see chapter 10 for elaborations). In addition, notice the ways in which the respondents speak about themselves as part of a community of professional journalists and not so much as individuals. In many instances, the ‘we’ pronoun is used exclusively as in reference to ‘we the journalists’ as a group of media practitioners with a specific professional identity. However, in the case of RT, ‘we’ and ‘our’ are used even more exclusively to refer to the journalists at Reuters. In some instances, as in the cases of TN2, ST and BD ‘you’ can be read as being deployed to refer to both the interviewer as a journalist and to any other potential addressees who may see themselves as ‘you journalists’.

Next is the presentation of the comments of those minority respondents who tend to see it as their duty as Africans to promote, support and advocate NEPAD.

9.2.2.2 Predominantly socially responsible with contradictions

Remember here that few of the respondents showed an explicit interest in development, in contrast to the rest who appear to equate with government propaganda. Although the respondents in this sub-section tend to agree that they see it as their role to enact the role of development, they are also quick to remind us that they are not doing or going to do this at the cost of journalistic ideology, particularly in its libertarian strand. As we shall soon see, there are contradictions and moments of conflict in their narratives as they successfully attach themselves to NEPAD’s pan-Africanism without this being seen as a loss/negation of their journalistic values. Note that three of the interviewees in this section – TEA, BDA, TN1 – had already indicated that when dealing with NEPAD they see themselves primarily as Africans.
Respondents in this category included **TEA**, who previously said that she sees her journalistic identity with regard to NEPAD as being ‘limited’. She offered the following comment:

Yes, I see it as my place to push NEPAD forward as a journalist in Africa or at least to write about it consistently unlike journalists from elsewhere because it deals with African issues. If only there was more to report about, but it is still limited in that I often end up focusing on the same things discussed year in year out.

**TD** also had this to say:

I have highlighted the benefits of NEPAD to the people. For instance, in my reportage on the peer reviews in Nigeria and the potential investments that could come out of NEPAD. So, yes I promote and support NEPAD to enlighten the people about it, but like most journalists, we all have to be careful, not to be used by and play into the hands of governments for propaganda. So I guess there is still a lot that journalists can do, but this should not lead them to compromise their professionalism. (**TD**)

**TNI** argued that, “the problem with some of our journalists telling the NEPAD story is that they don’t balance their reports and they don’t write accurately. If you do this you will not educate the public instead you will be misinforming them”. Despite this, he felt that it was the responsibility of African journalists to advocate for NEPAD. This thought is exemplified in the following comment: “They say charity begins at home. Without support from local journalists to set the agenda on African issues, it would be difficult for NEPAD to succeed. Foreign journalists can only pick up NEPAD stories if locals also show interest”. He advised that, solutions to African problems could only be found by continental African journalists. He added that, “we can’t rely on outsiders or expect much from them”.

**ADM** echoed the sentiments of **TNI** and those of NEPAD when he comments that, “every African has a duty to promote NEPAD”. He continued: “So it is right to say that it is the role and responsibility of journalists in Africa to promote a concept designed by African leaders. If we as journalists in Africa don’t publicise NEPAD, we can’t expect European journalists to do it for us”. He takes NEPAD’s interpellations a notch further up by asserting that this is not about supporting NEPAD simply because one is an African and a journalist, but rather it is about “patriotism” and “nationalism”. He argued that:

I believe that if you look at the Americans they are very nationalistic. They are patriotic, they promote their identity and they promote whatever is American because they want to protect their country. Why is it that African journalists cannot let the onus be on them by saying that, ‘look this is something coming from us, it was not imposed on us from somebody and we developed it’? It is only Africans who can project it and if we don’t do that no body else can do it for us. The European, American or Western journalist may project it, but they will not do it with a better understanding like an African doing it because of his existence on the continent.
ADM’s insists that although he sees himself as an African and NEPAD as an African initiative, he is not going to “gloss over” any “loopholes” in his NEPAD stories. He comments: “I must raise it to the policy implementers. I think it is better we look at the weaknesses. This is what we do – gloss over – and then the Western countries overtake us. We need to look at the weaknesses.”

The respondents’ comments portray a notion of ‘African/s’ as a common group of people and/or countries that are located in a geographical territory and place that is commonly understood by everyone to be ‘Africa’. Notice the ways in which the pronouns and identity markers in general are used to facilitate shifts between differences to make room for a constructed notion of a local/continental African journalist. TEA, TD and ADM use ‘I’ to present themselves as journalists although ADM appears to link this sense of self more specifically to ‘I’ the African journalist. With regard to TD, the reference to ‘we’ is ‘journalists’ whilst ADM appears to use it narrowly to refer to ‘we’ the ‘African journalists’, which is similar to his use of ‘us’. Having said that, ADM’s ‘we’s’ and ‘us’ can also be read as being in reference to ‘Africans’. TNJ deploys ‘we’ to refer to ‘local journalists’, but it is not clear whether he is referring to local journalists in Kenya or in Africa. His use of ‘our’ and ‘they’ to invoke those ‘local journalists’ that do not balance their NEPAD reports further complicates the question of exactly who it is that he is referring to. Note that he also deploys ‘they’ to distance himself from those ‘local journalists’ that misinform the public. Similarly, ADM also uses the third person plural ‘they’ against the first person plural ‘we’ to highlight an instance of ‘othering’. It is in this regard that ‘we’ and ‘us’ the (non-patriotic) African journalists are contrasted and opposed to ‘they’ the (patriotic) American, European and Western journalists.

Statements by some of the other respondents in this category did not always reflect the just under-the-surface belief that although they aspire to take on the role of development they are not letting go of their neutrality, independence and objectivity. On the contrary, in some cases they are willing to enact the development journalistic sub-identity for the purposes of African development. For example:

I do not see it like as if I am pushing the agenda of a government or self-serving interest of some leaders and their countries. I don’t think so. I feel that NEPAD is for all and not for the interests of particular countries. NEPAD in Rwanda has various educational projects that are social. So I push for them and report on them. (NT)
To be honest with you, my stake is, I would not say it is from the journalism point of view even though I want to do that. However, the continent has been drawn back for too long in development and that is why I like to blend positions to bring about development, but even as a journalist I think I can push for development through a watchdog position. (GNA)

We need to support NEPAD. I don’t see it as promoting propaganda. If I have to say that let’s market NEPAD and let’s do this, I am not playing their game. I will be giving my opinion. I can market NEPAD the way I want to because being in the industry I know how to influence the people. I know how to not manipulate opinion, but to increase awareness on one or two issues. It is up to your imagination as a journalist. How can I spur the interest of the people NEPAD? How can I revamp the whole NEPAD concept? (BDA)

Evidently, unlike some of the earlier respondents in this section and in fact unlike the previous responses that they have provided, BDA, GNA and NT appear to be far more willing to take on the development role than some of the other journalists who are open to the social agenda functions, but without letting go of the neutral-objectivist stance. In fact, in her own words, GNA sees her own journalistic stance to NEPAD as a “blend (of) positions”. She elaborates that her reason for taking on such a stance goes beyond the realm of journalism and her identity as a journalist. Even though she would like to keep her position on NEPAD within the realm of her responsibilities as a journalist, she feels that because the key issue here is development she identifies with NEPAD beyond the “journalism point of view”. As a ‘Ghanian’ and as an ‘African’, GNA appears to reduce all her other responsibilities to bringing about development. As a journalist, she enacts a stance that is oriented towards the role of development. At some level, she feels that this role can actually also be achieved through a watchdog stance, such as when she reasons that watchdogism is not at odds to the “push for development”. It is also evident that the journalists identified in this sub-section are, for the most part, the same ones that have so far, tended to show – both in their comments and ratings – a particular orientation towards NEPAD’s Africanist ideology and the related appeal towards development journalism. In the next sub-section, I present the findings concerning the implicit tension between Africanity and journalism as set up by NEPAD. This will also give us a clearer picture concerning how it is that the journalists respond to NEPAD’s appeals particularly in terms of their journalistic identity conceptions.

9.2.3 Between / beyond Africanism and Journalism
Respondents were asked to indicate which of the statements listed in Table 10 below most fundamentally described how they saw themselves in reference to NEPAD.

Table 10: Africanity versus Journalism

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What was nearly unanimous in the responses was the powerful influence of journalistic ideology, particularly in its libertarian strand, over the respondents’ self-conceptions. This is not entirely surprising given that most of the respondents have already indicated that they value the detached journalism stance and not so much the attached positions of social agenda and development journalistic ideologies. In addition, some of them tend to see themselves in terms of their nationalities whilst maintaining ties to NEPAD’s brand of Africanness. Still, as will be noted in their responses in the extracts below – which are transcribed here at length to highlight the implicit tensions, contradictions and conflicts between journalism and Africanness – there are moments of ambivalence and hybridity. Consider the following sample of responses:

More Journalist than African

My journalism I think defines me more whether I am in Africa or not. (TN2)

There is no conflict to speak of I do not see it. For me, there is no conflict between the two. The extremes of Africanness have been used by governments to promote political agenda through the media and journalism. (BD)

Journalism is what I have done all my life. I haven’t thought of it exactly before. I am a committed resident of Africa, I want this continent to get better, and I want South Africa to get better and richer. I want my kids to be able to stay here preferably. So I have a sort of vested interest in NEPAD working. How do I look at it? I look at it mainly as a journalist. (ST).

It is in this sense, that ST saw it as a key responsibility on his part to “to find out what” the politicians are hiding, if anything, in reference to NEPAD processes. “If there are closed doors, I would like to know what’s going on behind them if possible and there are more closed than open doors in this process in South Africa”. Rather similarly, MG also had this to say:

I take my duties as a journalist very seriously. You see when fighting apartheid I saw wicked, wicked things done in the name of nationalism, in the name of all sorts of isms. I believe that hiding behind those isms is a multitude of hidden sins. So I am a journalist first and foremost and then an African.

However, unlike some of the respondents in this category, MG admits that his position is far from clear because, “it becomes very difficult to make sense of, in that if I had information that would be of detriment of our continent would I then see my duty as a journalist first or an African first? I have no answer to that.” Similar to BD, he went on to comment that based on his experiences much of what passes for national interest, Africanism and patriotism is “the
interest of the ruling party and once you get to that you become cynical about everything and you are then not doing journalism”. Another respondent, *TEA* who has previously shown an orientation towards promoting and pushing NEPAD and its pan-Africanism forwards, had the following to say:

Because it does not matter where you come from as long as you are a *journalist* you have to do some things right in a manner that fits your title and profession. For me the journalism angle has to hold irrespective of whether I want to support it individually, or as a Ugandan or as an African. There is no big gap here to compare because what I do as a journalist might be in the interest and support of us all in the different countries. If I have to write about something objectively I would leave my *Africanness* out of it. If NEPAD did something wrong, I would definitely try to do my part as a journalist without saying that, ‘no this is my continent’ I would be as objective as possible, put aside my *attachment* and bring in *professionalism*.

**Equally Journalist and African**

Because I am both, my commitment to Africa does not compromise me as a journalist and vice versa. (TS)

If you are more *journalist* than *African* then your portrayal of Africa might be skewed. Look at the journalists that come here they are supposed to be neutral. *Reuters* and *AFP* send journalists and they advance the foreign policy agenda of their own countries in the way that they report on Africa. More African than journalist you might overlook issues because of your Africanness including not wanting to tell the ‘bad’ truth about Africa. More African than journalist can lead to the push for personal agendas and not those of the public. Equally journalist and African: I say that because I always try to perpetuate an African consciousness. This is very important not only politically, but in a way that as an African you can be very sensitive to things that are happening on the continent and report on them in a very balanced manner. This means telling both the good and bad stories. (BDA)

Others in this category such as *ADM* also had this to say:

I see myself as a journalist with the role and responsibility of educating the populace about NEPAD. As an African, I am proud of NEPAD, in the sense that it was developed by African leaders to transform the fortunes of the continent, but naturally, the African *euphoria* or the ecstasy in me for NEPAD should not overshadow the story I am doing. That is, if I see a loophole I should not let the euphoria overshadow that loophole. I need to resist so that policy formulators or implementers will see that in spite of all the good things about NEPAD we also think that there is a spot here that you people need to work on. (ADM)

When asked to elaborate on what it is that he needs to ‘resist’, *ADM* exemplified by saying that because “the majority of Africans are crying or hungry for peace and development”, many of them are bound to be “happy” about NEPAD because of what it promises. He added that, “professionally the issue which arises is whether a journalist who sees him or herself as an African is going to be balanced when he or she detects certain lapses in NEPAD or in the
implementation process, and would then want to openly state it or remain quiet over it”. In another follow-up comment, it is evident that for him there is a real perceived tension between journalism and Africanity when he comments that, “it is quite dicey, but in my opinion I think when it comes to such issues, professional ethics must supersede personal or regional identity”.

NT, also indicated her stance by saying the following:

I’m equally journalist and African. I am an African journalist. I cannot be more of this or that. I cannot say that I can become more of journalist and not an African, I can only be both. The two go together. As an African journalist, NEPAD issues affect my life in every aspect, be it through economic, social and intellectual development. As a journalist, I perceive NEPAD as a solution to most of the continent’s problems. Through NEPAD, many countries have solved numerous problems, which they could not have done by themselves. If I sense that a story might push NEPAD back very badly I would not publish it until I verify it.

Echoing the sentiments of the aforementioned journalists in this category, NT was also keen to clarify that her identification with NEPAD’s brand of Africanity should not be taken to mean that she would not criticise it, but that she would go out of her way to “double check” and “validate” critical information about NEPAD before publishing it. Her reason for this is that “Africa has suffered a lot from false propaganda” from the West and she does not want to see herself contributing to that propaganda. In fact, similar to TN2 and GNA below, she reconnects her journalistic identity in NEPAD to her identities as an African and as an agent of change. For her, the responsibilities that she has are not simply about journalism. She insisted that, “I feel privileged as a journalist and more so an African journalist to have access to first-hand information on NEPAD. The fact that I can disseminate NEPAD news to the public makes me feel so content because I know I have changed someone’s life in one way or the other”. Returning to the tension between journalism and Africanity, she confirmed her thoughts in this way, “I guess sometimes there is conflict – there are things you have to forego being a journalist by virtue of being an African, and similarly there are things you forego being an African and a journalist. So for me it goes both ways”.

More African than Journalist

Africa, its goals and achievements for me go beyond the normal call of duty that is set by journalism. Irrespective of being a journalist, I am willing to overlook certain things like balance. So long as the people of Nigeria and Africa are at stake, I can support Africa within reason. But journalists have to be cautious here in that they don’t end up getting used by the governments. (TD)
I want NEPAD to succeed and therefore I want to be watchful as an African journalist and then report on it to show how far the initiative has gone in terms of its success. I opted for this because I want NEPAD to succeed no matter my misgivings about it. I want NEPAD to succeed for Africa, that is why I see myself more as an African than as a journalist, but as an African who wants NEPAD to succeed, I would show the negative aspects of it so that it can be corrected. Maybe my position seems a bit queer because this is my profession. No matter my profession I am still an African and therefore whatever needs to be done for Africa to move forward, I would do it. (GNA)

Despite my being a journalist, I am still an African. Nothing can change that. So whatever I do even if I was a doctor I would still be African. Despite my profession, I am still an African. I am just a journalist because it is the job that I got. Journalism came to me first. I would still be an African even if I were a teacher or a doctor I would still be an African first before my profession. I also want to be a watchdog of NEPAD so that I can still investigate it. I don’t say that because I am an African I am not going to uncover this issue. I do it professionally. If it is an investigation, I highlight the issue as I would any other story. I will tell the truth about the story. I will not hide anything because it is NEPAD and it is an African initiative and because I see myself as an African. (TN1)

Based on the excerpts presented in this sub-section it can be posited that the respondents often use the ‘I’ statement, albeit in varying degrees, to enact their multiples selves as individuals, journalists and even as Africans. In addition, BDA uses ‘they’ exclusively to refer to foreign journalists. ADM uses ‘you’ to refer exclusively to NEPAD’s policy makers and implementers whilst his ‘we’ is in reference to ‘journalists’. MG’s ‘you’ is in reference to the ‘people’ which includes both the interviewer and any other addressee whilst BDA uses ‘you’ more narrowly to refer to journalists who may find themselves in the situation of having to juggle Africanist ideology and the journalistic sub-identities. The findings in this sub-section also suggest that irrespective of which category was selected by the respondents many of them do not see themselves as attached, interventionist agents of social change as is proposed by the social agenda and development roles that are influenced by social responsibility theory. Even in those cases where the respondents take up the ‘more African than journalist’ stance, as in Mbeki (2003b), and even ‘equally journalist and African’ positions, they still maintain a strong adherence towards the libertarian neutral identity with its emphasis on ‘facts’, ‘balance’, ‘truth’, ‘verifications’ and ‘professionalism’ as is so often invoked in their comments. However, note that they also take on, albeit to a lesser degree, the watchdog functions of exposing the ‘negative’. Of importance here is to recognise the ease with which they rely on personal pronouns like ‘I’ which are exclusive to the speaker, ‘you’ inclusive of the speaker and the addressee, and even possessive ones such as ‘my’ to construct identities. In responding to NEPAD’s interpellations, the journalists in some instances end up upholding and then linking the interests of the relatively well-established dominant libertarian professional journalistic ideology to those of NEPAD and Africanism. In other instances, as in the case of NT it is almost as if journalistic identity in general is unified with
Africanity in a process that works to suppress the differences between the two as in reference to an “African journalism”. In the case of *TN!*1, it is because of Africanity that the investigative strand of the watchdog sub-identity in particular is given a heightened appeal.

What is going on here is that various in-groups and out-groups are constantly being created and dismantled as part of an attempt by the respondents to come terms with the potentially conflicting philosophies of journalism and Africanism involved in the appeal of NEPAD. Whilst the previous sub-section found the journalists to be in possession of dual cultural identities as they kept on crossing the boundaries of nationality and Africanity, in this sub-section they appear to submit or integrate their social identities in favour of their journalistic identification particularly in its neutral-objectivist strand. Caution is required here with regard to reading too much into the enactment of a broadly libertarian-oriented approach towards journalism given that their comments actually show that NEPAD’s interpellations and the wider context of the post-colony also get them to cross the boundaries to the social agenda and development sub-identities. The fuller point here is that they are at some level aware of the pluralistic identities that they can take up depending on the news issue at hand. In fact, some of them do not see the neutral and even watchdog sub-identities as being at odds with social agenda and development journalism and wider Africanist aims. Still, few of them actually portray moments of plurality and ambiguity. Most of the respondents reveal that the neutral-objectivist journalistic sub-identity – a key aspect of the libertarian professional model of journalism – is the one that they identify with. However, even in such cases we can draw on Tuchman (1972:676) to query whether they are enacting a strategic ritual of avoidance when they are faced with NEPAD’s inward looking discourse, all of which allows many of them to maintain that they are objective, neutral and balanced professionals (see chapter 10).

9.3 Conclusion: summary of the main findings

The main findings of the study concerning the journalists’ self-identification with regard to NEPAD’s African identity, the journalism sub-identities and the nexus between journalism and Africanism include the following:

1. A questioning stance towards NEPAD’s common African identity and the prioritisation of other identifications such as nationality whilst also maintaining sympathies to NEPAD’s broad appeal towards Africanism.
2. An orientation to the dominant libertarian approach to journalism particularly through the neutral sub-identity whilst also subscribing to the social responsibility approach through the social agenda sub-identity.

3. Resistance towards the Africanist development journalist ideology by prioritising libertarian journalistic ideology with its focus on neutrality and watchdogism.

The findings indicate that most of the journalists more often than not perceive their journalistic identities in terms of the neutral dimension, albeit with some emphasis on the social agenda functions. With regard to the latter, it is perhaps because of the context in which they are that they still maintain and uphold values that can be linked to uplifting the African/national people that they identify with and this at some level includes development journalism for some of the respondents. They are all not uniform in doing this and some journalists clearly consistently portray this more than others do. Most of them also maintain a close affinity with their national identification and yet they do not entirely disregard NEPAD’s brand of a pan-African identity. In fact, many of them actually maintain a certain sense of Africanism. However, the main worry for them here is that appeals to pan-Africanism and development journalism could once again be used to propagate government propaganda and to curb press freedoms. Still, some of the journalists maintain an implicitly pluralistic view of their journalistic identity in which the neutral, social agenda, watchdog and development journalism models are combined as part of an attempt to meet the competing and potentially conflicting needs of their ‘profession’ and those of ‘development’ in the post-colony and in turn to balance out any ensuing dilemmas.

This first-level data analysis in this and the previous chapter also shows that journalistic beliefs go beyond views about journalistic functions and ideology to encompass other elements of a journalists’ social environment such as media house type, news work and the wider political, economic and socio-cultural context. Although the journalists’ professional ideals are maintained, they are still influenced by social realities such as NEPAD. Based on these findings, the researcher was able to inductively develop a conceptual model to indicate how one frame potentially influenced and related to another. The model is described in chapter 11. The conceptual model represents an analytical tool in the development of inferences and nuances about how journalists perceive their journalistic roles in NEPAD. The extrapolated big picture derived from the data analyses in line with the conceptual model in turn allows for the development of theoretical insights concerning the influence of NEPAD in shaping journalists’ perceptions of journalism and Africanity. In the next chapter, I present a detailed analysis and discussion of the main findings in line with the theoretical considerations of this study.
CHAPTER TEN
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

10.0 Introduction
The findings in chapters 8 and 9 can lead one to query whether NEPAD is being resisted as such. Also, if the journalists are sympathetic to NEPAD, why do they continue to prioritise detached neutral journalism? How about those moments of plurality and ambivalence? These questions are not easily answered. As a second-level analysis of the findings, this chapter attempts to address some of these issues. The chapter aims to link the findings to the theoretical considerations concerning journalistic philosophies, interpellation and hybridity within the context of NEPAD. This is particularly important since journalism and media studies is still in the early stages of theoretical and methodological development and has for the most part ignored the nexus between local socio-cultural dynamics and journalism in the context of the post-colony (see Ebo 1994). The findings are also discussed in light of the comments from some of the NEPAD proponents and analysts that were interviewed. The chapter consists of three broad sections that interpret and discuss the findings. A key consideration that arises from the discussion is whether the journalists’ identifications can at some level be interpreted as implicit attempts on their part to (in)directly address the needs of their profession and those of development in the post-colony through a variegated identity (also see chapter 11).

10.1 Responses to Africanity: contingency, multiplicities and differentiation
For the most part, this entire section attempts to highlight some of the wider implications concerning identity constructions based on the journalists’ responses towards NEPAD’s (pan-)Africanist and development appeals. The section specifically pays attention to the ways in which the journalists’ identifications seem to oscillate between constructions of essentialist and non-essentialist identities depending on the NEPAD issue at hand.

10.1.1 Interpellation, strategic essentialism and the maintenance of NEPAD
The journalists in this study generally considered NEPAD to be a step in the right direction with the APRM in particular being highlighted as a practical tool that enables countries to address their individual and collective challenges. Still, similar to Anyang’ Nyong’o et al (2002), they were also found, as was illustrated in Table 6 of the findings (see chapter 8), to enact a critical stance towards NEPAD with many of them insisting that it does not include and/or represent all African countries. They all seem to agree that it lacks political will, that it is poorly communicated, and
that there are no real NEPAD development projects to speak of. If we look back to the
Althusserian (1971) notion of interpellation in chapter 4, it can be posited that although the
journalists are generally successfully hailed into seeing NEPAD as a positive response to the post-
colonial challenges of development in the 21st century, they are not entirely certain about identity
conflation with NEPAD at the ideological level. Instead, some of the journalists – BDA, TEA,
MG, GNA, TN2, ST – actually interpret the network of discourse concerning NEPAD’s ‘African
interest’, ‘African-owned’ and ‘African-led’ credentials as being in the interests of a few elite
regional hegemonic African countries and the donor community (also see Bond 2002; Adesina
2004). Despite the aforementioned, the bulk of the journalists appear to maintain NEPAD’s
discourse by not entirely rejecting its (pan-)African aspirations and its neo-liberal development
agenda. In fact, it is the perceived practice of NEPAD that causes some distancing from the
phenomenon as a whole

To elaborate, with regard to Africanism, it can be argued that although the journalists appear to
oppose aspects of NEPAD whilst also prioritising a range of identifications – such as ‘more
Nigerian than African’, ‘equally Ghanaian and African’, ‘more journalist than African’ – that are
not neatly in line with NEPAD’s Africanist interpellations, they tend to respond to some sense of
Africanness. NEPAD’s discourse invites them to see themselves as members of a pan-African
community and it hails them as Africans who are subject to its brand of pan-Africanism. To
reiterate, although the journalists respond to this hailing by opposing aspects of NEPAD and even
more specifically resisting its African development journalist ideology when it is contrasted
against their preferred neutral orientation (see 10.5 below), they do not entirely distance
themselves from NEPAD’s Africanism. As was highlighted in Table 5 of the findings, they
broadly see NEPAD as being aimed at shared political and socio-economic challenges and as
being based on a commonly shared ancestry and history despite the differences within Africa.
Through this strategic essentialism of Africanity in the shape of an “African consciousness”
(BDA), the journalists manage to maintain a level of sympathy towards NEPAD. The very
narratives that are downplayed by the journalists – reclaiming ‘African-led’ and ‘African-owned’
development and the notions of a commonly shared cultural context – are the same ones that are
deployed by them to maintain sympathies towards NEPAD. The battle cry of ‘African Unity’
(Nkrumah 1963), which had previously been used effectively to mobilise people as anti-
colonialists and to construct an African identity, is in NEPAD turned into an Africanist neo-liberal
and donor-oriented development plan that is to be pushed for by all Africans if it is to succeed.
On the one hand, the foregoing discussion serves to remind us that there are usually multiple identifications and allegiances circulating in society and that individuals can prioritise and negate various subject positions depending on the context at hand (see Khan 1983). The fuller point here is that the respondents as individuals are positioned into different subject positions by the various discourses – journalistic ideology, nationalism – which are at play in society and yet they still maintain some aspiration or identification towards NEPAD’s Africanism appeal. On the other hand, as is expanded on below and as was also suggested by the collectivist themes in Table 5 (see chapter 8), this also works to remind us that in the post-colony, nationality in particular is often linked to a sense of shared African culture and experience that stretches across differences (see Cesaire 1969; Mbeki 1996). Drawing on Althusser (2000), it can be posited that one of the key things to realise about these moments of interp ellation is that the journalists are not necessarily always aware that they are making these shifts from one identification to another. As far as they are concerned, they are free agents simply moving in and out of identity categories that are already there or to which they are already part of as members of an in-group (see Fairclough 2001).

With regard to NEPAD’s neo-liberal development plans as a response to addressing the challenges of the post-colony, it is also evident that the journalists prefer an Africa that has NEPAD to one that does not. However, what is glaring here is that few of the journalists actually question NEPAD outside of its own ideology as an initiative for liberal democracy and economic growth. The ascendancy of a dominant economic and political model influenced by neo-liberalism and an Africanism that looks to partnerships with the donors is left intact. Little room is made for the pan-African socialist-oriented ‘indigenous development’ discourse that characterised previous development plans (see Chabal 1998; Adedeji 2002). The tenuous link between ‘development’, liberal democracy, free market reforms and prosperity for the African masses is constructed as genuine in NEPAD’s neo-liberal discourse of global economics (see Adesina 2004). The following references lend credibility to this point: ‘Africa is capable of a renaissance’ (ST); ‘since the advent of the ‘new partnership’ a lot has changed in terms of development’ (TEA); ‘the good governance of it was for me part of the initial excitement about it’ (BD); and ‘it aims to solve the socio-economic problems of the continent’ (TN1). This marriage between development, progress and Africa’s cultural and economic re-birth in the shape of the ‘African renaissance’ (see Moyo 1998) with NEPAD’s economic reforms is treated as a commonsensical and logical link within the context of the post-colony and yet these nuances do not always hold upon closer examination (see Bond 2002).
Even in those instances when journalists like GNA and BDA adopt an Africanist critique that highlights NEPAD’s dependent links to the ‘donors’ and its unoriginality as a Western-influenced development paradigm, they do not reject its neo-liberal agenda. For instance, when BDA links development in general to colonialism by illustrating how colonialism put an end to the “evolution” of an Africanist economic approach, NEPAD is still viewed as a harbinger of stagist economic development through modernisation and democracy. Similarly, when GNA reveals that she is sometimes sad to be an African because, “we are far back in development”, a view that she seems to take seriously in as far as it is emphasised when she goes on to repeat the phrase, she does not reject its economic neo-liberalism. In her comments, she equates development with the attainment of physical amenities such as “tarred roads with pavements” which she sees as being in short supply in Ghana and Africa. The absence of these amenities is for her an indication of a lack of development, whilst those regions that are already developed or ahead of Africa in terms of development are categorised as such because they have got such amenities. Similar to the journalists in the previous paragraph, both GNA and BDA also tend to sustain the patent belief in ‘progress’, which is reminiscent of the 1960s modernisation theories (see Rostow 1960). In addition, they also highlight the continued dominance of the idea of linear historical progress (see Berger 1992) of a forward movement – evolution – from backwardness to progress, the rationale of which also underlies the call for economic reforms in NEPAD’s discourse (see NEPAD 2001). Thus, a linear, progressive continuum is (re)established with Africa being placed at the ‘periphery’ of the neo-liberal path towards the ‘core’ of development (see Alhassan 2004). In a sense, similar to the academics referred to in chapter 5, the journalists are also silent on an alternative development strategy in the place of NEPAD, all of which leaves them rather susceptible to NEPAD’s interpellations concerning its credentials as an ‘African response’ to the development challenges of the post-colony in the 21st century global economy. The next sub-section looks more specifically at the construction of a common African identity.

10.1.2 The construction of Africanity

The broad picture emerging out of the journalists’ beliefs about NEPAD’s African identity is that more often than not, the pronouns ‘we’, ‘our’ and ‘us’ which can have different referents depending on how they are used, are deployed to refer to ‘Africans’. In many instances, ‘you’ is deployed in reference to the interviewer and any other addressees, as in ‘you’ the ‘people’. Nevertheless, as is highlighted in chapter 8 there are instances where ‘you’ is used exclusively to refer to ‘you’ the ‘African people’. In doing this, the respondents are not simply constructing an
African identity, they are inextricably linking themselves to the solidarity and commonality of experiences (see Fairclough 2001) that they see themselves as sharing with all (other) African peoples. In addition, the respondents’ construction of self or multiple selves in reference to Africanity is also generally characterised by the ‘I’ personal pronoun through which they represent and enact the present self as identifying with pan-Africanism or as being opposed to NEPAD. The ‘I’ statements, which become more pronounced when the respondents engage with their national and journalistic identities, can be read here as evidence of multiple-self identities which are positioned by functionally different ‘I’s’ (see Ricento 2003).

Further, similar to chapter 7, the identity markers / references such as ‘Africa’, ‘the continent’ and adjectives like ‘Africans’ are deployed to enact a common territorial, socio-cultural and political economic identity which is identified by a contingent sense of Africanity. These references to Africanity are in many cases being enacted to establish an in-group as in ‘we’ and ‘us’, the ‘Africans’. However, as was highlighted in chapter 8, it is not always clear whether the ‘we’s’ and ‘us’ are indeed in reference to ‘Africans’ in the singular sense. To remind us of this, consider the following selected references: ‘We don’t expect all countries to be party to the idea somebody must start’ (ADM) and ‘We could say a lot has changed, but not everyone knows what NEPAD is. I am a journalist and I don’t think I have done much…we need to revise that trend’ (NT). It is not particularly clear as to whether ADM who is from Ghana is inclusively referring to ‘we’ the ‘Africans’ or narrowly to ‘we’ the African countries that kick-started NEPAD or even more exclusively to ‘we’ the assessors of NEPAD, which in this case also appears to include the researcher as the interviewer. It is nonetheless indicative of an identification with a broader community than just himself. In the cases of both NT and BDA, it is not entirely possible to identify with certainty whether the referents to ‘we’ are, ‘Africans’, ‘African countries’, ‘journalists’ or even ‘African journalists’. In line with this, as was highlighted in the findings, also consider NT’s use of ‘our’ in the following selection: “When I first heard of NEPAD, I was working in Rwanda. I asked myself: ‘Is NEPAD going to change our people’s mindset?’ Is NT referring to the people of Rwanda or is it the people of Africa? Again, however, the sentiments reveal an imagined cultural community of ‘our’ people.

Even if we were to argue that in most cases these terms are in reference to ‘Africans’, such a proposition still requires us to ask exactly what it is that they share in common for them to be grouped under a collective singular identity? Clearly, the perceptions of this African identity are at times vague, varied and somewhat subjective. There is a wandering sense of ‘we’ and
an array of possible ‘Africans’. Having said that, in answer to the aforementioned question it can be posited that the respondents construct a collective sense of Africanity with the aid of the constructive strategies of unification, vagueness in the meaning of Africa/ns and even through the avoidance and obscuring of intra-continental differences. As individuals and even as members of an in-group they relate their identity through social interaction to a wider community of Africans who are presumed to be also filled with similar feelings about what it means to be African (see Gilroy 1993; Anderson 1983).

In addition, as was illustrated in sub-section 8.3.1 and in Table 5 of the findings, the respondents deal with the question of what African identity means to them in a variety of ways. For BDA, it is about a mental construct of an “African consciousness” whilst others like TN2 relate it to geopolitics as in Africans speaking as “one voice” on the global stage. Some, such as MG, link it to a territorial-place identity as in ‘our continent’ of Africa. As such, they draw on aspects of shared socio-cultural and historical context, tradition and landscape to enact Africanity and even more broadly a sense of Africanness. The close relation between Africanity and the element of a shared historical dimension is evident in the findings in so far as Africans are often linked to the shared experiences of colonialism and the continued post-colonial drive towards some form of ‘development’. Remember that it is on the basis of such presumably commonly shared experiences that regional initiatives such as NEPAD are created to address commonly shared politico-economic challenges (see Miller 2004). Not surprisingly, the journalists feel that their countries should, for the most part, put their differences aside and align themselves to each other through NEPAD as an avenue for regional economic development and the representation of Africa in 21st century neo-liberal globalisation.

In a sense, the version of Africanity that is being presented by the bulk of the journalists is based on mental or abstract phenomena and on real elements (such as borders) that can stand as objects of identity. A multiplicity of symbols and elements that are grounded in the socio-cultural and historical context of Africa are being used to construct African identity (see Gilroy 1993; Wright 2002). By drawing on Anderson (1983), we can note that the more abstract symbols of this identity may be an artificial myth or an imagined community that is relied upon to create a belief in a commonly shared history and the existence of a collective community. This abstract notion of being African is enacted as a real state of being which is applicable to a homogenous group in which each and every member knows that they are ‘Africans’ in tandem with or even irrespective
of their nationality and ethnicity (see 10.1.3 below). It is naturalised and then treated as being commonsensical to all those who identify with it. However, even those ‘other’ groups that are not addressed by it are presumed to know what it is through their exclusion. This singular notion of Africanity is seen as being crucial to the progress of NEPAD, African development and African unity. What is taken for granted here is this sense of being African which is characterised by a shared African experience that can be found in everyone that is assumed to be African. I now turn our attention to how Africanity is also characterised by difference, resistance and even hybridity.

10.1.3 Differentiation, resistance and hybridity

 Crucially, the findings also work to remind us that identification is predicated on differentiation, categorisation and the making of comparisons both at the level of the individual and the group (see Tajfel 1981; Khan 1983). The respondents deploy constructive strategies such as binary oppositions and linguistic devices – pronouns, identity references – to help invite identification and solidarity with the ‘we’ or ‘us-group’, which, simultaneously implies distancing from and the marginalisation of ‘others’ or ‘them’. For instance, as is elaborated on below, the ‘continent’ of Africa is often compared and contrasted against other places that are referred to as Europe, America and/or more generally ‘the West’. The respondents present themselves as Africans who are different from people in other places. As indicated in chapter 4, this externalisation of the out-group and the relational binary opposition between ‘us’ and ‘them’ is at the heart of all identity (see Hall 1997). In addition, binary oppositions and moments of inclusion and exclusion vis-à-vis identity constructions are not neutral in that they are characterised by power relations and moments of dominance (see Derrida 1981; Foucault 1990). Based on the phrases in some of the extracts in chapter 8 one can go on to posit the following associations:

**TEA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African countries</th>
<th>Europeans, Americans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bad things</td>
<td>Help the less well off African countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wars, famines, disease</td>
<td>Have plenty /</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BDA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African Union</th>
<th>European Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In need of development</td>
<td>Engine of development / financiers of development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa copies Europe / the West</td>
<td>Evolution is in the West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our indigenous economic frameworks</td>
<td>Colonialism deterred African economic frameworks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GNA**

| We are dependent | Donors support us |
They colonised us (Colonisers)

They colonised us (Colonisers)

Colonised

Africa has problems

NEPAD looks inwards

They colonised us (Colonisers)

Foreigners to step in and assist

NEPAD looks outwards to the international community

One of the strong elements in these oppositional associations and indeed in the findings in chapter 8 in general, is the continued search and need for development along the continuum to progress within the post-colony. Pronouns such as ‘they’ are used to refer to the ‘donors’ and the ‘Europeans’ as the ‘other’ to the African. The ‘international community’, Americans, the European Union, the ‘West’ and its people the ‘foreigners’ are generally constructed as the givers of funds and aid to NEPAD and Africa. These reductive ways of seeing and categorising ‘other’ identity groups tend to deny the complexities and the play of difference between and within these groups (Bhabha 1994a:75; also see hooks 1992). ‘Us’ the ‘dependent’, poverty-stricken Africans are in this case the recipients of aid and advice on democracy because “we are so far back in development” (GNA) unlike the developed West. In addition, as if to invoke Ngugi wa Thiongo’s (1983:80) oppositional “two great cultures” concerning the imperialists and the colonised, donors/Westerners are also portrayed negatively as the ‘colonisers’ even though not all donor countries were colonialists. Prioritising ‘self-reliance’ and the collective will of African peoples to address shared problems turns the negative portrayal of Africans as the ‘colonised’ into a positive one, even though not all African countries are committed to NEPAD or signed up to the APRM. One interviewee rejects the imagined community creation by seeing NEPAD / APRM as an avenue for creating – “a club within Africa” (ST) – divisions and differences within Africa.

In thinking about these nuances concerning moments of inclusion and exclusion and the related power relations, we can draw on Fanon (1986) to posit that the respondents as Africans tend to construct themselves in imitation of, as well as in opposition to the image of the ‘other’. Evidently, for the African, the ‘donors’ as the developed ‘other’ that give aid to Africa serve to define everything that is desirable, everything the self desires. However, the ‘donors’ as the colonising ‘other’ that continue to dominate Africa serve to portray everything that is averse, everything that the self wants to alienate (also see Said 1995). Also, bear in mind that nationalists and pan-Africanists have passionately, and often poetically, appropriated the notion of a binary opposition between Europe and Africa as part of an attempt to discover, rehabilitate or (re)affirm their cultural identity. This search for a collective one true self, which people with a shared ancestry and history hold in common, has been essential for anti-colonial struggles and the
construction of post-colonial identities as well. However, as Hall (1994:395) reminds us, the key thing to realise here about cultural differences is that identity is, in a sense, a matter of being and a matter of becoming (also see Achebe 1988). There is a difference as in otherness, but not purity as such, and then there is also multiplicity and hybridity.

Drawing on the interventionism of postcolonial theory (Shome and Hegde 2002), it can be inferred that the continued externalisation of the ‘other’ as the ‘coloniser’ is part of an attempt to interrupt, to resist, and historically and economically to liberate oneself from the colonising and hegemonic discourses of thought that are perceived as continuing to find favour in African affairs. Insights into the respondents’ aversion to the relations of dominance can generally be noted in the above associations, particularly with regard to their desire for Africa’s economic independence from a dominating donor community. The implicit attempt here is to threaten the certainty of the origin and sustained authority of the dominating power relations between Africa and the West. Influenced by Memmi (1965) and hooks (1992), one could go as far as to posit that such practices of differentiation can also be understood as an act of exorcism for both the ‘colonised’ and the ‘coloniser’.

The fuller point here is for us to realise that (group) identification is characterised by differentiation, categorisation and the making of comparisons which can be enacted through binary oppositions. As moments of inclusion and exclusion, these processes are embedded within power structures and relations of dominance. Thus, the West is not only seen as the ‘other’, but also the developed harbinger of progress that Africa must aim to emulate through NEPAD. Africa is to be measured against the West as the originator of progress. Once again, although the respondents aspire to see a better footing for Africa in global trade through NEPAD, they do not necessarily oppose the hegemony of its neo-liberal discourse, which some observers claim works to maintain the global order and the unequal balance of power between Africa and the West in the ‘new partnership’ (see Olukoshi 2002).

Further, the respondents’ comments concerning the APRM and the findings regarding ‘nationality over Africanity’ are characterised by heightened differentiation along the lines of the nation. This is not surprising because the peer review mechanism works on the basis of a nation being peer reviewed by a selection of eminent persons from other countries which have signed up to it. This is evident, for instance, through the ways in which some of the journalists insist on their national sovereignty and identity in the face of the APRM as part of an attempt to make sense for
themselves as to who they are and what the ‘others’ are. Consider the following: ‘We have differences and divisions’ (TN1); ‘APRM is about differentiating…the bad Africa…we have gradations across Africa’ (ST); ‘I am Nigerian first’ (TD); ‘I am more South African than African’ (MG); and ‘I see myself as a Ghanaian. We have a culture and history that make us different from other African countries’ (GNA). In the findings, the extracts concerning the APRM also pointed towards how the journalists from Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa in particular tended to implicitly defend the interests and leadership positions of their countries in NEPAD by presenting the belief that this is of benefit to Africans in general (see also Gans 1979; Thetela 2001). However, they also create room for resistant views of their leadership in so far as they tend to agree that their positions at the forefront of NEPAD could also be ‘divisive’. Remember that hegemonic processes in general do not always operate by way of direct domination, but through persuasion, consent and negotiation. The consideration here is that they create room for resistance, all of which works to blur out potential tensions (Gramsci 2000). In general, the journalists tend to defend and portray positively the positions of their own countries as members of the APRM whilst those ‘other’ nations that have not signed up are seen negatively and labelled as the ‘bad Africa’.

When positioning themselves in terms of their national identities over and above Africanity vis-à-vis NEPAD, GNA, TN2, TD, MG and BD exemplify their national identifications with the aid of constructive strategies and identity references – ‘us’, ‘them’, ‘they’, ‘I’, ‘us’ and ‘our’. The journalists attribute this identification to what can be seen as two broad influences of 1) occupation and 2) shared national socio-cultural historical experiences. The speakers often rely on the ‘I’ statements to perform nationality for instance as in: ‘I am Nigerian first that is my nationality and then an African’ (TD) and ‘I am South African first’ (MG). Others such as TN2 opined that his identification was mainly framed around his experiences in Uganda, whilst TD also revealed that she felt, “disconnected from the rest of Africa” due to her Nigerian experiences. In doing this, they are at some level paying allegiance to and prioritising their national identities. The identification with nationality in the context of NEPAD works to remind us that national identity is not necessarily weak or irrelevant as is often posited through the post-colonial theoretical emphasis on hybridity. This also reminds us that although there is a general destabilisation of the nation state or national identity in the contemporary global order, the assumption of the eclipse or demise of the nation as a space and a place could be premature (see Wiley 2004). Clearly, for some of the journalists, nationality remains a powerful logic of socio-
economic and cultural organisation, and post-colonial nation states continue to be seen as central sites of/for economic and political development and identification (see Mamdani 1996).

However, caution is needed with regard to reading too much into the enactment of national identity given that the bulk of the journalists, including those that are categorised as prioritising ‘nationality over Africanity’, tend to link or even transform their national identities and its components into a pan-African identity. For instance, although both *MG* and *TD* enact their national allegiance as their ‘first’ and preferred self within the context of NEPAD, they are in a sense also saying to us that there are other secondary identities that they see themselves as identifying with. Hence, they are both quick to add that they are also Africans. In line with this, consider the following selections: ‘As a Ghanaian first and as an African’ (*GNA*); ‘Despite being a Kenyan, I belong to a continent called Africa and the boundaries that divide us matter less’ (*TN1*); and ‘my work criss-crosses the countries in ways that reflect my own sense of who I am as an – East – African’ (*NT*). These nuances are not entirely surprising given that in the context of the post-colony national identity was and still is inextricably linked to a pan-African identity (see Nkrumah 1963; Fanon 1963; Mbeki 1996). As suggested in chapters 4 and 8, in the post-colony, the nation does not always equate to the notion of a shared language or cultural experiences which are neatly demarcated within a distinct political or geographical entity as in Anderson (1983). Instead, as is suggested by some of the respondents, the post-colonial national identity often takes on another meaning, a sense of shared African culture, subjectivity and essence that stretches across divisions of nations as political entities (see Cesaire 1969; Mbeki 2003) – a kind of pan-nationalism (Gilroy 1993), a pan-nationalism that is rooted in shared historical experiences. The idea here is to recognise that both nationalism and pan-Africanism create communities, which then have to be endowed with a historical and cultural unity which is both inclusive (sameness) and exclusive (difference).

The discussion so far – in this entire section – works to remind us that although the journalists maintain an aspiration towards NEPAD’s overarching African identity, this does not automatically preclude the possibility of agency (‘I’) or resistance to it (see Foucault 1980). As is illustrated in this and the previous chapter, aspects of NEPAD’s ideology interpellate the journalist as a subject and yet s/he is also capable of negotiating and even resisting some of them. Depending on the question at hand, some journalists see themselves as being more oriented towards their national identity than towards Africanity, others are oriented more towards Africanity than nationality, some are continuously ambivalent and uncertain about their stance.
and yet they all maintain at a broader level sympathies towards NEPAD’s Africanism. Drawing on Foucault (1980), it can be posited that this implicit potential to refuse to be one thing, that is to be a singular subject and therefore be subjected, is what it is that often opens up new possibilities for being (see also chapter 4). This activation of agency operates through the realm of a ‘third space’ or an ‘in-between space’ through which individuals are able to negotiate the various identities that are available to them rather being tied down to a single essentialist and all dominating identity that stifles cultural transformation and expression (see Bhabha 1994a). In addition, because moments of identification are characterised by power relationships and yet “power is everywhere” (Foucault 1978:93), it can therefore also be inferred that there is some room for subjects to resist or negotiate in and out of overarching identities. In other words, it is through power – which is relational – and its constitution of the subject that resistance is possible. It is this potential to resist in general that allows the journalists to reconsider, dismantle and even construct identities in relation to other groups.

It is in this sense that the journalists can on occasion be seen to enact multiple identities and conceptualisations. In their narratives, they cross boundaries and identifications as they shift from one identity category to another. It is almost as if their identifications are always oscillating, never perfectly achieved and yet at a certain moment in time they are real, lived and essentialist. It is in this regard that Achebe cited in Ahluwalia (2001:33), reminds us here again that African identity is constantly in the process of being made, meaning that it is almost never complete and yet it is also coming into existence in as far as it can be experienced as being real. Drawing on Bhabha (1994b:117), it can also be asserted that the divide between nationality and Africanity is not “a neat division”. The respondents, as Africans and nationals of various countries, are capable of being in at least two places/identity categories at the same time, which makes it almost impossible for the recognition of an essentialised identity. This recognition of multiplicities undercuts both the Africanists’ and nationalists’ claims of a unified self, and – as is cautioned by Said (1993) – warns against interpreting cultural difference in absolute or reductive terms. The next section presents an exploration of the findings with regard to the influences concerning the journalists’ conceptions of their roles whilst bearing in mind some of the wider ideological considerations that have been explored in this section.

10.2 Factors influencing the journalists’ perceptions

In thinking about how it is that the journalists come to maintain the dominance of the libertarian journalistic ideology, it is worth bearing in mind some of the factors that influenced them in this
regard. Drawing on the work of Shoemaker and Reese (1996), some of the main influences in the findings with regard to how journalists conceive of their journalistic sub-identities are identified as: 1) personal decision-making; 2) media type, sector and ownership; 3) audience expectations; and 4) professionalism and journalism’s ideology. The bulk of the journalists’ understandings concerning their journalistic responsibilities in chapter 9 lend credibility to these influences.

Consider the following selections: ‘Facts are facts. You don’t want to be accused of bias’ (BD); ‘We work under pressure from our editors’ (NT) and ‘My daily schedule does not leave room for influencing the audience’ (TD). In addition: ‘I am a human being with feelings. Sometimes when I am writing a balanced piece I often feel that I would just like to leave this out because I hate what this person is doing, but I leave it in because of balance’ (MG). These references and indeed the narratives in chapter 9 clearly point to the interplay between personal conceptions, audience expectations, media routines, organisational and even broader ideological factors in influencing the journalists’ conceptions concerning their roles.

In some cases, as in ST, MG, TNI and ADM, the journalists’ narratives – ‘I want to’, ‘I like to’, ‘I hate’, ‘I try’ and ‘I think’ – provide us with insights into how they can rely on their own individual interests, judgments and personal decision-making in deciding how to enact various journalistic stances. In fact, MG’s specific comments in reference to how he has to wrestle with his own feelings as a ‘human being’ in the interests of maintaining ‘balance’ particularly provide us here with rare insights into the consideration that journalists are indeed subjective (see De Beer 2004; Hazel 2001). The point here is that journalists do have some leeway to enact independent decisions in their professional activities, aspects of which can be equated with job autonomy. However, this leeway is – as indicated by NT, TD and MG – at times curtailed by media routines such as deadlines, professional considerations, time constraints and even organisational constraints such as finances. A key issue that was highlighted by the journalists in terms of newsroom/organisational dynamics is the role that can be played by editors who may have a hand in how a story turns out and this means that the editors’ own individual values and conceptions could have an influence in shaping the journalists conceptions of their roles.

The leeway is also constrained in that they are subject to the perceived interpellations of the public and peers in the journalistic fraternity. Firstly, the journalists appeared to base their conceptions of what it is that they do based on the expectations of their ‘clients’, ‘audience’ and ‘public’. It is in this sense that many of them tend to highlight the following: informing and educating the public; selecting topics that are of public interest; and adhering to professional
journalistic values and norms as important principles that the public expects them to uphold in their roles as journalists. Remember – as is indicated in chapters 2 and 4 – that the role/s of a journalist are partly created by other members of society and that they are maintained through societal interaction for the purposes of being upheld by the social actors – journalists – who perform those roles in society (see Berger and Luckman 1966; Goffman 1959). It is also in this regard that the journalists in different contexts can be found to enact divergent positions as to whether it is part of their responsibility to support government initiatives, with some journalists such as BD insisting that the responsibilities of governments should not be attached to those of the journalist. The point here is that what the journalists see as the real, true or even false role of journalism – in NEPAD – is at some level influenced by how their own societies look at the world at that point in time. This works to remind us that roles can be static over time, but they are also prone to change and they can be mixed depending on the societal context at hand (see Goffman 1981).

Secondly, one of the factors that come across as being prioritised in the journalists’ conceptions of their roles concerns their journalistic values and norms – objectivity, facts, credibility, balance, fairness, validity and accuracy – as the hallmarks of professional journalism particularly in its libertarian strand. This is not surprising given that journalistic norms and values actually define the role/s that journalists as a community of peers are supposed to perform in society (see Deuze 2001). This could also be one of the reasons why the journalists’ responses in the findings generally points towards their cautiousness about enacting attached, interventionist, issues-oriented and advocacy-driven journalism that is associated with social responsibility (see Ward 2004). Remember that for some advocates of reform type – as in social agenda and development – journalism, the detachment, neutrality and objectivity of libertarianism is exactly what deters journalists from enacting a more personal and political stance which enables them to empower the public as citizens to improve their conditions (Freire 1970; Janowitz 1975; Galtung and Vincent 1992). In fact, as noted above and as is also explored further below in sections 10.3 to 10.5, some of the journalists such as BD tend to relegate the social agenda functions to government media, while others like ADM opine that they have a role to play – with governments – when it comes to educating the public.

The aforementioned factors coupled with the wider socio-cultural ideological influences of their contexts lead the journalists to consider themselves as having professional journalism characteristics that include a full commitment to the profession, service to society and a degree of
autonomy. In attempting to make sense of these factors, it is also worth bearing in mind that although they intertwine, some of them can be more influential than others, depending on the news issues / context at hand and that often it is the wider ideological influences that tend to subsume the more individual ones (see Reese 2001). This relates to the ideological in the Gramscian (2000) sense whereby one interpretation of society is privileged in the social and political arenas over and above others, whilst also creating room for them to be contested. To elaborate, at a wider socio-cultural level, this can be read as the dominant ideology in society, which could include here the belief in modernisation, neo-liberalism and liberal democracy as the route towards post-colonial development (see Fukuyama 1992; NEPAD 2001). Therefore, a second and pertinent ideology that is also considered to be operating at this level includes Africanism with NEPAD’s ideological interpellations. A third ideology, derived from and closely related to the first one would in this case include journalistic (occupational) ideology. As noted in chapter 4, this can be read as the accepted media philosophy – libertarian or socially responsible – which relates to the media professionals’ shared journalistic expectations, such as conventions of storytelling and newsgathering. It is in this sense that ‘journalistic ideology’ is used here-within to refer to the ideal-type values, norms and codes of conduct that guide journalistic practice and identity (see Deuze 2005; Carpentier 2005). Journalistic identity is treated as an umbrella category for the neutral, social agenda, watchdog and development sub-identities (see chapters 4 and 8).

Based on the presentation of the findings in chapters 8 and 9, the libertarian strand or what is also at times referred to as the libertarian professional model of this journalistic ideology is read as being dominant bearing in mind that its values are constantly (re)enacted, reiterated and (re)invoked by the journalists in light of NEPAD’s Africanist thought. Despite this, as is explored further below, there are moments when neutrality as a dimension of libertarianism is linked to social responsibility, for instance when the journalists endorse the social agenda sub-identity as an avenue for providing analysis and discussions on issues of public interest. The next section pays attention to the discussion concerning the predominance of libertarian journalistic model and the neutral sub-identity vis-à-vis NEPAD whilst bearing in mind the nuances of the foregoing discussions.

10.3 The (pre)dominance of libertarian journalistic ideology

9.3.1 The centrality of neutrality

The journalists interviewed seem to have internalised the values of the libertarian journalistic ideology. Remember here that libertarianism demands that journalists act as disseminators of information and as watchdogs that are free from government control (Siebert et al 1956). As
established earlier in this chapter it can be posited that the journalists’ belief in and constant reinforcement of neutrality, objectivity, facts, balance, independence and the autonomy of the journalist happens either voluntarily, or even subconsciously, but also subtly through perceived audience expectations concerning the practice of journalism. Libertarian journalistic discourse hails them as ‘neutral journalists’ that are subject to its discourse. It hails them as active subjects that are expected to enact objectivist professional distance as part of the value patterns that come with this sub-identity. At some level, the journalists generally accept the wider interpellation towards libertarianism because it enables them, in part, to confirm that they already see themselves in this way. The close links between libertarianism and the dominant professional journalistic model of practice leads the journalists to identify with ‘neutrality’ and less so with ‘opinion’. ‘Neutrality’ rings true because the address seems less an attempt to resituate them than a continuing affirmation of an already commonly shared set of understandings about what it means to be a professional journalist or indeed a member of a journalistic community.

In thinking about how this study teases out the two broad categories of ‘neutral’ and ‘opinion’ in the journalists narratives, it is worth bearing in mind that despite drawing mainly from personal views, opinion-oriented journalism does not necessarily carry a politico-social agenda such as a pro-NEPAD or more broadly Africanist one. In turn, ‘hard news’ may aspire to draw mainly from ‘facts’ that are presented as ‘two sides to the story’, but it is still a socially constructed product that is influenced by subjectivity and not a direct reflection of an objective reality as such (see Tuchman 1978). The fuller point here is that actually none of the journalistic sub-identities and broader philosophies being drawn upon by the respondents can guarantee or even produce ‘truth’ that is both absolute and knowable. In fact, based on the content analysis in chapter 7, it can be posited that news is not free from personal opinion, political influences or the dominant societal ideologies of the day. A key issue of consideration is that neutrality and opinion do not operate in oppositional extremes as such. As some of the respondents’ comments illustrated, there is room for negotiation.

At a theoretical level, contrary to the views of scholars who have called for media-reform as in the shape of social agenda and even development type journalism within the context of the post-colony (see Freire (1970); Galtung and Vincent (1992); Domatob and Hall (1983)), the journalists tend to reject these particular sub-identities. As if to enact their professional autonomy, they prioritise the neutral information and factual content functions whilst rejecting government interference, the use of their opinions to influence social agendas that purport to be beneficial to
the (African/national) publics and even direct journalistic support for NEPAD, which roles are for them linked to propaganda. By distancing themselves from such functions, the respondents are implicitly enacting their belief in the ‘market place of ideas’, as the space through which individuals can come to decide for themselves about what they think is best for them (see Siebert et al 1956). In doing this, they are invoking and reinforcing some of the main values of libertarianism. To elaborate, they are upholding the libertarian belief in the ‘self-righting process’ and the ‘market place of ideas’ as the best guarantors of a ‘truth’ seeking and non-partisan form of professional journalistic practice (see McQuail 1994). By endorsing facts, neutrality and objectivity, the journalists are at some level revealing their belief in the competition of the market as an avenue for bringing out the ‘truth’ – and not propaganda – for the benefit of an informed electorate and democracy in general (see Siebert et al 1956). It is in this regard that they seem to be hesitant about the idea of influencing the public – through their opinions – to act on an issue of public interest. Here, we can infer that they are in a sense also linking the notion of the market place of ideas to the self-fulfilment of the individual and society in general. For instance, when TEA comments that she simply tells the story and “lets the public make up their own decisions” or when MG argues that, “I don’t delegate to myself the role of shifting people’s feelings”, they are both invoking sovereignty as a key tenet of libertarianism. They are (re)affirming the sovereignty of the individual as an entity with the right to express him / herself and to have the right to choose (see Siebert et al 1956; Chang and Grabel 2004).

In fact, the idea of the right to freedom of expression is another key aspect of libertarianism which is endorsed by the journalists especially when they insist on their independence and autonomy particularly from government. This consideration is at the heart of the distinct difference between the libertarian and social responsibility journalistic whereby the former insist on ‘freedom from’ government interference whilst the latter emphasise ‘freedom for’ advancement of social goals without necessarily excluding government participation (see Wuliger 1991; Nerone et al 1995; Ward 2004). This belief in being autonomous, independent and free from government is made more evident for us when we consider the finding that some of the journalists tend to reduce the functions of the development sub-identity in particular to public media such as the SABC, government type media or indeed governments in general. For instance, consider the following comments in response to ‘support for regional/continental development’, ‘the portrayal of a unified and self-reliant Africa’ and the use of opinion to push for social agendas: ‘That is not the journalists’ job’ (BD) and ‘I deem it as a national responsibility’ (GNA). In addition: ‘I am an independent journalist and I cannot campaign …let the public make up their own minds (MG); ‘I
am not going to become a champion of this or that African initiative…I am not going to cheerlead’ (ST); and ‘The journalism angle has to hold irrespective of whether I want to support it as an African’ (TEA). As was illustrated in the findings, the journalists believe that if they take on attached functions such as the positive portrayal of a self-reliant united Africa, they will be handing over the responsibility for information management to governments; a scenario that would be similar to the 1980s when journalists were under the patronage of the state and the ruling party. In their comments, the journalists are indirectly saying that one cannot achieve individual self-fulfillment or an informed electorate unless one prevents government interference in journalism. However, the difficulty in holding this position in exclusion of alternatives leads to a series of questions. For example, if government is to be deterred from interfering in journalistic/media practice, what does one do about struggles against racism and xenophobia or even the propagation of ideas like nation building and equitable development? Should all this be left to the ‘self-righting process’? Shouldn’t state supervision be considered in the journalism, media and NEPAD nexus?

The potential answers to some of the aforementioned question(s) can be found in the journalists’ responses concerning the social agenda sub-identity. Their particular endorsement of the social agenda functions – analysis, interpretation, discussing policies – as being reasonably important and their emphasis on acting as educators, guardians and investigators on behalf of their readers is in line with the public service ideals of journalism. Therefore, although they are bent on excluding commentary from facts, they still see themselves as performing some journalistic functions that are based on communitarian and collectivist principles which are at times seen as being the ideal within the ‘information poor’ (ST) context of the post-colony (also see Kasoma 2000). I return to this question of the journalists’ beliefs with regard to socially responsible journalism in the next section, for now I would like to pay attention to the watchdog dimension of libertarianism.

Evidently, one of the more salient findings of this study is the journalists’ tendency to downplay a strong watchdog sub-identity. Going beyond the role of disseminating the competing diversity and plurality of views for the enhancement of democracy, the libertarian approach also requires the journalist to serve as a check on government and the powerful in society (see Siebert et al 1956; Berger 2000). The aim is to keep them from abusing their power. Although some of the journalists see themselves as having the responsibilities of being a critic who looks for ‘personal agendas in NEPAD’ (ST), a watchdog that will ‘investigate’ and ‘not hide anything’ simply because NEPAD is African (TNI) or a journalist that ‘keeps an eye’ (GNA) on NEPAD, the
watchdog role does not come through strongly in the findings. The results showed that journalists considered the function of being an ‘investigator of statements made by government and business’ to be ‘quite important’, but it is the label of being an ‘adversary’ that takes on a critical stance to those in power that they seem to have a problem with. Their responses in the findings with regard to this function – ‘Not quite an adversary although it is also very important’ (BDA); ‘Why would I be an adversary?’ (MG); ‘I am a watchdog not an adversary’ (ST) – lend credibility to this point.

On the one hand, as Mwesige (2004), Shafer (1996) and Zhu et al (1997) remind us, the journalists’ uncertainty about being adversarial watchdogs could be due to the tendency for journalists in Africa and Asia to ‘play it safe’ with regard to the watchdog role. Watchdogism usually brings them into direct conflict with the political elite and so they avoid this by endorsing neutrality. The fuller point here is that in contexts where political and legal regimes continue to exercise direct control over the media, criticism of official policies is not always feasible especially when leaders retaliate through threats and media bans. On the other hand, it also raises question marks about the researcher’s inclusion of the adversarial function in particular as a relevant watchdog journalism element within the context of the post-colony. The journalists perceive an adversary as someone that is always against whatever government does, but they do not see themselves in that light. Bear in mind that the adversarial function is for the most part derived from the Western model of journalism (Weaver 1998; also see chapter 11 on implications). In line with NWICO, it is also significant to note that the respondents generally are based in societies where there is no polarised adversarialism as such between media and government and society. Cordiality in relations more broadly is not a fertile ground for media adversarialism, or an oppositional role akin to a political party aspiring to power.

I now turn to the implications of the journalists’ perceptions concerning the social agenda and development sub-identities. Remember that one of the factors that appear to have played a key role in influencing the journalists’ beliefs about the enactment of neutrality is the nexus between media and African governments, with many of them expressing their concerns about being used to enact propagandist journalism.

10.4 Social agenda considerations
Although the journalists are adamant about upholding the neutral sub-identity, the findings also show that they subscribe strongly to some of the functions of social agenda journalism. They saw themselves as informers, teachers and guardians who provide serious, prioritised coverage on
issues like NEPAD. Some, such as GNA, insisted that they reserve such serious topics for in-depth and analytical type reportage. Others like TS, indicated that they go beyond simply “telling the story” by including commentary through which they can get their audiences to “understand and appreciate” NEPAD. ADM opined that in the context of the post-colony, journalists should generally consider supporting certain initiatives like NEPAD and even attempts at social goals such as universal primary education, which should not simply be left to governments. He insisted that ‘we’ as journalists should also be ‘part of the process’. Therefore, besides simply being disseminators and neutral informers, some of the journalists are indirectly suggesting that they can also foster social-public activism, instil awareness about NEPAD, discuss NEPAD policies so that people can understand them and even go as far as assisting marginalised communities to define problems and find solutions. These enactments of the social agenda journalistic sub-identity are in line with the key tenets of social responsibility theory in which the emphasis is on ‘freedom for’ the advancement of social-public goals (see Nerone et al 1995; Wuliger 1991). The realisation here is that some of the journalists are willing to make room for working hand-in-hand with governments on NEPAD and they are also not averse to being subjective and attached even as participatory-type journalists who are working towards the success of NEPAD and the communities that they belong to (see Ward 2004; Freire 1970).

Furthermore, another key aspect of social responsibility theory in general is the requirement for journalists to enact issues-driven, analytical, interpretive and context-oriented reportage (see chapter 3). The idea is that it is through such coverage that discussion, debate and dialogue, and not so much conflict and scepticism, that people will be empowered to participate in NEPAD. Based on the findings, it can be argued that some of the journalists felt that this type of reportage was time-consuming, costly, not financially viable and out of place vis-à-vis the interests of their readers. Others such as ST revealed that in-depth reportage was more oriented to the responsibilities of investigative journalists and government type media than neutral-disseminator type journalists. However, a few argued that in-depth reportage was exactly what they were doing or aspiring to do when reporting on NEPAD. TEA and GNA revealed that they found the event-focus in their NEPAD reportage to be ‘limiting’ and that they preferred to provide analysis type coverage. BDA asserted that he enacted the ‘classic journalism role’ when reporting on NEPAD, but he still made it a point to look beyond the event by providing contextual and analytical NEPAD information “for the objective of educating the people”. These references to providing context, analysis and discussion are clearly in line with some of the (five) standards of media performance required of a socially responsible press (see Siebert et al 1956).
These aspirations also signal, in the words of Herbert, “the fundamental fault of African journalism in that it is excessively event-driven” (Interview 2006). As was illustrated in chapter 7, the bulk of the NEPAD stories were based on events such as meetings and press conferences and they had a low diversity of sources. This orientation towards news elements that are often associated with libertarianism is seen as being responsible for the absence of interpretive, participant and analytical NEPAD coverage. It is in this regard that Herbert (Interview 2006) asserts it is because of the “event focus” that some of the fundamental NEPAD subjects are never discussed in the African media. Based on his experiences as a trainer on media and NEPAD he also revealed that even when he chooses the best people for training he still finds that they struggle to “write feature articles”. He goes on to add that, “so in terms of NEPAD I haven’t seen enough effective coverage at all and I tend to attribute it more to that deficiency of feature writing”.40

On the one hand, these considerations serve to remind us that although the journalists generally identified with the social agenda journalistic sub-identity through which they can intervene in news production for the purposes of enlightening the public about NEPAD issues, the news-writing elements that go hand in hand with this sub-identity are limited. For the most part, the orientation is towards neutrality and its focus on events, timeliness, official sources and facts all of which seems to deter the scrutiny of NEPAD (see also Molotch and Lester 1997). On the other hand, it is possible that socially responsible journalism as they are understood within the context of the West are yet to take a firm root in the post-colony or that they are probably taking a slightly different direction (see also chapter 11 for implications).

If we consider the finding that the journalists enact the neutrality and social-agenda sub-identities, and that some of them such as NT, TEA, BDA, TN1 and ADM argued that “every African has a duty to promote NEPAD”, whilst GNA aspires to achieve development through watchdogism, the result is a picture of the relative endorsement of all identities, albeit unequally. Based on the reviews in chapter 2, it can be posited here that journalists have the potential to hold (un)equally to more than one journalistic dimension (see Weaver 1998). In reality, only five of the journalists – ADM, BDA, TEA, TS and ST – rated two identities equally whilst only ST rated three identities equally. Therefore, while an attempt was made to discern the statements that were held in highest regard, it is evident that journalists can give equal rankings to two, three or four functions, as in,  

40 Two of the journalists in this study have previously been selected for the SAIIA’s training sessions on reporting NEPAD.
‘extremely important’ or ‘somewhat important’ and then even go on to opine about their relevance in ways that are not too dissimilar. The point here is that the journalists have no problems in perceiving themselves as upholding a plurality of journalistic sub-identities. In some instances, even when the journalists enacted neutrality or social agenda identifications, some still went on to portray uncertainty and mixed feelings about their choices – ‘I have not put much thought into what I do as a journalist’ (TEA); ‘political…public agenda it can be a grey area’ (GNA); and ‘facts…opinion there is a grey area’ (BD).

In fact, with regard to TEA, GNA, ADM and TS whose responses are often characterised by moments of uncertainty, they tend to come across as being more open to a sense of plurality about their journalistic identities than others are. As is expanded on below in section 10.5, the fuller point here is that the journalists at times combine functions of the neutral, watchdog, social agenda and development journalistic sub-identities as part of an attempt to address the competing and even conflicting needs of their profession against those of the post-colony. This stance rather enables them to balance and even escape the potential dilemmas that at times come up as they shift between the journalistic models, NEPAD’s interpellations and the wider socio-cultural ideologies. Therefore, as was illustrated in chapter 9 of the findings concerning the journalists’ responses and ratings to the role statements, some of the journalists seem to deploy or even aspire to the majority of the journalistic identity functions and yet others outwardly reject some of them as not falling within the realm of journalism as they understand it. At some level, they actually seem to have implicitly differing perceptions, descriptions and understandings about the specific functions of the role of journalism in so far as it is influenced by libertarian and social responsibility philosophies.

In the next section, I discuss the findings with regard to development journalism and more specifically in reference to the potential tensions between its Africanist influences and the dominant professional libertarian stance of journalism.

10.5 Journalistic ideology versus Africanity/ism: conflicting philosophies?

10.5.1 Resisting the call for an African development journalist

In attempting to make sense of the journalists’ conceptions vis-à-vis development journalism, it is important to remember that NEPAD and indeed its proponents, as discussed in chapter 5, tend to rely on Africanist discourse to (re)situate journalists into a narrowly defined Africanist-development journalistic identity (also see Nkrumah 1965). In general, according to the proponents of NEPAD, the journalism-NEPAD nexus should for the most part be focused on
development-type journalism. This development journalistic ideology, which has its roots in the post-colony, is in this study associated with a journalistic stance that works to enhance people’s understanding of the values of NEPAD’s development plans, enhancing African development and self-reliance and African unity. The idea is for the journalists to be interventionist in their approach to NEPAD. However, the call here goes beyond interventionism to include Africanity.

Not surprisingly, Shope-Linney (Interview 2006) believes that part of the problem with regard to NEPAD reportage by the media in Africa is because most “African journalists are trained on the basis of journalism models that are based on Western values”. She adds, “they are trained to report positively on the West and negatively on Africa”. Some of the journalists such as BDA agree with this line of thought. According to him, “our journalists are trained and told that, ‘when you look at Africa this is the way in which you report’ similar to the ways in which reporting is done in Europe”. For instance, he feels that investigative journalism, which prioritises looking into issues “deeply” is set up to portray Africa negatively because of the absence of Western type institutional structures in the post-colonial nation state. For him, “it is all about corruption and then they overlook some other facts that are important for our people to know” (BDA). A key issue that is coming through here is the attempt to balance the needs of the dominant libertarian journalistic ideology against those of development in the post-colony. Shope-Linney also opines that another problem with regard to the journalism-NEPAD nexus is that African journalists in general can be “far more negative about Africa than Western journalists” (Interview 2006). She reasons that:

Then you have a situation whereby many of our journalists do not really know who they are as Africans – they are not patriotic enough. Why is it that the American and British journalists are far more patriotic about their continents than African journalists are about Africa? In Africa, you have that problem (Interview 2006).

It is by now evident that the implication here is that Western journalistic models and journalistic training in general are equated to being unpatriotic to Africa. Drawing on the inferences made in chapter 5, the assertion here is that to be a patriotic African journalist is to take on an Africanist development journalistic sub-identity. At some level, it can be inferred that overtly critical journalistic positions are seen as not being indigenous to the post-colony. Development journalism that is influenced by Africanism is presented as the legitimate indigenous journalistic identity for the post-colony. A discursive strategy of exclusion is relied upon to render libertarian-oriented journalists as agents of negative African images, whilst an emphasis on patriotic history (see Fanon 1963) is also deployed to label such journalists as being un-African. Bear in mind that the discourse of this journalism can be traced back to the anti-colonial struggles (see Nkrumah

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1965). In a sense, the proponents of NEPAD, including some of the journalists, are implicitly attempting to equate development journalism with patriotism, Africanism, and democracy, thereby narrowing the discursive field of journalism down to those who endorse this journalistic sub-identity (see Domatob 1988). In fact, what is being connoted here is that patriotic development journalism which is infused with Africanism has the potential to unify African journalists in defiance of the Western journalistic models. Any claim, which questions the legitimacy of this journalistic stance, is by definition rendered un-African. Africanist (development) journalism is articulated as restoring the journalists to their true African identity as agents of cultural unity, development and democracy (see Mbeki 2003) and it is also enacted as an indigenous African response to the problem of journalism in the post-colony (see Mwaffisi 1991).

These heightened forms of explicit interpellation, which attempt to resituate the journalists within a particular network of meanings concerning the roles of an African (development) journalist in line with the structures of Africanist discourse, bring up a series of questions. These could include: What are the journalists’ responses?; How do they interpret these interpellations?; Are there any moments of ambivalence?; and broadly speaking how do they balance journalistic ideology against Africanist thought and the wider post-colonial context? In thinking about the aforementioned questions or indeed discussion so far in this section it is important to bear in mind that although the journalists do often prioritise other cultural (national) identities and that they do not always see it as their role to portray a self-reliant and united Africa, they generally do maintain an appeal towards Africanism.

As documented so far, many of the selected journalists subscribed to both the neutral and social agenda sub-identities, as dimensions of libertarianism and social responsibility respectively. They believed that they should educate, guide and include discussions whilst also providing accurate and factual reports on NEPAD. However, they were not entirely certain about development journalism particularly in its Africanist strand as is articulated by Shope-Linney and NEPAD in general. As suggested before, many of the journalists equated it to the loss of autonomy, independence and the dissemination of propaganda or as something that should be done by government media. It is in this regard that BD revealed that ‘the extremes of Africanness’ were previously used to promote government political agendas whilst TS felt that journalists in Africa should hold onto independence and not simply support NEPAD because they are Africans. The concerns of the journalists generally remind us here of Said’s (1993) concerns about the ways in which essentialist conceptions of identity and calls for patriotism can be used to subjugate
people’s rights all in the name of a project such as NEPAD. However, also remember that the
tendency to use journalists and the media as propaganda tools or as a mouthpiece of the ruling
party and state can be traced back all the way to the period of European colonial rule, the anti-
colonial struggles and right up to the NWICO debates concerning the role of the media in the
South.

Having said that, as was illustrated in the findings, there are some journalists such as TN1, TEA,
ADM, GNA and BDA that echoed the sentiments of Shope-Linney by identifying with the
invitation to uphold development journalism as part of their responsibilities as Africans. They all
seemed to agree that promoting and supporting NEPAD was not directly equal to propaganda, but
rather a reasonably important ‘form of journalism’ (BDA). In addition, what also came through
strongly here was the idea that it was the duty of all Africans and not just African journalists to
promote NEPAD and that European journalists should not be entrusted with such a role due to
their contextual detachment from Africa.

In line with the aforementioned and the overall findings in this study, Herbert (Interview 2006)
argues that there are generally two types of journalists covering NEPAD. On the one hand, there
are those, who see it as “an African thing” which should be supported and not criticised “because
it’s ours”. On the other hand, there are those who do “not take sides”, but simply just report on it.
It is also in this regard that although the journalists did not rate and enact development journalism
as a dominant identity as such, they still held the function in relatively high regard as part of their
broader social responsibility attempt to foster public awareness about NEPAD. This is not entirely
surprising given that, as is discussed in section 10.1, the journalists are sympathetic and sensitive
to Africa’s development challenges, the relevance of economic independence and self-reliance
and even the benefits of African unity on the international stage even though they may not see
them as being ‘extremely important’. In fact, they maintain a strategic essentialism of Africanity
to enable them to sustain their sympathies and identifications with NEPAD.

Nevertheless, many of them, including those that tended to identify with the African development
journalist identity did not out-right see it as their role to support and promote NEPAD, prioritise
the positive aspects of Africa or advocate for African development in general at the cost of their
neutral-objectivist identity, which they prioritise as their preferred sub-identity. It is in this regard
that TEA was keen to point out that ultimately, she would ‘be as objective as possible’ by putting
aside her Africanist attachment and replacing it with journalistic professionalism. Similarly,
although *BDA* always tries to perpetuate an ‘African consciousness’ he also revealed that this would not be at the cost of ‘balance’ in his NEPAD stories. *TN1* asserted that as an African journalist who is in support of NEPAD he would not ‘hide’ the negatives about it. Besides simply (re)enacting their collectively shared understandings of what it is that they should do as neutral-objectivist journalists, one key issue that can be noted here in thinking about their identification or not with regard to the development journalism, is that their journalistic identifications are not straightforward. There are moments of mixed feelings and ambivalence in aspects of the journalists’ narratives as they wrestle with having to balance the ideals of the dominant professional-libertarian model of journalism against the development and Africanist aspirations of the post-colony (also see Ebo 1994). Actually, some journalists do seem to struggle with this tension or have at least thought about its dilemmas as when *NT* says that ‘sometimes there is a conflict’ between being African and being a journalist or when *ST* reveals that there is a ‘tension that arises sometimes’ between his professional journalistic identity and his cultural identifications vis-à-vis NEPAD.

Evidently, NEPAD’s interpellations do tend to place some of the journalists in paradoxical situations that are often interpreted as having to make a choice between neutral journalism and the commitment to Africa through development journalism. It is in this regard that the journalists in general can be seen to come across as enacting a series of identifications – neutrality and social agenda sub-identities whilst also maintaining some aspirations towards Africanness for the benefit of NEPAD and yet they are cautious about the Africanist development journalism stance. It is therefore not entirely surprising to find that the journalists seem to uphold a pluralistic view of their journalistic functions in which the sub-identities from the libertarian and socially responsible journalistic perspectives are combined as part of an attempt to meet the competing and potentially conflicting needs of their profession and the post-colony. The fuller point here is that their journalistic identifications are characterised by moments of certainty, uncertainty and plurality with some identity categories being prioritised and rejected whilst others are being (re)enacted and yet each could be influencing the journalists to behave in certain ways. What exactly is going on here? Are these signals of hybrid agency or pluralistic journalistic identities?

Caution is required here in reading too much into the potential enactment of a hybrid journalistic identity given the overwhelming recognition that is attached to libertarianism as the professional and rightful stance which is to be enacted by journalists. Whilst there are some strong resistances towards social responsibility in general, particularly as in the shape of development journalism,
there is no strong resistance towards the dominant libertarian approach. It is in this regard that those moments of plurality and uncertainty can at some level be read more like individual strategies and in some cases escapes of various sorts that are implemented to avoid the conflicting positions between libertarian journalistic ideology and NEPAD’s Africanist appeals and maybe not so much as concrete evidence of hybrid journalistic identity.

The next section concludes this chapter by presenting four concluding statements concerning some of the main issues of discussion.

10.6 Conclusion
In light of the issues discussed so far, particularly with regard section to 10.5 which seems to bring the journalists role perceptions into direct contact with NEPAD’s Africanist influences, I would like to posit four interpretations. Firstly, although the journalists are responsive to the ‘development’ challenges of the post-colony, the vision of an attached development journalist who uses journalism to proactively address, support and promote African development does not ring true to them. They do not see themselves as African development journalists and they interpret such interpellations as an attempt to reposition them from their rightful identification as neutral-objectivity journalists. Neither do they perceive themselves as attached Africanist development journalists who are not tied to the values and norms of libertarian journalistic ideology. Accepting the development functions could for them lead to government interference, the loss of autonomy and independence. However, as we know, social responsibility-oriented journalism is in theory not the denial of objectivity or even autonomy. In fact, the attached social agenda and development journalism statements in Table 9 of chapter 9 are not direct attacks on journalistic ideology. The point here is – as is illustrated in chapters 2 and 3 – that journalistic objectivity is not the same thing as journalistic detachment and being detached is not the be all and end all of journalism’s credibility. The fuller point for us to recognise here is that irrespective of whether journalists are ‘attached’ or ‘detached’ they are inevitably subjective and that in practice they have to rely on some sense of the values of balance, fairness and objectivity as entry points for making sense of the world that they report on (see Ward 2004; Hanitzsch 2004). Their professional ethics and journalistic ideology requires them to meet these guidelines. Thus, although the social agenda role and the participatory strand of development journalism tend to question ‘objectivity’ at the normative level, in practice the idea is to rethink its framework by redirecting its values towards bringing silent voices and topics to the fore, all of which is not the same thing as saying that there is no room for ‘objectivity’. Looked at in this way it is therefore
not surprising to find that even those few journalists who see it as their responsibility as Africans to practice development journalism keep on insisting on their adherence towards the neutral-objectivist stance.

Secondly, the journalists are at some level enacting various journalistic functions. The orientation of their journalistic identity conceptions is evidently the result of a myriad of media, journalistic and socio-cultural contextual influences. It is through these influences that journalists in Africa have, since the 1990s, come to uphold the neutral, watchdog and social agenda values of journalism without completely shedding their development journalism influences towards the post-colony in general (see chapter 2). This position of plurality – mixed journalistic sub-identities – implicitly enables them uphold libertarianism whilst also maintaining their allegiance and commitment to the challenges of development in the post-colony through the socially responsible literate journalism. Thus, we also find that journalists like BDA, GNA and NT enact development journalism because they see it as an avenue for social and economic justice. It is through development journalism that they see themselves as being able to inform the public about Africa’s place in globalisation. They relate development journalism to informing the public about issues such as the collapse of the WTO talks and the related implications for NEPAD, thereby helping readers to make connections between global trade agreements, regional integration, national fiscal policies and the actual experiences of those living in poverty. It is worth noting that neither the dominant hegemonic liberal model of journalism nor recent public literate journalism like the social agenda stance articulate these relationships and their implications for African peoples in a substantive fashion. Thus, although development journalism is out of favour, its roots in the post-colony are still relatively visible (also see Ramaprasad 2001; Kariithi 1994).

Thirdly, in their quest to control the media, the state, ruling parties and the elite have often used development journalism in general to stifle criticism, freedom of expression and journalistic autonomy all in the name of African development. Because this type of journalism is closely linked to supporting and positively portraying NEPAD-related projects, the journalists in this study are concerned that this could lead to self-censorship, propaganda, praise singing and cheering – all of which is in contradiction to the values of libertarian journalism. This also helps to explain the reason why the journalists are not comfortable about supporting and portraying NEPAD positively in their journalism even though they can see the relevance of such a function. Similar to Stevenson (1994), as far as they are concerned, journalism – as they understand it – does not really include such functions, which should generally be left to government
communications. Such journalistic approaches are believed to detract journalists from their priority roles as watchdogs in the interests of democracy (see Curran 2000).

Fourthly, although its discourse is narrowly defined and exclusionary, the Africanist dimension of development journalism can come across as being attractive to Africans and this is because it is steeped in unity and self-reliance. However, its African philosophical influences are in some way in direct conflict with the libertarian journalistic ideology which is supported by the journalists. Whilst the latter looks to individualism, objectivity, autonomy, independence and detachment, the former looks to collectivism, Africanism, subjectivity, communitarian self-reliance and attachment. The findings indicate that, when faced with these two ideologies, the journalists often retreat towards the libertarian journalistic ideology. Hence, it is not surprising to find journalists like ADM insisting that ultimately he has to ‘resist’ the emotional attachment that he has towards NEPAD’s Africanist credentials so that he can carry on reporting on NEPAD ‘objectively’ and with scrutiny so as to expose its loopholes for the benefit of the public. When journalistic identity is faced with NEPAD’s Africanist interpellations, the journalists maintain their hold on the former by negotiating the latter into subordinate status.

At some level, these four points also work to remind us here that journalists may actually be enacting a strategic ritual of (measured) avoidance (see Tuchman 1972) when they are faced with NEPAD’s African development journalism. To elaborate, by relying on a strategy that prioritises the neutral-objectivity stance whilst avoiding the Africanist development journalism ideology they are then able to present themselves as being fair, impartial and balanced as is expected of all professional journalists and not propagandists or promoters of government interests. This also creates room for them to pick from and mix the neutral-objectivity stance with the social agenda sub-identity. Such a strategy enables them to present themselves as objective professional journalists who are at some level also committed to NEPAD, Africanism and the post-colony, but not as Africanist development journalists. This emphasis on neutrality and objectivity by the interviewed journalists is not entirely surprising given that these elements stand for the key defining features of journalism in general (see Deuze 2005; Zelizer 2004). It is in this regard that the bulk of the journalists are cautious about including their own subjective opinions into their reportage even if it is for the purposes of promoting a social-oriented cause. They prefer to be detached outsiders who present the ‘two sides of the story’. The recurrence of these themes in their interview discourse could suggest that they see their discourse concerning the neutrality of a journalist as being commonsensical to all journalists. Their occasional reactions of surprise to the
statement that opinions can be relied upon in cases of conscientising their readers on social causes show that they have naturalised the neutral sub-identity and by implication the libertarian stance as the dominant way of practicing journalism. The fuller point here is that this discursive strategy, in which neutrality and objectivity are the dominant values, enables the journalists to (at some level) successfully, detach themselves from the African development journalist ideology and to avoid having to tackle head on the wider challenges of development in the post-colony. However, in doing this one can posit that they then end up maintaining the dominant neo-liberal discourse concerning NEPAD given that they rarely presented alternative view-points either in their news stories or in their interview discourse. In a sense, they perceive neutrality as something that is in everyone’s best interest, that is, in the interests of their readers, their peers and the journalistic profession, NEPAD and Africa, and yet this is the same stance that might actually be deterring them from taking on a less conformist and narrowly defined approach in their journalistic approach to NEPAD.

In the next chapter, I present the conclusion to this chapter and the study in general.
CHAPTER ELEVEN - CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

11.0 Introduction and brief summary
In profiling the key issues concerning this study, this concluding chapter starts with a section that posits a conceptual model and related theoretical position through which attempts are made to explain the direction in this study. A section that briefly explores the link between journalists’ perceptions and their news stories follows this. The follow-up section explores the potential significance, limitations and recommendations for future study that can be attributed to this research.

Before going into these sections, it is at this stage important to bear in mind some of the main coordinates of this study given that for the most part they provide the background for the concluding statements in this chapter. The aim of the current study was to explore selected journalists’ perceptions about what roles in terms of their journalistic identity they think they should take on when reporting on NEPAD. In light of NEPAD’s appeals as the African blueprint for development, the motive was to examine how the journalists position themselves in response to NEPAD’s journalistic and culturalist appeals. Journalists’ media content on NEPAD was also examined for insights into these issues. Regarding the question of journalistic identity, this study attempted to grasp the understandings of the journalists in terms of the libertarian and social responsibility theories. In reference to their conceptions with regard to African identity/ies, this study mainly drew on postcolonial theoretical perspectives in examining these issues. The research phase of the study employed qualitative content analysis and interviews to satisfy the research inquiries of the study. The thesis posits that although the selected journalists from Eastern, Western and Southern Africa who report on NEPAD prioritise the dominant libertarian journalistic ideology in their perceptions particularly in the shape of the neutral sub-identity. However, they also show signs of enacting a mixed stance which makes room for aspects of watchdogism and the socially responsible sub-identities of social agenda and even development journalism. However, ultimately they still lean towards the neutral-objectivist role of the libertarian stance. Overall, although they enact a multiplicity of identifications, they tend to prioritise their journalistic identity in general over and above NEPAD’s (pan-)African identity. Bear in mind that, because the data sets in chapters 7 and 8 do not present a representative picture of all the continental journalists who report on NEPAD, it is important to take a careful stance when interpreting the findings in this study.
11.1 Conceptual model

The diagram that follows – Figure 2 below – is meant to illustrate the process that I have been describing up to this point in reference to assessing the perceptions of selected journalists about their roles with regard to NEPAD. The diagram offers in symbolic form the journalists’ responses to NEPAD’s interpellations and the broader direction of their perceptions about their journalistic identity along the broad axes of libertarian and social responsibility theory. At the centre of the diagram is – journalism – the reality of the journalists within the context of the post-colony. This is essential to prevent losing sight of the consideration – as asserted right from the start of this study in the introductory chapter – that journalists are the key point of focus for research in this study and that it is their perspectives that are for the most part used as an analytical tool. It is in this regard that the practice of journalism is read as being based on the journalists’ experiences within the NEPAD context of the post-colony and cannot therefore entirely depend on theories and concepts.

Though at the centre, the journalists remain largely under the domain of the dominant libertarian journalistic ideology in tandem with other influences which include social responsibility ideology, NEPAD’s interpellations and the wider challenges of development in the societies in which they practice their journalism, including specific ones that range from individual decisions to internal newsroom routines. The rest of the diagram demonstrates how these relationships are played out. At its core, the dominant libertarian stance is based on the concepts of self-regulation, ‘freedom from’ government, and independence and autonomy. It is within this context that NEPAD attempts to resituate the journalists into Africanist and socially responsible journalistic positions particularly in the shape of development journalism. Remember here that NEPAD’s discourse primarily targets them as Africans who should join this ‘partnership for Africa’. As is shown in the model, they largely perceive a role for themselves as neutral-information disseminators and social agenda reporters who conscientise the public as citizens about NEPAD. To a lesser extent, they tend to see themselves as – investigative and not adversarial – watchdogs and development journalists, but these perceptions are protracted – lines with dashes – in that they do not come through strongly (see below). In general, they maintain a broadly sympathetic outlook towards NEPAD and its Africanism, but without necessarily seeing themselves as attached Africanist development journalists who are in direct support of NEPAD. Evidently, based on their responses in the interviews the journalists are in reality rather pluralistic in their journalistic identifications. In fact, they are more often than not, being subjected to a myriad of interpellations by NEPAD, journalism’s ideology, the nation and the wider socio-cultural context of the post-colony.
Figure 2: Journalists identifications with regard to NEPAD

Social responsibility
Attachment, Advocacy

Social agenda: thematic, opinions, public issues
Development: support/promote, portray self-reliance, unity

Selected Journalists who report on NEPAD

NEPAD’s Interpellations
Neo-liberal development and democracy
Socially responsible, Africanism

Dominance of Libertarianism
Professional libertarian model
Detachment
Neutrality: facts, objectivity, balance, inform

Watchdog: investigate, adversarial stance

Influential factors
Personal decision-making, Media sector, Audiences, Newsroom routines, Journalism’s ideology
Wider post-colonial context: liberal democracy and development, nationality, Africanity

Socially responsible, Africanism
African development journalist
The fuller point here is that not only are the journalists faced with contesting identities in terms of their journalistic sub-identities, and between this and the Africanist ideology of NEPAD, but also with different views within Africanism and NEPAD’s African interest appeals. Thus, the resultant identifications are likely to be determined in a fluctuating hybridisation of even contradictory identities. Still, the journalists for the most part see themselves in terms of the dominant libertarian journalistic tradition.

At some level, as is shown in the diagram, the aforementioned relationships create a system (see lightly shaded lines with dashes), partially described in the interview responses, which enables the journalists to identify what roles to perform in order to be seen as ‘credible’ and ‘objective’ without falling prey to the ‘accusation that you are not patriotic enough’ (BD). This in a sense is the politics of journalism in the post-colony. The dominant Western/global libertarian conception of journalism sets the tone for what is seen as the rightful orientation of journalism as it is to be performed by those who see themselves as journalists (see Deuze 2005; Grossberg et al 1998). This conception is at some level sustained by the wider belief in modernisation, neo-liberalism and liberal democracy as the route towards progress in the post-colony – aspects of which underpin the NEPAD framework. In turn, the libertarian strand of journalistic ideology also feeds back into this, thereby creating an almost hegemonic discourse about the kinds of norms, value patterns and roles that are deemed acceptable for journalists.

Still, the model also demonstrates that in a context where journalists are continuously being addressed by (pan-)Africanist and socially responsible journalistic ideology, there is room for the journalists to take on counter-hegemonic journalistic functions which can be seen as being most relevant to the specific needs and context of the post-colony. This works to downplay some of the potential contradictions that might be faced by the journalists as they attempt to balance the influences/needs of NEPAD, journalistic ideology and their wider socio-cultural context. The existence of moments when the journalists see themselves as social agenda enactors or those few that identify with development journalism without letting go of the neutral stance, at some level indicates their struggle to find ways of addressing the needs of these influences. This system is maintained because what is ideally considered as journalism does not only shape the consciousness of the journalists, but also what kinds of information they produce as news – in chapter 7 – and their practical actions including the acts of speaking / identification discussed in chapter 8 (see Alvarez 2002). At this stage, the above visual representation (Figure 2) leads up to a series of statements that can, together with the model, be read as theoretical considerations.
concerning the nexus between journalism and NEPAD. As is laid out in the next section, the bulk of the statements actually account for some of the recurring nuances that have been pointed out in this study.

11.2 Theoretical considerations
To start with, in thinking about social identities in general, it is evident that the process of identification is not simply a case of replacing one form of identity with another as might be suggested by the findings. For example, a respondent who may see herself mainly as a journalist does not automatically lose this identity if she later on claims to identify a lot more with her Nigerian nationality first before anything else. Rather, this journalist’s identity may be a series of complimentary and contradictory identifications operating simultaneously, with some coming to the foreground or receding depending on context. For instance, the journalist lives and practices her profession in Africa, but she does not always primarily see herself as an African. However, she at some stage also claims to be more African than journalist. She is simultaneously a journalist, Nigerian and an African depending on the NEPAD issue at hand. It is in this regard that, influenced by the concept of hybridisation, journalism practice from a postcolonial perspective moves away from looking at the (African) journalist in isolation as a whole, singular, unified individual whose role is unitary and universal. Instead, the journalist is considered to be a subject of multiple discourses and yet s/he is also read here as having the agency to resist the power relationships within various discourses. Also, note that this journalist’s experiences, role enactments and behaviours will be shaped by her identities and vice versa. The point here is that practical role performance as in what the journalist does and journalistic identity as in a sense of self – as in ‘I am a neutral journalist’ – interact and intersect with each other. Hence, roles and identities are in this study read as being in an almost inextricable discursive relationship through which both elements are shaped and constructed depending on the context at hand (see Goffman 1959; Meyer 1994).

In addition, from a more theoretical standpoint, the cultural studies and postcolonial theory influenced orientation towards power, meanings, multiplicities and identities, is a stance that appears to be positioned at odds with the premises of libertarianism. Whilst the latter believes in disseminating information about reality, telling the truth and exposing the hidden facts, the former believes in construction, subjectivity and relativity (see Zelizer 2004). According to Zelizer (2004), the presumed legitimacy of journalism depends on its declared ability to provide a referential presentation of the world at hand. Therefore, the cultural studies-postcolonial theory
framework of ideological considerations and the construction of news and identities touches on the legitimacy of journalism’s very status and its professional ideology (Zelizer 2004:103-104). In fact, on close analysis one could argue that the social agenda and development strands of journalism – influenced in varying degrees by social responsibility – are normatively aligned towards the cultural studies-postcolonial theory nexus in so far as they make room for the subjective intervention of the African journalist and his or her various identifications. These considerations are in many ways at the heart of some of the uncertainties and contradictions in the journalists’ perceptions about their roles and even in journalism, in that journalism can be seen to possess a number of faces. One face looks to the ‘objectivity’ values, whilst another calls for taking on a ‘social agenda’ stance without necessarily losing sight of certain values such as balance, whilst another, such as development, seems to be steeped in subjectivity and Africanist ideological influences. In some instances, journalists look to the social agenda functions, whilst they for the most part, also uphold the functions of neutral dispassionate transmitters.

As hinted at so far, besides this simply being about multiple identifications, another way of reading this scenario is to infer that these perceived contradictions and dilemmas could be due to influences that are related to the wider context, which collectively links to other influences such as individual decisions, newsroom culture and audience expectations (see Reese 2001; Figure 2 above). To illustrate, as is highlighted in the findings, some of the journalists revealed that as members of organisations who work in teams, they are expected to submit copy to editors. In other words, other news workers may have a hand in how a story turns out and this means that these news workers’ own individual values and conceptions could have an influence on how the journalists perceive their roles. In addition, while the journalists may embrace a certain journalistic stance, audience expectations on certain topics – such as ‘HIV/AIDS’ (for TEA) or the ‘Western Sahara (for MG) – within the context of NEPAD, reportage may lead them towards another journalistic orientation. In other instances, journalists may fall back on a neutral dimension under time pressures, even though they may value a social agenda stance more. Alternatively, even though a journalist may see the social value of a watchdog stance on a pan-African issue such as NEPAD, she and the media house she works for may feel that because ‘Africa has suffered a lot from false Western propaganda’, what is required now is not an overly critical stance, but one that enhances NEPAD. What is being suggested here is that for us to comprehend how journalists reason and understand at a certain point in time about a given aspect of their work, their stories and identity positions, we have to bear in mind the contextual influences and ideologies circulating in the environment in which they are working at that time.
This would need to include an investigation of the dominant journalistic ideology with regard to news issues such as NEPAD within the contexts in which the journalists operate.

Exploring the contextual influences which are faced by journalists means that investigating what journalistic sub-identities they enact is not simply about collecting psychographic data concerning their profiles or information about how they rate their roles. Rather, it is also about how they respond to ideology in terms of their identifications and their thoughts on their roles (see also Zelizer 1993; Ramaprasad 2001). For each journalist it is about how s/he perceives his or her roles, how these perceptions are enacted as identity positions and how, if at all, they reconcile journalistic ideology to NEPAD’s interpellations, how these are potentially expressed in their stories and how they adapt them to the conditions in which they practice. Therefore, if we consider more specifically the interplay of journalists’ perceptions and their identity positions, we come to realise that in their day-to-day work (depending on the news issue at hand), journalists are influenced by the socio-cultural context in which they make meanings. Journalists, like all other citizens, will consciously or unconsciously call into action their various identifications when they are confronted with opportunities to preserve, defend, or enhance them.

Further, in thinking about the perceptions of the journalists along the libertarian and social responsibility axes, it is pertinent to note that the journalists in this study prioritise the Western-oriented functions of the neutral-objectivist, factual, investigative and informative disseminator in ways that are not too dissimilar to journalists elsewhere in the world (see Merrill 1995; Weaver 1998). Thus, despite differences in social-cultural context, it can be posited here that the selected journalists’ perceptions are in line with the broader shared understanding – dominant journalistic ideology – that is upheld by many other journalists about the rightful role of a journalist in society (see Mwesige 2004; Herscovitz 2004; Zhu et al 1997; Hachten 1993). Such trends have given rise to propositions about a global view of journalism in which it is suggested that the journalistic values and perceptions that are upheld by journalists could be universal (see Deuze 1998; 2005). Drawing on Weaver (1998), who calls for caution in reference to strong suppositions about a global view of journalism, it is evident that whilst there are broad similarities in the selected journalists’ perceptions when read against the findings in other studies, there are also some subtle differences which negate the notion of universal journalism (see also Ramaprasad 2001, Mwesige 2004). For example, although the journalists rated most of the Western journalistic functions/statements as being “extremely important”, they still saw the social agenda and even – albeit to a lesser extent – development journalism functions as being important within the context
of the post-colony. It is in this regard, that some of the journalists kept insisting on being
guardians, teachers and educators on behalf of “the people”, “NEPAD” and “the continent”, all of
which is not far off from the ideology of social responsibility, which is often invoked as being
more directly in line with the needs of the post-colony. It is in this sense that the Africanist
ideology with its emphasis on unity and independence also continues to have a powerful pull on
the imagination of some of the journalists. In fact, although the journalists appear to prioritise the
Western model of journalism, they do not generally seem to uphold the watchdog stance,
particularly in its adversarial dimension as being of superior importance. Unlike the British
journalists (see Morgan 1995; Henningham and Delano 1998) who perceive of themselves as
adversaries that are in confrontation with or in opposition to government and business, the
selected journalists only weakly identify with this function. Nevertheless, similar to journalists in
Europe and America, they still perceive for themselves the role of investigator, which is a key
dimension of the watchdog stance (see Weaver 1998; Donsbach and Klett 1993).

The picture emerging here is that the journalists see value in the journalistic characteristics, roles
and norms that are primarily associated with the Western dominant libertarian model of
journalism. However, they may apply them in various ways so as to give meaning to what they do
within their specific context (see also Deuze 2004; Berger 2000). The fuller point here is that
although there are some indications towards a global view of journalism, the likelihood is also
that as journalism practices and assumptions travel in theory and practice from one context to
another they may mutate, change and sometimes even reconstitute initial emphases to fit that
specific local context (see Tomaselli 1999). This serves to remind us, as was asserted in chapters
2, 3 and 4, that journalism’s values and norms may at times come into contradiction with each
other due to differences in their interpretation and deployment in various contexts. In other words,
because the specific socio-cultural and political concerns and interests of the post-colony might be
different to those of Europe, these differences are bound to influence the ways in which
journalism is understood and practised in the post-colony. This realisation is amplified here in
light of the consideration that the journalists at some level portray a pluralistic view of their
journalistic functions when they combine various dimensions of the neutral, social agenda,
development and watchdog sub-identities (see also Herscovitz 2004) so as to balance the various
demands of their influences. At some level, they have adopted several ideals from the Western
libertarian and socially responsible models, which they have then adapted to their local context
without necessarily unsettling the dominance of libertarianism, which is mainly influenced by and
reflects many values of the modernist project (see Grossberg et al 1998; Kasoma 2000)
Furthermore, in chapter 4 it was suggested that for those journalists working on beats that cover intra-cultural, regional and trans-national issues, journalism is a practice that could potentially bring them into exposure to other communities, nationalities and international issues. Journalists, such as those who report on NEPAD do indeed routinely experience the activation of their national and African identities, the expressions of which are represented by a plethora of constructive strategies and ‘us’-‘them’ binary oppositions that ‘leak’ into their news stories (as in chapter 7) and their beliefs about their journalism (in chapter 8). In order to fulfil these opportunities, some of the journalists actually go on to endorse the African development journalism stance in so far as it creates room for them to link their self or collective identity conceptions as Africans to journalism and the wider challenges of development in their countries. It is in this regard that some journalists feel that all African journalists should enact this stance for the good of the continent. This is not so much a case of negotiation in Hall’s (1994) sense, but more like Althusser’s (2000) interpellation being deployed successfully as the journalists go on to enact and respond to Africanity. However, this is not to say that journalists do not address the potential dilemmas concerning journalistic ideology and Africanist ideology through some measure of reconciliation, all of which (as was noted in chapter 7) potentially find expression in the content of the news and in the value-laden lenses of their perceptions (chapters 8 and 9). Hence the uncertainties, contradictions and mixed identifications in some of their responses as they juggle journalism and Africanism.

Having put forward a conceptual model and related theoretical considerations concerning the overall direction of this study, I will now go on to look more specifically at the nexus between the journalists’ content and their perceptions.

11.3 The weak/strong correlation between journalists’ beliefs and their content
To a lesser extent, one of the aims of this study is to examine the relationship between the journalists’ role perceptions and their news content. Based on the literature reviews in chapter 2, the understanding here is that if role perceptions help shape the news, that shape should be identifiable in the news. Although there are few studies that examine journalists’ role perceptions and how these perceptions could potentially be expressed in the journalists’ news content, studies by Graber (1993), and Starck and Soloski (1977) have suggested a close link between journalists’ perceptions and news content. However, a few others such as Dare (1983), Bergen (1994) and Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) have pointed towards a mixed relationship.
In this study, the examination of the journalists’ news content and their interview responses reveals both some convergences and divergences in the correlations between their interpretation of what they do and the actual translation of this into their stories. As is illustrated with the aid of Table 11 below, the relationship is potentially a lot more mixed than straightforward. In the case of this study, the relationship would appear to be based a lot more on correlations than strong direct links between the journalists’ interpretations and their stories. In exploring the potential correlations between the journalists’ beliefs and their enactment in news stories, I will start by pointing out some of the points of convergence between the two. To start with, it is evident that, broadly speaking, the content of the journalists’ news stories on NEPAD does, at some level, bear the traces of their journalistic identity perceptions in reference to NEPAD. The journalists’ interview responses and news stories are for the most part oriented towards libertarianism particularly as in the shape of neutral journalism. The content is predominantly based on events, hard news, facts from official sources and summary leads whilst their perceptions prioritise facts, neutrality, balance and objectivity. However, in their comments they tend to uphold socially responsible type functions – educate, guide, discuss issues of public interest – as in the social agenda sub-identity. Rather similarly, their stories also show an orientation to news elements that focus on issues, in-depth analysis and interpretation, narrative leads, the use of alternative sources, and even the inclusion of their own opinions, all of which is linked to the socially responsible attempts at producing content that enlightens the public.

Other points of convergence concerning their beliefs and their stories include: the tendency towards a mixture of/pluralistic sub-identities along the neutral-development continuum; the weak orientation towards development journalism; the construction of a common African identity without necessarily negating cultural differences; and the sustenance of NEPAD within the dominant neo-liberal development discourse.

In attempting to explore the relationship(s) between journalists’ perceptions of their roles and their news stories at the more specific level of each individual journalist, what emerges is a picture of dissonance and contradictions between the two levels. For example, in their comments, journalists such as BD and ST who tend to express strong sentiments towards neutrality, detachment and criticism, generally seem to be responsible for some of the stories that were analysed as predominantly portraying news elements that are linked to social responsibility journalism.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points of convergence</th>
<th>Journalists’ news stories</th>
<th>Journalists’ perceptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Journalists’ news stories</strong></td>
<td>Portray a common sense of Africanity, national differences and links between the two.</td>
<td>Identification towards Africanity and nationality and the construction of ‘otherness’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPAD is criticised, but not questioned</td>
<td>NEPAD is criticised, but not questioned outside of its own development discourse.</td>
<td>NEPAD is criticised, but still seen as the harbinger development and democracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant orientation to libertarianism:</td>
<td>Predominant orientation to libertarianism: events; quick to read hard news; emphasis on two main NEPAD topics; overt reliance on facts from official sources; and summary leads.</td>
<td>Prioritisation of the dominant libertarian model: neutrality; objectivity; balance; facts; impartiality; detachment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of social responsibility: issues driven;</td>
<td>Presence of social responsibility: issues driven; some alternative voices/sources; feature-narrative leads; analysis/interpretation; inclusion of journalists’ opinions.</td>
<td>Perceived role as social agenda journalists: analyse and interpret issues for the public; discuss policies; public guardians; educators; responsive, but not attached.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low presence of development type reportage.</td>
<td>Low presence of development type reportage.</td>
<td>Cautiousness about development journalism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trends towards a mixture of sub-identities</td>
<td>Trends towards a mixture of sub-identities along the neutral-development continuum.</td>
<td>Indications of a pluralistic view of journalistic sub-identities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Points of divergence</strong></td>
<td><strong>Presence of journalists’ opinions in both the libertarian and socially responsible reports.</strong></td>
<td>General rejection of opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BD and ST’s predominantly socially responsible content.</strong></td>
<td>BD and ST’s predominantly socially responsible content.</td>
<td>BD and ST’s orientation towards libertarianism – neutrality, criticism and detachment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADM, TN1 and TD’s news stories that portray</td>
<td>ADM, TN1 and TD’s news stories that portray libertarian news elements, low diversity of topics and sources.</td>
<td>ADM, TN1 and TD’s perceptions of themselves as social agenda journalists who are also not blind to the functions of development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some watchdog news elements: exposure; conflicts;</td>
<td>Some watchdog news elements: exposure; conflicts; sceptical investigative narrative.</td>
<td>Weak perceptions towards the adversarial function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sceptical investigative narrative.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, journalists such as ADM, TNI and TD who generally perceived a role for themselves as social agenda journalists who are not blind to upholding the less restrictive functions of development journalism for the benefit of NEPAD and Africa accounted for some of the stories that were read as predominantly portraying news elements that are linked to libertarianism. Only a few cases such as NT tend to show a possible correlation based on the social agenda sub-identity between what she saw as her journalistic identity and what she produced in her stories.

In a sense, the idea here is that, similar to some of the studies in chapter 2, there is no direct link, between what the journalists believe to be important roles for them in NEPAD, and the actual enactment of these beliefs in their news stories. Neutral-oriented journalists do not necessarily produce hard news, factual and quick to read stories which are based on official sources at events. Similarly, social agenda-oriented journalists do not necessarily produce in-depth, interpretive stories which focus on issues of public interest. In looking back at the findings concerning news content and journalists’ beliefs, this dissonance is not entirely surprising, given the mixture of news elements that can be found in both the libertarian and socially responsible stories and the plethora of influences, contradictions and plurality of identifications in the journalists’ interview discourse. It can be posited – drawing on Reese (2001) – that other influences such as the newspaper’s organisational structure and cultural identifications renders the reality of the nexus between perceptions and news content as being indirect, nuanced and more like a process of mediation. Drawing on Bergen (1994), the fuller point here is that the mixed orientation of several journalistic role perceptions among individual journalists makes it difficult for researchers to establish simply a linear relationship between journalists’ behaviour/outputs and their attitudes and beliefs. Generally, the likelihood here is that the journalists’ role orientation is not directly linked to their outputs. However, the broader orientation of stories towards libertarianism can be related to the strength of the journalists’ attitudes towards neutrality, facts and objectivity as important dimensions of their identity as journalists.

Further, the aforementioned also has implications for us here in terms of the nexus between journalism, identity and news content. Generally, the relationship between socially responsible journalistic identifications, collective identities such as nationality and media content is often treated as being self-evident and yet it is not as obvious as it might seem (see Gleissner and De Vreese 2005; Gavin 2001). The relations between journalists and their identifications, say to Africanity, are affected by wider, rapidly shifting, political, economic and cultural influences. Rather similar to the way in which journalists’ perceptions do not always make their way into the
content of the news, an endorsement of the social agenda sub-identity, because it creates room for
the activation of Africanness unlike say neutrality, does not always go hand in hand with its
enactment in news content. Although there are broad themes that may be observed, the
relationship is a lot more subtle than that.

Following on from the conceptual model, the theoretical considerations and the nexus between
journalists’ perceptions and their news stories, I will now explore the significance, limitations and
recommendations that can be attributed to this study.

11.4 Significance, limitations and recommendations
Generally, the findings of this research might prove to be helpful literature to galvanise future
debates concerning the journalistic identifications – roles, functions – of journalists in Africa and
the social forces that shape them. The study also focuses on a topic – NEPAD – that is reasonably
important in terms of its implications for a Freirean (1970) type participatory approach to
democracy and democratising development, literally and figuratively in terms of politico-
-economic and socio-cultural improvements, as well as on a region that is rarely explored in media
research. It is in this regard that the study focuses on three issues that are often ignored in
journalism and media studies research. These include: journalism in Africa; African journalists’
perceptions of their roles; and the nexus between African journalists’ perceptions and regional
integration initiatives. In fact, given the dearth of literature and studies on journalists in Africa,
this study’s topic sits at the frontier of journalism and media studies literature about journalists in
Africa. It is because of this lack of literature and a large research tradition in Africa that I found it
necessary to carry out an extensive historical-literature review and mapping of the role shifts of
the African media (see chapter 2 and Appendices A-B) as part of an attempt to lay the foundation
for classifying the journalistic sub-identities into relevant categories. It is also partly because of
this absence of readily available data that I relied on purposeful-sampling techniques in selecting
the journalists.

The study’s theoretical contribution lies in its classification of the libertarian and socially
responsible theories into the four concepts or sub-identities of neutral, watchdog, social agenda
and development journalism as part of an attempt to make sense of journalism theory and practice
from the standpoint of the post-colony. Given the continuing evolution of the field of journalism
and the lingering questions concerning its relevance – in its dominant libertarian stance – in
Africa (see Nyamnjoh 2005; Kasoma 2000), such a synthesis and classification may be useful to
practitioners and academics alike. Practitioners might be able to use the classification to select information and practices / techniques that can help them direct their journalism towards certain social issues. Because the world is not neatly divided into practitioners and non-practitioners of neutral or social agenda journalism, this scheme could also enable editors and journalists to assess how much of this or that sub-identity they want to perform and adjust their practice accordingly. Academics may use the classification and the extensive literature review as a road map for undertaking journalism-related content analysis or interview surveys concerning African journalists.

In addition, the study deploys an interdisciplinary approach by relying on some of the connections between journalism theory, critical-cultural and media studies and postcolonial theoretical perspectives concerning African identities, as part of an attempt to make sense of the journalists’ experiences vis-à-vis a NEPAD. It is this inter-play between these perspectives that has given rise to a context-relevant and reflective conceptual and theoretical position which serves as an entry point for making sense of the journalists’ interview discourse. To reiterate, it is evident from the findings (see Figure 2) that the bulk of the selected continental African journalists are not (always) willing to submerge hegemonic professional values to inward-looking considerations of Africanity, nationalism and a sweeping definition of Africanism. However, the findings also suggest that their identifications towards journalism in general are not straightforward and that there are other influences at play. Academics may use aspects of the findings and the literature reviews for ideas for research into the study of the link between journalism and regional integration initiatives.

The study’s methodological contribution lies in its development / deployment of a qualitative conception / measure for the journalistic sub-identities in terms of both the content analysis and the interview discourse. While the specific news story elements – format, sources, hard news – and sub-identity, functional statements were tweaked and applied with NEPAD in mind, they can also be used for many social topics by changing the reference to NEPAD, dropping statements specific to conditions concerning NEPAD (region, continent), and modifying some statements as appropriate to the topic under study. In addition, instead of using the usual survey approach that profiles and collects psychographic data for a large number of journalists, this study uses a qualitative interviews to assess and examine the extent to which social responsibility and libertarian journalism roles are reflected / perceived by selected journalists who report on NEPAD, on the basis of their individual beliefs. It is in this regard that the study also only
analyses the stories of some of the self-same journalists that were selected for the interviews. This
approach gave rise to insightful narratives through which it was possible to tease out some of the
more specific reasons, meanings and explanations concerning journalists’ identifications, all of
which opens up new possibilities for other researchers conducting similar research.

Further, with regard to the methodological considerations it is also worth noting that this study
relied on a computerised and online NEPAD database at allAfrica.com as the entry point for the
content analysis on NEPAD. By deploying the full text search and locate functions of the
database, this study was able to quickly identify and narrow down to the most relevant articles for
analysis from six different African newspapers, rather than having to spend months or even a year
moving from one country to another in search of the hard-copies. In addition, computerised and
online databases would on the evidence of this study, seem to be particularly useful tools for
searching for rare kinds of media content particularly within the African context where hard
copies are not always archived. For example, suppose a researcher were trying to find stories on
the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). If you looked through a selection of
African newspapers with conventional content analysis techniques, you might find one in 50
stories dealt with the MDGs. With a computerised and online database on such topics at
allAfrica.com you can use the right key words and quickly go to a sample of those stories. Having
said that, also bear in mind that the use of such databases can be expensive in that most databases
require researchers to make paid subscriptions to them. For instance, a for a year’s subscription,
allAfrica.com charges $95. In addition, sometimes stories and sources are added or deleted from
databases from time to time without enough time for the researcher to notice exactly what is going
on, all of which may have implications for the samples and selections of content being analysed.
Pertinently, the material stored in many databases does not include many of the nonverbal signals
that are involved in print production such as photographs, pull quotes, headline type style and size
and the position of the article on the page, all of which can provide insights into the construction
of the story and its relevance.

The breakdown of the findings into specific journalistic orientations such as ‘predominantly
neutral’ could be used by funding organisations and trainers to plan and assess training programs
for journalists. Future researchers may also refine the journalistic sub-identities, maybe by relying
more directly on a three-dimensional journalism theory approach, in which development
communication / theory is classified as a stand-alone approach rather than linking it too strongly
to social responsibility, all of which could bring more statements into the development category.
Attention could also be focused on delineating more specific watchdog functions that are relevant to the context of the post-colony. In fact, herein lies one of this study’s limitations. The journalism function statements should have included more watchdog and development journalism items whilst others such as the adversarial item could have been reformulated. For example, based on the insights gained as the findings in general were being analysed and discussed, it should have been asked if journalists believed that they needed to ‘expose wrongdoing and the abuse of power by business and government’ as part of the watchdog items. This would have downplayed the adversarial sentiment, which seemed foreign to many of them. In the development category, they could also have been asked more directly about participatory journalism which is directed towards economic development even if it is state-led development vis-à-vis NEPAD. A revised / modified, classification, which collapses and adds certain items, can be delineated from the findings.

Future researchers may also assess whether socially responsible journalism in particular has taken the same routes in Africa as it has done in the West or whether it is taking a slightly different direction, which has aspects of the social agenda and development dimensions. In addition to this, researchers may also look into the view in the findings concerning how and why libertarianism (‘free from’) and social responsibility (‘freedom for’) are seen as divergent positions which separate two and unrelated journalistic dimensions, rather than a single freedom/responsibility dimension. At some level, this is not entirely surprising because journalism theory to date has largely come from Western scholars as in Siebert et al (1956) and is therefore marked by their perspectives concerning the state-media relationship. In doing this, not enough agency is given to journalists and their individual and collective socialisation within their specific contexts (see Zelizer 2004). Even when journalism approaches are functionally defined, they are often framed as the ‘free from state / freedom for’ or as the journalists in this study would put it ‘private / public-government-state-party’ perspective, all of which is in line with the Western perspective on journalism (see Siebert et al 1956). A fresh perspective is in order, where ownership, state-media relationships, roles, journalist agency and so on are coordinates in a multidimensional perspective to defining journalism approaches.

Further, the study in general may also challenge academics in journalism and media studies to expand the focus of the field of study by paying attention to the African context. This could also encourage them to consider more specifically how non-traditional theoretical perspectives such as postcolonial theory can challenge or get them and their students to rethink the universalism of traditional journalism theory. Academics are often afforded the luxury of entertaining debate and
they also have the time and access to a range of resources. This requires and should encourage them to bring a diversity and plurality of worldviews to the fore. The arenas of debate, particularly at the post-graduate level, should start looking beyond the narrow discourse that is at times neatly in line with the needs of the mainstream media jobs / industry. There is no reason why ideologies concerning regional integration, international relations, postcolonialism, emergent global journalism, African identities, inequality and poverty should go unexplored by students of journalism other than in the service of dominant academic discourse and colonial maintenance (see hooks 1992; Shome and Hegde 2002).

Evidently, the continued exclusion of these issues has resulted in several consequences. One of them is the obvious neglect of the workings of geo-political power – often seen as the subject of international relations – in the study of journalism and media studies. Increasingly, as nation-states settle for a reduced role and transnational corporations and regional entities take a greater share of what were hitherto considered national and state activities, it becomes necessary to study the role of these shifts in shaping not only the media landscape, but also the journalists’ own conceptions of that landscape. For instance, international media survey research often takes on board lessons from cultural criticism, but it often glosses over the economic differences between countries, like those at the WTO which form the basis of divisions on ‘free’ and fair trade and the effects of this on journalism outputs, styles and approaches. There are lessons for postcolonial theory too. In recent years, there has been a consensus among prominent writers of the need to focus on the neo-colonial tendencies of global capitalism (see McClintock 1994; Hall 1994; Bhabha 1994a). It is therefore surprising to note that issues of identity that have been dealt with rigorously within postcolonial theory/studies have rarely included the economic or geo-political angle. Whilst this study does not also look into such considerations or indeed questions of political economy, the findings can lead one to posit here that there is a need to look more closely at issues of identity and subject formation through these coordinates as well, and the nexus between them and journalism. For example, what does it mean for the identities of some communities – across the globe – to be described as ‘donors’, ‘rich’ or ‘developed’ and others as ‘recipients of aid’ or ‘poor’? What does it mean for geo-political identities when the reference ‘African’ is used to imagine needy and backward economies, given that there is an inevitable conflation of the politico-economic and socio-cultural aspects of African identity? What kind of relationship exists between these geo-political identities, journalism education and news-workers’ preferred journalistic identifications within the context of the post-colony? Perhaps these
questions point to a need for the redefinition of the subject and scope of study of journalism and media studies just as with postcolonial studies.

A simple willingness to include the aforementioned questions, issues and theories in the teaching or discussion of journalism and media studies education could only help to expand potential viable responses from journalists, communities and regions which are often marginalised in media research. Important and relevant as they are, we need not only rely on Western notions of acceptable journalistic practice and education. My recommendation is for journalism and media studies programs to infuse in their curricula courses on the history of the African media, development theory, Africa’s place in the geo-political order and African cultural identities. These issues are all deserving of scholarly focus in the study of African journalism. To add depth to these issues, I suggest a move to enlist the services of those who come from outside the practice of mainstream media work or education who can bring wider analyses and experiences to the academic community. Media and journalism education must incorporate the work of those in Africana, women’s studies, politics, history, economics and business studies including international relations, to name but a few. Less dependence on the traditional and dominant elite perspectives is a viable route towards a fuller understanding of journalism theory and practice in the post-colonial African context.

Finally, the issues raised in this study on the basis of an extensive literature review and 15 interview analyses require much more rigorous pursuit than is possible within the limits of this study. My attempt has not been to provide definite and conclusive answers, partly because I see journalism as being more fluid than static, but rather to invoke that journalism studies has in many ways eschewed the influence of local socio-cultural dynamics in shaping journalism practice in Africa.


Appendix A

Table 1: Categorisation of roles and theoretical influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholar</th>
<th>Libertarian theory</th>
<th>Social Responsibility theory</th>
<th>Development and participatory theories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Siebert et al (1956)</td>
<td>Watchdog Neutral</td>
<td>Social responsibility</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaver and Wilhoit (1986, 1996)</td>
<td>Disseminator Adversarial</td>
<td>Participant-Interpretive Populist mobiliser</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janowitz (1975)</td>
<td>Gate-keeper</td>
<td>Advocate</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McQuail (2000)</td>
<td>Watchdog</td>
<td>Public / Civic</td>
<td>Democratic participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunaratne (1978)</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramaprasad (2001)</td>
<td>Information / Analysis</td>
<td>Educate about Government</td>
<td>National development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuum</td>
<td>Objective ←</td>
<td>Subjective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Figure 1

Operational role definitions from the vantage point of the post-colonial context

From a normative point of view, these roles can all be characterised by a critical investigative function.

US, European and post-colonial context

Post-colonial context
Appendix C

Full listing of documents that were analysed


*Countries acceded to the APRM* 2006.


*The media, the African Union, NEPAD and democracy.* Speech by President Thabo Mbeki.

Appendix D

Description and Circulation of Newspapers selected on allAfrica.com

1. *Business Day* is a privately-owned daily in South Africa that is dedicated to business and economics news.

2. *The Sunday Times* is a regional weekly in Southern Africa.

3. *The New Times* is a government-leaning newspaper published three times a week in Rwanda.


5. *Accra Daily Mail* is a daily newspaper in Ghana published Monday through Thursday.

6. *This Day* is a leading privately-owned daily in Nigeria.

Sources: allAfrica.com

Newspapers and journalists found using the advanced search in selected newspapers on allAfrica.com between 1/1/2005 and 10/12/2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Commentaries</th>
<th>Stories</th>
<th>Journalists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selected Newspapers</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This Day</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Iyefu Adoba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>J Katzenellenbogen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Times</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Brendan Boyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nation</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lucas Barasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accra Daily Mail</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kent Mensah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New Times</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Joan Wangu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E
Codebook for newspaper coverage of NEPAD

1) Case Number: __________

2) Date of publication: __ __ __(dd/mm/yy)

3) Newspaper / Publisher: ____________________________(use code below) __

   1 = Business Day 2 = The Sunday Times 3 = The New Times
   4 = The Nation 5 = This Day 6 = Accra Daily Mail

4) Topic / Article title (headline): ________________________________

5) Author / Narrator’s name: ________________________________

Text Analysis Pointers

Focus: Issues / Events / Both Format: Narrative / Summary lead

Story type:

Hard news
Feature
Commentary
Interview

Topics:

AU (unification) Priority Sectors
NEPAD Economic development
APRM Corruption
African Nationalism Poverty (MDGs)
ICTs Peace and Security
Agriculture Gender

No single main topic

Sources:

   1 = Government 4 = Nepad
   2 = Business / Professional 5 = Civil society / Activist
   3 = Academic / Expert 6 = Document
   7 = Other

Comments:
Appendix F
Text Analysis Method Notes

General Instructions
In this study, I am interested in exploring how journalists understand their journalistic and cultural identities with regard to NEPAD, to which end, I inter alia wish to assess the portrayal of these in the news content on NEPAD.

Coding Instructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Instruction/Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year and date</td>
<td>Use abbreviated numbering <strong>9 8 05</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication</td>
<td><em>Business Day</em>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article Title</td>
<td>Headline of article…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Name along the byline…..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identify the following.

**Focus**
Is the focus on issues and/or events or both

**Type of story**

- **Hard news**
  A straight-ahead news story with verifiable information and little commentary; delivered in the inverted pyramid style.

- **Commentary:**
  An opinion piece presenting the personal point of view of the narrator

- **Feature:**
  An in-depth story with an analysis of a particular aspect of NEPAD

- **Q + A Interview:**
  A straight ahead question and answer format

**Comments:**
Topics
1. African Union (AU): regional unification and integration in general regarding for instance the Pan-African Parliament; Customs Union; Common Markets; African Court of Justice; summits regarding the same.
2. NEPAD: history, origins and aims; framework; sectoral priorities; summits; processes.
3. APRM: history, origins and aims; framework; events and summits; conditions of or for good governance and economic management; human rights; media freedoms; implications for or of; process of self-assessment.
4. African Nationalism or renaissance: demonstration of pan-Africanism; nationalism; patriotism; pro-Africanist positions or policies; Ubuntu; regional heroes or veterans honoured; African renaissance; regional cultural holidays or events (Africa Day); promotions of African cultural identity. African Renaissance: pan-Africanism; Ubuntu; cultural reification, Africanism; indigenous knowledge systems.
5. ICTs: information and communication technologies for education; e-schools in contrast to #7; digital divide; policies; East African Sub-marine cable System.
6. Agriculture: modernisation of agriculture; agricultural subsidies; dumping; agricultural breakthroughs; crops; government or state policies on agriculture; subsistence farming; Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP).
7. Priority sectors: excluding #’s 5 and 6, that is education, health, infrastructure and energy-policies and matters of; developments; controversies; breakthroughs; Universal Primary Education; e-schools Contrast from #5; schools feed programme; science and technology; malaria; health and moral problems; HIV/Aids; polio. science and technology policies and discoveries (excluding ICTs).
8. Economic: national, regional and global trends; exports-imports; Aid; debt relief; trade; investment (FDI); capital flows; changes in economic outlook; economic policies; terms of trade; inflation and fiscal policies; currency or monetary structures; labour strikes; employment; brain drain; economic conflict; embargoes.
9. Corruption: embezzlement; bribes; fraud; misuse of funds; commissions of enquiry; corruption perception indices.
10. Poverty: hunger; basic needs; millennium development goals; growth rates; highly indebted poor countries initiative; Commission for Africa; welfare issues.
11. Peace and Security: conflict resolution; regional agreements on; refugees or emigration as a result of wars/conflicts; coups; warlords; weapons; terrorism; military spending.
12. Gender: women’s rights; men’s rights; children’s rights; the girl child; double burden.
13. **No single main topic**: when the story deals with more than one main topic / themes.

**Sources**: Determine both the occupation and/or rank of each source that is quoted directly or indirectly. The following are the categories of sources.

1. **Government / Officials**: government personnel, public officials, law-makers, people who work at governmental institutions, spokespersons and or any persons quoted as officials or official representatives of such an institution or government agency, Presidents of countries, politicians, ministers or office holders in Contrast to #4. The story should give their designation so as to indicate their category for this bracket.
2. **Business / Professionals**: practitioners, that is, CEOs, financiers, investment brokers, a company’s manager, analysts, small-scale entrepreneurs including professionals working in the area of public service, such as lawyers, medical doctors and local clerks.
3. **Academic / Expert**: scholars including students or professors or teachers who speak on behalf of their educational affiliations, excluding participants to conferences, workshops and seminars see #5; experts affiliated with educational institutions and (non-government) members of think tank organisations. Excluding business experts, unless they speak on behalf of an organisation. Including professionals who speak in the capacity of an expert such as journalists specialising in a country, region and or topic; scientists and specialist doctors.
4. **NEPAD**: spokespersons and or any persons quoted as officials or official representatives of the AU, NEPAD and the APRM at the national and regional levels. Regional level politicians and or ministers or office holders in Contrast from #1. The story should give their designation so as to indicate their category for this bracket.
5. **Participants / Activists**: participants in an event such as a conference, seminar and or workshop; people engaged in demonstrations; unionists; activists of any kind of non-governmental organisations and participants in labour and civil rights movements.
6. **Documents**: This is for those instances in which attribution is based on a document / policy paper / research document.
7. **Other**: Sources whose origins or occupation could not be identified within the categories above. That is sources that are unknown and or those that are only identified say by their names or other attribution that is not clearly evident.
Appendix G
Interview Guide

Journalists’ perceptions of their identities with regard to NEPAD

Name: _______________________
Organisation and position: _______________________
Contacts (email and telephone): _______________________

Purpose of Interview Start:
I am aware that you have written stories for your newspaper on the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). I am interested in knowing your views and thoughts about how you as a journalist approach NEPAD and how you relate or do not relate to it as a continental African initiative.

Questions
Section 1: Self-identification with regard to NEPAD’s African identity sentiments
1. (a) What did you think of NEPAD when you first encountered it?
   (b) Have your views concerning NEPAD changed since then?
      If so, why? If not, why not?
   (c) The proponents of NEPAD have presented the initiative as a collectively ‘African-led’ development framework that embodies the conditions, aspirations and interests of all Africans (countries, peoples, states and nations).
      Do you agree? If so, why? If not, why not?
   (d) NEPAD opts to prioritise a common African identity (traditions, origins, heritage and culture) over and above geographical, national and ethnic identities.
      Do you identify with this statement? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. (a) The APRM is an African endorsed mechanism for some of the continent’s sovereign national states to check and advise each other as equals on issues of political, economic and corporate governance. How does this speak to you as a citizen of one of these states?
   (b) The APRM is based on the pan-African principles of mutual trust, shared responsibilities and common benefits, whereby the people of one part of Africa are seen as being responsible for those in other parts of Africa.
      Do you think it is realistic to appeal to such a pan-African identification?
      If so, why? If not, why not?
3. (a) Which, if any, of the following most applies as to how you see yourself when you engage with NEPAD?
Section 2: Self-identification with regard to journalism sub-identities

4. (a) What in your view, would you say is the ideal role of journalism?

Why? Give examples.

(b) In practice, how do you see yourself in relation to your answer in (a)?

Why? Give examples?

5. (a) Broadly speaking, I think of journalists in terms of the following two broad categories:

(i) Those that tell the story as it is mainly on the basis of factual evidence from sources, leaving the public to make up their own minds about aspects of their lives on the basis of what is written

(ii) Those that actively take sides and include both facts and even their own views in the story, for the purposes of getting people to act on an issue that the journalist sees as being of benefit to the wider public

Which of the above two broad categories, if any, do you feel most applies to what you are doing at this point in time? ____

(b) Why? Give illustrations and examples to illustrate your views.

6. In terms of how you see yourself in 5, how important is each of the following more specific functions in your day-to-day work? (4 = Extremely important, 3 = Quite important, 2 = Somewhat important, 1 = Not important at all)

(i) To provide quick, timely and neutral information ____

(ii) Avoid stories with unverified content (content that is not factual) ____

(iii) To influence public-oriented social agendas by providing opinions ____

(iv) To be an adversary of government and business through criticism ____

(v) Investigate claims and statements made by government and business ____

(vi) To provide analysis and interpretation of issues to the public ____
(vii) Discuss regional or national policies that are being developed ______
(viii) To support marginalised or disadvantaged people ______
(ix) To support regional or national development ______
(x) To portray the self reliance and unity of a country or continent ______

Section 3: Self-identification with regard to journalism and Africanity

7 (a) In reference to your reportage on NEPAD do you still see your journalistic role as you did in 4(b)? If so, why? If not, why not? (Give illustrations).

8. (a) Some people have suggested that it is the role of journalists in Africa to promote and support NEPAD as Africans. What comes to mind when you think of this view?
(b) Describe in some detail how you would compare your position at (3a) and (5a) with such a view?

9. Also, in terms of thinking about (3) and (6) which, if any, of the following most fundamentally describes how you see yourself?

   Journalist, not African ______
   More Journalist than African ______
   Equally Journalist and African ______
   More African than Journalist ______
   African, not Journalist ______
   Other (Please say what) ______

   Why?

Finish:
Thank you very much for your participation
Comments

Ends
Interview questions for the proponents and analysts of NEPAD

Name: _______________________
Organisation and position: ________________________________
Contacts (email and telephone): __________________________

Purpose of Interview
I am interested in knowing your views and thoughts about how you as one of the key exponents of NEPAD perceive the role of journalists in Africa in their relation to and reportage on NEPAD.

Themes
1. Perceptions with regard to NEPAD’s progress.
2. Identification with regard to its African identity sentiments.
3. Perceptions on the role of journalism in NEPAD.
4. Thoughts on the link between journalism and Africanity
5. Media coverage of NEPAD

Finish:
Thank you very much for your participation
Comments

Ends
Appendix H
Letter to Journalists who cover NEPAD

Dear………………………..,

I am Andrew Kanyegirire, a journalist who is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

I am working on a thesis “Journalists’ perceptions of their roles and identities: a NEPAD case study”. It deals with how NEPAD is reported and journalists’ perceptions of their roles and sense of belonging in reference to NEPAD.

As one of the prominent journalists covering NEPAD, your comments would be invaluable to producing knowledge about these topics. I would really appreciate it if you would grant me an interview at any time convenient to you between January and April 2006. Ideally, the one-to-one interview will last around 40 minutes. The format is a free flowing, in-depth interview. You are assured of confidentiality.

I will call you within the week as a follow-up to this letter. However, I can also be reached on the contacts below. I look forward to hearing from you and including your important viewpoints in this research.

Regards.
Andrew Kanyegirire
School of Journalism and Media Studies (JMS),
Rhodes University,
P.O.Box 94,
6140, Grahamstown,
Tel: + 27 46 603 7105 (Work)
+ 27 73 512 4247 (Cell Phone)
Email: g00k1936@campus.ru.ac.za / kancom@email.com

cc Prof. Guy Berger, Supervisor and Head of JMS, Rhodes University.
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