

California State University, San Bernardino

**CSUSB ScholarWorks**

---

Theses Digitization Project

John M. Pfau Library

---

2010

## Images of Sub-Saharan Africa and Africans in western media

Cherice Joyann Estes

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project>



Part of the [Mass Communication Commons](#), and the [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Estes, Cherice Joyann, "Images of Sub-Saharan Africa and Africans in western media" (2010). *Theses Digitization Project*. 3701.

<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/3701>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the John M. Pfau Library at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses Digitization Project by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@csusb.edu](mailto:scholarworks@csusb.edu).

**IMAGES OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND  
AFRICANS IN WESTERN MEDIA**

---

**A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino**

---

**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Social Sciences**

---

**by  
Cherice Joyann Estes  
December 2010**

IMAGES OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND  
AFRICANS IN WESTERN MEDIA

---

A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

---

by  
Cherice Joyann Estes

December 2010

Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Tiffany F. Jones (Faculty Advisor, History)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Cherstin Lyon

Dec 2, 2010  
Date

## ABSTRACT

Africa is the world's second largest continent. No continent has more countries or a more diverse ecology. Nevertheless, worldwide news coverage of Africa is very limited and not proportional to either the continent's population or the number of African countries. Moreover, Western media continues to view Africa through stereotypes that reflect antiquated and inaccurate biases developed during earlier colonialist periods. More often than not, news coverage of Africa focuses on negative developments and issues. Popular culture tends to portray Africa and Africans as primitive and uncivilized. This thesis highlights the historical images of sub-Saharan Africa and contrasts those with current depictions of the region and its people in Western popular culture. Research confirms that the manner in which sub-Saharan Africa and Africans are represented has changed little from colonial times. This thesis also shows how these representations have severe political consequences in a case study of the Rwandan Genocide. Indeed, the Western media's portrayal of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide was mischaracterized by the use of old colonial tropes that facilitated western countries' failure to act.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful to God for His grace and mercy. He put the right people in my life to make completion of this thesis possible. I would like to thank family members and close friends who offered words of encouragement that helped me make it through this difficult process. I would also like to thank Dr. Cherstin Lyon for all her help and support. She joined my thesis committee at a critical time and made sure that I had the resources that I needed. Dr. Ece Algan also deserves recognition for offering me suggestions on ways to improve this project. Dr. Sandra Kamusikiri and Shelby Reeder from the Office of Graduate Studies also deserve recognition for their efforts in helping me finalize my thesis.

A sincere thanks goes to UCLA faculty and staff members Dr. Edmond Keller and Miki Goral for assisting me with my research on the Rwandan genocide. Their knowledge and expertise helped me understand the complexity of this atrocity.

My thesis experience has been very challenging and I have endured setbacks that could have caused me to give up. Although negativity was coming from almost every direction, I was determined to achieve my goal and finish what I had started. Dr. Tiffany Jones, my supervisor, assisted me every step of the way. She inspired me, helped me envision my goal, and made herself available even at times that were inconvenient for her. She advocated for me and never let me down. I am indebted to her for her guidance as she taught me not only about African history, but also how to navigate through life's ups and downs.

Most of my academic progress and personal growth is a result of her teachings and direction. I am also grateful to have had the support of Pamela Crosson, the department secretary.

I would also like to acknowledge those who had negative perceptions and opinions about my abilities and/or research. Their pessimism increased my motivation to succeed. I would like to express my deep appreciation to my best friend and future husband, Kavin Fraine. For so long, he took the back seat so that I could achieve all of my educational goals. He encouraged me not to lose sight of these goals and reminded me to always exude self-confidence. He also understood the importance of my priorities. Having him in my life is a true blessing, and his unwavering support uplifted me.

I would also like to thank Gerald for sharing his proofreading talents with me and for offering suggestions on ways to improve my thesis. Finally, I would like to thank Evangelist Sharon Holly for urging me to “revive” this project, my dear friend Octaviana Hemmy Asamsama who sacrificed her time to assist me with difficult parts of this project and Nima Davarpanah for giving me access to additional resources whenever I needed them. To all of these individuals, many thanks.

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my three grandparents. Eliza Hill, my paternal grandmother, passed away on February 14, 2010. She believed in my abilities to succeed and taught me to be strong and have trust in the Lord. Uriel Parchment, my maternal grandfather, immigrated to this country from Jamaica. Through his life struggles, I learned the importance of resilience. My maternal grandmother, Ann Parchment, cultivated in me an appreciation for fine arts at an early age and helped me learn how to read. She accepted me as a child of her own. These extraordinary individuals were committed to my success and made positive contributions to my life in ways that are beyond measure. Their efforts made many of my educational experiences possible. Grandparents, this is for you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Question of Accountability and the Role of Western Media in Contemporary Africa .....	8
Western Media and Power .....	11
The Effects of Media on Western Perceptions of Africa .....	16
Organization .....	18
Methodology/Limitations of Study.....	19
CHAPTER ONE: HISTORICAL IMAGES.....	20
African Savages: Africans and Animals.....	23
Africans and the Ham Lineage .....	30
Colonialism and Domination.....	31
Dark Continent: Myth or Reality?.....	33
CHAPTER TWO :AFRICAN IMAGES IN POP CULTURE AND MEDIA .....	37
Africa as Wildlife and Wild Like .....	38
Africa as Tribes .....	50
Depictions of Africans and Charity Campaigns .....	60
Celebrities in Africa and African Otherness.....	69
African Responsibility and Self-Image.....	72
CHAPTER THREE: THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE: A CASE STUDY .....	87
Historical Background .....	89



European Stereotypes and the Hamitic Myth .....	93
Belgian Discriminatory Policies and Their Outcomes .....	96
Opposition Growth Across Borders .....	97
Civil War 1990-1993.....	99
The Genocide of 1994: Rwandan Radio Hate Media .....	102
Western Media Coverage of the Genocide.....	104
Prolonged Civil War or Genocide? .....	107
The Genocide and its Representation of Africa .....	110
CONCLUSION .....	114
REFERENCES.....	117

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: <i>TIME</i> Magazine Cover, 1984. ....	5
Figure 2: <i>The Economist</i> Cover, 2000.....	6
Figure 3: Cesare Ripa's <i>Iconologia</i> , 1593 .....	22
Figure 4: <i>Harper's</i> Missionary and African Savage Article. ....	25
Figure 5: The Negro Boy and Apes.....	29
Figure 6: Facial Angle Sketches.....	29
Figure 7:Pears Soap Ad .....	32
Figure 8: Toyota New Prado. ....	39
Figure 9: BBC World News Africa Business Report. ....	40
Figure 10: AT&T Wireless International Roaming: Zimbabwe.....	42
Figure 11: The Price of Beauty Episode 4 "Uganda".....	44
Figure 12:"Wild Things" Naomi Campbell and Cheetah .....	44
Figure 13: "Wild Things" Naomi Campbell and Monkeys Skipping Rope .....	45
Figure 14: <i>Vogue</i> Italia Model .....	46
Figure 15: <i>Vogue</i> Italia Model Iman .....	47
Figure 16: Wild Rivers Rides.....	48
Figure 17: The Chronicles of Keira. <i>Vogue</i> .....	52
Figure 18: Frelander Maasai Ad.....	52
Figure 19: Canon "We Speak Image" Corporate Campaign. ....	53
Figure 20: African Freecell Online Game. ....	55
Figure 21: African Freecell Natives Playing Cards.....	56
Figure 22: Aqua "Dr. Jones" #1.....	57
Figure 23: Aqua "Dr. Jones" #2.....	57

Figure 24: Aqua “Dr. Jones” #3.....	58
Figure 25: Kanye West’s “Love Lockdown” #1 .....	59
Figure 26: Kanye West’s “Love Lockdown” #2.....	59
Figure 27: Kanye West’s “Love Lockdown” #3.....	60
Figure 28: “I Am African” #1 .....	61
Figure 29: “I Am African” #2 .....	61
Figure 30: UNICEF German Ad#1 .....	63
Figure 31: UNICEF German Ad #2 .....	64
Figure 32: Supermodel Lara Stone Poses in Blackface .....	65
Figure 33: The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation. Rain.....	66
Figure 34: World Food Programme. Fighting Hunger Worldwide Ad. ....	68
Figure 35: World Food Programme “Can You Help to Fill His Cup?” Ad.....	68
Figure 36: 26 <sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Los Angeles Ad.....	69
Figure 37: Kimberley Walsh Charity Photo .....	70
Figure 38: CNN African Voices Ad .....	72
Figure 39: Skin Light Billboard in Ghana.....	73
Figure 40: Ambi Skin Lightening Cream Ad .....	74
Figure 41: Gabourey Sidibe on Cover of Elle.....	77
Figure 42: Standard Bank Advertisement .....	78
Figure 43: COMESA. “Connecting Africa with the World” .....	79
Figure 44: K’naan Clothing Ad .....	80
Figure 45: Akon “Oh Africa” Video Shot.....	82
Figure 46: “Oh Africa” Drummer #1.....	83
Figure 47: “Oh Africa” Drummer #2.....	83

Figure 48: AKON Pepsi Ad .....	84
Figure 49: <i>New York Times</i> Rwanda Article.....	107
Figure 50: Mother and Child Africa Image.....	112

## INTRODUCTION

Africa is much more diverse than many throughout the world understand. The continent consists of fifty-four individual countries, and is the world's second largest and second most populous continent. The media plays a significant role in shaping Westerners' opinions and perceptions of Africa. Media images associated with Africa, however, are mostly either negative or laden with mischaracterizations that perpetuate misunderstanding. Beverly G. Hawk notes in *Africa's Media Image* that:

Africa has been viewed as the “dark continent” by the West, an allusion not only to the skin color of its inhabitants but to their ignorance of European ways. Ever since Stanley was sent in search of Livingstone, Africa has been a wild adventure story and it continues to be perceived as such. The image of Africa in the American mind, then is worse than incomplete, it is inaccurate.<sup>1</sup>

Modern negative media images of Africa are rooted in part in the continent's history, including its long colonial period. Frantz Fanon, a staunch anti-colonialist whose works examine the psychopathology of colonialism, highlighted the racism that was associated with colonial Africa. In *Wretched of the Earth* he argues that colonial Africa was divided into Black and White. Africa north of the Sahara – White Africa – was associated with cultural traditions that include Mediterranean and Greco-Latin civilizations. Africa south of the Sahara was the Black Africa

---

<sup>1</sup> Beverly Hawk, Introduction to *Africa's Media Image*, edited by Beverly G. Hawk (New York: Prager, 1992), 5.

that Westerners have come to know as a brutal and uncivilized region full of savages.<sup>2</sup> These views have certainly continued today.

In order to address these perceptions, this thesis will highlight the negative stereotypes about Africa created prior to European colonialism and after African countries were colonized (Chapter One), analyze the way in which Africa and Africans are presented in educational media and popular culture (Chapter Two), and examine the very dire results of the media's failure in the case of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994 (Chapter Three). Western media's negative portrayal of Africa started before colonialism and remains today. If the Western media does not change their approach, the misrepresentations and stereotypes will never be diminished.

Westerners' images of contemporary Africa do not accurately reflect the current situations of most African countries. Reasons for the inaccuracy and negative reporting about Africa vary. In search of those reasons, scholars, heads of states, and Western and African journalists have addressed the issue.

In the article, "Show the World the Other Side of Africa" published in *New African*, the author states:

It is very disappointing that the media whose main function is to inform the public misinform them sometimes. It is rather unfortunate that Africa is used to justify the old cliché "negative stories make good news headlines." The Western media have

---

<sup>2</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Trans. by Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Weidenfeld 1963, orig. 1961).

psychologically damaged the image of Africa/Africans by their negative reporting.<sup>3</sup>

Examples of negative reporting can be seen in the verbiage that the media uses when describing African events. Hawk points out the difference in verbiage used to discuss African and European events:

The enduring fascination with Africa and things African is revealed in the vocabulary of the metaphor. The vocabulary of the story reports "Africans" in "tribal" or "Black on Black" violence. Current violence in Soweto and Natal is reported in this frame of reference. Vocabulary defines the story as "African" and "tribal". The message for the reader or viewer is that African events require a different vocabulary than those in Northern Ireland or Yugoslavia. Implicit in this vocabulary is that African events do not follow any pattern recognizable to Western reason. It is "tribal" conflict. No one calls the violence in Northern Ireland White-on-White violence, or tribal bloodshed. Current ethnic unrest in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is described as "ethnic," and scholars even refer to it as the nationalities problem.<sup>4</sup>

It is evident that the style of language used to describe African events is different from that used to describe events in Europe or in other predominantly White countries. Moreover, the very term "Africans" is an over-generalization that does not provide audiences with a useful understanding of the varied nations and peoples that make up the African continent. The term only adds to the misrepresentation of Africa, by failing to acknowledge the existence of each individual country and its particular culture. Indeed, as Hawk has also pointed out, the concept of "African" and "tribes" were colonial constructions and "useful for colonial goals" but doesn't adequately explain the reality on the ground.

---

<sup>3</sup> Vivian Atime, "Show the World the Other Side of Africa," *New African*, July 2008, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Hawk, *Africa's Media Image*, 8.

Continued use of old colonial terms by Western media keeps Westerners ignorant of African affairs and the distinctive circumstances in which each of the fifty-three nations finds itself.

Occasionally, journalists have addressed the negative reporting that colors news coverage of Africa. Regina Jere-Malanda, editor of *New African*, attributes some of that to an impulse to provide audiences with what the media believe those audiences want to hear:

Although a vital question could be why they believe what they read, see, and hear in their media, the real issue is that Western audiences are rarely offered an alternative view of Africa. Positive Africa is dry news, and dry news doesn't sell. What sells is PIDIC-poverty, instability, disease, illiteracy, and corruption.<sup>5</sup>

Heads of state from various countries have also noticed this trend among Western media. Former German President Johannes Rau criticized the Western media when he posed the following questions:

Does anyone in Germany know, for instance, that Tanzania is today a stable democracy or Botswana has [a] high performance economy? Is anyone aware that the Economic Community of Western African States, whose parliament I was privileged to address a few days ago, has peacekeeping troops in Cote d'Ivoire?<sup>6</sup>

Other heads of state from African nations have also remarked on this issue.

President Jakaya Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania claims that, "We are doing so many good things out here, but unfortunately you always read, hear

---

<sup>5</sup> Regina Jere-Malanda, "And Now... Positive Africa," *New African*, June 2008, 37.

<sup>6</sup> "German President Criticizes Biased Western Media," Xinhua General News Service, March 24, 2004.



and view calamities, conflicts in Africa.”<sup>7</sup> Images of Africa that appear on the cover of publications are illustrative of this point. The covers of *TIME* and *The Economist* seen below reinforce the negative imagery and attention that Africa often receives. The *TIME* cover was published in 1984 and *The Economist* in 2007. Despite the twenty three year difference between the publication dates, both magazines focus on highlighting the negative despite any progress African countries have made. The reason for this has much to do with Africa’s history and the impact of colonization.

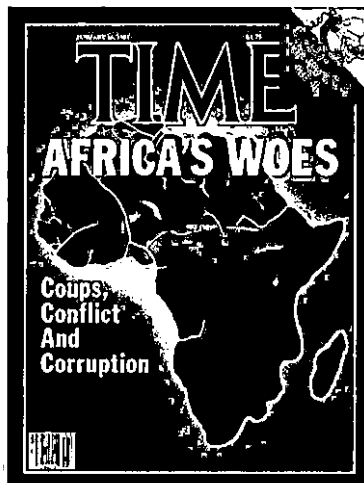


Figure 1: *TIME* Magazine Cover, 1984.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> "Kikwete Criticizes Western Media," *Daily News* (Dar es Salaam), September 21, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> *TIME Magazine*, Cover. January 16, 1984.



Figure 2: *The Economist* Cover, 2000<sup>9</sup>

Rwandan President Paul Kagame has said that, "The constant negative reporting kills the growth of foreign direct investment. There has even been a suggestion that it is meant to keep Africa in the backyard of the global economy."<sup>10</sup> This comment, from the leader of a country associated with a brutal 1994 genocide, suggests that the West deliberately enforces negative images, and in turn adopt policies, to prevent under-developed countries from achieving economic growth. Whether or not this is true is debatable, but there can be no question that the continuation of a negative image of the African continent and its population deflects blame away from Western governments. Nowhere is this more evident, as we'll see, than in Rwanda in 1994.

---

<sup>9</sup> *The Economist*, Cover. May 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Jere-Malanda, 37.

Some African journalists are less critical of the Western media. In an article published in *Africa News* on September 15, 2005, an unidentified journalist from Uganda states:

But I do not always share that enthusiasm for bashing the west for their so-called parachute journalism. Despite the patronizing and sometimes racist tones that characterise western reporting of Africa, many of these foreign outlets sometimes do a better job telling our story.<sup>11</sup>

Former South African President Thabo Mbeki, in an article entitled, "Who Will Define Africa?" states that "The time has come that we, as Africans take responsibility for how our continent is portrayed."<sup>12</sup> Mbeki helped to found the South African Broadcasting Corporation news channel, SABC News International. He contends that Africans have been unable to articulate their own reality, because Western media continues to highlight the negative side and does not acknowledge any successes in the continent. African leaders are not sitting idly by. In May 2005, African heads of state met at Boston University to discuss the negative reporting of Africa. They signed an agreement that insisted that African countries launch a multimedia campaign to counter the negative Western portrayal of Africa, to tell the African story, and to develop a way to involve other media outlets in presenting unbiased coverage of Africa.

---

<sup>11</sup> "Uganda; Africa's Media Image: Blame It on the West?", *Africa News*, September 15, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> "Who Will Define Africa?", *New African*, June 2008, 24.

## The Question of Accountability and the Role of Western Media in Contemporary Africa

Media accountability is the process in which media organizations are called to account to their constituents for their actions.<sup>13</sup> Constituents are the general public, to whom media owe a duty to inform. The extent to which the media should be held accountable for the substance and content that they report is a hotly debated issue: To what extent is the media to blame for the way they report African news? Do Africans themselves share any responsibility for the way in which their countries are depicted by the West? These questions are critical to my research and are explored in this thesis.

Western media's share in the blame for negative images of Africa seems undeniable. Some observers have even argued that Western media should be blamed for the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Allan Thompson, editor of *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, argues that the media is just as much to blame for the genocide as those who actually committed the atrocities. He states that, "They [the international media] contributed to the genocide because they encouraged perpetrators to kill." According to his theory, if the international community and United Nations had intervened in a timely manner, the genocide would have been prevented. Moreover, Robert Kabushenga, New Vision Managing Director and former head of the Media Centre claims that if the

---

<sup>13</sup> David Pritchard, introduction to *Holding the Media Accountable: Citizens, Ethics, and the Law*, edited by David Pritchard (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 1-10.

Western media had followed the media in Rwanda, they would have realized that something was wrong.<sup>14</sup>

These criticisms may go too far. While it may be true that the Western media could have done more than they did, the blame should not be placed solely on them: reporters and editors had nothing to do with the animosities felt between the Hutus and the Tutsis, and it is questionable that they could have done anything to stop the atrocities. As for the perception by many that Africa and Africans need to take responsibility for the way that they are portrayed in the West, Jan Nederveen Pieterse believes that Western ideology is to blame for the media's approach, but he also contends that Africans must take responsibility for their own actions and acceptances. Rwandan President Paul Kagame – quoted above with respect to how negative portrayals have dampened foreign investment in Africa – openly recognizes that Africans need to take responsibility for the failures that have taken place on their own soil. While he questions why Western journalists only report on “poverty, disease, corruption, civil war, and conflict” on the continent, he also says that Africans must look at themselves and ask why they are so far behind, in spite of the abundance of resources that they have.<sup>15</sup>

Lindsey Hilsum, international editor of Britain's Channel Four station offers several relevant observations. She says that, “War happens: that's news. War is

---

<sup>14</sup> Angelo Izama and Evelyn Lirri, “Western Media Blamed For Genocide,” *The Monitor* (Uganda), January 26, 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Jere-Malanda, 37.

not happening: that's not news."<sup>16</sup> Hilsum believes that it is not a matter of the international media being biased, as it is that famines and earthquakes are reportable subject matters that interest audiences, and that the reporting on these issues in Africa is not different from similar reporting on such events occurring elsewhere.

On the other hand, Abraham McLaughlin claims that racism and a view that Africans are inferior are the reasons why positive news about Africa is so scarce. He contrasts the coverage of China: "China has problems, but we see and hear other things about China. Russia has problems, yet we see and read other things about Russia. That same standard should apply to Africa."<sup>17</sup>

McLaughlin's view differs from some of the mainstream media outlets. Editors for Earthlink, for example, argue that the lack of coverage of Africa has to do with a general lack of interest in Africa.<sup>18</sup> Surely, this argument is not valid; news about Africa is still reported. The problem is not that Western media are uninterested, it is that they continue to excuse the negative way in which they portray Africa. An unknown British media analyst suggests that:

The disease that afflicts us is our inability to completely let go. Our inability to accept the end of empire, clinging to past glories. However, much we speak of modernizing and democracy, we cling to managing other people's lives, preserving foreigners-often at

---

<sup>16</sup> "Stop Patronising Africa, Mbeki's Deputy Tells Western Press," *Agence France Presse*, May 29, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Abraham McLaughlin, "African's Ask: Why Isn't Anyone Telling the Good News" *Christian Science Monitor*, May 26, 2005.

<sup>18</sup> "Who Will Define Africa?", 26.

gunpoint from the mistakes they would make if they were allowed to govern themselves.<sup>19</sup>

The continued trend of Western media's negative reporting affects public opinion and leaves an imprint which prevents Westerners from viewing Africa positively.

### Western Media and Power

In order to consider the role media plays in defining common perceptions of Africa, it is necessary to understand what the media is. Definitions of media vary. According to the editors of *The Media & Morality*, media are the means of communication that are generally centralized in production and widely distributed.<sup>20</sup> Some argue that media cannot be easily defined. For purposes of this thesis, the term "Western media" encompasses all forms of communication that are spread throughout the United States, Western Europe, and Canada. For decades, the West has dominated both the global political arena and global media, and thus, its ideas and perceptions of others have consistently predominated in the world's media.

In analyzing Western media depictions of sub-Saharan Africa, it is important to address the relationship between media and power. W. Lance Bennett, author of *Media Power in the United States*, explains that power

---

<sup>19</sup> Jere-Malanda, 37.

<sup>20</sup> Robert M. Baird, William E. Loges, and Stuart E. Rosenbaum, eds., *The Media & Morality*, (New York: Prometheus Books, 1999).

“encourages or discourages people from acting, taking risks, forming human associations, feeling secure or insecure and promoting various visions of private and public interest.”<sup>21</sup> He also explains that power involves having access to and possession of resources that get people to do things that they would not otherwise do without having those resources in their lives.<sup>22</sup> Akbar Ahmed acknowledges how powerful media are when he asserts: “The media is one of most important weapons in the arsenal of any country.”<sup>23</sup>

An example of the connections among media, power, and Africa can be seen in the way the media exercise their power to continually depict Africa in a negative light, which affects how Westerners have come to identify and characterize Africa. The lack of objective reporting has produced results that are evident in school curricula, pop culture, advertisements, and politics. Objectivity, as Shoemaker and Reese argue, is the concept about which social scientists who study media are concerned.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, when it comes to the coverage of Africa by Western media, reporting the reality through an un-biased lens rarely occurs, and what Western audiences gather is far from the truth. The media's

---

<sup>21</sup> W. Lance Bennett, “Media Power in the United States,” in *De-Westernizing Media Studies*, edited by James Curran and Myung-Jin Park (New York: Routledge, 2000) 204.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Akbar S. Ahmed, “Media Mongols at the Gates of Baghdad,” *New Perspectives Quarterly*, no.19 (2002): 49.

<sup>24</sup> Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1995).



focus has been on crisis events, and the focus is often repetitive and over-emphasized.<sup>25</sup>

News headlines often treat the entire African continent as one entity, rather than fifty-four independent nations. They rarely acknowledge the many different cultures, language groups and ethnicities, except when describing supposed “tribal” warfare, and most Westerners have limited knowledge of African geography.<sup>26</sup> As we have seen, African scholars and leaders have criticized the Western media for constantly propagating negative and biased reporting on Africa, resulting in a widespread lack of knowledge and understanding of Africa. Their concern is directly related to the political actions, and sometimes inactions, of western governments in the affairs of Africa. The media has considerable power in shaping the political policies of leaders and organizations of the West. At times, western governments may even assist with the construction of negative images of Africa. Although French philosopher Michel Foucault never uses the term media in his writings, his work directly addresses the issue of constructed power and has been used for theoretical purposes across many disciplines. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault describes how institutions construct a gaze or “Panopticon” that subjugates the entity being visualized. He elaborates further on his perception of power by arguing that disciplines, and we could also say media in this sense, are used to:

---

<sup>25</sup> William Hachten and Brian Beil, “Bad News or No News? Covering Africa, 1965-1982” *Journalism Quarterly*, no. 62 (1985): 626-630.

<sup>26</sup> Rod Chavis, “Africa in the Western Media University of Pennsylvania” (Paper presented at the Sixth Annual African Studies Consortium Workshop, October 02, 1998).

Substitute for a power that is manifested through the brilliance of those who exercise it, a power that insidiously objectifies those on whom it is applied; to form a body of knowledge about these individuals, rather than to deploy the ostentatious signs of sovereignty.<sup>27</sup>

His idea is apparent in the way the Western media shapes the way in which Africa is depicted today. Ezekiel Makunike, former Director of Information for the government of Zimbabwe and currently a journalist and teacher, acknowledges that America – which has never had a colony in Africa – is not well acquainted with Africa. He argues that for African news to be of interest to the American public and journalists, the news must be negative, and it must either appeal to the traditional colonial biases and stereotypes or highlight catastrophic events, such as chaos, starvation, misery, or primitive societies.<sup>28</sup> This is not to suggest that Western media are necessarily wrong to report on such crises, but there should be awareness of the political ramifications of their writings and there is a need for a more balanced portrayal.

Alhaji Kromah argues that the entrapment between Western media and their audiences can be dissolved if journalists will pay attention to the audience members who call for a portrayal of Africa beyond that of Tarzan, tigers, and chimpanzees.<sup>29</sup> Focusing on the negative and never recognizing the positive

---

<sup>27</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 209.

<sup>28</sup> Ezekiel Makunike, "Out of Africa: Western Media Stereotypes Shape Images." *Center for Media Literacy*. 21 April 2010. [http://www.medialit.org/reading\\_room/article108.html](http://www.medialit.org/reading_room/article108.html).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

keeps Westerners uninformed and ignorant about present-day Africa and leaves the question of media objectivity and their societal role open for debate.

Advances in media technology have made it possible for Western ideals and practices to circulate the globe. As Marshall McLuhan notes in his book, *Understanding Media*, "electric media allows Western man himself to experience the same inundation as the remote native."<sup>30</sup> While the internet, satellite television, and newswire services are just a few of the recent advances through which Westerners can now receive international news, because of the West's financial dominance, the Western media's reach and preeminence remain as great as ever. This has only perpetuated the cycle of keeping the West in the dark about Africa and reinforced the delivery of images and stereotypes that stick in the minds of Western audiences, further demonstrating the power and control that the Western media have.<sup>31</sup>

McLuhan explains the influence of the media by noting that, "Radio and t.v. have evolved into fixed charges on the entire psychic life of the community."<sup>32</sup> He claims that this creates the unique culture of any society which can have a positive or negative effect on the audience. In the case of Africa and its portrayal in Western media, the effects are negative and thus far not reversed.

---

<sup>30</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man – Critical Edition*, edited by W. Terrence Gordon (New York: Gingko Press, 2003), 22.

<sup>31</sup> Alhaji G.V. Kromah, "Africa In the Western Media Speech The Perspective: Cycle of Contra-Positives and Selective Perceptions" (paper presentation, African Studies Program at the University of Indiana, Bloomington, April 30, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man – Critical Edition*, 28.

## The Effects of Media on Western Perceptions of Africa

Even those population groups who would likely be more skeptical of media coverage of Africa are affected. Ekra Miezan argues that the more African Americans watch television, the more they develop a negative view of Africa.<sup>33</sup> His research indicates that the Western media exposes viewers to pre-colonial and colonial Africa and then paints the picture that these images represent present day Africa.<sup>34</sup> Television can be used to influence people positively or negatively and as Miezan's research indicates, Hollywood also misinforms Westerners of Africa by creating films which are based on "primitivism, exoticism, barbarism and wilderness."<sup>35</sup> When people are constantly fed imprecise information, they tend to develop stereotypes and generalizations.<sup>36</sup> This only helps to create an uninformed and ignorant society.

A 1999 study was conducted by the Biney Cosultancy that asked Westerners what images came to mind when asked about Africa.<sup>37</sup> All of the responses were negative and included flagrant instability, incompetent

---

<sup>33</sup> Ekra Miezan, "Media Images of Africa and African Americans' Attitudes Toward Africa" (PhD dissertation, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2000), 6.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>36</sup> Jere-Malanda, "And Now...Positive Africa,"40.

<sup>37</sup> *East African Standard*. "Kenya; Media Chiefs to Discuss Africa's Stereotype." Africa News, May 15, 2005. <http://www.lexisnexis.com/> accessed (December 1, 2008)

leaderships, and a deprived continent.<sup>38</sup> The *New African* also featured a story on this subject and noted in their commentary that, "The visual images of Africa were potent, tattered clothing, starving babies, machetes, guns, rape and famine".<sup>39</sup> Christopher Adams, a New Zealand journalist writes that:

It's true-poverty is a terrible problem in Africa, as is HIV/AIDS and war. But a bit of balance would certainly help viewers and readers to realise that Africa is not a land of pure chaos, filth and disease.<sup>40</sup>

The stories that capture Western Media's attention have some truth to it, however when the Western media does get involved, they have the tendency to distort images to show what they think is right. For example, Western media crews flocked to Somalia to cover the US invasion in the 1990's. Sophia Lauren, an American actress was in Somalia during this time and the media trampled over Somali children to get photos of her feeding a Somali child. She was instructed to feed the child in three different poses so that the right image would be captured.<sup>41</sup> Images like these portray the West as Africa's savior and emphasize African "otherness" as discussed in chapter one.

Positive situations and events are currently taking place in Africa, so if the Western media wanted to show Africa in a different light it could be done. As McLaughlin indicates:

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Kadja Sharife, "Whose Reality are we Living in?" *New African*, June 2008, 24.

<sup>40</sup> Christopher Adams, "Africa - Not as Dark as it's Painted," *The New Zealand Herald*, May 30, 2008.

<sup>41</sup> *East African Standard*. "Kenya; Media Chiefs to Discuss Africa's Stereotype." Africa News, May 15, 2005. <http://www.lexisnexis.com> (Accessed December 2, 2008)

There is more to Africa than hardship. Africa's economies grew by more than 5% last year-their biggest expansion in eight years. Central Africa's oil boom spurred 14.4% growth for that region; Ghana's stock exchange is regularly one of the highest-performing markets in the world; in 2003, it was No. 1, gaining 144%; exports to the US from 37. African nations jumped 88% last year, to \$26.6bn.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to these economic statistics, there are also other positive aspects.

Botswana had peaceful elections and the African continent was forecasted to reach a 6.7% economic growth.<sup>43</sup> Liberia, a country that was engaged in a brutal war is now represented by Africa's first female President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf after having won a peaceful democratic election.<sup>44</sup> Why does positive news about Africa continue to be sidelined by Western media? Why is Africa seemingly always depicted in a negative light? Who's to blame for the negative image that shadows Africa?

## Organization

In order to highlight the way in which Western media portray sub-Saharan Africa, this thesis is organized into three chapters. Chapter one addresses the historical images that started to become associated with sub-Saharan Africa in pre-colonial and the colonial era. Chapter two focuses on the current images of sub-Saharan Africa in Western pop-culture and various education curricula.

---

<sup>42</sup> Jere-Malanda, "And Now... Positive Africa,"38.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 38.

Chapter three discusses the Western media's reporting on the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. Each of these chapters demonstrates the various ways in which sub-Saharan Africa was and currently is misrepresented.

### Methodology/Limitations of Study

My research is a qualitative study that shows that Western media is often the cause for the negative perceptions of sub-Saharan Africa and African cultures by Western societies. Discourse analysis in particular, is a useful method to use to conduct this study which consists of a careful analysis of various print media articles from a variety of newspapers and magazines which include *Harpers Bazaar*, *Vogue*, the *New York Times*, *Salt Lake Tribune*, and *The Guardian* to name a few. Charity campaign advertisements included in these media outlets were also analyzed as well as marketing efforts and strategies regarding Africa and African culture by humanitarian organizations and corporations. Although this thesis focuses on ways Western media negatively depicts Africa, it is important to address the general theories associated with mass media which was also mentioned. However, this thesis does not address the creation or history of Western media, ideas surrounding various media content debates, and the coverage of Africa outside of the Western Diaspora. Any arguments or theories expressed in relation to these topics are outside the scope of my research and are not aligned with the goals of my study.

## CHAPTER ONE

### HISTORICAL IMAGES

In order to fully comprehend the stereotypes within present-day images of Africa, it is necessary to examine the historical foundations of common images of Africa. In doing so, we learn little about Africa, but more about Europeans and their own ideals. Indeed, as Jan Nederveen Pieterse points out, the myths of Africa correlate with myths of Europe itself.<sup>45</sup> Curtis Keim also suggests that the historical imagining of Africa was more about the changing bigotry in European perspectives, and asserts that:

European violence eradicated African violence, Christian love justified missionary control. And the White race, which had only recently stamped out its own slave-trading & slaveholding practices, called Arabs and Africans inferior because they traded and held slaves.<sup>46</sup>

Nederveen Pieterse and Keim have written extensively of the historical images of Africa. They point to how Africans have been analogized to various themes, including, for example, the link between Africans and animals, the curse of Ham in the Bible, and the concept of race.

Africans were not always seen as inferior, however. Early European images of Africans from 2500 B.C. depict ancient Egyptians being integrated into

---

<sup>45</sup> Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *White On Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 23.

<sup>46</sup> Curtis Keim, *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2009), 45.



society and intermarrying.<sup>47</sup> Black beauty was highly regarded, as Black symbolized fertility in Egyptian culture.<sup>48</sup> After 2200 B.C., Black Africans were depicted as warriors, such as the Nubian archers in the Egyptian army.<sup>49</sup> Ancient Egypt was the one place where images of Africans varied from everyday citizens, warriors, servants, entertainers, and Black Pharaohs. As Europe's image of itself began to change, European images of Africans also changed.<sup>50</sup> During the Middle Ages, Europe saw the earth's sphere as divided into three sections, symbolic of the Biblical Noah's three sons. Sem represented Asia, Japheth represented Europe, and Ham represented Africa.<sup>51</sup> As we will see below, this association of Africa with Ham continued during the early colonial years.

The subsequent exploration of America in the sixteenth century yielded a new image, which accounted for four continents.<sup>52</sup> As classical European ideologies shifted and changed, so did European views and images of Africa. Cesare Ripa's 1593 book *Iconologia*, for example, personifies this new European perspective of Africa in respect to Asia and Europe. This book contained used symbolic art to express European ideologies and was considered to be highly influential during that time. One image that was featured in this book focused on

---

<sup>47</sup> Nederveen Pieterse, *White On Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, 23.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

the portrayal of Europe, Asia and Africa. Europe is depicted by a crowned queen with a horse and scepter. Asia is represented as a woman covered with gold and pearls and carrying spices, while accompanied by a camel. Africa is represented by a dark-skinned woman barely clothed and wearing a necklace and earrings, with an elephant's trunk on her head.<sup>53</sup> In one hand, she carries a scorpion; in the other, she holds a cornucopia with ears of corn. To her one side is a lion; on the other side are vipers and serpents. This sculpture is an early reflection of the connection Europeans saw between Africans and wildlife.



Europe

Asia

Africa

Figure 3: Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, 1593<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

## African Savages: Africans and Animals

The term "savage" has been used in a variety of ways.<sup>55</sup> Savage is a derivative of the Latin word *silvaticus*, which means "of the woods, wild, not domesticated, or untamed."<sup>56</sup> It is also meant to describe "a person belonging to a primitive society; a brutal person; or a rude & unmannerly person."<sup>57</sup> These definitions were also used to distinguish between the civilized and barbaric. The Greek term *Barbaroi* was utilized to refer to non-Greek speakers and later took on a negative connotation relating to rudeness.<sup>58</sup> These terms were prevalent throughout Europe and were used to identify different European groups. According to the Greeks, the people to the north were barbarians. Likewise, Romans considered anyone who resided outside the Empire a barbarian.<sup>59</sup> Hungarians were referred to as savages in the Middle Ages and so were the Highland Scots.<sup>60</sup> In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans began to use the term to describe Native Americans, and although Black Africans were not the subject of debate during this time, the term was later applied to identify all non-

---

<sup>55</sup> Nederveen Pieterse, *White On Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, 30.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

Europeans.<sup>61</sup> It was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the term savage became the description that Europeans considered appropriate for Africans.<sup>62</sup> The following depiction is of an article that appeared in *Harpers Magazine* in 1904. This article written by H.W. Nevinson, a war correspondent of the *London Chronicle* tells of his experience in what is now, present day Angola. He too, describes Africans as savages in a way that would separate them from most people. Killing slaves, trading and selling off their own children, thievery and the connection between certain ethnic groups and crocodiles are some points of discussion that drew a distinction between the “civilized European” and the “Other” which are Africans.

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

# THE MISSIONARY AND THE AFRICAN SAVAGE

By H. W. Nevinson

MR. NEVINSON, THE WAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE LONDON "CHRONICLE," WAS COMMISSIONED IN OCTOBER, 1901, BY "HERBERT JAGGERS" TO MAKE A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE AND RACE CONDITIONS EXISTING TO-DAY IN PORTUGUESE WEST AFRICA. THE RESULTS OF HIS FIFTEEN MONTHS' JOURNEY HAVE ATTRACTED WIDESPREAD ATTENTION.

THE Chikoke do not sell their slaves. They kill them characteristically. The Bihans are carriers and traders. They always have an eye fixed on the margin of profit. They will sell anything, including their own children, and it is waste to kill a man who may be sold to advantage. But the Chikoke are savages of a wilder race, and no Bihans would dare buy a Chikoke slave, even if they had the chance. They know that the next Bihans caravan would be out to piece out its way.

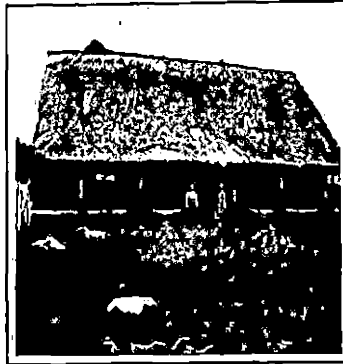
It is impossible to fix the limits of the Chikoke country. The people are always on the move. It is partly the poverty of the land that drives them about, partly their habit of burning the village whenever the chief dies, and as the village goes by the chief's name, they are the despots of geographers. But in entering the frontier you may begin to be on your guard against the Chikoke two days before crossing the Canans.

They have a way of cutting off stray carriers, and my own little caravan was charged by three of them with shields and spears, who might have been troublesome had they known that the Winchester with which I covered the rear was only useful as a club. It was in the Chikoke country, too, that the one attempt was made to rob my tent at night, and again I only beat off the thieves by making a great display with a loaded rifle. On one side their villages are mixed up with the Fainals, on the other with the Laves people and the Lavo, who are scattered over the great wet flats between Mashiko and Nankandundin. But they are a distinct people in themselves, and they appear to be increasing and slowly spreading south. If the King of Italy's expedition gives the Zambesi territory to England, the Chikoke will form the chief part of our new fellow subjects, and will share the legal advantages of Whitechick.

The Chikoke sharpen their teeth to points, whereas the Bihans compensate by only making a blunt angle between the two in front. It used to be said that pointed teeth were the mark of ransomed men, but I think it more likely that these tribes at one time had the crocodile or some sharp-toothed dog as their totem, and certainly when they laugh they resemble to pieces, sharks, or crocodiles in very remarkable. Anyhow, the Chikoke are not cannibals now, except for medicine, or in the hope of acquiring the moral qualities of the deceased. But I believe they eat the bodies of people killed by lightning or other sudden death, and the Bihans do the same.

In the arts they far surpass all their neighbors on the west side. They are so artistic that the women wear little cow-horn ornaments. Their houses are square or oblong, with steeply pitched and straight sides, and the roofs, instead of being conical, are oblong too, having a straight beam along the top, like an English cottage. The style is especially famous for its jetties, square, half-round, half-circles, and other ornaments, which they forge in the open spaces round the village club-house, working up their little furnaces with wooden tubes and bellows of goat-skin, like loom drums, pulled up and down with bits of sticks to make a draught.

Since this was written, the expedition has been published, but for the new frontier I think some of the Chikoke will be brought under British influence.



A Bihans House at Okhildoda

A simple pattern is woven on some of the axes, and on the side of one hat I saw an alligator, all fringed with white fringe on a red ground under a white moon—the figure being quite sufficiently like an ox.

It is natural that the Chikoke should have retained much of the religious feeling and rites which the commercial spirit has destroyed in the Bihans. They are far more alive to the spiritual side of nature, and the fetish shrines are more frequent in all their villages. The gate of every village, and, indeed, of almost every house, has its little cluster of sticks with various skulls stuck on the tops, or old rags fluttering, or a tiny whitebird roof covering a patch of woven mat. The people have a way of painting the sticks in red and black stripes, and on the fibers paints the rough model of a canoe that he hangs by his door to please the fishing spirit. Or sometimes he hangs a little pot, and the hunter, beside his cluster of horns, sticks, almost always hangs up a miniature turtle, three or four inches long. I cannot say for what reason, but all these charms are not to avert evil as much as to win the favor of a benign spirit who likes to fish or hunt. So far the vices are more the usual African religion of fever or devil-worship. But when a woman with child covers a wooden dish to hang over her door, and gives it meal every evening, and suitable food in front of her door, I think her object is to ward off the spirit of evil from herself and her unborn baby.

In a Chikoke village, one morning afternoon, I found a native woman being treated for sickness in the usual way. She was stretched out her back in the dust and dirt of the public place, where she had lain for four days. The sun beat upon her, the flies were thick upon her body. Over her head the village doctor, so-called in his care. He knew, of course, that the girl was suffering from malarial fever. Some remedy had put an evil spirit upon her, for in Africa natural death is unknown, and but for witchcraft and spirits man would be immortal. But still the doctor was trying the best human means he knew of as well. He had plastered the girl's body over with a compound of leaves, which he had first chewed into a pulp. He had then painted her forehead with red ochre, and was now applying some white preparation of mud into her nose and mouth. The girl was in high fever—some sort of bilious fever. You could watch the beating of her heart. The half-closed eyes showed deep yellow, and the skin was yellow too. Evidently she was suffering the greatest misery and would probably die next day.

It happened that two Americans were with me, for I had just reached the nearest inland station at Chikoke, beyond Mashiko. One of them was a doctor, with ten years' experience in a great American city, and after commending the efforts of the native physician, he asked to be allowed to assist in the case himself. The native agreed at once, for the white man's fame as a surgeon had spread far through the country. Four or five days later I saw the same girl, no longer stretched on her back, no longer covered with spots, leaves, and paint, but smiling cheerfully at me as she panted her feet among the other women. The incident was typical of those misadventures and their way of



Native Children coming out of a Mission School

Figure 4: Harper's Missionary and African Savage Article.63

63 H.W. Nevinson, "The Missionary and the African Savage," Harper's Weekly, April 7, 1906, 479.

European philosopher G.W.F. Hegel had a negative perception of Africa and claims that, "Africa is no historical part of the world; it has no movement or development to show."<sup>64</sup> This idea set a tone by which Africans came to be deemed a people without a history.<sup>65</sup> But, while a negative perception of Africa predominated, some European scholars had a high regard and respect for Africa. Olfert Dapper referenced the "rich courts and well designed cities in Africa."<sup>66</sup>

Western images of Africa tend to emphasize environmental landscapes, such as deserts, jungles, and wildlife reserves. Though some scholars argue that Africa's urban history may be older than Europe's rarely are Africa's modernized cities depicted.<sup>67</sup> The lack of balance in the way that Africa is often depicted reveals the sentiment that the West has towards Africa; and, when comparing the way in which Africa was depicted centuries ago to current depictions, it is apparent that little has changed. One of the key areas where we can see this is the association of Africans to animals.

Africa is home to a wide variety of animals, many of which are distinct to the region. Early European travelers were introduced to apes and Blacks at the same time, which probably has much to do with Europeans' linking Africans to

---

<sup>64</sup> Cirino Hiteng Ofuho, "The Changing Images of a Continent: An Eclectic Survey of Writings on Africa in the International System," *Global Society* 17, 2003, 153.

<sup>65</sup> Nederveen Pieterse, 34.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 35-36.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

apes.<sup>68</sup> Reports circulated throughout Europe, and were documented in personal diaries of European explorers, that compared Africans to different animal species. For example, the Dutch treated Blacks as if they were objects and hunted prey.<sup>69</sup> James Houston, a physician for the Royal Africa Company, made the connection between Africans and animals when he wrote in 1725 that:

Their natural Temper is barbarously cruel, selfish and deceitful, and their Government equally barbarous and uncivil, and consequently the men of greatest Eminency among them are those who are most capable of being the greatest Rogues.... As for their customs they exactly resemble their fellow creatures and natives, the monkeys.<sup>70</sup>

Comte de Buffon described Black Africans as crude, superstitious, and stupid in his *Histoire Naturelle*.<sup>71</sup> Bory St. Vincent, another European scholar, subscribed to Buffon's theories and determined that the Hottentot – a derogatory term used to describe indigenous African groups in southern Africa – as the missing link between apes and humans.<sup>72</sup> This belittling way of thinking became the norm, as more scholars and scientists made similar observations. Georges Cuvier, a Swiss anatomist, notes that:

The Negro race is confined to the south of the Atlas; it is marked by a Black complexion, crisped or wholly hair, compressed cranium, and a flat nose. The projection of the lower parts of the face, and

---

<sup>68</sup> Nederveen Pieterse, *White On Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, 39.

<sup>69</sup> John and Jean Comoroff, *Of Revelation & Revolution*.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in Nederveen Pieterse, *White On Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, 18.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

the thick lips, evidently approximate it to the monkey tribe: the hordes of which it consists have always remained in the most complete state of utter barbarism.<sup>73</sup>

Physical characteristics are a major factor in the separation between countries in northern Africa and those located in other areas on the African continent. For example, Morocco, Libya, and Tunisia are located in Africa just as South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia are. Black Africans generally populate areas south of the Sahara Desert and are subject to this correlation between Africans and animal theory. Africans residing in northern Africa are not considered Black and, therefore, were not described in the same manner. The figures below illustrate the attempts made by Europeans to classify and compare Africans to animals. The image on the left shows a Black boy photographed with a chimpanzee and an orangutan and the image on the right depicts the skulls and facial shapes of Whites, Blacks and Asians to determine the evolution of humans. These images reveal how Whites were able to transcend to a higher level of social hierarchy by proving that Africans were less human and were descendants of primates.

---

<sup>73</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 42.





Figure 5: The Negro Boy and Apes<sup>74</sup>



Figure 6: Facial Angle Sketches.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 48.

## Africans and the Ham Lineage

A medieval tale of Africa being the continent of Ham's descendants was another theory that emerged in Europe and served as justification for White superiority and privilege. In the book of *Genesis*, Noah became drunk and fell asleep while nude. His sons Sem and Japeth covered him, but his youngest son Ham, who also noticed his father in this state, did not.<sup>76</sup> Noah praised Sem and blessed Japeth, but cursed Ham's son Canaan saying, "Cursed be Canaan a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers."<sup>77</sup> Europeans linked the entire African continent to this biblical story. The irony in this theory is that if Africa and Africans were cursed, why did European colonialists desire to take over and dominate this region? How could a land and people that are cursed have an abundance of resources that were not present in Europe? This Christian theme was the explanation for the Black skin color of most Africans.

The concept of race was prominent in the late 1700s and still is evident today. Race was the overriding factor that determined how a person would be viewed and treated, and how much freedom they would attain. European racism fueled the slave trade, contributed to the growth of discriminatory policies such as colonialism and apartheid – and shaped the way that Africa is depicted in Western media and pop culture today.

---

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 44.

<sup>77</sup>Curtis Keim, *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind*, 37.

## Colonialism and Domination

To understand the influence of colonialism on Westerners' perceptions of Africa, it is important to define the term and explain its significance. According to *A Definition of Colonialism*, colonialism is "a form of domination - the control by individuals or groups over the territory and/or behavior of other individuals or groups."<sup>78</sup> In the case of Africa, Europe's objective was to gain access to and dominion over the continent's abundant natural resources. In doing so, Europeans gained control of most African countries and spread embellished, racist ideologies that emphasized White superiority over the indigenous peoples of Africa. These ideologies are apparent in commodity advertising such as the Pears Soap advertisement below.

Anne McClintock, author of *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, addresses how commodity racism differed from scientific racism. Commodity racism refers to the racial myths and biases that are evident in advertising of consumer products. Scientific racism is a form of prejudice that expressed scientific theories and ideas such as the link between Africans and animals.

---

<sup>78</sup> Ronald J. Horvath, "A Definition of Colonialism," *Current Anthropology* 13, no. 1 (February 1972), <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2741072> (accessed September 2, 2010).



Figure 7:Pears Soap Ad<sup>79</sup>

McClintock argues that scientific racism was geared toward the elite and literate population, who read scientific journals, travel writings, and anthropology studies. These theories remained popular among the elite. Commodity advertising, on the other hand, appealed to a much wider audience. The advertisement for Pears soap promotes European imperialism. In this image, a European individual on a horse is pointing to the words, "Pears Soap is the Best," which is carved on the mountain in the background. The Africans in the picture are seen gazing at the slogan; one is even on his knees, with his hands up in the air, as if he is surrendering.

<sup>79</sup> Douglas Haynes. "Electronic Educational Environment." *University of California Irvine*. 2005. <https://eee.uci.edu/programs/humcore/images/Africa/PearsSoap2Soudan.png> (accessed September 5, 2010).

Images such as these were intended to validate the need for European expansion: the uncivilized and subservient Africans were in need of the civilizing influence of the colonizers. The entire colonial discourse was designed to implant in the minds of both the colonizer and the colonized acceptance of the colonizers' ideas and control.<sup>80</sup> The methods proved somewhat successful, as the colonized at times came to adopt a submissive role.

### Dark Continent: Myth or Reality?

Also emerging in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the myth that characterized Africa as the "Dark Continent." Explorers such as David Livingstone and Henry Morton Stanley traveled on explorations throughout Africa and helped create the notion of Africa as a land of primitives who were inferior to Whites. To Europeans, Africa was a dark, unknown, and very different land, and they responded by constantly developing theories about the origins of Africa and Africans. In the process, differences became deficiencies, and prejudiced attitudes became accepted throughout Europe. Although Livingstone advocated for African rights, many of his references to Africans were demeaning. He notes Negroes as being on the low scale of humanity and having low character and physiognomy.<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> Samuel K. Bonsu, "Colonial Images in Global Times: Consumer Interpretations of Africa and Africans in Advertising," *Consumption Markets and Culture* 12 (March 2009): 4.

<sup>81</sup> Nederveen Pieterse, *White On Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, 63.

Mungo Park, a Scottish explorer of Africa also wrote of his experiences in throughout Africa. Park documented his experiences:

Black men are nothing. Part of our moral universe they might be, but they are dark inversions of ourselves, standing to us as does rudeness to refinement. In a climate technical optimism and rational idealism, the stage is set for humane imperialism.<sup>82</sup>

These observations evidenced racism, and his experiences and views were disseminated throughout European newspapers and magazines.

As time progressed, more and more Europeans were becoming interested in dominating this "unknown" region. Missionaries entered the picture, and were unrestrained in sharing their beliefs and biases about the African way of life and Africans. Comorroff explains clearly that Christian missionaries were agents, scribes, and moral alibi in their interventions in Africa.<sup>83</sup> Heathen rituals, idolatry, and human sacrifice prompted the Church's push to convert pagans into God-fearing believers.<sup>84</sup> Never mind that in the Old Testament God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son, or that his willingness to do so symbolized a proper obedience and love for God. Pagan sacrifice committed by Africans, however, called for the superior White Christians to move aggressively to convert and save the "savages."

The image of darkness came easily to European explorers and missionaries: People with dark skin, who lived in an unknown environment that

---

<sup>82</sup> Comorroff, 93.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>84</sup> Nederveen Pieterse, *White On Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, 68.

was overgrown with thick and forbidding jungles, and who acted, lived, and worshipped in ways quite unlike that of the European, were readily characterized as primitive and inferior. The flip side of that inferiority was the sense of superiority and pride engendered in the invading Europeans, whose mission now became to dominate, convert, and control the African savage. Enter British and French imperialism. As H.A.C. Cairns, author of *Prelude to Imperialism* states, "It was a good time to be White, British, and Christian."<sup>85</sup> V.Y. Mudimbe writes in *The Invention of Africa* that, "colonialism and colonization basically mean organization, arrangement... Colonists and colonialists have all tended to organize and transform non-European areas into fundamentally European constructs."<sup>86</sup> An example of such can be seen with the shaping of tribes. Colonial officers needed a system that would allow for logical and controllable units.<sup>87</sup> These groups, often European creations, also legitimized a system that elevated some individuals over others based on racial biases. The Belgians, for example, created a divide within Rwandese society that is further explained in Chapter Three. Even though some Africans contested the policies Europeans implemented, their ideas dominated and were unavoidable in many circumstances. For example, Europeans took possession of Africans' land and

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>86</sup> Quoted in Terrence Ranger, Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition Revisited: the Case of Colonial Africa," in Olufemi Vaughan and T. Ranger, eds., *Legitimacy and the State in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Africa: Essays in Honour of A.H.M. Kirk-Greene* (Hampshire: Macmillan, 1993): 62-111.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

imposed taxes on Africans at every opportunity.<sup>88</sup> King Leopold of Belgium created an extreme law in the Congo where Africans who did not gather enough rubber had their hands cut off in order to propel workers to work faster.<sup>89</sup> The cruelty and brutality resonated within African societies for many years.

The shaping, or “imagination” as scholars have termed it, of these newly adopted social systems often caused conflicts between social classes. Africans from various groups that were now strictly defined and divided by Europeans, found themselves at odds with each other because of divide and rule strategies. This sense of static “tribalism” became imperative for Europeans who wanted to control large populations of Africans. The view of the static, primitive “tribe” as set up during colonialism has certainly prevailed to today. Barbara Bush discusses the imagination in West Africa from the English perspective in her book, *Imperialism, Race and Resistance: Africa and Britain 1919-1945*. She notes that West Africa was seen as a “timeless world of adventure and exotic stimulation, outside modernity.”<sup>90</sup> Europeans grew fascinated with their idea of Africans being uncivilized savages and were impressed with their abundance of natural resources such as diamonds, gold and timber. What started out as a European conquest eventually resulted in an enforcement of European imperialism and inequality endured by African natives.

---

<sup>88</sup> William H. Worger, Nancy L. Clark and Edward A. Alpers, *Africa and the West: A Documentary History from the Slave Trade to Independence* (Phoenix: Oryx Press, 2001), 232.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Barbara Bush, *Imperialism, Race and Resistance: Africa and Britain 1919-1945* (London: Routledge, 1999) 50.



CHAPTER TWO  
AFRICAN IMAGES IN POP CULTURE AND MEDIA

The historical myths and images painted by colonialists and European travelers still influence contemporary portrayals of Africa. Many present-day images of Africa are just perpetuations or re-inventions of old and inaccurate colonial stereotypes and myths. Modern pop culture and media outlets contribute to Westerners' skewed views of Africa and Africans. Westerners' inability to see Africa as more than just a natural habitat for wildlife, with unique tribes and primitive infrastructure, stems in no small part from negative portrayals of African culture and people. And some Africans themselves contribute to the misrepresentations and stereotypes.

Many scholars have tried to theorize the ways in which identities are shaped through images. Saul Dubow, for example, explains that there is a difference between "naming" and "claiming" identity. He defines naming as "the tendency to conceive of identity in primordial, static, or essentialist terms" and claiming as the "thought that conceives of ethnicity in a situational, contextual, and subjective sense."<sup>91</sup> He asserts that naming is a device adopted by a more powerful group as a way to define those that are less powerful.<sup>92</sup> A perfect example of this, as we'll see, is the stereotypical depictions of Africa by the

---

<sup>91</sup> Saul Dubow, "Ethnic Euphemisms and Racial Echoes," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20 (September 1994): 368.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

Western media. On the other hand, he states that groups may claim cultural aspects for defense or "opportunistic" purposes. Thus, some Africans may sometimes embrace the stereotypical images for their own benefit. Indeed, we'll see this in the products of modern African pop stars. According to Stuart Hall, "identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often interesting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions."<sup>93</sup> What some people may choose to adopt as an identity, others from the same group may be reluctant to assume. Thus, we need to recognize that some Africans may adopt and even assert a specific stereotype for their own benefit and that not all Africans share the same view. Moreover, it is important that Africans and Westerners understand that identities are not always formed by outsiders but can, and often are, constructed by Africans themselves.<sup>94</sup> As this chapter illustrates, both modern Western portrayals of Africa and even some African images of the self, rely on stereotypical colonial language that prevails.

### Africa as Wildlife and Wild Like

Westerners are often quick to conclude that Africa is primarily a hot spot for herds of animals and wildlife. Africa, as Keim notes, does indeed host a wide variety of animals; but, the depiction of Africa as dominated by wildlife stems

---

<sup>93</sup> Stuart Hall, "Introduction" to *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications, 1996) 4.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

from colonial stereotypes.<sup>95</sup> Western media exaggerates this aspect of the continent and, in the process, deceives outsiders. Exemplifying the use of misleading and inaccurate stereotypes about Africa is the following advertisement, used in Angola to promote the new Toyota Prado Land Cruiser. One side of the vehicle is clean and shiny, and curious individuals are admiring the vehicle. On the other side are a giraffe, zebra, leopard, and meerkat – all creatures found in only certain regions of Africa.



Figure 8: Toyota New Prado.<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> Keim, 130-131.

<sup>96</sup> "Toyota 2 Sides," [adsoftheworld.com](http://adsoftheworld.com), 7 April 2010, [http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/toyota\\_2\\_sides](http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/toyota_2_sides).

Another illustration of undue emphasis on African wildlife appears in the following image, taken from the BBC World News' Africa Business Report, launched in August 2009. The advertisement uses the neck of a giraffe to display a progression of points on a graph, with more of the herd in the background.

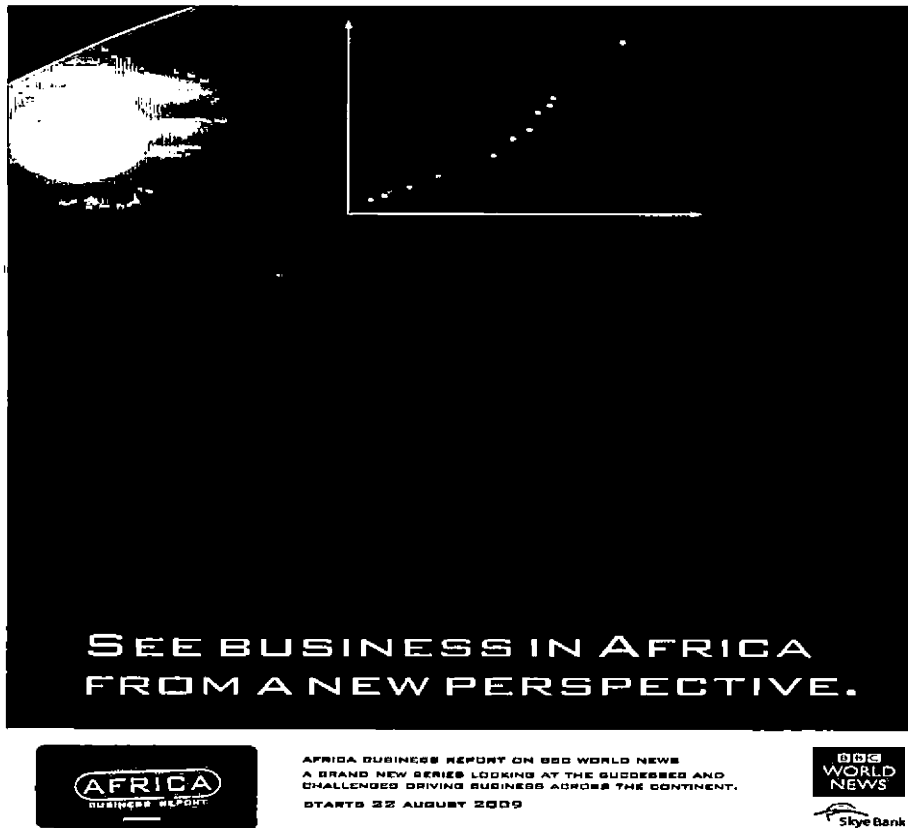


Figure 9: BBC World News Africa Business Report.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Africa Business Report Ad, "See Business In Africa From A New Perspective." *Focus on Africa*, October – December 2009, 9.

The giraffes presumably reinforce that the focus of the business program is on Africa; since giraffes are distinct to Africa, they are used to symbolize the orientation of the business news program to that continent. What, however, do giraffes have to do with African business, other than to serve as an African stereotype?

Keim reminds us that African animals live at the margins of human habitation or in areas where wildlife preservation methods are applied.<sup>98</sup> The continent is not a vast uncivilized expanse untouched by human beings. Nonetheless, the media continue to use African animals to represent the entire continent, making it difficult to move beyond the myth and the image of wildness. Would we not find it strange if the United States were commonly typified in advertisements by allusions to grazing buffalo or prairie dogs?

AT&T Wireless also used animals symbolize Africa in one of its advertisements, shown below. The slogan that the advertisement promotes, "Works in over 200 countries, like Zimbabwe," shows two cheetahs holding the cell phone with their noses. No African cell phone user is present. The link to Africa consists only of the two wild animals.

---

<sup>98</sup> Keim, 131.

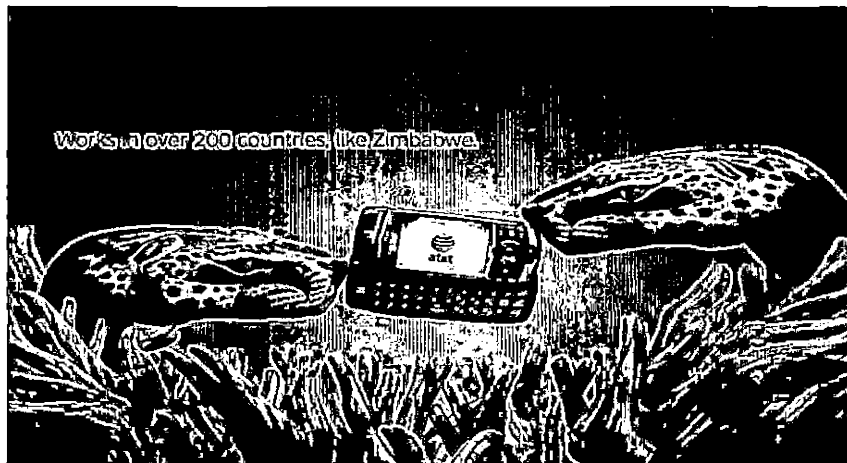


Figure 10: AT&T Wireless International Roaming: Zimbabwe.<sup>99</sup>

American pop singer and actress Jessica Simpson hosts a television show, *The Price of Beauty*, for which the cast travels around the globe to highlight different cultural perspectives on beauty. She hosted one episode in Uganda, where she focused on a ritual practiced by *Hima* women who live in remote parts of Uganda. A synopsis of the show reads as follows:

Jessica, Ken, and Cacee adventure to Africa, where they explore the beauty of Uganda's exotic Hima tribe. With zebras, giraffes, and warthogs at every turn, the trio travels to a very remote location, where they meet Judy, an ambassador from the tribe....<sup>100</sup>

The basis for the show is to highlight the perceptions of this group in regards to the notion that fat is beautiful. Hima women drink 5,000 calories of milk each day, in order to gain weight for their weddings. To help with the weight gain

---

<sup>99</sup> "AT&T Wireless International Roaming: Zimbabwe," 16 September 2010, [http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/att\\_wireless\\_international\\_roaming\\_zimbabwe](http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/att_wireless_international_roaming_zimbabwe)

<sup>100</sup> *The Price of Beauty*, "Uganda," episode 4, April 6, 2010. [http://www.vh1.com/shows/jessica\\_simpson\\_the\\_price\\_of\\_beauty/episode.jhtml?episodeID=166388#moreinfo](http://www.vh1.com/shows/jessica_simpson_the_price_of_beauty/episode.jhtml?episodeID=166388#moreinfo) (accessed August 9, 2010).

process, women are not permitted to engage in any physical activity that might impede the fattening process. They do not leave their homes until the day on which they are presented to their husbands at the wedding ceremony.

The problem with this show is that the synopsis is not fully accurate. Whereas it suggests the presence of “zebras, giraffes, and warthogs at every turn,” the viewer sees not a single animal. The summary leads viewers to believe that zebras, giraffes, and warthogs live in this particular community, rather than on land reserves away from people. In fact, the animals that are “at every turn” are cows, goats, and other insects that are likely to be found in remote areas all over the world. But, because zebras, giraffes, and warthogs are exclusive to certain parts of Africa, writers and producers for this show exaggerate the presence of such wildlife, consistent with outsiders' stereotypes, rather than being more accurate about the actual animal life that is present.

While many women around the world may act quite the opposite in advance of their weddings – in an effort to slim down, rather than to gain weight – the activity practiced by this group of women draws attention as bizarre and unique. The episode's very premise is to demonstrate how Africa and Africans differ from the Westerners who view the show.



Figure 11: The Price of Beauty Episode 4 "Uganda"<sup>101</sup>

Westerners' fascination with African wildlife also appears in the fashion industry. In the pictures below, British super-model Naomi Campbell is on a photo shoot in Africa. The first image shows her running alongside a cheetah, while wearing a cheetah-patterned garment. The second image shows her skipping rope with monkeys, while wearing a zebra head-covering and clothing.



Figure 12: "Wild Things" Naomi Campbell and Cheetah<sup>102</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.





Figure 13: "Wild Things" Naomi Campbell and Monkeys Skipping Rope<sup>103</sup>

The text on the image says, "Supermodel Naomi Campbell journeys to Africa in safari-inspired stunners." Not only does the text incorrectly conceive of Africa as one undifferentiated place, by failing to specify where in Africa the photo shoot takes place, but these situations are not likely if someone were to visit Africa. More importantly, the title "Wild Things" implies that Campbell is also a wild thing, rather than an individual person. European colonialists and explorers often referred to Africans as being wild or savage-like, as discussed in Chapter One. Purportedly scientific studies conducted by Whites during the colonial era alleged that Africans physically resembled animals more than humans and concluded that they were inferior to Whites.<sup>104</sup> This led to the labeling of Blacks as cannibals

---

<sup>102</sup> Jean Paul Goude, "Wild Things," Harper's Bazaar, September 1, 2009.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Renee Larrier, *Francophone Women Writers of Africa and the Caribbean* (Florida: University Press of Florida, 2000) 29.

or savages, primitive and nonhuman.<sup>105</sup> Despite the globally integrated society in which we live today, racist tones are still prevalent in many forms for which these images represent.

The suggested inseparability of Africans and wildlife can also be seen in the images below, taken from the all "Black" July 2008 issue of the magazine, *Italian Vogue*.



Figure 14: *Vogue Italia* Model<sup>106</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> "All Black Issue" *Italian Vogue*, <http://www.vogue.it/condenet/pages/sfogliabile.aspx?id=2010-02-19#page=57> (accessed August 20, 2010).



Figure 15: *Vogue Italia* Model Iman<sup>107</sup>

The magazine featured many of the top Black models in the industry, two of whom were photographed in animal-print clothing. The model dressed in leopard print strikes a pose that could be interpreted as ferocious and intimidating, reflecting the type of attire she is wearing. Iman, who was born in Somália and has become famous in the fashion industry, is wearing a zebra-print gown. The

---

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

editors and photographers for this issue should have refrained from using animal-print attire for the models as it proves that wherever Africa is concerned, animals and wildlife should be also.

Amusement parks are often based on a dominant theme. For example, Wild Rivers in Irvine, California uses African elements to create an “African” experience. Although the park’s creators may not have intended to be racially insensitive or biased, the names of some of the park rides are linked to ideologies of the colonial period. The following table is a listing of all the rides located at the park.



- |                       |                      |                             |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| ○ Bazooka<br>Bowls    | ○ Bombay<br>Blasters | ○ Chaos                     |
| ○ Hurricane<br>Harbor | ○ Kiddie<br>Bombay   | ○ Kiddie<br>Congo           |
| ○ Lake<br>Victoria    | ○ Mat-O-<br>Rama     | ○ Mombasa<br>Hot<br>Springs |
| ○ Monsoon<br>Lagoon   | ○ Nairobi<br>Express | ○ Pygmy<br>Pond             |

Figure 16: Wild Rivers Rides.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Wild River Web site, [www.wildrivers.com](http://www.wildrivers.com) (accessed March 2, 2010).

Names such as Lake Victoria, Sweitzer Falls, Nairobi Express, and Serengeti Surf Hill are all drawn from places in Africa. Rides such as “The Abyss,” “Chaos,” and “Pygmy Pond” are also intended to represent Africa, but they carry extremely negative connotations. The term *abyss*, for example, can mean “a deep or bottomless chasm,” “a wide or profound difference between people,” “a catastrophic situation seen as likely to occur,” and “the regions of hell conceived of as a bottomless pit.”<sup>109</sup> Each meaning conveys something dark or foreboding, consistent with references to Africa as the “Dark Continent” or a place of danger and disasters. The ride “Chaos” also evokes negative biases often associated with the African continent, which Western media frequently exaggerate as overwhelmed with chaos and tragedy.

“Pygmy Pond” is also offensive when used in relation to Africans. Pygmy is a derogatory word used to describe small persons affected by dwarfism in certain parts of equatorial Africa and Southeast Asia.<sup>110</sup> Because pygmies are generally the hunters and gatherers of a specific ethnic group, it would be more accurate to refer to them by their ethnic group rather than in terms of a physical trait like the *Twa* in Rwanda for example. The term *midget* likewise is an

---

<sup>109</sup> “abyss *noun*” *The Oxford Dictionary of English* (revised edition). Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford University Press, 2005. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. California State University San Bernardino. 21 September 2010  
<<http://www.oxfordreference.com.libproxy.lib.csusb.edu/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t140.e290>>

<sup>110</sup> “pygmy *noun*” *The Oxford Dictionary of English* (revised edition). Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford University Press, 2005. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. California State University San Bernardino. 21 September 2010  
<<http://www.oxfordreference.com.libproxy.lib.csusb.edu/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t140.e62924>>

offensive term used to describe persons affected by dwarfism, but it is not used to describe Africans with this genetic trait.<sup>111</sup> Rather than naming the ride after the name of the specific African ethnic group, the ride was named after a trait that only applied to certain people in specific regions around the world. If "Midget Lake" were the name given to an attraction at an amusement park in the United States, the reference would most likely be deemed insensitive and offensive. How then can we justify use of an equally offensive term that is generally used only for Africans and Asians? The answer lies in the fact that there is insufficient outrage by Westerners to use of the term *pygmy* for the particular ride. Far as African countries may have come in the world's view, it is depictions and labels such as these that have not faded entirely.

#### Africa as Tribes

Africans are as diverse in their physical appearances as they are in their cultural and social beliefs and practices. Nevertheless, Western media images ignore the diversity and tend instead to focus on African groups whose customs are considered bizarre when compared to Western culture. In addition to the Jessica Simpson example cited above, the following images illustrate the same tendency.

---

<sup>111</sup> "midget noun" The Oxford Dictionary of English (revised edition). Ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson. Oxford University Press, 2005. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. California State University San Bernardino. 21 September 2010  
<<http://www.oxfordreference.com.libproxy.lib.csusb.edu/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t140.e48386>>

In the June 2007 issue of *Vogue Magazine*, British actress Keira Knightley was featured in an article entitled, "Chronicles of Keira." The article had a colonial-safari theme in which Knightley is dressed in attire typical of the colonial era or found on a safari adventure. Also photographed are members of the Maasai, an indigenous ethnic group that resides mainly along the Rift Valley of Kenya and Tanzania.<sup>112</sup> Traditionally, the Maasai are pastoralists who have resisted many aspects of Western culture.<sup>113</sup>

In the following image, Knightley is standing on a rock and looking outward, while a group of Maasai, dressed in their traditional clothing, are standing or sitting beneath her. As some are looking at each other, one Maasai is looking up at her. This image has a subservient tone that reflects the attitude of some Europeans in colonial times. The picture is highly suggestive of White dominance and Black inferiority.

---

<sup>112</sup> "Maasai." *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students*. Ed. John Middleton. Vol. 3. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2002. 35. Gale Virtual Reference Library. Gale. CSU San Bernardino. 21 Sept. 2010. <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/start.do?p=GVRL&u=csusb>

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*



Figure 17: The Chronicles of Keira. Vogue <sup>114</sup>

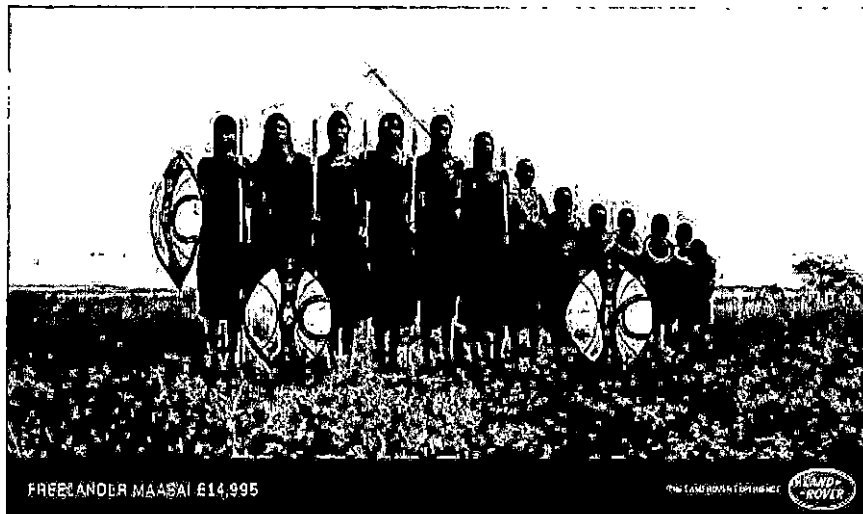


Figure 18: Freelander Maasai Ad <sup>115</sup>

---

<sup>114</sup> "The Chronicles of Keira," *Vogue*, June 2007. <http://www.vogue.com/magazine/article/keira-knightley-the-chronicles-of-keira/> (accessed April 18, 2010).

<sup>115</sup> "Maasai," advertolog advertising archive, 16 September 2010, <http://www.advertolog.com/land-rover/print-outdoor/maasai-6460905/>



The image immediately above is used to promote the Freelander Maasai, a vehicle manufactured by Land Rover. Pictured is a group of Maasai standing in a row, ranging from adult to child. The elder Maasai are standing with spears and shields. Were it not for the inclusion of the words *Freelander Maasai* and the Land Rover logo printed on this advertisement, it would not be clear what is being marketed. The vehicle is not depicted. The conclusion to be drawn is that the Maasai represent the Freelander vehicle and are not different from each other.<sup>116</sup>



Figure 19: Canon "We Speak Image" Corporate Campaign.<sup>117</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> The Blake Project, "Beware of Creating the Wrong Brand Impression," 11 March 2009, <http://www.brandingstrategyinsider.com/2009/03/creating-the-wrong-brand-impression.html> (accessed September 1, 2010).

<sup>117</sup> "We Speak Image Campaign," Canon, [http://www.canon-europe.com/About\\_Us/index\\_wespeakimage.asp](http://www.canon-europe.com/About_Us/index_wespeakimage.asp) (accessed September 16 2010).

Canon also used the Maasai in its “We Speak Image” campaign in Europe. In the above image, four Maasai are standing on a grassy plain and holding x-rays. The advertisement says, “Our mobile digital x-ray allows accurate diagnosis from thousands of miles away.” Anthropology Professor John G. Galaty of McGill University in Montreal argues that pastoralists such as the Maasai “have become icons of African traditionalism and unwitting symbols of resistance to modernist values of development and conservation.”<sup>118</sup> More specifically, he explains that “ethnographic images are intrinsically tied to the sparse, nominal language which we rely on so heavily to signify the identities of peoples, nations, places, habitats, occupations, and, even more so, the visual properties of the outside world.”<sup>119</sup> The use of the Maasai in this particular ethnographic image symbolizes Africa and reinforces Africa’s distance from Western countries.

The following images also portray Africans as distant peoples and in demeaning and stereotypical manners. The first is from Free Games Arena, an enterprise that produces numerous video games, available free online. African Free Cell – the game that is the subject of this visual – is one such game that uses strong language to suggest that Africans are situated far from civilized society. The caption describes native Africans as “living far away from the civilization.” The viewer is informed how surprising it is, therefore, that they have

---

<sup>118</sup> John G. Galaty, “How Visual Figures Speak: Narrative Inventions of ‘The Pastoralist’” in *East Africa Visual Anthropology*, 15: 347-367, 2002.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

learned how to play card games. This depiction of “native Africans” is similar to the views expressed by the early European philosophers who asserted that Africans are uncivilized savages. Here, they are seen not fully clothed and seated on the ground in a desolate rural area. This reinforces a sense of the “otherness” described in Chapter One.

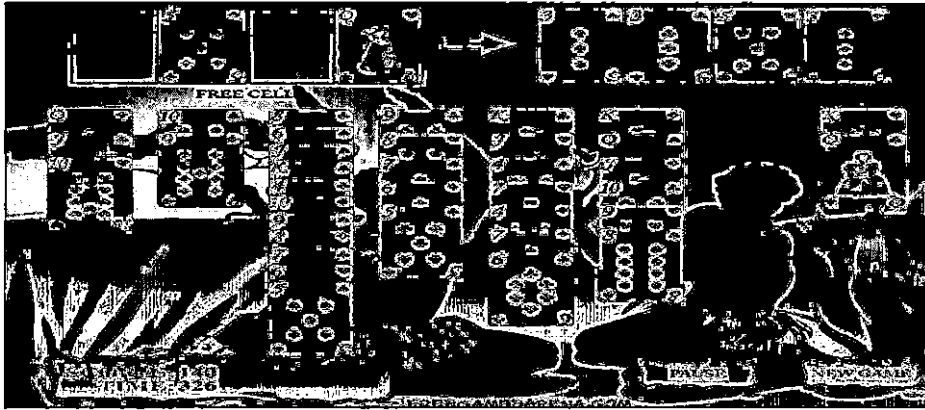
European explorers and colonists were on a mission to expand their territory beyond their geographic borders. In order to achieve that end and take over Africa, they had to fight for it in many situations. The caption underneath the image which says, “Stand up for yourself” and “Do your best and win a victory” may as well be colonial anthems that propelled Europeans on their conquest. To depict Africans this way in this century shows that Western views of Africans are outdated.



Figure 20: African Freecell Online Game.<sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>120</sup> “African Free Cell,” freegamesarena.com, <http://www.freegamesarena.com/games/african-freecell-info.html> (accessed December 20, 2009).



Play cards with native Africans of the most powerful tribe. Living far away from the civilization they have learnt to play cards very well. Now they are world known gamblers and unexcelled solitaire professionals. They can defeat you easily. But nevertheless, stand up for yourself! Do your best and win a victory.

Figure 21: African Freecell Natives Playing Cards <sup>121</sup>

The characterization of Africans as primarily tribes is also prevalent in the music industry. Danish pop group Aqua released a song entitled “Dr. Jones” in 1997. The music video for this song contains provocative imagery of a voodoo clan. Pictured in the images below are the group members cooking in a pot while masked members of the voodoo clan dance around the pot. The terrified looks on the Aqua band members’ faces show fear of being killed and eaten. The imagery in this music video is similar to the views of early White explorers, who perceived Africans as savages and cannibals who should be controlled and dominated.

---

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.



Figure 22: Aqua "Dr. Jones" #1<sup>122</sup>



Figure 23: Aqua "Dr. Jones" #2.<sup>123</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup> Yahoo Music, "Dr. Jones," Aqua, <http://new.music.yahoo.com/videos/Aqua/Dr.+Jones--2166796> (accessed August 20, 2010).

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

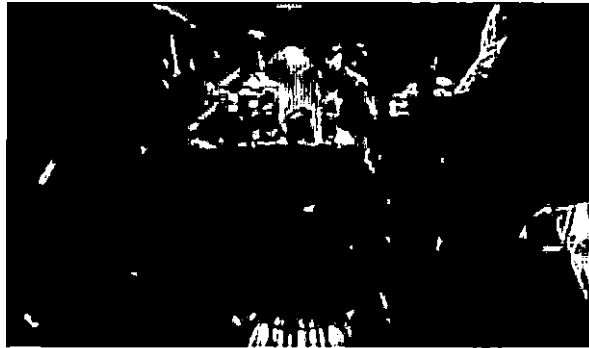


Figure 24: Aqua "Dr. Jones" #3<sup>124</sup>

American rap artist Kanye West also used African tribal imagery in a music video for his 2008 hit single, "Love Lockdown." The video opens with West alone in a luxury apartment. As the film progresses, persons dressed in African-inspired tribal costumes and wearing masks and face paint run about and dance with spears and shields. Women in the video are also barely clothed, and their bodies are covered in body paint. Interestingly, the scenes in this video have nothing to do with the lyrics of the song, which are about love. In fact, the only plausible connection between the dancers and the song is the strong drum beats that are evident. But, although drum beats are often essential to African music, one must wonder whether this stereotypical depiction of African tribes is really necessary for the song? These recurring images seem only to reinforce Westerners' perception of Africans and African society as "tribe-like" and uncivilized.

---

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.



Figure 25: Kanye West's "Love Lockdown" #1<sup>125</sup>

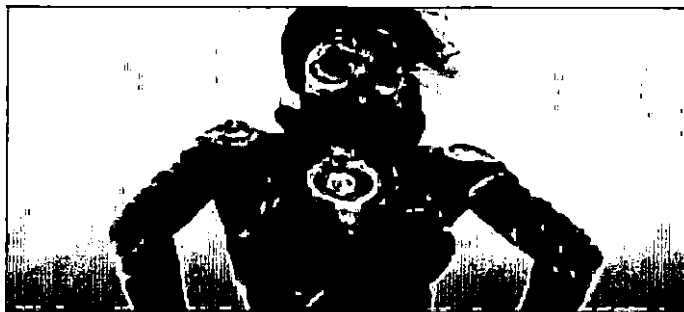


Figure 26: Kanye West's "Love Lockdown" #2<sup>126</sup>

---

<sup>125</sup> Yahoo Music, "Love Lockdown," Kanye West, <http://www.mtv.com/videos/kanye-west/290592/love-lockdown.ihtml> (accessed August 10, 2010).

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

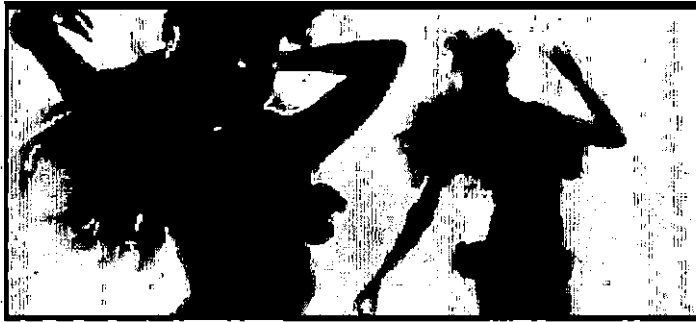


Figure 27: Kanye West's "Love Lockdown" #3<sup>127</sup>

### Depictions of Africans and Charity Campaigns

American rhythm-and-blues singer Alicia Keys formed a non-profit organization called Keep a Child Alive. Her effort to raise funds for the purpose of making anti-retroviral drugs and other medicines available in numerous Africa communities is a testament to her belief in philanthropy. The campaign marketing strategies used to promote Keep a Child Alive, however, contain elements quite offensive to Africans. One such strategy involves the pictures below, which show Gwyneth Paltrow and Lucy Liu with painted faces and beaded necklaces.

---

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.





Figure 28: "I Am African" #1<sup>128</sup>



Figure 29: "I Am African" #2<sup>129</sup>

---

<sup>128</sup> "I Am African," Keep A Child Alive, [http://www.keepachildalive.org/i\\_am\\_african/i\\_am\\_african.html](http://www.keepachildalive.org/i_am_african/i_am_african.html) (accessed March 18, 2010).

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

That their faces are painted and that they are wearing beaded necklaces consistent with a stereotypical view of Africans does not in any respect make them African.

The organization's website contains verbiage intended to show that each of us is to some degree African:

Each and every one of us contains DNA that can be traced back to our African ancestors. These amazing people traveled far and wide. Now they need our help.<sup>130</sup>

The difficulty with this statement lies in its hypocrisy. After first suggesting that we are all genetically linked to Africa – they are us, and we are them – it then puts distance between us and them: “[t]hese amazing people.” Saying then that, “*They* need our help” implies that all of Africa, without exception, and including our ancestors, are dependent and in need of help. Missing is any specificity about the actual individuals who are in need of assistance; the viewer is left to infer that all Africans need help, continent-wide. Ignored entirely by over-generalization is the fact that Africa, like any other country or continent, contains within it both prosperous and civilized modernity and pockets of need.

The way in which Africans are depicted by international humanitarian organizations is sometimes offensive and misleading. The campaign images below, used by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), show two German children with their faces covered in dark face paint. The translation for the image on the left reads, “In Africa, kids don't come to school late, but not at all,” and the

---

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

translation for the image on the right reads, "I'm waiting for my last day in school, the children in Africa still for their first one."<sup>131</sup> These ads suggest the incorrect generalization that African children do not attend school and, beyond that, assume that all Africans are Black. Some African countries – South Africa and Kenya are examples – have multi-ethnic and multi-racial populations. Painting a White person in Black face was at one time popular in some Western countries, when Whites performed in minstrels. We have come to an understanding now, however, that Whites portraying themselves as Blacks by painting their faces is highly insulting.



Figure 30: UNICEF German Ad#1<sup>132</sup>

---

<sup>131</sup> "UNICEF Paints Children in Blackface for New German Ad Campaign," rodonline.typepad.com, <http://rodonline.typepad.com/rodonline/2007/08/unicef-paints-c.html> (accessed April 15, 2010).

<sup>132</sup> Ibid



Figure 31: UNICEF German Ad #2<sup>133</sup>

When Dutch supermodel Lara Stone posed in Black face for the October 2009 issue of *French Vogue*, she sparked outrage.<sup>134</sup> Is this a fashion statement, or is it racism? The minstrel acts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century used Black stereotypes for amusement, and the re-emergence now of such portrayals reflects a high degree of racial insensitivity.

---

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> New York Daily News <http://www.nydailynews.com/lifestyle/fashion/2009/10/13/2009-10-13-supermodel-lara-stone-poses-in-blackface-for-french-vogue-photoshoot.html> (accessed September 1, 2010).



Figure 32: Supermodel Lara Stone Poses in Blackface<sup>135</sup>

It is not just that many Westerners are ignorant of how racially offensive are some depictions of Africa and Africans. Some expressions are also culturally insensitive.

The next image is a campaign advertisement for the Coca Cola Africa Foundation, as posted on its website. The ad shows young children standing around, watching a young boy pour water onto his head. "Rain: Clean water. Save lives. Replenish AFRICA" is indicated. The implication is that all of Africa is in desperate need of clean water. The continent's name is given added emphasis by the use of all capitals.

---

<sup>135</sup> Nicole Carter "Supermodel Lara Stone poses in Blackface for French Vogue photoshoot ," *NY Daily News*, 13 October 2009, [http://www.nydailynews.com/lifestyle/fashion/2009/10/13/2009-10-13\\_supermodel\\_lara\\_stone\\_poses\\_in\\_Blackface\\_for\\_french\\_vogue\\_photoshoot\\_.html#ixzz0zvrp8rDg](http://www.nydailynews.com/lifestyle/fashion/2009/10/13/2009-10-13_supermodel_lara_stone_poses_in_Blackface_for_french_vogue_photoshoot_.html#ixzz0zvrp8rDg)

Granted, there are some drought-stricken areas within African and others where more water would be useful. This is not, however, true of all of Africa. Charity campaigns such as this should be more specific and not make such over-generalized assertions. Consider the parallel example of California, a state within the United States that experiences droughts and water shortages. When this occurs, the problem is described as a California issue, not a continent-wide circumstance for the whole of the United States. Africa deserves no less specific treatment. Too frequently, Western media highlights a problem in Africa without respect to the specific venue, thus leading outsiders to infer that the entire continent is subject to the same crises and problems.



Figure 33: The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation. Rain.<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>136</sup> The Coca Cola Africa Foundation, Rain Water for Africa Project, [www.tccaf.org/slideshow/rain.jpg](http://www.tccaf.org/slideshow/rain.jpg) (accessed August 28, 2010).

Some charity campaigns are so emotionally disturbing that one cannot help but feel empathy for those who are suffering. Figures 2.27 and 2.28 are advertisements used by the World Food Programme, an agency that works to combat hunger worldwide. The first image shows a woman feeding a baby, and the second image shows a child holding a red cup with the words, "Can You Help to Fill His Cup?" Such images are more likely to elicit than would images showing Africans who are healthy and living in a developed society.

In Western countries, campaigns aimed at raising funds for persons in need tend to take a different approach. Generally, those for whom the funds are being raised are not the center of campaign advertisements. For example, Figure 2.30 is an advertisement promoting an AIDS Walk in Los Angeles. The individuals shown in the ad are participants in the walk, not the intended beneficiaries of the funds that the walk is to raise. Contrast Figure 2.29 with those that focus on Africans who are ill or malnourished, where the victims themselves are always shown. These types of campaign strategies leave a lasting impression in Westerners' minds and help to create or perpetuate an allusion that Africans are constantly in need of outside assistance. Such depictions illustrate the idea of "otherness," and act to separate the West from the rest.



Figure 34: World Food Programme. Fighting Hunger Worldwide Ad.<sup>137</sup>



Figure 35: World Food Programme "Can You Help to Fill His Cup?" Ad<sup>138</sup>

<sup>137</sup> World Food Programme, "Women the Front Line Against Hunger", World Food Programme, [http://www.wfp.org/campaigns/women?utm\\_source=howtohelp\\_lower\\_banner](http://www.wfp.org/campaigns/women?utm_source=howtohelp_lower_banner) (accessed September 20, 2010).

<sup>138</sup> World Food Programme, "Can You Help to Fill His Cup", United Nations Radio, <http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/english/detail/37832.html> (accessed September 20, 2010).



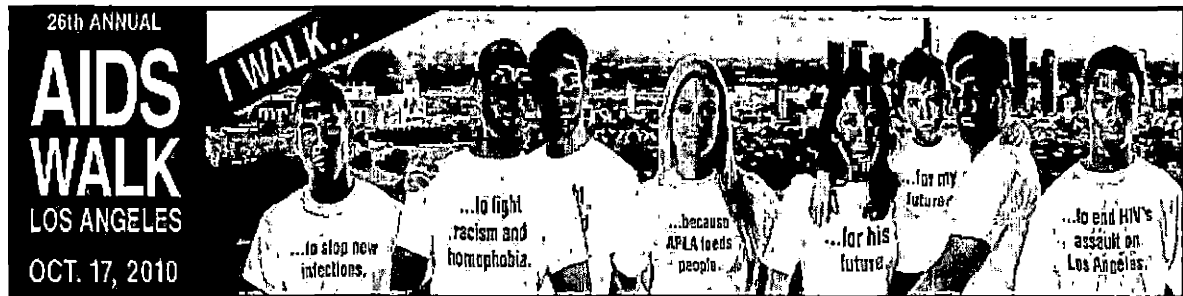


Figure 36: 26<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Los Angeles Ad<sup>139</sup>

### Celebrities in Africa and African Otherness

Africa's crises have gained the attention of many celebrities around the globe. Dale Jamieson argues in an article entitled, *Duties to the Distance: Aid, Assistance and Intervention in the Developing World*, that celebrity-driven media-centered projects create awareness, motivate people to act, and raise money for various causes. But, while these are all positive effects, Jamieson notes that, "These events also contributed to creating some important misconceptions about the causes, consequences and context of the suffering which they highlighted."

In the figure below, British pop star Kimberley Walsh is seen handing out mosquito nets to a group of Ugandans. The nets are designed to help impede the spread of malaria. In an article published in the UK publication *Daily Mail*, Walsh recalls of her action:

Handing those nets to people who needed and wanted them so desperately was an unforgettable thing to be given the chance to do. Almost all of them were parents and they were desperate to be

<sup>139</sup> AIDS Walk Los Angeles, "26<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Los Angeles," AIDS Walk Los Angeles (accessed September 20, 2010).

able to protect their children - it was great to play a small part in it.<sup>140</sup>

Desperation is emphasized in Walsh's comments and the article that featured this story failed to provide any insight as to why there is such a great need for these nets. This image along with Walsh's statement can be interpreted to suggest that all Ugandans are in critical need of help from the West.



Figure 37: Kimberley Walsh Charity Photo<sup>141</sup>

The message that is conveyed is a prime example of otherness in Western culture. As highlighted in Chapter One, European imperialists justified exploitation of Africans by convincing themselves and the European public that Africans needed their help. This resulted in the subjugation and conquering of

---

<sup>140</sup> Daily Mail, "Kimberley Walsh Returns to Africa With Four Other Celebrities From Team Kilimanjaro", December 24, 2009 *Dailymail.co.uk*. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-1238306/Kimberley-Walsh-returns-Africa-celebrities-Team-Kilimanjaro.html> (accessed September 1, 2010).

<sup>141</sup> Ibid

Africa. Whereas Africans are shown as incapable of satisfying their own needs, Westerners are seen as compassionate heroes helping the less fortunate. The idea of Africans relying on the West to sustain themselves helps maintain the illusion of African otherness and emphasizes the differences between the African and the Westerner.

The Western celebrity presence in Africa reinforces the image of a disconnected Africa. The African continent has always been recognized as a remote and “dark continent” during colonialism and this image continues in the post-colonial era. The contemporary isolation often associated with Africa can be seen in the CNN image below. CNN claims to be committed to Africa by airing news about Africa. This advertisement, however, suggests that Africa remains apart from the global world in which the rest of us live. What is implied by the statement, “Hear the voices shaping Africa and our world”? Although CNN’s intention to enlighten Westerners about this part of the world may be a step in the right direction, this advertisement clearly treats Africa as separate and apart from “our world.”

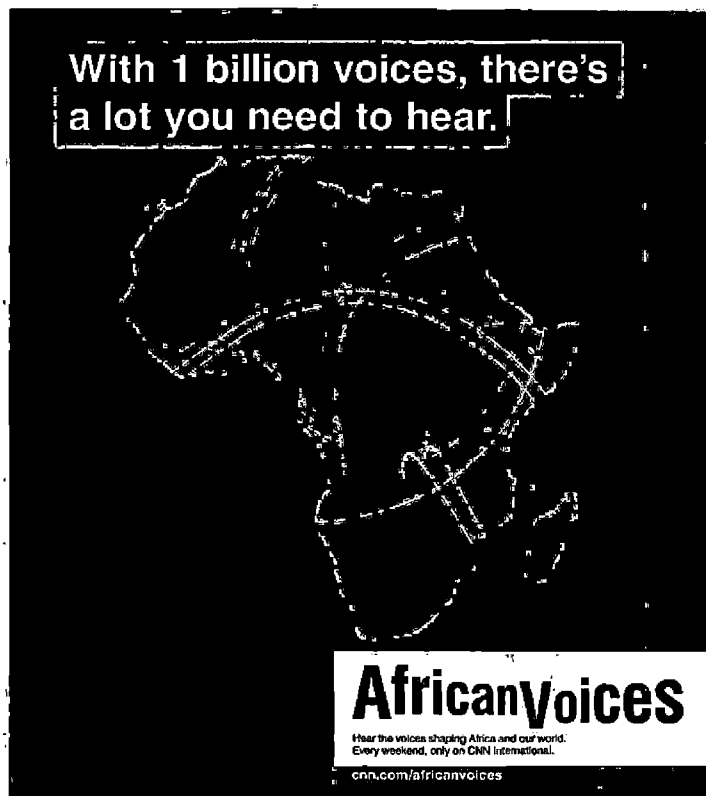


Figure 38: CNN African Voices Ad<sup>142</sup>

### African Responsibility and Self-Image

While Western media outlets and educational media bear substantial responsibility for misconceptions and inaccurate portrayals of Africa, Africans themselves share some measure of blame. As colonialists painted a picture of a continent full of primitive “Blackies”<sup>143</sup> who were distant and beneath the Europeans, there is evidence that Africans themselves have helped perpetuate

---

<sup>142</sup> New African, CNN Advertisement, December 2009

<sup>143</sup> Blackies –term used to describe Africans. Nederveen Piertese, 111.

these images. For example, just as European colonialists' racism depicted common African features and physical characteristics as unattractive, some Africans to this day also equate dark skin with ugliness and inferiority. Skin bleaching has become popular in some parts of Africa; witness the following image from a billboard advertisement for a skin Whitening product in Ghana. The ad says, "For body success" and implies that in order to enhance one's success and attractiveness in Ghanaian society, one should lighten one's skin.



Figure 39: Skin Light Billboard in Ghana<sup>144</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Vbulletin Solutions, "Skin Light Carrot Extracts Billboard," Dancehallreggae.com, <http://i37.tinypic.com/21np63s.jpg> (accessed April 2, 2010).

The next image below also draws on the same connection between light skin and success.



Figure 40: Ambi Skin Lightening Cream Ad<sup>145</sup>

Some argue that skin bleaching is a legacy of Western brain washing and that it derives from notions of "West is best."<sup>146</sup> Despite the health dangers of skin bleaching, many African women are infatuated with having lighter skin. They believe – and perhaps the European socialization of men makes this true – that men prefer their women to have a fair complexion, and that it is more fashionable

---

<sup>145</sup> Vbulletin Solutions, "Ambi Skin Lightening Cream Advertisement," Dancehallreggae.com <http://i34.tinypic.com/11jupew.jpg> (accessed April 2, 2010).

<sup>146</sup> Allen Thompson, "Ghana; Skin Bleaching, An Insult To The Black Race," The Independent (Accra), February 16, 1999.

to "purify" one's skin.<sup>147</sup> In fact, of course, darker skin can serve as protection against harsh sun rays, and research has shown that the chemicals used in skin lightening products can have serious side effects, including irritation and lasting damage to the skin. Michelle Betz, a reporter from Worldvision, has addressed the harm that many women face when they bleach their skin.<sup>148</sup> On assignment in Uganda, she talked with various women who, though they believe that fair skin is synonymous with beauty, have suffered multi-colored blotchiness resulting from such products. Bleached skin can react this way when exposed to the sun. Betz also reported that the use of steroids in bleaching creams can ultimately make a person's skin thinner and more susceptible to infections and skin cancer.

Dr. Ali Gindo, a physician in Mali, asserts that bleaching the skin can cause cancer and that the poorest persons are at the greatest risk, since they use the cheapest and lowest-quality products, which can cause the most damage.<sup>149</sup>

Men have also been known to use skin-lightening products. A study conducted in Lagos, Nigeria surveyed 450 persons to determine the prevalence of skin-lightening practices across socio-cultural and economic backgrounds.<sup>150</sup>

---

<sup>147</sup> All Africa Press Service, "Africa-at-Large Black And Beautiful But Skin Bleaching Persists," *Africa News*, January 12, 1996.

<sup>148</sup> Michelle Betz The Cost of Being Pale <http://www.worldvisionreport.org/Stories/Week-of-September-19-2009/The-Cost-of-Being-Pale> (accessed April 10, 2010).

<sup>149</sup> Joan Baxter, "The Heavy Cost of Light Skin," BBC News, April 18, 2000, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/718359.stm> (accessed May 4, 2010.)

<sup>150</sup> U.S. National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health An Epidemiological Survey of the Use of Cosmetic Skin lightening Cosmetics among traders in Lagos, Nigeria

The results showed that 77.3% of the sampled group used skin-lightening products, of which 27.6% were male and 72.4% were female. This problem persists throughout many African countries.

Today's fashion industry plays an important role in defining our perceptions of what constitutes beauty. Lighter skin color is a feature often emphasized by fashion and beauty experts. The following image features American actress Gabourey Sidibe on the cover of *Elle* magazine. Sidibe is half Senegalese and has very dominant features. *Elle* was accused of lightening her skin for the cover. Although *Elle* has not admitted to lightening Sidibe's skin, there is an obvious difference between her appearance on this front cover and the way she is photographed in other pictures. Whether or not her skin was lightened intentionally, her appearance drew considerable public attention for the message that the depiction sent. As Larrier explains, "The Black woman's otherness from White women is located far beyond mere difference."<sup>151</sup> Furthermore, she notes that, "Western female beauty is figured in blondness, purity, fragility, thin lips, and a smaller rear end."<sup>152</sup> *Elle's* decision to feature Sidibe on the front cover can be seen as a way to acknowledge beauty outside of these characteristics, but at the same time, lightening Sidibe's skin is additional confirmation that light skin is still preferred over dark and that Africans themselves will often conform to stereotypes.

---

<sup>151</sup>Renee B. Larrier, *Women Writers of Africa and the Caribbean* (Florida: University Press of Florida, 2000), 33.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*





Figure 41: Gabourey Sidibe on Cover of Elle<sup>153</sup>

Another example of Africans subscribing to the European stereotypes can be seen in the Standard Bank advertisement below. Standard Bank is one of South Africa's largest banks. In this advertisement, the bank uses the slogan, "Let's Build a Bridge from Africa to the World and the World to Africa." The message is clear: there is "the world" and, separately, there is Africa: Africa is not already part of the world.

European colonialists worked hard to disassociate themselves from Africans, and slogans such as this from Standard Bank reveal that some Africans and African businesses are still seen as outcasts from today's global world.

The same idea can also be applied to the 3<sup>rd</sup> COMESA Investment Forum image, which says, "Connecting Africa with the World". COMESA – short for

<sup>153</sup> *Huffington Post*, "Gabourey Sidibe Cover Lightened by Elle?," September 17, 2010 [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/09/17/gabourey-sidibe-cover-lig\\_n\\_721468.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/09/17/gabourey-sidibe-cover-lig_n_721468.html) (accessed September 18, 2010).

Common and Southern Market for Eastern and Southern Africa – consists of a consortium of African countries that focus on sustainable development and improving the quality of life for their citizens.

**Country filter** | **VIEW OUR** Operations | Deals | Accolades | News

**LET'S BUILD A BRIDGE FROM AFRICA TO THE WORLD AND THE WORLD TO AFRICA**

**How we connect Africa to the world**

Standard Bank is a leading African banking group focused on emerging markets globally. With assets exceeding R1500 billion (US\$), it is the largest banking group in Africa by market capitalisation. We are a universal bank and full-service financial group, offering transactional banking, savings, borrowing, lending, investment, insurance, risk management, wealth management and advisory services, via our three core business units, Personal and Business Banking, Corporate and Investment Banking, and Wealth.

The group has been a mainstay of South Africa's financial system for over 145 years. In recent years, led by the Corporate & Investment Banking division, Standard Bank's international expansion has taken it from its southern African base into 17 countries across the continent, and 18 countries outside Africa. With international representation in over 30

**LET'S SHOW YOU**

Figure 42: Standard Bank Advertisement<sup>154</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Standard Bank, "How We Connect Africa to the World," <http://movingforward.standardbank.com> (accessed November 30, 2009).



## 3<sup>rd</sup> COMESA INVESTMENT FORUM

SHARM EL SHEIKH, EGYPT 12-13 APRIL 2010  
CONNECTING AFRICA TO THE WORLD



# Connecting Africa with the world

### Why attend?

- ✓ Update your knowledge of COMESA's latest investment opportunities
- ✓ Engage one-to-one with Ministers from COMESA's 19 member states
- ✓ Explore future trends and innovative strategies and developments
- ✓ Network with over 500 international government and business leaders

**19 States, One Market,  
A World of Opportunity**

Meet the Ministers of Trade and Investment from the 19 member countries of COMESA.

#### Speakers and participants include:

- H.E. Dr Ahmed Nazif  
Prime Minister, Egypt
- H.E. Dr Mahmoud Mohieldin  
Minister of Investment, Egypt
- Mr Sindiso Ngwenya  
Secretary General,  
COMESA
- H.E. Festus Mogae  
Former President of  
Botswana
- Dr. Nkosana Moyo  
Vice President of African  
Development Bank
- Mr. Hassan Maitkel  
Managing Director,  
EFG Hermes
- Ms. Phuti Malabie  
Managing Director,  
Shanduka Group
- Mr. Joseph Muchoru  
Head of Sub Saharan Africa  
Google
- Dr Damblaa Moyo  
Economist and Author of  
'Dead Aid'
- Steward Kinloch  
Acting CEO, Africa Trade  
Insurance Agency
- Mr. Brian Herlihy  
CEO SEACOM

For more information and to register\* visit  
[www.comesainvestmentforum.com](http://www.comesainvestmentforum.com)

\*Participation is free, subject to approval

Figure 43: COMESA. "Connecting Africa with the World"<sup>155</sup>

Somali hip hop artist K'naan started a clothing line called "I Am Africa," ostensibly with the goal of uniting people from all over the world in "the global way of life."<sup>156</sup> The intention behind this clothing line may be a step in the right direction in terms of Africans stepping up to transform the negative images that are often linked to them. Unfortunately, however, the slogan "Live the Tribelife" is probably not the best phrase to use. It only reinforces the idea that Africans

<sup>155</sup> *New African*, "Connecting Africa with the World," COMESA Investment Forum March 2010, 7.

<sup>156</sup> I Am Africa, "Live the Tribelife," [http://store.iamafriwear.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&id=2](http://store.iamafriwear.com/index.php?option=com_content&id=2) (accessed April 28, 2010)

live in tribes and that these tribal Africans are not integrated into modern society. In the West, "tribes" are seen as static, "primitive" groups, specifically made up of non-White individuals. For an African to use this as a marketing strategy demonstrates that Africans themselves often perpetuate Westerners' misconceptions.



Figure 44: K'naan Clothing Ad<sup>157</sup>

K'naan's song titled, "Wavin Flag," was used by Coca Cola to promote the company's products for the 2010 World Cup soccer games, hosted in South Africa. Many people have criticized him for changing his song lyrics and allowing them to be used in a capitalist way. K'naan said in an interview that he changed his lyrics in celebration of the World Cup and not for Coca Cola.<sup>158</sup> He wanted his song to be uplifting to people in which his personal verses in the song were changed. The first version of his song contained lyrics that focus on struggling to

---

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> K'naan, interview on Q with Jian Ghomeshi, CBC Radio, Thursday, April 22, 2010 <http://www.cbc.ca/q/blog/2010/04/22/exclusive-knaan-on-q/> (accessed: September 12, 2010).

survive. Violence, poverty, fighting for freedom and the struggle for survival are mentioned in the song. The lyrics can propel some be liberated. However, the altered version speaks of celebrating, unifying and rejoicing in the game of soccer. These elements although promote positivity which is rarely ever linked to Africa or Africans, the struggles and reasons for their existence in many African communities is omitted from this version.

Although some may see his action as selling out to capitalism, his song would not have gained the attention that it did were it not for the offer from Coca-Cola. This specific song was featured in a commercial shown across many different television networks around the world and through K'naan's efforts, westerners can have a positive association with Africa through song.

Akon, a Senegalese-American rap artist, music producer, and song writer, is very popular in the United States. Although he was born to Senegalese parents in St. Louis, Missouri, he strives to remain in touch with his African roots and culture by creating songs about Africa. For the 2010 World Cup games in South Africa, he performed a song titled, "Oh Africa," with American singer Keri Hilson. In the image below, Akon is seen performing with choir members in a desolate area. The dry and deserted landscape chosen for this backdrop is synonymous with the misconceptions many Westerners have about the lack of development in Africa.



Figure 45: Akon "Oh Africa" Video Shot<sup>159</sup>

Other screen shots from Akon's "Oh Africa" music video (figures 2.40 and 2.41) only add to the negative image that Westerners have of Africans. In two of the figures, drummers covered in body paint blend in with the wall design. Akon is then shirtless and covered in body paint in the third image, the Pepsi advertisement for the same song. These images send a distorted message that it is normal for scantily clad Africans to wear body paint and no clothing. Despite their African heritage, entertainers such as K'naan and Akon have failed to help re-shape images of Africans.

---

<sup>159</sup> POPSOP Brand Magazine Online, "Pepsi Oh Africa," [http://www.popsop.com/.../pepsi\\_max\\_oh\\_africa\\_03.jpg](http://www.popsop.com/.../pepsi_max_oh_africa_03.jpg) (accessed September 12, 2010).

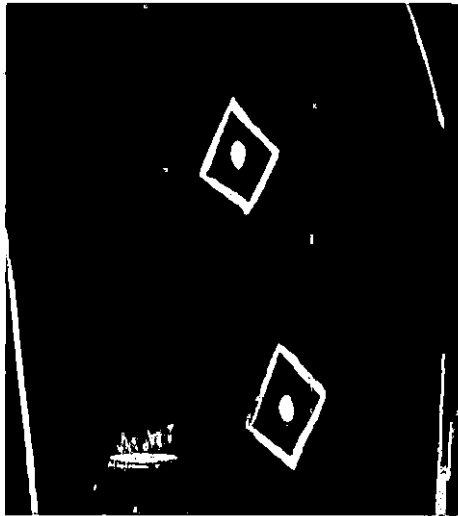


Figure 46: "Oh Africa" Drummer #1<sup>160</sup>



Figure 47: "Oh Africa" Drummer #2<sup>161</sup>

---

<sup>160</sup> The Konfidence Foundation, "Oh Africa," Konfidence Foundation Web site, <http://konfidence.org/konf/> (accessed September 2, 2010).

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.



Figure 48: AKON Pepsi Ad<sup>162</sup>

Simon Frith, Chair of Music at the University of Edinburgh discusses the importance of music to identity and argues that music "...offers, so intensely, a sense of both self and others, of the subjective in the collective. Identity is not a thing but a process- an experiential process which is most vividly grasped as music."<sup>163</sup> More specifically, he explains that:

The experience of identity describes both a social process, a form of interaction, and an aesthetic process; as Slobin argues, it is the aesthetic rather than organizational/contextual aspects of performance that betray a continuity between the social, the group, and the individual. It is in deciding - playing and hearing what sounds right.<sup>164</sup>

Both K'naan and Akon have used their music platform to portray cultural characteristics for economic gain. This raises the question as to whether or not

---

<sup>162</sup> Get Latest News, "Akon Ft Keri Hilson – Oh Africa Lyrics And YouTube Video," Getlatestnews.com, <http://getlatestnews.com/4848/akon-ft-keri-hilson-oh-africa-wm-songhymne-2010-lyrics-and-youtube-video/> (accessed September 8, 2010).

<sup>163</sup> Simon Frith, "Music and Identity," in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Paul DuGay (London: Sage Publications, 1996) 110.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.



they are “deciding, playing and hearing” what they think sounds right, or are they subjects of power exertion by global corporations. How much control did they have in how they were to represent, sell and promote consumer products? If their control was limited, then the argument of globalization being the new form of colonialism is evident as it shows how some people have to act in ways that appease those that dominate various industries in order to profit, excel and thrive in today’s society.

Individual Africans are not the only persons to embrace stereotypes in order to make economic profit. One need look no further than the firms that cater to tourist interest in safaris, the jungle, tribalism, and an Africa without cities. Countries, individuals, and various enterprises situated on the African continent generate revenues by embracing stereotypical images that appeal to foreigners drawn to the mysteries of Africa.

A relevant question in this regard is whether such use by Africans of stereotypes of the continent and its people differs from or resembles Westerners’ similar behavior. There is certainly a difference between the way in which Westerners “name” or define Africans in static ways and the way that Africans “claim” certain images for their own benefit. Although the claiming of stereotypes by Africans can suggest to Westerners that it is appropriate to continue the use of a skewed gaze at Africa, it can also be interpreted as a way that Africans assume these images as a means to regain some agency. Until Westerners have a better understanding of Africa, however, the risk of misinforming the consumer

by stereotypical depictions remains real, despite what may be the good intentions of Africans.

Africans need to challenge the stereotype that Africa is primarily a place filled with wild and exotic animals not found elsewhere. Africa's people are as central to Africa's essence as they are to any other country or continent. The media also need to be more selective with the tools they use to represent Africa as many people rely heavily on the media for information. In addition, Africans need to be more proactive in rejecting the images that create more biases and continue this unfavorable trend. The continued perpetuation of such stereotypes has serious consequences, as we will see in the next chapter, how western media, politicians and major international organizations such as the United Nations, treat major events that occur in Africa.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE: A CASE STUDY

Suzanne Franks notes in *The Neglect of Africa and the Power of Aid* that, "Africa is ignored or misreported and when it is mentioned, then horror and disaster are the regular themes."<sup>165</sup> This was definitely the case with the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. In one hundred days, an estimated 800,000 Rwandan citizens lost their lives, while the United States and European powers failed to intervene. Inaccurate reports in the Western media compounded the failure of outside governments to recognize the crisis as genocide. Western publications circulated stories that characterized the tragedy in Rwanda in ways that minimized the enormity of the event. For example the media would characterize the situation as "a tribal war" or merely the "continuation of a civil war."

This chapter analyzes the ways the Western media described the 1994 Rwandan Genocide and contrasts those descriptions with the actual historical facts and circumstances of Rwandan politics and social relations. Too often, African political events that have particular and distinguishable contexts and precedents are simply labeled as irrational tribalism, without any attention given to the causes of a particular occurrence.<sup>166</sup> While journalists may attempt as

---

<sup>165</sup>Suzanne Franks, "The Neglect of Africa and the Power of Aid," *International Communication Gazette* 72 (2010):74.

<sup>166</sup> Melissa Wall, "An Analysis of News Magazine Coverage of the Rwanda Crisis in the United States," in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, edited by Allan Thompson and Kofi Annan, (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 262.

best they can to be objective when relaying information, they, like anyone else, are the products of their training, their upbringing, their religious affiliation, and their political and social views. And, in the case of the Western media and Africa, the question of perspective is often exacerbated by the relative ignorance of Western media about the countries in Africa that they are asked to write about.

Anne Chaon, a journalist who spent time in Rwanda during the genocide, explains that:

Most journalists are not experts in genocide. Many of them - myself included - arrived in Rwanda with very little knowledge of the country. So, it was tempting, especially at the beginning, to speak of the civil war, and to link these massacres to previous massacres since 1959. We failed to understand that the killing was something totally new, that this was not a continuity of what happened before.<sup>167</sup>

Far too often, correspondents assigned to cover an event or issue involving Africa have not received the training necessary to "cover issues, activities, and crises in developing countries."<sup>168</sup>

The media's mischaracterization and erroneous reporting about the Rwandan genocide is apparent in examples from American, Canadian, and European periodicals, and from other sources that covered the incident while it was occurring. Many of the misguided reports were due to a lack of historical

---

<sup>167</sup> Anne Chaon, "Who Failed in Rwanda, Journalists or the Media?" in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, edited by Robert I. Rotberg and Thomas G. Weiss, (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 160-166.

<sup>168</sup> John C. Hammock and Joel R. Charny, "Emergency Response as Mortality Play: The Media, the Relief Agencies, and the Need for Capacity Building," in *From Massacres to Genocide* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1996), 125.

knowledge about Rwanda. Thus, the first section of this chapter examines the historical foundation for the social divide between the Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda, the two groups involved in the genocide. The paper then examines the events leading up to the genocide. The third section focuses on the genocide itself and what I term the Rwandan "hate media." In the last section of the paper, I highlight the misrepresentations of the crisis by Western media and their political ramifications.

### Historical Background

Rwanda's population consists of three main groups: the Hutu (85%), the Tutsi (14%), and the Twa (1%).<sup>169</sup> These three groups share the same religion, speak the same language, and, prior to colonization, lived peacefully with one another in the same community. In many cases they intermarried. Each group considered itself as belonging to a single, integrated society, despite various social differences. The shared community among the three groups was not unlike the shared communities of the West, where, for example, Catholics and Jews live and work together in the same city or suburb.

Pre-colonial Rwandese society was organized around the *mwami*, or king as the central figure of authority. The *mwami* was considered to be powerful, sacred, and divine. Rituals were carried out in his honor and a special

---

<sup>169</sup> Catharine Newbury, "Background to Genocide: Rwanda," *A Journal of Opinion* 23 (1995): 12.

vocabulary known as "king's speech" was used to describe his daily activities.

Gerard Prunier, author of *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* notes that:

The king was the father and the patriarch of his people, given to them by Imana (God). He is the providence of Rwanda, the Messiah and the savior. When he exercises his authority, he is impeccable, infallible. His decisions cannot be questioned. The parents of a victim he has unjustly struck bring him presents so that he does not resent them for having been forced to cause them affliction. They still trust him, because his judgments are always just. Whatever happens, he remains Nyagasami, the only Lord, superb and magnificent.<sup>170</sup>

There were three types of chiefs who were under the king: the *mutwale wa buttaka* (chief of landholdings), who was responsible for agricultural production, land attribution, and taxation; the *mutwale wa ingabo* (chief of men), in charge of recruiting men for the king's armies; and the *mutwale wa inka* (chief of pastures), who ruled over the grazing lands.<sup>171</sup> The *mutwale wa buttaka* was normally Hutu as agriculture was their expertise, while most of the other chiefs were Tutsi. The chiefs were responsible for minding the cattle, working the land, and maintaining their quarters. They also set the form of payment for each household under their jurisdiction, which allowed people to make their own arrangements to fulfill their government demands. This system became known as *ubuhake* and remained in existence until the European powers changed the taxation system.<sup>172</sup>

---

<sup>170</sup> Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 10.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-12.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

Rwanda remained free from European colonization until May 4, 1894, when the first European, German Count Gustav Adolf von Goetzen, was received at court by King Rwabugiri. The King welcomed the Count, but was unaware that the European powers had already divided up the African continent at the Berlin Conference of 1885. The decision to give Rwanda to Germany was an act of ignorance: Germans knew nothing about Rwanda. The Rwandan monarchy continued to exist while Germany deployed twenty-four military officers and six administrators to Rwanda. According to Linda Melvern, a British journalist and published author, "The German policy was to support the chiefs in such a manner that they would be convinced that their own salvation and that of their supporters depended on their faithfulness to the German."<sup>173</sup> The Germans also supported expansion and helped the Tutsi monarchy subjugate the northern areas.

After World War I, control over Rwanda and Burundi was transferred from Germany to Belgium under a League of Nations mandate. This covenant "was to herald a new phase of human evolution, to offer a framework for practical and effective co-operation between nations for their common good."<sup>174</sup> The covenant stipulated that the "tutelage of the peoples in the colonies should be entrusted to advanced nations who, by reason of their resources, their experience, or their

---

<sup>173</sup> Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books Ltd, 2000), 7.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

geographical position, could best, undertake this responsibility.”<sup>175</sup> Rwanda and Burundi were categorized as countries lacking in self-determination. Belgium agreed to assume administration, as well as to promote development, free speech, and freedom of religion.

The Germans had implemented a policy of indirect rule, which changed to one of direct rule under the Belgians. Slowly, the Belgians progressed in changing the societal structures that had existed throughout Rwanda’s history. In 1922, the king was forced to accept the assistance of Belgian representatives and one year later Belgium made it illegal for the king to have regional chiefs. Belgian colonialists dismantled the only structure that Rwandans had known. In 1931, King Mwami Musinga, who opposed colonization, was removed from power by Belgian administrators and replaced by Mutara Rudahigwa, who later became known as “king of the Whites.”<sup>176</sup> His values and practices were more “western,” and his conversion to Christianity in 1943 became part of the Belgian policy that made Christianity mandatory for anyone wishing to be part of the Tutsi elite.<sup>177</sup>

The Belgian government divided Rwanda into four chiefdoms and gave Belgian administrators the authority to control every aspect of Rwandan society. They introduced currency and implemented an education system available only to the sons of chiefs. They also created an African civil service that included only

---

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.



members of the Tutsi oligarchy. Despite the Tutsi being a decidedly small fraction of the total population – dwarfed in numbers by the Hutu—Belgium was intent on elevating the Tutsi over the Hutu based on physical characteristics. In this way, the Belgians were cementing their unfavorable attitudes toward the Hutu. Under the direction of the Belgian administration, Tutsi chiefs demanded forced labor from the Hutu in building roads. The Belgians insisted on cruel and inhumane beatings as a method of punishment and control. As a result, hundreds of thousands of Hutu peasants fled to Uganda to become migrant workers and escape the mistreatment.<sup>178</sup>

### European Stereotypes and the Hamitic Myth

Europeans in Rwanda had long noted physical differences within the Rwandan population and, beginning with the Belgians, they began to exploit those differences to create a social divide and implement policies based on racial discrimination. John Hanning Speke, a well-known Nile explorer in the 1800s, linked Rwandan “monarchic institutions” to the arrival of conquering invaders from Ethiopia (whom he speculated to be ancestors of the Tutsi). Speke posited that Tutsis were of a Hamitic, non-African race, and thus “superior.”<sup>179</sup> Other explorers, such as Sir Samuel Baker and Gaetano Casati, accepted this formulation.

---

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>179</sup> Prunier, 7.

Missionaries, such as Father van den Burgt and John Roscoe, also believed the explorers' theories; some, however, had different opinions. Father Pages, for example, believed that the Tutsis were descendants of ancient Egyptians. Father van den Burgt claims, "We can see Caucasian skulls and beautiful Greek profiles side by side with Semitic and even Jewish features, elegant golden-red beauties in the heart of Ruanda and Burundi."<sup>180</sup>

Tutsi features were described as though they were European and not of the same group as the Hutu. Prunier notes:

The Bahima [a Tutsi clan] differ absolutely by the beauty of their features and their light colour from the Bantu agriculturalists of an inferior type. Tall and well-proportioned, they have long thin noses, a wide brow and fine lips. They say they came from the north. Their intelligent and delicate appearance, their love of money, their capacity to adapt to any situation seem to indicate a semitic-origin.<sup>181</sup>

These Hamitic or Semitic characteristics were purportedly the underlying reasons why the Tutsi emerged as the privileged group. These stereotypes not only demonstrate that the Europeans were ignorant of Rwandese history and populations, but that they in fact facilitated the spread of racial animosity and hatred among the different groups. Based on the assumption that the Tutsi were ancient European descendants, the Belgian government decided that they were "fit to rule." The Hutu, by contrast, were deemed inferior. They were described

---

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

as having typical African features: “short and thick-set with a big head, jovial expression, a wide nose and enormous lips.”<sup>182</sup>

In 1933, the Belgian administration put together a group of Belgian bureaucrats to conduct a census of the entire population. The purpose was to classify every Rwandan as belonging to one of the three groups: Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa. They counted each Rwandan, measuring height, nose length, and eye shape.<sup>183</sup> Using physical characteristics as a way to group people into categories was, in fact, a flawed methodology because many Rwandans were mixed due to intermarriage. The Belgians' solution to that issue was to classify persons who were mixed as Hutu. Hutus who were wealthy and owned the required number of livestock were considered Tutsi.<sup>184</sup>

The Belgians then issued to every Rwandan an identification card that indicated the group to which the person had been assigned. The identification card policy is a primary example of how the Belgian government created and fostered a racially divided population based on physical appearance, a policy that contributed significantly to the country's progression down a path that led to genocide.

---

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>183</sup> Melvern, 11.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 11.

## Belgian Discriminatory Policies and Their Outcomes

The favoritism displayed by the Belgian government to the Tutsi population was pervasive and resulted in the creation of an African civil service limited to Tutsi elites. In 1952, the Belgians introduced electoral procedures for advisory councils at four different administrative levels, limiting voting privileges such that the minority Tutsi won all the seats.<sup>185</sup>

Because of these types of discrimination and repression, a sense of Hutu nationalism and racist ideologies began to surface in the northern region of Rwanda. In 1957, a group of Hutu nationalists published a manifesto that called for majority rule. Belgian Catholic priests supported the Hutus in their mission to gain equality and abolish discrimination within the public service, and in 1957, the United Nations pressured Belgium to liberate the Hutu.

On July 24, 1959, Rwanda's Tutsi King Mutara III Rudahigwa died while in the hospital. The Tutsi elite were under the impression that he was killed by the Belgians and that the Hutu were also involved.<sup>186</sup> This rumor sparked outrage among the Tutsi population, and on November 1, 1959, a Tutsi group called Union National Rwandaise (UNAR) attacked a Hutu leader, Dominique Mbonyumutwa, which placed Rwanda in violent turmoil. The Hutu started burning Tutsi homes and launching attacks on them. Many Tutsi fled Rwanda as a result of the violence.

---

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 14.

This upheaval was only the beginning of the repercussions from European interference and the Belgians' restructuring of Rwandan society. The Belgian government placed Rwanda under military rule on November 11, 1959. Under international pressure, they tried to rectify the situation by replacing some Tutsi chiefs with Hutu and announcing to Belgian administrators that the Hutu would now be "favored within the administration."<sup>187</sup> Tens of thousands of Tutsi were forced into exile in neighboring countries.<sup>188</sup>

Gregoire Kayibanda, founder of the extremist Hutu group Parmehutu, wanted to end Tutsi dominance forever. He organized rallies to overthrow the Tutsi monarchy, a goal he achieved in September 1961. By February 1962, an estimated 135,000 Tutsi refugees were living in exile in the Congo, Burundi, Uganda, and Tanganyika, and one thousand people were entering Uganda each week.<sup>189</sup>

### Opposition Growth Across Borders

Tutsi men displaced in refugee camps were recruited into secret militia groups, called *Inyenzi*, or cockroach, by the Hutu. On November 14, 1963, the Belgian National Guard stopped an *Inyenzi* attempt to enter Rwanda to kill

---

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

Hutu.<sup>190</sup> On December 21, 1963, two hundred armed Tutsi men left Burundi and succeeded in crossing over into Rwanda, heading toward the capital Kigali. They were defeated and Kayibanda reacted to the Tutsi infiltration with an organized campaign to kill Tutsi.

These killings in 1963 left journalists puzzled as to why an event like this would happen. Lord Bertrand Russell, a Welsh historian and philosopher, spoke of the event on Vatican Radio, claiming that, "It was the most horrible and systematic extermination of a people since the Nazi's extermination of the Jews."<sup>191</sup> These massacres organized by Kayibanda were propelled by Kigali Radio, which aired warnings that the Tutsi were coming back to "enslave" the Hutu, proclaimed that, "The Tutsi must be killed before they killed the Hutu."<sup>192</sup> Hoes, machetes, clubs, and any other tools attackers could access were used to kill at least five thousand men, women, and children. Some one hundred Tutsi women and children committed suicide by drowning themselves in the river to escape Hutu mobs at the Congo border.

Some consider this specific event genocide, though Europeans working for aid agencies in Rwanda during this time described the killings as "savagery of the negro."<sup>193</sup> Unfortunately, this was not the last time that massive killings would take place; a far worse massacre – the most horrible mass destruction of

---

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 18.

human beings since the Jewish Holocaust of World War II – would occur thirty years later.

Various groups of Tutsi refugees prepared to return to their homeland in order to oppose Hutu nationalism. One group was the Rwanda Refugees Welfare Association, later known as the Rwandan Alliance for National Unity.<sup>194</sup> This group operated in exile in Kenya from 1981 to 1986. In 1987, the group changed its name to the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The RPF consisted of a 26-member executive committee that included 11 Tutsi and 15 Hutu who opposed then-President Habyarimana and wanted to end his regime. A guerilla army known as the Rwandan Patriotic Army eventually grew from this organization. They were well-trained, disciplined and had considerable combat experience.<sup>195</sup>

### Civil War 1990-1993

On October 1, 1990, the Rwandese Patriotic Army forces attacked guards posted at the Rwandese border. This surprise attack was the start of a civil war. Former Major Paul Kagame, who is the current president of Rwanda, called this “the beginning of a protracted popular war.”<sup>196</sup> The goal was to put an end to the Habyarimana regime, return the Tutsi to their home country, and take control of

---

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>196</sup> Prunier, 96.

the government. Kagame worked with Habyarimana's former accomplice, Colonel Alexis Kanyarengwe, who was a Hutu living in exile. After three years of fighting, the civil war ended with the signing of the Arusha Accords in August 1993.

The civil war gained international attention. President Habyarimana, a Hutu extremist, had come under scrutiny for the instability and violence that his rule generated throughout the region. It took thirteen months of talks to get the Rwandan government and the RPF to agree to sign the accords, the only hope for an end to the civil war.<sup>197</sup> The negotiations were overseen by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), under the leadership of Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Five African states were involved in the negotiations (Burundi, Zaire, Senegal, Uganda and Tanzania), along with four western countries: (France, Belgium, Germany, and the United States), which had observer status. Great Britain, Canada, the Netherlands, and the European Union monitored the talks from their local embassies.<sup>198</sup>

Under the peace agreement, Rwandan presidential power was "reduced to no more than representing the Republic: the President could promulgate laws but had no authority to modify or veto them." Not only did he have no power to nominate civil servants, but also he could not suggest names for nominations.

---

<sup>197</sup> Melvern, 52.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.



Any messages addressed to the nation had to be approved by the Broad-Based Transitional Government (BBTG).<sup>199</sup>

President Habyarimana agreed to sign this accord only to maintain a good image in the eyes of foreign donors.<sup>200</sup> He scrambled to get support from other African leaders to buy time and hold up democratization. He traveled to Uganda to meet with President Museveni on August 31, 1993. The meeting turned out to be unfavorable for President Habyarimana and left him searching for outside supporters to delay the implementation of the Accords.<sup>201</sup>

Despite Habyarimana's signing of the Arusha Accords in August 1993, he failed to implement the agreement; too much was at stake. The Hutu supremacists who had supported him realized that he was incapable of defending their interests. The Hutu extremist group Coalition Pour la Defense de la Republique (CDR) decided to withdraw their support for Habyarimana and search for more radical representation and appease foreign governments who supported Habyarimana financially. Despite criticism from Europe and other African states, and despite the eagerness of the RPF to integrate the forces and implement the accords, Habyarimana refused.

On April 6, 1994, Habyarimana flew to Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania and met with Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Vice-President George Saitoti of Kenya, President Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi, and Ugandan President Yoweri

---

<sup>199</sup> Prunier, 193.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>201</sup> Melvern, 52-54.

Museveni. The focus of the discussion was supposed to be on Burundi; Habyarimana's refusal, however, to abide by the Arusha Accords was the topic of discussion. Back home, on the other hand, Hutu extremists felt betrayed by Habyarimana's signing of the Accords. Thus, whether or not he implemented the agreement, he was still in a difficult situation that he could not ignore.

President Ntaryamira accompanied President Habyarimana in his aircraft on the way back to Kigali. At around 8:30 in the evening on April 6, the aircraft was struck by two missiles. Ironically, it crashed into the garden of Habyarimana's home and caught fire, killing everyone on board. This incident sparked the beginning of the wave of killings that became widely acknowledged as the Rwandan Genocide.

#### The Genocide of 1994: Rwandan Radio Hate Media

The Hutu-controlled Radio-Television Libres des Milles Collines (RTLNC) was financed by Hutu extremists, which also included Habyarimana. The purpose for this radio station had always been to incite the Rwandan Hutu majority to genocide.<sup>202</sup> The radio station started calling for the extermination of Tutsi as early as January 1994 in response to the Arusha Accords. After Habyarimana's death, the radio station announcers had a new rallying cry; they

---

<sup>202</sup> Melvern, 71.

called for murder “to avenge the death of their president.” On May 5, they declared that the country must be “cleansed” of Tutsis.<sup>203</sup>

In order to achieve their goal, they helped recruit and organize the Interhamwe militias, whose purpose was to annihilate all Tutsi in Rwanda. Radio announcers read the names and addresses of Tutsi and moderate Hutu who were to be killed. Their last-known locations were also broadcast, and listeners were told, “You have missed some of the enemies [in this or that place]. Some are still alive. You must go back and finish them off.”<sup>204</sup> The results proved to be one of the worst human disasters ever. Fergal Keane, a journalist and writer, asks his readers:

Remember the figures, never ever forget them, in one hundred days up to one million people were hacked, shot, strangled, clubbed, and burned to death. Remember, carve this into your consciousness: one million. This estimate equates to three hundred and thirty-three and a third murders an hour, or five and a half killings every minute.<sup>205</sup>

The enormity of the bloodshed should have been recognized as genocide immediately, but, due to Rwanda’s remote geographic location and its lack of influence in the international arena, thousands of men, women, and children were slaughtered while world powers turned a blind eye. An article in *The Economist* explained that, “The killing in Rwanda is too terrible to ignore. It

---

<sup>203</sup> Peter Ronayne, *Never Again?* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 157.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

amounts to genocide, a word that the United States will not officially utter since to do so would make it harder to resist taking action."<sup>206</sup>

The Clinton Administration opposed using the term genocide to describe what was taking place in Rwanda at the time. Recognizing this as genocide would require the United States to intervene according to their adoption of the 1948 Genocide Convention. Nevertheless, United States government officials publicly acknowledged that "acts of genocide" may have been committed.<sup>207</sup> David Rawson, former US Ambassador to Rwanda during this time, said during an interview that "As a responsible government, you don't just go around hollering genocide. You say that acts of genocide may have occurred and they need to be investigated."<sup>208</sup> While western powers danced around the issue, Hutu extremists carried out their successful agenda at an astonishing rate.

### Western Media Coverage of the Genocide

The 1994 Rwandan Genocide officially started when President Habyarimana was killed. The Hutu extremists who supported him blamed the Tutsi for his murder and wasted no time in trying to rid Rwanda of Tutsi. Western media reported the violence as "a product of tribal factions."<sup>209</sup> *The New York*

---

<sup>206</sup> "Who Will Save Rwanda," *The Economist*, 25 June 1994: 13.

<sup>207</sup> Douglas Jehl, "Officials Told to Avoid Calling Rwanda Killings 'Genocide.'" *New York Times*, 10 June 1994.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*

*Times*, for example, on April 9, 1994, headlined "Terror Convulses Rwandan Capital as Tribes Battle." The article understated events, citing "tribal bloodletting" as the cause for the high death toll and also for the evacuation of foreigners from Kigali, Rwanda's capital. The reporter, who clearly lacked an understanding of Rwanda's long history of Hutu-Tutsi conflict, attributed the violence simply to the murder of President Habyarimana. In fact, tension between Hutu and Tutsi had been building and worsening since the post-World War I entry of Belgium into Rwandan society and Belgium's implementation of policies that included: inscribing "ethnic" identification on identity cards; relegating the vast majority of Hutu to onerous forms of forced labor; and favoring Tutsi in access to administrative posts, education, and jobs in the modern sector.<sup>210</sup>

In another article titled, "Africa Has Yet to Come to Terms with Its Tribal Divisions," the author stated, "Rwanda is African tribalism in its extreme form."<sup>211</sup> A news article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* also incorrectly referenced the genocide as a "tribal vendetta."<sup>212</sup> On the same day, the *New York Times* also

---

<sup>209</sup> Niranjana Karnik, "Rwanda & the Media: Imagery, War & Refuge," *Review of African Political Economy* 25 (December 1998): 614.

<sup>210</sup> Catharine Newbury, "Background to Genocide: Rwanda," *A Journal of Opinion*, 23 (1995): 12-17.

<sup>211</sup> Jonathan Power, "Africa Has Yet To Come To Terms With Its Tribal Divisions" *The Gazette*, final edition, B5, July 30, 1994.

<sup>212</sup> "Rwanda Struggle to Regain Balance/New Government Named, but Many More Massacred in Tribal Vendettas," *San Francisco Chronicle*, final edition, April 9, 1994.

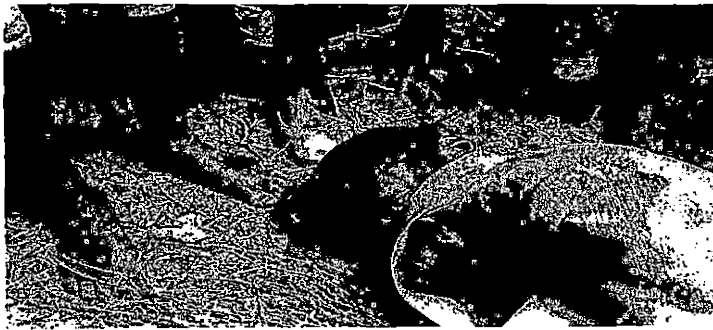
incorrectly referred to the genocide as a tribal war.<sup>213</sup> In point of fact, the Hutu and Tutsi should not be referred to as different tribes. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a tribe is defined as “a group of persons forming a community and claiming descent from a common ancestor.” The Hutu and Tutsi lived in the same community, spoke the same language, and shared the same religion.

An article featured in the *Boston Globe* stated, “The Troubles in Rwanda and Burundi go back 500 years, to the time when the tall Tutsi came in from neighboring Ethiopia to establish dominance over the Hutu people.”<sup>214</sup> Even though some of the physical features of Tutsi and Hutu differed, the two groups had been living together and co-mingling in Rwanda when the Europeans arrived. Moreover, recall that under Belgian policy, the Hutu could be classified as Tutsi merely as a result of their wealth. The classification system that was created never accurately represented the population, thus to describe the genocide as a “tribal war or tribal conflict” is an incorrect description of what occurred. The article below appeared in the *New York Times* one month after the genocide began and exemplifies the language used to describe this event.

---

<sup>213</sup> “Terror Convulses Rwandan Capital as Tribes Battle,” *New York Times*, late edition, April 9, 1994.

<sup>214</sup> “Ethnic War in Africa,” *Boston Globe* 13 April 1994:16.



A young Tutsi, one of more than 1,000 who have taken refuge in a seminary from Hutu carrying out "ethnic cleansing," huddling under a blanket. The seminary, in the Rwandan capital, is surrounded by Hutu soldiers.

### Tribal Fighting Flares Again Around the Rwandan Capital

NATRONI, Kenya, May 15 (Reuters) — Rebel forces in Rwanda are poised to begin new attacks against Government troops, diplomats said today.

They seem to be advancing from several areas, one African diplomat said after a day of artillery duels and small-arms fire around Kigali, capital of the small central African state.

Government artillery batteries failed to dislodge the rebels, fighting on the Rwanda Patriotic Front, from positions around the airport east of the capital, and in the surrounding hills.

**Isolation as Tactic**

Apart from tightening their noose around the major army barracks at Kigali, east of the airport, the rebels have not advanced into Kigali since April. The mainly Tutsi rebel forces, lighter armed but highly mobile, have instead concentrated on cutting major roads and capturing rural areas in the north and southwest.

The fighting began on April 6, when President Juvénal Habyarimana, a Hutu, died in a suspicious plane crash near Kigali. The frux then began a slaughter of countless thousands of Tutsi and their allies in Hutu-based opposition parties.

Some aid workers estimate that the death toll may have reached 200,000 people.

The United Nations Security Council is expected to vote on Tuesday on a proposal to send up to 5,000 African

troops to try to curb the bloodshed. But while the United States wants the soldiers deployed along Rwanda's borders to create safe havens for refugees, the United Nations wants them to secure Kigali airport.

Witnesses said reports of the latest rebel advances put them as close as 12 miles to the southwestern town Gikoma, east of the Government since soon after President Habyarimana's death. "Politically, that would create disaster in the Government camp," a military analyst said.

United Nations officials said there was also heavy fighting in Tumba and Kibumba, just west of the major Government garrison in Ruhengeri.

**Drunk on Militaries**

But in Government-held areas, aid workers speculated, the bloodshed could be easing, perhaps only because so many Tutsi have already been killed or have fled the country.

A reporter in southwestern Rwanda said some drunken Hutu militiamen with grenades, guns and chickens had become a fair unit themselves. Even Government soldiers and the police seemed to defer to them at the frequent roadblocks, which have been set up to look for Tutsi who are seeking refuge.

Aid workers say the militiamen are preventing Tutsi civilians from being rescued from the camps, churches and hotels where they have sought protection. "This is one of the reasons why we're hopeful the Security Council



Rebel forces control positions in the hills around Kigali.

will increase our numbers on the ground so we can patrol such areas," Abdul Kabila, executive director of the 40-member United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, said in a telephone interview.

United Nations officials said the Hutu militia possess the greatest threat to foreign peacekeepers. "We are getting cooperation from the warring parties but I don't know if anybody is in control of the civilian militia," Mr. Kabila said.

He said a United Nations force could quickly secure Kigali airport because both the Government and the rebels had agreed to the idea in principle. United Nations officials said the African force would be backed up by armored personnel carriers and 15 helicopters.

Figure 49: New York Times Rwanda Article<sup>215</sup>

### Prolonged Civil War or Genocide?

Raphael Lemkin, a Polish jurist who lost forty-nine family members in the Holocaust, first used the word "genocide."<sup>216</sup> The term has been used to describe, "the systematic targeting of national, ethnic, or religious groups."<sup>217</sup>

<sup>215</sup> Michael McMahon, "Tribal Fighting Flares Again Around the Rwandan Capital," *New York Times*, late edition, 16 May 1994.

<sup>216</sup> Samantha Power, "Raising the Cost of Genocide" in *Fifty Years of Dissent*, edited by Nicolaus Mills and Michael Walzer, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 295.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*

The United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, to include, however, has defined the term, more broadly:

Any of a number of acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.<sup>218</sup>

It is the totality of the intended extermination that marks genocide.

The intention and attempt of the Hutu to annihilate the entire Tutsi population is clearly an example of genocide, yet the media often portrayed this crisis as a civil war, implying that two opposing political viewpoints had taken up arms simply to gain control of the government. Three months after the genocide began, *USA Today* headlined "Rwandan Rebels Call for Civil War Cease-Fire."<sup>219</sup> *The Gazette* used the same mischaracterization in an article entitled, "Toll From Rwanda's Civil War Nears 3 Million, UN Says."<sup>220</sup> *The Washington Post* published an editorial that identified the violence as "savage civil war."<sup>221</sup> The labeling of Africans as savages was started with the Europeans during the pre-colonial era. Although colonialism is a thing of the past, western media continued

---

<sup>218</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (New York: United Nations, 1948) <http://www.un.org/millennium/law/iv-1.htm> (accessed May 31, 2010).

<sup>219</sup> Charmagne Helton, "Rwandan Rebels Call For Civil War Cease-Fire" *USA Today*, 6 July 1994, final ed.:1A.

<sup>220</sup> "Toll From Rwanda's Civil War Nears 3 Million, UN Says" *The Gazette*, 14 May 1994.

<sup>221</sup> "The Best News Out of Rwanda," editorial, *Washington Post*, 15 July 1994 final ed.:A20.



to use these terms to describe the genocide. Mark Doyle, a British journalist, recalls a conversation that he had with a BBC presenter:

There are two wars going on here. There's a shooting war and a genocide war. The two are connected, but also distinct. In the shooting war, there are two conventional armies at each other, and in the genocide war, one of those armies – the governments side with help from civilians – is involved in mass killings.<sup>222</sup>

Rwanda had been involved in a civil war from 1990-1993. The actions and goals of the Hutu extremists in 1994, however – to exterminate all Tutsis – made the million deaths in 1994 genocide and not merely the continuation of a civil war.

Mahmood Mamdani, professor of anthropology and international affairs at Columbia University, wrote:

But whereas these Hutu were murdered as individuals— butchered for their beliefs or their actions—the Tutsi were murdered because they were Tutsi. This is why the killings of more than half a million Rwandan Tutsi between March and July of 1994 must be called genocide.<sup>223</sup>

"War" and "genocide" are not simply two variations of the same behavior and the media's characterization of the 1994 events in Rwanda as "civil war" necessarily misled and misinformed Western audiences. In the Western mind, war is an activity involving two or more opposing sets of organized combatants or warriors who might contest land, property, or political supremacy. War involves accepted rules of engagement, the taking and humane treatment of prisoners who are

---

<sup>222</sup> Mark Doyle, "Reporting the Genocide" in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 145.

<sup>223</sup> Mahmood Mamdani "A Brief History of Genocide" *Transition* 10, no.3 (2001): 26.

returned at the conclusion of hostilities, and perhaps most importantly, the idea that civilians are off limits to the warriors. The loser in a war surrenders and is not exterminated.

Genocide, on the other hand, is directed at the civilians as it aims to exterminate rather than to imprison, to annihilate rather than to capture. It is not land or political powers that those engaged in genocide seek; rather, it is the total elimination of the existence of the persons who are the objects of the genocide. Western audiences were deceived by a "war" characterization that distorted, and in the process minimized, what was actually occurring in Rwanda.

### The Genocide and its Representation of Africa

Africa is often depicted to Westerners as a place of destruction, death, and deprivation. Westerners should not be led to believe such characteristics represent the entire continent. Nonetheless, some journalists reported the genocide as if it took place in all of Africa rather than in one specific country. The *Salt Lake Tribune* published an article titled, "Map of Africa Shifts As More Wars Break Out African Map Runs Red; Wars Erupt Among Incompatibles."<sup>224</sup> The same newspaper also issued another article one day later headlined, "Foreigners Flee As Blood Flows in Rwanda Stench of Death Everywhere As Rebels Advance; U.S. Sends Troops to Burundi Americans Flee For Their Lives From

---

<sup>224</sup> "Map of Africa Shifts As More Wars Break Out African Map Runs Red; Wars Erupt Among Incompatibles," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 9 April 1994.

Africa's Land of Death.”<sup>225</sup> These headlines give the impression that the entire African continent was affected by the genocide and not just the country where it was taking place. The cartoon image below was featured in the *Christian Science Monitor* when the Rwandan Genocide first started. Garth Myers, Thomas Klak and Timothy Koehl argue that this image highlights the exaggerated misconceptions that all of Africa is experiencing the same crises.<sup>226</sup> A mother and her child are seen emerging from the continent without any specific geographic context as to where the genocide was actually occurring. These types of depictions send a clear message about the way Western media views Africa, especially in a time of crisis.

---

<sup>225</sup> “Foreigners Flee As Blood Flows In Rwanda Stench Of Death Everywhere As Rebels Advance; U.S. Sends Troops To Burundi Americans Flee For Their Lives From Africa's Land of Death,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, 10 April 1994.

<sup>226</sup> Garth Myers, Thomas Klak and Timothy Koehl, “The Inscription of Difference: News Coverage of the Conflicts in Rwanda and Bosnia,” *Political Geography*, 15 no. 1 (1996) 37.



Figure 50: Mother and Child Africa Image<sup>227</sup>

The Rwandan genocide represents both an international and media failure. As acts of genocide were perpetrated, Western powers ignored what was happening and the Western media continued to report the situation inaccurately and without any context. The role of Belgian colonialism had created divisions within Rwandan society that segregated persons who were not members of separate tribes, but people who had lived and worked together for centuries before the Europeans arrived.

The media, however, overlooked and over-simplified the origins of the genocide, and in so doing, misled Western audiences. California State University Fullerton professor Ronald Pahl states, "What is neglected or ignored in the reporting on Africa are the issues that have caused these problems for the

---

<sup>227</sup> Myers, Klak and Koehl, 37.

African nations.”<sup>228</sup> As long as Western media continue to portray the continent in this manner, the rest of the world will never be able to understand accurately the underlying reality of Africa and its issues. This incident is representative of many cases in which Western media relied on colonial stereotypes to tell the story of the genocide, instead of reporting the events in an objective manner that might lead to a clearer understanding of why this tragic event evolved. Hutu extremists used the same racial stereotypes fostered by the Europeans to evoke hatred of the Tutsi and to convey the impression that they were not originally from Rwanda, but had come from somewhere else. The genocide also proves – along the lines discussed in Chapter One – how implementation of European policies had a negative effect on African societies.

---

<sup>228</sup> Ronald H. Pahl, “The Image of Africa in Our Classrooms” *Social Studies*, 86, no. 6 (1995:Nov./Dec.)

## CONCLUSION

In their reporting on sub-Saharan Africa, Western media continue to be bound by colonial myths and stereotypes. Africa became known as the “Dark Continent” during a period in history when Europeans knew very little about Africa and its people, and when reliable, alternative sources of information were lacking. Information about Africa and its people was at that time limited largely to that coming from those interested in subjugating Africa.

Since those earlier colonial times, however, there has been substantially increased exploration of and contact with Africa and Africans. Stereotypes and misconceptions bred of unawareness can no longer be justified by the distance, newness, or mystery that was once the case for Westerners looking at Africa as a newly discovered region. Nevertheless, the West still knows much less about this continent than it does about other areas of the world. As *Los Angeles Times* reporter David Lamb puts it, “No continent has been more mistreated, misunderstood and misreported over the years than Africa.”<sup>229</sup>

Many Westerners still think of Africans as an undifferentiated population of uncivilized, impoverished savages who organized into tribes in the desert. The research reflected in this thesis confirms that very little in Westerner’s perceptions has changed since colonial images of Africa, except, perhaps, that overtly racist ideologies that found biological differences between Westerners

---

<sup>229</sup> Quoted in Cirino Hiteng Ofuho, *The Changing Images of a Continent: An Eclectic Survey of Writings on Africa in the International System*

and Africans have been replaced with more subtle forms of racism. Where Africans were once compared to descendants of animals, they are now often depicted as animals in photo shoots as if they are anything less than human beings.

Colonialism and its dominant/subservient premise have played a continuing role in the way that Africa has been perceived by the rest of the world. Colonialism remains a potent, if indirect, force that shapes attitudes about Africa long after many African countries have achieved independence from European control. Ronald Horvath, Geography Professor at Michigan State University, notes that:

The changing morality of colonialism contributes to our lack of understanding. People feel strongly about colonialism - it has either been a dirty business engaged in by evil people or a praise worthy endeavor undertaken by fine gentlemen for a noble purpose of saving the wretched, the savage, the unfortunate.<sup>230</sup>

Much of the West is unable to see or understand Africa and Africans beyond the depictions that European conquerors created. And, those perceptions dominate Western media's portrayal of Africa and interpretation of African events and issues. Africa remains a continent in need of rescue by more developed countries.

Various crises on the continent, and the way in which they have been covered by Western media, compound the inability to see Africa in a positive light. Atrocities such as the Rwandan genocide, for example, have been inaccurately covered – exaggerated in some cases, understated in others, and

---

<sup>230</sup> Ronald J. Horvath, "A Definition of Colonialism," *Current Anthropology* 13, no. 1 (February 1972), <http://www.jstor.org/pss/2741072> (accessed September 2, 2010).

frequently reported without a fair explanation of the historical forces underlying the genocide. Western media coverage of the Rwandan genocide failed to represent accurately the magnitude of the massacres, that scope of the systematic killings of hundreds of thousands that were explained as factions of tribal warfare.

Blame for the way in which the African continent is perceived elsewhere is not solely the fault of the media. United States President Barack Obama explains that, "Africa's future is up to Africans."<sup>231</sup> He argues that the West is not at fault for the downfall of Zimbabwe's economy or for child soldiers. Although he acknowledges that colonialism helped foster conflicts, its ramifications should not be the blame for all that goes wrong on the continent.

Africans themselves share responsibility for the manner in which their continent is portrayed in the West. As I discuss in this thesis, Africans such as K'naan and Akon have the opportunity to help alter Western perceptions of Africa, but they have failed to do so. African organizations and businesses, such as COMESA and Standard Bank, continue to employ slogans that imply that Africa is separate from the rest of the world. Racism and biases associated with colonialism remain deeply rooted. Africans share accountability in the way Africa is covered; westerners are also responsible for their inability to judge the media and Africa more critically and to become more familiar with this region of the world.

---

<sup>231</sup> BBC News, "Obama Speaks of Hopes of Africa," <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8145762.stm> (accessed September 8, 2010).



## REFERENCES

- Adams, Christopher. "Africa- Not As Dark As It's Painted ." *New Zealand Herald*, May 30, 2008.
- Adebajo, SB. "National Center for Biotechnology Information." *An Epidemiological Survey of the Use of Cosmetic Skin Lightening Cosmetics Among Traders in Lagos, Nigeria*.  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12081345> (accessed April 27, 2010).
- Ads of the World. *AT&T Wireless International Roaming: Zimbabwe*.  
[http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/att\\_wireless\\_international\\_roaming\\_zimbabwe](http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/att_wireless_international_roaming_zimbabwe) (accessed September 16, 2010).
- Ads of the World. *Toyota 2 Sides*.  
[http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/toyota\\_2\\_sides](http://adsoftheworld.com/media/print/toyota_2_sides) (accessed April 7, 2010).
- "Africa's Troubles." *TIME*. January 16, 1984: Cover.
- Ahmed, Akbar S. "Media Mongols at the Gates of Baghdad." *New Perspectives Quarterly*, no. 19 (2002).
- AIDS Walk Los Angeles. *26th Annual AIDS Walk Los Angeles*.  
<http://aidswalklosangeles2010.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=427581&lis=1&kntae427581=01217A9FD9EA4BA1B7FB9EA9B956904B>  
(accessed September 18, 2010).
- All Africa Press Service. "Africa-at-Large Black and Beautiful But Skin Bleaching Persists." *Africa News*, January 12, 1996.

Baxter, Joan. "The Heavy Cost of Light Skin." *BBC News*. April 18, 2000.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/718359.stm> (accessed May 4, 2010).

BBC Africa Business Report. "See Business in Africa From a New Perspective."

*Focus on Africa*, October 2009.

BBC News. "Obama Speaks of Hopes of Africa."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8145762.stm> (accessed September 8, 2010).

Bennett, W. Lance. "Media Power in the United States." In *De-Westernizing*

*Media Studies*, edited by James Curran and Myung-Jin Park. London:

Routledge, 2000.

"The Best News Out of Rwanda." Editorial, *Washington Post*, 15 July 1994.

Betz, Michelle. "The Cost of Being Pale." *World Vision*.

[http://www.worldvisionreport.org/Stories/Week-of-September-19-](http://www.worldvisionreport.org/Stories/Week-of-September-19-2009/The-Cost-of-Being-Pale)

[2009/The-Cost-of-Being-Pale](http://www.worldvisionreport.org/Stories/Week-of-September-19-2009/The-Cost-of-Being-Pale) (accessed April 28, 2010).

"The Black Issue." *Vogue Italia*. July 2008.

The Blake Project. "Beware of Creating the Wrong Brand Impression." *Branding*

*Strategy Insider*. March 11, 2009.

[http://www.brandingstrategyinsider.com/2009/03/creating-the-wrong-](http://www.brandingstrategyinsider.com/2009/03/creating-the-wrong-brand-impression.html)

[brand-impression.html](http://www.brandingstrategyinsider.com/2009/03/creating-the-wrong-brand-impression.html) (accessed September 2, 2010).

Bonsu, Samuel K. "Colonial Images in Global Times: Consumer Interpretations of

Africa and Africans in Advertising," *Consumption Markets and Culture* 12

(March 2009):4.

- Canon. "About Us: We Speak Image." [http://www.canon-europe.com/About\\_Us/index\\_wespeakimage.asp](http://www.canon-europe.com/About_Us/index_wespeakimage.asp) (accessed July 28, 2010).
- Chaon, Anne. "Who Failed in Rwanda, Journalists or the Media?" in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, edited by Robert I. Rotberg and Thomas G. Weiss, (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 160-166.
- Chavis, Rod. "Africa in the Western Media." *Sixth Annual African Studies Consortium Workshop*. University of Pennsylvania, 1998.
- CNN. "African Voices Advertisement." *New African*, March 2010.
- Coca Cola. *The Coca Cola Africa Foundation*. [www.tccaf.org/slideshow/rain.jpg](http://www.tccaf.org/slideshow/rain.jpg) (accessed July 28, 2010).
- Comaroff, Jean and John L., *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa Vol 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
- COMESA Investment Forum. "Connecting Africa with the World." *New African*, March 2010.
- Daily Mail. *Kimberley Walsh Returns to Africa with Four Other Celebrities From Team Kilimanjaro*. December 24, 2009.  
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-1238306/Kimberley-Walsh-returns-Africa-celebrities-Team-Kilimanjaro.html> (accessed September 15, 2010).

Doyle, Mark "Reporting the Genocide" In *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, edited by Allan Thompson, 145-159. London: Pluto Press, 2007.

"Ethnic War in Africa." *Boston Globe*, 13 April 1994.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Translated by Constance Farrington. New York: Grove Press, 1963.

"Foreigners Flee As Blood Flows In Rwanda Stench Of Death Everywhere As Rebels Advance; U.S. Sends Troops To Burundi Americans Flee For Their Lives From Africa's Land of Death," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 10 April 1994.

Foucault, Michel. *The Foucault Reader*. Edited by Paul Rubinow. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.

Franks, Suzanne. "The Neglect of Africa and the Power of Aid." *International Communication Gazette*, no. 72 (2010).

Free Games Arena. "African Freecell- Free Card Game."

<http://www.freegamesarena.com/games/african-freecell-info.html>

(accessed March 11, 2010).

"Gabourey Sidibe Cover Lightened by Elle?" *Huffington Post*. September 17, 2010. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/09/17/gabourey-sidibe-cover-lig\\_n\\_721468.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/09/17/gabourey-sidibe-cover-lig_n_721468.html) (accessed September 2, 2010).

Galaty, John G. "How Visual Figures Speak: Narrative Inventions of "The Pastoralist" in East Africa." *Visual Anthropology* 15 (2002).

"German President Criticizes Biased Western Media." *Xinhua General News Service*. Dar Es Salaam, March 25, 2004

Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 10.

Get Latest News.Com. *Akon ft Keri Hilson- Oh Africa Lyrics and Youtube Video*.  
<http://getlatestnews.com/4848/akon-ft-keri-hilson-oh-africa-wm-songhymne-2010-lyrics-and-youtube-video/> (accessed September 1, 2010).

Goude, Jean Paul. "Wild Things." *Harper's Bazaar*, September 2009.

Hachten, William, and Brian Beil. "Bad News or No News? Covering Africa." *Journalism Quarterly*, no. 62 (1985).

Hall, Stuart. "Introduction: Who Needs Identity?" In *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications, 1996.

Hammock, John C. and Charny, Joel R. "Emergency Response as Mortality Play: The Media, the Relief Agencies, and the Need for Capacity Building," in *From Massacres to Genocide* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1996), 125.

Hawk, Beverly G. *Africa's Media Image*. Westport: Praeger, 1992.

Haynes, Douglas. "Electronic Educational Environment." *University of California Irvine*. 2005.  
<https://eee.uci.edu/programs/humcore/images/Africa/PearsSoap2Soudan.png> (accessed September 5, 2010).

Helton, Charmagne. "Rwandan Rebels Call For Civil War Cease-Fire." *USA Today*, 6 July 1994.

"The Hopeless Continent." *The Economist*. May 13, 2000: Cover.

Horvath, Ronald J. "A Definition of Colonialism." *Current Anthropology* 13, no. 1 (1972).

I Am Africa. "Tribelife." *I Am Africa Wear*.

[http://store.iamafricawear.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&id=2](http://store.iamafricawear.com/index.php?option=com_content&id=2)

(accessed March 20, 2010).

Izama, Angelo and Lirri, Evelyn. "Western Media Blamed for Genocide." *The Monitor*, January 26, 2007.

Jehl, Douglas. "Officials Told to Avoid Calling Rwanda Killings Genocide." *New York Times*. 10 June 1994.

Jere-Malanda, Regina. "And Now...Positive Africa." *New African*, June 2008: 37.

Karnik, Niranjana. "Rwanda & the Media: Imagery, War & Refuge." *Review of African Political Economy* 25 (December 1998): 611-623.

Keep A Child Alive. *I Am African*.

[http://www.keepachildalive.org/i\\_am\\_african/i\\_am\\_african.html](http://www.keepachildalive.org/i_am_african/i_am_african.html) (accessed March 1, 2010).

Keim, Curtis. *Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2009.

"Kenya; Media Chiefs to Discuss Africa's Stereotype." *East African Standard*. May 15, 2005.

"Kikwete Criticizes Western Media," *Daily News* (Dar es Salaam), September 21, 2006.

K'naan. Interview on Q with Jian Ghomeshi. CBC Radio. Thursday, April 22, 2010 <http://www.cbc.ca/q/blog/2010/04/22/exclusive-knaan-on-q/> (accessed: September 12, 2010).

Larrier, Renee. *Francophone Women Writers of Africa and the Caribbean*. Florida: University Press of Florida, 2000.

Makunike, Ezekiel. *Center For Media Literacy*. 1993. [http://www.medialit.org/reading\\_room/article108.htm](http://www.medialit.org/reading_room/article108.htm) (accessed April 21, 2010).

Mamdani, Mahmood. "A Brief History of Genocide." *Transition* 10, No. 3 (2001): 26-47.

"Map of Africa Shifts As More Wars Break Out African Map Runs Red; Wars Erupt Among Incompatibles." *Salt Lake Tribune*, 9 April 1994.

Mclaughlin, Abraham. "African's Ask: Why Isn't Anyone Telling the Good News?" *Christian Science Monitor*, May 26, 2005.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Critical Edition. Edited by W. Terrence Gordon. New York: Gingko Press, 2003.

McMahon, Michael. "Tribal Fighting Flares Again Around the Rwandan Capital," *New York Times*, May 16, 1994.

Melvern, Linda , *A People Betrayed The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books Ltd, 2000), 7.

- Miezan, Ekra. *Media Images of Africa and African Americans' Attitudes Toward Africa*. PhD Thesis, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 2000.
- Myers, Garth, Thomas Klak, and Timothy Koehl. "The Inscription of Difference: News Coverage of the Conflicts in Rwanda and Bosnia." *Political Geography* 15 no. 1 (1996): 37.
- Nederveen Pieterse, Jan. *White on Black : Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- New African*. "Who Will Define Africa?" June 2008: 24.
- Newbury, Catharine. "Background to Genocide: Rwanda." *A Journal of Opinion* 23 (1995): 12-17.
- Ofuho, Cirino Hiteng. "The Changing Images of a Continent: An Eclectic Survey of Writings on Africa in the International System." *Global Society*, no. 17 (2003).
- Pahl, Ronald H. "The Image of Africa in Our Classrooms." *Social Studies* 86:6 (November/December 1995): 245-247.
- Popsop Brand Magazine Online. *Pepsi Oh Africa*.  
[http://www.popsop.com/.../pepsi\\_max\\_oh\\_africa\\_03.jpg](http://www.popsop.com/.../pepsi_max_oh_africa_03.jpg) (accessed September 1, 2010).
- Power, Jonathan. "Africa Has Yet To Come To Terms With Its Tribal Divisions." *The Gazette*, 30 July 1994.



- Power, Samantha. "Raising the Cost of Genocide." In *Fifty Years of Dissent*, Edited by Nicolaus Mills and Micheal Walzer. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.
- Prunier, Gerard. *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- Ranger, Terence "The Invention of Tradition Revisited: the Case of Colonial Africa," in Olufemi Vaughan and T. Ranger, eds., *Legitimacy and the State in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Africa: Essays in Honour of A.H.M. Kirk-Greene* (Hampshire: Macmillan, 1993): 62-111.
- Rod 2.0 Beta. *UNICEF Paints Children in Blackface for New German Ad Campaign*. August 20, 2007.  
<http://rodonline.typepad.com/rodonline/2007/08/unicef-paints-c.html>  
(accessed May 1, 2010).
- Ronayne, Peter. *Never Again?: The United States and the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide Since the Holocaust*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001.
- "Rwanda Struggle to Regain Balance/New Government Named, but Many More Massacred in Tribal Vendettas." *San Francisco Chronicle*, final edition, 9 April 1994.
- Sharife, Kadjia. "Whose Reality Are We Living In?" *New African*, June 2008.

Shoemaker, Pamela J., and Stephen D. Reese. *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1995.

Standard Bank. *How We Connect Africa to the World*.

<http://movingforward.standardbank.com> (accessed November 30, 2009).

"Stop Patronising Africa, Mbeki's Deputy Tells Western Press." *Agence France Press*. May 29, 2006.

"Supermodel Lara Stone Poses in Blackface for French Vogue Photoshoot." *NY Daily News*. October 13, 2009.

[http://www.nydailynews.com/lifestyle/fashion/2009/10/13/2009-10-13\\_supermodel\\_lara\\_stone\\_poses\\_in\\_Blackface\\_for\\_french\\_vogue\\_photoshoot\\_.html#ixzz0zvvp8rDg](http://www.nydailynews.com/lifestyle/fashion/2009/10/13/2009-10-13_supermodel_lara_stone_poses_in_Blackface_for_french_vogue_photoshoot_.html#ixzz0zvvp8rDg) (accessed April 20, 2010).

Sykes, Plum. "The Chronicles of Keira." *Vogue.com*. June 2007.

<http://www.vogue.com/magazine/article/keira-knightley-the-chronicles-of-keira/> (accessed April 5, 2010).

"Terror Convulses Rwandan Capital as Tribes Battle." *New York Times*, 9 April 1994.

Thompson, Allen. "Ghana; Skin Bleaching, An Insult to the Black Race." *The Independent*, February 16, 1999.

"Toll From Rwanda's Civil War Nears 3 Million, UN Says." *The Gazette*, 14 May 1994.

United Nations, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (New York: United Nations, 1948).

Vbulletin Solutions. *Skin Light Carrot Extracts Billboard*.

<http://i37.tinypic.com/21np63s.jpg> (accessed April 2, 2010).

VH1. "Uganda Episode 4." *The Price of Beauty*. April 6, 2010.

[http://www.vh1.com/shows/jessica\\_simpson\\_the\\_price\\_of\\_beauty/episode.jhtml?episodeID=166388#moreinfo](http://www.vh1.com/shows/jessica_simpson_the_price_of_beauty/episode.jhtml?episodeID=166388#moreinfo) (accessed September 7, 2010).

Wall, Melissa. "An Analysis of News Magazine Coverage of the Rwanda Crisis in the United States." In *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, edited by Allan Thompson. London: Pluto Press, 2007. 261-276.

"Who Will Save Rwanda?" *The Economist*, 25 June 1994.

World Food Programme. *Can You Help to Fill His Cup?*

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/english/detail/37832.html> (accessed September 2, 2010).

World Food Programme. *Women the Front Line Against Hunger*.

[http://www.wfp.org/campaigns/women?utm\\_source=howtohelp\\_lower\\_banner](http://www.wfp.org/campaigns/women?utm_source=howtohelp_lower_banner) (accessed September 20, 2010).