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Negotiating Culture in Africa: A Critical Analysis of Organizational Discourse in Ghana

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NEGOTIATING CULTURE IN AFRICA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL DISCOURSE IN GHANA.

BY

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DISSERTATION

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this project to Africans – men, women, and children – everywhere who continue to fight, often at the expense of their personal comfort and safety, to regain the respect and dignity they deserve in the global community. We shall overcome!

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Abstract

Organizational culture is a concept that is theoretically contested, particularly within critical approaches to communication. However, it is a highly crucial area of research which has symbolic and material implications for individuals, organizations and communities. This study contributes to the conversation about how organizational culture is constituted by interrogating the forces at play in this constitution. One of such forces is neoliberalism, which operates by subsuming all organizational practices under the umbrella of market value. The study takes a cultural materialist approach to organizational culture through the analysis of discourse at the National Communications Authority (NCA) in Ghana.

The NCA is the state-sanctioned regulator of the communications industry in Ghana. Its unique position as regulator exposes it to several localized and globalized discourses which shapes how its employees conceptualize organizational cultural practices. This study seeks to 1) analyze how organizational communication is constituted at NCA through the discursive practices of participants; 2) examine the strategies participants use in responding to neoliberal discourses; 3) show how

organizational culture influences the making of communications regulations and policies; and 4) explain the role of colonialism in the negotiation of culture at NCA.

The results reveal that organizational culture is shaped by interrelated tensions among several often-contradictory concepts such as global/local, structure/agency, subjective/objective, and public/private. For instance, the tension between structure and agency means organizational culture is the product of both the discursive closure facilitated by dominant discourses and the interpretive agency of participants.

Table of Contents

Preface

One afternoon in December of 2015, I was listening to a podcast hosted by a popular radio personality in Accra, Ghana. This radio personality is, in fact, one of my favorites; mostly because, as the host of some of the most popular radio and TV talk shows, he is usually very critical and asks hard-hitting questions that seek to push the boundaries of thought concerning gender, ethnicity, disability, class, and other markers of privilege. This episode of the podcast, however, was in my view, quite different.

The host was interviewing a corporate/organizational culture expert who happened to be a professor at the University of Ghana Business School in Accra. As a student of organizational communication and of culture, I was excited to have chanced upon that specific episode of the podcast. My surprise – and to some extent, disappointment – came when it seemed like the host was excited about his guest's prescriptive approach to constructing culture in organizations; an approach that places the responsibility for a given organizational culture at the doorstep of employers/managers and institutional heads. I earnestly wanted the host to put on his critical suit and begin to question his guest's responses, but it did not happen. This event, however, became the beginning of this project because it got me to think about the taken-for-granted assumptions about organizational life, the means by which managerialism operates, and the implications for communication in organizations in Ghana.

One of the many questions this episode begged concerned the sources of knowledge about what is conceived as culture in an organization. Where does organizational culture come from? If the above assumption that leaders are responsible for cultural orientation and change in organizations is true, then where do the leaders get

their ideas from? Is it through research, practice, experience, or a combination of these? Ultimately, what are the research tools used to inform decisions about organizational culture? Whose practical experience is used to determine organizational culture? What are the structures that shape organizational culture?

The above are some of the concerns that drove me into this study. Particularly, my interest is found at the intersection of my being Ghanaian, and a student of organizational communication and culture. I believe, from personal experience and my scholarship, that there is something inherently problematic about how culture in organizations, specifically in contexts like Ghana, is conceptualized. In short, it seems counterintuitive to assume that something as complex as organizational culture is simply a set of shared characteristics and can, therefore, be taught or prescribed. This assumption also excludes the impact of global economic and political processes that influence contemporary organizations.

While I am by no means the first person to venture into examining the nature of culture, especially with an African case study, I deem it a matter of social justice to contribute to the host of research which critically interrogates the complexity of culture as it pertains to power relations in an increasingly globalized world. Specifically, I engage with theoretical perspectives that enable me to analyze the implications of cultural production and consumption in a Ghanaian case study

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

In his acclaimed book, *Encountering Development,* Escobar (2011) began with

the story of the global utopia that was dreamed about by powerful Western leaders

including former US president Harry Truman, and the United Nations. In this story, there

seemed to be a truly genuine concern, a dream, to bring developing regions along with

the advanced world by replicating a formula that has worked in the latter; a formula

whose features include "high levels of industrialization and urbanization, technicalization

of agriculture, rapid growth of material production and living standards, and the

widespread adoption of modern education and cultural values" (Escobar, 2011, p. 4). This

dream demanded a restructure of developing societies with respect to their cultural,

economic, political, and even historical development.

However, this dream quickly turned into a nightmare as the development

conceptualized in the 1950s resulted in widespread poverty and underdevelopment,

facilitated by exploitation and oppression. More importantly, this story became one of

how the 'Third World' "has been produced by discourses and practices of development

since the inception of the early post-World War II period" (Escobar, 2011, p. 4).

Fast forward to 2016 and 2017, the biggest stories of global interest concerned

refugees and illegal migration. While most of the refugees whose stories are being told all

over the world come from Syria, Iraq, and other non-African territories, tens of thousands

of refugees and asylum-seekers from African countries attempt the treacherous journey

from Sub-Saharan Africa to Europe every year (Sieff, 2015). According to Tony Elumelu

– one of Africa's wealthiest and most respected entrepreneurs – economic hardship and

repressive governments are the biggest reasons Africans leave their countries for others (Elumelu, 2015). Many Africans still suffer from high levels of poverty, owing to the regular incidences of economic and political instability in their countries.

While the factors outlined above represent the popular verdict for why people yearn to migrate even at the peril of their lives, Appadurai (1990) reminded us that the features of globalization – unimaginable media and transportation technology, for instance – enable the existence of a kind of cultural affinity to the Western centers of 'civilization.' Consequently, people who physically migrate from their home countries are not the only ones who have a yearning for other places. Several years ago, a friend of mine joked, "Even though I live in Kumasi, I don't like to dream about walking the streets of Adum; I like to dream about the bright lights in Times Square." The reality of his own life, and media representations of life in New York combine to create, in his mind, a world where life in New York would present him with far better prospects.

Therefore, whether people are physically migrating or they are living in an imagined community that represents their desires, the affinity to Euro-American cultural forms represents what Appadurai (1990) calls "nostalgia without memory" (p. 30). This kind of nostalgia operates when people are attracted to spaces and places with which they have had no prior physical experience. The desires are created and stoked by certain historical processes which include neoliberalism and colonialism – each discussed in further detail in this study. More importantly, however, what we now see as global cultural processes, I argue, are inherently the result of the aforementioned historical processes. In effect, between colonialism and neoliberalism, there is a set of global cultural phenomena which essentially determine the manner and pace of cultural flows. I

argue that the desire to occupy specific cultural spaces and places is a "negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility" (Appadurai, 1990, p. 31).

In this light, there is a significant portion of this desire that emanates from the manner in which Africa, for instance, has traditionally been represented in global discourses – particularly through the structures of global media and communication. Though they are gradually changing in some instances, representations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America as underdeveloped have been the dominant discourses in global affairs, and the desire to change this underdeveloped status through use of a Western vision of the world has significantly contributed to the nightmare described above. Particularly in the case of Africa, scholars (Cooper, 2014; Mudimbe, 1988) have insisted that Africa has a significant role to play in global affairs, and this role needs to be critically reinterpreted by interrogating the notions of cultural, economic, and political development.

According to scholars such as Said (1979) and Escobar (2011), one of the most effective ways of deconstructing development and the notion of modernity in general, is to conceptualize them as discourses. This enables one to appreciate the hegemonic role they play in representing people and phenomena – through use of language and other social practices. By conceptualizing them as discourse, Escobar argues, one is also able to analyze the spaces within these discourses where people can negotiate their own complex social contexts. Therefore, development discourses not only constrain groups of people to a limited set of cultural practices, they also provide a platform upon which to interrogate, interpret, reproduce, or resist these discourses in various ways.

However, it is the often-overwhelming power of development discourse, particularly within the framework of a global economy, that has received much attention from scholars over the years (Cooper, 2014; Escobar, 2011; Ferguson, 2006; Springer, 2015). The current study aims not only to contribute to the necessary interrogation of development discourse and how it has made and unmade African societies, but also to examine a case study of the communicative means by which individuals and groups negotiate their social lives in spite of structural limitations presented by globalized neoliberal economics.

Specifically, in this study the above goal is achieved by looking at the role of neoliberalism in the construction of organizational culture. I use a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of policy documents and interview data to examine if and how neoliberal discourses operate in organizational settings; in particular, how such discourses are appropriated to inform the creation of organizational culture at the National Communication Authority (NCA), Ghana.

In the rest of this first chapter, I discuss the exigency of this project, particularly with respect to the African setting, and its implications for media and communication research in developing economies like Ghana. I also briefly explain the significance of analyzing neoliberalism and how it influences organizational discourse, and thus culture, in this context. Next, I briefly introduce the concept of culture from a cultural materialist perspective, and what organizational culture looks like and implies. Finally, I show the link between cultural materialism and other theoretical concepts like postcolonialism and neoliberalism as pertains to this project. This is done in order to argue that culture is a

material productive process that is significantly shaped by imperialist and/or capitalist structures.

Chapter 2 discusses, in further detail, the theoretical assumptions informing this study. I also do a review of literature on neoliberalism as a globalizing discourse. This is to show that, as enumerated above, neoliberalism is not only a global economic or political set of ideologies, but a totalizing one which has implications for organizational culture as well. Also, in Chapter 2, I define 'culture' in the context of this study and review the debates between Political Economy and Cultural Studies to argue for a cultural materialist perspective to organizations. This is because the study is intrinsically linked to global media processes, based on the argument that 'goods' produced by the media are as cultural as they are economic (Wasko, 2014). Finally, I draw on scholars of postcolonialism to argue that for individuals and organizations situated in formerly colonized territories, there is an additional layer of complexity that is introduced in their attempts to negotiate 'culture'

In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodology for the study, including an outline of how CDA is utilized to analyze organizational discourses. I use CDA as a methodological perspective because it is a transdisciplinary project which is unified by a consensus on the role of discourse in the construction of social reality. Using this approach, therefore, enables me to interrogate the power relations that influence social relations. Also, CDA provides the tools for 'measuring' culture through the analysis of discourse.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I analyze the study data – which includes participant interviews and policy documents – to respond to the research questions. The research questions are concerned with how structural forces shape the way organizational culture

is constituted at NCA; what strategies participants use in the negotiation of culture; and the relationship between organizational culture and communications policy.

In the final chapter, I conclude by reiterating how communication, organization, and power are articulated in understanding discourses, both local and global; as well as the dialectical tensions between structure and agency. I also discuss some important implications of the study, as well as some limitations in the study design, methodology, and analysis.

Africa in a Neoliberal World

According to Springer (2015), neoliberalism is a dominant political economic feature of our world today which promises a utopia but often delivers dystopian realities (see also Harvey, 2007). In many cases, neoliberalism has been the anchor of a development discourse that has hindered the potential for progress, peace, and social justice in many parts of the world today.

Particularly, Africa has and will likely remain a key target of neoliberal ideology as we move well into the 21st century. This is because Sub-Saharan Africa is currently the most important frontier market for global commercial activity (Mataen, 2012; Moghalu, 2014). A frontier market, according to Mataen, is an emerging one which offers high returns on investment and is expected to become more liquid and eventually take on the characteristics of the rest of the markets in the global economy. The natural resources in much of the African continent remain relatively untapped; this coupled with its relatively underdeveloped markets presents an opportunity for capitalists to exploit.

The nations of Sub-Saharan Africa are lumped into a collective in this argument because they have similar economic circumstances, which includes similar stages of

economic development and similar social challenges (Mataen, 2012). In many cases, the region is seen as the last frontier of global capitalism because most of the others – particularly the epicenters of the West – have already been well-developed and have hence suffered, in the last few years, the shocks of economic and financial crisis almost the magnitude of the Great Depression (Moghalu, 2014).

The excitement and enthusiasm about Africa has resulted in a somewhat more positive outlook of the former in the imagination of the rest of the world. Even though the continent, in many ways, is still represented as the 'dark continent' of poverty, disease, chaos, and general backwardness, several scholars have expressed the hope of a brighter future for Africa and thus, the global economy. In the mass media, popular news corporations like the BBC and CNN have, in recent years, produced and aired serial documentaries and news shows dedicated to the positive stories of Africa and Africans – shows like CNN's *African Start-Up, African Voices,* and *Inside Africa;* and the BBC's *Focus on Africa* series are examples. For example, a quote from the homepage of CNN's *African Voices* website states, "African Voices highlights the continent's most dazzling trendsetters who create their own subcultures in areas such as travel, fashion, art, music, technology, and architecture" (African Voices). However, the source of this hope remains problematic.

While the rise of Africa seems to be on the lips of everyone these days, it is the nature of this purported rise that has become of concern to many. Moghalu (2014) observed that the excitement about the economic and cultural revolution in Africa is spoken/written about more often by non-Africans than by Africans themselves. He wondered if the kind of progress being purported and sought is being defined by Africans

themselves. I argue, in this study, that while Africans have agentic space, through discursive means, to influence the nature of the continent's progress, significant constraints represented by structures of contemporary capitalist globalization and colonialism need to be continually examined to ascertain their actual effects on this African economic 'renaissance'.

Additionally, as I discuss in further detail later, there is an almost blind obsession, of both people in and outside the continent of Africa, with negotiating a proper, more respectable place for Africa in the global order. As Ferguson (2006) warned, this situation presents the greatest challenge to the continent because Africa's place seems to be hinged upon its acceptance of and adherence to the demands of globalized institutions and their practices. These institutions and practices are put in place and maintained by specific political and economic ideologies, the most popular being neoliberalism.

Harvey (2007) explained that neoliberalism, which appeared in the 1970s in the West was able to successfully spread to Africa and other regions of the world by the economic and political power of the US and through the Bretton Woods institutions – the IMF and the World Bank. What made neoliberal theories attractive was that they were based on principles of human dignity, ethical individualism, free markets, and free trade; values which appeal to the moral senses of many people (see also Garland & Harper, 2012). However, along with the rise of neoliberalism in the 1970s came the gradual decline of many African economies and thus, the increasing marginalization of the continent. Arrighi (2002) observed that Sub-Saharan Africa's per capita GNP, which stood at 17.6 in 1975, had dropped to just 10.5 in 1999 and the slide downwards was expected to continue.

This situation resulted from the neoliberal polices instituted by the IMF and the World Bank, which restricted indebted developing economies to structural adjustment programs (SAPs). These SAPs, Nothias (2014) argued, worked to safeguard the interests of the Western countries by prescribing systematic cuts to public sector funding to stimulate a free market which was also supposed to facilitate economic development.

> However, these African countries integrated a global market where they were unable to compete with the international private sector. As the SAPs required the scaling back of education, health and labor protection, they led to greater social and economic deprivation and an increased dependence of African countries on external loans…They contributed both to greater poverty and dependency, while preserving Western dominance in the global economy (Nothias, 2014, p. 327).

Unfortunately, by the turn of the century, global media organizations, whose centers are mostly found in the West, did not often include the stories of economic neoliberalism in their numerous narratives about Africa. Afro-pessimism[1] traditionally led the way in terms of reportage about the continent, according to Nothias (2014). This strategic representation of Africa was central to the narrative of White Western superiority, which gains legitimacy only in opposition to the inferior Black African, the universal symbol of backwardness (Mbembe, 2001).

Therefore, the insistence on neoliberal polices as the way forward is usually informed by perceptions about the African continent (usually Sub-Saharan Africa or "Black Africa"). Ferguson (2006) for instance, argued that it is the perceptions about

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[1] Afro-pessimism is the idea that economic and political instability and underdevelopment are essentially African problems.

Africa and Africans – rather than objective data – that has informed the traditionally low level of interest in Africa as an investment destination and thus, as a major player in global affairs. To this end, the conceptualization of Africa as a planetary unit specifically evokes the concept of the global; for it is through the global – thus, globalization – that the idea of an "Africa" is understood. That is, it is through global discourses, systems, and history that individual African countries automatically take on a place and identity that is regularly purported to represent all of Africa.

It is also worthy of note that economic and cultural domination need to be understood as a historical continuum in which colonialism, characterized first by European explorers 'discovering' Africa, and then militarily and politically instituting an imperial system, is linked to contemporary processes of capitalist globalization, namely neoliberalism. Nothias (2014) insisted that the overwhelming interest in Africa since the turn of the century should be treated with caution as has several features – some already discussed above – that makes it reminiscent of the colonial 'scramble for Africa'.

Incidentally, understanding how neoliberal ideology is deployed and how it works requires a recognition of neoliberalism itself as a set of discourses about globalization. In this regard, the study pays attention to theories of globalization which describe the nature of the world order and are, thus, crucial to interrogating the structural peculiarities of neoliberalism. In the paragraphs below, I briefly explain three of the theories of globalization and their relevance to this study. I argue, ultimately, that these theories are important for understanding the structural foundations of globalizing processes – particularly with respect to capitalist development – and they also serve as important frameworks for appreciating how neoliberalization proceeds.

First, World Systems Theory (WST) is a theory that generally views the world as a coherent social space whose primary unit of analysis is the world-system. Chase-Dunn (1998) argued that WST is primarily concerned with the structural logics of the overall world society rather than conjunctural particularities of nation states (see also Walz, 1979). According to its foundational theorist, Immanuel Wallerstein (1979; 1987), globalization consists of the ways in which nation-states in the world are linked economically, mediated by transnational politics. Therefore, according to this perspective, the world system is a world-economy. Wallerstein traces the formation and consolidation of this world system to the 16th century in Europe where advancement in technology enabled the holders of capital to expand into other regions of the world.

In this respect, WST argues that the world became, and still is, a single division of labor, where the core nations – typically the holders of capital – are the producers of highly-skilled, capital intensive labor; the periphery nations provide low-skilled labor and raw materials; and the semi-periphery nations act as the buffer. The sustenance of the world system then depends on the success of the capitalist system that underlies it.

However, recent developments around the world, particularly in the West, are beginning to threaten this assertion. The Brexit vote and the election triumph of US President Donald Trump, both in 2016, and several nationalist, religious fundamentalist, and xenophobic incidents in countries like Turkey, the Netherlands, and South Africa have raised important questions about the sustenance of a world-economy as is being discussed above. This does not, however, take away from an important contribution WST makes to this debate: that the rise of capitalist globalization has tangible ties to imperialism.

European imperialism, which saw almost all of Africa, Latin America and Asia colonized by a few European powers, was the basis for the current world-system of nations-states and the flow of national and international capital. WST theorists like Wallerstein (1979) help us understand the progression from feudalism to global capitalism and how imperialism provided a platform upon which neoliberalism was built. In recent times, however, neoliberal globalization has suffered a major setback with the rise of nationalist sentiments across the world, particularly in the West, as described above.

The current 'crisis' of neoliberal globalization is not new and was experienced in the semi-periphery in the 1990s – with Turkey, Mexico, Russia, and Brazil being prominent examples (Öniş & Güven, 2011). The difference between the last global economic hiccup and the current one, which begun in 2008, is that this time it hit some major countries in the core. According to Öniş and Güven, the implication is that not only is there a bigger threat to neoliberal globalization as we know it, it also means the major countries of the core – particularly the US and the UK – would need to devise a new course of action because the Thatcher/Reagan model is no longer as resilient as it used to be.

Particularly with respect to institutional norms and liberal democratic values, countries in the developing world – including those in Sub-Saharan Africa – are now weary of the Euro-American models which have not brought much benefit to them. Unlike India, China, Russia, and Brazil, for example, they do not currently have enough economic and political strength to 'rebel' against the current order and will, at least in the

medium term, continue to rely on multilateral forms of economic cooperation, particularly with the IMF and the World Bank.

The WST, therefore, while it offers some important insights into the historical development of contemporary capitalism, fails to account for the complexity with which to analyze the changing nature of neoliberal globalization. The division of the world into core, semi-periphery, and periphery nations defies current capitalist development where the supposed semi-periphery nations are fast gaining more economic clout and are challenging the hegemony of the core, in many cases.

The World Polity Theory (WPT), consequently, provides an explanation for why and how neoliberal globalization, as it is now, may persist for a while longer. From Öniş and Güven's (2011) argument, although increasing South-South cooperation and the rise of nationalism in the global North are changing the nature of globalization in significant ways, North-South relationships will be sustained. This is because, not only will developing countries in the South continue to appropriate institutional cultural norms of the Euro-American center, the countries of the North will continue to count on these relationships – facilitated by supranational institutions – because it benefits them disproportionately.

WPT is a theory of globalization which sees the world as a social system with a cultural framework called world polity (Boli & Thomas, 1997; Meyer, Boli, Thomas & Ramirez, 1997). This approach therefore takes a macrophenomenological approach in which the world society is constituted by a set of universalizing institutional processes. This neo-institutionalist perspective asserts that the institutional cultures of nation-states and other actors (including international NGOs, national and local organizations) are

driven by global norms. In this study, this is conceptualized through the NCA's work as regulator and policy maker for Ghana's communications landscape. NCA's unique position means that it has relationships with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and other local and global players in the communications industry. These relationships, as discussed later, introduce global governance issues which seeks to produce cultural standardization.

The above shows how, through neo-institutionalism, empire is restored in the current world order. Hardt and Negri's (2001) critique in *Empire* suggests that WPT assumptions about how world culture (institutionalism) functions espouses neoliberal discourses. This is because the path to constructing universal concepts like citizenship, democracy, and institutional culture in the international arena have imperial origins from the West.

Owing to the above, an important assumption being made in this study – and is discussed in the next chapter – is that the propositions of the WPT do not take into account the historical continuum of colonialism. The neo-institutionalist stance of WPT not only shows the influence of traditional Western cultural impulses, but also the contemporary effects of historically situated colonial relationships. Therefore, a critique of the WPT leads me into an analysis of colonial relationships and how many of those relationships will help maintain neoliberal globalization, at least in the medium term.

Finally, World Culture Theory (WCT) assumes that globalization involves the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world (Robertson, 1992; 1995). This means individuals in the world share the same social space but their experiences of that space are different. These differences in experiences rely on

several factors including which part of the world people are in, geographically, and differences in how people imagine the world (Anderson, 1983).

Consequently, the world is a fully globalized system comprised of nation-states, individuals, a system of societies, and one humanity, according to Robertson (1992). This fully globalized system is, however, relativized and interpretive; actors in the world society have a considerable ability to negotiate their identities. However, by admitting to a system of societies, WCT implicitly recognizes that these identities are significantly constrained by structural possibilities. Nonetheless, WCT emphasizes the agency of individuals and nation-states; the interpretive ability to define the world and their own identities on their own terms. Appadurai (1990) for instance, refers to "nostalgia without memory" to describe how, through the enablement of media and technology, people are now able to fairly construct their own identities by imagining their own worlds.

While the WCT describes the global system of interactions as intensely interpretive and relative, it also accepts the liberalizing moments in this approach. Robertson and Lechner (1985), for instance, agreed that there is a degree to which the interpretive nature of global cultural construction is constrained by structural forces. Though not addressed directly, neoliberal discourses in the WCT approach are relevant because even in the processes of contestation and negotiation of cultural orientations, nation-states and individuals are restricted by the structures of capitalist globalization, which includes media and communications establishments.

It follows that WCT theorists (Robertson, 1992; Robertson & Lechner, 1985) acknowledge that, in the world society, nation-states are judged based on the same standards as everybody else. Therefore, one of the major successes of neoliberal ideology

is to create and maintain methods of cultural standardization in the global system, such that nation-states and other actors would need to adopt or risk marginalization.

For instance, glocalization is a means by which the role of liberalization is illuminated in WCT. Glocalization refers to the process by which local content is introduced into global forms (Robertson, 1995). For instance, when multinational corporations (MNCs) move into another country outside of their home, glocalization is used to describe the effort to localize their activities while maintaining their global essence. I argue that this process involves the deployment of recontextualized global narratives into local spaces, thus neoliberalism.

The phenomenon of recontextualization – which I discuss in the next chapter – brings into focus the hegemonic influence of globalizing processes like neoliberalism. Recontextualization brings together depersonalization, the production of power, and the specifics of organizational interaction (Iedema & Wodak, 1999). That is, through this concept one is able to understand how neoliberal policies breach national and organizational borders through the power of technologized media messages, electronic communication, research, design, and writing.

The Setting: Ghana

Going back to my story of the podcast episode in the preface, I found the notion of organizational culture being discussed in the episode particularly problematic because of the context within which it was taking place. Consequently, I have pondered the implications of such prescriptive approaches to organizational culture along the lines of structure and agency, and particularly, with respect to the legacy of colonization – Ghana is one of those 'post-colonial' societies where the everyday lives of people are mediated

by colonial impulses, among other factors. My concern – and motivation – is that while there is some merit to the prescriptive approaches to organizational culture as advocated by Schein (2010) and other prominent organizational culture scholars, defining the culture of an organization as something that is invented, developed, or discovered by a group of people tends to reduce culture to a set of discrete phenomena that must be taught/prescribed to members.

Additionally, scholars like Deetz, Tracy, and Simpson (1999) have argued that prescriptive approaches to organizational culture could produce monolithic cultures which may lack the diversity and creativity required to tackle the challenges of a rapidly changing market. Therefore, while it may be important to base the culture of an organization on a set of core values and assumptions, it is important to also realize that this culture is more constitutive than prescriptive. This means the culture of an organization is as constant as its membership, and its context (local and trans-local). Organizational culture evolves as the people and the context change.

Despite the above, I approach culture from the perspective that it is a field of contestation where norms, values, beliefs, and attitudes are constantly being negotiated through power relations. For instance, the NCA, because of its unique position as a media and communications regulator – and thus as an institution – influences not just the conduct of its employees, but also those of the media and communications organizations it regulates. In a reverse fashion, the NCA is also influenced by its own employees and by other stakeholder institutions and organizations like global communications organizations, the government of Ghana, and local media and communications outlets. This points to the nature of production and consumption of discourse, and thus culture;

contrary to the prescriptive view of culture, its production is dialectical to its consumption. That is, though it may seem the production and consumption of culture are oppositional, one cannot exist without the other because one implies the other.

More importantly, the forces at play in terms of discourse and culture are not simply either local or trans-local/global, but ones in which the global transforms the local, and the local is a historical reflection of the global (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000). Subsequently, because I approach the study of culture from a critical perspective, discourse and culture in this study are not categorized as either distinctly micro- or macro-level phenomena. It is important to pay attention to the macro-level influences like mass media, and globalized race and gender ideologies, on the culture of organizations like the NCA. However, it is equally important to consider the micro-level interactions (like conversations, norms, values) that constitute culture in organizations (Alvesson, 2004). My orientation throughout this project is that these two levels of analysis interact sufficiently and, even in a localized context like that of the NCA, analysis of talk and text will take factors like power and ideology into account.

The above constitutes a fundamental assumption of this study, thus an examination of organizational culture in this project would include an interrogation of how culture is conceptualized and enacted/performed. It would also include a look at the 'forces' that shape the nature of organizational culture both from the local and the trans-local context. For the purposes of this project, 'trans-local' is defined to represent any contextual influences outside the immediate environment of the organization in question – in this case, the National Communication Authority (NCA) in Ghana. Trans-local forces will hence include global media and communications influences, and the legacies

of colonization, some of whose structures still exist in the organizational landscape in Ghana.

Therefore, as will be discussed in further detail later, the current study employs cultural materialism as a theoretical perspective that circumscribes the other perspectives taken in this project; neoliberalism, postcolonialism, critical approach to organizational culture, and media studies. This is because, as a theory of culture, cultural materialism is concerned with social and material productive processes. Therefore, for cultural materialism, emphasis is placed on the political economy of culture, which encompasses a critique of media industries, of capitalist globalization, and of imperialist relationships and knowledge forms.

Owing to the above focus on both the local and trans-local contexts of the organization, this study sufficiently examines neoliberalism and its influence on organizational culture, particularly due to the increasing globalization of media and communications across the world. Therefore, I want to examine if, and how, the powerful impulses of neoliberalism are materialized in the shaping of organizational culture in Ghana. Specifically, I will analyze organizational discourses from the NCA's head office in Accra.

Ghana as a Viable Case Study

It was almost 10 years ago in 2008, on a hot afternoon on the campus of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi, Ghana. I and a few course mates of mine were waiting outside a lecture hall to take one of our end-of-semester exams. While waiting, we drifted into conversations about the state of Ghana and of the African continent in general. In the course of this dialogue, one of the

participants, Chris lamented, "It is a shame that we cannot even copy from those who have already done it. I don't see how copying could be so difficult." We all burst into laughter for the next few seconds and essentially agreed that all Ghana and Africa needed to do was to copy from Europe and North America if we are to progress economically and socially.

The irony is that the 'copying' was well underway in almost all aspects of our lives. Our economic and political systems were fashioned in the mold of our European and North American counterparts. Our mimicry of Western cultural forms depicted our use of the former as a reference; the only viable standard to which we could measure ourselves. It is not uncommon to hear people in Ghana repeat Chris' lamentations every day, in all circles of life; in politics, business and finance, science and technology, the arts, music, and in society in general, the chorus seems to be that Ghana needs the 'style' of social and cultural organization of the West.

The current study, therefore, uses a Ghanaian case study to make a unique contribution to the list of studies that have analyzed the cultural politics of colonialism. Homi Bhabha (1994) outlined the nature of this cultural politics by showing how European colonizers used cultural mimicry to civilize the colonial subject. That is, according to Bhabha, mimicry was not simply an accidental result of the colonial relationship but a deliberate effort by colonizers to civilize the colonized by getting the latter to mirror the former's cultural norms, practices, values, and beliefs. In that same vein, this study examines not only explicitly colonial cultural mimicry but also contemporary cultural impulses that have been made possible by globalized media and communications structures, like those that influence the workings of the NCA in Ghana.

The NCA is the statutory Government of Ghana (GOG) organization responsible for regulating the media and ICT landscape in Ghana. Among others, it is responsible for granting licenses and permits for operation of communications systems and services and to ensure fair competition among the licensees. As a mission, the NCA aims to "regulate the communications industry in a forward-looking and transparent manner that promotes fair and sustainable competition, stimulates innovation, encourages investment, protects stakeholders' interests, and facilitates universal access to quality communications services for national development." ("Mission and Vision", n.d., para 2).

The NCA is governed by a board of directors which is responsible for regulating the functions of the management team ("Our corporate structure" n.d.). It is also important to note that the eight-person board, which includes a chairperson and the Director-General (who is also the head of the management team), is appointed by the President of the Republic of Ghana to serve no more than two, 4-year terms. NCA was established by an act of parliament in 2008 – known as the National Communication Authority Act 769 – as a semi-autonomous state institution.

My choice of NCA is partially informed by the fact that it is a fully Ghanaian-owned and run organization. However, its organizing practices are set up like those of organizations in the West (specifically the US and the UK), in several ways. For instance, from my preliminary, informal conversations with an employee friend at NCA, I learned that the organization mostly benchmarks US American and British telecommunications policies and procedures. For instance, this friend told me in our conversation that when it comes to the issue of how regulated the internet should be, Ghana – through the NCA – had chosen to benchmark the FCC in the US, and OfCom in the UK. He was not able to

give me concrete reasons but alluded to the NCA's stronger ideological ties with the above-mentioned counterparts than with, for instance, regulators in China. Such strong ideological ties could be traced to the work of modernization theorists, who have argued that developing (periphery) countries would see an improvement in economic and cultural development if they adopted Western media and technology (Lerner, 1958; McQuail, 2000). Rogers (1962), for instance, insisted that mass media facilitate the diffusion of important innovations that could economically transform societies.

Also, based on my own knowledge of organizational practices in corporate Ghana, I hypothesize that the NCA is set up to largely mimic Western ones – through discursive practices. This is important in this study because, as a media organization, the NCA has significant influence on the media landscape, particularly through its relative power as a regulator. In the neoliberal sense, a media regulator like the NCA transmits the cultural and economic impulses of global capitalism from its association with some trans-local industry players.

Neoliberalism and organizational discourse

Scholars like Harvey (2007) have analyzed the links between knowledge production and culture and have observed that neoliberalism plays a key role in a society's cultural production. As discussed earlier, neoliberalism is not only economic or political but is, by implication, cultural as well. The economic, for example, is linked to the cultural by the commodification of culture – an example of which would be the recontextualization, packaging, and dissemination of organizational cultural 'products' through the media. By focusing on organizational culture, I am referring to the social practices which shape organizational norms, beliefs, and behavior. These norms, beliefs,

and behavior constitute the discourses of the NCA and are thus representative of the nature of communication in this organization.

Specifically, I want to explore how neoliberal ideologies seep into common sense notions of 'organizing' in the workplace through various discursive forms. From the vantage point of communication studies, I want to analyze the influence of neoliberalism through the discursive means by which employees negotiate identities, and in turn contribute to organizational cultures. Additionally, "communication functions as the linchpin in the cycle of production and consumption" (Mumby, 2015, p. 25). That is, communication is relied upon to shape social relations that are linked to production/consumption patterns. I aim to first look at discourses about such organizational practices as professionalism and individualism to see if and how individual agency is constrained by a wider frame of structural possibilities – in this case, neoliberal policies.

Using a communication lens enables me to center organizational discourses – talk and text – as essential components of culture. According to scholars like Fairhurst and Putnam (2004), organizational discourses are cultural because they carry the cultural meanings that enable communication and social interaction. Therefore, an inquiry into the nature of discourse and of culture is inherently concerned with the nature of human communication, which is the central business of communication studies.

As stated above, neoliberal policies seep into social and organizational spaces through media discourses. Therefore, these media discourses are the means by which neoliberal ideas are spread because media production and consumption greatly influence social (including organizational) discourses. Also, as Blommaert (2005) argued, I will

analyze the "discursive opportunities" (p. 225) offered by these neoliberal ideologies of organizational life to show, for instance, how actors negotiate the thematic spaces produced by the hybrid local-global discourses.

Specifically, my concern with the NCA as a case study is based on the assumption, discussed earlier, that neoliberal policies find their way into such spaces through global institutional forms, and through the power of media industries. As I discuss in the next chapter, neoliberal ideologies also become naturalized through individuals' creative interaction with the products of the culture industry.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

Everyday Neoliberalism: Culture, and Communication at NCA

In 2016, Britain opted to leave the European Union (EU) after a vote which was widely expected to go the other way. For some pundits, this signaled the beginning of the end of globalization as we know it, particularly given that there were other populist and nationalist movements rising all over the world (Goodman, 2016; Tharoor, 2017). Furthermore, the resurgence of economic protectionism, fortified by Donald Trump's "America First" policies, added to the slew of reasons to doubt the future of neoliberalism - particularly the doctrine of free trade. But while the nature of neoliberal globalization is bound to be impacted by such events, Mirowski (2013) argued that the global neoliberal project is far too resilient to be dismantled by the current crisis. He noted, "phalanxes of political theoreticians before me have insisted that the neoliberal project *reregulates* and institutes an alternative set of structural arrangements, it never ever wipes the slate clean" (p. 16, italics in the original). He further added that for global capitalists, the solution to a crisis of neoliberalism is always more neoliberalism.

Therefore, while it may seem natural that, for instance, the failed economic policies of the 1970s that plunged much of the developing world into political and economic instability would be discouraged, Mirowski (2013) observed that they continued through other subsequent crises, and will, by several indications, intensify in the future. In fact, Mirowski undermined the effects of the political and economic threats to the order of things, by suggesting that the world is already so intensely linked by neoliberal impulses that freedom, and individuality are hardly distinct from the norms of economic production; that is, market logics have become everyday cultural norms. This is

also to suggest that the global neoliberal project has successfully mobilized a rally around an intensified desire for cultural products. This is even more so in the case of Africa.

In a March 2017 publication, the BBC (2017) revealed that a meeting of finance ministers from the top twenty largest economies of the world – also known as the G-20 – failed to renew their long-standing pledge to resist protectionist measures. This, according to the story, was a result of pressure from the US despite agreeing, just a year prior, to organize a concerted affront on protectionism. An interesting outcome from that meeting, however, was that while these nations essentially shifted from a more globalist to a nationalist orientation to economic development, they "did include pledges on a determination to fight tax avoidance, clamp down on terrorist financing, and strengthen private investment in Africa" (para 12).

Accordingly, while nationalism, as a symptom of renewed localist/nationalist politics, seems to be on the rise around the world because of some of the current events mentioned above, the global capitalist development agenda has hardly been abandoned. Even when there is a general populist outcry against social and economic globalization, coming mostly from Western countries, Africa apparently represents a hope for the full restoration of neoliberal forms of globalization. Ferguson (2006) argued that "the loss of credulity towards narratives of economic and social development has occurred not universally but in specific ways and in specific *places (i.e.*, there is a *regional* specificity to this loss of credibility)" (pp 182-183, italics in the original).

In *The New Scramble for Africa*, Carmody (2017) explained that similar to the days of European colonialism, special interest in Africa today is geo-strategic and does not only involve the US and Europe anymore; it now has China as the biggest competitor

to the Western forces in Africa. Africa is immensely rich in both renewable and nonrenewable natural resources. Carmody explained that this means not only is there going to be continued interest in harnessing the resource potential of the continent, there is also going to be continued efforts to liberalize the African space in order to achieve that goal. For example, through the logic of free market competition[2], there are plans to build solar farms in the Sahara to subsidize Europe's energy requirements.

Again, in an editorial for *Global Strategy Journal Special Issue,* Mol, Stadler, and Ariño, (2017) outlined several reasons why Africa is uniquely relevant to global strategic management efforts. They observed that,

> the scarcity of work on and in Africa means there is currently a lack even of a
> sheer descriptive understanding of strategic management in Africa, i.e. questions
> like: What strategies are in use; what is the nature of the institutional and industry
> environment in which firms creates strategies; even what kinds of firms do we
> find in Africa, including in the informal economy (p. 4).

They also argued that Africa is the only remaining region of the world where strategic management theories have hardly been tested, and the continent therefore represents a great opportunity to confirm or rethink those theories.

In the rest of this chapter, I focus on the above to explicate how Africa – and organizations in the individual countries – has remained the last frontier for an integral project which seeks to perpetuate neoliberalism. I particularly engage in this discussion from the perspective that while colonialism and various globalizing processes

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[2] Carmody (2017) also explained that free market competition has enabled multinational corporations (MNCs) access to African markets. However, in many cases in Africa, theses MNCs act both on their own behalf as much as on behalf of the governments of their home countries.

significantly influence the nature of organizational culture, there is no previous empirical or ethnographic evidence to suggest, for instance, that individuals and organizations in Africa simply forfeit their 'traditional' ways in favor of the modern norms of scientific rationalism, individualism, and the principles of liberal democracy. Using the NCA case study, I argue that the social, economic, political and thus, the cultural implications of neoliberal globalization, are not simply imbibed but undergo a complex process of creative change, however constrained it may be.

I, therefore, define 'culture' in this study from a cultural materialist perspective, and this would explain why it (cultural materialism) is the central theoretical perspective in this study. Williams (1976) explained that culture is a material social process that is inextricably linked to other elements of the social. He was more interested in how cultural forms constituted the dominant structures of feeling of certain historical periods (Gunster, 2004). This approach would also invoke the tensions between culturalist and economicist paradigms as addressed by debates between Political Economy and Cultural Studies. Then, I review pertinent literature on neoliberalism as, still, an important globalizing phenomenon; particularly in the case of formerly colonized, developing economies like Ghana. Specifically, I argue for the importance of critically examining neoliberal policies and their role in the construction of organizational culture in Ghana, using the NCA as a case study. Consequently, I discuss why it is also crucial to consider the role of colonialism in instituting and maintaining neoliberal ideology that influences the organizational culture of organizations like the NCA. I engage in the above discussion to answer questions such as to what extent local and global media discourses influence the construction of organizational culture at NCA, what role colonialism plays in the

conceptualization of culture at NCA, and the discursive opportunities offered by

neoliberal notions of organizational culture.

Global Media and the Commodification of Culture

As stated earlier, cultural materialism enables an examination of culture from the

critical organizational, postcolonial, and media studies perspectives, and directly

addresses the need to critique neoliberalism as a mechanism used to maintain

institutionalized inequality. First, from a critical theory orientation, I argue that

organizational culture results from the complex interaction among communication,

organization, and power – where power points to the ability to produce hierarchies of

significance and to inform cultural practices. Additionally, taking a media studies

approach to the analysis of NCA's organizational culture is an attempt to conceptualize

communication, organization, and power through the lens of cultural materialism. This is

manifested in the fact that media industries are also cultural industries whose primary

occupation is the commodification and marketing of difference (Puppis, 2008).

Due to the fact that this study is concerned with neoliberalism as a globalizing

phenomenon, it is important to also take a perspective that recognizes the role of

globalizing structures and processes in not just the consumption, but also the production,

of culture. To this end, I take a media studies approach[3] to analyzing organizational

culture also because the NCA is an important media organization in Ghana – a media and

communications regulator and policymaker – that epitomizes the relationship between

global media structures and localized discourses and is thus a good example of how the

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[3] The media studies approach used in this study corresponds to Kellner's (1995) explication of media culture as a totalizing phenomenon where the media industry's products permeate everyday life through images, sounds, and spectacles that help create identities, and by which individuals insert themselves into a global capitalist society.

cycle of production and consumption of culture proceeds. Using this approach facilitates the analysis of culture as a set of structurally produced values, beliefs, norms, and practices which are organized in the production/consumption process and can be accommodated, negotiated, and/or resisted. Production, in this sense, points to the creativity and innovation involved in constructing cultural artifacts, but also to the conditions under which this construction occurs (Pratt, 2004). Similarly, consumption involves both the manner in which the cultural artifacts are received and/or appropriated by various audiences/consumers, and the social relations that are fostered by that reception or appropriation.

In the realm of media studies, the creativity of individuals in defining/shaping the culture of a group cannot be viewed in absolute terms. That is, creativity is not simply a mode of innovation; it is also tied to economic activity. Therefore, culture and economic activity are tied together in a relationship where production and consumption (of culture) are dialectically related[4] as well. This assumption lends credence to the idea that culture is structurally produced[5]. It also enables us to see how neoliberalism – as a capitalist phenomenon – is able to operate through culture.

For instance, Mumby (2015) argued that contemporary organizations – namely, post-Fordist organizations – rely on the cyclical nature of production and consumption where, on one hand, the consumer is involved in the production process through the organizations' attention to consumer feedback on the production process. On the other

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[4] Production and consumption are dialectically related in the sense that even though they seem to be on opposite ends of a spectrum, they rely on each other; that is, production is a prerequisite for consumption which evokes more production in a cycle.

[5] In the media studies sense, culture is structurally produced because ideas about what is normal and what is acceptable are rife with political-economic influences and implications (Babe, 2009).

hand, the production process itself has seen a paradigm shift with the "development of 'niche' markets signaling a shift in post-Fordism from production to consumption" (p. 25). In this study, post-Fordism is recognized as a globalized phenomenon because, although it was developed in the West, its key operational assumptions have spread through the world. I therefore make references to globalized post-Fordism as a way to point to the globalization of this particular capitalist process.

Subsequently, the blurring of the lines between cultural production and consumption is a feature of neoliberal ideology which enables it to operate because both processes – production and consumption – promote the logic of the market through commodification. Culture then, in neoliberal terms, is a commodity form.

Raymond Williams (1977) traced the historical path of culture to its relationship with civilization. He noted that in the late 1700s the concepts 'culture' and 'civilization' were interchangeable in many ways, because culture was a civilizing enterprise. In the context of the media industry, this explanation illuminates other scholars' concept of culture as a commodity (Gunster, 2004; Wasko, 2014). That is, culture is marketable forms of difference and they evolve, in part, through our creative engagement with cultural commodities (Gunster, 2004). However, the process of marketing culture and the effects this process has on everyday life is what has attracted much scholarly attention. The commodification of culture is therefore of concern to the culture industry analysis[6].

In Adorno and Horkheimer's thesis, it is the commodification – not industrialization – that is the focus of the culture industry thesis (Gunster, 2004). Their

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[6] The culture industry analysis implicates the media industry by placing emphasis on media effects; that is, how the products of the media industry affect audiences in everyday life. The core assumption is that media culture has material effects because it reproduces the interests of powerful social forces thereby promoting domination and/or alienation, and providing tools of resistance to such forces.

main concern is not simply the mass production aspect of the industry but what the mass production does to culture. He argued that mass culture profanitizes art and culture through commodification; commodification subsumes all particularities beneath the all-encompassing category of exchange value. Therefore, understanding culture in organizations as simply a communicative constitution is not enough to capture the complex relationship between localized cultural practices and the more durable, more global practices. With respect to communication, this study posits that culture is the result of several meaning-making processes that are linked to economic activity through people's engagement with the language of the market. These meaning-making processes are tied to material social production that are in turn informed by the ideological function of language. Therefore, everyday life is littered with norms and values that operate through the language of material social production. This makes language an important tool in the repertoire of ideological instruments.

For instance, one ideological function of language is in the business of myth creation. In *Mythologies,* Barthes (2012) provided a critical and powerful philosophical foundation for understanding the relationship between language, myth, and culture. He argued that language, backed by power, has the ability to associate words with concepts which are not related to their content. In the media industry sense, language is deployed to cover up reality. Therefore, in the business of mass producing culture, reality is only a perception based on the realm of possibilities made available by power structures. Therein lies the relationship between, for instance, myth and popular culture. Myth is a rational exercise in delineating perception, according to Barthes, because it is culturally-

informed propaganda which uses images with universal resonance to tell people how to feel about being human.

In this respect, what the media industry is primarily involved with is the myriad of processes that is basically the business of myth creation. This is because in popular culture, for instance, the sounds and images portrayed are not usually a true reflection of reality; neither are they random pieces of art, entertainment, and information. Barthes (2012) argued that there is a specific purpose to mythology and this makes it (mythology) dangerous because it keeps humanity from full consciousness of its reality. He further argued that one of the most important purposes of mythology is to harmonize the world. However, this harmonization is not done as the world is, but as it wants to create itself; not by unanimous consensus, but by the working of power to 'creatively' instill the will of the powerful. For example, in my NCA study, an effect of the media industry with respect to corporate culture would involve the means by which standardization of organizational norms is achieved (discussed into further detail in the next section). From Barthes' argument, norms and values of a professional or corporate environment are myths created to harmonize organizational culture across contexts. This involves the ideological legitimation of capitalist ideals through individuals' engagement with cultural products and practices.

Consequently, Harold Adams Innis has argued that control of the media constitutes political-economic power. This perception led him to propose the 'medium theory' which essentially argues that media and communication should be placed at the center of historical analysis (Babe, 2009). Analyzing media industries, especially in our increasingly globalized world, tells us a lot about the nature of cultural life at the

intersection of politics and economic relations. For instance, a study of US popular

culture illuminates dominant forms of globalized consumer culture (Kellner, 2003). This

particularly helps interrogate how commodification influences the work of NCA due to

globalized commercial interests. Through policies, books, seminars/webinars,

workshops, podcasts, radio shows, news stories, movies, and so on, NCA becomes a site

where cultural products are cyclically produced and consumed. It is also important to

note that because of NCA's crucial position as the regulator of Ghana's media and

communications landscape, their work is likely to be of particular interest to global media

corporations with an established – or seeking to establish – presence in Ghana. As a

media regulator and policymaker, the NCA is intrinsically linked to the global network of

culturally produced goods – such as those mentioned above – through benchmarking[7] and

standardization, but also through individual employees' engagement with those goods.

Lastly, one of the important features of the media industry is the myth of

competition. Wasko (2014) contended that one of the major seducing tenets of capitalism

is the promise of competition which is supposed to encourage innovation. However, she

argued that in the contemporary media environment, concentration[8], more than

competition, is what we see. When this happens, the promise of competition through

innovation becomes a story of corporate colonization of everyday life (Deetz, 1992). In

line with Barthes' (2012) explanation of mythology, the myth of competition is designed

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[7] Benchmarking, in this case, describes the process of evaluating NCA's communications and media policies with those of external organizations like the FCC in the US. The decision on which external agency/organization to benchmark, in the first place, is important to the commodification theory described here because it helps identify where specific cultural goods originate from and, thus, the relative power of the industries that produce them.

[8] Wasko (2014) explained concentration as the phenomenon where the same media conglomerates are producing all the cultural products, thereby producing homogenization of content (e.g. the Time Warner Corporation, which operates several media outlets).

to 'harmonize' the media industry in a way that only seeks to perpetuate the influence of the biggest media corporations, while making it look like consumers are being given many more options.

The Cultural Materialist Perspective

As stated earlier, an orientation to culture in this study is one which does not conceptualize it as neutral, but one in which culture is mediated by power relations. Therefore, one reason for adopting a cultural materialist perspective in this study is that "it is a form of critique equipped with a set of moral and political values, working within the history of Marxist discourse, and it judges and evaluates cultural products in line with its commitment to those values" (Wilson, 1995, p. 27).

Cultural materialism emphasizes the political economy of culture. As I show later, cultural materialism includes perspectives from both cultural studies and political economy. In this approach, attention is paid to how hegemonic forces appropriate dominant cultural artifacts/practices to erect structures of feeling in a given historical moment (Milner, 1993). Theoretically, this perspective draws from Marxist work to explain how "structures of feeling are common to different classes, yet nonetheless represent the interest of a particular class" (Milner, p. 52). However, as William's work became more and more influenced not just by Western Marxism - particularly by such scholars as Gramsci – but also by Third World cultural theories, his conceptualization of cultural materialism was revised to encompass all marginalized groups of people. Cultural materialism essentially then argues that a good, satisfying life should not only be served to some but to all people; that all people regardless of class, race, gender, sexuality, and other markers of difference should be given an equal share of social goods.

Another reason for adopting a cultural materialist perspective is that it provides an adequate critique of media culture. A cultural materialist approach emphasizes the relevance of the "political economy of culture, of the system that constrains what can and what cannot be produced, that provides limits and possibilities for cultural production" (Kellner, 1995, p. 43). I argue for this perspective in this study because it enables me to first, focus on neoliberal discourses because of their link to capitalist production. Secondly, this approach to media culture focuses on popular culture and its influence on not just organizational cultures, but on life in general. In what follows, I continue my argument for a cultural materialist perspective and draw on some of the features of political economy and Cultural Studies that enable me to make that argument.

For many political economists, cultural goods are commodities whose use may influence behavior or social practices or desires. Within political economy there are several 'specialties', some of which are critical political economy (CPE) and Critical Media Studies (CMS). CPE (as opposed to, say, neoclassical economists) considers claims of culture and consciousness, based on critical theory and Frankfurt School thought. CMS attempts to integrate philosophy and social analysis in their opposition to concentrated power and instrumental reason.

Once again, political economy perspective could be attributed to Adorno's culture industry thesis because of its preoccupation with how mass culture is produced and consumed. Therefore, contrary to some of the arguments from cultural studies scholars, political economy is interested in both the production and the consumption of cultural products. Particularly, Babe (2009) observed that political economists utilizing the culture industry thesis study the organization of free time and the institution of

conformism. In this study, for instance, the concept of conformism could be used to understand how organizational discourses at NCA are produced and consumed through political-economic impulses that influence the way individuals interact with, and produce meaning systems in organizations. For example, the cyclical production and consumption patterns could be seen in how discourses about professionalism in the workplace are produced and disseminated from non-local sources. These are consumed by NCA employees, who in turn produce similar – but not the same – discourses which are also consumed through media and communications policy in Ghana.

Additionally, political economy of the critical kind makes it its business to interrogate the control of consciousness, which includes civilizational constraints, and centralized administration which exerts control through prescriptions, taboos, stereotypes, etc. However, as I explain later, these constraints are deployed differently than, for example, in a Fordist era bureaucracy where there were strict rules about organizing, and almost all organizational processes were formalized. In the era that characterizes contemporary organizations, constraints exist but they do so within the complex neoliberal economic relationships between individuals and their organizations. Once again, I am able to draw on these assumptions to understand the nature and origin of normalized discourses in organizational settings.

Additionally, Cultural Studies situates culture in a socio-historical context in which culture promotes domination or resistance (Kellner, 2003). Much of the debate about Cultural Studies and political economy, according to Babe (2009) intensified after the poststructuralist turn. Before poststructuralism in cultural studies, cultural studies and political economy were basically the same – especially in the 1930s and 1940s. However,

there has been a division among cultural studies scholars – who are divided between the British version, and the American version (Babe, 2009; Garnham, 1995). British cultural studies are materialist; they focus on material origins of culture and how culture is used to dominate or resist. However, American cultural studies mostly restrict their analysis to that of language without attention to the materiality (Kellner, 2003).

In general, however, Cultural Studies oppose economism and reductionism, of which many cultural studies scholars have accused political economists. The economism and reductionism, it has been argued, come from political economy's seeming obsession with the base-superstructure metaphor. Raymond Williams (1991), argued that the relationship between the base and the superstructure should be seen as a dialectical process rather than as an economically-determined, static one. He continued that analyzing the effect of hegemony clarifies this relationship because hegemony totalizes the base-superstructure relationship. That is, hegemony harmonizes the relationship between the base and the superstructure such that while, for instance, culture – which belongs in the realm of the superstructure – maintains the means and relations of production, the latter shapes culture in cyclical pattern.

Furthermore, one of the biggest issues in the debate between political economy and cultural studies has been the issues of class, race, and gender (Babe, 2009, Garnham and Fuchs, 2014). Cultural Studies scholars have typically criticized political economy for not paying enough attention to gender and race. Garnham (1995) somewhat agreed to this critique by stating that some political economists have focused on class to the detriment of race and gender issues. However, Garnham also argued that cultural studies

itself, from it very origins, has been significantly concerned with class as the determining factor in social analysis.

Stuart Hall (2001) would agree with the above argument, since he was an advocate for cultural studies which opposed a white patriarchal capitalism – combining issues of class, race, and gender. Hall further explained that even though the media industry usually controls narratives, audiences also appropriate the spaces – within structural possibilities – to either maintain a dominant reading of media messages, have a negotiated reading, or an oppositional reading. Therefore, cultural artifacts, practices, and institutions provide tools for resistance (Kellner, 2003). More importantly, however, this assertion illuminates the complexity of production-consumption patterns, and enables an analysis of culture where individuals interact with discourses not as helpless subjects but as creative agents.

Subsequently, cultural studies engage questions of articulation between production, consumption, politics, and ideology. Within organizational communication and management research, this approach is quite different from earlier critical approaches which focused mostly on ideology and hegemony critique (see, Barett, 1996; Clair, 1993; Vallas, 2003). In this perspective, an interrogation of ideology and hegemony are important not in isolation, but as a part of the overall process of interaction among historical, social, as well as political and economic factors. For instance, neoliberal ideology in this study is examined in tandem with the attendant tensions among several elements; global/local, structure/agency, social/cultural, private/public. Similarly, hegemony is exemplified by not just the product, but also the processes of production and consumption by which these tensions create common sense 'rules' and practices which

significantly prevent the consideration of other points of view – they produce discursive closure. In this regard, the material culture approach used in this study focuses on how production interlinks with consumption in the context of culture. For instance, as I have hinted to previously, the NCA as an organization is comprised of individual employees whose interaction with cultural artifacts – policies, seminars, movies, news, etc. – enable them to also influence the production or other cultural artifacts in a manner that is in line with the demands of neoliberal capitalist development.

Consequent to the above, a cultural materialist approach is an aggregate of the practical and theoretical requirements of British Cultural Studies and critical political economy. This is primarily because, as I have already mentioned, the two fields were never even separate fields of scholarly endeavor (Babe, 2009). Adorno's approach, for instance, combined Critical Political Economy and Cultural Studies.

First, both approaches – political economy and cultural studies – acknowledge that class is a structure of access to the means of production. In this light, cultural studies should be reconnected with political economy because the former was founded based on assumptions about political economy (Garnham, 1995; Garnham & Fuchs, 2014). The founding impulse of Cultural Studies was the revalidation of the British working class against the elite dominant culture. This impulse was situated within the context of class struggle formed by industrial capitalism and an increasingly commercialized system of cultural production, distribution, and consumption. Therefore, there is a natural connection between the two fields due to their similar assumptions about class culture. In the same light, political economy, like cultural studies, is concerned with the distribution of social resources and the justification for this distribution.

In this study, I see the cultural materialist position of British cultural studies particularly useful. I believe it is more closely aligned with political economy and will thus serve my project better than, say, the poststructuralist approach. The poststructuralist approach, according to Babe (2009), had major disagreements with political economy on the nature of concepts such as 'truth' and 'authenticity'. Critical Political Economists, however, maintained that the pursuit of social justice depends on some philosophical, experiential, or moral grounding – something that looks like 'truth'. Therefore, to base critique solely on individuals' interpretations defeats the purpose of social justice and degrades it into self-love. This is a position I agree and align with because I believe social justice inherently contains the search for collective and not individual interests, and to achieve that is to be able to draw out an aggregate of what those interests are.

Also, on one hand, I believe we cannot study culture without studying the influence of political economic forces or the political economic consequences of cultural activities. As soon as we delink the two, we run the risk of delinking oppression from the political economic factors that cause or contribute to them (Babe, 2009). For instance, to study the extent of neoliberal influence on the organizational culture at NCA without political economic considerations rids the study of the ability to analyze the important linkages of culture to economic production that the cultural materialist approach argues.

On the other hand, we cannot study political economy without studying the influence of culture. We would be denying human agency, and thereby understating the possibility of social reform. This, once again, applies to this project where I will not only be analyzing how political economic forces affect culture, but also the means and resources that enable people to creatively navigate everyday organizational life despite

the structural constraints. This creative engagement, I have argued, consists of how individuals at NCA accommodate, negotiate, or resist neoliberal discourses. It is important to note that these discourses originate from both the global and the local levels. Therefore, when we speak of organizational culture, it does not only result from one level/type of discourse, but from an interplay of the local and the global, in this case. More significantly, at these levels there is the interplay of subjective individual agency and objective structures which constitute a holistic understanding of culture (Reed, 1997).

Levels of Discourse at NCA: Interplay of Local and Global Forces

Culture and discourse are, theoretically, not starkly distinct constructs, because they are both products of systems of knowledge and symbolism (Alvesson, 2004). However, analytically they are different due to the assumption that discourse is the means by which culture is empirically obtained. That is, analytically, culture does not exist without the constitutive power of discourses. In this project, I aim, through critical discourse analysis (CDA), to get to culture as constructed at the National Communication Authority (NCA) in Ghana by analyzing discourse. I argue that culture and discourse are dialectically related to each other and so are their production and consumption

In this section, I wish to establish the complex interaction of local and global forces in the production and consumption of discourses – and thus, of organizational culture – at NCA. The NCA, because of its unique position as a media and communications regulator – thus as an institution – influences not just the conduct of its employees but also those of the media and communications organizations it supervises/regulates. In a reverse fashion, the NCA is also influenced by its own employees and by other stakeholder institutions and organizations like global

communications organizations, the government of Ghana, and local media and communications outlets. This points to the nature of production and consumption of discourse, thus culture, explained above; contrary to the prescriptive view of culture, its production is dialectical to its consumption. That is, though it may seem the production and consumption of culture are oppositional, one cannot exist without the other because one implies the other – as explained above; production is only viable if it ends in consumption, and consumption effects further production.

More importantly, the forces at play in terms of discourse and culture are not simply either local or trans-local/global, but ones in which the global transforms the local, and the local is a historical reflection of the global (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000). Subsequently, because I approach the study of culture from a dialectical perspective, discourse and culture in this project are not categorized as either distinctly micro or macro-level phenomena. It is important to pay attention to the macro-level influences like mass media, and globalized ideologies about organizing, on the culture of organizations like the NCA. However, it is equally important to consider the micro-level interactions (like conversations, norms, values) that constitute culture in organizations (Alvesson, 2004). My orientation throughout this project is that these two levels of analysis interact sufficiently and even in a localized context like that of the NCA analysis of talk and text will interact with power, ideology and relations of production.

Discourse and Culture at NCA

Culture, in Fordist organizing, was traditionally prescriptive. That is, "people working in large organizations are very likely to have found themselves exposed to 'culture change' programmes as part of attempts to make enterprises more efficient,

43

effective and profitable" (Du Gay, 1996, p. 151). This confirms the primary role accorded culture in organizations; it is seen as the lens through which organizational members view appropriate norms, values, and behavior. In many Western organizations, this prescriptive view of culture is designed to preserve the traditional values of typical organizations, according to Du Gay.

However, in the context of the NCA in Ghana, such 'traditional' values do not translate as seamlessly as in Western contexts. Ghana being a former colony of the British enables some significant aspects of organizational cultural life to be transposed from the latter. At the same time, there are some very local cultural practices – which some scholars refer to as national culture[9] –which are also specific to organizations and which emanate from non-Western cultural practices. Discourses, therefore, are seen at both the macro level – global level – and the micro/local level.

Furthermore, in this study, it is important to consider national culture as a constituent of localized discourses because they are derived from localized behaviors and practices. The assumption is that while people of a country cannot be said to be culturally homogenous, there are certain cultural behaviors that are common among them for several reasons including, in the instance of Ghana, colonial rule, similar indigenous languages, a national constitution, and a central government.

Boubakri, Guedhami, Kwok, and Saffar (2016) suggested that political and economic decisions are not made the same way across countries due to national cultural differences. For instance, they observed that in countries where people have a tendency

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[9] National culture in this instance refers to the localized cultural practices, norms, values, and beliefs which are common across sub-cultures within a particular country.

towards collectivism[10], "resource allocation is viewed as being the task of the

government" (p. 171). This means, privatization for instance, would proceed in a manner

that allows a significant amount of state control, in such countries – which includes

Ghana. This brings into focus the tension between public and private interests, and

emphasizes a mixed form of governance that incorporates public as well as private

authorities (Schuster, 1998). Therefore, organizations are assumed to significantly reflect

this national culture, which is constantly in contest because of the continued influence of

globalized forms of governance on national forms.

      According to Fairhurst and Putnam (2004) organizational discourses are cultural

because they carry the cultural meanings that enable communication and social

interaction. They distinguish discourses (small *d*) from Discourses (big *D*). That is,

Fairhurst and Putnam "distinguish between *discourse* that refers to the study of talk and

text in social practices and *Discourses* as general and enduring systems of thought" (p. 7).

Even though these distinctions are made between the levels of discourse they interact

with each other. For instance, in the context of globalization – and in many ways,

colonization – Discourses are the larger norms, values, beliefs that historically and

culturally standardize language and social interaction and therefore influence the nature

of talk and text in specific contexts. Although these levels of discourse are not referred to

in these terms in this study, they help illuminate the relationship between

globalized/localized and micro/macro level discourses. In discourse analysis, text usually

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[10] Collectivism expresses the idea that people's concerns for group welfare, equality, and loyalty are taken into account in aggregating interests as opposed autonomous/individualized ones (Hofstede, 1991). While this idea is a good starting point for understanding how people appropriate cultural norms, values, and beliefs, this study maintains E. P. Thompson's assertion that culture is a site of struggle because the dominant cultural form(s) cannot sufficiently articulate the lived experiences of the entire population in any given historical moment (Gunster, 2004).

refers to the written texts, spoken conversations, and multimedia messages through sources like television, and the internet (Fairclough, 2005).

Theoretically, discourse – as explained above to include the use of language and other social practices – and culture are not entirely discrete phenomena. This is because they are both "systems and forms of consciousness, and they may be ideologies" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 19). However, analytically they are different because discourse is the means by which culture is 'measured.' That is, through the analysis of language and other social practices, we can gain an entry into the nature of a specific culture – in this case organizational culture. For instance, at the NCA the means by which I hope to analyze the production and consumption of culture is through a study of the language used to describe phenomena, the rules of appropriate behavior enacted through unwritten values/norms, and official organizational policies. Therefore, while discourse points to language in use, culture concerns systems of meaning created through language and other social practices. Culture is more difficult to decipher without the help of discourse (Alvesson, 2004).

When one views culture as a map of shared meaning and the use of symbolism we are able to more concretely link culture to discourse (Alvesson, 2004). This is because the shared meaning and the use of common symbolism inform our social reality – in other words, our cultural reality. It follows that culture is informed by discourse – and vice versa – because the latter pertains to language and practices that create meaning and (re)produce symbols.

According to Fairclough (2003), when we talk about culture especially of organizations, it is an inevitable reference to the power of a 'knowledge-based' global

informational system. This system is, in itself, a cultural one because it influences

representations, values, and identities through discourse. Therefore, discourses about

what is (in)appropriate are significantly dictated by globalized cultural norms.

Particularly for the NCA, which is in the business of regulating the media and

communications industry in Ghana, these globalized cultural norms become more salient.

This is because, as Hall (1997) argued, certain discourses – by the use of language – have

been deployed to represent certain ideas and to evoke specific behavior. This constitutes

the production and consumption of culture that links it to discourse. In this sense, culture

is a system of representation, mediated by language and other meaningful social

practices, that "express how a specific social formation is actually lived and experienced"

(Gunster, 2004, p. 179). So, the culture of NCA is for instance, partly mediated by by

institutional benchmarks and standards as described above. These ensure that certain

discourses which come from external sources have an influence on the culture of NCA,

and in line with my argument so far, this culture is one which valorizes capital

accumulation through mundane organizational processes.

Neoliberalism as a Globalizing Discourse

Neoliberalism is essentially the idea that social and governmental institutions are

better served by free-market principles that allow for social and economic liberalization,

i.e., privatization. Instead of governments taking charge of the provision of infrastructure,

healthcare, education, and other basic social needs, neoliberal ideology suggests that it is

more beneficial to encourage free-market competition. Allen (2001) insisted that this

posture places the moral authority of corporations above those of the state, thus "the state

is seen as the evil opposite of the corporation" (p. 471). This narrative is so powerful that

the corporate model now supersedes localized understandings of how institutions ought to operate. The more globalized notions of institutional governance and corporate culture dominate many local spaces across the globe. As stated above, colonial linkages have enabled this relationship in the past and will be counted on to maintain it in the future. Many formerly colonized nations have been roped into the neoliberal world through their associations with former colonizers, in many cases.

In February, 2017 the British Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, paid working visits to Ghana and the Gambia. According to Frimpong (2017) the visit to Ghana was to ensure that "Global Britain and its partnerships are growing and not shrinking around the world as demonstrated by the Commonwealth's strength" (para 2). Also, the Gambia visit was to help facilitate the process that will see the West African country rejoin the Commonwealth. After the *Brexit* vote the popular assumption was that Britain was ready to abandon its most important regional and international relationships in favor of more nationalist concerns. However, through the British government, British corporations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the former is able to continually assert itself globally. In contrast with popular opinion that neoliberal ideology is in crisis, Sub-Saharan African economies present an avenue for continued influence of capitalist interests through neoliberalism.

When I talk, in this study, about the influence of capitalist interests, I specifically point to the cultural implications of such interests. That is, how the forms of capital investment on the African continent, for instance, intersects with techniques for instituting a political and cultural order. Ferguson (2006) argued that neoliberalism is the phenomenon that facilitates this process; through neoliberal ideology new forms of

practices and thinking about everyday life are subtly introduced and combined with local

forms. It is worth noting that within contemporary organizations the means by which

ideologies make their way into organization forms are markedly different from what they

used to be. Mumby (2015) explicated the progression from pre-Fordist through Fordist to

post-Fordist organizing and noted that the most current version – the post-Fordist form –

characterize the neoliberal form of control, as shown in the following section.

Organizational Culture: From Managerialism to Neoliberalism

In recent times, scholars of organizations and management have paid significant

attention to the nature of neoliberalism on organizational processes – including

organizational culture (Deetz, 1992; Giroux, 2002; Mumby, 2015). This shows a marked

difference in approach from those that concentrated mostly on issues of ideology and

hegemony. While the latter approaches still exist now, the turn to neoliberalism is based

on the belief that an inquiry into contemporary organizations should include analyses of

neoliberal ideologies and their significance to mundane organizational discourses. This

also implies a turn to analyses of the political economic underpinnings of everyday

organizational life, as discussed above.

In critical organizational communication scholarship, the contending issues have

always been framed around power relations, i.e., the ability to produce hierarchies among

people or groups. Mumby (2015) explained that the term *organization* itself is indicative

of the presence of control. An organization is only seen as such because individuals and

their idiosyncrasies are subjected to the broader 'goals' of the larger group. Therefore,

organizations essentially operate by juxtaposing individual needs "against the ordered

rationality of the organization" (Mumby, 2015, p. 20). Mumby argued, therefore, that

organizations are more concerned with disciplining member/employee behavior than with simply creating specific organization forms.

Some critical approaches to organization and management studies have often engaged with a Marxist argument to analyze the relations of production in the capital accumulation process (Deetz, 1992; Mumby, 2015). Essentially, the labor of the employee is appropriated by the capitalist in order to produce surplus value (Marx, 1967). Labor power, in the hands of the capitalist, is infinite and enables capital accumulation. Prior to the twentieth century, management style consisted of overtly exploitative measures designed to make the labor process more intense, and in effect, increase surplus value. This approach was the cause of several instances of industrial unrest prior to the early twentieth century. However, following Frederick Taylor's (2013) work on scientific management, the organizational narrative begun to change to view the capital-labor relationship more as a cooperative one. In this respect, the employee is provided with better conditions that are likely to make them 'consent' to the labor process, a move which is ultimately geared toward better output.

Taylor's (2013) theory prescribed a 'one best way' approach to management; managers still made all the important decisions, employees simply needed to follow instructions to get the job done. In the decades that followed, other scholars have tried to improve upon Taylor's principles by introducing more humanitarian management theories (Mumby, 2015). Many of them have nonetheless, only managed to mask the authoritarian elements of Taylor's approach. This is because, through countless incidences of unionized employee strife and research studies – through the pioneering work of Frederick Taylor, Max Weber, Henry Fayol, Elton Mayo and others – many

organizations provide certain incentives for their employees. These include better working conditions, better remuneration, and benefits like healthcare and vacations. Deetz (1992) however, argued that this situation does not erase the fact that corporations have assumed power of immense proportions, making employees subservient to them. More importantly, "the rationalization and normalization of corporate experience provides cover for forms of arbitrary domination through systematically distorted expression, suppressed conflict, and dominant articulations of experience" (Deetz, 1992, p. 2).

The persistence of employees, activists, and scholars led to even more humanistic approaches where the focus was shifted to creating employees whose work was not only meaningful to the organization, but also to the employees themselves. Despite these efforts, Deetz (1992) insisted that the bottom line remained the same, and that turn was necessary to produce consent for the oppressive nature of organizational life by moving away from a model of stringent rules, structures, and technologies to a concern with the employees themselves. This, nonetheless, the rationalized set of rules and procedures that govern organizations are not designed to maximize the potential for freedom, individualism and democracy but to fortify the authority of the corporate form (Iedema, 1999). In this respect, it is almost oxymoronic to positively associate corporations with democracy or freedom.

According to Mumby (2015), neoliberalism represents a more contemporary wave of capitalist colonization:

It is important to understand its emergence as an economic, political, and ideological system, and the concomitant development of post-Fordist organizing.

In addition to privileging the "free market" as the model for all spheres of life –

economic, political, and social – neoliberalism also shapes the ways in which

social actors view themselves, others, and their relationships to work and other

institutional forms. In such a context, all values are framed in terms of their

potential as exchange value, and the new model of organizing plays a central role

in this monetizing of forms of life beyond the work sphere (p. 24).

One of the most important features of neoliberalism is that, through the work of

transnational corporations, supranational institutions, and governments of powerful

countries, it was able to liberalize many geographical spaces in order to operate beyond

the locations of its origin – specifically the US and the UK. The result is that rationalized

and technologized knowledge produced in the Fordist era, were then disseminated around

the globe to enable Western corporations to operate in non-Western locations for the

purpose of maximizing capital accumulation.

What we see now as the dominant forms of culture in organizations across the

globe – including those in Ghana – is a culmination of the process described above; a

process that begun in the US and that produced the formalization of organizational

norms, values, beliefs, and practices, and spread to other parts of the world through

processes of recontextualization. Recontextualization is the process responsible for the

globalization of post-Fordism, for example. Neoliberalism therefore, has important

implications for organizational cultural identities.

Additionally, it is important to note that neoliberalism produces discourses that

influence life beyond the organization (Deetz, 1992). As discussed earlier, corporations

are not only interested in shaping the views and perspectives of employees; they seek the

commodification of everyday life – life beyond the organization. This makes them formidable especially because a historical progression shows the shift from "from direct, often coercive forms of power and control to forms rooted in consensus directed at the employee's sense of self and identity" (Mumby, 2015, p. 26). In this sense, invoking the Gramscian sense of hegemony facilitates our understanding of how neoliberalism has attained such an important position within organizational discourse.

Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony explains, for instance, that it is unsustainable to 'rule' simply by coercion – as in the case of the pre-Fordist approaches mentioned above. He argued that for ruling classes, it is more profitable to manufacture consent among the working class. The process of manufacturing such consent involves the ruling class exploring their economic, political, and cultural influence to institute and universalize their vision of the world:

> The realization of a hegemonic apparatus, in so far as it creates new ideological terrain, determine[s] a reform of consciousness and of methods of knowledge … when one succeeds in introducing a new morality in conformity with a new conception of the world, one finishes by introducing the conception as well; in other words, one determines a reform of the whole philosophy (Gramsci, 1971, p. 192).

Gramsci, therefore, helps us to understand, for instance, the progression from managerialism, which originated mostly in the US and Europe, to neoliberalism as a more globalizing capitalist phenomenon.

In the same vein, Gramsci's assertion about hegemony allows us to appreciate the centrality of communication in the neoliberal discourses of organizations.

Communication is central to neoliberalism because the production of consent relies on ideologies, language and other meaning systems, and perceptions of individual and group cultural identity. This means that far beyond the technology and the institutional bureaucracy, organizational norms are spread through words, signs, and images (Iedema, 1999).

As Mumby (2015) argued, communication is the "constitutive element in the construction of professional identities in the workplace" (p. 25). The norms, values, beliefs, and practices about work, professionalism, and cultural identity in organizations are framed through communication. In effect, organizational culture is discursively negotiated by the communicative action of employees. However, this negotiation is done within the realms of the organization's brands, norms, and measures of performance. For instance, even though employees, through their individual communicative behaviors, contribute to the culture of their specific organization, they do so within the confines of pre-determined estimates of appropriate behavior. With specific respect to neoliberalism, organizational cultural impulses travel from one location to another through formalization and recontextualization.

First, formalization – similar to the processes of rationalization and normalization described above – is the process of closing off certain possibilities of interaction among people. Recontextualization, subsequently, is the process by which meanings are made durable by depersonalizing them, and then decoupling them from their original contexts in order to make them applicable to other contexts (Iedema, 1999). This also involves removing the historical implications of these meanings. This space-time distantiation is achieved by the interplay between organization, communication, and power; the

assumption that the organization is constitutive of communication practices which are mediated by local and trans-local power relations.

The assumptions being made about organizations in Ghana – particularly using the NCA case study – are based on the above understanding of how neoliberal structures operate and are maintained. For example, in analyzing discourses of professionalism and of individualism at NCA as constituting neoliberal discourses, I take into account the following factors; 1) the expressed/explicit content of these discursive forms, 2) what they actually mean in everyday organizational life and, 3) how these discourses operate within the NCA organizational space. In pursuing these interconnected issues, I am able to interrogate, once again, the relationship between the NCA (organization), the communicative behavior of its members/employees (communication), and the ideological as well as political economic forces (power) that influence organizational culture.

Therefore, I argue that the discourses of professionalism constitute neoliberal discourses because professionalism itself is a concept that has gained legitimacy through the processes of formalization and recontextualization discussed above. Individuals at NCA, for example, 'choose' to act professionally for various reasons; as a way of keeping their jobs or improving their odds of getting a promotion, as a way of gaining the respect and admiration of their colleagues, and/or even as a means of asserting self-importance. Whatever the reason may be, the discourses of professionalism are deployed in a similar fashion across organizations; they demand individuals to communicatively perform their identities and sense of self according to certain globalized norms. For instance, there are norms of professional behavior that govern language use, and nonverbal communication which have become universalized through cable television

programing, seminars, webinars, and training programs, and internet sources such as blogs, and social media platforms. These sources of influence do not simply 'teach' employees how to behave in organizations, but also connect them directly to the global capitalist stream. The organizational member therefore, also becomes a subject of the commodification process through their interaction with the above-mentioned media sources.

With respect to discourses of individualism, neoliberal ideology promotes individual choice and independence in the workplace by insisting on freedom and democratic principles. Contrary to earlier forms of organizational control – i.e., the pre-Fordist, and Fordist forms – this form of organizational behavior encourages individuals to bring their 'authentic' selves to work. An implication of this is that there is a blurring of work and life since individuals are encouraged to be creative by tapping into their non-work identities. Many organizations now, even allow members flexible work hours, thus, allowing them to take work home. Again, while this seems to conform to the principle of individuality, it is in many cases, linked to the valorization of capitalism. Fleming's (2012) concept of biocracy explains that this type of individualism usually calls for unpaid communicative labor which involves employee networks that encourage work-related discussion at all times, and which in the process are concerned with promoting the organizational brand and meaning systems.

By invoking the centrality of communication in instituting neoliberalism and in constituting the organization, I take the position that individuals are able to assert some agency in the process. People are able to creatively negotiate their sense of self and identity, and thus the culture of the organization. This position is in line with the earlier

discussion about the commodification of culture. Therefore, this conceptualization of organizational culture as influenced by neoliberalism is distinct from earlier critical approaches which focused solely on ideology, and hegemony in creating the organizational subject. The current approach, as discussed by Mumby (2015), accounts for the individual's autonomy in choosing, albeit from the marketplace of neoliberalism, how they view work, themselves, and others. "Work and identity are articulated together in ways closely connected to the particular conception of freedom and democracy built into neoliberal political and economic thought and practice" (Mumby, 2015, p. 27).

In addition, the African individual or organization experiences another level of complexity with respect to structure and agency. Due to the legacy of colonialism, the organizational subject at NCA is also influenced by cultural norms and values that are tied to past colonial regimes. It is for this reason that I discuss postcolonialism as a critique, in tandem with the cultural materialist approach, which goes beyond class and considers race/ethnicity as an important justification for oppression. The cultural materialist approach, as a Marxist theoretical perspective, is also linked to postcolonialism by their unified focus on global imperialism which is done through a critique of capitalism. In this vein, Mezzadra (2012) insisted that postcolonialism should read "colonialism as part of the historical unfolding of capitalism" (p. 155). This is because, as Sinha and Varma (2015) noted, postcolonialism and Marxism are both concerned with the historical development of capitalism as an imperialist phenomenon.

Postcolonialism: An interventionist approach

Postcolonialism has assumed an interventionist position – it is done as an intervention to the covert structures of imperialism that persist across the world,

especially in Africa and parts of eastern Asia (Young, 2001). The structures of imperialism have been put up for intentional de-legitimization of the "other" – the subaltern according to Said (1979). Said explained in *Orientalism* that "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (p. 3). The ways in which Europeans were able to systematically manage and subordinate the Orient – the people of Eastern Asia – politically, socially, ideologically, and scientifically in the post-Enlightenment era can be understood by critically studying how they persistently and consistently used their relative power to promote their rhetoric of European superiority.

Said (1979) gave an account of the reasons for European rule in eastern, central and western Asia, and in some eastern parts of the world. For instance, he analyzed Arthur James Balfour's speech to the British House of Commons in June 1910. In this speech, Balfour stated that the reason for British colonization of Egypt was "not merely for the sake of Egyptians… [they were] there also for the sake of Europe at large" (p. 33). In the first place, the confession that the British colonized Egypt for the latter's sake is an allusion to British superiority. In this regard, the British reliance on their limited knowledge of Egypt as justification for colonization not only masks the inherent economic and cultural motive but also the racism upon which colonialism is anchored.

An important disjuncture which needs to be addressed in this context is the tension between decolonial and postcolonial approaches to critique of imperialism. While both perspectives offer strong and valid critiques of colonialism and its effects, scholars on either side have offered various reasons why their side of the aisle provides a more sustained affront on imperialism and knowledge production. On one hand, decolonial

58

scholars like Mignolo (2009) believe that emancipation can be achieved through the acknowledgment that, contrary to popular belief, the histories and thoughts of other places were coherently expressed prior to European incursion. Mignolo therefore argues for the delinking of histories of former European colonies from the rhetoric of modernity (Bhambra, 2014).

On another hand, postcolonial scholars, prominent among which are Said (1979) and Bhabha (1994) argue that:

> Postcolonial theory…is no longer (if it ever was) simply about the establishment of separatist trajectories or parallel interpretations, but should be seen instead as 'an attempt to interrupt the Western discourses of modernity through ... displacing, interrogative subaltern or postslavery narratives and the critical-theoretical perspectives they engender' (Bhambra, 2014, p. 116).

Owing to the above, I take the postcolonial approach in this study mainly because of the assumption that in contexts like Ghana, where (neo)colonial domination has succeeded in desecrating almost all indigenous knowledge forms, there is more value disrupting colonial epistemologies and imperial ideologies from within those positions. This also adds justification to the cultural materialist approach which not only critiques class culture but enables an interrogation of other forms of marginalization which include colonialism's racist and patriarchal foundations.

Additionally, I take the postcolonial turn in this study in order to argue that a purely class-based interrogation of neoliberalism disregards some of the most important conditions under which our 'global' world has arrived in the contemporary moment. In fact, the cultural materialist perspective I take supports the insistence on equally

analyzing class and race in issues of neoliberal economic and cultural logics. Allen (2001), arguing from a critical race standpoint, argued that in relations between Whites and people of color, race seems to always be the most salient form of identity politics, at least from the perspective of people of color. Allen added that it is only when race is given a front row seat in the analysis of neoliberalism that a more holistic critique of capitalist globalization could be offered.

So, how is racism related to postcolonialism? How are they connected to neoliberalism? Wallerstein (1979; 1987) made an important contribution to this argument by linking European colonialism to the global division of labor that sees the most powerful nations – mostly European and North American – at the core and the least powerful – usually the formerly colonized nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America – at the periphery of global affairs. Wallerstein also added that capitalism, as a global circumstance, does not have an accidental historical relationship with imperialism, and that imperialism was a pre-requisite for the former. In the same manner, Tietze (2004) suggested that the spread of the English language as the language of choice for management and organizational discourse, for example, create identities that are in line with neoliberal economics. Both the language and the discourses they produce are "expressive as well as constitutive of particular ideologies and situated in specific sociohistorical contexts which privilege particular collectives and agents over others and create a unifying system of knowledge and action" (p. 175).

One of the most enduring legacies of colonialism is language use. Language, from the discussion of cultural materialism above, plays an ideological role particularly in the context of cultural production and consumption. It is common knowledge that almost all

former colonies of European colonialism adopted their colonizers' languages. Based on the assumption that language is not a neutral means of communication, Tietze (2004) asserted that the English language, for example, encourages and naturalizes a specific form of global capitalist thinking. Said (1979) would also add that instituting language was one of the major civilizational 'missions' of European colonizers, and as stated above, the need to civilize was built on the foundation of White supremacy. Therefore, racism and colonialism are both targets of critique for postcolonialism, and more importantly, they are both linked to the neoliberal cultural impulses discussed in this study.

Perhaps one of the most salient arguments that connect colonialism, racism, and neoliberalism is one that posits that colonial histories help us understand why formerly colonized peoples relate to and respond to Western influence the way they do. Scholars, Fanon (2008), and Said (1979) have responded powerfully to this charge and have explicated the connection between colonial racism and the psychology of both the colonizer and the colonized.

First, in *Black Skin, White Masks,* Fanon (2008) draws on a Marxist approach to argue that colonial racism was not simply a social issue but was fundamentally a socioeconomic one because it justifies itself on the economic condition of the colonized; since the colonized had been systemically excluded from being economically productive and competitive, they had to remain subservient to the White-Europeans who controlled economic resources. In this argument, Fanon criticizes Octave Mannoni for claiming that racism cannot be an economic issue because poor White people are as racist as the rich. Fanon argues that in South Africa for example, segregation and economic exclusion from

the mainstream had ensured that black people are not competitive with whites, lending to the plan to eventually lift poor white people out of their condition.

Subsequent to the above argument, Fanon (2008) continued his critique of Mannoni's work by insisting that, contrary to the latter's assertion, an inferiority complex is not produced simply because of a group's position as an ethnic/racial minority. Fanon stated, "in Martinique there are 200 whites who consider themselves superior to the 300,000 people of color" (p. 73). Therefore, for him, people of color experience an inferiority complex; this had more to do with social, cultural, and economic conditions to which they had been subjected for a long time, regardless of whether they are the majority or the minority group.

This adds a layer of complexity to the cultural and socioeconomic context (Ghana) of this study. Ghana was a colonized territory of the British, and for this reason I argue, from Fanon's analysis, that part of the reason people in Ghana may be susceptible to neoliberal discourses is the effect of colonial racism. Colonial racism introduced an inferiority complex which, in the eyes of the colonized subject, made the 'White man' more intelligent, knowledgeable and therefore more trustworthy with respect to social, political and economic development.

In addition to the above, Fanon (2008), dedicated a significant portion of his text to discussing how colonialism shapes the worldview of colonized non-White people right from the early stages of their lives. Alienation from the mainstream cultural experience makes colonized people feel they have no viable identity because to be Black, for instance, is to be subhuman and to be White is impossible. This, Fanon explained, is because "not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white

man" (p. 90). Drawing on Hegel, Fanon explained that the experience of the Black person in the absence of the White person would have been his/her own experience but colonialism by the white man has ensured that the black experience is one of being for others. Therefore, the black person is in a constant crisis of identity because he/she has to keep negotiating between his/her customs and traditions – which have been replaced because they were deemed uncivilized – and the new civilization imposed on them.

In *Orientalism,* Said (1979) tackled the psychological effects of colonial racism from a simultaneously similar and different perspective to Fanon. His object of analysis was the discourse of empire, which constitutes a larger, collective project of domination and which, he argues, affects both what the dominant and the dominated perceive of that relationship. Orientalism, as Said argues, was an ambitious imperial project which involved a vast investment of resources including scholars and institutions all in a bid to know the mind of the orient. This desire to know, however, is not one in which there is a genuine attempt to understand the 'other' but one of representation in which they (the 'other') would come to believe that the West knows them better. This is also linked to the quest for economic and political dominance.

As a result of the above, the non-White, colonial subject has a different kind of relationship with neoliberalism than European or American Whites, for instance. While the latter deals with mostly class issues, the former is constantly confronted with the equally salient race and class issues which are further complicated by a long legacy of colonialism. It is perhaps due to the still existing colonial influence that the most powerful economies regard Africa as the last frontier of global capitalism, and thus, still a target of neoliberal economics.

Owing to the discussion in this chapter, this study seeks to analyze culture –

through analysis of discourse – and how the production and consumption of

organizational discourses at NCA reflect neoliberal cultural impulses. I also want to

examine the role of colonialism to find out if – and how – colonial history influences the

way organizational members interact with neoliberal cultural artifacts. To this end, the

following research questions are proposed:

RQ1: How are global/local phenomena, values, norms, and practices related to

organizational culture at NCA referred to linguistically?

RQ2: What are strategies used by NCA employees to accommodate, transform

and/or resist neoliberal discourses?

RQ3: In what ways do the production and consumption of neoliberal discourses

occur? How does the production and consumption of these discourses affect

media and communications policy in Ghana?

RQ4: What is the role of colonialism in the negotiation of culture at the NCA?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

As I have argued in the previous section above, all discourse is cultural, as much as culture is discursive. That is, discourse is the means by which culture is analytically isolable and therefore meaningful (Fairclough, 2005). The examination of discourse through 'texts' therefore, is a means by which we can get to the cultural implications of organizational norms and practices. 'Texts' in this instance, refer to the oral, written, visual, or performative material which could be used for analysis. They refer to the analyzable artifacts – or data – which is combined with the context to study discourses.

The nature of discourse is not always agreed upon by all scholars. However, in this study, I appropriate Fairclough's (2005) definition, which considers discourse to be both the recurrent and relatively stable forms of narratives and interactions, and the more micro linguistic details which takes into account the vocabulary, metaphors, form, grammar, and so on. The approach to discourse analysis I employ in this study therefore applies to "discourse as well as to other elements of the social, which regards 'discourse' as subsuming both linguistic/semiotic elements of social events and linguistic/semiotic facets of social structures, as well as of the 'social practices'" (Fairclough, p. 916).

With the above in mind, it is important to explain that the realm of discourse analysis consists of both critical and noncritical approaches. On one hand, critical approaches to discourse analysis regard discourse as social practice that is constitutive of and constituted by power relations[11]. The noncritical – or interpretive – approaches like conversation analysis (Tracy, 2005), on the other hand, pay closer attention to situated

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[11] Power relations in this context refer to the historically specific social relations that are shaped by capitalist logics of neoliberalism. Power relations represent the creation of hierarchies, as well.

meaning making. In this regard, social practices are analyzed in terms of the patterns of social interaction usually immediate to the given context.

The current study aligns with the critical approaches to discourse analysis, as discussed earlier. There are several other features that distinguish critical approaches to discourse from other approaches, theoretically and methodologically. Chief among those features is the critical approaches' commitment to social justice. In line with this, I argue that the research questions I have identified above could be addressed by CDA for two reasons: 1) the analysis of neoliberal discourses constitute a social justice concern because neoliberalism oppresses, alienates, and disenfranchises groups of people based on social position, and 2) as a requirement of CDA, the above research questions demand an attention to the texts as well as to the contexts. In the section that follows, I argue for a critical discourse approach to the analysis of organizational discourse at NCA by juxtaposing some of CDA's core assumptions with what I deem are the requirements for appropriately analyzing discourse in the above-mentioned context.

Introduction: CDA and its Core Assumptions

CDA – referred to as Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) by van Dijk (2009) – is a set of research approaches unified by a consensus on the role of discourse in the construction of our social world (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). Scholars affiliated with this transdisciplinary field believe that social and cultural processes are linguistic-discursive and non-discursive. This means that discourse is both constitutive of and constituted by language and other social practices.

CDA is both a set of theoretical approaches and methods of analysis which critiques specific discourses and explains their role in the creation and/or maintenance of

social realities (Fairclough, 2012). In this sense, CDA is an approach that does not separate language from social practice. Discourse is not only a part of the social world, it is also a perspective; it is a frame through which macro and micro contexts are brought together to inform everyday practices. Even within the arena of discourse analysis there are several other perspectives which are used; examples of which are Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory approach, and the discursive psychology perspective. CDA is thus, only one set of perspectives by which such social phenomena are conceptualized.

However, according to Kress (1990), what sets CDA apart from other types of analysis of discourse, is their attention to mundane, everyday events (talk, text, and other social practices) which reveal and analyze such issues as racism and sexism (Amaya, 2007), the legitimation and normalization of neoliberal capitalist ideologies (Dahlberg, 2014), the role of the media in the production of discourses (Van Dijk, 2000), and the formalization of organizational meaning (Iedema, 1999). This, in addition to its overtly political agenda sanctifies the project of CDA from others; CDA is politically committed to social justice and therefore looks for ways in which the critique of ideological processes that perpetrate injustice/inequality may contribute to the former.

It is particularly for these reasons that I have identified CDA as an appropriate method of analysis for this study. This is because in an analysis of organizational discourses that are implicated by neoliberalism it is important not only to pay attention to the taken-for-granted assumptions about organizational life but also to question their implications for the cultural identities of both the individual members and the organization as a whole. I specifically relate some of CDA's theoretical and methodological features to my study in the paragraphs below.

The first and most important factor to consider is that scholars of CDA believe in the goals of critical theory and the work of Jürgen Habermas and the Frankfurt School; that our conception of the world, of identities, and social relations, is not neutral but is mediated by power relations. This includes the assumption that knowledge is not objective but a product of discourse. According to Meyer and Wodak (2009), regardless of the specific position in which any CDA project finds itself, power and ideology feature prominently in the analysis. As a problem-oriented approach CDA is concerned with the way discourse (re)produces social domination and how dominated groups resist. In doing this, CDA should account for the structures, strategies and functions of text and talk i.e. the mundane everyday social practices of people in specific contexts.

In the specific instance of the NCA, I argue that based on the assumptions of critical theory, neoliberal ideology represents globalized capitalist structures of domination that work through the naturalization and normalization of organizational discourses. It is therefore, incumbent on the chosen method of analysis to venture into the nature of those structures and the functions and strategies that enable their persistence within organizations such as the NCA.

The CDA approaches of scholars such as Fairclough, and Wodak (Fairclough, 1995; 2003; 2005; 2012; Wodak, 2001a; 2001b) rely on Foucauldian notions of power and society, and Gramscian notions of hegemony. Others like van Dijk (2001; 2009) use theories of social cognition to understand the nature and significance of discourse. However, scholars like Wodak (2001b) would also say that CDA researchers – like other researchers – bring their political motives to bear on their work. For instance, I am politically committed to social justice with regard to this study – thus the critical

orientation. More importantly, in this study I regard power, communication, and organization as intrinsically linked by political-economic interests.

Owing to the above, I acknowledge that even my decision to take on this kind of study and the paradigmatic orientation I approach it with reveal my political commitment to uncovering oppressive and/or discriminatory discourses. However, this political commitment aligns with those of CDA. CDA demands a theoretical approach which is politically committed to the goals of critical theory, a requirement this study has met in design and orientation. By this I mean that this study, based on its cultural materialist and postcolonial approaches to studying culture at NCA, has opened itself up for applying the principles of CDA in analyses.

A final theoretical feature includes the assumption that CDA approaches all focus on the relationship between text and context. This is important because in order to reveal or discover ideologies the implicit meanings (from the text) would have to be combined with the context to make them explicit (Van Dijk, 2001). That is, when analyzing NCA policy documents, for instance, it is essential to relate each set of texts to some social and historical context in order to draw out a meaning. Meanings are not just found in the texts, they are found in synching the message of the text with the context.

The implicit meanings are linked to certain beliefs which are part of the mental models of, say, participants. To make them explicit is to be able to sufficiently take apart the text and systematically relate the parts to specific ideologies, structures and/or historical context. This is also to say that the text-context relationship exists in two forms; 1) the first recognizes this relationship in the linguistic details (e.g. as mentioned earlier in the case of conversation analysis), and 2) the second points to the texts as existing in a

larger context that (re)produces discourses (Meyer & Wodak, 2009). I have described the interplay of these types of text-context relationships in the previous section to illustrate the acknowledgement that this study is not only interested in discourses produced and consumed in local contexts, but that the larger/global discourses are essential as well.

In terms of methodological features, even though CDA is known to be interdisciplinary and accommodates a wide range of theoretical approaches, it is not a 'free-for-all' field. That is, methodologically, CDA/S has a set of core assumptions which need to be adhered to. First, and probably most important, is the fact that CDA is politically committed to social justice. As I have previously discussed, this means that whichever theoretical approach is used by a researcher doing CDA/S work has to have the ultimate goal of social justice in mind.

There are several strands of CDA but "the most evident similarity is a shared interest in social processes of power, hierarchy-building, exclusion and subordination" (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 32). Some of the biggest 'protagonists' of the CDA project, such as Ruth Wodak, Norman Fairclough, and Teun van Dijk, each has their own ways of approaching the field of discourse analysis. Van Dijk (2009) for instance, insists on a critical application of the project which implicitly rejects the restrictive label of CDA as a method of analysis. For him, CDS is a more apt way of representing the field because this label better shows the methodological diversity and the theoretical and practical focus on social justice.

Other scholars have agreed with Van Dijk (2009) by also insisting that CDA should ultimately be about social justice (Blommaert, 2005; Fairclough, 1995, 2012; Wodak, & Meyer, 2009). This also means that there is consensus about the presence and

prevalence of social inequality and unequal power relations among these scholars. This is the central reason why I deem CDA crucial to this study. As I explain later, the prevalence of neoliberal discourses at the NCA in Ghana constitute a means by which marginalizing discourses – linked to economic production/consumption – sneak into the consciousness of people through everyday use of language and other meaningful social practices.

In light of the above, I believe, that for several reasons – including the kind of project being embarked on and the types of data required for the analysis – several aspects of different strands of CDA could be pulled into the same project. In the next section, I will describe my texts and proceed to show which approaches and key concepts will benefit my study and how those concepts could be applied in the study.

Culture and Organizational Discourses

The current study on the role of neoliberalism in the construction of organizational culture in Ghana will look at how certain neoliberal discourses contribute to organizational culture at the NCA. By organizational culture, I am referring to how discourses – language and other social practices – shape organizational norms and behavior, and crystalize into a given cultural identity. As I explained in Chapter 2, discourse is the analytical equivalent of culture; it consists of the language and other social practices which are enacted through talk and text to form a culture. Specifically, I will be looking at how neoliberal discourses such as those on individualism and professionalism are constructed and enacted to inform organizational culture.

Some critical scholars (Deetz, 1992; Fairclough, 2005; 2012; Mumby, 2015) would argue that all spaces are inherently cultural and that these cultural practices are

embedded in discourses and institutional practices which are anchored on language. Therefore, an important object of analysis in this project will be language because it is connected to social practice and thus, becomes central to the critique of discourses in any given human communication context.

Particularly in organizational communication, it is important to prioritize the discourses that, upon inspection, inform what the organization deems cultural. Therefore, an orientation towards 'organizing' – as opposed to a well-formed organization – is, for instance, advocated (Mumby & Stohl, 1996). Mumby and Stohl explained that,

> For us, organization… is a precarious, ambiguous, uncertain process that is continually being made and remade. In Weick's sense, organizations are only seen as stable, rational structures when viewed retrospectively. Communication, then, is the substance of organizing in the sense that through discursive practices organization members engage in the construction of a complex and diverse system of meanings'. (p. 58).

One of the founding assumptions of this study is that these systems of meaning are influenced significantly by both the micro-level/localized discursive practices, and the more macro/globalized discourses, which I also argue are neoliberal in several ways. The uncertainty and ambiguity, thus, lie in how much of either level of discourse is represented in the culture of an organization in a given context. In the case of the NCA, I have also argued that the colonial history of Ghana is an important consideration to make, and one which further complicates the nature of discursive practices in the organization.

The focus on the discursive elements of an organization is informed by Fairclough's (2005) work on discourses in organizations and on neoliberal discourses

(Fairclough, 2012). According to Fairclough (2005), it is important, from an epistemological standpoint, to look at organizational discourse from a critical realist perspective because it allows the researcher to emphasize a moderately social constructivist ontology. This view posits that communication in organizations involves a constant process of creating and recreating the organization. In this sense, structure and agency are equally important in this organizing process. "Organizational communication does indeed organize, produce organizational effects and may contribute to the transformation of organizations, but organizing is subject to conditions of possibility which include organizational structures" (Fairclough, 2005, p. 918).

More importantly, this critical realist position does not conflate structure and agency due to its attention to social constructivism. As shown in my analysis in proceeding chapters, the culture of an organization is constituted by the agency of its participants (Giddens, 1984). However, this subjective agency is constrained by objective organizational structures. Therefore, the limits of possibility for participants' agency are usually analyzed within the realms of the structural forces. In this study, structure and agency are also analyzed from two distinct levels, as stated above; the global (macro-level) and the local (micro-level).

Reed (1997) cautioned that while it is important to acknowledge structure and agency in organizational analysis, and while the two may be analytically distinct, they are linked by structural contextualization. That is, the structural context of a given organizational analysis gives insight into the manner of the subjective agency being exhibited, such that participants' 'freedom' to reproduce or transform discourses are subject to the structural principles operating in that setting. For example, in this study, I

include a subjective analysis of participants' narratives as well as an objective analysis of the more enduring macro-level discourses that interplay in a complex fashion to constitute organizational culture. A subjective analysis, for instance, may reveal the ways in which participants exert agency through the intentional reproduction or transformation of neoliberal ideas. Objective analyses, then, would examine how participants may unwittingly enact certain discursive strategies by simply inhabiting a specific ideological environment.

Consequently, there are two notes to make in reference to the above. First, in addition to my argument in the previous chapter, even though employees are able to creatively navigate these discourses through their personal engagement with organizational artifacts, organizational culture is also influenced by larger discourses regarding organizational life such as discourses of individualism and professionalism. Second, I add here that the discourses of individualism and professionalism that I focus on in this study, are deemed neoliberal ones because, while such discourses operate by the 'consensus' of employees, they help establish new forms of managerial control while also contributing to the process of capital accumulation.

According to Mumby (2015), such neoliberal discourses depend on what he called "communicative labor" which is intimately linked with branding practices. "Brand management…is increasingly a matter of putting to work the ability of worker-consumers to create a common social world through autonomous processes of communication" (p. 31). The employee's ''freedom' to innovate and compete with other employees (individualism), and the way s/he is expected to behave in the workplace (professionalism) are cultural practices that are manifested through discourses.

Blommaert (2005), argued that discourse is meaningful, symbolic behavior – that is, language-in-action. He argued that every discourse has significant social and cultural meanings which should remain essential to the analysis. Critical discourse analysis, therefore, is a method which analytically isolates text-context relationships in order to connect the texts of a discourse to their social, cultural, and historical contexts.

Although I draw from several CDA approaches, as discussed, I rely quite heavily on Wodak's (2001a) discourse-historical approach. Some of the approaches (e.g. Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010) to CDA in organizations that I identify with employ a dialectical-relational approach. This approach allows CDA to simultaneously attend to the linkages between power, discourse and other moments of the social. This makes the approach complementary of the discourse-historical approach because the former encourages interdisciplinarity and rejects a rigid definition of context. The discourse-historical approach adheres to the socio-philosophical orientation of critical theory. It, as such, follows a complex but socially embedded path to critique, based on three interconnected aspects as follows:

1 `Text or discourse immanent critique' aims at discovering inconsistencies, (self) contradictions, paradoxes and dilemmas in the text-internal or discourse-internal structures.

2 In contrast to the `immanent critique', the `socio-diagnostic critique' is concerned with the demystifying exposure of the manifest – or latent – possibly persuasive or manipulative' character of discursive practices. With socio-diagnostic critique, the analyst exceeds the purely textual or discourse internal sphere. She or he makes use of her or his background and contextual knowledge and embeds the

communicative or interactional structures of a discursive event in a wider frame of social and political relations, processes and circumstances. At this point, we are obliged to apply social theories to interpret the discursive events.

3 Prognostic critique contributes to the transformation and improvement of communication (Wodak, 2001a, p. 65).

In order to demystify any persuasive or manipulative character of discourses, Wodak (2001a) proposed contextual understanding – pointing to the historical situatedness of this approach – which allows the critique to move beyond any generalizations and into the particularities, while counting on the researcher's ability to remain loyal to the theoretical guidelines specified for the project. It is important to note that, in this approach, particularities do not mean a preoccupation with the local context. It emphasizes a look at how the local interacts with the trans-local through a historical frame of social relations.

Recontextualization is the most important concept within this framework for this study. Especially in organizational discourses, recontextualization is the way genres, arguments and topics are connected. With respect to neoliberalism and organizations, "recontextualization primarily aims towards maintaining the processes of production, and therefore involves shifts towards technological or exo-somatic materialities: from talk to print, or from design to (built) construction" (Iedema & Wodak, 1999. p. 13). This is why I chose to combine policy documents with in-depth interviews in this study; to be able to trace how certain organizational benchmarks were chosen, and to what extent they valorize the economic production process.

Other concepts that inform the discourse-historical approach are ideology, language, and power. As in the other approaches, the discourse-historical approach emphasizes these concepts because they indicate the existence of unequal social relations in discursive contexts. Therefore, in addition to the above, recontextualization also facilitates hierarchical ordering of meaningful organizational practices. The discourse-historical approach provides the tools with which to include, in the analysis, the colonial circumstances that enable this ordering. This could be done by looking at organizational documents, in combination with interviews (discussed in the next section).

Sampling and Texts

The data I use in this study include policy documents, and responses from interviews. In terms of the policy documents I have identified the two main documents which guide the work of the NCA in Ghana (the Electronic Communications Regulations (ECR) of 2011, and the National Communications Authority Act of 2008). I have chosen to use these documents because they contain the policies and regulatory framework within which the NCA functions as a media and communications regulator in Ghana. As an industry regulator, the NCA is an institution. This means that it consists of a complex set of relationships, roles, and norms which regulate interaction of its members, amongst themselves and with others external to the institution. "There is a particular interaction logic to a given institution" (Burns & Carson, 2005, p. 284). This logic requires that members of an institution acquire institutional knowledge which is usually divided into official and unofficial knowledge (van Dijk, 2005). According to van Dijk, policy documents are a means by which official knowledge about an institution are

disseminated. Therefore, the NCA analysis of organizational discourse will benefit greatly from an analysis of the main policy documents that guide their work.

Qualitative Interviews

In order to analyze neoliberal discourses and their effect on the organizational culture at NCA, I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with 12 employees of the organization. Starks and Trinidad (2007) stated that, in discourse analysis projects, it is often not necessary to sample large numbers of participants especially when the study also involves written documents. This is because one participant alone is able to provide a large amount of relevant information due to their experience of the phenomena or context under investigation. Therefore, I used a purposive interview technique to recruit employees of NCA to participate in the study. This was done through my contact person who helped identify and recruit interested participants.

Ultimately, I conducted face-to-face (in person) interviews with employees at various levels of influence within the organization. This was to ensure that I obtain narratives from as many different perspectives as possible. For the same reason, I interviewed both male and female employees.

The use of a semi-structured interviewing technique – instead of either a structured or unstructured technique – was to ensure that while I am able to do some pre-planning in order to get to my research questions, I also make room for conversation-style interviews that encourage participants to open up and provide important information that was otherwise not planned for. This type of semi-structured interviewing technique resembles ethnographic interviewing in the sense that the ethnographic interviewer relies on rapport with his/her interviewee to have a successful interview. Spradley (2016) also

explained that an essential element of ethnographic questioning is the use of descriptive questions to "collect an ongoing sample of an informant's language" (p. 60). This could be crucial for this type of study which seeks to examine the text-context relationships of certain discourses. For a qualitative inquiry like that identified in this study, the use of in-depth interviews is important for several reasons.

First, they allow the researcher to gain an insight into the personal narratives of participants. Interviews are, therefore, an important part of the discourse that provide knowledge about organizational practices, power relations, and the communicative practices that bring them together. Within the field of CDA, several studies which have analyzed the communicative and discursive dimensions of organizations and social groups have relied on interviews as valid data collection methods (Krzyzanowski, 2005; Oberhuber, 2005).

Secondly, according to Lindlof and Taylor (2011), interviews provide a performative avenue for participants to reveal their identities and make sense of their positions within a specific context. For this study, in-depth interviews are likely to enable participants to show if, and how, they appropriate the neoliberal discourses of individualism and professionalism through their responses to questions I pose. Thus, through the analysis of interviews, I would be able to show how participants accommodate, negotiate, or resist neoliberal discourses.

Finally, interviews provide a "window" through which the researcher looks from the outside into the narrative environment, allowing him/her to know how the environment affects the participant (Chase, 2011). However, Chase cautioned that because interviews are only a window, they have limits with respect to how much insight

they provide into the context. This is another reason why, for this study, I use interviews together with policy documents.

As suggested above, the interviewing method I apply involves features of narrative inquiry because it is the aim of the analysis to not only get to the 'big stories' that are told in semi-structured interviews but also to gain access to the 'small stories' that arise. According to Chase (2011) the small stories are the mundane, informal, conversational stories which could range from current events to future meetings. Using this approach also helped to reveal the status of different sets of narratives within the given context; such as which narratives are deemed more important/relevant, how they achieve that status, or how they are resisted and/or changed.

Researcher Reflexivity

According to Saldana (2011), data collection in qualitative research involves using several tools (e.g. note pads, pens, laptops, audio recorders, etc.). However, the most important instrument is the researcher him/herself. The researcher's ability to successfully collect important qualitative data goes beyond the mechanical tasks (like writing, transcribing, observing). It also involves several cognitive and affective tasks including the ability to empathize, to be intuitive, to infer, and to evaluate. These tasks are as crucial to the data collection process as anything else. For this reason, the researcher needs not only to be skilled in the art of the specific data collection techniques; s/he should also be aware of their influence on the process, especially in a study that seeks to promote social justice.

For the above reason, I choose to employ the use of Collier's (2015) critical dialogic reflexivity as a way of cautiously mediating my position as a researcher,

particularly during the interviewing process. Critical dialogic reflexivity is an approach to critical reflexivity which takes into account the researcher's knowledge and appreciation of the context as a site of differential "power relations, levels of hierarchy in intergroup relationships and material conditions" (p. 210). The interview should be seen as both a data collection event and an avenue for revealing ontological orientations (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). That is, interviews, beyond collecting responses to the researcher's questions, are also events where assumptions about social reality of both the researcher and respondents are shared. The researcher should, therefore, be cognizant of and open to these conditions to ensure the participant's responses receive the attention they deserve.

Also, critical dialogic reflexivity requires, as a fundamental tenet, a commitment on the part of the researcher to engage with cultural differences, levels of privilege, and issues of agency. Being a native of Ghana and having some knowledge of both the general Ghanaian context (history, language, other social practices) and the specific NCA context do not exonerate me from reflexively examining my role as researcher. In fact, it is all the more important to check my relationship with respondents, particularly in terms of the knowledge systems and vocabulary I apply.

One important means by which I employed a critical dialogic approach to data collection was making sure participants were aware of my intentions and ideological position, coming into the study. Through my informed consent form and informal conversations with participants, I explained not only my study goals, but also my desire to critique dominant ideologies such as neoliberalism. According to Collier and Lawless (2015), this is crucial for critical dialogic reflexivity because it brings participants better

into the conversation when they are aware of the context of the study and the intentions of researcher.

Social justice, in this study refers to a commitment to engaging with and advocating for people who may be under-resourced in any way, and critical dialogic reflexivity helps facilitate this engagement (Collier, 2015). For instance, during the conduct of the personal interviews, I allowed participants to finish every statement (and not interrupt them) before adding a comment or a follow-up question. This was done as a way of legitimizing participants' views on the questions being asked. This also enabled the agency of participants to manifest through their narratives. There were times when, because of my knowledge of the Ghana context, I felt compelled to interrupt with my own opinions, but it was important to affirm participants crucial role in the study by allowing them to complete their thoughts to further the conversation. Additionally, since I was coming into this context as a male, doctoral researcher from a US university, some participants had ascribed to me the role of 'expert.' Therefore, it was important for me to facilitate the interviewing process being fully aware of this status and privilege.

Finally, to ensure a critical dialogue I asked participants questions about their individual interests, goals, position at NCA, and how it feels to work for the organization. By asking such questions I was able to build rapport with participants, but I was also able to obtain important information about life at NCA, which were not originally planned for in my interview script. This provided a very good context for analyzing the interview data in this report, as shown in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE INTERVIEWS

Neoliberalism Shapes Organizational Culture

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of the personal interviews conducted with twelve employees of the NCA in Accra, Ghana. Of the twelve participants 8 were men and 4 were women. Participants were selected from different divisions and different positions within these divisions to provide a diversity of perspectives from both managerial level and non-managerial level employees. Although the goal was to be able to interview some directors of the divisions, their schedules did not permit it. I was, however, able to interview two deputy directors and several managers of the various divisions (see Appendix 1 for list of participants and their roles/positions at NCA).

In what follows, I organize the findings and analysis by research question to see how each of the questions is addressed by the texts. In view of this, I divide this chapter into two main sections to address the first two research questions. This is primarily because the first two questions focus on the interview narratives of the participants and they examine how participants negotiate and enact behaviors and practices, which would be construed for the purposes of this study as directly related to the construction of organizational culture at NCA. Additionally, I make the argument that the interview narratives in the context of this study provide insight into how the tensions at various levels (micro and macro levels) and from various sources (local and global) interreact, as shown below. The focus on the interview narratives in this chapter is not made to assert that it is only through individuals' accounts that organizational culture is understood. As argued throughout this study, organizational culture could be studied through the analysis of several texts such as interviews, policy documents, participant observation, etc.

However, the research questions discussed in this chapter analyze participants linguistic characterization of organizational culture, as well as how neoliberalism mediates the construction of this culture. In these semi-structured interviews, I asked participants questions related to how they view life at NCA with regards to the internal environment (see appendix for interview questions). I also asked specific questions about NCA's relationship with global media and other communications regulators, as well as participants' views on professionalism and individualism as employees. As suggested above, the purpose of asking these questions was to enable an analysis of how discourses are related to organizational culture. As discussed in Chapter 2, culture is discursive in the sense that discourse is the means by which culture is analytically isolable (Fairclough, 2005). In this regard, by analyzing the textual discourses – interviews – of participants through these interview questions, I was able to examine the factors that contribute to, and/or shape organizational culture. An assumption, based on NCA's relationship with local and global media, is that by asking questions about professionalism and individualism, for instance, the role of neoliberal capitalism would be fairly understood. Intentionally or unintentionally, participants linguistically revealed their perspectives about the relationships among values, norms, and practices of the internal environment at NCA, and external forces like globalized media practices.

Organizational Culture: Linguistic Interpretations

In this section of the chapter, I reveal the findings of the study with respect to the first research question;

RQ1: How are global/local phenomena, values, norms, and practices related to organizational culture at NCA referred to linguistically?

I coded the interviews into categories that specifically show participants' utterances about organizational culture at NCA; what it is and, what is should look like in participants' opinions.

As stated in the previous chapter, this study employs the use of the discourse-historical approach (DHA) within the tradition of CDA. This approach allows for the interrogation of the persuasive and/or manipulative tendencies of particular utterances or discourses, by paying attention to the historical context within which those utterances or discourses are evoked (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016). For instance, in this study, participants' utterances are analyzed by taking into account the local as well as the global context, but also by analyzing which particular (ideological) perspectives accompany those utterances by looking at other background information. This constitutes what Reisigl and Wodak call the method of triangulation; where the particular theories and methods, are combined with empirical data/observation, and background information to reveal the nature and effect of discourses.

The three-dimensional DHA allows the researcher to combine 1) topics within particular discourses to 2) "discursive strategies…and 3) linguistic means (as types) and context dependent linguistic realizations (as tokens)" (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016, p. 32). The discourse topics – or related themes - refer to the categories into which the study data are put. In this study, the discourse topics represent the categories for downsizing the data based on their intertextual and interdiscursive significance. That is, the interview data and the policy documents were categorized based on how they relate to each other, and how they relate to other discourses. Discursive strategies, according to Reisigl and Wodak, are tools for analyzing the micro-context of the data, with particular respect to the latter's

85

persuasive character (examples are provided in Table 4.1 below). The linguistic means

and linguistic realizations are the actual narratives of participants that are chosen for

analysis. They refer to, for instance, the excerpts of participant interviews which are used

to exemplify discourse topics related to a particular argument or claim.

With particular respect to the above research question, I use the five discursive

strategies (in Table 4.1 below) proposed by Reisigl and Wodak (see, Reisigl and Wodak,

2016, p. 33) as analytical tools for contextualizing responses and analyzing how

organizational culture is discursively conceptualized. I then discuss some discourse topics

associated with participants' narratives about organizational culture.

Table 4.1: Categories for Analyzing Discourses About Organizational Culture

Discursive Strategies	Purpose	Examples from interview texts
Nomination strategies: How participants linguistically describe practices, values, norms, phenomena related to organizational culture	Discursive construction of practices/phenomena (maintaining global standards)	*So, as an employee of NCA what I think is global is trying as much as possible to meet all those minimum requirements and ensuring that the industry operates at that level.* *Yeah, we are trying to attain world class status.*
	Discursive construction of values/norms	*I will say the teamwork aspect. The teamwork is part of our core values. I know that one – we live it.* *Yes, they championed this core values thing. We had to go through a series of a whole lot of things. They were promoting some change which, to me, if they had practiced what they were trying to put on us, it would have been okay. It's contrary; it's not what is being done.*
Predication strategies What characteristics are attributed to actors, processes, events, or norms.	How actors, norms, processes, or events are qualified/characterized	Global trends: *e.g. meeting all the minimum requirements* Organizational actors: *my work is guided by international principles*

Argumentation strategies: How arguments are used in discourses about organizational culture.	Persuasive language about the inevitability of certain values, norms, practices, phenomena ('common sense' concepts)	*The standards come from ITU. We have three wings…so the standard is from there and then it has to cascade down to all the regulators. It sort of brings some harmony among all the regulators. So, that's where we get them and then we are supposed to implement them.* *Global trends always have an effect on what we do because as a regulator, the polices and directions where we go, do not emanate from us but come from the global trend.*
Perspectivization strategies: From which perspectives are participants making those nominations and arguments?	To determine participants' or policy documents' positions on specific issues related to organizational culture at NCA: ideological positions	Neoliberal capitalist e.g. *And I don't blame them – I blame the whole system, the whole setup, the whole governmental sector. From the appointment of the Director General to cleaner, this is flawed. And until the government sector starts looking at things the way the private sector works, I mean, it's not relevant.*
Mitigation and intensification strategies: whether participants utterances are made explicitly or implicitly. Are they intensified or mitigated?	Moderating their linguistic choices to intensify or mitigate a particular stance.	*Work very hard…* *Very great incentives…* *Very friendly environment…* *we are not bad…*

The above table provides an overview of what participants' narratives/utterances

do in describing the internal environment or organizational culture at the NCA. As seen

above, this is not simply done by explicitly describing what it feels like to work at NCA,

or what the environment looks like. Participants used various discursive strategies, which

may or may not have been explicit, to nominate, characterize, persuade, and

mitigate/intensify certain claims about organizational culture from particular ideological

perspectives. Furthermore, within the significantly structured discursive space of the

NCA participants inhabit an environment which carries ideological implications. This is

because, as Broadfoot and Munshi (2007) observed, organizations are permeable and thus, constantly interact with the local, national, or global environment. This also means that organizations and their members imbibe ideologies in different ways and will, therefore enact them differently. In this analysis, a focus is placed on the perspectives being revealed, reflectively or unreflectively, by participants in their accounts of NCA's culture.

The most important – and visible – of these perspectives, from the text, is the one related to neoliberal capitalism. That is, participants' perceptions of organizational culture, in most cases, sought to normalize, and valorize neoliberal capitalist ideals. For this reason, the analysis below uses discourse topics that emerged from the coding of the interviews to show how participants utterances link, what Fairhurst (2004) termed, discourses and Discourses, as explained earlier. That is, utterances that linked the micro to the macro context, and the local to the global. The analysis also emphasizes the dialectic between agency and structure, where participants are not only deemed to be mimics of the perspectives identified but exercise their agency by modifying or defying the dominant perspectives.

Discourse Topics
As noted above, discourse topics are categories or themes that help with the discursive interpretation of the study data. This section analyzes discourses about organizational culture categorized into three different discourse topics namely;

- A corporate environment should be a professional environment
- World class means adhering to global standards.
- Teamwork is important but individual meritocracy is key.

A corporate environment should be a professional environment

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, the three-dimensional DHA approach is used. This allows for simultaneously employing the discourse topic, the discursive strategies, and tokens – which in this case are excerpts – of the text to analyze particular discourses. Throughout the interviews, one of the most prominent themes regarding the internal cultural environment at NCA concerned the relationship between a corporate environment and a professional one. According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, "professional" is a characteristic of a particular profession and refers to the standards and ethics associated with that profession. It relates to the type of communicative behaviors expected or required in a given field. Example, physicians would have certain communication standards related to their profession, which may be required to be adhered to in the performance of their duties A corporate environment, conversely, connotes a description of the cultural environment and therefore is not equivalent to a professional one. That is, a corporate environment is used to describe the specific organization type, whereas professional is usually used in relation to a profession. In several cases, those two terms have been used interchangeably, and this, I argue, is due to the dominance of Western approaches, particularly those approaches which privilege the standardization of communicative practices in organizations in order to globalize them.

Additionally, references to professional and corporate environments are related to branding as a neoliberal avenue in the post-Fordist era. Derived from, and closely related to corporation, 'corporate' refers to norms, values, and general behavior associated with the former. This is an aspect of the study of organizations where Mumby (2015) argued

has typically been ignored by communication scholars but should be focused on to examine the implications of branding as a component of communicative capitalism. The brand is an important material aspect of an organization because it reflects its value and success, and this is the reason it is crucial to the analysis of neoliberalism.

Though participants did not use professional and corporate environment – or did not refer to them – interchangeably, they were used as though one depended on the other. That is, several of the participants made utterances that suggested that a corporate environment, like the one being nurtured at the NCA is inevitable for the performance of employees' professional duties, and vice versa. This was related to a number of issues including physical space, interpersonal relationships, the allocation of resources, and employees' physical appearance. For instance, when asked about whether employees have certain expectations for physical appearance, this is what Participant #1 said in response:

> I think we are expected to dress in a professional way. You can wear a shirt and a trouser, or African wear, or you can decide to wear a tie. I mean, we don't have any defined dress code, but it's implied that once you come in you have to dress formally. Yeah.

While there was no explicit reference to 'corporate,' we can extrapolate from the discursive strategies in the table above that this participant's use of "shirt and trousers", "tie" – which are objects – and "formally" – an adverb – that represent the dominant Western understanding of a corporate style outfit for such work environments (nomination) are the standards (predication) which must be adhered to (argumentation). This is because, as explained above, dressing professionally would mean the outfit requirement is stipulated by the participant's profession – which, in this instance, is not

the case. The reference to dressing "in a professional way" is, thus, a conflation of professional and corporate, because he was only referring to the organizational environment at NCA and not to his profession as an electrical engineer. In addition, without an explicit connection to any ideological/political positions, the references to these words could be linked to specific arguments by deconstructing their embedded persuasive nature. For instance, in the excerpt above, the statement "but it's implied that once you come in you have to dress formally" points to the taken-for-granted nature of the expectation. In this phrase, there is a claim to truth or objectivity that accompanies that use of "it's implied" to suggest that an employee does not need to be persuaded to dress formally because that is a truth of corporate environments. First, this assertion is made unreflectively because it echoes a taken-for-granted position, and this could be accounted for by observing the organizational structure the participant inhabits; the NCA positions itself as a corporate entity ("Corporate Statement" n.d.). In other words, the NCA, as part of its branding process identifies as a corporate entity, and this comes with the connotation that, to a significant extent, employees imbibe and enact norms and values which embody the contemporary meaning of "corporate." This is achieved through the communicative labor of employees who, like Participant #1 in the excerpt above, are required to promote this brand through everyday interactions with artifacts and symbols that reaffirm the organization's position as a corporate entity. According to Mumby (2015) and Arvidsson (2006) contemporary organizations use branding, not just as a cultural phenomenon but also a capitalist institution because it reflects the value of the organization.

Second, the above excerpt represents a particular Westernized/globalized perspective where organizational bodies are disciplined in terms of how they appear, and how they generally behave (see Fleming, 2012). Furthermore, this participant uses the phrase "we don't have any defined dress code, but…" to mitigate the force of this discipline. This mitigation strategy is used as a way of stating the participant's position on the dress code; that dress codes are an essential aspect of maintaining a corporate thus, a professional environment. To associate "professional" with dressing style is a predication strategy that enables an argument to be made that, to be considered a professional in this setting is to dress in this way. This strategy is designed to sanctify employees of White-collar jobs from others as a branding mechanism. As noted in Chapter 2, post-Fordist organizations enable and require employees to operate within taken-for-granted notions of Mumby (2015) implored "organizational communication scholars investigate branding practices as particular instantiations of the politics of common sense, and as reflecting particular practices of inclusion and exclusion" (p. 30).

In response to the same question, Participant #2 said, "Okay… there's no strict policy on outfits, but it's a corporate environment so as much as everybody can, we show up in corporate wear." Here, there is no mention of 'professional' but, similar to the previous excerpt, there is a connotation of the close relationship between – or conflation of – corporate and professional. This excerpt nominates similar objects as the previous one. That is, "corporate wear" is evoked as a given in a corporate environment. This object – or artifact, in this case – is characterized as having a certain direct connection with the standards of a corporate environment (predication). As such, the "corporate

wear" is used as an argumentation strategy based on the authority of globalized norms of a corporate environment.

Additionally, the use of "corporate" in this context shows the perspective from which the participant made the above utterance. This also means the perspective being evoked here is related to neoliberal capitalism because, as explained above, "corporate" is used both as a standardized cultural phenomenon, and as an economic symbol which influences the behavior of employees. "Corporate" is synthetically attached to the "profession" because it elevates the expected behaviors of employees in that setting to the level of professional qualifications or requirements. For instance, the following excerpt provides an example of how the expectations of a corporate setting may be equated with, and attached to the actual work professionals do.

> Anybody will see this guy who really wants to work and progress in a certain corporate world will find it very challenging in an environment like that, because I mean I didn't go to the office to do politics. I went there to work and, for my work to be recognized. That's right. So, if after doing all the work there's no recognition, or the recognition is given to someone else, automatically incentive is zero because it's natural. It's natural that if work done is not recognized, there's no incentive to work anymore (*Participant #8*).

In the above excerpt, the participant was responding to a follow-up question about some of the relational challenges of working at NCA. The participant nominates "corporate world" as a world where people like him (professionals) would like to work. His displeasure about the internal environment at NCA is rooted in his belief that "work" in the "corporate world" should be done without political interference, for instance. This political interference comes through the government and the ruling political party, because of the NCA's position as a state institution. In another excerpt, this participant

shared similar concerns in a response to a follow-up question about whether he had

enjoyed his 10years of working at NCA:

> It's had its ups and downs. I mean…initially, we had the opportunity to express more professional opinions about issues, and they were taken on board and the NCA was operating as such. But now, there are lots of political considerations and it's affecting the job. I mean…I'm sure I'd prefer moving on very soon because I can't work in an organization where there is a lot of political considerations. I'm a professional, I have to express my professional opinion, and I think that's the way it should go (*Participant #1*).

In both excerpts, the argumentation strategy is premised on a truth claim once again; that

politics, in that context, should not interact with work. Both participants were speaking

specifically about the internal party politics at play at NCA. The NCA, although it is

semi-autonomous is also controlled by the government. The Director-General – who is

also the Chief Executive Officer – is appointed by the President of the Republic of

Ghana. This means, other appointments and promotions are sometimes influenced by the

political leaning of individuals. This also means that the overall vision of the NCA as an

organization is influenced by political ideologies of the political party in power. In this

respect, the party in power – the New Patriotic Party (NPP) – whose flagbearer won the

2016 general elections, gets to steer institutions like the NCA in the direction of their

philosophy, which is to nurture a "property-owning democracy" (New Patriotic Party,

2016, p. iv).

According to the NPP's manifesto, the national interest is sought through the

provision of social interventions, protection of important material and symbolic cultural

artefacts, and the stimulation of economic growth through the provision of incentives for

private companies and corporations (New Patriotic Party, 2016). This also means that

from board members to the Director-General, and probably some key members of staff, employees would generally have to lean towards the NPP's political philosophy in order to be appointed. This philosophy, however, is one which seeks to further liberalize Ghana's economic – and by extension, cultural – landscape in an attempt to stimulate growth. Historically, the NPP has been the political party more likely to support privatization, for instance. Although the reference to a "lot of political considerations" by Participant #1 may not have been made to imply the above analysis, it helps explain the relationship among the politics, professional, and corporate environment in the micro-context. That is, the connection between, and conflation of professional environment and corporate environment is mediated by the politics of the local, and national context.

However, this context is inherently linked to the macro-context – the global context – by the use of "corporate world" first, as an artifact for linking the local to the global, and second as way of arguing for how work should be done. The appeal to approach and design work at NCA like a private corporation, is what Jin (2011) argued constitutes a means by which "the sovereignty of Global South nations and local cultures and economies are subordinated to the will of more powerful nations and corporations" (p. 666). The creation of a corporate environment, which according to several of the participants is directly related to a particular fashion style and modes of behavior reveal the nature of the recontextualization process. As previously explained, recontextualization is the process by which meanings are depersonalized and decoupled from their original contexts so they can be applied to other contexts. In this case, the use of "corporate" to describe how to dress for work, as is also exemplified by the following excerpt:

You can wear whatever you want to wear but it should be corporate. If it's not Friday, I don't think anyone would wear jeans and sneakers to go to the office. I mean, you know Ghana, how we do our things; formal. You should wear some formal office wear, then Friday, you wear anything (*Participant #9*).

The above excerpt was a response to a question about what freedoms NCA employees enjoy in their daily work. In addition to arguing the indisputability of corporate wear, this participant also states that Friday is the only exception to this rule. This argumentation strategy is, again, drawing its authority from the recontextualized norms of a corporate environment. For instance, in the US, many corporate organizations have 'casual Friday' polices where employees are allowed to deviate from the normal standards by wearing, what is considered casual outfits to work.

Also, in the last excerpt, the participant attaches the characteristics of the corporate standards described, to Ghana. His expectation that I know how things work in Ghana, and consequently, that such environments demand formal outfits, also illuminates the historical relevance of recontextualization in the conversation about organizational culture.

To this end, the argumentation strategy being utilized by the above excerpts seek to suggest that a professional environment is one where employees wear corporate outfits, prescribed by a dominant global understanding of corporate culture. This argumentation strategy is used to predict that participants' utterances aligned with neoliberal capitalist ideologies about management and corporate culture. As Guiso, Sapienza, and Zingales (2015) have suggested, "corporate culture acts as a constraint" for employees of a given organization (p.3). This argument is furthered by Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) who insisted that post-Fordist work structures enabled corporate

96

cultures to remain constrained by management demands while securing the collaboration of employees. In the above excerpts, this is exemplified by participants' admittance of the necessity of wearing corporate outfits in the context of the NCA.

World class means adhering to global standards

Another important discourse topic that was prevalent in the interviews was related to adhering to global standards in the (tele)communications industry. Several of the participants were keen to inform me about NCA's strict adherence to standards set by organizations such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). In response to a question about which organizations the NCA benchmarks in their work, Participant #7 had this to say:

> And we do it at the world level, at the International Telecommunications Union – ITU. It's an international body, it's a union body in charge of telecommunications. So, if you go to the UN website, the organizations – like UNICEF and stuff – ITU is also the body in charge of regulating the telecom industries – the radiospectrum and stuff. We go there, they set the agenda for the studies to be done. You know, what we are doing – the administering of the radiospectrum.

Through use of "body in charge of", the participant linguistically nominates the ITU as the governing body for the business of telecommunications among member countries. This includes setting the "agenda" and industry standards for member countries and their regulators. Therefore, the predication strategy in this excerpt characterizes the ITU as a 'global telecommunications regulator' the implication of which is that the ITU is the ultimate authority with regards to telecommunications standardization. This predication strategy is also used by Participant #10 who, in response to a question about what the 'global' means to him in the context of his work, said this:

Global trends always have an effect on what we do because as a regulator, the policies and directions where we go, do not emanate from us but come from the global trend. For example, in the year 2006, at a meeting that was attended at the ITU, they intended to go digital with broadcasting on the UHF. Now, everybody started pushing digital broadcasting.

Here, the participant, like in the previous excerpt, characterizes the ITU as the actor responsible for global trends in telecommunications. This leads to an implicit argument that, because the ITU meeting of 2006 decided to go in a certain direction with broadcasting, "everybody" – all member regulators – had to follow. Technically, the ITU is set up such that all member regulators – whose countries are also members of the UN – have an equal say on all matters and decisions, thus on agreed-upon standards. However, considering the historical context that Ghana is a formerly colonized developing country, its regulator, the NCA, would not have as much political clout at the ITU as would countries like the US or the UK. One implication therefore, is that the US and other developed countries have historically used institutions such as the ITU to assert neoliberal policies that ultimately help to open up other countries through the globalization of norms and standards of practice. This is sometimes done through training programs that the ITU itself holds for representatives of member countries, as exemplified by this excerpt:

I think they have this thing with ITU…you've heard of that? Yeah. And they normally go for workshops, training – there is a few people I know that will be going for training somewhere in August (*Participant #4*).

The above was a direct response to a question about what the 'global' means in the context of the work of the NCA. First, this participant equates 'global' in that context with the NCA's association with the ITU. That is, the argumentation strategy is the ITU

represents the NCA's link to the global which includes the fact that the former imparts global standards to NCA employees through training and workshops.

Harris (2014) traced the historical relationship between the ITU and its member regulators, particularly the mechanism the former used to assert global governance through the liberalization of national spaces. He argued,

> At times, international laws and the mechanisms of the ITU have been utilized by developed nations as means of maintaining power or protecting domestic interests in ways that would not be possible without an international regulatory author (pp. 12-13).

The 'global' in this context, therefore refers, on one hand, to the implications of global governance in the telecommunications industry. On another hand, the 'global' refers to the global capitalism which has been facilitated by global governance. Harris (2014) additionally argued that the drive, at the ITU level, to address the global digital divide has been led by developed countries and their corporations as a way of getting developing countries to open their borders as the expense of social and cultural issues. 'Global' then, unites the global governance issues which have been the subject of ITU deliberations for a long time, and its direct implications; the spread of global capitalism through neoliberalism.

Furthermore, achieving a world class status in communications regulation – which is a primary goal of the NCA – equates not simply to following ITU directions, but also to benchmarking the world class regulators themselves:

> So, that's what I see as global. The quality of service, quality of experience should be the same as any developed country. And the operation of the regulator too should be world class. I mean, it should be at par with any world class

regulator; OfCom, FCC, or any other regulator that's deemed as world class (*Participant #1*).

The argumentation strategy in this excerpt is drawn from the participant's perception of OfCom and the FCC – regulators of the UK and the US respectively – as world class regulators because they belong to developed countries. Scholars (Harris, 2014; Raboy, 2004) argue that this claim to world class regulator status is in line with ITU's global governance approach because they employ the same mechanisms of technical standardization and the exertion of their superior political and economic statuses to get developing countries to accept and even justify benchmarking processes. In this sense, being a regulator of a developed country, for this participant, is the most important because no other characteristic was referred to in this response. This is also exemplified by this response by Participant #4:

> I'm sure we all want to be like Europe. I think the ITU thing, I'm sure everybody would want to get something from them because they are the brains, and the reason is you have a lot of countries coming there and they share ideas, yeah.

Again, the benchmarking standard is set as European regulators – as a representative of developed countries - and that point is quickly made by the participant. However, she goes on to nominate the ITU as "the brains" of the telecommunications regulatory space. The argument for this is contained in the next half of that statement when she adds, "the reason is you have a lot of countries coming there and they share ideas." As mentioned above, the ITU is supposed to be an international platform where all member regulators contribute to the development of standards and policies. However, Pickard (2007) argued

that the ITU was not as multilateral and democratic as it promised to be because of its handing over of important policy decisions to private corporations.

Furthermore, being world class was not only important for the benchmarking of policies and regulations. It was also important for NCA to nurture a world class culture in order to achieve that status:

> I prefer – once you're employed – you don't need to come and they will be looking for a seat for you, a table or a desk for you. You come and you may even have to use your own personal laptop for a while, or they will refurbish another PC for you. I expect that once you're employed everything should be done. You can't be wondering…there's something going on for you, like everything has been done so you just start work. Yeah, that would be world class for me (*Participant #4*).

This participant was responding to a question about what the 'global' means in her work. After stating that 'global' means attaining world class status, she proceeded to add the above excerpt as an explanation of what world class means for her. For this participant, a qualification for world class status is found in what kind of resources an organization provides for their employees (predication strategy). The persuasive content of this excerpt is contained in the expectation that "once you're employed everything should be done." Though not present in this excerpt, this argument is linked to the assumption that world class organizations should nurture a world class culture, which includes the provision of the necessary resources needed for employees to do their work. Again, this can also be explained by how post-Fordism operates as a neoliberal mechanism because "value within contemporary capitalism is tied less to factories and machinery, and more to the ability of companies to communicatively create meaningful worlds within which social actors engage in processes of identity formation" (Mumby, 2015, p. 31). By repeatedly

invoking "world class" as a status, participants – and employees of NCA in general – are engaging such processes of identity formation. The post-Fordist era requires and relies on employees' construction of a common social world through their interactions with organizational artefacts. These artefacts, as seen in the excerpt above, could be local or global and may shape what people consider "world class" or otherwise. On one hand, the circulation of media images about what corporate settings in the US and Europe look like and, how their physical spaces are designed may be influential in this participant's view of what NCA's space should look like. On another hand, this participant had earlier informed me she had worked in the private sector and as such, her frustration with NCA could also be informed by her expectation that things should be done like they are in the private sector. This shows that the image of a world class organization, with respect to culture, is developed by exposure to both globalized and localized cultural images of a corporate setting. This is because the notion of a world class organization is developed through the recontextualization of organizational cultural norms and practices from one discursive context to another. Iedema (1999) argues that organizational processes of recontextualization tend to increasingly technologize with respect to both what they signify and their materialization (p. 49). Form a cultural materialist perspective recontextualization limits discursive possibilities and creates inequalities.

In the excerpts analyzed in this segment, the ideological positions of the participants in question could be said to conform to those of neoliberal capitalism because neoliberalism, argued Harvey (2007), does not only facilitate privatization, deregulation, and liberalization, but also enables the globalizing of norms, values, and beliefs in a given historical context. As I show in further analyses below, the globalizing

of norms and practices enables organizational cultures in contexts like the NCA to be constituted in similar patterns to those of their counterparts in Western countries due to the hegemony of Western discourses.

Teamwork is important but individual meritocracy is key

The NCA has identified six core values which guide their work. These are teamwork, accountability, consistency, trust, innovation, and transparency. These values are communicated on their website (NCA "Corporate Statement", n.d.), in their employee diaries, and designed on the wall in the main lobby of the NCA Tower in Accra. This gives some indication that, perhaps, these values are prescribed by management of NCA. Guiso, et al. (2015) identified several corporate cultural values among US American organizations, and among the top five were teamwork, and innovation, with teamwork being second on that list. This means, first, that for several US American organizations teamwork is a cherished value. This also means that given the context of the NCA's relationship and interactions with global media and organizational artefacts, these values may have been borrowed from other contexts – the US context, for instance. While, it is understandable that organizational values from success stories are replicated in other contexts, this study is more interested in the cultural implications of adopting them. More importantly, the cultural implications would stem from how these values are being conceptualized and how they shape the organizational landscape. This section analyzes teamwork which appeared to be an important topic of conversation for several of the participants.

In the following excerpt, the participant was responding to a question about the value of teamwork in his work:

I will say that everything that we do is teamwork. Because, you see, when the problem comes, it's given to a division and your boss will re-delegate it to you – the related Junior Officer. So, you do it. When you do it, it has to go through the same channel (*Participant #7*).

Teamwork is nominated as a core tenet of NCA's culture. It is seen as the process by which work gets done in the participant's division within the NCA. This participant uses the phrase "everything we do is teamwork" as an intensification strategy to stress the value of teamwork in his division. Although, literally not everything at NCA depends on teamwork, the intensification strategy is used to also reveal the persuasive character of the utterance; that teamwork is not simply a theoretical core value of the NCA but that it is practiced in everyday life. Following this, the same participant added the excerpt below to clarify his earlier statement about teamwork:

I mean, your immediate boss or your line manager will have to look through it – before we escalate it to the Deputy Director, then to the Director, before it gets to the DG. So, it's like a chain. So, whatever you do will be vetted along that chain. So that is the teamwork that I'm talking about, not that when a problem comes we sit around a table. No, no, no (Participant #7).

So technically, he is referring to individual work that has to go through a chain of command, and not a group of individuals working together simultaneously on a project, as is the traditional understanding of teamwork. This is an indication that the teamwork being discussed here is one done to fulfill a management requirement. So, although in the excerpt above, the participant's description does not conform to actual teamwork, it is framed as such. Salas, Shuffler, Thayer, Bedwell, and Lazzara (2015) defined teamwork as encompassing several elements including interdependence and similar goals. These elements are missing from the above excerpt since the participant clearly stated that his reference to teamwork does not imply sitting "around a table" to work together. More

interestingly, the fact that he frames this process of working independently as a teamwork means that his supervisor(s) agree with this notion of teamwork. This is because, I was made aware that employees of NCA are evaluated based on their ability to work in teams – meaning the process of meeting this requirement would have been communicated to all employees.

Additionally, in the above statement, although he nominates teamwork as an important cultural tenet at play at NCA, he is implicitly arguing that collaboration is not as valued as measuring individual's work through supervisory actions such as vetting. Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) described this phenomenon as one characteristic of the new spirit of capitalism, where although employees are only monitored from a distance, their work is constantly measured against prescribed standards. The vetting process also helps argue that instead of encouraging genuine collaboration, as prescribed, the current setup facilitates competition among employees. This also illuminates the tension between the neoliberal requirement of employee self-regulation and team-based work in organizations. Contemporary organizations simultaneously expect employees to work in teams and work independently while expecting high performance in both cases. However, the overall goal is to produce a meritocratic culture where individuals, whether they are working in a team or individually are expected to embody organizational values by following procedures (Agostinone-Wilson, 2006).

Participant #2, a manager in the Audit Division, also provides an example of this:

For my work, I will always have to work with someone because if I'm checking what you did. I know what you're supposed to do, so I'll have to ask you what you did. I'll have to check the paper trail of what you've done and compare with

what you were supposed to do. I have to talk to you about what you do, so for audits we are always working with someone.

Again, although the conversation was about teamwork, her reference to working with someone involves "checking what you did." Contrary to the traditional sense of teamwork, the participant is describing an evaluation process, where she ensures that employees are complying with the necessary requirements of their job.

Later in the conversation I asked Participant #7 where he thinks teamwork and NCA's other core values come from, he added:

> It is prescribed. Like I said, it is part of our core values. And even in our appraisal process at the end of – when we are being appraised, you are appraised on that stuff. I mean, is the employee a team player? So, you can't just say 'yes'. You give evidence as to why you think the person is a good team player and therefore the person should be assessed as such. So, even though I would say that it varies from division to division, the organization has a structure or a way of determining if, indeed, you are a team player (*Participant #7*)

The participant acknowledges that teamwork is a prescribed core value of the NCA and by virtue of that it is an important element of the organizational culture. Particularly, this argument is backed by a reference to teamwork as part of the individual employee appraisal process. It is interesting, however, that in describing the importance of teamwork, this participant helps analyze the perspective from which this argument is being made. That is, by invoking teamwork and revealing that individuals – not teams – are evaluated based on whether they "are a team player" the participant is emphasizing individual meritocracy, not teamwork, as a core value of teamwork. As discussed above, this is achieved by allowing employees to self-regulate by following organizational procedures. Another example of this is shown in the excerpt below:

We are evaluated based on the individual work but we also have a section on teamwork. Yes. We have about 6 core values – teamwork, accountability, consistency, trust, innovation, and transparency – and what happens is that during the evaluation period, you are evaluated on these things too. So, you need to give evidence of living these values (Participant #12).

The above was a response to a follow-up question about whether employees are evaluated based on individual work or based on the work they do in teams. While this participant explicitly states that individual work is evaluated, she was not clear about whether teamwork is evaluated in the same way. There is a requirement to work in teams – along with exhibiting the other core values – but it is the individual who bears the responsibility of showing how the teamwork contributed to his/her goals for the given period.

In fact, there were some participants who did not own teamwork as a prescribed core value at NCA. I asked a participant about what the expectations are for interpersonal relations with co-workers, and this was his response:

NCA interpersonal relations with others, I mean, I think we deal cordially amongst ourselves. So, I think, in that respect, the expectation is met. The only thing that maybe we need to work on is teamwork. Teamwork. The system doesn't encourage teamwork (*Participant #8*).

Although the question that prompted the above response did not refer to teamwork, the participant nominated teamwork as a value he thought was not being encouraged by the culture at NCA – but should be emphasized. When I probed further as to why he thought teamwork was deficient, he added, "Yeah, within the division and even inter-division…Each person or division wants to show supremacy – I am the best, I am the best." Not only is this participant criticizing the lack of emphasis on team work, he

argues that individual meritocracy is more prevalent. This is in contrast to the core values outlined by management of NCA.

Individual meritocracy as an ideological perspective is argued by Harvey (2007) and by scholars concerned with management and organizational practices (see Mumby, 2015; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007) as an integral element in the neoliberal capitalist imaginary. For instance, Mumby argued that with the emergence of post-Fordist management practices, the individual was made more important than any other element of the organizational process, because this posture was economically more beneficial. "Employees construct and manage (unstable) identities through communicative performance; in turn, organizations discursively construct company brands, workplace cultures, and measures of performance that employees must negotiate" (p. 25). Thus, while teamwork is espoused as an integral part of the culture of the organization, it is the responsibility of the individual to negotiate what that means since in this case the organization expects individual employees to simultaneously collaborate and compete with each other to the benefit of the former.

In addition to this, the profile of employees in the neoliberal order should include the ability to develop marketable 'soft' skills, including communication, and teamwork (Kubota, 2011). "These skills are supposed to make individuals competitive in the knowledge economy in which information-based activities involving technology and communication take precedence over physical labor" (Kubota, 2011, p. 249). These skills not only make employees competitive as representatives of their organizations, but also competitive within the same organizations. Therefore, as stated, teamwork is proposed as

a commodifiable skill and that is why, along with others, is identified as one of the core values of the NCA.

Strategies of Accommodation, Transformation, and Resistance

In this section of the chapter, I discuss the different strategies employed by participants in accommodating, transforming, and/or resisting neoliberal discourses. This is in line with the second research question as follows:

RQ2: What are strategies used by NCA employees to accommodate, transform and/or resist neoliberal discourses?

The analysis, therefore, is categorized into three different segments namely accommodation, transformation, and resistance. These strategies are examined in this study in order to show how participants operate within and between the forces – neoliberal capitalist forces – that influence them. That is, examining how these strategies are used provides a look into the dialectics of structure and agency with respect to how participants respond to neoliberalism at NCA. For instance, accommodation is used to explain the linguistic strategies participants used to, objectively and subjectively, show agreement with neoliberal practices, while resistance refers to those that are used to show disagreement with the latter.

Accommodation

Accommodation is a term used in this study to refer to the means by which participants linguistically defend, or express agreement with certain neoliberal policies, practices or procedures related to their work. DHA's principles of triangulation are employed here as well, to adequately combine the empirical data (interviews) with

concepts and theories of neoliberalism, and the background information (geographical and historical context) to show how participants respond to neoliberal organizational practices. This is important to help analyze the relationship (if any) between organizational culture and communications policies (discussed in the next section).

According to Clark (2004) one of the primary functions of neoliberalism, in its various forms, is to dissolve the public realm in the interests of the private. In this study, some participants' accommodation of neoliberal practices evoked the social and political differences – and implications – between the public and the private. In response to a question about the values and practices that constitute organizational culture at NCA, this participant responded as follows:

> And I don't blame them – I blame the whole system, the whole setup, the whole governmental sector. From the appointment of the Director-General to cleaner, this is flawed. And until the government sector starts looking at things the way the private sector works, I mean, it's not relevant (*Participant #8*).

This excerpt was part of a conversation on the participant's frustrations about the challenges he experiences with the culture at NCA. Previous to the above excerpt he had stated, "the culture is – you should have a godfather at NCA. You should be someone's baby, okay? That's right, someone's baby." In the former excerpt, he nominates the private sector as an object/sphere that represents a better alternative to the challenges he had described; the nepotism that hinders the career growth of some employees, particularly those who do not have "godfathers at NCA" (predication strategy). His argumentation strategy hinges on a critique of what he deems are the negative aspects of the culture at NCA, but those are the aspects of culture that facilitates his argument against organizational nepotism, for instance. Nepotism, because it points to a situation

which undermines meritocracy, seems the object of the participant's frustration in the second excerpt. However, this seems contradictory because nepotism often involves appointing people to certain positions without reference to their relative qualifications – like a father appointing his son as CEO of his private company. Therefore, using nepotism as an argument against public organizing seems contradictory. However, this participant may be employing this line of argument in general opposition to the perception that the public sector is rife with corruption; that nepotism is a corrupt practice which exists primarily in the public sector, although it is not exclusive to the public sector. It is, nonetheless, important to note that such contradictions are characteristic of the tension between structure and agency in organizational analysis because individuals' accommodation, or otherwise, of relatively enduring discourses may proceed in ways which may not always be predictable (Reed, 1997).

Furthermore, by saying "the whole system, the whole setup, the whole governmental sector" he applies an intensification strategy to emphasize the need for a cultural change – one that involves the switch to "the way the private sector works." Using that intensification strategy is an attempt to fortify his argument by exaggeration. That is, although the current environment at NCA may have its challenges, to nominate the "whole system" is to argue that it is failing and should, therefore, be replaced urgently.

While the participant's intention in the excerpts above is to argue against nepotism and how the "government sector" operates, the analysis reveals his accommodation of neoliberal ideals. In effect, as I show in other examples below, the use of the discursive strategies to accommodate neoliberalism is not always intentional or

111

subjectively strategic. Once again, this can be explained as a product of the structure-agency dialectic; people are not always intentional or even aware of the ideologies they accommodate.

While speaking about her tenure at the NCA so far, Participant #2, an assistant manager in the Audit Division who had been at NCA for a year, noted:

> It's new for me. So, it makes it a little challenging; I've always worked in the private sector, so being in the public sector, I want to say is exciting because the private sector is a little more rigorous. Yeah. You can have things done within minutes, unlike the public sector that everything is covered by a memo. You send mails and people will say we still want a memo. And so, it feels like 'can we work already and stop all these letters?'

Once again, there is a comparison of the public and private sectors. In this case, while the participant seems to criticize the private sector for being rigorous, her next statement valorizes that rigor. Based on the phrase, "you can have things done within minutes, unlike the public sector…" the persuasive intent is revealed by the participant's concern with getting things done quickly. There is also a reference to "work" in this excerpt, which sheds light on the concern for getting things done. In this case, getting "things done within minutes", could be read as getting work done quickly, since, work is the primary reason for being in the workplace. The argument therefore is that, the private sector better facilitates work than the public sector. That is, the private sector is more concerned with efficiency. This argument is corroborated by Kariithi and Kareithi (2007) who explained that efficiency is one of the argued benefits of privatization. The private sector is usually praised for making decisions quickly, avoiding bureaucracy, and curtailing waste with the view of making profit. While these are normally important for any organization, Kariithi and Kareithi suggested that they are not good enough reasons

112

to argue for the privatization of public sector organizations, because the latter serves a purpose which ideally goes beyond the individual interests represented by private corporations.

In another response, Participant #4, an assistant manager in the IT Division who was also in her second year as an employee at NCA, communicated a similar frustration with bureaucracy. She was responding to a question about some of the challenges she faces in her work, and was comparing NCA to previous organizations she had worked with in the past. She noted:

> No, I think…they were private organizations so…instantly it goes [through]. Whoever is in charge takes control of it and you don't have to follow up. But over here, you have to follow from the beginning till the end. Sometimes…it gets to a particular place and the thing vanishes so you would have to produce your copy. And they would ask you to go and start all over again, for one particular thing. Yeah, that's the bad part of it.

Similar to the previous comments, the argument is pointed at the need for the public sector to emulate the private sector in order to get work done more efficiently. In this particular excerpt, the participant points to bureaucracy as "the bad part of" working in the public sector.

In the excerpts above, the accommodation with neoliberal practices is analyzed by examining which ideological perspectives the participants' narratives align with. While the public in this context refers to public interest, the private carries an economic connotation in which entities are established by private people/corporations for the primary purpose of making profit, at least in the neoliberal capitalist sense. The NCA is a public institution established to protect the public interest by managing Ghana's

communications space. However, as Harlow, Berg, Barry, and Chandler (2013) argued,

in the neoliberal era

> Private sector managerialism came to be seen as a means of making the most of
public
> investment: that is, managerialism became the mechanism by which public
> services, such as social work, could become more economic, efficient and
> effective (p. 13).

The frustration with the public sector in the interview excerpts above, are specifically

related to what participants regard as barriers to the economic efficiency of the sector.

That is, anything that prevents work from getting done efficiently should not only be

urgently removed but should be replaced by the private sector alternative. According to

Harlow et al. this alignment with the private sector alternative has become dominant in

the neoliberal world mostly because neoliberalism enables the depersonalization of

managerial and organizational practices where performance, for instance, is measured in

specific ways, and policy is deemed to be devoid of politics.

Accommodation of neoliberalism also took the form of rationalizing choice,

flexibility, and competition among media and communications organizations in Ghana. In

the excerpt below, the participant, a deputy director of the Consumer and Corporate

Affairs Division, was responding to a question about how much progress the NCA has

made as a communications regulator. She spoke about Mobile Number Portability as one

of the most important interventions the NCA has made in the last few years which

represented how far they have come in their regulatory work:

> And you know, we need to give them the choice, it's a right to be given the choice
> to move from here to here…. They wanted to move to other networks. Maybe the
> network that they were on was very expensive, so it also gave them the flexibility

to move early, enjoy good quality of service, better prices, better promotions and packages (Participant #12).

The nomination of "choice" as a "need" and therefore the consumer's "right" is, according to Harvey (2007) one of the promises of neoliberalism. In neoliberal terms, flexibility, rights, and choice, all associated with freedom of the individual, are unfulfilled promises because the "debasement of the concept of freedom 'into a mere advocacy of free enterprise' can only mean…'the fullness of freedom for those whose income, leisure and security need no enhancing, and a mere pittance of liberty for the people, who may in vain attempt to make use of their democratic rights to gain shelter from the power of the owners of property'" (p. 183). Just as is seen around the world, the availability of multiple service providers, does not guarantee free choice, especially because they are providing the same options at similar costs to consumers. The real winners in this context are therefore the service providers who benefit from the liberalized market.

In addition to freedom, the excerpt above also alluded to competition among the service providers, which the participant argued, enables them to provide better services, "promotions and packages" to consumers. This was also exemplified in the following excerpt:

> That would also distort the market and it would also be an indictment on the regulator. Because they will realize that you are a regulator, you are supposed to ensure that there is sanity in the market, there's competition in the market, but you are encouraging this. Why is it so? (Participant #1).

This was a response to a question about professionalism. The participant, who is an engineer, was explaining how for instance, he could use his professional integrity to protect consumers by ensuring "there's competition in the market." His argument seems

to be hinged on the popular – neoliberal – notion that consumers are the winners when market forces are allowed to operate without manipulation. So, the participant's accommodation of this globally accepted idea is an accommodation of neoliberal capitalism which dictates that market forces should be allowed to operate freely. One implication of this is that people are stripped of social protections, which public sector organizations like the NCA are expected to safeguard. Another implication relates to the argument being made about structure and agency. This participant, although he linguistically accommodates neoliberal ideology may not necessarily be aware that he inhabits this structural environment – the neoliberal one that naturalizes the necessity for market-driven forces and competition. Therefore, accommodation in this instance could be seen as a means by which agency is exerted.

Transformation

Transformation, in this study, is defined as the means by which participants seek to linguistically move between the ambiguities of neoliberal practices. This definition is drawn from Mumby's (1998) use of the term to refer to "the ability of workers to engage in "discursive penetration" of the work culture, enabling them to limit the degree of "corporate colonization" or normative control to which they are subject" (p. 179). Hall (2011) in his study of Jamaican managers' discourses about leadership in indigenous contexts, explained that this transformation strategy is used to develop new ways of constructing organizational reality even with the dominant discourses. In this case, I analyze instances where participants use these transformation tactics as a means of asserting their agency despite the hegemonic cultural constraints presented by neoliberalism.

In the following excerpt, Participant #9 was speaking about which professional standards are used in his work and where those standards come from. He acknowledged that, in his work "the standards come from ITU. We have three wings…so the standard is from there and then it has to cascade down to all the regulators." In this excerpt, the participant nominates ITU and "standards" as the means by which the NCA is able to carry out its mandate. By admitting that the ITU is the body tasked with producing standards that guide the work of regulators like the NCA, this participant is implicitly accommodating the political economic, and cultural impulses that come with this standardization process. On the other hand, in the following excerpt, the same participant seems to resist the impact of the standardization process by mitigating their effects on the work of the NCA:

> But not all the parameters that they use can be used here in Ghana, because in Ghana you can't publish revenues. They wouldn't even give it to you – I mean, they would advise you don't publish revenues. So, what we can take, we take it, and then we also customize to suit our needs (Participant #9).

By providing the example of revenue publishing, the participant seeks to argue that while his work – and that of the NCA – depends on the standards provided by the ITU, employees of NCA, are able to exert some professional agency in the application of those standards.

In a similar excerpt, Participant #2 also noted:

> So, what it means is that if we beef up our processes, we beef up our work, our technical work, to meet the international standards, it makes my work flow better. I would say what usually hinders our work, or my work, not just me but I think for people in my work space in this part of the world, is sometimes some standards are unrealistic to implement because the thing doesn't exist. So, you

won't know how to apply, then it will look like you are the bad person but really you are following a certain rule that you have been asked to use to work.

In order to protect her professional integrity this participant's argumentation strategy is to admit that adhering to international "technical" standards is essential to improving the legitimacy of her work. However, she criticizes those same standards as unrealistic in some instances for people "this part of the world." This was done as a recognition for the fact that although she generally agrees to using those technical standards, they needed to be transformed in order to work in her context.

There were other instances where the transformation was related to other organizational issues apart from standards. For example, Participant #3, an employee in the Cybersecurity Division at NCA, recounted her experience working with people in different communities around the country when she was in the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Division;

> Our boss usually wants you to go and communicate with – not middle-class people – she wants lower class people because they are more likely to be cheated by the telcos or their service providers.

Here, the participant and her boss' concern for lower class people is in line with NCA's original mandate of providing "universal access to quality communications services for national development" (NCA "Corporate Statement", n.d.) This also reflects the general purpose of public entities like NCA; protecting public/social interest against those of private corporations. However, the same participant, had earlier in interview, defended the benchmarking of regulators like the FCC and OfCom, as well as the ITU in creating industry standards. Responding to a question about which entities the NCA benchmarks

she said, "if you are bringing equipment and it is approved by FCC or OfCom, you don't need to retest it to make sure, because those standards are high standards approved by the ITU." Her argumentation strategy is predicated on the supposed "high standards" of the FCC, OfCom, and ITU. Though it is not expressed in clear terms, the perspective from which she makes this argument could be analyzed as one of neoliberal capitalist ideology. Although, there is a contradiction between this participant's alignment with the public interest and her defense of neoliberalism, there is a simultaneous accommodation and resistance of neoliberal practices, whose social and political economic implications are described as follows.

First, Jin's (2011) analysis of US cultural policy in the global film market helps explain the role of standardization which neoliberal globalization, with its attendant free-market forces facilitates. The UN's ITU, although it is an international association of regulators and is thus not officially a representative of any specific country, represents a conduit for disseminating neoliberal norms and practices through standardization of global telecommunications. Pickard (2007) added to this argument by explaining that standardization emanating from the ITU is yet another neoliberal project that seeks to "[favor] the operations of transnational corporations over social imperatives" (p. 119). He traces a historical account of the tension between primarily Western state-corporation alliances, on one hand, and developing countries and civil society groups, on another hand, and implicates the ITU for being susceptible to neoliberal practices and disseminating those practices through its members. As explained in chapter two, standardization of norms and practices across geographical and cultural boundaries represent a primary means by which recontextualization is achieved. Drawing on Iedema

and Wodak (1999), recontextualization in this sense allows the production of depoliticized and technologized meanings to cascade from the ITU, for instance, into cultural and organizational spaces like that of the NCA.

Second, the interview excerpts from this section also show the constant struggle for control over organizational forms and meanings. That is, as Mumby (1998) explicated, organizational members simultaneously, "identify with the organizational culture and develop a healthy cynicism toward it" (p. 180). For instance, in the last excerpt above, the participant's concern for lower class people because of their vulnerability to being cheated, is in contrast with her support for the ITU's high standards, because supporting the ITU's standardization projects is, by extension, supporting the interests of private corporations over public needs. In the same manner, while Participant #2 above, shows support for international standards produced by bodies like the ITU, she voices her displeasure at any attempts to force those standards on organizations without regard to context.

Resistance

The concept of resistance to neoliberal practices in this study refers to how participants argumentatively oppose specific norms, which upon analysis, are deemed to contribute to neoliberalism at NCA. As explained in the section on accommodation above, participants may or may not be aware of the implications of the resistance moves because people may be operating within dominant ideological structures which may not be apparent to them. Therefore, resistance here may occur either intentionally or unintentionally. Resistance is also theorized as any narrative that seeks, not only to challenge but also to change the dominant understanding of a specific organizational

practice. Several of the participants voiced their disagreement with certain neoliberal

organizational practices, which they argued intruded into their personal and professional

preferences. Participant #1, when responding to a question about if he takes work home,

lamented:

> If there is an urgent project then you may have to work after-hours, or sometimes
> you may have to go continue the work at home. But bringing work home is not a
> freedom, it's a distraction (*Participant #1*).

The first sentence of the excerpt above seems to nominate work as the natural and

inevitable part of organizational life which must be completed, regardless of how long it

takes, or where it is done. Sturges and Guest (2004) noted that this situation is

symptomatic of contemporary organizational expectations that require employees to work

longer hours, due both to incidences of downsizing and the increase in the intensity of

work, particularly for higher level employees. However, this participant's argument is

presented in the second sentence, where he reveals that as much as work needs to get

done, bringing work home – which is his private space – does not constitute a freedom.

The participant's use of the word "distraction" is a synonym for 'intrusion' into his

private time. Treating work from home as a "distraction" is in direct resistance to the

neoliberal ideology which Deetz (1992) termed the colonization of everyday life. This

neoliberal imperative is born and encouraged by post-Fordist management principles in

which freedom and individuality are encouraged but only in the service of organizational

needs. Therefore, individuals in the post-Fordist context are constrained to see

"themselves, others, and their relationships to work and other institutional forms… in

terms of their potential as exchange value" (Mumby, 2015, p. 24).

The participant's comments above also remind us of an important tension between structure and agency, in that, he seems to acknowledge the fact that the organizational environment he inhabits is responsible for the "distraction" of working from home. His act of resistance here, therefore, is done subjectively because although he accepts the reality of the situation, he resists it by labelling it a distraction. This shows that agency, in relation to the structural reality of organizations, may be exerted regardless of whether individuals are fully aware of ideological structures and their implications.

In another excerpt, Participant #8 reiterates his concern for the lack of teamwork in his work.

> The only thing that maybe we need to work on is teamwork. Teamwork. But I don't blame all this on staff. The system doesn't encourage teamwork…Because the inter-division itself is, if you go to that level, then it's a headache because each division wants to show supremacy – I am the best, I am the best – and once that is there, forget about teamwork (Participant #8).

He was responding to a question about his relationship with fellow employees within his division at NCA. Despite his knowledge that teamwork is a part of the core values of NCA, he still believes the "system" – which could be read "culture" – does not encourage it. Here, teamwork is characterized as an important aspect of his, and his colleagues' work. However, it is lacking because "each division wants to show supremacy." His argument, therefore, is based on the assumption that the inter-division competition discourages teamwork. This is a resistance move because, as previously discussed, neoliberal policies replace genuine teamwork/collaboration with competition among employees as a means of maximizing the value of labor. Mumby (2015) explained that one of the processes that characterize the post-Fordist organizational form is an emphasis

on "skilled and autonomous "knowledge worker" (p. 24) while simultaneously encouraging work teams to reflect the development of flexibility in the labor process. The individual employee then is constantly torn between the demands of work teams and the expectation of individuality. In this case, employees at the NCA are evaluated individually – that is, based on their individual, not team performance – and as such, would feel the need to be competitive rather than collaborative. This is the frustration of Participant #8 when he notes, "…and once that is there, forget about teamwork." He argues that teamwork is being sacrificed on the altar of competition amongst employees and the culture needs to change in that respect.

Implications

In this chapter, I have analyzed how participants of the study linguistically describe the cultural environment at NCA. First, participants' use of language to describe how the organizational culture is, or should be, references neoliberal ideals because they are evoked as natural aspects of organizations such as the NCA. This is due to participants' exposure to several enduring discourses – including globalized norms and practices – which seek to, for instance, standardize and harmonize the organizational environment as a capitalist institution. That is, the organization encourages and requires its members to engage in several practices that help brand the organization as a specific type.

Additionally, the analysis above has examined the process and impact of the recontextualization process. For instance, when participants describe what a world class environment/organization is, they do this with images of certain contexts in mind. Not only is recontextualization a cultural phenomenon that, in our case, globalizes

organizational meaning, it also produces discursive closure. That is, recontextualization limits the discursive opportunities available to people to transform organizational process.

However, through the analysis of accommodation, transformation, and resistance strategies, I have reiterated the tension in the relationship between the global and local, subjective and objective, structure and agency. Participants linguistically showed how they relate to certain discourses by using one or a combination of the above strategies in response to neoliberal practices at NCA. An important insight from this analysis is that organizational reality is constructed through the tensions mentioned above; objective structures exist, and they shape organizational culture by encouraging common sense practices, although individuals, in sometimes complicated ways, operate within the spaces in these structures to exert their agency. Again, further insight about agency from this analysis, drawn from the work of media scholars like Van Dijck (2009), illustrates that agency is a precarious concept which has no binary configuration. That is, on the one hand people can assert their agency by using any of the above strategies to accommodate, transform, or resist organizational norms and practices. On the other hand, agency may seem like an illusion when it is directed by the structural forces, which in this case includes neoliberal ideology.

CHAPTER 5: ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The Interconnectedness of Colonialism, Culture and Communications Policy

As discussed in the introductory chapter – Chapter 1 – the sub-Saharan African region occupies a unique position in the world, politically, economically, and culturally. Many of the nations of the region, due to colonialism and capitalist globalization, have for instance, similar economic circumstances; circumstances that make the region vulnerable to exploitation and marginalization. Ghana, as a sub-Saharan African country, is not exempt from this situation because of colonialization by the British, and because of its association with global institutions like the UN – which is the parent organization for the ITU. Due to the hegemonic nature of both colonialism – morphed as neocolonialism in the contemporary discussion – and neoliberalism, it is important to include in the examination of organizational culture a substantial analysis of the impact of the aforementioned factors, which both manifest as globalized forces. More importantly, because of NCA's position as a regulator and policy-maker, it is also important to discuss the connections between organizational culture and communications policy in Ghana.

In this chapter, I analyze two related aspects of the organizational culture at NCA. First, as previously discussed, the organizational culture of the NCA is significantly influenced by global neoliberal norms and practices through discourses of individualism and professionalism. In this section of the chapter, I analyze how the production and consumption of neoliberal discourses – which, in turn, influences organizational culture – are reflected in communications policies in Ghana. Second, I analyze if, and how organizational norms and practices are influenced by colonial structures. Although, as

mentioned earlier, I deem neoliberalism to be a historical continuum of colonialism, I analytically distinguish them in this analysis based on the explicit connections of Ghana – and the NCA, in effect – to both of these globalized structures. For instance, although both neoliberalism and colonialism are connected to, and appropriated by the same globalized structures, they are separated by different historical events. Said (1978) argued that colonialism was concerned with a defined condition; one in which nations of the West – the colonizers – were physically connected with the 'other' – the colonized until formal colonization ended. Therefore, according to Said, although the (neo)colonial mentality is manifested politically, culturally, economically, and militarily in contemporary global relations, it is important to note colonialism's direct effects on those countries who experienced it as a result of direct contact with the colonizer.

In this respect, I distinguish between (neo)colonialism and neoliberalism based on Ghana's specific position as both a former British colony, and as an African country experiencing neoliberalism through the hegemony of countries/entities like the US and the ITU. That is, the discussion of colonialism is with respect to Ghana's position as a former colony, whereas the analysis of neoliberalism is with respect to Ghana's existence 'developing country' in a global environment that is dominated by capitalist ideology. The justification for discussing the two research questions in the same chapter is to situate the discourses of neoliberalism, and those of colonialism within the same theoretical realm, nonetheless. That is, both neoliberalism and colonialism could be analyzed as different chronological points on the same historical continuum, despite the differences outlined above. Neoliberalism represents a capitalist response to Keynesianism and the general economic failures of post-World War II policies (Harvey,

2007). However, operationalized in the non-Western world, neoliberalism is occasioned and maintained by imperialist ideologies that position Africa, for instance, as a dumping ground for superior Western ideology.

Therefore, both neoliberalism and colonialism are cultural, economic and political projects sworn to the service of empire (see, Allen, 2001). In this sense, a cultural materialist perspective allows me to circumscribe neoliberalism and colonialism as material productive processes that have implications for, in this case, organizational culture at NCA. That is, both colonialism and neoliberalism have a cultural function. However, this cultural function is not simply symbolic but significantly material because through them the production of the history of modernity was dominated by the West. Consequently, dominant discourses about how society functions, in general, are significantly controlled by the West in relation to the non-West. Additionally, as explained in Chapter 2 above, it is important to note the role of colonialism in maintaining neoliberalism as a cultural, and political, economic phenomenon. This happens because colonialism provided certain 'tools' like language – in the case of Ghana, the English language – which is the conduit by which dominant discourses are disseminated in contemporary organizational settings.

Dialectic Tensions: Communications Policy and the Production/Consumption of Organizational Culture

As an assumption, this study projects that NCA's important position as a regulator and policy-maker in Ghana's communications space also means that the organizational culture impacts the nature of their regulatory and policy work, in much the same way as the reverse happens. That is, on one hand, the norms, beliefs, and practices that guide the

day-to-day functioning of NCA as an organization, are assumed to significantly influence policy. This is because, as examined in the previous chapter, organizational culture evolves from particularly localized and globalized perspectives, and those perspectives are likely to be carried over to the NCA's regulatory and policy functions. On the other hand, the policies could be the influencing factor in organizational culture at the NCA.

From a cultural materialist point of view, it is important to examine the contradicting public/private, social/economic, local/global tensions that produce and shape organizational culture. As a consequence of NCA's position as a communications regulator of Ghana, I argue that it is exposed to contradicting discourses. Example, neoliberal globalization enables the liberalization, deregulation, and privatization of Ghana's communications landscape. These phenomena, scholars (Craig & Cotterell, 2007; Harvey, 2007; Pickard, 2007) argue have the tendency to effect important changes that "can be linked to a neoliberal political economic system that favors the operations of transnational corporations over social imperatives" (Pickard, 2007, p. 119). Pickard also argued that public/private tensions exist in the relationship between global communication governance whose proponents are mostly developed countries from the West and their corporations on one hand, and communication rights advocated by developing countries and civil society groups.

In the following analysis, I provide an examination of how communications policy and organizational culture are related through an analysis of the NCA's main policy documents; the Electronic Communications Regulations (ECR) of 2011, and the National Communications Authority Act of 2008, in conjunction with the personal interviews. I use these documents, in addition to the personal interviews, for analysis

because they are the main regulatory and policy documents that guide the work of the NCA. The assumption is that by looking at regulations and policies an insight into organizational culture will be gained, and vice versa. This is because regulations and policies are reflective of what decision-makers deem important and worthwhile. Bacchi (2000) suggested that policy makers, in doing their work, go through a meaning making process that is drawn from certain structures that help justify the decisions made. The ECR, for instance, is the binding document that highlights in detail, the regulatory functions of the NCA. The National Communications Authority Act of 2008 is a legislative document approved by parliament that outlines the justification for, and the legal authority of the NCA. I argue that, as afar as NCA is concerned, the regulations and policy direction are informed by organizational culture. The following research question will be analyzed in this chapter:

RQ3: In what ways do the production and consumption of neoliberal discourses occur? How does the production and consumption of these discourses affect media and communications policy in Ghana?

Policy as a Product of Discourse

As suggested in the section above, an important orientation to organizational culture and policymaking this study takes is one where analysis of discourse plays a pivotal role. In order to conceptualize and analyze how organizational culture is constituted or how it shapes policymaking, there needs to be a focus on the meaning-centered nature of the process; both organizational culture and policymaking are significantly products of discourse, albeit in a cyclical manner, where the latter is also influenced by culture and policymaking. This assumption could be traced back to

Bakhtin's (2010) treatise on language and discourse in which he contended that language – and discourse, which results from language use – should always be viewed in relation to context. This brings into focus the concepts of interdiscursivity and intertextuality, with respect to organizational culture and policymaking. Consequently, contemporary discourses, according to Bakhtin, are always connected to both past and future ones – that is, they are interdiscursive – and should therefore be contextualized as such. The analysis in this section, is therefore, focused on the nature of NCA's regulations and policies as discourses. As Bacchi (2000) stated, this is the case because "'social problems' or policy problems get 'created' in discourse" (p. 48). What eventually becomes policy is the result of how the 'problems' are perceived, and as such from what positions their 'solutions' are proffered.

Although not explicitly stated on the NCA's official website, the ECR of 2011 is, on inspection, an update of the National Communications Regulations (NCR) of 2003. According to the official website the NCR of 2003 were made "in exercise of the powers conferred on the Board of National Communications Authority under section 41 of the National Communications Authority Act 1996 (Act 524)" (NCA Regulatory Framework, n.d.). Since board members, apart from the Director General, are not regular employees of the NCA, the assumption is that these regulations are the result of work done by the regular employees in the various divisions, as evidenced by the following excerpt from interviews: "Okay. So, we deal a lot with the policies. Our engineers, technical, finance, everybody comes together. These [policies] are put together. It goes through the board, it's approved" (*Participant #2*). In another excerpt, this participant responding to a

question about the policy work the NCA does, sheds light on the process policies go through before being finalized:

> If I understand you perfectly, the policy arm of telecommunications is the Ministry of Communications. We can also recommend – the NCA – can recommend some policies that we have learned from other places that are working. So, it's a reversible thing. It's not only NCA that proposes or puts forward policies, the ministry also sometimes uh...But in making the policies the Ministry of Communications depends on the NCA for data, and it is based on the data that they can also make some well-informed decisions that bring about changes in policies. (*Participant #9*).

Although the Ministry of Communications is the policy wing of the government in relation to media and communications, the NCA, as the technical wing is heavily involved in shaping policy as well. Hence, the NCA is not only the most important institution in terms of media and communications regulation, but it is also a foundational one for policymaking in the sector. Additionally, it can also be inferred from both excerpts above that the process of policy formulation, of which the NCA is involved, is a discursive one. That is, by nominating "comes together" as part of the process which leads to policy formulation, Participant #2 sheds light on the importance of discourse for policy making. Furthermore, in the same excerpt, Participant #2 characterizes the "engineers, technical, finance, everybody" as key players in this process; meaning that these categories of employees engage in several interactions that lead to what is crystalized as regulations and policies.

Again, in the comment from Participant #9 above, the reference to "well-informed decisions" provides even more information about the nature of the discursive process described above. As was discussed in the previous chapter, discourse in organizations like the NCA is significantly shaped by globalized norms and practices within the media

and communications industry. Participant #9 affirms this by stating that sometimes NCA's polices are "learned from other places." To this end, information about what is important, and even necessary in the industry are partly determined by global governance norms. Therefore, it can be inferred that Participant #9's characterization of policy making as the result of "well-informed decisions" is likely to be an affirmation of decisions made at the ITU or by other regulators from whom the NCA benchmarks it operations. For Bacchi (2000) this is problematic not because policy should not be seen as a product of discourse, but because dominant discourses limit what is conceivable; they do not only provide solutions to problems, but they have a way of creating problems that may not necessarily exist in a given context and offering solutions to them.

In yet another excerpt this participant affirms the policy responsibility of the NCA:

> You know now cybercrime and cybersecurity is a big, big issue in Ghana and the government is really committed to mitigating it kind of, I mean with policies. We're now starting to, we are in the drafting stage of writing policies and things like that (*Participant #3*).

The reference to "we" in the above points to employees of the Cybersecurity Division of the NCA. The participant admits to being a part of the policy making process by contributing to "drafting" documents. This is despite the fact that there is nothing on both the NCA's website and in the documents reviewed that explicitly identifies it (the NCA) as a policy institution. Perhaps, the lack of formal information about NCA's policy responsibilities is due to the fact that the Ministry of Communications is the official government of Ghana policy wing for media and communications. Another possible reason is that the NCA has been positioned as a semi-autonomous organization with the government of Ghana having partial control.

The Authority is a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal, and may sue and be sued in its corporate name…The Authority may for the performance of its functions acquire and hold movable and immovable property and may enter into a contract or any other transaction (National Communications Authority Act, 2008, p. 3).

This confirms the semi-autonomous nature of the NCA; though it is formally a public sector institution setup by parliament, it has been given the authority to stand on its own, particularly in its day-to-day operations and in its interactions with other corporate entities. It is therefore, important to recognize that NCA's conferred status as a "body corporate" has several implications for its internal cultural environment as well as its institutional positioning within the local and global context. The NCA is independent of the government of Ghana in its day-to-day operations. However, it is semi-autonomous because the Director-General of the NCA is appointed by the president of Ghana. In addition, the NCA reports regularly to the Ministry of Communications as its sector ministry.

With the above said, Participant #3's excerpt also points to the discursive nature of the policymaking process. Her use of "we are in the drafting stage of writing policies" supports a subsequent comment where she described this process as emanating from research of other institutions' work. In response to a question about whether her work as a researcher in the Cybersecurity Unit directly affects the Ghanaian landscape she said, "Yes, because the research is going to be translated into policy. So, eventually, yeah, that's what's supposed to do." At each stage of the process described by this participant, there is a series of activities involved. For instance, "translating" in this case may be referring to how information gathered from research is juxtaposed with and converted to

the demands of Ghana's communications landscape – in specific relation to cybersecurity. At this level, policymaking is influenced by global trends. However, NCA's status as a public institution means that political considerations would be at play even in the translation of this research. Example, different political parties make different promises to citizens in election campaigns and these are taken into consideration when the NCA needs to make policies or regulations. Therefore, part of the argument being made in this policy-as-discourse section is to reiterate the notion that policymaking is a series of steps where individuals involved in decision-making sit down to intently discuss what is needed in a given context. There are discursive forms, global and local, that determine what gets defined as a problem and what gets ignored. In the next section, I analyze the importance of paying attention to NCA's policy and regulatory provisions as a way of understanding what influences its culture.

Public/Private Arrangements Perpetuate a Neoliberal Agenda

Briziarelli (2011) argued that contrary to a widely shared opinion, the state does not play a negative role in neoliberalism. This refers to the notion that neoliberalism's advocacy for free markets, deregulation, and privatization is an advocacy for states and governments to desist from interfering in economic affairs. However, he insisted that "neoliberalism relies heavily on institutional/political forces much more than on an unregulated market to realize its objectives" (p. 7). This is primarily because states act as the arbiters for economic arrangements, for instance, in privatization efforts.

In the case of Ghana, for example, the state is expected – mostly by external forces – to actively interfere by making policies that decimate the welfare system, and support privatization, and deregulation. In the case of the NCA, regulations and policies

play an important role particularly in facilitating the privatization of pubic interests. That

is, because it is a state institution, it is required to seek the public interest above all else.

However, as I analyze below, Ghana, like many countries in the developing world has

been subject to global capitalist forces which compel it to institute policies that advance

private interests at the expense of public interests. The NCA is one such institution that,

as I show, helps promote this agenda.

According to the ECR, one of the most important functions of the NCA is the

protection of public interest through proper management of Ghana's telecommunications

resources. This is exemplified in the following statement:

> In furtherance of principles of universal access and service each operator of an
> electronic communications network or provider of electronic communications
> services to the public shall, subject to the terms of its license, (a) provide and
> extend the services of the operator or provider to the entire geographical market
> for which it is licensed including rural and remote parts of its geographical market
> and other areas of low population density (Electronic Communications
> Regulations, 2011, p. 5).

In the above, the NCA public interest function is to ensure "universal access" of

telecommunications services without discrimination with regards to geographical

location. This is to ensure that the private companies who receive licenses to provide

services share the responsibility of seeking the public interest first. Particularly because

access to broadband and other digital communications services in rural areas is a big

issue even in the developed world (see Horrigan, 2018), it is essential for the NCA to

make the above statement to communicate its commitment to the public, for whose

service the former was established. Therefore, to assert that licensed communications

operators provide services to "rural and remote parts of its geographical market and other

areas of low population density" is crucial to ensuring the public interest is served. In

another example below the ECR stresses the NCA's commitment to prioritize the public interest:

> The provision of communications services to the general public shall have priority over the provision of private communications services…The Authority shall bear this principle in mind in (a) the grant of a license under the Act, (b) the allocation or assignment of frequencies, and (c) matters in which the Authority has to allocate a limited resource between the needs of public and private communications services (Electronic Communications Regulations, 2011, p. 7).

Evidently, through the ECR, the NCA is required to keep public interest at the center of all its decisions including the granting of licenses, and the allocation of frequencies. This is expected, because the NCA is legally required – per parliamentary mandate – to function as a public institution.

In serving the public interest, however, the NCA works with private companies who are granted licenses to operate in Ghana. This arrangement introduces a contradiction in NCA's pursuit of public interest.

> The fusion of contradictory discourses of public and private within civil society suggests that it is not as much an inversion of state–civil society relations, but a new equation
>
> between public and private interests that is being formulated (Kamat, 2004, p. 158).

Therefore, the inevitable pursuit of private interests by private companies in the media and communications industry, I argue, is condoned and even facilitated by NCA's own organizational goals as shown in the excerpt below. Briziarelli (2011) added that neoliberalism ideologically seeks to naturalize class-based interests and "at the practical level attempts to instrumentalize public institutions to conserve the material interests of this restricted social group" (pp. 8-9). This also has implications for the organizational culture at NCA since in a political economic sense the goals of an organization influence

what is valued, and what is practiced. That is, to put it simply, culture is what people do, and how they do it. As has been argued in the previous chapter, while the organizational culture at NCA is not wholly determined by globalized neoliberal norms and practices, it is important not to ignore the influence of neoliberalism. In fact the link between organizational culture and communications policies at NCA is constructed by their common connection to neoliberalism. From both the interviews and policy documents reviewed, neoliberalism is the common denominator because in both data sets there is an adherence to certain neoliberal principles – like the protection of private economic interests. For example, in the following excerpt, the ECR regulations insist on safeguarding the interests of private operators/providers in order to stimulate competition:

> An operator who owns or controls an electronic communications network or other essential facility on which other competitors depend for the efficient provision of their services, or who has a dominant position in a geographical market specified in its licence, shall not resort to conduct or practices that unfairly put at a disadvantage rival operators or that are calculated to keep out competition (Electronic Communications Regulations, p. 6).

The above excerpt from the ECR uses nomination strategies to identify "competitors" and "competition" as justification (argumentation) for protecting private organizations from others who may have a "dominant position." Additionally, "competitors" and "competition" are characterized as inevitable elements in the market-driven communications industry, although the NCA is a public sector organization. In this section of the ECR the decision to ensure competition has several implications, particularly in terms of neoliberalism. First, competition usually refers to the valorization of economic benefits above all else (Clark, 2004). Although in the above excerpt there is no mention of private economic benefits the context implies it. The invocation of "market" – also an argumentation strategy – is further indication of the economic

reference intended and particularly important for analyzing the purported role of the state; that is, to invoke a market logic is to affirm the NCA – part of the state apparatus – does not intend to meddle. Second, the decision to discourage unfair conduct or practices is in line with the neoliberal arrangement of public/private partnerships where an important national resource like frequency is allocated to private firms for the purpose of profit, as is explained by Participant #2 below:

> As far as using the natural resource frequency, it falls under our purview. We're supposed to regulate that space so that it's not chaotic. We're supposed to make sure that frequency – it's one of the most important resources of any country. It's a very…it's like gold in the air. If managed properly, the country should be able to tap a lot from that area whilst keeping it in check.

First, the reference to frequency as a resource and the subsequent use of the metaphorical "gold in the air" to describe it, indicates that as an employee, this participant believes the NCA should monetize by tapping "a lot from that area." This belief is commonplace and is derived from the neoliberal justification for private economic interests. More importantly, it provides yet another example of how the state facilitates private interests by justifying how private expansion would benefit the public. In the above excerpt from the ECR, it is important to note that "competition" also refers to international competition; the phenomenon which justifies the opening of local borders to external non-governmental and intergovernmental interests as a way of stimulating economic growth. Scholars have argued that there is a cultural cost to this opening of borders; the ICT landscape has successfully removed cultural frameworks and governments have become the facilitators of such arrangements (Harris, 2014; Pickard, 2007).

Second, the participant's reference to the management of frequency because of its economic value confirms some scholars' (Clark, 2004; Harvey, 2007; Kamat, 2004)

analyses about deregulation as one of the most important elements of neoliberal capitalism. In Ghana, for instance, the NCA, as a public institution is set up to primarily serve as arbiter for the communications industry; they provide the legal authority to operate without actually interfering in day-to-day activities. So, while the ECR categorically states that NCA's oversight of the private companies is to solely ensure that the public interest is protected, Pratt (2004) argued that public-private arrangements produce cultural hybridization, because their goals are simultaneously private and public. This argument is furthered by Schuster (1998) who argued that in contexts where there is a trend towards privatization of public interests, there needs to be more of a focus on the hybrid product that results, rather than the creation of a purely private entity. He suggested that privatization is a cultural phenomenon which is connected to the structure of the organization – thus, would have direct implications for organizational culture because the structure of the organization is shaped by its beliefs, norms, and practices. For instance, in telecommunications, there are no longer any state-owned companies in Ghana after the sale of Ghana Telecom to Vodafone in 2008. This was a consequence of the privatization efforts by then President John Kufuor's government. The dominant justification for privatization was that government agencies and institutions are not as efficient and as profitable as private ones. In this context, privatization is argued to be more beneficial to the tax payer. Consequently, institutions like the NCA which have regulatory oversight of the industry are required to still protect the public interest in conjunction with the Ministry of Communications, and the private companies licensed to operate in Ghana. So, the NCA's mandate to protect the public interest will, for instance, simultaneously evoke support for private interests, because competition, for instance, is

seen as crucial for innovation which in turn spurs economic growth and development. Therefore, to pursue an agenda that encourages competition would be seen as beneficial to the general Ghanaian public interest. However, the competition being referred to here corresponds with the neoliberal perspective, as is seen in the excerpt below:

> In furtherance of the principles of fair competition and transparency in the operations
> of electronic communications, any transfer of shares, merger or acquisition of a
> communications entity shall be subject to the prior written approval of the Authority (Electronic Communications Regulations, 2011, p. 6).

Once again, the goal of safeguarding fair competition is nominated, and is characterized as essential for ensuring big companies do not take advantage of the public by entering into economic arrangements which may engineer consolidation or even create monopolies. The argumentation strategy here is made overt by the phrase, "principles of fair competition and transparency," to appeal to the common-sense impulses of people, since privatization, for example, is largely associated with stimulating economic growth. In the context of this study, this has an important implication. While competition, in and of itself, may be a helpful concept, the neoliberal perspective makes it problematic because it limits the possibilities for conceptualizing "fair competition." This means neoliberal forces shape the idea of competition by organizing its "principles" to produce discursive closure. At the same time it is evident that by this mandate, the NCA's regulatory framework also promotes private interests since the former does not regulate the latter beyond the provision of licenses and the terms associated with that relationship. In effect, the NCA facilitates both public interests and private interests.

Most important to my analysis, however, this ambiguous relationship is further complicated by the tension between the social and the economic realms. On one hand, the NCA is mandated to protect the public interest because governments, through their agencies and institutions, are contracted to citizens to provide social services and protections (McGuigan, 2005). Although the provision of social services and protections by government usually contradicts the resort to economic valorization, Clark (2004) argued that they depend on each other to thrive. On another hand, this situation prompts the further development of the relationship between the local and the global. This is because, neoliberal globalization, for instance, has a way of localizing the global and globalizing the local. The NCA's many relationships with both local and global media and communications organizations exposes it to neoliberal practices which, I argue, influences its organizational culture. Particularly, the NCA's relationship with international organizations like the ITU introduces the phenomenon of global governance which several scholars (Kamat, 2004; Raboy, 2004; Wade, 2002) have argued extends the reach of neoliberal globalization to these territories. These scholars define global governance to be a phenomenon characterized by technological convergence, standardization, and globalization, which have implications for political, social, and cultural lives of people as analyzed in the next section.

Organizational Culture Is What We do And How We Do It

This section focuses on the communicative nature of organizational culture particularly in terms of how beliefs, norms, and practices circumscribe the relationship among organization, communication, and power. I analyze excerpts from both personal interviews and policy documents to show how the public-private arrangements discussed

above naturalizes the mimicry of global/international standards, and thus limits the discursive choices of agents in the construction of culture at NCA. More importantly, I argue that the discursive closure orchestrated by neoliberalism through the standardization and technicalization of organizational norms and practices influences organizational culture and has material consequences for organizational members. In this sense, this section reveals the dialectical relationship between organizational culture and policy making.

In the ECR of 2011, the NCA is required to enforce international standards and best practices in the communications industry. For instance, with regards to the kind of equipment, a communications service provider shall abide by the following regulations:

> For the purpose of sub-regulation (1), the Authority shall put in place both the standards and a mechanism for the approval. (3) A public communications systems supplier shall provide the Authority with (a) a list of acceptable international standards in relation to connection with other networks or to subscriber equipment (Electronic Communications Regulations, 2011, p. 26).

The "acceptable international standards" are usually those approved for use by the ITU. It is usually argued that the ITU comes to a consensus on any given set of standards – for equipment, operations, etc. – through meetings, and discussions held among member regulators. Therefore, the assumption is that all member countries of the ITU and their representatives would have agreed on these standards before they are approved, as it argued by the participant in the excerpt below:

> I know, for example, for type approval, before we had our lab, if you are bringing equipment and it is approved by FCC or OfCom, you don't need to retest it and make sure because those standards are high standards approved by the ITU (*Participant #3*).

Subsequently, once a piece of equipment is approved by ITU it is assumed to be of the

kind of quality desired for operation in Ghana. Similarly, with other communications

operations, the ITU is involved in discussions, albeit not without conflict, that eventually

determines standards. These standards are discussed in detail at study group meetings

which involve representatives of all member organizations of the ITU, according to

Participants #7 and #8:

> So, I am following a particular agenda item. So, as I follow, I am supposed to write the country's position on that agenda item. And Ghana would take our views for that agenda item and forward it to the African Telecommunication Union, who would then write it into the region's, or the African Regions' common position then forward it to ITU (Participant #7).

> ITU is made up of almost all regulators of telecoms across the board. Some SDOs, that is Standards Developing Organizations, and then some other – some are academia, research, Cisco – all of those big guys are all part of ITU. So, before these standards are documented as recommendations, there are a series of meetings – we call them study group meetings – so we have Study Group 1 to Study Group 20. NCA heads Study Group 12, which is Quality of Service and Quality of Experience. So, before there is any standard, say, how to measure call quality, there is study group meetings for sometimes two to three years on that topic. There is debate, I mean so it goes (Participant #8).

A subjective analysis of the above excerpts shows that the participants' confidence in the

deliberation process which leads to the production of standards. They believe, at least,

that the process allows each representative's position to be factored into the overall

decision. However, in the realm of global capitalism and neoliberal globalization, this

assertion ignores the significance of the hegemony of Western countries and their

representatives, which frequently includes non-state actors like multinational

corporations (Raboy, 2004). For instance, Participant #7 added to the above excerpt by

illuminating the contribution of certain corporations at ITU meetings:

What happens is – okay, the developed countries, they are always ahead of technology. So, they are inventing. For instance, the example that I give with the WiFi – Cisco has done studies and they've been able to predict that the spectrum or the frequency requirement for WiFi by 2020 will be around 880 MHz, and currently we have about 450 MHz. Therefore, that means that there's a deficit that needs to be met. So that is a proposal that they have brought forward. So, they have proposed in advance. And it was captured in the 2019 agenda items.

First, by admitting developed countries are "always ahead" with regards to technology, the participant is bestowing a level of legitimacy on these countries – and their representatives – which is perhaps not associated with other (developing) countries. Second, by nominating Cisco, a US-based conglomerate and one of the world's largest IT corporations, as a legitimate entity which is able to conduct studies and bring proposals to the ITU, the participant is unintentionally arguing that the ITU deliberations processes should perhaps rely more on entities who are primary producers, rather than consumers of technology. Consequently, the ITU's World Radiocommunication Conference of 2019 (WRC-19) whose agenda was set at the 2015 conference, would include propositions and policy recommendations from representatives of member countries including those of non-state actors like Cisco.

The consequence of global governance in the situation described above includes the following. As Raboy (2004) elucidated, "global governance is increasingly referred to as a multi-stakeholder process" (p. 225). This means in the deliberation processes at ITU, for example, it is not only government representatives who make contributions to policy. Multinational corporations and other non-state actors, play a significant role in the making of decisions about global standards. Wade (2004) argues that because almost all important players in ICT, for instance, originate from developed countries, they design technological solutions that are almost exclusively intended for those developed

countries' environments. However, when developing countries like Ghana are forced,

through global governance avenues like the ITU, to adhere to those ICT standards they

become subjected to new forms of dependency on the West. In the case of the NCA,

however, the dependency on the West manifests itself in the form of mimicry; mimicry of

Western counterparts' practices and communicative behaviors. This mimicry is seen in

how both the policy documents and study participants describe standardization and the

NCA's relationship with the ITU, as shown in the following excerpts:

> An electronic communication service shall be classified as follows:
>
> (a) communications services; (b) broadcasting services; (c) cable services; (d) satellite services; (e) value added services; (f) aeronautical services; (g) maritime services; (h) amateur services; and (i) any other services as determined by the International Telecommunications Union (Electronic Communications Regulations, 2011, p. 8).

In the above, the NCA is mandated to regulate communications services which fall under

all of the categories mentioned, including any others which may not be listed but may be

determined by the ITU as an appropriate communications service. I make the assumption

here that the last category of services – in (i) – is left unspecified because the ICT

landscape changes very quickly, therefore, there may be some services available in the

future which are not currently available or are not even in existence yet. By making the

above provision, the ECR is mandating the NCA to be proactive about its regulatory

authority. However, by making provisions for "any other services as determined by the

International Telecommunications Union" the NCA is also required to mimic ITU

standards. In another example, the ITU is evoked again as a technical standard:

> The Authority shall issue a Standardisation Certificate based on a favourable
report

issued in writing by an inspector, which confirms that the equipment or system standardized fulfils the internationally recognised technical specifications established by the International Telecommunications Union or any other recognised international body (Electronic Communications Regulations, 2011, p. 29).

An important reason for why the NCA relies on ITU and other globalized standards is that Ghana does not produce its own communications standards, as this participant illustrates:

> Ghana doesn't develop any auditing standards, it's international. So, it's something that every auditor across the globe uses. So, what it means is that if we beef up our processes, we beef up our work, our technical work, to meet the international standards, it makes my work flow better (Participant #2).

Once again, the argumentation strategy in this excerpt is found in the participant's insistence on the suggestion that the standards used in her work are neutral because "every auditor across the globe uses" them. The reference to "technical work" which meets "international standards" also reinforces the perspective of the participant. That is, she is arguing from a neoliberal capitalist perspective where globalizing phenomena are framed as neutral, technical processes which are applicable across contexts. This also reaffirms the power of neoliberalism to recontextualize cultural phenomena through global governance.

When organizations and their members consume, enact, and make sense of these neoliberal norms and practices, they in turn, reproduce them, particularly for a setup like the NCA which is involved in regulation and policy making. It describes a relationship in which production, consumption and reproduction are connected in a repetitive cycle. In order for this to happen, the NCA would need to claim ownership of the standardization

practices discussed above, as seen in the following excerpt. In responding to a question about safeguarding high standards in the communications industry this participant explained:

> I mean you can't just – if you realize, the watch that you are wearing has a transmission port. If, like, you are here to sell them, you are a business person, then we know, or we have a list and we realize the customs people will immediately put them or seize your items temporarily, then call us to come in to check and find out if what you are bringing in conforms to our standards here (*Participant #11*).

This was after the same participant had earlier admitted to the NCA's reliance on ITU and other international standards. He was referring to the standards for imported equipment, similar to the ECR excerpt above. Both the ECR and Participant #11 have a concern for the quality of equipment brought into the country. However, by invoking "our standards" this participant has finally accepted that the standards, although not produced in Ghana or by Ghanaians, have become the NCA's own. This ownership also reveals the cultural impact of standardization and technicalization in the neoliberal globalization process. Jin (2011) insisted that the liberalization of many countries has enabled neoliberal globalization to gain cultural capital by crossing borders under the guise of international agreements and relationships. In this case, developed countries – mostly Western countries – have used the ITU as a conduit for entering the cultural domain of many countries through the dissemination of technical knowledge which are deemed to be neutral and objective.

Organizational communication scholars like Mumby (2015), have studied how we could use an analysis of the transformation of coercive-based to consensus-based forms of control to help explain the above phenomena. Globalized post-Fordism, first of all,

enables neoliberal capitalism to thrive because at the ITU, for instance, the making of decisions about standards takes place through a pseudo-democratic process where all representatives are allowed a say but only the most powerful of entities – state and non-state actors – actually significantly influence the process. This is in line with Boltanski and Chiapello's (2005) argument in which they maintained that post-Fordist management practices became popularized on the basis of acknowledging the autonomy of workers, and not necessarily as a way to disseminate or dissipate power. This is not to say that there is a causal relationship between the most powerful actors and global communications structures, but to suggest that there is an imbalance in the relationship between developed countries and their representatives, and developing countries. Hence, corporations like Cisco, which was invoked by a couple of participants in this study as important players in the international communications arena, have a bigger voice than previously designed. Analyzing the impact of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) on the rise of neoliberalism in global communications, Pickard (2007) observed that although only sovereign nations were allowed an official voice in discussions about policy, other industry players found a way of making significant contributions to the process. He added,

> Compared with the governments of sovereign nation-states, appearances become murkier with the industry and civil society components of WSIS. Although appearing to be a minority, industry was actually represented well through "strategic partnerships" described as "business sector entities and private-public partnerships" (p. 125).

This creates a situation where the consensus process originally designed is compromised by the involvement of, say, private corporations. More significantly for this analysis, the

global dominance of neoliberalism engineers a liberalized space where cultural norms and practices are transmitted.

The Ubiquity of the Colonial Question: Organizational Culture and the Language Dilemma

Perhaps one of the most important features of culture at NCA is, as stated in earlier chapters, the ubiquitous nature of colonialism. That is, because Ghana – when it was known as the Gold Coast – was colonized by the British from 1867 to 1957, several institutions, norms, and practices were transformed to mimic British versions over time. Most important to this study, Ghana adopted English as the country's official language even after independence. Therefore, as Fanon (2008) argued there are psychological as well as socioeconomic implications that require examination. As discussed in Chapter 2 above, Fanon's assessment of the psychological implications of colonial racism explained that the social and economic conditions that attended colonization introduced an inferiority complex which cannot be ignored in discussions, for instance, about why formerly colonized people are susceptible to neoliberalism. In this regard, I analyze colonialism's role in how organizational culture is constituted at NCA using the following research question as guide:

RQ4: What is the role of colonialism in the negotiation of culture at the NCA?

In what follows, I conduct my analysis of colonialism discussing how language enables culture and how culture is constituted through language. Because of the well-researched connection between language and culture, I interrogate the possible linkages among language, organizational culture, and colonialism, using a postcolonial perspective. Particularly in this study, I also analyze the use of the English language at

the NCA is a dilemmatic phenomenon based on participants' confessed relationship with it. Since the NCA is a formal context, the expectation is that English is used as the primary means of interaction among organizational members. However, there were instances where participants expressed contradictory reactions to this expectation; that sometimes it was easier to use English while at other times is was inconvenient. This is to further illuminate the relationship among communication, power, and organization. Power is conceptualized here as the ability to constitute and organize identities through previous and current (neo)colonial and neoliberal relationships.

Language as an Essential Colonial Legacy

Language is a form of social practice (Blommaert, 2005). Therefore, to use language is to understand society from a certain perspective, at least in part. It is thus, not a neutral exercise to organize a given society in a particular way since it carries a cultural connotation. In the process of constituting an organization, language is therefore a crucial ingredient also because it is through language that inclusion/exclusion from certain discourses are negotiated. Example, during the personal interviews with my participants, I asked several questions about the impact of the use of English as the official language, and what they thought were the implications of this situation. Several of them appreciated the use of English because for them it provided access to both other people, and to places:

> It's more of an advantage because you meet some people, they are here alright but they don't even speak the local languages. I've been in Accra for a while, I can't speak *Ga*, so if I need to communicate – well, I may try *Twi* and the others – but English is like across, once you say something someone gets it so to me it's an advantage. Everybody speaks it all over the place (*Participant #4*).

This response was given to a question about whether this participant thought English language use was an advantage or disadvantage at NCA. She argues here that although there are several local/native languages in Ghana, none of them is as widely accepted as English. The perspectivization strategy in this excerpt is based on the participant's view of English as the only language in the NCA – and Ghanaian – context with enough social coverage to reach everyone. "Everybody speaks it all over the place" is a mitigation strategy which is intended to fortify her argument about why she thinks it is an advantage to use English. This is because, not everyone in Ghana speaks, or has the ability to communicate in English.

The above perspectivization also reveals the contradiction between the objective structure and individuals' subjective interpretations of them. In this case, the subjective position is seen in the above analysis, but the objective analysis would examine the forces that create the impetus to regard English as the language of choice in a context like Ghana. Here, an important structural consequence of the use of English in Ghana is colonialism; unlike in other contexts, the legacy of colonialism instituted a policy in Ghana where official communication is conducted in English. Therefore, while this participant views the use of English as merely a matter of convenience, Fanon (2008) would argue that its adoption and use is the result of a condition that was forced on the colonized and was later accepted for various reasons, including as a way of transcending social and economic status among the formerly colonized. An effect is that, particularly among the most educated people, English use is a status symbol that communicates inclusion into the world of colonial powers, and into the global mainstream. Quarcoo (1994) believed that English use even becomes an integral part of people's perceptions of

themselves. He argued that because of how long the speaking of English has existed in the Ghanaian society, it is labelled now in many circles a "Ghanaian artifact" (p. 331). In the following example this participant agrees by stating,

> English is an essential aspect of whatever we do here, because your report writing and stuff always have to be in English, and whatever communication we put across in NCA has to be in English. So, we cherish English language very much; not the language in itself but the speaking and writing (Participant #10).

This participant was responding to a similar question about the benefit, or otherwise, of using English. He nominates English as "an essential aspect" of their work at NCA. The argumentation strategy is founded in the inevitability of English. It is seen an element of NCA's work which cannot be foregone in everyday life. However, the English language, despite its hegemonic status is a complicated terrain in Ghana because not only is it not a native/first language, it is also not the preferred language even for people who possess some proficiency. English, even though widely spoken is only taught in schools and the ability to use it is therefore tied to literacy. According to World Data Atlas (n.d.) Ghana's adult literacy rate in 2015 was 76.6%. This figure also includes any adult who is able to minimally communicate in English; that is, is able to write a short description about her/himself in English. It is therefore safe to say that even among those who are considered literate, the ability to communicate proficiently in English may be minimal.

In another example, this participant admits it is easier to use English to communicate for the reasons stated above, but adds that sometimes using a local/native language provides more discursive choices:

> They might not understand the Twi or the Fante I want to speak, so the good thing would be to speak English so that, at least, they would understand what I'm speaking. And, when it comes to the Twi side, it would be easier…there are

certain things you can say it in Twi for the person to understand better than in English (*Participant #9*).

Twi is the language spoken by Ghana's largest ethnic group, Akan. However, because of historical circumstances which include Akan groups' violent conquest of other ethnic groups, and their subsequent social and political dominance, Twi has grown to be the most widely spoken language in Ghana. It is spoken even more widely than English, particularly in the informal sector. In spite of this, Participant #9 still believes that it is more convenient to use English, although not everything can be explained well enough with English, either because of his own limitations with using it, or because of his audience's limitations in understanding it. This seeming contradiction helps reveal the perspective of the argument. Although Twi, for instance, may be more appropriate, English offers more social capital because it has historically carried a significance in the Ghanaian context which native languages have not yet attained. This is linked to the historical condition of colonialism but is not disconnected from current neoliberal capitalist ideology.

So, in the above, while British colonization of Ghana may have left in its wake the officialization of English in the country, contemporary neocolonial relations and neoliberal globalization have ensured that the colonial legacy of teaching the colonized the ways of the colonizer lives on. In effect, any discussion about organizational culture in such a context, must account for the forms of knowledge and cultural representations attributable to colonialism.

However, as seen in Participant #9's response above, there is no straightforward causal way of analyzing the colonial situation. While the English language holds

important value for knowledge, meaning, and access, native languages provide an invaluable tool in the repertoire of organizational actors to exert their agency. In the following example, Participant #9 continues to explain why he thought there are benefits to using native languages too:

> So, when it comes to okay, "let me go down and speak my local language." It's about understanding – getting what I want to put across for you to understand and do what you are supposed to do. So, if I have to use my local language or dialect to explain it you, I think that would also bring some benefits.

Again, he reiterates what he thinks is the essence of using a native language to communicate, even about work related issues. For him the native languages facilitate some kind of "understanding" which may not be possible with English. He argues that native languages provide "benefits" too. An implication of this argument is that power is not only the macro-level, ideological processes (colonialism, neoliberalism, etc.) but also the micro-level ability to transform dominant forms of meaning making through the appropriation of discursive opportunities offered by the same dominant ideologies. Also, from the above excerpt, it is evident that the reasons given for why English is the language of choice are similar to those offered for why it is not, in some circumstances. While this may be confusing Quarcoo (1994) asserted that Ghanaians in many contexts have, over time, constructed a complicated relationship with the English language resulting in the customizing of the language. There is actually something known as 'Ghanaian English' which is used to describe the unique way Ghanaians use English; the unique accent, but more importantly the way words are used. For instance, in many cases in Ghana, people would resort to combining both English and a native language in the

same conversation – something akin to code-switching – as a way of providing better descriptions or explanations:

> Yeah, you have mix it up. Where it would be easier to use the English, you use it, where it would be easier to use the local language you use it to make it easier for the person to understand (*Participant #9*).

Again, Participant #9 was responding to a question about how he deals with communicating technical information about his job, since the native languages do not have local equivalents for the jargon used in the communications industry. Switching languages several times in the same conversation, according to this participant could make it easier for both the speaker and the audience. The imperial project of colonialism was meant to create subjects who are inferior to the colonizer (Said, 1979). Eke (2016), however argued that people use several textual – I would add discursive – strategies to counter the hegemonic effect of colonial forms of knowledge production by using hybridized forms of expression as a means of resisting the dominant forms. In this case, the participants are not reflexively engaged in covert resistance by using a mix of English and native languages. They, in their own accounts, use this strategy as a practical way of enhancing communication. This seems like a dysfunctional approach to language use given that sometimes the reasons for using English are the same one offered to switching to native languages. However, by doing this they exert communicative agency and thereby disrupt the colonizing structures. Additionally, by moving between the lines in the use of language, the participants make up for first, their own limitations in communicating in English, and second, the inadequacy of either language to describe their experiences.

For the reasons mentioned above, organizational culture in contexts like the NCA in Ghana is more complicated because the forces at play include the historically relevant colonial processes, of which language use is central. Language is an important colonial legacy because, several decades after formal colonization ended, (neo)colonial relations are relied upon to harmonize global relations by standardizing one of the principal modes of knowledge production and meaning making; language. The material consequences of this is seen in how people struggle to make sense of, and express themselves. Nonetheless, in such turbulent circumstances, people exert their agency by transforming colonial structures in ways makes the organizational cultures simultaneously similar and different from those of the dominant perspectives.

Implications

In this chapter, I traced the relationship among communications policy, neoliberalism, and colonialism as related to organizational culture. Although I sought to analyze these using distinct research questions, I chose to include them in the same chapter to assert the relationship between two important structural phenomena; neoliberalism and colonialism. Ghana being a former British colony and a developing country caught in the web of globalizing neoliberal forces made it an excellent context to include both elements in the analysis.

In analyzing RQ3 above, I conclude there is significant evidence that organizational culture, and communications regulations and policies are influenced by similar factors. They are both shaped by neoliberal forces some of whose discourses concern privatization. In the case of communications policies, the analysis concluded that private/public arrangements facilitate neoliberalism, and the same logic is employed in

the construction of organizational culture at NCA. Subsequently, conceptualizing both organizational culture and policy making as discursive processes we are able to interrogate the effect of different discourses on these phenomena, and as such are able to ascertain the discursive limitations and/or opportunities made available. For instance, policy-as-discourse would normally not be problematic if the dominant discourses were not creating problems as well as solutions. That is, although every context has its peculiar social or policy problems, dominant discourses dictate which problems deserve attention and how solutions need to be found.

Additionally, it was revealed in the analysis that global governance policies, which influence policy making in Ghana through NCA, liberalize the landscape while also producing discursive closure. This is seen through the work of global institutions like the ITU whose job it is to standardize global communications. While the standardization of the global communications landscape is not the only factor responsible for policy making in Ghana, it illuminates the role of hegemony as, still, an important concept in critical organizational communication.

Finally, in analyzing RQ4 it was concluded that the use of English as the official language of Ghana stipulates the role of colonialism in the negotiation of culture at NCA. First, it reasserts language as a colonial legacy, with its attendant implications for making meaning of organizational discourses. Second, it produces a dilemma for the study participants due to the sometimes-contradictory representation of the English language; sometimes English is the language of choice for several of the participants because of how convenient it is and its wider audience reach. At other times, for the same reasons, native languages are preferred. While this process may seem dysfunctional and even

confusing, participants use it to transform dominant forms of meaning making by

customizing its use.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Culture Operates at the Intersection of Organization, Communication, and Power

On March 23, 2018, Ghana's parliament ratified a controversial US-Ghana

Military Defense Cooperation agreement. This agreement was controversial because

while representatives of both governments hailed it as mutually beneficial to both

countries, opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) and civil society groups labelled it "a

complete mortgage of the country's sovereignty" (Brakopowers, 2018, para 3).

According to the agreement, the US military will be given unfettered access to and

exclusive control of certain areas in Ghana as mutually agreed upon by both countries.

Days after this agreement was ratified, citizen groups expressed displeasure with it by

organizing public protests in Ghana's capital, Accra. The only reason provided to the

public was that this agreement is only a new version of a similar one signed between the

two countries in 2015. However, opponents of the deal felt this was not sufficient

information concerning the justification for such a partnership.

The government of President Donald Trump, as soon as they assumed office

embarked on their "America First" policy regarding, among others, trade and foreign

policy. This policy emphasizes American nationalism and anti-interventionism which

includes President Trump's regular comments advocating protectionist measures and

fueling a potential trade war with China. For instance, CNN's Daniel Shane (2017)

reported, "China says it will respond to any new trade tariffs by the United States with

measures of the same scale and intensity" (para. 1). There is also confirmed reports that

President "Trump is imposing a 25% tariff on steel imports and a 10% tariff on aluminum

imports." (Horowitz, 2018, para 3). There are also recent reports about US intention to

withdraw from Syria, a move which the administration considers important for its "America First" policy (Mclaughlin & Finnegan, 2018). This posture – coupled with recent nationalist events in Europe and other parts of the world – has convinced many people that globalization, especially of the neoliberal kind, is collapsing.

As discussed in the introductory chapter above, some have even argued that neoliberal globalization is no longer as significant as it used to be. However, the most powerful countries in the world, particularly the US, the nations of Western Europe, and Eastern powers like China, continue to see African countries as crucial to their political, economic, and cultural interests. The example of these countries' interests in Africa as a whole evokes the concept of globalization, which several of them (the countries) seem to be trying to avoid. For example, in contrast to the US' "America First" policy as described above, such arrangements as the Military Defense Cooperation agreement with Ghana goes to show that while there is a nationalist rhetoric about relationships with other territories, Africa remains crucial to their interests, and neoliberalism is an important strategy that has been employed. Mirowski (2013) insisted that neoliberalism is far more resilient than it is often given credit for, since it has shown over decades that it can evolve to withstand crises of different kinds. I have argued in the chapters above that neoliberalism is fundamentally an imperialist project that seeks to maintain – and expand – the military, political, economic, and cultural superiority of powerful countries through policies that encourage liberalization, deregulation, privatization, and globalization (Harvey, 2007).

While instances like the US-Ghana Military Defense Cooperation agreement described above point to some of the more visible activities of powerful developed

countries in Africa, neoliberalism is a cultural project which shapes organizations and institutions, and produces ideologies and social hierarchies. In this study, for instance, my interest was in the role of neoliberalism in shaping organizational culture in Ghana, using the NCA as a case study. This goal allowed me to conduct an analysis of organizational culture from the perspective of several interrelated tensions. First, there is the tension between the macro-level (global) and the micro-level (local) discourses. This project acknowledges the influence of both localized and trans-localized (in this case, globalized) practices through which organizations are formed. In this study, is it important to examine not only the localized practices but also the globalized discourses that shape organizational culture. Example, local discourses would comprise the norms, values, behaviors, practices which are deemed to emanate from individual and/or organizational cultural understandings of how things are done. However, these are mediated by global discourses about organizations and, in the case of the NCA, about communications regulations and policies (like rules of professionalism, technical standards, etc.).

Another competing tension, not discrete from the global/local ones, is the one between structural constraints and individual agency. In many ways, the structures that constrain organizational practices are linked with global discourses – and local ones as well – but they also facilitate the changing or transformation of these discourses through the agency of individuals. This is observed through individuals' subjective and/or objective reactions/practices in relation to discourses. For instance, while participants may be aware of the organizational structures and may choose to accommodate or resist them, they are still inhabiting these structures and are thus, involved in a contradictory relationship between structure and agency.

In the sections that follow, I discuss the appropriateness of the methodology and method, and the results of the analysis of both interviews and NCA's policy and regulatory documents. I also discuss the theoretical as well as the practical implications of this study to determine if its goals were met. I then discuss some limitations and suggestions for future research, resulting from this study.

Critical Discourse Analysis as Methodology and Method

The most important consideration for using CDA as methodology and method in this study was the latter's commitment to mundane, everyday discourses, and its ability to capture how they interact with institutional discourses. Because the study was designed to analyze texts from participant interviews and policy documents as discourses, the decision to employ CDA was justified. Again, due to CDA's overall commitment to uncovering the relationship between discourses and ideological/power structures I found it useful as an approach to analyzing texts. For instance, CDA enabled me to show the relationship between the normalized discourses of professionalism at NCA and the ideological implications which include discursive closure, where employees conceive of professional behavior only through the eyes of some standardized norms.

Specifically, this study used Wodak's (2001a) discourse-historical approach (DHA) within the general CDA framework. The utility of this approach was found in its ability to facilitate an analysis based on three interrelated aspects; the text or discourse immanent critique, the socio-diagnostic critique, and a prognostic critique, each of which plays a critical role in uncovering ideologies, exposing the manipulative character of these ideologies, and providing solutions or avenues for improving communication. Crucial to the analysis in this study, the DHA enabled a contextual focus based on the

historical situatedness of the approach. This, as shown throughout the analysis, does not mean an obsession with the local context. Context in this study, referred both to the local and the global contexts within which discourses were operating, and the DHA provided the tools to adequately examine them. Example, the DHA's attention to context allowed the analysis to connect local language policy to global industry practices over a historical period.

The DHA sufficiently connected organization, communication, and power by providing the language and strategies for tracing how recontextualization occurs within the NCA context. That is, by the use of the DHA I was able to show how recontextualization functions in the service of neoliberalism through the ways texts, genres, and discourses are connected to each other and to other elements in a historical period. Example, the DHA emphasizes the use of perspectivization strategies – as one of five main strategies – which help reveal the ideological perspective underlying a seemingly mundane narrative. For instance, when a participant argues that the NCA should be operated like a private organization there is a perspective which, although not apparent in the statement, could be uncovered by using this approach. Overall, the use of CDA and the DHA, in particular, enabled me to show how organizational culture as a material process is constituted, but also how this process is connected to the formulation of policies.

Discussion of Results

In this section, I discuss some important implications of the study by examining the results of each of the research questions – and as such, discourse topics/themes. I do this by revisiting the insights provided by the analysis of both the participant interviews

and the policy documents chosen for the study. I then provide an explanation for what each theme means for the goals of the study.

Linguistic References to Organizational Culture

The first research question for the study sought to reveal how phenomena, norms, values, and practices related to organizational culture are linguistically produced and reproduced. This is in reference to both localized and globalized discourses but also to the interrelated tensions between structure/agency and subjective/objective practices of participants. As explained in Chapter 2 above, this study takes the position that culture is manifested through discourse, and therefore by analyzing the linguistic aspects of discursive behavior and combining them with the context, one is able to analytically isolate cultural forms. That is, cultural practices such as rules of professional behavior, individualism, teamwork are observed through the analysis of how they are enacted in complex ways. In the case of the NCA in Ghana, some of the most important discourses – observed through interviews with participants – were seen to be the result of the process of recontextualization. Particularly in the case of neoliberal discourses, I have argued in this study that NCA employees' narratives about professionalism and individualism, for instance, show how those concepts are enacted and re-enacted in that context. I take each of the discourse topics/themes formulated within this research question and discuss their implication in the section that follows.

A corporate environment should be a professional environment. In the analysis of participant interviews, one of the most important themes to emerge concerned the conflation of 'corporate environment' with 'professional environment'. Several of the participants, although they did not use these interchangeably, referred to them as if they

had the same meaning. An implication of this observation is that the process of recontextualization occurs because of the relative power of the macro-level discourses. In this instance, corporate and professional environment although they have different meanings are globalized concepts which have gained credibility in management discourse through people's interactions with global media artifacts (news media, books, social media, podcasts, seminars, webinars, etc.).

The conflation of these concepts, therefore, is a result of the close relationship that has been constructed between professional behavior and corporate environment in a context like the NCA. Not only does this arrangement have implications for organizational culture, it also helps explain the relationship among communication, organization, and power, in the sense that one of neoliberalism's most powerful effects is the promotion of branding as a form of communicative capitalism. For instance, in post-Fordist organizing employees are required through everyday practices, to promote the brand of the organization. This communicative labor manifests itself as organizational culture because such practices become regular, mundane parts of everyday life which are taken for granted. In effect, to properly position NCA as a corporate entity, employees have come to accept that they need to exhibit certain behaviors deemed to correspond with such environments.

The above also helps explain why and how the NCA, as a public institution seeks to operate like a private corporation – through the way the organization itself and its participants position it as a corporate setting with expectations for corporate behavior. The discussion of corporate and professional environment, helps to understand the impetus for the privatization of public institutions. Therefore, the discussion about

corporate practices and behavior in the internal organizational environment is connected to NCA's overall position on what type of organization – corporate or otherwise – it aspires to be. Through neoliberal ideology, privatization is naturalized as a solution to the corruption and ineffectiveness of public sector institutions, for example.

World class means adhering to global standards. One of the most frequently used phrases throughout the participant interviews I conducted was "world class." This phrase was used in relation to NCA's goals of achieving the highest international standards in communications regulation. Analysis showed that achieving world class status means the NCA needs to abide by the standards of globalized communications institutions like the ITU. However, this relationship with the ITU exposes the NCA to global governance constraints which influences organizational culture by introducing standardized norms and practices, which ideally would not be problematic if this adherence did not have cultural and political economic implications. Harris (2014) argued that global governance opens up the borders of developing countries for the norms of more powerful developed countries to seep into these spaces. The result of this is that cultural impulses are also disseminated through the technical standards introduced, and this produces discursive closure.

Discursive closure is described as the facilitation of limited choices for thinking and communicating about organizational culture. When "world class" for instance is invoked, it implies a particular way of doing things. While this phenomenon harmonizes the communications landscape, it simultaneously helps create an organizational culture that valorizes economic interests above all else. Therefore, in the neoliberal sense, organizational culture is not simply an aggregate of interpretive practices and localized

norms; it is a material productive process that constitute the dominant structures of feeling (Gunster, 2004).

Furthermore, I conclude here that the use of "world class" to describe NCA's aspirations to meeting global standards does not only elicit the disciplinary value of global governance, for instance. NCA's aspiration to meeting these standards also shows the emancipatory aspect of inhabiting ideological structures. For instance, when participants talk about streamlining procedures at NCA in order to be at par with regulators like the FCC and OfCom, they are not simply admitting that these regulators are better, but also that the NCA has the capacity to match their standards even if it means customizing those standards.

Teamwork is important but individual meritocracy is key. It is understandable that in any contemporary organization teamwork would be an important tenet. This is mostly because of research that provides empirical support for its value for organizations (see. Guiso, et al, 2015). In this study, teamwork was discussed for two reasons. First, I included questions about teamwork in the study design because scholars like Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) have critiqued the motive for insisting on the former in a neoliberal context. For them, teamwork, instead of fostering genuine collaboration, urges competition among employees. Second, I included an inquiry into teamwork because the NCA as an entity has identified it as one of its core values.

Upon analysis, I concluded that based on participants' narratives about how teamwork is operationalized at NCA, it is mostly an individualized process which is indeed instituted to measure individual employees' performances. In the context of Ghana, an assumption could be made about a general national culture which is slightly

more collectivistic than most Western cultures, as mentioned in Chapter 2. Although the study was not concerned about gauging the level of individualism or collectivism in the national culture of Ghana, I conclude that this leaning towards collectivism likely introduced some dissonance in participants' reception of the neoliberal model of teamwork espoused at the NCA. Several participants acknowledged that they did not think teamwork as is meant to be, was being practiced at NCA.

Participants confessed to not being involved in actual teamwork as a collaborative process but stated that they got favorable evaluations for teamwork even when they did not work in a team. This pointed to the fact that teamwork is seen more as an individual meritocratic process in many instances. This also means that NCA's management prescription that teamwork is a core value carries a neoliberal connotation because of its insistence on employee surveillance – through the vetting of individual work by supervisors in an upward chain of command – and self-regulation. Yet again, the influence of neoliberalism is observed through particular notions of teamwork that privilege competition over collaboration. Organizational culture is impacted through the routinization of such teamwork practices. Kubota (2011) suggested that the insistence of framing values such as teamwork as sets of skills is in line with the principles of neoliberalism where employees are encouraged to develop skills that would make them competitive, and therefore contribute to the enhancement of the organization's brand. So, instead of pursuing teamwork as a collaborative process that produces innovation, teamwork is expected to be a skill that enables an employee to become and remain competitive.

Strategies of Accommodation, Transformation, and Resistance

Despite the influence of norms and practices that, as described above, may produce discursive closure, participants also exerted their agency whether in accommodating, transforming, or resisting neoliberal structures. This shows how the dialectics of structure and agency work, and illuminates the tensions among several elements, like macro/micro-level, local/global. On one hand, the construction of organizational culture is shaped by structural constraints, emanating from several discursive sources (like globalized neoliberal practices, or even discourses about social and cultural organization in Ghana). On another hand, the individual understanding of organizational practices also influence culture at NCA. However, the argument in this segment was that individual, micro-level interactions that contribute to organizational culture at NCA are not simply determined locally but are mediated by dominant – in many cases globalized – discourses, in the same manner in which globalized discourses are understood in the context of localized ones. It is within the discursive spaces provided by the dominant structures that individual agency is exerted. The second research question for the study was, therefore, dedicated to exploring the strategies employed by participants in particular relation to neoliberalism.

Accommodation. Accommodation was used to describe how participants linguistically expressed agreement with or support for neoliberal structures. This was regardless of whether participants were intentional about or unaware of the objective structures they may have been supporting. That is, since agency in this study is either subjective or objective, some participants unwittingly supported neoliberalism with respect to organizational culture at NCA because they may not have been aware of the

objective organizational environment which they inhabit. Others, although they were aware of the objective structural environment, still chose to affirm their support for neoliberal practices. In effect, several participants accommodated neoliberalism by suggesting or encouraging NCA's corporate structure; a corporate structure which, on inspection, was profoundly sympathetic to the tenets of private sector organizing although NCA is a public sector institution.

From the study's critical realist perspective, although agency and structure cannot be conflated or collapsed into each other, they are in constant tension with each other. Agency, for instance, is not a single-level, constantly influx phenomenon that is bereft of any structural influence (Reed 1997). This accommodation theme revealed that agency of participants showed how much they asserted themselves on the process of constructing organizational culture. However, asserting themselves also meant that they sometimes, reflectively or otherwise, accommodated neoliberal ideologies by argumentatively insisting that certain practices should be adopted as the way forward. This was, however, done in reference to how those practices have been seen to be used elsewhere in the global context. For instance, at NCA some participants argued that Mobile Number Portability, a technical standard advocated by the ITU, fosters choice, flexibility, and competition and this could only be good for the general public. As Harvey argued, nonetheless, within the realms of neoliberalism this posture only works as a vehicle for free enterprise which only benefits a small portion of the population; those who already have the choice, flexibility being offered.

Transformation. The difference between the transformation theme and the accommodation theme in this study is that while both are strategies for exerting agency in

the face of structural constraints, the former particularly finds new ways of creating organizational reality. Therefore, accommodation and transformation as used in this study could be visualized as different points on a continuum instead of as discrete strategies. In this sense, participants sometimes acknowledged the structural constraints that exist in their day-today organizational experience, but also showed how they are, or would do things differently. For instance, some participants pointed to how they customize certain globalized technical or organizational norms to suit their specific contexts. This included instances when participants accept the legitimacy of globalized technical standards or norms of behavior but would conclude that they were unrealistic in the context of the NCA and should therefore be modified. Additionally, these transformation strategies show the struggle for control over organizational forms, as Mumby (1998). That is, in the process of constructing organizational culture, and within the structural limitations employees tend to accept the culture while also developing a healthy cynicism toward it.

Resistance. Study participants also engaged in strategies of resistance, which pointed to the means by which, linguistically, they expressed opposition to, or disagreement with neoliberal practices. This, once again, was regardless of whether participants were aware of specific ideologies to which they offered opposition. For instance, some participants kicked against the expectation to work from home, by indicating how it produces an imbalance between work and private life. Other participants opposed the neoliberal version of teamwork, where employees are required to conceptualize teamwork as an individual meritocratic phenomenon but were not convinced that the actual interdependence and collaboration that were entailed in this process were culturally present at NCA. These acts of resistance, in both examples, are

deemed as such not because participants were conscious of the ideologies they were resisting. While the objective structures of neoliberalism may require employees to see themselves and their everyday behaviors at work in terms of an economic exchange, employees may subjectively resist certain aspects of these structures without being aware of them. In the same manner, individuals could also exhibit acts of resistance while acknowledging the constraints presented by these structures. This is because the structure/agency dialectic may make it difficult to observe and/or acknowledge complicity or resistance. More importantly, as suggested above, resistance enables individuals to exert their understanding of organizational norms onto the construction of organizational culture. It is, therefore, an avenue where the micro-level meets the macro-level in the discussion about culture.

Organizational Culture is Intrinsically Linked to Communications Policy

While the first two research questions and their results concerned how discourses at different levels constituted organizational culture, the third research question sought to examine if there is any meaningful connection between organizational discourses – which culminate in organizational culture – and NCA's core regulatory and policy work. The analysis showed that indeed, the same neoliberal discourses that were identified as significantly shaping the culture at NCA were present in the interrogation of communications regulations and policies. This leads me to conclude that there was a fairly tangible link between organizational culture and policymaking. In the next three sections, I illuminate the implications of this by discussing the resulting themes of this analysis.

Policy as a Product of Discourse. One essential orientation this study takes in relation to the connection between organizational culture and policymaking is that they are both products of discourse. As indicated severally in this report, discourse is the analytical equivalent of culture whereby cultural norms and practices are isolated through an analysis of the former. This is not to say that culture and discourse are discrete phenomena, but to acknowledge that although they exist in a complicated relationship bounded by several tensions, the nature of culture could be adequately examined by analyzing the discourses associated with it. In a similar manner, policymaking results from discursive practices.

According to several participants, NCA's regulations and policies emanate from series of deliberative processes which are then scaled up. However, these deliberative processes are, again, mediated by levels of discourses; that is, both localized and globalized discourses influence these processes. The challenge to this is that the more dominant, globalized discourses take center stage in determining the nature of policies and regulations. Bacchi (2000) contended that in the realm of policymaking dominant discourses have a bigger say not only in providing answers/solutions to local questions, they also have the ability to create problems which may not be present in a given local context. Discursive closure facilitated by the hegemony of dominant discourses influences what gets defined as a problem worthy of attention, and what gets ignored. In effect, discourse plays a similar role in the making of policies and in the constitution of organizational culture. As observed earlier about the relationship between discourse and culture, policy making and discourse also exist in a complex relationship where several tensions (between structure and agency, local and global, etc.) exist. Particularly from a

cultural materialist perspective, this study has argued that neoliberalism constitutes an important discursive force in both organizational culture and policymaking, and this is where the two processes are linked, as discussed below.

Public/Private Arrangements Perpetuate a Neoliberal Agenda. As is widely researched (Harvey, 2007; McGuigan, 2005), neoliberalism banks on expanding private interests in territories where public interests are expected to be advanced. From analysis in this study, the NCA is an avenue where this tension between private and public exists, particularly as seen through the organization's regulations and policies. According to their regulations and polices the NCA, as a public institution, is primarily concerned with protecting the public interest from private exploitation. This mandate includes ensuring fair, universal access to communications services to all Ghanaians. However, the NCA simultaneously acts as the facilitator for private economic interests in the communications industry.

The consequence of this is that since neoliberalism as a globalized ideology is able to naturalize private interests in organizational settings, people begin to see progress through the lens of privatized goals. Particularly in Ghana where the current government has a political philosophy that firmly supports privatization of public institutions, the tension between public and private become even more apparent. The government argues that creating a conducive atmosphere for private entities to flourish can only be good for the population because competition, for example, brings innovation which spurs economic development. Most importantly, I observed that similar neoliberal impulses existed in both the constitution of organizational culture, and the creation of regulations and policies. For instance, in constituting organizational culture the neoliberal practices

174

that encourage self-regulation and individual meritocracy are the same ones that are used to justify deregulation and privatization in NCA's regulations and policies. What this shows is since culture broadly points to what a group of people are more inclined to do, and since it affects, in this case, their perspectives and orientation to their work-related tasks, communications regulations and policies, and organizational culture are connected; by their mutual connection to similar ideological structures.

Organizational Culture is What we do and How we do it. Crucial to this study is the assumption that organizational culture of an important institution like the NCA has implications for social justice, because they (the NCA) are regulators of a communications industry which affects the lives of millions of people in Ghana. The social justice implication is made because NCA's work of regulating the industry affects issues such as access to communications services for poor and rural people who are considered some of the most vulnerable in the area of digital inclusion. Also, the above assumption was drawn from arguments that position organizational culture, not only as a process with material implications for organizational members, but also for the work they do, and the people who are affected by their work. Since the NCA's core business is to regulate the communications space in Ghana their work impacts millions of people in Ghana who may not even know about the existence of the former.

Analysis showed that another important phenomenon that connects the internal workings and routines of the NCA with their output – that is, their regulatory work – is global governance involving ITU standards. Not only do the standards affect and shape the internal organizational culture at NCA by stipulating rules for employee behavior, the technical standards also inform what regulations and policies should look like. However,

these standards are not neutral and carry cultural impulses which, in this case, are mostly neoliberal ones. The cycle of production, consumption and reproduction is exemplified here through NCA's relationship with the ITU and other national regulators, and their communications regulations and policies. This involves NCA employees claiming ownership of ITU standards and other globalized practices related to the industry and in turn, transposing those policies onto the Ghanaian landscape.

The Role of Colonialism in the Negotiation of Culture at the NCA

Of all the research questions interrogated in this study, the one that sought to explain the unique aspect of NCA and Ghana's context was the fourth. It was also important for this study to include this question because of the dearth of research in organizational communication that connects language and colonialism to organizations; that is, postcolonial research in organizations is not as widespread as it needs to be, particularly in analyzing formerly colonized contexts. This question sought to analyze the role of colonialism in the negotiation of culture at NCA. The reason for this relative uniqueness, as explained, is Ghana's position as a formerly colonized British territory. I worked with the assumption that this colonial condition was bound to impact the discussion about neoliberalism in terms of their connection to a spectrum of imperialism. That is, neoliberalism and colonialism both operate through imperialistic formulae through language and other social practices.

Language as an Essential Colonial Legacy. Although the English language currently occupies a hegemonic position in the globalized world today, for contexts like Ghana it is also an important colonial legacy which has occupied a central position in the Ghanaian society for more than a century. I have argued that the power of neoliberalism,

176

particularly its influence in Ghana and on the work of the NCA, is consolidated by the

hegemony of the English language. But due to Ghana's association with the language

through colonialism, English use in Ghanaian settings has an interesting connotation; it is

even seen as a Ghanaian artifact among many educated people (Quarcoo, 1994). In an

organizational setting like the NCA this assertion was partly confirmed by participants'

acceptance of English as a natural part of the environment, although several of them

admitted to not being completely comfortable with its use for different reasons.

Additionally, in my analysis of language as a colonial legacy I concluded that

there was a dilemma in participants' relationship with the English language. While

participants sometimes thought it was an advantage to use English because of the access

it granted in certain contexts, they also made the same arguments for using

native/indigenous languages. This produces a dilemma for the study participants due to

the often-contradictory representation of the English language; sometimes English is the

language of choice for several of the participants because of how convenient it is, and its

wider audience reach. At other times, for the same reasons, native languages are

preferred. While this process may seem dysfunctional and even confusing, participants

used it to transform dominant forms of meaning making by customizing its use.

Theoretical Implications

Although not a central focus, this study theoretically contributes to the relevance

of ideology and hegemony critique in conversation with the relationship between

structure and agency. As a study situated within the critical paradigm of organizational

communication, the study's focus on these concepts enabled a relationship to be

constructed among communication, organization, and power, to further understand how

practices that inform organizational culture come about. This orientation to organizational culture also enabled – and was consequently enabled by – the application of a cultural materialist approach to organizations like the NCA whose unique position as a communications regulator required the analysis of media industries as cultural industries which thrive on the commodification of culture and marketing of difference (Puppis, 2008).

Ideology and Hegemony Critique Still Relevant in Organizational Analysis

There has been the critique within critical organizational communication that analysis has often focused solely on ideology and hegemony effects and does not take into account other significant historical and political economic aspects (Barett, 1996; Clair, 1993; Vallas, 2003). This study takes a cultural materialist orientation in which the critique of both ideology and hegemony are inherent. This is because, for instance, neoliberalism is considered an ideology – and in this study, mostly a globalized ideology – which through processes of recontextualization has assumed a hegemonic position in the media and communications landscape, globally. While it is important to analyze the materialist underpinnings of neoliberalism, for instance, it is through an understanding of ideology and hegemony – as functions of power – that we appreciate how hierarchies of significance are produced.

In the analysis in this study, ideology critique is seen in the examination of neoliberalism itself as a relatively enduring set of discourses that valorize economic interests above all else. In contrast to analyses that perceive organizational processes as set of micro-level interpretive processes, this study conducted an ideological analysis by considering the tensions that exist between discourses at both the local and the global

levels and how they influence each other. Consequently, hegemony in this study is exemplified by the cyclical production, consumption and reproduction of common sense norms and practices that get recontextualized and globalized.

The nature of ideology and hegemony in the study of organizations, according to Mumby (2015), has also changed. Previous analysis concentrated on hegemony, for instance, in Fordist organizations where control is formalized and centralized, making it more visible to detect. In many contemporary organizations now – including the NCA – neoliberalism has taken over, making hegemonic influence more difficult to detect because "all organizational forms (Fordist or post-Fordist) must operate on a neoliberal ideological, political, and economic terrain that shapes the "politics of common sense" in everyday organizational life (Mumby, 2015, p. 27). While this situation means more analytic tools need to be employed in examining organizational forms and artifacts, it does not reduce the significance of ideology and hegemony critique.

Consequently, the nature and functioning of ideology and hegemony have remained the same. However, the inception of neoliberalism has meant that their (ideology and hegemony) circulation is more decentralized. For instance, as the results of this study show, organizational control is no longer seen through the distinct levels of hegemonic managerial class and resistant employee class. This gap has been closed quite significantly so that at all levels employees are "constantly engaged in competitive social relations through the construction and ongoing management of an entrepreneurial self" (Mumby, 2015, p. 27). This self-management, facilitated by neoliberalism through post-Fordist organizing, also illuminates the dialectical relationship between structure and agency. That is, in this study, the relationship between structure and agency is not easily

decipherable by simply interrogating the relationship between employees at different levels of the organization. It is revealed by examining the relationship between organizational members and particular discourses, as discussed below.

Dialectics of Structure and Agency

One of the prevailing aspects of the analysis in this study concerned the relationship between structure and agency. This relationship, although not to be conflated with it, was also used to understand the nature of discourses at different levels; that is, globalized and localized discourses about management and organizations. Operating from a critical realist perspective, this study's analysis takes an adequately social constructionist approach to organizations; through communication, organizations are created and recreated by the actions of participants. However, as seen through NCA's relationship with globalized discourses – through the ITU and other communications regulators – objective structures constrain the possibilities for this cycle of creation and recreation. This allowed the study's analysis to avoid collapsing structure into agency and to duly recognize the influence of both globalized and localized discourses.

The NCA, although it is located in the local context of Ghana and its employees are all Ghanaian, cannot be said to constitute an organizational culture which is purely Ghanaian or only reflective of the local NCA context. In fact, one of the important reasons for conducting the analysis in the study from the critical realist perspective is because of the analysis of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism, in this context, is a globalized phenomenon which is transmitted through, for instance, global governance at the ITU and global capitalism. Therefore, in this study organizational reality is not constructed simply

through horizontal, localized narratives and conversational practices of members, but is also determined by the structural, globalized discourses (Reed, 1997).

Postcolonialism as Critical to Critique of Neoliberalism

As an important contribution to the value of a postcolonial approach to organizations, this study offers insights into the connection between capitalism in general, and neoliberalism, in particular, and colonial structures. As discussed in Chapter 2 above, global capitalist structures have persisted not only because of the economic and political power of the US and other Western capitalist systems, but also due to the global division of labor that has its origins in the colonization of the non-Western world (Chase-Dunn, 1998; Wallerstein, 1979). African countries especially are still positioned as being on the periphery of global affairs partly because of the colonial conditions which instituted this division of labor. However, contemporary capitalist ideology has maintained these relationships through several avenues, one of which is neoliberalism.

Therefore, this study adds to the body of research on postcolonial critiques of capitalism by focusing on how neoliberalism partially relies on the colonial condition of countries like Ghana to gain access into organizational spaces like the NCA. The explanation being offered is that postcolonialism is inherently committed to capitalist critique dating back to scholars like Fanon (2008). He insisted that the relegation of the colonized to the periphery of the economic system was not just a consequence of colonial racism but a cause of it. In this study, the postcolonial approach to language use, for instance, illuminated the cultural challenges of study participants by showing their complicated relationship with the English language. Simultaneously, language is not just a legacy of colonialism but also a neoliberal one which confirms the need for a critique of

capitalist structures to be present in postcolonialism. This study's view that both colonialism and neoliberalism belong on the same historical spectrum of imperialism is supported by Mezzadra (2012) who argued that postcolonialism's traditional concern with modernity "lies in a kind of geographical disruption, in a continuous mixing up of scales of accumulation, dispossession and exploitation" (p. 1). Neoliberalism, as a globalized capitalist ideology, is therefore not misplaced when it is employed alongside postcolonialism in the examination of how organizational culture in a periphery country is constituted.

Limitations and Future Research

In terms of the study design, there were several aspects that presented obvious limitations to both the results and the implications. First, an important limitation was that, upon analysis, I observed that there were some questions for the semi-structured participant interviews that could either have been included or reframed to better respond to the goals of the study. For instance, I realized I could have asked more questions – even as follow-up questions – about participants' perceptions of Ghana's colonial condition, beyond questions about the use of the English language. I believe this could have provided a more nuanced analysis and discussion about the relationship between colonialism and neoliberalism. I, hence, suggest that future research of this kind focuses more on other aspects of the colonial condition with respect to its relationship with capitalism and organizational forms.

Second, the study design could also have benefited from participant observation, in addition to participant interviews and policy documents, since the goals included an inquiry into organizational culture. Daas and Mcbride (2014) explained that participant

observation is useful primarily because it provides detailed information through structured observation of naturally-occurring phenomena. Villanueva, Broad, Gonzalez, Ball-Rokeach, and Murphy (2016) suggested that such observations added to the richness of the data pool. For this study, however, participant observation was not feasible because of extreme time constraints – it would have extended the period of data collection significantly – and the security concerns NCA would have with my sustained presence in their offices. I suggest therefore, that future research, when feasible, consider including data from participant observations to enrich the data pool.

Third, also in terms of the study design, more questions in the interviews and information from participants could have illustrated the documented relationship among colonialism, capitalist organizing, and patriarchy. That is, scholars like Schmidt (1991) have insisted that there is a complex relationship among colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy where, particularly, women's oppression and their reduced significance in the labor force, was mediated both by indigenous and colonial labor policies in certain African societies. Although, the women who participated in this study were not of lower status at NCA than their male counterparts – one of the four women was a deputy director, while two were assistant managers – it would have been interesting to go deeper to analyze how indigenized patriarchal forms interact with colonial and/or neoliberal ones to maintain male dominance. This is important because, as reflected in the participant sample, the NCA has a higher percentage of male employees than female employees. Additionally, since the establishment of the NCA in 1996 none of the NCA's six directors-general have been female. Therefore, designing the study to be able to respond

to such issues was crucial since patriarchy is an important element in the matrix of communication, power, and organization.

Finally, although the NCA may be the most central and therefore most significant organization in the media and communications landscape in Ghana, there were other entities like the National Media Commission (NMC), and the Ministry of Communications where data could have been collected in addition to the NCA data. This is because, as preference by several study participants, these entities have significant roles to play especially in media communications regulations and policies in Ghana. For instance, I found out during collection that the NCA and the NMC had different responsibilities with respect to media and communications, but sometimes had some overlapping oversight. The Ministry of Communications, for example, is the official policy wing of communications in Ghana, although they work directly with the NCA, which is the operational and technical body. Data from all three organizations would have enhanced the analysis of the levels of discourse that shape communications policy. However, due to time and other logistical constraints, I was not able to factor these other organizations into the study.

Applications

This study is aimed primarily at scholars, practitioners, and activists within the fields of organizational communication, media studies, and postcolonial studies. This target is based on the assumption that these groups described above are the most important constituents with regards to theories, methodologies, and concepts that shape the understanding of culture in organizations. For example, research on post-Fordist organizing and management practices have largely focused on Western concepts,

although globalization has ensured that contexts like Ghana experience varieties of it. Therefore, the goal is to create awareness and hopefully trigger a rethink of some theories in management communication that continue to marginalize the experiences of people from formerly-colonized, developing countries, particularly in Africa. On this account, I plan to prepare manuscripts for publication in national (in the US and in Ghana) and international journals.

Based on the results of this study, I plan to undertake a phase II collecting additional data to augment my previous results. Phase II would be targeted at a bigger constituency which would include undergraduate students in both African and US American universities. I plan to do this by publishing the results in book chapters or in a textbook targeted at undergraduate students in the fields listed above. The goal of targeting undergraduate students in this phase is to make studies of this nature accessible, not just to established scholars and graduate students, but also to individuals whose awareness of, and engagement with such studies may further illuminate the centrality of communication to positive social change.

Finally, drawing from scholars such as Deetz (1992) and Cheney (1995) this study could be used a foundation for training programs at NCA in Ghana, and other relevant organizations about workplace democracy. Deetz, for example, advocated an approach to organizational decision making – which in the case of this study would point to the process of formulating regulations – where all major stakeholders are brought on board. Stakeholders could include employees from all levels of the organization, investors, as well as community members who are impacted by the decisions of the organization. This would be a more equitable approach to policy formulation for instance,

than the heavy reliance on technical standards from the ITU and other media and communications organizations. For the goal of social justice, such training programs to encourage workplace democracy could also ensure that the NCA moves to the frontlines of equitable and universal access to communications products and services in Ghana.

Conclusion

Organizational culture is such an important concept that it can give crucial insights into how organizations perform their core functions. However, it is a contested concept because while some scholars believe it is best for management to lead the charge for organizational identity by prescribing norms, values, and practices, others believe that no matter how much it is prescribed, culture in organizations results from a constitutive process. I take the latter approach in this study and argue that what organizations become – and this changes with time – is a result of the interaction among organization, communication, and power.

Consequently, organizational cultural analysis in this study was approached from a cultural materialist perspective because that way it lent itself more to an examination of different levels and tensions at which discourse – the constitutive element of culture – could be analyzed. Organizational culture, then, is not just an aggregate of micro-level, localized, interpretive practices which crystalize into norms and values; it is a struggle between local and trans-local discourses during which the more powerful ones dominate by creating and maintaining ideological structures. These structures include neoliberalism and colonialism which mediate understanding of organizational life and limit the possibilities for action. However, these same structures provide avenues for exerting individual, often localized agency which have the capacity to transform narratives.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Participants

ID	Gender	First Name of Participant	Position at NCA
1	Male	Kofi	Manager, Regulatory Administration Division
2	Female	Asantewaa	Assistant Manager, Internal Audit
3	Female	Ama	Officer, Cybersecurity Division
4	Female	Caroline	Assistant Manager, IT Division
5	Male	Solomon	Officer, IT Division
6	Male	Robert	Chief Transport Officer
7	Male	Isaac	Deputy Manager, Engineering Division
8	Male	George	Assistant Manager, Regulatory Administration Division
10	Male	Timothy	Deputy Manager, Engineering Division
11	Male	Bright	Deputy Director, Internal Audit
12	Female	Efua	Deputy Director, Consumer and Corporate Affairs
9	Male	William	Principal Manager, Research and Business Development

Appendix B
Invitation to Participate in a Research Study

Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Eric Karikari, Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Communication & Journalism at the University of New Mexico, U.S.A. The overarching goal of this study is to understand how neoliberalism influences the formation of organizational culture in Ghana, using the National Communication Authority (NCA) as a case study. In addition to this, the researcher intends to analyze how employees of NCA creatively engage in the formation of organizational cultural norms, values, beliefs and practices. To do this, the researcher will conduct interviews with some employees of NCA, as well as analyze some publicly available NCA policy documents.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of the study is to examine the factors that contribute to the formation of organizational culture in a Ghanaian setting. As stated above, this will be done by analyzing policy documents and by conducting interviews with employees who will share their personal views about their experiences at NCA. The specific research questions that this research seeks to address are:

1) To what extent do local and global media discourses influence the construction of organizational culture at NCA?
2) What are the discursive opportunities offered by neoliberal notions of organizational culture?
3) What is the role of colonialism in the conceptualization of culture at the NCA?

This research is being undertaken as part of the requirements for the doctoral program that the researcher is undertaking at the University of New Mexico in the U.S.A. The results will be presented as a dissertation to the Department of Communication and Journalism at the University of New Mexico and results will be published in communication journals and/or as book chapters in media studies and organizational communication. The results may also inform training programs about organizational culture and postcolonial organizing.

Why are you being contacted?

You are being asked to participate in this study based on the following reasons: (a) because you are an employee of NCA (b) you are a citizen/native of Ghana (c) you are willing to share your experiences about working at NCA.

What are the procedures?

If you decide to participate in the study, the interview will be held in a place that is most convenient to you and where we can have a private, uninterrupted interview. Participation in the interview will take approximately 60 minutes on the day appointed for the interview. During the interview, you will be asked to provide information about yourself,

your organization (NCA) and your work. Your responses will be kept confidential. Since your participation is completely voluntary, you may choose not to answer any questions during the interview without any penalties whatsoever. Your responses will be tape-recorded only with your permission. There are no monetary rewards due to you for participating in this research

What are the benefits of my participation?
Your participation in this research will give you the opportunity to share information and views about your experiences as an employee of NCA. This research provides you with an opportunity to reflect on your work and your workplace relationships in the context of organizational culture at NCA. The results may inform training programs to be applied in other organizations. The results of the interviews with NCA employees about their experiences could also provide useful information for the continued research into how corporate/organizational culture evolves in contexts such as those in Ghana and in Africa.

How will my interview responses be used?
All the information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Your interview responses will be used strictly for academic purposes. Your personal responses will not be shared with anyone else in your organization. Your name and the name of your organization will not appear in any research report or transcript. All participants and organizations will be assigned pseudonyms in the final research report. Quotations from the interview responses will be listed with the pseudonyms only. Only the researcher, Eric Karikari, and Principal Investigator, Dr. Marco Briziarelli, will have access to the audiotapes and the transcripts of your interview. The audio taped data will be erased when the written transcriptions of your interviews are finished or whenever you request that from Eric Karikari by email or phone call. For information on how to contact Eric Karikari, please see below.

What do I need to do to participate in the interview?
Should you decide to take part in this interview, please send an e-mail message to Eric Karikari at ekarikari@unm.edu or call at +1(516)284-9699 to indicate your willingness to participate. You can also send any other questions that you might have and I will be happy to address them. Then we will schedule a time and place for the interview. Thank you for your time and willingness to take part in this important research study.

Appendix C

Interview Questions
1. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? Family, hobbies, other interests?
2. How long have you worked here at NCA?
3. What is your role/position here? What does it entail?
4. What are the most enjoyable aspects of working here at the NCA?
5. In your opinion, what is the main job/task of the NCA?
6. How would you describe the culture of NCA? What are some of the things you would describe as being unique to NCA and its employees?
7. As an organization, what do you suppose are some of the values and beliefs of NCA?
8. Where do you suppose those values and beliefs come from? Do they come from employees, management, or some other source?
9. As a regulator and policy maker, how would you compare the NCA to other organizations (perhaps in other countries) in terms of standards and policies?
10. Have you ever been involved in training programs and/or seminars/webinars related to your work? Where were they held?
11. How often do you work in teams and how often do you work alone? Any specific examples?
12. What are some of the expectations in terms of employee behavior? Are you expected to dress a certain way, speak a certain way, communicate in a certain language?
13. What are some of the 'freedoms' you enjoy in terms of your work and your interpersonal relationships? For instance, are you allowed to bring work home? Do you have flexibility in terms of what time you report to work or leave work daily?
14. We would all agree we live in an increasingly globalized society, but what does the word "global" mean to you as a person and in your work?
15. What is your personal view on why organizations like the NCA use English as the lingua franca (as opposed to other languages)?
16. What are some of the benefits and challenges of using English as the official language of this organization? Any personal accounts?

Appendix D
Informed Consent Form

Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Eric Karikari, Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Communication & Journalism at the University of New Mexico (UNM), U.S.A. The overarching goal of this study is to understand how neoliberalism influences the formation of organizational culture in Ghana, using the National Communication Authority (NCA) as a case study. In addition to this, the researcher intends to analyze how employees of NCA creatively engage in the formation of organizational cultural norms, values, beliefs and practices. To do this, the researcher will conduct interviews with some employees of NCA, as well as analyze some publicly available NCA policy documents.

What will happen if I decide to participate?

If you agree to be in this research study, you will answer discussion questions about your experiences as an employee of NCA particularly with regards to your daily routines, and relationship with other employees. Participation in this interview will take approximately 60 minutes of your time on the day appointed for the interview. Your responses will be kept confidential. Since your participation is completely voluntary, you may choose not to answer any questions during the interview without any penalties, whatsoever. Your responses will be audio recorded only with your permission. There are no monetary rewards due to you for participating in this research.

How long will I be in this study?

The interview will take about one hour (60minutes) to complete and you also agree to be audio recorded.

What are the risks of being in this study?

There are no foreseen risks associated with participating in this study. There may be some minimal risks in talking about some uncomfortable experiences that you might have gone through. In this respect, memories of these experiences may make you feel uncomfortable. The interview will also explore questions regarding your own cultural groups and your relationships with work colleagues, subordinates, or superiors. You may choose not to respond to any question. You may also choose to inform and talk about your discomfort with the interviewer, or stop the interview at any time. There are risks of stress, emotional distress, inconvenience and possible loss of privacy and confidentiality associated with participating in a research study.

For more information about risks, ask one of the study investigators listed above.

What are the benefits of this study?

Your participation in this research will give you the opportunity to share information and views about your experiences as an employee of NCA. This research provides you with an opportunity to reflect on your work and your workplace relationships in the context of organizational culture at NCA. The results may inform training programs to be applied in

other organizations. The results of the interviews with NCA employees about their experiences could also provide useful information for the continued research into how corporate/organizational culture evolves in contexts such as those in Ghana and in Africa.

What other choices do I have if I do not want to be in this study?
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, skip any question or withdraw at any time without penalty. If you do decide to participate, you will sign and detach both consent forms, keep one form for your records, and hand the other form to the person administering the focus group before starting the focus group.

How will my information be kept confidential?
Your original name will be withheld from the transcription of the interviews and in the final report. The information gathered from the interview will be used only for the purpose of this study. Information from the focus group will be transcribed and saved in the Communication and Journalism department under the supervision of the principal investigator (Dr. Marco Briziarelli) and researcher/secondary investigator (Eric Karikari). Only the principal and secondary investigators will have access to the transcriptions.

After each interview, the researcher will transfer the audiotaped session into MP3 format and erase the original audio from the tape recorder. The researcher will hire a transcription service to transcribe the audio tapes. The transcript will be saved on the secondary researcher's computer until final analysis is completed in May 2018.

The secondary investigator will erase transcriptions from his computer once his dissertation is completed. CDs and any hard copies of transcriptions will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the main office of the Communication and Journalism department for three years after the completion of the study. After the three-year period, the data related to the study will be destroyed. Transcriptions would be shredded and any hard copies of the audio recordings will be destroyed.

What are the costs of taking part in this study?
There are no direct costs to you for participating in this study.

Will I be paid for taking part in this study?
Participating in this study is voluntary and there are no monetary rewards due to you for participating in this research.

Can I stop being in this study once I begin?
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to choose not to participate or to withdraw your participation at any point in this study without affecting any services to which you are entitled

If you feel your personal safety is compromised during the interview, you can leave the interview immediately. Likewise, if the personal safety of the investigator becomes questionable at the location of the personal interview, that interview will be forfeited.
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Whom can I call with questions or complaints about this study?
If you have any questions, concerns or complaints at any time about the research study, Eric Karikari, or his associate Dr. Marco Briziarelli will be glad to answer them at +1(516)284-9699 any time throughout the week. If you would like to speak with someone other than the research team regarding any complaints you have about the study, you may call the UNM IRB at +1(505)272-1129 or email at IRB@salud.unm.edu.

Whom can I call with questions about my rights as a research subject?
If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may call the UNM IRB at +1(505)272-1129. The IRB is a group of people from UNM and the community who provide independent oversight of safety and ethical issues related to research involving human subjects. For more information, you may also access the IRB website at http://hsc.unm.edu/som/research/HRRC/maincampusirbhome.shtml.

Consent
You are making a decision on whether to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you read the information provided (or the information was read to you). By signing this consent form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights as a research subject.

I have had the opportunity to ask questions and all questions have been answered to my satisfaction. By signing this consent form, I agree to participate in this study (A copy of this consent form will be provided to you).

_____   _____   _____
Name of Adult Subject (print)   Signature of Adult Subject   Date

INVESTIGATOR SIGNATURE
I have explained the research to the subject or his/her legal representative and answered all his/her questions. I believe that he/she understands the information described in this consent form and freely consents to participate.

_____
Name of Investigator/ Research Team Member (type or print)

_____   _____
(Signature of Investigator/ Research Team Member)   Date

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