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Why Study African Media?

This book is motivated by two factors. The first is rooted in my first year as an undergraduate student in the United States. In 2007, my home country, Kenya, had a highly contested election that led to post-electoral violence. While the violence was primarily limited to a few parts of the country, watching and reading coverage from Western media outlets, one would have been forgiven for thinking that the whole country had convulsed into an inexplicable, bloody, and vengeful conflict. There was little to no mention of the intricate political, economic, and historical injustices that had led Kenya to this point. In the eyes of the Global North's press, Kenya was proving to be a typical African country, beset by ethnic hatred and the potential to be "another Rwanda." For many, images of political protests, burning tires in the middle of roads, and machete-wielding men represented all that was wrong with African politics. These images linked the country to past and ongoing atrocities in other African countries. The crisis had a primeval inevitability, with a constant stream of people running away from the violence of "burning houses […] and even people hacked to death" (Ogola, 2008). Images were accompanied with little to no contextualization, subliminally suggesting that the whole country was doggedly marching into the abyss.

The second motive is grounded in an intellectual interest born of and nurtured by frustration. Frustrations best capture in December 2017, at the start of a two-year postdoctoral fellowship, I attended a symposium in Canada with several scholars working on media and atrocity in Africa. During my presentation, a well-regarded scholar asked a question of which I had heard numerous variations during my graduate career. Prefacing his question with the tried and tested "I don't mean to be disrespectful," he

asked why I would focus on African newspapers and not those from the Global North, since no one reads African newspapers. Leaving aside the annoyance that African audiences were being labeled as "no one," what took me aback was the fact that for this scholar, the fact that we were both at this symposium and we were fellows at Harvard University was not enough to convince them that African journalism was worth studying. My work, the voices I was giving space to, and the intellectual exercise I was engaged in were all for naught, since "no one" read African newspapers.

This book represents an effort at allowing people who look like me, and live where I have lived, to tell their stories. It is about giving African journalists a platform to discuss how they construct knowledge about Africa. It is about pushing back against the tendency to talk *about* and *for* Africa without speaking *to* and *with* Africans. This is not to suggest that I seek to tell an "African story," since, with fifty-four countries, what counts as an "African story" is in itself contested (see Jacobs, 2015). Moreover, the data presented in Chapters 3–5 offer a strong rebuttal to the notion of an "African story."

Both motivations are anchored on the fact that scholars and laypeople often assume that they know the nuances of how Africa is represented in the media. As a result, a set of beliefs about media representations of Africa have become truisms both within and outside academia: (1) journalists from the Global North often represent Africa through stereotypical frames and often ethnicize African conflicts; (2) journalists from the Global North lionize international rescue/intervention; and (3) Global North journalists typically represent Africa with paternalistic, negative, neoliberal narratives. Yet, despite a long and deep fascination with Africa, there is a dearth of scholarship on how African journalists represent the continent and its peoples. This void is extant in studies on how conflicts in Africa are represented in the media.

Journalism scholarship has been epistemologically ethnocentric with regard to how Africa and Africans are represented, almost as though African journalists do not engage in knowledge production. The continent's media organizations are treated as transient compared to their counterparts in the Global North, resulting in a scholarship with an "imperialistic unconscious" through its "European metrocentrism and analytic bifurcation" (Go, 2013b, p. 49). They can only be understood as flawed and incomplete copies of those in colonial metropoles. This has meant that scholarship on African journalism has had the tendency not just to "reproduce and mirror the wider culture of northern dominance" but to approach Africa's press more to make comments "about

something else, some other place, some other people," with the continent being the "mediation that enables the West to accede to its own subconscious" (Go, 2013b, p. 49; Tageldin, 2014 p. 302–3). As Nyabola (2018, p. xix) and Mbembe (2001, p. 3) eloquently put it, Africa is often the background to someone else's story rather than a unit of analysis in its own right.

With all of this in mind, *In the Shadow* tells the story of how African journalists contend with being journalists that are African, covering an international event unfolding next door. It examines the social conditioning of African journalists' knowledge while paying attention to existential factors like professional pressures, norms, and the nation-specific constraints placed on journalists and the news organizations they work in. As a result, *In the Shadow* is invariably interested in news narratives and the social context within which journalists construct these narratives. As will become apparent, these narratives are neither naïvely constructed nor innocently relied upon. They embody multiple discursive struggles over what it means to be an African journalist, what it means to be an African news organization, and what it means to be an African in light of a politics of identity and belonging. This third struggle is key to understanding journalism narratives in Africa when we consider that within the African political scene there still exists what Nyamnjoh (2005, p. 17) calls "an obsession with belonging," which becomes evident in this book as well.

In the Shadow achieves the aforementioned by focusing on how African journalists constructed knowledge about the atrocities in Darfur between January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2008. The choice of Darfur as a site for studying African journalism fields and how they cover international events unfolding on the continent is based on two key attributes. First, Darfur was the first conflict that garnered intense attention from the Global North after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi as well as unfolding in a post-9/11 world. Second, Darfur provides a site through which to analyze journalists from several African countries covering a singular event to understand the narratives and norms they rely on to make sense of an event for diverse national audiences. Also, because of its history of Arabization by Khartoum, continental tensions about what it means to be African and what it means to be an "African journalist" clearly come to the fore. As such, Darfur is a perfect site to investigate the tension between journalistic norms and roles (*doxa*) on the one hand and an embracing of an African postcolonial identity (*habitu*) on the other.

STRANDS OF JOURNALISM SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship on the representation of Africa, particularly by the Global North, has developed along three primary trajectories. The first argues that Western organizations rely on colonial tropes that focus on ethnicizing every conflict in Africa while also relying on stereotypical representations of Africans (Ebo, 1992; Kogen, 2015). This reportage on Africa is reductive, and its engagement with the continent begins from the premise that the continent is incomplete and needs to be "saved" (Bunce, Franks, & Paterson, 2016; Mamdani, 2010). This trajectory holds that this type of representation hovers between, on the one hand, homogenized knowledge leading to a normalization (and eventual disregarding) of conflict in Africa and, on the other hand, trying to convince the audience that this is newsworthy and *new*. Thus, phrases such as "another Rwanda" appear regularly whenever a conflict is covered in Africa (see Brown, 2013). The implication is that African journalists are likely to better contextualize Africa. *In the Shadow* engages and pushes back on this strand by showing that African journalists also ethnicize conflict on the continent but argues that this is part of a long historical debate over who belongs and who does not (Chapters 6 and 7).

The second strand's approach has led to analyses moving away from questions focusing on the rigid *bias* versus *objectivity* paradigm to studies of how newsroom routines play a role in shaping news content (Tuchman, 1978). This shift has also informed our understanding of the news as an organizational product – that is constructed, rather than a "true" transcription or representation of events. Taking cues from the literature on knowledge production, this strand argues that representations, like the knowledge anchoring them, depend highly on the social context journalists, news organizations, and audiences are in. This trajectory has led to a careful analysis of how atrocities – such as Darfur – are framed by media organizations from the Global North and how wire agencies inform how news organizations from the Global North cover Africa (Bunce, 2010, 2011; Savelsberg & Nyseth Nzitarira, 2015). For example, Savelsberg and Nyseth Nzitarira (2015) find that a nation's collective memory of traumatic events, such as Ireland's famine and poverty, or Germany's memory of the Holocaust, will manifest in how the media frame atrocity. Traces of this strand can be found in *In the Shadow's* discussion of frames in Chapter 5, in which Rwanda's memory of its own Genocide and the memory of colonization across Kenya, Rwanda, and South Africa influenced how Darfur was framed. It builds on this strand by arguing

for the importance of nonjournalistic actors – like the colonial and post-colonial states – in affecting how journalists operate (Chapters 2 and 3). The strength of social context is accentuated in Chapters 2 and 3, which discuss the political and educational contexts as an avenue to understand the struggles over what it means to be an African journalist working in an African news organization.

In the Shadow's focus on discursive struggles builds on a third and very nascent strand of scholarship that has shown promise. This trajectory argues that scholars have inadvertently found themselves perpetuating a myth regarding how Africa is represented, due to focusing primarily on newspapers, magazines, and a small number of countries (Scott, 2017). This narrow focus has meant that scholars have made sweeping statements about "media representations" when they mean "press representations." This is further compounded by the narrow range of topics related to crises, likely determining research design (Nothias, 2016). In this strand, we find work by Guy Berger (2010), Daniel Hammett (2011), and Jacqueline Maingard (1997), who focus on how major international competitions hosted in South Africa were represented in the press. By focusing on the representation of South Africa in contexts not imbued with violence, these and other scholars avoid the concerns Nothias (2016) raises over predispositions towards specific research designs. This trajectory, in conjunction with the second strand, urges scholars to take a more nuanced approach to studying Africa's representations by the media and to include more diversity in questions and topics analyzed. Using Darfur as a case study, it shows how an analysis of conflict representation can yield insights that allow for new avenues for scholarly engagement and broaden our understanding of journalism(s) in the Global South. Furthermore, *In the Shadow* also shows that conflicts are ripe for capturing discursive struggles over identity and professional norms and expectations and how these lead to tensions over what it means to be a journalist.

Although these three trajectories offer a rich and vibrant debate about how Africa and Africans are represented, none actively engages with how African journalism represents Africa and Africans. All three treat largely Africa as merely existing in the shadows, a prop in the discourse about journalism fields from the Global North. A decade and a half after Hallin and Mancini (2004) argued for a case study approach to understanding media interactions with other social actors – and articulating which actors and institutions play a crucial role in shaping the narrative –very little has been done on media in Africa. *In the Shadow* takes up this challenge

by focusing on the roles of the political field (Chapter 2), academic field (Chapter 3), journalistic cultures (Chapter 4), and sources (Chapter 5) in shaping narratives. With this in mind, I make two claims in this book: (1) discourse about the silencing of African voices by Western journalists has itself silenced African voices by not including them in analyses; (2) as a result of this silencing, we know very little about journalists in Africa and the types of narratives they employ to represent Africa and Africans.

At heart, *In the Shadow* is about the construction of knowledge about Africa by journalism fields in Africa. It is anchored in Max Weber's (1976) call to study the press, the contextual nature of knowledge, and the narrative limits and opportunities this contextual nature presents (P. Berger & Luckmann, 1966). It does this by paying attention to the structures and strictures of the journalism profession as understood through Pierre Bourdieu's field theory (1984, 1991, 1999, 2013). This situates *In the Shadow* at the intersection of two strands of knowledge production scholarship: one preoccupied with the influence of global scripts on local knowledge production (Haller & Hadler, 2008) and the other with the impact of nation-specific contextual and institutional realities (Savelsberg & Nyseth Nzitarira, 2015). It is at this intersection that I empirically illustrate and explain how: (1) News organizations in Africa are critical players in the silencing of African voices; (2) African journalists are themselves part of the marginalization of African voices; (3) narratives employed by African journalists do not differ that significantly from those employed by journalists from the Global North; and (4) African journalists use the ethnic conflict frame with relative frequency when narrating a conflict. *In the Shadow* achieves this by analyzing the social space in which journalists exist as Africans and the structure of the professional space within which they pursue "their different trajectories" (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 27). Ergo, it purposefully centers African narratives and experiences while pushing the Global North to the margins.

THEORIZING AFRICAN JOURNALISM

When thinking about the trajectory of the journalism profession on the continent, it is impossible to overstate the effects colonization had on the formation of the profession and how it developed in the postcolony. For example, it would be imprudent to talk about media freedoms in post-colonial Africa without taking into account the role of colonial control in shaping how actors within and outside the profession understand these freedoms. Moreover, colonial era moves to control

Indigenous presses highlighted the importance of retaining power over the field within the new political class. It is not a stretch to argue that political elites inherited fields that colonialists had designed and deployed as tools of oppression (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2010, 2012). Many were all too willing to put the profession, just like economic and political institutions, to the service of a ruling minority (Mamdani, 1996; Nyabola, 2018). As Martinique political philosopher Frantz Fanon (1968) had warned, politicians succumbed to the seduction of colonialist thought and, as a result, journalism found itself the subject of enduring coloniality (Quijano, 2000).

I rely on field theory to capture these disparate forces seeking to influence how journalists operate to varying levels of success (Benson, 1999; Bourdieu, 1993; Usher, 2017). As an explanatory mechanism, it is not a "static model with a priori determined confines," allowing me to simultaneously use it in a transnational, national, and subnational manner (Buchholz, 2016, p. 34). I construct a profession whose boundaries and characteristics "transgress, principally, those of the nation-state" (Buchholz, 2016, p. 34), leveraging this quality to design transnational, national, and subnational units of analysis that work in concert to produce and shape the narrative on Africa. It allows me to articulate experiences that go a long way in explaining individual and institutional decisions that may seem irrational to those outside the profession (Chapters 4 and 5).

Discussing Bourdieu's conceptualization of a "field," Julian Go and Monika Krause (2016, p. 8) remind us that a field is "a social space of relations or social configuration defined by struggle over […] valued resources." In *In the Shadow*, the critical resource being contested is the right to construct the continent's narrative. This idea of struggling over "valued resources" has a lot of purchase for anyone thinking about how to argue for a transnational African field (as I will do) while also being sensitive to the idea that within this overarching field, there are smaller subfields also struggling over resources. Additionally, field theory allows *In the Shadow* to expand its focus "beyond the newsroom and towards a larger news ecology" (Usher, 2017, p. 1119), which allows for the contextualization of the realities journalists have to deal with – such as an ever-present state in how Rwanda covered Darfur (Chapters 5 and 6) – without resorting to assumptions about state censorship and authoritarianism that tend to surround discussions of relationships between journalism and political fields on the continent. This expansion of focus to include interactions with nonjournalistic actors places *In the Shadow* within Hallin and Mancini's (2004) milieu.

For *In the Shadow*, the task of field theory is to examine the role of institutional logics while simultaneously highlighting and being mindful of the complex interplay between social structures and cultural forms within a society.[1] Members of the field share certain dispositions and have specific beliefs that they take for granted about how the field operates and the particularities that structure the field. Specifically, I lean more towards Rodney Benson's model of "journalistic field position, logic and structure" (2013, p. 17) than I do the version discussed by Pierre Bourdieu (1993). Bourdieu discussed fields as sites of struggles for and between two forms of power: an external heteronomous pole and an autonomous pole internal to the field. For Bourdieu, the heteronomous poles contain both economic and political power, whereas the autonomous poles are more cultural. On the other hand, Benson argues that focusing on merely economic and cultural forms of power is "inadequate to explain the complex dynamics of the ongoing journalistic mediation of public discourse" (2013, p. 13). Instead, Benson's model provides a way to analyze the "complex interplay of market, civic, class, and organizational ecological dynamics" (2013, p. 25). By taking this approach, I seek to complicate understandings of how and why "news is produced as it is" (Benson, 2013, p, 25). This should provide a fuller understanding of the influences at work in shaping narratives produced by journalists situated in African contextual realities.

Understanding Journalistic Fields

Fields contain an internal logic by which those within them have shared understandings of the fields' rules and operate within their frameworks. This does not mean that the field is impervious to exogenous pressures. Instead, these pressures are not always translated to the field's internal logic. We can understand this internal logic as part of the field's "rules of the game," the embodiment of which forms actors' *doxa*. For example, journalists are generally mindful of their editors' framing preferences and adjust their narratives to suit this mold to get their stories published. They will adapt their behaviors to gain recognition and resources within the field. A Kenyan subeditor explained this dynamic in their newsroom:

[1] To quote sociologist Gaye Tuchman (1978, p. 183), "Social structure produces norms, including attitudes that define aspects of social life which are of interest or importance to citizens."

For example, our managing editor is very conservative. So she will say, "No, I do not want that," or a story will come in, and she will say, "No, that is not good for our readers." […] So when the story comes in, it is likely to be less harsh because of her. So when she is on leave and her deputy [steps in], you can almost tell that there is a different kind of mindset. (Subeditor interview, Kenya).[2]

Additionally, journalists have experiences they garner before entering the field by being socialized into their respective communities. Bourdieu (1958, p. 144) states that these experiences are part of one's *habitus*, which can be thought of as the unconscious patterns tailored to one's society that structure one's day-to-day (Go, 2013a, pp. 62–63; Hammoudi, 2009, p. 210). The relation between habitus and the field presently occupied by an individual facilitates incorporating the relationship between the individual's past and present, accounting for how it influences them. For *In the Shadow*, habitus elucidates the role of a politics of belonging in shaping the actions of journalists (Chapters 2, 6 and 7). Both doxa and habitus provide individuals with the tacitly accepted presuppositions within groups and professional fields. Neither of these are fixed, and are dynamic and susceptible to ongoing experiences. To achieve this level of nuance in explanation, I leverage Benson's (2013) analytical levels of field *position* (distance from the market and nonmarket power as mediated by the state); field *logic* (news practices and formats that are dominant); and field *structure* (distinctions inside the field, related to habitus of journalists and audiences, and the organizational ecology of competition).

Field Position

Benson informs us that field *position* situates journalistic fields within a field of power in which journalism fields operate in "relation to the nonmarket or civic field and the capitalist market field" (2013, p. 25). In this field of power, the state can extend its tentacles onto both market and nonmarket actors through its power to make laws and empower regulatory bodies to effectuate these laws. As such, Benson reminds us that it would be a misnomer to suggest any "necessary dichotomy between state and market," since the state "enables and constrains both market and nonmarket activity" (2013, p. 25). This complication is especially poignant when studying journalism in countries such as Kenya, where, while the journalism field may appear vibrant, this should not be conflated with its independence. New organizations in the field are either owned

[2] This interview is quoted in Wahutu (2018b).

or controlled by allies of the state, and because the state constrains and enables both market and nonmarket activity, its presence is never wholly avoidable. Analyzing the field's *position* highlights that the nonmarket and market poles sometimes work in equilibrium towards "unstable hybrid formations" (Benson, 2013, p. 25).

On the market side of this field of power, these hybrid formations are epitomized by the fact that in 2010, when data was first publicly available, the Kenyan government spent $45 million on advertising – despite a ministerial directive to reduce spending on advertising purchases (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013, p. 71; Wahutu, 2018b). South Africa spent $4 million in the same year (Maseko, 2010). This suggests that the state can still meaningfully constrain the level of autonomy journalists have through the market levers of power. On the nonmarket side, the effect of this hybridity was evidenced during Kenya's post-electoral violence in 2007–2008, when the state ordered the shutting down of live broadcasts. Although editors complained bitterly about this illegal action in op-eds, one of the worst-kept secrets was that government officials had previously met with media owners, and both parties agreed to the shutdown of broadcasts (Obonyo, 2011, p. 12). This articulation of *position* envisages political and economic forces as not always being at opposite poles of the spectrum (Chapter 2).

Field Logic

While focusing on dominant practices and format, field *logic* traces the field's historical trajectory, paying particular attention to how the field's rules of the game are established and how and why they persist over time. Benson informs us that the dominant logic in the field is likely to endure even "after conditions external to the field change" (2013, pp. 25–26). Building on prior research and theorizing on journalism education, Chapter 3 demonstrates how – because those training African journalists in the early years of independence were from colonial metropoles – one of the *logics* that has endured is the seeming disconnect between journalists and the everyday realities of Africans (Nyamnjoh, 2013, 2015). The first generation of post-colonial journalists gained skills viewed as necessary by external agencies, such as the Ford Foundation, the International Press Institute (IPI), and UNESCO, but which were qualitatively unhelpful to fellow Africans (Jenks, 2019). Consequently, the profession is viewed as "deaf and dumb to the particularities of journalism in and on Africa" (Nyamnjoh, 2015, p. 37).

Another *logic* that has persisted has been the bifurcation of the journalism field into colonial and Indigenous subfields, which have lasted (Chapters 2 and 4). Furthermore, even once external conditions changed (such as the end of colonization), the internal conditions did not substantively change with regard to legislation that the new African states instituted, thus maintaining and enforcing certain restrictions on journalists and the media (Chapter 2).[3]

Field Structure

The third analytical level of fields is *structure*. Benson argues that this level of analysis focuses on the multiple factors in the "social hierarchical organization of competition within the field" while emphasizing "variation among media outlets" (2013, p. 26). In this elucidation, field analysis locates the structural position of each outlet in relation to others in the "class stratification of audiences" (Benson, 2013, p. 26) under the assumption that different social locations are likely to produce different narratives. Building on this, I show that when studying journalism fields within Africa, scholars are much more likely to generate crucial insights by analyzing ethnicity and the politics of belonging, which are fundamental in the African context (Chapter 7). The politics of belonging anchors the knowledge repertoires that journalists access in their coverage of the continent (Chapter 6). Subsequently, when talking about the African field's *structure*, the focus invariably highlights the role of ethnicity in affecting how the field operates.

A South African editor singularly provided clarity as to how identity affected their coverage by stating that their sympathies were with "Black Africans," because they understood them much better "culturally" (Chapter 6). Consequently, this leads to the discussion on the extent to which *affinities* influence both the framing of international events and the intensity of coverage. Intuitively, we would expect that *affinities* are likely to lead to "more (and positive) news coverage of some groups, whereas *disaffinities* could contribute to less (and less positive) news coverage of other groups" (Benson, 2013, p. 27). We might also expect that

[3] In Ghana, Alhassan (2005) reminds us that the country's broadcasting polices during and after colonization had common threads when it came to the treatment of private sector participation until 1982. In Kenya, see The Preservation of Public Security Act, Cap 57, The Official Secrets Act of 1968, and The Books and Newspapers Act of 1960 (formerly The Book and Newspapers Ordinance of 1906), which continue to be enforced by the state whenever it suits the state.

affinity is likely to play a role in African journalists' choices of sources in their coverage of events on the continent. Yet, as I show in Chapter 5, this was not the case regarding whom African journalists relied on as sources.

A TRANSNATIONAL AFRICAN JOURNALISM FIELD

While *In the Shadow* takes up the challenge of "fielding transnationalism" (Go & Krause, 2016), this is not about 'bringing' field theory into Africa. Instead, it illustrates how field theory can be transformed by a deeper engagement with Africa while also being nestled within the discourse of de-Westernizing international political communication and journalism studies research (Willems, 2014a, 2014b). While, at first glance, relying on field theory may seem at odds with my pursuit of de-Westernizing these areas of scholarship, this surprise captures the extent to which Africa's contribution to institutionalized knowledge in the Global North continues to be erased. The seeds of field theory and the central concept of *habitus* can be found in Bourdieu's early work on the Kabyle in Algeria (Go, 2013a). Its use here is thus less about transposing a Western theory in my attempt to de-Westernize but rather a return to a region where the theory's fundamentals germinated.

Of course, it would be foolhardy not to acknowledge that Bourdieu was a White Frenchman working in a French colony as he thought about and wrote about life there. However, recognizing Bourdieu's positionality is not to suggest that he was unaware of colonialism's toxic impact. Indeed, Bourdieu wrote of colonialism as a "relationship of domination" that structured a kind of "caste system" (1958, pp. 120, 132, 134). As Go reminds us, for Bourdieu, "racism was built into the system of colonialism as a legitimizing mechanism" (2013a, p. 55). Pushing back on modernization scholars who insisted that modernization was a process that occurred by choice, Bourdieu (1958, p. 120) argued that these scholars ignored the fact that the power to choose had been denied to those dominated by those dominating them. Subsequently, Bourdieu's work was central in pointing to the colonial state's penchant for, and monopoly on, violence, suggesting an affinity with Fanon's (1968) work in Algeria (Go, 2013a, pp. 56, 68). Thus, while, yes, Bourdieu is a White Frenchman writing about a French colony, his early work on Algeria aligns with Raewyn Connell's southern theories by focusing on the "power, violence and pain of colonialism" (2007, pp. 165–191).

Yet there is also the fact that in contemporary understandings of field theory, the place and role of Algeria have been obfuscated. The elision of Algeria's pivotal role in the development of field theory echoes Bourdieu and Wacquant's (1999) warning on the "cunning of imperialist reason" within academia. It is also a reminder that field theory, like many concepts circulating in the Global North, epitomizes Ndlovu-Gatsheni's admonition that within academia, Africa specifically, and the Global South generally, exists as a site "for hunting and gathering of raw data" (2021, p. 6). In contrast, the Global North remains framed as a crucial site where "what is considered valid and scientific knowledge cascades and circulates to the rest of the world" (2020, p. 6). Consequently, its use in *In the Shadow* as a tool to de-Westernize journalism studies and political communication is a conscious decision to remind the reader that the continent has been a critical player in knowledge production and circulation and thus part of the "global."

In the following chapters, I eschew the "discursive prominence" (Raetzsch, Ngomba, Olivera, From, & Bødker, 2021, p. 9) of Global North journalism(s) in my use of field theory and move the theory away from an obsession with "problems experienced in the West" (Hanitzsch, 2019, p. 216; Willems, 2014a). In writing exclusively about a transnational African journalism field and how it narrates Africa, *In the Shadow* moves away from the Eurocentrism that pervades political communication and journalism studies that insist on conflating "transnational" or "international" with the Global North. It takes for granted that African countries are "transnational" and "international" in relation to each other and introduces a transnational journalism field that is African in much the same way Noha Mellor (2011) and Marwan Kraidy (2011) have argued for an "Arab media field" and a rise of pan-Arab media as a "transnational system" respectively. While this transnational field is continuously being integrated with the global media field, especially in the age of digital media, it is heavily influenced by disparate, and often similar, nation-specific contextual realities.

Field theory's relational quality allows for boundary-stretching and contraction, which enables *In the Shadow* to focus on national fields simultaneously with their subfields (contraction) while always keeping the transnational field present and active (stretching). This stretching and contraction of journalism's boundaries is crucial, since "national and transnational fields interact in complex ways" (Go & Krause, 2016, p. 12). Concurrently, within this transnational field exist multiple subfields located within several countries on the continent. These are subfields

in relation to the transnational field but are often the environing field in their respective countries (Steinmetz, 2016, p. 109). For example, the South African journalism field is a subfield of the transnational African journalism field while also being an environing field with its own subfields (Chapter 4). The critical point to remember, though, is that actors within subfields are also participating members of the environing field, since subfields share "certain features with [their] environing field while differing in other ways" (Steinmetz, 2016, p. 109).

Any discussion of a transnational African journalism field should be grounded on the knowledge of histories and geographies that have worked to repress modes of knowing and producing knowledge about journalism fields in Africa. Chapters 1, 2, and 3 show the ubiquity of a colonial legacy that continues to shape the realities of everyday life on the continent. Consequently, any articulation of a transnational African journalism field must be mindful that such a field would be inflected by pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial realities. These realities make it prudent to engage the interdisciplinary field of postcolonial theory in concert with field theory.[4]

Postcolonial theory attempts to theorize the problematics and context brought to the fore by the processes of colonization and decolonization (Shome & Hegde, 2002). It confronts us with the recognition that institutionalized knowledge is often subject to colonialism, geopolitics, and historical forces. *In the Shadow* asks us to think about localized colonial histories and how they mitigate journalism practice in Africa (Mabweazara, 2018, p. 34). Its use here clarifies the historical structures of knowledge production firmly rooted in coloniality's various histories and geographies (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2021, p. 5). Using both postcolonial and field theory allows *In the Shadow* to capture the interaction between actors within journalism fields and subfields, where although power differentials exist and are acknowledged, a mutual constitution and interdependence of actions also exists. This allows for an excavation of how colonial experiences continue to shape the journalism field's coverage in the postcolony. With this in mind, *In the Shadow* treats this legacy as a macroenvironment within which the journalism, politics, and education fields are "embedded in networks of fields" (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012, p. 203) that have coloniality as their environing field.

[4] I use the nonhyphenated "postcolonial" to differentiate the "theory" from "post-colonial" as a chronological period marking the end of colonial administrations on the continent. This approach is influenced by arguments by Quayson's (2000, p. 1) exegesis of the same.

STUDYING AFRICAN JOURNALISTIC FIELDS

We know little about how field logics and subtleties affect news construction about Africa in African countries. For example, how does relying on the field's *logic* lead to African journalists marginalizing African sources and mimicking frames from the Global North? To what extent does Africa's colonial and post-colonial history influence the field's relationship with actors from the political field or the Global North? How does identity affect how journalists view protagonists in a conflict unfolding in an African country? To answer these questions, while making the connections between imperialistic policies of the Global North and how these continue to shape journalism fields today explicit, *In the Shadow* is at the locus of three overarching academic fields: African studies, journalism studies, and sociology.

Drawing on academic and nonacademic literature, original content analysis, and journalist interviews, I explore the process of narrative construction, capturing and explaining instances of convergence and divergence of journalistic narratives on Darfur. Together with three research assistants, I conducted a content analysis of 784 newspaper stories from *The New Times* (Rwanda), *The Sowetan*, *The Mail & Guardian* (South Africa), *The Daily Nation*, *The East African*, and *The Standard* (Kenya) published between January 1, 2003, and December 31, 2008.[5] This time frame allows me to move beyond the coverage of news-breaking events such as the application for (and issuance) of arrest warrants by the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) at the International Criminal Court (ICC) for Ahmed Haroun, Ali Kushayb, and President al-Bashir, or moments of increased levels of violence or visits by international government officials to refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) camps. It captures periods where there was a lull in the intensity of attention by governments, institutions, and actors from the Global North.

We know that news organizations are critical actors in determining the overtone window for their audiences (Benson, 2013; McCombs, 2004). Decisions over what events to highlight and which ones to ignore and downplay are vital in shaping and reflecting our reality. With this in mind, the decision to focus on newspapers as a subject of analysis is anchored on the fact that newspapers contemporaneously archive history and are also "indicators of collective knowledge repertoires and processes" (Savelsberg, 2015, p. 22). Each news story was coded using

[5] For a brief background of these newspapers, see Appendix.

byline attribution (e.g., Zachary Ochieng' Meera Selva, Reuters), which allows for nuances such as whom African journalists quote as sources (Chapter 5) and how they frame events (Chapters 6 and 7) compared with journalists from the Global North who had articles published in African newspapers (Chapter 4).

Scholars have shown that news stories are often the result of complex collective actors within and outside journalism fields (Wright, Scott, & Bunce, 2020). Therefore, a news story can be understood as a representation of scripts, beliefs, values, and normativity, which form a society's collective representation (Asad, 2007; Tuchman, 1978). To achieve this collective representation, journalists rely on frames, which influence how audiences discuss and interpret events (Iyengar, 1994; Shulman & Sweitzer, 2018). My analysis focuses on manifest frames since they exert the "first and uncontested level of influence" (Benson, 2013, p. 5). Moreover, unlike latent frames, focusing on manifest frames ensured that my research assistants and I were not forced to try and interpret second-order meanings of frames and thus narrowed our focus to a frame's initial effect. To ensure that the coding of frames was consistent, I carefully trained them in how to code the frames and conducted rigorous multiple tests to ensure that the findings were not simply the result of our idiosyncratic interpretations.

The content analysis is supplemented by interviews with journalists from Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, and Nigeria between 2012 and 2015. The journalists interviewed had covered Darfur (and other mass atrocities) for several years and frequently traveled to the region or the various peace negotiations held across Africa and the Middle East. The interviews focused on how and why they became journalists, how they understood the atrocities, their organizations' division of labor, whom they viewed as bearing responsibility for the atrocity, and what course of action they thought best to solve the crisis. These interviews provide contextual nuance to the findings from the content analysis and capture any disjuncture between the published news stories, which result from bureaucratic/group processes, and journalists' perceptions of the atrocities.

The interviews center on journalists' voices and are motivated by the fact that we rarely hear from African journalists in discussions of media representation of Africa and Africans. Journalism research tends to treat African journalists as props on a stage whose role is to supplement Global North journalists rather than to be active actors. As more African journalism scholars have come through the ranks, we have started to hear more African journalists, but this is still infinitesimal compared with journalists from the Global North. As a result, they are vital for capturing

how journalists discuss and perceive the atrocities in Darfur, its victims, and their role in constructing knowledge about African suffering. They uncover the role and influences of the "rules of the game" on how journalists cover atrocity. Finally, role of historical trajectories that place journalists in the nexus of being African and a professional field that sees itself as narrating African experiences are laid out.

This choice to interview journalists is conscious of concerns by scholars who view interviews through a strictly constructionist approach (Collins, 1990; Miller & Glassner, 2004).[6] Some have argued that interviews are, at best, context-specific and constructed to fit the demands of the interactive milieu of the interview. Miller and Glassner (2004) state that though interviewees are likely to respond to "familiar narrative constructs" (such as what it means to be "Black African"), it is incumbent on the interviewer not only to recognize this as a possibility but also to realize that prior cultural understandings inform the interviewee's response. In the context of *In the Shadow*, the influence of cultural perceptions is crucial since it points to nation-specific traits and traces of collective memories (Chapters 6 and 7). Hence, some of the more critical facets of interviews are those familiar constructs seen by constructivists as impediments.[7] For example, when journalists explicitly referred to the victims as "Black African," this opened up avenues to discuss how they understood identity in the context of their country's collective memory. In South Africa, Black-identifying journalists wore their sympathies with victims referred to as "Black Africans" on their sleeves primarily because of their country's apartheid history (Chapter 6).

I am also keenly aware of the critiques by scholars who suggest that researchers cannot make legitimate claims if they do not have the subjective knowledge central to understanding the life experiences of the groups they study (Collins, 1990). While I cannot claim to understand the experiences of journalists, let alone South African or Nigerian journalists, this does not imply that the interviews were bereft of helpful information on their social and professional worlds. Interviews allow *In the Shadow* to illustrate how journalists, as social actors, imagine the meaning of their activities (Chapters 4 and 5), which cannot be achieved without at least talking to them (Lamont & Swidler, 2014, p. 159).

[6] See Small & Cook (2021) for a summary of these and other critiques of the usefulness of interviews.

[7] See Lee Ann Fujii for a similar approach to conducting interviews in settings that have gone through large-scale violence (2010).

Positionality

My overall "Africanness" did affect how the discussions went and provided valuable information leveraged across multiple chapters. Likewise, conversations with journalists highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of being an "outsider" or an "insider" in South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. At times in Kenya, my "insider" status meant I had to convince journalists of my credentials. On one occasion, my meeting was delayed because the journalist was talking to "American students."[8] Journalists were sometimes resistant to responding to questions they thought were blindingly obvious; political scientist Yolande Bouka (2015) also raised this concern in her preparation to conduct fieldwork. Concomitantly, I was mindful of the intersecting nature of my identity, especially because it likely triggered different responses to my questions, depending on whether interviewees identified me as an "insider" or an "outsider." At other points, the various intersections of my identity were beneficial and detrimental, and I needed to be flexible in deciding which facet of my identity I emphasized.

However, this "insider"–"outsider" tension also enabled me to achieve a level of discursive (Chapter 7) access that most scholars from the Global North may be unable to reach. Having the flexibility to choose when to highlight my "insider" and "outsider" statuses and when to embrace both allowed me to "share the burden and privilege of certain kinds of colonized and racialized subjectivities" (Bouka, 2015; Juluri, 1998, p. 86). It allowed me to speak both "as [a] transnational intellectual and as [a] representative of specific national and local constituencies" (Juluri, 1998, p. 86), allowing for the creation of what Bourdieu referred to as "homologies of position" (1996c, p. 27). To older journalists, especially Kenyan and Nigerian journalists, I was a son telling the story of African journalists and Africa to Americans. I was, in this sense, working to correct the record and challenge stereotypes about journalism and Africans. This homology also allowed me to pay attention to how "non-verbal signs, coordinated with the verbal ones" (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 20) during an interview in Nigeria led to my discussion of ethnicity in Chapter 7.

That being said, it is also true that either facet of my identity ran the risk of acting as a form of censorship, depending on how they were read (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 19). For example, in Rwanda, my surname

[8] I took this to mean "White" students, which is typically the case, since non-White identities are typically raced.

"Wahutu" has led to misidentification as an "insider." In a conversation with a Rwandan government official several years ago at a conference in the United States, the official advised that I use my English name, james, and the middle name, Siguru, instead of my surname. I would later discover that the Internet makes this difficult.

One final point on methodology and positionality. The biggest methodological challenge with which I have had to grapple while working on *In the Shadow* has been one of identity. What does it mean methodologically and ethically that I am an African scholar living in the United States studying African journalists? While I could claim "insider" and "outsider" identities fluently, can I be considered an "insider" in the strictest sense? In the same way political scientist Oumar Ba (2022, p. 2) wrestles with whether he is "performing as an academic 'native informant' going to the field" to "extract knowledge for the consumption of institutions and networks that reproduce normative whiteness and confine others in their racialized bodies," I too worry about my role. How much do my identities as a "native informant, the Self and Other" (Ba, 2022, p. 3) overlap to ensure an even more efficient knowledge extraction? This is even more so considering Nnaemeka's (2005, p. 57) assertion that "insiders" can also not only be alienated from their own culture but that this is even more so when they are educated in the Global North.

It is a fear that haunts each chapter in this book because in collecting data and arranging them for the sake of legibility in the Global North, I worry that I may be as guilty of extraction of knowledge in ways that I have often viewed Global North scholars as being (Dauphinee, 2015; Sabaratnam, 2017). This is exacerbated by the fact that as a scholar in an American institution, my doxa is heavily influenced by existing in a settler colony ensconced in imperialistic machinations (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1999; Go, 2008). In this predicament, I am in the company of several African scholars that have had to wrestle with what being African in Western spaces means for our research projects (Bouka, 2015; Katshuga, 2019; Nyabola, 2018). However, I have no succinct response to these struggles. While I may be in the company of several contemporaries, I draw little comfort from it since I am acutely aware that this is one of those things where there is no safety in numbers.

Which Journalism Fields?

In the Shadow focuses on four journalism fields across the continent: Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, and South Africa. All four were heavily

engaged in both the peace negotiations between the Sudanese State and Darfuri rebel groups and the contribution of peacekeeping troops, military personnel, and police personnel. Nigeria's former Chief of Defense Staff, General Martin Luther Agwai, was for a time the commander of the joint UN/African Union (AU) peacekeeping force in Darfur. The choice of Rwanda is further influenced by the fact that not only had it undergone a genocide but also the fact that Darfur came to most of the world's consciousness on the tenth anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda. On April 7, 2004, former UN Secretary-General Koffi Annan, speaking before the General Assembly, stated, "despite all our efforts, we learn that genocide is happening, or about to happen." While Annan was making this speech, Kenya was negotiating a peace agreement between Khartoum and Juba. I selected Kenya because it shares a border with what was then Sudan, and it was already engaged in negotiations about a different conflict unfolding within Sudan. Moreover, Kenya is often viewed as a beacon for peace and has been home to refugees from the multiple conflicts unfolding in the East African region. The choice of South Africa was a result of its status as the continent's largest economy at the time. Like Nigeria and Kenya, South Africa had been heavily involved in multiple peace negotiations in and out of the continent.

Focusing on multiple countries allows for cautious generalizability of my findings, which concentrating on a single country would have closed off.[9] The use of various methods and data should provide a fuller picture of how an international event unfolding on the continent was covered in four media ecologies, with different yet sometimes similar media histories, and actors in all four fields pushing toward capturing the essence of what it means to be a journalist on the continent.

WHAT ARE AFRICAN JOURNALISM FIELDS DOING?

In the Shadow leverages the dynamic nature of field theory to zoom in (individual level analysis) and out (transnational/national/regional level

[9] The impetus to carry out a cross-national comparative study of the media representation is anchored on a rich history going back as far as the 1920s with the investigation of propaganda in WWII (Lasswell, 1927), Wilbur Schramm's (1959) study on news around the world, Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammdani's (1984) study for UNESCO on the New International Information Order (NIIO), and Pamela Shoemaker and Cohen Akiba's (2006) work on news around the world. Contemporary studies more relevant to this project are those by Emmanuel Alozie (2005, 2010), Bella Mody (2010), and Carina Ray (2009) on African news media on Darfur, and Joachim Savelsberg (2015) and Savelsberg and Nyseth Nzitarira (2015) on the Global North's representations of Darfur.

analysis) while paying attention to the organizational (meso) level. It articulates how individual journalists talk about their work and communicate their organization's helpfulness and unhelpfulness as they carry out what they view as their duty, to tell the story of Africa to Africans. The result of this highlights the fact that African journalism fields are sites of discursive struggles over what it means to be African journalists, what it means to be African, and what role the field and its actors have in shaping narratives about the continent to Africans. In these discursive struggles, I point to a metajournalistic discourse. This discourse is critical in understanding not only how journalists define their relationship with the continent and their audiences but also how they discursively constitute their roles within the global narrative construction of their home continent (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2017). This focus on metajournalistic discourse also draws critical attention to how nonjournalists from the political and educational fields seek to discursively constitute journalistic roles, always looking for ways to influence these roles through legislation (Chapter 1) and curricula (Chapter 2).

In the struggle over what it means to be African, I not only rely on journalists' articulation of what they think of as "real Africa" but connect this to debates over African identity by thinkers such as cultural theorist and Senegal's first President Leopold Senghor (1966, 1971), and Fanon (1968).[10] In the following chapters, I capture the necessity of a reimagination in understanding representations of Africa by showing how Africa represents itself. This reimagination begins with the placing of narratives by African journalists within the locus of knowledge production; at this locus, scholarship should consider what people define and know as their everyday reality (P. Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This definition of the everyday is what establishes the very fabric upon which society creates meanings. *In the Shadow* treats journalists as well-socialized members of society, which requires us to take seriously that African journalists, and, by extension, African news organizations construct knowledge that is circumscribed by the reality within which they are embedded.

This socialization is captured in the stories journalists produce, which are imbued with culture and history that provide structure to their narratives. That being said, narratives are never unilateral signs, and audiences can decode them in ways that are incongruent with the journalist's original intent (Fairclough, 1992, p. 195; Hall, 1993). To mitigate against this risk, journalists inscribe within their narratives a preferred reading

[10] See also Gamal Abdul Nasser (1955) and Thomas Mboya (1970).

through the use of already existing frames and taken-for-granted knowledge. Taking a sociology-of-knowledge approach means that the use of the "ethnic conflict" frame in Chapter 7 to describe Darfur by African journalists is not particularly surprising. Even then, Chapter 7 seven shows that the presence of this frame is a marker of who can be imagined as either a "worthy victim" or "truly African" (Wahutu, 2018b). While capturing the protagonists' identities may be the manifest/conscious function of the story (i.e., who are perpetrators and victims), the contemporaneous construction of who belongs and who does not is the latent/unconscious function. Subsequently, framing such a story relies on and reifies already present knowledge and understandings of identity society.

Finally, part of this discursive struggle is also born out of the fact that journalists have a sociality that develops from their relationships and practices that they unconsciously reproduce in their particular contexts over time. They are not "born" journalists but instead learn how to embody this identity through education and continual repetitiveness to the point where it becomes almost second nature to them. But what happens when what they learn is at odds with their particular contexts (Chapter 3)? Put another way, what happens when the definition of a "good journalist" or "good journalism" seems at odds with how they identify as a nonjournalist (Chapters 4 and 5)? It is not as simple as saying that they will "innovate," since innovation is often inscribed within the contours of coloniality that permeate most facets of African society (Chapter 2). Innovation is almost impossible in spaces where society values foreign things not because they are better but because they are foreign (Nyang, 1994). As the Kenyan journalist put it, this preference for foreignness has "something to do with colonization" and is the result of colonization's everydayness.

DARFUR: A SNAPSHOT OF A CASE STUDY

Following its independence in 1956 from Britain, Sudan became embroiled in two civil wars between the North and the South throughout the twentieth century (Bartlett, 2008). The first began in 1955, eight months before independence on January 1, 1956, and pitted the North and the South (Deng, 2006). This conflict halted in 1972 and resumed in 1983 when the North abrogated the peace agreement that ended the initial conflict. Both civil wars were rooted in a politics of identity and belonging, in which, as Francis Deng informs us, "the normative framework provided that a person who was Muslim, Arabic speaking,

culturally Arabized and could claim Arab decent" would be elevated to positions of power and prestige. At the same time, all those considered non-Muslim, Black, and African were deemed inferior and legitimate targets of enslavement (2006, pp. 155–156).

Four years into the second civil war, violence in Darfur erupted and would last two years; while this conflict was initially an internal Darfuri affair, the government in Khartoum would get involved following the 1989 coup that brought al-Bashir into power. While this conflict was initially about the effects of desertification on communities, it would become a conflict anchored on two "uncompromising ideologies – one Arab supremacist and the other Fur nativist" (Mamdani, 2010, p. 245, United Nations, 2006). Essentially, the more desertification affected entire groups, the more likely it was that nomadic and sedentary communities would view this ecological crisis through the "land and governance systems created during the colonial period" (Mamdani, 2010, p. 237). As this conflict continued in the 1990s and destruction escalated, conventional restraint on conflicts between farmers and herders began to erode slowly. Muammar al-Qaddafi's decision to flood Darfur with weapons as he sought to destabilize the local government and promote his pan-Arab ideology turned the region into a tinder box (Bartlett, 2008; Mamdani, 2010). This escalation means that violence in the region started taking a "near total character" with the objective no longer of boundary definition but of questioning the "very existence of the other" (Mamdani, 2010, p. 246).

Violence in Golo and El Fasher

This is the environment in which the armed struggle that began in 2003 was anchored. In February 2003, insurgents calling themselves the Darfur Liberation Front (DLF) seized the town of Golo in the province of Jebel Marra (Mamdani, 2010, p. 250). DLF was led by Abdel Wahid Mohammad al-Nur – a Fur lawyer trained at the University of Khartoum – who styled himself after John Garang and had been a member of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement.[11] A few days after this attack, a second rebel movement, the Justice Equality Movement (JEM), announced itself. While JEM's origins can be traced to the mid-1990s, this current iteration was led by Dr. Khalil Ibrahim, who had once been the state minister of health in North Darfur.

[11] Al-Nur would change DLF's name to the Sudan Liberation Movement/Sudan Liberation Army (SLA/SLM) within days of this attack.

While the February 2003 attack in Golo was significant, it is understood that the attack on an air base in El Fasher on April 25 was pivotal to the new round of violence. Rebels destroyed five military planes and two helicopter gunships while also taking captive an air force commander, Brigadier Ibrahim Bushra Ismail (Flint, 2007; Prunier, 2008). Flint informs us that within a few weeks, SLA and JEM "attacked Tine, Kutum, and Mellit," making it nearly impossible for the military to make any headway in those early months after the El Fasher attack (2007, p. 152). By August, the rebels had killed at least 800 soldiers (Prunier, 2008). In planning its response, the government in Khartoum decided that its military, made up of recruits and NCOs from Darfur, was not trustworthy and chose to align with militia groups known as the Janjaweed. That said, even this new eruption of violence in 2003 was still one in which the effects of drought were filtered through colonially crafted institutions that divided Darfuri society into "tribes with *dars* (tribal homelands) and tribes without" (Mamdani, 2010, p. 16).

Additionally, these 2003 attacks also had not come without warning. Rebel movements had been organizing in the region since 2001, having "little more than the weapons they had for personal defense" (Flint, 2007, p. 147). By the time 2003 began, Eritrea and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) were providing arms shipments through networks in Chad and Libya. Darfuris in the diaspora also provided significant support with, on many an occasion, briefcases "stuffed with tens of thousands of dollars" being "carried by hand to Nairobi and N'djamena" (Flint, 2007, p. 147). Thus, the February attacks, upon which this book's premise begins, marked the culmination of several years of preparation and were, for all intents and purposes, a renewal of the violence that had plagued Darfur dating as far back as the mid- to late 1980s, with two peaks in 1987–1989 and between 1995 and 1999 (Flint & Waal, 2008, p. 277; Mamdani, 2010).

Why Darfur?

Why use Darfur as a case study? Darfur matters today for several reasons, but two inform its relevance to *In the Shadow*. The first is that regardless of the debates over whether the atrocities amount to genocide, it is undeniable that the violence, which continues to unfold at the writing of this book, has resulted in the slaughter, displacement, and sexual violence against millions of men, women, and children. As recently as April 2022, Human Rights Watch published a report stating that new

attacks in April 2022 had left "hundreds dead, thousands displaced, and hundreds of civilian homes scorched and property looted" (2022). In April 2023, former Janjaweed militia members (having been transformed into a paramilitary group named the Rapid Support Forces) participated in their second attempted coup against the Sudanese Army, which had been in charge of Sudan as part of a unity government following a 2019 coup against Omar al Bashir's government.

This continuation of both low- and high-scale violence can be attributed to countries such as China and Russia, who have been and are accused of enabling the atrocities to unfold through two mechanisms. First, both are accused of having sold millions of dollars' worth of weaponry to the government in Khartoum that has been used to wreak untold violence against Darfuris. Second, China has used its veto power in the UN Security Council to delay any substantive action by the government in Khartoum while ensuring that any sanction is diluted to the point of being functionally useless. While in the early years, China marketed itself as a possible negotiator between Khartoum and Darfur,[12] what instead happened is that it leveraged this role to ensure a consistent low-level insecurity, which would dissuade any new investors in the region. This is even more pertinent considering that in 2008, China bought 60 percent of Sudan's oil, accounting for 6 percent of China's oil (Associated Press, 2005; McGreal, 2008).

The second reason Darfur matters is the extent to which it was – and continues to be – a site of global struggles over narrative construction about events in Africa. Darfur became an international story in 2004, through a series of events that began with the issuance of a "genocide alert" by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in January 2004. Gal Beckerman (2006) of *The Jerusalem Post* called the alert "the first ever of its kind, issued by the U.S. Holocaust Museum." This was followed by a speech by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan before the UN General Assembly on April 7, 2004, the tenth anniversary of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Later that fall, the UN Security Council passed UNSC Resolution 1564, which instituted an International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur. With that being said, perhaps it was President George W. Bush's June 30, 2004 statement that "the violence in Darfur region is clearly a genocide" that moved the needle strongly and made Darfur more of a household name. This sense of Darfur as a genocide would further be cemented when Secretary Powell stated in September 2004 that "genocide has been committed in Darfur [and] may

[12] Much in the same way it did in 2023 with regard to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

still be occurring" (The Darfur Crisis, 2004). Mamdani reminds us that this period was the first time "one government has accused another of genocide" (2010, p. 25). The release of the film *Hotel Rwanda* in December 2004 further augmented Darfur's publicity wave.

The numbers coming out of Darfur in this initial period were also crucial in searing Darfur into the psyche of the Global North. The US Department of State initiated a massive data collection exercise under the then Secretary Colin Powell, resulting in the Atrocities Documentation Survey. These numbers would be used by both scholars and journalists seeking to capture the enormity of human suffering in Darfur. Transnational organizations such as the United Nations and the World Health Organization also collected statistics that different organizations leveraged to show the scale of violence and mortality in Darfur. American social movements such as the "Save Darfur Coalition" also amassed and built their own databases.[13] By 2006, these datasets (which were some of the most prevalent ones in use) would be labeled by the Government Accountability Office as having several "methodological shortcomings [...] including use of problematic data and application of unrealistic assumptions" (2006, pp. 3, 26; Mamdani, 2010, p. 30). Thus, even at this moment of internalization, Darfur was a site of contested narratives about capturing the extent of death and human suffering.

The internationalization of Darfur thus makes it an excellent site to study narrative formation and contestation. As one of the first significant atrocities in a post-9/11 world, it allows for an analysis of the strength of knowledge scripts from the Global North and how much they infiltrated local/national scripts. As a site, it captures the extent to which the journalism profession in Africa has internalized external narratives of its inequities, resulting in a field that is a crucial actor in the marginalizing and silencing of African voices as it constructs a narrative about a global event unfolding within its boundaries. Using Darfur, *In the Shadow* shows that African journalists (and the transnational African journalism field) find themselves playing second fiddle to and in the shadow of their counterparts from the Global North in the narrative construction of internationalized events such as Darfur.

Darfur allows *In the Shadow* to highlight how local (i.e., Sudanese) narratives about identity, conflict, and protagonists make it to the collective knowledge repositories of those consuming them through journalism's

[13] By 2007 "Save Darfur" claimed to have a "130 million person network" with an annual budget of roughly $14 million (Mamdani, 2010, p. 23).

normative narrative structures. It also allows for an excavation of how these narratives are, in turn, used as proxies for debates over who counts as African (Chapters 6 and 7). It is this focus that allows for the teasing out of the tensions between habitus and doxa (Chapter 5) while also paying attention to discursive struggles over what it means to be an African journalist (Chapters 3 and 5) and what the role of African journalists is within the continent (Chapters 3 and 4). This struggle over identity and belonging has a long historical trajectory in the continent, rooted in whether or not African identity could transcend geographical and racial divides (Fanon, 1968; Senghor, 1966, 1971). Thus, Darfur, by virtue of its location and history, provides a case study perfect for understanding how the politics of "Africanness" unfolds in how the transnational field constructs knowledge about international events on the continent (Chapter 7). It also provides a platform through which to analyze journalism's interactions with other social factors in ways that Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue are needed.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

In the Shadow consists of two parts. Titled "Making Journalists," Part I provides the context within which African journalism fields emerged and explores how the role of education and coloniality ensures that the field's logic endures. Chapters 1–3 make up this first part, providing a theoretical and historical framework for understanding the transnational African journalism field and its framing of Africa. Part II, titled "Narrating an Atrocity," transitions from these early days of the field's development to illustrating how these early influences shape how the field – and its subfields – facilitates the continent's "self-writing." These chapters capture how this is happening within a global field that is insistent in its presence and hegemonic approach, using the atrocities in Darfur (between 2003 and 2008) as a site through which to articulate the role of specific actors and institutions in shaping African narratives about Africa.

Part I: Making Journalists

Chapter 2, *What Is African Journalism?*, captures the beginnings of the first discursive struggle over what journalism meant in Africa and the role of the field in ensuring the newly independent states were marching to the tune of political elites. It charts the development of African newspapers, starting in 1797, through to their development during colonization and the relationship of the field to the post-colonial state. It shows how

the field's logic, structure, and position can be traced to colonial policies while highlighting how the political field continues to influence the journalism field's logic and position. It finds that even as fields have matured, they remain ensconced within colonial logics, affecting how journalists cover the continent.

Chapter 3: *Habitus in the Postcolony* builds on Chapter 2 by focusing on journalists' training from the 1960s to 2015. Relying on interviews, scholarship, and participant observation data, the chapter highlights the enduring strength of the field's logic due to non-field-specific factors such as education. It shows how curricula focused on Western canonical thought reinforce a sense of liminality of a field already perceived as out of touch. It provides the context for understanding the seemingly counter-intuitive findings in Part II by discussing the role of journalism education in inculcating specific normative assumptions about how the fields should work on the continent. It shows that journalism education now, just as at the dawn of independence, is such that the profession is heavily moored on Western understandings of journalistic doxa. Like Chapter 2, it highlights the contours of the discursive struggle over the role of journalism and journalists in Africa.

Part II: Narrating an Atrocity

Chapter 4, *African Journalism Fields*, and Chapter 5, *Africans at the Margins*, illustrate the extent to which African journalists and sources are at the margins of the global narrative construction process about Africa. Both focus on the discursive struggle over the role of African journalists in the narration of Africa. Chapter 4 finds that the transnational African journalism field's logic of bifurcation (Chapter 2) has carried on into the twenty-first century. It shows that the effect of this bifurcation is that African audiences primarily learn about events occurring across the continent from the Global North as opposed to African journalists. The chapter shows the extent to which African journalists are marginalized in their fields and how they understand and explain this marginalization.

Chapter 5 shows how African journalists exacerbate this reality by quoting sources from the Global North instead of African sources. Thus, an African reader was much more likely to know what then senator Biden thought about Darfur than they were to hear from an African state actor such as General Lazaro Sumbeiywo. The chapter empirically shows that African journalists are crucial players in silencing African voices despite their complaints of marginalization in Chapter 4.

Chapter 6, *Framing an African Atrocity*, focuses on the politics of choosing specific frames over others. It finds a marked difference between frames employed at the field level and those at the subfield level in each country. It finds, for example, that the Kenyan national subfield's favored frame resembled those selected by fields in the Global North. Concomitantly, it finds an ambivalence in using the genocide frame to talk about the atrocities in Darfur, arguing that this ambivalence is due to perceptions of how the frame would affect peace negotiations and the posture taken by transnational organizations such as the ICC, UN, and AU.

Chapter 7, *"That Is Lazy Journalism,"* by focusing on the field's structure, shows that African journalists use the ethnic conflict frame to cover African atrocities. This frame is deployed by African journalists even though they and scholars argue that it is stereotypical and oversimplifies complex social processes. This chapter contextualizes its use within Africa while pushing against simplistic readings of its existence. It argues that this frame engages in the politics of who is African while relying on specific collective memories about political manipulation of identity, colonial subjugation, and the war-on-terror discourse.

Chapter 8, *Lessons Learned*, situates the preceding chapters within the broader field of journalism studies and provides nuance for understanding how Africa is represented. It argues that the lack of scholarship on how African journalism fields represent transnational events has hampered our understanding of African media organizations. This has meant that scholars primarily extrapolate from fields from the Global North in their claims-making about how African fields cover or should cover Africa. This is even more troubling when we consider that recent scholarship has alerted us that claims about how the Global North represents Africa have rarely been centered on empirical data. This chapter ties in the findings and discussions in the previous chapters by linking them more explicitly to the book's overarching question; how do narratives about mass atrocities differ when the different countries and societies journalists work in are considered? It closes by proposing ways in which journalism in Africa and journalism studies broadly can be improved to allow an equitable representation of African voices in the coverage of Africa.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Allow me to point toward some critical interventions *In the Shadow* makes. It shows that the term *African media* is a misnomer of sorts, even more so when talking about newspapers and their coverage of events on

the continent (Chapters 4 and 5). African news organizations rely primarily on wire agencies and foreign news organizations to cover the continent's international events. Subsequently, African journalism fields are mainly composed of two subfields operating within them with minimal overlap. The first, which I call the *national subfield*, comprises journalists with an African postcolonial identity rooted in specific geographic African locations (Gikandi, 2010, p. 9; Wahutu, 2018b). The structure, logic, and position of this subfield are shaped by the national context and history of the country it is located in. The second is what I term the *cosmopolitan subfield*. It comprises foreign journalists working for organizations headquartered in the Global North and writing primarily for the Global North. The critical brokers in the cosmopolitan subfield are Reuters (founded by Julius Reuter in 1851),[14] Agence France-Presse (founded by Charles Havas in 1832), and the Associated Press (founded in 1846).[15] Other actors in this subfield include Germany's Deutsche Presse-Agentur (dpa), the BBC, individual authors from the Global North, and in some cases a mix of these in specific stories (see Table 4.1). Although discursively aware of the cosmopolitan subfield and mutually constructing narratives about events in the region, journalists in the national subfield hardly, if ever, interact with journalists in the cosmopolitan subfield.

African audiences primarily receive knowledge about events in Africa from non-African actors. These carrier groups include not just the cosmopolitan subfields (Chapter 4) operating within the continent but also non-African knowledge entrepreneurs (Chapter 5). While it is easy to point to the data presented here and say that African sources have played a role in shaping the narrative on Darfur due to the perceived dominance of Sudanese sources, this is not a holistic interpretation of the data. The significant presence of sources from the Sudanese state cannot be read in isolation, because the cosmopolitan subfield also has an overwhelming presence in the narrative construction process. By combining the presence of cosmopolitan subfields and sources from the Global North, it is evident that non-African voices shaped Africans' knowledge about Darfur. *In the Shadow* challenges assumptions about

[14] Julius Reuter had been a subeditor at Charles Havas' *Agence Havas* in 1848 before leaving to establish Reuters news agency in London (see Bielsa, 2008).

[15] These organizations relied heavily on the growth of telegraphic lines in their formative years and were the first international media organizations (see Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen, 1998, p. 1).

how African journalists represent African atrocities by pointing to the dissonance between critiques of Western media and the actual representation of Africa by African journalists.

However, I want to stress that the marginalization of African voices is not simply a result of the dominance of Global North journalism fields but a joint enterprise between the African journalism field and its Global North counterpart and one distinctly rooted in the journalistic rules of the game. The result of all of this is that the transnational African journalism field is a site of multiple discursive struggles about what the role of the field in post-colonial Africa should be (metajournalistic discourse), what it means to be African (habitus), what it means to be an African journalist (alignment of habitus and doxa), and who should narrate the experiences of Africans to Africans and the rest of the world (cosmopolitan versus national subfields).