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**The portrayal of the global south by the global north news media.**

**PORTRAYAL OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH BY THE GLOBAL NORTH NEWS ORGANIZATION/ MEDIA**

The Global North has portrayed the Global South in diminishing ways, for the curse of this assignment I would be focusing on how the latter has portrayed Africa in news organizations. Global North media coverage of Africa has long been a subject of controversy. A study on international communication cites under-reporting and negative coverage as major problems of Global North media reporting of the African continent. These problems are present specifically in US television coverage of African countries. Western media are said to only cover Africa as a ‘backdrop to disaster or the scene of a celebrity visit’. While it has been claimed that this type of coverage is only natural as the media prefer bad news, such coverage is said to be based on a deliberate and systematic process that has led to misreporting and under-reporting. Africa's incalculable natural wealth, which is barely available to its indigenous populations, and her ecosystem, are endangered by insatiable Western consumption. This item goes unnoticed or is ignored by consumers in the metropoles of Europe, Japan, and North America-the U.S. consumes about 60% of the world's resources but has only a fraction (4.1 %) of the world's population. With the reports from journalists, Africa, her continent, and her descendants are pejoratively reduced to nothing: a bastion of disease, savagery, animism, pestilence, war, famine, despotism, primitivism, poverty, and ubiquitous images of children, flies in their food and faces, their stomachs distended. On the other hand, little is said about Africa's strategic importance to so called industrialized nations; her indispensability and relevance to world development, global technology, and the wealth of nations, derived from involuntary African largesse, are not acclaimed in the media. Without access to certain raw materials from Africa, Western industrial capacity would wither much like a "raisin in the sun". Even less is communicated via the media or anywhere else about the incalculable volume of African art and crafts that end up in private collections and museums: books, calendars, and artistic publications, produce minimal income and royalties, if any, for Africans creating such works of art. Mega profits are gained by expatriate marketers in royalties, commissions, exhibitions, documentaries, movies, shows, and other niches in the U.S and world art and craft consumer market. While the perceived misrepresentation and under-reporting of the continent have been cited as a problem, individual African countries receive even less coverage. These portrayals suggest that individual countries are only covered as a consequence of negative events and are of even less significance. Western Media treat the African continent as a malignant appendage rather than as an integral, systemic part of the earth and all its natural functions in accordance with universal laws. Its indigenous populations are depicted as without value. News in general displays a tendency for negativity, as the truism “If it bleeds, it leads” would suggest. Journalists have long spoken of a coups-and-earthquakes approach to covering the world outside, but the tendency appears to be more pronounced regarding news of the African continent.

**RWANDA GENOCIDE**

From April to July 1994, approximately 500,000 Rwanda tutsi,some 80 percent of the country’s Tutsi population, were exterminated In the most efficient complete genocide of modern times. Western media blame the international community for not intervening quickly, but the media must blame for not immediately recognizing the extent of carnage and mobiling world attention to it. They failed to report that a nationwide killing campaign was under way in Rwanda until almost three weeks into the violence. By that time, some 250,000 Tutsi had already been massacred.

During those first weeks of genocide, western reporting was marred by four lapses, first it mistook genocide for civil war. The country had been wracked by a low-level civil war from 1990 to 1993 between the government, controlled by Hutu majority, and a rebel force comprised mainly of Tutsi. Though a minority, the tusi had ruled until the late 1950s when the Hutu took power and forced many tusi to flee as refugees. Conflict continued through the next three decades, so upon the outbreak of genocide on April 6, 1994, western correspondents reported the initial burst of violence in the capital Kigali as resumption of bloody civil war.

April 11, an editorial in London times pondered international calls for a cease fire and asked rhetorically, “which parties would be asked to cease fire against whom?”

Perhaps the main reason that the western correspondents have had difficulty reporting ethicnic violence accurately is that is that at least one sides doesn’t want them to, and reporters cannot confirm May allegations without risking their lives by visiting combat zones. There is no moral requirement for journalist to make such a personal sacrifice. But so long as reporters do not confirm the facts on the ground, they must try do everything else possible to piece together the real story for readers in full awareness that combats, governments and private agencies are all trying to manipulate them.

Rwanda Hutu government wanted reports to think that violence was civil war rather than genocide. In a similarly manipulative way, the Kosovo liberation army wanted reporters to think that Yugoslav government violence pior to natos bombing was genocide or ethnic cleansing rather than counterinsurgency. in both cases, western reporters were fooled. They should take a lesson from this as they continue their vital task of informing western policymakers and publics about the world.

**Challenges of a reporter;**

Foreign correspondence is the reportage and filing of new stories by a Journalist known as a foreign correspondent (who works for a media organization) from a foreign country. A Foreign correspondent is a journalist who sends news reports and commentary from a foreign country for publication or broadcast.  His is an agent who contributes reports to a newspaper, radio or television, from a remote, often distant location. The foreign correspondent is stationed in a foreign country. Challenges are the part of every job and journalism is not escaped from it. This profession invites maximum number of challenges and a correspondent has to take them as part of his/her occupation. According to a famous journalist, “the biggest challenge for a today’s journalist is to survive”. Foreign correspondence, even from a layman’s perspective has a lot of challenges especially because the Journalist has to leave his/her own country for another country that he/she is not familiar with. The challenges of foreign correspondence are:

·         The **cost of operation** has risen, not only as a result of economic meltdown but also because of the advent of new technology. The media organizations have to make sure they do not get out of business as a result of citizen Journalism, which has come to stay. The economic situation all over the world has made many countries call back their foreign correspondent and close down news bureaus. The advent of new media technology has even made it easier for the extent of foreign correspondence. These new technologies, made it possible that correspondents are not sent abroad, before news information are gotten from reliable sources. Reporters can now sit in the comfort of the newsroom, access the internet and gather necessary information. The technological progress over the past years has enabled large parts of the general public to access and afford new ways of interaction and communication via the internet’s new intelligent web services and fast broadband connections. Personal digital assistance (PDA); in form of Androids, Smartphone, Tablets, etc. is also not encouraging media houses and agencies to send foreign correspondents on assignments. This is because individuals are now becoming citizen journalists, providing user generated content and relegating to the ground the function of the foreign correspondent. A media organization or agency, that is not buoyant financially, might find it difficult to send foreign correspondents on assignment because money is needed for transportation, accommodation, feeding and other things that will keep the foreign correspondent going.

·         The problem of **language barrier**, which is very common but can be avoided. Being a foreign correspondent means you report happenings in countries outside your country. The language in this foreign country is most definitely different from what is spoken in your own country; this may pose as a challenge to the foreign correspondence. This is why foreign correspondents need to possess a bilingual skill. The foreign correspondent should at least have a working knowledge of the language of the country of assignment. Foreign correspondence should learn international languages that will give him/her edge during an assignment and also make it easy to interact with people in the country of assignment. Languages can be learn in school or prior to an assignment while on the job.

·         **Wars, disputes and ripple** are major challenges faced by foreign correspondents and why many upcoming communication students avoid foreign journalism and journalism as a whole. Countries are made up of people with different perspectives and ideologies on issues. These differences when not well managed results to dispute and if not still curbed, may result to wars. During situations like these, foreign correspondents and reporters in general are injured, maimed or killed. Correspondence have to take protective measures while reporting wars because, it might entail reporting from the war front.   
Foreign correspondents often have to visit places which are badly struck by natural calamities like floods, heavy snowfall, volcanoes, etc. in order to keep the authorities alert, of the affected area towards the welfare and rescue mission of the people, foreign correspondents have to visit the worst hit areas as well. This could also pose a serious threat to their lives as well. In some unfortunate accidents, foreign correspondents have suffered injuries while covering stories in dangerous places.

Foreign correspondence is also followed by assignments, like covering a war zone, communal riots, and infiltrations in borders, civil wars and much more perilous coverage. The spread of insecurity in a country not only threatens the lives the people of that place, but foreign correspondents also become their targets.

·         The foreign correspondent is also faced with **cultural challenges.** The foreign correspondent if not conversant with the culture of his place of assignment will have problems. The culture of the place of assignment of the foreign correspondent is usually different from that of his/her country. The correspondent has to learn the culture of the people; the dress sense, what they eat, different seasons in the country, courtesy among the people, their way of live, the laws of the land (dos and don’ts) and the language and its usage. To know all these, the correspondence must read extensively. Foreign correspondents at times find it difficult to eat some types of food in their place of assignment; at times they break some rules not knowing they are breaking them. The correspondence also has to take note of the seasons so as to bring the appropriate clothing. For example, if a reporter is sent from Nigeria and assumes the weather of Nigeria is similar to that of New York’s, he will probably have to freeze and develop cold. Some things that are accepted one country may not be accepted in other countries, things might be much more different in the place of assignment of the correspondent.

·         **Political instability** is another problem faced by a foreign correspondent. When there is political instability in a country, a correspondent will not be able to carry out his assignment effectively. He might even be sent back to his country. A foreign correspondent might not be able to carry out in his country of assignment when there is political upheaval.   
Many western countries have “freedom of the press” but not all the countries give this right to their media professionals. In many countries media does not have freedom to speech and journalists (foreign correspondent) have to adhere with the set norms before writing or publishing a story, else they have to face dire consequences. This is called self-censorship. The foreign correspondent is often oppressed by the governments of his place of assignment. The foreign correspondent in some countries is not supposed to show any videos which could malign the government for violating human rights and taking innocent lives and creating havoc. The foreign correspondent also has some roles to play. He has to have a thorough knowledge of various political philosophy operation in his place of assignment i.e. should know the difference between capitalism which is operated in U.S and western Europe and communism a variance of socialism still practiced in China, Cuba of North Korea. He should have the knowledge of authoritarianism, fascism and totalitarianism, which are almost stale. The knowledge of these philosophies will help the correspondent know what step to take in case of any situation. He should have a wide knowledge of the constitution of his country of assignment. The constitution is the primary law upon which a country is governed. This will also save him the trouble of asking too many questions about the political parties because the constitution gives the reporter access to the conduct of political parties in his country of assignment.

·         The foreign correspondence should have knowledge of the **economy** of his country of assignment. At times foreign correspondence makes the mistake of reporting wrong figures. He should be familiar with economic terms like inflation, and its effect on the economy, the lives of the citizens and the causes of the inflation, demand, supply, deficit, budget and deflation. To do this the correspondent has to maintain contact with experts on the field. He should be able to interpret data, charts and graphs.

·         Another challenge of foreign correspondence is that the correspondence will **require additional training to master other skills.** The Job of a foreign correspondent requires him to have other skills aside reporting. The old days when a Television foreign correspondent was nothing more than a reporter who telexed, faxed or later emailed his/her copy once or twice a day and did nothing else, leaving the cameraman to handle the pictures, are over. Today's foreign correspondent is on duty 24 hours a day and has to be versatile with technology and in some cases do everything. However, despite all intense challenges in foreign correspondence some foreign correspondent is determined to do their jobs with full dedications and nothing could deter them.