The Coverage of Africa in the Mainstream Western Media – Examining the Times Coverage of the D.R. Congo's First Free Elections

Chongombe Djongana
St. Paul's University

Abstract

This paper seeks to investigate the on-going complaints from both African and western scholars that Africa is still negatively represented in the western mainstream media more than 50 years after independence even when hopeful signs and baby steps towards democratisation and development are obvious in the continent. The study employs both content and discourse analysis approach. The Times, which used to be one of the leading western newspapers and the British newspaper of record, was selected. Content and discourse analysis were used to evaluate and categorise the news items published in the sampled year (January to December 2006), to distinguish the emerging themes, identify the sources, and to interpret the language used in the coverage. The findings show that news stories throughout the coverage of the D.R. Congo first free and fair elections in 2006 were written by western journalists and correspondents from The Times and associated correspondents, while three other news agencies namely Agence France Press (AFP), Associated Press (AP) and Reuters were the main sources for The Times newspaper. Recurring themes such as tribal clashes, civil wars, corruption, child exploitation, poverty, refugees, witchcraft, dependency, spreading diseases and mismanagement prevail in the reporting. The findings reveal that the reporting of the Congo in The Times has avowedly been through western eyes, and, as with much journalism, has not offered any real context to the stories.

Key Words: Western Media Coverage, The Times Newspaper, African Stereotypes, The Congo.

Introduction

This study is about the representation of Africa in the western mainstream media 50 years after independence. Specifically, it focuses on the way in which the Congo is reported and represented in what has traditionally been held as Britain's leading newspaper of record, *The Times*. Since the 1980s as part of an increasing awareness if of postcolonial relations, scholars have identified two basic features of the coverage of Africa in the western media. Firstly, it has been marginalised, ignored and represented from the western perspectives when covered in the international news. Studies in a variety of media systems have indicated the western dominance in the coverage of Africa and limited attention paid to the continent; for example see Gerbner and Marvanyi (1983), Screberny Mohammadi (1984), Harrison and Palmer (1986), Quist-Adade (2000), Golan (2008). This absence of attention to Africa is also apparent in news media studies, which often pay attention to the African continent only within the context of the 'digital divide' and Africa in the news media remains an under-reported part of the world (Fahmy 2010:149). Secondly, when it is covered by news outlets in the West, Africa is often represented negatively even when there are steps towards democracy such as free and fair elections in different African countries, peace deals, regional cooperation and development (Hunter-Gault 2006:115-118). To be more specific it is largely reported in the context of what has been identified as the 'coups, famines and wars' syndrome. Public images of Africa are in general mostly negative: AIDS, starvation, corruption, dictatorships, or as one scholar sums it up, a continent of 'poverty and flies' (Palmer 1986:12; see also Michira 2002, Fair 1998, Mackenzie 1984).

The particular geographical region of Africa this paper focuses on is the D.R. Congo, but in some senses D.R. Congo can act as a synecdoche for the whole of Sub – Saharan Africa.[1] The main research question for this study is: (1) what have been the representations of the Congo in *The Times?* The secondary questions are: (2) who are the authors of the articles and commentaries if any and what are the standard discursive conventions and tropes and sources that they draw upon? (3) What are the main topics, stereotypes and images that pervade the reporting and articles?

---

[1] I obviously do not claim that DR Congo is literally representative of the whole of Africa in being a synecdoche. I use this only as a heuristic device to develop the argument of the study. Indeed, Africa is a multiplicity in more than one sense of the word. Rather in terms of media representation there are a number of repeated and commonly drawn upon representation stereotypes and forms that are used in the colonial literature which in many cases seek to undermine or extinguish the multiplicity of lived experience in Africa.

The newspaper selected to look at the representation of the Congo is *The Times* of London. This is because of its unique status *stretching from the 18th century to the present day. The Times* has been considered throughout its long history - which contrasts to the short lived appearance of some of its competitors - as Britain 'newspaper of record' for the country that established the world's largest empire and it has also been regarded as a pioneer of foreign news (Thomson 2000). A combination of content analysis and discourse analysis is used. The second section of this study explains the western media images of Africa from the 1980s to date, the third section looks at the methodology used, the fourth section analyses the findings, identifying the nature of representation, the sources used in framing the debate, the kinds and types of stories deployed. The *fifth section* discusses the findings of the analysis of the content of *The Times* reporting. It describes and discusses the pictures of the Congo that emerge and compares these with the images of Africa that have been identified in previous research to see if stereotypical representations prevail over time.

The western media coverage Africa and its persistent Stereotypes

Research on western media coverage of Africa suggests that, if not the least covered region of the world, Africa is one of the most seldom covered (Golan 2008:43). There are practical reasons for this. Getting the story out of Africa is not easy. Reporters must often contend with sources reluctant to speak for fear of their own safety, difficult travel conditions, censorship and inadequate communication facilities that make transmitting stories at times nearly impossible (Behr 1969:177). In addition to these daily reporting problems, media organizations must make a large financial commitment to maintain a correspondent in Africa. But when the media do cover African countries, stories often conceive of Africa in a very narrow focus.

Most commonly, media coverage is of an Africa enmeshed in a series of political and military imbroglios, and ethnic violence. Moreover, before the decline of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, relations between East and West, the Cold War framework often informed this crisis coverage, as violence and conflict in Africa were the site for the so-called proxy wars between the superpowers (Behr 1969). Thus, for African countries to be part of "all the news that is fit to print", as the slogan of the *New York Times* pronounces, it seems that news stories had to

fit the Cold War frame (Golan 2008:44). Nonetheless, news is more than a collection of facts that simply fit a particular ideological or political frame.

It is part of a narrative form that is anchored in the cultural understanding audiences bring to new and recurring events, issues and problems in society. In telling a story, the news media retell and reinterpret versions of that particular story as told by other powerful social and political institutions and rooted in the history of the society within which they are told (Fair 1993:6-8).

Africa as a place of famine civil wars, infectious diseases and death

Since independence in the 1960s to date, most regions of Africa have experienced various forms of violence, ranging from tribal clashes, armed conflicts and civil wars to genocide. Be it the Somali crisis, the government versus rebel wars in the Congo and Angola, or the Rwandan genocide of 1994, reports of this kind have a high premium in the Western media and they automatically earn a headline or even top story status (See Fair 1994 and Michira 2002). While it may be difficult to achieve total objectivity in media reports, it is not lost to many observers that reports in the Western media about war and conflicts in Africa are often crisis-driven in such a way as to imply that Africans are naturally savage, warlike, and violent and steeped in primordial tribal feuds.

The perspectives taken by reporters, the kind of headlines, pictures, statistics, and the language that they use, all point to a picture created to serve certain interests/agendas. Much of the information is usually omitted (and sometimes added) to give the Western audiences and governments what they want (see Simonsen 2010). The news analyses purposively choose not to mention the fact that the US supported, both materially and militarily, certain despotic regimes in Africa during the Cold War. It has, over time, also been supporting undemocratic governments as a means of creating a conducive environment for the exploitation of Africa's natural (mainly, oil and mineral) resources. Said Barre of Somalia and Mobutu of Zaire are just but two of such despots. Yet this does not seem to be reported consistently to the Western audiences. The Western media conveniently avoids talking about the connection between these civil wars and

45

the colonial legacy. Politicizing ethnicity by pitting certain "tribes" against others in the "divide and rule" policy was adopted mainly by the British and Belgian colonial governments. Moreover, the artificial (arbitrary) drawing up of national boundaries during the "scramble and partition" of Africa saw the division and polarisation of African communities that had otherwise lived as one for centuries. Such issues never see the light of day in the Western media (Mudimbe 1988).

AIDS has had a devastating impact on the social and economic development of the human race. Statistics provided by WHO and other humanitarian agencies vindicate the fact that the majority of the HIV/AIDS sufferers are in Africa. Given the aforesaid, the Western media have succeeded in giving Aids an African face. With highly sensationalised headlines and pictures of the infected population, they seem to tell their audience that this "their" problem, not "ours". The media attributes the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS in Africa to ignorance, the reluctance to change sexual behaviour, as well as backward cultural and religious traditions that make talking about sexuality and AIDS taboo. Such explanations are prominently fronted (Fair 1993:5).

The issue of poverty, famine, starvation, and corruption are then mentioned as having a role in the spread of the disease. Related to poverty, however, is the fact that the majority of those poor people do not have access to food & medical care that their counterparts in the West have. But his is not given due publicity. As long as the gap between the West and African countries continues to grow, AIDS, Ebola, malaria and a plethora of other diseases will remain wearing an African face. As far as the Western Fourth Estate is concerned, "Africa has a grim future", or rather "Africans face extinction" unless the Western governments and humanitarian agencies comes to its rescue (Michira 2002; John 1987:1-6).

Methodology

To better examine and analyse the texts found in *The Times*, I used content analysis alongside discourse analysis. Content analysis was useful to identify the occurrence and recurrence of topics, themes, words and concepts. It was supplemented by discourse analysis to excavate the latent meaning around representation and stereotypes in the coverage. Words such as violence, conflicts, civil wars, tribal wars, corruptions, justice, peace, rebellions, dangerous destination, spreading disease, poverty, witchcraft, Western intervention, UN intervention and unrest were repeatedly used in *The Times* to reporting the Congo and its peoples. For O'Sullivan and Jewkes (1997:73) 'media stereotypes occur when the roles, behaviour or personal characteristics of a particular groups or community of people are portrayed in a particular way'.

As Schiffren et al (2003) attest, there is a sustained history of investigation into stereotypes - particularly using discourse analysis to specifically record the incidence of repetition and use of stereotyping labels. Paltridge says that 'such repetition reinforces social inequalities and naturalises dominant labels' - and thus ways of thinking about 'in' and 'out' groups (Paltridge 2006: 182; see also Hinton 2000).

The Sample

The year selected represents distinct era in the country's development. It was not until the beginning of the 21th century that true freedom arrived in the country, when the first free and fair elections were held in this period of *reparation*. The decision to concentrate on the British press was because of its accessibility and global reach throughout the history of the Congo. Which newspaper to select posed a problem; to select one paper over another could be perceived as subjective. However, it was straightforward to collect texts from the Digital Archives and microfilms of *The Times*, which are available online, enabling me to go back to microfilm to collect back issues of the paper, print them out, then code and analyse them. *The Times* of London was not only a newspaper of record but had been one of the leading newspapers in the world. Its foreign news gathering operation was the envy of international journalism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century's (see Merrill & Fisher 1980:325).

The qualitative analysis depended on identifying stereotypes in this period of study. The recurrence of certain stereotypes was counted. The key stereotypes identified for comparison were as follows:

- Conflict/civil war/coups/unstable/post-election unrest/violence
- Backward/Poverty/famine/refugees/helpless/tribalism/witchcraft
- Spreading disease/human disaster/poor infrastructure/rape
- Corruption/elections/vote rigging/insecurity/politically unstable
- Dependency/UN intervention/European Union intervention

The stereotypes identified above were drawn from the Representation literature in section two. They were examined and compared in the selected year to identify similarities and differences. The categories examined negative representations of the Congo and the Congolese people, where positive images were found they were categorised.

Findings & Results

The Times newspaper only published 38 news stories from January to December with no editorials or letters. This included 20 articles on pre-election campaigns and election excitements for the Congolese who were going to vote for the first time. There were eight articles on violence which included clashes and rebellions, two on vote rigging which is seen as corruption, two on witchcraft, two on coup arrest, two on starvation and poverty, one on spreading disease Ebola and one on business.

The news stories were written by a range of named correspondents, as well as agency sources such as AFP (Agence France Press) and Reuters (see table 1).

Table 1: Modern Congo News authors/By-lines

Anonymous	2
AFP (Agency France Press)	3
AP (Associated Press)	7
Chris Johnston	1
John Swain	1
Jonathan Clayton	10
Isabel Matheson	1
Levis Smith & Mark Wright	1
Matthew Green	1
Michael Hornell	1
Peter Nicholas	1
Richard Hoskins	1
Reuters	6
Sam Kelley	1
Toby More	1

The sources directly cited reflected a broader range of actors, including a number ordinary Congolese. The primary sources of information for the election stories were official Congolese source including the Congolese Defence Ministry, Congolese Electoral Commission and Congolese Supreme Court. Most of these sources were on the record (See table 2).
 (See table 2).

49

Table 2: Modern Congo Direct Sources

Abbe Malumalu (Electoral Commission)	1
Mr Baybay Ange (Congolese Judge)	1
Mr Bienvenu Kenny (Congolese)	1
Unnamed Congolese Children	3
Congolese Defence Minister	1
Congolese Electoral Commission	1
Congolese Independent Electoral Commission	1
Congolese Supreme Court	1
Congolese Voters	1
Congolese women	1
Mr Jean Kabongo	1
Mr Jean Pierre Bemba (Opposition Politician)	9
Mr Joseph Kabila (The President)	6
Lieutenant Colonel Conrad Thorpe (British)	1
Dr Kashala (Congolese Presidential candidate)	1
Mr Molobo (Congolese)	1
Mr Mwamba (Congolese)	1
Unnamed Congolese Church Pastor	1
Unnamed Congolese police man	1
Unnamed Congolese army general	1
Unnamed Wildlife experts	1

50

The stereotypes that appeared regularly in 2006 centred on child exploitation, witchcraft, rebel, civil war and disease (see table 3). The language used reinforced stereotypical representations: for example, UN troops 'killed', Kinshasa is like 'a huge open sewer', 'Sorcery is in the streets'.

Table 3: Modern Congo's Stereotype

Modern stereotypes	Frequency	Percentage
Child exploitation	14	38%
Poverty	13	36%
Witchcraft (black magic)	12	33%
Rebels	10	21%
Civil war	5	13%
Peace Deals	2	5.5%
Ceasefire	1	2.5%
Dangerous destination	1	2.5%
Spreading disease (Ebola)	1	2.5%
International Justice	1	2.5%

The Congo is mainly portrayed as a place of violence, danger, poverty and backwardness. The refugees were indigenous, usually fleeing unrest and violence following the elections. The Congolese are represented as backward and unable to adjust to the modern world and democracy. Their cultural inferiority is reproduced, albeit in slightly different ways and the language used to describe 'Congolese' reinforces this portrayal including stories of strange practices such as witchcraft.

51

Discussion of the Findings

This section discusses the findings that have emerged from the study of *The Times*. It refers to the different explanations that have been put forward to account for the nature of the reporting of Africa in the western media, focussing on cultural production and newsgathering approaches to account for the selection of what is newsworthy. It identifies gaps and silences in the coverage. Attention is paid to the criteria of newsworthiness and the nature of news values in relation to the research on the western media coverage of Third World countries (Hunter-Gault 2006 & Smith 1980).

Michira (2002) identifies the coverage of the western media as shaped by several factors: profit and commercial motives; the West's dominance of global culture; the foreign policy interests of western governments and the narrow cultural perspective and understanding of western audiences. The nature of the specific framing of Africa is attributed to the legacy of colonialism, which can be traced in varying ways throughout *The Times* coverage of the Congo. As this study is not just a snapshot like many other pieces of research in this area (see Alleyne 1997, Ankonah 2008, Fair 1998, Mengara 2001, Michira 2002 and Palmer 2006) it enables us to place the representations of Africa in the western media in a broader historical context.

Basics findings

The image of the Congo in *The Times* is primarily negative and narrowly drawn. Much of the coverage focuses on the failings of Africans and African political systems (Michira 2002) are reflected in the focus on the inability of the Congolese to govern and administer themselves. The people of the Congo are deemed in different ways, to be incapable. The Congolese are represented as unfit to fully participate in the political process. Tribal disputes are apparently the root cause of the instability and underdevelopment of Africa. African scholar, Ekeh (2007:108) states: 'tribalism is a term used in most of post-colonial Africa to denote animosities between members of different ethnic groups. By its very nature, tribalism is a de-radicalised construct'. The imposition of western rule or the intervention of western influence is often justified in terms of the instability caused by tribal divisions. These are often defined as bloodthirsty and barbaric actions and practices. The 'primitive' aspect of African society is acknowledged less in later coverage, but is never far from the surface in accounting for war and warfare on the

52

continent. *The Times* reporting of the Congo reflects this, with the cruelty of the continent touched on in this period.

It is also the case – as identified by other researchers, for instance, Alleyne (1997) – that there is little context or background provided to the reporting and very few positive news features. Few positive stories emerge and when they do it is often to praise the capacity of western interests to contribute to the development of Africa. Above all there is a preponderance of reporting of death, destruction and violence. This is, as Fair (1993), Michira (2002), Ankonah (2008) and Simonsen (2010)[2] note in their discussions of Africa in the western media, clearly 'endemic' in the coverage of the Congo by *The Times*.

Coverage of Modern Congo (2006)

The main topic in *The Times* coverage of the modern Congo (2006) was again politics: featuring prominently were the United Nations and European Union's interventions to keep peace between rebel factions in the country and the election campaign - the first free and democratic elections since the country independence in June 1960 - as well as the post-election unrest. Much of the coverage examines the violence and ethnic clashes that arose from the allegations of vote rigging and the rejection of the election results by the Congolese rebel leader, Jean Pierre Bemba, and his supporters. They had lost the elections to Joseph Kabila. Violence expressed in various ways is the most common element in the findings gathered from the coverage of the news of the Congo:

> Congo is on the verge of civil war after supporters of the President Joseph Kabila and his main election rival Jean Pierre Bemba fought on the streets of the capital for the third day. Fighting broke out when the independent electoral commission announced that the country's election on July 30 had proved inconclusive and that the two would have to face a run-off (anonymous author, *The Times*, August 23, 2006, p.31).

---

[2] See section 5

The former rebel who lost Congo's presidential election has been claiming he will not resort to violence and plunge the sprawling central African country back into chaos Jean Pierre Bemba vowed to the people … the election result has to be formalised by the end of this month (*The Times*, November 20, 2006, p.34).

All the articles are written by *The Times* correspondents and agency journalists, mainly the Associated Press (AP), the Agency France Press (AFP) and Reuters. *The Times* journalist Jonathan Clayton alone wrote and covered more stories than all the correspondents from AP and AFP (see Table 1). Richstad and Anderson (1981:224) argue that the concerns about the news coverage of Africa focus on the inadequate and superficial attention the western press pay to the realities of developing countries, often infusing coverage with cultural bias. The traditional emphasis on the dramatic, the emotional, and the amusing, the 'coups and earthquakes' syndrome, is seen not only as unbalanced but also as detrimental to the development process. The western monopoly on the distribution of news, whereby even stories written about one Third World country for distribution in another are reported and transmitted by international news agencies based in New York, London, and Paris, amounts to neo-colonialism and cultural domination. The hold of the agencies over the control of international news provision is seen as increasing over the years, especially in the post-war period. This was not really shown to be the case in this study.

The Times uses much material from its own staff or named correspondents. This can be attributed to the fact that some influential newspapers maintained their corps of correspondents and syndicated their correspondents' work. These papers also employ stringers on a permanent or semi-permanent contract. However, most news organisations rely on Reuters, AP and AFP. Few newspapers keep correspondents in Central, East or West Africa given its perceived low newsworthiness (Richstad and Anderson 1981:224-5; see also Williams 2011). The perceived lack of newsworthiness of Africa is reinforced by western news media views of what its audiences want. They believe that people are only interested in what is described as 'home news abroad'. According to Kai Hafez (2007:39; see also Williams 2011). 'Most of the time, international reporting in media systems around the world is produced for domestic audiences, not for the regions in question themselves'. Adapting international stories to domestic concerns

and interests is a means of ensuring that foreign news relates to the viewers, readers and listeners at home (Elliot 1979:156, Hafez 2007:40). Home news abroad concentrates on events that are directly linked with or are of direct interest to domestic audiences.

What happens to fellow citizens abroad or the travels of domestic leaders or celebrities' are examples of such stories. In this study of *The Times* coverage of the Congo it was a consistent feature of the reporting that it focuses on western interests, people and concerns. In 2006 the case of the Briton Conrad Thorpe helping Congolese to protect the White Rhino in Virunga Park in the midst of a civil war which has been estimated to have taken the lives of nearly four million people is an extreme example (see *The Times*, May 20, 2006, p.3).

However, there is still something about the colonial experience that influences the coverage and a tendency in the British press to judge contemporary African states in terms of their colonial past. According to commentators such as Woollacott (1976), Berry (1988), Parekh (1988) and Tunstall (2008), the western media act as inspectors to examine how far the new states of Africa and elsewhere in the Global South have fallen from the civilised standards that supposedly characterised their colonial past. Some of the coverage in *The Times* leads us to think that the paper is making this type of judgement. The reporting of the Congo could also be seen as a product of the international news gathering system and a set of news values that reflect western cultural assumptions about the world and those who live in it. It was predominantly negative, centred on stereotypical representations of the people and the country which coincided with the readers' perceptions of this part of the world, focused on western interests and reflecting western priorities. While there were slight deviations from what has been identified in the research into the representation of Africa in the western news media, this study confirms the findings of previous research. Galtung and Ruge's typology holds up: *The Times* focussed on elites, bad news and news and comment that responded to western perspectives. It was primarily about politics and economics, 'hard news', and set a news agenda, which was western in orientation and explanation.

Gaps and Silences

The Times coverage was negative, focussing on traditional stereotypes such as backwardness, violence, tribalism, failed states, lack of collective identity, corruption, injustice and mismanagement, hunger, famine as indicated by other research studies (see Achebe 1975, Mandaza 1986, Mphahlele 1922; Michira 2002, Mengara 2001, Lynch 2004, Pieterse 1992). There were few positive articles such as Congolese who are excited to freely vote for the first time, ceasefire and peace deals in between.

However, the negative/positive dimension is only a partial explanation of the picture while only bad news predominates. *The Times* focussed on the bad news syndrome with stories of violence, war, crime, ethnic conflicts, corruption, disaster and famine. But these bad news stories were related to political coverage that stresses external or international dimensions to the African experience. Coups, crises, wars and conflicts are located as part of an international agenda not the local agenda – their impact is assessed in terms of geopolitics rather than on local peoples and interests (Smith 1980). Hence the western interests and perspectives prevail. What is neglected throughout the history of the papers coverage of the Congo is the international solidarity in support of the native peoples which has featured in the findings of the year 2006. *The* UN peacekeepers and the European Union were present in the Congo to help keep the peace and support the efforts of the people of the Congo to their self-determination and these efforts of international solidarity were not covered.

From this study it is significant that the major silence in the *The Times* reporting of the Congo related to western involvement in the country. That many of the problems faced by the Congo and its peoples were largely created by westerners and western interventions, such UN intervention and other seemingly necessary intrusions, is not apparent. The responsibility of the West, and in particular western governments, for the country's failings and suffering is down-played or neglected. It is not part of the agenda about thinking of the problems of the Congo, Africa and the Third World. As Dahlgren and Chakrapani (1982:54) have asserted: 'The instability in most African countries and other parts of the Third World is at least in part due to the West's role over several centuries. The news merely draws upon and contributes to a convenient cultural amnesia that it did not create these problems'.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to examine and uncover the nature of representation in terms of the images and discourses presented or the types of stories covered and the sources used more than 50 years after independence. The study found that many of the stereotypes that were identified in previous research into the images of Africa in the western media were apparent in *The Times* reporting of the Congo. The country was consistently represented in a stereotypical way, focussing on the negative aspects of the society and its peoples. Violence is represented as endemic and, like other parts of the continent, Africans and African institutions and political structures are found wanting. The Congo is portrayed as under-developed, uncivilised and under-reported.

Generally, the coverage conformed to representations of Africa, focussing on several myth-like characteristics, exaggerating certain features such as war, suffering, danger, and disease, while minimizing others - including the specific culture, history, customs and social and political processes within the Congo. Often the Congo is seen as the same as other African countries. In an article in the May 2006 edition of the magazine *Journalisten*, the new foreign correspondents appointed by the NRK, Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, are represented by reference to the capitals they are based in, with one exception. The African correspondents are always described as 'going to Africa' without stating the African country they are going to, as if Africa is only a country (Simonsen 2010).

The first free elections in 2006 were subjected to the western news values, which emphasise what went wrong rather than what went right. This conforms to the 'coups, wars and famines' syndrome. It seems that stories about the Congo and the Congolese are more likely to appear when it is bad news (See Smith 1980). This conforms to the structure of the international system and predominance of western news values in the selection of international news. The stereotypes that were apparent in the reporting of the Congo reflected a long tradition of cultural misrepresentation of Africa in western societies.

The commercial and economic requirement that the western agencies and western news media produce news that interests the western audience leads to the reproduction of these images. The lack of a provision of background or context means audiences understand events through their own cultural prism, which in the West means negative and narrow stereotypes of Africa and Africans. In this way, international news can be seen as a weapon of those with power

57

in the international system, a tool to maintain the status quo, at least in regard to the inferior status of some peoples and nation-states. However, an alternative way of viewing the problem is to focus on the dominant definition of news. Such an approach locates the problem with the power of news values rather than with particular prejudices towards certain countries or groups of people. *The Times* reporting of the Congo must be seen in the context of an international news system that was established in colonial times. Events in *The Times* coverage of the Congo 2006 elections were viewed through western eyes more than 50 years after the so-called independence of most African countries.

References

Primary Sources

Achebe, C. (1975). *Morning yet on Creation day*. London: Heinemann

Alleyne, M. (1997). *News Revolution: Political and Economic Decision about Global Information.* London: Macmillan.

Alleyne, M. (2003). *Global Lies? Propaganda, the UN and World Order*. London: Macmillan.

Anderson, M. and Richstad, J. (1981). *Crisis in International News.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Ankomah, B. (2008). *Reporting Africa: Images of Disaster & Rebellion*. London: Longman.

Behr, E. (1969). *Anyone Here been Raped and Speak English?* New York: New York *Times* Company.

Barker, M. (1979). *The Loss of Sterotypes* in O'Sullivan, T. and Jewkes, Y. (eds). *The Media Stude's Reader*. London: Arnold.

Curtin, P. (1965). *The Image of Africa*. London: Macmillan.

Dorman, W. (1986). '*Peripheral Vision: U.S. Journalism and the Third World.'* World PolicySummer: pp. 419-45.

Ekeh, P. (2007). *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.17, No.1 (January, 1975), pp.91-112.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language & Power*. London: Longman.

Fair, J. (1993). War, Famine, and Poverty: Race in the Construction of Africa's Media Image. Journal of communication Inquiry 17: pp. 2, 5-22.

Ferguson, R. (1998). Representing Race. Ideology, Identity and the Media. Arnold London.

Galtung and Ruge (1965). '*Structure of foreign news; the presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in four foreign newspaper.*' Journal of International Peace Research 1, 64-90.

Graber, D. (1994). *Media Power in Politics*. Chicago: Co-Press.

Gunter, B. (2000). *Media Research Methods*. Measuring Audiences, Reactions and Impact. London: Sage.

Habermas, J. (1992). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: Polity

Hafez, K. (2007). *The Myth of Media Globalization.* London: Polity.

Hansen, A., Cottle S., Negrine, R. and Newbold C. (1988). *Mass Communication Research*

Method. New York: Palgrave.

Harcup, T. and O'Neil, D. (2001) '*What is News?* Galtung and Ruge Revisited Journalism Studies, 2 (2): 261-280.

Harrison, J. (2006). *News.* London: Routledge.

Hartley, J. (1982). *Understanding News.* London: Methuen.

Hohenberg, J. (1993). *Foreign Correspondence: the Great Reporters and their Times.* New York: Syracuse University Press.

Hunter-Gault C. (2006). *New News Coming Out Of Africa. Uncovering Africa's*. Oxford University Press.

Kaul, C. (2006). *'India', the Imperial Press Conferences of the Empire Press Union: The Diplomacy of News and the Politics of Empire, 1909-46'* in Kaul, C. (eds) *Media and the British Empire*. London: Palgrave: Macmillan.

Lippmann, W. (1922). *Public Opinion*. New York: The New York Times Company.

Lynch, J. (2004). *'Reporting The World: The Ethical Challenge to International News'* inPaterson, C. and Sreberny, A. (2004) *International News in the Twenty-first century.* Luton: John Libbey.

Mandaza, I. (1986). '*News from the Third World: Crossing the barrier'* in Desbarts, P and Southerst, J (eds). *Information/Crisis/Development: News from the Third World.* Ontario: University of Western Ontario.

McCombs, M. and Shaw, D. (1972). '*The agenda setting function of the press*' *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36: 176-87.

McEvedy, C. (1995). *Penguin Atlas of African History*. London: Penguin Books.

McShane, D. (1979). *Using the Media.* London: Pluto.

McQuail, D., (2008). *Mass Communication Theory.* London: Sage 5th edition.

Melvern, L. (2001). '*Missing the Story: the media and the Rwandan genocide.*' Contemporary Security Policy 22 (3): 91-108.

Mengara, M. D. (2001). *Images of Africa*. Trenton: Africa World Press.

Merrill, C. and Fisher, A. (1980). *The World's Great Dailies. Profiles of fifty Newspapers.* New York: Hastings House Publishers.

Michira J. (2002, December). *Images of Africa in the Western world*. At

www.Teachingliterature.org [Accessed in October 10, 2010]

Mphahlele, E. (1962). *The African Image.* London: Faber & Faber.

Mudimbe, V. (1988). *The Invention of Africa.* Bloomington: Indiana University
Press.

Murray, A. (1993). *Wild Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

O'Sullivan, T. and Jewkes, Y. (1997). *Media, Politics, Power*. New York: Free Press.

Palmer, M. (1977). *'The British press and international news, 1851-99'* in Boyce, G., Curran, J.
and Wingate, P. (eds). *Newspaper History: from the 17th century to the present day* London:
Constable.

Paltridge, B. (2006) *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction.* New York: Continuum Press.

Parekh, B. (1988). *'Reflections on...the legacy of colonialism ...'* in Twitchin, J (eds) *The Black
and White Media Show* Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Paterson, C. and Screberny, A. (2004). *International News in the twenty-first century* Luton:
John Libbey.

Perkins T. (1979). Rethinking Stereotype in Barrett M., Corrigan P., Kuhn A. and Wolff J. (eds).
Ideology and Cultural Production. London: Croom Helm.

Pieterse, J. (1992). *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture.*
New Haven: Yale University Press.

Richstad, J. and Anderson, M. (1981). *Crisis in International News: Policies and Perspectives.*
New York: Columbia University Press.

Simonsen, H. (2010). *Fantasies and Experiences*: *Norwegian Press Coverage of Africa 1900-
2002*. Nordic Mind Special Issues in Kult 7: pp.1-40.

Smith, A. (1980). *Geopolitics of Information*. London: Faber & Faber.

Thomson, J. Lee. (2000). *Northcliffe*: *Press Baron in Politics 1865-1922*. London: John Murray.

Williams, K. (2011). *International Journalism*. London: Routledge.

Williams, K. (2010). *Read all about it. A history of the British Newspaper*. London: Routledge.

Wimmer, R. and Dominick, J. (1984). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction (4th eds).*
Belmont: Wadsworth.

Zins, H.S. (1982). *Joseph Conrad and Africa*. Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau.

Secondary Sources Cited

Adams, W. (1982). *TV Coverage of International Affairs.* New Jersey: Ablex.

Akeley, C. (1924). *In Brightest Africa.* New York: Page & Company.

Berry, A. (1988) '*Black Mythologies: representation of black people on British Television*' in Twitchin, J. (eds). *The Black and White Media Book* Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

CARMA (2006). *The Carma Report on Western Media Coverage of Humanitarian Disasters.* Web Document: [accessed November 21, 2011].

Coupland N. & Jaworski A. (2007). *Sociolinguistics.* London: Macmillan.

Curran, J (1982). '*Communications, Power and Social Order*' in Gurevitch, M., Bennett,T., and Woollacott, J. (eds) *Culture, Society and the Media.* London: Methuen.

Dance, S. (1978). *The Art of Natural History.* New York: The Overlook Press.

Dahlgren, P. and Chakrapani, S. (1982). '*The Third World on TV News: Western Ways of Seeing the 'other'* in Adams, W. (eds). *Television Coverage of International Affairs.* New Jersey: Ablex.

Dorman, W. and Farhang, M. (1987). *The US Press and Iran.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fahmy, S. (2010). '*How Could So Much Produce So Little*? *Foreign Affairs Reporting in the Wake of 9/11*' in Golan, G., Johnson, T.J. and Wanta, W. (eds) *International Media Communication in a Global Age* London: Routledge.

Gerbner, G. and Marvanyi, G. (1983). '*The Many Worlds of International News?*' in Glasgow Media Group (2000). *Viewing the World: News Content and Audience Studies.* London: DFID.

Golan, G. (2008). *Where in the world is Africa? Predicting coverage of Africa by US Television Networks.* Communication Gazette 70 (1); 47-57.

Gowing, N. (2009). '*Skyful of Lies' and Black Swans: the new tyranny of shifting information power in crises* Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.

Harrison, P. and Palmer, R. (1986). *News Out of Africa.* London: Hilary Shipman.

Jenkins, A. (1978). *The Naturalists: Pioneers of Natural History.* New York: May flower Books.

Lynch, J. and McGoldrick, A. (2005). *Peace Journalism.* Stroud*: Hawthorn Press.*

MacKenzie, J. (1984). *Propaganda and Empire.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Quist-Adade, C. (2000). '*In the Shadow of the Kremlin: Africa's Media Image from Communism to Post Communism*' in Malak, A. and Kavoori, A. (eds). *The Global Dynamics of News: Studies*

in International News Coverage and News Agencies. Stamford: Connecticut Ablex.

Screberny-Mohammdi, A. (1984). '*The World of News*' Journal of Communication Winter.pp. 121-134.

Sreberny, A. and Paterson, C. (2000). '*Introduction'* in Paterson, C. and Screberny, A. (eds). *International News in the twenty-first century.* Luton: John Libbey.

Stanley, H. (1980). *In Darkest Africa or The Quest, Rescue, and Retreat of Emin, Governor of Equatoria.* New York: Charles Scriber's son.

Tunstall, J. (1996). *Newspaper Power: The New National Press in Britain.* Oxford: Claredon Press.

Tunstall, J. (2008). *The Media were American: US Mass Media in Decline.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Williams, B. (2003). '*The New Media Environment, Internet Chatrooms and Public Opinion Discourse after 9/11'* in Thussu, D and Freedman, D (eds) *War and the Media.* London: Sage.

Williams, K. (1992). '*Something More important than truth: ethical issues in war reporting'* in Belsey, A. and Chadwick, R. (eds) *Ethical Issues in Journalism and the Media* London: Routledge.

Williams, K. (1993). '*The Light at the End of the Tunnel: the mass media, public opinion and the Vietnam War*' in Eldridge, J (eds) *Getting the Message: News, Truth and Power* London: Routledge.

Williams P. and Chrisman B. (1994). *Colonial discourse & Post-colonial Theory.* Cornwall: Hatnolls.

Wonders K. (1993). *Habitat Dioramas: Illusions of Wilderness in Museums of Natural History.* Sweden: Diss Uppsala Universität.

Worsley P. (1984). *The Tree Worlds: Culture & Development*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson.