Štefan Ižák

IDENTITY OF TERRORIST AND VICTIM
(IMAGE OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN THE SLOVAK MEDIA)

In this article we deal with the media and the image of Sub-Saharan Africa they create in society. The media are important source of informations, that helps us shape our view of the world. At work, we focus mainly on their function to disseminate knowledge about different areas, countries and cultures. The main aim of this work is to find out what image is formed by Slovak media on Sub-Saharan Africa by targeted selection and presentation of the various events. Article is divided in the theoretical (including methodology) and empirical part. In the theoretical part we define the key terms and theoretical frameworks for the article, while empirical part is based on the research of Slovak media and analysis of relevant news stories.

Key words: *Sub-Saharan Africa, media, news, stereotype.*

Іжак Ш.

ІДЕНТИЧНІСТЬ ТЕРОРИСТА І ЖЕРТВИ
(ОБРАЗ АФРИКИ НА ПІВДЕНЬ ВІД САХАРИ В СЛОВАЦЬКИХ МЕДІА)

У статті розглянуто засоби масової інформації та образ Африки на південь від Сахари, який вони створюють у суспільстві. Медіа є важливим джерелом інформації, оскільки вони допомагають розширити наш погляд на світ. У статті автор фокусує увагу на їхній функції поширення інформації про різні регіони, країни і культури. Основною метою статті є з'ясування, який образ Африки на південь від Сахари формують словацькі медіа шляхом цілеспрямованого відбору і представлення різних подій. Стаття поділена на теоретичну (враховуючи методологію) й емпіричну частини. У теоретичній частині ми визначаємо ключові терміни і теоретичні засади дослідження, а в емпіричній проведено дослідженнях словацьких ЗМІ й аналіз відповідних новин.

Ключові слова: *Африка на південь Сахари, медіа, новини, стереотип.*

Ижак Ш.

ИДЕНТИЧНОСТЬ ТЕРРОРИСТА И ЖЕРТВЫ
(ОБРАЗ АФРИКИ НА ЮГ ОТ САХАРЫ В СЛОВАЦКИХ МАДИА)

В данной статье рассмотрены средства массовой информации и образ Африки на юг от Сахары, который они создают в обществе. Медиа являются важным источником информации, поскольку они помогают расширить наш взгляд на мир. В статье автор фокусирует внимание на их функцию распространения информации о разных регионах, странах и культурах. Основной целью данной статьи является объяснение, какой образ Африки на юг от Сахары формируют словацкие медиа путем целенаправленного отбора и представления разных событий. Статья поделена на теоретическую (включая методологию) и эмпирическую части. В теоретической части мы определяем ключевые термины и теоретические принципы исследования, а в эмпирической части проведено исследование словацких СМИ и анализ соответствующих новостей.

Ключевые слова: *Африка на юг от Сахары, медиа, новости, стереотип.*

Methodology

The main purpose of this article is to find out what image of Sub-Saharan Africa[1] is constructed by targeted selection and presentation of various events in Slovak media newscast. In our research we are finding answers to four researching questions. 1. About what Sub-Saharan countries the Slovak media inform? Considering the Western war against Islamic terrorism and because of the disorder in the Middle East and the related refugee crisis, we assume that Slovak media will inform more about the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, where the Islam has strong position, possibly states where are riots (terrorist attacks) 2. About what themes? Considering the eurocentric set of knowledge that we have in our society about Sub-Saharan Africa and by power unevenly distributed postcolonial relations between Europe and Africa, we assume that the media are the tools that help create and continue to reproduce the image of poor African countries, mainly described in the light of their negatives and weaknesses that legitimize power *status quo* 3. In what relationships are Sub-Saharan countries presented toward the West? In this question we come out from the previous assumption, just like in previous question 4. In what relationships are Sub-

---

[1] Sub-Saharan Africa is a part of the African continent, which include all countries on the south from Sahara desert., except North Africa countries Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan.

Saharan countries presented to the Slovakia? Since Slovakia is a member of the European Union and seeks to present itself as a mature democratic nation, we expect that African countries will be in relation to Slovakia mentioned in the submissive position. Considering the absence of colonial past and a minimum of military and political links with the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, we assume that the most common theme will be development cooperation, where Slovakia would be presented as a donor.

Research of the media lasted for five months (since September 2015 to the end of January 2016). We analyse news from seven Slovak media, four printed (Sme, Nový čas, Pravda, Plus 1 deň), two televisions (Markíza and TV JOJ) and one online media (aktuality.sk). The main criteria for choosing these media was their high viewership.

As a methods of processing the news we used the method of content analysis which allowed me to analyse a great amount of the news. Content analysis is a standard method for analysing communication used in social and humanitarian sciences like sociology, cultural anthropology, politology etc. This method is a *"research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifested content of communication"* (McQuail 1999: 307). In the next next scheme is described her application:

"1. Choose a universe or a sample of content. 2. Establish a category frame of external referents relevant to the purpose of the enquiry (such as a set of political parties, or countries which may be referred to in content). 3. Choose a unit analysis from the content (this could be a word, a sentence, an item, a whole news story, a Picture, a sequence, etc.). 4. Seek to match the content to the category frame by counting the frequency of the references to relevant items in the category frame, per chosen unit of content. 5. Express the results as an overall distributuin of the complete universe or chosen content sample in terms of the frequency of occurrence of the sought-for referents." (McQuail, 1999: 362).

For research unit we consider a reports placed on the internet servers of the mentioned media. The selection criterium is word Africa, or places that lie in a country in Sub-Saharan Africa, or the country's name in the title or subtitle of reports. By this criterium we ensure that selected and analyzed are only those messages that were directly engaged to happening in Sub-Saharan Africa, although it is clear to me that the imagination of the region can also be affected by articles that are devoted to Sub-Saharan Africa only marginally or indirectly. We choose the internet serves of the media for two reasons. Because of simplier access and because of their higher viewership in comparison with printed versions. We are also aware of critique on content analysis. Her disadvantage is disability to make a deep analysis of communicated text like for example discoursive analysis.

Theoretical part

There is no doubt that the media have a great impact on our society. They play an important role in the construction of widely shared meanings, ideas and values, which cause a social actions. By the same time, the media are integral part of society and they are determinate by it. Thus, the media are able to legitimate our symbolic world and maintain our social order and protect power *status quo*. Thanks to a massive progress in the field of modern technologies, they are able to spread these meanings to the wide spectrum of social actors and modify their views on the world and their behaviour.

Newscast is a specific medial genre with high vieweship. This genre constitute itself as a objective and reliable mediator of contemporary events, informations, facts and also values and norms of society. The produced medial contents are mirroring the character of the concrete medial institution and character of the whole society (Trampota, 2006).

The media are part of the neoliberal economical system and they have to produce financial gain. So necessity of making the news attractive as possible to attract more and more people is for them a mater of life and dead. Reporters try to process as many events, as they can handle, but they can´t process everything. Only "the most important" events can reach the status of news in our tv screen, internet server, radio speaker or newsprint.

The process of selecting, writing, editing, siting, planning, repetition and further processing of information to such messages through the media passed on to the consumer of newscast is called *gatekeeping* (Reese – Shoemaker – Vos, 2009). The concept of *gatekeeping* is related to the theory of news values, that are described in the book *What´s news?* (2016) from Tony Harcup & Deirdre O'Neill. If some event suppose to be a part of the news, it should contain some of these criteria: Exclusivity, Bad news, Conflict, Surprise, Audio-visuals, Shareability, Entertainment, Drama, Follow-up, The power elite, Relevance, Magnitude, Celebrity, Good news News organisation's agenda (Harcup-O´Neill, 2016).

Newsworthiness of event isn´t defined only by concrete *gatekeeper*, although personality of journalist is important too. Journalists also belong to some ethnic, social, or confessional groups, they are born and raised in concrete environment, that formed their views on the world. But there is a lot of other influences which can affect the final form of the news. Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky in their book *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media* (1988, 2002) argue that the media are part of the propaganda model and they estimate five filters, which shape the final form of reports. The first is *ownership of the medial institution* and its focus on profit. The media are businesses and their owners usually belong to the social elite, and sometimes have

direct interests in various industries, and even in politics. Second filter is *advertising*. The media are used to attract people and their purchasing power to corporations, which they buy advertising. The third is *sourcing*, where large companies are often suppliers of important messages. The fourth filter is *flak* which represent all forms of critique directed towards media programs. The fifth filter is *dominant ideology*. During the Cold War it was ideology of anti-communism in USA (Herman-Chomsky, 1988). Teun van Dijk argues that media replaced traditional institutions for spreading ideology like family, schools, churches etc. because of their ability to share ideas to masses by fast pace (van Dijk, 1998).

If the media want to reach a wide range of audience they have to process informations really fast. This fact, pushes them under time pressure. Under these conditions, the resulting products can lose their quality and interesting phenomenon can occurs, when quantity takes precedence over quality. For faster processing and interpretation of the events, the media have developed various standards and routines by which events are processed to a resulting news stories. Pamela Shoemaker says that the forms of media routines stem from three fundamental pressures emanating from the public, media organizations and resources. From these types of impacts result for journalists three basic questions: What will the audience care about? What the media is able to handle? What material is available? (Shoemaker 1996). The problem may be, that routine treatment of events may constitute a significant bias in the social reality, which is represented to audience and have a impact on it.

Very interesting in this way is function of big international news agencies. Western agencies like the British Reuters, the American Associated Press (AP), the German Deutsche Presse (DPA), or the french Agence France Presse (AFP) and others, dominate to global informational market. For Denis McQuail the big international agencies are like *"wholesale distributors of informations as a goods of a kind"* (McQuail, 1999: 205). Their customers are smaller national, or local agencies, which offer reports at the domestic market. In Slovakia there are two national news agencies, the Slovak news agency a.s. (SITA)[2] and the Slovak Press Agency (TASR)[3]. Many of Slovak media buy the reports (mainly foreign news) from these agencies, because it is cheaper and easier, than paying own reporters abroad. Although Tomáš Trampota (2006) sees some negative aspects at the activities of the big western international news agencies. According to him the dominance of the small group of such giants at the market with informations could mean a homogenous production of news, which are results of institutionally and culturally homnogenous staffs (Trampota, 2006).

It is fair to say that majority of the Slovak citizens doesn´t have a regural and direct experience with somebody from Sub-Saharan Africa and many informations about this area has from the media. So in this case the impact of the medial representations is even stronger and there is a great space for constructing misinterpretations and stereotypes about Africans.

Of course we can´t look at the audience as monolithic entity. Everyone is watching on the news something else. Someone actively reads articles, someone just listens radio during other activities, someone only reads headlines. Man can´t remember the exact wording of the text, but its meaning. Repeating ensure that the information remains in the memory. People tend to remember informations that stepped into their memory first, it means that it is more likely to remember the informations from the beginning of the text (captions, first phrases etc.). Emotionally colored events (positive, negative) are more likely to be kept in mind than a neutral event (Atkinson in Letavajová 2010). Very important elements in the proces of constructing our mental maps and evoking emotions aren´t just words, but also images used in the news.

While dissemination of information could be considered as a short-term effect of news, for a long-term effect could be considered bringing topics in society (*agenda setting*), which is caused by relatively consistent selection of events. The idea of *agenda setting* is implied from assumption, that media can affect recipients awareness of what is important and what is not by selection and representation of some themes and by ignoring of others (Nečas, 2008). From everything written above, it is obvious that the media actively work with events. They define actors, environment and dominant angles to look at the event. *"Picking some aspects of observed reality and giving them greater importance in communicating text in a way supporting a particular problem definition by causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or recommendations addressing the described facts is called framing"* (Tabery, 2008: 30). In analysis of news is important find out what is expressed in news, but also what is missing and should be there. By processes of *gatekeeping*, *agenda setting* and *framing* the media are constructing dominant and marginal frameworks for understanding various topics, Sub-Saharan Africa not excluding.

By a constant repetition, these frameworks can become completely natural views on the area (in our case Sub-Saharan Africa). Walter Lippmann in his publication *Public opinion* (1922) argues that the media are windows to the world beyond our personal experience, so by selecting, processing and representation of events shape our cognitive maps. In that way, our thinking and actions are just reflection of pseudo-environment created by the media (Nečas, 2008). Thus, we have to be very careful and try to be critical toward news, because sometimes they can contain misinformations, or stereotypes.

The stereotype is a simplified and distorted representation, which is caused by limited space and the need to quickly and briefly describe the actors of situation (Trampota, 2006). Stereotypical images are based on prejudices

---

[2] In Slovak language SITA – Slovenská tlačová agentúra a.s.
[3] In Slovak language TASR – Tlačová agentúra Slovenskej republiky.

deeply rooted in society, they are reproduced by constant using. All stereotypes despite their natural look and false objectivity are socially constructed and can be destroyed, or modified. Stereotypes reduce their model to a few basic attributes and these attributes are being exaggerated. With stereotypes are necessarily linked evaluating aspects such prejudices, attitudes, judgments. Constant presentation of particular social, ethnic groups through stereotypes can lead to a distorted and negative perception of them, what is then manifested in their social status (which is legitimized by stereotypical ideas). In this sense the stereotypes can be very dangerous. *"The process of stereotyping foreign group has the following features: Choice of most extreme characteristics of group, crediting this features to all members of the group regardless of the facts, homogenization foreign group using the similarities and the essential distinction from our own group"* (Šmausová 1999: 438). We have to mention that not all stereotypes are negative, there are also positive sterotypes. Our brain need to use stereotypes, because it can´t capture the whole social reality in her complicated complexity, but we have to be responsible in using them, and be aware of their possible impacts.

An important element that has a great impact on the perception of our collective identities is access to the media and the opportunity to speak for themselves. According to van Dijk (1995), especially social and political elites have access to the media, which means that they can legitimize their power and status. On the other hand ethnic minorities, refugees etc. have only small space in the media to represent themselves. Furthermore van Dijk notes that the Western media are used to reproduce racism and negative stereotypes about minorities and countries of "global south". Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, South America and large parts of Asia are usually displayed in discourse of uncivilized backwardness and being presented as a territory full of violence, terrorism, ethnic conflicts etc. Ethnic polarisation is in the media reproduces implicitly based on demarcation of binary opositions "us and them". In category "us" are prefered our positive attributes and diminished our negative attribures, while category "them" is decribed mostly with negative attributes and positive attributes are being diminished (van Dijk 1995).

Many authors who studied image of Africa in the Western media confirmed these thesis (Araya 2007; Brantlinger 2004; Fair 1993; Farárik – Zorad 2015; Franks 2005; Horáková 2007; Chavis 1998; Mahadeo – McKinney 2007; Michira 2002; Obijiofor 2009; van Dijk 1991). For example James Michira in his article *Images of Africa in the Western Media* (2002) argues that Africa is in the western media under-represented and described mainly by negative conotations and stereotypes. He divide images of Africa into seven categories:

1. Africa as a homogeneous entity.
2. Africa as a "dark" continent.
3. Africa as wilderness / jungle.
4. Africa as a place of hunger, famine and starvation.
5. Africa as a place of violence, conflicts and civil wars.
6. Political instability in Africa.
7. HIV / AIDS pandemic in Africa (Michira, 2002).

Very interesting publication in this field is also *Viewing the world: A study of British television coverage of developing countries* (2000) by Glasgow Media Group. This study didn´t analyse only news, but also some other tv programs like documents, programs for kids, programs about cooking and so on. It analysed coverage of all "developing" countries, not just Sub-Saharan countries. Of the total of 137 countries were mentioned in news only 72. Africa was at least covered continent. From the total amount of then 52 african countries, there weren´t mentioned at least once 28 countries and 27 of them were from Sub-Saharan Africa. Algeria, Mauritania, Seychelles, Sudan and Western Sahara were mentioned only in connection with a sporting event, visiting someone from the West, animals, or some bizarre event. Viewing countries of "global south" was linked mainly with negative connotations, the most common topics were the conflict / war / terrorism, visitors from the Western countries, sport, politics, natural disasters (DFID 2000).

The way the Western media portray Sub-Saharan Africa today is strongly connected to the historical process of creating a knowledge about this area by whole Western civilization. Our understanding of Sub-Saharan Africa is a result of longtime prefered and reproduced eurocentric and racist discourse[4], which legitimazed inequality in relationships between Europeans and Africans. Richard Reid (2011) sees the origin of this knowledge on/about Africa in the period of slave trade, but especially in the 19th century and in colonial period.

In the 19th century European countries started to "discover" continent of Africa. The reasons were various: sciencie, rivality between nations, but the most important reasons were definitely economical and political. It was the period of massive industrialization in Europe and European nations needed a lot of raw materials and cash crops for their economies and Africa seemed to be a perfect place for both. Even African market served as a big outlet for European products. During the Berlin conference (1884/1885) the European countries agreed on the conditions under which it is possible to divide territories in Africa and establish colonies. This power-driven process of Euro-

---

[4] Concept of discourse doesn´t have one universal definition in social sciences. In this article i understand discourse as language or set of representations that are socially evolved to create and put into circulation a coherent set of meanings of some major thematic areas. This language serve to the interests of the social group in which the discourse has origin and that the ideologically working on the naturalization of those meanings in common sense (Fiske in Bočák, 2012).

pean expansion (in many cases very violent) was justified by knowledge, which was based on binary opositions "us and them", "civilized-uncivilized", "rational-irational", "adult-infantile" etc. These opinions about Africans stayed on the pseudo-scientific theories about human races, on social evolutionism and was linked to strong eurocentrism.

Europeans saw African through this paradigm (colonial discourse) and it helped constructed image of African cultures as natural "primitive, backward and immature" (Reid, 2011). On the imaginary evolution ladder the "black race" was at the bottom, on contrary the "white race" was on the top and it was her "burden"[5] to bring christianity, civilization and comerce to "backward" Africans and help them to escape from "dark" continent. This "help" should be delivered by direct colonial intervention of European governments, because of stereotype, that Africans weren´t able to take care of their territories, only white man could. Based on racial stereotypes Africa was seen as a "dark" continent, which was defined in opposition to the developed Europe (development model) only by weaknesses and negatives (savages, conflicts, diseases, exotic rituals etc.). Knowledge was spread by colonial administrators, misionaries, travelers and also by scientists (anthropologists not exclude).

In colonial period European powers divided African ethnics into the stable, unchanging units called "tribes", because they didn´t believe Africans could live in such a community as a European nation (evolutionary thinking) and for simpler administration. The term "tribe" even today evokes a certain lower position on the evolutionary ladder, a certain stiffness (Horáková, 2007).

After the fall of the colonial regimes after the Second World War, the colonial discourse transformed into the discourse of development, where development isn´t provided by colonial intervention, but by development cooperation, loans etc. (Profant, 2013) The main actors aren´t just national states, but also World Bank and International Monetary Fund, or private companies and non-governmental organisations (NGO´s). Also in this discourse are clearly outlined binary oppositions "us and them", when they are described by certain abnormalities mainly to the ideal of what constitutes us. This apparent eurocentrism associated with cultural arrogance and lust for power has contributed significantly to our current way of thinking about Sub-Saharan Africa and about other countries of "global south" as the naturally backward and underdeveloped parts of the world. At the same time in this way the negative characterization of "others" the West confirms the positive myth of its own uniqueness.

Empirical part

During the monitored period we have found 763 reports about Sub-Saharan countries. The most reports occurred in November and 235 messages, while at least reports appeared in September, namely 94. In October it was 96 reports in December 180 and in January, 158 messages. We can see that during examined months the number of reports varried a lot. A large number of reports in november was mainly due to two events that Slovak media devoted big attention. The first was a terrorist attack on a hotel in Bamako (Mali), which was especially popular with visitors from the West and the other was the first trip of Pope Francis I. to the African continent.

On the news portal of journal SME we determined the most relevant reports 240, while Plus 1 deň, or TV Markíza produced only for 64 reports. Aktuality.sk portal published 149 reports, Nový čas 99, Pravda 76 and TV JOJ 71. It is fair to say, that daily SME covers not just the most events in Sub-Saharan Africa, but the topics diversity was the widdest and there is apparent effort to present events in a wider contexts. We see that there are significant differences in the interest of the media in Sub-Saharan Africa, since two of the seven surveyed media (SME and Aktuality.sk) produced a total of 389 messages which represents 51% of the total news stories. In average, the surveyed media produced only 22 reports per month. In two tv´s we examined their news programmes and during the period we indentified 23 news stories in tv Markíza and 44 in tv JOJ, which is smaller number in comparison with news portals of the media. The above statistics show us that the Slovak media don´t report about Sub-Saharan Africa by some consistent and regular manner. It is rather a random selection of events that could have a readership. This area in our media occurs rarely, reflecting the lack of interest of the media, which originates mainly in public disinterest.

About what Sub-Saharan countries the Slovak media inform?

11 countries from 49 observed countries of Sub-Saharan Africa aren´t mentioned once. Small island countries like Cape Verde, Comoros, Mauritius, Seychelles, São Tomé and Príncipe and continental countries like Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Malawi, Swaziland, Togo. Five countries are mentioned only in one report (Benin, Ghana, Mauretania, Mozambique, Zambia). Another seven countries are mentioned only with relation to one event.

The most reports are devoted to Nigeria (91), the second most reported country was Somalia (75), followed by Burkina Faso (65), Mali (63), Kenya (57), South Africa (39). The number of reports dealing primarily these six countries is 390, representing 51% of all reports. Others countries of Sub-Saharan Africa are represented by 49% of reports. The Slovak media don´t inform about Sub-Saharan Africa in balanced way, rather we can see a relatively narrow range of countries with majoritarian space. In all mentioned countries except South Africa appear terrorist attacks of terrorist organisations[6] and these attacks attract attention of the media.

---

[5] White man´s burden is symbolical phrase of colonial era, which is based on the novel of Rudyard Kipling, who glorified the British Imperialism.

[6] Boko haram in Nigeria, Al Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya, Al Quaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in Mali and Burkina Faso.

It is also interesting to compare the number of reports dealing with events in Sub-Saharan Africa and those dealing with events in North Africa. Seven countries of North Africa[7] are primarily mentioned in the 634 reports, while Sub-Saharan countries 763. Quantitative it is indeed larger number, but given the size of the area and the number of countries the number of reports on the country is much lower. Per country of North Africa it accounts for an average of 91 reports, while Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for only 16 messages. North Africa is to Slovak media and public much more attractive area for abstracting, because it is from geographically, political and economic point of view closer to Slovakia.

In the articles on about Sub-Saharan africa we can follow a tendency of the media to talk about it as a homogenous entity. It is done by characteristic of events in coutries through not specifying geographic location and using simplified notion Africa which automatically attach concrete attributes to the whole continent and reproduce the stereotype of Africa as one country. This feature can be explored especially in the headlines, such as. *"Fragile victory over Ebola is at hand: Africa rejoices!"*[8] (Pluska, 12.29.2015). *"France and Germany will help Africa with renewal energy sources"*[9] (SME, 01.12.2015), *"Unidentified gunmen kidnapped 14 African aid workers"*[10] (SME, 11.02.2015). This way of writing headlines can lead to significant distortions, particularly if the reader doesn´t deals with the entire contents of the report, he can think that Ebola has hit the whole continent, although it was widespread in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

About what themes?

Definitely the most reports are dedicated to the theme of *war/conflict/terrorism* (340–44,6% of all reports). This category we can divide into the two sub-categories. The first is sub-category of *terrorist attacks* (258 reports – 33.8% of all reports) and second is sub-category of *other conflicts* (wars, poltical, or ethnic conflicts, etc.) which is represented by 82 reports – 10,8% of all reports.

Sub-category of *terrorism* deals with terrorists attacks in some countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. Terrorism is connected with Islam and in reports this connection is explicitly written. There are usually a short news from news agencies, with basic strucuture of report, which give answers to questions who? where? when? how? why? The last paragraph often offers a short context informations. In this news related to terrorism we identified two most common identities ascribed to Africans. The first one is identity of victims, usually helpless civilians and is expressed approximate number of dead, or injuried what implies their lower social status. Other is identity of dangerous terrorist, who are portrayed as violent people, who have no problem to kill anybody.

Sub-category of *other conflicts* deals with conflicts, where no longer figure a terrorists groups. This sub-category consists mainly of posts about the political crisis in Burkina Faso, the crisis in Burundi and South Sudan, or the violence in the Central African Republic. The reports talk about concrete actions such as protests, open violence, which in the long-term tensions arise. Mainly three stereotypes are reproduced by these reports, that Africans can´t live in a democratic society (as we in Europe), and that they can´t adequately govern themselves, but rather their indicates strict rule by one party (leader). The third is the stereotype of Africans as violent people, when political change can´t be achieved by democratic ways, but by force. If in these reports appear some western leaders, mostly as advocates of democratic values and challengers for common dialogue both conflicting parties. We see that the reports dedicated to violence and conflict (whether terrorism or political instability) make up almost half of all news stories. Constantly displaying Africans in conflict situations creates an idea that violence in Sub-Saharan Africa is something natural, which firmly belongs to Africans.

The second biggest thematical category is dedicated to *economic* with 92 reports (12,1%). Only 16 reports deals with some economic realtionships, growth, investisions or trade. 76 reports is about development cooperation betwenn the West (or Slovakia) and Sub-Saharan countries, which evokes stereotype, that Sub-Saharan states are weak and not equal economic partners for the West. Development cooperation is presented only in a positive ways. Where active role plays "generous" Western subjects and Africans are portrayed as a passive objects of this cooperation, characterised by their negatives, whic should be eliminated by cooperation, usually in field of education, economic, health care. The Africans don´t dispose with many opportunities to express themselves, much more opportunities have the representants of the West, like politicians, celebrities or development workers. Development cooperation is presented only in positive ways as only tools to solve African problems, but we can´t find a explanations of causes of these problems, or some historical contexts, problems are just there. Development cooperation is considered as something natural in relationships between the West and Sub-Saharan Africa, but is no mentioned the importance of Africa for the Western economies. As we can see in the report of tv Markíza from 17th of January

---

[7] Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Western Sahara.

[8] http://www.pluska.sk/spravy/zo-zahranicia/krehke-vitazstvo-nad-ebolou-je-dosah-afrika-raduje.html (downloaded at 30.12.2015).

[9] http://svet.sme.sk/c/8090424/francuzsko-a-nemecko-pomozu-afrike-s-obnovou-energetickych-zdrojov.html (downloaded at 2.12.2015).

[10] http://www.sme.sk/c/8058268/neznami-ozbrojenci-uniesli-v-afrike-14-humanitarnych-pracovnikov.html (downloaded at 3.11.2015).

2016 which talks about the Trabant charity race on the route from Hungary to Mali that *"the black continent has traditionally get humanitarian aid"*.

Health, health care and hygiene is the third thematical category that consists of 68 reports (8,9%). 61 reports in this category deal with the epidemic of ebola in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Others deal with different diseases like AIDS or malaria. In this thematical category we can see a two types of news stories, where the first type talks about more victims of virus[11] and the second type about the end of epidemic[12]. Constant media coverage of the cycle of ends and beginnings of the epidemic represents an enormous stamina of virus, but on the other hand, implies the low level of hygiene and certain irresponsibility of Africans in whom the virus is constantly appearing, even after statements by the World Health Organization (WHO) to end the epidemic and quarantine those who came with the victims of in-person contact. News articles on Ebola continues to reproduce the stereotype of Africa as a hatchery of dangerous diseases for which they are not able to help themselves, but have to seek the assistance of international organizations and Western countries. It convinces the myth of Africans as weak, passive victims dependent on the help of others, unable to speak for themselves.

64 articles (8,4%) are associated with theme of *crime*. In 20 cases the criminal is a public known people like Oskar Pistorius from South Africa or Radovan Krejčíř from Czech republic. It shows us, that presence of public known person increase chances for events to become a news story (see news values from Harcup-O´Neill, 2016). But in the most cases the criminals were Africans and their non-western idetity was explicitelly expressed.

In the thematical category of *politics* we identify 57 reports (7,5%), that deal with various political events such as political meetings, referendums, but mostly with elections. We can see a tendency in our media to refer more about elections, which are accompanied with troubles, protests, violence or authocratic government. It is easy to demonstrate it on the concrete case, when online news portal of Nový čas published a article about election in the Ivory Coast, where the election was influenced by civil war after the last election in 2010. At the same time, election (without problems) was in the progress in Tanzania, but it isn´t commented in single article, only by a few sentences in the article about Ivory Coast[13].

Another bigger category is about *visitors from the West* (53 reports – 7% of all reports). Except of three articles about death of Slovak Peter Lupták and five articles about Prince Harry´s visit in Lesotho, all news stories talk about Pope Francis I. and his visit of Kenya, Uganda and Central African Republic in November 2015. All these persons are presented in a positive light. Pope is understood as a element of positive change. His statement (similar to missionaries of 19th century) parafrased by daily SME *"Francis marked himself as a Messenger of peace for African continent, destroyed by conflicts and extremists attacks"*[14] (SME, 25.11.2015). On the other hand African countries were described mostly by negative connotations and their problems in the oposition toward positive westerners. These binary opositions between "civilized" West (represented by Pope Francis I.) and backward Africa are expressed by this expressive headline *"Pope Francis I. for the first time in Africa: Leading the mass in a mud"*[15] (Plus 1 deň, 27.11.2015).

During our research we classified another marginal thematical categories like *Catastrophies* (3,20%), *Nature* (3%), *Human rights* (2,8%), *Culture* (1,7%), *Others* (1,1%). Also in these categories we identified some articles, which reproduced stereotypes on Africans. We can insert some interesting parts of articles here. This passage comes from a reports of tv Markíza from 22.10.2015 about consumption of cats in Congo and dogs in Cambodia:

"While we wouldn´t put a roasted dog or cat in our mouth, on the other side of the globe people don´t have problem with that, unawared of danger to their health. [Stereotype: the ignorance of Africans, paternalistic attitude. Author´s note]. *Cat, not as pet, but as delicacy on the plate. The inhabitants of the African Congo eat cats, like us chicken or pork, but not every cat goes to the pot (...) The procedure for preparation of the cats is the same as for other animals. For European eyes just annoying and unbearable* [Stereotype: violence, brutality, attitude – refusal. Author´s note], *because cat is the cute pet and doesn´t belong on the plate"*.

Another example of a stereotypical perception of Africans as "exotic" is part of the article of the newspaper Nový čas (13.11.2015) on a recycling art from Ethiopia with cynical headline *"For us waste, to them treasure"*[16].

---

[11]   http://svet.sme.sk/c/20076985/sierra-leone-ma-druhy-pripad-eboly-epidemiu-pritom-pokladali-za-skoncenu.html (downloaded at 22.1.2016).

[12]   http://www.tvnoviny.sk/zahranicne/1815101_epidemia-eboly-v-guinei-sa-skoncila-nakazilo-sa-nou-3800-ludi (downloaded at 30.12.2015).

[13] http://www.cas.sk/clanok/334426/v-zapadoafrickom-pobrezi-slonoviny-sa-hlasovalo-prve-volby-od-obcianskej-vojny-z-roku-2011/ (downloaded at 27.10.2015).

[14] http://www.sme.sk/c/8083095/papez-frantisek-zacal-mierovu-cestu-do-troch-africkych-krajin.html (downloaded at 26.11.2015).

[15] http://www.sme.sk/c/8083095/papez-frantisek-zacal-mierovu-cestu-do-troch-africkych-krajin.html (downloaded at 26.11.2015).

[16] http://www.cas.sk/clanok/336140/kmen-v-etiopii-predstavil-vlastnu-kolekciu-modnych-doplnkov-pre-nas-odpad-pre-nich-poklad/ (downloaded 14.11.2015).

"While Western civilization makes sure that we are recycling more and more waste, tourists in Africa obviously forget this challenge. Little Blacks [stereotype: African as a child, paternalistic attitude, Author´s note] *are active and from the old plugs from bottles, rechargeable cards from the phones and even from old watches have created ornaments that can next year become a hit of the season"* [Attitude of ridicule. Author´s note].

In what relations are Sub-Saharan countries presented toward the West countries?

Relations to some of the Western countries were indentified in 207 articles (27%), but with counting of Slovakia the number will increase to 260 articles (34%). In the majority of news stories were Sub-Saharan countries presented in submissive position to the West countries (59%). The most mentioned of the Western countries were France 74 reports (9,7%) and USA 61 reports (8%), less mentioned countrie were Germany 13 reports (1,7%), Belgium 10 reports (1,3%), Spain nine reports (1,2%), Sweden five reports (0,7%) and former colonial superpower Great Britain only 12 reports (1,6%).

The most common relationship was *military relationship* 32,9% (68 reports). These reports usually describe military operations of the West countries targeted on terrorists groups in Africa, where the West plays active role of freedom protector. Neocolonial relations aren´t problematised, mostly on the French side[17]. Sub-Saharan coutries are described as dangerous and problematic so the cooperation of the West looks legitime.

The same percentage of the articles delas with the category of *the Western victims in Sub-Saharan Africa* 32,9% (68 reports). Westerners (usually soldiers, development workers, or civilians) are victims of attacks, murders[18] or kidnapping[19] by the terrorists groups. In the majority of articles the Westerns try to "help" in Africa, so criminal acts against them implies stereotype that Africans are dangerous and not interested in this kind of "help".

Similar relationship is constructed in the news stories connected to *crime* 15 reports (7,3%), where except of four cases are the westerners victims of the violent acts of Africans.

The colonial relationship is expressed in 22 reports (10,6%), but it is not critized at all. It is usually mentioned only by short sentences like *"people of former French colony"[20]* (Sme, 22.12.2015). Although in many reports it would be helpfull to analyse the heritage of colonialism, or neocolonialism and their impacts on the present of Sub-Saharan countries.

Another bigger category can be *development cooperation between the West and Sub-Saharan countries* that make 5,8% (12 reports), but it is already analysed in the previous research question.

Also some small categories can be identified in this research question, like *Migration* (3,9% – seven reports), *the West speaks about Africa* (3,4% – seven reports), *the West judge Africans* (1% – two reports), *Curiosities* (1% – two reports), *Imperialism* (0,5% – one report) and *Art* (0,5% – one report).

In what relationships are Sub-Saharan countries presented toward the Slovakia?

In this research question we deal with 53 articles (7%) where some interaction between Slovakia (or Slovaks) and Sub-Saharan countries was expressed. Submissive position of Africans we can identify in 59% of these articles.

24 reports (45.3%) deal with *development cooperation* . In all is Slovakia presented as a donor who provides a financial, or personal cooperation[21]. This processes are understood as positive and Slovakia is building a international prestige by it. While space for Africans to express themselves is marginalized. By the similar positive attributes is Slovakia described as a provider of asylum for refugees in all four articles in the category of the migration (7,6%).

In the category of the *crime* (15,1%), which is created by eight reports, Slovakia becomes a destination for African drug smugglers[22].

Six articles (11,4%) are devoted to *Slovak visitors in Africa*. Connection between Slovak and African nature is expressed in three articles (5,7%), which write about fly of eagle Anička from Slovakia to Africa (category *nature*)[23]. Also three reports in the category *military relations* (5,7%) inform us about Slovak support of French military operation on Mali. This participation on war against terrorism increase Slovak international reputation[24].

---

[17] http://svet.sme.sk/c/8009022/sprostredkovatelia-ponukli-plan-na-riesenie-krizy-v-burkina-faso.html (downloaded at 22.9.2015).

[18] http://www.sme.sk/c/8084636/francuzsky-vojak-na-misii-v-mali-podlahol-zraneniam.html (downloaded at 27.11.2015).

[19] http://svet.sme.sk/c/20071019/mali-v-meste-timbuktu-uniesli-svajciarsku-obcianku.html (downloaded at 9.1.2016).

[20] http://svet.sme.sk/c/20068325/stredoafricania-maju-novu-ustavu-schvalili-ju-v-referende.html (downloaded at 23.12.2015).

[21] http://domov.sme.sk/c/8079811/najviac-nasich-dobrovolnikov-pomahalo-v-keni.html (downloaded at 23.11.2015).

[22] http://www.tvnoviny.sk/domace/1814570_na-bratislavskom-letisku-zadrzali-nigerijcana-s-kilogramom-kokainu-v-tele (downloaded at 23.12.2015).

[23] http://spravy.pravda.sk/regiony/clanok/371269-orlica-anicka-uz-leti-afrikou/ (downloaded at 21.10.2015)

[24] http://www.sme.sk/c/8090576/do-mali-vysleme-vojenskych-expertov-rotacia-ma-stat-do-400-tisic-eur.html (downloaded at 2.12.2015).

Other marginal categories are containig of articles about *Politics* (3,8% – two reports), *Economic* (3,8% – one reports), or *Activism* (1,9% – one report).

Conclusion

The media have a great power and responsibility in our society. They help us create our views on the world. This is particularly true for areas, with which we have no regural and direct experiences and Sub-Saharan Africa belongs between these areas, so we see the media as a very important apparatus through which we shape our understanding of this area. So image of Sub-Saharan Africa in the media is dominant image in whole society. The main purpose of this article was to find out how is Sub-Saharan Africa represented in the Slovak media. Due to the content analysis, we was able to process selected reports and reconstructed the media image of Sub-Saharan Africa. The results shows us that Sub-Saharan Africa is in the Slovak media under-represented and there is no systematic manner of coverage it. The media prefer stories with action or strong stories. The assumption that a reports about Sub-Saharan Africa are colored with negative tone and attention is paid mainly on a problems, like conflicts and terrorism, poverty, disease, development cooperation has proved to be valid. Just like the assumption that Sub-Saharan countries will be to the Western countries (including Slovakia) displayed in the submissive position, as entities dependent on the Western "generosity". Our media follow the historical continuity when Africans in the Western discourses are depicted mostly by negative connotations and weaknesses (in the system of binary opositions). Africans are described mostly by stereotypical identities as poor, violent, politically backward, exotic, etc. We see that place which is Sub-Saharan Africa in our symbolic world is still burdened by a colonial past, where most of the current stereotypes have origins.

In a last few years we can see some turning points in informing about Africa in some Western media, that try to bring a more balanced image of the African continent. So it is time for the Slovak media to try crack down the stereotypical notions of Africa as "dark" continent too. Helpfull would be represent Africans as capable of action, equal and culturally advanced individuals who can bring to this world positive values, not just desperation, violence and hopelessness, bringing wider diversity of themes, putting events in the wider contexts, watching the trends on the continent, etc. As a first step towards overcoming prejudices would be certainly appropriate and demand. To fulfill this goal, however, it is also needed quality training and awareness of journalists, because they are the ones who produce the news and are thus in the hands of great power and responsibility.

Bibliography:

1. Araya S. The misrepresentation of Africa. 2007. Available at : http://www.pambazuka.net/en/category.php/comment/39756.

2. Bočák M. Diskurz – koncept kritický: nereflektované riziká používania výrazu mediálny diskurz. 2012. Available at: http://www.ff.unipo.sk/jak/cislo10.html.

3. Brantlinger P. Victorians and Africans : The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent. In Joseph Conrad´s Dark Continent : Case Book. Moore, G.M. (ed). New York : Oxford University Press, 2004. – P. 43–89.

4. Department for International Development. Viewing the world : A study of British television coverage of developing countries. 2000. Available at : https://celebrityanddevelopment.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/2000viewing-the-world-dfid.pdf.

5. Fair J. E. War, Femine and Poverty : Race in the Construction of Africa´s Media Image. In Journal of Communication Inquiry, 1993, Vol. 17, No. 2. – P. 5–22.

6. Farárik P – Zorad, L. Afrika: Mýty a fakty. Bratislava: Človek v ohrození, 2015.

7. Harcup T. – O'Neill, D. What is news? News values revisited (again). 2016. Available at : http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1461670X.2016.1150193.

8. Herman E. S. – Chomsky, N. Manufacturing Consent : The Political Economy of the Mass Media. New York : Pantheon Books, 1988.

9. Horáková H. Past and present: Sub-Saharan Africa in european perception. In Asian and African studies, 2007, Vol. 1. – P. 45–54.

10. Chavis R. Africa in the Western Media. Africa studies Centre, 1998. Available at : www.africa.upenn.edu/Workshop/chavis98.html.

11. Letavajová S. Islám a islámska kultúra v slovenských médiách a spôsob ich prezentácie. In Alternatíva, životný štýl, identita? Niekoľko pohľadov na súčasnú slovenskú spoločnosť. Deák,D. – Hlúšek, R. – Letavajová, S. – Priečko, M. (eds). Čadca : Magma, 2010. – P. 114–146.

12. Mahadeo M. – McKinney, L. Media Representations of Africa: Still the Same Old Story? In Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review. 2007, Vol. 4. – P. 14–21.

13. McQuail D. Úvod do teorie masové komunikace. Praha : Portál, 1999.

14. Michira J. Images of Africa in the Western Media. 2002. Available at : www.teachingliterature.org/teachingliterature/pdf/multi/images_of_africa_michira.pdf.

15. Obijiofor L. Is bad news from Africa good news for western media? In Journal of Global Mass Communication, 2009, Vol. 2. – P. 38–54.

16. Profant T. "Rozvoj" a moc: Sociologické analýzy moci v "rozvojovej" spolupráci. In Sociologický časopis, 2013, Vol. 49, No. 2. – P. 291–317.

17. Reese S.D. – Shoemaker, P.J. – Vos, T.P. Journalists as gatekeepers. In The Handbook of Journalism Studies. Hanitzsch, T. – Wahl Jorgensen, K. (eds). London and New York: Francis & Taylor, 2009. – P. 73–88.

18. Reid R. J. Dějiny moderní Afriky : Od roku 1800 po současnost. Praha : Grada, 2011.

19. Shoemaker P. J. Mediating the Message : Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content. New York : Longman, 1996.

20. Šmausová G. "Rasa" jako rasistická konstrukce. In Sociologický časopis, 1999, Vol. 35, No. 4. – P. 433–446.

21. Tabery P. První a druhý stupeň nastolování agendy (agenda-setting), rámcování (framing) a vypíchnutí (priming). In Agenda setting : Teoretické přístupy. Škodová, M. (ed). Praha: SOÚ Sociologický ústav Akademie věd ČR, 2008. – P. 28–40.

22. Trampota T. Zpravodajství. Praha : Portál, 2006.

23. Van Dijk T. Racism and the Press. London and New York : Routledge, 1991.

24. Van Dijk T. The mass media today. Online. 1995. Available at : http://www.discourses.org/OldArticles/The%20mass%20media%20today.pdf.