MEDIA FOR CHANGE? A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA'S SUPPORT TO THE MEDIA: 1997–2007

by

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DECLARATION

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I declare that MEDIA FOR CHANGE? A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVE FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA'S SUPPORT TO THE MEDIA: 1997–2007 is my own work, and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE
[MR S P PHIRI]

....
DATE

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It is obvious, therefore, that although I would have loved to take full responsibility for this study, it is a collective effort and so each one of the people named above, and many others who are not mentioned, must partially share the credit for the insights contained in this thesis. Nonetheless, I am in no position to share with them the bitter 'cake' of the shortcomings in the study. Those weaknesses are entirely on my menu and plate.

ACRONYMNS

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights
AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
ANC	African National Congress
AMARC	World Association of Community Radio Stations
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BNF	Botswana National Front
BONGO	Business-Owned non-Governmental Organisations
BPP	Botswana People's Party
BSA	Broadcasting Services Act
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIF	Cultural Initiative Foundation
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPJ	Committee to Protect Journalists
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for Foreign and International Development
DONGO	Donor-Owned Non-Governmental Organisation
DP	Democratic Party
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAMW-SA	Forum for African Media Women Southern Africa
FEIMA	Foundation for European Intellectual Mutual Aid
FEP	Foundation for Education and Production
FINIDA	Finish International Development Agency
FROC	Foundation for the Reform and Opening of China
GEMSA	Gender in Media Southern Africa
GONGO	Government Organised Non-Governmental Organisation
HIVOS	Humanist Institute for Development Co-operation
IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority

ICA	Interception of Communications Act
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDASA	Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa
IFEX	International Freedom of Expression Exchange
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IPS	International Press Institute
KAF	Konrad Adenauer Foundation
MACRA	Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority
MAZ	Media Alliance of Zimbabwe
MESAB	Medical Education for South African Blacks
MBC	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MDLF	Media Development Loan Fund
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MMP-Z	Media Monitoring Project - Zimbabwe
MWASA	Media Workers Association of South Africa
NAC	National Arts Council of Zambia
NAC	Nyasaland African Council
NAMA	National Media Arts Association
NAMECO	National Media Corporation
NATAAZ	National Theatre Arts Association of Zambia
NAZI	National Socialist Party
NBB	National Broadcasting Board [of Botswana]
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIZA	Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for International Development
NSJ	Nordic-SADC Journalism Centre
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OSF-SA	Open Society Foundation of South Africa
OSI	Open Society Institute
OSIEA	Open Society Initiative for East Africa
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa
OSIWA	Open Society Initiative for West Africa
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress

PFP	Progressive Federal Party
POSA	Public Order and Security Act
SABA	Southern African Broadcasting Association
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SABRA	South African Bureau for Racial Affairs
SACOD	Southern African Communications for Development
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACPO	South African Coloured People's Organisation
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SACU	Southern Africa Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADCC	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
SADC-PF	SADC Parliamentary Forum
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SAEF	Southern African Editors' Forum
SAHRC	South African Human Rights Commission
SAIC	South African Indian Congress
SAIMED	Southern African Institute for Media Entrepreneurship Development
SAJA	Southern African Journalists Association
SAMDEF	Southern African Media Development and Entrepreneurship Fund
SAMTRAN	Southern African Media Training Network
SAP	Southern Africa Project
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SPI	Sol Plaatje Institute
SOWETO	South-Western Townships
RPPC	Rhodesia Printing and Publishing Company
TFB	Trust Fund Board [of MISA]
UCT	University of Cape Town
UDF	United Democratic Front
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations

UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIP	United National Independence Party
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWC	University of the Western Cape
VoP	Voice of the People (radio station)
ZAFODAMUS	Zambia Folk and Dance Music Society
ZAM	Zambia Association of Musicians
ZANVAC	Zambia National Visual Arts Council
ZAPOTA	Zambia Popular Theatre Alliance
ZAWWA	Zambia Women Writers Association
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ZCCM	Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines
ZNBC	Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation
ZNEF	Zimbabwe National Editors Forum
ZUJ	Zimbabwe Union of Journalists

SUMMARY

This study is broadly conceived within the case study format, as is exemplified by the focus on the exploration of the orientations and operational contexts of a single media-support organisation, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA).

Within that research approach, the thesis examines the historical and ideological designs of OSISA, the rationale for its existence, and its inter-locking linkages with international and Southern African-based media civil society organisations.

The study argues that OSISA was formed in response to the evolving political situations in parts of Southern Africa in the mid-1990s, which include the collapse of apartheid in South Africa, and the crumbling of many authoritarian regimes on much of the rest of the sub-continent. With all these events   taking place in a relatively short space of time, the initiators of OSISA saw a window of opportunity for supporting and influencing the political and social transformation processes, as well as spreading the ideology of social 'openness'.

As such, the thesis approaches OSISA as an institution that forms a part of the movement towards democracy or Westernisation. The study therefore documents and analyses the theoretical antecedents that contributed to the evolution of open society ideals, and their transplantation to Southern Africa. Thereafter, the study explores the nexus between OSISA and local civil society groups. This exploration is done from the theoretical assumption that no financial aid is given without strings attached.

The study thus concludes that although locally based civil society organisations try to negotiate their operational spaces, in the final analysis, such groups are all embedded in (and expected to play a role within) the

modernisation project, of which OSISA is just one of many instruments in that grand global venture.

Finally, the study proposes a few areas for additional investigations which could enhance our understanding of the global forces at work in Southern Africa.

KEY TERMS

Apartheid, Broadcasting, Civil Society, Communication, Democracy, Development, Donors, Media, Open Society, OSISA, Presidentialism, Post-colonial, Southern Africa

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CHAPTER ONE: THE SETTING

1.1 Introduction

This thesis is an exploratory case study that discusses both the internal and external workings of one donor organisation, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), as a representative of other donor institutions that fund media development in Southern Africa. The study examines the historical context in which OSISA was founded, and how – as a funding organisation – OSISA tries to enforce its ideology on regional civic groups. The study also explores how African civil society groups respond to OSISA's initiatives.

The study thus commences in this chapter with a discussion on the geographical and political setting that influenced the design of the structures of OSISA, before examining the history of the region, as it impacted on the local media both during and after the colonial era. The thesis situates OSISA within the development paradigm that places donor organisations within the Western-inspired modernisation process. In that respect, the study argues that a major assumption of many donor organisations is that the media have modernising roles in societies. As such, donor agencies (like OSISA) tend to be inclined to enforce their perspectives on African media institutions which benefit from the donors' funds. This chapter also considers the research methods used, and concludes with an outline of the structure of the thesis as a whole.

1.2 The geo-political and historical context of Southern Africa

The region that has come to be generally referred to as Southern Africa consists of 12 countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and

Zimbabwe. However, although 'Southern Africa' is used in this study, it should be appreciated that the term has "no ethnic or geographical validity" and therefore, to some extent, is patently limiting (Wilson 2002:ix). Nevertheless, with the emergence and growth of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) – a regional economic initiative – the term 'Southern Africa' has been broadened to include the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and by 2008 the regional economic body had also embraced Madagascar.

In geographical terms, however, the DRC is on the lower cusp of central Africa, Tanzania is in East Africa, while Mauritius and Madagascar are islands in the Indian Ocean.

Any reference to 'Southern Africa' in this study excludes the countries of South Africa, Tanzania, the DRC, Madagascar and Mauritius. This exclusion is solely based on the geographical mandate of the major subject and reference point of this study, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) – a mandate that limits OSISA's operations to the remaining nine countries. Southern Africa therefore excludes the above mentioned five member states of the SADC region. It is, as a result, applied only to the remaining nine countries of SADC.[1]

In very broad terms, the written history of the Southern African region has, in some cases, been traced to as far back as 1, 000 AD (Wilson 2002:ix), through the stages of early African settlements; subsequent African migrations; different ethnic group conquests; the creation of empires; the coming of European explorers whose initial interest seemed to have been to find a route to Asia, rather than to settle in Africa; European colonisation of most parts of Africa; and the creation of newly independent African states (Wilson 2002:1–315).

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[1] It should be acknowledged that although OSISA's mandate has been, since 2006, extended to include the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), this study makes little reference to OSISA's operations in that country, because most of these operations were still at a nascent stage at the time of writing this thesis.

Nevertheless, Europeans eventually settled in significant numbers – mostly in South Africa, Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia) and, to some extent, Mozambique and Angola. The then protectorates of Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia), Malawi (formerly Nyasaland), Botswana (Bechuanaland) and Namibia (South West Africa), only experienced small and limited European settlements. Mozambique and Angola were generally settled and controlled by the Portuguese, Namibia was (before the Second World War) controlled by the Germans. The other countries – except for South Africa, which was mostly dominated by descendants of the Dutch – were colonised by the British.

After various political struggles by the African people, that ranged from mass political action to guerrilla warfare, Zambia and Malawi became independent under African-dominated governments in 1964; Botswana and Lesotho in 1966; Swaziland in 1968; Angola and Mozambique in 1975; Zimbabwe in 1980; and Namibia in 1990. South Africa (although not part of this study, but mentioned due to its significant influence on the political, economic and social developments of the other countries in the region) abolished racial segregation (apartheid) with the end of European-based rule in 1994.

The end of apartheid in South Africa had a dramatic impact on the geo-political situation in Southern Africa. Cross-border confrontations (defined from African governments' perspectives as part of the anti-apartheid struggle) quickly gave way to both political and economic cooperation, with the new government in South Africa subsequently being incorporated into SADC.

1.3 Background and context of the study

In general terms, European colonialists or settlers brought modern media systems to Southern Africa. Newspapers, in particular, have been referred to as "relic(s) of colonialism" which, almost without exemption, were started to further colonial interests, using foreign capital (Jones 1974:53). In the same vein, it is argued that the various media institutions such as newspapers, radio and much later television stations were – in the early days – usually intended

to serve the informational needs of the colonialists or European settlers, for various reasons that included the lack of literacy skills among the African people. As an example of the attitudes of the media institutions of the time, Ettinger (1986:85), in reference to the non-governmental and non-missionary media of the then Belgian Congo, states that the European established independent media were essentially "ethnocentric in conception and content". Such media, apparently, ignored African aspirations, while the information disseminated was sourced almost exclusively from the colonial government of the day.

1.3.1 Colonial newspapers and radio

In reference to the early newspapers in Zambia, Kasoma (1996:46, 2000a:12) writes that these were for Europeans, and that they "offered little" to Africans. These newspapers essentially supported the objectives of colonialism while catering to the interests of the settlers, ignoring the black majority. Mbennah, Hooyberg and Mersham (2002:40); Barton (1979:126); Hachten (1971:36, 1993:17), Chuma (2004:12) and Mwakikoti (1992:121) also state that pre-independence media in much of Africa promoted the ideals of European settlers, covered European social affairs, and were owned by either foreign capital or colonial governments. These media, according to Chuma (2004:122) were basically "a European minority public sphere".

In general terms, Kasoma (2000:11–13); Mbennah (2002:50); Hachten (1971:5); Wilcox (1975:2); Sturmer (1998:11); and Jones (1974:53) argue that the role of pre-independence media included, on the one hand, the preservation of the colonial status quo and the pacification of Africans, while on the other, it was to educate Africans on their civic rights so that they agitated for majority rule. The latter was mostly the task of the liberal media establishments that opened up to the voices of African nationalists. The other main actors were Christian-owned media, whose prime purpose was the evangelisation of the African peoples.

With regard to ownership, the media were European-dominated, as indicated above, and were mostly – in the case of the broadcasting media – purveyors of government information (Chuma 2004:122). Referring to newspapers in particular, Jones (1974:53) argues that these colonial interests were started,

> …in order that they should perform the dual purpose of preserving the colonial status quo and keeping expatriates happy. They were run by, and their policy was directed by, expatriates. Their news was of home; of the host country chiefly as it related to the way of life of the expatriates; and of the international scene as it reflected authority rather than progress. There was no attempt to either supply a total community need or in any way replace the village drums.

1.3.2 Post-colonial media

The above characteristics of the colonial media resonated with (as they influenced) the post-colonial media environment in Southern Africa. After independence, the question that quickly arose was whether the continued control and ownership of the media by Europeans could be justified (Hachten 1971:36). For example, shortly after Zambia's independence, one of President Kenneth Kaunda's closest confidants, Sikota Wina – himself a former journalist – declared in parliament that the media of the time were suffering from "nostalgia of the past", and were living "in fear of the present", while being utterly "confused about what to do in future" (Kasoma 1986:83). This apparent confusion, and perhaps as part of the legacy of colonial rule, may have prompted Kaunda to declare (in 1968) that it was wrong for the major media operations to be dominated by foreign interests, adding that he would be happier if the state took ownership of the daily newspapers (Kasoma 1986:97).

In the same year Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta echoed Kaunda's apprehension about foreign ownership of the media in new African countries. Addressing an International Press Service (IPS) meeting in Nairobi, Kenyatta said media ownership was "a very central problem" in Africa (Hachten

1971:36). Three years prior to that, Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah had painted the media as being either for or against his government (Hachten 1971:45). Subsequently, in Mozambique, the government was more forthright: the media had to be "within the direction of the political orientation of the [ruling] Frelimo party" (Barton 1979:180), for the purposes of supporting the government in achieving its goals (Libombo 1991:1).

In the view of Van de Veur (1996:9), the media of post-colonial Africa were, like the education system, meant to serve as vehicles for the dissemination of particular values and practices meant for the reproduction of particular cultures. In the case of Zambia, the media became tightly "controlled organs of the government" and thus were kept close to the ruling elites; to such media, the 'truth' was only that which the government said was true (Moore 1992:28).

In many cases, these views resulted in the new governments taking over not only the main broadcasting stations, but also some leading national newspapers. For instance, in Zambia, the main daily newspapers were nationalised in 1975 (Kaunda 1975:35; Mwakikoti 1992:138; Banda 2003:31). In Zimbabwe, a visiting mission of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) observed that the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) was "essentially" a channel for government propaganda (CPJ 1983:9), with what Moyo (1993:13–14) calls "the dear leader mentality" that contributes to bad governance. The Zimbabwe public media were, according to Chuma (2004:136), "reduced to hapless cheerleaders, not dissimilar from what they were in the colonial era and perhaps even worse …" In Mozambique, Libombo (1991:2) observes that the two national dailies, *Noticias* and *Diaro de Mozambique* were state controlled, and like the broadcasting system in Zambia, were aimed at propagating government policies (Kasoma 1997:145, 2002:14).

It is clear, therefore, that post-colonial African leaders not only inherited the ethos of controlled media, but also the drastic laws that ensued that this was enforced. In some cases, they refined these laws in order to ensure that the

views of perceived political enemies were silenced and suppressed (Otlhogile 1996:53; Ndlela 2003b:18). In fact, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe commended the inherited colonial laws, saying that the more stringent they were, the better for Zimbabwe, because the laws instilled "some sense of responsibility and discipline in the journalists" (Ndlela 2003b:24).

Mugabe's views are in line with Moore's (1992:4) observation of the situation in post-colonial Zambia, where,

> …political leaders of the time were uneducated in the complexities of running a country. As simple nationalists, they relied heavily on the practices and laws which were in place prior to independence and continued them under the new government. Many endure to this day. Northern Rhodesia was often characterised as an authoritarian colonial government. The adoption of those colonial laws and structures simply continued them into a present-day authoritarian state.

Or as Chiluba (1995:22–23), who took over from Kaunda in Zambia in 1991, argues: whereas power was concentrated in the governor during colonial times, similar power was reposted into the post-colonial presidents. The presidents, like the governors, had the power to detain people considered dissidents; to uphold the states of emergency initiated during the upheavals of the liberation struggles; and to set the national intelligence networks to spy on those whom the presidents considered political opponents. Thus, in effect, the treatment that the colonial governors meted out on nationalists was simply incorporated into the practices of the post-colonial one-party state. These practices were also visited on post-independence-day media institutions.

1.3.3 Impact of colonialism on post-colonial media

Thus, although the end of colonialism and the emergence of African rule dramatically altered the 'colour structure' of governments or the media, the operational social context remained basically the same, with the various new governments owning most of the major means of communication, such as

national radio and television stations, leading daily or weekly newspapers, or video and film production facilities. In that regard, the dominant political elites – although this time of a different colour – continued to control the major means of communication in many African countries.

The resultant effect was, as Eribo and Jong-Ebot (1997:x) note, that the media remained full of contradictions,

> …having been organised to serve the needs of the various colonial administrations, they became at independence, ideological tools of the new African leaders and were brought under state control and made to sing the praises of the dictators.

The African leaders systematically planned and implemented this control. For instance, in Zimbabwe, immediately on taking political office, African nationalists press-ganged their 'comrades' into decision-making positions in the various media to – as the then Zimbabwe minister of information, Nathan Shamuyarira, confessed – direct the policies of those media organisations (Maja-Pearce 1995:125; Mararike 1997:59).

Such tight control, according to Hachten (1971:37), led to an overall sharp decline in privately-owned media; the expansion of government ownership of the media; the strengthening of the various ministries of information; the nationalisation of the main radio and television stations; and the introduction of national news agencies. At the same time, African governments became overly sensitive to alternative views, and thus one-party regimes prospered as divergent views were either suppressed or silenced. Foreign media organisations were distrusted, or sometimes overtly banned. In Zimbabwe, for example, after creating the Mass Media Trust for the purpose of taking controlling shares in foreign, mostly South African-owned media companies (CPJ1993:91), the government demonstrated its hatred of the foreign media by deporting non-Zimbabwean journalists who represented such organisations as the British Broadcasting Corporation, the *Daily Telegraph* and South Africa's *Mail and Guardian* (Ndlela 2003b:27).

That way, African-led governments took effective control of national communication systems – especially the production and public dissemination of news and ideas. In Southern Africa, this state of affairs – in the political and media arena – predominated, from the optimistic independence era of the 1960s through to the late 1980s.

1.3.4 The end of the 'Cold War' and its effect on Southern Africa

The then prevailing media environment was only seriously challenged and altered considerably from around 1989, with the arrival of the new 'winds of change' blowing across Africa, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and other East-European Communist states who previously were, in the main, viewed as role models by several Southern African governments (Lambeth 1995:3–18). Morna and Khan (2001:22) also argue that the changes were further speeded up by the end of apartheid in South Africa, a country that had previously exercised sovereignty over Namibia (from the time of the defeat of Hitler's Germany at the end of the Second World War).

In political terms, these changes manifested through a transition from one-party ruler-ships to multi-party democracies, and the subsequent growth and activism of the various civic groups in the different countries. Furthermore, South Africa abolished apartheid in 2004. Mozambique achieved peace after a prolonged civil war in 1982, while Angola gingerly dealt with its decades-long conflicts through various failed peace negotiations that concluded with a much firmer peace settlement in 2002.

What these later changes did was to usher in social and political forces that forcefully campaigned for greater media freedom from the context of Western liberal paradigms, and especially advocated the need to divorce governments from the dominant positions they occupied within the media arena. They also promoted the establishment of independent or non-governmental media forms. [A detailed overview of the region's media landscape is dealt with in greater depth in chapter 3.]

However, in response to dramatic changes in the region, several actors found it necessary to (directly or indirectly) participate in the social evolutionary processes taking place, or indeed to strengthen the forces of change by acting as institutional backers of the change process.

One such group was the Open Society Institute (OSI) based in the United States of America (USA). New York is where the head office of a grant-making network of foundations, created by millionaire philanthropist George Soros, is based. The OSI or The Soros Foundation is a series of semi-autonomous foundations, specialist programmes and institutions which implement a range of programmes, projects and initiatives worldwide. These activities are undertaken mostly though grant-making and inter-sectoral advocacy to promote the ideals of 'open societies' through an array of activities focused on education, human rights, public health, cultural development, legal reform, media and other initiatives.

The OSI was founded in 1979 as the Open Society Fund. George Soros's first foundation, the Eastern European Foundation, was established in Hungary in 1984. Since then, the OSI has grown into a network of organisations with more than 60 semi-autonomous entities in more than 50 countries in Africa, the Americas, Europe and Asia. Jointly, these entities spend and disburse more than $450 million per annum, worldwide.

In Africa, there are four such foundations: the Open Society Foundation for South Africa (OSF-SA); the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA, that operates in 18 countries in the western part of Africa); the Open Society Initiative for East Africa (OSIEA, which at the time of writing was mostly operational in Kenya); and OSISA, which is the subject of this study. OSF-SA was the first on the continent, established in Cape Town in 1993 with its activities focused on South Africa. OSIWA was founded in 2000, and operates in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria,

Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. OSISA was launched in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1997.

George Soros borrowed the concept of an open society from his mentor, the philosopher Karl Popper, who believed that nobody has a monopoly on wisdom and truth, and that societies should be organised in such a way as to set free the critical faculties of individuals in the search for the ultimate truth (Popper 1986:225). In contrast to a closed society, an open society, therefore, is supposed to be characterised by democratic practices; freedom of opinion and sentiment; social progress; liberty of thought; and the right to express and publish these opinions and thoughts freely (Kendall 1996:143–150). [The Open Society concept is dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 2].

1.4 Limitations and rationale for the study

In dealing with the above issues, this study is limited to exploring and analysing the funding policies and activities of OSISA, in supporting the media in Southern Africa from 1997 to 2007. It is the kind of study that Babbie and Mouton (2001:272) refer to as "idiographic", since it adopts a single case and examines that case in great detail and from different angles, within a larger social context and as that 'case' interacts with the social context.

The rationale for the study is that there is a need for a deeper understanding of OSISA policies and practices, and indeed open society principles, so as to determine the mode and manner in which the open society movement (and other media funding organisations) contributes – or fails to contribute – to the current media landscape and media environment in Southern Africa. Furthermore, there is also a need to understand how funding organisations interact with their grantee partners; and whether (at the meso and micro levels) northern hemisphere entities enforce their worldviews on the development organisations of the Southern hemisphere.

As such, this study attempts to assist media and other development activists in Southern Africa, to view all foreign aid with a critical mind. This critical

attitude should go beyond the acceptance of such aid as being motivated by northern hemisphere organisations' goodwill or empathy. As Halloran (1998:20) argues, it is absolutely necessary that researchers "question basic assumptions and policies, challenge professional mythologies and prevailing values, inquire about existing structures, external pressures, and *modus operandi",* whenever appropriate, with a view to opening up possibilities for alternative perspectives*.*

It is expected that the study will, therefore, assist the media and other civil society organisations (CSOs) in Southern Africa to correctly analyse their positions, and situate their actions in proper operational contexts.

1.5 Statement of the problem

The above brief discussion of the ideals of OSISA underlies the overall premise of this study. It is that OSISA, like any other donor organisation, has certain principles and reasons for its existence, because of and through those principles, OSISA may want to exercise some inordinate influence over the affairs of the Southern African media organisations which it supports. This inbuilt attribute is characteristic of all donor agencies, irrespective of who they are. These donor agencies could be national states, multilateral agencies, or philanthropic organisations such as OSISA. The characteristic expression of the donor agencies' public proclamations is not the issue here. What is emphasised (i.e. the underlying problem being investigated by the study), is that the often private or secret and unpublicised intentions of the donor-actors are usually the real and more significant motivating factors for actions that are often publicly justified as moralistic, philanthropic or simply humanitarian.

As Lockwood (1991:44) argues, donor funding is often disbursed with conditions and under terms set out by the funding organisation. This is regardless of whether there is a danger of distorting the development objectives of the fund-seeking organisations. In the view of Lockwood (1991:47), donor funding – especially Western-sourced finance – is meant to ensure the continued exploitation by capitalist forces of the poor areas, "with a

sense of justice" and "nobility of purpose". So, in Lockwood's sense, donor agencies feel justified in supporting budding development initiatives in Africa and elsewhere with a sense of *déjà vu,* sometimes believing that they are supporting societies' development processes. Such an underlying attitude is not neutral, but ideological. What is rarely asked, within this approach, is: whose development is it anyway? And: what is development, and for whom?

1.5.1 The development paradigm

Essentially, Western donor support for development projects in Africa and elsewhere, has so far largely been based on what the Dag Hammarskjoeld Foundation (1975:35) refers to as the "global normative approach" that sees development as linear and in line with the modernisation process. This approach is heavily influenced by scholarly theories such as Walter Rostow's five stages of economic growth, or indeed the social change thinking of people like Adam Smith, Darwin's evolutionary perspective, or even Karl Marx's revolutionary change (Lockwood 1991:23; Dag Hammarskjoeld 1975:34; Tisch and Wallace 1984:34; Melkote and Steeves 2001:34).

All these theories assume that development, or change, are unidirectional, that it is both good and incremental. Often, development is taken to be a movement from the primitive to the less primitive; from the less preferable to the more acceptable; from ancient and unsophisticated practices to the modern and more complex (Tisch and Wallace 1984:36, 37; Kivikuru 1990:17; Kasongo 2001:55). In Southern Africa, the process is translated to mean, in many cases, an incremental and systematic shift from African to Eurocentric value systems and practices.

In terms of the media, though, this developmental approach is played out within the functionalist mode, whereby society is assumed to be an organic whole that is integrated and operating harmoniously. As such, society is viewed as a cohesive arrangement of separate social institutions that participate in maintaining order, consensus and equilibrium (Fourie 2001:265, 267; O'Sullivan, Hartley, Sounders, Montgomery and Fiske 1994:124; Sardar

and Van Loon 1998:44; Halloran 1998:18; McQuail 2001:78–81). In this arrangement, different institutions have roles whose sum total is the assurance of society's survival, or the management of change. The media, therefore, are regarded as essential parts of this package. In that instance, the media are expected to act as agents of change in society. Furthermore, as Boyd-Barrett (1995a:73) notes, although the media may play this 'allotted' role, they are often subjected to double-edged experiences in that while they may be able to help society to progress, and thereby 'act' on society, they too are acted upon by society. In practice, this becomes a double-edged experience. In general, therefore, as Chuma (2004:137–138) argues, media systems have bilateral responsive relationships with social institutions – especially those within the political and economic realms.

1.5.2 The functionalist perspective

Accordingly, from the functionalist perspective, the media's role includes to guarantee that society will continue to operate in an integrated fashion (McQuail 1996:76). In that respect, society is said to apportion to the media the parameters of what they "should and could do", and what they should not do (Fourie 2001c:265–277). It is these approaches that have spurred various, but related, normative propositions about the media in society. Such propositions comprise those classed as "authoritarian". Simply stated, authoritarian propositions are where the media are said to be agents of (or extensions to) the structures of an authoritarian state doing the bidding of the ruling authorities. The second propositional model is "libertarian", and is mostly idealised in Western countries, where the media are regarded as watchdogs rather than lap-dogs of the political and other authorities. The third is the "social responsibility" model, where the media are believed to be both free and responsible to the democratic and developmental agendas of society. The fourth is the now largely defunct "Soviet-Communist" model, where the media are said to work for and act in the interests of the working 'proletariat' class. The fifth popular approach is the "developmental" model, where the media are largely regarded as contributing to the developmental agendas of nation-states. The sixth is the "democratic-participant" model,

where small-scale, multiple, accessible, socially conscious and participatory media forms are encouraged.[2]

In acting on the media and within the context of some, if not all, the above mentioned models, society is said not only to set the boundaries for the media's operations, but also to provide the latitude for the media to assume roles of surveillance, to interpret events, suggest solutions to societal problems, and entertain – and, through these activities, to transmit socially acceptable values (Wright 1995:101; Lasswell 1995:94). It is while transmitting these 'new' values that the media are expected to contribute to the manner in which society as a whole responds – whether physically or psychologically – to its environment.

In one view, it is this enhanced capacity of society (or individuals) to respond to the environment that Kasoma (1992a:5) considers as development. In that vein, those media contributing to that capacity are viewed as being instrumental to the social change process. According to Melkote and Steeves (2001:39); Wright (1995:97); and McQuail (2001:74), this view has – in certain instances – led some scholars to credit the media with powers of transmitting new and innovative ideas, partly through the creation, among media-product consumers, of empathy for new tastes or new ways of doing things. Apparently, these newly influenced and created tastes or 'personalities' (in the Third World) are supposed to be so enamoured and to become so influential, as to effect development and social change in their countries. This, according to Melkote and Steeves (2001:101, 118), is what scholars aligned to the modernisation paradigm consider the media's contribution to development.

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[2] It should be acknowledged, however, that various scholars have attempted to revise these perceptions of the roles of the media, or indeed what could be termed philosophical approaches to the functions of the media. Some have indicated that these theories take two forms: either prescriptive (i.e. outlining the perceived roles of the media); or descriptive (i.e. objectively describing the 'real' roles of the media) (Fourie 2001c:275–276). But beyond these conceptions, different scholars have described other models of the media in society, which include "neo-communist", "multi-party", "government", "private", "social-centrist", "social-libertarian", "Western", "Communist", "revolutionary", and "developmental". For in-depth descriptions of some of these models refer to Hachten (1999:16–34); Wilcox (1975:102–113); Fourie (2001c:269–276); and Kasoma (2000a:37–78).

1.5.3 The paradigm of development revisited

However, Melkote and Steeves (2002:34–37) argue that there is more than just the above single perspective on development. The perspective articulated by Wright (1995:101) and Lasswell (1995:94) above, largely belongs to the modernisation paradigm, which implies that least developed countries need to adopt neo-classical economic practices which include the adoption of modern technologies (i.e. information communication technologies) and macro-level policies (i.e. liberalisation and structural adjustment programmes), as well as the capitalist mode of production, in order for them to catch up with the West. This modernisation paradigm is largely pushed by organisations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other bilateral funders.

The second approach to development is espoused under the critical paradigms that inherently challenge the modernisation project, arguing that Western-inspired development initiatives represent mere applications of the expansionist cultural and economic imperialism which, in the final analysis, are aimed at the perpetual subjugation of the world's least developed countries. This approach is a constituent part of the critical approach to development. However, although the critical perspective has not really generated specific models, its emphasis is more on distributive social and economic justice, than on mere growth. As Keet (2001:28–29) argues, scholars within this perspective should not feel compelled to formulate "preconceived and rather crude blue-prints" which can be implemented through "extensive and damaging experiments in social engineering", as was the case in the Soviet Union and post-colonial Africa. Rather, such scholars should focus – through struggle, research, debate and cumulative experience, on evolving coherent alternatives to the capitalist modernisation paradigm.

The third approach to development, according to Melkote and Steeves (2002:34–37), is the liberation perspective, whose priority is to release the energies of individuals or societies from oppressive state machineries, or the international economic system. Such a release could lead to the self-reliance

of the people and the general empowerment of society. The essence of this approach is that the people should have the right to choose the development path they wish to follow. This will empower the people to actively participate in the development process, and to master the prevailing social and economic conditions.

1.6 Hypothesis of the study

Concrete debates around the concepts of development contributed to the building of the hypothesis of this study. Thus, this study hypothesises that many donor organisations, including OSISA, operate within one or more of the abovementioned development perspectives, in supporting media initiatives in Africa. In particular, it is the view adopted by this study that the media have a function or a role to play in society. It is this functionalist perspective that provides the framework around which this study is constructed.

Within the context of the theory of functionalism, the media (as indicated in chapter 1 (1.5.2, above)) have various roles to play in society. Such roles include the need to ensure that society continues to operate in an integrated fashion (McQuail 1996:76). In that respect, the functional approach indicates to the media the roles which – in the words of Fourie (2001c:265–277) require that they understand what they can or cannot do, or as Wright (1995:101) and Lasswell (1995:94) argue, the media should contribute to the way in which individuals and societies, respond to their environment. It is the improved capacity to respond to the environment which Kasoma (1992a:5) considers as the essence of the process of development. This study's hypothesis, therefore, is that donor funding is framed within this developmental perspective. It is a view that posits that the media are seen as not only able to contribute to social cohesion, but also to the development process.

1.6.1 Assumptions underpinning the hypothesis

The major assumption that underpins the hypothesis of this study, is that donor funding to the media in Southern Africa is structured within a normative

frame. This, in a way, is linked to elements of Western liberal thought, where the media are viewed as potential agents for not only social cohesion, but also transformational development.

Within this frame of thinking, the media are thus considered as engines for change – especially where change has socio-political transformational characteristics.

As a way of exploring the above hypothesis, the study is, therefore, grounded on the following sub-assumptions:

- OSISA has certain belief systems or ideals and values which are directly, or indirectly, promoted in Southern Africa;
- OSISA is bent on creating, supporting and sustaining free and independent media, in line with the global modernisation project;
- OSISA manages the media projects it supports, to adopt its principles of open society.

1. 7 Research questions

Against the background of the above assumptions, this study investigates the following research questions:

- What historical, political and other factors induced the formation of OSISA?
- What is OSISA and what is its ideological framework?
- How does OSISA communicate its value systems?
- How do Southern African civic groups respond to OSISA's interventions?

1.8 Objectives of the study

From the above questions it is clear that the major research objectives of the study are to:

- Interrogate the socio-political context influencing the media in Southern Africa;
- Explore the genesis of OSISA and its reasons for supporting the media in Southern Africa;
- Investigate the relationship between donors and grantee organisations;
- Examine and contextualise civil society responses to OSISA's ideological interventions in Southern Africa.

1.9 Research methodology

Thus, the overall aim of what is, in the main, an ethnographic study, is to "interpret and construct the qualitative aspects" (Du Plooy 2001:29) of OSISA. In particular, this approach, which is defined as "micro-ethnography" by Wimmer and Dominick (1997:106), and is distinguished from "macro-ethnography", focuses on studying smaller units such as sub-groups, institutions and/or organisations. Such sub-groups are contrasted to the sister macro aspect of this form of investigation, which emphasises the study of the entire culture of a people. The macro aspect has been popularised by anthropologists and sociologists, while the other methodology – according to Wimmer and Dominick – is extensively used in communication science.

However, both approaches involve intensive long-term participation in the activities of the institution or organisation under study. The researcher records what happens in the organisation, examines documentary evidence and details the findings, including providing quotations and commentary (Wimmer and Dominick 1997:83).

Nonetheless, Wimmer and Dominick (1997:106) state that the essential characteristics of this approach are:

- It places the researcher in the centre of the issue under study, for a considerable amount of time. In a sense, the sought-after data thus come to the researcher, rather than the researcher pursuing the data;
- The subject of the study is approached from the researcher's frame of reference; and
- It uses various techniques that include observation, interviews, and documentary analysis. In the view of Babbie and Mouton (2001:280), interviews and participant observation studies are two of the main methods for gathering data in a qualitative study.

In order to meet the above mentioned research objectives of this study, and to properly respond to the research questions, this study determines the operational conditions that exist within OSISA, and deduces the nuances in the relationships between OSISA and its partners, thereby seeking to explain and place those relationships in some theoretical context. This explanation is done in chapter 6.

In line with the methodology followed, much of the study's analyses are informed by, and tested through, the researcher's direct experience and access to the subjects under scrutiny.

In this regard, the first major concern of this study, therefore, is *Verstehen,* or what could be termed 'the need to understand' OSISA through the rather "subjective exploration" of OSISA's reality via "the perspective of an insider", rather than as an outsider (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport 2002:79–82).

That concern aside, insights contained in the study benefitted from the researcher's proximity to the subject, which enabled a deeper exploration of the OSISA, as outlined in this chapter (see 1.9.1, below) and brought about a

deeper insight into the attitudes towards OSISA, of a small number of the grantee organisations.[3]

In the main, as an ethnological study, the following four main research tools were used: participant observation, interviews and/or personal conversations, the administration of questionnaires by email, and the analysis of documentary evidence.

These are discussed fully below, but first there is a need to clarify the concept of ethnography in the research process. As mentioned before, in an ethnographic case study the researcher looks at one group, i.e. OSISA, for an extended period of time. As a group, or community, OSISA is assumed to have developed a common culture that this researcher has extensively studied. This was done through focusing on the "everyday behaviour" of OSISA, its daily interactions and other periodic exchanges and rituals; and through the observation of the organisation's norms, practices and structures. With time and close analysis, certain patterns of behaviour began to emerge, which were then identified, in line with what Leedy and Ormrod (1985:149–150) state as the role of the researcher. According to these two scholars, the researcher in this type of study,

> …collects extensive data on individual(s), programme(s), or event(s) on which the investigation is focused. These data often include observation, interviews, documents … in many cases; the researcher may spend an extended period of time on-site and interact regularly with the people who are being studied. The researcher also records details about the context in which the case is found, including information about the physical environment and any historical,

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[3] For an even deeper insight into the operations of OSISA, it was necessary to engage research techniques such as participant observation which, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001:293–303), require that the researcher remains a member of the group under study, and use both covert and overt approaches to gain access to the relevant data of the organisation (Du Plooy 2002:186–188); or include in-depth interviews with leading people in related organisations (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:149) so as to gain an even better understanding. This was done to some degree, but was also extensively undertaken in other research activities that cover the topic of this thesis.

economic, and social factors that have a bearing on the situation. By identifying the context of the case, the researcher helps others who read the case study draw conclusions about the extent to which its findings might be generalise-able to other situation.

1.9.1 Approach to data collection

Taking the above discussion into account, the researcher decided that the following data collection techniques, as described below, were most appropriate for this study. The researcher then organised the collected data in the form of a logical framework, which reflected the following clusters:

- The historical origins of OSISA;
- The theoretical context that underpins OSISA;
- The social-political context in which OSISA operates;
- OSISA's interactions with other civil society players in Southern Africa.

In broad terms, these were the categories that governed the collection of data and into which the collected data were grouped and clustered. However, since the hypothesis undergirding the study requires the researcher to test whether and how OSISA transmits its ideology, this necessitated the application of specific techniques which encompassed the following:

Documentary analysis

Various and numerous primary and secondary documents, directly relevant, and related to the abovementioned four broad clusters, were collected and analysed. The primary documents included grant application guidelines; grant application letters; grant agreements; reports on various grants; OSISA's responses to the reports; project evaluation reports; auditors' reports; minutes of various meetings; letters and other email exchanges between OSISA and grantees; annual reports; and several other internal and sometimes confidential communication between OSISA and its employees, or with grant-holders, or from the Open Society Institute (OSI) headquarters in New York to

OSISA; and vice versa. These provided a wealth of information on the orientations and operations of OSISA.

Participant observation

This part of the research provided rich perspectives on various aspects of OSISA that could not have been obtained in any other way. As Leedy and Ormrod (2001:151) argue, site-based fieldwork is the "essence" of an ethnographic study. The researcher must be engaged with the subject for a prolonged time, and must have access to the site. However, there are ethical and practical dilemmas which are associated with this form of research which should be kept in mind. For example, Leedy and Ormrod (2001:151) suggest that "ideally", the researcher should be a stranger to the research site, in which the researcher has "no vested interest in the outcome of the study". This is meant to ensure that there is "sufficient detachment" from the subject of study, and to enable the researcher to gain a realistic perspective of the processes being studied.

This caution was particularly relevant to this study, where the researcher is closely acquainted with, and in some way is "inextricably part of, the phenomena studied" (Maxwell 1996:67), being an employee of OSISA. Nonetheless, while acknowledging the above caution by Leedy and Ormrod, this researcher did not view the dilemmas as insurmountable. In fact, the above scholars do not state that it should *never* be done. Similarly, other scholars, including Maxwell (1996:66–69); Patton (202:265–279); Welman and Kruger (2001:184–188) deal with several ways in which these dilemmas (variously referred to as "negotiating a research relationship" with the subject under study; "degrees of participation" or the extent to which the researcher might participate in the activities of the studied group; or "variations in observational methods") could be sufficiently addressed. In all these discussions, what emerges is that although a researcher may be closely connected to the subject of the study, it is possible for the researcher to credibly study the subject, depending on how he or she manages his or her relationship to the subject. Crucially, therefore, the design of the research, and the proper and sustainable maintenance of the relationship are critical to

this form of research. It proved vital to this researcher. In a way, this research challenges what Maxwell (1996:67–69) refers to as the "traditional research relationship", which often requires that the researcher be divorced from the subject, or be a mere 'fly-on-the-wall' observer, taking a bird's eye view of the processes under study, without being deeply involved in the activities of the subject.

Thus, although this researcher was not directly or indirectly involved in the initial five years of the life of the subject of this study, he was nonetheless deeply engaged with it, between July 2002 and 2007.

During that time, the author was an active participant in the OSISA processes. The major challenge, therefore, was to balance the two roles of participant and observer (Welman and Kruger 2001:185) during the five years of the researcher's involvement with OSISA. This is when the techniques of full participant observation were employed, and the advantages of the technique were optimally utilised. For, as Patton (2002:265) adequately describes the researcher in this position,

> …the participant observer employs multiple and overlapping data collection strategies: being fully engaged in experiencing the setting (participation) while at the same time observing and talking with other participants about whatever was happening.

This is what this author did, and many of these 'talks' are, therefore, interchangeably referred to either as interviews or personal conversations.

In taking into account the concerns expressed by Leedy and Ormrod above, the main strategy was to have as few people as possible, within OSISA, aware that the researcher was undertaking this study. Officially and initially, only the OSISA Chief Executive Officer (Tawanda Mutasah, and later Sisonke Msimang) knew the extent of the research, but both never asked to discuss or see the contents of the report. This carefully crafted strategy enabled the researcher to probe aspects that the study is concerned with, without undue

pressure being exerted on the research process, or on personnel within OSISA. Thus, in some cases, for example, unstructured interviews and personal conversations took place with people within OSISA, without such personnel knowing that OSISA was under scrutiny. It was often a case of a fellow employee asking for clarification, or a second opinion on some issues.

In that way, the research can be said to have only suffered a limited measure of (what can be referred to as) reverse *Verstehen,* whereby respondents tell the researcher what they believe the researcher wants to hear. This consideration was also taken into account when administering the questionnaires, as demonstrated in the introductory letter (see Appendix 1).

Interviews or personal conversations

The strategies utilised in this research technique, varied. For respondents who are no longer directly connected with OSISA, the purposes of the interviews were clearly explained; but for those within OSISA, as mentioned above, such discussions were as discreet as possible (and are thus mostly referred to as 'personal conversations'). The reason for being discreet, was not to overtly alert respondents to the research process, thereby guarding against instances of reverse *Verstehen* (referred to above).

In all cases, the interviews were semi-structured [for details, refer to appendices 1, 2, 4 and 5], although the interviews/conversations took place at different times, and in some cases in phases, with copious notes from conversations being written down soon after conversations had taken place, which covered particular areas of the study.

Questionnaire administration

The questionnaire was constructed in such a way as to address particular aspects of the study. These aspects are summarised in chapter 6. The main areas of inquiry were around perceptions on aspects like grant conditions; open society; levels of dependency; power relations between OSISA and respondents; and the transference of the OSISA ideology. Specific responses relating to these areas were triangulated with other relevant findings from the

researcher's observations, background search on the respondents, and documentary analysis.

The criteria used for selecting respondents was that they had to have maintained relations with OSISA for no less than two years; that they represented a particular media sector (i.e. advocacy group, trainers, radio or print media); operated in one nation or regionally; and finally, they had to represent the OSISA media grant portfolio (as far as is practically possible).

Thus, nine civil society groups were selected. The sample, therefore, consisted of two radio stations, a training institute, a network of journalists, a network of media training institutions, a capacity-building project for the independent media, a network of women media workers, and a research and advocacy organisation. Details of the questionnaires and responses are contained in appendices 1 and 2 (from page 402), while their analysis is discussed in chapter 6.

All questionnaires were administered by email, barring one which was delivered by hand. In detail, the sample consisted of the following:

- A Zambia-based privately-owned radio station;
- A Zimbabwe radio initiative, which is owned by civil society groups and broadcasts to one country from an external source;
- A regional communication-network film-makers;
- A South African-based post-graduate training institution situated in the journalism and media studies department at a university;
- A regional network of journalists' unions;
- A Mozambique-based regional network of journalism schools and media training institutions;
- A Botswana-based regional capacity-building institution for the privately-owned media;
- A regional network of women media workers; and

- A South African-based regional organisation specialising in researching gender in the local media.

Apart from the two nationally-based radio initiatives (which represented national efforts in this research), the remaining organisations interviewed had to operate at cross-country or regional levels, in the same geographical space as OSISA. [For full details of these organisations, refer to appendix 3.]

1.9.2 Overview of the research design

In summary, the methodology used in this study established OSISA, rather than the whole donor community, as the object of close study and analysis. This approach positioned the researcher within the studied organisation, while keeping in mind that the numerous, varied and divergent donor communities could be reflected in the findings of the study.

This is, therefore, a case study which combines a historical perspective with the direct observation and subsequent interpretation of the subject under study. As a historical study, it examines processes and attitudes that evolved over a period of time through an examination of documentary evidence produced between 1997 and 2007. Outcomes of this examination is triangulated with findings from pointed and specific interviews and conversations that sought clarification regarding issues or lacunae identified during the examination of documentary evidence, and observations from the researcher's experiences of the organisation studied. The intention behind triangulating documentary data with that discerned from interviews and conversations is to ensure a completeness of understanding, that is, for instance, although the documents examined were important, they may not have totally exhausted the available 'facts' about OSISA.

For a fuller understanding of the processes involved at OSISA, additional in-depth interviews/focused conversations were conducted, so as to tease out the historical memories of some of the critical participants in the environment that helped create OSISA. In turn, as already said above, the above research

strategies were triangulated with participant observation which, according to Waters (2000:95), is the "dominant mode of inquiry" in classic ethnographic studies, where the main assumption is that "certain facts comprise social reality and can be learned and analysed through participation and observation".

In a way, this is also an *historical research,* which concerns the "finding and describing of observations of past events" and happenings. It consists of the recording – as accurately as possible – of what may have taken place (Rubin, Rubin and Piele 1990:175–177) between 1997 and 2007, through an examination of the available primary documentary records (published, or not), published reports, messages and books related to OSISA work, as obtained from the OSI headquarters in New York.

1.9.3 Organisation of the study

The study was conducted over a four-year period, and divided into the following phases: first, the exercise involved the probing of historical, theoretical and socio-political data that informed the foundations as well as the operational context of OSISA. The second phase concentrated on analysing the interrelations and discourses around OSISA's grant-making practices, including the email interviewing of a select group of grant-holders; while the third period was a reflexive exercise that synthesised interpretations and observations against a backdrop of certain theoretical positions. The syntheses underpin the discussions in chapters 5 and 6, and thus precede the conclusions contained in chapter 7. Although the study was initially designed with those three phases in mind, in practice, the different phases tended to overlap.

1.10 The structure of the thesis

As such, this chapter only considers the background to, and context of the study, thereby providing the rationale for the thesis. The chapter also outlines the research problem and the methods used to investigate it.

The chapter argues that OSISA was chosen for in-depth examination because of its proximity and accessibility to the researcher, and also because of what Leedy and Ormrod (2001:149) would refer to as OSISA's "unique and exceptional qualities" which, by extension, could be indicative of the activities of other donor actors. In that respect, the study can be classed within the borders of the critical research tradition, which focuses on a specific organisation while seeking to interpret and evaluate the organisation's activities and events, as well as their consequences, through systematic and thorough analyses (Rubin, Rubin and Piele 1990:175), with the possibility of extrapolating the findings to similar organisations. As Halloran (1998:19) argues, such a study takes into account the "intentions, aims, purposes, policies, organisational frameworks, modes of operation, professional values, funding, general circumscriptions, external pressures and ideological considerations" of the subject under scrutiny. However, the studied organisation should not be viewed in isolation, but rather as an institution that continuously interacts with other institutions within the social milieu.

In summary, this study strives to take all the above considerations into account, with the aim of collecting facts, understanding the motivations and appreciating the attitudes and beliefs of stakeholders – especially their expectations of how things should be done (Mytton 1999:95; Leedy and Ormrod 2001:159).

Thus, this thesis is organised in line with the objective of the study, and in direct response to the research questions. In that context, chapter 2 picks up the discussion through a theoretical analysis of the concept of 'open society', and a review of the relevant literature in both Western and African philosophy. This analysis provides the theoretical framework for this study.

Chapter 3 sketches the concrete realities of the media landscape of Southern Africa prior to, and after, the arrival of OSISA. The chapter discusses the media environmental map, from pre-independence to post-colonial times, focusing mainly on the situations in three countries: Malawi, Zambia and

Botswana. The choice of the three countries was deliberate: it was influenced by, among others, the readily available data in the three countries; the similarity of the countries' pre-independence history as subjects of Britain; and their adoption of English as the official language. Despite these similarities, after independence the three countries evolved divergent political and media systems that in a way demonstrate the continuum of the broader conditions of the media environment existing in Southern Africa. It is this context that provides the rationale for OSISA's interventions.

Chapter 4 tracks OSISA's responses to that environment – responses that, in some cases, parallel the reactions from civil society groups in the region. These discussions are framed within the context of the global political and structural transformations taking place in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which resulted in the collapse of Soviet Communism in Eastern Europe, and the eclipse of one-party regimes in Southern Africa.

Thereafter, chapter 5 discusses the initial interfaces between OSISA as an instrument for the open society movement, and the indigenous, home-grown civil society groups that (separately) were primed to challenge the existing political and media environments described in chapter 4.

Relatedly, chapter 6 picks up the discussions to analyse the maturation of OSISA's engagements in the region, but more especially, OSISA's interactions with local civil society groups. In particular, chapter 6 examines how donor worldviews are processed by Southern African groups. Furthermore, chapter 6 observes that donor ideologies may be absorbed or rejected by southern civil society groups, depending on several factors (including the situation-specific contexts in which the interactions take place).

Chapter 7 wraps up the study by concluding that although donor agencies may wish to impose their will on beneficiary organisations, such intentions may not always be as successful as desired, because the operational terrain that exists between the donors and local civil society groups is, essentially, negotiated space. It is, nonetheless, acknowledged that for researchers to

help extend an understanding of the politics of donor aid, future studies should attempt to focus on cases and countries that are not dealt with in this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO: THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF AN OPEN SOCIETY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the historical origins of, and philosophical debates around, the concept of 'open society'. It traces the growth of the concept, the debates it has spawned through the ages, the intellectual influences behind its growth, and scans some attempts at implementing open society ideals (i.e. recent interventions).

The discussion also deals with the manner in which modern thinkers – mostly politicians in Africa – have related to the open society concept in their political stances and practices. In particular, the literature that highlights the debates around the concept is explored, so as to give some perspective and context to this study.

In so doing, the theoretical base of the chapter relies heavily on the thoughts of Karl Popper, both as a way of providing the intellectual 'limitations' of the study, and also because, as Burke (1983:vii) argues, Popper's views on the open society concept offer a kind of "stimulus" and "starting point" in analysing social development. In that way, Popper suggests alternative conceptions of social development (Burke 1983:viii) – a notion that is central to the theme of this study.

Popper's thoughts are pertinent for our purposes, because although he may not have invented the concepts of 'open' and 'closed' societies, he is, nevertheless, credited with having given currency to the concepts, and as O'Dowd (1998:9) argues, no other thinker since Popper has added anything significant to the concepts, nor indeed interpreted them further, adding that there is only one description of the concepts "and that is Popper's". Although this rather categorical statement is disputable (see 2.2, below), it is to Popper's thoughts, more than any

other philosopher's, that we turn to underpin the discussions in this chapter and the rest of the thesis.

On that basis, this chapter seeks to lay the groundwork for justifying OSISA's engagement with the media situation in Southern Africa – the focal point of discussions in the next chapter.

2.2 Origins of the theories of an open society

The concept of an open society is traceable to the French philosopher Henri Bergson, who first coined it in his book *Two Sources of Religion and Morality* (Outhwaite 2003:448; Hughes 2003; Soros 2000:xx).

Bergson was born in Paris on 18 October 1859, to a Jewish father and Jewish-English mother. He lived in London in his early years, but the family moved to Paris just before he turned nine. Bergson later became a naturalised citizen of France, obtaining his Doctorate of Letters in 1889. In 1927 he won the Nobel Prize for Literature, and he died in January 1941 (Bergson 2006).

In differentiating the open from the closed society, Bergson (1935:32–33, 267) contrasts the concepts. However, in adding substance to his definition, Bergson does so from a moral and religious perspective, viewing an unchanging and "static" religion as providing the social pressure that contributes to the moral substance of a closed society. Such a religion encompasses a moral code that is unchanging and ingrained in society's "customs, ideas and institutions" (Bergson 1935:269). From that point of view, Bergson (1935:77–78, 282) states that the drive from closed to open societies in the Western world was stimulated by the less static Christian religion, which inspired both the French and American revolutions through its principles of universal brotherhood, equal rights, and the inviolability of the human person.

Thus, in contrast to the more progressive Christianity, to Bergson (1935:32–33) closed societies are engulfed and controlled by unconditional morality that is absolutist, and based on authoritarian religious dogmas and customs that are both unchanging and dominant. According to Outhwaite (2003:443), each such society is like "a small, tightly knit, face-to-face community" that is also "centralised, static and un progressive". To Popper (1966:173) and Bergson (1935:266–267), each of these societies resembles a herd, or a "semi-organic unit" where people live together or are held together through formalised systems, and where members are often related.

According to Hughes (2003), old closed societies had rigid social hierarchies and mindsets that were resistant to change, like those in tyrannical and monarchical ancient China and Japan. Bergson (1935:77) states that in China, for example, although various noble doctrines on life and social organisation emerged, these did not apply to all of humanity – only to the Chinese community. Mativo (1989:127, 188) argues that the Japanese never abandoned their traditions, but used their cultural homogeneity and unity to define the rather unique Japanese-style economic development model. In other words, both China and Japan were, until recently, so culturally and politically closed-in that they carefully kept out all external influences before absorbing such externally-induced influences into their societies, in a prudent way.

In modern times, Hughes (2003) believes that closed societies are expressed through police states or military dictatorships that are "omnipresent, tyrannical and secret".

The common thread running through the theme of the concept of closed societies is that diversity and progress are never encouraged or tolerated, while religious dogma, unchanging morality and authoritarianism go unquestioned. On the other hand, the precepts of mysticism rule the lives of the people, mainly through religious and

customary practices that are absolutist and above critique. These are the kinds of societies in which values, laws, customs, taboos – in fact, the whole framework of ideas that govern and determine such societies' characteristics – are beyond the people's right to examine or to change (Burke 1983:144).

Thus, from Bergson's initial formulations, the open society concept gained further currency through the writings of the latter-day philosopher, Karl Popper.

Popper was born on 28 July 1902 in Vienna, Austria, of a pacifist and liberal Jewish lawyer father and a piano-playing mother. His father was greatly influenced by the writings of Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill (Popper 1999:130), and the family converted to Christianity in order to maintain good relations with their neighbours (Ryan 2004:188).

Within the context of this study, it should be pointed out that Kant's views were centred on the belief that modernisation is a cultural precept that is inherent in the make-up of the European character. This sort of character tackles the natural environment with the view to transforming it, for the benefit and use of all human beings. This approach to nature contrasts sharply with that of the non-European, who ostensibly focuses on short-term, fleeting, brief and temporary engagements with nature, and does not anticipate long-term social development. In other words, the social reality and ethos of non-Europeans are considered 'unreal' and ethereal by Europeans, to the extent where the social circumstances of non-Europeans need to be 'modernised' and 'elevated' to the levels of European realities and perceptions. This approach justifies the civilising mission of the European mind, which follows a clear set of the "utopian blueprint" (Serequeberhan 2002:64–67; Easterly 2006:321). To the European mind, the effective tackling of the natural environment is central to human progress which, according to Ani (2000:489), is the,

...essential dynamic of the main thrust of European ideology. The idea is the fundamental aspect of European philosophy of life, providing moral justification for the technical order and giving supposed direction to the strivings of individuals within society.

The adventurous and more aggressive approach to nature, which is said to be inherent in the European psyche, is a particular characteristic that is credited with having led to the colonisation of non-European areas of the globe – a process which, in turn, ushered in Eurocentric models of development (Serequeberhan 2002:75). It is further argued that these Eurocentric models of social change derive their 'legitimacy' from a belief in the natural right of humans to be free – something that is endowed in each individual at birth. That line of thought argues that humans are expected to act on nature, and not just contemplate on it. In that respect, this approach places some primacy on the ability of individuals to take action, rather than on mere contemplation. In other words, the implication is that humans are free to tackle nature, rather than to surrender to the vicissitudes of natural law (Hassner 1963:559). Taken further, this argument states that humans are not prisoners of nature, but its masters. The mastery of nature is, therefore, the highest expression of individual liberty. This contrasts with the approach adopted by non-Europeans who, in many cases, subject themselves to the mercies of natural laws or circumstances.

According to Magid (1963:750), John Stuart Mill, on the other hand, proposes that the object of human life is to achieve maximum pleasure over pain. In the pursuit of that pleasure, humans come together to form governments whose task is to maximise the people's pleasure. The problem that the people face, is how to ensure that governments meet the objectives for which they were formed, and also to ensure that individuals in government do not use the power vested in them, to advance their own interests. To protect the majority of the people, it is

suggested that such governments should be elected, limited and constitutional, with strong countervailing institutions that could be used by the people to check on the excesses of government officials. Such representative governments are expected to exhibit some level of balance of power between the people and state officials, so that the people spend most of their time pursuing their own interests.

It is these ideas, emanating from Kant and Mills, which influenced Popper's father. According to Ryan (2004:188), Popper was 12 years old when the First World War broke out (on his birthday). He left school at the end of the war, did several odd jobs, and at 19 years of age he joined the Communist youth movement, of which he remained a member for just six weeks. Popper quit the Communist Party in revulsion at the movement's justification for the death of some of its members (who were shot by the police for participating in a public-political demonstration); the Communists had earlier explained the deaths away as necessary catalysts for social revolution.

To Popper (1966:102) the guiding line on such life-and-death matters belongs to the philosopher Kant, whom Popper quotes as stating: "Always recognise that human individuals are ends, and do not use them as mere means to your ends." This view rationalises Popper's decision to quit the Communist Party for good. In later years, Kant's thoughts contributed immensely to Popper's firm objections to grand utopian social engineering schemes which sacrifice individuals' immediate happiness for the anticipated future social good (Popper 1966:157–160). Kant's ideas also inspired Popper's firm objections to the hardened, idealistic and high-minded movements that tend to dogmatically force people to conform to their dictates (Magid 1963:749–750).

Popper went on to qualify as a mathematics and physics teacher while retaining his interest in left-wing politics, social work, music and philosophy. In his twenties, Popper obtained his doctorate and came

into conflict with the influential Vienna Circle: this group of philosophers preached "logical positivism", they posited that knowledge could only be garnered from experience, and that the laws of knowledge-discovery could be reduced to physics, which could allow for a universal language to be constructed and understood across all sciences. In addition, the logical positivists argued that only that which is scientifically verifiable can be both meaningful and truthful (Mouton 1997:15–18). Popper, on the other hand, contended that such a positivist outlook could not work, because the truthfulness of any conclusion does not, with finality, guarantee the veracity of the premise on which such a conclusion is based (Munz 2004:115). Furthermore, Popper contended that the role of scientific discovery is not to confirm any hypothesis, but to try to refute the hypothesis (Keuth 2005:67). This contention later formed the centre-piece of Popper's political philosophy, which is summarised in a formula described in this chapter (see 2.7, below).

Later, when Adolf Hitler (who in his pre-political and younger days also lived in Vienna, at about the same time as Popper) annexed Austria in the pursuit of his conviction that the destruction of the Austrian state was a necessary condition for the "security of the German race" (Hitler 1936:19), Popper emigrated to England, where he developed the concept of an open society (Faure and Venter 1993:64). Between 1937 and 1945 Popper wrote the two-volume *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (first published in 1954) while teaching philosophy at the University of New Zealand. Popper returned to England at the end of the Second World War to teach logic and the methodology of science at the London School of Economics (Faure and Venter 1993:64).

2.2.1 Closed versus open society concepts

In *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Popper (1966:1) writes that closed societies are distinguished by their submission to magical forces, and are typically symbolised by backward tribal orientations

which include rigid social customs and irrational attitudes towards social life that are assumed to be directed and enforced by supernatural forces. Accordingly, Popper (1966:173) argues that such societies are comparable to "semi-organic" units where people are held together through biological ties of "kinship, living together, sharing common efforts, common dangers, common joys and common distress". These societies consist of concrete groups of individuals who are often related, not only through abstract social relationships, but also through the division of labour and the exchange of commodities. They are collectivist or organic societies whose institutions are inviolable, sacrosanct, and magical and based on taboos. Such institutions are rigid, never criticised and leave no room for individuals to take personal responsibility for their lives (Popper 1966:172–173; Soros 1991:182, 218; Burke 1983:144). In such societies, the social group or tribe is everything, while the individual is reduced to nothing (Popper 1966:190). To Popper (1986:318), living in such societies is akin to living in a cage, or "a perfect zoo of almost perfect monkeys".

Closed societies are dominated by oppression, inhumanity, tradition, irrational justice, xenophobia, and the rule of hereditary groups who claim to be infallible and superior to the rest of the population (O'Hear 2004:189). According to Outhwaite (2003:444), such societies emerged naturally and have, over the ages, been idealised by both modern and ancient philosophers.

2.2.2 Plato and the concept of closed society

One thinker who thought highly of such seminal societies was Plato, who advocated for a return to the sublime and perfect state of pre-historic times (Popper 1986:21). Plato feared that social progress would lead to moral decay, and so it was the mission of social activists to "break the iron law of destiny" and effect the return of current societies to the golden ages of pre-historic states.

Woodruff (2005:29), however, argues that Plato's ideas were some of the most impractical ever to emerge from the ancient Greek world. Woodruff adds that Plato's ideas were initially never meant to be the blueprint for modern practical social organisation or societal reform, because anyone who believes that such ideas can be applied to social systems in the modern world, could pose a danger to democratic liberties.

Nonetheless, Plato contended that there was a historical tendency for societies to change. Referring in particular to the Greek city-states, Plato expressed the fear that if the evolution of city-state democracy was not halted, it would lead to the tyranny of the unthinking masses. This tyranny would give rise to a confused situation, where all forms of authority were considered illegitimate – a condition that could disrupt political harmony. The result would be a state in which society descends into chaos, where every individual strives to satisfy personal pleasures, with desires that have run out of control (Boesche 1996:32–46).

In Plato's view, such a pursuit of self-interest (especially economic gain) could lead to social strife and class wars – a situation which, when approached from another angle, could lead to social change ushering in political degeneration. According to Plato, it is this form of social tension that led to society's evolution from the 'natural state' to timocracy (or the rule by ambitious noblemen who fought for fame and honour). It is argued that timocracy evolved into a state of oligarchy (or rule by the rich families) which, in turn, was overturned by the state of democracy, in which the middle classes share full citizenship and state offices with both the poor and the rich. The inevitability or end result of the democratic process, according to Plato, is that the poor will eventually take control of the affairs of state, and usher in a form of mass tyranny that will be the prelude to social chaos and the total malaise of society (Popper 1966:40; Boesche 1996:26–31). In effect,

this decay is caused by the unrestrained desire for things that are not necessary for the survival or well-being of society (Strauss1963:18).

It was Plato's view that in order to avert this social inevitability and instability, there is a need to revert back to the natural state – a state that recognises that people are not individually endowed equally, but rather that their talents are meant to serve society in particular positions, capacities and situations. For instance, in properly functioning societies, policy making and policy implementation should be the preserve of specially-trained classes of guardians and philosopher-kings; the production of social wealth should be the responsibility of the working class; while the defence of society should be reserved for those individuals who value valour and courage above all else. Any arrangement that falls short of this model could lead to social collapse, because the 'right' social roles would be undertaken by the 'wrong' people (Mwaipaya 1980:16–19; Dillon-Malone 1989:31).

It is this closed model of social arrangement, where individuals are placed in rigid classes, that Woodruff (2005:29) dismisses as impractical and a danger to democracy; and which Popper (1966:318) believed could lead to a society of "perfect monkeys" in a perfect social zoo – societies that would be dominated by injustice, inequality and irrationality (O'Hear 2004:189); in other words, closed societies.

2.2.3 African political thought and the creation of closed societies

Thoughts about a return to the idealised past, as outlined above, are not confined to ancient Greek[4] thinkers – they are present among modern African political leaders as well. For instance, such a return was advocated by post-colonial African leaders like Kenneth Kaunda of

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[4] Some scholars have argued that ancient Greek philosophy borrowed heavily from ancient Egypt, which was dominated by black Africans. It is said that, for example, Pythagoras lived in Egypt for 22 years while Plato spent 13 years studying in Egypt, and Aristotle "copied every word of the documents" found in the Egyptian library after Egypt was conquered by his pupil, Alexander the Great (Mativo 1989:747–800).

Zambia, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Leopold Senghor of Senegal, and Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire (now renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo). These are political leaders who ascribed to themselves the roles of philosopher-kings, through the imposition of their personal theoretical, intellectual and political wills and hegemonies on their subjects. These hegemonies, according to Mangcu (2008:47), are a necessary practical convergence that requires that the intellectual and critical autonomies in society be purposefully subjected to the politicians' quest for survival.

Kaunda, for example, propagated what he termed 'the Philosophy of Humanism' that was based on both Christian principles and selected moral precepts from pre-colonial African societies. Kaunda hoped to gather inspiration and strength from the past in planning for and managing the progress of the new Zambian nation (Kandeke 1977:21, 29; Dillon-Mallone 1989:19–21). Although he did not necessarily advocate a wholesale return to the traditional African way of life, which he recognised as having been overtaken by the latest scientific inventions and modern economic processes, Kaunda nevertheless preached the necessity of retaining the principles of 'humaneness' or *'ubuntu'* and social cohesiveness that supposedly characterised the African past (Kandeke 1977:56). Rather than a return to the past, what was central to Kaunda's thinking was that a new society could be created on the basis of the legacy and principles of the African past. He opposed losing the value placed on the human being in the African society, because that value was better placed to propel the struggle to achieve the modern ideal society in Africa – something which he believed could be the embodiment of African civilisation and the continent's contribution to the world (Hall 1969:47–48).

For Nyerere (1968:1–12), African tribal society was the ideal to which modern Tanzania should aspire, because in African society all individuals worked for the common good, and did not desire to dominate one another. Partly because of the absence of that selfish

and aggressive competitiveness, traditional African society prospered at the same pace, carrying along every person in it. No member of society was therefore left behind. Accordingly, Nyerere argued that in order to avoid the emergence of cut-throat capitalism, Tanzania needed to be founded on the African philosophy of *Ujamaa*, or family-hood. In Nyerere's view, *Ujamaa* as a political philosophy recognised that society as a whole was a mere extension of the basic family unit, where each member looked after the interests of the others. To Nyerere, modern Africans could not hope to live happily by escaping the traditional way of life that had produced them.

According to Irele (2002:40), Senghor's ideology of Negritude is premised on the rehabilitation of the African past, mystifying it and glorifying some aspects of that worldview through the selective and nostalgic painting of "the imaginary beauty and harmony" that may have existed in traditional society – something that Fourie (2007a:9–10) dismisses as the mere idealisation of traditional African cultures and philosophies.

Ettinger (1986.63–65) states that the doctrine of Authenticity which Mobutu preached was meant to ensure that the Zairian people were able to return to their 'authentic' African culture through a careful and selective search for ancestral values, and integrating these with suitable foreign ideals.

In summary, the above African leaders' views and socio-political choices ignored the existence of ideological contestations in pre-colonial societies, and promoted the values and ideals of an ideologically and theoretically harmonised modern-day Africa. This was dismissed outright as "unanimist illusion" by scholars like Hountondji (1983:154), who believes that such thoughts are neither interwoven with any serious significance nor do they have any chance of practical realisation.

It is clear from the above brief overview that the political philosophies of Humanism, *Ujamaa*, Negritude and Authenticity, shared some common elements which included the idealisation of the past; aspirations for a measured return to an ideal pre-colonial African society; the mystification of long-lost pre-colonial African principles embedded in memories of that past; and the wish to slow down modern African social progress.

In addition, these social philosophies provide the political rationale and justification for the institutionalisation of what Bratton and Van de Walle (1997:61–68) refer to as the "neo-patrimonial rule" evident in much of post-colonial Africa. Such a rule is a state in which authority is not only personalised, but is also centred in presidents, and is thus "shaped by the ruler's preferences rather than any codified systems of laws". Ordinary people are also treated as extensions of the presidents' households, with neither specified rights nor privileges, except those bestowed upon them by the occupants of State House, through the selective distribution of favours and material benefits in exchange for loyalty.

As Babu (1985:171) argues, to a people subjected to these levels of commandism, the state is not only in disorder, but it is also not based on any system of law or the respect for human rights. In effect, according to Babu,

> …those in power demand from the people only unilateral, in place of mutual, respect: the respect of inferiors to superiors, rather than the respect between equals. To such leaders the people are only part of their estate, and in such an estate the masters are insensitive to appeals for justice; to them justice is whatever is useful to maintain themselves in power. Their ideal is to govern with the minimum of perspiration and the maximum of domination. They are obsessed with the lust for power and regard themselves as demigods.

Typically in Africa, Bratton and Van de Walle (1997:61–68) argue that first, such systems are built around concepts of presidentialism, which is a political structure where all political power, except "the most trivial decision-making tasks", are concentrated in the president; and where the image of the president that is consciously and officially promoted, is that of the sole father-of-the-nation.

In Zambia, such father-figure pretensions reached humorous levels when the then president Kaunda published what is probably his most philosophically insightful book, with the rather patronising opening sentence addressed to "My dear children …" (Kaunda1973:13). Although the book may have ostensibly been truly addressed to Kaunda's biological children, it was nonetheless promoted, through in-depth reviews by the pliant state-controlled media, as required reading for Zambians to understand the inner thoughts of their dear leader.

Second, Bratton and Van de Walle (1997:65–68) argue that such neo-patrimonial rulerships are also characterised by patronage or "systematic clientelism", through which favours that include cushy cabinet positions, parastatal and top civil service jobs, and other material perks and benefits such as official cars and houses, are distributed to the most loyal of the president's followers. These are the kind of state resources which, according to Bratton and Van de Walle, Kaunda overwhelmingly controlled in the 1980s, to an extent that he was able to directly distribute to his cronies more than 40, 000 jobs in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, alone.

In effect, Kaunda's rule belongs to Chan's (2007:53) typology of African rulerships that are symbolised by "the patronising elder statesman" regime, whose justification is based on the idealisation of the African traditional system that, it is argued, was in turn based on (among other principles) cooperative effort; egalitarianism; the extended family; commitment to society (that required "dual responsibility … to oneself

as an individual as well as responsibility to the group"); and respect for traditional authority. The principle of respect for authority has been credited by some as an ingredient that, it is argued, was imposed in pre-colonial systems by African traditional rulers who required that commoners exhibited some level of deference to tribal leadership, for the purposes of maintaining social cohesion (Kaunda 1975:73; Komba 1995:36; Gyekye 1997:278; Dillon-Mallone 1989:36).

Highlighting the above 'values', for instance, Kaunda (1966:28) states that individuals were, in traditional society, valued for their own sake. He argues that,

> …this high valuation of man [sic] and respect for human dignity which is a legacy of our tradition should not be lost in the new Africa. However 'modern' and 'advanced' in a Western sense the nations of Africa may become, we are fiercely determined that this humanism will not be obscured. African society has always been man-centred.

Nyerere (1971:5–9) adds that the achievement of the African traditional society was,

> …the sense of security it gave to its members, and the universal hospitality on which they could rely … it was taken for granted that every member of society – barring only children and the infirm – contributed his [*sic*] fair share of effort towards the production of its wealth … in tribal society, the individuals or families within a tribe were 'rich' or 'poor' according to whether the whole tribe was rich or poor. If the tribe prospered all the members of the tribe shared in its prosperity.

From the above statements it is clear that Kaunda and Nyerere's arguments underscore some of the values believed to be common within the African traditional heritage (Bell 2002:37). In post-colonial

Africa, though, the 'value' placed on respect for elders or the leadership, was used by many regimes to justify the excesses of presidents and the closing-in of social spheres, discourses, political spaces and thus the creation of closed societies. In that respect, these African philosophies and political practices had a lot in common with the philosophical postures of Plato.

2.2.4 Historicism and attempts to return to the past

As shown above, Plato's philosophies and post-colonial African political practices were partly aimed at arresting social progress, although Gyekye (1997:295) argues that in the case of African philosophical thought, the most suitable way forward should have been to marry the "positive traditional values and institutions into the functional idioms of modern circumstances". In practice and effect, though, post-colonial African political thought symbolised reactions to the social changes brought about by European colonialism. These social changes were often considered, by certain African thinkers (as highlighted above), as the bane of African humanity. For, as Popper (1966:17) concedes, similar reactions to change were witnessed during major social upheavals, for example when the philosopher Heraclitus reacted to the break-up of Greek tribal life, or Karl Marx responded to the social consequences of the European industrial revolution, or when the German state-sponsored philosopher Friedrich Hegel theorised in reaction to the topsy-turvy events of the French Revolution.

In Africa, social upheavals were spurred-on by the processes of the modernisation of African societies which were pioneered by colonisation and industrialisation. It can, therefore, be argued that the above outlined political thoughts in some way mirrored the exigencies of the mass-responses of the indigenous people towards Western interventions. Such responses were also reflected in the structural formations (characteristics and strategies) of the independence movements, whose philosophies the aforementioned leading politicians

articulated. Such were the moulds of thinking and the political structures that took control of the African state apparatus at independence. The political structures' leaders, who inevitably became presidents, continued to reflect what they believed to be the core aspirations of the indigenous people by looking to the idealist past – both for inspiration or organisational guidance, and for purposes of mobilising the people – thus keeping themselves in power for as long as possible.

As indicated in this chapter (see 2.2.2.), Popper (1966:19) could have viewed those African leaders in the same frame as he viewed Plato and other historicists. He could have placed the abovementioned leaders in the same bracket as Plato, who saw instances of rapid social change as precursors to corruption, social decay and moral degeneration – vices which should be fought and stopped.[5]

However, although Plato may have been philosophically opposed to such changes, he nevertheless viewed these transformations as part of the fundamental laws of the universe which work through cosmic forces that can only be stopped through the abrogation of social progress (Popper 1966:21). Failing that, the process of degeneration, which may

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[5] Some recent African thoughts probably confirm this posture. According to Soyinka (2006:2) in modern Africa such social decay is speeded up by a "regulation quota of sycophants, opportunists, mercenary cheerleaders … praise singers and other acolytes of power" who, besides playing a central role in the political process, preach the doctrine of "power perpetuity" and the "indispensability" of the incumbent leader. Such practices, enhanced by the social habits of political correctness and government policies aimed at favouring chosen sectors of society, such as the official policy of Zambianisation (or Africanisation) in the immediate post-independence decade in Zambia; indigenisation in Botswana; or the so-called Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies in South Africa do, according to Slabbert (2006:136) strengthen "a growing culture of corruption". In the case of South Africa, Slabbert states that a recent survey revealed that 86 per cent of South Africans believe corruption has become a way of life. In this instance, Kamara (2005:1) argues that much of the plunder taking place in Africa today is not by former colonial masters, but by the "African elites themselves". This plunder, or corruption, is often expressed through what Fukuyama (2005:21–22) terms "rent-seeking", whereby public resources are deliberately allocated to politically-preferred sections of the community such as tribes, regions or ethnic groups. In other instances, corruption is practised by government officials who place their "pecuniary interests" above the rhetoric of public service (Fukuyama 2005:66) or, in other words, through what Kanduza (2001:107) eloquently refers to as "the politics of the belly and open self-enrichment". All these factors contribute to the apparent social decay and moral degeneration taking place in Africa, which in the view of Kaunda, Nyerere and others can only be stopped by reverting to original tribal practices and principles.

have started with the passing of a tribal state into a state of timocracy (or the rule of the nobles), then into oligarchy (or the rule by rich families) and finally into Athenian democracy, could only lead to social decay, injustice and immorality. The harbinger to that state of social debilitation was a democracy that allowed the emergence of shared citizenship with the poor classes. In line with this thought, the equalisation of citizenship and social opportunities could only lead to social disorder, lawlessness, and, eventually, to the 'sickness' of tyranny (Popper 1966:40).

As shown in this chapter (see 2.2.2, above), the main causes of this social lewdness is the strife caused by inter-class struggles, fermented by the unrestrained pursuit of material and economic self-interest of individuals in those societies (Popper 1966:39, 55).

A similar social trajectory, although not completely reflective of Plato's, was enunciated by Kaunda, who outlined "six important stages" in human development. According to Kaunda (1974:51) and Bwalya (1987:90) humans have developed through the following stages: pre-historic age or creation; the primitive stage; slavery; feudalism; and presently, capitalism. Thereafter, humanity was expected to reach the humanist stage after temporarily diverting its route to the socialist experience. Accordingly, the humanist stage would resemble the original state of human society.

For Plato, what could be likened to Kaunda's humanist ideal was the ancient state of Sparta, which at that time had insisted on retaining the rigid state that kept all foreign influences and ideas at bay. At the time, the city-state of Sparta opposed all ideas that promoted equality, democracy and individualism. It was also a state content within itself, as it sought neither to dominate its neighbours nor to expand beyond its boundaries (Popper 1966:182).

Thus, with regard to the search for social organisational principles from the past, Plato had a lot in common with the abovementioned African leaders. In practice (as demonstrated in chapter 3, see 3.5–3.8), African political leaders tended to maintain colonial boundaries, and also similarly circumscribed foreign influences and ideas through various means which included the nationalisation and tight control of the media. Also, African leaders allowed only limited social equality and political participation (almost wholly reserved for followers within the dominant ruling single parties. Instead of individualism, African political leaders promoted communalism and group-think, while through their membership to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), they subscribed to the maintenance of colonial boundaries and considered all African states, irrespective of their population size or wealth, as equals.

Because of apparent similarities between Plato's theories and African political practices, Plato, Kaunda, Nyerere, Senghor and Mobuto are, for the purposes of this study, placed within the first group of historicists. Here, historicism is defined with the aid of Popper (1966:2–3, 8) and others, as a philosophical mindset that assumes the inevitability of future outcomes, or indeed, the surety of historical prophesies about human social development. The doctrine of historicism holds that "history is controlled by specific historical or evolutionary laws whose discovery would enable us to prophesy" the future of humanity, and that all this knowledge is determined by history (Burke 1983:143; Suchtung 1985:149; Popper 1986:209; Macdonald 1995:248; Gonzalez 2004:87–88; O'Hear 2004:191; Keuth 2005:196). More specifically, Popper (1972:38) refers to historicism as "the view that the history of mankind has a plot and that if we can succeed in unravelling this plot, we shall hold the key to the future".

Some sociologists like Soja (1993:115–118) dismiss this approach to human history as either 'sociological imagination', 'historical imagination', 'trans-historical universalisation' or just 'longitudinal

tantalisation' whose overall objective is to bring a practical understanding to the process of social change, thereby enriching the discourses around issues of social emancipation as against the upholding of the status quo. In a slightly different vein, Burke (1983:154) alludes to his and Popper's view about the liberatory and emancipatory nature of the Marxian brand of economic historicism, or historical materialism.

However, because the liberatory aspects of historicism form part of discussions that are patently beyond the scope of this study, they will merely be alluded to in chapter 2 (2.2.6) below, as a way of giving some indication of the depth and extent of the debates that accompany the concept of historicism and its contribution to the theory of closed societies.

In any case, as indicated, the aforementioned group of historicists is – in summary – distinguished by the following characteristics:

- A binding belief in the theory that social change is inexorably taking place;
- Change follows unbending cosmic laws that inevitably lead to social decay;
- Change can be delayed or stopped, or its pace minimised through planned action or the careful absorption of foreign influences and other elements;
- The aspired-for ideal belongs to the magical 'tribal' past.

2.2.5 Responses to attempts to return to the past

A study of social science literature reveals that the belief systems of the above group, are not without critics. For example, Popper (1966:168) dismisses the group's form of historicism and its propensity

for infatuation with a past long gone, as a type of irrational escapist romanticism, adding that it,

> ….springs from an intoxication with dreams of a beautiful world…it may seek its heavenly city in the past or in the future; it may preach 'back to nature' or 'forward to a world of love and beauty'…its appeal is always to our emotions rather than reason. Even with the best of intentions of making heaven on earth, it only succeeds in making it a hell – that hell which man [*sic*] alone prepares for his fellow-men.

Furthermore, one African political leader, Kwame Nkrumah (1973:79), the first black president of Ghana (the first sub-Saharan African country to become independent), characterises the professed wish for a return to the idyllic past as the fetishisation of the African society that is a "facile simplification" without any supportive "historical or anthropological evidence" to back up that hope. In addition, Popper (1966:200, 201) argues that,

> ….arresting political change is not the remedy; it cannot bring happiness. We can never return to the alleged innocence and beauty of the closed society. Our dream of heaven cannot be realised on earth…for those who have eaten the tree of knowledge, paradise is lost. The more we try to return to the heroic age of tribalism, the more surely do we arrive at the inquisition, at the secret police, and at a romanticised gangsterism. Beginning with the suppression of reason and truth, we must end with the most brutal and violent destruction of all that is human. There is no return to a harmonious state of nature. If we turn back, then we must go the whole way – we must return to the beasts.

Chiluba (1995:21) states that arguments for a return to the romanticised past are impractical for modern African states that have

been irreversibly exposed to urbanisation, industrialisation and socio-economic modernisation.

Mbikusita-Lewanika (1990:166) argues that official government ideologies such as those promoted by Kaunda and other African post-colonial leaders are not only socially untenable but also unpopular, as they are created by the minority "bourgeois elites" to act as a palliative for the elite while reflecting "their socially and historically narrow self-interest". In propagating these ideologies, these elites are merely expressing a cultural affinity to broken and dispersed pieces of "Euro-Christian liberalism" that has little to do with "any traditional thought or lifestyle of Africa". Mbikusita-Lewanika argues that most (if not all) of these ideologies are, therefore unrealistic.

Saul (2005:33) adds that these ideologies not only reflect the "cultural-nationalist preoccupations" of leading and opportunistic members of the African elite, but they are also cynical attempts at giving a "veneer of progressiveness and apparent concern for popular aspiration" to what, in reality, are "self-interested and increasingly capitalist policies". These political facades, in Saul's view, were maintained in various ways in countries as diverse as Leopold Senghor's Senegal through the Negritude philosophy, Julius Nyerere's Tanzania through African Socialism, and Jomo Kenyatta's Kenya through a 1965 document referred to as 'Session Paper No.10 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya' – a piece of paper that Saul (2005:34) considers as having "nothing to do with any recognisably socialist intention", although it carries the concept of 'socialism' in its title.

2.2.6 Marxism and the attempted return to the past

The above sentiments inevitably lead us to the other major responses to historicism and the various attempts made to return to past systems. These responses are constituted by a group of thinkers who believe

that change is progressive and does not lead to decay, but rather to a better future. Perhaps recent history will record that a most influential member of this school of thought is Karl Marx.

According to Baradat (2006:161–162), Lenin (1970:30–57) and Mehrotra (1984:190–191), Marx was born on 5 May 1818 at Trier in the Rhineland Province of Germany. His father was a Jewish liberal lawyer who had converted from Judaism to Christianity. Up to the age of 13 Marx was educated at home, but at 17 he enrolled at the University of Bonn to study law. Later he transferred to the Friedrich Wilhems University in Berlin, where he absorbed the radical and atheist philosophy of the Young Hegelians clustered around Ludwig Feuerbach and Bruno Bauer, who were young journalists opposed to the theologically-based teachings of their mentor, Friedrich Hegel. The Young Hegelians nevertheless adapted Hegel's teaching of dialectic, for example, contradictions leading to the growth of knowledge, but leaving out the dialectic's religious bent. Instead, the Young Hegelians opted to critique both the politics of the day and established religion, using the methods of Hegel's dialectic.

Because of Marx's association with the Young Hegelians, he opted to submit his thesis to a different university (instead of Berlin) which, he was advised, was more theocratically inclined. Instead, he submitted to the University of Jena, which awarded him a doctorate in 1841. A year later, Marx became the editor of a radical newspaper in Cologne which was shut down by the authorities in 1843 for over-stepping acceptable bounds. He then emigrated to France, where he met his life-long intellectual partner, Friedrich Engels – the man who converted him to the Communist ideology. Soon after, Marx and Engels were forced out of Paris and they left for Brussels in Belgium. In 1848, Marx and Engels published the *Communist Manifesto* which was then meant to be a policy declaration document for the members of the Communist League in Europe. The league had, by then, fallen under the influence of Marx and Engels.

In the same year, Marx was detained and deported from Belgium because of his political activities. He returned to Paris, where he witnessed a social uprising that was eventually referred to as the French revolution in which activists seized power in Paris. When the uprising was crushed, Marx returned to Cologne, where he started a newspaper that was suppressed within a year for allegedly inciting armed rebellion against the ruling authorities. Marx then fled back to Paris and, shortly after, moved to London where he remained until his death in 1883.

The essence of Marx's (1977a:713–715, 1977b:877–884) thought is a rejection of the idea that human nature is inherently unchanging. Marx argues that human beings have the capacity not only to change nature through the practice of labour power, but also that humans are adaptable, although their inner behaviours are influenced by the context in which they live. He states that the mode of production (consisting of the *means* of production, i.e. natural resources, land and technology) and (the *relations* of production, i.e. social and technical relationships that people enter into as they use the natural and other resources), change over time. He argues that the mode of production has changed from that which characterised primitive societies through feudalism to capitalism. In turn, the capitalist mode is expected to be transformed into the socialist mode of production. All these changes are catalysed by class struggles that are sparked off when each class furthers its interests over accessibility to the means of production, and each class's patrimony within the social relations of production. In other words, in the capitalist state the working class or proletariat, whose social relation is to sell its labour power to the capitalist class or bourgeoisie, is in constant conflict with the premier capitalist class. It is this conflict that would lead to the defeat of the capitalist class. The working class would then establish a socialist regime that would be the transition to a classless society. Within the trajectory of this train of thought it is, therefore, possible to predict the future.

Scholars who include Lenin (1970:66–70) and Mehrotra (1984:189–193), trace Marxian ideology to three sources, namely German classical philosophy, British classical economic theory, and the failed French uprising.

In terms of its German foundations, Marxism borrowed heavily from Hegelian dialectic that states that the world is forever in a dynamic natural state of constant flux. Change that takes place gradually is a result of the struggle of opposites, in particular the thesis acting against the antithesis, which results in a synthesis. This battle of opposites means that society is forever in transition, with one state coming into being while the other passes away; with the lower state of being giving way to the higher form or state. Although Hegelian dialectic referred only to the evolution of ideas, Marx adapted this evolutionary explanation to social change. According to Marx, the struggle was between the propertied class (the bourgeoisie) and the proletariat (the working class) – a struggle that would inevitably lead to the synthesis of the communist state.

In terms of economic theory, Marx adapted the essence of British classical economic arguments of the 19th century, which stated that the working people's labour created the value that was later appropriated by the bourgeoisie. From the French Revolution, Marx derived the idea that the class struggle could lead to the overthrow of the ruling classes, and thereafter the dawn of the utopia of a classless society (Mehrotra 1984:189–193). As Marx's leading disciple Lenin (1970:40) argues that,

> … ever since the Great French Revolution, European history has, in a number of countries, tellingly revealed what actually lies at the bottom of events – the struggle of classes.

For Marxism, therefore, class-based and class-inspired social dynamism does not lead to social decay but to the ideal, perfect state. It is on this point that Marx differed from Plato.

In summary, it is clear that Marx was highly influenced by Hegel's dialect method and historicism. It is evident that Marx borrowed and reflected on the classical economic theories of 18th-century Britain, and the impact of the failed French Revolution. In turn, Marx's writings influenced Vladimir Lenin's Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and also led to the establishment of Communist regimes in Mao Tse Tung's China, Ho Ch Minh's Vietnam, Kim il Sung's North Korea, Fidel Castro's Cuba, and nearer home, the early socialist experimentations in Angola and Mozambique. In South Africa, the standard-bearer of this school of thought is Blade Nzimande's South African Communist Party (SACP), which is a governing ally of South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC).

However, because of Marxian beliefs in the inevitability of human history and other practices that were evidenced in the abovementioned countries and political organisations, it can be argued that Marxism as an ideology has helped create closed societies and social systems. As another disciple of Marx, Amin (1990:5) rather categorically states – the choice before humanity is between sliding backwards towards barbarism, or enforcing the ideal socialist experiment (the latter being an inevitability that the world can never hope to escape from (Mehrota1984:198–204)). Legassick (2007:576), on the other hand, warns that if Communism fails to triumph across the world in the near future, the "economic anarchy of capitalism" will devastate the global environmental balance to an extent where the serious consequences of global warming are the "dreadful alternative posed by Capitalism", and will lead to the complete destruction of all living things on Earth.

That aside, Marx is also criticised for having predicted class struggles in Europe – struggles that have not yet taken place. Worse still, with

the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 and its client states in Eastern Europe, previously vibrant exponents of Marxian theories have been forced into a defensive mode worldwide, or are in retreat, as the failure of the Communist ideal has "put the final nail in the coffin of the Marxist-Leninist alternative to liberal democracy" (Fukuyama 1989:7).

2.3 Marxism, Africa and the neo-colonial future

For our purposes, one African leader emerges as a leading proponent of the second group of historicists that may be associated with Marxian theories, namely Nkrumah of Ghana. Nkrumah belongs to that set of philosophers and political thinkers who share the view that social change is not only knowable, but also predictable, inevitable and potentially plan-able.

Such Marxian brands of philosophical historicism are rooted in, and raised on the pedestal of the practice of scientific inquiry, whereby it is assumed (as indicated in this chapter, see 2.2.6 above) that a systematic study of natural laws leads to the awareness and possibility of predicting the future. In the social sphere, it is argued that it is possible to study the laws of social development, and after acquiring a sufficient understanding of those laws it is possible to fashion, manage and predict the course of history. This philosophical view is also referred to as Scientific Socialism or Historical Materialism. Essentially, this brand of historicism lays claim to scientific methods in the practice of prophesy, from which are derived theoretical propositions for the future course of history (Popper 1986:82–84, 186; Zeleza 1997:140).

In the sense of this group, the motive for scientific inquiry is not just to gain knowledge about objective existence, but to empower leading individuals in society to manage and predict the future, for as Marxists argue, philosophers may have attempted to understand and interpret the world but the task of Marxists is to change that world (Mehrotra 1984:189). This is what has been referred to as the 'materialist

conception' of history, namely that it is within the people's power to change history through class struggle.

However, even though Marx may have warned against turning his analysis of 19th-century capitalist Europe into a fetish, or a fatalistic philosophical theory that was applicable across the board and in all situations (Suchtung 1985:151), this caveat did not stop disciples like Vladimir Lenin (1986:20) and others from drawing and extrapolating some "general and fundamental law" in the development of capitalism and thereby referring to imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. This projection was extended by Nkrumah (1968:1–16, 1965: ix–xx, 1963:174) into a theory of neo-colonialism, which argues that neo-colonialism is the last stage of the imperialist endeavour. According to Nkrumah, the neo-colonial status ensures that former colonies continue to be surreptitiously subject to the economic, cultural and other whims of their former masters.

The neo-colonial situation comes about shortly after independence. According to Nkrumah (1965:ix), once a state has been granted nominal independence in modern times, such a state cannot be re-colonised directly. Instead, the former colony is forced (through various means) to become a client state, that in theory is independent with "all the outward trappings of international sovereignty", but in reality, such a state's economic and political policies are directed by the former colonial masters or by international business conglomerates.

In very extreme cases, Nkrumah (1965:ix) asserts that this form of neo-colonial control could take the mode of direct invasion or invisible economic pressures. Thus, economically, a neo-colony is forced to import ready-made goods from the former colonial master-country, to the exclusion of competing products from elsewhere. Furthermore, pressure is exerted on the neo-colony in the form of the former colonial rulers meeting the expenses for the state's administrative structures, or

placing Western civil servants in influential positions within the civil service.

According to Nkrumah (1968:8–9), this status does not emerge suddenly but is a lengthy process that begins by compromising the independence movement, when critical functionaries in the movement are either corrupted or blackmailed. At the same time, "imperialist dogmas" are promoted within the liberation movement as essential governance values for the emerging new state. These set values include the principles of liberal democracy, the free enterprise system, and the maintenance of the colonial state's boundaries. The sustaining of colonial borders (refer to chapter 2 (2.2.4), above) is encouraged by former colonial masters, according to Nkrumah, to ensure that the new states remain small, unviable and therefore easy to control and manipulate.

Nkrumah (1968:10) asserts that on the eve of independence, so-called "free" elections are held, during which especially selected candidates are placed before the people by the colonial authorities, as the most suitable to run the new state. After the elections, the new authorities are handed the trappings of power, but that power is without substance. Thereafter, Nkrumah (1970:10) argues that it becomes the responsibility and the interest of the newly elected elites to maintain and preserve the free market system, as well as the inherited support structures. Thus, the neo-colonial elites work in alliance with international business interests against the general interests and welfare of the majority of the people. The new ruling classes are also co-opted into the local and international business sector at various levels.

In practice, Nkrumah (1970:12) states, the new elites demonstrate a level of mesmerisation with capitalist institutions, behavioural patterns, and generally "the way of life of their old colonial masters". Mbikusita-Lewanika (1990:70) likens such mesmerisation to "a matter of fattening

frogs for the snakes". The frogs, in this instance, are the neo-colonial nations that suffer from the "uninterrupted exploitation of the country's resources by the international bourgeoisie, but this time in collaboration with the national ruling classes. The primary mission of the latter is to maintain [the] order, stability, and labour discipline required to meet the country's obligations to the international capitalist system" (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1987:107). This is done through the use, after nominal independence, of "capitalist institutions, influences, and practices that are left-overs of colonialism" (Hallen 2002:73).

The above elements are, in essence, the fundamentals of the neo-colonial theory of post-colonial statehood. In summary, as indicated above, neo-colonial states may appear to be independent, but their political and economic policies are determined from elsewhere (Nkrumah 1973:13). It is what Nkrumah (1968:8) refers to as "sham independence", or what Cabral (1969:60) describes as living under the jack-boot of "rationalised imperialism". In addition, Nkrumah (1965:253) conceptually refers to such a situation as a state of neo-colonialism that does not depict imperialism's strength, but rather exposes imperialism's "last hideous gasp … in its final and perhaps its most dangerous stage" (Nkrumah 1965:ix).

From the above overview, it is clear that Nkrumah borrows extensively from Lenin's (1986:119) theory and description of imperialism as the highest stage of "moribund capitalism", or the explanatory theory of capitalism having reached the end of its evolution. Nkrumah's addition, as shown above, is that capitalism is neither on its last legs nor waning, but has evolved – with the independence of much of Africa – into a system of neo-colonialism, or the stage marking the conclusion of the imperialist endeavour. Such an end to imperialism would come about after the African people have defeated the imperialist forces, after which African governments could have applied socialist policies, affected the spirit of pan-Africanism and completed the unity of the African continent as a single, political whole. Nkrumah's single-minded

trajectory of thought is important to take note of, because it provided the influential rationale for the establishment of one-party regimes across the continent – regimes that were meant to bring about these ideals, starting with Nkrumah's own Ghana, without the distraction of political opposition activities. Inevitably, it is these thoughts that led to the establishment of closed one-party regimes across the African continent.

Nkrumah was deposed from Ghana's presidency in 1966. He died in exile as a titular co-president of Guinea in 1972. Some 34 years later, his dream of creating a union government for all Africa, as a counterweight to what he saw as imperialist manipulative designs on small African states, has not been achieved. In the interim, the socialist experiments in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, that influenced his political perceptions, have collapsed. Now, the free market system is, seemingly, in ascendance and is being pushed across the world by the globalisation process. Undoubtedly, the free market is the development model that dominates much of the world today, including Africa.

2.3.1 Explanations for change and social development

That aside, Nkrumah, Lenin and Marx's analyses of social development, as outlined above, represent the historical interpretation of change whose critical essence is that internal social contradictions provide the momentum for change – that is, class struggles determine the manner in which societies progress. According to these explanations, everything is in a state of change, and this factor is an irresistible force before which nothing in society is secure or deemed stable (Popper 1972:333).

Such a theory on the causes of change could be traced to early Greek thinking, as espoused by Heraclitus, who variously stated that "everything is in a flux and nothing is at rest", that "you cannot step

twice in the same water", and that "strife is the father of all things" (Popper 1966:12–13; Burke 1983:148). In terms of Hegelian philosophy, therefore, change is the state of flux that leads the essence to a new idea or progress. Thus, to Hegel, history was the record of a development of ideas (Popper 1972:333). In the Hegelian sense, the essence is self-impelled, and thus a self-creating process is unleashed that leads to a final end result that is hard to predict. In that regard, social progress is neither predictable nor straightforward; and that, for Hegel, was the general law of the development of ideas.

As has been stated, it is this pattern of thought from which Marxists borrowed heavily. A major difference is that Marxists dropped Hegel's idealism, and instead re-emphasised the critical importance of humanity's socioeconomic experience as the determinant cause of all societal change (Popper 1966:106, 1972:333; Burke 1993:154). Marxists argue that it is possible to predict the future, only if you understand the inexorable laws of social progress.

For Marxists it is the class struggle (and not necessarily the 'self-impelled' essence) that arises out of contradictions within the capitalist system, that leads to the victory of the working class and heralds the emergence of a classless society. This is the assumed historical law of progress (Lenin 1970:37–39; Baradat 2006:166–169). However, when seen from another angle, this view does, to some extent, underpin a theory of social determinism which holds that society is a huge automated structure beyond which the influence of individuals is either limited or non-existent. According to this view, individuals can affect society only in line with the predetermined laws of the social structure, and only when those individuals act in groups or classes. This attitude reduces human beings to little more than "cogs", or indeed "at best, sub-automata" within the social monolithic (Clark 1995:149–150), where almost everything that takes place in that structure is pre-determined and beyond the control of individuals.

That aside, to Marxists, all history is a history of class struggle, and this explanation for social change is picked up by Nkrumah (1970:17), who argues against a classless pre-colonial African society, positing that the struggle among classes is the "fundamental theme of recorded history". For Nkrumah, in non-socialist societies, including pre-colonial Africa, there are only two classes: the ruling class and the subjected class. The rulers control the major means of economic production and the levers of political power, while the other class is dominated and exploited. Because this situation is unsustainable, it leads to conflict and changes in society.

Neither Nkrumah nor Marx looks to the past for inspiration. They look to the future, and hope that with the pervasiveness of class consciousness, the workers or subjected classes, will force change through revolutionary means, to secure a better future.

The futuristic approach distinguishes Marx and Nkrumah from Plato and Kaunda. While Kaunda, Senghor and Nyerere look to the past for inspiration, Nkrumah, Babu, Cabral and other Marxian-inclined thinkers look to the future. Whereas Plato condemns social change, Marx applauds it. But what binds the two groups of theorists is their belief in the inexorability of the laws of historical change. Also, the historical trajectories of these two paths are similar, although the expected end-results are different, and are achievable differently.

However, Popper (1966:34, 1986:82), as we have seen above, believes that both paths are wrong, because attempting to plan or predict the future is an exercise in futility. Furthermore, Popper (1966:viii) regards Marxism, in particular, as an unfortunate episode in humanity's perennial attempts at building a better world. For Popper, Marx is a "false prophet" whose prophecy proved disastrous with the collapse of Soviet Communism in 1989 (Popper 1999:128–129). In addition, Popper (1999:134–135) and Mehrotra (1984:197–215)

believe that the fall of world Communism was premised upon the following facts:

- The model of highly exploitative capitalism that Marx propounded, never really existed;
- The 19th-century society that Marx wrote about, had radically changed by the following century;
- The oppressive nature of manual labour had drastically disappeared from Western societies through the invention of new technologies, and so the prophesy of a class war came to naught;
- Western workers were less wretched and much happier by the 20th century;
- Industrialisation had brought about mass production, which resulted in goods becoming cheaper and affordable to the majority of people in the West;
- Class struggles have never really taken place.

Thus the failure of Communism proved that Marxian predictions are false, just as the search for the idyllic past has been fruitless. In that sense, social engineering undertakings can be said to have proved to be impossible to implement successfully. Instead, Marxian and similar belief systems have only gone so far as to lay the theoretical basis for establishing closed and restrictive political and social systems.

2.4 Foundations of a closed society

As observed above, those philosophers and political leaders who attempt to predict the future, or to implement their ideals about the society of the future, tend to construct grand theoretical narratives that supersede individualism and individual initiatives. Their narratives are aimed at serving their grand plans.

For example, according to Burke (1983:143), a major thrust for those who recommend a return to the tribal state, is an advocacy for:

- Totalitarianism that minimises individual freedom;
- A situation where the interests of the state should be placed above those of the individual. In other words, people should serve the state and not the other way round, as Babu (1985:171) argues;
- A state where individuals have allotted roles within the social scheme of things;
- Circumstances where the objective of the nation's education system is to indoctrinate the individual to perform specific roles in the bigger scheme of things;
- A condition where independent thought is subject to the expressed will of the state;
- A case where dissent is silenced in the overt interest of, and in order to, sustain the state;
- The reign of a philosopher-king who assumes political authority and symbolises both the national interest and society's political aspirations.

As has been argued in this chapter (see 2.2.3, above), the emphasis on the philosopher-king, for example, resonates well with many of the political practices of much of post-independence Africa (Bratton and Van de Walle 1997:61–68; Chan 2007:53). As has been demonstrated above, what were termed 'national' ideologies were, in essence, mere frameworks for the institutionalisation of personalised rule, so that the presidents arrogated to themselves – to the level of 'monarchical' control – the levers of national administration, coercive instruments and the financial means of the state (Ettinger 1986:58). In doing so and in the pursuit of their ideals, these African leaders did nothing more than build closed societies that, according to Bullock, Trombey and Eadie (1988:608), are characterised by:

- Totalitarian doctrines;

- Closed social, political and economic hierarchies based on patronage, that do not allow for individuals to rise on merit;

- The rise of a form of education aimed at indoctrinating the public. For instance, Nyerere's (1968:52) education system was meant to inculcate in Tanzanian youths "a sense of commitment to the total community … [with] values appropriate to our kind of future". The kind of future referred to was *Ujamaa*, as defined by Nyerere (1968:75) himself;

- Political theories that predict society's destiny on the basis of unchangeable laws;

- Centrally directed social engineering projects based on specific blueprints;

- Direct interventions in the social and economic lives of the citizens.

In the instance of such closed societies, the ruling party controls and reaches all corners of the citizens' lives. The party even determines the morals, laws and 'spirit' of the people (Popper 1986:63), while the president or philosopher-ruler comes to symbolise not only the will of the nation, but also defines the national personality. The ruler positions himself as the 'instrument' of the history of the nation (Popper 1986:73–74). The political environment in such a society is ably demonstrated by Ettinger (1986:69), who quotes an unnamed grassroots citizen in Mobuto's Zaire who stated that for an individual during Mobuto's rule, there were only three possibilities: to submit to authority, to applaud every act of the president, or to keep quiet.

In essence, these societies were so organised as to ensure that the people forgo the enjoyment of their freedoms and innovative abilities in the interests of the ultimate goal (Bothamley 1993:386) – a goal defined by the political leadership.

Looked at from another angle, and with the benefit of hindsight, the ultimate aim of the models of social organisation imposed on such societies was certainly not altruistic. The imposition of "monolithic ideologies" was meant to fashion individual citizens' behaviours and worldviews, in line with the ideals of the political leadership, to maintain a social order in the 'image' of the leadership.[6] In that way, and in practice, people were told what to do and what to think (Nzouankeu 1991:375). This is in contrast with an open society where, besides there being no ultimate aim, the people are free to criticise those in authority as well as the policies and programmes of those authorities. There is no question of blindly following orders. Instead, the approach to social matters is similar to the line taken by the Greek philosopher Pericles, who argued that "although only a few may originate policy, we are all able to judge it" (Popper 1966:7, 186; Bullock, Tombley and Eadie 1998:608).

In open societies, no single individual issues instructions all the time, and there are no policies that cannot be changed, no rigid institutions or indisputable frameworks of ideas that cannot be questioned. Nothing is sacred. The management, growth and progress of open societies are the responsibility of every member of such societies (Burke 1983:144). This position is in direct conflict with that taken by those who, like Malawian academic Paul Mwaipaya (1980:3), argue that the affairs of societies can only be managed properly by a class of elites who are "enlightened, intellectually sophisticated and culturally sharpened" to perform leadership duties, because not everyone has the capacity to initiate good policies.

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[6] For example, at the height of his power, Kaunda (1969:64) openly declared that he was "the ultimate director of all manpower in Zambia", adding that he expected to be obeyed. He said: "When the order is given, I expect you to get moving and to keep in step with me." He was addressing the supreme policy-making body (the National Council) of his then ruling political party, the United National Independence Party.

Like Plato, Mwaipaya rejects the fundamental principles of universal liberty and equality because, apparently, these principles may be against the nature of human beings who are said not to be equally endowed in all departments. Unfortunately, such postulations tend to remind a lot of people of Adolf Hitler (1936:179) who, in particular, argued that the best brains in German society should be enabled by the state to rise to positions of leadership and influence. This, despite the fact that Hitler did not have a university education. In addition, Mwaipaya maintains that the success of African countries' endeavours for development is only achievable if premised on the conscious nurturing of "quality leaders" through a systematic framework of moral education that is in tune with Plato's ideas. Mwaipaya (1980:16–30) states that each society has three classes: guardians, auxiliaries, and producers.

According to Mwaipaya, it is the role of the *producers* to ensure the availability of material wealth, as the basic instincts of this class are inspired by physical desires and emotions. The producer class could coalesce around business-oriented people. The *auxiliaries* should be responsible for maintaining law and order and the territorial integrity of the nation, as they are inspired by feelings of pride and courage. The auxiliary class would be symbolised by soldiers, civil servants and police officers. The producers and auxiliaries should neither aspire for leadership nor should they be trained for that purpose, because they are not blessed with the innate ability to enunciate good policies. That responsibility falls squarely on the *guardians,* who (in Mwaipaya's society) would be solely responsible for initiating policy and running state affairs. To be able to do this, the guardians would be thoroughly and rigorously trained for their leadership roles. Through that education, the guardians would be expected to develop the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, and to be able to resist corruption, as they would be less inclined to be emotional because of the high level of rigorous moral training they would have been subjected to. In that regard, the guardians would be able to maintain

high standards of morality and a clear sense of social justice. Only through this formula, Mwaipaya (1980:59) asserts, would African countries experience "proper national development".

However, what remained unstated in Mwaipaya's overall thesis, was who would be responsible for designing, implementing and overseeing the guardians' rigorous training and education – especially at the initiation of this model. The answer was probably inherent in Hitler's (1936:110) thoughts, namely that it was the responsibility of the state to watch over the people's education, and to prevent the education system from taking a wrong turn. However, a question that should have been asked, is: Who would initially appoint the leaders to those state positions?

That question aside, it can be surmised that Hitler's views on education are not too far removed from those articulated by either Mwaipaya or Plato, although Hitler's beliefs and practices can be said to have been both intense, and perhaps severe and immoderate. For example, with particular reference to the 'educational' role of the media, Hitler (1936:110) argues that it is the duty of the state to "watch over people's education and prevent it taking a wrong direction …" and to "keep control of that instrument of popular education (the press) … with absolute determination and place it at the service of the state and the nation".

Although Hitler's views, on this point, refer only to the media and the media's educational role in society, such views were reflected in practice in the tight controls that his National Socialist (Nazi) regime exercised over the much-formalised education system. Hitler (1936:162–173) argues, in tandem with Plato and Mwaipaya, that it is the responsibility of the state to provide specific educational values to the youth, so that they are skilled enough to serve society in their different capacities.

For example, in Nazi Germany, young men were trained for military duties while the state prepared girls for their reproductive roles as future mothers (Hitler 1936:163). The talented and most able brains among the boys of the Aryan race were elevated above the general masses and provided with specialised training, so that in later life they could occupy positions of dignity and leadership in the state's structures (Hitler 1936:170)[7]

That aside, it is clear that Mwaipaya's position makes, nevertheless, an articulate contribution to the elitist theory of the management of the state. It adds to Plato's theory of an elitist-led closed society run under strict discipline, an idea that Popper (1966:156) characteristically dismisses as symbolising a "monument of human smallness".

For as Popper (1999:85) quotes H.G. Wells, "grown men do not need leaders", adding that: "I believe in the duty of every intellectual to keep them (leaders) at arm's length." However, Hitler (1936:23, 138) argues that people love strong rulers and as such, citizens do experience more inward satisfaction with doctrines that do not accept competition, and political systems that do not admit liberal freedoms. According to Hitler, such systems prove to be superior "in truth", and efficiently "ruthless in

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[7] It should be admitted at this stage that Hitler's views are not only acknowledged in this study merely because of their relevancy to the core argument of this chapter, and for providing a model of thinking that contributes to the building of closed societies, but also because Hitler's early life was not only spent in some proximity to that of Popper but also because Hitler's later political activities bore profound influences on the lives and works of both Popper and Soros: at one time Hitler lived in the same city, Vienna, as the youthful Popper. In the case of Soros – as will be shown later – Soros fled his home country, Hungary, after the Nazi invasion. In those two respects there is some level of embryonic affinity between the existence of Nazi Germany and the evolution of the ideals of an open society. On the other hand, Hitler (1936:35) admits to having become "a fanatical anti-Semite" after observing the lifestyles of the Jews in Vienna, a city that Hitler (1936:20) declares to have been the best place to study the German social question. Popper was a Jew and so is Soros; but more importantly, it is through the overbearing impact of Hitler's political and military exploits – including his annexation of Austria – which these activities had on Popper's life and intellectual growth, that it becomes pertinent for us to juxtapose Hitler's thoughts against those of Popper. Although the two lived in the same town in their youth (there is no evidence that they ever met) the paths of their lives inevitably took different turns. Hitler overran Vienna and Popper fled into exile to write *The open society and its enemies,* a book that Popper (1999:93) says was his contribution to the anti-Nazi war effort, although he never mentions the Nazis or Hitler in the book. In that way, Popper and Hitler's 'works' and ideologies are somewhat symbiotic, even though they occupy different spaces and follow different patterns.

practice". Accordingly, the success of the Hitlerite doctrines, and perhaps Mwaipaya's too, are dependent on the existence of a popular following, intolerance of alternative ideas, and committed follower classes that enthusiastically and militantly believe in the truthfulness of the doctrines and the immutability of those individuals who espouse those policies.

2.5 Towards an open society

On the other hand, open societies are characterised by the absence of most of the above factors. O'Hear (2004:190–191) states that open societies are based on five basic principles, almost all of which are wholly drawn from the traditions of enlightened rationalism and optimism. The principles that pervade open societies are:

- **Unity of humankind:** Essentially, this is a recognition that in a society, everyone has the right to participate in the affairs of the nation, on a social-contractual basis, through proposing changes to policies or suggesting new ones, taking part in leadership activities, offering criticism on every aspect of national life, and accepting similarly originated criticisms, irrespective of the origins, race, class, religion or gender of the source;
- **Individualism:** This notion encompasses the full acceptance of the fact that every individual is complete in him- or herself, and so group rule, or collectivism, is unacceptable. As individuals, people have a responsibility first to themselves, and second, to contribute to society – as individuals – and not to be subjected to the whims of society;
- **Impartiality:** This principle holds that any opinion is worth hearing, and that societies should operate under the moral rules of scientific communities, where members of those communities acknowledge criticisms with a level of objectivity, in the

knowledge that criticism is a necessary ingredient for the growth of knowledge;

- **Humanitarianism:** The notion here is that it is unacceptable to sacrifice human life for the purposes of achieving an ideal or future happiness. According to this principle, nothing can ever justify the sacrifice of human life;

- **Fallibism:** This is the belief and understanding that all humans are liable to make mistakes and to err. Therefore, all policies, theories and grand plans should be subjected to critical analysis, so that mistakes can be detected early and corrected.

It is partly because of the belief in the fallibility of individuals, and the propriety of individual initiatives, that proponents of open societies object to grand plans, historicism, and the efforts that go towards achieving distant ideals through what has been termed 'utopian social engineering'. Instead, Popper (1966:157–159) and others are inclined towards the more controlled forms of piecemeal social reforms (Macdonald 1995:245–246; Burke 1983:164; Bullock, Tombley and Eadie 1998:785; Magee 1995:262) as the most appropriate and useful methods for managing change.

2.5.1 A model for managing change

In that respect, Popper (1999:4–14) and Burke (1983:190) suggest a four-stage model for managing change. The model is in line with the scientific community's practices, and it is suggested that open societies should adopt or try to implement it. The elements of the model are:

- Societies should start from the premise of dealing with current and existing problems, rather than trying to achieve an ideal. In other words, societies should work through current problems to seek solutions by means of a process of trial and error;

- Thereafter, transforming societies should work towards forming tentative theories, formulated after the attempted trials, and then develop hypotheses and conjectures around those problems;
- Then, through experimentation, critical discussion and the testing of hypotheses, societies should be able to eliminate false theories, incorrect assumptions and steps that have been taken;[8]
- After this, society is then led to a new situation, with a new problem where the whole process would be restarted all over again. The most important feature of this model, for formulating policy, is an understanding that there is neither finality to social problem solving, nor an end to this process.

In summary, the above model has been schematised by Popper (1972:406) as follows:

$$P(1) \rightarrow TT \rightarrow EE \rightarrow P(2)$$

Where as **P(1)** is the initial problem; **TT** the attempted solution to the problem or tentative theory; **EE** is for eliminating the errors observed during the trials; and **P(2)** is the new situation arrived at with its own new (and sometimes unexpected) problems (Faure and Venter 1993:264; Magee 1995:264; Gonzalez 2004:82).

The above formula posits that when social scientists or policy strategists are faced with original situations or problems (**P1**) they

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[8] The 'tool' for this form of policy formulation is what Faure and Venter (1993:41) refer to as the "hypothetico-deductive scientific method", which implies that when a theory or social programme is formulated, it should be taken as "provisional knowledge" that must be subjected to further tests and trials to examine the theory's inherent logical coherence, as well as the concreteness of its internal theoretical consistency. Thereafter, the "empirical substance" of the theory should be substantially checked, so as to ensure that there are no tautological nuances that defeat clarity, or would hinder practice. Lastly, the theory should be checked against other theories that make similar claims, to see whether any advance has been made in the generation of new knowledge. If such a theory passes this final test, it could be adopted for implementation, but on the understanding that the theory is only valid until further tests are able to refute it. In the event of two or more theories making claims to similar truths, it is the one that passes the *most* and *additional* tests, which should be adopted and implemented.

should formulate tentative solutions or tentative theories (**TT**) for solving those problems. These theories will only be acceptable provisionally, and should be subjected to further experimentation, trials and criticisms. These tests and critiques will highlight the weaknesses or vulnerabilities of the theories. The testing stage must be exhaustive. When it is found that the theories are full of errors, they should be eliminated or refuted – that is the stage of elimination (**EE**). If the theories are accepted – again provisionally – such theories should be opened up to further tests, trials and criticism. Either way, whether accepted or rejected, new situations or problems (**P2**) are arrived at, and the whole process starts all over again.

According to Popper (1972:312–317, 406–407), this rigorous testing process leads to the development of knowledge and should be the basis for undertaking all forms of social change initiatives or implementing policies.

However, a number of aspects remain unclear in this schema. According to Keuth (2005:307) the formula does not completely explain how new situations (**P2**) arise. In addition, the formula does not explain the direct relationship between the original premises or situations (**P1**), and the new situations (**P2**). In trying to explain the obvious lack of logical consistency, Keuth (2005:307) states that as a formula, this schema is not a theory that explains anything. It merely plays an "aphorisaic role" of pointing in a direction of what might take place in controlled environments, and thus the formula has a "sentential function", and could thus neither be expected to project the truth nor to foretell what may eventually happen.

Had we to accept Keuth's justifications for the formula's existence and even weaknesses, we nevertheless would have to consider that its practical application and utility at the social and, maybe, political levels, is still hard to ascertain. Nevertheless, as a framework for academic and intellectual exercises the schema may have to be acknowledged,

largely because of its significant attributes that point to what could be aspired to in social practice, rather than what can definitely be done.

That aside, it is clear that for proponents of open societies, the above schema adds some dynamism to, and provides the framework for, the manner in which societies could systematically deal with the problems they face, because underpinning the schema is the principle that there is constancy to social processes, and that there is no end to social evolution.

2.5.2 Polemics over the 'triumph' of liberalism and the 'end of history'

The model, therefore, flies in the face of Fukuyama's (1992:xi) assertion which, for example, states that the 'defeat' of communism, and before that of fascism and monarchism, necessarily means the end of the possibility of further refining the theory, for better human governance beyond Western liberalism. Thus, according to Fukuyama, social evolution came to an abrupt end with the collapse of communism and the apparent triumph of the liberal democratic ideal; because for Fukuyama (1989:1) the triumph of Western liberalism "at the realm of ideas" marked the end of the idea-development of humankind, and cannot be improved on – except in refining democratic practice. To Popper (1999:124), Fukuyama's polemics are dismissed as "just silly phrases", with no basis in social fact. It is the view of Popper that Fukuyama has no chance of ever predicting the future course of either humanity's ideological evolution, or, indeed, the end of it. Instead, for Popper (1999:135), history ends today, and all that is needed is to learn from the past, for the future is neither the prolongation of the past nor the extrapolation of the previous existence.

For Popper, history is a "reflexive process" through which individuals interface with reality – they are thereby in a position to correct their misconceptions, or to help influence the future paths of society's progress (Soros 2000:xxiii, 39; 1991:165–167; 1995a:212–213;

2002:133). If that is the case, then liberal democracy has the potential for further refinement or regression. That is why a major objective for the campaign for open societies is to ensure that systems and institutions are in place which support the further refinement of democracy, and stem the potential tide of regression. These institutionalised systems should constantly be kept in check by alert citizens, to ensure that they do not regress or become repressive. That way, societies that are open would forever strive to improve on their way of doing things, and would, in turn, ensure that institutions which serve society operate at maximum efficiency and with due respect for human rights.

Presently, the United States, the European Union and the West in general, are touted as being the closest there is to the ideal of open societies (Soros 2000:117; O'Hear 2004:190), with Britain and Switzerland being considered the best democracies in Europe. According to Popper (1999:81–84), Britain and Switzerland are closest to the ideal because democracy in Britain is rooted in the characteristic pride of the British people, their Protestant ethic, religious tolerance and the eminence of the citizens' consciences. Swiss democracy is rhizomed into the acclaimed Swiss pride and personal individualism, which is exhibited by the country's mountain farmers. For Popper, these are just two examples of countries where citizens are least humiliated, least repressed and least insulted. As such, they are the closest illustrations of modern and functional open societies. The argument, however, is that the construction of open societies never ends because the concept does not necessarily denote an "actual state" of being, or "an ideal one" (Soros 2006:45).

2.5.3 Defining characteristics of an open society

Irrespective of the fact that the ideal of open societies cannot clearly be discerned, there are, however, a number of features that various authors have identified as prerequisites for a society that is moving

towards openness. According to Soros (2000:117,133; 1995:112–113); O'Hear (2004:189–190); Mandela (1999:3–4); Ginwala (1995:1–14); Moseneke (1997:1–8); Nordenstreng (2000:33–36); Cuilenburg (2000:14–15); Kendall (1996:143, 150) and Nutturno (1999:43), societies that promote openness should demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Show respect for human rights and the right to freedom of expression and association;
- Exercise representative and deliberative democratic processes;
- Respect the rule of law, which is upheld by an independent judiciary, as opposed to rules imposed by monarchies, dictators or presidents who feel they are 'entitled' to rule;
- Practise social justice through non-racism, non-sexism and the abhorrence of any form of discrimination;
- Observe social responsibility by, and towards, all citizens;
- Exhibit a functioning market economy that respects private ownership of property, but also safeguards the interests of the disadvantaged;
- Preserve institutions that enable people with different belief systems to live together in peace and tolerance;
- Institutionalise processes that enable the peaceful, orderly and non-violent transfer of power;
- Sustain institutions that protect minorities, minority opinions and such minorities' freedom of choice;
- Demonstrate the absence of grand social blueprints for a good life which are imposed by leaders claiming that the grand plans are for the purposes of pursuing the agenda for national development;
- Allow the presence of free, diverse, plural, public interest and critical media that hold elected leaders and other social actors to account. Such media should provide a variety of content in

terms of topics, viewpoints, voices and values, as are broadly reflected in that society;

- Demonstrate a commitment to the peaceful resolution of all conflicts;

- Demonstrate a respect for, and acceptance of, the principle of social criticism as a necessity for social cohesion;

- Preserve structural mechanisms that ensure open, free and democratic debates and governance;

- Sustain intellectual infrastructure that ensures that civil liberties are prized, safeguarded, protected, and their principles are popularised;

- Provide objective information that enables the people to participate fully and effectively in their own governance and the decision-making processes of the state;

- Provide mechanisms for keeping alive free public spheres that facilitate the people's unlimited participation in local, national and state affairs;

- Demonstrate a respect for democratically enacted written constitutions that guarantee and institutionalise these characteristics;

- Demonstrate a culture of transparency and accountability in all spheres of public life;

- Ensure broad-based representation, by all social classes, ethnic or language groups, in the decision-making and policy implementation structures of the state, at all levels;

- Sustain and protect strong and professional public service-oriented media sectors;

- Reject corrupt practices in the conduct of state and other social affairs;

- Deliberately nourish the intellectual and social climates that favour individual creativity, dynamism, inventive thinking and the never-ending but ethical search for solutions to social, scientific and other problems.

If the above scholars are right, these characteristics should at least constitute something to be aspired to, in the quest for an open society, but as Tocqueville (1966:xiv) warns with regard to the American system of democratic governance, there should be no "slavish" copying of models, characteristics or institutions from one society to the other. Each society should strive to fashion its own institutions to meet its own ideals of an open society, as reflected in the natural temperament of the people in that society.

2.5.4 The nexus of the ideals of open society and the concept of public sphere

The above discussions illustrate certain identifiable characteristics that should be present before any society can qualify to be considered 'open'. An analysis of these societal qualities or distinguishing features, brings to the fore Jurgen Habermas's concept of the *public sphere*, which has, since 1989 (with the publication in English of his seminal work *The structural transformation of the public sphere: an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*), occupied a central space in any discussions about open political systems and democratic practices (Chibita 2006:18–19). The book originally appeared in German in 1962, with the Swedish version appearing in 1984, before the English version was published five year later (Dahlgren 1995:ix). As such, though the notion of public sphere is still considered valid and useful, it should be recognised as a concept that has existed for close to 50 years. Nonetheless, the concept has continued to inspire critical thinking about its relationship with democracy, and the role of the media in that political system, perhaps because democracy embodies a good number of the people's desire for a "good society". Alternatively, perhaps it is because since the notion appeared, it has been perched between practice and political philosophy (for instance, in Britain it has been used to defend the practice of public service broadcasting); or that its vision may have retained its inspirational qualities, while

scholars have accepted that as a single model its utility may not be universally acceptable for all time and in all circumstances (Dahlgren 1995:2–23). Nevertheless, the concept continues to raise questions about the formulation of media policy issues; the dimension of media representations; how to structure political institutions so as to take into account the considerations and boundaries of the public sphere; and even what to do with people's frames of reference, i.e. their innermost subjectivities. All these are issues surrounding the concept of the public sphere that should be noted, even though they may not be central to this study.

Essentially, however, the notion of the public sphere is traceable to the political activities of the ancient Greek states, where the public sphere was the arena where citizens would interact freely (Dahlgren 1995:7). But more specifically, Habermas (1974:352) defines the public sphere as,

> …a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body. They then behave neither like business or professional people transacting private affairs, nor like members of a constitutional order subject to the legal constraints of state bureaucracy. Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in unrestricted fashion – that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association, and the freedom to express and publish their opinion – about matters of general interest.

To Boyd-Barrett (1995b:231) the concept has taken centre stage and remained influential, partly because it blossomed at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Communism in Eastern Europe; and during the rise of consumerism promoted by then American president Ronald Reagan and then British prime minister Margaret Thatcher's

economic policies. These policies were diffused throughout the world and applied widely to public bureaucracies. The policies also included the privatisation of public media and the commercialisation of private media. These policies, according to Boyd-Barrett, revitalised and energised the practices and ideology of capitalism; the weakening of "radical oppositional analysis" and the softening of critical media scholarship that previously was premised upon discourses of political economy as alternatives to liberal media theory. This situation led scholars like Dahlgren (1995:1) to openly declare that "at this historical juncture, global capitalism clearly has no serious competitor".

According to Habermas (1974:351–352), Thompson (1995:252), Boyd-Barrett (1995b:230) and Chibita (2006:19–21), from ancient Greek times the concept evolved further in France and England – especially between 1680 and 1730, with the emergence of coffee houses or salons which, as public places, took over as meeting places for the bourgeoisie. Previously, this forum (especially in France) was provided by the royal residences in Versailles, during huge and lavish parties for the gentry – this allowed the 'cream of society' some time for intimacy and an opportunity to share ideas. However, when the French royal residence was moved to Paris, such assemblies became irregular and therefore, eventually, less important.

That is when discussions among the bourgeoisie shifted to coffee houses which, in London alone, at one time numbered more than 3, 000 (Habermas 1995:236). However, in both France and England, the salons and coffee houses became centres of literary and arts criticism, and henceforth, the prevailing political and economic situations. They were places where intellectuals and others (except women) met with the aristocracy on an equal footing outside of state structures. They were venues where the educated elites met, and where writers, for instance, initially published their works.

These have also been identified as the places where the bourgeois public initially established themselves as institutionally stable groups of discussants who – although they did not equate themselves with the public at large – claimed to speak for, act on behalf of, or represent the public (Habermas 1995:239). Thus emerged the concept of a 'representational' bourgeois public sphere which, in time, became opposed to the former 'representational' royal public appearance, where the nobility and the church represented their power to the people (Habermas 1974:351–352).

These changes, in form and content, of the public space were foisted onto society by various factors: they were partly a consequence of the death of feudalism; the rise of the nation-state and parliamentary systems; the emergence of commerce and the accompanying mercantilist and bureaucratic class; and the rise and popularisation of printing technology. All these factors gave rise to increased tension between the state and society, as the state – through various means, including the use of administrative measures – tried to intrude in the private spaces of individual citizens in an endeavour to control commerce and trade (Habermas 1989:24; Dahlgren 1995:8).

In particular, the rise of print technology and the subsequent increase in literacy among the public, ensured that knowledge was not confined to the church and the aristocracy, as more and more people now had the capacity to reflect on, and rationalise upon, their social circumstances. This enabled various challenges to be launched against state interventions in people's lives (Chibita 2006:22). In turn, social activism gave birth to civil society groups, which are a major feature of the political landscape of the world today. [The concept of civil society is dealt with in greater detail in this study, in chapter 5 (5.3, below)].

However, Habermas (1974:353) argues that the bourgeoisie were not, at this early stage, directly challenging the authority of the aristocracy, because political power for this new class was not "possible within the

exchange economy – private authority over capitalist property is, after all, apolitical. Bourgeois individuals are private individuals. As such they do not rule." What this class aspired to at this stage, was to limit the power of the nobility while remaining under the supervision of the nobles. What the bourgeois called for was a balance of power.

It is these social dynamics and social pressures which, in time, led to the emergence of the public sphere (Habermas 1974:353–354). It is this space which now includes written constitutions; representative authority or parliaments; political parties; civil society organisations (CSOs); and the media. Within the media, however, there has evolved the attendant editorial class, which claims to occupy the public space through its dealing with, and the moulding of, public opinion and discussions. In the opinion of Habermas (1974:350–351), public opinion refers to "the tasks of criticism and control which the public body of citizens informally – and, in periodic elections, formally as well – practices vis-à-vis the ruling structure organised in the form of a state", a task that in many cases is claimed by the editorial class.

This characteristic of the media gained further momentum and currency as societies evolved. From the 18th century (when as Habermas (1995:240) argues, the media focused on literary and art criticism, and confined themselves to remaining mere extensions of public discourses happening in coffee houses) to today (when the media have taken centre stage as promoters of public discussions), as Dahlgren (1995:2) states,

> …the health of democracy in the course of the twentieth century has more and more been linked to the health of systems of communication, though of course democracy cannot be reduced to issues of the media. However the dynamics of democracy are intimately linked to the practices of communication, and societal communication increasingly takes place within the mass media.

Dahlgren's argument suggests that the notion of public sphere has now fully encompassed the practices of the media, in the sense that the media enhance the interaction of the people. For, as Boyd-Barrett (1995b:233) further argues, the media are at the "root" of any responsible democratic system. In both senses, it can be argued that the notions of public sphere and media freedom are grounded within the Anglo-American tradition – a tradition that underscores the importance of media which are free and governed by the laws of the market. Under the concept of a 'marketplace of ideas', citizens, according to this tradition, have the right and need for useful, relevant, objective and quality journalism; the right to access reliable information from a variety of sources; and the right to a diversity of opinions on current issues, so as to enable them come to conclusions which will allow them to participate actively in the affairs of their communities (Dahlgren 1995:9).

But even though it is argued above that media freedom and the public sphere are critical concepts for analysing the functioning of democracy, it should further be possible to posit that the aspirations for free public spheres, and free media (as constituent parts of democracies) are, in Dahlgren's (1995:156) words, incomplete political tasks in the double-sided democratisation process that should involve both the state and CSOs. The roles of CSOs in this process or in society in general, are discussed in detail in chapter 5 (5.3) of this study.

2.5.5 Critique of Habermas's conception of public sphere

Admittedly, although the concept of the public sphere has been utilised in different ways by many scholars, it has not been without its critics. Central to these criticisms has been the notion that Habermas over-idealised the bourgeois public space as being representative of the social evolution of the time. This idealisation ignored the parallel, alternative and conflictual plebeian discourses that were taking place at the same time, although they were excluded from the bourgeois public

spaces and are not reflected in Habermas's descriptions. The plebeian discussions could not be equated to those of the bourgeoisie because they were neither a derivative of the bourgeois public spaces/discussions, nor were they subjected to them: these were independent discourses. Furthermore, Habermas's description of the public sphere also failed (until much later) to acknowledge that women were excluded from these spaces. In addition, Habermas's assumptions that the public sphere led, in the 19th and 20th centuries, to its "refeudalisation" and collapse due to the fragmentation of consumers of media products because of the commercialisation, manipulation and spectacularisation of the media, is to exaggerate the "passivity" of the public who consume media products. Research has proven that, in fact, consumers are active participants in communication processes (Thompson 1995:225–256; Dahlgren 1995:10; Boyd-Barrett 1995b:230–232).

Nonetheless, in spite of such criticism it is clear that the concept of the public sphere still has use in media and democracy theories, as well as the theory of an open society – which forms the point of departure of this study.

2.5.6 A debate over the strategies for achieving open society ideals

That aside, as has been demonstrated in this chapter (2.5.5, above), the creation of a viable public sphere or open society, in Tocqueville's (1996:XIV) view, raises questions about the best ways of working to implement open society ideals, for as Soros (2006:xiv) argues, no blueprint for an open society (or public sphere) should exist. Instead, each society should determine its own priorities and implementation strategies. Soros maintains that his role as the financier of foundations and institutions that are oriented towards the ideals of open society is to offer the frame within which such organisations should operate. He adds:

> …I refuse to propose a timelessly valid prescription because every society and every generation has to define the meaning of open society for itself.

In addition, Soros (2006:16–17) writes that Popper, his mentor, never exactly defined what an open society was, as Popper was averse to definitions, adding that,

> …in any case, an open society needs to be constantly redefined by the people who live in it, otherwise it might become a definitive design.

In that respect, when a society or an organisation adopts a definitive design, it closes ranks and becomes a closed establishment.

If that thought is set aside, it has to be appreciated that the open society is an ideal that has to be worked for, although in only a few respects, it has not been likened to existing political or economic systems (Notturno 1999:43). Those who have tried to draw comparisons, like what is cited in this chapter 2 (see 2.5.5) above, have only done so in terms of approximations. Others still, like Soros (2000:117), have associated the ideals of open society with concepts of Western democracies and the free market system –a juxtaposition which Notturno (1999:43) considers an unwarranted distortion of Popper's views.

Beyond that, it has to be conceded that Soros (2006:43) admits that the concept of an open society is complex, because, although similar to the concept of liberal democracy, it is "an epistemological concept, not a political one". As such, the concept is based on people's imperfect knowledge and understanding, and not on political theory. Accordingly, the concept lacks "proper grounding" in political theory (Soros 2006:46–49). In Soros's view, the concept's major utility is in providing the framework for critical modes of thinking and reasoning, whose

major social outcomes are uncertain, not predetermined and not yet perfected.

It is further argued that a major weakness in efforts to realise the ideal is, according to Burke (1993:188), the centrality that open society theory imposes on criticism. This critical approach assumes that members of society are able to generally appreciate the value of critical thoughts which, unfortunately, is not always the case. Burke (1993:188–192) further argues that most societies cannot sustain criticisms partly because individuals in those communities are not sufficiently trained and educated to match the levels expected of scientific groups.

Generally, societies do not welcome criticism, and besides that, some less sophisticated societies do not enjoy the luxury or material comforts which enable them to wait and allow for (developmental) policies, initiatives and problems to be subjected to such meticulous attention and debates. Often, such communities' situations are life-threatening, requiring immediate and 'quick-fix' solutions. Applying critical 'open society' approaches and techniques, like those outlined in the model in this chapter (see 2.5.10, above), in circumstances where critical approaches are neither a value nor a priority, cannot be easy. As Soros (1991:190) states: "Criticism is basically unpleasant and hard to take." This becomes worse in emergency situations, where critical minds are either not tolerated or are merely considered treacherous (Babu 1985:171).

Therefore, the absence of serious attempts to bring to bear the requisite critical exigencies in judging public policy in most post-colonial African societies is considered by Hountondji (1983:155, 214) as unfortunate and a mistake. This is so because in societies where official ideologies are not just "servile and irresponsible puppets" of the political regimes, such ideologies tend to mutate into facile pronouncements which, in many cases, are "a tissue of slogans" or

"pedantic propaganda" with no substance. In circumstances such as these, Hountondji argues that it is imperative that the critical sections of such societies impose their will by providing some reflection on policy formulation and implementation.

Hountondji's views are in line with the assumed roles of intellectual communities in any society, for as Nzongola-Ntalanja (1987:126) adds, although African intellectuals are known to be critical of the performance of their governments, they often fail to go beyond the confines, comfort and safety of university campuses to confront social practice by being part of activist groups. Such failure detracts from the causes of the social forces that work to transform closed societies into open ones. As Nicol (1967:15) argues, it is important that African intellectuals contribute to the change process, especially in politics, by cooperating and communicating effectively with politicians who may not be intellectuals, as a way of furthering the change process. When that is done, it becomes difficult for closed systems to remain closed forever.

2.5.7 The politics of alternative development, negotiated space and the Third World intellectual

At this stage it is pertinent to recognise that any references made to closed systems are not limited to those identified by OSISA and similar groups. Such references could also justifiably be extended to paradigms, models and ideologies of development that OSISA, its partners, associates and collegiates (including bilateral funding organisations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and World Bank, among others) may be using in "defining the nature of development" and "prescribing paths to achieve change" (Storey 2000:103).

As Matshabaphala (2001:13–14) argues, the closed systems approaches emerged around 1700 through Newtonian science that

posited the philosophy of permanence, continuity and inner-directedness through which people and organisations were expected to behave like machines, by reacting to the external universe in a linear fashion. Since around 1900, however, these mechanistic paradigms have been challenged by fundamental principles and philosophies that articulate greater openness in aspirations for development, and emphasise that environments and the accompanying paradigms are characterised by instability, chaos, discontinuity, change, and the need to empower people through consensus-building.

As Escobar (1992:412, 419) argues, since the Second World War discourses about and on development – or indeed the "whole enterprise of development" – have been consolidated into a "powerful and hegemonic form of representation" that is articulated and channelled through elaborate systems of knowledge and institutions. This hegemony has forced the societies and peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America to see themselves, and to accept to be seen, as the underdeveloped and "unfinished manifestations of a European ideal". This conception is, in itself, a form of alienation (Matshabaphala 2001:15–16) which ensures that collectivities of human beings take on the appearance of objects. According to Waters (2001:89), this has entailed that the people of the Third World are approached as problems that require "management and intervention".

The scholars cited above, and many others, have argued that these approaches cannot be allowed to continue. Instead, what is expected of intellectuals – especially those in Africa – is to go beyond a mere engagement with states and other development apparatus to challenge the dominant paradigm of development and aid-giving which, in the view of Escobar (1992:419), may have (in some instances) irreparably damaged "the immune system of many Third World communities, namely their cultures and local subsistence systems, thus producing a development-related type of AIDS".

Furthermore, Escobar (1992:430) identifies three areas in which the modernisation development paradigm needs to be critically engaged with, through discourse:

- The fulfilment of the "democratic imaginary" that is rooted in the egalitarian principles followed by donor organisations and others. In other words, there should be a fresh and critical re-examination of concepts like human rights, equality, economic and social justice, gender and ethnicity, which should encompass the strategies for the "radicalisation" of the principles of democracy and the understanding of the meaning of pluralism. In essence, this would emphasise the need to respect differences and the autonomy of cultures in the construction of identities, subjectivities and development plans. It would be an acceptance of each society's right to define its own development path;

- The above would, in turn, require the acceptance that past and recent national liberation struggles should be continued and refined, through a discourse that endorses that the struggles and campaigns of the indigenous peoples are a continuation of the liberations process;

- Ultimately, this would require embracing grassroots-based anti-imperialism struggles, such as the fight against the current hegemonies prevalent in development discourses, which include the forced absorption of Western technologies and development paradigms.

It is Escobar's (1992:431) argument that such a vigorous engagement would address the social needs and aspirations of a good majority of the people, including "the hungry, the illiterate, the marginals, the migrants, those belonging to the informal economy, the excluded women and indigenous peoples". This would also effect a move away

from dominant patriarchal paradigms and approaches to development (Wilkins 2000:207–208; Melkote 2000:40).

Undergirding all these views is the need to deconstruct discourses surrounding the concept of development, and thereby suspending the [African] intellectual's understanding of development aid, because as Escobar (1992:432) argues, the concept of development should – in all circumstances – be understood as a "historical construction" which, until it becomes normal and transparent, is neither neutral nor natural. It involves choices of definitions as well as choices of practice.

A re-assessment of development practices and discourses would necessarily, therefore, require that the exercise be situated within the contexts of power relations (Melkote 2000:40). This contextualisation demands that the dynamics that manifest in development projects, or between funding organisations and grant holders, be recognised for what they are: power plays. [For a demonstration of these 'plays' refer to the discussions in chapters 5 and 6 of this study.]

In arguing for the re-conceptualisation of the concept of communication for development in development projects, Wilkins (2000:207–208) states that such undertakings should recognise that foreign funded development projects are "created and justified through institutional discourses operating within a global system". Change, in this instance, would be possible only if those engaging with such interventions, clearly distinguished and identified areas and avenues of the discourse with the potential for reform, or for embarking on a form of resistance.

Essentially, there is a need to address the power relations that play themselves out at the grassroots level in any project. According to Melkote (2000:16), many projects fail not because the people at the grassroots do not have the knowledge, or lack the capacity to rationalise their problems and solutions to those problems, but rather because those people lack access to political and economic power.

Because of this lack, the people are unable to avail themselves of possible opportunities to improve on their lives. Melkote argues that when unequal power relations at the grassroots are ignored, development initiatives end up as either ineffective, or merely "function as mere bandages [or] temporary palliatives" to cover larger and long-standing problems. To avoid this, Gumucio-Dragon (2001:31–35) and Melkote (2000:49) suggest that development initiatives should, among other things, ensure that marginalised groups and individuals in any society have the capacity to:

- Perceive and articulate their social, cultural, historical, economic and political realities;
- Operationalise their needs;
- Identify the resources they need;
- Identify, articulate, and operationalise possible solutions or alternatives;
- Identify and gain access to individuals, agencies, or organisations which are crucial to meeting their needs for solving their problems; and
- Own the development process.

In that way, such pointed efforts would qualify to be regarded as, and contextualised within, the human development concept. This is what Alumuku (2006:86) regards as a process in which the people should not only influence the processes that shape their lives, but also have a say in the implementation of decisions that affect them, while participating in the monitoring and adjustment of development outcomes, where necessary. Such development practices then ensure that development initiatives are for, by, and of the people, because the grassroots participants are not merely participants in the projects, but also partners who are dialogically engaged – as is their human right (Huesca 2000:75). Nonetheless, Waters (2000:93) cautions that,

> …even though new approaches [to development] may speak a language of empowerment, they do little to foster the type of social and political change that links local agents with higher levels of policy and decision making. Assuming that participatory approaches are inherently more capable of generating social transformation is questionable, because we simply have not seen systematic analyses of how local agents engage with larger power structures.

Indeed, Waters may have a point, for real participation in development is what Mefalopulos (2003:259) judges as "a hard and complex task to accomplish". According to Waters (2002:323) it requires a proper understanding of the "discursive properties of development", through a multi-layered examination of the processes that inform and problematise the efforts of the people to effect social transformation. This is worth pointing out as a potential subject of further study, although it is not the core purpose of this thesis.

2.6 Towards the implementation of open society ideals

Perhaps it is because of the belief that the process of development is both multi-layered and involves a complex set of interactions (Storey 2000:106–107; Waters 2002:323; Mefalopulos 2003:259), or because criticism can be a luxury or something that is hard to digest; or in line with Tocqueville's (1966:xiv) advice for the non-duplication of democratic applications; or the inherent predilection towards cautiousness … any of these factors may have forced Soros, who was influenced by Popper (Soros 2000:103, 1998:ix; 1995:33; 1991:170), to err on the side of caution and moderation when designing and implementing his foundations for advancing open society principles in Southern Africa.

When Soros founded the initial Open Society Fund in 1979, it became the seed from which the current network of more than 40 semi-

autonomous foundations have grown and spread worldwide. The fund's mission was to offer alternatives to prevalent dogmas of the time, such as those in countries like South Africa and the then Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe, through the spreading of liberal-democratic ideals (Ryan 2004:177).

Apart from helping to open up these societies, the fund has not established specific guiding principles like those existing in planned societies or organisations (O'Hear 2004:192). As Soros (1995:112) argues, it is not possible to define the principles of an open society for every society – each country and institution should define these principles for itself. In any case, Soros (2000:122) claims to have understood Popper's standpoint that coining definitions for terms is not a necessity; that the primary objective of adherence to open society principles is to first describe situations before labelling them. It is, apparently, on this premise that Soros created his network of foundations, admitting that "we have never defined open society. Had we done so, the organisation would have become more rigid; as it is, flexibility has been our hallmark" (Soros 2000:122).

Thus, each of the Soros foundations that have followed in the fund's footsteps, was allowed to define its own operational niche in line with the needs of the region or country (Soros 1991:128). According to Soros (1991:215–216), to have attempted to do otherwise, would have been to impose a dogma that could have been compulsive, and also contrary to the ideals for which such foundations were founded. However, the overall aim of this approach was that the countries and people targeted for support should develop alternative policy positions as well as critical modes of thinking (Soros 2000:104). For Soros (1991:35) the objective of raising alternatives in the targeted countries is, among others, aimed at undermining the overarching powers of the political authorities, destroying prevalent dogmas; promoting critical thinking; and exposing discrepancies in existing arrangements.

As indicated above, these approaches were in line with how Soros understood Popper's teachings. It is no secret that as a student, Soros was greatly influenced by his teacher, Popper (Soros 2006:16). As such, it may be possible that Soros tried – as far as possible – to fit into the mould of his mentor's thinking.

However, although Popper's influence is clearly evident in Soros's writings, Popper, on the other hand, simply refers to Soros as "a pupil of mine, very many years ago. But we keep in touch all the time." The twist in the tail is that Popper regards his relationship with Soros as difficult, adding that "I do not want to continue the teacher-pupil relation" (Chmielewski 1999:35).

In an apparent response to this mild snub, Soros (1995a:33–34) admits he had "relatively little to do with him (Popper) at a personal level", and states that Popper was not his regular teacher at the London School of Economics. However, even though contacts between the two became more frequent in Popper's latter years, Soros (1995a:34) categorically states that it was not Popper the man who influenced him, but Popper's ideas – especially Popper's approach to the philosophy of science. This is an area where Popper argues for the falsification of hypotheses rather than following the dominant dogma in the research sciences, where hypotheses are generally meant to be proved. Soros nonetheless disagrees with Popper's positivist views about whether the scientific method could be used successfully in both the social and natural sciences. According to Soros (1995a:212–213) this is not possible, because human beings' understanding of the world is always imperfect, and as such humans always act from a position of imperfect knowledge, because nobody is privy to the ultimate truth. Knowledge, therefore, progresses through the recognition and correction of mistakes. That is the reason why, ultimately, individuals should strive to nurture the faculties of critical reasoning, and endeavour to build and sustain institutions that ensure that varying opinions and belief systems coexist peacefully. This approach could ensure that there is no support

for large-scale social engineering projects (Soros 1995a:112; Slabbert 2006:126).

In attempting to put into effect these beliefs and strategies, Soros's first foray was into South Africa, where his fund supported scholarships for black students to attend the liberal University of Cape Town – in that respect, his major commitment was in the form of 80 scholarships. Soros (1995a:144) states that the purpose of this initiative was ultimately to undermine the apartheid system, by educating Africans so that they could stand, on an equal footing, with the European-controlled establishment. Additional support was provided for training black journalists and doctors, and for direct support to organisations such as the Black Sash movement. A major political breakthrough came when Soros supported the first ever meeting between 50 leading white South Africans, and the then exiled leadership of the banned African National Congress (ANC) – a meeting that took place in July 1987, in Senegal (Neier 2003:329–330; Soros 1991:xiii–xiv, 5; Hacohen 2000:548). These and other activities are dealt with in more detail in chapter 4 (4.2, below).

2.6.1 Motivations for open society initiatives in Southern Africa

As will be shown in chapter 4, Soros undertook these initiatives under the burden of the context of his life's history. Soros was born in 1930 in Hungary, of Jewish parents. His father was a lawyer, journalist and soldier who (for a time) was imprisoned in Russian Siberia. His mother was a full-time housewife.

When Hitler invaded and occupied Hungary, Soros feared for his life – like other Jews, he was under threat of being hunted down. The situation only changed when the Soviet army took over Hungary in 1944 and established a Communist regime. Soros was only 14 years old then. Three years later, he left for England where he entered the

London School of Economics. There he met and established a relationship with Popper.

As already indicated, Popper was himself a Jew born in Vienna, Austria, in 1902. In April 1919, Popper joined the Austrian Communist Party as a volunteer, after being impressed by the Communists' stance as peacemakers during the negotiations and signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty that ended fighting on the Russian front. It was that peacemaking exercise that drew Popper to Communism, but this draw-card was built on Popper's parents' pacifist tendencies, which were apparent even before the war broke out. As shown in chapter 2 (see 2.2, above), Popper's liberal lawyer father was himself heavily influenced by the ideas of philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill – especially on issues of social justice and liberty. However, in June 1919, a mere six weeks after becoming a member of the Communist Party, Popper resigned after the police killed several Party demonstrators. The Communist Party explained the deaths as necessary catalysts for social revolution – a political position that did not sit well with Popper. Some 26 years later, Popper (in the book, *The open society and its enemies*) restated his abhorrence for sacrificing people's lives for present or future happiness (Popper 1999:130–134). This publication was to have a great impact on the life and future activities of Soros.

Such were the historical, experiential, personal and intellectual influences that went into Soros's formulation of the network of open society foundations that he personally supports. This network includes OSISA, whose structures, programmes and policies cannot be divorced from the abovementioned underlying philosophical currents.

2.7 Conclusion

The current chapter traces the historical origins of the concept of open society, and outlines initial attempts at building institutions around the

concept. This is in response to the research question (refer to chapter 1 (1.6)) about the constituent ideology of OSISA. In particular, this chapter deals with the theoretical aspects of the evolution of the open society concept, by transposing its principles onto the political practices in immediate post-colonial Africa. Such African practices were, in large measure, influenced by Marxism and ideas about pre-colonial African traditional systems theories. Chapter 2 forms the theoretical backbone that underscores this study.

The chapter observes that although post-colonial African political systems imitated traditional practices, they were not without their critics. The major critiques were that although African politicians reverted to the pre-colonial situation, it was only for the sake of expedience, as the traditional values that the modern African leadership espoused had not really existed in pre-colonial Africa.

The objective of analysing the immediate post-colonial systems in Southern Africa was to lay the foundation for exploring the influences that impacted the media landscape in the region – a central issue for discussion in chapter 3. Thereafter, in chapter 4, the study builds on the discussions by specifically focusing on the historical origins of open society initiatives in Southern Africa.

CHAPTER THREE: THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN MEDIA LANDSCAPE – PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explored the history, theories and philosophies that accompany the concept of an open society. What the present chapter sets out to do, is to sketch the concrete realities of Southern Africa by presenting in broad outlines an overview of the regions' media sector – from its founding to the present. The aim is to create the basis for a discussion on the rationale for OSISA's engagement with the region, which is dealt with in chapter 4.

Essentially, the current chapter is written in two parts: the first gives a synopsis of regional trends, taking a broader bird's eye view of the region. Tracking regional trends is necessary because, as chapter 1 argues, both historically and politically, now as in the past, the countries of the subcontinent have often been considered and analysed as a single economic unit.

Furthermore, political decisions have, over the recent decades, been taken to effect greater regional integration. At the economic level, this movement has been associated with the concept of *deep integration*, as opposed to *shallow integration*. The latter concept is premised on a form of economic cooperation that includes the removal of external barriers and the regional coordination of development planning. Such integration was symbolised by the establishment of the now defunct Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1980, which merely sought to coordinate economic activities in the region. Deeper integration, on the other hand, goes beyond the above measures and is supposed to tackle issues that include, at the economic level, the removal of internal trade barriers; and the development of common policies on issues like monopolies, licensing, and a regulatory framework. At the political level, deep integration requires that common policies are effected for the purpose of creating a single Southern African identity. The search for a common identity culminated in the Windhoek Treaty of 1992, which ushered in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In line with these regional decisions, various structures

have since been put in place, or have evolved in tandem. These include the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) and the SADC Electoral Commissions Forum, which are mere consultative platforms, but nevertheless push the agenda for greater regional approaches to specific issues. Aside from these regional movements, there have been equivalent shifts in non-governmental organisations in sectors such as academia, commerce, labour and the media (SARIPS 2000:16–28).

In the media, for instance, organically grown organisations such as the Southern African Editors Forum (SAEF), Southern African Journalists Association (SAJA), the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), the Southern African Media Development and Entrepreneurship Fund (SAMDEF), the Southern African Institute for Media Development (SAIMED), the Nordic-SADC Journalism Training Trust (NSJ), the Southern African Media Training Network (SAMTRAN), the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA), Gender in Media Southern Africa (GEMSA), Southern African Communications for Development (SACOD) and the Forum for African Media Women in Southern Africa (FAMW-SA) have been created, and are now functional and poised to address critical regional issues.

Through the process of observing these and other organisations, it is possible to correctly identify, isolate and study certain regional trends that cut across the borders of Southern African countries. Later, in chapter 4, the study deals with some of the abovementioned media structures that work around regional concerns.

The second part of the current chapter gives in-depth, country-by-country analyses of specified media sectors in three countries: Malawi, Zambia and Botswana. The sectors and countries were chosen for various reasons, the first being that all three share a common colonial heritage, having been British colonies or protectorates from about 1885 to the mid-1960s. All three became independent black states at about the same time: Malawi in July 1964, Zambia three months later in October 1964, and Botswana two years later in September 1966.

The second reason that influenced the choice was that all three have maintained English as the official language of communication at state level. Their judicial systems have similarly drawn heavily on British legal traditions, although to varying degrees.

Thirdly, Malawi, Zambia and Botswana were chosen because despite their colonial and historical similarities, their post-independence political developments have often taken different turns. Malawi emerged into what could be termed an African one-party state, or what in chapter 2 (2.2.3) is referred to as 'presidentialism'/one-person rule. Botswana has maintained some form of a multi-party system; while Zambian political history and processes could be placed somewhere in-between those of its two neighbours. In that sense, the three countries offer an interesting but broader kaleidoscope of political colours, trends and systems over a period of time.

The fourth reason that cannot be ignored, is that unlike neighbouring Angola and Mozambique, which were savaged by brutal and long-winded civil wars; or like Zimbabwe and Swaziland which have been subjected to strong-arm regimes; or Namibia which once was (with South Africa) compromised by the apartheid system; or Lesotho whose geographical size and economic might are not significant enough to have any major impact on its immediate neighbours; the three selected countries promised easier access to data, as well as published sectoral analyses.

Lastly, and perhaps even more importantly, the impetus underlying this specific study at this juncture is to select countries that could colourfully demonstrate some kind of continuum between elements of liberal democracy and personalised rule. To put it mildly, the choices were influenced by McQuail's (1992:9) continuum of the modelling of the historical conflict between government or state authority on the one hand, and media freedom on the other. According to McQuail, this struggle has historically progressed on a continuum – from a situation of complete *suppression* of the media that took place "in the name of the state or religion", through to *prohibition*, where the media were allowed to do some things but not others, to the age of *permission,* when control was loosened "in the name of liberty and of

business", to *prescription,* where the media were encouraged to promote "educational and cultural goals", to the generation of *libertarianism*, where the preponderance is on "market-based claim(s) to (the media's) unhindered freedom of operation".

As will be seen in the discussions that follow, this study endeavours to place Malawi, at a particular time, under the rubric of "suppressed media", Zambia under the umbrella of "prescribed media", and Botswana is blanketed under the ruse of "libertarian media system". All these terms and labels are deliberately not clearly spelt out, but can be discerned from the discussions. The deliberate avoidance of the act of directly labelling the countries, was intentionally done, so as to eschew the potential folly of having the labels determining the flow, and thus, bracketing the depth of the discussions. The idea, therefore, is not to force the foot into the shoe, but to allow the shoe to find its own shape.

The decisions that influenced the selection of the three countries are thus arbitrary as well as having been determined by the terrain of politics, history, language, geography, potential impact on neighbours, and the media-centric appreciation of media practices in the countries of the region, over time.

3.2 Methodological and contextual issues

To ensure manageability, this part of the study concentrates on examining one variable: media ownership. To that extent, the discussions regularly refer to the concept of control and the issues surrounding that abstract idea.

This is so because the notion of ownership is understood within the context of media structures, which McQuail (2005:192, 227) defines as all those matters that are constituted in media systems, and are related to funding or financing. As the saying goes: 'He who pays the piper, chooses the tune.' Although this does not always apply in real life, funding and financing are, in many ways, the motivators for instituted regulatory mechanisms; the determinants of the state of media infrastructure and the extent of distribution prospects of media products. According to McQuail, ownership can be categorised into three

sectors: commercial, not-for-profit, and public. In that sense, commercial initiatives can be led by a single person or a family, like Australian-born Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation (Thussu 2000:107; McChesney 2004:10), or a conglomerate like the America Online-Time Warner Group which, in 2000, was considered the fourth biggest company in the world, worth more than $350 million (Dunn 2004:72; Ronning 2002:51; Thussu 2000:120; Hamelink 1995:58).

Secondly, public ownership,[9] in McQuail's view, ranges from direct state control, to that expressed in configurations designed to promote the autonomy of media institutions (i.e. private ownership with a public mandate) and, finally, the non-governmental organisation (NGO) sector's ownership (i.e. ownership by organisations such as churches and political parties). But for the situation in Southern Africa, Nyirenda (1997:128) ignores the last form of ownership instead focusing on "private" as against "government" ownership. Although Nyirenda's model is conceptually narrow, it is helpful for analytical purposes because of its simplicity – it escapes the 'penchant' for establishing neat dichotomies between classifications – something that Ziegler and Asante (1992:43) assert is the bane of Western analytical minds. For our purposes, therefore, we will only use Nyirenda's model which places state and government-owned media in a 'rival' camp to that of independent or privately-

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[9] Article 19 (2006:37) tries, rather unsuccessfully, to establish the difference between government and state ownership of the media within the configuration of the 'public media'. For the British-based Article 19, state media are those which are controlled by the state and represent "state interests", whereas government media are controlled by "the government of the day" and supposedly represent "the viewpoint of the executive". What remains unclear in this desegregation is the point at which the executive – especially in Africa's case – departs or diverts from state interests. The question is: Who defines state interests, if not the government of the day, as is personified in the executive, irrespective of how that executive came to power? This question gains some significance, especially when counter-posed against Slabbert's (1992:4) concept of "contingent consent", which suggests that electoral victors in a democratic political contest eventually form the government and its executive, and as such, for the duration of their time in political office, such an elected executive does have the right and is entitled to "take binding decisions" over everybody, "until the next elections". However, Melber (2006:28) argues that although the victors may "formally be entitled to take decisions" and to act on behalf of the rest of the population without additional consultations, such actions and decisions need to take into account moral and ethical considerations, because immoral actions and decisions cannot be legitimate. The question still remains whether those morally upright actions and decisions that are taken by a democratically elected government are always, or never, in consonant with state interests. If not, when are they ever going to be?

owned media. Again, the determining factor for this choice is a consideration for the manageability of the current exercise.

However, in approaching the issues in line with this modelling, it should be appreciated that the concept of *media independence* inhabits a highly contested terrain. In this thesis, the concept is mostly used to refer to media institutions or environments that are not state owned or controlled. In other words, independent media are the "other" to government-owned media. Thus, at the very minimum, the expectation for the media to qualify to be clothed in the label of 'independence' has to be measured against that media organisation's freedom from "state control and coercion". For daily newspapers, in particular, this requires that there be no discernable "direct or indirect state ownership" by the state or state actors (Martin 1992:335).

In that vein, therefore, it should be acknowledged that the concept of control – when linked to that of ownership – traverses the descriptive perspective offered by Chan (1997:111), who associates control with the Chinese Communist Party's exercise of power and influence over the media through a mixture of restrictive measures like "legal limitation, policy directives, administrative rules, mini campaigns and normative guidelines". Such an association and definition of control is anathema to Ziegler and Asante (1992:43), who strive to make a distinction between "controlled" and "directed" media. To Ziegler and Asante, controlled media are those institutions where the interplay between "philosophy, functions, operations and content are under the *immediate* oversight of the government". They distinguish such oversights from directed media, whose philosophies are *guided,* mostly through persuasion rather than coercion, by government policies and developmental objectives. Chan does not see, or just ignores, this distinction with regard to the Communist Party's influence over the media in Communist China. To Chan, perhaps, in the social circumstances prevalent in China, such separations could be frivolous.

This chapter adopts Chan's perspective, and so views 'control' in a rather holistic manner. Furthermore, the chapter tries to demonstrate how media owners – especially governments – continue to exercise and impose, directly

or indirectly, their authority on the media institutions they own, by determining the media's roles and expected performances.[10] It is further proposed that the inordinate exercising of this clout does, to a very discernible degree, affect the manner in which media content is presented, which in turn, impacts and influences recipient audiences' attitudes towards and thinking about issues (Fourie 2001a:122). Therefore, this position substantially departs from that taken by Ziegler and Asante.

Related to ownership, there are issues around the concept of media performance and the measurement thereof. McQuail (1992:1–17 and 2005:173–174, 186, 192) situates the exercise of measuring media performance within the civic sphere, i.e. within the context of what the media may do "in their public capacity". Related to this line of thought are society's expectations of the responsibilities of the media, and how individuals in that society may accrue benefits from the media (McQuail 2005:162). But, as McQuail (1992:1–17) warns, examining the media's performance within these expectations, or similar checks on media performance are not easy exercises to undertake, partly because there are various ways in which the process may be approached. This would include an examination of the media enterprise's internal organisational efficiency, or checking the impact the media product has on the audience. It could also involve the using of a range of optional methods embraced by the cultural studies tradition.[11] The tests may also approach media institutions from the internal institutional media ethics angle,

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[10] The position taken in this regard coincides with that of Hrvatin and Petkovic (2004:12) who, in reference to the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe, assert that media owners are not only positioned to exercise some influence on media content, but that they, through various means, "dictate" what the media publish. This, in the view of socialist revisionists, could be seen as too simplistic a position, as it may over-emphasise Marxian economic determinism to the exclusion of human motivations (Baradat 2006:179). The position, though, accepts but side-steps the necessary recognition of the fact that although the Marxian notion of determination is important, it is effective in the *first instance* but does not explain everything that happens in media or any communication processes (Golding and Murdock 1996:15).

[11] Within the cultural studies tradition there are several schools of thought that include an examination of how media texts are consumed; the analysis of the social and cultural context in which these products are sent and received; and how the messages, as meanings, are consumed and utilised. Some of these approaches have led to the development of structuralist branches of research that have dealt with processes of coding and decoding messages, representation, etc, (McQuail 1992:13; Fourie and Karam 2001: 469–505; Golding and Murdock 1996:12) – processes that fall outside the scope of this study, but it is necessary merely to acknowledge that they exist.

which could examine how the media observe and adhere to various ethical standards and self-regulatory mechanisms. Furthermore, it could include a social-cost benefit analysis that tests the media institution's ability to meet the social policy goals, such as those of public education, health or social welfare. Finally, there is the classical critical Marxist approach that examines media performance from class or bureaucratic based positions.

As mentioned above, this chapter adopts the last option, with the caveat that determination is not everything.

What will not be done, is to evaluate whether ownership patterns, in whatever form or manner, have served the public interest well. This is so because the concept of 'public interest' is itself contested or oblique, with "no generally acceptable or satisfactory definition" (Mak'Ochieng 2006:12; McQuail 2005:164–166). Some major questions that colour the full appreciation of the concept include those already cited, for instance, who qualifies to define public interest? In addition, Sono (1992:24) extends the discussion when he declares that public interest or the general will is often determined by the rulers, without reference to the ruled:

> …we do not have a general will. We only have the will of the rulers who, in their search for legitimacy, extol the abstract virtues of the citizenry while seeking its concurrence, after the fact, in legitimating *a fait accompli.*

However, Oosthuizen (2001b:167) argues that public or national interest clearly exists, and is found in the articulation by governments in democracies that represent the majority of the people. In those situations, governments then determine the national interest, and thereby set the parameters for the rights and roles of the media, so as to "best serve" those societies. Therefore, in reality it is political power that determines the nature of the media system in any country.[12] Melber (2006:23), on the other hand, when referring to Namibia

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[12] But Mak'Ochieng (2006:12–14) argues that relying on political power to ascribe meanings to the concepts of 'public' or 'national interest' is inadequate, because it is just one element among three theoretical definitions assigned to the concepts. The first of these emerge from "preponderance theories" which assert that public interest corresponds to majoritarianism, or

and Southern Africa, agues that the concept of "national interest" (as directly related to public interest), is often used by former liberation movements that have negotiated their way into, or have captured, state power to "justify all kinds of authoritarian practice". They comprehensively take control of the state machinery and perpetuate their hold on political power while excluding from the political process those they consider critics, or either dismiss them as unpatriotic or anti-national. Hoggart (2004:131), on the other hand, accuses the media of abusing the concept of public interest by reducing it to a "euphemism for sensationalism". Drale (1985:2–5) pushes the definitional boundaries a little further when she states that the concept is a description of the "dialectic of the common good", in the sense that it defines the media's social and practical "tension between independence and responsibility". What Drale seemingly asserts is that in their professional capacities, the media are faced with practical tensions of trying to balance their aspirations for independence in what, for all practical purposes, is "an interdependent universe". Furthermore, media professionals and other media theorists are faced with the problematic of not being able to completely divorce themselves

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the preferences and choices of the majority of the people. It is within this ambit that Oosthuizen's argument may be placed. Secondly, there are "common interest theories" that tend to aspire to determine the common denominators supposedly enjoyed or shared by all the people. These denominators include social utilities like communications systems, i.e. roads and railways; the environment, i.e. water and air; and the security and governance apparatus. The third set of theories is constituted within the "unitary" notions of concepts based on the enunciation of an "absolute and universal normative" – goods that are valid in all situations, and for all times. However, Mak'Ochieng cites a major flaw in the third set of definitions, namely that they are inclined to be ideological, paternalistic and authoritarian. The fault with preponderance theories, in Mak'Ochieng's view, is that it is doubtful whether one can permanently rely on majoritarian opinions and attitudes to determine, with finality, and in the long term, any of the complex social issues. However, although Mak'Ochieng does not raise the issue, it is still unclear as to who within the common interest theoretical framework qualifies to define what is of common interest beyond the post-debate resolution of public issues, and mere presumptions – especially since debates are never conclusive – and/or in situations where socio-political formations ensure that some of the cited 'common' goods and basic services such as transport systems, power and water utilities have been privatised and are thus owned by profit-seeking individuals, some of whom may not even be nationals. Nevertheless, Mak'Ochieng does conclude that only the national constitution is good enough to define what is in the national or public interest. But what would Mak'Ochieng say about constitutions such as those of apartheid South Africa and present-day Zambia, which were/are under widespread public dispute? Or, strictly speaking, what would he say about the post-1994 South African constitution, which was negotiated by black and white elitist groups, and then adopted by the elitist parliament to the almost total exclusion of the common people? Can such a constitution legitimately 'define' public interest? That aside, it is clear that by promoting the national constitution as the definitive edge of the public interest, Mak'Ochieng situates his argument within the common interest framework of theories which, as shown above, may not be an indisputable position to take.

from the social contexts in which they operate, since each of them – as individuals who belong to "socially bound group(s)" – is shaped by a social history, attitude and existence, which he or she cannot escape.

Drale (1985:11–12) further adds that there are two ways in which the concept of 'public interest' could be approached. The first takes into account the *form* in which the concept is finally expressed. The emphasis here is that 'public interest' could be discovered through the use of a particular and validated process whose outcome would constitute a public interest, regardless of what form that interest finally takes. The second approach is to emphasise the *content* of what constitutes 'public interest'. In this regard, what is important is not what process was used in discovering the 'public interest', but rather that the content of what will be in the public interest, or in the public domain, is described and defined before the process is undertaken. The issue here, however, is that since the content of the constituent parts (of what is in the public interest) is defined beforehand, questions arise about the legitimacy of not only the content, but also the social, historical and/or spiritual conditions that may have given birth to the constituent parts of the content of what is conceived as 'in the public interest'. Furthermore, there is lingering doubt about the legitimacy of those who make the choices, for as Raboy and Abramson (1998:329) argue, there is no consensus about what constitutes public interest despite all the claims made by policy interventions.

In Drale's (1985:161) view there are thus both *qualitative* and *quantitative* perceptions of what is in the public interest. In terms of qualitative perceptions, the *process* used in arriving at what may be termed as being of public interest may lead to "something that generates a 'good' outcome for the public"; while in terms of *content* this may refer to "something that is 'good' for the public". From a quantitative perspective, the *process* may lead to "something that insures majority input'; while the *content* may lead to "something that the majority desires". In that regard, what may ultimately be defined as of 'public interest' is not categorical, but fervently disputable and contestable.

As can be discerned, at the centre of these discussions about whether the media serve the public interest, are several perspectives that depict various theoretical contestations as well as conceptual disputes.

However, it should be acknowledged that Drale's views, outlined above, in some way – especially as Drale's opinions relate to the 'social-embeddedness' of media institutions and journalists as workers therein – are also in line with the notions first articulated by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956:1), namely that the media are always shaped by the social and political structures in which they operate. The three writers thus modelled the media of the time as either being Soviet-Communist, authoritarian, libertarian, or socially responsible. In brief, within the Soviet model, the media were expected to lead the people to a predetermined aim and were part of the ruling party. Within the authoritarian concept, the media were controlled by the state and were never expected to challenge the government of the day. As such, the flow of information was always from the ruling classes at the top of the social ladder to the people below. Under the libertarian theory, the media belonged to individuals who were expected to pursue their interests freely. Often this freedom was positioned as freedom from government control. Under social responsibility theories, the media were assumed to have a responsibility towards societies by being truthful, accountable, representative and reflective of the constituent parts of the societies they served (Hachten 1971:45–50, 1999:17–32; McQuail 2005:168–180; Wilcox 1975:102–113). These conceptions have since been expanded on by other scholars, both before and after the collapse of the Soviet model. For example, the social responsibility model has been extended into the public service broadcasting category, where the media funded from public funds, are expected to reflect the diversity inherent in societies, and to exhibit universal coverage while promoting national cultures. Beyond this, the four theories have been revised to include civic journalism, democratic-participatory, alternative, interactive, emancipatory, small, developmental and communitarian theories (Melkote and Steeves 2001:31–32; McQuail 2005:183–186; Sturmer 1998:8–13; Fourie 2001:269–275), and as Kasoma (2000a:57) adds, donor-driven" conceptions.

Another recent post-modern revision of Siebert et al's four theories is described by Fourie (2001c:275–277), who cites scholars like Karl Nordenstreng and McQuail as having endeavoured to articulate fresh theories on the roles and functions of the media. According to these new outlooks, media roles can either be normatively prescriptive or realistically descriptive. While the earlier normative theories were "subjective conceptions" of the roles of the media, they were usually promulgated by opinion leaders in societies. Latter-day descriptive conceptions try to describe the "real" situation of the media in societies. According to such theories, media systems, individual journalists or media institutions could have "a combination of roles", which could include upholding and building democratic practices; developing societies and uplifting citizens; critically appraising dominant social ideologies; and providing credible and professionally produced information that the public could utilise; and promoting various cultural expressions. Thus, the arguments are that the media could collaborate with governments in national development; set agendas for societies; watch over decision makers; sustain public discourses on critical social issues; and facilitate debates on "the prevailing social order".

These theoretical developments aside, this study reflects on the theories of the media's role in 'serving the public interest' only against OSISA's engagements with media initiatives, and how those initiatives respond to OSISA's presence in the region. In another way, there is also a reflection on the characteristics of an open society, outlined in chapter 2 (2.5.3) against the media initiatives' appreciation of those principles. The processing of these reflections is dealt with in detail in chapter 6.

In preparing for the coming discussion, therefore, this section of the study adopts and adapts a methodology that Wigson (2001:5), quoting H.F. Dahl's term "deep drilling", defines as the process of examining interactions between media institutions and government, so as to understand the impetus of the changing relationships between the two power centres. In adapting this method, what are left out are the technological, economic and cultural influences and dynamics. Instead, great emphasis is placed on political

actions, utterances and policies, as articulated by leading political actors in Malawi, Zambia and Botswana. Some mention is obviously made of the legal framework in one instance or the other, but this is on the understanding that the law comes after the fact – after the policy declaration of a political leader.[13] Thus, in a way, a historical narrative description is utilised for the purposes of fully understanding the contextual framework of the media in Southern Africa.

In that regard, although the media that are dealt with fall within the definitions, like agencies that enable communication to take place (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Sounders, Montgomery and Fiske 1994:176), or channels through which content is transmitted (Fourie 2001b:214), these definitions are not fundamentally useful for the present purposes. The study limits the meaning to what is tangible, or to technological expressions of those means of communication. These are what Fiske (1990:18) categorises as "representational" and "mechanical" media. More importantly, a further limitation of the study is that only the press, in terms of newspapers; and radio, in terms of the broadcasting sector; are dealt with in some depth. Admittedly, this leaves out a whole range of media manifestations that will have to be dealt with by others at some time.

These sectoral limitations were decided – in terms of newspapers – by historical factors: newspapers were the first serious mass media in world history (Oosthuizen 2001a:129), with the oldest known printed newspaper being the *Courante uyt Italian*, published in Holland in the 16th century (Hamelink 1995:21). In the case of radio, the choice was influenced by the medium's ubiquitous character (Head 1995:4; Ziegler and Asante 1992:55), for as Chibita (2006:171) states, radio remains a major channel for providing Africans with access to public information, and is a means of communication.

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[13] This position is in total agreement with De Conning's (1995:113–114) assertion that public policy is a "statement of intent" that aspires to articulate "basic principles to be pursued to attain specific goals". These statements are often meant to interpret specific values of society, and are consequently followed up by "pertinent project and programme management actions". In this instance, the follow-up actions are the draft laws and regulations that political leaders bring before parliaments for discussion and enactment.

An additional reason for studying the two media sectors separately is provided by Wigson (2001:3, 97–98), who argues that theories and models that relate to the different "strands" of media "are not readily interchangeable", and so the different sectors cannot be properly studied together. As an example, Wigson states that in South Africa, broadcasting history has been shaped by the expectations of the governments of the day, while the print media have more often than not been driven by the commercial imperative.

Moreover, within the African context there are issues of accessibility of the different media formats. Compared to other media, like the more expensive Internet or satellite television, for example, radio has for a long time been considered the most pervasive medium in Africa, with the greatest potential of effecting change in people's attitudes (Nyamnjoh 2005:48; D'Souza and Owen 1995:1). In Malawi, for instance, radio has been said to be "the most important news medium in the country" because more than half of the population can neither read nor write (Carver 1995b:41); and a person does not need to be literate to get the 'messages' from radio broadcasts which are usually aired in the local languages. It has also been estimated that by the year 2000, in sub-Saharan Africa, there were more than 100 million radio sets, whose unit costs were becoming cheaper by the day (Fardon and Furniss 2000:1). As a result, the 1983 research by the British Broadcasting Corporation's External Services estimated that there were only about eight people per radio set in sub-Saharan Africa, compared to 37 people per television set in sub-Saharan Africa (Chibita 2006:171; Head 1985:327). On the other hand, newspapers have always been for literate urban dwellers who, within the African context, are usually the leading elites and opinion makers. As a result of the above factors it is pertinent, within the scope of this study, to select radio and newspapers over the other media in use in Southern Africa.

As such, several considerations were taken into account when deciding what to include and what to leave out. As shown above, in terms of the choice of countries, those included had to reflect the diversity of the media freedom environments that exist in the region. Another consideration was the political systems that had evolved in the countries since independence: these had to

be representative of general trends in the region. Thus Malawi, Zambia and Botswana were chosen to illustrate these factors. In terms of the media included in the study, radio and the press were decided on because (a) radio is the most popular medium in the region (Head 1985:327; Nyamnjoh 2005:48; Chibita 2006:117), while (b) newspapers as a medium has a history of over 200 years on the continent (Hachten 1993:15). The following section, therefore, discusses the coming of these media to Southern Africa, with special attention being paid to the media policies in the three countries: Malawi, Zambia and Botswana.

3.3 A historical overview: from colonialism to the present and back

It is generally agreed that modern mass media appeared in Africa with the arrival of the European conquerors, missionaries, settlers and governing officials from around the 18th century (Chibita 2006:113; Hachten 1993:viii; Mativo 1989:342, 388–389). The first recorded newspaper in Africa was published in Egypt during Napoleon's occupation of the country (Kasoma 2000a:11). However, Mbennah, Hooyberg and Mersham (2002:43) believe the earliest newspaper on the continent was the *Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser*, which was founded in 1801. This fact is disputed by Sturmer (1998:10), Hachten (1993:15) and Barton (1979:5), who state that the first newspaper on the continent was the *Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser,* which appeared on 18 August 1800 but ceased publication after three weeks.[14] The *Royal Gazette*, on the other hand, was first published in February 1801.

However, although there is apparent scholarly conflict over the dates and order in which the newspapers were first published, what may not be contested is that the earliest newspapers were introduced by Europeans, to serve European information needs and interests. The newspapers, too, were designed along the lines of those then in existence in Europe (Banda

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[14] The initial publication dates of the *Cape Town Gazette* are also in dispute. Wigson (2001:35) and Hachten (1993:15) place the birth date of the newspaper, which was started by "corrupt slave dealers" Alexander Walker and John Robertson, as 16 August 1800.

2003:29; Sturmer 1998:11; Rantao 1996:4–5; Hachten 1993:17; Ziegler and Asante 1992:23; Okigbo 1995:192).

Prior to coming to Africa, the newspaper had a long history in Europe and elsewhere. The origins of this form of mass media can be traced to the invention of writing and printing by the Chinese in 581 AD (Mativo 1989:57). Later, the German Johann Gutenberg introduced the printing machine to Europe in 1445. Then William Caxton 'invented' the printing press in Britain in 1476. Following these technological developments, printed news sheets (as opposed to hand-written ones) like the *Daily Courant* began to appear in continental Europe. In 1719, the *Barrows Worcester Journal* appeared in Britain, to be followed by the *Times of London* in 1785, the *Daily Mail* in 1896, and the *Daily Mirror* in 1903 (Mativo 1989:342). Thus Ward (1989:21) is able to assert that because of these technological improvements and thanks to better distribution systems, the printed press were the first to achieve mass media status in the 19th century.

With all that in place, it was inevitable that as they landed on the continent, the Europeans would bring these models with them into Africa.

In Zambia, for instance, the first newspaper is said to have been the *Livingstone Pioneer and Advertiser*, which was launched in 1906 (Gender Links 2003:17; Kasoma 1990:11, 1986:19). As Kasoma states, throughout the history of Zambia, the ownership patterns of newspapers have ranged from companies, private individuals, the churches and the state. The *Pioneer* was a private newspaper which, in its wake, was followed by others such as the *Central African Post, Northern Advertiser, Copperbelt Times* and *Northern News.* In Malawi, the first newspaper was the *Central African Planter*, which was established in 1895 but was renamed the *Nyasaland Times* in 1908 (Patel 2000:163). Kasoma (1986:19) adds that all these were European-owned papers that strictly pursued policies whereby the indigenous people were non-existent in their pages – unless the African people's activities had a direct impact on the lives of the European settlers.

For instance, the *Livingstone Pioneer and Advertiser* issue of 13 January 1906 editorialised that as a paper, it was an extension of British colonialism. For instance, in its opinion column of that day, the type-written newspaper stated that,

> …as the organ of a British pioneer settlement we boldly take up an optimistic attitude as to the immediate future of the great territory we are actively engaged and employed in civilising and preparing for inclusion in the glorious British Empire. We are convinced that as a nation, whatever our failings in tariff systems, army organisation or party government, as colonisers we are pre-eminent. Sooner or later our free institutions, just laws and indomitable pluck and energy shall induce peace, prosperity and progress.

Thus Ettinger (1986:25–26) argues that as part of the colonial project, the newspapers not only served the informational needs of the Europeans, but were also used to psychologically integrate and unify the colonial empires. Such integrative media roles were taken even more seriously during the Second World War. However, these roles were primarily carried out by the newly invented radio.

That consideration aside, there is again a dispute as to who invented radio. Claims abound, but the generally acceptable narrative is that ultimately the radio, as we know it today, was a culmination of separate and unassociated inventions by scientists from as far afield as the United States, Canada, Italy, France, Britain and Russia, towards the end of the 19th century. Various components, such as the amplifier, transmitter, wireless telegraph, the vacuum tube and other accessories, consisting of "more than 20 inventions" together, were tried out across the world from the final years of the 19th century to around the 1920s when, according to Kasoma (2002:1) the first "regular broadcasting station", 8MK, went on air in Detroit, USA.[15]

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[15] Other authorities, like Head (1985:14) pinpoint the beginning of radio broadcasting on 1919 experiments by Dutch and Canadian scientists, adding that the first regular broadcasting station was KDKA in Pittsburg, USA. This was followed by Popov's experiments in Russia and the subsequent regular station which Popov introduced in 1922. What is not in doubt,

Some of the prominent claimants regarding the invention of radio broadcasting include the Italian Guglielmo Marconi, who took out a patent on his invention in England, in 1896. But then a Briton, Oliver Lodge, had already laid claim to something similar to Marconi's contraption. In Russia, Alexander Popov had demonstrated some broadcasting machinery on 7 May 1895, while the Frenchman Edouard Branly was also hard at work on similar devices at about the same time. A few years prior to that, James Maxwell from Scotland had developed a theory on electromagnetism which was eventually proved in a laboratory setting by the German scientist Heinrich Hertz (Head 1985:14).

Ward (1989:82), among others, argues that these technological inventions were spurred on by the demands of the First World War, but that is another story.

In Africa, radio broadcasting was either introduced in the 1920s (Mbennah, Hooyberg and Mersham 1998:50), or 1930s (Kasoma 2002:2). But Wigson (2001:6–7) seemingly sides with Mbennah, et al., when he traces amateur broadcasting in South Africa to experimental transmissions in Johannesburg in 1923, and regular broadcasts in July 1924. This assertion is backed by Bosch (2003:71), who considers that the first broadcasts took place in South Africa in 1923, while McKay (2003:33) dates the initial broadcasts on the continent to those in Johannesburg in 1924 – a mere two years after broadcasting began in Europe.

These disputes aside, it should be accepted that these narratives are pointers to the beginnings of radio and newspapers in Africa. It is from these foundations that both media sectors were popularised across Southern Africa.

In summary, Chibita (2006:112–117), Okigbo (1995:192), Spitulnik (1994:7), Hachten (1993:14) and Zaffiro (1991:5–8) agree that both media formats were introduced into Africa at the behest of colonial urgencies, mercantile pressure, and the need to proselytise, and after the Second World War to dampen

however, is the spread of radio which was so fast that within a decade more that 40 countries had broadcasting stations. By the end of the 1960s, almost every country had joined the broadcasting club. The last to do so, according to Head, was the nation of the Cayman Islands in the Caribbean, which only introduced radio in 1977.

indigenous Africans' enthusiasm for freedom and independence. The media were also used to promote the virtues of settlerism and colonialism.

With these imperatives, it is objectively understandable that the colonial authorities and their accompanying agents (like missionaries and business entrepreneurs) sought to dominate, or aspired to become, major owners of radio stations and newspapers in Southern Africa during the colonial era.

Apart from the economic and social realities of the time (for example, the black African population did not have the economic means to own expensive broadcasting and printing facilities, and/or the indigenous population was almost overwhelmingly illiterate, as writing was not part of the culture, which is why they depended on oramedia[16]) these new information and communication technologies were imbedded with different value systems and had different skills needs and expectations that were almost absent from the African population.

Nonetheless, it would be naïve to expect that the European immigrants could have brought and implemented values systems and technologies beyond those they grew up with, and were socialised into. Thus the radio and newspaper systems that were imported into and spread across Southern Africa had to be typically European.

The media grew and were sustained in tandem with the political, social and legal systems put in place by colonialists in the region. At the political level, the social and legal systems complimented the need to control the territories. At the economic level, Chibita (2006:113) argues that the value systems were meant to enhance the objectives of mercantilism, Christianity and the ideology of free enterprise. These ambitions were all protected within the edifice of a framework of laws and regulations, some of which were directly copied and supplanted from the metropolis without any sort of minimum reform or adaptation. In many cases, as Otlhogile (1996:54) argues, as part of the

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[16] Kivikuru (1990:122–123) defines 'oramedia' as a traditional form of communication that includes music, poetry, drama, dance and song to reinforce ethnic traditions in cultures and societies where modern means of communications are lacking. Sturmer (1998:24-25) on the other hand, states that such media largely reside in rural Africa.

colonial project, the laws imposed on African territories like Botswana were more draconian than those which obtained at the time in Britain. Otlhogile states that in terms of media law regime, the model applied in British colonial Africa was "authoritarian", as opposed to the more liberal model which was then operational in Britain.

Elements of these laws included provisions for the licensing, banning and prosecution of the media or media personnel – actions that had already been abandoned in the mother country. Some of these laws included the Printed Publications Acts that are traced to the colonial laws of 1947 in Botswana, Malawi and Zambia, that required newspapers to be registered by the Registrar of Newspapers (in Botswana), or the Director of National Archives (in Zambia and Malawi) before being published. The information required by the registering authorities included the titles of the newspapers, addresses, and details of the publishers and editors. Other draconian laws are the so-called "insult laws" (Berger 2007:160) which, in the three countries, protected the presidents and "foreign" royalty from being defamed by the media.[17] The Official Secrets Act (in Malawi), the State Security Act (in Zambia) and the National Security Act (in Botswana) prohibit civil servants from disclosing government information to the media, without the necessary authority to do so. The penalties for contravening the provisions of these 'security' laws range from imprisonment of a maximum of 30 years in Botswana, to 25 years in Zambia, and two years in Malawi. All these security laws can be traced back to Britain's Official Secrets Act of 1911.[18] Otlhogile further argues that these tough laws were necessitated by "the need to control [African] nationalist politics" and the sustenance of what Chuma (2004:112) refers to as the European "minority public sphere" – an attitude that after independence was transformed into the sustenance of the public sphere of the ruling class (Ndlela 2003a:324) in many of the former British colonies in Africa. But, as

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[17] As Kemigisha (1998:10) states with reference to Uganda, "criminal defamation is perhaps the most hurting of all legislation against the media [because] it is inconsistent with freedoms of expression and the media as guaranteed by the Constitution" and is also "untenable in democratic societies. Many countries, including Britain from where Uganda copied it, have recommended its scrapping. The biggest argument against it is that civil defamation is enough to provide remedy to any plaintiff."

[18] For a detailed analyses of these and other media-restrictive laws refer to Balule and Kandjii (2004:21–33, 45–53 and 106–114).

shown below in this chapter (see 3.5.1–3.5.3), when discussing the specifics of Malawi, Zambia and Botswana, whereas during the colonial era the newspapers were mostly owned by private individuals or firms, the situation dramatically changed after independence when the government (in the case of Zambia), the state (in Botswana), or leading politicians (in Malawi) directly controlled much of the printed press. In general, and across the board, in the three cited countries broadcasting remained a state operation.

As shown above, and as will be demonstrated in this chapter (see 3.5, below), although in much of Southern Africa the colonial period lasted for less than 90 years, its impact (especially in the media field) is still very evident today. This is more so in terms of the abovementioned surviving media laws, but also in terms of value systems, institutional structures, or more broadly, media ideologies.

3.4 The principles of constitutionalism and the democratic project in Southern Africa

At independence, much of Southern Africa had negotiated supreme laws or constitutions, which in large measure balanced African nationalist aspirations with those of the minority settler interests. Typical examples of such constitutions include those of Zimbabwe in 1980, Namibia in 1990, and earlier constitutions negotiated at Lancaster House in London for Zambia and Malawi in 1963 and 1964, and Botswana in 1966. But perhaps the most dramatic demonstration of the 'balancing act' is encapsulated in the current South African constitution. That aside, in general, it is argued that "at least on paper", all Southern African countries are constitutional democracies.[19] All these supreme laws embody the basic principles of a constitutional order. Such principles encompass those of constitutionalism; respect for democratic conduct and accountability; and the separation of the functional executive powers of government, which include the presence of effective mechanisms for inter-operational checks and balances (Waal, Currie and Erasmus 2003:6–25; Burns 2001:5–18).

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[19] This view was emphasised by Louise Olivier, lawyer and legal researcher at OSISA, in conversation with the author on 22 November 2006.

In terms of the principle of *constitutionalism,*[20] the negotiated supreme laws endeavour to provide frameworks within which governments seek to derive sufficient power to govern, but within limits. This is often done in two ways: the structures of government are delineated, as are the procedures to be followed when exercising the power of governance. In terms of this arrangement, government can only do so much within the set limits of the constitution.

Secondly, the principle of constitutionalism provides that no law can be effected if it is in conflict with the basic premises of the constitution. In that regard, the constitution is the supreme law of the land and also the legal guiding light of the country. If it so happens that government, parliament or any such other branch of the state acts contrary to the parameters of the constitution, any of these public institutions could be arraigned before the courts of law. The principles of constitutionalism also place a burden on parliament not to amend any parts of the supreme law without following previously set out procedures, as outlined in the supreme law of the land.

In other words, constitutionalism is a situation whereby the state is founded on, and functions in accordance with, a written set of principles that is embodied in the supreme law of the land (Burns 2001:7). Apart from respect for the constitution, such a state is characterised by the separation of powers and roles of state structures (executive, judiciary and legislature), guaranteed respect for human rights, and the practice of changing governments peacefully. State structures ensure that each of those structures oversees the performance of the other, and that citizens too have the opportunity to probe into and examine the accomplishments of the different structures individually. This oversight role takes into account Popper's (1966:67, 125–126) fears that

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[20] This narrative and what follows is dependent on Waal, et al (2003:6–25), where a much more nuanced description may be found. However, the objective of the long narration of the constitutional principles serves not only to emphasise these constitutional ideals, but also to highlight the deep chasm that exists between the ideal situation of constitutional rule, as is established in this chapter (3.4), against the current and past practices that exist in Southern Africa (as established in (3.3), and further developed in this chapter (see 3.5)). The reason for doing so is to emphasise the fact that although most of the region's legal regimes could be said to be constitutional democracies, as provided for in the individual countries' supreme laws, the practices and realities on the ground are very different. In a way, these two sections of the chapter are meant to set the stage for discussions that follow in chapters 4 and 5 of this study.

social institutions that are unsupervised are like machines that multiply people's capacity to do either good or evil. As such, all social institutions need to be overseen intelligently, constantly and consciously, because often public institutions have a built-in propensity to turn themselves into "fortresses" that develop a culture of tyranny only amenable to change through violence. The constitution, therefore, provides the framework through which the operations of state structures are overseen or supervised.

With regard to the principle of the *rule of law*, a constitutional set-up avoids violent changes to its structures through the adoption of the moral maxim that all political actors, including administrative ones, should only act within the set standards of the constitution. Any conflicts arising from different interpretations of the provisions of the law should be determined by courts that are impartial and able to constrain the possible abuse of power (Slabbert 2006:143).

The above practices are distinguishable from totalitarian methods, like those which obtained in Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy, where the states were a law unto themselves. The Nazi state, for instance, held both moral and juridical powers and its actions were not open to critical examination by any other authority (Popper 1986:66–68). In the words of Hitler (1936:179) the state was expected to work "untiringly" to ensure that the political leadership and government were free from "the principle of control by minorities … so as to secure the undisputed authority of the individual in its stead … [with all the major decisions] made by one man."

In democracies, however, individual rights are contained in the constitutions' bill of rights – sections which, in Southern African states' supreme laws, read so much alike. These sections include, among others, the right to equality and human dignity; freedom of conscience and opinions; freedom of association; freedom of expression; the right to citizenship, etc. In some cases, specific rights refer to the freedom of the media, as in the constitutions of Namibia, Malawi, South Africa and Mozambique. In addition, there may be specific references to the right to information, as in the case of South Africa and Malawi. By contrast, in totalitarian regimes some racial groups, or women,

have no rights (Hitler 1936:175, 239, 277). This was the case in Nazi Germany where, for instance, women were reduced to mere "subjects" of the state who could attain full citizenship only after marrying German men.

With regard to *accountability,* what the principles of constitutionalism highlight is that no persons or social institutions – including religious bodies – have the divine right to rule over others (Waal et. al. 2003:15). Historically, the predilection for some to claim the divine right to rule can be traced to Pope Gelasius, who in the year 496 opined that the world was subject to two parallel but equal jurisdictions, with both ultimately deriving their authority from God. These parallel jurisdictions were the Catholic bishops and the monarchies. While the bishops were responsible for the spiritual side of humanity, the kings and queens were supposedly divinely empowered to oversee the political side (Germino 1982:118–120). However, according to Waal et al., political governance is only legitimate if it is based on the consent of the governed, and on the understanding that the governors will be in office for a limited time.

The above is a fundamental principle of democracy that could be said to have assured smooth transitions from one-party regimes to democracies in Zambia in 1991, Malawi in 1994, and from minority rule in South Africa in 1994. Often this principle is ignored (as was the case in Angola in 1992, or Zimbabwe after the March 2008 elections), and that leads to protracted political problems. In Angola, for instance, it led to the resumption of the previously suspended civil war, while in Zimbabwe it has led to a sustained political stalemate and economic meltdown, as a good number of countries – both neighbouring and beyond – have questioned the legitimacy of the continued rule of Robert Mugabe's regime.[21]

In terms of accountability, the organs of the state are not only expected to reflect the will of the people, but are compelled to be responsive to the whims

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[21] The inter-political party clashes that followed the 2006 elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) tested the efficacy and the acceptance of this principle in an important country in South-Central Africa. The Congo is strategically placed at the 'heart' of Africa, and is potentially one of the richest countries in sub-Saharan Africa. What happens in the DRC has potential political and economic repercussions for more than eight neighbouring countries. Fortunately, the disputes were eventually settled amicably through negotiations.

of the citizens. The principle, therefore, places at the forefront the people's right to know, and to access public information. Within the structures of the state, the executive is expected to be accountable to parliament and the judiciary, and vice versa. The media are placed somewhere in-between these 'oversight role processes' by acting, according to Ronning (2001:64), as watchdogs of society.

This arrangement ensures not only that the separation of powers is effective, but that the principle of *checks and balances* between the various structures is not just outlined in theory, but is put into practice. This balancing act is based on the democratic theory that the various branches of the state have different roles to play. For example, parliament makes laws; the executive executes the laws, while the judiciary interprets the laws. Ideally, the officers in the three branches of the state should be different people, although this is not always the case – especially in parliamentary democracies, where some members of the executive are also parliamentarians.[22]

In this arrangement, the role of the media is following up closely on the activities of the three institutions, and to ensure that these institutions act responsibly and according to set procedures and the law. But, as we have seen above, this is only possible when the basic principles of constitutional democracy are observed and respected. These are principles of respect for the separation of powers among the different structures of the state; the accountability of all social actors; respect for the rule of law; and respect for the provisions of the supreme law of the land. In the previous section (3.3) we demonstrated that although these basic principles may be included in national constitutions, subsequent laws and regulations and the conduct of state structures in Southern Africa may not always be congruent with the

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[22] For example, in Botswana, cabinet ministers must be appointed from among elected parliamentarians; in Malawi and Zambia ministers can be picked from outside the national assembly, but when they are so chosen, the president is obliged to nominate them to parliament. In Botswana, the president is a nominal member of parliament who may attend parliamentary proceedings, but may not vote. In Malawi, the president can participate in parliamentary proceedings, but cannot vote. In Zambia, the president can address parliament, but is not a member of parliament (Nwabueze 2004:171–175). As expected, these variations play themselves out differently in the three countries.

expectations and provisions of the various national supreme laws, especially as regards Malawi, Zambia and Botswana.

3.5 The state of the post-colonial state

The above discussion highlighted the principles guiding most constitutions in Southern Africa. The objective of the narrative was to place the ideals of a constitutional state at the centre of discussions, before examining how actual practice has reflected on those ideals since independence. Together, as indicated above, all these current discussions are merely laying the groundwork for analyses of why and how OSISA came to intervene in Southern Africa – a topic for the next chapter. In reflecting on praxis, the following section pays special attention to the evolution of media–state relations in Malawi, Zambia and Botswana. This section traces the emergence of personalised and rule in Malawi as well as its consequences; capturing the essence of the benevolent and hesitant democracy in Zambia; and the unique practices of the (debatable) multi-party democracy in Botswana – a country often regarded as the oldest democracy in Southern Africa. This is done within the context of the purpose of this chapter, which is to demonstrate the practical differences between constitutional ideals and the realities on the ground. It is also in response to the research question about the factors that induced the formation of OSISA.

For a start, it should be acknowledged that a few years ago, Africa was dominated by what could be termed as authoritarian or one-party regimes. Nwabueze (2004:255, 364) points out that by 2002, out of 53 independent African states, 43 had been "at one time or the other" either *de facto* or *de jure* one-party states. In Southern Africa the only exceptions to the rule were Swaziland, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa. Swaziland was, and still is, a no-party monarchy, while the other four were, and are, multi-party democracies. Nwabueze adds that out of the 43 one-party states, 11 had declared themselves "socialist". In Southern Africa, the once openly Marxist-socialist states were those of Angola and Mozambique.

On the whole, however, whether or not the one-party states had declared themselves socialist, they were, according to Nwabueze (2004:255), neither absolutist nor totalitarian,[23] but merely authoritarian,[24] as they were subject (although to a limited degree) to the supreme laws of their countries – a situation which forced such leaders to refer to the legislatures for the changes they needed to effect in national laws.

Nonetheless, these one-party states demonstrated a gradual erosion of the democratic process, and the conflation of and personalisation of power in the president. In turn, the judiciary and legislatures slowly became subservient to the executive, while cabinets were reduced to the presidents' tools or rubber stamps, with ministers being mere "robots" who could not initiate any new ideas or do anything without the say-so of the "great leader" (Chiume 1982:202). At the same time, all other forms of checks and balances were abandoned, with the various state structures being subjected to the whims of the higher echelons of the ruling party (Nwabueze 2004:255–264). This was the state of affairs in Zambia from 1972 to 1991, and in Malawi from 1964 to 1994.

The following section analyses, in much greater detail, the political and media freedom environments in Malawi, Zambia and Botswana.

3.6 Malawi: the case of an 'African' one-party state and its consequences for the media environment

Mtewa (1986:6–24) traces the beginnings of African political consciousness in Malawi to 1943, with the formation of the Nyasaland African Council (NAC)[25]

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[23] The concept of totalitarianism was coined by Italy's Benito Mussolini to designate a state where "political leaders control every institution in the society and use them for political purposes as well as for the functions for which they were ostensibly designed". Such leaders not only dominate politics, but also all aspects of society including the church, economy, media, education, and the arts (Baradat 2006:226).
[24] This is the state in which political leaders are vested with "powerful political controls", but are denied "complete authority over other elements of society" (Baradat 2006:244).
[25] Speck (1970:6–7) offers a slightly different historical narrative by stating that the organisation that was the direct antecedent of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) was named the African National Congress (ANC), which was formed in 1944 by civil servants and small businessmen. The organisation was recognised by the colonial authorities in 1946 as representing African interests, but was banned in 1957 for its political activities. The ANC was replaced by the MCP, which eventually led Malawi to independence.

by a grouping of educated indigenous people who aimed to influence the colonial government's policies on the welfare of the African people. The NAC had brought together about ten separate entities which included the Natives Industrials and Chiradzulu Associations (formed in 1909); the African Industrials (formed in 1911); the North Nyasa Association (formed in 1912); the West Nyasa; Mombera; Southern Province; and Central Province Associations (formed between 1914 and 1927). Unfortunately, when these groups came together to form the NAC, they could not agree on a unified leadership.

In 1958, after an absence of more than 43 years, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, then living in Britain, was invited by Malawi-based politicians like Kanyama Chiume and Masauko Henry Chipembere, to take over the leadership of the NAC. Chiume (1982:92–99), Tangri (1975:259–260), Welensky (1964:83–84) and Pachai (1973:241) explain that Banda was invited because of the then "pressing need" for unity within the nationalist movement, and the expectation that the person who would take the top position in the NAC could demonstrate a respectable combination of both age and higher education – which Banda had. Pachai adds that before Banda arrived in colonial Malawi, the organisation and leadership of the NAC "were not equal" to the demands of the time. Also, the leader of the NAC was expected to embody the hopes and militancy of the youth, and to "bring unity, democracy and dynamism" to the nationalist movement. However, according to Speck (1970:7) and Welensky (1964:98), Banda only agreed to lead the fractious NAC "on his own terms", and on condition that he was allowed to be solely responsible for the appointment of members of the NAC executive committee. This, according to Welensky, gave Banda complete "autocratic powers" – a scenario that set the tone for the conduct of Malawian politics for more than 40 years thereafter.

Shortly after his return to Malawi, Banda was detained for igniting some level of militancy in the Malawian people's calls for independence. Upon his release, he assumed the leadership of the renamed Malawi Congress Party

(MCP) – a political vehicle through which he led the country to independence in 1964 (Lwanda 1993:10–16; Mgawi 2005:36, 43–44).

However, it should be noted that before independence, the MCP was not the only political party active in Malawi. Other parties were the United Federal Party, Christian Liberation Party and Christian Democratic Party, but these fizzled into oblivion when they failed to win seats in parliament during the 1961 elections. Banda's MCP secured all 20 seats reserved for Africans in the lower chamber of parliament (Mgawi 2005:44–46; Mtewa 1986:6; Speck 1970:8), thus setting the scene for the dominance of Banda's MCP in future political processes in Malawi.

But even before he secured this dominance, Banda had already signalled his style of government soon after assuming the leadership of the independence movement, when he said he would not have "fools" in his cabinet. In 1962, he referred to his ministers as "my boys", adding two years later that the ministers enjoyed being "his boys" because "by so doing I impart to them some of the things I know and they do not know. Therefore I am very, very, happy indeed." Later, he expressed similar sentiments when he declared that as the leader of Malawi, what he said was the rule, "whether anyone likes it or not … no nonsense, no nonsense … you can't have everybody deciding what to do" (Lwanda 1993:27, 64). In fact, Malawi's former foreign minister in Banda's government, Kanyama Chiume (1982:205) concedes that Banda often treated his cabinet ministers "worse than his kitchen boys".

These anecdotes demonstrate the style of governance that Banda put in place after 1964. He was the supreme leader who enjoyed exercising political power and personal dominance over the national economy for more than four decades. He was the absolute ruler who exercised personal neo-colonialism over his country (Mtewa 1986:25; Michaels 1995:1). To secure his place in the top office of the land, Banda drafted what he termed the "four cornerstones" of his party, the MCP: "Unity, Loyalty, Obedience and

Discipline", which were the signposts for conducting politics in Malawi.[26] Banda's apparent aim was to forge a Malawian nation that was united behind him, with a disciplined population who was loyal to him and obeyed his directives. Eventually the principles of the MCP found their way into the national constitution. According to Mtewa, these principles formed the basis for the enactment of draconian laws such as the Preservation of Public Security, and the Preventive Detention Order which gave Banda the power to imprison anyone at will, without allowing them recourse to the courts of law. These laws were brutally enforced by various organs of the state, including the intelligence services, the army, the police and the notorious paramilitary force of youths known as the Young Pioneers, who could detain anybody at any time. Such a detainee could only be released on Banda's orders. The Young Pioneers only answered to Banda, not to anyone else in the country (Mtewa 1986:90–91; Lwanda 1993:102).

3.6.1 The defining media law in Banda's Malawi

For the purpose of understanding the background to the media environment in Malawi, it may be of the utmost importance to appreciate the significance of the following section of Banda's penal code, which states that,

> …any person who by any means whatsoever, communicates, or attempts to communicate, to any person outside Malawi any false statement, information, report or rumour which he has cause to believe may be published or broadcast, either in the form or language in which he communicates it or in some other form of language, to the public generally in some place outside Malawi or to any section or such public shall be guilty of an offence if such publication or broadcast may reasonably be expected to be harmful to the interests or the good name of Malawi.

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[26] A marble-lined mausoleum built at Banda's grave on the western side of the main street of the country's capital, Lilongwe, and on the fringes of the new Parliament buildings, includes four pillars that are inscribed by the words: Obedience, Unity, Loyalty, and Discipline, perhaps to signify the 'enduring' message of Banda to his Malawian people.

According to Mtewa (1986:91–92), Wilcox (1975:75) and Mwakikoti (1992:122), this law effectively closed the shutters on Malawi. No news could flow properly from that country to the outside world. Any person who contravened this law was liable to life imprisonment, and was at the mercy of the whims of the president, as Banda was the only person who determined what was "false" or "true" news in Malawi. Besides this law, there was the rather restrictive Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act of 1968, which criminalised the publication of anything that could be constituted as undermining the authority of government, or the confidence of Malawians in the Banda regime (Patel 2000:161).

When placed side-by-side with Banda's temperament, and then read together and enforced, these laws totally crushed any prospect of observing individual rights in Malawi, let alone the freedom of the media.

The cumulative effect of these laws is that more than 849 books were banned in Malawi during Banda's presidency. Titles included Mario Puzo's *The godfather*; George Orwell's *Animal farm*; René Dumont's *False start in Africa* and Chinua Achebe's *No longer at ease*. These books were among the more than 100 magazines, various periodicals, and a dozen films which were disallowed (Patel 2000:161–162; Mtewa 1986:94; Carver 1995:44).

3.6.2 The evolution of the media in Banda's Malawi

In enforcing the above legal and political environment, particularly with regard to newspapers and radio, Patel (2000:162–163) argues that Banda exercised "absolute control" over both in terms of content as well as their management and ownership. For Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) radio, Banda was effectively its director-general, controlling it from State House. Also, the MBC was the only broadcaster allowed to operate in the country.

Thus, although Malawi has a long history of privately-owned print media, that started with the establishment of the *Central African Planter* in 1895, which was in 1908 renamed the *Nyasaland Times* and is today called the *Daily Times* (as referred to in chapter 3 (3.3) above), Banda had by 1970 acquired

majority shares in this paper and the paper's publishing firm, the Blantyre Print and Publishing Company. Patel (2000:163) is unclear about how Banda came to be the dominant owner or majority shareholder of both the publishing house and the newspaper. Patel's guess is that Banda exerted political pressure to gain control of the newspaper, so that by 1969, "the demarcation between the private company, government and the ruling party became blurred."[27] In a similarly 'mysterious' manner, the MCP's newspaper, the *Daily News,* which was launched in 1959, ended up as Banda's personal property[28] (Lwanda 1993:197; Patel 2000:163).

The legacy of Banda's tight control of the media has been hard to crack, even after he left office in 1994. Today, in Malawi, the media have continued to be controlled by political heavyweights who influence editorial content, the recruitment of staff, and the management of the media they own. The country's main printing press, the Blantyre Print and Publishing Company, is still controlled by politicians, while both the governments that succeeded Banda have continued to exert tight control over the MBC (Patel 2000:163–164).

The Malawi situation may be similar to what Eribo and Jong-Ebot (1997:x) and the London-based media rights' advocacy group, the International Centre

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[27] For a more detailed analysis of this phenomenon and the dominance Banda exercised over Malawi's commercial and industrial sector through his Press Holdings group of companies, whose tentacles extended to newspaper publishing, refer to Chiume (1982:220–222).

[28] One explanation is contained in Barton's (1979:154–155) historical narrative on the media in Malawi, which states that the *Central African Planter* was changed to the *Central African Times* after 1900, and later to the *Nyasaland Times.* In 1962, the newspaper was bought by Roy Thomson who in 1972 sold it to Banda. At about the same time, the pre-independence Malawi Congress Party-initiated newspaper, the *Malawi News,* was bought by Banda who turned it into the *Daily News.* However, the mystery remains about the sources of the funds Banda used to purchase the newspapers as, by this time, state assets had already been conflated into his personal possessions. However, a former Banda acolyte, Chiume (1982:198–199) gives a possible indication of the early sources of Banda's wealth: in 1961, Chiume handed over 14, 500 British pounds to Banda after a fundraising tour of African countries, in preparation for the 1961 general elections. Banda allegedly told Chiume not to tell anyone about the money. An additional 14, 000 British pounds of party members' contributions were sent to Banda's personal bank account in London. Furthermore, when the Party's account in London was closed, some 888 British pounds from that account were handed over to Banda, never to be seen again. In 1964, Chiume states he deposited 10, 000 British pounds of Party funds into Banda's personal account in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. These funds were not publicly accounted for, as no financial statements were ever published or allowed to be discussed by the Party's general conference, from the time Banda took over the leadership of the nationalist movement.

Against Censorship (also known simply as Article 19 (2000:1)) refer to as the propensity by African regimes to want to turn the media into "ideological tools" that are made to "sing the praises of dictators". This has resulted in what Patel (2000:162) and Carver (1995:44) have called feeble journalism that is "strictly restricted" to what the state permits.

In the case of radio in Banda's Malawi, Patel says that it tirelessly and endlessly gave minute details of presidential activities, including his tours of the country, speeches, admonitions and assurances that all was well in the country. The actions of the Malawi radio station were similar to what is now prevalent in Zimbabwe, where Robert Mugabe's regime has, according to Chuma (2004:136), reduced the media to "hapless cheerleaders".

As demonstrated above, the explicit control of the media in Malawi was partially the result of Banda's personality, but more importantly from the normative theoretical perspective, it was a function of an authoritarian state.[29] In that context, the control of the media had to be direct, explicit and strict. The role allocation for the media by an authoritarian state does not come about through a consensus or the quest for the common good – it is an act of the political leadership. The overall aim is to sustain the status quo by controlling the flow of information and ensuring that the law is obeyed and order is maintained (Oosthuizen 1989:12). It can also be argued, as Matlou (2004:33) does, that this form of media control, and the legislation through which such control is enforced, is "a reflection of the balance of political as well as economic forces in the geopolitical landscape" of any country. In other words, where power is unbalanced, the dominant social actors – whether political or economic – will underwrite the laws governing the media. This is so because realistically, media institutions are part of the structures of society, while the media products themselves, i.e. media texts, pictures, images and

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[29] In fact, McQuail (1996:69) asserts that in societies where there are clear ideologies, there are most likely parallel but also clear media ideologies. In the case of Malawi, the ideology of personalised political control was very clear, and if McQuail is right, this had to be reflected in the manner of control that was exercised over the media.

ideas constitute a part of any society's culture, since the technological base of the media is a part of any society's economic base.[30]

To illustrate Matlou's views, it can be argued that the media environment in Malawi dramatically improved for the better, following political changes in 1994, when the country became a multi-party democracy under the presidency of Bakili Muluzi, a former acolyte of Banda (Carver 1995:40; Lwanda1993:305). For a limited time, especially during the euphoria that marked the end of Banda's rule, there was a "media explosion" in Malawi (Michaels 1995:8). Private newspapers sprang up, and by 1979, Article 19 (2000:117–119) had recorded more than 79 titles on the streets of Malawi. Some were of a limited lifespan, while others survived. In addition, two new privately-owned radio stations emerged: the first was owned by Al Osman who had just retired as President Muluzi's press spokesperson. The second station was introduced by the son of a minister in Muluzi's cabinet (Patel 2000:166). As is evident, all the media – old and new – were still either owned or controlled by people with close ties to either the past or current political leaderships (Konrad Adenauer Foundation 2003:9; Article 19 2000:3). On the other hand, the *Daily News* was now run as a Malawi Congress Party newspaper.

However, after the collapse of the Banda regime in 1994, new laws governing the media were put in place. The new constitution guaranteed media freedom and the freedom of expression. A semi-autonomous Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) was instituted to oversee the communications sector, while the independence of the judiciary was once again entrenched.

Notwithstanding the above, with time, it is claimed that the more things changed at the political level, the more they remained (virtually) the same in the media environment. Although this may not be entirely true on a comparative basis, it is nonetheless argued that after a brief post-Banda honeymoon of media pluralism and freedom, the media environment may

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[30] For comprehensive analyses of similar political economic approaches to the roles of the media in society, refer to Fourie (2001:121–126), Golding and Murdock (1996:14–29) and Mosco (1996:70–134), who are among the authorities who give intense overviews of the various strands within the political economy school of thought in media studies.

have regressed somewhat. For instance, the broadcasting sector has continued to be controlled from State House, although, admittedly, in a much more relaxed way. The president nevertheless continues to appoint members of MACRA, while MACRA's Chief Executive is ostensibly the appointee of the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. The minister, in turn, is appointed at the pleasure of the president. In terms of responsibilities, MACRA regulates all radio frequencies and is the licensing body for all radio spectrum users in Malawi. In addition, to date no law regulating access to public information has been enacted (KAF 2003:14–17; Patel 2000:164–173).

Furthermore, Kadzamira (2000:58) and Patel (2000:168–169) are of the opinion that although the constitution guarantees media freedom, and the newspapers are now by and large "refreshingly free", the two governments that have succeeded Banda continue to exercise an inordinate influence over public opinion formation, through the "unfettered use of the radio waves" by controlling the national broadcaster, the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC). Thus, essentially, the MBC has continued to be regarded as a devoted "mobilising agent of the government". Also, as stated above, the print media are largely affiliated to politically connected individuals and organisations. Basically, the elites of the new post-Banda political order continue to speak to each other, among themselves, and/or against each other, while the majority are either not listening or do not fully understand what is going on. The voices of the poor, weak, inarticulate and marginalised are, therefore, still on the wings of the political process.

It is within this context of the marginalisation of the majority of the people in Malawi and other Southern African countries that the media environment should be seen, as we investigate open society initiatives in the next chapter.

3.7 Zambia: the legacy of an uncertain presidential state and benevolent one-party state

Unlike Malawi, which came into independence with only one strong nationalist party, Zambia emerged into self-rule with a multi-party system in 1964. The roots of multi-partyism were laid in the 1962 elections that produced a hung parliament in line with the designs of the colonial power of the time. The elections were designed to ensure a balance of seats between European settlers and African nationalists. The electoral roll was drawn up in such a way that the country was divided into three huge constituencies: the upper roll seats were to be dominated by European voters, with only 7, 321 Africans being eligible to vote for candidates who qualified for these seats, out of 37, 330 voters. The lower chamber of parliament was meant to be dominated by African voters, with 92, 255 Africans qualifying to vote. The national rolls had 70, 000 eligible voters and the seats were competed for separately by both Europeans and Africans. Each of the three 'constituencies' had 15 seats in parliament (Sardanis 2003:89–96; Mayuya 1994:6; Kasoma 1986:15).

The net result of these elections was that the European-dominated United Federal Party won all 15 seats in the upper chamber of parliament, while the more conservative nationalist party, the African National Congress (ANC) took four seats of the national and lower chambers, and the much more radical United National Independence Party (UNIP), led by the future President of Zambia, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, amassed 14 seats in the two national and lower chambers (Sardanis 2003:129). After negotiations, the two African-led parties, the ANC and UNIP, joined forces in a coalition government, taking control of the executive wing of the transitional government with Kaunda as the first African Prime Minister, but initially supervised by a European colonial Governor, Sir Evelyn Hone. Two years later, on 20 January 1964, fresh common roll elections were held and Kaunda's UNIP won 55 parliamentary seats, with ten seats going to the ANC, while the remaining ten were reserved for European representation in the 75-seat national assembly (Sardanis 2003:146; Hitchcock 1973:37).

These elections laid the basis for Zambia gaining independence in October 1964. Unlike in Malawi, at this stage of Zambia's history no single political party could have laid claim to an overwhelming mandate to direct national

political development towards its own predetermined ends. Thus, Zambia emerged into black rule as a multi-party democracy. The trend was repeated in subsequent elections in 1968 when, with the appearance of other new political parties besides the ANC, the balance of political representation was maintained in parliament. The status quo generally remained unchanged until 1973, when through Kaunda's banning of serious opposition parties like the United Progressive Party and the United Party, and through the application of pressure and in negotiations with the ANC, Kaunda in 1973 proscribed other parties and declared Zambia a UNIP-led one-party state.

According to Pettman (1974:235–236), Kaunda's shift to the one-party mould was prompted by his government's "continuing and compounding sense of frustration, vulnerability and impotence" in achieving the promises and objectives stated at independence. At that stage, the nation-state had remained largely unformed, while the state structures and "instruments of control" were also largely inadequate for the tasks of national development and consolidation. Pettman further states that at the political level, Kaunda's philosophy of humanism (referred to in chapter 2 (2.4) above) had failed to become the expected national mobilising force, as the nation's political fabric (both within and outside the ruling UNIP party) exhibited serious divisions. Externally, Zambia's support for the African nationalist movements had achieved little, as the European regimes in Southern Africa remained strong while the liberation forces remained fractious.

To further compound Kaunda's difficulties, Uganda's President Milton Obote, who, together with Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, was one of Kaunda's closest political allies on the continent, was removed from power in a military coup in 1971. Pettman (1974:241) observes that although Kaunda's one-party state increasingly relied on the use of internal force, with the objective of what Chisala (1994:32) regards as the "hidden agenda" of keeping Kaunda in the presidency for life, the one-party state did not ease Kaunda's worries or indeed Zambia's critical political and security problems, as the government did not have the means "to impose its authority on everyone".

Zambia's one-party constitution specifically declared that "there shall be one and only one political party or organisation in Zambia, namely, the United National Independence Party (UNIP)", whose constitution was annexed to the national constitution "for information" purposes only. However, the national constitution declared that nothing contained in the supreme law could be "construed as to entitle any person lawfully to form or attempt to form any political party or organisation other than the [UNIP] party, or to belong to, assemble or associate with, or express opinion or do any other thing in sympathy with, such political party or organisation" (Kasoma 1986:216).

As is evident, all fundamental political rights and freedoms of association, expression or assembly that are taken for granted in constitutional multi-party democracies were effectively cancelled out by this provision of the one-party constitution.

Such a provision crystallises Nwabueze's (2004:255) view that the typical African one-party state eroded the fundamental human rights of citizens (as discussed in chapter 3 (3.5) above) – a situation that is in conflict with the ideals and principles of democratic constitutionalism (the principles outlined in chapter 3 (3.4) above). In addition, such one-party constitutional provisions allowed for the unfettered continuation of colonial (or the fresh enactment of post-colonial), draconian media-related security and secrecy laws – some of which are referred to in chapter 3 (3.3) above.

3.7.1 The media environment prior to Kaunda's Zambia

In terms of the media environment in general, the origins of newspaper publishing are outlined in chapter 3 (3.3) above; a discussion that identifies the *Livingstone Pioneer and Advertiser* as the first newspaper to be published in Zambia in 1906 (Gender Links 2003:17; Kasoma 1990:11; Kasoma 1986:19). However, as noted above, throughout Zambian history, from colonialism to the present, most newspapers were either owned by companies, private individuals, churches, or the state. A good number – especially during the colonial era – adopted racist policies, which resulted in

them reporting on the activities of the indigenous people only in so far as the local populations affected the lives of the European settlers.

But, admittedly, these policies were not practised by all the newspapers in colonial Zambia. Some liberal-minded papers strived to pay adequate attention to the African people. These included the European-owned *Zambezi News,* the *African Times* and the *African Mail.* An early black newspaper initiative took the form of *African Life,* a monthly society-oriented magazine published from 1958 to 1961 by Sikota Wina, who later became Zambia's Minister of Information (Sardanis 2003:63; Kasoma 1990:11–12; Kasoma 1986:19–46). Wina's initiative flies in the face of Mwakikoti's (1992:137) statement that Zambia had no black press prior to its independence in 1964.

In general, however, the growth of the media in Zambia, as described in chapter 3 (3.8) below (when discussing Botswana), was influenced by two sources: its colonial heritage as part of the British Empire, and the country's proximity to its more economically powerful neighbour, South Africa (Banda 2003:29). South African influence came about through its close economic, historical, trade and communications links with Zambia. A good number of European settlers in the country could trace their roots to South Africa. Furthermore, this connection continued post-Zambia's independence, when South Africa's anti-apartheid political movement, the African National Congress (ANC), now the ruling party in South Africa, established its operational headquarters in Zambia. In line with Zambia's solidarity with the anti-apartheid movement, a special radio channel – the external service of Radio Zambia – was established to enable the ANC to broadcast its messages to the population of South Africa. This channel was closed soon after the ANC was unbanned in South Africa.

Historically, the connection between Zambia and South Africa was also exemplified, before Zambia's independence, by early privately-owned newspapers concentrating on news from South Africa. For instance, the *Livingstone Mail* regularly carried reports on parliamentary proceedings in South Africa, while its editorials consistently advocated for racial segregation

in Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia), in line with the then emerging ideology of apartheid in South Africa (Kasoma 1986:21).

Another influence that has defined the media environment in Zambia is that of company ownership. A good example is the *Northern News*, where various individuals came together to set up the paper in 1943.[31] Later, in 1951, the paper was sold to the Zimbabwe-based Rhodesia Printing and Publishing Company (RPPC) and the RPPC's South African-based parent conglomerate, the Argus Group (Banda 2003:30; Kasoma 1990:13, 1986:37; Hall 1969:89). This link to the Argus Media Group demonstrates the extent of South Africa's influence on media development in Zambia. In fact, Hachten (1971:222–225) argues that the press in Zambia and neighbouring Zimbabwe were, before these two countries' independence, extensions of South African publishing interests in general, and the Argus Group in particular. Furthermore, Argus was one of the conglomerates in which the founder of colonial Zambia and Zimbabwe, Cecil John Rhodes (the two countries were previously named after him as Northern and Southern *Rhodesia*) had a financial stake. In Zimbabwe, Argus dominated the newspaper scene from about 1891 until Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 (Ndlela 2003a:11–12) through the RPPC, which published two national dailies: *The Herald*, based in Harare (then Salisbury), and *The Chronicle*, based in Bulawayo. Both papers, like their sister paper the *Northern News* across the Zambezi, espoused what Chuma (2004:122–124) refers to as the "European minority public sphere" in Zimbabwe. *The Herald* and *The Chronicle* were bought out shortly after Zimbabwe's independence by Robert Mugabe's government, with the help of Nigerian funding.

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[31] Two significant facts need to be taken into account here. First, although Banda (2003:29) states that the *Northern News* was set up in 1944 by Roy Welensky, the future white Prime Minister of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Kasoma (1986:37) places the date of the initial appearance of the paper at 26 May 1943. Second, Kasoma (1986:32–37) further argues that to assert that Welensky set up the paper as Banda and Ainslie (1996:93) do, is "a gross understatement" of the circumstances that went into its founding. Kasoma admits that Welensky played a role, but argues that various individuals and colonial government officials were involved in establishing the newspaper. Those involved included the former owners of the *Copperbelt Times,* E.C. Wykerd and E.D. Hovelmeier. On the part played by the colonial government, Kasoma asserts that senior officials in the government of the time, to the exclusion and the knowledge of juniors, colluded to ensure that the newspaper's initial newsprint was paid for from government coffers, and that the normal channels for the registration of newspapers were not followed. However, Kasoma confirms that besides secretly funding newsprint, the colonial government did not have any financial interest in the *Northern News.*

Earlier, in Zambia, just two months after the country's independence in October 1964, Argus sold the *Northern News* to Tiny Rowland's London Rhodesia Mining and Land Company (popularly known by its acronym, Lonrho). Six months later, in June 1965, the newspaper was renamed the *Times of Zambia* – the title under which it is still published today.

3.7.2 The evolution of the media since independence

Shortly after assuming power, Kaunda hastened to take control of the media. In 1968, a mere four years after the end of colonial rule, Kaunda – under the rubric of his 'economic reforms' – in a public statement "invited" Lonrho to sell 51 per cent of its shares in the *Times of Zambia* to his government. But the shares appear not to have been transferred even after Kaunda had declared a one-party state in August 1973. Then in June 1975, Kaunda announced the complete takeover of the newspaper by his ruling UNIP political party, but this again appears not to have been effected until October 1982, when UNIP effectively bought the newspaper from Lonrho (Banda 2003:31; Kasoma 1986:97–98, 139–140). The following year, Kaunda created the National Media Corporation (NAMECO), a UNIP-owned subsidiary company under which the *Times of Zambia,* together with the other government-owned daily, the *Zambia Daily Mail,* were ostensibly placed.[32]

The dramatic twists and turns in the ownership structures and fortunes of the *Times of Zambia* highlight the prevailing socio-political sensitivities in the political history of Zambia. For example, in the 1940s the paper was started by European individuals who could trace their roots to South Africa. The objective of the paper, at the time, was to further European interests. It was later sold to a South African conglomerate, but with the dawn of independence, the South African company disinvested and moved back to Zimbabwe and South Africa,[33] selling the newspaper to a British multinational,

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[32] This researcher joined the *Times of Zambia* (initially as a sports journalist) a year later, in September 1983.
[33] For detailed analyses of the processes that took place in the complicated economic relationships between the newly independent Zambia and South African companies at the

Lonrho, that built up good relations with many post-colonial African leaders. For example, shortly before Zambia's independence, Lonrho took the unusual step of guaranteeing a bank overdraft for Kaunda's UNIP of $700,000 – a measure that, according to Sardanis (2003:142), earned Lonrho and its owner Rowland, Kaunda's "eternal gratitude and friendship". Sardanis should have known because according to Pettman (1974:245), Sardanis was Kaunda's "chief financial adviser" at the time. Thus, perhaps, the delayed complete takeover of the *Times of Zambia* referred to above, could partially be attributed to Kaunda's friendship with Lonrho's Rowland. Also indicative of this relationship was an early arrangement whereby Kaunda appointed and fired editors and other senior journalists of the Lonrho-owned *Times of Zambia,* from as far back as 1975 – some eight years before the paper was completely taken over by the UNIP (Kasoma 1986:139).

This 'quiet' arrangement resulted in a situation where, as Hitchcock (1973:105) argues, in Zambia at the time all the major newspapers had become voices of the government and could not be taken seriously. According to Hitchcock this situation amounted to all news media being "government directed". Chisala (1994:44) adds that although there was no official censorship of news in Zambia at the time, the top leadership of the *Times of Zambia, Zambia Daily Mail* and the national radio station, the *Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC),* were all presidential appointees. As a result, these media followed "a deliberate policy" of carrying Kaunda's stories as front page or lead items (similar to the practice in Banda's Malawi, referred to in chapter 3 (3.2) above).

In Zambia's case, Kaunda had to be the main news item because, according to Chisala, not doing so "was considered unpatriotic" and showed "gross indiscipline" according to the UNIP and the government. Thus, Chisala argues, this meant that the media were not free because they operated "under extreme fear and could not write or broadcast anything critical of the

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time, refer to Hall (1969:88–92) and Nkrumah (1965:110–119,127–136). Apart from Argus, other companies involved were the copper mining giant Anglo American, Standard Bank, Old Mutual, Rothmans, and Barclays. All these companies had their regional headquarters in South Africa.

government". However, this stance is contrasted by Kaplan (1979:147) who asserts that although the media under Kaunda were state-controlled, they "seemed to have a fair measure of independence and criticism of official policies were [*sic*] fairly frequent".

Nevertheless, as shown above, private newspapers were eventually turned into organs or properties of the state or ruling party. The *Times of Zambia* was cited as a synoptic 'case' for this section of the study, because apart from reflecting the pressures that played themselves out in the media sector in general, and for the control of the public space and flow of information in particular in Zambia, this was the leading newspaper in the country (from January 1953, when it became a daily, to 1990, when the privately-owned *Weekly Post* (later to become a daily) joined the scene). During that time its shifting fortunes – including various changes in ownership – mirrored the interests of the various social forces at play in the political scenario in Zambia.

As shown above, the *Times of Zambia* traversed the whole gamut, from being a private newspaper, a South African-owned firm, to a state-cum-ruling party publication. But these were not the only institutions vying for space in the public sphere. The Christian churches also asserted their right to that space.

The first church-owned publication was *The Leader* (published from 1961 to 1962); the second was *The Northern Star* (1962 to 1964); and then came the *National Mirror* which was launched in January 1972 and continued publishing through the one-party era into the late 1990s, during the multi-party period, when it folded after being challenged for space and readership by more dynamic rivals like the independent-minded, and more outspoken, *Post.* The *National Mirror* has since resurfaced, but at the time of writing, it had yet to reclaim and re-occupy the popular space it enjoyed between 1972 and 1992, when it was the only significant paper to remain beyond the grip of government control. During that time the church publication was looked up to, and expected to provide alternative news and views (Banda 2003:31; Kasoma 1986:117–129).

As an example of the *National Mirror's* daring challenge to the dominant paradigm of the one-party state, it once characteristically and sarcastically dared to refer to the ruling elites as the "PIG". This was a play on the shortened form of a popular phrase of the time, that referred to the leadership in the ruling UNIP as the "Party and its Government". The reference was made in the paper's satirical column "Our Comrade Says …". In a tongue-in-the-cheek way, the column stated that from then on, the phrase should be shortened to PIG, but warned that "saboteurs of semantics must be warned against referring to … [the UNIP] party headquarters as the PIGGERY [because] anybody doing so should not be spared the wrath of the PIG" (Kasoma 1986:127).

The phrasing of this column, including its title: Our Comrade (Kaunda and his colleagues always referred to each other as "Comrades"), was almost always couched in the popular tones that regularly emerged from Zambia's cabinet office, State House and the UNIP headquarters. Such statements were always "warning" people, including "saboteurs" who crossed the party line, that they risked facing the "wrath" of the state. At one time, a government minister, Fines Bulawayo, warned errant citizens that UNIP's wrath would come down on them "like a ton of bricks".[34]

The 'piggery' column, however, was not a product of the inventiveness of journalists at the *National Mirror*. It came about as an adaptation of a Letter to the Editor, sent by a reader, Alfred Ndhlovu, to a newspaper that Ndhlovu may have thought was the only one at the time with the courage to publish his pithy perspective on the ruling elite.[35] However, the paper's sub-editor, Mike Wasa, picked up and ran with the saying: 'Our Comrade.' This was at the height of Kaunda's power. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church leadership, which partially owned the *National Mirror* together with the Christian Council

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[34] These and much of the narrative that follows on the PIG incident, are from this researcher's recollection of the time when he was a journalist with the *National Mirror*. This author was a journalist with the church-owned newspaper from 1981 to 1983. Later, in 1998 in the presence of another former journalist Chibamba Kanyama, Ndhlovu confirmed, in conversation with this researcher, that he was indeed the author of the PIG letter to the *National Mirror*.

[35] Sometime after 1991, Ndhlovu became Deputy Minister of Information and Broadcasting in the post-Kaunda government led by Frederick Chiluba.

of Zambia (a grouping of Protestant Christian churches), forced the paper to run an apology and retraction in the next issue. The Catholics threatened to withdraw their support for the newspaper and its publishers, Multimedia Zambia, if the newspaper did not immediately apologise to Kaunda and the ruling elite.

In the case of broadcasting, the situation remained almost as it had been during colonial times. From its establishment, broadcasting had been dominated by government. From before independence, the national broadcaster has been monopolised and has remained the mouthpiece and propaganda tool of the government and the ruling party (Kasoma 2002:9–12; Mytton 1999:11).

How this was maintained throughout history will be demonstrated with greater clarity in the next section of this chapter, which illustrates the broadcasting landscape as a 'case study' of the media situation in Botswana.

As mentioned above, the illustrative methodological approach adopted in this chapter is deliberate. It is based on the assumption that to a large extent, the media environments in the three countries have been largely similar, although not necessarily the same. In the case of Malawi, the focus is on the political ownership of the media – especially the printed press; in Zambia the political control of one leading newspaper is tracked, while in Botswana the evolution of the broadcasting sector and its political management is emphasised. Taken together, the media sectors in the three countries are meant to demonstrate, through extrapolation, similarities between the media environments in Southern Africa – both before and after independence. It is those environments that OSISA was meant to address. How this was done in practice, is an issue for Chapter 4.

3.8 Botswana: the impact of a façade of an African multi-party system on the media

Botswana is one of those Southern African countries that is a favourite of some Western democrats, as not just a 'gem' in democratic practice, but as

an economic "success story" (NIZA 2004:22). But it is also one country which has had much closer political and economic relationships with the much more powerful South Africa. Other countries with similarly close ties within the membership of the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) are Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland. Apart from Namibia, which was once a South African protectorate under the United Nations mandate (after the Second World War), the other three were British possessions.

A British resident commissioner for the territories of Swaziland, Basutoland (Lesotho) and Bechuanaland (Botswana) was based in Cape Town, South Africa in the 1950s. In the case of Botswana, which for a long time was considered a poor, dusty and dirty cousin of the British territories in Southern Africa, the British colonial authorities were (up to as late as 1962) undecided about whether to lead the territory to independence, or just to allow it to be incorporated into South Africa (Zaffiro 1991:8, 22).

During that time, the Pretoria government exercised some influence over political, economic and media policy developments in colonial Botswana. In particular, the Pretoria Postmaster-General, according to Zaffiro (1991:1), and Mosaka and Kanaimba (1998:23), claimed authority over the licensing of potential radio broadcasters in Botswana. The British colonial authorities diplomatically deferred to South Africa on these matters. For example, in responding to an application for a broadcasting license in 1958, Cape Town-based British Commissioner, J.A. Steward, admitted that Pretoria regarded Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland as "part of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) audience". He warned that South Africa would resist any radio broadcasting competition emanating from the three territories, and so he "saw no future at all for broadcasting in the territories" unless the British authorities were ready for "a major row with the South Africa government". That was something he considered ill advised, and not worth "the consequences of such a row".

According to Zaffiro (1991:13, 24) this policy of British deference was suddenly abandoned in 1961. At that time, South Africa was in the process of gaining independence from British colonial rule, and the country had already

started implementing its policy of apartheid. What may also have influenced a change of attitude on the part of Britain, towards South Africa (especially on issues concerning media development in Botswana) is the pressure brought by world attention being focused on the Pretoria government – this, after the massacre of about 79 African civilians protesting outside the small town of Sharpeville, in South Africa, in that same year. As a result of these shootings, South Africa was expelled from the British Commonwealth and in tandem, London resolved to fast-track Botswana's route to independence. It was in this mould of facilitating Botswana's independence that the British colonial authorities seriously considered starting a national radio station for that country.

A decision was nevertheless made, at that early stage, that the station would be tightly controlled and regulated by the colonial government. Moreover, the station was to be used for the socioeconomic advancement of the African people. But, as a way of mitigating against South Africa's fury, no commercial broadcasting was to be allowed. Thus, a national radio network – the precursor to the current Radio Botswana – was established in 1962 (Kasoma 1992b:52; Zaffiro 1991:36).

It should be pointed out, however, that the launch of the station was preceded by the radio communications network that facilitated the work of the police from around 1936 (Kasoma 1992b:51; Zaffiro 1991:2). This police network was used to connect Mafeking in South Africa (from where the British colonial governor for Botswana operated), to remote police posts such as Maun, Tsabong, Ghanzi, Kanye, Serowe, Palapye and the nation's future capital, Gaborone, in Botswana. As part of the process of pacifying African nationalist tendencies, and for the purposes of nation building, indigenous chiefs were frequently allowed to talk to their people via the radio. The first such 'talk' took place on 27 November 1936, by chiefs Bathoen and Tshekedi Khama (the latter was the father of the first president of Botswana, Seretse Khama, and thus the grandfather of Ian Khama, who became the fourth president of Botswana on 1 April 2008). The radio network, which was later called ZNB, was housed in the colonial Department of Education.

In 1944, the reception quality of the station greatly improved when the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) allowed the ZNB to use its transmission infrastructure. By 1962, the popularity of the station was such that besides the 78 police frequencies within the network, there were an additional 43 belonging to the government.

3.8.1 The evolution of media policy in post-colonial Botswana

When independence approached, the main broadcasting studios were moved from Mafeking, South Africa, to Gaborone (1965), and the Botswana national radio station, Radio Botswana, was inaugurated. Underlining these changes and transformations, though, were several factors that influenced the growth of the broadcasting sector in the country. Zaffiro (1991:16) cites some of these as being:

- South Africa's early influences and the control of Botswana's frequencies;

- The influence of the SABC model, which was subject to direct government control. This model was vigorously implemented by the National Party when it became the governing party in South Africa in 1948;

- The competing British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) model of an autonomous public service that the colonialists were more inclined to favour; and

- The idea that radio could be used for mass education.

Some of these factors have endured to the present day. For example, from the first broadcasts in Botswana, Zaffiro (1991:36) states that radio was expected to, among others; to:

- Inform Batswana about events in- and outside the country;

- Contribute to national development through the fostering of acceptable changes;

- Air schools broadcasts as part of the government's mass education project;

- Assist in the development of indigenous culture by broadcasting local music, dance and drama; and

- Assist in refocusing the listening habits of Batswana away from the older and more powerful radio stations based in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In 1967, Botswana's first President Khama made his government's position on the radio station very clear, by situating the role of the radio station within the paradigm of national development. Khama stated that,

> …broadcasting can bridge distances in space, time and knowledge itself. Radio can stimulate discussion among the people and assist in the process of democracy…[and can draw the people of Botswana] together as a nation. (Zaffiro 1991:36; Van der Veur 1996:221)

In the pursuit of this objective, Khama directed, among other things, that the station should:

- Operate as a government department and not a public service corporation;

- Be closely monitored and supervised by the department of information in the President's Office;

- Be subject to regular and frequent due diligence examinations and exercises, for all programmes produced;

- Be expected to use music as a channel for promoting informational messages; and

- Use only English, the state's official language, and Setswana, the national language. Other languages, like Karanga, could only be considered in later years after a comprehensive review of the language situation in Botswana had been undertaken.[36]

These directives and policy statements provided the framework through which Radio Botswana operated for many years. In addition, Zaffiro (1991:53) cites the report of an influential foreign consultant, A.J. Hughes, who advised that Radio Botswana should not be turned into a public broadcaster in the mould of the British Broadcasting Corporation, because it was "a government department". Hughes argued that "under no circumstance should it (Radio Botswana) be used to embarrass, frustrate, or oppose the government".

In implementing these recommendations, especially during the initial years of the station's existence, the structural chain of command for Radio Botswana therefore ran from the president, through the minister for presidential affairs and public services, to the administrative secretary to the president, before settling on the desk of the broadcasting officer who was expected to interpret and implement the directives (Zaffiro 1991:48). This structure has recently been slightly reformed with the creation of a dedicated ministry for communications, which incorporates the portfolio of broadcasting. The minister is appointed by the president.

After independence, however, it became clear that the presidency and the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) were intent on exercising full control over the management and programme content of the station. This led leaders of the opposition parties to complain that the station was controlled by the ruling clique, and that such monopolisation of broadcasting airtime had gone too far, and was beyond what was expected of a political party in government (Zaffiro 1991:67). However, in spite of such complaints Kerr (2001:255), Donnelly (2001:269-271), Kasoma (1992b:28) and Zaffiro (1991:70) consider that Botswana has maintained a relatively free media environment, compared

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[36] However, 42 years later, even after several reviews of the Botswana language situation have been undertaken, only English and Setswana may be used on Radio Botswana, and the sister state-owned Botswana Television.

to other African states. Kerr, in particular, when comparing the Botswana situation with that which obtained in Banda's Malawi, argues that the relative openness of the media system in Botswana was a result of the multi-party system that had endured since 1966; and the resilience of the traditional discursive *kgotla* system that had also survived colonialism and post-colonial social reforms.[37]

A *kgotla* is an ethnic gathering of the Tswana people that is regularly called by the chief; here all men are free to participate in decision making. According to Kerr (2001:255–261) the function of the *kgotla* in modern-day (and traditional societies), includes the making of laws; acting as the space for the chief to provide information to subjects; being a court for solving legal disputes; and providing a public sphere for debating issues. The first president Khama, who was a traditional chief, made sure that during his term of office the institution of the *kgotla* survived. To ensure this, Khama built the ruling party's power base around the patronage of other chiefs and the *kgotla* system (Donnelly 2001:275).

3.8.2 The evolution of the print media in Botswana

As regards the print media, Rantao (1996:5–17), Kasoma (1992b:73–84) and the African Global Marketing Report (sa:6) identify at least five categories that have constituted print media ownership in Botswana throughout history. These are:

- **Colonial government's official publications**

  The first newspaper in this category is the *Bechuanaland News and Vryburg Chronicle* that appeared in 1901. The paper was followed by the *Northern News* in 1914; *Lebone la Batswana* (published between 1930 and 1944 by the Department of Education); and *Kutlwano,* a monthly

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[37] Kerr's (2001:255–261) rather positive view of the *kgotla* is dismissed by Ramphele (2008:111), who argues that "despite the romantic notion of accountability of chiefs and kings" in the *kgotla* system; the fact of the matter is that the *kgotla* system ensures that leadership is essentially hereditary, undemocratic, patrilineal and authoritarian. In addition, as an inherently patrilineal system, the *kgotla* excludes women from decision-making processes.

magazine that was introduced in 1962 in preparation for independence, and which is still being published today.

- **Independently-owned publications, but with a nationalist flavour**

The first of these was *Kuranta ya Batswana,* which was financed by Silas Molema and edited by Sol Plaatje.[38] This paper started in 1901 and ceased publication in 1908. Plaatje then founded *Naledi ya Batswana* from Mafeking. A regular correspondent for this paper was one Ketumire Masire, who later became the second president of Botswana. These privately-owned newspapers were unique in the sense that they campaigned for changes in public policy, contributed to mass education and worked to build national consensus. All these factors, according to Rantao (1996:6), have been picked up by the modern-day privately-owned press in Botswana.

- **Post-colonial 'independent' newspapers**

The first to appear within this category was *Mmegi wa Dikgang,* published in Serowe in 1968. The paper was followed by *Linchwe* from Mochudi. Both publications were, strictly speaking, regional community-based newspapers, commercially oriented and politically independent although loyal to the government of the day. But because of their weak financial base, they both folded. *Mmegi* ceased publication in 1972, while *Linchwe* collapsed in the following year. The most recent independent newspapers in this cluster include the less successful *Examiner/Golebela* which started in 1982 and folded eight months later. One of the most successful papers, though, has been *The Botswana Guardian,* which is the oldest surviving privately-owned newspaper in Botswana. Its first issue appeared in August 1984, starting off as a weekly, but it is now published as a daily. The other successful initiative is *The Botswana Gazette,* which first appeared in October 1985 and is still published today (Rantao 1996:8–16). *Mmegi* was,

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[38] As a result of Plaatje's journalistic and writing skills, Rhodes University's School of Journalism and Media Studies in South Africa named its media leadership training centre the Sol Plaatje Institute (SPI) in his honour.

however, re-launched in August 1984 and has, over time, evolved into a leading daily newspaper that is inclined towards intellectual commentary and political analysis.

- **Political publications**

The papers in this category are initiatives of the various political parties – especially during election times. They include *Masa,* which belongs to the opposition Botswana People's Party (BPP); *Therisanyo,* which was started in 1962 by the ruling BDP (in its initial stages, it was edited by the future president, Masire). The others are *Pou-Pha* of the opposition Botswana National Front (BNF), and *Naledi ya Masa,* published by the BNF Youth League (Rantao 1996:9–13).

- **Post-colonial government newspapers**

All the newspapers in this category were inherited from the colonial government. The first was the previously referred to *Kutlwano* magazine which started four years before independence; the *Bechuanaland Newsletter,* which first came out in 1965 and is today published as the *Daily News* (distributed free of charge). However, *Kutlwano* is not allowed to engage in politics, while the *Daily News* is expected to support the government of the day (Kasoma 1992b:75–77) – a situation that, in effect, has meant that for the past 40 years the *Daily News* has supported the ruling BDP.

- **Christian publications**

The most prominent among these has been *Puisanyo*, published in Selebi-Pikwe by the Botswana Christian Council since 1972. However, the first recorded newspaper in this (Christian) genre was *Mahoko a Batswana,* which lasted from 1833 to 1899. It was followed by *Molekodi wa Batswana* which lasted from 1856 to 1857; then *Mokadi wa Batswana* was published between 1857 and 1859 (African Global Marketing sa:7). All these were churned out by missionaries for, essentially, evangelistic purposes.

3.8.3 The impact of language policies on the media in post-colonial Botswana

Within the context of these media developments, especially since independence in 1966, Botswana has successfully managed to maintain a façade of democracy, multi-partyism and stability. These outward appearances have been attributed to several factors. Kerr (2001:256–257) argues that it is a result of the dominance of the Setswana ethnic group,[39] and this group's successful appropriation of the nation's "post-colonial ideology" in the process of excluding minority ethnic groups from the power structures. It is Kerr's view that this has always been in line with the practices of the *kgotla* system, where women and non-Tswana ethnic groups are excluded from participating in proceedings. It is partly this 'peaceful' façade that leads Kasoma (1992b:14, 17, 103, 107) to mistakenly refer to Botswana as a "monolingual country", or as "virtually, [a] one language" nation. Kasoma argues that "all Batswana, regardless of their ethnic origins, speak Setswana" and yet in a contradictory manner, Kasoma later complains that the San people, whom he calls "the traditional desert people", are "hardly referred to, or touched by the Botswana media".

This is confusing. Nonetheless, it is clear that such internally politically created and externally projected and promoted confusions have helped mask the realties of the tensions that lie beneath the ethnic surfaces of the Batswana nation. Such a positive picture of peace and stability that is assiduously promoted by a state machinery (controlled and dominated by one ethnic group since independence in 1966) may have, to some extent, dampened the appetite of social scientists to critically review both the general language policies of Botswana at a state level, and how those policies are applied to and impact the country's media environment.

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[39] In comparison, in both Malawi and Zambia, no one ethnic group can numerically claim to exercise the same dominance as that exhibited by the Setswana in Botswana, where it has been said that up to 80 per cent of the country's population is either of Setswana stock, or at least, they consider Setswana to be their first language (Anderson and Janson 1997:2; Mutambo, Matome and Mufune 2002:112). The discussion in this section of this study is, therefore, premised on the huge numbers of the population of Botswana that are said to speak Setswana, and the impact those numbers have on the growth and evolution of language policies in the local media.

The need for a critical review of the nation's language policies may now be of utmost importance – some 42 years after the colonialists left – because a whole generation may now believe that English and Setswana are the only socially important languages, and therefore the only languages to be used in the media. If uncorrected, such attitudes will impact negatively on the media's capacity to communicate effectively to all, as well as the media's relevance to society as a whole. Not least of all will be the impact that this neglect will have on the other languages that are not used on state-owned radio and television stations, or in government and private newspapers.

Secondly, there is a discernible problem with the name of the country itself. Anderson and Janson (1997:10) argue that the name 'Botswana' carries ambiguous meanings. The term 'Batswana' could mean all citizens of the country, or just people belonging to the Setswana ethnic group.

While the first meaning seemingly emphasises the homogeneity and unity of the country, it nonetheless masks a second inherent meaning that excludes those who do not belong to the Setswana ethnic group. At the superficial and concrete levels both meanings are valid, so the continued failure by the government to acknowledge the validity of the rather exclusionary second meaning, could have far-reaching and lasting consequences for the other languages of the country, and for the spaces occupied by the media.

This apparent failure goes as far back as 1968, when the use of languages other than Setswana and English on Radio Botswana and in the *Daily News,* was considered unnecessary. This was despite campaigns conducted by the Kalanga people to have their language used in the media. In response, a 1968 presidential directive suggested that the proposal to use Kalanga on national radio needed an in-depth study and should be taken up later (Kasoma 1992b:56).

The fact is, there has been no need for such a study as regards the use of Setswana in the media, because as Anderson and Janson (1997:27) argue, for policy makers, proficiency in Setswana is taken for granted for all citizens. This is in spite of the fact that "there are no official statistics as to language

use or ethnicity". However, the truth of the matter is that not all Botswana indigenous nationals speak or understand Setswana, as Kasoma (1992b:17, 103) seemingly believes. Had it been in a different context and not Botswana, Kasoma could nonetheless be said to have a point when he writes that

> …the language used by the media is key to both accessibility and participation … thus when the mass media in Botswana use Setswana, they are certain that everyone in the country would understand them.

The reality, however, does not sit well with Kasoma's assertions. According to Anderson and Janson (1997:27), estimates are that only between 70 and 90 per cent of the population are able to speak and understand, Setswana. The question is: what about the 10 to 30 per cent of the population of the country who do not speak Setswana? Will they forever be left out of political discourses about the future and developmental prospects of Botswana?

The truth of the matter is that Botswana, like all other countries in Southern Africa, is saddled with a "complex linguistic situation" (Anderson and Janson 1997:7). For instance, Hasselbring (2000:141) lists 41 different languages in Botswana, excluding English and Afrikaans. In the Boteti sub-district of northern Botswana alone, an area that consists of just 11 villages with about 35,459 inhabitants, Hasselbring's research found that 15 different languages are spoken. Seven of these trace their origins to the San people, while eight fall within the Bantu group of languages. In the North-West district, consisting of 38 villages with 94, 534 inhabitants, 12 different languages are spoken. Of these, nine are of the Bantu stock, while three belong to the San. To complicate matters further, in some places between three and four languages are spoken in one village alone (Hasselbring, Segatlhe and Munch 2001:1–7).

As an indigenous languages expert, Professor Lazarus Miti warns "it is impossible these days to talk of a monolingual country because of the movement of the people. Botswana is clearly not monolingual. For instance,

you cannot just ignore the existence of other people purely out of xenophobia."[40]

From the above observations, it becomes pertinent that the language problem in Botswana is dealt with in a much more fair, direct and open manner. This is necessary because, unlike in Malawi and Zambia (respectively named after what, under the circumstances qualify as 'neutral', or commonly shared histories or natural objects, i.e. Malawi is named after the empire that existed in the area before independence, whereas Zambia is named after the Zambezi River that traverses a huge part of the country's southern border area), the same 'neutrality' cannot be discerned from the name given to the territory now known as Botswana. Botswana is derived from the name of the predominant language or ethnic group in the country, the Batswana. This is despite the fact that some estimates indicate that up to 15 or 30 per cent of the people of the country do not have, or do not consider, Setswana as their first language (Mutambo, Matome and Mufune 2002:112). The name, therefore, is problematic because it has an inherent potential (now or in the future) to raise and cause conflict because a section of the population (as much as a third) might come to feel marginalised or excluded from the created national identity that is Botswana. It is also problematic because language impacts on the people's proximity to, and accessibility of, the media and other national resources (Kasoma 1992b:103) – including political office.

The reason why only one political party has been in government since independence some 42 years ago, may neither be wholly attributable to the booming economy nor to the politically correct 'national paradigm' of a homogeneous community; nor to the questionable winner-takes-all, first-past-the-post electoral system; nor to the agreeable policies and performance of the ruling BDP; nor to the inherent weaknesses of the opposition parties; nor to the fact that the politically dominant Tswana ethnic group is in the majority; but although it could be a result of all those things, it also perhaps, could also

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[40] These sentiments were expressed in conversation with the author on 27 November 2006. Prof. Miti is the Indigenous Languages Fellow at OSISA. He is currently researching the complexities of the development of local languages in Southern Africa.

be ascribed to the unfairness of language policies which may have unofficially marginalised no less than 10 per cent of the population.

As indicated above, the ruling BDP has built its political base through the patronage of what Donnelly (2001:275) refers to as the 'newly educated chiefs who represent the Tswana aristocracy'. For a start, it may be true to state that this aristocratic class has sidelined the minority ethnic groups from the political processes – a situation that Donnelly and Kasoma (1992b:107) consider as having serious consequences in terms of media access and the institutionalisation of democracy in Botswana.

In Baradat's (2006:125–126) view, therefore, Botswana does not qualify to be called a multi-party state, because only one party has had any significant chance of capturing the largest number of seats in parliament for the past four decades. Botswana, according to Baradat's line of thought, is a one-party state because apart from its dominance in parliamentary elections, the ruling party's "choice of the chief executive is assured of that office", even before election day, while the opposition parties can only muster "more than a fraction of the vote", for whatever reason. These are characteristics of a one-party system. In Baradat's view, a single-party system need not necessarily be dictatorial, but can be 'democratic' – as is the case in Botswana.

3.9 General features of a subcontinent in perennial crisis

The case of Botswana, like those of Malawi and Zambia, is illustrative of a region which, to some extent, experiences sustained media and political crises. Indicators of potential meltdowns can be traced across the region. This chapter has highlighted some of those indicators – especially as they touch on the media environment. Some of the identified features of the crisis include:

- The absence of homogenous, settled and generally agreed-upon social formations that work to serve the public interest, rather than to meet the party-political self-interests of the leadership. This has led to a situation where political players view state formation as a prerequisite for nation building; that in turn has spurred insecurities within the ranks

of the political leadership, which has led to oppression, the violation of human rights, and the subjugation of the media (Ettinger 1986:2–4);

- As a way of also responding to insecurities and the prospect of losing political power, some Southern African political authorities have, over the years, maintained tight oversight over the main means of communication (i.e. radio and the major newspapers) in their countries. Past draconian laws have been retained on the statute books, resulting in a situation where the national media are turned into presidential mouthpieces (Mativo 1989:443);

- The failure to allow for change, or to facilitate it through the requisite legal and policy reforms at critical junctures of the region's history, has resulted in the regeneration of colonial systems and legacies. This has led not only to the retention of archaic media laws, but authoritarian media policies and ideologies as well as the inherited coercive colonial structures whose original objectives were not meant to promote Africans' development (Ayittey 2005:27; Chuma 2004:125; Otlhogile 1996:53–54; Mwakikoti 1992:140). The media have thus been reduced to developmental organs of the party-state;

- The failure by the region to escape megalomaniac tendencies on the part of politicians; the equating of elected political office with traditional aristocratic practices; and the archaic belief in the right to rule (derived from ancient religious opinions), has led to various excesses by some governments. In the media sector, this has ensured a top-down flow of information and communication that has been manipulated and monopolised by the leading political authorities (Zaffiro 1991:74; Kasoma 1992b:6). The result has been that Africa is now considered the "most un-free continent, having more despots per capita than any other region of the world" (Ayittey 2005:15);

- The failure to arrest political and economic corruption, which has instituted political patronage as an acceptable way of life. This has resulted in a situation where national and personal assets are conflated

within the purview of the political leadership, for example, in Malawi, where it is still difficult to ascertain whether one leading newspaper belonged to the leader or was the property of the state (Patel 2000:163). Weakened media systems, too, have failed to play their expected watchdog roles (which is the case in liberal societies);

- What Ramphele (2008:111–122) refers to as the "ghost of authoritarianism", which is a "dominant facet" of African traditional culture and governance systems – in spite of the romanticism that is often applied to the idealisation of pre-colonial societies – has substantially contributed to modern political practices in much of Africa (Southern Africa included). When these ghosts are enamoured by the colonial culture, there is little doubt that Africa (Botswana included) has much work to do to break free from what Ramphele aptly refers to as "authoritarian political heritage".

From the above situational overview it is clear that some of the causes of weak media systems in Southern Africa include the unfriendly political environments that, since independence, may have emphasised national consolidation above the need for the respect of individual liberties; policy environments that pay little attention to the fundamental rights of the people; the region's socio-cultural environment (constituted by a diversity of usually competing languages and cultures); and low technological development (Mugabe and Urgoiti 2001:6–13).

In turn, the reigning post-colonial political and economic paradigms have ensured the continued existence of, among others, media-unfriendly laws, policies, ownership patterns and practices. In Zambia, Malawi and Botswana, for example, these laws encompass criminal libel; the restrictive sections of the penal codes; state secrets acts; defamation; and censorship laws. Also, low levels of economic activity have ensured that essential media inputs (like spare parts or newsprint) have been heavily taxed by the government. This form of taxation has worked against the potential for the rapid expansion of the media sector. Moreover, non-governmental media initiatives have found it

difficult to access private capital as, strictly speaking, financial establishments have not considered media entrepreneurships to be viable and sustainable propositions in the region.

This, in turn, has resulted in the manifestation of poor or low business and managerial skills within existing media houses. Low levels of economic activity in much of the region have also resulted in underdeveloped distribution systems for the media – radio and newspapers. In addition, the underdeveloped state of much of the region has, in many ways, been expressed by a high level of illiteracy, which means that there are few media consumers. This has also contributed to there being limited advertising possibilities – a situation that has negatively impacted the sustainability options of media institutions.

Lastly, at the micro level there is much evidence of a lack of professional skills and a failure to observe ethical conduct on the part of media practitioners in the region. This has resulted in poor programme productions and low-quality media products, which in the eyes of many consumers lack credibility (NIZA 2004:22–59; COWI 1996:12–13).

In summary, these are just several of the many challenges that Southern African society needs to address. As challenges, therefore, they conversely present themselves as prospects for positive action.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the problems and prospects facing Southern Africa, as a way of building on and highlighting the various questions posed by the theory and ideology of the open society (outlined in chapter 2). By citing several of the social, economic, cultural, historical and political challenges faced by the region, especially with regard to the media, the chapter is responding to the research question about the socio-political context that necessitated the formation, and subsequent interventionary activities, of OSISA. This chapter lays a proper foundation for the contextualisation of the discussions that follow in chapter 4. The core aim of chapter 3 is to highlight

the dichotomies that exist in the region, between the ideals set out in chapter 2 and the practical realities on the ground. The purpose of exploring these dichotomies is to establish the rationale for OSISA's intervention in the region, which constitutes the central focus of the discussions in the next chapter and in chapter 5. The specific manner of those interventions – especially in relation to the relevant projects supported by OSISA – are examined in the following chapters, for the purposes of exploring the similarities and differences between OSISA's approaches and those of local civil society establishments. This exploration is undertaken in chapter 6. The overall focus of the remaining parts of the thesis is also to examine whether the open society ideology is the determining factor for activities undertaken by the local civil society organisations that receive funds from OSISA. The final chapter of the study sums up the findings emanating from these discussions, and suggests other research avenues that may be pursued around this topic.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE ORIGINS OF OPEN SOCIETY INITIATIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

4.1 Introduction

In the foregoing chapter, the study analyses the historical and political situations of the media in Southern Africa, especially as they pertain to three countries: Malawi, Zambia and Botswana. The discussions note that although the three countries are all former British colonial subjects, and are all now members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Over the years these countries have evolved some patently different media and political systems that, in broad terms, reflect the overall trends of the political landscape in the region.

Chapter 2, on the other hand, explores in some depth the meaning and extent of the concept of 'open society'. In this examination, some characteristics are identified that, may describe and identify an 'open society'.

Taken together, the two initial chapters lay the groundwork for the exploratory study of the beginnings of OSISA, which is the focus of this chapter. While chapter 2 endeavours to describe the concept, and the preceding chapter paints a picture of how far away Southern Africa is from becoming an open society, the present chapter attempts to show how the ideals of an open society have interfaced with, or have been applied to, prevailing political and media realities. By so doing, this chapter does – in a way – provide a rationale for the establishment of a mechanism for social intervention, and an instrument for the transformation of Southern Africa, called the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA). This instrument, as this study argues, is meant to change societies from various states of non-democratic political systems, to more liberal, more democratic, more modern, and thus, more open societies. This chapter responds to the research question about what OSISA is, and how OSISA is defined.

The chapter therefore outlines the historical origins of OSISA; briefly discusses the early interventions that gave birth to the structures of OSISA; the initial projects supported; how these interventions evolved over the years; and to some extent analyses the evolving thinking behind these interventions. The purpose of doing this is to lay the groundwork for a comfortable examination of several of the specific interventions OSISA has been engaged in from the outset, which is the focus of chapter 5.

4.2 Apartheid and the need for an open society in Southern Africa

It may seem strange to mention this, but the origins of OSISA can be traced to responses to the ideology of apartheid, which emphasised European supremacy in the region's most important country, South Africa. De Klerk (1991:102) argues that by the late 1980s, South Africa, under the rule of the National Party, had effectively become "a one-party state" and as such, a closed society. By then, the National Party had largely eroded the power bases of the various European liberal opposition parties, like the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) and its successor the Democratic Party (DP), or even the Labour Party, which was mainly for coloured people. The National Party had also earned substantial support from the South African business community, including the largely oppositional English-speaking voting block. Apartheid, as a political ideology or political system, was never clearly and properly defined (Wilson 1975:327–335), although in practice it came to mean the segregation of the different races living in South Africa.

Roskam (1960:98–101), Klein (1965:59–141), De Villiers (1970:34–36), Nolutshungu (1975:8), Hachten and Giffard (1984:xiii), and Dhansay (2000:6) argue that apartheid, as a political policy, was not a sudden invention and imposition of the National Party upon assuming power in 1948. It was a systemic ideology that evolved over a period of time. For instance, De Villiers quotes the then Prime Minister of South Africa, Jan Smuts, as telling a British public that the segregation policies that governed race relations in South Africa had been in gestation for more than 250 years, and although they may not have been clearly spelt out, they could take a further 100 years to

completely work out. Klein adds that apart from the apartheid policy evolving gradually, it initially gained appeal as "an adroitly-exploited slogan" with non-specific but "implied meaning" bereft of an implementation programme. However, Klein also narrates and reviews the manner in which this policy was systematically implemented in South Africa. Roskam, on the other hand, traces the use of the term 'apartheid' to the 1936 conference of the South African Bureau for Racial Affairs (SABRA). Whatever the case may be, the term is said to have first appeared in the Afrikaans dictionary, *Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal,* which was edited by P.C. Schoonees in 1950. In this dictionary, according to Roskam, the meaning given was that apartheid was a tendency of differentiation based on race, colour or level of civilisation. It was not assimilation. According to this definition, apartheid was therefore a tendency to maintain and perpetuate the separate identities of different race groups, through the separation of residential areas and public facilities (like entertainment venues, sports arenas or transport); and the separate exercising of political rights. De Villiers further argues that the term is "a coined word" whose nearest equivalent in English could be "separateness" or the state of being kept apart.

In essence, this separation was systematically enforced and applied through various laws and regulations from about 1948 – the year in which the National Party, then led by D.F. Malan, came into political power in Pretoria.

This was just three years after the end of the Second World War – an upheaval that was followed by an upsurge in global forces fighting for the freedom and emancipation of colonised people across the world. Anti-colonial movements erupted worldwide, while indigenous-based nationalist movements swept across the horizons, exerting greater pressure against colonialism and foreign rulers. With the strengthening of these movements; colonialism, empire building and racism came to be viewed as unacceptable, unethical and – in some cases – downright sinful (De Villiers 1970:37). Thus, Malan and his political cohorts feared that the colonised people's urge for self-rule could affect and disrupt the peace then enjoyed by European-ruled (or white-ruled) South Africa (Nolutshungu 1975:6–7). Therefore, in aspiring to

stem the tide, they cunningly devised methods of stopping the waves of freedom, misdirecting them, controlling them, or at least delaying them from buffeting the shores of South Africa.

It should be noted that, according to De Villiers (1970:38–39), in the 1950s the most optimistic assertions were that most colonial African territories could only properly attain self-government in about 25 years, i.e. in about the 1980s. By then, it was expected that the colonies would have built up the requisite capacity in terms of a residue class of educated people who would have been primed to take over the running of the countries, and that such nations would have developed the capacity to generate adequate financial resources through the exploitation of their resources and participation in the world trade system, for use in government expenditure and the provision of public services. But these estimates may, in the sense of projections for Africans' evolution towards self-rule, have proved too conservative: for in 1955 – just ten years after the end of the Second World War – according to De Villiers an effective European "evacuation" of much of tropical Africa had commenced, and by 1965 it was "virtually complete".

The exodus was spurred by several factors, not least among which was the activism of African nationalists like Nkrumah (1962:37), who argued that the continent had "a sufficiently informed leadership" to direct public affairs without the supervision of Europeans. Nkrumah questioned whether Europeans expected 100 per cent African literacy before Africans could be allowed to govern themselves.

Other factors that led to decolonisation were internal pressures within the mother countries, where it was suggested that the colonies were "a worthless burden" (Lugan 2003:88–102) that generally impacted negatively on the economies of countries like Britain, France and Belgium. Lugan (2003:89) further argues that France, for example, had by 1960 "exhausted itself" by building thousands of kilometres of roads, railroads, clinics, and providing free medicines and schools to Africa. In that year, more than 28, 000 French teachers (one-eighth of its teaching corps) were dedicated to Africa. The

French financial commitment to African colonial empire-building amounted to no less than $1.4 billion.

The French situation could be branded similar to that faced by the white South African government, which also spent a lot of money in supporting the 'African areas' of the country. It is clear that the Pretoria regime, too, thought it had to act quickly – in one way or the other – to stem the tide and address the demands of black Nationalism as well as black political ambitions.

As a first step, from the early days the Pretoria authorities reduced, or almost curtailed, the inflow into South Africa of people the government considered 'liberal' immigrants from, mostly, the British Isles (Wilson 1975:327), whom they saw as harbouring dangerous views about African emancipation. The government feared that liberalism could contaminate the thinking of the majority of the African people. Wilson adds that in terms of the Citizenship Act of 1949, new immigrants were not allowed to vote for five years, as opposed to the previous term of two years. Also, in areas where Afrikaners were a majority, children from different races were not allowed to mix in schools, "so that pure Afrikaner culture should not be diluted by British liberalism" (Wilson 1975:327). As part of this "mammoth social engineering" project (Nolutshungu 1975:9), Malan and his cabinet worked to retain the Afrikaner's cultural and racial purity, by enforcing laws to keep the Afrikaner ethnic group separate, pure and independent of other races. This included (to a limited extent) immigrant Europeans from the British Isles who, according to Hachten and Giffard (1984:23), had been settling in South Africa since 1820 with the expectation that they would continue to enjoy and exercise their right to voice oppositional views (as they had been used to, in Britain). However, De Villiers (1970:52) argues that the anti-immigrant measures taken by the Pretoria regime were "an essentially pragmatic approach to a particular problem of intricate human relations", where 'nations' at various stages of development, and with different cultures and belief systems, had to live side by side.

4.2.1 Overview of some laws that enforced apartheid

To cement the abovementioned approaches and policies, the white government of South Africa enacted and implemented various laws so as to ensure that the ideals of the apartheid project were achieved. Some of the laws that were rigidly enforced, included the following:

- The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949, and the Immorality Amendment Act of 1950, which jointly banned sexual relations between people of different races, and thus ensured that the races remained distinct;

- The Population Registration and Group Areas Acts of 1950, which ensured that people were registered according to race, and lived in segregated residential areas;

- The Separate Representation of Voters; and the Bantu Authorities Acts of 1951, which effectively removed non-Europeans from the common voters roll and forced Africans to be represented separately in parliament. In addition, the laws provided that the African people should be governed by state-approved chiefs in so-called 'African reserves';

- The Bantu Education Act of 1953 ensured that the education provided to African people was not only tightly controlled by the White government, but that it was of an inferior character (this, to ensure the perpetual subjugation of the African races, while controlling their minds).

- The Extension of University Act of 1959 ensured the exclusion of African people from especially-designated white universities, and generally, from quality higher education.

- Besides the above laws, the 1950 Suppression of Communism Act gave extensive powers to the white government to ban or restrict any organisation or publication; or to dismiss or bar from office any person whom the minister of justice believed and declared to "have

connections with Communism" (Wilson 1975:328–331; Roskam 1960:55–60).

These were just a few of the many interlocking laws and regulations that ensured that the ideals of separateness were not only achieved, but so managed, so as to reconfigure the South African social landscape. All in all, Roskam (1960:55–60), Wilson (1975:328–331), Hachten and Giffard (1984:51–52), and Dhansay (2000:6) individually and collectively cite more than 40 laws that were passed between 1911 and 1956, that formed the bedrock of the apartheid system.

Historically, such laws did not suddenly come about after the National Party, in league with the Afrikaner Party, won a narrow victory in the parliamentary elections of 1948.[41] The laws had been systematically initiated, as African-European social relations evolved since the arrival of European settlers at the Cape of Good Hope. In the main, however, the laws can be traced to the South Africa Act passed by the British parliament on 2 December 1909, which provided for self-rule in South Africa. Taken within the context of African-European social relations at the time, it can be argued that the passing of this British law provided the framework and basis for what was to follow when the National Party won the whites-only elections in 1948.

It is this law that became the constitution of the then Union of South Africa five months later, in May 1910, and allowed the parliament in Cape Town to pass any law it agreed to enact; to bar Africans from being elected to parliament or to participate in choosing members of parliament. The law also disallowed Africans from occupying senior positions in the government of South Africa.

It is clear, therefore, that this supreme law and the subsequent "sea of discriminatory enactments" that followed, resulted not only in limiting the

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[41] In the elections, the D.F. Malan-led National Party (NP) came to power in Pretoria through an alliance with the C.M. Havenga-led Afrikaner Party (AP). These two parties, which had agreed to work together from 1943, won a slim majority of only seven seats in a 153-member parliament, to form the government. Three years later (in 1951), the AP formally merged with the NP (Klein 1965:58–59), although Nolutshungu (1975:39) places the date for the merger as 1953.

political rights of Africans, but also restricted the movements of Africans across the territory, and denied them the right to own moveable property (Roskam 1960:60–79). These were some of the cornerstones of the system that eventually came to deeply embody, and symbolise, apartheid.

4.2.2 Cross-ethnic responses to apartheid

It is in this foggy political and legal environment that several anti-apartheid organisations, such as the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Coloured People's Organisation (SACPO), the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and the Congress of Democrats, met at Kliptown, near Johannesburg, in 1955 to draw up what they termed the Freedom Charter. This Charter formed the basis for these groups' demands for the enactment of a multi-racial constitution for the country. Mass action advocacy[42] around these and other issues led to the banning of the ANC and other organisations such as the SACP; and the incarceration of more than 156 of the organisations' leaders – including those from the more militant Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), from about 1964. Both the ANC and the PAC were banned following disturbances in Sharpeville, Durban, and Cape Town, after the Pretoria government had declared a state of emergency. On the other hand, media organisations that were perceived not to be supportive of government policies were either subjected to various threats, pressures, arrests or intimidation, or outright bannings, from as far back as 1948, when the National Party came into power (Louw and Tomaselli 1991:78; Hachten and Gifford 1984:50–75).

This intimidation took various forms. African-oriented publications like *The World* and *Weekend World* were banned, while their editors, Percy Qoboza

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[42] This campaign was in line with the 1945 Declaration of the 5th Pan-African Congress held in Manchester, England, that called on subjected peoples across the world to strive for self-government and the right to elect a government of their liking [the complete declaration is contained in Nkrumah (1962:44–45)]. This Declaration was followed by many others, including the 1969 Manifesto on Southern Africa issued by the African-ruled independent states in Lusaka, Zambia. This Manifesto asserts that all citizens have "the right and duty to participate, as equal members of society, in their own government" and that no group has the right to govern others "without their consent" (Zambian Government 1969:1).

and Aggrey Klaaste, were detained. Others who were banned or detained included editors or media union activists such as Zwelakhe Sisulu, of the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA); Joe Thloloe, the current media ombudsman of South Africa; and Mathata Tsedu (until recently the editor of the weekly *City Press*) – all formerly from *The Post* newspaper, as it was known then. White-run and oriented newspapers like the *Daily Dispatch* faced similar pressures. In particular, the editor of the *Dispatch*, Donald Woods, was banned following the death in police custody of Black Consciousness Movement leader Steve Biko. Woods later fled into exile. The government, besides enacting several draconian laws, attempted to buy media influence through publications such as *To The Point* and the failed purchase of the influential *Washington Post* in the United States.[43]

All this was taking place during a time when the dominant global philosophical paradigm was, according to Mandaza (1997:iv–xi), influenced by the Eurocentric historical view, which was meant to pursue a "permanent colonial situation" in parts of Africa, hoping that the "race-caste-class hierarchy" could be sustained for all time.[44] This notion had not been completely discarded in Southern Africa. The broad terms of this colonial project was the continued domination by the European establishment of the indigenous people. It was hoped that the privileged Europeans would permanently occupy top positions in the region's social hierarchy. To ensure that this was so, several very "specific legal provisions, and the political and socio-economic structures,

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[43] This was part of the government's "total strategy" of combating what it foresaw as the dangers South Africa faced from the "total onslaught", i.e. from Communist forces pioneered by the ANC and supported by neighbouring African-ruled states which were, in turn, sponsored by Communist China and the Soviet Union. In response, Hachten and Giffard (1984:113–124), and Fourie (2002:19–27) identify a number of laws and political pressures that impacted negatively on media operations during the apartheid era. These laws and government actions are too numerous to be individually cited here, but Fourie argues that the "authoritarian" manner in which the government handled both black and white media institutions made it "almost impossible" for the media to effectively function as purveyors of truthful information and comments on the situation in South Africa. The overall objective of these measures, according to Hachten and Giffard, was to ensure that all sections of society, including the media, contributed to the strategy of working against external threats, to maintain "white control."

[44] This position is similar to what De Klerk (1991:108) dismisses as "the ideological phantom of Afrikaners' exclusive rights and dominance of government" and the South African nation – ideals that were impractical, and served as the "opiate of the people", who were mostly uncertain about their future.

which sought to lend social reality to this conception" were put in place (Mandaza 1997:vi).

This, in summary, is what the apartheid political system – whose influence, through economic and social relations, extended to the whole region, including Nyasaland (Malawi), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Bechuanaland (Botswana) – was all about. Some of the peculiar laws that enforced this racial ideology are cited above. The resultant effect of the ideology was its mass rejection by Africans and some enlightened sections of the European community. Such rejections were constituted in both organised and non-organised groups, but in effect the organised formations that offered alternative scenarios for the reorganisation of South African society were either banned, proscribed or subjected to various levels of intimidation and harassment.

As mentioned before, not all Europeans (people from Europe) or whites (race-based distinction in South Africa at the time) supported apartheid. According to De Klerk (1991:105–106),[45] apart from the European enlightenment movement within the Afrikaner community (a loose collection of intellectuals referred to as the *Verligtes,* who began advocating for change in the 1960s); white opposition parties; extremist Afrikaner groupings; and the African mass democratic movement all contributed significantly to change in South Africa. Extremists fuelled the fears of what South Africa could become without a negotiated settlement, while the *Verligtes* and the English press communicated to the people of South Africa the negative impact of the apartheid system. The media and the *Verligtes* confronted the policies of the government on the platform of Western liberal values, and thus became effective instruments of change by offering alternatives.

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[45] In a 26 June 2007 interview with this author, De Klerk argued that the role played by the white members of the enlightenment movement (i.e. the *Verligtes*) through conference papers, publications, newspaper articles, books and speeches should not be underestimated as regard their impact in changing the attitudes of Afrikaner rulers – including his younger brother F.W. de Klerk, who dismantled the apartheid system with the unbanning of the ANC and other black movements, and the release of their leaders in 1992.

On the other hand, for instance, Savage (1986:4–8) argues that apartheid was financially too costly to maintain forever: it had to sustain ten 'governments' in the Bantustans, which duplicated services in areas such as health, education, defence and security, and transport. These were *direct* costs. But the tentacles of apartheid also extended to *indirect* costs, as evidenced by the maintenance of buildings in which these sub-governments operated; *enforcement* costs that went towards enforcing the laws of apartheid, i.e. policing and court costs; *lost opportunity* costs due to lost foreign direct investment and as a result of the campaigns of the disinvestment movements; *punitive* costs that came about through international economic sanctions against the country; *human* costs evidenced by the brutalisation of the majority of the people; and *regional* costs incurred through the regime's military actions in neighbouring states like Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho and Zambia. In implementing apartheid, the system ended up with 13 houses of parliament, 1,270 parliamentarians, 151 government departments (which included 18 departments of health, 14 departments of agriculture, and five departments of foreign affairs). Comparing direct costs, Savage states that in 1981 the cost of running the above named houses of parliament was only R8,720,660 while five years later (1986), this had risen by 140 per cent to R40,448,000.

To De Klerk (1991:99) and other members of the *Verligtes* movement, the "impracticality, unacceptability and un-affordability of Apartheid meant that the whole system was falling apart". According to this group, the ruling National Party had to be helped to move towards a national settlement based on power-sharing arrangements.

This form of political contestation of ideas and scenarios went on for more than 40 years, and was only resolved through a negotiated settlement that resulted in a new political order in South Africa in 1994. This rather sudden transition was something many people did not anticipate. For instance, Sardanis (2007:221–222) was expecting "a protracted civil war", lasting twice as long as the wars in neighbouring Namibia and Zimbabwe. Namibia (then South West Africa) was occupied by South African forces in 1915 after

Germany's defeat during the First World War. In 1920, the League of Nations declared Namibia a mandated territory under the supervision of South Africa. In 1966 this mandate was officially terminated by the League of Nations' successor, the United Nations, but South Africa kept a hold on the territory until 1990.

Namibian African nationalists fought sporadic guerrilla wars against the South African forces from about the middle of the 1960s until the territory's independence in 1990, following a United Nations-facilitated negotiated settlement.

Similarly, around the 1960s, African nationalists in the then Southern Rhodesia had started similar activities, firstly as peaceful resistance, and then around 1972, as a form of 'armed struggle', to try to wrestle the country from European minority rule. Guerrilla warfare in Zimbabwe lasted until the country became independent, through a British-supervised negotiated settlement in 1980 (Sardanis 2003:173–181; Chisala 1994:131–145; Mwanakatwe 1994:66–83; Mandela 1994:424–425; Martin and Johnson 1981:1–334; Wilson 1975:315).

As Schlesinger (1992:57) and Neier (2003:328) state, the extraordinary changes taking place in South Africa and other parts of the world in around 1990 were unforeseen, because "all the statesmen, all the sages, all the savants, all the professors, all the prophets … were caught unaware and taken by surprise; all were befuddled …". However, for pro-Marxist and radical interpreters of history, like Essack (1976:69–201 and 1980:226–259) and McKinley (1997:86–122), the outcome, although sudden, was the inevitable end result of class contradictions and the subsequent effects of the armed struggle in countries like South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

These claims aside, what should not be underplayed in any consideration of the factors that eventually led to the end of apartheid in South Africa is the role of the so-called enlightened Afrikaner movement (*Verligtes*) (De Klerk 1991:110). The *Verligtes* (a term coined by Willem de Klerk) movement, as

already referred to above adopted methods of "incremental political renewal which tried inch-by-inch and in tiny doses, to shift the government and the Afrikaner nation from the accent of segregation and Apartheid to the accent of unity" (De Klerk 1991:117–118).

This loose-knit movement, according to De Klerk,[46] consisted of about 300 influential Afrikaners who partly worked through the Institute for Reformation Studies at Potchefstroom University from the 1960s. They produced critical circulars, made speeches to Afrikaner organisations, wrote in the media and produced a monthly publication called *Woord en Daad* (Word and Deed), focusing on fighting racism, the injustices of apartheid, human rights violations, and highlighting discrimination against the majority of the people. Through these strategies, the movement managed to persuade a good number of Afrikaners that it was more advantageous and safer to change, than to cling to old apartheid policies (De Klerk 1991:118).

These doses resulted in the conceptual evolution of the National Party's thinking that ran through various stages, starting with the concept of 'segregation' to 'co-existence,' through racial 'consultation' to 'consociation,', to 'power sharing', then the concept of a 'federation' of racial groups, and finally to the 'unitary non-racial state' that South Africa officially is today. In all this, the *Verligtes* took the lead while the National Party followed with conceptual and policy shifts (De Klerk 1991:121–122).

However, it should be stated at this stage that it is not the purpose of this study to expand on, and study in any depth, the work, activities and thinking of 'pressure groups' – whether loose-knit or structured – such as the *Verligtes*, or the smaller opposition political parties, like Frederick Van Zyl Slabbert's Progressive Federal Party (PFP). The purpose of this section is merely to acknowledge the role such groups and individuals played, most importantly, in influencing the various paradigm shifts in the ruling white establishment, and also to connect this shift to the initial work of those individuals who initiated

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[46] These figures and views were provided to the author in an interview with De Klerk at his home in Johannesburg on 26 June 2007.

OSISA, and whose initiatives may have contributed to, or tied in with, shifting paradigms in the whole Southern Africa.

But before the final changes in the social structures could take place, some measures were taken by several people, governments and business institutions, to effect change in South Africa. The people involved in these varied campaigns to undermine the apartheid political system included George Soros, whose local initiatives eventually led to the formation of OSISA, and it is to those initiatives that we now turn our attention.

4.3 The roots of open society work in Southern Africa

The philosophical roots of the OSISA initiatives in Southern Africa can be traced to the theories discussed in chapter 2 of this study. In addition, they could – as indicated – be connected to the life experiences of OSISA founder George Soros (cited in the same chapter of this study). But, in practical terms, Soros (2006:xiii) admits to having always aspired to translate his personal open society beliefs into a private political agenda. His primary goal has, accordingly, been to promote a "global open society" through initiatives that try to change the world political order, by addressing prevailing political situations in specific countries or at the global level.

Soros's first forays into any form of philanthropic activities were in South Africa, because, according to him, the country was "a closed society in which Europeans lived in the first world and the blacks in the third". He thus wanted to "break down" racial barriers by giving Africans the first-class education they would otherwise not have access to, in line with the laws of the time. Soros therefore sought to undermine the apartheid system from the inside (Soros 2006:53–54, 2000:104, 1998:69, 1991:5; Neier 2003:329–331).

In that regard, his first act was to provide scholarships for African students to attend what he believed to be a 'liberal' institution – the University of Cape Town, in 1979. Soros was impressed by the institution's public profile, which resembled that of a university devoted to the ideals of an open society.

However, this profile proved to be threadbare – a realisation that led Soros to abandon this initial scheme (Soros 2006:54, 1991:5).[47] He nevertheless started and continued supporting projects for computer training in African secondary schools; medical training for Africans through an institute organised around Dr. Nthato Motlana of Soweto; fellowships for African journalists; and the provision of financial aid to the European-led Black Sash movement that worked against South African pass laws (Neier 2003:329–330).[48]

However, these forms of support were scaled up after 1986, when opposition party members of parliament Frederick van Zyl Slabbert and Alex Borraine quit the National Assembly and formed the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA) with financing from the Norwegian government and Soros.[49] Among others, this organisation asked for financial assistance from Soros to bring together a group of leaders of the then banned

[47] The broad aim of the scholarship scheme was to enable African students to obtain the "first-class education" they were entitled to, at the University of Cape Town. At this time, blacks and whites were entitled to free university education, and so the Soros initiative was meant to encourage as many black students as possible to avail themselves of the opportunity for higher education. Soros provided African students with "stipends" so as to spur them on to attain degrees. However, it was eventually discovered that the African students remained alienated both at the university and in society as a whole, because of the entrenched practices of the apartheid system. It was then realised that it was not that easy to subvert the system using that method alone (Soros 2006:54), so the scheme was abandoned.
[48] At this time, the Black Sash was led by people like Sheena Duncan, Ethel Walt, Audrey Coleman and Mary Burton (who became a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission). The organisation worked to partially alleviate the suffering caused by the apartheid system, especially through fighting pass laws and the detention of Africans illegally found in 'European areas'. Support for Dr. Motlana, a physician, was channeled through an organisation called the Medical Education for South African Blacks (MESAB), which was initially created by Herb and Joy Kaiser, formerly of the American Embassy in Pretoria. At this time Dr. Motlana was recognised as the unofficial spokesperson of the African community living in the sprawling South-Western Townships (SOWETO) of Johannesburg. Soros initially donated $250,000 to MESAB, to enable African students to attend medical schools. The other organisation he supported was the Institute for a Democratic Alternative (IDASA), a political think-tank on the future direction of South Africa, which was pioneered by two former liberal members of parliament belonging to the opposition Progressive Federal Party, Frederick van Zyl Slabbert and clergyman Alex Borraine (who also ended up with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission). A major project that Soros supported was the meeting between 50 influential Afrikaners and other Europeans, and the exiled ANC in Dakar, Senegal (Neier 2003:329-331).
[49] The sources of the initial funding for IDASA were revealed by Slabbert in an interview with the author on 12 June 2007. According to Slabbert, IDASA came about after he and Alex Borraine quit parliament "without knowing what to do and where my next income would come from." Borraine and Slabbert then decided to form an organisation that would establish contact with the ANC in exile, as a way of addressing the problems caused by the township riots raging across the country at the time. Slabbert re-established contact with Thabo Mbeki, whom he had first met in Lusaka in 1985, when he (Slabbert) was still a parliamentarian.

ANC in discussion with 50 prominent white South Africans.[50] The meeting took place in Dakar, Senegal in July 1987. Although this meeting captured the imagination of the world, it was not the first of its kind organised by IDASA. Other meetings had previously been held in far-flung places such as Lusaka in Zambia, Moscow, Paris, London and Germany (Slabbert 2006:30–31; Neier 2003:330). Also, meetings were held between the ANC and a team of the *Verligtes* group led by Willem de Klerk on five occasions in the 1980s in London, on weekends lasting from Thursday to Sunday, to discuss the social dynamics of South Africa and thus examine where negotiations were possible. From the ANC side, those present at these meetings were Thabo Mbeki, Jacob Zuma and Aziz Pahad (De Klerk 2007).[51]

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[50] The Dakar meeting, organised under the auspices of the Danielle Mitterrand foundation: France Libertés (Neier 2001:330) was attended by leading figures in the South African European community, as well as leaders of the ANC in exile. ANC members who attended included Thabo Mbeki (then responsible for the organisation's International Relations); Alfred Nzo (Director for Foreign Affairs); Barbara Masekela (Cultural Affairs); and Steve Tswete, Mac Maharaj, Dr. Pallo Jordan, Prof. Kader Asmal, Dr. Panuel Maduna, Essop Pahad and Bridget Mabandla – all of whom came to take up senior positions in the post-apartheid government. From South Africa those present were Max du Preez (a former journalist with the alternative Afrikaner newspaper *Vrye Weekblad*); Prof. Lawrence Schlemmer (a researcher); Prof. Hermann Giliomee (from the University of Cape Town, and a former journalist); Prof. Andre du Toit (from UCT and a former journalist); Jannie Gagiano (a UCT political scientist); Manie van Rensburg (a filmmaker); André Brink (a writer); Breyten Breytenbach (an internationally acclaimed Afrikaans poet then living in exile); Prof. Jakes Gerwel (formerly of the University of the Western Cape (UWC)); Prof. Jaap du Randt (from UWC); Franklin Sonn (from Peninsula Technikon); Randall van der Heever (of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU)); Theunis Eloff (of the Consultative Business Movement); Rev. Beyers Naude; Chris Louw (a journalist); Revel Fox (an architect); Leon Louw (of the Free Market Foundation); Adie Enthoven (of the Wits Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce); Marina de Beer (a university lecturer); Trudie de Ridder (an educational psychologist); Grethe Fox (a cultural artist); Prof. Michael Savage (from UCT, but later Executive Director of the Open Society Foundation for South Africa); Prof. Braam Viljoen (Theology lecturer); Tommy Bedford (an architect); Andrew Savage (a businessman who initiated the Human Rights Trust of South Africa); Dr. Alex Borraine (a former PFP parliamentarian and later Executive Director of IDASA and Deputy Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission); Peter Gastrow, Pierre Cronjé and E.K. Moorcroft (later parliamentarians of the Democratic Party); Prof. André Odendaal (from UWC); Prof. Johan van der Westhuizen (of the University of Pretoria); Prof. Frederick van Zyl Slabbert (IDASA) and Prof. Gerhard Erasmus (of Stellenbosch University). From outside South Africa, those who attended were Prof. Heribert Adam; Theo Hanif; Baron Klaus von der Ropp and author Hans Christop Buch (Slabbert 2006:79–84). According to Slabbert (in an interview with the author) all the above people who were based in South Africa, were personally invited in secrecy, and travelled as if they did not know one another to London, before flying to Dakar, Senegal.

[51] De Klerk, in an interview with the author, declared that these were "sham negotiations" as the *Verligtes* group, which included many Afrikaners, was not elected to conduct these negotiations. Nevertheless, De Klerk believes the meetings provided useful information on the thinking of influential sections of the Afrikaner community to ANC headquarters in Lusaka, while De Klerk reported these meetings to his young brother, Frederick, who was then the influential head of the National Party in Transvaal. One such meeting took place when Willem's young brother, Frederick, was already president of South Africa.

The agenda for the Dakar gathering is instructive about IDASA's motivations at the time. The meeting had the following objectives:

- To design strategies for bringing about fundamental change in South Africa;
- To explore ways of building national unity in South Africa, a country that was fraught with racial and ethnic divisions;
- To examine ideas on the structures of a future government of South Africa; and
- To offer perspectives on the future economic system of the country. (Slabbert 2006:76)

This, and other meetings were taking place at a time when some forward-thinking South African academics had already declared that the country was in a transition from "exclusive white domination" to an all-inclusive post-apartheid political formation of non-racism (De Klerk 1990:154). The question then was how this transition would be managed.

It would appear that, partly in response to this question, Soros's approach was that political systems that were as closed as that of apartheid South Africa could be subverted from the inside. He took the same view about Soviet Communism.[52] As indicated above, this was the approach Soros

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[52] But perhaps the greatest internal subversion of Soviet Communism was pioneered by Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms under the slogans of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (accountability) – measures which, according to Filitov (1992:77), were necessitated by the Soviet Union's imperative failure to continue with the Cold War's competition against the United States in building up its military. According to Filitov, by the late 1980s the Soviet Union was "as economically devastated as it was after World War Two", while the economy of the United States was largely intact. However, Toffler (1991:405–414) argues that Communism did not collapse because of external or internal subversion, or the competition of the Cold War, but rather because of the system's failure to absorb and deal with the advance of new communication technologies which spread knowledge in such a way that it was no longer the preserve of the ruling party's elites. According to this argument, the Soviet system failed to deal with the exigencies of the knowledge economy, while it retained the old, "obsolete" and "arrogant" assumptions that only those in the top echelons of the state knew what was best for society. This approach, according to Toffler, ensured the "economic stupidity" and underlying rigidities of socialist management, which eventually led to the collapse of the system and the Soviet state. But Fukuyama (1992:13–22) argues that the collapse was not as sudden as is generally assumed, as the degeneration process started

adopted by enhancing African educational empowerment in South Africa. When this failed, he went on to support "dissidents" in Eastern Europe who, among others, were grouped around the Solidarity labour movement in Poland; intellectuals under the umbrella of Charter 77 in the then Czechoslovakia; and the so-called "Refuseniks" in the Soviet Union.[53] Apart from supporting dissident activities and their structures, some individuals were selected and sent to the United States on scholarships that enabled them to learn how democratic societies operate. These activities led to the

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with the caving-in of the authoritarian regimes of Portugal and Greece in 1974; Francisco Franco's Spain in 1975; various revolutionary changes in South America in the 1980s; and the collapse of the Ferdinand Marcos regime in the Philippines in 1986. These culminated in the collapse of apartheid in South Africa. According to Fukuyama, this worldwide movement was a result of the various regimes' "failure of legitimacy", caused by the global "crisis on the level of ideas" that raised doubts in the minds of leading members of the ruling elites about the legitimacy of their actions and membership of the regimes.

All in all, what the above review of some of the explanations proffered for the changes reveals, is that there can be no single reason for the dramatic events of the late 1980s. For example, in trying to explain the demise of apartheid, De Klerk (1991:98–127) asserts that change is "a process" that cannot be ascribed to one or a few factors. In the case of South Africa, change was facilitated, among others, through shifts in the character of international politics, i.e. the end of the Cold War; the end of civil wars in neighbouring Angola and Mozambique; independence movements in other parts of Africa; the collapse of the Soviet system in Eastern Europe; the creation of the European Community in 1992; the economic pressures of running the apartheid bureaucracy; South African opposition parties which articulated alternative policy viewpoints; African mass democratic movements; and internal debates within the Afrikaner community about the future of South Africa. In that regard, change happened as a complex set of dynamic social, political, economic and ideological processes that could never be adequately ascribed to the work of either Frederick de Klerk, Nelson Mandela, Mikhail Gorbachev, or George Soros. Individually and collectively, these individuals played a role, but change of that magnitude and scale is far too complex to be attributed to a few individuals.

[53] In the early days, Soros's support to resistance movements in Eastern Europe was channeled through the underground Solidarity labour movement in Poland, led by people like Lech Walesa, who eventually became the country's president; and others like Thadeusz Mazowiecki and Bronislaw Geremek, who became Prime Minister and Foreign Minister respectively. Solidarity was formed in 1976 as a worker-led trade union in which various intellectuals became active. The spark that led to dramatic changes in Poland was the then Communist government's announcement of drastic food price increases. This led to people like Leszek Kolakowski (a philosopher), Jacek Kuron and Adam Michaik (both historians), and Thadeusz Mazowiecki (a journalist) forming the Workers Defence Committee – the precursor to Solidarity (Neier 2003:249–254; Soros 2006:54). In the case of the Soviet Union, Soros's support for dissident elements started in around 1979, and was channeled through New York University's Institute for Humanities, which brought to the United States, on scholarships, scholars and writers from Eastern Europe – especially Hungary and Poland, and the Soviet Union. These fellowships were undertaken at major universities in America and Europe. Scholars were identified through a network established by the human rights advocacy group, Helsinki Watch (yet another group supported by Soros); and the Foundation for European Intellectual Mutual Aid (FEIMA), which was based in Paris and was primarily funded by the Ford Foundation but later also by Soros. From 1974 to 1989, about 3, 000 scholars from Eastern Europe benefited from being placed at various Western universities (Neier 2003:289–293).

establishment of the first fully-fledged Soros Foundation in his native country, Hungary, in 1984. The foundation was subsequently followed by others in Poland, China and Russia. By 1991, there were similar open society foundations in more than 20 countries worldwide (Soros 2006:53–57).

4.3.1 The beginnings of the open society movement in Southern Africa

In Africa, the first such foundation was the Open Society Foundation for South Africa (OSF-SA), established in 1993 (Neier 2000:13) with Slabbert as its first Chair. Other members of the board included Michael Savage (then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town); Alex Borraine (from IDASA); Peter Sullivan (then Editor of *The Star* newspaper); Tony Heard (former Editor of the *Cape Times*); Mamphela Ramphele (then Deputy Vice-Chancellor of UCT); Rhoda Kadalie (from the UWC); Fikile Bam (a lawyer); Khehla Shubane (a researcher); Helen Zille (a former journalist and then Public Affairs Director of UCT, who now heads the opposition Democratic Party) and G.T. Ferreira, a businessman. The OSF-SA was kick-started with a grant of R45 million. The organisation established as its focus areas: Economic Development and Justice; Criminal Justice Initiative; Human Rights and Governance, and Media. A few of the projects that benefited from OSF-SA's initial grants include community radio, the Women's Development Bank (which received a grant of R3 million); and the National Youth Development Forum (that received R1.5 million). However, in 1996, upon the resignation of Slabbert as Chair of the board (from which he moved on to form OSISA), and Michael Savage's resignation as OSF-SA Executive Director, the board was expanded to include Mojanku Gumbi (former legal adviser to former president Thabo Mbeki), Leah Qubashe, and Brigalia Bam. For reasons that are unclear[54] but related to efforts made by the new board to find a successor for Savage, Soros disbanded the board and Azar Cachalia became the new Chair while Zorah Dawood became the Executive Director. Gumbi, Qubashe,

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[54] In an interview with the author on 12 June 2006, Slabbert recalled that "Soros was uncomfortable with some board members whom he felt were trying to use the Foundation for political purposes. Soros then fired them all and appointed some of them back."

Kadalie and Brigalia Bam were not re-appointed to the board (Slabbert 2006:115–117; OSF-SA 2007; Selda 2007).

OSISA came into being in 1997 with a grant-expenditure budget of $5 million. Its projects were located in countries like Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe (OSI 1998:90–91). The organisation was officially registered as a South African tax-exempt trust in terms of section 10(1)(fa) of the Income Tax Act of 1962 of South Africa, with Slabbert as the initial trustee. Earlier in 1996, as indicated, Slabbert had stepped down as Chair of OSF-SA, to assume the same position at OSISA (Slabbert 2006:117; OSI 1998:87; Brice 1998a).

At this juncture, reference should be made of the type and level of control Soros exercises over his foundations. Slabbert reveals in a letter to Soros[55] that he told some OSF-SA board members to resign, since they were opposed to Soros's nominee (to replace Slabbert as board chair). The letter states that at least two OSF-SA board members considered Soros's approach to the succession both "pre-emptive and restrictive" – a position that prompted Slabbert to recall and tell Soros that "in this particular instance, you had made it clear from the outset that it was your prerogative to appoint the chairperson".

But before the emergence of OSISA, Soros's initiatives in Africa (beyond those cited above, and focused on South Africa), were initially launched in 1996 as the Southern Africa Project (SAP), managed from the Open Society Institute's (OSI) offices in New York. The major focus areas for the Southern Africa Project were to:

- Develop independent media, especially radio; and
- Support media-related projects that targeted rural communities (OSI 1997:181–183).

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[55] Slabbert wrote this letter to Soros, dated 11 February 1998, after his resignation from the board of OSF-SA.

As can be discerned, SAP was essentially a media development initiative. In practice, however, SAP was overseen by a project advisory committee whose members were appointed on the basis of having demonstrated their commitment to the principles of an open society, and having proved their full understanding of how to advance the overall goals of the OSI network.[56] The members of the advisory committee were identified by Kim Brice, who was the SAP coordinator, but had to be confirmed by the operational head of the OSI network, Aryeh Neier. According to Brice (1997), every effort had been made to ensure that different sectors of Southern African society were included, and that, on the whole, the committee's composition reflected a "commitment to the open and civic concept of citizenship and ethnic pluralism".

At about this time, Soros declared that he had devoted "exactly half" of his income and a "substantially larger portion" of his time and energy to propping up the work of his foundations. In terms of funding, by 1995 this amounted to about $300 million being spent on projects that supported open society initiatives in 22 countries (Soros 1995:13). According to OSI (1995:9), the objective of this expenditure was to "transform closed societies into open ones and to protect and expand the values of existing open societies". From that perspective, closed societies are those which were under state domination, while open societies respected the rule of law; had periodical elections and democratic governments; allowed and enabled the existence of strong, vigorous and diverse civil society formations; respected minority interests and opinions; and obeyed the laws of the free market economy.

To that extent, the SAP committee members (and, later on, the OSISA board) had to demonstrate and prove their commitment to the above principles. Thus, for example, an aspiring OSISA board member, wrote:[57]

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[56] These premises for appointing SAP board members are contained in Kim Brice's letter of 22 January 1997, to the president of the OSI network, Aryeh Neier. In it Brice argues that all the people who had been nominated to the SAP advisory board were committed to open society ideals. This assurance was necessary, because it was Neier's prerogative to confirm the nominees.
[57] The quotation that follows is contained in a curriculum vitae submitted to OSISA in 1997. All nominated members of the incoming OSISA board had to submit their CVs to a sub-committee that decided on their suitability as members of an open society policy-making body. This practice of evaluating potential new members of the OSISA board continues to this

> …I believe in democracy, freedom of speech, and human rights, to the extent that I consider political parties, especially in Africa with the tendency toward collective responsibility, as undemocratic, therefore I have always shied away from joining any political party.

Maybe this individual was trying too hard to prove his credentials, but surely membership to a regional transformative body would have been considered by many as prestigious. The board was formed with representation from all SADC countries. Other members of the initial board, besides Morris Attala from Zambia, were Judith Ellen Dean (a Catholic nun and development activist in Swaziland) Dr. Almerido Jaka Jamba (an academic from Angola); Dr. Edrienne Kayambazinthu (a lecturer at the University of Malawi); Dr. Brian Mokopakgosi (a sociologist from the University of Botswana), and Ms Lupi Mushayakarara (a journalist from Zimbabwe) (OSISA 1998a).[58]

Nevertheless, in terms of the projects initially supported by the SAP, these focused on building the various infrastructures and institutions that support the ideals of open societies. In general, the projects followed an array of programmes, covering areas like the media, education, civil society, human rights, science and medicine, arts and culture, and economic restructuring (OSI 1995:7).

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day. Initially, according to Slabbert (2007), OSISA board members had to be nationals of the SADC countries, who had been identified from civil society, and appeared to share the ideals of an open society. Thereafter, nominees had to undergo a one-day board orientation seminar on the principles of an open society – a practice that continues.

[58] Slabbert left the OSISA board in 2003 to be replaced by Reginald Machava-Hove, a medical doctor and human rights activist from Zimbabwe. Dr. Hove served for three years, and was replaced by Musa Hlope, coordinator of the Swaziland Coalition of Concerned Civic Organisations, which promotes democracy and human rights in his country. In 2008, Hlophe was replaced by Elinor Sisulu a Zimbabwean writer and civil society activist based in South Africa. Other members of the board in 2007 were: Carlos Alberto Figueiredo (the Angola country director for the Dutch Development Organisation (SNV), that works to strengthen local government capacity in his country); Moatlhodi Bart Marumo (a former judge of the Botswana Court of Appeal, who discontinued his membership of the OSISA board after attending only two meetings in late 2007); Mathasi Kurubally (from World Vision in Lesotho); Dr. Fidelis Kanyongolo (a law lecturer at the University of Malawi); Dr. Abdul Carimo Mahommed Issa (Chair of the Legal Reform Commission of Mozambique); Clement Daniels (a private lawyer in Namibia); Betty Sombe (a businesswoman from Zambia); Dr. Godfrey Kanyenze (a labour economist from Zimbabwe) and Elinor Sisulu (a writer and Zimbabwean civil rights activist who represents South Africa on the OSISA board) (OSISA 2006:101).

As such, in practice the Southern Africa Project (SAP) did not substantially deviate from the overall broad objectives of the OSI network, and what Soros wanted done. Thus, some of the prominent projects supported in the region included:

- An advocacy campaign aimed at developing strategies to reform the broadcasting sector. This project proposed the liberalisation of the airwaves and aimed to ensure that national broadcasters broadened their expected roles in national political and economic development. This support was channelled through the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) – a region-wide freedom of expression advocacy group (OSI 1997:182; Brice 1998b);[59]

- Support for the establishment of a loose network of media lawyers who share information about effective ways of protecting media freedom across the region (OSI 1997:183);

- Initial support for the Southern African Media Development and Entrepreneurship Fund (SAMDEF), which enabled SAMDEF to set up a low-interest revolving fund for new independent media initiatives in the region;[60]

- Start-up funding for independent publications such as the *High Density Mirror*, a newspaper focusing on the neglected Chitungwiza township in Harare, Zimbabwe; the general-interest magazine *Horizon*, also in Zimbabwe; and the independent weekly newspaper *Demos,* in the Mozambican capital of Maputo (OSI 1997:183).

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[59] Brice's January 1998 memo to the incoming OSISA board on the activities of the SAP project, in which she states that the SAP would henceforth be referred to as the OSISA Media Programme. [An extensive discussion of MISA is contained in chapter 5.]

[60] It should be noted that this support continued for more than ten years, until 2007, when it was suddenly stopped by OSISA following differences in approaches between SAMDEF and OSISA. This is an issue that will be discussed extensively in the next chapter, because it relates to the core issue of this study: how OSISA influences grantee organisations.

4.3.2 The role of George Soros in OSISA structures

It may, by now, be clear that although it is generally claimed that the different open society foundations do set their own programme priorities (OSI 1995:10), the practical reality of the matter is that although some operational latitude is allowable, all the foundations are expected to operate within the stated and broader frameworks of the 'thoughts' of Soros. As his confidant and highest-ranking official, Neier (1997:19) states that Soros is considered the "unifying influence" for the activities of all the foundations. Moreover, as noted above, it is Soros's prerogative to personally appoint Chairs of the foundations' boards, while Neier plays a role in determining who sits on these boards. Obviously, this is to ensure that the various foundations do not stray too far from Soros's ambitions in a particular country, or indeed, from his larger global project. Furthermore, Neier (1998:13–14) reveals that Soros often travels to countries where the foundations have been established, and on several occasions he has personally identified and recruited individuals to run those foundations.

Often, Soros participates in articulating the initial programmes of the foundations. Neier adds that in many "crucial respects" Soros's engagement with the various foundations assumes a "hands-on" approach, although Neier states that thereafter Soros allows the local foundation boards to determine their priorities, and to allocate funds to different projects within the foundations' activities. Neier considers this relationship a "difficult-to-describe combination of full engagement and full deference to boards appointed to oversee the various programmes". This management style has been referred to as "undemocratic and un-open" by some who have been closely associated with the projects Soros supported.[61] In addition, however, it is clearly stated

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[61] Of particular relevance here was the comment made by Kellys Kaunda, a MISA representative on the SAMDEF board, in a conversation with the author on 24 April 2007. Kaunda, a journalist with the Voice of America, declared – in reference to the difficult relations between OSISA and SAMDEF – that the Open Society was not open at all. This view was buttressed by Console Tlane, following his sudden resignation from the Open Society Foundation for South Africa (OSF-SA). Tlane, who until the end of June 2007 was the Media Programme Director, charged in a conversation with the author that parts of the leadership of

that with regard to the operations of the various foundations "democracy stops with George Soros. He is the founder and he decides what to fund."[62]

In effect, Soros's close monitoring of his foundations should be viewed within the context of his expectations that the institutions he creates, reflect his policies and outlooks. As such, policy formulation in OSISA has always been aligned to the whims and expectations of Soros. These include that OSISA and other foundations should provide frameworks through which different social views and opinions on political and economic positions should be debated, and, whenever possible, reconciled. As expected in such organisations, for instance, this reality does not, naturally, allow for challenging the essence, utility and need for opening up Southern African societies. This ambition is assumed to be a given value that should be subscribed to by all board members, grantee organisations and employees within OSISA.[63] Were this not so, it is possible that those foundations would not continue to be members of Soros's open society family.[64]

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the OSF-SA may have "privatised" the organisation to the extent that lower-ranked employees were treated as if they did not matter in a "typical colonial situation" where lower-ranked officials had little voice. Tlane said it was amazing and "hypocritical" that the Open Society network "praised one thing (openness)" and practised a "colonial-style dictatorship" in its operations. However, Slabbert (2007) countered this by saying that, for instance, Soros rarely interfered with the operations of individual foundations, although he gave an example of how Soros "interfered a lot in OSISA when he wanted SAMDEF closed". [The incidents surrounding relations between OSISA and Soros on one hand, and SAMDEF on the other, are dealt with in greater detail in the next chapter.] Also, as shown above, Soros personally fired the OSF-SA board in 1996, and Slabbert observes that what "forcibly" struck him most during his October 2003 familiarisation trip to Open Society projects in Berlin, Budapest, Warsaw and Kiev (for the purposes of his and other OSF-SA board members learning "how to pursue the ideals of Open Society in South Africa") was the manner in which Soros "personally involved himself with his projects" (Slabbert 2006:116–117).

[62] This assertion about the prominent role Soros plays in his foundations' work, is contained in the minutes of the OSISA board meeting held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 23 April 1998, chaired by Slabbert.

[63] For instance, in a 14 September 1998 letter to candidates for interviews for the first Executive Director's position at OSISA, candidates were required to write two pages on how they thought OSISA could "shape its support for the development of an open society". Obviously, successful candidates were not expected to see OSISA's support in any other light.

[64] In fact, Soros has been known to close foundations that displease him. One instance was in 1989, when he closed the China-based foundation because it was said to have been taken over by the intelligence unit of the Chinese Communist Party's ruling authorities, after the Tiananmen Square massacre (Soros 2006:57, 1991:13).

Therefore, although Soros's (1996:17) social philosophy is that no one has a monopoly on wisdom and truth, and that every person's understanding of the external world is inherently imperfect, such questioning does not extend to the essence and necessity of the ideology of open society. There is, therefore, some level of a dichotomy between the ideal and the practical realities within the foundations.

That observation aside, Soros's social philosophy about the inadequacy of every individual's understanding of the world is in line with that of Van Tonder and Van Rheede van Oudtshoon (2006:144), who state that the ideal of a single truth is both unattainable and unrealisable, especially within the context of social environments that are defined by fragmentation and diversity, such as those of Southern Africa. In such situations a "single truth" or an "objective reality" can only be found in the 'eye of the beholder'.

What is debatable is whether institutions such as Soros's foundations can (or should) be allowed to determine their own paths and roles, and still be sustained within the open society movement. Is this possible? The fact of the matter is that the process of institution building could not allow this to be possible.

In any case, although this point questions the categorical imperatives of the open society network, it should nevertheless be acknowledged that the question is (or should be) a part of the institutional framework, outlook and institutional practices of any organisation that claims to be open and democratic. Such institutions should be spaces for questioning, or the critical reviewing of everything – including such establishments' own rationale and reasons for existence. But is this possible? Can an institution continue to exist when the reasons for its very existence are subjected to vigorous questioning? But then, approaching the issue from the other angle, one might need to ask what the limitations – if any – should be for institutions that are framed by and propagate openness. These are the type of critical questions and issues that need to be raised within open society institutions that idealise

open society principles; if such questions are not raised, or not permitted to be raised, then such institutions' own validity and credentials are questionable.

That aside, it should be acknowledged that OSISA and other foundations were consciously and purposefully, constructed to meet certain goals. As such, they have to abide by specific policy positions. As in any other policy formulation exercise, as Oosthuizen (2001c:190) points out, institutional policy formulation can either be spelt out explicitly, or it could be constituted within the overall expectations of what could be the right or wrong way of doing things in any organisation.

At the operational level, internal policy formulation often acts as the interpretation of institutional objectives, whether set by the board or the owner; and/or as defined in daily practices by senior members of a particular institution (Oosthuizen 2001c:193–194). This is perhaps the explanation, or *raison d'être*, for preserving limitations in the practise of 'open-ness', even in institutions that proclaim openness to others. Perhaps those limitations offer a chance for such institutions to continue to exist, and thereby pursue the objectives for which they were formed. That is perhaps why it could be said that in open society foundations, democracy stops with George Soros.

4.3.3 The institutional framework of OSISA

What should not be missed in all this questioning is the significance and meaning of the purpose of any institution. On the surface, institutions or organisations are social frameworks through which groups of individuals "work together to reach specific goals". Typically, such organisations have different people doing different jobs; combined with different officers holding and exercising different powers; but somehow in a coordinated fashion. All this is done for the purposes of achieving certain objectives (Mersham and Skinner 2001:4–5; Fielding 2001:29–31; Neher 1997:1). In such instances, organisations or institutions could be said to be open structural systems that respond to particular situations, or react to external stimuli and environments (Frimpong 2003:3). It is clear, therefore, that Soros 'inspires' OSISA towards specified goals, while OSISA (to an extent) is expected to respond to its

environment in a specified manner, or within the limitations of a set framework.

Thus, although it can rightly be argued that individual employees of any organisation play a role in the articulation and implementation of particular policies, it is often the top leadership that is "ultimately responsible" for the organisation's culture and ethical behaviours (Van Tonder and Van Rheede van Oudtshoon 2006:137) – aspects which, in the final analysis, guide the overall behaviours, attitudes and orientations of organisations. It is the role of the leadership to ensure that this in fact remains so.

Furthermore, it can be argued that as organisations grow and structures develop in the pursuit of stated objectives (Rudansky-Kloppers 2002:17) they tend to evolve into, and develop, separate identities and characteristics. As such, they usually operate in social spheres as independent entities, almost like individual people, although "apart from people" (Neher 1997:15). As such, no two open society foundations are alike. For instance, OSISA is structurally different from OSF-SA, or indeed OSIWA in West Africa. The reasons are many and may be historical, but that is not the focus of this discussion.

All the same, even if those differences are apparent, what is central to this discussion is that predetermined sets of organisational or institutional policies need to be generally obeyed by associated institutions (or individuals identified with those institutions), because policies are outlined for the purposes of achieving the goals of the organisations (Oosthuizen 1989:1) and keeping such organisations as united fronts. On the other hand, policies could be said to confine institutions within their operational social spheres. What may be obvious is that policies define the social 'personalities' of particular organisations.

In that regard, Oosthuizen (1989:1–2) and Frimpong (2003:1) argue that policies lay the basis for the articulation of institutional plans of action/ statement of the organisation's intentions, including how those plans will be managed. As such, these policies have to provide clarity on how objectives

will be met; they must define which interests will be served or secured; and provide the means for doing so.

However, as Fourie (2003:164) warns, for policies to be considered good, they need to be in sync with a "socially agreed-on set of principles" and goals, without which such policies and goals become ends in themselves. Therefore, in taking a cue from Fourie's position, the overview that follows in chapter 4 (4.4.4) below, considers the policies followed by OSISA. Also, the discussions in much of the remaining part of this study question whether OSISA's stated media ideals are based on generally accepted social principles prevalent in Southern African societies. [Refer in particular to discussions in chapter 6 (6.4.3)]. These are important debates, because if the ideals are in dispute it could have serious repercussions for the acceptability and smooth implementation of the various projects supported and undertaken by OSISA in this region.

However, in reviewing these issues, what will not go amiss is what could be referred to as the "politics of public principles".[65] This discussion may, in a sense, thrust to the fore (as an understandable rationale) Soros's close supervision of his entities (highlighted above, in this section). The discussions will also help to clarify why OSISA may have evolved in the manner that it has, as this study endeavours to tease out an understanding of the rather complicated and confusing structure that is OSISA, as well as the socio-political environment in which it operates.

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[65] The use of the term 'politics' is deliberate here, because this author partly acknowledges Banda's (2004:37) argument that the concept carries with it the notions of conflict and resolution – positions that presuppose states of tension within the social space. Principles, on the other hand, could be referred to as sets of moral rules and/or fundamental essences of generally accepted truths that tend to guide people's conduct (Collins 1993:1063), which in the "depraved" nature of humans, tend – according to James Madison, one of the founders of the United States – to lead to mutual animosities, extreme excitement and violent conflict (Baradat 2006:91–92). Such situations (as shown in this chapter (4.3.2, above)), cannot sustain any organisation. For any social organisation to be sustainable, at least public principles should be commonly shared among members of that particular organisation – a situation similar to what Banda (2004:43) refers to as linking the people working in an organisation to that organisation's strategy, so as to have them align their priorities and activities to the aims and objectives of the organisation they are associated with. That is what is meant by the "politics of public principles" within the context of this study.

As indicated in this section, at the operational level the OSISA media programme inherited the work of the New York-based Southern African Project, which was mainly directed at developing the capacities of media institutions in the region. Since then, the OSISA media programme has grown, aiming to meet and address other perceived regional needs.

In the next section we trace the growth and expansion of OSISA in Southern Africa.

4.4 The evolution of OSISA and its media programme

In the beginning, the OSISA office on the 12th floor of Braamfontein Centre at 22 Jorissen Street, in the central district of Johannesburg, South Africa, was supposed to be the coordinating point for open society national structures in each of the targeted (then nine) countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These structures were to be semi-autonomous, with their own missions and strategies for addressing the problems of their host countries (OSI 1998:90; Neier 1998:19).

As such, and in line with those plans, by 1998 interim boards and advisory committees had been formed in all nine countries. The objectives of these committees were to develop the national structures, and to clarify their missions and strategies. On the whole, this regional network was expected to focus on youth and women development; entrepreneurship skills development; formal education; civic education; the use of information technologies; and the promotion of the independent media (OSI 1998:90).

In terms of the media programme, apart from the projects inherited from the SAP, by 1997, its support included SAMDEF; the Lusaka-based Panos Centre for Public Policy Debate (that facilitated discussions on media pluralism); the establishment of Katutura Community radio station in that neglected township of Windhoek, in Namibia; equipment supply to Radio Phoenix, an independent and privately owned radio station in Lusaka,

Zambia; funding for a regional news exchange project for national broadcasters under the Southern African Broadcasters Association (SABA); advocacy projects for media law reforms in Malawi, Lesotho and Swaziland; campaigns against the broadcasting law in Malawi; and advocacy against the Media Council Bill in Swaziland (OSI 1998:91; Brice 1999, 1998b).

However, as all this was taking place and was mainly directed from Johannesburg, plans for the establishment of national structures were quickly shelved.[66] But before that, a national office had been established in Luanda, Angola, that is still operational today. Before these plans were shelved, a budget of $4, 500, 000 was provided by OSI's New York office, but this amount was not used at the time because the debate over whether to have individual semi-autonomous foundations in each of the SADC countries had not been resolved. Besides, the governance structure(s) that were to decide how to disburse these funds, were not in place (Brice 1998a).

As an indication of the activities of the OSISA media programme at this stage, Brice (1998c)[67] states that the focus was on the following areas: national or public broadcasters; commercial radio stations; privately-owned independent media; and community media.

4.4.1 National or public broadcasters

The plans and conditionalities here were that these state-controlled radio and television stations could only be supported if they had become independent from government, or if steps had been taken to ensure that this was about to happen. At the same time, there had to be proof that the legal and political

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[66] Slabbert (2007) said he questioned Soros on the wisdom of starting nine autonomous foundations in each of the SADC countries, as these mini-foundations could be both expensive structures and difficult to manage. Additionally, Slabbert (2006:116–117) adds that although Soros's original idea was to have the nine foundations in Southern Africa, it "soon became clear that this would be too cumbersome and clumsy", and so the plans were dropped in preference for a regional organisation with each country being represented at governance or board level (as cited above).
[67] What follows is contained in the "Draft 1998 media programme description" presented to the OSISA board meeting in Johannesburg on 23 March 1998.

steps had been initiated to ensure that the broadcasters were independent from the government.[68]

Obviously, as a result of this policy position, a search in the OSISA archives reveals that OSISA has not provided much support to national broadcasters since 1997. The only exceptions, of course were (a) support to Radio Mozambique in 1999 to enable journalists of the national radio station to cover the general elections professionally; and (b) the already cited news exchange project that, in any case, was managed by SABA – a regional network dominated by state broadcasters. This support to SABA was nevertheless halted after a year, and the exchange programme quickly collapsed.[69]

4.4.2 Commercial radio stations

These were recognised as money-making media institutions which nevertheless warranted support as long as they retained their independence from the state, political parties, individual politicians, the churches or international investor companies.

For such stations to qualify for support, they had to demonstrate "editorial independence" from the abovementioned interest groups. Their programming also had to be relevant to the 'goals of OSISA'. In addition, the programmes had to be of public interest or oriented to the public. For an in-depth discussion on the concept of 'public interest' refer to chapter 3 (3.2) of this study, where the concept is examined from different angles. However, what may need to be restated here, is that the concept is a subjective term that is

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[68] The status of state-owned media (both broadcasters and the press) is dealt with in detail in chapter 3 above; suffice to say here that in almost all SADC countries, national broadcasting systems were (and still are) tightly controlled by the government. This is especially so in Malawi, Zambia and Botswana, where chief executives of national broadcasting stations and the governing boards are appointed by the government. In all the three countries, cabinet ministers of information and broadcasting are directly responsible for supervising and directing the national broadcasters. In Zambia, such a minister is also often referred to as the chief government spokesperson (e.g. *Times of Zambia* p. 1, of 2 July 2007).
[69] This information was obtained from the "List of projects" supported by the OSISA media programme from 1 January 1997 to 31 December 2002, which is available in OSISA's confidential archives, or Grant Management System (accessed by the author on 25 January 2007).

often externally determined by people or institutions with the means and power to enforce their perspective.

In this case there is no doubt that OSISA enforced its conception of what was in the public interest when deciding which commercial projects to support, although over time, this support came about through loans channelled largely through SAMDEF, an institution that is dealt with in greater detail in chapter 5.

At this stage what should be recognised is that the rationale for the loan-funds facility channelled through SAMDEF, was that OSISA recognised that the independent and commercial media in general were underdeveloped, and faced crises compounded by the "multifaceted economic woes" generally evident in Africa today (Rønning 2005:166–168). Some of the general problems faced by this sector included limited access to venture capital funds; low-quality printing and broadcasting facilities; high government taxes on media inputs; and limited business and management skills (Carl Bro Management 2000:4–5), which constituted a "hostile" political and economic environment (SAMDEF 2001:2), an aspect which SAMDEF and its sister institution SAIMED were primed to address.

Nonetheless, aside from the loan fund, OSISA supported some privately-owned projects in the form of stand-by transmission equipment and a generator for Breeze FM radio station in Chipata, Zambia; support for the independent Capital radio station in Harare, Zimbabwe (this station has since relocated from Zimbabwe to Britain, where it is now registered and is referred to as Short Wave Radio Africa, but is still supported by OSISA and other foundations within the Soros network); the planned but later withdrawn supply of computer equipment to Mo'Afrika FM radio station in Lesotho;[70] and financial backing for the Ohungi radio station initiative in southern Namibia. Details of the amounts of these grants are given in chapter 4 (4.4.3) below.

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[70] This grant was withdrawn following management problems at Mo' Afrika radio station in Lesotho. The issues raised by OSISA, which were not properly responded to, concerned governance and financial management. As OSISA was not satisfied with the levels of accountability at the station, the grant was withdrawn.

Obviously, apart from highlighting debates surrounding the concept of public interest, OSISA's conditions regarding support to commercial radio stations also bring to the fore theoretical disputes over the concept of 'editorial independence'. There is no doubt that this concept underpinned OSISA's support to these types of media. However, the OSISA archives do not reveal any clear-cut definition of what OSISA means by 'editorial independence'. It would appear that the concept was erratically applied on a case-by-case basis, and as determined by senior OSISA functionaries at the time.[71]

Nevertheless, at this stage it should be acknowledged that the concept of 'independence' has been generally and theoretically dealt with in chapter 3 (3.2) above, but what could be at issue at this stage, is the possible meaning attributed to 'editorial independence'. From the above outlined OSISA policy it is clear that what it may mean is that the media had to be both professional and free from partisan influences. The concept, therefore, requires evidence of the media house's capacity for honesty, fairness and a regard for social responsibility, because in the absence of these characteristics, the media institution could pioneer its own "tyranny" – something which could be as unconducive to democratic practice as the "tyranny of politicians" (Mollenhoff 1981:2).

But, perhaps worse still, the media that are controlled by politicians in political office are often used to enslave whole nations (Leiter, Harris and Johnson 2000:13). Therefore, in this instance it may not just be a question of the media or journalists avoiding state or government pressure, but also that this independence should be both legally and ethically secure. A further expression of editorial independence should also be seen within the context of the media institution's strategic placing, and distance, from both business and advertising interests (Fuller 1996:199–202). Essentially, this means that the media should ensure that the news and opinions they put out should not pander to the interests of business and advertising lobbies.

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[71] This impression is garnered from the author's examination of the archived files, and the researcher's own experience of working for OSISA as Media Programme Manager since 2002.

In that regard, editorial independence could be considered as the lack of controls exercised by political and other powerful interests on the media (including economic interests). What is broadcast, and when, should be left to editorial workers alone. This would require that the media report freely and express their opinions openly in such a way that they meet the objective needs of their audiences, without fail (McQuail 2005:166).

As can be argued, the concept of editorial independence goes to the core of the principles of openness in an open society, for according to Soros (2000:133) the existence of independent-minded media is a major characteristic of all open societies.

4.4.3 Privately-owned independent media

The policy here was to support stations that were indigenously-owned; free from state, political party, academic institution, or church control or ownership (as indicated in chapter 4 (4.2) above). As can be expected, this policy highlights the conceptual complications of the concept of 'ownership' of the media, and how OSISA interpreted it.

Once again, the concept was undefined within the practical realities of OSISA. It was obviously left to senior officers to apply meaning to it, and to state how ownership could be determined as there are no specific guidelines for this within OSISA. Often – then as now – ownership was determined by checking the list of the given shareholders when assessing requests for support. In many cases, and whenever this was required, this was done in concert with an in-country OSISA board member nearest to the applicant institution.

However, in actual fact, to 'own' means to have, or to control, or to have power over something. In media theory, McQuail (2005:86–88) states that ownership issues are usually debated across either pluralistic or dominance models of media institutions. The dominated media model holds that while the media may have power or influence over social reality (or the ability to set

agendas); this power is exercised on behalf of other powerful interests, such as governments, political parties, ethnic groups or indeed international companies. In dominated media, the views, ideologies and perspectives that are given prominence are those of the people or institutions who 'possess' the media. On the other hand, the pluralist model of media ownership aspires for diversity in both the 'possession' of media establishments, and in the perspectives promoted. In this model, media institutions are as diverse as the people who have access to them, and as the worldviews projected. In this model there is no central consensus over dominant positions that may emerge in media presentations. Such media belong to the liberal and free market, where media products compete openly.

It is clear from the above discussion that by supporting the unattached, independent and un-dominated media (such as the supply in 2002 of $36, 338 worth of recording and stand-by recording equipment to Breeze FM, and the provision in 1997 of $24, 778 worth of transmission equipment to Radio Phoenix, both in Zambia, and training and awareness-raising campaign support worth $57, 000 (in 2000) to the now-relocated Capital radio in Zimbabwe, and the Ohungi Radio initiative in Namibia, which received research support of $3, 508.62 in 1999 (OSISA 2007g)), OSISA was bent on supporting the pluralist model of media ownership.

4.4.4 Community media

The policy perspective here was to support community-based radio or media establishments that at least demonstrated "evidence of community ownership through participation" (OSISA 1998c) in the governance structures, and in membership, management and programming activities.

To AMARC-Africa (1998:9–28), these radio stations are community-based; not-for-profit, but rather the "means of communication for the community, essentially run to serve this community". Kasoma (2000a:23–29) considers them to be establishments that serve "a specific section of society known as a community", and adds that there are several models of ownership of

community radio stations, which may include the following: cooperative; public company community; civic society community; church community; and public community ownership.

But Fardon and Furniss (2000:9) regard the most important characteristic of these types of institutions as being the station's "situatedness", and that of the programme makers within a particular community – however this community may be viewed or described. In other words, what matters is how close the station and the programme makers are to the community they broadcast to. Ilboudo (2000:43) considers that what sets apart community radios from other initiatives is that these stations have,

> …allowed non-professionals to take part in the production and broadcasting of programmes; and this has required them to use local resources of information actively; doing so has enabled the expression of their talents and on occasion, their artistic creativity … [such stations] create 'alternative means of communication', which are usually, but not invariably, local.

This, according to Alumuku (2006:46–47), is a defining feature of the community radio sector: there must be active participation by local community members in not only the management of the station, but also the creation of news, entertainment and all programming that seeks to facilitate change and social progress in the community. As Ilboudo (2000:42–43) states, such initiatives have so far contributed greatly to the democratisation process in Africa, as more and more people gain access to information and have the means to exercise their right to question and criticise those in political office.

OSISA's support in this sector was mostly channelled through the now closed Johannesburg office of the World Association of Community Radio Stations (AMARC-Africa), but assistance was also directly provided to individual community radio initiatives, such as Radio Lyambai in the Western Province of Zambia, which in 2001 received $59, 075 worth of transmission equipment; the Tete Province Community radio project in Mozambique which received

$140,000 worth of equipment and funding in 1998; Katutura Community radio project in the capital city of Windhoek, Namibia, which received training and administrative financial support of $56, 963 in 1997; Pasme and Kariba radio initiatives in the Eastern and Southern Provinces of Zambia, and Mzimba in the Northern Region of Malawi, which each received $126, 000 worth of broadcasting equipment and institutional support from OSISA. In the Botswana capital city of Gaborone, the Naledi community radio initiative received $46, 000 in institutional support.

AMARC-Africa, on the other hand, received a total of $422, 051 from OSISA, between January 1997 and December 2002, in support of various aspects of community radio development across sub-Saharan Africa (OSISA 2007).

If it is true that community radio and community media have played (or have the capacity to play) the role ascribed to them by Ilboudo, then it is perhaps in that direction that OSISA's policy has been directed.

4.5 An overview of the expectations of the media in an 'open' Southern Africa

In essence, as shown, the above policy positions were applied to both radio and print media initiatives. The aim was undoubtedly because OSISA believed that such media could contribute to the development and sustenance of democratic structures in Southern Africa. This approach is within the context of the Open Society Institute's directive that its funds should be used to "foster values, attitudes and skills that promote democracy, self reliance, self-awareness, critical thinking, social activism and leadership" (OSI 1999:77).

This directive is also within the OSI's overall framework and common mission of transforming closed societies into open societies, making open societies more viable, and promoting critical modes of thinking across the world (Soros 2006:53; OSI 1999:11). OSISA may, therefore, have found an operational

niche for itself in Southern Africa, for as noted in chapter 1 (1.2) of this study, the media in the region had been (from the 1960s – the era of the struggle for African self-determination – to the second winds of change in the late 1980s and early 1990s) variously and effectively owned and controlled by African states and/or ruling political parties or politicians.

However, from around the late 1980s the region has been in a state of flux. Apartheid ended in 1994; Namibia became independent in 1990; peace returned to Mozambique and Angola in 1992 and 2002 respectively. One-party regimes collapsed in Zambia and Malawi in 1991 and 1994 respectively. As during the upheavals in Eastern Europe, Soros took advantage of the turmoil in Southern Africa to put in place instruments to transform countries in the region from closed to more open societies. As stated, this is how the aptly-named Southern African Project, the precursor to OSISA, came into being.

In all this, the expectation is that the media will play a particular role not only in the transformation process, but also in sustaining democratic values and practices in new and emerging societies. These 'great' expectations, some of which, according to Gurevitch and Blumler (2000:25–26), and Kasoma (1992b:111, 2000:40–46) include the media being watchdogs over, and not lapdogs of, the political authorities exercising power; that they exercise surveillance over the nations' socio-political processes; intelligently set agendas for the public; enable dialogue to take place across various sectors of society; urge citizens to be involved in the political and decision-making processes that inevitably affect their lives; resist political intimidation and other social pressures; monitor the states' development and other plans; and serve as platforms for the general education of the public.

In essence, as Fourie (2001c:277) argues, if we have to accept that the media – any media – have roles to play in democracies or open societies, then the problem of defining what their roles should be is set aside by acknowledging the necessity for the pluralist media model. In other words, societies must allow for the existence and unimpeded performance of various forms of media which articulate, and process freely and independently, the many colours of

the social and political perspectives that exist in any society. That is probably what OSISA has been working and campaigning for since 1997.

However, Fourie (2002:36) warns that a one-track campaign for media pluralism can be dangerous in a post-modern society, where the concept has (in practice) been turned into an "economic ideology" that can be as ruinous to media freedom as the control of the media by totalitarian regimes. Some of these regimes were discussed in chapter 3 (3.5) above. The only difference is that while in authoritarian political systems the media are directed towards meeting the state's interests (as apartheid South African tried do, as discussed in chapter 4 (4.2) above), campaigns for media pluralism in the era of post-modernism should be tempered by an understanding that some of these initiatives are pioneered and sponsored by international economic interests. The major objectives of those interests are not too far divorced from the aspiration for "control of public discourses, often formed by economically driven news values and frameworks … and by the perceived need to entertain and to alert public awareness instead of forming it".

If this is in fact so, it brings to the forefront debates about the role of the media in society. But more importantly, and within the context of this study, Fourie's admonitions may beg, at some stage in the future, for an examination of whether OSISA's policy stance has not been in tandem with the objectives of the abovementioned economic interests. In addition, it should be noted that Oosthuizen (1989:28) warns about the dangers inherent in the possibilities of international economic and media conglomerates forming alliances with ruling party politicians. Such alliances might concretise into situations where such economic interests acquire inordinate political power, by influencing politicians so that they support the ambitions of the conglomerates through media products that, covertly or overtly, sway public opinion towards the political ambitions of the politicians and the economic ambitions of the international or local companies. These under-the-table machinations may not be too far removed from what Nkrumah (1965:239) terms the "mechanisms of neo-colonialism" which, he argues, are exercised in "innumerable ways", for the

purposes of accomplishing the objectives of exploitation that previously were achieved through "naked colonialism".

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has traced the origins and foundations of OSISA, briefly examining the rationale for its existence. By so doing, the current chapter has acted as a bridge between the research question about what OSISA is; and the question about how OSISA initially responded to the socio-political context dealt with in chapter 3. As a bridge, this chapter has also described how OSISA initially interpreted its own principles, before exploring how OSISA principles are transmitted. This transmission process is the locus of the discussions to follow in chapters 5 and 6. The current chapter thus argues that the political and social context of Southern Africa provided the background to OSISA's initiatives at the time.

In the context of this study, the overall objective of chapter 4 is to ground the theoretical framework of open societies, as outlined in chapter 2, in those implementation programmes which addressed the environmental issues described in chapter 3. Initial attempts at addressing the region's programmes culminated in the formation of OSISA in 1997. In that sense, this chapter explores how open society principles were interpreted, and how these were made to respond to the concrete realities of Southern Africa, which included the system of apartheid (also described in this chapter 4 (4.2) above). OSISA's initial interfaces are purposefully examined in broad terms in this chapter, so as to lay the foundation for a much closer examination of later-day interventions which, in that respect, demonstrate the salient internal workings of OSISA. That is the subject focus of the next chapter.

Structurally, chapter 5 discusses two regional media initiatives – MISA and SAMDEF – and how these have interacted with OSISA at different levels and times. The purpose for examining the dynamics that played out between OSISA on the one hand, and MISA and SAMDEF on the other, is to initiate responses to the research question about whether OSISA transfers its

ideologies to partner organisations. That question is finally answered in the follow-up chapter 6.

CHAPTER FIVE: CREATING AN OPEN SOCIETY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA - 1

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter traces the origins of OSISA, and argues that the institution was established partly in response to the apartheid system in South Africa, and partly as a channel or support mechanism for consolidating and "deepening democracy"[72] in new democratic societies throughout Southern Africa. We also observe that these responses were generally part of rather uncoordinated reform movements, such as those pioneered by loosely-knit organisations such as the *Verligtes* and the Mass Democratic Movement in South Africa, and other campaigns against one-party regimes elsewhere.

In the case of South Africa, we noted that both Europeans and Africans who worked within the ambit of the movements for change, had taken issue with the social engineering project of apartheid which, in practice may merely have appeared as blatant racism, when in actual fact it was more than that. Apartheid was also a subjective and material totality that was directed at furthering and protecting emergent Afrikaner capital interests, which at the time were in direct competition with English capital that dominated the South African economy prior to the National Party coming to power in 1948.

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[72] The concept of 'deepening democracy' is used by Chandhoke (2007:34–40) to refer, in broad terms, to the role played and the space occupied in the social sphere by members of civil society groups who are neither encumbered by the requisite discipline associated with political party membership and party members' expected adherence to party manifestoes; nor by the disciplined rigor and expectations of the practices and activities of those individuals or institutions operating in market economies. The Chandhoke image of civil society groups is that of the unelected, arguably unrepresentative, and perhaps generally not socially accountable entities that have mandated themselves to play a role in social processes. However, Chandhoke argues that these groups open up spaces for public discussions on what good societies should be, and how such societies could be attained. The spaces such groups occupy are also referred to as the 'third frontier' – beyond political parties and the market – for processing and considering the nature of societies. It is the existence of this social space where political discourses additionally take place – beyond the organised political parties – that Chandhoke considers as acts of deepening democracy. Relatively, it is also the existence of this third social space (outside of market and political parties) that Okigbo (2000:76) identifies as the legitimate arena for civil society group activism. [Other views on this social space are discussed in this chapter (see 5.3 below)].

Furthermore, this chapter argues that apartheid was also a part of the virulent social modernisation project which, like its Communist counterpart in Eastern Europe and Russia, came undone in the late 1980s and early 1990s. As Bauman (1992:221–222) says of Communism, apartheid was a modern idea of a "designed society" that, in spectacular fashion, dramatised the message of modernity and the Enlightenment. Its sudden collapse was a demonstration of the failure of attempts to make modernity work, through social engineering.

Nonetheless, whatever the underlying reasons for the disintegration of apartheid, Communism or the one-party political systems in Southern Africa, Okigbo (2000:64, 74–79), among others, acknowledges that the sudden departure of these systems from the political scene reinvigorated the civil society movement in the region.

This chapter, therefore, deals with the initial role OSISA played in re-energising the civil society movement in Southern Africa. This is done by looking closely at the beginnings of two regional civil society groups: the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA) and the Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF).

In doing this, the underpinning thread is an examination of the evolution of the relationships between OSISA and these two organisations, as a way of initially beginning to respond to the research question about how and whether OSISA imposes its worldviews on associate organisations.

Thus, essentially, this chapter is presented in two parts: the first part delineates the theoretical context in which both MISA and SAMDEF operate. In this way, it is recognised that both organisations are basically civic groups that emerged during the 1990s, following the aforementioned upheavals in Africa and Europe which were pioneered by, and led to, the worldwide popularisation of civil society organisations (Okigbo 2000:75–76; Fowler 2003:2). In particular, Chandhoke (2007:3) argues that civil society organisations (CSOs) came to occupy the "centre stage of political vocabularies and political imaginations" in the events that led to the collapse

of Communism (where the people rejected authoritarianism and instead resurrected the civil society space in which individuals and groups reflected on, considered and planned for their future). The recreation of this space rendered unresponsive and oppressive Communist states shells that were irrelevant to the people's lives. In turn, the concept of civil society was adopted, adapted and popularised in Africa.

The second part of the chapter consists of a closer examination of the growth of two media-related CSOs that emerged in the 1990s. MISA and SAMDEF are tracked from their beginnings until they come into contact with OSISA. The essence of the section is to explore the evolution of unfolding relations, which form the foundation of the more dynamic, and perhaps acrimonious, exchanges that have since occupied the dialogical space between OSISA and especially SAMDEF. The fundamental significance of those contentious interactions is dealt with in chapter 6.

5.2. Chapter methodology

In exploring the birth of MISA and SAMDEF and their subsequent association with OSISA, this section of the study utilises qualitative methodologies that entail, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001:278–283), Leedy and Ormrod (2001:147–150) and Patton (1987:19, 60–61; 147–149), a detailed engagement with the subject under study, so as to examine the inherent complexities through a multi-dimensional and multi-layered sourcing of data. In that regard, the case-study approach (see also chapter 1 (1.9) above), is adopted because, as Babbie and Mouton argue, although ethnographic studies are concerned with large entities and units of analysis, case studies concentrate on "clearly delineated" entities such as institutions or organisations. Other scholars, though, suggest that there is no boundary between the broader ethnographic and narrower case-study approaches. Nonetheless, this and the next chapter adopt Babbie's 'narrower' view of the case study, clearly setting aside and focusing on two organisations: MISA and SAMDEF.

These two organisations were chosen for this section because they, firstly, individually maintained partnership relations with OSISA during the whole ten-year period covered by this study, and secondly, because they are generally two of the best-known and biggest civil society organisations within media circles in Southern Africa – they have a presence, activities and projects in almost all the countries that constitute the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (the same countries in which OSISA's grant-making activities are focused).

In that regard, this chapter and chapter 6 constitute short but relatively intensive investigations of the two CSOs – especially SAMDEF's relations with OSISA (an aspect that is explored in greater depth in chapter 6). These investigations involve a multiple examination of different variables. The reason why the two CSOs were selected, was so that they represent the projects that grantee organisations typically symbolise – in particular, situations of engagements with donors. At the same time, it should be acknowledged that although the focus is limited to just the two entities, even then, relatively fewer perspectives are offered on the two CSOs.

Regardless of that fact, the socio-political contexts in which the two CSOs operate are taken into account, although these are dealt with in greater detail in chapter 3. Nonetheless, further considerations of other relevant aspects of the social ecologies in which both OSISA and the two organisations operate, need to be mentioned. In doing so, what is pointed out is that the interactions between the three (OSISA, MISA and SAMDEF) took place in particular contexts, times, and among responsible individuals. In that regard, aspects of individual persons' psychological and preferential contexts are largely left out of the discussions below. In other words, the elements of how the psychological make-up of individuals in the three organisations impacted on the overall relationships between OSISA and the two civil society organisations are not tackled in this chapter, or any part of this study. This is not to say these contexts (which obviously had an influence on the outcomes of the relationships) are unimportant. Rather, if such considerations were brought into the discussions at this stage, the psycho-social aspects could

push the limits of this study far beyond the focus areas of the thesis. The purpose then, of mentioning these other socio-psychological angles is simply to emphasise that they do exist, and that they constitute other influential contexts that define the exchanges between OSISA and the two organisations. In other words, there are many other variables and considerations that could have been taken into account, but cannot be, within the limitations of this study.[73]

In other circumstances, an examination of OSISA's relationships with the CSOs would have required that, besides dealing with the context in which the three organisations operate, such an examination should also deal with the question of whether it is society or the mind which gives meaning to a situation. Such a discussion would raise issues around the 'conflict' of viewpoints that have characterised the terminological debate between the concepts of *social constructivism* and *social constructionism*. Patton (2002: 96–97) traces this debate to Michael Crotty, who argues that social constructivism refers to how each of us makes use of the mind to apply meaning to everything around us, while social constructionism refers to the influence that culture has on us as individuals, in the process of forming meaning.[74]

In summary, the above methodological considerations – especially Crotty's arguments – are cited as a way of indicating that there could be more than one way of examining the social interactions between OSISA on the one hand, and MISA and SAMDEF on the other. For example, these social

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[73] Babbie and Mouton (2001:282) argue that any isolated unit of analysis in a case study cannot be successfully isolated from the environmental context in which it is essentially embedded. Thus, to understand the unit successfully, the researcher needs to describe the context in which the unit lies.

[74] Within the context of this study, therefore, it could either be argued that relations between OSISA and the two CSOs were defined by the meaning-making of the individuals holding office in those organisations, or that the individuals were merely beholden to, firstly, the internal cultures of those organisations, and secondly, to the 'global' cultures in which the individuals in those organisations worked. Unfortunately, at that level of discussions we would be struck by the reality that these cultures could be varied: they could refer to the 'cultures' of African societies, or to those of the Western Enlightenment, or indeed to the 'culture' of the so-called 'dependence syndrome', or indeed cultural imperialism. Had we to embrace the full spectrum and implications of Crotty's debate, the discussions could evolve to such levels, heights, breadths and magnitude as to go well above and beyond the scope of this study.

interactions could have been studied from the perspective that they are determined by the minds of the individuals working in those organisations, or that the relations are determined by the social circumstances in which the organisation or the individuals therein, find themselves. Approaching the issue from the 'minds' angle could have emphasised the social constructivism edge; while using the lenses of social circumstances gives the study the slant of social constructionism.

This chapter and chapter 6, therefore, approach the discussions from the perspective that social circumstances had a *greater* influence on the outcome of interactions between the three organisations. As such, the discussions start by situating MISA and SAMDEF within the theoretical discourses surrounding the concept of civil society, before dealing with the internal workings of OSISA. As will be evident, at that stage the discussions do not entirely escape from dealing with the matter of how 'minds' within OSISA are formed and framed (i.e. the internalisation of OSISA's organisational culture) in preparation for those minds' proper operation as tools for the transmission of the open society ideology.

Thus, in summary, there could have been many ways in which to approach the following discussions; but one was decided on. Even from that one position, various variables are considered, so that the relationships between OSISA and the civil society groups may be better understood.

5.3. The concept of civil society and its relevance to social movements in Southern Africa

At this stage it should be acknowledged that various theorists have approached the concept of civil society from many angles. These include Bobbio (1979:26–32) who, for instance, states that the concept of civil society can be traced to philosophical debates surrounding the evolution of society from the supposedly 'natural state', to the creation of societies through the 'social contract', which presumably led to the creation of the political state – a

state that (if some of these arguments are followed to their ultimate end), will eventually wither away.

The concept has also been discussed in other ways by political and philosophical thinkers such as Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Hobbes, Spinoza, Marx and Antonio Gramsci. As such, since the concept has been studied from different angles, it has inevitably been rendered, over time, a very complicated term.

However, Bobbio locates the origins of the concept to the time when the European feudal system was giving way to mercantilism, and the industrial capitalist state. This was around the 18th century, when Scottish philosopher Adam Ferguson published his 'Essay on the History of Civil Society' (1767). In this essay he considers civil society as more or less the "antithesis of primitive society than the antithesis of political society … or natural society" (Bobbio 1979:27–28). Ferguson's line of thought and definition were later elaborated on by Adam Smith, who likened civil society to a civilised society – a definition that encompasses more than merely economic relations, but also aspects of moral values. In other words, only advanced and civilised societies can have, or embrace, civil societies. Later, Gramsci drew a clear distinction between the state (or what was then referred to as 'political society') and civil society, which remained in the philosophical realm of the private sphere (Bobbio 1979:30).

Chandhoke (1995:8–9), on the other hand, posits that the concept of civil society draws on the political thoughts and traditions of by thinkers like Montesquieu, De Tocqueville and Habermas, who essentially suggested that in any society there is a need for the existence of an "intermediate" or a public sphere that enables a level of social discourse between the state and the individual. This intermediate space would consist of independently organised but concrete social organisations, whose major objectives would include the promotion of democratic practices in society. Some of these independent social organisations or institutions would include free media, associations, or representative fora that would enhance and protect the rights of citizens. The

people's rights would include free expression, free association, the sharing of alternative viewpoints, and the right to disseminate such different views and opinions freely. Partly because of this premise, Chandhoke further argues that this site, which would be at the intersection between society and the individual household, is what would be referred to as 'civil society'. Likewise, it is this social space that Habermas (1974:350) refers to as the 'public sphere', which consists of the realm of social life where access is guaranteed to all citizens, and where "something approaching public opinion can be formed". In that vein, Hrvatin and Petkovic (2004:11) argue that freedom of expression is a basic human right that is not restricted to geographical boundaries – it is a global right. In their view, there can be no democracy without respect for freedom of expression, and more especially as that freedom is expressed through the media.

As mentioned above, the literature on political philosophy tends to refer to the concept of civil society in many ways and from may perspectives, ranging from those with a religious and moral bent (e.g. St Augustine, who gives the term a religious and ethical edge, in which civil society is considered as an assemblage of human beings who share common understandings about what is right and wrong for a community, or what is in the interest of that community (Fortin 1963:156)); to the modern era (where it has been defined as the "arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and the market, though in practice, the boundaries between state and civil society, family and the market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power" (LSE 2007)).

Perhaps an even more nuanced examination of the concept is that of Holloway (2001a:2–31). His position is that although the concept may have gained prominence after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the term gained general acceptance when it was first used in the official international documents of the 1993 Earth Summit Declaration, known as Agenda 21. The

concept has since evolved to, on the one hand, define or describe the distinctive space that is not occupied by the state or the market sectors; to, on the other, the refined views that characterise the third social sector not as civil, but rather as a "citizen" sector. In this latter view, therefore, civil society is that dynamic intersectional and overlapping space where the state (or public), market (or private) and citizen sectors meet and interact. This perspective rejects the bifurcatory notion of a divided society, preferring instead the view that society is a social whole, with the state, market and citizens intertwined in the social milieu, despite mainly playing distinctively self-interested roles. It is when the three interests meet in some kind of relationship that they all become, or create, institutions for the social good, that contribute to the building of the civilised space, or civil society [Holloway's figure below defines this theory].
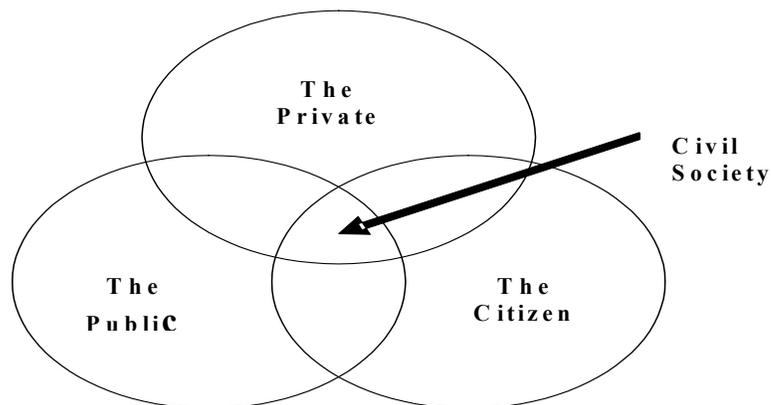
From this holistic approach, the institutions of public space include the political executive, legislature, independently-run social and political accountability organisations, citizen-inspired organisations, local government structures, universities, the judiciary, stock exchanges and the media. Of these, the executive, judiciary, legislature and the media play the roles of creating an enabling environment for a civil society space to flourish and prosper. The rest

are citizen organisations that could be divided into the broad categories of "mutual benefit" and "public benefit" organisations. Within the former category are such organisations as cooperatives, trade unions, self-help schemes and professional associations, which are formed by citizen members, "from which they derive benefits". On the other hand, public benefit organisations have their mandate determined by "the common perceptions and values of self-selected" groups of public-spirited citizens, whose overall objective is to offer services or products that will benefit other groups. Thus, it is expected that those who govern or manage public-benefit organisations may not directly be the beneficiaries of the groups' final products, nor do the beneficiaries directly determine the mandates of the organisations. These public benefit organisations may include private philanthropic foundations with diverse operations worldwide. However, Holloway warns that following the capture of the public consciousness and conscience of the civil society concept, there has since emerged "a spurious group of people" who pretend to be citizen organisations, when in fact they are groups comprising individuals whose only interest is to "earn money" for themselves, their political parties or business institutions. Often these groups of people form organisations that misrepresent themselves as institutionally independent, and as being for the benefit of the public, when they are "altogether different" and are essentially employment or income-generating organisations for, chiefly, their founders. These may include the GONGOs (i.e. government-organised NGOs), BONGOS (i.e. business-owned NGOS), or DONGOs (i.e. donor-owned NGOs, or formerly independent NGOs that have been bought, or made "malleable and compliant" to, and by, the dictates of the donors. Such NGOs may be referred to as NGOs-for-hire).

Nonetheless, this "associational life of citizens" is supposed to stimulate the people's power and potential to influence and change societies; to bring individuals together to act in groups to ensure that governments and industry are socially accountable (Fowler 2003:1).

These civil society groups also challenge the exercise of state power; campaign for the expansion of the state's obligations to its citizens; and

become the theatre for negotiation and supplementation, challenging everyone else for the purposes of deepening democratic practices (Chandhoke 2007:40–41; Fowler 2003:13).

Civil society groups take the form of churches, formal or informal neighbourhood groups, trade unions, self-help gatherings, volunteer associations, charities, community units, professional associations, advocacy bodies, social coalitions and any other non-governmental organisations (LSE 2007; Okigbo 2000:74).

Civil society groups are also referred to as "interest groups" or "factions" within the context of the discourses of social pluralism, where it is accepted that modern democracies are so huge that it is often impossible to obtain a single consensus on issues. The best way for individuals to protect their interests, or to be heard, is to join or support those groups that represent or articulate individuals' interests and positions. That way, individual citizens' social and political goals may be attained (Baradat 2006:110), for as Raboy and Abramson (1998:329) argue, throughout the world "policy intervention hails the public interest as its objective, but nowhere is there any consensus on what this might mean". It is, therefore, left to individuals and groups of individuals to define and advocate for themselves what could be in their interest. [For additional debates on public interest, refer to chapter 3 (3.2) above.]

These groups are often distinguished from political movements and parties because, essentially, CSOs are not entirely focused on power relations, but rather, they mount campaigns and advocacy activities around a single or cluster of immediate concerns. According to Chandhoke (2007:34–35), this focus does not necessarily imply the absolute absence of politics in the activities of these groups, but rather that such activities take place "outside the sphere of formal politics".

Okigbo (2000:74) further argues that a "positive value" of the CSO movement is evidenced by the absence of the self-interest rationale in its actions.

Whereas, on the one hand, it is self interest that drives the commercial market, it is coerciveness that properly defines the characteristics of state action. Tactically, however, the work of CSOs often depends on non-violent means of asserting their claims. Such work includes mass mobilisations, rallies, sit-ins, processions, research, media campaigns, advocacy, lobbying and negotiations (Fowler 2003:12; Chandhoke 2007:33).

To use Bauman's (1992:xix) perspective, the activities of CSOs are part of the defining characteristics of the post-modern era, where communities are imagined and created but are without firm and objectified anchors. Such communities last for as long as the issues to be addressed are still valid. The groups could be momentary, or exist for decades. However, these communities largely depend on the affection of the members, and as social entities they exist only through their group manifestations. This feature basically means that often, CSOs are symbolised through the expression of occasional and time-bound ideas, which in themselves are aspects that define the social characteristic of "continuity, and discontinuity" with previous more settled modern-era situations. Whereas the modernisation project(s) aspired to greater homogeneity or universality in the ideals and social affairs of the people (refer to discussions on African political thought in chapter 2 (2.2.3–2.4) and apartheid in chapter 4 (4.2) for instance), and so was in many ways considered monotonous, the post-modern project(s) era is full of, among others, variety, contingency and institutionalised pluralism (Bauman 1992:187–188). In some way, the activities of the various CSOs could be situated in the era of post-modernism.

Nonetheless, Okigbo (2000:74–70) struggles to distinguish between Euro-centric and Afro-centric conceptions of the civil society movement. According to him, the European view limits its sights by subjecting the roles of civil society to just the realm between the state and business. In Africa, Okigbo argues, CSOs do not only act in the "domain between" the state and business, or only in the space between the state and the household, but they also act for and look after the affairs of people outside the realm and reach of the state. This is often an area where the state demonstrates little concern or

capacity in terms of "service delivery". The CSOs occupying this space, therefore, are often seen to have close links with government and its various departments.[75] To Okigbo, therefore, the rather simplistic state-market division in the conception of the civil society space is "superfluous", as there is abundant evidence to suggest the existence of "umbilical ties" between civil society groups and governments in Africa on the one hand, and African CSOs and international CSOs on the other. However, according to Okigbo, the nexus between local and international CSOs is sometimes used to promote the social agendas of foreign states, governments and commercial interests.[76]

That aside, it should be acknowledged that within the civil society discourse, what predominates is the liberal perspective that asserts that the CSO space is there for the promotion of individual liberties, and to contain the power of the state. Essentially, this view assumes that at the end of the day, a balance will be struck between the demands of the citizens and those of the state,

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[75] A good example of such a CSO could be the National Arts Council (NAC) of Zambia, which brings together individual NGOs that are interested in promoting various artistic activities in that country. The overall objective of the NAC is to advise government on policy relating to the "visual, performing, media and literary arts", and to promote artistic excellence in Zambia. The NAC is thus an umbrella group covering the National Theatre Arts Association of Zambia (NATAAZ), Zambia Association of Musicians (ZAM), Zambia National Visual Arts Council (ZANVAC), Zambia Folk and Dance Music Society (ZAFODAMUS), Zambia Women Writers Association (ZAWWA), Zambia Popular Theatre Alliance (ZAPOTA), and National Media Arts Association (NAMA), among others. As such, the governing committee of the NAC is composed of representatives from a cross-spectrum of society, covered by the portfolios of the different government departments such as Community Development and Social Services; Education; Culture; Vocational Training; Information and Broadcasting and; Tourism. The NAC has a responsibility of linking the various sectoral associations to the relevant government departments, and supporting such associations materially and morally in the pursuit of their individual objectives (http://www.nationalartscouncil.org.zm). As such, the NAC is an example of a CSO that has close links with government, while delivering in those areas where the state may demonstrate little concern or limited capacity to do so. The NAC is, therefore, in the mode of what Ahmed and Potter (2006:57–71) consider as being in collaboration with the state. This mode is distinct from CSOs that substitute or are opponents of the state. As a collaborator with the state, the NAC provides social and other services on behalf of the state, "supposedly for the comparative advantages" that such an CSO, as the NAC, enjoys in terms of "flexibility, efficiency, and proximity to the target" group of artists (Ahmed and Potter 2006:62).
[76] It is pertinent here to point out that some of the international donor agencies or CSOs that Okigbo may have in mind could include such government-owned development organisations as the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the British Department for Foreign and International Development (DFID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD), and the Finish International Development Agency (FINIDA), that have often been accused of promoting their governments' political interests. Okigbo may also have had in mind private donor foundations such as those started by Microsoft owners Bill and Melinda Gates, that ostensibly promote Microsoft's commercial interests, which include the use of its Microsoft software across the world.

which will result in social harmony. However, although this perspective predominates, the civil society concept has also been adopted by the 'new left', which perceives it as an arena for the struggle of individual and group rights, seeing the space as a channel for forcing governments to pursue the common good (Fowler 2003:2).

Then, others like Okigbo (2000:74–79), as referred to above, have added the developmentalist perspective, whereby CSOs are viewed as a theatre for cooperative engagement (either collectively, dually, or individually) between the state, commercial interests and/or CSOs, in the interest of the common good.

In this latter view, civil society groups can work with the state or business institutions to further the developmental objectives of societies, or CSOs can go it alone.

However, other more radical positions consider that the greatest threat to the individual liberties and economic rights of citizens does not emanate from states or governments, but from global commercial interests which have minimised the roles of states in the developmental processes. According to this view, these commercial interests have subordinated "all human and planetary needs" to commercial imperatives. These imperatives require responses that would necessitate that CSOs recapture, revitalise and re-legitimise governmental roles in developmental processes, so that governments and states "firmly re-establish their democratic responsibility and accountability to the people first and foremost" (Keet 2001:21).

Perhaps it is important here to point out that Keet and Okigbo's positions and arguments could be legitimate within the context of the post-modernist critiques of positivism, whereby positivism is accused of failing to acknowledge and accept social differences, and lacking the requisite sensitivities towards cultural and historical specificities and differences (Babbie and Mouton 2001:40–43). As Babbie and Mouton argue, in the post-modern era there can be neither grand truths, nor grand narratives, nor the

belief in the universality of human nature as defining factors, as espoused by Nazism, Communism, *Ujamaa*, Ubuntuism, or apartheid (as an example, refer to the discussion in chapter 2 (2.4) and chapter 4 (4.2) above). All these elements are contestable through no preordained or presettled models. So both Keet and Okigbo's positions may have to be viewed in that light, as both viewpoints seek a stake in the civil society discourse.

It is within these historical and theoretical debates that especially MISA, but also SAMDEF, should be placed. The organisational models followed by MISA and SAMDEF obviously draw heavily from and build on theoretical discourses on the roles and spaces of civil society that go far back in history. Furthermore, the two CSOs should be seen as acting both between the state and the household on one side, acting in the space that the state cannot reach or has no interest in; and on the other as having taken up the space within Holloway's (2001a:7) model where the state, the market and the citizen sectors interact and intersect, thereby creating a functional and refined civil society sphere.

5.3.1 The role of civil society in African social development

As demonstrated above, arguments for the existence of the public space between the state and the individual, is considered a necessity for a democratic post-colonial African society. This has not always been the case. For several years, in some African countries this space could be said to have been 'closed', or was consistently narrowed – especially during the era when one-party state political regimes enjoyed popularity. These were times when ruling political parties assumed overall political power and considered themselves the facilitators of this social space, but also acted as motivating forces for social development, as has been demonstrated in chapter 2 (2.4) above. However, as Mbikusita-Lewanika (1990:160) argues, in the application of a twisted form of logic, the bringing together of all the people under the umbrella of a one-party state was also an "acknowledgement that genuine development arises out of broad popular self-determination and full participation of the people", as that participation was said to be allowed,

although confined, within the structures of the one-party state. In reality however, Mbikusita-Lewanika admits that free and open discussions within state structures were "systematically blocked or severely obstructed", while in the view of Ayittey (2005:10), opposition views were effectively banished. In practice, therefore, Chandhoke's (1995:8–9) intermediate space for effective social discourse was closed in a one-party state.

This situation was sustained in Africa and much of Eastern Europe until the late 1980s, when popular movements for political and social reform sprang up across the board. These popular movements joined hands with international pressure groups to campaign for democratic reforms (Carver 2000:193; Mwanza 1993:13) and were, according to Hamalengwa (1992:159–160) triggered by the transformations taking place in Eastern Europe, where similar one-party regimes were collapsing "like dominoes as a result of mass protests". In addition, with the end of the Cold War, many Western donor agencies and governments saw no need to use foreign aid to "buy" strategic allies in Africa and elsewhere, but instead such agencies concentrated on maximising the development impact of their donor resources by channelling such resources to CSOs which were considered more cost-effective in reaching the poorest of the poor in Africa (Makoba 2002). This ushered in an era in which the CSO sector was both important and prominent as regards economic and social development.

However, while acknowledging that the struggle for change in parts of Africa in the 1980s (and with particular reference to Malawi) may have been helped by changes taking place at the time in Eastern Europe, Kamwambe (1993:109–110) nonetheless argues that the far-away events did not, in fact, ignite the fuse of civil society-based political struggles in Malawi. Such struggles had been evident through loose associations, from the time the Malawian one-party state was declared in the 1960s. Even then, as demonstrated in chapter 3 (3.6) above, civil society groups in countries like Malawi had been in existence since colonial times. Such formations were a response to the colonial situation while also being vehicles for channelling campaigns for interracial equality. In neighbouring Zambia, for instance, one

of the first African-led civil society group was the Northern Rhodesia Federation of African Welfare Associations, which was formed in 1946, and which two years later transformed itself so as to be reconstituted into a political party – the Northern Rhodesia African Congress – which began to advocate for African self-rule (Mbikusita-Lewanika 1990:73).

In South Africa, it is argued that although CSOs may have mushroomed in the 1970s in response to the apartheid system, such organisations were merely the offspring of "a long tradition in black communities of collective association around basic needs" and a response to the deteriorating living standards of urbanised African communities (Nthambeleni 2006:295–299). As evidenced in other African countries, such civil society groups in South Africa also gravitated towards political activism, more especially through their alliance with organisations such as the United Democratic Front (UDF). This close association between CSOs and political parties has, in the view of Chiluba (1995:89), proved that civil society could be the training ground for political and government leadership, as was evidenced by his (Chiluba's) emergence from the trade union movement to the presidency of Zambia in 1991, and the presence in top state structures in South Africa of people who, prior to the demise of apartheid in 1994, were civil society activists; or in Zimbabwe, where the current leading opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change, is led by Morgan Tsvangirai, a former trade unionist.

In summary, it is clear that in many respects CSOs have played critical roles in post-colonial Southern Africa by, firstly, mobilising the African people against colonial rule, then secondly, by either reinstituting themselves as political movements or associating themselves with existing political parties; and thirdly, by providing the critical leadership to some of the ruling or opposition political parties.

However, perhaps partly because of this close association with political processes, many CSOs in post-colonial Africa have, in some instances, been relegated or subjected to the whims of dominant political parties for many years after the end of colonial systems (or apartheid, in the case of South

Africa). In South Africa, this is evidenced by the close alliance between the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the now ruling African National Congress (ANC), since COSATU's formation in November 1985 (McKinley 1997:67–72). To date, COSATU remains a political ally of the ANC, although it is a junior partner in the government of South Africa.

That aside, according to Ahmed and Potter (2006:23–25), three major factors have contributed significantly to the rapid evolution and growth of CSOs worldwide. The first factor has been the growth of the Internet and global communications systems, which has ensured that CSOs in various corners of the world not only share their experiences, but also build common agendas and mutually supportive international networks. This connectivity has enabled CSOs in various parts of the world to develop common repertoires as well as similar strategies for addressing global challenges, such as the environment, human rights and media freedom issues. A second factor is what has been referred to as the failure or retreat by governments, from providing and developing social services to communities. This failure has, in many instances, been viewed as the failure of ruling regimes, and in many cases this has led to calls for change. The third factor is directly related to the second: it is the failure by states to achieve economic development. In fact, Makoba (2002) argues that the failure by African regimes to deliver on their developmental promises has increasingly been viewed negatively, in the sense that the states are seen as structures that inhibit, rather than promote, development partly because of the corruption embedded in state structures. As a result, the development space has increasingly been occupied by civil society groups. For instance, in Kenya there are about 500 registered CSOs, while Uganda has topped 1, 000 such organisations; Zambia has more than 128; Tanzania has recorded 130; and Zimbabwe 300 (Makoba 2002). According to Makoba, the growing role of CSOs in the development sphere is a direct consequence of the "decreasing capacity of the African state to undertake meaningful development". Furthermore, Nunnenkamp (2008) argues that much donor funding has gone to civil society groups because CSOs are generally viewed as being,

…particularly close to the poor, as many of them directly cooperate with local target groups, circumventing recipient governments with a reputation of corruption. Accordingly, the argument goes, they (CSOs) are better aligned to the poor people's needs, and suffer from less leakage.

As a result of this perspective, Makoba (2002) notes that besides an increase in the number of CSOs, the financial resources that have been channelled and are handled by CSOs have also increased tremendously. For instance, in Kenya, 18 per cent or $35 million of official development aid is each year channelled through various civil society groups.

Thus, in a way, the failure of African states to achieve relevant and effective economic development has given reign to the prominence of the CSO sector in development and other social activities. Furthermore, such failures have, as Ahmed and Potter (2006:23–25) argue, enabled academics and social activists to search for alternative models of organisations [beyond the states] to induce social and political development. In addition, Ahmed and Potter aver that the above three factors (growth of the Internet, governments not providing social services and goods, and the failure to effect meaningful development) have contributed to the evolution of new attitudes – especially in Western countries. These countries are increasingly concerned with what the two authors term "post-material values" that emphasise social equity and higher standards of living for all. These values have given rise to concerns for human rights, citizen empowerment and environmental issues, all of which are major concerns for the CSO movement (Ahmed and Potter 2006:25).

From the above analysis, it is possible to argue in tandem with Chandhoke (1995:111) and Holloway (2001b:3) that CSOs are a sphere of associations which bring together individuals, to jointly address common concerns through a commitment to action with other citizens. These concerns may include food, water and shelter, or be of a much broader climatic or political nature.

It is partly because of the capacity of the civil society movement to bring together the energies of the citizens, and the successes of such endeavours evidenced in the events of the 1990s in Eastern Europe which, according to Robinson and Friedman (2005:1) have spurred the donor community to shift its emphasis from supporting national electoral processes and institution-building, to strengthening CSOs. The CSOs were thus encouraged to ensure that states are accountable; that they broaden the people's participation in policy formulation, and that the people are empowered to dialogue freely with government and state structures on key policies and laws.

In the main, these are the roles that many CSOs and their donor partners have defined for themselves, more especially since the end of the Cold War. As Naughton (2004:5) states,

> …Civil society must be increasingly vigilant, putting at least as much effort into preventing the regression of human rights agreements as it puts into progress towards a more just world.

That, perhaps, sums up the roles of CSOs in Africa since the early 1990s. The CSOs' activities have gone towards ensuring that governments are accountable, that human rights are respected by all social structures, and that increasingly, there is improved public participation in state-policy formulation, as the training ground for political leadership as Chiluba (1995:89) argues. These roles are all couched within the liberal-democratic paradigm through which, according to Robinson and Freidman (2005:1), CSOs are viewed as fertile vehicles for promoting the people's participation in the democratic process.

This approach has also been referred to as the "new policy agenda" (Makoba 2002), which is promoted by liberal economic and the (neo-) liberal democratic theory, in which a level of prominence in economic activity and the provision of social services is reserved for private sector initiatives and markets. In line with the agenda, the private sector and the market are viewed as critical engines, or the "most efficient mechanisms" for promoting economic

growth and the provision of social services, including advancing the values of democratic practices in Africa and the Third World. Governments are, therefore, encouraged – through various mechanisms – to provide enabling legal and policy environments that facilitate the smooth operations of civil society organisations and the private sector across the African continent.

The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), the Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF) and other CSOs (discussed below) should be viewed as being situated within the liberal democratic paradigm referred to above; and as being primed to pursue the abovementioned values and aspirations. In that respect, such CSOs are meant to promote liberal democratic values and sets of democratic principles which are ensconced within the ideology of an open society. The discussions below build upon this line of thought.

5.4. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) – a historical perspective

The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), with its regional headquarters in Windhoek, Namibia, was launched in April 2002 as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) registered trust with a Southern African region-wide mandate of helping to implement the 1991 UNESCO Windhoek Declaration on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press (Chipare 2007:154; MISA 2003:161; Riber and Chigudu 2004:4).

The Windhoek Declaration is largely based on the United Nations' Advisory Declaration on Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations' General Assembly in New York, on 10 December 1948. This UN Declaration consists of 30 articles that define the world body's view of what rights the individual is born with, and which should be respected by the states. The Declaration, adopted under UN General Assembly Resolution 217 of 1948, is basically a non-binding statement that all humans are, from birth, endowed with inviolable

rights that include those of life, dignity and freedom.[77] In particular, Article 18 states that everyone has the "right to freedom of thought, conscience and … belief", while Article 19 states that all humans have the right to "freedom of opinion and expression … [and] to hold opinion without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" (www.un.org/overview/rights.html). In the same spirit, the Windhoek Declaration seeks to bind nations into promoting the "establishment, maintenance and fostering of independent, pluralistic and free" media, as these are considered essential for developing and sustaining democracy and economic development (Barratt and Berger 2007:174).

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[77] The concept of human rights is traceable to that of 'natural rights', which over the years have been defined by the branch of political theory that posits that humans have basic and inalienable rights that should not be violated by fellow citizens, states or governments. This view that emerged from medieval beliefs, argues that humans, as God's or natural creatures, should be allowed to live according to God's or natural law. This proposition was re-emphasised in the writings of philosophers like John Locke, who posited that humans were generally good and rational; Frenchman Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who argued that it was necessary that humans who live in communities should have some kind of 'social contract' through which they respect one anothers' rights; to Americans Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson, whose philosophical views are concretised in the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. Other expressions of the natural rights of individuals are contained in documents such as the English Bill of Rights of 1689; the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen of 1789; and the American Bill of Rights of 1791 which together influenced the UN Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations 2007a; Shivji 1989:16; (http://columbia.thefreedictionary.com/natural+rights). Contextually, the UN Declaration on Human Rights was partly a response to the violation of people's rights that the world witnessed both before and during the Second World War, on the part of Nazi Germany (Shivji 1989:17). The Declaration was therefore a request by the world body to member nations to promote these rights as a basis for peace, justice and freedom in the world. The overall objective was to seek to limit the powers of states over citizens, although some people have since felt that a mere resolution does not go far enough to provide these safeguards. Thus, in 1966 the UN adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which came into force on March 23, 1976 (Shivji 1989:24). The nations that signed on to this instrument are now expected to abide by its provisions. The various nations' compliance is monitored by the Human Rights Committee of eminent persons who are elected by the UN member nations. The criteria for electing people to this Committee are that they should demonstrate high moral character and competencies in human rights issues. Presently, a South African member of the Committee is Zonke Zanele Majodina, Deputy Chair of the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC). She is a clinical psychologist who specialises in the rights of refugees. Others from the African continent on the 17-member Committee come from Egypt, Tunisia, Benin and Mauritius (United Nations 2007b; http://en.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/members.htm; http://www.ohchr.info/english/issues/poverty/docs/3sf-bios.doc). However, there are arguments to the effect that although these declarations and conceptions are clothed in the language of universalism, once these conceptions are placed "in their historical context", such conceptions become mere declarations or political manifestoes of particular classes for a limited time, to serve the interests of such classes. According to Shivji (1989:51–53) the above United Nations Declarations "can, by no means, be regarded as universal", as they have a historical and cultural basis and in addition, not everyone agrees with their principal proclamations, thus such Declarations are difficult to implement globally.

In that regard, MISA's objectives are in line with several international declarations, and thus its actions are directed at influencing public opinion, the business sector and state operatives towards holding more liberal perspectives on the role of the media in society (as contained in these declarations and documents).

The actual gestation of MISA can be traced to the December 1989 seminar on 'Democracy and the Media in Southern Africa', held at Chobe Game Lodge in northern Botswana. The meeting was organised by the Botswana-based Foundation for Education and Production (FEP) and the Sweden-based Dag Hammarskjöeld Foundation. Essentially, the meeting was convened in honour of the former Swedish International Development Agency's (SIDA) Director-General Dr. Ernst Michanek. It was attended by the following journalists and media workers: Jennifer Cargill, Bornwell Chakaodza, Geoffrey Nyarota, Peta Thorneycroft from Zimbabwe; Govin Reddy (a South African based in Zimbabwe); Alaudin Salim Osman (a Malawian then based in Zimbabwe); Paul Fauvet from Mozambique; Sven Hamrell, Per Wasberg, Ingrid Lofstrom-Berg, Ernst Michanek, Kerstin Kvist, Olle Nordberg, Birgitta Toresson from Sweden; Jo-Anne Collinge, William Harper, Michael A. Kahn, Raymond Louw, Naphtali Mlipha, Latiefa Mobara, David Niddrie, Gabu J. Tungwana, Chris Vick, Cecil Sols, Elsabé Wessels from South Africa; Tom Sebina (a South African spokesperson of the exiled African National Congress, then based in Lusaka, Zambia); Methaetsile Leepile, D. Ntwaagae, Patrick van Rensburg, Judy Seidman, Andrew Sesinyi from Botswana, and David Lush from Namibia (Hammarskjöeld 1989b:115).

The overall objective of the seminar was to survey and examine "how the right to inform and be informed and the democratisation of the media could be safeguarded and supported in the interest of the future development" of Southern Africa (Hammarskjöeld 1989a:3).

Among the seminar's recommendations was the need for the creation or strengthening of mechanisms for regional cooperation, that included the

expansion of the "formal organisations of journalists as formations with the capacity to pursue the ends of freedom … [and] securing support in defence of freedom of expression". Other recommendations were for the creation of a "media bank" for the SADC region, through which donor agencies could channel their funds in support of new media initiatives, and the creation of a regional "media school" that could provide quality education for journalists in Southern Africa (Hammarskjöeld 1989b:109–115).[78] In terms of a regional organisation for the campaign of media freedom and the people's freedom of expression, this was instituted as MISA, a CSO that is currently represented in ten countries: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Presently, a MISA chapter is under construction in Angola.

As an organisation, the financial affairs and political objectives of MISA are overseen by the MISA Trust Fund Board (MISA-TFB). At the time when MISA was launched in September 1992, the TFB was comprised of the following three elected members: Judge John Manyarara (a Zimbabwean now practising in Namibia); Prof. Bojosi Otlhogile (now the Vice Chancellor of the University of Botswana and the recent past Chair of the SAMDEF board); and Dr. Gilbert Mudenda (a development economist from Zambia, and also a former Chair of the SAMDEF board).

At the time of writing, the TFB is chaired by Mandla Seleone of the National Research Foundation of South Africa, while other members are Beatrice Mtetwa (a media lawyer from Zimbabwe); Prof. Marcelino Liphola from

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[78] The media school was eventually established as the Nordic-SADC Journalism Centre (now referred to as the NSJ Southern African Media Training Trust), based in Maputo, Mozambique. Its evolution and operational context is dealt with in some detail by COWI (1996:15–33) and Phiri (2001:7–23). Basically, the school was established in 1993 under a bilateral agreement between the governments of Mozambique (representing the SADC countries) and Denmark (representing the Nordic States). The school now provides journalism skills to journalists working in the SADC region. In 1999, the ownership of the NSJ was transferred from the governments of SADC and the Nordic regions to Southern African media organisations such as MISA, the Forum for African Media Women in Southern Africa (FAMW-SA), the Southern African Broadcasters Association (SABA) and the now defunct Africa office of the World Association of Community Radio Stations (AMARC-Africa). As we shall see later in Chapter 5 (5.5, below), the media bank was established in 1998 as the Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF), based in Gaborone, Botswana.

Mozambique; Lindiwe Khumalo-Matse (a lawyer from Swaziland), and Mike Daka (a private radio station (Breeze FM) proprietor in Zambia).

Besides its financial oversight role, the objective of the TFB is also to ensure that MISA does not digress from its founding principles and values. These include the core business of safeguarding the right of the region's people to freedom of expression, as defined in the abovementioned UN Declaration on Human Rights, and in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. MISA is also expected to sustain – among others, campaigns for media freedom, the principles of media pluralism, media professionalism, media independence and citizens' unimpeded access to public information (Kawerema 2007:1; MISA 2003:161; www.misa.org/aboutmisa.html). In that regard, MISA's activities are defined by, and conducted through, the following sectoral programmes: Freedom of Expression; Media Monitoring; Broadcasting Diversity; Gender and Media; and Legal Support, which are discussed in detail below.

5.4.1. Freedom of Expression and the Right to Information

This programme is basically a campaign that seeks to ensure that the people of Southern Africa enjoy unhindered access to public information, and that the people embrace this element as their basic human right. This campaign is conducted by seeking to reform such laws and regulations as may impede the free flow of information, and ensuring that such new laws – when enacted – do not restrict the free flow of information.

In line with this campaign, MISA and the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) subsequently convened a conference in August 2007 in Lusaka, Zambia, at which the regional members of parliaments committed themselves to review all laws, and not pass new laws that restrict the performance of the media. Governments and parliaments have also been heavily lobbied, over the years, to pass laws that allow journalists freer access to public information.

Partly as an outcome of this campaign, Mozambique had (by 2005) produced a draft law on access to official information. This draft law seeks to expand on the constitutional guarantees that provide that all Mozambicans "have the right to freedom of expression and freedom of the press, as well as the right to information" and so the law wishes to extend this right to cover information held by private persons or bodies. However, such information has to be in the public interest (Berger 2007:63, 68–69).

Zambia, on the other hand, submitted to its parliament the Freedom of Information Bill, although this was later withdrawn. The objective of the intended law was to ensure that information held by public and semi-public organisations is freely available to the public (Berger 2007:128).

Namibia has produced a media-friendly Communications Bill; while in Botswana, progress on a Mass Media Bill stalled towards the end of 2007. The Botswana Bill had earlier been withdrawn from parliament following much criticism from parliamentarians, who expressed fears that the Bill's intention (to allow the registration of community radios) could divide the country along ethnic lines. [For the debates surrounding ethnic sensitivities in Botswana which could have impacted the progress of this Bill, refer to the language policies discussion in chapter 3 (3.8.3) above.] Nonetheless, the Botswana National Broadcasting Board (NBB) awarded broadcasting licences to three privately-owned stations in 2007. These include the popular music station, GABZ FM, the youth-oriented Yarona FM, and another new station to broadcast across the country. In Malawi, the law and broadcasting policy that had earlier been endorsed by civil society groups was still under discussion in 2007. MISA-Malawi has taken the lead in initiating discussions with various groups, including government[79] (MISA 2007a:31–32; Lepothoe 2007; Makate

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[79] It should be acknowledged, however, that all these positive movements were taking place across the region at the same time when major reversals were being recorded in Zimbabwe, where the government had enacted several laws that were inimical to greater access to information and the practice of free media. These included the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), and the Broadcasting Services Act (BSA), which remained on the law books in spite of international campaigns to have them revoked. Worse still, in 2007, Zimbabwe enacted the Interception of Communications Act (ICA) which allows the government to freely intercept telephone and e-mail messages. The enforcement of these and other draconian laws led MISA to conclude

2007; MISA 2006:299; MISA 2003:162; Riber and Chigudu 2004:12; www.misa.org/freedomof expression.html).

5.4.2. Media Freedom Monitoring

Under the monitoring programme MISA has, since its inception, recorded and disseminated various incidents of the violation of media freedom and freedom of expression in the ten countries in which it has branches. For example, between 1994 and 2003, MISA reported on more than 1, 520 violations across the region. News about these infringements is disseminated across the world on a daily basis, through the Canada-based International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX). The organisations that are made aware of these violations include human rights groups such as Article 19, Amnesty International, Reporters without Borders, Human Rights Watch and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

These alerts are meant to be factual reports that essentially cover various infractions on the right of the media to operate freely; or reflect on acts of direct censorship, or court cases that border on restricting the operations of the media; or on laws that have been passed, which could work against the media, and on policy statements by government officials that have an impact on media operations. The alerts also cover news about journalists who have been killed, harassed, assaulted, threatened, injured, arrested, kidnapped, denied credentials, expelled from countries, or sued for libel or defamation.

The alerts are about media or related organisations that may have been censored, shut down, searched, raided or attacked, or – in the case of individual journalists – sued for libel or defamation. The aim of the dissemination activities is to draw global attention to the various states, powerful individuals or groups of individuals who are taking actions against the media. Apart from the legal support offered to victims of these violations, MISA provides individual journalists with welfare necessities that include

that Zimbabwe is the worst violator of media freedom in Southern Africa since 2000 (MISA 2007a:4, 8, 20, 35–36).

funds and emotional assistance to cope with their daily lives when under pressure from more powerful personalities, or forces such as governments. Such support also includes the provision of a facility for trauma counselling, medicines, or meals while in detention.

In terms of the regularity of these alerts, for example, more than 180 were issued in 2003 alone; of these 54 per cent were from or on Zimbabwe, a situation indicative of the deteriorating human rights situation in that country (Riber and Chigudu 2004:15; MISA 2006:298–300; MISA 2003:117–151, 158–159; www.misa.org/mediamonitorin.html).

5.4.3. Campaign for Broadcasting Diversity

Under this campaign, MISA pursues a three-tier model broadcasting system in Southern Africa. According to this model, a suitable broadcasting environment should consist of community broadcasters; private radio and television stations; and those owned by the public (Berger 2007:140). However, Buckley, Duer, Mendel and O'Siochru (2008:35) argue that the models in this tier cannot be rigidly separated or defined, as they tend to overlap in terms of ownership and control. Each of the three models of broadcasting is,

> …governed by different dynamics and embodies a different set of interests but the configuration in any given country is the result generally of a unique, sometimes lengthy and complex, historical evolution. No two regimes are identical and the concept of an 'ideal' model of broadcasting fails when confronted with the diversity of different national contexts. No single size fits all.

Nonetheless, MISA's position is that for the broadcasting environment to be fair, it must not be dominated by either one of the sectors – least of all, the government.

In the pursuit of this ideal, MISA developed the African Charter on Broadcasting, concerning the broadcasting and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sectors in Africa. This Charter, too, is grounded on the provisions of the Windhoek Declaration for Promoting Pluralism in the Media. The Broadcasting Charter was launched in Pretoria, South Africa, in May 2002, as part of a session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR).

In October 2002, the ACHPR adopted the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa which, among others, recommends that African governments promote diversified broadcasting sectors in their localities, as states' monopolies in these sectors were incompatible with the acceptable principles of free expression (Berger 2007:164–169). This declaration was recommended to the ACHPR by MISA and other continental civil society groups, and is based on the Windhoek Declaration on the Freedom of the Press.

In terms of government and state-controlled broadcasters, the Charter on Broadcasting calls for such broadcasters to be transformed into genuine public service outlets, that are accountable to the people through independent boards (Berger 2007:148) which ensure that such broadcasters serve the general good of the public. Under this arrangement, such broadcasters are expected not to be politically or culturally biased, while the governance structures are expected to be free from outside pressures and interferences.

On the other hand, the second tier of community broadcasting is considered a sector that should be "for, by and about the community", and whose ownership and management represents the community, while its programming is not-for-profit, and is concerned with the social development agenda (Berger 2007:159).

The commercial or private sector of broadcasting should be the preserve of commercial interests or private initiatives. These interests should be free to determine the orientation of those broadcast stations and their programmes,

and to occupy or dominate the station's governance and management structures.

As regards progress made in this campaign, it is possible to point to Zambia, where the Zambia National Broadcasting Act was amended in 2002 to allow for the establishment of an independent broadcasting authority, where unlike before, the authority to regulate the field was the preserve of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services. This amendment enabled the state to enact the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act, which provides for the inauguration of an independent body (to be referred to as the IBA), with representation from across the spectrum of public opinion. Such a body was not meant to be subject to any other authority – including the president. However, it should be noted that since the law was enacted, its implementation has stalled as government has declined to implement it. This has resulted in MISA taking the state to court. MISA eventually lost the case on appeal to the Supreme Court. However, the campaign for the implementation of the IBA Act was continuing at the time of writing this thesis.

In Botswana, the Mass Media Bill was, as indicated above, controversially withdrawn from parliamentary deliberations in 2007 after objections from members of parliament. In Lesotho, the government was forced to withdraw the Lesotho Broadcasting Corporation Bill after MISA and other freedom of expression groups had mounted vigorous campaigns against it, as the intended law failed to meet the basic minimum international requirements for the provision of a three-tier system of broadcasting: public, private and community. In Malawi the situation remains unchanged, with little movement towards transforming the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) into a public service broadcaster – although it has to be acknowledged that more and more private and community radio stations have been awarded licences to operate (Riber and Chigudu 2004:17–18; Berger 2007:127–135; Matibini 2006:66–89; MISA 2007b:30–36; MISA 2006:298–300; MISA 2003:162; www.misa.org/broadcasting/index/html).

5.4.4. Gender and Media Support

This branch of MISA's activities seeks to foster an ethos of professionalism and accountability within the media sector. It entails ensuring that media products are professionally produced and disseminated, with full regard for the expectations of ethics, requirements of excellence, sensitivities to gender and HIV/AIDS issues, and the existence (in each of the ten countries) of media self-regulatory mechanisms. MISA assists the media in enhancing their professionalism through the provision of direct training courses, or through exchange programmes for media personnel, and the definition by MISA branches, of codes of ethics.

Within this programmatic context, therefore, from 1992 to 2002, for example, more than 600 journalists participated in MISA-sponsored training courses, mainly centred on skills upgrading. The areas covered included computer-aided research; Internet research methodologies; media management; and thematic reporting on economics, elections and gender. In addition, more than 80 journalists participated in exchange programmes through which they honed their skills at media institutions in different countries within Southern Africa. Partly as a result of this programme, self-regulatory mechanisms such as the Press Council of Botswana and the Media Council of Zambia were established (Riber and Chigudu 2004:19–20; MISA 2006:298–300; MISA 2003:161–162; www.misa.org/gendermediasupport.html).

5.4.5. Legal Support

This programme provides support to journalists and media institutions, to challenge their criminalisation by, especially, governments. A good number of cases in the region are related to the application of the laws of criminal defamation, through which heads of state are protected from critical comments.

According to Berger (2007:141), such "insult laws" – especially as they pertain to the presidency in Africa – "constitute a high percentage of the legal

instruments deployed by governments against journalists". As such, these laws are vigorously opposed by various sectors of the global community, including MISA and the World Association of Newspapers, because "it is questionable whether such laws are compatible with democracy". In addition, Buckley, Duer, Mendel and O'Siochru (2008:111) state that these laws have "a profound chilling effect on freedom of expression".

To counteract this effect, and within the context of the Legal Support Programme, MISA established the Media Defence Fund, through which financial resources are made available to victims' lawyers who have taken on cases to challenge similar state actions. For example, in 2001, MISA provided *The Nation* magazine in Swaziland with financial and legal support to challenge the state's banning order. The monthly resumed publication after winning the case in the country's High Court.

In the same year, similar support was given to two weeklies, *The Guardian* and *Midweek Sun*, in Botswana, after the state had banned government advertising in the privately-owned newspapers. The ban was lifted after the state lost the case in court. MISA's challenge was based on the premise that the state's decision to stop advertising in those newspapers was an act of censorship, as it was aimed at throttling the newspapers which had been accused (by state functionaries) of being heavily critical of the ruling party – something that should not necessarily be penalised in a democracy.

In Zambia, in 2004, the state was arraigned by MISA before the country's High Court, seeking that the court compel the state to implement the stalled broadcasting law, which would have provided for the establishment of the Independent Broadcasting Authority. Although the state initially lost the case in the High Court, it nevertheless appealed to the Supreme Court, which ruled in its favour. At the time of writing (2007) the law was still stalled, and unimplemented (Riber and Chigudu 2004:21–22; Berger 2007:125; MISA 2007e:34; MISA 2006:298–300; MISA 2003:162; www.misa.org/legalsupport.html).

5.4.6 The financial backing of MISA

It is clear from the above scrutiny that there is a need to be cognisant of the reality that MISA could not have undertaken all these activities on its own, without financial and material support from other organisations. The most important of these were Nordic development agencies such as NORAD, SIDA and Danida on one hand, and OSISA on the other. Other supporters include Hivos (the Dutch aid organisation); USAID (the American agency for international development); the European Union; NIZA (the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa); Free Voice (the Dutch development organisation); and the German Foundations: Heinrich Boll and Friedrich Ebert (MISA 2006:300).

OSISA has been supporting MISA since 1998, with the first such funding directed at MISA's advocacy and broadcasting reform programme (OSISA 2007g). This initial support was based on the need to assist the social and economic reforms then taking place in the region. A major thrust of the project was to speed up the liberalisation of the region's airwaves, but in a measured way.

The concern evidently expressed in MISA's proposal to OSISA was that the opening up of the airwaves could lead to a situation whereby commercial interests were poised to dominate the broadcasting sector, to the exclusion of the community and broadcasting sectors, if nothing was done to promote the non-commercial sectors. A grant of $105, 060 was therefore offered to MISA, with the objectives of enabling MISA to:

- Assist its national chapters in determining national priorities in broadcasting, and to develop mutually agreed regional advocacy plans of action. In that respect, each country focused on individual priority projects which included, for Zambia, campaigns for the freedom of information laws; the transformation of the national broadcaster, and the creation of an independent media council. In Zimbabwe, campaigns were mainly centred on the revocation of the draconian media laws

(refer to chapter 5 (5.4.1)); the creation of the Media Alliance of Zimbabwe (MAZ), that brought together media groups such as MISA, Zimbabwe National Editors Forum (ZNEF), the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ), and the Media Monitoring Project – Zimbabwe (MMP-Z);

- Establish a platform for regional and international cooperation and actions around reforming broadcasting in Southern Africa. This was mainly centred on the principles enunciated in the African Charter on Broadcasting, which formed the basis for campaigns in the various SADC countries. Apart from this, the platform included training parliamentarians in media policy development in countries like Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia (MISA 2007a:31–36).

- Monitor national legislation and policy development in the whole region. Under this platform, media monitoring activities included the creation and sustenance of such projects in Zimbabwe, Swaziland, South Africa and Namibia, although the Namibian project collapsed due to management problems in 2004. However, the two most active media monitoring projects are in South Africa and Zimbabwe, while that in Swaziland is still a fledgling operation. A summary of these monitoring activities concluded that in 2006 there was a 7.6 per cent drop in the number of media freedom violations in Southern Africa; that is from a total of 155 violations recorded in 2005. In effect, the recorded violations dropped to 144 in 2006. Although this seems positive, the report nonetheless concludes that the media in the SADC region ended 2006 "battered and bruised", and under pressure from political authorities, with Zimbabwe leading the assault on media freedom (MISA 2007a:18–19).

- Develop and implement strategies to inform and train regulators on broadcasting policy: sensitisation conferences that included parliamentarians, government, regulatory authorities and other stakeholders were held in various countries, including Botswana and Zambia. Out of these meetings emerged "concrete resolutions" that

were to form the basis of national campaigns for the transformation of state broadcasters (MISA 2007a:30).

- Develop and implement lobbying strategies at SADC level: essentially the beginnings of this aspect of the project were studies conducted about public awareness of the concept of public service broadcasting in countries like Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia. It was found that in these countries, public service broadcasting was "mostly taken to be synonymous with state broadcasting". This misunderstanding enabled MISA to work with the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA), SADC Parliamentary Forum and the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR) to develop lobbying strategies for changing state broadcasters (MISA 2007a:30–31).

However, the latest major grant was in 2006, which in effect was meant to continue the work to transform state broadcasters into public service outlets in countries like Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia. This support amounted to $160, 383. Although the aim of this support was similar to the first, the campaign to change state broadcasters in the region was limited to only six countries, for the sake of manageability.[80]

Also, the choice of targeted countries was deliberate, and negotiated between MISA and OSISA. Malawi, Botswana and Zambia were chosen and included in the 2006 project because these countries were believed to have evolved multi-party democratic systems over the years – this could have assisted them in coming up with policy and regulatory frameworks to speed up broadcasting reforms (more so than the other countries).

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[80] The SADC ccountries that were left out of the 2006 project (Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo) were considered to be facing more difficult media environments, with prospects for broadcasting reform being limited. In the case of the DRC, it was because of the then ongoing political instability, while the Zimbabwean government had previously proved not to be amenable to reform. On the other hand, Namibia and Mozambique had more dynamic media environments that were partly enshrined in their national constitutions and political practices. It was expected, therefore, that the situations in those two countries could be retained or improved on, internally, without resorting to external pressures supported by OSISA. [This insight comes from this author's direct participation in the design of the new project, and negotiations with MISA for its implementation.]

Lesotho and Swaziland were considered smaller countries, which might be easier to influence toward taking the road of reform. However, it was acknowledged that Swaziland could pose greater difficulties as regards the campaign, because of the much more entrenched and absolutist nature of the monarchy in that country, compared to the constitutional monarch in Lesotho. Also, it was expected that the campaign experiences gained in these two Southern African monarchies could complement each other. Angola was included in this project because it was viewed as a country promising massive social democratic changes after the end of the civil war in 2003.[81] The initial outcome of the implementation of this project is that a MISA office was opened in Angola in 2007 – before then, MISA had had no effective representation in Angola for a long time.

In general, these were the beginnings of interactions between OSISA and MISA. As shown above, although MISA had several programmatic areas of its own, OSISA selected and supported only those areas that it felt were in consonance with its immediate objectives and interests. OSISA's emphasis in supporting MISA programmes was, therefore, on broadcasting regulatory reforms. This is because in terms of MISA, OSISA has deliberately focused on supporting MISA's broadcasting reform advocacy programme. Other MISA programmes (listed in this section of the study) are supported by donor agencies through a basket funding model, whereby funding agencies put their funds in the same MISA 'basket' without necessarily delineating the areas in which those funds should, or could, be used. Grant-making organisations broadly endorse MISA programmes which are negotiated between them and MISA every three years. Such grant-making agencies include the Danish International Development Agency (Danida), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the Norwegian Agency for International Development (Norad), and the Netherlands Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation (Hivos). OSISA is not part of this funding

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[81] This insight is provided by the author from recollection, as he was intimately involved in negotiations with MISA. However, the manner in which this and other projects were eventually structured, is dealt with in Chapter 6 of this study.

arrangement with MISA. Instead, OSISA selects and negotiates with MISA particular programmes that it funds on an annual basis (MISA 2007a:7; also refer to the financial report in the MISA 2007 annual report). MISA receives substantial amounts from this arrangement, with basket funds amounting to a total of $2, 642, 872, while the OSISA grant amounted to a total of $164, 668 in 2007. OSISA's emphasis on working with MISA on mainly broadcasting reform, is in recognition of the fact that the broadcasting media (as social institutions) function within the specifics and expectations of the values of particular societies. These values are codified in political policies and subsequently, legislative frameworks, and thus ensure that the media are not only subject to political control both "normatively and structurally", but also legally (Oosthuizen 2001b:164–171). Therefore, the transformation of state broadcasters into public service broadcasters is, for the whole Open Society Institute's (OSI) network, a priority area of its work. For instance, in 2003 the OSI developed a project in Eastern Europe to examine the legal, ethical, structural and other issues raised in the process of transforming former state-controlled national broadcasters in transition countries of the region (OSI 2004:147). This research initiative has since been extended to cover 12 countries in Africa.

That is why it was, perhaps, patently important for OSISA to act within the overall thinking mould of the OSI network, and also because, as Fourie (2007b) states, structurally and theoretically it may be important to prioritise this area of activity because broadcasting regulation needs to undergo "fundamental structural change" before focusing on media training or the monitoring of media performance. Ignoring this procedural matter may have been considered folly to the development of the media in general in Southern Africa.

5.5. The Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF) – a historical perspective

SAMDEF, with its headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana, was launched in April 1998 as a development fund to support the new privately-owned media

in Southern Africa. Legally, it is owned by the Media Trust Fund Board. Its objectives include the mobilisation of funds that are then passed on as loans to media enterprises.

These loans are offered at reasonable rates of interests, of between 5 and 17 per cent (Billing and Engstrom 2006:8)[82] – indices that, in general, are much lower than the rates charged by most commercial and financial organisations. The overriding purpose of SAMDEF, therefore, is to ensure that a low-rate financing option is available to non-governmental media as a way of promoting the sustainability of such media. In doing so, SAMDEF – at a commercial level – aims to bridge the gap between the financial needs of private media initiatives and the comparatively more stringent requirements of commercial banks (Minnie [sa]; Mundale, Mosienyane and Mutambo 2001; http://www.samdef.com).

The establishment of SAMDEF, like that of MISA, can be traced to the 1989 Chobe seminar of journalists (discussed in 5.4 above). At that seminar a resolution was passed, calling for the establishment of a 'media bank' into which international donors could channel their funds to support the sustainable growth of the independent media in Southern Africa (Lush 2001; Hammarskjoeld1989b:112). In 1994 the resolution was followed by a MISA-commissioned feasibility study on the establishment of the fund. This study highlighted a need in the region for an institution that could provide both capital and credit facilities to the independent media, and assist in the development of the business skills of non-governmental media entrepreneurs (Lush 2001; SAMDEF 2001:11; OSISA 2001b).

SAMDEF was then instituted in 1998 with Methaetsile Leepile, a Botswana national, and the former Regional Director of MISA, as its founding Executive Director. Soon after its launch, a finance officer, Charles Mundale – a

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[82] SAMDEF loans are disbursed to media institutions in either American Dollars, Rand or Pula (Southern African currencies). For loan applicants in Botswana, the interest rate is generally pegged at 17 per cent; while for institutions in the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU – South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho), the rate is placed at 15 per cent. For the rest of the SADC region the loans are denominated in American Dollars, and interest rates range from 5 to 10 per cent for borrowers in those countries (Billing and Engstrom 2006:8).

Zambian national – was appointed to increase the staff compliment to two. In 2002, Mundale replaced Leepile as SAMDEF's Chief Executive Officer. In turn, Mundale left SAMDEF in 2007 at the end of his contract, and was replaced by Ms. Kate Senye, a Botswana national. Before then, Senye had been the SAMDEF Investment Manager (OSISA 2007e; SAMDEF 2007b; Lush 2001).

As indicated above, SAMDEF was established for the purpose of addressing specific problems affecting the media – especially those media in private hands, in Southern Africa. These problems were both 'external' in the sense of such factors basically being outside the institutional structures of the media. These could be considered as the external environments that impacted the media's performance. SAMDEF was also expected to address factors that constituted the 'internal' environment of media institutions in the region – this set of factors is discussed in greater detail, below.

5.5.1. The external environment of the media

In broad terms, the first aspect SAMDEF had to deal with, was the hostile political conditions that generally militated against the formation and growth of politically independent media in the region. Looking back, it is clear that up to and until the rapid worldwide political changes that culminated in the late 1980s (referred to in chapter 4 (4.2 to 4.3) above), the ideological orientations of most of the governing parties in Southern Africa did not allow for oppositional media (refer to chapter 3 (3.6 to 3.8) above): the ruling authorities considered most media institutions to be instruments of thought control, for use in promoting government programmes. These regimes used the media as devices to perpetuate political control, and as avenues through which to socially mobilise the people towards modernisation projects and programmes.

As such, most of the predominant constitutional paradigms and legal frameworks that were in force not only barred political pluralism, but also decidedly discouraged (and in many ways disallowed) the existence or proliferation of independent media that were outside the influence and control

of governments (Matibini 2006:2–4). In the same vein, the operational environments of the media in Southern Africa resembled, to a large measure, the operational spaces of the media in Communist Eastern Europe.

For example, both the Southern African and East European media sectors of the time were characterised by the complete absence of national institutions to protect media professional independence and general freedom of expression. Instead, the political elites who controlled the state apparatus also exercised extreme control over media practices, to the extent that the political elites appointed leading members of the media, such as editors-in-chief.

These appointees were expected to articulate the ruling party line (Kaunda 1975:35). Beyond appointments, controls were also exercised through official decrees issued from State House, or through informal meetings at various government offices, through telephone calls from state or political functionaries, or mere criticisms on the performance of the media by leading politicians (Banda 2007:16; Bajomi-Lazer 2003:90; Kasoma 2000b:207–210; Van Rensburg 1989:44). Changing such viewpoints, as well as the policies and regulatory frameworks, was the role of MISA.

SAMDEF was expected to supplement MISA's role by providing, enhancing and developing the requisite alternative scenarios of sustained and highly competitive independent media operating outside the clutches of governments. Such media had to proffer a diversity of views, a plurality of access to media spaces, and enforce the practical principles that emphasised that the media were professionally neutral mediators in public discourses. The media were also expected to decisively compete in the public arenas of viewerships, listenerships and readerships, and to capture many of the resources within the advertising market. It was in this latter aspect, of providing competition for state-controlled and state-owned media, that SAMDEF initially was expected to play its specific and mandated 'other' role of improving managerial and entrepreneurial skills within media institutions.

The second aspect that SAMDEF had to address within the external environment was the economic situation: this was characterised by low or negative growth rates in the region. The situation resulted in deteriorating living conditions for the people, low production levels and employment rates across the board, and exceedingly high inflation rates which ensured that many public goods and services – including media products – were unaffordable to the majority of the people. Also, a combination of these factors ensured that the markets were comparatively miniscule, the public's general purchasing power was extremely low, while savings and capital formations were poor. Combined, these factors ensured that banking institutions and financial establishments considered investing in such circumstances – especially in media institutions – to be extremely unattractive, while the media sector in particular was regarded as highly risky, unstable, uneconomical and prone to frequent government pressures. Such an environment enabled mercantilist elites to shy away from investing in the media in much of Africa (Mundale, Mosienyane and Mutambo [Sa]:4).

The net result of such a situation was that independent media entrepreneurs had problems accessing capital for investment, and establishing strategic partnerships among themselves or with others from outside the region, because, generally, the media arena was considered the least probable site for safe and assured profit-making commercial ventures. Media projects were thus frowned upon by both serious entrepreneurs and financial institutions.

Also, as a matter of history, the media were generally considered the responsibility or preserve of governments in Africa – especially the broadcasting sector, because broadcasting was seen as a sensitive and strategic resource that impacted the security of the nation, and also as a tool for use in national integration activities, national education, national development or the propagation of a national ideology. Furthermore, broadcasting was generally viewed as the most important means of mass communication that could be used to reflect the concerns and preoccupations of the African political leadership (Nyamnjoh 2005:45; Banda 2004:85; SAMDEF 2001; Lush 2001; Mutambo, Mufune and Matome 2000:4; Carver

1995a:5; COWI 1996:13; Ettinger 1986:113; Head 1985:301; Ng'wanakilala 1981:31–41). Since the sustainability of independent media ventures was, as Banda (2006:20) argues, predicated upon strong economic foundations, SAMDEF was deliberately conceived as a platform for building that foundation. [83]

5.5.2. The internal environment of the media

The third aspect that was considered during the construction of SAMDEF was the internal institutional and operational factors that prevailed within media institutions at the time. Essentially, these were analysed as the lack of business ethics, and the lack of (or minimal) entrepreneurial and managerial skills and expertise. Jointly, these aspects were viewed as inherent outcomes of a lack of relevant and related education and training in these areas, across the region. It was argued that more often than not, media training was focused on providing journalistic skills, rather than managerial competences or entrepreneurial expertise – necessary preconditions for effective media performance in competitive and democratic societies. At the same time, non-media business enterprises that operated in the economic and political environments (discussed in chapter 3 (3.5–3.8) and chapter 4 (4.2) above), did not really need these competencies. Such business enterprises were either closely associated with the ruling political elites of the time, or affiliated to governments, or they were dependent for their survival on the states' goodwill or contracts. Also, non-media enterprises with advertising revenue to spare, were more inclined to support the ruling authorities of the time (through placing advertisements in media, and/or through sponsorship of media events

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[83] However, it should be noted that although the formulators of SAMDEF considered the political and economic environments as 'entities' that impacted the media 'separately', Banda (2004:84–86) argues that both these challenges are essentially and ultimately political in nature because, as he states, "no matter how else one may look at them, they always seem to have a political resonance." Banda further argues that for the "strategic reasons of advocacy and lobbying" it may be necessary to approach both these extraneous factors from a perspective that assumes they are constituted within the holistic political framework, as any policy changes that may accrue from lobbying and advocacy activities will necessarily emerge from the political will or political posturing of those who are in a position to exercise that will or assume that posture: the politicians.

that directly supported the strengthening of state-owned media) – this as a sign of their loyalty (COWI 1996:12–13; SAMDEF 2001).[84]

In any case, in most countries of the region, the state was the dominant force in the economy, and as if that was not enough, in many instances the state constituted the main industrial entrepreneur, as was the case in Zambia in 1969, just five years after independence (Kaunda 1969:13).[85] In such circumstances, for the few remaining private enterprises, which in most instances were comparatively smaller in scope and operations, the options open to them were either to creatively support the governments of the day, or to risk being nationalised (or to go under). One way of exercising this 'support' was to advertise in the state-owned media, at great expense to themselves, but consistently over the years, and more importantly and especially on

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[84] Examples of these practices include an advertisement placed by the now defunct Zambia Airways, in the *Zambia Daily Mail* of 30 April 1983. This advertisement states that the airline's management and staff "join the nation" in celebrating President Kenneth Kaunda's 59th birthday, and wish Kaunda, who "undoubtedly is our customer number one" many happy returns "as we continue to benefit from his unequalled wise leadership" (*Zambia Daily Mail* 1983:7). Not to be left out, a day earlier on 29 April 1983, the nation's highest institution of learning, the University of Zambia, also felt obliged to convey its "heartfelt wishes" to Kaunda on his birthday, hoping that he would "enjoy many more years as [the university's] Chancellor and beloved leader of the nation" (*Zambia Daily Mail* 1983:8*)*. Eight years later, in 1991, Kaunda was voted out of office but the practice of fawning over political leadership did not depart with him. Some 24 years later, in 2007 to be precise, full-page broadsheet advertorials were carried by four institutions: Luanshya Technical and Business College; Mulonga Water and Sewerage Company; the Food Reserve Agency; and the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM), congratulating late Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa for being bestowed with his first (and so far only) honorary Doctorate in law by the Arkansas-based American University of Harding. According to advertisements carried in the *Times of Zambia* issue of 15 October 2007, the conferment of the degree was in recognition of Mwanawasa's "outstanding performance as a lawyer", which performance had apparently "brought a great honour to the nation" and could inspire Zambian youths (*Times of Zambia* 2007:8)

[85] At this time, for example, Zambia was considered a middle-income country with a Gross Domestic Product three times that of Kenya, twice that of Egypt, and much higher than those of Brazil, Malaysia, Turkey and South Korea individually. In terms of the people, a quarter of the Zambian population of about 4 million were already living in cities and towns, while 750 000 were in formal employ. However, through socialist-inclined economic policies and reforms implemented by Kaunda and his government from about 1968 as a way of controlling the economy, and ostensibly to use the accrued surplus for the country's development, the state had, by 1992, become the dominant economic player in Zambia, directly running and controlling more than 280 parastatals – companies that previously were in private hands (Fraser and Lungu 2006:7–10).These companies included the more sophisticated copper mining and refining operations under the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines, the airline (Zambia Airways), power generator (Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation) or the much simpler transport system (United Bus Company of Zambia), or taxis (Zamcabs), or restaurants selling (among others) the local traditional dishes of Nshima and meat, or pap and vleis! This high level of control is said to have been spurred by Kaunda's preponderant desire to gain economic sovereignty over Zambia's national resources (Saasa 1987:25).

'national' occasions such as – in Zambia's case – the day commemorating the country's independence, every year on 24 October; or on President Kaunda's birthday (28 April).[86]

In such circumstances, it was difficult or near impossible to sustain vibrant and independent media institutions that were not directly or indirectly linked to the state or the ruling political party apparatus. As such, new and innovative entrepreneurship skills or initiatives were either stunted, un-attempted, or strategically submerged or subsumed under the rubric of subservience and/or sycophancy to the powerful ruling political elites. SAMDEF was thus designed to help overcome these challenges by offering the requisite management and entrepreneurship skills to new media entrepreneurs.

In essence, SAMDEF has since sought to empower the independent media with the economic space and skills to ensure that such media become self-sustainable, through advanced skills and access to cheaper financial resources. This, as indicated above, SAMDEF did through the provision of soft loans, equity, credit guarantee schemes, the training of management and capacity building for the emergent media.[87]

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[86] This is evidenced in the referred to paid-for advertorials in the daily newspapers of the state-owned *Times of Zambia* and *Zambia Daily Mail* that appeared on those days, including days prior to and following those dates, often praising the "wise and dedicated leadership of President Kaunda". The adverts came from private and state-owned companies, and as a way of accommodating the flood of such adverts, and raising additional income for themselves, the two newspapers always ran special supplements, in issues on those 'special' days between 1973 and 1991. Similar paid-for advertorials extolling the wisdom of the political leadership were also aired on state-controlled radio and television stations. Some companies – especially hotels and similar establishments – fell over each other to deliver extraordinarily huge birthday cakes to the president at especially arranged public events that caught media attention and were often covered live on both radio and national television. [These observations come from the author's recollection of the time he was working as a journalist with the *Times of Zambia*, from September 1983 to May 1993.]
[87] It should be noted, however, that the mandate for the provision of direct training to media enterprises was hived off the SAMDEF profile of activities in 2001, when a separate organisation dedicated to that activity, the Southern African Institute for Media Development (SAIMED) was created. The new organisation's mandate became entrepreneurship development, while SAMDEF kept the financial loan portfolio (OSISA 2001:2; Lush 2001).

5.5.3. The beginnings of OSISA/SAMDEF relations

It was on the basis of the abovementioned principles that the Open Society Institute began supporting the new SAMDEF, from as early as 1997, even before OSISA itself was formally inaugurated in the same year. This support, historically, came to SAMDEF after an exploratory exercise undertaken in 1996 by the Open Society Institute (OSI), under the auspices of Kim Brice. This exploration examined the form in which the OSI network could support MISA and how such support could be structured. One of the areas examined during that exercise was the possibility of establishing a media development fund in Southern Africa, along the lines of the Media Development Loan Fund (MDLF) which was already operational in Eastern Europe, and which was supported by OSI.

As a way of furthering this prospect, MISA was put in touch with the MDLF in Budapest, Hungary, while in Southern Africa discussions continued on what would be the most suitable mechanism for supporting the independent media in the region. In concrete terms the initial $110, 000 from OSISA was granted to SAMDEF in November 1997, in support of, and to ensure that, fledgling structures (such as the administrative secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana, as well as the governance systems) were in place.

This support continued for ten years, and by 2007, SAMDEF had received grants totalling more than $14 million from OSISA alone (OSISA 2007f). In that decade, OSISA remained SAMDEF's main funder, while SAMDEF was the single greatest CSO beneficiary of OSISA funding in Southern Africa. However, this relationship came to an abrupt end in 2007; the circumstances which brought about this end are discussed at some length in Chapter 6.

The following year, in 1998, SAMDEF staffers, Leepile and Mundale, visited the various SADC countries to introduce the concept of SAMDEF at workshops for MISA's institutional members and other interested private individuals. These workshops were followed up with concentrated and focused assessment visits to specific and individual media projects that had

been systematically identified as having the potential for being supported by SAMDEF.

By then the SAMDEF secretariat had enunciated the criteria for assessing projects and the conditions to be applied to its loans. In summary, SAMDEF decided that media projects which qualified for loans had to:

- Exhibit some level of either staff or community participation;
- Emphasise the promotion of opinion and information diversity;
- Demonstrate a larger-than-average audience reach;
- Aspire for project financing rather than administration or working capital expenses; and
- Prove that the projects had the capacity to pay back SAMDEF loans.

In terms of the evidence required for staff or community participation in the media projects, the aspiration of SAMDEF at this stage was that such initiatives could become centres for facilitating the empowerment of people and communities in the areas in which they were located. It was also expected that beneficiaries of SAMDEF loans could themselves be sources for the democratisation of media structures and environments.

Here the concept of media democratisation should not be confused with the concepts of 'media *reform'* or 'media *activism'* or 'democratisation *through* the media', which in themselves have different connotations. In that sense, media reform refers to efforts undertaken to change aspects of the media which include structures, processes, financing, content, laws and regulations, ownership patterns or access channels that the media avail the public. Usually, these efforts are centred on activities concerned with governments or the corporate sector. They are often focused on public policy changes. Media activism, on the other hand, involves process activities that are arenas occupied by civil society groups whose aims include influencing the media strategies and objectives, with – often but not always – the objective of advancing particular CSOs agendas. In many cases, these forms of activism

are aimed at ensuring equitable access to media resources (including time and newspaper spaces). On the other hand, democratisation through the media is a focused approach that, though functionalistic, emphasises the use of the media in the promotion of particular ideals, such as those of democracy. At the other end, the concept of the democratisation of the media looks at the media *per se* and tackles institutional issues therein. In media democratisation, the actions and processes undertaken include, among others, searches for changes in institutional formations and processes within and beyond the media themselves. Attention is thus paid to particular functional processes that produce media products, and also how such products are distributed (i.e. to whom and for whom), and also what means are used in producing those products. The tests under this rubric include a check on the technologies used, and who has access to those technologies. In general, the concept of the democratisation of the media encompasses questions and responses that in the West raise issues around the corporate dominance of media institutions, while in Southern Africa the concept largely questions the state's domination of the media. In general, all these aspects of the campaigns are aimed at ensuring that all media institutions are more responsive to the public they claim to be serving. [For more detailed analyses of these concepts refer to Carroll and Hackett (2006:84–87) and McChesney (1998:1–15).]

Coming back to the criteria used by SAMDEF to disburse its loans, and in particular with regard to the consideration for the need for information and opinion diversity, this was in full cognisance of the Windhoek Declaration (referred to in this chapter 5 (5.4) above), and is encapsulated in MISA's mission and vision statements. In terms of SAMDEF's practical application of this Declaration, projects that were to benefit from SAMDEF loans were supposedly assessed on their ability, or potential capacity, to contribute to the promotion of, and increasing the diversity of opinions and views in, Southern Africa. According to SAMDEF (2001), projects that favoured the use of indigenous languages – especially those that cut across national boundaries and thereby enhanced regional integration – were favoured and encouraged. In that regard, considerations for the prospective projects' 'audience reach'

were essentially concerns bordering on the need to ascertain the projects' future impact in terms of the number of SADC citizens who potentially would have access to them (SAMDEF 2001). These considerations had a bearing on and influenced SAMDEF's decisions in granting loans to particular projects.

By 2001, therefore, and perhaps in line with the abovementioned criteria, the media enterprises that had received loans from SAMDEF (and therefore benefited indirectly from OSISA's grants to SAMDEF) included the following:

- *The Post* newspaper in Zambia, which received a total of $148, 419. This loan enabled the newspaper to purchase an image setter for its printing machine, and to expand its operations by increasing its staff compliment;
- Luna Enterprises in Zambia received $38, 000 for the purposes of purchasing modern equipment and training its personnel in the latest accounting software. (Luna was an advertising agency);
- Radio Phoenix in Zambia received a loan of $75, 000 to enable it buy new broadcasting equipment after its apparatus had been mysteriously destroyed in a fire;
- Sky FM radio station in the southern provincial town of Monze, in Zambia, received a total of $367, 616 for buying modern broadcasting equipment for the commercial station;
- The now defunct *Daily News* in Zimbabwe received $468, 000 to sustain its operations and buy equipment. Soon after obtaining this loan, the newspaper's print run was increased from 30, 000 copies to 100, 000 in just under a year. The pressure on the owners to increase the print run was exercised through public demand for the newspaper, which at the time had positioned itself as a campaigner for social justice in a country where political repression was becoming increasingly evident. The newspaper was eventually closed down by the government;

- *Mmegi* newspaper in Botswana, which through Dikgang Publishing company received $650, 000 from OSISA funds, which was topped up with an additional $270, 000 from USAID, for the newspaper to acquire a printing machine from Taiwan. Shortly after the machine arrived, *Mmegi* begun publishing in colour and the newspaper transformed itself from a weekly into a daily. This newspaper thus competed heavily with the government-financed and owned *Daily News*, which is distributed free of charge across Botswana by the state's machinery;
- Other initiatives that benefited from OSISA's funding of SAMDEF included *Big News* – a business newspaper based in the Western Cape in South Africa that received R498, 000; Sahara Communications company – a radio and television station in Tanzania that received instalments of $348, 700, $357, 000, and $200, 000 for equipment and the expansion of the signal to cover the country; SOICO – a television company in Mozambique that received loans (instalments of $600, 000 and $300, 000); and One Africa television company in Namibia, that received a loan of $1 million (SAMDEF 2006:2–20; SAMDEF 2001; SAMDEF 2007a).

In all this it is evident that a common purpose had been established on the one hand, between OSISA and SAMDEF, and on the other it encompassed some of the principles which MISA, SAMDEF and OSISA stood for. How these relations evolved and matured is analysed in Chapter 6.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter tracks the evolution of MISA and SAMDEF as examples of two leading media CSOs in Southern Africa that built up working relations with OSISA. The two CSOs are discussed and contextualised within the theories surrounding the roles of CSOs in society, and connecting these to the operational spaces of the two CSOs. The two CSOs' contacts with OSISA are mentioned tentatively. In doing so, it has been argued that the two CSOs and OSISA procedurally identified their common interests and justifications for

their existence – a process that formed the basis for partnerships and interactions. These interactions constitute the joint searches for channels or platforms that could adequately respond to the issues and closed-space problems discussed in chapter 4. The discussions are placed within the contexts of the contentious discourses accompanying the concept of 'civil society' and the assumed roles that such CSOs play in society. The chapter argues that there are many ways in which the interactions between OSISA and the CSOs could be examined, but this thesis (especially in chapter 6) mainly focuses on the sociological aspects of these interactions.

In line with the above observation, chapter 6 of the study examines the maturation of engagements between OSISA and the two organisations, but mostly between OSISA and SAMDEF, and the consequences of these interactions. Thus, apart from highlighting the drama that took place between the principal donor (OSISA) and perhaps, a principled recipient in the form of SAMDEF, the following chapter also exposes the power relations that often exist in lopsided arrangements, and the consequences of the actions of a financially much stronger side trying to enforce its will and viewpoints on the financially weaker 'other.' As such, the current chapter sets the stage for a holistic response to the research question about how OSISA transmits its ideology – something that is covered in the next chapter. In additionally, chapter 6 also addresses the research question about how the region's CSOs respond to OSISA's interventions.

CHAPTER SIX: CREATING AN OPEN SOCIETY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA - 2

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discusses the foundations of the evolution of relations between the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) and the two civil society organisations (CSOs): the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA) and the Southern African Media Development Fund (SAMDEF). The chapter situates these foundations within the context of competing theories around the role of CSOs in society. Thus, the current chapter is basically a continuation of that line of discussions, and therefore builds on those debates by focusing more on specific interactions between OSISA on the one hand, and SAMDEF and other CSOs operating across the region, on the other. In that regard, and as a matter of limiting the boundaries of the discussions, apart from SAMDEF, the other CSOs will be referred to sporadically and when absolutely necessary, so as to build upon or re-emphasise a particular point of view. In essence, chapter 6 further pursues the research question about how a funding organisation imposes its 'will', or worldview, upon a grantee-recipient organisation. Basically, the chapter explores, in case study format (refer to chapter 1 (1.9) above) and as a subset, the disquisition of how OSISA systematically tries to advance its underlying belief systems on SAMDEF and other related CSOs, and how such CSOs respond to those initiatives.

Before engaging in that question directly, the current chapter begins by examining the operational and internal dynamics, or the organisational culture, and structures of OSISA. Thereafter, the chapter discusses OSISA's interactions with other CSOs. Thus, the chapter is largely divided in two parts: the first deals with the internal environment within OSISA, while the second examines how OSISA's 'ideas' are externalised onto partner organisations, and how that external environment responds to OSISA's self-projection. This is to lay the foundations for chapter 7 which concludes the study by synthesising insights into the nature and workings of donors highlighted and

papered throughout this thesis. Arising from that synthesis, chapter 7 sketches potential areas for further critical examination and research.

6.2 A reflexive and theoretical perspective on OSISA's internal operations

As may already have been discerned from chapter 5, OSISA is an institution that can be viewed as an 'organisation' within the context of Neher's (1975:15–18) and Fielding's (2001:29–31) meanings, which refer to such formations as institutionalised, ongoing and observable social arrangements and interactions that are systematic, planned, and progressively managed among a set group of people. This group of people may have different jobs and responsibilities, but they nevertheless work together to achieve common goals. In that sense, members of such institutions are expected to share the common goals for their coming together, and to some extent the members of the group should also believe in the strategies embraced by that institution as a way of achieving the goals that – in the final analysis – brought them together. As such, these institutions can be considered as communal inventions coming out of social interactions. From that perspective, Neher (1975:19–20) argues that human organisations are mere outcomes of communication practices and therefore they, in essence, "do not have a reality apart from human … acts of communication."

In the same vein, Fielding (2001:3), Melkote and Steeves (2001:31), Dimbleby and Burton (1992:4) posit that in real terms, communication is a transaction that takes place, or a process of making connections, through the exchange of symbols while creating meanings between two or more people; or one organisation and others, as a way of sharing worldviews, facts, opinions, ambitions, plans, ideas, belief systems, or information. Thus, Neher (1975:15–18) observes that in recent years there has been a deliberate but successful movement towards the reification (i.e. making something out of nothing) of, especially, corporate organisations that has resulted in such institutions assuming lives of their own. Such organisations develop independent juridical personalities apart from the staff within their structures – even when individual

staff members change over time. These institutions, in concrete terms, are intangible and therefore do not exist beyond symbols like company logos and office spaces. What is in fact there, and is assumed as the reality of such formations, are public images which occupy the minds of people – whether in- or outside such institutions. These images are basically superficial social residues of the outcomes of the abovementioned communicative and cooperative behaviours of independent individuals acting together in space and time. In their communication behaviours such individuals may have evolved systems, sustained them over time, and then passed them on to others, as patterns of work and other relations. That is what it is all about. It is this milieu of social interactions that is often uncritically, and commonly, viewed and referred to as an organisation.

Beyond that, these work and other relations may also have evolved into what those with anthropological inclinations and training may commonly refer to as the 'culture' of the organisations. Essentially, these cultural manifestations include the languages spoken; patterns of behaviour; imageries used; common heroes held in awe or seen as icons; myths shared; and rituals that are religiously followed within those formations (Neher 1997:128–131; Dimbleby and Burton 1992:222; Fielding 2001:476–477). In that sense, organisational cultures include shared values and philosophies, apart from the assumptions and acceptable ways of behaviours among members of those organisations. In all earnest, these factors are concretised into the "unspoken guidelines for the groups' procedures and actions, as well as how those procedures and actions are to be interpreted and understood. These guidelines become so ingrained within a particular culture that they are taken for granted and therefore operate outside of everyday, or conscious, awareness" (Neher 1997:131).

It is important, at this stage, to keep Neher's argument in mind, for as we observe in chapter 5 (5.3) above and will inevitably confirm in this chapter (6.3, below), OSISA's policies and especially its interactions with other entities, are similar to the foreign policy activities of a nation-state. According to Thiam (1965:2) such external activities are based on specific and long-held

guiding principles which are inspired by the history, geographical location and heritage of the institution (or nation-state) (see chapter 2 of this study for an elaboration on these elements, in the case of OSISA). It is these factors that 'govern' the entity's relations with others.

From the above discussion it is clear that OSISA – when viewed as an organisation – is not just an imaginary 'being' or set of patterned communication processes. It is also an institution that, while communicating, or what existentialists could call 'living', has built an organisational culture that firstly, enables OSISA staff to commune among themselves, and secondly to evolve and sustain the experiential and sense-making characteristics that are uniquely specific to OSISA. Thirdly, these characteristics act as the building blocks for OSISA's interactions with other institutions.

However, in trying to understand how OSISA acts within itself, or manages its exchanges with other organisations, it may be intellectually profitable to take cognisance of the component parts of what organisational theorists, including Neher (1997:133) consider the "corporate culture". These attributes include the following:

- *The environment in which an organisation operates*: as regards OSISA, this aspect has to do with the geographical and socio-political placing of an organisation, which has already been adequately dealt with in chapters 2 and 3 of this study. These constitute the operational contexts of OSISA;
- *The value systems*: these consist of the theoretical cosmos in which an organisation like OSISA may be situated. This, again, is covered in chapter 2 above.
- *The heroes of the organisation*: these include those individuals, both past and present, who are held as symbols of rectitude, or are idealised as examples of how people in that organisation are expected to behave, and what they should believe. As an example, in the nation-state of South Africa, both Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond

Tutu may be said to have been placed in that role; while in Cuba it is the late revolutionary Ernesto 'Che' Guevara who occupies that public space. In OSISA, it is George Soros whose life history and thoughts are tracked in chapter 2 above;

- *Rites, rituals and repeated ceremonies*: Within the context of an organisational culture, these may include the scheduled meetings in the annual calendar of the institution; regular reports that have to be submitted (monthly or annually), certain team-building exercises, staff performance evaluation sessions, etc. However, it should be acknowledged that although these rituals are enforced and performed regularly, they are not absolutely essential for the smooth and technical functioning of the organisation. These ceremonies do serve, to a large extent, as reminders to staff that they belong together and share common values. They are also measures to sustain staff morale and a sense of identification with the institution (Neher 1997:134). As Browne (1980:1) and Bird (1980:19) argue, rituals and rites are symbolic codes of, and methods of, behaviour that (to an extent) ensure the regulation of human interactions – whether in an organisation, or in society. Thus in organisations, in particular, these rituals ensure that the organisational values, beliefs, practices, shared attitudes and assumptions are sustained in the minds of the staff, so that they become the "collective mind of an organisation" (Fielding 2001:36). In the case of OSISA, these rites are explored and contextualised in this chapter (see 6.3, below).

- *Transmission processes of cultural values*: Within the context of this study, these refer to OSISA's structures and documents; and how these act as channels for OSISA's interface with grantee organisations. The consideration of these factors involves discussions about how OSISA attempts to externalise its value system onto others. This is explained in 6.5, below.

Thus, out of the necessity to examine OSISA's "corporate culture", and what may in Thiam's (1965:2) view be considered OSISA's "foreign policy", the

characteristics that have not been dealt with so far in this study are just those connected to rituals and value transmission systems and processes. It is to those elements that we now turn.

6.3 The fundamentals of OSISA's organisational culture

From the above, it is clear that since its establishment, OSISA has evolved some form of organisational culture. This consists of guidelines for procedures and operations. As shown above, and as Neher (1997:131) states,

> …the elements that make up organisational culture were first identified by Deal and Kennedy as the business environment, shared values, heroes, rites and rituals, and the 'cultural network' (cf. Deal and Kennedy 1982).[88] One symposium refers to organisational culture in these terms: 'operationally, culture is defined as shared philosophies, ideologies, values, beliefs, assumptions and norms. These are seldom written down or discussed, but they are learned by living in the organisation and becoming a part of it' (cf. Klimann, Saxton and Serpa 1985: ix).[89] The *values* are the bedrock, the basis for how things are typically done in a given organisation. The *heroes* embody and illustrate these values in positive ways for the members of the organisation. The *rites* and *rituals* provide symbolic ways of enacting and reminding members of these values. The *cultural network* represents the way in which the values and the culture in general are transmitted and maintained throughout the entire organisation.

As already indicated, it is clear that we have dealt with the value systems and the heroes of OSISA. What remains is to discuss the rites and rituals as well as what is referred to as the 'cultural network'.

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[88] Cf. Deal, T.E. and Kennedy, A.A. 1982. *Corporate cultures: The rites and rituals of corporate life.* Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.
[89] Cf. Klimann, R.H., Saxton, M.J. and Serpa, R. (eds). 1985. *Gaining control of the corporate culture.* San Francisco, SF: Jossey-Bass.

6.3.1 An exploration of rites, rituals and ceremonies within OSISA

For the purposes of this discussion, a rite should be considered as an established ceremony, often of a cultural or religious nature, that changes the status of a person. As a journey, it symbolises the changing status of the individual. Rites of passage occur in three parts: the preliminary stage, whereby the person is separated from his/her previous social existence and status; the liminal stage[90] which is when the ceremony takes place and the individual concerned is considered as belonging to neither the past nor the future status; and the final or post-liminal stage, where the person is confirmed as having transited from the past and having been confirmed and incorporated into their new status (Bird 1980:21–29; Rothenbuhler 1998:3).

From a sociological perspective, rituals should be understood as sets of symbolic actions that are performed regularly or at intervals, or on special occasions, often within a community to ensure – among others – that the group continues to abide by its values, obligations and ideals. For example, Richards (1956:17–18) argues, from an anthropological perspective, that rituals like those of "puberty" of the Bemba people in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), are rites of passage that mark occasions when youths acquire different and mature roles associated with adult life. The rituals and ceremonies that accompany these occasions signify that youths are now

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[90] Gothoni (1986:179) and Pentikainen (1986:27) state that within the theory of 'rites of passage', a person passes through three overlapping stages that enable him or her to move from one social status to another. The three stages are the *preliminal* stage, where rites are performed to mark the individual's detachment from the previous/first stage. The second period is the *liminal*, also known as the "threshold" stage, which consists of the period before the *post-liminal* stage. The post-liminal stage is when individuals are absorbed into their new social status. The middle (or liminal) stage is considered as the transitional period whose length varies depending on several factors. Gothoni (1986:196) likens these stages to university education, stating that,

> …I think it would be interesting to study the ritual passages within the university education because, as we all know, the university as an institution has its roots in the monastic traditions. Therefore it is not a coincidence, at least in Scandinavia, that we have degrees of candidate, licentiate, and doctorate, and a prolonged liminal period of a non-permanent senior lectureship (docent) … if we compare the entering into Buddhist monkhood with the entering of the professorship … it seems as if the structure of the ritual pattern is the same.

ready to assume the social roles of marriage, the rearing of children, and the social obligations that such roles imply in that society.

In addition, these rituals reflect the "tribal attitudes" towards group identity, the maintenance of community or tribal bonds, and boundaries for social relationships (Nwanko 2000:339). But, according to Gothoni (1986:187–188), an adult also passes through different developmental life phases. These include adolescence, early, middle and late stages of adulthood. A critical factor to note is that these stages are not clear-cut, but tend to overlap.

Nonetheless, such ceremonies, as already indicated, are performed to mark a person's passage from one societal status to the next. They are usually carried out as confirmatory activities, or celebrations marking the end of the transitional or liminal stage, thus symbolising that the person has entered a new status. These ceremonies vary: they could be conscious or voluntary, collective or recreational, simple or sophisticated, formal or informal, flexible or rigid, spectacular or small, sad, forlorn or happy, but on the whole, they are generally a confirmation that an individual has moved from one stage to the next (Bird 1980:29; Mann 1980:64; Rothenbuhler 1998:7–28; Gothoni 1986:178–180).

In summary, Rothenbuhler (1998:130) argues that in all societies or communities, rituals are necessary for the continued existence (and maintenance) of social order, because they are a "symbolic means of crafting the self in social shape, of putting the will in the order of the social. Without it, we would have no means of social order between happy cooperation, rational agreement, and brute coercion … Some may call ritual(s) a type of symbolic coercion, [or] just brutality in another form …"

In terms of OSISA, a person's rites of passage start with the recruitment process.[91] When a vacancy occurs, or a new position is created within the

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[91] The description of this process comes from the author's observation and participation in the recruitment exercise, which included serving on not less than three interview panels since 2003.

structures of the organisation, an advertisement is placed in the region's newspapers, covering all ten OSISA countries. The notice clearly specifies the profile and qualifications of the candidates required, which is already indicative of who may, or may not, join the organisation.

Then a selection committee of senior OSISA employees and board members is constituted with indicative guidelines of the broad profiles of the person who would be most welcome to join the organisation. During the interview sessions, candidates are essentially asked questions that, among others, are designed to test their ideological framework and how this is aligned to that of an open society. Thereafter, the successful candidate is selected. Then the second phase of the preliminary stage of the rite of passage begins: the candidate is offered employment through a three-year contract that specifies what his or her responsibilities are, including what the performance evaluation criteria will be, as well as the remuneration OSISA will be offering. During the person's first week at the office, s/he meets with various sectoral managers within OSISA who introduce him/her to the operations of the organisation. The new employee is also availed of all essential operational and policy documents, including the OSISA strategy book and the human resource manual.

The strategy book is the guiding text for OSISA's activities. It is produced after "the collective reflection and planning efforts" of the OSISA board and staff, with "appropriate inputs" of grantees and other partners, that have been collected from dialogues and feedback between all parties (OSISA 2003:1–4). This document contains the broader vision of OSISA, which is stated as "a vibrant Southern African society in which people, free from material and other deprivation, understand their rights and responsibilities and participate democratically in all spheres of life". In addition, the strategy book states that OSISA's mission is to support "initiatives working towards open society ideals" and to advocate for these ideals in Southern Africa. Separately, the document outlines individual visions and missions of the constituent programme areas of OSISA. These complementary missions and visions must, inevitably, be in consonance with the broader positions of OSISA as a whole. For instance, the

vision of the Media Programme is "free and independent media through which Southern Africans communicate among themselves and with others", while the programme's mission is to "promote marginalised people's rights, in Southern Africa, to own the media and communication processes". Strictly speaking, these are the determining and defining factors that guide OSISA's support to the media in the region. It is, therefore, against these 'outlooks' that an OSISA job applicant is tested. However, it should be noted that the strategy book also contains specific strategies for individual countries in Southern Africa. These too, are aligned with the broader strategies listed above.

The employee manual, on the other hand, clarifies the overall objectives of the organisation while it also emphasises what OSISA expects, in terms of behaviour, from each employee. The induction process takes about a month, and according to Prava Singh (2007), the OSISA Human Resources and Office Manager, the induction is "a constant process that for me ensures that the new individual is oriented to the organisation and that individual is able to function properly".

However, although acknowledging the practical importance of this initial rite of passage, some OSISA employees, as in many other organisations, believe the process is deficient in that it is not comprehensive enough. Apparently, rites do not fully bring the new person to comprehend the workings and policy orientations of OSISA. These come much later, and are gained through deep discussions with other employees and through participation in subsequent (regular) office meetings. As Professor Lazarus Miti (2007), the OSISA Language Rights Fellow who joined in September 2005, states:

> …new employees are not properly oriented. Up to now, I do not know whether I understand what an open society is. There is a general assumption that people on application for a job at OSISA know what it is. This is quite worrying. There is no proper rite of passage for new employees to know and interpret open society and its ideals. For me, I interpret these as I go along.

Miti, however, acknowledges that the more useful orientation fora, where employees get a better idea of what an open society is, are what in OSISA parlance is called "Programme Issues" meetings that take place every third month of the year. At these meetings, OSISA programme staff make joint preparations for the OSISA board meeting to follow a month later.[92] These meetings are chaired by the OSISA Executive Director, and regular agenda items include:

- *The presentation – by programme managers – of project proposals that they intend taking to the board for consideration*. The meeting then critiques these proposals in anticipation of the kind of questions the board members may ask. Questions are also asked in terms of the proposals' suitability and alignment with the OSISA strategy.[93] Some of the issues that are frequently raised at these meetings, and subsequently at board meetings, are related to the proposed projects' contribution to the building of open societies in Southern Africa; such projects' perceived contribution to social and gender justice; the projects' sensitivities to the special interests of socially marginalised communities such as ethnic minority groups (e.g. the San people, where this applies), youths, women or the physically or mentally challenged, or differently-abled people. Other regular questions probe the potential sustainability of the projects. It is at these meetings that proposed projects are rigorously 'tested' against the expectations of OSI, and the ideals of building open societies in Southern Africa;[94]

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[92] For example, in 2007, these meetings were held at the OSISA offices on 15 February, 18 May, 20 August and 12 November. Board meetings followed on 8 and 9 March, 7 and 8 June, 14 and 15 September, and 31 November and 1 December 2007 (OSISA 2007a).

[93] This point (and much of what follows in this section) comes from the author's observations and participation in these meetings and events since 2002.

[94] For example, a discussion on a proposed project for a national conference on Zambia's language policies in education and the broadcasting sector, solicited comments from meeting participants to the effect that journalists in other countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zimbabwe and Angola, should also be lobbied to improve their use of local languages in the media (OSISA 2007b). The increased use of local languages by the media is, therefore, viewed as contributing substantially to the flow of information and ideas, and thus helping to open up many avenues in societies for diverse groups of people.

- *Brief reports on the activities undertaken by the various programme units*. Such reports include meetings attended by staff, monitoring visits to previously supported projects and other out-of-office, or out-of-country meetings attended. The broad idea behind these usually verbal reports is to ensure that other OSISA staff members fully know what workmates are doing to implement OSISA strategy;

- *Reviews of policy documents*. Often this takes place when a new policy paper has been produced by an in-house committee led by of the executive director, before a document is presented to the OSISA board for discussion. One such paper made proposals and charted the manner in which OSISA programme units could engage with state structures beyond working with CSOs. This was particularly relevant in OSISA's work concerning education and HIV/AIDS programmes, where it is recognised that the problems in those areas are so great in the region that OSISA could not just depend on working with NGOs and ignore the state structures. For any such work to have an impact, OSISA needs to engage directly with concerned state departments – especially where this concerns policy reforms (OSISA 2004).

The above should be considered as mere examples of some of the issues that are debated and discussed during programme issue meetings. They are brought forth at this stage to illustrate their role and significance in inculcating OSISA's cultural, political and social values, as well as their contribution to the building of the common and collective 'mindset' of the organisation. Yet these meetings are not the only rituals followed by OSISA. Another important ritual is the regular board meetings.

6.3.2 The role of the board in OSISA and its nexus with Soros

Here it should be acknowledged that the board is generally considered the "highest decision-making body" of the organisation, and within OSISA, its primary responsibilities include "deciding how the work of promoting open societies will be pursued" in Southern Africa. Thus, apart from overseeing and

defending the work undertaken by OSISA, the board is the main recruiting agency of the OSISA Chief Executive, and has (at least on the surface) the responsibility of defining the organisation's strategy and "articulating a vision for open society" in the region (OSI 2005). Perhaps because of this apparently powerful position, it is practice within the OSI network that the OSISA Chair has to be approved by the OSI New York head office, before being confirmed in the post. Besides that, the Chair is the only person in OSISA with direct access to OSISA's founder and benefactor, George Soros.

It is significant to point out that the recent past Chief Executive, Tawanda Mutasah, a Zimbabwean national (and his successor in 2008, Ms. Sisonke Msimang, a South African)[95], were appointed by the OSISA board – but only after they had been approved, endorsed and assented to by the OSI New York head office. As such, the guidelines emphasise that Chief Executive is "the only person who works for, and reports directly to the board", while the rest of the staff are employed by the Chief Executive, although they are all expected to "understand board priorities and intentions well enough … [and to have the] responsibility of turning board directives into concrete activities", beyond administering open and effectively run programmes (OSI 2005).

Furthermore, OSI policies state that OSISA is "an autonomous entity" that makes all grant decisions independently, and so every board member has a responsibility to advise observers to OSISA activities that George Soros does not directly meddle in the internal affairs of any of the Southern African countries served by OSISA. In keeping with these expectations, it is nevertheless expected of each board member to articulate,

> …briefly and clearly, his or her own views on what an open society is, why it is important, and why the activities of the foundation (i.e. OSISA) should promote it. Mr Soros's views and those of the Soros-supported foundations and institutions are less important in your country (i.e.

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[95] Mutasah was moved to the OSI Network head office in New York in 2008.

Southern Africa)[96] than the views of local board members. There *must obviously be a degree of agreement between board members and OSI about what 'open society' means.* (OSI 2005) [my italics]

It follows, therefore, that among the criteria used for the acceptance of candidates to the OSISA board is the prerequisite that such people should demonstrate some measurable commitment to the ideals of an open society, and state how such principles would be promoted (OSI 2005). At least there should be a level of consonance between a particular board member and the OSI in this respect.

This requirement is, therefore, not far removed from the views of Saab (2005:19–24), who argues that Soros and other philanthropists like him establish fecund (or fertile and intellectually productive) grant-making foundations that directly subsidise and propagate "ideas and forms of inquiry" which they approve, while discouraging ideas they deplore. Saab adds that Soros's global activities should be placed within the framework of clever mechanisms aimed at controlling and dominating the world scene: they should not simply be likened to the tactics and techniques used by the political authoritarians who Soros and others like him are ostensibly challenging and trying to replace.

According to Saab, philanthropists like Soros are "beholden to no one but themselves", while the foundations they form and finance are accountable to boards that are, themselves, often self-perpetuating, and not elected democratically. Accordingly, it is Saab's (2005:23) argument that,

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[96] It should be noted that the policy directives in this quotation refer to a "country", but in effect the concept of 'country' is also used to apply to regional areas covered by Soros's regional foundations, such as the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), Open Society Initiative for East Africa (OSIEA) and OSISA. In OSI parlance, regional-wide foundations are, for practical purposes, also considered "national" establishments. The reasons are: firstly, originally Soros's work was confined to individual countries where the foundations were located (i.e. the Open Society Foundation for South Africa). These country-specific operations still dominate the worldwide network of Soros's foundations, especially in much of Eastern Europe. Some confusion may have arisen when regional foundations, such as OSISA, were established. Secondly, the use of the concept "national" allows for a distinction to be made between Soros's worldwide operations, such as the OSI Network Media Programme or the OSI Network Women's Programme. As worldwide programmes these are neither national nor regional in operational scope (OSI 2005).

…Soros is merely part of a new group of commercial philosophers to have made their appearance in the post-modern period. Many of these 'pomosophers' ["pomo" = post-modern + "sophos" = wise] are business people and pop stars with nagging conscious,' [sic] who like to surround themselves with a host of intellectuals and artists in order to satisfy their vanity and make themselves feel intellectually important. What Soros really wants, at the end of the day, is to be recognised as a major philosopher and to be granted respect for his ideas and activities.

In a number of ways, Soros concedes to these criticisms. For instance, Soros (2006:x–xx) admits to being in a "privileged position" since he has "a lot of money … a set of firm ethical and political beliefs" and a developed framework that has given him a "certain understanding of history". Thus, as "a stateless statesman", Soros concedes that he is not really an uninterested participant in world affairs. Instead, he has the "desire to make an impact" on historical events – something that gives him some satisfaction at the age of 70.

In addition, Soros's philosophical ambitions may also have been openly projected at the April 2007 meeting, where he expressed a sense of dissatisfaction with what he referred to as "an almost total disconnect" between his vision of an open society and what the various foundations were doing across the world.[97] According to him, most of his foundations' strategy papers were "rather uninformative", thereby betraying the need for the foundations and the whole OSI network structure to "develop more conceptual work on open society issues to guide the network activities" (OSI 2007). Soros's apparent frustration with his foundations may also be demonstrative

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[97] This meeting, held in Budapest, Hungary, was attended by OSI board members who include OSI President Aryeh Neier; Soros's son and heir-apparent, Jonathan (via the phone from the United States); Frederick van Zyl Slabbert from South Africa, and Mark Malloch Brown (who has since left the OSI board to join the British Cabinet under Prime Minister Gordon Brown). In the London cabinet, Malloch Brown falls under the Foreign Office, tasked with the responsibility for matters relating to Africa, Asia and the United Nations (Neier 2007).

of his controlling character – an inherent personality attribute that Neier (2003:xii), who as president of all Soros's foundations, and as Soros's right-hand man, adequately recognises. Neier (2003:xii) states that Soros's need for control "has been a significant factor limiting my own ability to take charge" of the activities of the OSI worldwide network.

In the early days of the two personalities working together, when Neier joined the OSI in 1993, Neier (2003:295-300) writes that he observed that Soros "generally" made most of the decisions, and was the only person exercising a general overview of the whole OSI network, for "as it was his money … ultimately he could prevail in any dispute".

Additionally, Soros is known to shut down foundations, as was the case with the Foundation for the Reform and Opening of China (FROC), following the Tiananmen Square massacre in Peking on the night of 3 to 4 June 1989, when he suspected that FROC had been infiltrated by Chinese intelligence agents, or had become embroiled in the ruling Chinese Communist Party's internal power struggles (Neier 2003:272–276; Soros 1995a:126); or the Cultural Initiative Foundation (CIF) in the then Soviet Union, which Soros established in 1987 and had primed to "lead the revolution". Later, the CIF was viewed as having been taken over by the then reformist Communist Youth League that, nonetheless, transformed it into a "closed society for the promotion of open society" (Soros 1995a:128–130). Soros eventually closed it down.

Soros's dissatisfaction with the performance of some of his foundations and their strategies may arise from, on the one hand, his hands-on observation of their activities, and on the other, his inclination or penchant for being too sure of himself and his belief systems, as he is known to have categorically stated: "I have developed a conceptual framework that has given me a certain understanding of history … I have a set of firm ethical and political beliefs, and … I have made a lot of money … on the basis of which I can claim to be heard on a variety of issues" (Soros 2006:x).

This less-than-endearing quality and personality trait (i.e. too much self-assurance and self-regard) is also accompanied, on the flip-side, by a rather self-deprecating posture, for Soros does, elsewhere, admit: "In my view, it is an essential feature of an open society that not everything should be to my liking, [for] if I tried to control the content of every programme, I would not be creating an open society" (Soros 1995a:125). This side of Soros's character may nonetheless mask his apparent scepticism about institution-building, because according to Neier (2003:302), Soros tends to believe that, over time, all institutions mutate into monoliths that concentrate more on survival, self-perpetuation and self-aggrandisement, to the detriment of the work for which they were initially established.

This is the rather complex lens through which Soros's attitude to his workers and foundations may be viewed. At the same time, and perhaps as an indirect response to criticisms such as those expressed by Saab (2005:23) above, Soros (2006:xi-xii) counters that,

> … I should like to clarify where I stand. My goal is to make the world a better place. There is nothing unusual about that. Many people share my aspiration and work at it more selflessly than I do. What sets me apart is that I am able to do it on a larger scale than most others … Our society is suspicious of those who claim to be virtuous, and not without justification. Many rich people who form foundations have ulterior motives for doing so. I like to believe I am different. Being able to do the right thing is a rare privilege, and exercising that privilege is ample reward. But I always tell people who question my motives that they are right to do so. When I claim to be disinterested, the burden of proof is on me … I recognise that no one has elected me or appointed me as a guardian of the public interest; I have taken on that role for myself … [because] I believe the common interests of humanity badly need looking after and it is better to do it imperfectly than not to try at all.

In Southern Africa, it could appear that a major channel for this posturing, and Soros's accompanying ambitions, is OSISA – through its board. As indicated

above, the OSISA board meets at least four times a year to deliberate on policy and discuss proposed projects.

A typical recommendation from the OSISA staff to the board, which would have already passed through the rigorous processes of the programme issues meeting (described in this chapter (6.3.1, above)) would be in written format which, among others, would include the goals and objectives of the proposed project; a description of the implementing organisation and the organisation's registration status; a general brief of the project; an analysis of the levels of gender and youth-specific participation in the project; some description of the need and rationale for undertaking the project; a rationalisation about why OSISA should consider supporting the proposal; an outline of the specific concerns that the OSISA office might have about its implementation; the identification of any conflict of interest that the staff or board members might have; the budget; details of previous support given to the implementing organisation, if any; and an analysis of the project's sustainability, status and options (OSISA 2007c).

Such a document is sent to the OSISA board at least two weeks prior to the board meeting. On the day of the meeting, the board deliberates on such proposals, questions the OSISA staff on aspects of it, and either endorses or rejects the funding proposals. Often, the board merely adds some comments which are then translated by the staff as conditions for the grant.

From the foregoing two examples (programme issues and board meetings), it is clear that certain rituals and ceremonies are employed by OSISA not only to build a common culture among employees, but also to effect OSISA's mandated role. Beyond those objectives lies the necessity to build a common 'mind' in the organisation, which is enhanced through the various documents that are shared among staff. These also, frequently come from OSI New York, and include policy documents that act as guides for staff behaviour and performance. Additional contributing factors that work towards building common attitudes in the organisation include daily interactions in the corridors, or via internal email exchanges. As we have already seen in this

chapter (6.2, above), these constitute part of the communicative activities that contribute towards building an organisation's culture.

All that remains for this study, is to explore how these fundamental cultural precepts, ideals and principles are externalised to partner organisations.

6.4 OSISA's 'agency,' transmission processes, and the responses of the 'others'

The above analysis has so far established and demonstrated that as an organisation OSISA has, through its communication activities, evolved a culture that is systematically instilled in its employees and board members. It has further been argued that the genesis of this culture is a flow that emanates from the offices or mind of Soros himself, because he is, essentially, not only the founder of the organisation, but also its chief theoretician.

A recent good example of this is the policy directive that was issued from OSI's New York head offices (O'Haver 2007), giving guidance to all foundations on how to support the promotion of democracy in different countries. The directive states that,

> …OSI works to promote <u>open societies</u> around the globe including in Europe and the United States. It does so primarily by supporting over the long term individuals and groups working to establish or improve an open society in their country. In deciding which groups or individuals to support and for what purposes, OSI seeks guidance from local advisors. Often this is done by supporting the creation of a local foundation with a local board and staff which work according to their own priorities. Some of the activities that OSI often supports – such as promoting open, inclusive and accountable governance practices at all levels of government, promoting a vigorous civil society, promoting a free press and freedom of information, creating an accountable police force or supporting an independent judiciary – may be considered

"democracy promotion" activities; from OSI's perspective, these are essential elements of an open society.

We ground our support for democracy in international law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) guarantees the right to take part in representative government (Article 21) and this is also guaranteed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 25). The UN Charter says that member states pledge to take joint and separate action to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms (Article 56).

OSI believes that there is now an international norm that guarantees the right of individuals and groups to seek information and support from groups both within their borders and beyond for peaceful humanitarian, educational or civic purposes, as they strive to establish or strengthen an open society. The UDHR guarantees the right to receive and impart information and ideas regardless of frontiers (Article 19). In 1998, the UN General Assembly adopted – with the active support of democracies and the human rights community – a declaration on human rights defenders which states that, 'everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to solicit, receive and utilize resources for the express purpose of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms through peaceful means'.

OSI provides such support in a manner consistent with that right … However*, under no circumstances will OSI provide support to a political party or provide support to a candidate in an electoral contest or otherwise take sides in an election.* [O'Haver (2007/11/20)]

This directive is hereby quoted at length, so as to demonstrate the detailed nature of the kind of instructions that are regularly issued to subordinate foundations by the New York head office of the Open Society Institute. The clarity of expectations contained in these instructions also reveals the frame through which open society ideologies are expected to be carried forward by the various foundations across the world.

This ideological tide is then inevitably carried through the ranks and structures (i.e. boards, executive officers …), to be absorbed and internalised by lower-ranked staff.

As indicated above, OSISA's expectation – and that of Soros – is not that employees will 'dam' this surge or tide of ideas. Instead, the employees, as in any other institution, are paid to direct the flow of ideas to targeted groups through the implementation of the board directives, which are turned into concrete activities (OSI 2005). In that respect, the board is like the political head of OSISA, while the staff roles are not dissimilar to those of civil servants in state structures, who must implement the policy decisions of the government of the day. Clearly, such workers, like civil servants, are agents for the implementation or enforcement of the 'will' from above. This applies to state systems, as it does to organisations like OSISA.

6.4.1   The role of OSISA staff in the transmission of open society ideology

It is clear that for the staff to implement the abovementioned 'will' properly, they need to have understood the directives well. That understanding is a process that could be likened to the 'internalisation' of open society principles and OSISA's organisational culture (described above).

In that respect, internalisation is a process through which issues, norms or belief systems are consciously or unconsciously assimilated and accepted as their own, by individuals or groups. This is similar to the cognitive process that Schleifer, Davis and Mergler (1992:37–38) regard as being dependent on an individual mind's capability to understand and assimilate the realities of any phenomenon through a series of actions that ensure the simplification of the known "facts" of such a phenomenon. This processing is followed by the generalisation of these snippets of facts, while carefully or parsimoniously working to ensure that there is no contradiction between what has been understood as *factual* reality, and the *actual* phenomenon; then combining – as far as possible – this selective appreciation of reality (of a particular phenomenon) with all the data that may be available. Admittedly, this is a

mind-boggling and highly complicated psycho-analytic process[98] which takes place unconsciously in an individual's mind. That, in the view of Schleifer, et al., is a process that should simply be understood as "the simplification and generalisation of experience", or what Shen (2004:128) refers to as the activation of "relevant mental associations" within an individual.

The same processes could be extrapolated to what happens in an organisation: whereas the process may be understood as the internalisation of reality in an individual's brain, when that brain becomes aware of a particular phenomenon through the senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch; and whereas the brain is unable to take in and accommodate all these external stimulants by resorting to picking, choosing and keeping such information or things that it agrees with, through what Fielding (2001:101–103) refers to as "selective perception"; the same selectivity takes place in organisations – as will be shown in the descriptions of CSOs' reactions to OSISA's initiatives in this chapter (see 6.5–6.6, below).

As we have already seen, this process commences with learning what those principles are through rituals, rites and ceremonies (discussed in 6.3.1 above); to understanding them as far as possible, and appreciating them – genuinely or otherwise – for their value, purpose and utility. The overall aim is to have the staff, as implementing overseers, making those principles their own, and also ensuring that in an organisation, a supportive and friendly environment is created whereby members of that organisation willingly work together to meet the organisation's objectives (Fielding 2001:103).

This 'osmosis' of ideas and values is the opposite to the process of externalisation which, in practice, should be considered as putting something outside, or beyond the parameters of the initial value-hosting body. In communication theory this is also considered as the "process", activity or behavioural pattern that involves a sender and receiver in the sharing and exchange of information, messages (whether covert, overt or multiple); or of

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[98] For additional reference to this process, refer to the discussions in chapter 5 (5.2) of this thesis.

signs, meanings or codes; between individuals, groups, instruments, or organisations (Dimbleby and Burton 1985:15–28; McQuail 2005:68–74). However, this process cannot be taken to be simply linear, i.e. happening in a direct line between sender and receiver. It has, firstly, to be appreciated as a process that takes place within given social, technical, natural or environmental contexts. Secondly, it has to be understood as a process that involves simultaneous exchanges of meanings or information, in a transactional manner, between two or more centres, before some common understanding can be arrived at.

The above is a process that Fielding (2001:18–19) has modelled into a 'convergence model of communication', since a complete and common understanding of a message or idea is never really possible – although some level of 'understanding' may be attained in certain circumstances, it is never complete but is inexact, while the process itself is continuing and continuous.

However, were we to examine the process further, we would also see that approaching it from the perspective of the 'information-processing theory' (Baran and Davis 2006:286–290; Pitout 2001:244–260), the act of making sense of received messages or texts involves the act of interpretation, whereby a systemic negotiated interface is created within social and cultural contexts; and between received texts and recipients. In that sense, Baran et al., view humans as "complex bio-computers with certain built-in information-handling capacities and strategies". Some of these capacities, namely the ability to pick and choose, and strategies (like only accommodating what the mind agrees with), have been referred to in this chapter (see 6.4.1, above).

Still, it may be pertinent to mention in passing, the 'social judgement theory' (Miller 2005:127–128) which posits that a person's acceptance of meaning is largely dependent on the juxtaposition of that meaning against the recipient's "existing system of attitudes and beliefs". In that regard, it has to be understood that the degree to which the message recipient accepts and agrees with a particular position or message depends on what is termed that person's "latitude of acceptance", while the level of disagreement is

considered as that person or institution's "latitude of rejection". In the event that some indifference exists to a particular message, this is referred to as the person's or organisation's "latitude of non-commitment". Thus, whether or not an individual or organisation accepts a given meaning depends on the inherent 'frames' of these latitudes, which are also determined by several factors (see 6.6 below).

On the other hand, it is important to point out that scholars like Melkote and Steeves (2001:31–33) and Owens-Ibie (2004:72) argue that since communication is a dynamic cultural practice, and the crucial indicator of human social existence and communion (whose underlying objective is to maintain social order), real communication does not end with a rather superficial 'understanding' between parties involved in communal-making exchanges. Real communication incorporates, and is the social imperative of the reality of human being-ness, and the expression of society's power relations which are aimed at reinforcing "hegemonic values and priorities". It is further argued that the promotion of these hegemonies is both "subtle" and "seductive", to the extent that most seduced participants fail to resist this, but instead actively accept the imposed values and tendencies.

Such is the complicated terrain of the externalisation of understanding which could also be recognised through the abstract idea of "externalised cognition".[99]

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[99] Here, the concept of 'externalised cognition' is used with circumspection, but within the limitation of the context of meaning that process through which, firstly, an individual knows or experiences something, then secondly, the process that takes place past that 'understanding,' which is the transmission of that understanding beyond the 'self'. This is so because the concept is used to mean both the "acquisition" of knowledge or experience; and taking that experience to the next level, to a particular person or organisation. In this thesis, therefore, the meaning of the concept of externalised cognition is extended to include the experience, knowledge, or feeling of passing on what has been internalised and processed. Admittedly, such given meaning could be controversial, as it has been stretched somewhat to accommodate the meaning required by this author. However, taking that 'liberty' lies within the confines of what could be termed the 'beauty of language', in which this author posits that since language is a tool of communication, it can (sometimes) be used in the manner in which any author intends to use or employ it, or to give it any relevant shade of meaning because no one (not even the language academy) has the holistic monopoly of determining the full and complete use and meaning of any word or concept – except within specified contexts. Accepting anything less than this 'open-ness' would kill the creative spirit of humanity. Because of that human creativity we now have complex shades of conceptual meanings in such recognised 'languages' as American, British, Pidgin or African-American English(es). As

For the purposes of this study, the concept of externalised cognition refers to the manifestation of the communicative behaviour of an established 'understanding' (discussed in detail above). Accordingly, this human 'need' or potential for the ability to externalise the 'self', of what is felt inside, and how this is perceived, received and in turn externalised, has been recognised as the basis for socio-psychological communication processes expressed in speech, politics, group dynamics, journalism, propaganda or theatrical performances. However, in almost all these cases, as Severin and Tankard (1998:38–53; 341–344) explain, these external disciplines are the result of the systematic sifting and aggregation of past and present knowledge, by humans, for the purposes of sharing these with fellow humans.[100] This need for projection or externalisation could also be applied to embrace the external activities and actions of social structures and organisations such as OSISA. As social entities, like nation-states, these organisations engage in 'foreign relations' through which they export messages and engage with others on their worldviews.

In terms of the purposes of this study, this engagement takes place between OSISA and its grantees, and is discussed fully in this chapter (6.5.1–6.6, below).

When discussing this engagement, therefore, what should be kept in mind is that this outward push by OSISA manifests in many forms. It may be in the form of discussions with grantees, negotiations with partners, email messages, letters, and messages posted on the OSISA website, or

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Collins (1993:xi) argues: English "has never been a static language, but in terms of its vocabulary it is developing faster now than ever before. New words and *new meanings* of existing words enter our language today at a faster rate and in greater numbers than at any previous time in our history … " [italics are mine].

[100] For a nuanced analysis of the externalisation process, including the concept's historical and philosophical basis, refer to http://www.phenomenologycenter.org/phenom.htm. The depths of the discussions around these concepts are beyond the scope of this study, but they are definitely indicative of the complexities – both psychological and philosophical – of what is inherent in the daily activity of dialogue or communication between individuals or organisations.

documents such as grant agreements signed between OSISA and grantees, which take place at all levels discussed above.

As has been described above, the process of engagement between OSISA and its grantees cannot be a simple matter of merely exchanging letters, phone calls, holding meetings or the symbolic signing of specific documents like grant agreements. The process covers a whole range of overt, as well as subliminal, series of actions that are not always evident, and yet they are so tightly intertwined that they may not be easily separated. As Severin and Tankard (1998:345–346) argue, these 'actions' take place at the level of psychology, philosophy, sociology, politics, the computer sciences and linguistics, because communication is an interrelated process that constantly and continuously takes place at all these – and many other - specialist subject levels. To attempt to understand the communication phenomenon fully, one therefore needs to utilise, as completely as possible, all the techniques and perspectives developed and offered by these, and other, sciences.

Obviously, it is not possible to use all the techniques and perspectives developed by the various social and natural sciences for a critical examination of how donors transmit their ideologies (refer to chapter 1 (1.5) above) because they are too numerous; and because some of these perspectives (refer to chapter 5 (5.2) above, for example) fall outside the scope of this study. What is done below is simply to trace the nature of the relationships that exist between OSISA and the grantees, and thereafter to examine how the grantees understand OSISA's primary objective of promoting open society ideologies.

6.5 A methodological approach to the study of relations between OSISA and civil society

In trying to understand the form and nature of the relationships that exist between OSISA and the Southern African CSO partners, we will, firstly, track the exchanges between OSISA and SAMDEF, then move on to explore how the rest of the interviewed CSOs respond to, or appreciate, the ideological

objectives of OSISA. In so doing, we will keep in mind Fielding's (2001:18–19) "convergence model of communication" that posits that the initiator and sender of symbols or meaning (in this instance OSISA) and the recipient(s) (i.e. the various CSOs in Southern Africa) are involved in some dance of meaning-making that requires them to constantly engage until some level of 'understanding' is reached. However, this common appreciation is neither final nor perfect. It can only be tentative for as long as this transactional relationship lasts. Where no common understanding is discernible, no communication takes place and the relationship is severed – as was the case with SAMDEF (refer to chapter 6 (6.4.3) below).

In examining the problematic of the relationship between OSISA and its partners, this section of the study relies, to some extent, on the documentary tracking of exchanges between OSISA and SAMDEF, and email exchanges and other interviews the author conducted with other CSOs. The purpose of the interviews was to provide some perspectives on the various CSOs' attitudes towards selected primary objectives of OSISA. This is not a content analysis of this transactional relationship, but rather, in large measure, an exploratory undertaking with the objective of highlighting the commonality or diversity of 'understandings' between OSISA and the partners, or among the CSOs themselves.

Thus, although it may not be possible for the study to examine all aspects of OSISA's external communication in this chapter, the thesis nonetheless endeavours to selectively track exchanges between OSISA and SAMDEF around a draft grant agreement, before placing those exchanges within the theoretical contexts outlined above. That contextualisation, for the purposes of the study, demonstrates to some extent the drama that – once in while – unfolds around a document that is patently meant to consolidate the understanding, and govern the relationship, between a funding organisation and the grantees. Thereafter, the study documents the perceptions that other grantee organisations have of OSISA and its communication purposes. As indicated, these perceptions are important to know as a way of counter-posing them against the Open Society principles discussed in chapter 2 above. This

discussion is also used to consider the theoretical relationships that exist between OSISA and grantee organisations – one of the core objectives of this study (cited in chapter 1 (1.8) above).

As indicated above, these grantee-perceptions are mainly garnered from responses to e-mail interviews between the author and a number of organisations in Southern Africa. In broad terms, the interviewees represent those who operate at the national (i.e. in-country) level, and the broader regional organisations with national representation. Of these, two were radio stations: Breeze FM in Zambia (a private initiative) and the Voice of the People (a Zimbabwe-based radio-station initiative).

The other institutions interviewed are: The Southern Africa Communications for Development (SACOD); Gender Links; the Forum for African Media Women in Southern Africa (FAMW-SA); the Southern African Journalists Association (SAJA); the Southern Africa Media Training Network (SAMTRAN); the Rhodes University-based Sol Plaatje Institute (SPI); and the Southern African Institute for Media Entrepreneurship Development (SAIMED). SAMDEF was not directly interviewed because of the amount of data contained in exchanges between OSISA and SAMDEF, which were found in the OSISA office records.

This section of the study, therefore, begins by contextualising the modes of engagement that usually take place between OSISA and its CSO partners, using the case of SAMDEF as an example. Thereafter, the study documents the typical responses of the various CSOs to OSISA's overtures. These responses are based on email interview questions sent to the various CSOs by this researcher.[101] A discussion of these perspectives is thus brought

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[101] The email interview format was an experimental way of gathering the CSOs' perspectives. It was selected on the basis of convenience (respondents were given time, up to a week, to think through the questions, and so effectively, they could attend to the questions sent in this manner at their convenience. Secondly, in order that the questions were answered by the top decision-maker in a particular CSO, the interview questions were directly sent to the personal email address of the head of the organisation. Thirdly, as the various CSOs are spread across the SADC region, it was convenient that they were all connected to the Internet, and the email messaging system has a good technical indicator showing whether or not the intended person has been reached. In this respect, all the intended persons/organisations

together in this chapter (see 6.5); while chapter 6 (6.6, below) examines, from various theoretical perspectives, the reasons for the different responses by CSOs. Inevitably, chapter 6 (6.7) situates these responses within the current dominant paradigm, giving that paradigm as the framework through which these engagements take place.

6.5.1 The modes of engagement and the nature of their outcomes

As intimated, for more than ten years OSISA has had some kind of relationship with SAMDEF. According to Brice (2007), this partnership started with the OSI searching for ways to support and sustain the independent media in Southern Africa. At about this time, OSI was already supporting a similar institution in Eastern Europe, the Media Development Loan Fund (MDLF), whose major objective is to support the private media in that region, following the collapse of Communist governments. In Southern Africa, Brice – who was coordinating this search under the Southern African Programme (just before the establishment of OSISA) – was tasked with researching the possibility of replicating the MDLF experiment in Southern Africa, a region that had just transformed itself from mostly one-party regimes to multi-party democracies. That was the genesis of OSISA's future relations with SAMDEF.

At the same time it should be noted that similar sentiments were being expressed by media people in the region. This was in reference to the need of what was termed the 'media bank' (refer to chapter 5 (5.4) above). Thus, in a way, there was a convergence of feelings around this need. Eventually, these separate movements resulted in a relationship that lasted from 1997 to 2007, with SAMDEF receiving grants of well over $14 million (OSISA 2007f).

In following up on the OSISA-SAMDEF relationship, this study focuses on debates around negotiations on the contents of the principal document – the grant agreement. This is because, essentially, it is a 'certificate' that confirms

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were reached and responded to the questions at various times.) Essentially, the questions were designed to solicit views on the CSOs' perceptions of issues like grant conditions; open society ideology; the balance of power between OSISA and the grantees; and how the CSOs viewed their 'dependence' on OSISA funding.

and authenticates certain understandings between OSISA and its grantees. At least, when signed, it certifies that the two sides have come to some agreement on how to implement a particular project. As agreements go, they – in that sense – can be likened to contracts which carry certain underlying assumptions or expectations.

The process is that before OSISA can work with any NGO on a particular project, a whole series of actions (assumed in common law) have to be undertaken. These include acts of offering and accepting to work together; both parties considering the 'consequences' of that unity of purpose; and gaining clear understandings of how that relationship will be governed and arbitrated in the event of conflict. When all this is clear to both parties, their concurrence is signalled by the signing of the agreement as a symbol of mutual understanding of how relations between OSISA and a particular CSO will function, for as Woodruff (2005:119) argues, no one is "bound by agreements unless they have made them freely, knowing what they entail".

Therefore, if that is the case, then it can be argued that it is only when authoritative signatures have been appended to an agreement that a working relationship starts. The agreement is, therefore, a legal document which normally consists of 19 clauses. The preamble to it states the amount that the grantee has been offered, in American dollars.[102] The first clause thereafter is categorical: it states that the grant "must be used solely" for the objectives contained in the signed document. In the case of the OSISA-SAMDEF draft agreement, the funds were to be used:

- To sustain a loan fund facility, to be used as SAMDEF loans to independent media in Southern Africa;
- As a back-up facility to the matching funds SAMDEF had to raise from other funding sources during the lifetime of the agreement;[103]

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[102] In the case of the OSISA-SAMDEF draft agreement discussed below, the offer was for $4.7 million United States dollars over a three-year period (OSISA 2007d).
[103] This provision required that SAMDEF could only avail itself of a portion of the grant, a total of $1.5 million, if it raised funds, or an equal amount, from sources other than OSISA within the three-year period of the agreement (OSISA 2007d).

- As institutional support for the operations of SAMDEF (OSISA 2007d).

In addition, the document contains OSISA's expectations that the budget would be strictly adhered to, and thus any "shifts or reallocations" within the budget would require approval from OSISA. At the same time, unspent funds or interest accrued from the funds in a bank account, were to be returned to OSISA unless permission to use those excess amounts had been granted by OSISA. Furthermore, it was the expectation of OSISA that all the funds would be fully accounted for, and the grantee organisation would send to OSISA audited accounts of its financial statements every year.

All the above provisions relate to the manner in which OSISA funds were to be utilised and accounted for. But a more indicative premise for OSISA's influence on the grantee is contained in Clause 5 of the agreement, which states the conditions for the grant (OSISA 2007d). These provisions cover areas that even border on the organisational and operational frameworks, in the case of the draft SAMDEF-OSISA grant agreement. In summary, these include that:

- OSISA is appointed to both the board and investment committees of SAMDEF;
- SAMDEF signs a memorandum of understanding that ensures that SAMDEF refers two organisations a year, which apply for the loans, to the Southern African Institute for Media Entrepreneurship Development (SAIMED) for capacity building [OSISA provides separate funds for this purpose to SAIMED under a separate agreement];
- SAMDEF follows an investment policy that ensures that at least 30 per cent of the total funds received from OSISA go towards "politically risky" countries or environments;[104]

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[104] The objective of this provision was ostensibly to be in line with what Soros referred to as 'toxic waste' at a 31 October 2003 OSI board meeting held in Budapest, Hungary, to discuss, among others, the grant to the MDLF. Soros instructed that a segment of OSI funds to the MDLF be considered toxic waste that could never be recovered, since such funds were directed at high-risk investments (OSI 2003). Explaining this concept further, Mutasah (2004) states that the waste was included in the grant "to ensure that SAMDEF does not become like

- SAMDEF manages to recall at least 80 per cent of the loans from its clients, outside the provision of 'toxic waste'.

The first requirement or conditionality, namely that OSISA be appointed to the SAMDEF board, is the exception rather than the rule for OSISA. What prompted it was that SAMDEF had become the biggest single beneficiary of OSISA grants in Southern Africa. For example, between 1997 and 2007 more than $14 million was granted to SAMDEF (OSISA 2007f), as SAMDEF was considered a critical player in the development of the privately-owned media in the region. By joining the SAMDEF board, it is clear that OSISA wanted a say in how these funds were utilised, and how the independent media evolved in Southern Africa. The presence of OSISA on the SAMDEF board lasted until 2007, when OSISA stopped funding SAMDEF's programmes.

Other instructive provisions are in Clause 8 of the draft, which outlines the parameters to be used in assessing the success or failure of SAMDEF as a project. These include a check on how SAMDEF manages to meet the conditions cited above, an examination of how women and the youth benefit from SAMDEF loans, and how SAMDEF succeeds in getting other funding organisations to support its loan fund.

On receipt of the agreement, SAMDEF (or any other partner) has the option of responding in at least three ways: rejecting it outright, negotiating any contentious provisions, or completely agreeing to the whole draft. This phase of the process transcended the stage of an "offer" and moved towards either acceptance or rejection, as is the case with all draft contracts. It can be assumed, therefore, that the CSOs' responses to the agreements came about after lengthy consideration of these options. Below, the study now examines what those reactions were.

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any other ordinary venture capital loan fund, completely ignoring countries or areas within countries at political risk (for instance the sudden banning by the state of a newspaper in which SAMDEF has invested, and the confiscation by the state of, say, the printing press of such a newspaper) … The concern here is simply that such societies or contexts also need interventions that build the institutions, values and practices of open societies, and that certainly includes plural and progressive media."

These responses are concentrated and classified into two parts: the first deals with attitudes towards grant conditionalities, while the second discusses the CSOs' reflections on, and interpretation of, the open society concept.

Focusing on the two broad areas is deliberate. Firstly, the subject of grant conditions underpins the central hypothesis of this study, which is that donor organisations – either directly or indirectly – try to influence the agendas and programmes of grant-holding organisations. The conditions applied to these grants should, therefore, be examined from a perspective of such conditions being a critical mechanism for enforcing donor organisations' influences and agendas (Robinson and Friedman 2005:30–39), with the purpose of managing the projects, or CSOs, "towards a previously determined goal" through socialisation, or the indirect use of a "reward system" that reinforces, in the CSOs, what may – or may not be – acceptable behaviours (Hoyer 1996:1–2). How the CSOs in Southern Africa respond to such pressures is captured in the discussions in chapter 6 (6.5.2) below, through an analysis of the sampled civil society organisations.

Directly related to the abovementioned hypothesis is the assumption that posits that donor organisations try to impose their ideologies on grant-holders. This corollary assumption is inherent in the outline given of the hypothesis in chapter 1 (see 1.6.1, above). Therefore, the email-administered questionnaires sought to solicit the views of respondent CSOs on the question of 'imposed' ideologies, or the possibilities of 'transferring' donor ideologies to them. In particular, the questionnaire solicited the CSOs' interpretation and understanding of OSISA's ideology of open society, so that these could be contrasted with what OSISA interprets an open society to be. The CSOs' responses are discussed in chapter 6 (6.5.3) below.

6.5.2 Civil society responses to OSISA grant conditions

In general, while SAMDEF may have come out strongly against certain provisions of the grant agreement, other grantees, like Breeze FM, VoP, SPI,

FAMW-SA, SAIMED, SAJA and SACOD generally find them to be useful, or by-and-large, agreeable.

Breeze FM, a radio station that has received grants totalling $147, 013 since its first application in 2003, finds the conditions to the grants "useful and essential in guiding the [radio] station" towards set goals. The conditions are, therefore, considered "a useful tool" for carrying out the activities of the station "in more or less the same way" as when the station uses its own funds (Daka 2007).

The Sol Plaatje Institute (SPI), which trains media managers from across the region, has received $85, 000 since 2005. The funds have gone towards a scholarship scheme for potential women media managers from the SADC region (excluding South Africa). According to the Institute, the conditions attached to the grants are "favourable and reasonable", as the SPI is "given [the] latitude to decide on key issues … the accounting of the funds – one of the conditions attached – is necessary to ensure a proper and transparent use of the funds and we fully support it" (Mdlongwa 2007/11/22).

SAJA, a regional network of journalists' unions has received $128, 080 since 2005. The funds have largely gone towards building the capacity of media unions in the SADC region, as well as financing the regional secretariat based in Johannesburg. According to SAJA, the conditions "imposed" by OSISA have not caused any difficulties or problems, as the SAJA "programme and focus have not been influenced by OSISA". Rather, SAJA argues, OSISA has "been able to share our strategic vision in its support" (Memeza 2007/11/20).

SAIMED, which is responsible for the capacity building of the independent media in the region, has received a total of $573, 445 in grants from OSISA since 2003. However, the organisation has not found any of the conditions accompanying the grants to be unfavourable, as these conditions are "meant to satisfy certain issues that are not only important to you as an organisation, but also to the overall objective of an open society. For example the issue of gender and youths is perfect." SAIMED believes that the conditions

accompanying the grants are "within the clear objectives of SAIMED primarily, and OSISA thereafter" (Kabeta 2007/11/20).

The VoP, an external radio station that broadcasts into Zimbabwe on short-wave through a Radio Netherlands transmitter in Madagascar, has received more than $480, 000 since 2003. The station believes that "most" of the conditions are favourable to the ideals of the VoP, "as they are meant to promote accountability and [the] focused execution of projects". The conditions are thus not viewed as hindering the operations or plans of the VoP. Instead, through these conditions, the VoP believes OSISA,

> …expects organisations such as ours to promote transparency and good governance within themselves by respecting own constitutions/deeds of trust. It [OSISA] expects funds to be fully accounted for through audits and narrative reports' explaining what was achieved through the availability of the funds. Even if my organisation was using its own funds it would still go the same way in order to promote accountability. (Masuku 2007/11/19)

FAMW-SA, which has received a total of $176, 000 from OSISA for institutional expenses since 2003, believes the grant conditions are a "framework for an amicable funding relationship" (Hove 2007/11/30).

However, SAMTRAN (an organisation that brings together media training institutions in Southern Africa), and which has received a total of $26, 200 since 2004, believes that certain conditions are not favourable. As an example, SAMTRAN states that one requirement attached to its last grant from OSISA; that SAMTRAN should raise a minimum of 50 per cent of its administration budget before being considered for further funding, was found by SAMTRAN to be "unfavourable" because the percentage was too high and did not take into account SAMTRAN's capacity to "raise these kinds of funds" in one year (Mukela 2007/11/30).

Gender Links, a Johannesburg-based organisation which has received a total of $780, 000 since 2001, considers the most unfavourable condition to be the failure by OSISA to consider multi-year funding for its projects, because even though OSISA "has renewed grants each year, we are never entirely certain and this can lead to insecurities, especially for staff" at Gender Links (Lowe-Morna 2007/11/27).

However, SAMDEF – on receipt of the draft agreement in early 2007 – responded robustly. SAMDEF accused OSISA of trying to pressurise it into changing its focus to issues that do not constitute SAMDEF's core business. The organisation concluded that it is "about time" that it rejected OSISA's grants and conditions (Mundale 2007a). Referring to particular conditions contained in the agreement, SAMDEF maintained that it is not its mandated role to nurture nascent media institutions; account for how much women and youth benefit from its loans; or to recover 80 per cent of the loans. It is SAMDEF's view that these conditions and expectations signal "major drift" in OSISA's thinking, thereby necessitating SAMDEF to reject the grants. SAMDEF advised OSISA to allocate the funds to other grantees, so as to allow SAMDEF to enter into "new strategic alliances" that do not include OSISA. SAMDEF argued that it "has always been a strong view" that SAMDEF should "reject altogether such funds that come with totally unfavourable conditions" (Mundale 2007/03/02; SAMDEF 2007a).

According to Mundale (2007/08/04), the rejection of OSISA funds and conditions was a collective decision taken by SAMDEF managers, adding – when queried by the SAMDEF board - that,

> …Let us sober up on issues … the fact remains that we made a right decision. Institutions need to continuously go through change and innovation is a challenge at this stage than OSISA money. You don't get dragged into unfavourable contracts because of money. I am a principled person. I stand for what I believe … let's see how far we go.

It should be noted that Mundale argued in this manner to the SAMDEF board some four months after he had ceased to be the SAMDEF Chief Executive, i.e. at the end of his contract, which he decided not to renew.

Nonetheless OSISA, through Mutasah (2007/03/02), responded to SAMDEF's posturing by arguing that the provisions of the draft agreement are negotiable, although if SAMDEF were serious about disengaging from the partnership, OSISA could consider it unfortunate "but would be ready to proceed" in line with SAMDEF's wishes.

A meeting to resolve SAMDEF and OSISA's opposing positions collapsed, after SAMDEF officials insisted that the conditions were unfavourable (SAMDEF 2007b; OSISA 2007d). SAMDEF then took the conflict to its board, which tasked its executive committee to mend the strained relations (SAMDEF 2007a). This did not happen, as SAMDEF then embarked on what was referred to as "a mini shuttle-diplomatic effort" that had a SAMDEF board member, Kellys Kaunda, meeting with an OSISA board member, Norman Tjombe, in Windhoek, Namibia, on 18 April 2007. At the meeting, Kaunda tried to clarify the SAMDEF board position on the letter that had earlier been sent by the OSISA board to SAMDEF.[105] At this meeting, Kaunda also appealed for a resolution to the issues in the interests of the media in the region. OSISA, on the other hand, continued to contend that SAMDEF needed to address the issues raised in its letter to the SAMDEF board, and not attempt to "work past" these issues, as they were the basis for resolving the conflict (Tjombe 2007/03/26; Mutasah 2007/03/26).

It is in this manner that the relationship was terminated and the grant withdrawn. From OSISA's position, this outcome flowed from the wish by

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[105] The OSISA letter required the SAMDEF board to state its position on what OSISA considered the "arrogant, insulting and reckless remarks" uttered by Mundale about OSISA and Soros at an OSISA/SAMDEF meeting held in Johannesburg on 5 March 2007. According to the two sets of minutes of that meeting taken by SAMDEF and OSISA, Mundale had referred to the $4.7 million as "peanuts" and claimed that at a 2001 meeting, SAMDEF had told Soros to "keep his money" if Soros insisted on imposing difficult conditions. OSISA then requested the SAMDEF board to clarify its position and asked Mundale to apologise in writing, "failing which, OSISA confirms withdrawal of the offer of the current grant to SAMDEF" (OSISA 2007d; SAMDEF 2007b).

SAMDEF to disengage, and SAMDEF's failure to address the issues contained in OSISA's letter. It is OSISA's view that SAMDEF's entire response scenario portrayed a characteristic failure by SAMDEF's governing structures to play their expected roles. In that regard, OSISA felt the security of its funds could be endangered, as the responses of the SAMDEF board demonstrated a lack of accountability (Mutasah 2007/05/14).

According to SAMDEF (2007c; 2007d), this withdrawal impacted negatively on its operations and directly affected the smooth implementation of its on-going projects, as well as its human resources strategy, because at that stage more that 90 per cent of its funds came from OSISA. As could be expected, such an end to a ten-year relationship necessitated that SAMDEF reposition itself – it had to become a viable commercial institution; that is from being a not-for-profit NGO with most of its funds coming from a single source, to an entity that exploits the possibility of receiving funds from the commercial and private sectors, other than donors like OSISA. The options that SAMDEF were considering at the end of 2007, included turning itself into either an investment company, or a straightforward venture capital fund (SAMDEF 2007d).

6.5.3 Perceptions about the meanings of an 'open society' and the transference of ideology

In terms of what the concept of an open society means, a summary of the views expressed by the various CSOs reveals that there is, at times, some convergence of viewpoints on one hand, yet complete divergence on the other.

In Breeze FM's opinion, an open society is a community where the collective decisions of the people are respected. In that regard, these decisions should be determined through, and guided by, the holistic interests of such a society (Daka 2007).

To the SPI at Rhodes University, such an open society is,

> …a democratic society which entrenches media freedom and other key freedoms such as the right to assembly and association; a society which allows for a divergence of differing and conflicting views; a society which deliberately promotes openness and transparency (Mdlongwa 2007/11/22).

For SAIMED, an open society requires that alternative viewpoints are allowed, and as such, people are accountable for their moral choices (Kabeta 2007/11/19).

For SAJA, a trade union movement for the media, an open society is a social order that exhibits "robust social discourse" that is characterised by tolerance for differing political views. It is a society that sustains accountable governance (Memeza 2007/11/20).

SACOD, on the other hand, believes an open society is,

> …a society in which one is free to explore and expand their own opinions. They have the freedom to receive and impart information. [It is a society that] creates an environment where every citizen, regardless of their economic power, is respected as an important part of society/community to [sic] which they reside and exercise their trade (Madzimure 2007/11/21).

To the media women's group, FAMW-SA, an open society is a social arrangement where democratic principles of free expression and free association are not only espoused, but also where the commonly agreed-to principles of good governance are obeyed and respected (Hove 2007/11/30).

For Gender Links, such an ideal society should ensure that both men and women "are free to participate, contribute and benefit as equal citizens" (Lowe-Morna 2007/11/27).

To the clandestine Zimbabwean radio station, the VoP, such an idealised society should be one in which its members are free to debate issues without fear or favour, or being subjected to state or other pressures. It should be a society in which information is freely disseminated (Masuku 2007/11/19).

To SAMTRAN, a regional media schools training network, an open society is best defined by contrasting it to one that is closed. As such,

> …a closed society can be said to be one where the general business of social, political and economic relations and inter-relations of that particular society are prescribed and closely moderated by self-appointed gatekeepers, who derive their authority through dubious means. In an effort to hold on to their dubiously acquired authority and power, their every deed and action is guided by underhand methods that undermine the freedom, liberty, and self-worth of society at large. An open society on the other hand, is the opposite of the above, where political contestations are opened up to a level playing field, within credible parameters of engagement; where freedom of association, liberty and opportunity are not unduly regulated by political gangsters masquerading as liberators; where social, political and economic roadblocks are not constructed to halt the quest of citizens' empowerment and well-being (Mukela 2007/11/30).

On whether OSISA tries to enforce its values on grantee organisations, the views vary. On the one hand there are those CSOs – like SAMDEF – who believe OSISA tries to impose its worldviews on the recipients of its financial support. This feeling, for example, led SAMDEF to reject the 2007 grant and the conditions attached to that funding, because SAMDEF felt it had been pushed beyond its mandate (Mundale 2007/08/04). This position is passionately supported by SAMTRAN, which argues that,

> …by virtue of the fact that OSISA funded the SAMTRAN proposal, it can be argued that the decision was premised by OSISA's overall

ideological/political belief in the area of engagement that the proposal sought to address. Hence it might be concluded that a deviation by SAMTRAN from this general understanding of the thrust of its intervention, which OSISA was in support of, might have caused OSISA to revise its undertaking to support SAMTRAN (Mukela 2007/11/30).

However, on the other side of the debate continuum, the VoP sees no direct imposition of ideologies by OSISA since, apparently, OSISA "states clearly that it supports organisations that promote people's right to communicate and debate freely issues that affect their daily lives". Thus, according to the VoP, OSISA "leaves organisations to execute their programmes freely" (Masuku 2007/11/19).

In support of the VoP's position is Gender Links, which categorically states that OSISA does not determine its (Gender Links') agenda. According to Lowe-Morna (2007/11/27), the Gender Links agenda is determined independently of OSISA, and is based on Gender Links' three-year plan of action. This action plan simply seeks to empower women so that they can claim their social spaces as active citizens and decision makers. The plan also seeks to ensure the equal representation and participation of men and women in the institutional structures of the media, and also a fair portrayal of both men and women in the media by promoting the "enlightened reporting of gender issues".

In the case of FAMW-SA, SAJA, SPI, SAIMED, Breeze FM and SACOD, the question of the possible imposition of a particular ideology by OSISA does not even arise, because in these organisations' view, these CSOs' ideals are in full accordance with those of OSISA. According to the six CSOs, some pertinent points in which they share common worldviews with OSISA include, among others, the pursuit of and need for mainstreaming gender issues in all social and developmental activities; the need to empower women so as to ensure that all development activities are socially sustainable; the need to influence the evolution of social policies that ensure that social resources are

distributed equitably; campaigns to sustain a plurality of views in any society; and advocacy around the need for social and economic justice and equitable social development (Hove 2007/11/30; Mdlongwa 2007/11/22; Daka 2007; Memeza 2007/11/20; Kabeta 2007/11/19; Madzimure 2007/11/21). This could be viewed in different ways: it could be a convergence of shared ideological positions and understandings, or indeed, some of the CSOs could easily be 'playing the market' by saying the 'right' kind of things (i.e. what OSISA wants to hear), for the strategic reasons of gaining easier access to OSISA's financial resources.

6.6 Possible causes and theoretical justifications for the CSOs' divergence/congruence of views and perspectives

In concluding the above narrative, it is pertinent that in this section we should highlight some processes and factors that may have contributed to the divergent views among the CSOs. However, as a start, is has to be acknowledged that from the discussions in chapter 6 (6.5.2) above, it is clear that the views on whether a funding organisation advances its ideologies on grantees are highly debatable. Some grantees perceive no evidence of this happening, while others (like SAMDEF and SAMTRAN) believe that all financial aid has ideological strings attached. That is, dependent CSOs either do what they are influenced or 'pushed' to do, or they have to make do without those freely-given financial resources. As such, those CSOs which detect incipient or apparent pressures being imposed on them by funding organisations like OSISA, either adopt more stringent and confrontational positions and thus opt out of the relationship (refer in particular to the discussions on SAMDEF-OSISA relations in chapter 6 (6.5.2) above), or they lose out on funding (as Mukela (2007/11/30) argues in chapter 6 (6.5.3) above).

There could be several reasons for both the convergence and divergence of views among the CSOs. These may include the following:

The manner and 'acts' of processing perceptions within CSOs

The first cause of the differences could be the manner in which perceptions are processed and formed (refer to discussions in this chapter (6.2 to 6.4) above). From this point of view, CSOs should be understood as acting from a chosen context of forming or understanding the world, or the chosen basis for the pursuit of the knowledge of the world, or the mind's chosen "cognitive" process in forming this understanding. Needless to say, though, such minds or CSOs might be satisfied with not being critical enough, and thereby taking things, and the world, as a "given" and/or at times, being embroiled in a rather make-believe mental environment where the world is 'wished' to correspond with that which is wished. It is an environment where such minds want to see and have what they want to see and have (Soros 2007:187).

The perceived state of victim-hood within the CSOs

When such a make-believe state of mind is evident it could, inevitably, bring forth the second reason for differences in opinion, namely the possibility of such minds being victims, and thereby participating willing or unwillingly, in the act of being manipulated. As Soros (2007:187) argues, "the two functions – cognitive and manipulative, knowledge-seeking and reality-influencing – go hand in hand, but they work in opposite directions." In that regard, the manipulative function is usually the priority activity of those who want to dominate others, as politicians do, or those who wish to retain power in perpetuity. The manipulative function is not usually the priority pre-occupation of individuals whose concern is much more with the cognitive function, or in other words, the need to understand the world. This cognitive sector of the population is, according to Soros (2007:192–193), less likely to attain or occupy high positions of power. If this argument is sustained and explored further, it is probable that a Southern African CSO that 'looks up' to a philanthropic funding organisation for its survival, would be more likely to be receptive to some manipulative and mind-bending strategies of the funding organisation, for as Saab (2005:19–23) argues in this chapter (see 6.3.2,

above), there is no such thing as a free lunch, as all aid-giving is framed within clever mechanisms for controlling and dominating the world.

Nonetheless, it has to be emphasised that although this manipulative possibility does exist, it is clear from some of the viewpoints of interviewed CSOs that there could be a mere failure to detect and/or reveal that manipulative frame. For example, while Breeze FM accepts that there are conditions to all grants obtained from OSISA, the station nonetheless states that though it "does not find the conditions unfavourable"; the conditions do in fact "assist" and "guide" the station by providing the framework for preparing the station's end-of-project reports to OSISA; adding that OSISA has "advised and, sometimes, *improved* our original ideas". At the end of the day, Breeze FM seemingly carries out its activities "in *more or less the same way* … we intended to do if we had our own funding" (Daka 2007).

SAJA, on the other hand, acknowledges that some conditions are "imposed" by OSISA, but nonetheless adds that OSISA "has been able to share our strategic vision", although SAJA's strategies may not have been influenced by OSISA (Memeza 2007/11/20).

SAIMED sees a "synergy of purpose" between OSISA and itself; although SAIMED acknowledges that "yes, in some way" OSISA conditions affect its plans, giving an example of the year 2007 when "SAIMED was planning to improve its human resource [sic] which OSISA was receptive to, but due to the conditions set, this will have to wait" (Kabeta 2007/11/19).

Some of the above responses indicate that it may not be possible to preclude the existence of OSISA's manipulative frame, except in the case of OSISA grant conditions to SAMDEF (discussed in 6.5.1, above) which, among others, required that OSISA be appointed to the SAMDEF board. Such conditions could be considered intrusive and manipulative of the grant-holder, SAMDEF. Nonetheless, the SAMDEF conditions were, as mentioned before, the exception rather than the rule in OSISA's grant-making process. But even in the absence of such overt intrusions into the decision-making processes of

grant-holders, there could still be a possibility that the manipulative frame existed, and was being exercised by grant-givers (as demonstrated in discussions in 2.5.5, above) – especially when seriously considering the framing of conditionalities for the grants.

The CSOs' approaches to knowing and understanding

With such conditions in place, one would generally expect all CSOs to perceive them similarly, but this is not the case. As the study points out in chapter 6 (6.4.1) above, the process of knowing and understanding is different from mind to mind, person to person, or group to group. As indicated, cognitive and manipulative approaches to 'knowing' may be psychologically based. This implies that the manner in which the information is received, or the way in which someone attempts to come to some form of knowledge, or the way in which such external 'interventions' are entertained and processed, differ. This processing may thus affect the ways in which concepts such as 'ideology' is understood by people or organisations; or the manner in which such ideologies are perceived to be transmitted from one organisation to the other. In other words, how one organisation sees things, or defines the concepts, can never be the same, or be similar, across the board. This is so because in addition to what has been said (immediately) above, factors of experience, culture, geographical location, education, social status, or even the intellectual rigour applied to such concepts and situations by organisations or individuals, inevitably have a bearing on how concepts are understood.

To that extent, it could also be a question of the manner in which the negotiated meaning-making process is managed (Buckingham 1998:136–142; Baran and Davis 2006:286–290; Pitout 2001:244–260). For example, the manner in which the received messages, signs and symbols are processed is something that Baxter and Montgomery (1996:24–25) liken to the practices of 'dialogism' – a concept coined by the Russian intellectual Mikhail Bakhtin (Storey 2000:104–106). According to Baxter and Montgomery (1996:24–25) and Storey (2000:104–106), this concept posits that meanings in texts are not resident or embedded in the texts themselves. Instead, these meanings are

found within the context of "the interaction between an author's words and the particular reader of those words". Furthermore, as Storey (2000:105) states, the "pre-existence of a language world from which the utterance emerges, ensures that the utterance will be relativised or juxtaposed against other competing definitions of the same things … thereby changing itself as well as [changing] the competing definitions." If that is in fact the case, then, accordingly, the process of coming to an understanding of anything is through a "multi-vocal" method whereby two distinct voices stand side by side in an interaction while each of the 'voices' maintain their individual uniqueness. However, partly because of the 'voices' proximity, they somehow build a "unity of conversation".

Within the context of relations between OSISA and the CSOs, it may therefore be argued that some level of understanding of each other's worldviews, or what could be termed the "unity of conversation" takes place in letters, meetings and other exchange processes, except, perhaps, in the instance of a complete breakdown of relations between donor and grant-holder, as happened in the case of OSISA and SAMDEF (see 6.5.1, above).

However, another factor that should be kept in mind when considering the processes of knowing within the various CSOs, is that of the inherent competencies to process external materials or ideas, which may exist within those organisations. Put another way, it may have to be acknowledged that while SAMDEF is, strictly speaking, a financial institution operating at a regional level, the skills-base of the people who manage it, is essentially business-oriented.[106] This factor probably necessitates that the intellectual rigour which is applied towards managing the funding relationships may be much more demanding than in other situations or CSOs that may be less elitist-based. That is, other organisations like Breeze FM, which are private undertakings and are managed by professional media persons who are less

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[106] For example, a background check on the leadership or executives of the different interviewee CSOs showed that both the Chief Executive and Financial Manager of SAMDEF have business-related qualifications at Masters level, whereas the seven other respondents have the relevant media-related qualifications at mostly the Bachelors level and in fewer cases, at the Masters in communication or other related degrees in the Humanities or Social Sciences field.

honed into the strictures of business practices (such as risk analyses before lending out monies), may thus be more inclined to use different, and perhaps less exacting, criteria for assessing the impact of OSISA conditions on them. The absence of this rigour may be partly because, unlike SAMDEF, these CSOs are neither judged nor expected to get back – from third parties – some of the funds they received from OSISA. As regards Breeze FM and other CSOs, they are merely judged by how well they may have spent OSISA grants.

In other words, for CSOs which are commonly-held, or community-based; or private undertakings (like the VoP or Breeze FM, for instance) and/or are managed by professional media persons rather than individuals skilled in business practices, their capacity to apply the requisite rigour to the concept of ideological domination may be less exacting. On the other hand, in the case of SAMDEF, and partly because of the sophistication of its operations, its capacity to apply itself to such concepts or situations may be much more versed in the technical bureaucrats at the helm of the organisation and in their abilities than the process of seeking consensus in more grass-root organisations

Different ownership patterns

Taking the above into account, the third factor that may have influenced interviewees' perceptions could be the ownership structures of those organisations. As McQuail (2005:226–228) argues, in the instance of media production, the structure of an institution's ownership has an impact on what that institution produces, and how it interprets events. As Robinson and Friedman (2005:6) argue, a CSO's internal organisational structures are important determinants of each CSO's "external influence", and in addition, how it conducts its relations with other organisations. As already shown, the patterns of ownership of the CSOs interviewed, differ: some are private institutions, while others are commonly owned across the CSO sector. If McQuail, Robinson and Friedman's arguments are valid, then it cannot be

expected that with such a divergence of ownership structures, the different CSOs could interpret situations similarly.

Different social norms and operational contexts of the CSOs

Furthermore, as Oosthuizen (2001b:179) states, one factor that should be considered beyond ownership is that of the additional pressures that are exercised on institutions through social norms which can be "responsible or co-responsible" for the media institution's final products. According to Oosthuizen, although such social norms change over time, they nonetheless broadly determine what may or may not be published at particular times or in specific circumstances. Secondly, CSOs, like McQuail's (1996:68) media, tend to "occupy a contested terrain of the shared 'public space'". Often this contestation of ideas and relevance takes place between CSOs and the state, with both sides claiming to be acting in the public interest (refer to the discussion on public interest in chapter 3 (3.3.2)).

However, partly because of the existence of this contestation, and claims to relevancy, the state or society tends to abridge the operational spaces, or to place structural limitations on the activities of CSOs – just as societies tend to do to media institutions. These limitations include, but are not limited to, the licensing of CSOs by the state.

In response to these limitations, some CSOs challenge the state's hegemony by insisting on ensuring that governments are accountable to the public, and that public policy formulation is transparent (Robinson and Friedman 2005:1). Such CSOs, like their cousins the media, act from the assumption of the liberal pluralist models which asset that citizens, individually or through CSOs, have the capacity, or should have the equal opportunity and the right, to influence public policy decisions (Robinson and Friedman 2005:41). However, this is not always the case in Southern Africa.

For instance, the political realities of Zimbabwe do not allow for the liberal plural model to be followed or encouraged. CSOs in that country have little

chance of influencing public policy, compared to the more open environments of, say, Zambia, Botswana or South Africa. Thus, the operational spaces of Breeze FM (based in Zambia) are different from those of the radio Voice of the People (VoP) which, although based in Zimbabwe, can only broadcast to the country from external broadcasting facilities. The VoP is not licensed in Zimbabwe, despite its numerous applications for registration. In 2002, the station's offices in Harare were bombed by people who still remain unknown. It nonetheless produces programmes, mostly from Zimbabwe and its external office in Cape Town, send these through the Internet to the studios of Radio Netherlands in Hilversum, which in turn transmits the programmes back to Zimbabwe using its powerful shortwave radio transmitters based in Madagascar. The VoP is available in Zimbabwe, using this channel, for two hours every evening.

This example demonstrates that the operational space in Zimbabwe is more constrained than in other countries. For instance, Robinson and Friedman (2005:11) state that in South Africa, the state provides formal channels for public participation in policy formulation – something that is non-existent in Zimbabwe. In that instance, it can be argued from the perspective of this study, that the local policy environment has a bearing on the operations and attitudes of the various CSOs. This is in line with Robinson and Friedman's (2006:9–10) argument that the "political culture and the nature of the state shape the form and character" of CSOs; and also the range and scope of activities that may be undertaken by CSOs. Repressive regimes tend to limit the operational spaces of CSOs, just like they do with the media. This is also the case with the VoP.

Taking the above observations into account, it could be argued that in the case of the CSOs under discussion, while a concept may mean one thing in a particular situation, it could be seen to mean something slightly different, or completely different, in different circumstances.

In that instance, a CSO like the VoP, which is fighting for the free flow of information in the current circumstances prevailing in Zimbabwe, could view

any other organisation (like OSISA, which proclaims that it adheres to democratic principles) as its close ally. In that instance, for example, an organisation like the VoP is able to reflect on the stringent circumstances it faces in a country like Zimbabwe, by interpreting OSISA's support and funding as something that is meant for "creating and sustaining an open society in my country since official channels are closed to critical voices …" (Masuku 2007/11/19).The same evidence, of being inclined to associate an institution's social circumstances to OSISA grant conditions, would be hard to detect in organisations such as SAMDEF and SAMTRAN, which are not directly involved in similar struggles for media freedom, or for their basic existence, as is the case with CSOs in Zimbabwe. Therefore, while the other two CSOs may adopt a much more detached approach to issues of freedom, and consequently evolve social norms and practices that reflect that detachment, the VoP, and others in similar circumstances, may evolve meanings and understandings that reflect their immediate imperatives about the compelling needs of the coal-face activities they are involved in.

When that is the case, it is possible for us to utilise Oosthuizen (2001b:179) and McQuail's (1996:68) thoughts about the pressures exerted by society on social institutions, in such a manner as to view any CSO that tries to make sense of the world as being subject to the pressures exercised by social norms and operational contexts, whose result is the clouding of a CSO's interpretative 'visions'. This, then, could be the fourth factor causing a divergence of opinions and perceptions amongst the CSOs concerned. It may very well also have to do with the intensity and variegated nature of such pressures, as exerted by society on one hand, and as experienced by the CSOs, on the other.

Level of CSOs' dependency

Such social pressures may also reveal the 'depth of dependency' that an organisation may 'feel' in relation to a particular funding institution. In other words, certain recipient organisations may be of the view that without OSISA's support they would face insurmountable difficulties, while others may view

those difficulties as mere challenges, or task exercises. In such circumstances, CSOs in difficult situations could ignore the ideological overtures that OSISA makes to them, and thus, whenever such notions come before them, they may strategically 'internalise' and make such overtures their own. This could be done for strategically relevant reasons of self-preservation and survival.

Such dependence on foreign financial resources does, in a way, undermine the credibility of CSOs (Robinson and Friedman 2005:10), not only in the eyes of the public, but it also undercuts the CSOs' capacity to stand up to pressures exerted by the funding agencies.

In the case of more independent CSOs such as SAMDEF and SAMTRAN, they may tend to openly 'fight back', as the depth of their dependency on OSISA may be perceived to be rather limited and not insurmountable. For semi-autonomous organisations like SAMDEF, their survival may not entirely depend on the whims of OSISA or a single funding agency (refer in particular to Mundale's (2007/03/02) statements, discussed in 6.5.2 above).

In the instance of a CSO being more dependent on donor funding, this may compromise, or skew, such a CSO's programme priorities, broad agendas and even its overall social trajectories, through the process of trying to accommodate the preferences of the aid-giving agencies (Robinson and Friedman 2005:29–35).[107]

Thus, while the first group of CSOs could strategically ignore or embrace the practical and ideological dichotomies existing between them and OSISA, the latter set of CSOs could be more aggressive, confrontational or dismissive of

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[107] However, that said, it should also be kept in mind that this factor does not preclude the existence of a two-way relationship between donor agencies and funding recipients. Somehow, CSOs subtly manage to influence the trajectories and agendas of funding organisations. But in the main, according to Kabemba and Friedman (2001:16) and Robinson and Friedman (2005:34–36), such reverse impacts are often exercised by CSOs that exhibit some clarity of vision, and demonstrate internal capacities and external legitimacies which, combined, are accompanied by the existence of the diversified framework of funding sources.

OSISA's overtures. Thus, the levels of dependency that a CSO feels or experiences could be a fifth factor influencing its perspectives.

The constituencies the CSOs are meant to serve

The postures which the different CSOs take, could also be related to the nature of the constituencies they serve. That could be the sixth consideration. For example, the VoP is, to some extent, heavily dependent on Western goodwill to implement its mandate, which is to further the democratic space in Zimbabwe – a space that has been shrinking since 2002 (Mochaba, Raffinetti, Vallabh and White 2003:105–129). The VoP may thus act reticently, so as not to lose such goodwill.

Funding organisations may also wish to reduce the stringency of their funding conditions, for the purposes of pursuing a common objective. In other words, when the visions of the mandates between a CSO and the funding institution coincide, a delicate balance of power is, out of necessity, maintained between the two actors. This is akin to what Kabemba and Friedman (2001:16) view as the two-way relationship through which both sides influence each other; or what Storey (2000:104) regards as donor agencies' responsiveness to "grassroots initiatives and progressive voices for change".

Breeze FM, on the other hand, may view its ultimate legitimacy as originating elsewhere, i.e., from its mission to provide a public service to its listeners. As such, its sense of dependence on the funding organisation is off-set by its sense of dependence on serving the public interest. Thus, compared to the VoP, Breeze FM's dependence on the funders' goodwill is considerably reduced, as its survival concerns are not entirely focused on whether its activities are judged as being in consonance with those of funding organisations. Breeze FM's own interpretation of what constitutes the public interest[108] balances this out. Additionally, as a privately-owned radio station,

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[108] Although the concept of public interest is thoroughly discussed in Chapter 3 (3.2) above, it may be pertinent to add here that according to Drale (1985:1–12), the concept also refers to the dialectic tension that exists between an individual's state of "independence" and the

a substantial amount of income for Breeze FM does not come from foreign funding sources, but is derived from local sources through the sale of advertising airtime. The radio station, nonetheless, still views itself as both community-based and commercial. The overall aim is to attain "financial viability" (Daka 2007).

SAMDEF, on the other side of the scale, largely derives its mandate from a vociferous regional freedom of expression movement (i.e., the Media Institute of Southern Africa) that is recognised and considered as credible and legitimate across the world. Partly because of the pervasiveness of this movement, clothed within Western liberalism, any liberalism-imbued funding organisation that wishes to apply undue pressure on SAMDEF risks the wrath of Western public's obloquy or discredit. It may thus lose face.

The power of the SAMDEF constituency thus places organisations like SAMDEF in a much stronger position to bargain and negotiate funding conditions with organisations such as OSISA, based on SAMDEF's versions of what its principles are. An appreciation for the size of this constituency and its positioning within the current globally pervasive dominance of Western liberalism may have inspired SAMDEF board member Kaunda (2007/04/19) to draw on these 'higher ideals' of the "interests of the media", when arguing for the resolution of the conflict between OSISA and SAMDEF.

In Kaunda's view, OSISA cannot afford to be seen to be working against the interests of millions of people. In turn, and rather defensively, OSISA's response also drew on its own version of what those interests are. OSISA argued that it was precisely because it wanted to defend those interests that it took the action that it did in requesting, and insisting on, the accountability of

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necessity for the individual's "social responsibility" function. This tension is expressed in the interplay between the community's expectations, or universal culture (that consists of common sense); a community's given meaning to situations and terms; and the individual's social orientation in that meaning-making framework (as is explained in Chapter 6 (6.2 and 6.3) above), and the individual's sense of self-reliant existence in a rather interdependent universe. In that respect, the concept could also be said to refer to "what is in the best interest of any socially bound group of human beings;" or additionally, as Burns (1997:29) argues, the meanings applied to the concept are "so nebulous as to offend nobody and be open to any interpretation" that any of those people who use the concept care to put meaning to it.

SAMDEF, adding that "pious appeals to the noble cause that [SAMDEF] benefits millions in the region, is not a substitute for accountability. It is precisely those millions (of people) that OSISA is working to protect. We do not for a moment confuse the interests of those people with the interests of SAMDEF or individuals thereat" (Mutasah 2007/05/14). In other words, SAMDEF can neither appropriate the claim to represent, nor symbolise those interests alone, as OSISA too has a legitimate claim on those same interests which it presents in its grant conditions (which, among others, seek to ensure that CSOs like SAMDEF are accountable). The debate, over what or who represents public interest, is irresolvable.[109] As pointed out in chapter 3 (3.2), discussions around the concept are mired in deadlock. It can, therefore, be argued from that viewpoint, that the collapse of the ten-year relationship between SAMDEF and OSISA lies buried within the ruins of battles over the concept of "public interest".

Conceptions of power and power relations

After the above discussions about the influence constituencies exert over CSOs, perhaps it is pertinent to add an extra dimension to the factors that influence CSOs' perspectives. This element relates to the seventh consideration, which is the concept of *power relations* in society [in terms of the analysis of the power relations that play out between a funding agency and the grant-holder, this is discussed in detail in chapter 2 (2.5.5) above].

To an extent, this concept also lies somewhere near the core of this study. That is, power – be it economic, political, coercive or symbolic – should also be understood, among others, to mean the ability or capacity to "influence people's thinking and behaviour" (Fourie 2001a:123–125). Therefore, when

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[109] This contest of claims between SAMDEF and OSISA demonstrates, to some degree, the complications around what Raboy and Abramson (1998:350) refer to as the "enigma" of public interest. According to these two authors, democratic structures like the state should play the role of acting (or refraining from acting) in the interest of the citizens. The problem, however, is that the citizenry is "by definition, unknowable and elusive", and so the clouds of meanings that surround the concept of citizenry, and its very complexity, "precludes carving out of a clear 'public interest' as a knowable object", Thus, if Raboy and Abramson are right, then both SAMDEF and OSISA are making claims about something they have no clue about, and therefore cannot appropriate that 'interest' to the exclusion of the other.

considered conceptually, power should also be regarded in terms of a unit's (or organisation's) relation to another unit. In other words, the manner in which people or institutions speak to each other, or discuss issues among themselves and with others, is broadly reflective of the power relations that exist among them and within a particular society (Gardner and Lewis 1996:xiv). In effect, as Waters (2000:98–99) argues, in all situations there is a need to acknowledge that power structures do not wither away – even in social frameworks that ostensibly promote dialogue and empowerment, for even in such cases there is a reflection of a "pattern of power and control" consistently occurring. That is to say that for any relationship or partnership to survive, some form of balance may thus need to be maintained between the two inter-facing units or organisations. If this semblance of a balance is upset, or tilted too far to one side, or the equilibrium is completely lost, the partnership not only suffers, it collapses[110] as was the case in the SAMDEF-OSISA relationship.

In that particular sense, power manifests and is expressed in a dialectically-dialogical manner, as, for example, enunciated by Baxter and Montgomery (1996:23–31), or it is expressed relatively, as in the case of one class over another, or one organisation against another. As Shivji (1974:3) argues in a Marxian mould, with regard to the social and economic situation in Tanzania during in the 1970s, a major consideration in assessing social power relations in that country would be to answer the question: "Who controls Tanzania's economy? For it is that class which controls the economy [that] in the final analysis will be the decisive factor …" In other words, in Shivji's view, it is the person who, or institution which, controls the purse-strings (especially in donor/grantee relations), that takes the most important and perhaps, most decisive decisions.

Had we to adopt Shivji's views in earnest, it could be inevitable to argue that Shivji's model in a way reflects the power relations between OSISA and

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[110] For a different meaning of "power", see Toffler (1991:3–11), who argues that power is pervasive in all human relationships, and that humans are all "products of power". This notion can be said to be "neither good nor bad", although its exercise has been abused many times before.

certain of its grantees in Southern Africa, for to re-emphasise Water's (2000:98) argument, power plays exist even in circumstances that ostensibly promote participation, dialogue, solidarity or the empowerment of the people; or in situations where (as Kabemba and Friedman (2000:16) enjoin) there is an interplay of influence-trading between donors and funding-recipients. In that regard, it could be much simpler to posit that the apparent priorities or agendas for all, if not most, Southern African CSOs' externally supported media initiatives lie with whoever controls the purse-strings. But this could be too simplistic, as the discussions in this chapter (see 6.5.2 and 6.5.3) may have proved.

Nonetheless, after the above considerations – including the pertinent responses of the various CSOs – it is important that the discussions revert back to where they started in this section of the study: with a reflection on perceptions about ideology.

Causes of different conceptions of ideology

After looking at the CSOs' differences from various angles, it may now be apparent that the eighth cause of the divergent views could again be directly related to the first cause, cited above. When discussed above, ideology had to do with the interpretation given to it as a concept, but at this stage, it has little to do with *how* the concept is understood, or the manner in which received wisdom is processed, but rather with *what practical meaning is given* to the concept.

As Baradat (2006:1–10) argues, ideology is a difficult concept to define. For instance, although scholars are not in agreement about what it means or who first coined the concept, many trace its origins to the French aristocrat, Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy's work on the Enlightenment movement. Over time the concept has been used by various thinkers, ranging from liberal scholars to Marxists, to mean a variety of things. Generally, however, Baradat argues that ideologies have been used to inspire communities to achieve specific goals. As a result, ideologies, such as

Communism, Nazism, or Open Society, project simple utopian ideals through comprehensive political visions of the past, or futures by outlining 'easy' ways of achieving those futures.

The objective of ideologies, therefore, is to mobilise the people towards the pursuit of those simply-stated goals and ideals. Also, ideologues ensure that the manner of reaching those goals is articulated so simply, that as many people as possible can easily understand them. In that way, ideologies are applied and institutionalised as inspiring public policy statements. In that regard, Kandeke (1977:iv) argues that,

> …every person as a member of society has ideas about his society and the diverse processes that take place in it. Without such ideas men [sic] would fail to control these social processes. People also have beliefs and these beliefs in turn influence the evaluation of the ideas. In other words, beliefs relate ideas to concrete life situations. The sum total of all ideas and beliefs about how the social-economic and political processes are, their tendency, and how they ought to be, is what we call ideology.

Halloran (1995:55) further notes that in the social sciences, ideology is often used synonymously with the concept of propaganda. However, it is increasingly used to refer to "any set of key principles or assumptions that inform everyday behaviour and thought". If that is the case, then it may not be possible for any person or institution *not* to think and act ideologically; and if Halloran and Kandeke are right, then OSISA is an ideological institution that not only thinks ideologically, but also acts ideologically. The implication of this factor, therefore, is that OSISA grants are ideologically tied.

It is in that mould that OSISA activities could be viewed. But moreover, these grants should also be understood as attempts at promoting certain common ideas that reflect the overriding belief systems of the current world. It is these common ideas that contain within them certain assumptions, and sometimes

norms, which often go unchallenged and are – on the surface – accepted as normal and right (Baradat 2006:6–10).

These positions are constituted in assumptions which form a kind of "hegemony" of ideas and practices, upon which is built what Mosco (1996:154) considers institutionalised power for the promotion of one logic at the expense (or total exclusion or elimination) of alternatives logics.

But as a cultural concept, hegemony reveals additional complexities. The term has now come to mean the manner in which one cultural group or class dominates another, to an extent where that dominance is achieved with the consent of the subordinate class or group. Often this dominance is formalised through benevolent institutions that lead the subordinated groups to accept and internalise the value systems and ideals of the dominant group without much resistance – a state that is referred to as the "intellectual and moral leadership" (Mouffe 1973:183) of one group over another, or of one social class over another, or indeed, of one person over another.

With time, such internalised 'cultures' evolve into worldviews or paradigms, that form the bedrock on which subordinate groups' beliefs are based, and through which such surbordinate groups judge and/or view the world with all its inherent complexities.

Inwardly, these paradigms act as the subordinate groups' socialising frameworks and parameters for deciding what is acceptable, socially useful or sensible (Patton 2002:69). According to Roelofs and Berndtson (1994:167), this social state of affairs can also be considered a form of "cultural imperialism", which does not necessarily imply the domination of one social actor over another, but rather signifies the "existence of a hegemonic climate that slowly moulds the intellectual discourse".

It could, therefore, be argued that in cases where, for instance, CSOs receive funds for their activities, they may be able to resist some of the pressures exerted by funding agencies, so as to protect their (the CSOs') own interests.

However, inevitably the interests of the funding organisation and the recipient CSO "must meet somewhere", because in the long run, as Mukela (2007/11/30) argues, it could be difficult for CSOs to obtain funds for activities that are "totally against the interests of those holding the purse" (Roelofs and Berndtson 1994:167).

The question, however, is: which of the two competing worldviews (donor vs. grantees) do, with time, achieve paramountcy? In other words, which view assumes certain hegemonic overtones over the other?

Although this research notes (in the discussions above) that a process of negotiation which leads to some understanding does take place, it is the contention of this study that the interests of the funding agency – more often than not – assumes supremacy over time. As Shivji (1974:3) argues, the decisive factor in such a relationship is not necessarily the performance of the recipient organisation, or the goodwill of the 'giver', but the nature of the controlling force behind the purse-strings. In that case, whoever has control of the finances, determines the priority areas to be followed in the pursuance of a particular ideology, whether it is shared or not. However, Shivji's argument does not preclude the fact that disagreements may exist between the funding agency and the grant-holder, more especially on the best ways of pursuing the strategies for achieving the social or political goals within the context of an 'agreed-to' ideology. Such disagreements do exist and such have been dramatically demonstrated in this study during the discussions about the causes of the rupture of relations between OSISA and SAMDEF. This rapture happened, despite the fact that, strategically speaking, both institutions have an inherent interest in, or convergent views about, growing and sustaining the privately-owned media in Southern Africa.

6.7 The supremacy or 'triumph' of Western liberal hegemony

An analysis of the disagreements between OSISA and SAMDEF shows that both organisations are generally agreed on the functions of the media in emerging or democratic societies; what may be in dispute are the terms and

conditions of the OSISA grant. However, without paying any further attention to 'Fukuyanism' (or the belief that Western liberalism has triumphed over every other thought system), the study nonetheless sees the differences in CSOs' responses to OSISA, and the CSOs' varied views on the open society ideology, as partly a demonstration of the variegated impact of the shadowy hegemony of Western ideas on Southern African society.

For example, in spite of what critics of modernisation or the Enlightenment may say, the ideas that gave rise to the current powerful universalisation-of-values movement could still be said to predominate to some degree. This is in spite the fact some of these values may variously have been challenged by elements within some civil society organisations, some of which pursue social democracy, or other agendas. This is so in politics and economics, as in the sciences where, for instance, in research the positivist paradigm (although liberally and regularly challenged) reigns supreme in many respects.[111]

The same dominance can be discerned in the manner in which the so-called commonality of the inherent values of global political, social and economic formations are argued for and proclaimed at international conferences, global meetings and in the media.

For instance, it is because of the underpinning strong belief in these commonalities and the assumed supremacy of the positivist outlooks and paradigms, that scholars like Fukuyama (1999:280–281), among others, could claim that,

> …the unfolding of modern natural science drives economic development, and economic development drives – with lags, setbacks, and wrong turns – a process of political development in the direction of liberal democracy. We therefore expect a long-term progressive

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[111] For a detailed narrative on the dominance of the positivist research paradigm, including its foundation and development by Auguste Comte, with contributions from Emile Durkheim and others, and subsequent critiques by post-modernists, refer to Babbie and Mouton (2001:20–45).

evolution of human political institutions in the direction of liberal democracy.

But as Huntington (1996:301) argues, this may not be so because "societies that assume that their history has ended … are usually societies whose history is about to decline". To avoid a global catastrophe at the physical and 'ideas' levels, Huntington (1996:321) proposes that a process of mutual cooperation and understanding should evolve between the political, spiritual and intellectual leaderships of the various "civilisations".

Unfortunately, this appeal may continue to fail to fall on virgin intellectual soils in many parts of the aid-dependent African continent, for as this thesis demonstrates, many of the ideological assumptions that generally govern aid-giving, and perhaps drive social evolution through instruments like OSISA and its partner CSOs in Southern Africa, are embedded into the eminent ideas of Western liberal thought.

Since the collapse of Communism, Western liberalism has remained influential although it can be said that it is constantly being challenged by other theories and social experiments such as neo-conservatism, post-modernism, social democracy, and the current Chinese and Russian models of governance. Nonetheless, in spite of these challenges, liberalism remains part of the cathedral of Western ideas that prevail in the world today. As shown above, the mechanisms of foreign aid (which include financial support to Third World development initiatives provided by private foundations like OSISA) are avenues through which such influences are channelled.

As discussed above, it is this 'modernisation hegemony' that also drives the CSO movement in Southern Africa today. In addition, as emphasised in Chapter 2 of this thesis, it is this range of ideas that defines the objectives of OSISA, its fund-giving activities, as well as the rationale behind its continued existence. As an influential hegemony of ideas and practices, these sets of theories ensure that the ideals of the various CSOs in Southern Africa are not

only similar, but also that they generally reflect some of the values and objectives of funding organisations, including OSISA.

From the above discussion it may be clear that either the Southern African-based CSOs know this, and therefore play along; or completely share the ideals of OSISA; or are merely oblivious to the presence of this hegemony. If they truly are oblivious, then the CSOs could be suppliant victims rather than disciples of the age-old Western intellectual liberal push that emerged during the Italian Renaissance a few centuries ago. That said, however, the objective reality could entail the existence of each of the abovementioned three (or more) options. Clearly, from among the CSOs interviewed, there is almost total unanimity about the similarities of their social outlooks and those constituted in the official OSISA ideology. These CSOs' understandings of the ideals to be aspired for, tie in reasonably well with the characteristics of an open society, as outlined in chapter 2.

For instance, Breeze FM states that an open society is,

> …one in which people are concerned with the society in which they live and in which collective decisions are guided by the interests of society as a whole rather than narrow self interests. In such a society people are able to discuss issues that concern them, among themselves, and with those that rule them and make decisions on their behalf (Daka 2007/01/14).

It is clear that this version encompasses the characteristics of an open society, as outlined in chapter 2 (see 2.5 and 2.5.3 in particular) above. These include the concept of the 'unity of humankind' – the notion that all individuals have a stake in the affairs of their communities; thus, individuals have the right to determine the future direction of their societies. Those are some of the principles that OSISA variously advances as rationales for its existence. On several occasions, these principles are used to justify OSISA's activities in Southern Africa. Often, OSISA does this by reverting to international norms, protocols, or laws that protect individuals' rights, such as the rights to

participate in the affairs of their communities (refer, for instance, to the discussion in chapter 6 (6.4) above).

These norms are encapsulated in documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, or the United Nations Convention on Civil and Political Rights (O'Haver 2007/11/20), or, in the case of Africa, the African Convention on Human and People's Rights (Amnesty International 1991) which, as Shivji (1989:51–53) argues, are not universally endorsed.

At the same time, Breeze FM's reference to "collective decisions" which are "guided" by the interests of society (Daka 2007/01/14), draws from what Fourie (2007:9–10) identifies as the "the intellectual quest to re-discover and re-establish the idealised values of traditional African culture(s) and traditional African communities" that are said to have placed some premium on "negotiation, inclusiveness, transparency, and tolerance".

In that regard, it may be apparent that although it may be argued that no one may have the monopoly on wisdom or the truth, about what an assiduous ideal should be (or how worldviews are transferable), it is clear that most of these aspects are situation-specific, and take place on a case-by-case basis, or through the tactical balancing-out of ideas about (or the essential idealisation of) what the aspired-for open society should be. A decisive factor for CSOs in Southern Africa is that they work for the region's social evolution away from presidentialism, and towards an ideal that remains largely trapped and defined within the confines of Western liberalism. As such, together with OSISA, the various CSOs could correctly be said to be useful and convenient tools, employed by a global 'civilising' project, which is meant to Westernise African societies. That is why so much money is flowing into the coffers of these 'tools'.

6.8 Conclusion

The above discussion suggests that although there may be a divergence of opinions about whether or not funding organisations consciously promote their

ideologies; or about the manner in which this is done; it is clear that funding organisations on the one side, and the grantees on the other are (consciously or unconsciously) networked partners in the global modernisation project, whose roots are embedded within the Enlightenment movement. It is, therefore, argued that it is in this holistic, theoretical space that both OSISA and its partners in Southern Africa find their operational and rational space, although in finding that space, OSISA's priorities, as a funder, prevail.

The manner in which each of these organisations 'finds' and defines its spaces and roles is determined by several factors – these include their perceptions; capacity and ability to contextualise their spaces; the profiles of their allotted constituencies; and the tacit management of the balance of power between and among themselves, but more especially, with the financiers. Most such 'contestations' take place within the hegemonic discourses of the Western liberal paradigm that, seemingly, is in an objective ascendance following the decline of experimentations of alternative approaches to political and economic formations, symbolised through, or espoused under, the rubrics of African socialism (i.e. Kaunda's Zambian Humanism or Ubuntu, Mobutu's Authenticity, Nyerere's *Ujamaa*, or Senghor's Negritude); or the so-called scientific socialism (i.e. Soviet communism, the application of Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse Tung-thought in communist China, or the socialist-Juche ideas of North Korea's Kim il Sung); or the failed racially-based ideas for social engineering projects of Nazism led by Adolf Hitler in Germany; Fascism of Benito Mussolini in Italy, or Verwoerd's apartheid in South Africa.

This chapter has, therefore, teased out some of the above considerations, in discussions that drew on discourses contained in previous chapters. These chapters, in broad terms, examined the historical foundations of OSISA, its rationale and the socio-political environment which OSISA was meant to address. Chapter 6, therefore, emphasises that although OSISA's activities are framed within the modernisation paradigm (which also influences most Southern African CSOs), OSISA's strategic priorities tend to prevail over those of Southern African CSOs.

In building towards that conclusion, this chapter starts by acknowledging that OSISA is a value-embedded institution that seeks to promote specific outlooks in Southern Africa. These outlooks are processed at various levels, both internally within OSISA and externally through the various CSO partners. The projection of these outlooks is what the current chapter refers to as the externalisation of OSISA's ideology.

The next chapter picks up on these discussions and concludes by concretely demonstrating how the thesis has holistically addressed the objectives of the study, before suggesting fresh avenues for investigating other aspects within the scope of this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

7. 1 Introduction

This study set out to examine the dual research problem about, firstly, whether donor organisations transmit their ideologies to grantee organisations, and secondly, whether northern-based philanthropic foundations offer disinterested aid to Southern African civil society groups.

To properly address this problem necessitated the use of a triangulation of research techniques. The implication is that the collected observations and data were examined against various perspectives and, as such, it can be argued that the research problem has been sufficiently addressed.

However, in order to facilitate a proper examination, the research problem was situated and grounded within the following research objectives:

- Describing the socio-political context influencing the media in Southern Africa;
- Exploring the genesis of the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) and giving it as an example of a donor organisation funding the media in this region;
- Investigating the discourses that typically take place between a donor and Southern African Civil Society Organisations (CSOs); and
- Interrogating the responses of CSOs to donor pressures and ideological positions.

Thus, in order for the study to meet the above objectives, the following research questions were asked:

- What is the socio-political context that necessitated Open Society intervention?
- What is OSISA and what is its ideology?

- How does OSISA communicate or transmit its values or worldviews?
- How do Southern African CSOs respond to OSISA's communication of its principles?

7.2 Research process and structure of the study

Clearly, the above research questions are all derived from the abovementioned research objectives. With that consideration in mind, the study thus concentrates on analysing the dynamics of relations between donors and grantee organisations. Based on this analysis, it is hoped that the energies expended on donor-aid mechanisms are better understood and appreciated.

This study, therefore, is governed by the abovementioned dual research problem and objectives. Subsequently, the chapters of the thesis are structured to meet the objectives of the study, and to address the research questions. The hypothesis, assumptions, questions and objectives are detailed in chapter 1.

Thereafter, chapter 2 traces and examines the history and evolution of the concept of 'open society'. This section locates the source of the concept in the writings of French philosopher Henri Bergson, before the concept was adopted by Karl Popper and later popularised by philanthropist George Soros. Chapter 2 also contrasts the concept against both emergent African political thought on the one hand, and Marxism on the other. In that regard, the attempted implementation of Marxian-based society frameworks in Eastern Europe and their equivalent African counterparts are considered, as examples of 'closed society' experimentations.

The broader description of the political and media environment of post-colonial Southern Africa follows in chapter 3. These descriptions are meant to demonstrate, or be indicative of examples of how 'closed societies' were implemented in the region. This is in direct response to the research question

about the rationale for introducing OSISA to the region. In particular, this chapter elaborates on the situational analyses of three countries: Malawi, Zambia and Botswana, to illustrate the continuum of freedom of expression and media freedom issues in the Southern Africa of the time.

The choice of the countries was deliberate: although all three shared a common British colonial past, they evolved markedly different political and media environments soon after independence.

Malawi shifted towards a more extremist form of a one-party state after independence in 1964. This was a country where all aspects of life – including the media – were strictly controlled by President Kamuzu Banda.

After 1966, Botswana stayed on the other side of the continuum. It maintained a multi-party democracy in which freedom of speech and the right of the media to play their "watchdog role" were generally respected (Tafa and Mack 1996:40–41), but this study argues that Botswana remains a closed society to as much as 30 per cent of the population, as a result of the failures of its language-in-the-media policies, and its adherence to the values of the traditional *kgotla* political system that excludes women participation in public affairs.

Zambia is stuck somewhere in-between the Malawian and Botswana experiences. In the early years after its independence in 1964, Zambia maintained some measure of multi-party democracy until 1972, when it legislated for a one-party regime, where the freedoms of speech and the media were, though restricted, allowed to a limited degree within the context of a form of governance popularly referred to as "one-party participatory democracy". This form of democracy, according to Chikulo (1979:210–211), gave President Kenneth Kaunda "a measure of control" over the political process, including, as we have already seen, the operations and performance of the media. The media, as instruments of the ruling elites, were expected to glorify Kaunda and assist in his nation-building endeavours (Kasoma 1986:104).

As Kasoma (1997:135–137) further argues, the "long-standing despotic government" of Kaunda had, by 1972, almost totally placed the media under its control. This, according to Kasoma, was a period of "almost total subjugation of the country's media …", with the Zambian media publishing only the news which "Kaunda and his henchmen wanted and excluding any information which they would frown upon". Makungu (2004:21) observes that although there was no coherent official policy on media freedom in the country, state officials largely dictated and succeeded "in telling the newsmen and women what they should and should not publish".

At a broader level, it is the view of Mwanakatwe (1994:112) that at this time Kaunda and his colleagues were totally "insensitive to the attitudes, feelings and interests of people who were not members of the ruling class", as the one-party state had become a "monster to the people of Zambia". [Mwanakatwe was initially Kaunda's political ally and a minister in Zambia's first cabinet in 1964.]

By contrast, the political environment in neighbouring Botswana allowed for the "free market of ideas", even though a major problem with the media was seemingly caused by the lack of professional journalistic expertise (Rantao 1996:14), rather than political pressure. In Malawi, from 1964 to 1992, the one-man-dominated political system was characterised by the state's "muzzling, harassment, intimidation, detention and even murder of journalists" – especially those who misquoted or misrepresented the political leadership (Chimombo and Chimombo 1996:26, 62).

OSISA was, therefore, primed to respond to these realities and challenges. How the organisation did so is the subject of discussions in chapter 4. This section of the study investigates early interventions by OSISA in the abovementioned media environments. In particular, chapter 4 describes some of the initial projects that were directly supported by OSISA. The chapter takes note of the fact that OSISA's interventions were deliberately meant to respond to the 'un-free' media environments that had been created by one-

party regimes, apartheid in South Africa, and traditional African attitudes towards authority. Traditional forms of respect for authority are more clearly evidenced in an analysis of the political and media practices of Botswana.

Chapter 5 follows the evolution of OSISA and examines the strategies that a much more 'mature' OSISA, as donor organisation, follows in meeting its mandate. In particular, some of the strategic directions adopted by OSISA include the deliberate strengthening of private entrepreneurs so that they are in a position to establish and sustain privately-owned media institutions. Other strategies include advocacy activities around media policy reforms; the monitoring of the performance of the region's media; and building the capacity of media CSOs, so that they can sustain the activities they initiate.

Chapter 6 discusses the relationships between OSISA and its grantee organisations. It interrogates how these interactions pan out, and how both sides manage the liaisons, with each side approaching the relationship from its own perspective, and governed by its own values, objectives and plans of action. The discussions in the chapter observe that each organisation bases the relationship on its own self-interests. It is thus observed that the principle of 'self-interest' is a critical factor and determinant in either the maturation or collapse of such ties.

In the case of OSISA, this self-interest is evidenced in the conditions it applies to its grants, which are underpinned by OSISA's definition of what an open society is, and how its funds should be used to further the objective of open societies in Southern Africa. Through the imposition of its grant conditions, OSISA goes some way towards proving Lockwood's (1991:44) and Robinson and Friedman's (2005:30-39) assertion that donor funds are often disbursed with conditions that reflect the self-interest of the funding organisation. The section alludes to the question as to whether OSISA's insistence on grant conditions does not in itself raise questions about OSISA's commitment to open society principles. It is noted that these conditions are insisted upon, irrespective of whether such conditions could, in other institutions' view, distort

the development objectives of grantee organisations in Southern Africa (refer to chapter 1 (1.5) and chapter 6 above).

Chapter 7 takes the discussions from there and recaps that this research uses specific methodologies that are considered appropriate for investigating the activities of OSISA as a case study. The research techniques employed are "multi-perspectival" (Von Solms 2006:188) in the sense that they aim to capture perspectives on OSISA, from different angles, through triangulation. The chapter thus reflects on the methodologies used, before summarising several major findings and conclusions reached. In addition, the chapter shows how the thesis has holistically addressed the objectives of the study, as well as its research questions.

7.3 Reflections on the methodology used

As indicated above, this study is consciously framed within the case-study methodological approach. Essentially, this structuring requires that the techniques used should involve an observation of processes, activities, events, programmes and individuals (Von Solms 2006:186) both within OSISA and the organisations associated with it. This kind of investigation had to be done within set time frames – in this case, the investigations were limited to the period between 1997 and 2007.

As is characteristic of such a study, data were gathered from various sources, as described in chapter 1 (1.6) above. The sources of these data include various documents, reports, in-depth interviews and conversations with grantees and OSISA staff, direct observation by the researcher, and an examination of archival materials. The broad idea for the research strategy has been to highlight the situation of OSISA as it pertains to its life, origins and activities, so that OSISA can be understood comprehensively, contextually and holistically, not only as an "idiosyncratic and unique phenomenon" (Patton 1987:148), but also as being reflective of the donor community in general.

Thus the processing of the data occurred in three stages: the first phase covered the period in which the relevant information was collected (which lasted a total of four years). The second period covered the construction of raw data into organised, classified and edited pieces of information that could be managed and packaged in such a way as to enable proper analysis. The third and final phase involved the thematic description and analysis of the data in an inductive and logical manner (Patton 1987:149–164). It should be noted, however, that these phases were not exclusive of each other but tended to overlap, whenever necessary, for the duration of this study. Nonetheless, the thematic description and analysis of the data is contained in chapter 6 (6.3.1–6.4.4) of the thesis.

7.4 Core findings of the study

In summary, the descriptions of the findings and the accompanying analyses are grouped into the following categories: (a) observations on the internal organisational culture of OSISA; (b) the transmission of this culture and values systems to partner CSOs; and (c) responses and the critical engagement of CSOs with OSISA initiatives. In terms of the CSOs' responses, these are grouped around the following classifications: (a) the CSOs' perspectives on grant conditions; (b) the CSOs' interpretation of the concept of an open society; and (c) the internal dynamics that had an impact on CSOs' responses to OSISA.

7.4.1 OSISA's organisational culture

In terms of the internal workings of OSISA it is observed that, like any other social entity, OSISA not only operates within (and is thus influenced by) its social environment, but it also interacts with that environment. OSISA articulates and 'markets' its value systems both among its employees and among 'external' institutions such as grantees.

With regard to OSISA's internal operations, the thesis argues that as a social organism with a clarified role in society, OSISA subjects its employees to

orientation and absorption processes that include the administration of rituals and rites of passage. The objectives of these rituals is to ensure that there is a coherent understanding of the core principles and practices that are uniquely OSISA's, among staff members.

This process is somehow extended to OSISA's relations with other organisations. For example, to ensue that its core values are understood, OSISA engages with grantees over a period of time, before parameters are laid down which thereafter govern future relations. These parameters are embodied in a document referred to as the Grant Agreement. It is this agreement that defines the framework through which OSISA relates to the grantee, and vice versa.

7.4.2 Value transmission and perceptions of open societies

The discussions in chapter 6 (6.3.1) observe (in passing) that culture is conceptualised both as a *form* in which, for example, a community or organisation expresses its unique characteristics or retains experiential memories, and as the *manner* in which group members commune among themselves and communicate with others. At the same time culture has been conceived as a *function,* or a way in which such experiences are organised, and how organisations or individuals participate in micro or global communities (Miller 2005:290–292). If that is in fact so, then organisational culture is, in this thesis, taken to refer to the "the patterns of making sense" by, and through which organisations uniquely make sense of the world (Neher 1997:130–131). Therefore, these patterns should be understood as being constituted by social ingredients and elements such as shared values, the environment, heroes, rituals and rites of passage, philosophies, ideologies, assumptions and norms. For, as Neher argues, these social fundamentals are generally,

> …unspoken guidelines for a group's procedures and actions as well as how these procedures and actions are to be interpreted and understood. These guidelines become so ingrained within a particular

culture that they are taken for granted and therefore outside everyday, or conscious, awareness (Neher 1997:131).

The ways in which these fundamentals are applied in OSISA are extensively discussed in chapter 6 of this study. A substantive observation that emerges from the discussions not only confirms Neher and Miller's arguments, but also demonstrates the pervasive nature of cultural elements in all organisations. As such, OSISA as a social entity can only be expected to act true to form, and in a certain manner, while insisting that these social essences be respected in its interactions with other organisations – more especially those that are recipients of its funds. However, in so doing, OSISA has to negotiate its way with grant-holders, because as Storey (2000:116) argues, the outcomes of development cannot be predetermined as there are several actors in the process of development. These actors include grant-givers and grant-recipients.

Nonetheless, OSISA's insistence in this regard, although not necessarily obvious, may sometimes be obstreperous. Often, however, this 'intrusion' is effected in an orderly, systemic, managed and – from time to time – obtrusive manner. Thus, occasionally, this 'push' is expected and taken as normal by some grantees. However, when some CSOs perceive the thrusts to be too blatantly obtrusive, such intrusions are angrily and openly rejected – as was the case with SAMDEF (refer to chapter 6 (6.4.3)). In some cases, such interventions are embraced or pushed to the sidelines of the grantee's own primary objectives. The latter case is seemingly displayed in Breeze FM's deliberate reinterpretation of the meaning of the concept of an open society. In Breeze FM's view, such a society goes beyond those conceptions that emphasise individual primacy and individual freedoms (discussed in chapter 2 (2.7)) to encompass the inclusivity of African notions of social existence that embrace collective responsibility and collective decision-making processes (Daka 2007/01/14). It is this peculiarity of social consciousness that Fourie (2007a:9–10) considers a derivative of idealised African traditional cultures and philosophies; or what Kaunda (1974:4) refers to as a form of Zambian humanism (known as *Umunthu* in the local language), whose essence is

"man (*sic)* as man-in-community;" or what in South Africa is now referred to as ubuntuism. In other words, a person is a person only in the context of other people, or society as a whole. According to Kaunda (1973:38), humans are not only at the centre of society, but a human being can be free "only by living for his (*sic*) society".

Thus, according to Breeze FM, an open society is one in which decisions are arrived at collectively and taken in the interest of the society as a whole (Daka 2007/01/14). In broad terms, Breeze FM's approach interprets social existence through the lens of the general values of traditional African society, or a way of life where – although not everything is done by individuals communally – many things are done "with the intention [of it being] for the common good" (Abraham 1962:97).

However, it is such interpretations of the African past that Hountondji (1983:67) dismisses as dangerous forms of "folklorism … collective cultural exhibitionism … [and] cultural particularism" which has forced some African scholars to advance purely imaginary peculiarities about the African past when speaking to the West. According to Hountondji, such scholars claim to be speaking for the African people when no one asked those scholars to do so, and when the majority of African people were totally unaware that such self-appointed spokespeople were speaking on their behalf.

Furthermore, as Fourie (2008:69–72) argues, an attempt to revere or glorify idealised traditional African values as present-day lived moral values has its own dangers and consequences in terms of the expectations for media practice and performance: as moral philosophies, certain traditional African values, such as ubuntuism, have the potential of being hijacked or abused by the ruling elites, for the purposes of pursuing their own political agenda (as evidenced by the misuse of Christian nationalism by the apartheid government of South Africa). In such instances, the media and CSOs are expected to be patriotic and serve the national interest. Often, as we have seen from examples taken from Southern African experiences outlined in chapters 2 (2.2.3) and 3 (3.5–3.8), this leads to the legitimisation of

oppressive regimes, the promotion of intolerance and the subjugation of society to the whims of state authorities, as was the case in Nazi Germany.

Nonetheless, the above discussion does not seek to disabuse Breeze FM's inclusion of African cultural fundamentals in its expectations of what an open society should be, but rather to acknowledge the radio station's capacity of absorbing traditional African social attitudes within the broad frameworks of the ideals discussed in chapter 2. Besides placing Breeze FM's interpretations in particular philosophical traditions, this discussion also highlights issues around the dichotomy of understandings between OSISA and some grantees on such a crucial concept as the open society, which inevitably has consequences for project implementation.

Viewed from that angle, it can be argued that OSISA's frequent obtrusive ideological posturings are not always totally rejected by Southern African CSOs, but are sometimes modified, restructured or repainted during the implementation stages by grantees such as Breeze FM. This is a form of practice that Kabemba and Freidman (2001:16) liken to a cross-pollination of ideas and influences between the donors and grantee-holders; or what Storey (2000:106–107) refers to as the complex set of interactions that take place within the development process, or development practice.

In all cases though, OSISA's practical posturings - as a grant giving organisation that enforces conditions to its grants, and as a structural social organism - does raise questions about its adherence to its self-proclaimed basic principles of an open society.

7.4.3 Critical engagements and civil society responses

The example given above, of the absorbent capacities and strategies employed by some Southern Africa CSOs, is one response mechanism which is used by the CSOs that this study identifies. The other side of the strategic coin, however, is complete compliance to OSISA dictates, as contained in the grant conditions, and as exemplified by organisations such as the Voice of the

People (VoP) in Zimbabwe, the Sol Plaatje Institute (SPI) at Rhodes University, the Southern African Journalists Association (SAJA), the Forum for African Media Women in Southern Africa (FAMW-SA) and the Southern African Institute for Media Entrepreneurship Development (SAIMED). To most of these CSOs, the conditions are variously regarded as favourable, amicable and reasonable, since OSISA allows such CSOs to determine key project implementation issues and programmes (Masuku 2007/11/19; Mdlongwa 2007/11/22; Memeza 2007/11/20; Hove 2007/11/30; and Kabeta 2007/11/20).

Nonetheless, this study acknowledges that such mild levels of engagement and subsequent compliance are dependent on several factors, including the manner in and by which OSISA's worldviews are processed by the CSOs; the levels of dependence perceived by individual CSOs; the CSOs' operational context; specific ownership patterns and social norms within the different CSOs; and the nature and characteristics of the constituencies served by the CSOs. These factors are separately and extensively discussed in chapter 6 (6.4.5), in response to the research question about how OSISA's ideology may be transferred to media institutions in Southern Africa.

It is also the conclusion of this thesis that the above factors are critical to the decisions taken by the various CSOs as to whether OSISA's ideology should be alienated, rejected or mildly absorbed, as in the case of the Southern African Media Training Network (SAMTRAN) and Gender Links (Lowe-Morna 2007/11/27; Mukela 2007/11/30). Such organisations argue that their agendas are determined independently of OSISA (Lowe-Morna 2007/11/27), or that the CSO's plan of action is accepted by OSISA, until OSISA notices some deviation from the plan, after which it (OSISA) cuts its support (Mukela 2007/11/30). These aspects are also extensively discussed in chapter 6 (see 6.4.5), in response to the research question about how grantee organisations implement OSISA ideals. The conclusions of this study are that these ideals (of an open society) are only implemented if, and sometimes only when, such ideals are in congruence with the higher principles and action plans of grantee-holders, the various Southern Africa CSOs.

7.5 Chapter conclusion

In summary, the conclusions are the culmination of the discussions that ran through the length of the thesis, the study objectives of which can be summarised as follows: firstly, to explore the rationale for the establishment and existence of OSISA; and secondly, to inquire into the broader dynamics that govern the liaisons between grantees and funders.

As a way of setting the stage for the discussions, the study (in chapter 1) considers the socio-political context of Southern Africa which spurred Soros to establish a private foundation, OSISA, in the region. It is observed that a major influence on Soros was the existence of the racially-based and exclusionary political system of apartheid, which Soros considered unacceptable. It is further noted that apartheid could not merely be judged and dismissed from the moral perspective, but rather that it was also a social engineering project which, on that score, could be likened to similar social experiments (i.e. communism or fascism).

A second justification for introducing OSISA into Southern Africa was the existence of a body of belief systems embodied in the ideology of 'open society' which inspired a wealthy, socially ambitious and itinerant self-proclaimed philosopher to utilise his massive financial resources to implement his ideas in this region, just as he later did in Eastern Europe and Russia.

The third justification was for Soros to see how his ideas could be implemented in the African context through the strengthening of the new democratic institutions that had emerged following the collapse of apartheid and one-party regimes. It was observed that Soros's ambitions were channelled through OSISA and beyond that to local civil society organisations (CSOs) – organisations which were seen as central to the promotion of the ideals of an open society.

On the whole, and in summary, two major insights and conclusions of this study are that firstly, although donor organisations may try to enforce their

ideologies as they endeavour to meet their mandates, the social arena at which they interface with CSOs is a negotiated space. What happens in that social expanse is that, in the main, CSOs do absorb donor worldviews, but on the CSOs' terms and at their pace. This adaption, absorption or adoption of donor ideologies is conducted within the context of the CSO's plans, interests and strategies. Nonetheless, this process does not, for example, exclude the possibility of some CSOs changing their initial plans to suit those of the donor community – playing to the market, as it were – for the purposes of resource gain although both sides are engaged in the pursuit for the modernisation of Southern Africa. Secondly there are questions raised about whether or not a structural social organism and actor such as OSISA, which applies conditions to its grant-giving, and orients its employees to specific ideals, can arguably be said to completely abide by the principles of an open society – principles that in themselves are supposed to question everything and where no ultimate truths can be viewed as realisable.

7.6 Suggestions for further research

Arising from the above observations and conclusions, it is clear that the dynamic donor/grantee relationship – especially the influx of Western and recently, Eastern (especially Chinese) financial aid into Southern Africa (whether in the media or other economic sectors), requires further research. Fundamentally, there is a need to explore the following areas and concerns:

- As this thesis is conceived as a qualitative study, and thus utilises some of the available techniques, it obviously does not exhaust the topic – that is far beyond the scope of any single undertaking. As such, there is a need to embark on a similar but quantitative study, because as Leedy and Ormrod (2001:101) suggest, often a qualitative study "is more likely to end with tentative answers or hypotheses about what was observed". These provisional, cautious and indefinite answers could be settled in further research undertakings that may use either additional qualitative or other quantitative methodologies;

- Since the emergence of multi-party systems in Southern Africa after the late 1980s, there has been a need to study what impact this change may have had on both the state and privately-owned media, in terms of professionalism, policy development and the sustainability of such institutions;

- Since the demise of apartheid in South Africa in 1994, the relatively powerful South African-based media businesses have established foot-holds in various countries in the region. This kind of 'media's great trek' across the Limpopo River has conveyed with it particular value systems, such as independence from the state; journalistic excellence and expertise; professionalism; and the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) hybrid model of public service broadcasting which, though controversial within South Africa, may have had some impact on the state of broadcasting and other state-owned media in the rest of Southern Africa. What that impact could be, is an issue for further research;

- Whereas this study may have focused on OSISA, the investigation needs to be extended to other donor organisations – especially European-based foundations such as Friederich Ebert Stiftung, Free Voice, International Media Support, and the Friederich Neumann Stiftung, which are deeply engaged with the media in Southern Africa;

- It is a finding of this study that the 'common space' between the donor community and the recipient CSO is a negotiated space. How these negotiations take place is something that warrants further study, especially within the realm of how the power dynamics tend to play out between donors and grantees. In addition, it is pertinent to replicate this study and delve further by intimately examining how this interface may be reproduced in other circumstances, that is, between different sections of the donor community and different CSOs that are not included in this thesis;

- There is also a need to explore the issue of negotiated space, especially from the grant-holder's perspective. This could interrogate the notion that grantees do, at times, 'play the market' by acting and

saying the right things to funders, for the purposes of accessing donor funds;

- A huge amount of support from OSISA has been focused on modern and European-oriented media, to the exclusion of other means of communication – especially those that are pervasive in rural African societies. It might be interesting to know how such communication systems have been sustained without donor funds;

- There is also a need to explore the impact of OSISA on the evolution of the media in Southern Africa, from the point of departure of the various development theories – something that has only been referred to in this thesis;

- Although traditional communication systems are not often credited with contributing to the democratic process, perhaps some research aimed at that angle would be useful in determining the role – if any – that such systems played in the democratic changes that swept Southern Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s;

- An exploratory study of whether Africans who work for Western-oriented donor organisations are really committed to the ideals of those organisations could be instructive, i.e. reveal the real motivations of such staff. Do African employees really share the ideologies of the organisations they work for, or they are there as mercenaries, for the cushy jobs and paycheques?

- Lastly, there is a need for a quantitative investigation into how donor funds have been utilised since the 1990s, to determine (a) priority areas for the donors, and (b) whether the supported projects have been   sustained.

As already said, this thesis is limited to the critical investigation of one organisation, OSISA – especially as this donor organisation relates in its daily activities to the CSOs in the region. It is, therefore, important that the suggested future research be undertaken so that the region emerges with a concrete, broader and much more nuanced understanding of the critical necessities for media development in Southern Africa. It is this author's hope

that even with those highlighted areas of possible future research; this study has contributed to the generation of additional interest in the focused examination of media development initiatives that are poised to function as agents of social change in Southern Africa.

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APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER AND E-MAIL QUESTIONNAIRE

From:	Sam Phiri		[mailto:SamP@osisa.org]
Sent:	17 November	2007 05:34	AM
To:			clmorna
Subject:	SHORT		SURVEY

Importance: High

Dear Colleen,

As you know, you are one of the OSISA Media Programme's close partners whose views and work are greatly valued by me and others.

I am currently preparing a paper that, among other things, examines the perceptions around this long standing relationship that your institution has with OSISA. This is for academic purposes only.

Kindly assist by responding *fully* and *honestly* to the few questions below, in the confidence that your *open* and *direct* answers will ultimately have no impact on the current or future partnership relations that your institution has with OSISA.

As said, the outcomes of the survey are for academic purposes only and their consumption shall remain confidential and limited to that goal. Ultimately, the records of the survey shall be destroyed at the end of the study.

If you have any questions concerning this survey, do not hesitate to contact the OSISA Executive Director Mr. Tawanda Mutasah (Tawandam@osisa.org), who is aware of its extent or my Promoter Prof Pieter Fourie (fourip@unisa.ac.za) of the Department of Communication Science, College of Human Sciences, University of South Africa. Tel +27 12 429 6025 or Fax: +27 12 429 3346.

Looking forward to your responses

Sam Phiri

QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [*Estimate the year if you cannot fully recall***]**

2. Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [*Please give an estimate*]

3. OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the *ideals* of your organisation?

4. Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [*Please give examples***]**

5. In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?

6. Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideologies on your institution?

7. In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?

8. Do you *primarily* apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?

9. In summary, please list [*maximum of three***] *priority ideals* for your institution.**

Thanking you for your time

Sam

APPENDIX 2:

RESPONSES TO THE E-MAILQUESTIONNAIRE:

A. Memeza, M. 2007. [Southern African Journalists Association (SAJA)]

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [Estimate the year if you cannot fully recall]

A: 2005

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [Please give an estimate]

A: USD$128, 080

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the ideals of your organisation?

A: Our organisation has so far not had any difficulties or problems with the conditions that are imposed.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [Please give examples]

A: Not applicable

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?

A: No, even though OSISA has assumed a role of initiating programmes recently as opposed to mere funding, our programme and focus has not been influenced by OSISA. Rather OSISA has been able to share our strategic vision in its support for our programmes.

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideologies on your institution?

A: No. As an organisation we strongly believe in the ideals of a free and open society and these have not been imposed on us by OSISA.

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?

A: Open society denotes a set of views and ideas that espouse a free society characterised by robust engagement in public discourse, tolerance of political views and a responsive and accountable system of government in relation to those governed.

Q: Do you primarily apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?
A: The ideals of our organisations are interwoven with the ideals of open society. So- we apply to OSISA for the pursuance of our organisation's ideals which happen to be shared by OSISA.

Q: In summary, please list [maximum of three] priority ideals for your institution
A: - respect for a plurality of ideas
   - socio- economic justice and
   - development

B. Masuku, J. 2007. [Voice of the People (VoP) – Zimbabwe)

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [estimate the year if you cannot fully recall]
A: In my capacity as Executive Director I first applied for funding in 2003, but my organisation had got the initial funding from OSISA in order to set up in 2000-- during Kim Brice and David Lush's times as OSISA Media Programme Manager

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [Please give an estimate]
A: Since I personally started writing Radio VOP funding proposals to OSISA in 2003 about USD 480 000.00 has been disbursed to my organisation.

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the ideals of your organisation?
A: Most of the OSISA conditions are favourable to the ideals of my organisation as they are meant to promote accountability and focussed execution of projects in attempting to create an Open Society.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [Please give examples]

A: OSISA conditions don't hinder the implementation of our plans or projects except in situations where the organisation would have failed in the area of good governance and accountability.

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?

A: OSISA expects organisations such as ours to promote transparency and good governance within themselves by respecting own constitutions/deeds of trust. It expects funds to be fully accounted for through audits and narrative reports' explaining what was achieved through the availability of the funds. Even if my organisation was using its own funds it would still go the same way in order to promote accountability.

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideologies on your institution?

A: OSISA does not advance or impose its ideologies on my organisation but it states clearly that it supports organisations that promote people's rights to communicate and debate freely issues that affect their daily lives.

OSISA leaves my organisation to execute its work freely as long it is promoting the right of all citizens to access and disseminate information via the chosen means of communication.

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?

A: An Open Society is that in which access to information and means of its dissemination without any hindrance is promoted and sustained so that citizens freely debate issues that affect their daily lives amongst themselves as well as with their rulers.

Q: Do you primarily apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?

A: We apply for funding for the purpose of creating and sustaining an Open Society in my country since official channels of communications are closed to

critical voices like independent media, opposition parties, civil society and individuals.

Q: In summary, please list [maximum of three] priority ideals for your institution

A: - To encourage the development of participatory democracy in areas of health, governance, parliament, business development, gender and the environment among others.

- To generally present balanced and impartial news coverage for the overall development of the country socially, politically and culturally.

-To promote and protect the principles of pluralism and diversity in the media.

C. MUKELA, J. 2007. [Southern African Media Training Network]

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [estimate the year if you cannot fully recall]
A: 2004

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [Please give an estimate].
A: $26,200

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the ideals of your organisation?
A: Yes there are conditions. In the case of Samtran, one of the conditions was that further support would be considered by OSISA if SAMTRAN raised at least 50% of the operational budget of the Secretariat by the end of the project period. This was too high a % in terms of the capacity of the organisation to raise these kind of funds in such a short space of time.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [Please give examples]

A: Yes

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?
A: No Comment

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideologies on your institution?
A: Not directly. But by virtue of the fact that OSISA funded the SAMTRAN proposal, it can be argued that the decision was premised by OSISA's overall ideological/political belief in the area of engagement that the proposal sought to address. Hence it might be concluded that a deviation by SAMTRAN from this general understanding of the thrust of its intervention, which OSISA was in support of, might have caused OSISA to revise its undertaking to support SAMTRAN.

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?
A: In my own words, using a fairly narrow description, I can best describe an "open society" from the vantage point of its opposite of a "closed society." In which case for me, a closed society can be said to be one where the general business of social, political and economic relations and inter-relations of that particular society are prescribed and closely moderated by self-appointed gatekeepers, who derive their authority through dubious means. In an effort to hold on to their dubiously acquired authority and power, their every deed and action is guided by underhand methods that undermine the freedom, liberty, and self-worth of society at large. An open society on the other hand, is the opposite of the above, where political contestation of opened up to a level playing field, within credible parameters of engagement: where freedom of association, liberty and opportunity are not unduly regulated by political gangsters masquerading as liberators: where social, political and economic roadblocks are not constructed to halt the quest of citizens' empowerment and well-being.

Q: Do you primarily apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?
A: The ideals of SAMTRAN were and are strategically tied to the general and overall vision of an "open society."

Q: In summary, please list [maximum of three] priority ideals for your institution

A: - SAMTRAN's main priority is to support the strengthening of the media in Southern Africa by providing a platform for the interchange of ideas, synergies, information and teaching aids to assist the capacity of media trainers in the region.

- Following on the above overall ideal, an increase in the capacity of trainers to impart relevant knowledge and skills to practitioners shall then go on to feed into a strong and robust media, which is one of the building blocks of the quest for creating an "open society."

D. HOVE, D. 2007. [Forum for African Media Women in Southern Africa]

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [*estimate the year if you cannot fully recall*]
A: 2003

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [*Please give an estimate*]
A: US$ 176, 000

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the *ideals* of your organisation?
A: Generally, OSISA conditions provide a framework for an amicable funding partnership. However, when unforeseen circumstances arise that militate against the fulfilment of set objectives within a given time-frame; it would be ideal if within any grant, there is provision for managing these circumstances.

The unfavourable condition in this instance is a lack of support in- between disbursements impacting on the FAMW-SA relocation

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [*Please give examples*]
A: In the case of this relocation of FAMW-SA, there were instances when the time-lag between request for, and the actual disbursement of funds compromised me. An essential trip to Johannesburg exhausted the limited personal resources as the

disbursement still had not come through at the expected time, hence left me stranded, and there was no readily available information on how to trace it.

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?
A: No.

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or impose its ideologies on your institution?
A: Fortunately, FAMW-SA's ideals are in line with OSISA's.

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?
A: It is a society that espouses democratic principles of free association, free speech, and respect for all the fundamental human rights and good governance.

Q: Do you _primarily_ apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?
A: As the ideals of FAMW-SA are in line with those of an open society, we apply for funding to fulfil both.

Q: In summary, please list [_maximum of three_] _priority ideals_ for your institution.
A: - Gender mainstreaming in and through the media
- Empowerment of women and other vulnerable groups, for sustainable development
- Influencing policy formulation and equitable distribution of resources

E. KABETA, J. 2007. [Southern African Institute for Media Development]

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [_estimate the year if you cannot fully recall_]
A: 2003

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [_Please give an estimate_]
A: $573,445

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the _ideals_ of your organisation?

A: None as the conditions are meant to satisfy certain issues that are not only important to you as an organization but also to the overall objective of an open society. For example the issue of gender and youths is perfect.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [_Please give examples_]

A: Yes in some way. For example in year 2007 SAIMED was planning to improve its human resource which OSISA was receptive to but due to the conditions set, this will have to wait.

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?

A: No, as the conditions attached and the programmes undertaken are within the clear objectives of SAIMED primarily and of OSISA thereafter.

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideologies on your institution?

A: Not at all. The OSISA program support areas are open to applications on basis of various institutions' missions and values. Thereafter what works is synergy of purpose between OSISA and us as the recipient.

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?

A: There are various schools of thought but basically it means society must be open to alternative points of view. But it could continue to mean an increase in personal responsibility and accountability for moral choices.

Q: Do you _primarily_ apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?

A: SAIMED applies for funding for purposes of furthering the ideals of an open society through creating pluralistic and strengthened public spheres (using media as a public sphere).

Q: In summary, please list [_maximum of three]_ _priority ideals_ for your institution.

A: Media pluralism, development and organizational support.

F. MDLONGWA, F. 2007. [Sol Plaatje Institute - SPI]

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [*estimate the year if you cannot fully recall*]
A: 2004; funding eventually given in 2005 (effective in 2006) after a submission of a revised application.

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [*Please give an estimate*]
A: $84,000.

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the _ideals_ of your organisation?
A: All the conditions attached have been favourable and reasonable.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [*Please give examples*]
A: Yes. We are given latitude to decide on key issues, which gives the SPI flexibility in the implementation of its funding agreement with OSISA. The accounting of the funds – one of the conditions attached -- is necessary to ensure a proper and transparent use of the funds and we fully support it.

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?
A: No

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideology on your institution?
A: No

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?
A: This is a democratic society, which entrenches media freedom and other key freedoms such as the right to assembly and association; a society which allows for a divergence of differing and conflicting views; a society which deliberately promotes openness and transparency; etc.

Q: Do you _primarily_ apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?

A: To do both: we hope that by strengthening a well-managed and led independent and free media, we help to contribute to the creation of a financially vibrant and pluralistic media – a necessary pillar of democracy and of an open society.

Q: In summary, please list [*maximum of three]*** *priority ideals* **for your institution.**

    A: - To become the Number One media management and leadership training institution in Africa, offering both professional and academic courses for the continent's media leaders.

       - To strengthen African media leadership and management so that the continent's independent media companies become financially sound and self-financing, thus buttressing their editorial independence to produce credible news. To use innovation, sound research and quality teaching to achieve the goals above.

G. MADZIMURE, T. 2007. [Southern African Communications for Development - SACOD]

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [*estimate the year if you cannot fully recall*]
A: 1995 (estimate as per records on hand, so it could be earlier).

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [*Please give an estimate*]
A: $617, 000 (period 1999 to date as per record).

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the _ideals_ of your organisation?
A: In my dealing with OSISA, I have fond their grant making conditions to be acceptable and in line with what is required in the kind of partnership that they enter into with organisations. For example, unlike other grant making organisations, OSISA recognises the importance to support capacity development as well as providing for operational support if their partner organisations are to have stronger structures to enable them to deliver on their projects/plans.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [*Please give examples*]
A: No.

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?

A: Not experienced to date.

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideology on your institution?

A: OSISA does not impose its ideology as some of the SACOD objectives are already in line with the OSISA ideology thus making it an ideal partnership.

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?

A: It is a society in which one is free to explore and expand their own opinion. They have the freedom to receive and impart information. Creates an environment where every citizen regardless of their economical power is respected as an important part of the society/community to which they reside and exercise their trade.

Q: Do you _primarily_ apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?

A: To further the ideals of the organisation which are in line with some of OSISA ideals in some aspects.

Q: In summary, please list [_maximum of three_**] _priority ideals_ for your institution.**

A: -   For SACOD membership to be empowered to produce high quality, well researched stories about the communities in which they operate

- Create a network of like minded practitioners that can through exchanges, grow their individual capacity to produce high quality productions that are commercially viable

  - To motivate for an increase in high quality African content to be broadcast on the region's broadcasting stations, as well as identify alternative means to ensure this is made available to wider audiences on the continent (those not served by television broadcasting).

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [_estimate the year if you cannot fully recall_**]**

A: 2004; funding eventually given in 2005 (effective in 2006) after a submission of a revised application.

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [*Please give an estimate*]
A: $84,000.

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the _ideals_ of your organisation?
A: All the conditions attached have been favourable and reasonable.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [*Please give examples*]
A: Yes. We are given latitude to decide on key issues, which gives the SPI flexibility in the implementation of its funding agreement with OSISA. The accounting of the funds – one of the conditions attached -- is necessary to ensure a proper and transparent use of the funds and we fully support it.

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?
A: No

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideology on your institution?
A: No

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?
A: This is a democratic society, which entrenches media freedom and other key freedoms such as the right to assembly and association; a society which allows for a divergence of differing and conflicting views; a society which deliberately promotes openness and transparency; etc.

Q: Do you _primarily_ apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?
A: To do both: we hope that by strengthening a well-managed and led independent and free media, we help to contribute to the creation of a financially vibrant and pluralistic media – a necessary pillar of democracy and of an open society.

Q: In summary, please list [*maximum of three] priority ideals* for your institution.

A: - To become the Number One media management and leadership training institution in Africa, offering both professional and academic courses for the continent's media leaders.

- To strengthen African media leadership and management so that the continent's independent media companies become financially sound and self-financing, thus buttressing their editorial independence to produce credible news.

   - To use innovation, sound research and quality teaching to achieve the goals above.

H. MORNA, CL.2007. [Gender Links]

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [*estimate the year if you cannot fully recall*]
A: 2001.

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [*Please give an estimate*]
A: $780, 000 [R4, 836, 616].

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the _ideals_ of your organisation?
A: None.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [*Please give examples*]
A: It would be useful if OSISA would consider multi year funding. While OSISA has renewed grants each year we are never entirely certain and this can lead to insecurities, especially for staff. Lead time between submission of reports and payment of next tranches is sometimes also long; this poses challenges for planning and implementation.

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?
A: No, OSISA has never determined our agenda; we work from our three year strategic plan.

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideology on your institution?
A: No.

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?
A: One in which women and men are free to participate, contribute and benefit as equal citizens.

Q: Do you _primarily_ apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?
A: Freedom of expression is intrinsic to open societies. Freedom of expression presupposes that all have the right and ability to be heard. The Gender in Media Baseline Study showed that in Southern Africa, as in the rest of the world, women represent some 17 per cent of news sources. To the extent that women are portrayed in the media, they are invariably cast either as victims of violence or fashion models rather than as human beings with a range of interests and aspirations.

In 2005, gender and media networks in the region coordinated by Gender and Media in Southern Africa, of which Gender Links is the founding member, undertook a one-day monitoring exercise as part of the Global Media Monitoring Project. This showed that there has been an increase in women sources across the region from 17 to 19 per cent, but with significantly higher increases in countries where gender and media networks have been most active (e.g. In South Africa the increase was from 19 to 26 per cent).

Gender imbalances in the newsroom often reflect the gender stereotypes in society. Women in Southern Africa constitute less than 25 per cent of reporters and less than five per cent of media owners. The only category in which women predominate is as TV presenters.

There is much talk in all societies about mainstreaming gender in government policy and practice. The media – the tenth critical area of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action – is one of the most important yet challenging areas of work for advancing gender equality. As "formal" or legislated discrimination against women falls away, the key challenge confronting us is how to change mindsets hardened by centuries of socialisation and cemented custom, culture and religion.

Yet very little of this discussion on transformation has extended to the media. Part of the problem appears to be that the media and gender activists are constantly talking past each other, rather than engaging with each other. The media cannot and should not be commanded to transform. It (sic) must be persuaded to do so – through research, advocacy, training and ultimately through enlightened self interest.

Q: In summary, please list [_maximum of three_**]** _**priority ideals**_ **for your institution.**

A: Gender Links vision is of a region in which women and men are free to realise their human potential both in the public and private sphere. While there are many facets to this ideal, Gender Links has chosen as its entry point the much neglected yet critical area of transforming gender relations in and through the media.

The organisation's specific goals are to:

- Empower women, who have been socialised to occupy private spaces, to claim their voices as citizens, decision-makers, and in all aspects of public and private life. This objective recognises that it is not enough to focus on gender sensitisation of the media. Women must also be empowered to claim their space. Gender Links places its specific focus on the media within the context of gender and governance more broadly.
- Promote equal representation and participation of women and men within the institutional structures of the media.
- Promote equal voice and fair portrayal of women and men in the media.
- Further the overall objective of gender equality through enlightened reporting on gender issues that challenges stereotypes and raises crucial debates. We work to achieve more diverse, informed and probing coverage of gender issues so that the media becomes (sic) a change agent in the rest of society.

I. DAKA, M.2007. [Breeze FM Radio Station, Zambia]

Q: When did you first apply for funding from OSISA? [_**estimate the year if you cannot fully recall**_**]**

A: Breeze made its initial application in 2003 for the purpose of purchasing standby transmission equipment and portable field equipment.

Q: Since the initial application, what is the total amount of funds that your institution has got from OSISA? [*Please give an estimate*]

A: The total amount of funds Breeze FM has received from OSISA since 2003 is $147, 013.

Q: OSISA does set out some conditions for its grants, which of these conditions do you consider unfavourable to the _ideals_ of your organisation?

A: Yes, OSISA clearly outlines and enforces conditions on the funds that it grants through a signed Agreement which specifies, among other things, that 'the grant must be used solely for the objectives specified…' Breeze FM does not find the conditions unfavourable to the ideals of the station.

Q: Do these conditions affect the implementation of some of your plans or projects? [*Please give examples*]

A: The conditions have proved to be useful and essential in guiding the station to carry out the activities of each project in accordance with the set goals. The conditions have been useful tools in helping the station operate within the agreed budget. The conditions have assisted the station with the framework for preparing its end of project reports.

Q: In your opinion, do you think OSISA expects you to do things that you would otherwise not have done if you had your own funds?

A: OSISA has helped us to do what we intend to do if we had out own funding. Therefore, if we had our own funds we would carry out the activities in more or less the same way.

Q: Do you think OSISA advances, or imposes, its ideology on your institution?

A: No, because we always originate the ideas of each project and OSISA has not made any fundamental changes that would result in the imposition of ideologies or approaches that we would not subscribe to. If anything, OSISA has advised and, sometimes, improved on our original ideas.

Q: In your own words, what is an "Open Society"?

A: I think an open society is one in which people are concerned with the society in which they live and in which collective decisions are guided by the interests of society as a whole rather than narrow self-interests. In such a society people are able to discuss issues that concern them amongst themselves and with those that rule them

and make decisions on their behalf. I think the ideal of an open society is achievable in Southern Africa but progress is hindered by the fact that most governments are full of people who do not wish to serve but seek personal gain at the people's expense.

Q: Do you _primarily_ apply for funding from OSISA for the purposes of creating an "Open Society" or to further the ideals of your organisation?
A: We primarily apply for funding from OSISA to further the ideals of our organisation but in so doing also meaningfully contribute towards the creation of an 'open society'.

Q: In summary, please list [_maximum of three__] priority ideals_ **for your institution.**
A: Our priority ideals hinge on our quest to achieve our vision which is to be _a model people-centred and development – focussed community-based commercial radio station._ The five priority ideals for Breeze FM are to:
- Dedicate the station to the audience and identify strongly with the community;
- Broaden listener choice in news, information and music;
- Expand the geographical coverage to cover the entire Eastern province of Zambia;
- Expand geographical coverage to cover more comprehensively, the areas of north-eastern Malawi and Tete Province of Mozambique, and;
- To attain financial viability

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Type of organisation and location	Name of organisation	Contact person and address	Position of contact
Regional Offices in Johannesburg, South Africa	Southern African Communications for Development (SACOD)	Tambudzai Madzimure Email: sacod@icon.co.za	Executive Director
Media Training Institute, Grahamstown, South Africa	Sol Plaatje Institute (SPI), Rhodes University	Francis Mdlongwa Email: f.mdlongwa@ru.ac.za	Director
Regional network of media unions: Johannesburg, South Africa	Southern African Journalists Association (SAJA)	Mzi Memeza Email: mzi.memeza@webmail.co.za	Secretary - General
Regional capacity-building institute for the independent media: Gaborone, Botswana	Southern African Institute for Media Development (SAIMED)	Jackie Kabeta Email: j.kabeta@yahoo.co.uk	Executive Director
Radio station: Harare, Zimbabwe	Voice of the People (VoP)	John Masuku Email: jjwpmasuku@yahoo.com	Executive Director
Regional network of women media workers: Johannesburg, South Africa	Forum for African Media Women in Southern Africa (FAMW-SA)	Dorcas Hove Email: dorcashove@yahoo.cim	Executive Director
Regional network of media trainers: Maputo, Mozambique	Southern African Media Training Network (SAMTRAN)	John Mukela Email: Mukela@nsjtraining.org	Director and Coordinator
Regional	Gender Links (GL)	Colleen Lowe Morna	Executive

research of advocacy organisation: Johannesburg, South Africa	incorporating Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA)	Email: clmorna@mweb.co.za	Director
Radio station: Chipata, Zambia	Breeze FM	Mike Daka Email: breezefm@zamtel.zm	Owner and Executive Director

APPENDIX 4: BROAD AREAS OF INQUIRY [RITES OF PASSAGE CONVERSATIONS AND INTERVIEWS]

The overall goal of this inquiry was to explore the rites of passage, and the rituals, that are followed at OSISA. The responses were to be corroborated with the researcher's own experiences. Sporadically, the responses garnered through these interviews or conversations were tested against the experiences of other OSISA employees. However, only those that were corroborated were included in the thesis. A critical interviewee in this regard, was the Human Resources and Office Manager, who has been with OSISA since its establishment in 1997 and is directly responsible for effecting most of the activities in the rites of passage. In line with Rothenbuhler's model, the areas of investigation were grouped in the manner outlined below:

EMPLOYEES	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER
Preliminal • How did you know about OSISA? • How did you come to OSISA? • Describe what happened when you arrived at OSISA.	*Preliminal* • How do you make people aware about opportunities at OSISA? • What follows thereafter?
Liminal • What happened on the first day (and weeks after) at OSISA? • With the benefit of hindsight, what systems, procedures, or other measures should have been in place for your reception into OSISA?	*Liminal* • Briefly explain how candidates are shortlisted, what criteria are used and what happens during interviews. • What do you do for employees on their first day at the office? • What standard procedures do you follow to orient an employee to the OSISA environment?
Post-liminal • In your own words, what is an 'Open Society'? • How do you interpret 'Open Society' to others, including grantees?	*Post-liminal* • Do you think all workers understand what an 'Open Society' is?

APPENDIX 5: BROAD AREAS OF INQUIRY [HISTORY OF OSISA]

The overall goal of this area of inquiry was to obtain an expert view of the history of OSISA, especially the events that led to its founding. Two people were targeted for this purpose: the first was Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, the first Chair of the OSISA board and the initial trustee of OSISA. The second was Kim Brice, an American national who was brought to South Africa to initiate the organisation. The objective was to have them corroborate the historical narrative that had been discerned from documentary evidence. Broadly, the interviewees responded to the following questions:

1. How did you come to OSISA?
2. What was your initial role at OSISA?
3. What were the critical social, political and other factors that were at play at the time of your association with OSISA?
4. Tell me a little about your history with OSISA.
5. In your view, what were the reasons for the establishment of OSISA?
6. With the benefit of hindsight, do you think OSISA is meeting the objectives for which it was established? What are these objectives?
7. How would you define an Open Society?

APPENDIX 6: MAP OF THE COUNTRIES IN WHICH OSISA HAS PROJECTS

Countries in which the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa currently (2007) operates. These are Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.*[Map courtesy of OSISA website: www.osisa.org]*