

NEWS FRAMING OF THE 2003 IRAQ WAR: A STUDY OF THE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PRESS

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ABSTRACT After a two-day ultimatum demanding that Saddam Hussein step down, the United States attacked Iraq on March 19, 2003. The Iraq War generated a variety of emotions around the globe, particularly in the developing world. The sub-Saharan African press viewed it as a war without convincing legal or moral justification, perceiving it to be a tool used by the US to gain global economic, military, and strategic influence. Employing framing analysis, this study investigates how the sub-Saharan African press constructed a number of different social realities of the same war.

Key Words: Iraq war; Sub-Saharan African press; News framing; Discourse analysis.

INTRODUCTION

On March 19, 2003, the world observed the tenth anniversary of the US invasion of Iraq; this war, whose impact on the world has been immense, continues to draw the attention of media scholars. The current study is a comparative analysis of the themes, or frames, in newspaper articles about the 2003 Iraq War published in the sub-Saharan African countries of Kenya, Zambia, Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana, and South Africa. We conducted an empirical study of six daily newspapers' interpretations prior to, during, and after the Iraq War to determine any shifts in the themes and debates relating to the war. Articles on the possibility of a war against Iraq did not begin to appear in the sub-Saharan press until a few days before Hans Blix's report to the Security Council on March 7, 2003. A three-week time window was chosen for each period after a preliminary Lexis-Nexis search confirmed that a sufficient number of articles existed for each time frame. The three time periods for study were defined as follows: the nineteen days before the war began, March 1 to March 19; the twenty-one days from the beginning of the war to the day Baghdad fell, March 20 to April 9; and the twenty-two days from the day following Baghdad's fall to shortly after President George W. Bush's declaration on May 1 that the war had ended, resulting in a time window from April 10 to May 5.

Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, the study focuses on three main components:

1. A tracking of the policies in each of the six sub-Saharan African countries under study to determine how they responded to the war against Iraq;
2. A content analysis of the themes, or frames, present in newspaper articles and their stance on the war;
3. A textual analysis of the frames present in newspaper articles that clarify sub-

Saharan Africa's position with respect to the Iraq War.

Why Sub-Saharan Africa?

The first clear indication to Africans that their continent held a position regarding the 2003 Iraq Crisis came in the form of the “Bush cannot think” speech of former South African President Nelson Mandela, delivered on January 30, 2003. His speech was followed by an official government position presented in more measured terms by South African President Thabo Mbeki. Mbeki pointed out that a war in Iraq would lead to sharp rises in oil prices, which for Africa would mean a halt in development. As the United Nations Security Council approached a showdown vote on the declaration of war, the United States and Britain exerted an all-out effort to enlist three key African nations—Angola, Cameroon, and Guinea—in what critics were calling a “coalition of the coerced”, even though Washington and London knew that the African Union was opposed to war. Hence, some feared that the US preferential trade scheme known as the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) would be used to persuade the three African states to support the Iraq War resolution. In that sense, many Africans perceived the war against Iraq not as an event that was far removed from their own continent but as a potential return to Western colonialism. Nobel Peace Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu described the War as immoral and stated that it reminded him of the apartheid years when blacks were forced to submit to whites.

Furthermore, the US approached Kenya and South Africa, in addition to 58 other countries, with the aim of persuading them to close their Iraqi embassies. The US and Britain falsely charged that Saddam Hussein had tried to buy large quantities of uranium for nuclear weapons from Niger. In response to the question of why the forged documents pointing at Niger's involvement were not discredited earlier than they were, it has been proposed that the forgers felt it would be more credible to incriminate a poor African country than any of the world's other three leading exporters of uranium oxide, namely, Russia, Australia, and Canada (Kelley, 2003). There were also reports that the US “had leaned on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to close its eyes to borrowing by Angola on the international market of an amount totaling \$1.4 billion” (Cameron, 2003: 46).

Framing

Framing analysis, an extension of agenda-setting theory, was first explicitly described by Gitlin (1980) when he examined how a television network had trivialized a major student political movement during the Vietnam War protests in the 1960s. Gitlin states that “media frames, largely unspoken and unacknowledged, organize the world both for journalists who report it and, in some important degree, for us who rely on their reports” (Gitlin, 1980: 7). As a research paradigm for studying the effects of the media, framing theory claims that two news stories that offer the same factual information through different rhetorical and script structures, or frames, may produce substantial differences in readers' perceptions and responses. To frame, according to Entman (1993: 52), “Is to select

some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”.

Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980) have shown how the news media construct frames for conflicts by attempting to fit the information they collect into a package that is professionally useful and culturally familiar. Tuchman (1978) borrowed the framing concept from Goffman (1974) and Gitlin (1980) in his pioneering research on framing in the US. It is important to stress, however, that neither Tuchman nor Gitlin were trying to create a theory of framing; they were simply employing the concept of framing as a means to comprehend, in Tuchman’s words, “news as a social construction and a social resource” (Tuchman 1978: 14).

Discourse Analysis

A key component of the current research is the application of a textual discourse analysis to news articles from the six sub-Saharan African countries under study. This involves conducting an interpretive textual analysis to identify themes and the ways in which they are woven into news narratives or storylines. The aim of conducting a discourse analysis of news reports is to uncover some of the narrative elements employed in newspaper text that perpetuates Africans’ perceptions of the Iraq War.

Discourses are ways of representing the world that can be identified and distinguished at different levels of abstraction (Fairclough, 2003). Discourse analysis is an endeavor to exhibit “systematic links between texts, discourse practices, and sociocultural practices” (Fairclough, 1995: 17). Discourse is defined as language in use, and discourse analysis normally entails the study of particular texts such as interviews, speeches, and conversations. “It can range from the description and interpretation of meaning-making and meaning-understanding in specific situations through to the critical analysis of ideology and access to meaning-systems and discourse networks” (Jaworski & Coupland, 2001: 7). Discourse analysis “refers to the practice of analyzing empirical raw materials and information as discursive forms” (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000: 4). It can be applied as a method of interpretation in either pro-war or anti-war uses of discursivity. In international war discursivity, it is a practice employed both by those in favor of war and those in opposition to war. For example, the Iraq War may be represented as a justifiable move by the US and its allies to oust Saddam from power and ensure the flow of oil, or it might be viewed as an unjustifiable move that violates the UN Charter, and be represented as a symbol of US hegemony and neo-imperialism. In this manner, the perception of the war hinges upon the orders of discourse that determine its shape, subjects, and significance. The war forms a political discourse with a number of incongruent ideological elements.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. How did the sub-Saharan African press frame the Iraq War?
2. What are the most prominent frames and issues made salient in news articles?
3. Does the use of frames differ significantly before, during, and after the war?
4. Are there significant differences in the frames that are used by the press working under different conditions and structural systems?
5. What types of frames are prioritized by the press within each system?
6. What was the press's stance on the war and the US's accusation that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction?
7. Is there evidence that, in countries without free press systems, news reports were more critical of the war than in countries with free press systems?

HYPOTHESES

Numerous studies of nationalism in the press (Becker, 1977; Chomsky & Herman, 1988; Downing, 1988; Lee & Yang, 1995; Lehman, 2005; Yang, 2003) have shown that national interests play a pivotal role in the way media cover international conflicts; these results motivate our hypothesis that the coverage of international crises and conflicts—either in the developed or developing world—tends to be nationalistic, ethnocentric, and state-centered. During periods of upheaval, government policies affect what the press choose to cover.⁽¹⁾ We predict that the use of frames in the sub-Saharan African press will vary considerably across political systems, individual countries, and specific themes. Coverage of the Iraq War by the African press will reflect the central ideological messages circulated by governments. The more favorable the official attitude toward the Iraq War, the more favorable the press's attitude is expected to be toward the war. Coverage will be critical of the claim that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Countries without free press systems will generally publish a greater number of articles on the Iraq War than countries with free press systems. There will also be more criticism of the war in newspapers in countries without free press systems than in those with a free press.

Differences in ideologically driven frames will exist, with major distinctions in the ways that each African newspaper under study frames the war and discusses the best means of countering the threat of global terrorism. The African press in general does not view the war as driven by the goal of promoting democracy in Iraq, but as a tool used by the United States to gain economic, military, and strategic influence around the globe. Many Africans view America as a growing empire, a hegemon state, rather than as an advocate for democracy, world peace, and stability.

We expect to find that the sub-Saharan African press will frame the Iraq War in terms of ten framing elements, or ideological components (marked in italics): America (a) is not a promoter of *democracy* but (b) a *hegemon* (c) with *imperialist* intentions in (d) a *post-Cold War era* characterized by (e) a US desire to

control Middle East *oil* and employ the (f) war on *terrorism* and catastrophes such as (g) the *September 11 tragedies* to unleash its anger on nations such as Iraq. The sub-Saharan African press will quote from (h) *African officials*, stressing that the war against Iraq will (i) weaken the *role of the UN* and have dramatic consequences for (j) Africa's economy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The global Freedom of the Press survey conducted annually by Freedom House, a New York-based human rights organization, offers a model and some guidelines for selecting the data to be used in our study. Because our research focuses on an event that occurred in 2003 and the newspaper articles we selected were published in the same year, we relied on results from the 2003 Freedom House survey (Freedom House, 2003). The survey, which represents one of the few attempts to characterize media systems across regions, adopts a set of universal criteria to compile annual comparative rankings of press freedom; these rankings are based on analyses of political and economic controls on the media, legal restrictions, and the extent to which journalists are the targets of attacks and harassment. Countries are classified as having press systems that are "free", "partly free", and "not free".

Countries scoring 0–30 are regarded as having free media; those scoring 31–60 as partly free; and those scoring 61–100 as not free. Of the 193 countries surveyed in 2003, 78 countries (41%) were rated as having free media, 47 (24%) as partly free and 68 (35%) as not free. Armed conflicts continue to hinder press

Table 1. The classification of the media in sub-Saharan African countries as free, partly free, and not free

| Free | Partly Free | Not Free |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bénin (28) | Burkina Faso (39) | Angola (72) |
| Botswana (30) | Comoros Islands (43) | Burundi (76) |
| Cape Verde Islands(30) | Congo-Brazzaville (55) | Cameroon (65) |
| Ghana (30) | Gabon (58) | Central African Republic (67) |
| Mali (24) | Guinea-Bissau (60) | Chad (67) |
| Mauritius (24) | Lesotho (42) | Congo-Kinshasa (82) |
| Sao Tome and Principe (19) | Madagascar (38) | Côte d'Ivoire (68) |
| South Africa (25) | Malawi (57) | Djibouti (65) |
| | Mozambique (47) | Equatorial Guinea (81) |
| | Namibia (37) | Eritrea (83) |
| | Niger (53) | Ethiopia (64) |
| | Nigeria (53) | Gambia (65) |
| | Senegal (38) | Guinea (65) |
| | Seychelles (50) | Kenya (68) |
| | Tanzania (47) | Liberia (79) |
| | Uganda (45) | Mauritania (61) |
| | | Rwanda (80) |
| | | Sierra Leone (61) |
| | | Somalia (80) |
| | | Sudan (84) |
| | | Swaziland (74) |
| | | Togo (74) |
| | | Zambia (63) |
| | | Zimbabwe (88) |

freedom in countries south of the Sahara. Of the 48 sub-Saharan African countries, eight (17%) were rated as free with respect to their media, 16 (33%) as partly free, and 24 (50%) as not free. Table 1 indicates the survey's 2003 classification of sub-Saharan African countries with regard to press freedom, and presents each country's total press freedom score in parentheses (higher scores indicate greater restrictions).

Why Kenya, Zambia, Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana, South Africa?

In addition to the degree of press freedom, as determined by the Freedom House survey, we considered other factors when selecting our sample of six countries from among the 48 sub-Saharan African states. These factors included economic conditions, population size,⁽²⁾ geographic location (with the aim of representing all parts of sub-Saharan Africa), the government stance on the Iraq War within the nation-state media culture, and the availability of sub-Saharan African newspapers in English on the Lexis-Nexis newspaper database. Furthermore, in choosing a newspaper from each of the six countries, attempts were made to select a well-established newspaper, preferably a daily paper, with the largest circulation. When such a newspaper was not available on the Lexis-Nexis database, the second largest newspaper was chosen instead. In choosing countries from each of the press freedom categories, we also considered the relations of the sub-Saharan African country with the United States, and whether that country had witnessed a terrorist attack on US targets on its soil. Table 2 shows some of the main features of the six countries included in the sample.

We selected the following six English-language newspapers: Kenya's *Daily Nation*, published seven days per week (titled *Saturday Nation* and *Sunday Nation* on weekends), *Zambia's Post*, *Nigeria's Vanguard*, *Uganda's New Vision*, Ghana's *Accra Mail*, and South Africa's *Mail & Guardian*.⁽³⁾ All of these newspapers, except for the last, are dailies. All of them are privately owned except for *New Vision* which is owned by the government. We considered including two newspapers—one government-owned and one privately owned—from each country but we encountered a hurdle: the South African government, contrary to

Table 2. Significant features of the countries included in the sample

| | Kenya | Zambia | Nigeria | Uganda | Ghana | South Africa |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------------|
| Population (in millions) | 31 | 10 | 133 | 25 | 20 | 42 |
| Polity | Repub. | Repub. | Repub. | Repub. | Demo. | Repub. |
| Geographic quadrant of the continent | East | Central | West | East | West | South |
| National income per capita (US\$) | 1,000 | 800 | 900 | 1,200 | 2,000 | 10,000 |
| Daily papers (per 1,000 people) | 9 | 12 | 24 | 2 | 14 | 32 |
| Terrorist incident(s) on US targets | Two | None | None | None | None | None |
| Government stance on the Iraq War | Anti | Anti | Anti | Pro | Neutral | Anti |

Note: Data were gathered from the CIA World Factbook, Freedom House, and the World Bank in March of 2004.

most African governments, does not own any print media. Nevertheless, we opted to include South Africa in the sample because of its unique political, economic, and geographical place on the continent; the weekly *Mail & Guardian* was the only South African paper we could access at the time and in which we found articles on the Iraq War on the Lexis-Nexis database.

We believe that, ultimately, our choice of a single newspaper from each of the six sub-Saharan African countries facilitates comparisons across these countries with respect to their print media, the role of the press in the formation of public opinion, and the general alignment of reporting with political regimes. It is important to stress that this study intends to draw comparisons primarily with respect to the presses and not the countries themselves, though at times we take the liberty of referring to them interchangeably; throughout the study when we refer to these countries we do so primarily in their role as exemplars of press systems that are variously free, partly free, or not free, and we refer to their newspapers as manifestations of public opinion. Thus we are studying each country as representative of the general qualities of its press system rather than the varied press systems operating in it. Naturally, many sub-Saharan countries have private and government-owned newspapers with substantial differences in their operation.

METHODS

Our research combines a qualitative content analysis with a quantitative assessment of the frames that appear in the articles in six sub-Saharan African newspapers. The choice of print media, rather than broadcast media or a combination of both, was determined by two factors. First, it proved too difficult at the time to gain access to broadcast news from sub-Saharan African states, at least in the systematic way required to carry out quantitative research. Second, the print media—newspapers in particular—are more analytical and contextual than the broadcast media.

To compare coverage of the Iraq War over time, our research was divided into three time periods: (a) before the war, March 1–19; (b) beginning of the war to fall of Baghdad, March 20–April 9; and (c) after the fall of Baghdad, April 10–May 5. We used the day President Bush officially declared war on March 19, and the day of Baghdad's fall on April 9 as temporal boundaries. We believe that the choice of time segments of approximately three weeks from the beginning of war to the fall of Baghdad, and from the fall of Baghdad to President Bush's declaration that the war had ended, provide the opportunity to observe general aspects of the discourse of the debate and any pertinent changes in frames. It is also important to stress that some difficulties did occur with regard to finding articles within the fixed three-week time spans. For example, even after we changed the starting date for Period I (March 1–March 19) from its original starting date of March 5 due to insufficient articles in the original time period, we were still only able to locate one article focusing on the Iraq War in the South African *Mail & Guardian*. For the same newspaper no articles were found for Period III (April 10–May 5).

Procedures

An initial search of Lexis-Nexis using the words “Iraq AND war”, “Iraqi AND war”, “Baghdad AND war”, and “Saddam” was conducted. Articles that did not specifically focus on the Iraq War were eliminated, resulting in a total of 151 news stories from the six newspapers under study. One news story in Uganda’s *New Vision* was cited as “contradictory” in meaning by one coder. Upon closer examination by the head researcher, this article was eliminated, leaving a total of 150 articles over the three time frames. All of the articles were supplied to Lexis-Nexis by All Africa Global Media (AllAfrica.com), and none of them were editorials. The newspaper articles differed in length, placement, and page location; nevertheless, since our unit of analysis was the paragraph of the printed article, all articles were treated equally.

We were able to identify the main frames and discursive themes that appeared in the articles and developed a coding sheet with the goal of measuring the frequency of frames in each newspaper with coding intervals injected between three periods—before, during, and after the war. Every occurrence of a given frame was tallied; the frequencies and percentages are indicated in the various tables that appear in the following sections.

The 150 articles were coded according to our coding scheme by two independent coders. Prior to training the coders, we defined the frames and pre-tested them to ensure that they were frequent enough and did not overlap. Paragraphs were coded separately for all frames, and if more than one frame appeared in a paragraph, each frame was coded separately. The coders were not informed of the research questions and hypotheses until after the coding was completed. Details of the procedure, which involved three separate stages, are described below.

In Stage One, the two coders received initial training regarding the methods of the study. Each coder received a copy of the coding sheet and was instructed to classify the news content according to established definitions by placing slashes in predetermined spaces. Coders were asked to rate each article’s stance on the Iraq War. Articles that did not overtly express a position were not coded. As a test of reliability, 10% of the articles were reanalyzed by the two independent coders, yielding an intercoder reliability coefficient of 71%, as measured using the Ole Holsti formula (Holsti, 1969).

Since only nominal scale variables were used, most of the data analysis involved cross tabulation, which took place at Stage Two. The Chi-Square test was used to assess whether the frames differed among the six newspapers during the three periods. For this analysis, the alpha error rate was set at the .05 level of statistical significance. The independent variable was the category of the pertinent newspaper (as belonging to a press system that was free, partly free, or not free). The dependent variable was the degree of frame difference that occurred among the six newspapers.

In Stage Three, which occurred after the frames in the articles were identified and quantified, we applied a textual discourse analysis approach to assess how the debate on the war was constructed, whether it shifted, and whether Saddam, Bush, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair were portrayed favorably or unfavorably.

Frames

A close reading of the news articles revealed ten “working frames” capturing the range of themes and story lines used to frame the accounts of the war. We labeled these frames as follows:

The *UN role* frame: This frame presents the view that the US and Britain violated Iraq’s sovereignty by going to war without a UN resolution. It claims that the authority of the United Nations as a body had been completely disregarded, if not destroyed, resulting in the need to reform and strengthen the international organization. In short, within this frame, African journalists view the United Nations as facing a crisis, with its Charter and principles of national sovereignty being swept away.

The *African officials* frame: This frame focuses on government policy regarding the war in Iraq and describes how such policy was received by officials and picked up by the press. It reflects the frequency of citations of African officials’ statements, primarily drawn from statements made in anticipation of a war against Iraq at the African Union’s Central Organ meeting held in January of 2003 in Addis Ababa, and at the Africa-France summit in Paris held in February. This frame also reflects the tendency for the political stance of a country to influence its press’s position on foreign issues.

The *oil* frame: This frame articulates the view that the US and its major allies—Britain in particular—went to war over oil. Iraq ranks second only to Saudi Arabia for its oil resources, and was the world’s second largest oil exporter before the Iraq-Iran War erupted in 1980.

The *democracy* frame: This frame argues that the war against Iraq will fail to result in a democratic system of government in that country and, instead, will impose chaos and anarchy on the Iraqi people.

The *economic impact* frame: This frame posits that the Iraq War will jeopardize economic growth and development in Africa by diverting international attention from the continent, thereby placing a strain on African nations’ economies.

The *general category* of terrorism frame: This frame stresses that war will result in a worldwide increase in terrorism rather than a decrease. Some of the most devastating acts of international terrorism prior to the Iraq War occurred in Africa. In August 1998, more than 200 citizens of Kenya and Tanzania were killed when terrorists bombed the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam. On November 28, 2002, terrorists attacked an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombasa, Kenya, killing 13 people.

The *September 11 tragedies* frame: This frame suggests that America is using

the war against Iraq to vent its anger over the September 11 attacks, with African Muslims complaining that their religion has come under fire since the attacks occurred.

The *post-Cold War* frame: This frame proposes that the end of the Cold War in 1990 has shifted the balance of power, destabilized world politics and weakened the West and Russia's interest in and commitment to Africa.

The *hegemony* frame: This frame contends that the US is a rising hegemonic state that aims to manipulate international affairs. Within this frame, hegemony is defined as "power sustained by ideology" (Hallin, 1987: 11).

The *imperialism* frame: This frame posits that imperial interests guide US foreign policy. America is seen as embodying a global empire, an unrivalled power. Imperialism here is defined as "a sufficient political function of the process of integrating new regions into [an] expanding economy" (Gallagher & Robinson, 1953: 5).

FINDINGS

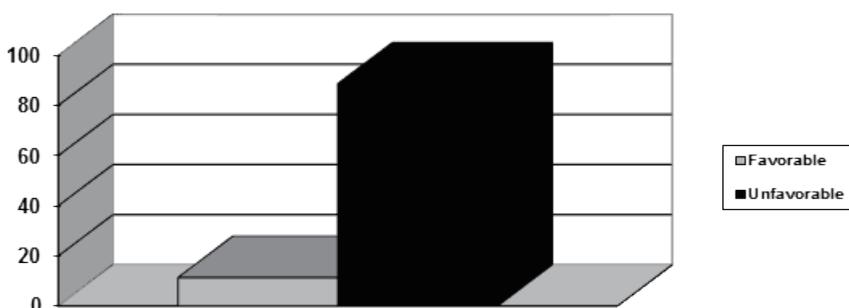
The number of sampled articles, which were predominantly news stories, varied within each newspaper, ranging from a maximum of 41 to a minimum of 11 of the total 150 collected. Kenya's *Daily Nation* had the largest number of articles on the war (41), followed by Zambia's *Post* (33), Uganda's *New Vision* and Nigeria's *Vanguard* (26 each), Ghana's *Accra Mail* (13), and South Africa's *Mail & Guardian* (11). These figures reveal that the number of articles about the Iraq War was larger in countries without a free press system (74) than in countries with a partly free press (52) or those with a free press (24), confirming our prior hypothesis. We cannot overlook the fact, however, that the South African *Mail & Guardian* is a weekly newspaper rather than a daily, in contrast with the remaining five newspapers under study. However, our hypothesis is bolstered by the findings from Ghana's *Accra Mail*; this newspaper, which operates within a country that has a free press, printed the smallest number of articles pertaining to the Iraq War among the five daily newspapers.

Criticism of the Iraq War falls into three broad categories: War breaches Iraq's sovereignty under the UN Charter, America is a hegemon engaging in war for oil, and war will have a negative economic impact on Africa. As Table 3 indicates, support for the war was highest in Uganda's *New Vision* (70%), distantly followed by Ghana's *Accra Mail* (20%), and Nigeria's *Vanguard* (10%). To some extent, this mirrors national policy, since the Ugandan government supported the war and was considered to be one of America's closest allies in Africa—at least under President Yoweri Museveni who has held office since 1986. The Ghanaian government did not take a position on the war, preferring to remain neutral. There was no indication of favorableness toward the war in the *Daily Nation*, *Post*, or *Mail & Guardian*.

Table 3. Distribution of newspapers' positions (whether favorable, unfavorable or neutral/balanced) toward the war

| | Favorable | | Unfavorable | | Neutral/Balanced | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----|-------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| <i>Daily Nation</i> | 0 | 0 | 16 | 20.51 | 18 | 48.65 |
| <i>Post</i> | 0 | 0 | 22 | 28.21 | 8 | 21.62 |
| <i>Vanguard</i> | 1 | 10 | 11 | 14.10 | 5 | 13.51 |
| <i>New Vision</i> | 7 | 70 | 13 | 16.67 | 1 | 2.7 |
| <i>Accra Mail</i> | 2 | 20 | 8 | 10.26 | 2 | 5.41 |
| <i>Mail & Guardian</i> | 0 | 0 | 8 | 10.26 | 3 | 8.11 |
| Total | 10 | 100 | 78 | 100 | 37 | 100 |

$X^2 = 59.74$, $p = .05$, $df = 1$

**Fig. 1.** Newspapers' views of the war

To some extent, the six newspapers exhibited opposition to the war. Opposition was highest in Zambia's *Post* (28.21%), followed by Kenya's *Daily Nation* (20.51%), Uganda's *New Vision* (16.67%), Nigeria's *Vanguard* (14.10%), and Ghana's *Accra Mail* and South Africa's *Mail & Guardian* (each with 10.26%). This confirms our prior hypothesis that opposition to the war would be highest in nations without a free press system. Furthermore, it supports the hypothesis that the sub-Saharan African press's coverage would generally be unfavorable to the war.

When we examined the coverage in terms of the proportion of favorable versus unfavorable categories, we found that 88.64% of the statements that expressed either a positive or negative stance on the war were unfavorable whereas only 11.36% were favorable (see Fig. 1). The Chi-Square value at the 0.05 alpha level for 1 degree of freedom is 3.841; since our Chi-Square value of 59.74 far exceeds this level, we can conclude that this represents a significant difference that is unlikely to have arisen due to chance.

The resentment evident in the sub-Saharan African press's coverage of the Iraq War was high. Commentators criticized many of the premises on which the war was founded, contending that by going to war, the Anglo-American alliance was endorsing the killing of innocent civilians in Iraq. They argued that the war would inevitably result in "collateral damage" and the death of Iraqi children, women,

and men at the hands of the military. In an article entitled “Unequal Forces”, the *Post* noted, “Whatever the determination displayed by the Iraqis so far, this is a war between unequal forces—two nuclear powers and a disarmed Third World nation” (*Post*, April 3, 2003).

Few articles argued that Africans should not be concerned about a “senseless war in some far-off land which is child’s play compared to the carnage taking place” in Africa (*Daily Nation*, March 30, 2003). However, *New Vision* advocated the opposite, stressing Africa’s losses due to the war: “Africa will suffer many direct and indirect consequences of the Anglo-American War on Iraq” (*New Vision*, April 30, 2003). The scope of the war crisis, stated the *Daily Nation*, “will not be felt now but in its aftermath both in terms of emasculation of the UN, the realignment of geopolitical power and the fallout that is sure to follow” (*Daily Nation*, March 21, 2003). According to the *Vanguard*, what the world is witnessing in Iraq is a large-scale massacre that resembles past human catastrophes: “This is no war of liberation; it is a war of aggression and conquest” (*Vanguard*, April 13, 2003). Likewise, the *Accra Mail* pointed out: “What we are seeing is not a War of liberation. It is a War of old-fashioned conquest” (*Accra Mail*, March 30, 2003).

The discourse was equally varied in each newspaper’s view of Saddam, Bush, and Blair. No favorable references were made to Saddam, with unfavorable statements directed at him occurring most frequently in the *Accra Mail* (37.5%), followed by *New Vision*, (25%), and the *Daily Nation*, *Post*, and *Vanguard* (12.5% each). These results fail to support our hypothesis that the press in undemocratic regimes would be uncritical of Saddam because they are governed by similar autocratic rulers. No reference was made to Saddam in the *Mail & Guardian*. Bush received favorable citations from *New Vision* (66.67%) and *Vanguard* (33.33%). The *Post* published the highest proportion of unfavorable statements of the *US President* (26.67%), followed by the *Accra Mail* (20%), *Vanguard* and *Mail & Guardian* (16.67% each), *Daily Nation* (13.33%), and *New Vision* (6.67%). The only favorable reference (100%) to Blair was in the *Mail & Guardian*. The highest proportion of unfavorable references of the British Prime Minister came in the *Post*, (41.18%), followed by the *Accra Mail* (23.53%) *Vanguard*, (17.65%), *Daily Nation*, (11.76%), and *New Vision* (5.88%).

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

The axiom that the first casualty of war is the truth rings true in the sub-Saharan African press’s coverage of the Iraq War. The African press predicted that US intelligence reports regarding Iraq’s WMD would turn out to be inaccurate. In fact, no such weapons were ever found. Baghdad never employed non-conventional weapons during the War, and none of the chemical munitions mentioned in the reports have ever been found. President Bush, whose approval in election polls at the time dropped below 50%, later founded a commission to investigate the failure of pre-Iraq War intelligence. Prime Minister Blair also initiated an independent inquiry into the pre-war intelligence. Both leaders came under fierce

Table 4. Distribution of newspapers' views on whether or not Iraq has weapons of mass destruction

| | True | | Not True | | Neutral/Balanced | |
|----------------------------|------|-------|----------|-----|------------------|-------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| <i>Daily Nation</i> | 0 | 0 | 3 | 30 | 4 | 44.44 |
| <i>Post</i> | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 2 | 22.22 |
| <i>Vanguard</i> | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 1 | 11.11 |
| <i>New Vision</i> | 2 | 66.67 | 2 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Accra Mail</i> | 1 | 33.33 | 1 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Mail & Guardian</i> | 0 | 0 | 2 | 20 | 2 | 22.22 |
| Total | 3 | 100 | 10 | 100 | 9 | 100 |

criticism from opposition members in their cabinets.

Table 4 presents results pertaining to the perceived truthfulness of statements made by US and British leaders regarding Iraq's possession of WMD or capabilities for producing them. Of the 29 articles that took a position on the WMD issue, 10 stated that Iraq did not have WMD, 3 argued that Iraq did have them, and 9 remained neutral with respect to this particular question. Among the articles espousing views that can be classified as either "true" or "not true", we find that 23.08% argued that Iraq did have WMD whereas 76.92% claimed that it did not. Uganda's *New Vision* had the highest proportion of articles (66.67%) arguing that Iraq had, or was capable of producing, WMD, followed by the *Accra Mail* (33.33%). Coverage suggesting that Iraq did not have WMD was highest in the *Daily Nation* (30%), followed by *New Vision* and *Mail & Guardian* (20% each), and the *Post*, *Vanguard*, and *Accra Mail* (10% each). It is important to note that in ranking the highest among the newspapers with respect to arguments that Iraq had, or was capable of producing WMD, *New Vision's* stance mirrored the pro-war policy of the Ugandan government. To test whether significant differences occurred in the articles with respect to views of the truthfulness of claims of WMD in Iraq, we conducted an exact one-tailed Binomial Test at 55%, showing a finding of $p = 0.973$. Since p is more than 5% ($p < 0.05$), we can conclude that a greater number of articles expressed the view that Iraq did not have WMD than would be expected to occur by chance.

The articles offered some vigorous discourse regarding the WMD issue, with newspapers presenting responses that were highly skeptical of the evidence brought before the Security Council in support of the claim that Iraq had WMD. One of the key reasons for waging the Iraq War, said *New Vision*, "was to destroy the weapons of mass destruction, which America insisted were being stocked by the Saddam regime. Interestingly, no such weapons have been discovered and Saddam has not used any even as a last resort" (*New Vision*, April 14, 2003). The *Daily Nation* declared its expectation that after Bush "dethrones Saddam" the US leader "will show us the chemical weapons that have become his waking chorus. Nothing less" (*Daily Nation*, March 22, 2003).

We are being told, argued the *Post*, that Iraq possesses WMD and poses a threat to world security. The *Zambian Daily* added: "There is no credible evidence that Iraq has or will ever supply WMD to any terrorists against the US" (*Post*, March 2, 2003). In another article, the *Post* sardonically asked: "And how can a country that is the only one in the world that has irresponsibly used WMD

twice—atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki—accuse others of being a threat to world security?” (*Post*, March 19, 2003). Zambia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs Secretary Lazarus Kapambwe said if the predicament was WMD, then “the question was supposed to be how many countries had them” (*Post*, April 5, 2003). The *Nation*, on the other side, stated that Israel possessed WMD and “commits more mass destruction every hour than 10 Iraqs can do in a year” (*Nation*, March 16, 2003).

The *Accra Mail* was one of two sub-Saharan newspapers that contended that Iraq had WMD, arguing that the world community needed to unite to curb the proliferation of these “terrible weapons”. The Ghanaian *Daily* pointed out that the Iraqi government “cannot be a role model in any department of foreign relations” since it had in the past used chemical weapons against Iran and Kuwait. “The immediate and most urgent aspect of that task is to ensure that Iraq no longer has such weapons ...” (*Accra Mail*, March 12, 2003). Similarly, wrote *New Vision*, “The position taken by Uganda to support ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’ by the US-led coalition to topple Saddam Hussein and forcefully rid Iraq of suspected weapons of mass destruction is pragmatic and astute.” The Ugandan newspaper added: “It is in Uganda’s interest that Iraq does not possess biological, chemical, nuclear or any other weapons of mass destruction, especially since Iraq has had close ties with Khartoum. There are no guarantees that Iraq would not supply these weapons to fundamentalists in Sudan with links with terrorists like the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)” (*New Vision*, March 26, 2003).

The *Post* quoted US Ambassador to Zambia Martin Brennan as saying that Saddam was purchasing WMD using Iraqi oil (*Post*, April 5, 2003). The Zambian newspaper concluded that it was now clear “that possession of weapons of mass destruction has nothing to do with the US war against Iraq. They can have all the weapons of mass destruction they want, thousands of nuclear weapons and a whole arsenal of laboratories devoted to producing biological weapons and any other kind of weapons” (*Post*, March 4, 2003). The *Daily Nation* stated that Washington and London “had only a paucity of evidence to prove that Iraq was the threat they said it was and that the supposed connections with al Qaeda were tenuous at best” (*Daily Nation*, March 28, 2003).

FRAMES

Among the frames included in the analysis, the *African officials* frame was the most frequently used (20.50% of the total). The second most frequent frame (18.84%), was the *UN role* theme. Ranked third through ninth were *economic impact* (14.70%), *oil* (9.11%), *general category of terrorism* (8.49%), *democracy* (8.49%), *imperialism* (7.87%), *hegemony* (5.59%), *post-Cold War* (4.76%), and *September 11 tragedies* (1.66%). Table 5 provides details regarding the distribution and ranking of the frames.

Table 6 indicates the distribution of the 10 frames in all six newspapers. The *UN role* frame ranked highest in the *Post* (27.47%) and lowest in the *New Vision* (7.69%); the *African officials* frame ranked highest in the *Post* (43.43%) and low-

Table 5. Distribution and ranking of the frames

| Rank | Topics/Frames | N | % |
|------|--------------------------------------|----|-------|
| 1. | <i>African officials</i> | 99 | 20.50 |
| 2. | <i>UN role</i> | 91 | 18.84 |
| 3. | <i>Economic impact</i> | 71 | 14.70 |
| 4. | <i>Oil</i> | 44 | 9.11 |
| 5. | <i>General category of terrorism</i> | 41 | 8.49 |
| 6. | <i>Democracy</i> | 41 | 8.49 |
| 7. | <i>Imperialism</i> | 38 | 7.87 |
| 8. | <i>Hegemony</i> | 27 | 5.59 |
| 9. | <i>Post-Cold War</i> | 23 | 4.76 |
| 10. | <i>September 11 tragedies</i> | 8 | 1.66 |

Table 6. Distribution of frames among the six newspapers

| Newspapers Frames | DN | | Post | | Vanguard | | NV | | AM | | MG | | Total | (%) |
|-------------------------------------|----|-------|------|-------|----------|-------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|-------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | | |
| <i>UN Role</i> | 17 | 18.68 | 25 | 27.47 | 21 | 23.08 | 7 | 7.69 | 12 | 13.19 | 9 | 9.89 | 91 | 100 |
| <i>African officials</i> | 21 | 21.21 | 43 | 43.43 | 10 | 10.10 | 13 | 13.13 | 6 | 6.06 | 6 | 6.06 | 99 | 100 |
| <i>Oil</i> | 7 | 15.91 | 6 | 13.64 | 18 | 40.91 | 0 | 0.00 | 5 | 11.36 | 8 | 18.18 | 44 | 100 |
| <i>Democracy</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 4.88 | 15 | 36.59 | 9 | 21.95 | 4 | 9.76 | 11 | 26.83 | 41 | 100 |
| <i>Economic impact</i> | 3 | 4.23 | 6 | 8.45 | 35 | 49.30 | 13 | 18.31 | 10 | 14.08 | 4 | 5.63 | 71 | 100 |
| <i>G. category of terrorism</i> | 4 | 9.76 | 6 | 14.63 | 5 | 12.20 | 15 | 36.59 | 5 | 12.20 | 6 | 14.63 | 41 | 100 |
| <i>September 11 tragedies</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 12.50 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 12.50 | 1 | 12.50 | 5 | 62.50 | 8 | 100 |
| <i>Post-Cold War</i> | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 52.17 | 5 | 21.74 | 5 | 21.74 | 1 | 4.35 | 23 | 100 |
| <i>Hegemony</i> | 3 | 11.11 | 5 | 18.52 | 10 | 37.04 | 1 | 3.70 | 1 | 3.70 | 7 | 25.93 | 27 | 100 |
| <i>Imperialism</i> | 2 | 5.26 | 3 | 7.89 | 10 | 26.32 | 5 | 13.16 | 5 | 13.16 | 13 | 34.21 | 38 | 100 |
| Total | 57 | 100 | 97 | 100 | 136 | 100 | 69 | 100 | 54 | 100 | 70 | 100 | 483 | 100 |

Note: Abbreviations DN stands for *Daily Nation*, NV for *New Vision*, AM for *Accra Mail*, and MG for *Mail & Guardian*.

est in the *Accra Mail* and *Mail & Guardian* (6.06% each); the *oil* frame ranked highest in *Vanguard* (40.91%) and lowest in *New Vision* (0%); the *democracy* frame ranked highest in the *Vanguard* (36.59%) and lowest in the *Daily News* (0%); the economic impact frame ranked highest in the *Vanguard* (49.30%) and lowest in the *Daily News* (4.23%); the general category of terrorism frame ranked highest in *New Vision* (36.59%) and lowest in the *Daily News* (9.76%); the *September 11 tragedies* frame ranked highest in the *Mail & Guardian* (62.50%) and lowest in the *Daily News* and *Vanguard* (0% each); the *post-Cold War* frame ranked highest in the *Vanguard* (52.17%) and lowest in the *Daily News* and *Post* (0% each); the hegemony frame ranked highest in the *Vanguard* (37.04%) and lowest in the *Accra Mail* and *New Vision* (3.70% each); and the imperialism frame ranked highest in the *Mail & Guardian* (34.21%) and lowest in the *Daily News* (5.26%). These results reveal that the *Vanguard* used five of the frames—*oil*, *democracy*, *economic impact*, *post-Cold War*, and *hegemony*—more frequently

than any of the other newspapers, whereas the *Daily News* invoked six of the frames less frequently than any of the other newspapers, namely frames related to *democracy*, *economic impact*, *general category of terrorism*, *September 11 tragedies*, *post-Cold War*, and *imperialism*.

African Officials

The *African officials* theme emerged as the most commonly used frame, with articles frequently citing statements made by public officials. African officials and military experts were quoted as saying that a war in Iraq would end endeavors to broker peace in the Horn of Africa. Lucy Muyoyeta, chairperson of Zambia's Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Committee, condemned the United States and Britain for any attack on Iraq without UN authorization, warning that, "The US and Britain are setting a very dangerous precedent by ignoring the UN over the Iraq impasse" (*Post*, March 19, 2003). On April 15, the Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa was quoted as stating that the US and Britain should mobilize sufficient resources to rebuild Iraq: "[We] hope that sufficient efforts will be made, especially by those countries that went to war, to mobilize resources to reconstruct that country [Iraq]" (*Post*, April 16, 2003).

From Durban to Lagos, pressure on African governments by their citizens to clarify their position regarding the war was intense. A few days before the outbreak of war, the 33 members of the Kenyan Parliament asked their government to explain its stance on Iraq. On March 20, Kenyan Foreign Affairs Minister Kalonzo Musyoka was quoted in a *Daily Nation* article as saying that Kenya supported the UN Security Council in finding a solution to war. He later condemned the US-led war against Iraq. Abdi Tari Sasura, a member of the Kenya Africa National Union, stated that, "The attitude of the US in ignoring a diplomatic approach and the cries of innocent people of Iraq can only be termed as modern day aggression" (*Daily Nation*, March 20, 2003). The country's National Security Minister Chris Murungaru added that Kenya benefited from its good relations with the US, but that it could not be compelled to support the war. (*Daily Nation*, March 23, 2003). On the then-pending war against Iraq, Zambia's Liberal Progressive Front leader Rodger Chongwe expressed the opinion that Africans had no influence on the international relations scene. The United Nations, he said, "has failed the people of the world due to its failure to protect them from war mongers." He added that it was high time the United Nations regained its stature and begin protecting disadvantaged people (*Post*, March 18, 2003).

The African press showed no lack of sympathy for Iraqi losses during the war, as expressed in the words of African officials. Michael Sata, Zambia's President of the Patriotic Front opposition party pondered, "Who are we to fold our hands when our brothers and sisters in Iraq are being killed?" (*Post*, March 26, 2003). President Dean Mung'omba of the Zambia Alliance for Progress claimed that America and Britain had lost their reliability, goodness, and moral standing within a civilized world. "Anyone with power and strength can exercise brutality on weaker nations," Mung'omba said, adding that, "America and Britain shall win the physical war given their might, but winning a war over a weak nation which

has already been disarmed is no victory” (*Post*, April 2, 2003). He demanded that Kofi Annan step down because he had failed in his duties as Secretary General of the United Nations.

On March 10, Uganda’s Foreign Affairs Ministry issued a statement that his country supported a peaceful resolution to the Iraq crisis under the patronage of the United Nations, as reported in *New Vision*: “As a member of the United Nations, Uganda is committed to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and the establishment of a global order based on peace, stability and the sovereign equality of state” (*New Vision*, March 11, 2003). However, the Ugandan cabinet under the chairmanship of President Yoweri Museveni later decided to back the US-led coalition to disarm Iraq by force. This prompted the country’s MP Omara Atubo (Otuke) to object that the Ugandan government should have consulted with Parliament and civil society first to determine the majority opinion of Ugandans. Atubo stated, “I am shocked with the position the Ugandan Government has taken. I think it is cheap opportunism. I think they are trying to get money from America, but you do not conduct international relations on purely monetary gains” (*New Vision*, March 25, 2003).

Other Ugandan MPs such as James Kubeketerya, John Eresu, Issa Kikugwe, Latif Ssebagala, and George Ekanya criticized the war. The Chief of the Uganda People’s Congress James Rwanyarare told the press that the Government’s support for the war was dangerous for Ugandans. He noted, “I have no kind words for Saddam and the Ba’ath Party. He has tortured political opponents and mistreated the Kurds. But I am against the US taking over the mandate of the United Nations” (*New Vision*, March 27, 2003). Uganda’s Information State Minister Basoga Nsadhu denied, however, that the US had compelled his country to support the Iraq War: “Uganda is an independent country. I do not see how the US can coerce us into a position we do not believe in” (*New Vision*, April 4, 2003). Kenya’s Foreign Affairs Minister Kalonzo Musyoka called for an end to the war: “It has been the position of Kenya to support peaceful initiatives to any kind of human crisis” (*Daily Nation*, April 2, 2003). Zambia’s Patriotic Front President Michael Sata predicted: “What will happen in Iraq will affect Zambia because our country has no oil and dollar revenues to cushion the impact of the war” (*Post*, March 19, 2003).

UN Role

Ranking second in frequency, the *UN role* frame was referred to in many articles; after all, Africa has a long commitment to the UN and its ideals, and would have preferred to see the Iraqi conflict handled under the UN mandate. The UN’s costly failure in Iraq called into question the future role of this world body, with many sub-Saharan Africans grieving that it could seemingly no longer stand the test of time. Newspaper articles stressed that the Security Council, which had been established to ensure that global tyranny, as personified by Adolf Hitler, would never again prevail, was sidelined in a battle for dominance—in an Anglo-American quest to oust a sovereign state’s President.

Articles in all of the six newspapers rejected any attack on Iraq without a UN

mandate. If the US were to attack Iraq without a UN resolution, warned *New Vision* on March 17, it would have no “moral mandate”; it would be the “aggressor”. The impact of the war, predicted the *Daily Nation*, “will be felt in its aftermath both in terms of the emasculation of the UN, the realignment of geopolitical power and the fallout that is sure to follow” (*Daily Nation*, March 21, 2003). Africans began writing obituaries for the UN from the moment the Iraq War was launched. Many articles appealed for the restoration of the dignity of the UN. The *Post* captures this best in an article on March 29: “The invasion of Iraq by the United States and its ally, Britain, without Security Council’s approval clearly demonstrates that we cannot really speak today of a United Nations’ system What we actually have is a system of domination over almost every country in the world by the United States, the most powerful nation of all decides everything on our planet”.

Because of the continent’s colonial past, Africans value the principle of state sovereignty that has governed state-state relations on the continent since the formation of the Organization of the African Union in 1963. The phrase “peaceful and diplomatic means” was commonly repeated in the news coverage, as was the international rule of law. “The deployment of unilateral force by the US,” argued the *Mail & Guardian*, “signifies the end of ‘international law’ and the defeat of ‘collective security’” (*Mail & Guardian*, March 25, 2003). Africans felt that the war was not a “good omen” for the future of the UN and often cited the UN Charter. For example, on March 20 the *Post* commented as follows: “The Security Council should not be pushed to give legal support to hegemonic and arbitrary decisions made by the ruling Power, which violate the Charter and International Law, and that trespass on the sovereignty of all states. Today the Security Council, a hostage of the United States, could only exercise a selective, capricious, arbitrary and ineffective dictatorship, instead of moral leadership”.

The world today, according to the *Post*, is witnessing an incredible act of “United States and British barbarism” in violation of international law (*Post*, March 21, 2003). An article in *New Vision* on March 17 cautioned the US Administration against attacking Iraq without a UN mandate. It referred to the events of 1979 in which Tanzania’s Julius Nyerere invaded Uganda and toppled Idi Amin from power; this action was seen as a violation of the UN Charter under the notion of sovereignty. “It is this mandate”, argued the newspaper, “that US President George W. Bush is searching for, seemingly in vain, to attack Iraq. He is now getting impatient, and has indicated that he could order his forces to attack at any time if efforts to get a new United Nations resolution continue to stall”. The Ugandan newspaper emphasized that, thus, the US had no mandate; if it attacked Iraq “without a new UN resolution, it would be the aggressor. It would then fail both the technical and moral tests for fighting”.

In the *Daily Nation*’s view, the capacity of the US to bind “UN legitimacy to causes and battles that are important to the United States, such as the war on terrorism, will be severely hampered if Washington is perceived to disregard the UN’s experience in post-conflict situations as well as nation-building” (*Daily Nation*, March 27, 2003). On a few occasions, articles also argued that the Iraq War served as a call to action to protect the United Nations from the moral decay

engulfing it. “Whatever they may think,” observed the *Accra Mail*, “to some of us, the UN cannot be irrelevant, no matter its imperfections. International law governing how nations relate to one another is intricately bound with the UN system and to treat that with contempt, the US and UK would render themselves as outlaw states” (*Accra Mail*, April 15, 2003).

In general, the news coverage emphasized support for a UN role in resolving the Iraq crisis and maintaining stability in that country after the eruption of the war. Sub-Saharan Africans have often viewed the UN as an independent governmental organization, an effective entity for maintaining world stability, fighting AIDS, feeding the poor, helping refugees, and protecting the rights of the community of sovereign nations. The UN, wrote the *Daily Nation*, “is in real danger of playing a reduced role in world peace. But in the face of misguided French intransigence and the real threat of weapons of mass destruction being used by Saddam or his terrorist cohorts, the US, UK and Spain can claim some legitimacy in abandoning the UN process”. The UN, continued the Kenyan *Daily*, “could easily become irrelevant and suffer the fate of its predecessor, the League of Nations, which was mired in deadlock prior to the Second World War and died a natural death” (*Daily Nation*, March 21, 2003).

The challenges Africans see facing the UN were best summarized in the words of a *Daily Nation* piece: “Perhaps the most important lesson to be drawn from the UN’s attempts at peace-building—their successes or failures aside—is that winning a war is easier than winning peace. And as long as peace remains way beyond the reach of humanity, as is the case today, it will be suicidal to dump the UN in the dustbin of history” (*Daily Nation*, March 27, 2003). In short, African journalists perceived the Anglo-American-led war in Iraq as a breach of international law and justice with catastrophic long-term effects. They believed that reconstruction of the UN was necessary. Consider the following paragraph from the *Accra Mail*:

The US and UK are undermining the UN for this short-term victory. The effect of a weakened UN may not be immediately apparent but the long-term effects would be catastrophic for all of us. The priority therefore should not be only the reconstruction of Iraq but also the rebuilding of the UN. This must start with the US and UK for it was these two countries that lost patience with the UN and decided to go it alone in disarming Iraq (*Accra Mail*, March 28, 2003).

Economic Impact

After the outbreak of war, several African countries reported a decline in income from the tourism and hospitality industries. For example, the Kenyan Foreign Affairs Minister Kalonzo Musyoka said his country’s tourist industry had been damaged by the war due to travel warnings issued by the US and British governments. Prior to the onset of the war on March 7, letters by prominent African advocacy groups, such as Africa Action, Advocacy Network for Africa, and Trans-

Africa Forum, had been sent to African ambassadors and permanent representatives of the United Nations Security Council—in particular, to representatives of Guinea, Cameroon, and Angola—warning that a war on Iraq could have damaging economic consequences for Africa.

The Iraq War was perceived by the sub-Saharan African press as having a potentially devastating impact on development in Africa by distracting international attention from issues such as poverty reduction, health, and education. A war in the Gulf, noted *New Vision*, “would not only affect the people of the Middle East, but would also undermine economic growth and political stability in many countries and especially the fragile economies of Africa” (*New Vision*, March 11, 2003). The Iraq War, cautioned the *Post*, is not far from Africa (*Post*, April 3, 2003). African writers outlined how the flow of aid to Africa was drying up as the West turned its focus to the situation in Iraq. Many argued that the world should “focus on Africa not Iraq” (*Vanguard*, April 15, 2003). They argued that the war should have been avoided, with the estimated supplementary figure of \$75 billion being used to alleviate the suffering of civilians in Africa. There was a lot of good, stressed the *Accra Mail*, that this money could do to “alleviate poverty, increase relief food rations, build infrastructure and provide healthcare to the suffering lot across Africa” (*Accra Mail*, April 7, 2003).

Once again, Africans feared that international attention and resources would be diverted to the war rather than to resolving conflict and promoting economic development on their continent. The war, lamented the *Accra Mail*, “will affect our work to resolve the conflicts that are causing so much suffering in Africa, setting back prospects for stability and development that the continent so badly needs” (*Accra Mail*, March 12, 2003). If the “war should drag on, and the price of oil soars, Africa’s fragile economies would be hardest hit”, continued the *Accra Mail* in another article. The Ghanaian *Daily* added, “Even if the war is short lived, Africa would still lose out because the reconstruction of Iraq would take the top billing that the ‘emergent democracies of Eastern Europe’ have been enjoying since the eighties” (*Accra Mail*, March 19, 2003). The Governor of the Bank of Zambia, Caleb Fundanga, stated that the war in Iraq, together with the political crisis in Venezuela at the time, posed a major threat to macro-economic stability in Zambia. “We are a landlocked country and our goods have to be transported,” said Fundanga. “Our exports will become less competitive because of production costs. The war will affect growth of the economy unless it ends quickly” (Quoted in the *Post*, April 10, 2003).

Instead of war, Africans wanted the cancellation or reduction of their continent’s debt and help in alleviating the poverty and disease engulfing them. The debt cancellation campaign in Africa receded in 2002 following the September 11 attacks, as developed countries focused their attention on the fight against terrorism. “Debt services by countries such as Zambia in which over 80% of people live in poverty is a scandal for humanity”, said the *Post*. “It is not morally right that while some people are dying from poverty-related diseases, cutbacks in the social sector should continue in order to service the loans” (*Post*, March 19, 2003).

There was vigorous criticism in the African press of Bush’s economic policy

in Africa. Newspapers portrayed his policy as flawed because it subjected Africans to the conditions of free market economies and economic liberalization, conditions that have proven to be devastating for African economies. The news media cited how opponents of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) believed that the AGOA promoted US business interests at the expense of African economic growth, because it failed to address the issue of debt overhang, offered no labor or environmental protections, and did not promote local development. Immediately prior to the onset of the Iraq War, Africans were struggling to implement positive change as a result of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Launched at the Lusaka summit in 2001, NEPAD encompassed an ambitious reform agenda articulated by Africans and aimed at promoting economic and governance improvements across the continent. It did so by urging Western countries to play a role in debt relief, aid, and enhanced terms of trade. The plan was characterized at the time as an opportunity for Africa to extricate itself from its economic difficulties.

A number of articles stressed that, as world leaders focused their attention on Iraq, the prospects of positive results emerging from NEPAD would dwindle. "It is highly unlikely that NEPAD would make any headway should the guns roar and tanks roll into Iraq," noted the *Accra Mail* on March 19. "NEPAD might as well consider itself part of the collateral damage of this war." It is worth noting that during the war a document by the IMF acknowledging severe consequences of recent policies to Africa's economies received limited attention. This document represented the first instance in which the IMF admitted that coercing developing countries to open their markets to foreign investors could increase the risk of financial crises. The IMF document stated that there is "little evidence" that its policies on liberalization encourage economic growth in poor countries. The *Daily Nation* blamed the IMF for releasing "the document at a time when world attention was focused on Iraq and it was sure that it would not get any coverage since every critique is on the Gulf War, which is taking up the majority of air time and newspaper pages" (*Daily Nation*, March 24, 2003). It is also important to point out that, of the six newspapers we examined, Uganda's *New Vision* offered the least commentary on the devastating economic impact that the Iraq War could have on development in Africa.

Oil

The oil frame was the fourth most frequent frame to appear in the articles we studied. In this frame, the Iraq War was portrayed as driven by the desire of the Bush Administration to control Iraq's oil (Iraq owns 11% of the world's oil and ranks second only to Saudi Arabia with respect to oil revenue.) Consequently, the *Vanguard* queried, "What is the war all about? The oil installations secured within the first few days gave the truth away—the war is all about oil" (*Vanguard*, April 13, 2003). Americans seek out the cheapest fuel and they are after the oil in Iraq, stressed the *Mail & Guardian*. Bush and his team wish to profit from it (*Mail & Guardian*, March 31, 2003). Upon condemning the war, Emily Sikazwe, the Executive Director of the Zambia-based Women for Change, stated

that there was no doubt that the US Government wanted to control Iraq's natural resources. The issue in Iraq was not democratization but control of oil (*Post*, April 3, 2003).

In the *Vanguard's* opinion, the American "siege to secure oil" was resulting in the death of "tens of thousands of Iraqi children" due to famine and disease. (*Vanguard*, March 30, 2003). "And who has not noticed the obscene Anglo-American dash to secure Iraqi oil fields? It sends an obvious message of what this war is largely about" (*Daily Nation*, March 30, 2003). The United States, noted one *Post* article, is very much in debt; it is the world's most indebted nation, "which may partly explain why it is very important for the US to control oil supplies in the Gulf, and hence the push for war, at all costs" (*Post*, March 12, 2003). The *Daily Nation* stated that America "has no qualms about hurling unprecedented lethal weapons on millions of Arab children while the world watches cheerfully". The Kenyan paper concluded, "The icing on the cake is Iraqi oil" (*Daily Nation*, March 16, 2003).

Newspapers in oil-producing countries such as Nigeria and Ghana cautioned that after its war against Iraq, the United States would seek to control the oil resources in other countries. The *Accra Mail* observed, "How long would it be before the US or one of its rivals seeks to increase its control over West African oil production or other strategic resources by overthrowing governments under the pretext of defending democracy? Is this not indeed happening?" (*Accra Mail*, March 31, 2003). A *Post* article stated that it is hard to comprehend, "How for God's sake Kofi Annan could instruct the UN personnel in Iraq to abandon the people of that country at this crucial hour when war has resumed and where innocent lives shall perish due to greedy Washington and London as a result of the urge to control huge oil reserves in that country" (*Post*, March 22, 2003).

General Category of Terrorism

The theme corresponding to the *general category of terrorism* was the fifth most frequent frame. In expressing their anxieties regarding the broader consequences of the war, African journalists feared that the Iraqi regime, or sympathizers with its "terrorist" connections, might retaliate by attacking US and British facilities abroad or their allies. They argued that Bush had taken America to a far and dangerous place, portraying America's "war on terrorism" as a colossal distraction from the real main concerns that the world is facing. They perceived the threat to world security as emerging not from terrorism, but from poverty and AIDS. They viewed efforts to resolve conflicts through dialogue as an essential means of curbing terrorism.

Newspapers often stated that the "real war" should be launched against the circumstances that lead people to resort to terrorism, expressing the view that containment, rather than consistent confrontation, is the best tool for countering terrorism. African journalists stressed that without understanding the roots of violence and effective security policies, Western policies may in fact increase the very threats they seek to neutralize. "The war", commented the *Accra Mail*, "is likely to produce increased insecurity in the world due to a widespread anti-

American stance (if global anti-war protests are anything to go by) that might advertently (or inadvertently) find a vent through widespread international terrorism” (*Accra Mail*, April 7, 2003). Likewise, the *Mail & Guardian* prognosticated that the world is bound to witness an increase in terrorism as resentment in the Arab and Muslim world escalate. “It is a gross miscalculation to think that a show of overwhelming military force will deter acts of violent extremism. If the US cannot be opposed by conventional arms, other methods will be sought,” cautioned the South African paper. “The official pretext for this war is to prevent ‘weapons of mass destruction’ falling into terrorist hands. In reality, it enormously increases the risk of biological, chemical and nuclear attacks on Washington and London” (*Mail & Guardian*, March 21, 2003).

Kenya’s Foreign Affairs Minister Kalonzo Musyoka expressed fears that with war raging in Iraq “terrorists may find it convenient to attack countries” such as his homeland. He advised Kenyans not to become involved in any acts of terrorism (*Daily Nation*, April 2, 2003). “The Bush administration theologians”, observed the *Daily Nation*, “have been working frantically to implicate the Saddam regime with al Qaeda”. The article went on to mockingly suggest that unless President Bush figures out “where and what the heck Mt. Kilimanjaro is or what in the Lord’s name is Jupiter or Pluto”, he “might think it is a new weapons system developed by a military contractor, in which case he would instruct Rumsfeld to buy the stuff and target it against those Islamic terrorists” (*Daily Nation*, March 16, 2003). In a statement issued on March 28, the National Union of Ghana Students described the war as. “A recipe for terrorism, world chaos and a sin against God and Humanity.” Kenyan public figures cautioned that “any use of Kenyan facilities in a war that lacked the mandate of the United Nations could make the country a target for terror attacks” (*Daily Nation*, March 24, 2003). After the outbreak of war, Cissy Taliwaku, the Chairperson of Uganda’s Inter Ministerial Task Force on Iraq in Kampala, was quoted as saying, “[We are a] potential target of terrorism. We should take all the necessary precautions against any such threats” (*New Vision*, March 21, 2003). However, hardly any arguments were made in *New Vision* that a war against Iraq would increase acts of international terrorism. Instead, the Ugandan paper expressed, or quoted others as expressing, support for the war because there was a “link between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction” (*New Vision*, March 24, 2003), and suggested that Kampala had taken a stand because “nobody was safe from terrorism” (*New Vision*, April 4, 2003).

Democracy

Most of the articles in our sample did not express enthusiasm regarding the prospect of establishing a democratic system of government in post-Saddam Iraq with Anglo-American involvement. They rejected the notion that only a period of foreign rule in Iraq could bring the Arab state into the community of free nations. According to the *Mail & Guardian*, one main goal of the war was to test the US’s “new military toys. The last thing it is really about is the liberation of the Iraqi people” (*Mail & Guardian*, March 21, 2003). The *Vanguard*

predicted that America's real war would start after the defeat of Saddam Hussein and it would be: "A long drawn-out war that is guaranteed to render the military victory a hollow one if not more tragic than the planners of this war might have imagined" (*Vanguard*, April 13, 2003).

Africans were highly skeptical of the US's stated intentions to transform Iraq into a democratic state. "To assume that the removal of Saddam will bring peace and democracy in that part of the world is folly because the history of Iraq is one of resistance against oppressors and strongmen or despots reigning supreme over the affairs of the nation", asserted the *Post* (March 22, 2003). In brief, many Africans opposed attacks on Iraq for the purpose of regime change in Baghdad, arguing that democracy cannot be given; it must be earned. They often referred to the deaths of more than four million people in the Democratic Republic of Congo following a Western-sponsored "regime change". African leaders like Nelson Mandela and Mbeki were quoted as saying that the use of force would be counterproductive if the true aim was to establish democracy in Iraq and make the world a safer place.

Imperialism

On 1 June 2002, President Bush stated in a speech at the US Military Academy in West Point, New York, that the United States had no imperial ambitions. "America", he stated, "has no empire to extend or utopia to establish. We wish for others only what we wish for ourselves—safety from violence, the rewards of liberty and the hope for a better life". Although Bush denounced imperialism, his administration's ambitious National Security Strategy, according to sub-Saharan Africans, appeared to adhere to the notion of neo-imperialism. With regard to this perceived neo-imperialist ambition, the *Post* commented: "In spite of massive anti-war demonstrations last weekend all over the world and more particularly at the doorstep of the White House, President Bush has gone ahead with neo-imperialistic war. He is heedless to counsel for caution. He has been reminded that bombing his way to Baghdad may not be difficult, but farming out Iraq's oil wells to his buddies and coming away unscathed may turn into a very messy business. Iraqi history warns against imperialist adventures" (*Post*, March 26, 2003).

The media discourse in sub-Saharan African newspapers was not free of oriental clichés. The word "empire" was often used in articles when talking about US involvement in Iraq. Africans portrayed the American-led coalition as "imperialistic". They perceived America as "a rising empire" that aspires to dominate poorer nations. Three days before the war began, the *Daily Nation* cautioned: "People who imagine America is going into this thing in a bumbling and blind way as has been its norm are mistaken". The Kenyan *Daily* added that a motivated plan was in place "to impose total American dominance over the Middle East, and from there the rest of the world is expected to get the message. The era of Pax Americana is set to be given a radically new imprint by Bush the Second".

The Iraq War, according to the *Mail & Guardian*, “is about revenge; about American penis size as much as American bellies. It is an object lesson to the Islamic world in the aftermath of the Twin Towers and a shot across the bows of the other great powers with interests in the Gulf” (*Mail & Guardian*, March 21, 2003). It exhibits the “painful reality—that America can damn well do as it pleases, whether the rest of the world likes it or not” (*Daily Nation*, March 21, 2003). The *Post* asked: “By looking back, recalling what happened in our part of the world—the Third World—in the past few decades, who fathered most of the coups d’état? Who trained the torturers in the most sophisticated techniques? Who trained the sinister culprits? Who armed them? Who supported them?” The *Zambian Daily* added: “Up to now, the great promoter, the great patron, the great fatherly educator and supporter of those who committed massive violations of human rights has been the United States” (*Post*, March 4, 2003). The US, cautioned the *Daily Nation*, was becoming an imperial nation which, “instead of putting vassal states under its thumb, is only interested in mopping up economic trophies. The question remains, after Saddam Hussein, who is next?” (*Daily Nation*, March 21, 2003).

The *Vanguard* ran one article written by a Nigerian writer in the form of a letter addressed to the US Ambassador to Nigeria. In it, the Nigerian author contended, “Now that the American Empire has started in earnest, it will be wise to remind the decision makers in Washington that the US is not the first, nor will it be the last to have an empire” (*Vanguard*, March 13, 2004). The *Post* posited a link between the rise of imperialist powers and the intensification of an arms race in the developing world. The *Zambian Daily* stated, “The international climate of tension and violence generated by the aggressive policies of the imperialist powers and their regional gendarmes, the aggressions and direct or indirect pressures aimed at destabilizing or destroying revolutionary processes and defending neo-colonial interests, the regional conflicts often encouraged by those very interests: these are the major factors that have contributed to Third World involvement in the arms race as we are today witnessing in the Middle East” (*Post*, April 6, 2003).

Hegemony

Some Africans have argued that US hegemony over world affairs began with the administration of George H. W. Bush (the senior Bush), but later declined under Bill Clinton. With George W. Bush (the junior Bush) in power, American dominance and arrogance were revived, proclaimed the *Accra Mail* (March 28, 2003). The *Mail & Guardian* queried, “Evil as Saddam might be, and however necessary it might be to dethrone him, what gives the American President the right to play with the lives of citizens of other countries?” The *South African Daily* added: “How can a government justify putting a whole country at risk for a reason that is still unclear to many of us? Is humanity so without legal and political options that it must use the most lethal of means at its disposal, even if the reason is to remove a dictator like Saddam Hussein? Have the lessons of the past still not been learnt?” (*Mail & Guardian*, March 17, 2003).

There were, however, hints that despite its global power, the US might not be able to achieve its goals in Iraq if it acted alone. “There is a real danger”, observed the *Post*, “a greater one than ever before, because the United States feels that it owns the world and is filled with triumphant crowing and a blind, mystical, fanatical faith in its strength, its might, its sophisticated weapons and its ability to impose its will on any nation” (*Post*, April 3, 2003). The *Daily Nation* asks us to question the reality and morality of the Iraq War due to the imbalance of power:

This does not look like a War to anyone. Better call it the conquest of a defenseless enemy by a terribly technologically superior foe. Ever since the Gulf War 12 years ago, Iraq has been systematically disarmed under US direction using the cover of the UN arms inspectors. What has become of Iraq is no different from somebody who has been neutered, tied up, handcuffed and blindfolded. It is the easiest thing in the world to clobber such a fellow senseless. Even a child who is not shackled will do it quite efficiently (*Daily Nation*, March 23, 2003).

In short, journalists in sub-Saharan Africa saw the Iraq War as a mechanism for achieving dominance by a nation with an unparalleled military power. Washington’s fight against terror was seen as a way to justify the Bush administration’s “neo-conservative ideologies” of achieving US hegemony through military power. Consider the following quote, for example, from an anti-war coalition member in South Africa: “To secure its imperialist design on the world, the US has ignored international agreements ... the US is prepared to wage a war against any state, people or political movement that [it] considers too independent of the goal of US hegemony” (*Mail & Guardian*, April 12, 2003).

The *Post* proclaimed that citizens of the world desire a planet “without hegemony, without nuclear arms, without racism, without nationalists and religious hatred, without outrages against the sovereignty of any country, and with respect for people’s independence and free self-determination; a world without universal models which completely fail to consider the traditions and cultures of all the peoples that make up humanity” The *Zambian* newspaper concluded that for international peace and cooperation to be achieved, for our world to be saved, we must avoid “hegemonic interests” and “national ambition” (*Post*, March 20, 2003).

Post-Cold War

The end of the Cold War has had a deep effect on the global views of sub-Saharan African states and on their relations with the West. Africans see themselves as being marginalized in a new unipolar world system (Keller, 2002). With the collapse of the Iron Curtain, the continent has gradually fallen off the West’s agenda. Coverage in the six sub-Saharan African newspapers was not positive about world stability in the “post-Cold War” era. To some extent, Africans blamed US Cold War politics for encouraging antagonism, hegemony, and imperialism.

In the post-Cold War world, America was perceived as the sole superpower. Before the Iraq War, African journalists saw America as standing at a crucial point, attempting to define its role in the post-Cold War world. On this theme, the *Post* wrote: "From the weaponry that is being exhibited on the borders of Iraq on the eve of its invasion by the United States and British forces, it is clear that although the Cold War has ended the arms race continues and military and nuclear hegemony is being perpetuated" (*Post*, March 20, 2003).

Reducing conflict around the globe, according to Africans, entails the equitable distribution of international resources, the elimination of the debt burden, support for global peace, and the denunciation of the use of force in international relations. African observers argued that the War on Iraq could potentially stall the then-ongoing delicate negotiations for peace in Sudan and Somalia, with some noting that the southern Sudanese fighting forces would be portrayed as Christians and not as Sudanese. The *Post* concluded on March 21: "They [US and Britain] will get their world, the world they seek, a world that will be steadily more and more ungovernable. They will not be able to go on sustaining this unjust order they are imposing on humanity; that habit of wanting to govern the world, telling everyone what to do; of even insulting presidents that they refer to as friends. It cannot go on forever".

September 11 Tragedies

The events of September 11 have changed the entire world. In the ensuing international disorder, the Middle East lies at the center (Kepel, 2004). In the opinion of many African journalists, September 11 represented a frightening demonstration that groups who are motivated to cause suffering and destruction do not need sophisticated weapons to achieve their goals. The tragedies changed everything, with America eager to punish any country that concealed terrorists or belonged to what Bush called the "axis of evil": Iraq, Iran, North Korea, and other states considered a threat to America and its interests abroad. The sub-Saharan African press perceived the war in Afghanistan as a preamble for the Bush administration's portrayal of "Muslim Arabs" as actual or potential terrorists targeting the US. "Draft dodger George Walker Bush discovered the warrior and hero in himself and waged war against Afghanistan," observed the *Daily Nation*. (*Daily Nation*, March 21, 2003.) Africans also saw the war on terrorism, which followed the September 11 tragedies, as an introduction to the war against Iraq. They perceived US "efforts to link Saddam to September 11" as "unpersuasive". (*Mail & Guardian*, March 21, 2003.)

Many Africans believed that it was from the ruins of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York on September 11 that a more assertive US ideological foreign policy emerged, with President Bush declaring a new doctrine of pre-emptive strikes. The Bush Doctrine was seen as a tactic for justifying the US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. In the aftermath of the September 11 tragedies, Bush and several members of his cabinet tried to present the US war as being waged against terrorism and not against Islam. He apologized for his earlier use of the terms "crusade" and "infinite justice". The African press picked

up on the story, claiming that the Bush administration was exploiting the September 11 attacks to advance its true intentions: to invade Iraq and launch a crusade against Islam.

In countries with large populations of Muslims,⁽⁴⁾ such as Nigeria and Kenya, arguments were raised about deliberate attempts in the West to confuse their religion with terrorism and push Muslims out of “history and geography”. The sub-Saharan African press often maintained that the West had gotten used to justifying its colonial expansion in the Islamic world through its “civilized mission”, which mandated picturing Islamic society as a backward and violent one. Thousands of Muslims demonstrated on the streets of the African capital cities of Nairobi, Kampala, Pretoria, Khartoum, Accra, among others. Furthermore, officials of the Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims criticized the appointment of a retired US general to head the reconstruction of Iraq as “reminiscent of colonialism”. (*Daily Nation*, April 11, 2003.)

CONCLUSION

The institutional foundation of journalism in sub-Saharan Africa differs significantly from the Western ideal. The ways in which Africans perceived and constructed the Iraq War was in many ways influenced by their continent’s heritage and varied political systems—from authoritarian to democratic ones. The sub-Saharan African press provided extensive coverage of the US-Anglo invasion of Iraq as the “shock and awe” campaign began in earnest, reporting the human side of the story and appealing for both national and international support to avoid and stop the war. It interpreted the war as a global catastrophe and pleaded for clarity over the US-led mission in Iraq. Such interpretations were aligned with public opinion and with the views of political leaders south of the Sahara.

With the exception of Uganda’s *New Vision*, the other five sub-Saharan African newspapers echoed strong opposition to the Iraq War. There was vigorous debate over the post-Iraq War world order, with many fearing that the war could hinder future attempts to broker peace deals in Africa because the world’s eyes would be focused on Iraq. Some newspapers published interviews with Muslim clerics in their countries denouncing America and Britain and lamenting the “failed” role of the UN. Nonetheless, in general, the sub-Saharan African press acted as a socially responsible press and often adhered to African maxims that a human being always deserves compassion and ought to be helped. The press constructed a number of different social realities of the Iraq War, reflecting anguish and uncertainty over Iraq and what would follow the ousting of Saddam’s oppressive regime. The most lasting impact of the war has been the questioning of the international system of governance centered on the United Nations; this represents an unprecedented distrust of the pillars of global governance. However, it is important to stress here that Africans do not deride America. Antipathy toward the United States is founded on four main factors: (1) the capitalistic intentions of the US in conducting its foreign policy, (2) the rise of ultraconservatives and religiosity in US politics, (3) America’s rise as a world hegemon, and (4) the

lack of US commitment to resolving international conflicts, particularly in African countries such as Liberia, Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The African suspicion directed at Westerners is a product of the association in the African mind between the West and colonialism. The gulf between Africa and the West is depicted in a book by French (2004), in which he details Western greed and betrayal of Africa and its people, and reprimands the West for deliberately looking away from the outbreak of horrifying violence on the continent. What Africans desire from Washington is more US involvement in resolving conflict and defeating poverty in their embattled continent. They did not perceive these desires as being met by the George W. Bush administration. Not surprisingly, the African media fretted about Bush and Blair as much as it did about Saddam. The press suggested that the most serious risk to the future of world stability was the West's continued failure to sufficiently tackle the root causes of global terrorism.

America's war on terror has affected its policy with respect to Africa, causing Washington to give less attention to Africa than might otherwise have been expected. Africans had no doubts regarding the failure of Bush's war on terror, which their press portrayed as a propaganda narrative and a tool to achieve US supremacy. They viewed bin Laden and other al Qaeda leaders as the products of flawed US policy and rejected two of the most frequent boasts of the Bush administration: that bin Laden and al Qaeda were "on the run" and that the Iraq invasion had made America safer. They added that unless American leaders acknowledge reality and adjust their policies abroad accordingly, the enemies of America will flourish.

Finally, examining the coverage of the war in the sub-Saharan press casts a light on questions regarding the similarities and differences among cultures with respect to their values and notions of morality, fairness, and justice. To the Bush and Blair administrations, the war was perceived as entirely just in its intended goals of attacking Iraq, ousting Saddam, and instituting a Western form of democracy. To many Africans, attacking Iraq was an imperialist operation—a new form of "Western crusade". Consider the following words published on March 26 in the *Post*:

The next generation of children grows spurs on the hope that our world is a better place to live in. Do they know that barbarism generated by power and greed will make earth a hell? Historians will never pardon the US in general and Bush in particular for making the world over whimper with hatred, waiting for many values created by the wisest thinkers like Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela, Julius Nyerere and KK to be trampled under their military boot.

Tenth Anniversary of Iraq War

On the ten-year anniversary of the Iraq War, I revisited the sub-Saharan Afri-

can press to see what it had to say about the war and, not surprisingly, nothing positive was written about it; in fact, it was barely mentioned in the news coverage. Based on my observations over the past nine years from the vantage point of my residence in Cairo, Egypt, and after living for almost two decades in the West (primarily in the US and England), one can say that public opinion in Africa has hardened against the Iraq War; people typically view it as a war that was not worth fighting. The sub-Saharan African press has reported on the high cost of the war and concluded that the occupation was a disaster, focusing on the more than one million Iraqis who have been killed and on the additional half a million Iraqi children who died as a result of sanctions. African journalists also lamented the death of more than four thousand American soldiers who “were forced” into a war they did not believe in. They denounced US detention centers, such as Guantanamo, and wrote regretfully of the Jihadists who have been trained in Iraq and are now making life difficult for Americans inside and outside of Iraq.

The predictions that appeared in much of the sub-Saharan African press that the US war in Iraq would be a long and difficult one turned out to be correct. A decade has passed and Iraq is mired in anarchy and chaos. Human suffering and the killing of the innocent continues in the Land of the Two Rivers until this very day, with bombings in Baghdad killing 59 people and injuring more than two hundred in March 2013. Furthermore, President Barack Obama, who won the presidency on the strength of his opposition to the war, has shown no sign of public remorse on its tenth anniversary. Instead, the US President—whom Africans have admired for his charismatic personality—issued a written statement saluting the “courage and resolve” of the one-and-half million Americans who served in Iraq and honoring the memory of the nearly four-and-half thousand Americans “who made the ultimate sacrifice”. Regrettably, resentment of America will not diminish in countries south of the Sahara unless and until Washington exhibits respect for the sovereignty of nations.

NOTES

- (1) Numerous other studies have also suggested that the media tend to follow the foreign policy set by their government.
- (2) For example, Nigeria and Ghana are located in West Africa, which is home to 40% of sub-Saharan Africa’s population.
- (3) For brevity, we eliminated the word “the” from some of the titles of these newspapers.
- (4) About 50 percent of all Africans are Muslims.

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