

**FRAMES AND MONKEYWRENCHING THE MEDIA IN  
CÔTE D'IVOIRE: HOW TO WIN A WAR IN  
FRANÇAFRIQUE**

by

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## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Title: Frames and Monkeywrenching the Media in Côte d'Ivoire: How to Win a War in Françafrique

This study revisits the media coverage of Côte d'Ivoire's 2010-2011 electoral crisis as a case study of the political, economic, and contextual stressors that impact journalists writing in francophone Africa in times of conflict. This dissertation demonstrates how the three key political parties in Côte d'Ivoire's electoral crisis, France, Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara, all had a deep economic incentives in this civil war, and were using both hidden and public tactics to manipulate media coverage in their own interests. I explore these tactics in two locations: how the news is framed in the local and foreign news coverage of the crisis, using a textual analysis of 210 news articles; and how politicians monkey-wrenched journalists and news outlets to secretly impact news coverage, drawing on 31 interviews with Ivorian and foreign journalists.

Under the umbrella of international communication, I explore how the influence of France continues to assert immense editorial control over the media infrastructure of Côte d'Ivoire. I draw on postcolonial theory, political economic theory, frame studies in social movement theory and in media literature to locate the theoretical underpinnings of this research. A political economic framework helps explain this monkey-wrenching of journalists by inspecting who exerts control over journalistic coverage.

This dissertation is a critical, qualitative case study that employs a textual analysis of 210 newspaper articles and interviews with 24 journalists to explore the central questions of media imperialism and framing in Côte d’Ivoire and Françafrique. I drew articles from the local newspapers: *Fraternité Matin*, *Notre Voie*, *Le Temps*, *Le Nouveau Courrier* and *Le Patriote* from 2010 and 2011. From the international press, I pulled articles from Agence France-Presse, *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, Reuters and Associated Press from 2010 to 2017.

Little research has been done in the English-speaking world on the media in francophone West Africa. This study helps introduce the complications of media in Françafrique- where France earns enormous profits from African economies- to the English-speaking world.

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This dissertation has been 10-plus years in the making. I first visited Côte d'Ivoire in 2008, as a media intern for a US media newswire. At the time, the road barriers, soldiers and frequent AK-47s in the streets frightened me. I've spent the last decade piecing together Côte d'Ivoire's internal struggle. I learned to read French and improved on speaking it during sweaty hot days hanging out with friends under mango trees and in open markets in Dakar. I spent hours on the phone with my good friend Guy-Roger Otchrifou, who lives in Abidjan now with his wife Ruth and son David. We've spent years discussing Côte d'Ivoire's poverty, natural resources, politics and the way forward for this amazing and rich region. I started the Ph.D. program at University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication in 2013, where I met scores of journalists from other African nations. From 2014 to 2016, I visited Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire three more times, this time with a far more complex tool kit for understanding the country's postcolonial dynamic with France and struggles with neocolonial corporations which buy the country's massive supply of cocoa beans.

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May we remember those who came before us and those who came after.

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## CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION: FRAMES AND MONKEYWRENCHING THE MEDIA IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE: HOW TO WIN A WAR IN FRANÇAFRIQUE

The first three pages of this chapter outline a list of common acronyms used to discuss the civil conflict, a timeline of the electoral crisis, and a map of Côte d'Ivoire. The opening description for this exciting research then follows.

### List of acronyms

AP: Associated Press, a U.S. worldwide newswire agency,

AFP: Agence France-Presse, a worldwide state-run newswire, run by the French government

CEI: Commission Electorale Indépendante, the Côte d'Ivoire's independent electoral voting body, which ruled Ouattara the winner in the 2010 election.

FN: Force Nouvelles, Alassane Ouattara's main military force, built of a collection of smaller military factions from northern Côte d'Ivoire, that overtook Gbagbo's control of Abidjan in April, 2011.

FDS: Forces de défense et de sécurité, Laurent Gbagbo's inner-city police force that became his main military support during the electoral crisis in Abidjan.

FPI: Front Populaire Ivoirien, Laurent Gbagbo's political party, created in 1982. FPI's left leaning politics governed Côte d'Ivoire from 2000 to 2010, under Gbagbo.

ONUCI :Opération des Nations Unies en Côte d'Ivoire (The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire), is a UN military branch stationed in Côte d'Ivoire since 2004 to help stabilize the country and the region.

Operation LICORNE: France's military and political arm in Côte d'Ivoire, which is based out of the 43e BIMA (Bataillon d'Infanterie de Marine), a large French military compound outside Abidjan.

PDCI: Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire – African Democratic Rally. The original political party of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, now headed by Henri Bédié.

RDR: Rally of the Republicans, Alassane Ouattara's political party which has governed Côte d'Ivoire since 2010.

RFI: Radio France Internationale

RTI: Radiodiffusion Télévision Ivoirienne, a state-run Ivorian TV and radio station, controlled by Gbagbo until 2011, when the station staff were fired and replaced with pro-Ouattara journalists.

### **Timeline of Electoral Crisis, 2010-2011**

**December 8 to 13, 2010:** Parties of Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara both hold swearing in ceremonies, announcing themselves as president.

**Dec. 2010:** Ivorian refugees, many from Abidjan, flee across the border to Liberia and Ghana to avoid impending civil war in Côte d'Ivoire.

**March 29, 30, 2011:** Ouattara's Force Nouvelles troops descend from the north to south, taking villages on their path to Abidjan.

**April 10, 2011:** Ouattara, France and the UN surround Gbagbo's palace in Abidjan. Ouattara's soldiers capture Gbagbo alive.

**April, May, 2011:** Forces Nouvelles and looters sweep through Abidjan's neighborhoods, racketeering and stealing in the power vacuum left after France, UN and Gbagbo have left.

**Nov. 20, 2011:** Gbagbo is transferred to the International Criminal Court in Geneva, Switzerland. As of November, 2017, Gbagbo is still incarcerated at ICC.

Photo 1: Map of West Africa



Photo 2: Map of Côte d'Ivoire



## Introduction

This dissertation is a postcolonial study of how power works in the media structures that produce news in Côte d'Ivoire, focusing on coverage of the country's chaotic 2010-2011 electoral crisis.

I'd like to begin with two stories.

The first story, is the view from the ground, the sight which greets local journalists with *Notre Voie* each day as they come into work. The aging signs of civil war are apparent as one walks up the stairs into the *Notre Voie* newspaper office in Abidjan. The entire printing press room- about 40 feet long- is empty. A rumbled photo montage stands out the newsroom's main hallway. It displays photos of the black shell of *Notre Voie's* imported printing press after it was burned beyond recognition in 2010. There is a photo of an enormous pile of burned newspapers strewn around a room, and smashed computer equipment, smashed desks, smashed windows. Piles of plaster and debris still line the room in which the photo montage sits. *Notre Voie's* news office was sacked by militia for Rally of the Republicans in 2010, the political party for Alassane Ouattara, the present president of Côte d'Ivoire.

The second story is from Reuters, an international newswire. On February 9, 2014, Reuters newswire published a news story on Côte d'Ivoire's economic recovery after the country's electoral crisis. The two foreign journalists note that oil investors are eagerly rushing to invest in the country's natural gas sector. They even embedded links to major oil and telecommunication companies' online stock handles in the article. "Analysis: War-scarred Ivory Coast Reopens for Business," reads the article's headline.

With peace finally restored, French construction firm Bouygues (BOUY.PA), oil companies such as Tullow (TLW.L) and Lukoil (LKOH.MM), and South Africa's Standard Bank (SBKJ.J) are among those flocking to invest. "We lost half of our companies during that time. The level of poverty increased from 10 percent to almost 50 percent," Trade Minister

Jean-Louis Billon told Reuters. “Now we want to move forward.”...“Ivory Coast could become one of the motors of economic growth in Africa again,” IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde told a conference in Abidjan last week that drew 4,000 delegates and more than \$800 million in investment pledges (Bavier & Flynn, 2014)

There are no Ivorians cited in the 1,100-word news story; only French CEOs and IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde, herself a lawyer from France. This Reuters story exemplifies the neo-colonial problems still present in Françafrique. Françafrique is a colloquial and slightly sardonic expression used by citizens in Francophone West Africa and France to denote the ongoing economic, editorial, political and financial control that France continues to retain over this region it formerly colonized. People use it in Côte d’Ivoire to insult the French for the 600-some French companies operating in Côte d’Ivoire, one of which is the Félix-Houphouët-Boigny International Airport, another is Orange, a multi-million dollar French telecommunications company operating throughout Francophone Africa. The Reuters story gives a good introduction to the underlying problems with Western news publications continuing to dominate the news narratives leaving Côte d’Ivoire, such as problems of misrepresentation and voice for the Ivorian people. And despite France’s very loud protests that their multi-million dollar military branch Licorne stationed in Côte d’Ivoire is only there to protect French citizens, the Reuters story tells us the French wanted stability in Côte d’Ivoire so their multi-million dollar company profits could return.

The conditions at *Notre Voie*, speak to an entirely different angle on the Ivorian conflict; conditions on the ground for Ivorian journalists as they struggled to publish a daily newspaper in a conflict zone. The journey of this research will attempt to talk about these conditions as well, exploring the micro-details of life on the ground for local journalists through extended interview excerpts included in this work.

**An introduction to Côte d’Ivoire’s politics and press**

Laurent Gbagbo was Côte d'Ivoire's president from 2000 to 2011, despite multiple coups and episodes of political uprisings from opposing political factions. In 2002, a failed coup d'état resulted in most of northern Côte d'Ivoire falling under control of rebel soldiers who rejected Gbagbo's national authority and creating personal fiefdoms throughout the region. Since 2002, the northern region of Côte d'Ivoire has been under this anarchic control. In 2010, the country held long-awaited national elections after delays that lasted almost five years. Gbagbo contested the alleged victory of his political opponent Alassane Ouattara. In early December 2010, both Gbagbo and Ouattara held official, well-publicized press conferences in separate locations, in which their loyal cabinet members swore each of them in as the rightful president; Côte d'Ivoire now had two presidents. The African Union, the UN Security Council and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) all issued public statements supporting Ouattara as president, and asked Gbagbo to step down.

As December 2010 wore on, Ouattara called on the disgruntled and well-established rebel militia armies in the far north of Côte d'Ivoire to join him in conquering Gbagbo<sup>1</sup>. In early April, 2011, Ouattara's Force Nouvelles marched south through Côte d'Ivoire, reaching Abidjan in three days. To further complicate the role of the foreign press, France's military mission "Licorne" and the UN Mission to the Côte d'Ivoire joined Ouattara's military troops when they reached Abidjan. Licorne and the UN provided extensive military support and resources to Ouattara's Force Nouvelles to help his troops secure Abidjan. On April 10, 2011, Licorne, the UN and the Force Nouvelles battled their way to Gbagbo's palace. They secured the area and at the last instance, only Ouattara's soldiers were allowed to actually enter the palace and bring out

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<sup>1</sup> The Ouagadougou Agreement of 2007 technically incorporated these rebel militias in the northern region as official soldiers within the country's national army, yet informally, militias of this region never disarmed. These factions sided with Ouattara during the electoral crisis.

Gbagbo at gunpoint. He was arrested and held in Côte d'Ivoire for several months. In November, 2011, Gbagbo was flown to the Hague, International Criminal Court in Switzerland, where he is being tried for war crimes. A large percentage of the Ivorian population continues to support Gbagbo's anti-Western efforts and he continues to retain immense popularity in Côte d'Ivoire.

In 2010 and 2011, international audiences learned about the violent four-month electoral crisis in the Côte d'Ivoire from the main Western news bureaus operating in Abidjan: Associated Press, Agence France-Presse, BBC, Reuters, *Jeune Afrique* and *Le Monde* (a daily in France), among others. Many of the journalists with these international agencies are Ivorian or another African nationality and work with editors back in Europe or the U.S. Meanwhile, the plentiful local newspapers and radio stations of Côte d'Ivoire were also churning out their own versions of the electoral conflict. Like many news stations in Africa, Côte d'Ivoire's media outlets typically support a specific politician within the country's political landscape, and often receive funds from the political party. The local newspapers and the foreign news bureaus in Abidjan published news from entirely different standpoints, leading to very different frames in both types of publication. Consider the following two quotes on the post-electoral crisis, one from *Le Monde Afrique*, a French daily which pulled this story from Agence France-Presse (France's global news wire), and one from *Notre Voie*, a pro-Gbagbo, anti-French Ivorian newspaper.

A heavily armed attack caused 25 to 30 deaths in Abidjan Thursday by "the armed forces of the camp" of outgoing Ivorian president, Laurent Gbagbo, which could constitute a crime against humanity, declared Rupert Colville, spokesperson for the UN High Commission, at a press conference. He underlined that "it's difficult not to arrive at the conclusion that this is a crime, possibly a crime against humanity." (*Le Monde*, avec AFP et Reuters, March 17, 2011).

The UN and the French military troops of Licorne are fighting on the side of the rebellion on this stage of the operation, according to a military source. According to a source close to this stage of the operations, ONUCI and Licorne have changed strategies. One testimony given by another source close to the operation in Duekous revealed that "The UN and Licorne are no longer content to transport or support the rebels, but now are shooting"

against the national Forces of Defense and Securite (FDS) before embedding themselves (*Notre Voie*, March 30, 2011).

As is evident above, the foreign correspondent cites official, out-of-country sources and clearly frames the article in a way that discredits Gbagbo's legitimacy and respectability as a leader. The Ivorian journalist cites anonymous in-country contacts who see the fighting first-hand, and is clearly picking sources that villify the UN and French military intervention.

This dissertation is a study of how power operates in the media structures that produce news in Côte d'Ivoire. Ivorian journalists working for locally-owned publications survived death threats, arrests, escapes, the destruction of their newsrooms and the hacking of their websites as political actors in the Côte d'Ivoire's electoral crisis. Few, if any, international media outlets took the time to interview any local Ivorian journalists on their experiences trying to work as media professionals without the protection of France or the UN (as the international media had). In this research, I've tried to center the testimony of these journalists. Their stories of conditions on the ground help to correct the historical understanding of the electoral crisis as told by Ivorians working for the international media, and instead offer a new insight to life on the ground as a resident African journalist working for a local publication.

That said, I visualize the telling of this dissertation as a lesson in how to win a war in Françafrique using media as a political tactic. I make the case that the three key political parties in Côte d'Ivoire's electoral crisis, France, Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara, all had a dog in the fight, and were using both hidden and public tactics to manipulate media coverage in their own interests. I explore these tactics in two locations: how the news is framed in the local and foreign news coverage of the crisis; and secondly, how politicians monkey wrenched journalists and news outlets to secretly impact news coverage. Additionally, I discuss the benefits and

payoff of winning the election in Côte d'Ivoire, as the end result of manipulating the media to one's own interests.

I examine power in how journalists, both local and foreign, approach framing their news stories. I explore how the ongoing influence of France over Côte d'Ivoire's politics, economy and media continues to assert immense editorial control over the media infrastructure of Côte d'Ivoire. I look at the Ivorian resistance to this Western editorial control, via the growing online news businesses in Abidjan, the country's main economic hub. I problematize how the dominant coverage of Western-owned media outlets in Côte d'Ivoire can broadcast a particular set of frames, and any glaring flaws in those same frames became glaring flaws in the final telling of the electoral crisis. This opens up a Pandora's box of issues of representation for Côte d'Ivoire.

I problematize how this monopoly on international news eliminates some highly crucial frames found in local newspapers supporting Gbagbo, such as pro-Gbagbo journalists writing editorials against the French military occupation of their country. This brings me back to the thesis of this dissertation, however, that each political party in this conflict was using media as a tactic of war. Just because the news coverage offered by pro-Gbagbo journalists was eclipsed by the international news coverage in size, does not imply that all coverage in the local pro-Gbagbo press was innocent. Gbagbo, Ouattara and France were all equally culpable in their manipulation and framing in media coverage; everyone was trying to win this war in Françafrique. Chapter 5 shows clearly just how extreme the frames became in the pro-Gbagbo press. To further complicate matters, the newspapers supporting Ouattara *sided* with the military intervention of the UN and France, meaning the local press of Côte d'Ivoire was heavily divided itself in how journalists visualized and wrote about the conflict. This also means some pro-Ouattara journalists (included in this study's interviews) were supportive of France intervening to help

Ouattara gain the presidency. Therefore, in the assessment of the media in Côte d'Ivoire from a postcolonial perspective, it's important to remember that pockets of the local press *support* France's economic and political presence in Côte d'Ivoire (in line with RDR's pro-Western stance) while other areas of Abidjan's local media *resist* the former colonizer of the country. These relationships add another layer of resistance and collusion in the discussion of Côte d'Ivoire's postcolonial ties to France.

The results chapters of this study help unpack this extremely complex web of media alliances, to shed more light on the political agendas of these three political parties.

### **Postcolonial theory and political economy**

A key result of this study found that every political party in this electoral crisis was partially at fault for the events that transpired. I draw on media imperialism, postcolonial theory, political economic theory, frame studies in social movement theory and frame studies in media literature to better locate the theoretical underpinnings of this research.

Specifically, I visualize the struggles for control of the media narratives in postcolonial Côte d'Ivoire as a dynamic occurring within the colonial legacy left by France. Côte d'Ivoire was colonized by France in the mid-1800s<sup>2</sup>. It won its independence from France in 1960, whereupon Ivorian Félix Houphouët-Boigny ruled for the next 30 years. Houphouët-Boigny famously maintained an active trade relationship with France in his lifetime, leading Côte d'Ivoire to be deemed one of the wealthier countries in Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. The conditions created by Côte d'Ivoire's colonial past with France are numerous. France built a military compound, the 43e BIMA (Bataillon d'Infanterie de Marine) in 1978, which in 2002 housed Operation Licorne,

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<sup>2</sup> Cote d'Ivoire's history with France is discussed at length in Chapter 2

a more active French military contingent which (as Licorne professes) is there to protect French citizens. There are over 600 French corporations operating in Côte d'Ivoire.

The postcolonial conditions created by this legacy with France deeply orient, manipulate and stress the economic and political landscape upon which Ivorians and their news media operate. This study adds to postcolonial theory as it explores these conditions- such as Ivorian-owned newsrooms (pro-Ouattara) choosing to both support France's military intervention or cite AFP extensively in their own coverage. Côte d'Ivoire's politics are deeply tied to France: Ouattara's slow climb to national prominence in Côte d'Ivoire began with a career with the International Monetary Fund in the 1970s, along with his long-time friendship with former French president Nicolas Sarkozy. Ouattara's first year as president (2011 to 2012) was adorned with many new trade agreements signed between the government of Sarkozy and Côte d'Ivoire. Additionally, all Ivorian-owned newsrooms and businesses compete financially with wealthy western transnational media corporations for their share of the news market both regionally and internationally. This type of competition is a political economic problem seen in many Global South news markets. The Côte d'Ivoire presents a helpful case study of this postcolonial dynamic as it occurs in the unique tensions of francophone Africa.

That said, this research in Côte d'Ivoire necessarily involves a political economic framework as it compares two media camps (international and local) which have very different ownership boards. Political economy of the media addresses the production, distribution and consumption of media content and its implications as these engage with political, economic, and cultural contexts. In addition, looking at ownership structure of news enterprises may shed light on issues of agenda setting, indicating what journalists are able to cover and publish, or not. In Côte d'Ivoire, the French ownership of AFP or Gbabgo's Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI)



newspaper *Le Temps* both raise questions as to how the political agendas of those in power set the news agendas affecting content. Chapter 6 of this dissertation explores the monkeywrenching of journalists behind the scenes as they covered the electoral crisis in 2010 and 2011. A political economic framework helps explain this monkeywrenching of journalists by inspecting who exerts control over journalistic coverage, and how political agendas profit due to such control.

This dissertation is a critical, qualitative case study that employs a textual analysis of 210 newspaper articles and interviews with 24 journalists to explore the central questions of media imperialism and framing in Côte d'Ivoire and Françafrique. I drew articles from the local newspapers, *Fraternité Matin*, *Notre Voie*, *Le Temps*, *Le Nouveau Courrier* and *Le Patriote* and interviewed a total of 15 journalists working for these publications. From the international press, I drew articles from Agence France-Presse, *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, Reuters and Associated Press. I interviewed a total of nine journalists with these publications. Additionally, I interviewed staff with two new media news outlets, Abidjan.net and Alert.Info, a text-message based news service based in Abidjan.

I visited Abidjan in the summer of 2015 and 2016 to meet contacts in newsrooms throughout Abidjan. As a journalist, I included in this study more ethnographic and contextual details, as “thick description” helps describe the rough dynamic on the ground during the electoral crisis (Geertz, 1973).

### **Social movement theory and collective action frames**

In explaining how news frames worked during the crisis, I borrow from media theory and social movement theory to discuss the role of *power* in how frames work. I argue that the empirics of this study show that local *and* international journalists face many complex factors while trying to do their jobs. This produces hybrid frames that act as quasi-news and quasi-

activism. A hybrid frame implies that the complex circumstantial factors of reporting in intense political arenas pulls apart the canonical ideas of only activism or only news, and instead implies that all journalists dabble in both, often unintentionally. As a theoretical contribution, this concept of a hybrid frame marries the idea of intentional frames and unintentional frames in social movement theory and media studies, respectively.

### **Francophone Africa**

Very little research written in English has been done on the dynamic of French media and local media operating in Francophone African nations in this postcolonial period. How is the juggernaut of France using its state-run Agence France-Presse newswire and Radio France Internationale to promote propaganda for France in the era of new media? It presents a similar situation to how the U.S. used Voice of America throughout colonies in the 1950s and 1960s during the Cold War. Most media studies in Africa focus on English-speaking nations such as Ghana, Kenya or South Africa, as most communication scholars tend to already speak English, not French. I add to the postcolonial discussion of France's continuing economic influence in French-speaking Africa and its media. Additionally, I introduce the newer component of Francophone Ivorian journalists turning to online and social media to broadcast the news as a *point of resistance* to Western and French news outlets operating in their country. This adds an alternative voice for international audiences, beyond the louder, more mainstream news offered by Western news outlets in Abidjan. Using the Côte d'Ivoire as a case study, then, creates a space for analyzing the postcolonial media dynamic in other Francophone African nations with political turmoil, such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gabon or the Central African Republic. The particulars and long history of the France-Africa relationship occur nowhere else in the world,

making the lessons learned from a case study of Côte d'Ivoire applicable to these other Francophone African nations.

The study of frames in the coverage of Côte d'Ivoire's election crisis matters because of how the country's politics are viewed in the international limelight. The international coverage of Côte d'Ivoire's politics can upset or incentivize international organizations to relocate their business to the country or grant foreign aid or loans. *How* a country's politics are mediated to the rest of the world lies on the shoulders of journalists. Côte d'Ivoire's international reputation has the power to draw or repel talent, corporations, terrorism, university programs, non-profit organizations and many other actors to itself. In the 1960s to the 2000s, Western news outlets came under heavy criticism for misrepresenting African political events to the rest of the world. Yet a recent comprehensive study of foreign correspondent coverage of Africa showed a marked improvement in positive news coverage in certain topics, comparing 1994 coverage to 2013 (Bunce, 2017, p. 17 - 29). It is exceedingly important for Francophone African nations to have a voice in their representation at the international level in the era of globalization and neocolonialism, as these nations are the most susceptible to more powerful nations, like France, creating unequal trade agreements with them. Journalists writing in West African nations where huge corporate, UN and European interests define much of the political agenda must work to prioritize African interests, African industries, and African voices.

### **The chapters ahead**

The next chapter, Chapter 2, presents an abbreviated history of Côte d'Ivoire's colonial relationship with France. Chapter 2 also examines the present newspaper industry operating out of Abidjan, to add a contextual foundation for understanding this research. Chapter 3 is a review of the present conversation on media frames, social movement theory's collective

action frames and studies of frames in media in Africa. I present my own theoretical framework and elaborate more on the blurring of lines between journalism and activism in the coverage of civil war.

Chapter 4 reviews the methods used for this research; a textual analysis of 200 news articles plus transcripts from 31 interviews. I review my time in Abidjan in 2016 gathering interviews with 24 journalists, as well as how I coded the resulting transcripts. I offer a brief description of the types of journalists I spoke with and where their offices were located. I mention my own past years working in both Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire on other media projects.

Chapter 5 reveals the results of the in-depth textual analysis of 200 news articles (half from local Ivorian newspapers and half from Western newswires, such as Agence France-Press) to find four key frames in both media camps. I use extensive excerpts from news articles published during the electoral crisis to illustrate how these frames work, drawing on interviews with journalists to explain why the printed press covered events in this way. This chapter addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the frames in local and international media papers during the conflict?

How do they compare?

RQ1a: What themes were found in interviews with both local and international journalists that speak to their ideas about “la ligne éditorial” of both types of media?

RQ1b: Where are the loci of editorial and economic power in the media systems that produce news about the Côte d'Ivoire?

RQ1c: What do we learn about journalists as activists in the ways news frames are produced?

Chapter 6 focuses on the political-economic monkeywrenching of journalists that went on behind-the-scenes in Abidjan, as Gbagbo, Ouattara and France tried to influence the media for their own political gain. This chapter jumps the fence from the textual side of the news industry to the actual, physical lives of journalists working in the conflict in Abidjan in 2011. I draw on five in-depth first-person testimonials from journalists who faced harassment from various political bodies over their work. I show how these instances of media manipulation are directly caused from the political leanings and financial interests of the media executives and politicians who manage such media institutions. Political economy of media is a good tool to analyze and understand how news institutions and journalists were manipulated as a tactic for war.

This chapter addresses my second set of research questions:

RQ2: What do the personal experiences of both local and foreign journalists tell us about the behind-the-scenes battle or “monkeywrenching” for control over Abidjan’s media?

RQ2a: In light of the postcolonial theory and Entman’s idea that frames typically support those in power, which media held the most power to further their own framing of the conflict? Who benefited from being the loudest voice heard in the coverage of Côte d’Ivoire’s election crisis?

Chapter 7 examines the newer phenomenon of Ivorian journalists publishing daily newspaper editions to Abidjan.net, an online news source for Côte d’Ivoire. These results help locate Abidjan’s news scene in the current conversation on Africans representing their own nations to international audiences in era of new media. Globalization has introduced a spiderweb of asymmetrical news flow and new lines of feedback to and from Global South nations. I explore the use of Abidjan.net, Alert.info (a mobile phone news company), Twitter and Facebook during the electoral crisis as a means for Ivorian journalists’ voices to gain

international exposure online, over the din of Western news outlets. This chapter addresses the following question:

RQ3: Largely, local Ivorian media did not have enough political power to internationally influence the media coverage of the conflict online, despite having an international online presence through Abidjan.net, blogs and social media. They had some impact locally.

What role does CI media's growing online presence play in the overall picture of globalization of media in Françafrique?

Chapter 8 synthesizes the findings and discusses how this study contributes to the literature, as well as its practical significance. I revisit globalization, postcolonial theory and political economic theory in relation to the results of interviews, drawing a clearer picture of what this research can add to the existing conversations on these theories at work in international communication and Africa.

Chapter 9 discusses the limitations of this study and offers some suggestions for future research, with particular interest in Côte d'Ivoire's growing online population. The appendix contains a list of the newspaper articles cited for this research.

## **CHAPTER II**

# **CONTEXTUALIZING FRANÇA-FRIQUE AND LAURENT GBAGBO**

This section spotlights three sociological areas which are crucial to understanding the present situation in Côte d'Ivoire. I detail a brief history of the French colonial era in Côte d'Ivoire and West Africa. I also discuss the present economic interest France has (such as transnational corporations based there) in the cocoa and oil industry. Lastly, I explain the present print industry operating out of Abidjan, including major daily newspapers and the offices of international news agencies located in Abidjan.

### **Imperial France**

Far from equatorial West Africa, in 1885 at the Berlin Conference in Germany, the leaders of select European nations signed an agreement stating that, henceforth, only the boundaries ascribed by European nations would be officially recognized on the West African coastline. The rhetoric surrounding French colonialism in the 1870s and 1880s relied heavily on notions of expanding France's economic markets to help the country recover from the Franco-Prussian war (1870-1871), along with talk of bringing "civilization" to the "backward peoples" of Ivory Coast (Murphy, 1948). During the 1880s, entrepreneurial, well-educated Frenchmen held formal, verbose conferences throughout France, where they hatched ideas on how to expand French infrastructure and trade into West Africa. The following comment was made at a conference in 1881 in France.

In the third of a series of conferences on Africa, J. Bebin, secretary-general of the society of geography in Valenciennes, explained that by dint of repetition he desired to have his favorite ideas implanted in the minds of those who heard him, that they might please his audience...

“There the adventurous character and eminently colonizing genius of our race will have leisure to give itself full scope; there the living forces of the nation which are beginning to find themselves compressed within the narrow limits of the Treaty of Frankfort will be able to accomplish complete expansion without one’s being able to foresee, if the events we hope for are realized, where our flag will one day stop” (Murphy, 1948, p. 19).

Rhetoric like this exemplifies the French attitude toward Africa in the late 1800s; it is evident their intentions for the colonies were economic. Additionally, the glory of France was at stake, along with its competitive prestige among other European nations. The race to colonize vast regions of Africa began in the 1880s, with France, Germany, England, the Portuguese and the Dutch vying for prime ports along the west and east coastlines.

From 1893 to 1960, France claimed the Côte d’Ivoire as a foreign colony, along with Mauritania, Senegal, French Sudan, French Guinea, Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Togo (first colonized by Germany, then deeded to the French after WWI), Gabon, Dahomey (now Benin) and Niger and Gambia. This era of colonization occurred at the tail end of the trans-Atlantic slave trade (which saw its official end in the 1850s). French colonists never set up an active slave trade out of Ivory Coast, but were more active in the 1700s in Senegal, which is farther north up the coast of West Africa.

In the early 1900s, the French slowly instituted a policy of “association,” in which multiple committees of Frenchmen, appointed by the government of France, set up a public infrastructure along the coast of Ivory Coast and other colonies, which mimicked French laws and the school system. This original system included the infamous “indigène” policy, which denuded Ivorians of French citizenship, the ability to own land, practice certain customs and generally reduced their basic rights to that of subservience to the French. One aspect of *indigène*, passed in 1900, mandated that every adult male work without pay for 10 days each year for the French colonial administration



(Campbell, 1997; Guillaneuf, 1975). In the meantime, French colonists brought the elephant population in Côte d'Ivoire almost to extinction by the early 1900s.

The French colonial administration of West Africa drafted thousands of native Senegalese, Ivorian and other West Africans from the colonies to fight on the front lines in World War I and World War II. A more notorious military troop, the Senegalese Tirailleurs (Senegalese Riflemen) was assembled by the French colonial administration from multiple Francophone nations and served in both world wars (Senegalese Tirailleurs, 2017; Kentake, 2015; Babatunde, 2014).

French West African troops serving in World War I comprised about 170,891 men, and approximately 30,000 of them were killed. In Senegal alone more than 1/3 of all males of military age were mobilized. Following World War I, the Conscription Law of 1919 in French West Africa called for universal male conscription in peacetime as well as wartime. Hundreds of thousands served in the Senegalese Tirailleurs in colonial wars in this time period and in reserves and labor brigades (Kentake, 2015).



French West African soldiers served in the troop Senegalese Tirailleurs in France, WWI. Photographer unknown. (Source: Tirailleurs Senegalese, Blackpast.org, 2017).

France's economic dominance in Côte d'Ivoire today obviously bears a strong resemblance to its original reasons for colonizing the region: the accumulation of wealth via natural resources. As a broader observation, the era of colonization for France in West Africa is closely tied to the present

day structure of *neocolonialism* in Françafrique, where France doesn't technically govern Côte d'Ivoire yet has multiple multi-million dollar corporations which bring wealth back to France's economy. The drafting of West African troops into the French military spoke to the system of extreme colonial governance during the 1910s to 1940s. In some ways, France's current military base outside Abidjan, the 43e BIMA, which houses Licorne, is no different than drafting Ivorian natives to fight in the French trenches during WWII. Both situations still maintain the structure of imperial France and its military in a position of colonial power within the Côte d'Ivoire.

### **Colonial-Era and Postcolonial-Era Press in Côte d'Ivoire**

Limited documents are available on the newspapers written by Ivorian writers in Côte d'Ivoire during the period of French colonization, i.e., the late 1800s to independence in the 1960s. Literacy in written French was minimal in the emerging colony in the early 1900s, as there was no French-structured school system in most of rural Côte d'Ivoire.<sup>3</sup>

Jean Guillaneuf's 1975 dissertation, "La presse en Côte-d'Ivoire. La colonisation, l'aube de la décolonisation 1906-1952," exhaustively examines the 20 or so pre-independence newspapers published by Ivorian writers. Guillaneuf, a French socialist active in both Algerian and French politics, visited Paris and Abidjan in the 1970s to locate Ivorian newspapers from the 1930s and 1940s. The first newspaper written by indigenous Ivorians was *L'Eclaireur de la Côte d'Ivoire*, printed June 1, 1935 (Campbell, 1998, 92). These small newspapers were often published by a team of less than five journalists. There is little information on how early Ivorian newspapers were financed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> At this writing, I am unable to find information on colonial era newspapers in indigenous languages in Cote d'Ivoire. Secondary research cited here indicates only French language publications.

<sup>4</sup> Given the fleeting existence of these papers, it is clear their financial income was limited. It is likely each newsroom solicited donations from like-minded colleagues and citizens, as competition for newspaper sales and newspaper advertising were often crushed by the wealthier French newspapers publishing in Abidjan at the time.

Most Ivorian newspapers from the 1930s, 40s and 50s were printed on less than five news tabloid sheets or were in publication for less than a year.

Amon D'Aby, director of the Ivorian archives from 1938 to 1959, counted two dozen titles that had appeared by the early 1950s. All but two, he wrote, 'were ephemeral. One sees them born but one never knows how or when they disappeared. Their existence lasts from six months to a year; the best supported hardly pass three years, and that period is marked by long interruptions in publication. The press run varies from 1,000 to 1,500 copies. (Campbell, 1998, p. 92)

Guillaneuf concludes the editorial rhetoric in such papers was largely reticent to criticize France's colonial control. An AP journalist, Joseph Campbell, later came to the same conclusions after locating some pre-independence drafts.

Colonial-era titles in Côte d'Ivoire were more servile to French authority, and more short-lived, than the outspoken newspapers in colonial Dahomey (now Benin). Indeed, many Ivorian titles were started by French nationals or Senegalese residents. *L'Eclaireur de la Côte d'Ivoire*- the first Ivorian newspaper published by indigenous residents...declared earnest support in its inaugural issue for the 'vital and general interest of our beautiful colony in the framework of the French nation.' It pledged 'to collaborate sincerely and totally with the government' in order to 'serve even better the French colonial cause.' Few of the Ivorian colonial-era titles appeared for more than a few years. By the late colonial period, when Houphouët had largely consolidated political control through this Parti Democratique de la Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), rival and opposition newspapers had ceased publication (Campbell, p. 76).

Guillaneuf also found some Ivorian-written articles contain a thinly veiled criticism of France, often cloaked in flowery compliments. Ivorians in the 1930s and 1940s were still under France's strict "indigène" policy, which deprived them of French citizenship, yet still placed state commitments such as free labor and taxes on them. Interestingly, Guillaneuf also included excerpts from the French-published newspapers that emerged in Côte d'Ivoire in the early 1900s, which were overtly racist about indigenous Ivorians.

The development as well as the ethical development in black Africa is an affair managed sufficiently on the blacks by the whites." *L'Avenir de la Côte d'Ivoire*, 30 Mars, 1934. (Guillaneuf, 1975, p. 78).

Africans are judged to be incapable of working effectively for the development of their

country; impregnable, parsimonious, of weak spirit. The negro is still "without morality." Of the first years of the Colony, the [French] governor Angoulvant affirms: "The native cannot, in his current moral state, be considered a right being. His social life, yet uncomplicated, his fearful and defiant esteem made him clever. His maneuver of sincerity is, in our eyes, natural. It is to be feared that he will manifest as naturally the need to deceive in his work as in his words. *La Côte d'Ivoire*, February 10, 1909. (Guillaneuf, 1975, p. 79)

Côte d'Ivoire won independence from France in 1960. Ivorian citizen Houphouët-Boigny was elected and ruled the country for the next 30 years. Houphouët-Boigny notoriously governed the nation's press with an iron fist. The state newspaper, *Fraternité Matin*, was started in 1960 as the mouthpiece of Houphouët-Boigny's regime. During the 30 years of his regime's rule, citizen journalists tried to start new newspapers. Houphouët-Boigny famously organized large public conferences for "dialogue" in the 1960s and 1970s, and used these events as political manipulation to deny the need for a free press. Participants could come air their civic complaints at his forum, he argued, negating the need for any lengthy criticism in the Ivorian press (Campbell, 1998, 78- 79).

It was, in some respects, an innovative and effective strategy for acknowledging, channeling and coopting dissidence and political opposition- and in doing so, strengthening the single-party state and expanding its reach in society. Indeed, in the process of Dialogue, the country's sole political entity, the PDCI, would be at once the party in power *and* the opposition.(Campbell, 1998, p. 78).

Another popular medium of dissent against Houphouët-Boigny's regime was the use of secret pamphlets, or clandestine tracts, circulated among the Ivorian population in the 1970s and 1980s that contain bits of government scandals (Campbell, 1998; Théroux-Bénoni, 2009)

However, in the Ivorian context- with Dialogue increasingly state-managed and regimented, and with news of unsettling and embarrassing developments often not reported- clandestine tracts became a popular and surprisingly effective means of signaling dissent and expressing grievances and, in turn, of occasionally sowing alarm and uproar within the regime. (Campbell, 1998, p. 81).

After the death of Houphouët-Boigny in 1993, the printed newspapers of the country experienced a "springtime" of free press in the 1990s (Campbell, 1998). Dozens of politically financed and affiliated newspapers emerged throughout the 1990s. Notably, *Notre Voie* and *Le*

*Temps* still print today and were both started in the 1990s; *Le Temps* was founded by Gbagbo's Front Populaire Ivoirien. The practice of politicians creating their own newspapers to publish their own parties' rhetoric was established in Côte d'Ivoire in the 1990s. Newspapers and other media in many African nations also are commonly party-owned or affiliated, in countries such as Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria.

### **Contemporary politics in Côte d'Ivoire; events of 2010-2011 electoral crisis**

Houphouët-Boigny had a historically strong and stable trade relationship with France, making Ivory Coast one of the wealthier nations in West Africa through the early 1990s. When Houphouët-Boigny died in 1993, the Côte d'Ivoire saw multiple violent coups, as upcoming politicians tried to seize the presidency, most notably in 2002 and 2005. In 2004, Ivorian soldiers killed nine French peacekeepers. French president Jacques Chirac consequently ordered French military troops to destroy the entire Ivorian air force in retaliation, which they did. Tensions were extremely high between the two countries between 2003 and 2005, during which two French journalists, Jean Héléne and Guy-André Kieffer, were murdered ("Il y a 10 ans," "Ten Years Ago, RFI, 2013).

Both Alassane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo have had long political careers in Côte d'Ivoire, dating back to the 1970s. Ouattara, whose father is from Burkina Faso, traveled to the US in the 1970s to attend college. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a Ph.D. in Economics in 1972, and held progressively higher positions with the International Monetary Fund through the 1970s and 1980s. He was appointed as Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire by Houphouët-Boigny from 1990 to 1993, when Houphouët-Boigny died. Several years later, Ouattara was voted head of the Rally of the Republicans in 1999 (RDR), the political party which is currently in power in Côte d'Ivoire.

Whereas Ouattara's career origins started in economics, Gbagbo's career began in the social sciences and political activism. He received his doctorate in history in France in 1979, from Paris Diderot University. As a history professor in Côte d'Ivoire at University of Abidjan, he participated in a violent teacher's strike and ended up fleeing to France, where he stayed in exile from 1982 to 1988. While in France, he formed his idea for a new political party, Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI). He returned to Côte d'Ivoire in 1988, where he began a political campaign against Houphouët-Boigny and his Western-friendly politics. The FPI won nine seats in the Côte d'Ivoire's 1990 parliamentary election, giving them a national stronghold. After a series of coups, in which politicians Henri Konan Bédié and Robert Guéï briefly served as president for less than a year, Gbagbo successfully ran and won the presidential position in 2000.

Gbagbo furthered a nationalist ideology of Ivoirité, which has historically ostracized the largely immigrant northern region of Côte d'Ivoire. Unhappy that Ouattara was excluded from the presidential elections of 2000 because his father was from Burkina Faso, immigrant rebels in northern Côte d'Ivoire launched an unsuccessful coup in 2002, calling themselves the Forces Nouvelles. To confuse matters, Guéï, his wife and their children were all murdered the morning of the coup in 2002, well after Guéï was done serving as president, but the perpetrators were never discovered.

From 2002 to 2011, the Force Nouvelles were loosely aligned with Ouattara's politics, but firmed their commitment to him when his party won the first 2010 election. Most of the northern region of Côte d'Ivoire fell under control of these soldiers starting with the coup d'état in 2002. Force Nouvelles from that point on pledged allegiance to Ouattara. Because Ouattara was the final winner in the 2011 electoral crisis, many Force Nouvelles warlords also gained the power to split up Abidjan into smaller political fiefdoms. Many of them are now extremely wealthy landowners in

Abidjan. They are often referred to as rebel soldiers in the content of this study, and are historically considered to be the somewhat anarchic authorities of northern Côte d'Ivoire, which is divided up into their own political fiefdoms. In terms of strategic power, the northern region of Côte d'Ivoire carries weight because it contains the majority of the Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa farms, which are the country's number one most lucrative cash crop. About 87 major foreign corporations gather, process and export raw cocoa beans out of Côte d'Ivoire each year, 19 of which are from the U.S., France, Switzerland, UK or Singapore (RPT-Olam joins list of 87 Ivory Coast cocoa exporters, 2013).

Going forward, it is helpful to align Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa industry, foreign corporations like Total or Orange, the Force Nouvelles, Ouattara and France as operating with at least one common objective: pro-Western, free-trade friendly agreements that give the most access to Côte d'Ivoire's natural resources. To the contrary, Gbagbo's socialist and communist leanings have historically pointed him in the direction of national sovereignty for Côte d'Ivoire against France, though more cynical parties would liken his political tactics to an authoritarian dictatorship.

Gbagbo was not, of course, the first African leader to run afoul of the French ambition. Many others, before him, were dethroned or eliminated, particularly during the era of emancipation in the 1950s and 1960s; Djibo Bakary in the late 1950s in Niger, Mamadou Konaté in Mali in the 1950s, Sylvanus Olympio in Togo, assassinated in 1963, Ruben Um Nyobè, killed in 1958 by the French colonial army in Cameroon, etc. Each time, the objective for the French authorities was to dethrone these men or political parties which were making susceptible the interests of France in Africa. (Pigeaud, 2015, p. 318)

After the coups of 2002 and 2005, Gbagbo's administration delayed the presidential elections for a number of years, but finally agreed to go through with an election in 2010. The results of the election were announced in November, 2010, where Ouattara was declared the winner by the country's Commission Electorale Indépendante (CEI). Gbagbo's administration contested Ouattara's win, saying the votes from the northern portions of Côte d'Ivoire shouldn't count

because many of the voters are from Burkina Faso and were Ivorian nationals. Gbagbo's political party, FPI, brought their complaint to a second electoral office within the Ivorian government, the Constitutional Council. A second vote (a recount) was ordered for early December, where Ouattara was again voted the winner by CEI.

In early December 2010, both Gbagbo and Ouattara held official, well-publicized press conferences in separate locations, in which their loyal cabinet members swore them in as the rightful president. Now Côte d'Ivoire had two presidents. On Dec. 16, hundreds of Ouattara's supporters began a march across Abidjan to protest in front of the state-run Radiodiffusion-Télévision Ivoirienne (RTI) building. Gbagbo's police forces, Forces de Défense et de Sécurité (FDS), opened fire on the mostly civilian throng, killing about 19 people. Spats of violence between Gbagbo's government military and Ouattara's rebel army continued for the next three months. The African Union, the UN Security Council and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) all issued public statements supporting Ouattara as president, and asked Gbagbo to step down.

On January 3, 2011, Benin president Boni Yayi, Sierra Leone president Ernest Koroma, and Cape Verde president Pedro Pires, all leaders in ECOWAS, personally met with Gbagbo in another effort to persuade him to walk away. Frustrated with four months of a stalemate, Ouattara's Forces Nouvelles in the northern region assembled their forces and began marching south through Côte d'Ivoire in late March. From March 27 to 29, the Force Nouvelles killed over 800 civilians in the town of Duékoué on their way south, a massacre that was somewhat glossed over in the international media coverage. In early April, Ouattara's forces converged on Abidjan and began coordinating with Licorne and ONUCI. Together, the three military factions encroached on Gbagbo's palace, issuing daily warnings for him to surrender. On April 9, Licorne and ONUCI



secured the streets around the palace. At the last minute, Ouattara's forces broke into the palace on their own and arrested Gbagbo alive in his bedroom with his wife, Simone Gbagbo. Gbagbo was transported to an unknown location in Côte d'Ivoire by the French government, where he was later transferred to the International Criminal Court at the Hague, where he is presently on trial for war crimes. Simone was put on house arrest that same day, but was later caught and severely beaten by a mob of angry Ivorian civilians later that week. Simone was never sent to the ICC, but was tried for war crimes within the Côte d'Ivoire. She was released in 2015.

The months following Gbagbo's arrest are still cogent to the object of this study, namely in examining which political parties clearly profited in the ensuing cleanup. For example, *Jeune Afrique* published several stories on the pillaging of Abidjan that occurred in the power vacuum left when Licorne and ONUCI scaled back their military presence throughout Abidjan (Mieu, 2011; Niakate, 2017). The warlords of Force Nouvelles not only split up Abidjan into personal territory, they organized racketeering operations in front of the businesses and homes as people tried to return to their daily lives. With little order throughout the streets, many homes were robbed and additional civilians were killed, raped or beaten for their possessions as the Force Nouvelles savaged the city. Ouattara put out several press briefings asking for former rebel soldiers to return to their northern homes, asking for calm and order to help the city rebuild again.

Meanwhile, the government of France quickly issued about 10 million Euros to 44 French corporations in Côte d'Ivoire in July, three months after Gbagbo was arrested. A government spokesperson claimed the money was to repair French businesses damaged in 2004 in anti-French demonstrations. This was clearly a weak reason when it was obvious the money was to repair French businesses from the far more recent economic disaster of the post-electoral crisis, according to French journalist Fanny Pigeaud. The money was given to the French private sector in Côte

d'Ivoire by channeling it through l'Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD), as a loan (10 millions EUR pour indemniser des entreprises françaises, AFP, 2011; Pigeaud, 2015, p. 319).

A flurry of new gas and drilling contracts were signed between Ouattara's new administration and French corporate giants like Bouygues, Total, Foxtrot Internationale, BTP, and Bolloré in 2011 through 2014. For example, French energy and gas titan Martin Bouygues held a private meeting with Ouattara in Abidjan, in May 7, 2013. In a jubilant press briefing afterward, he announced plans to invest about \$5 million in Côte d'Ivoire's gas and energy sector, based on new contracts signed with Ouattara (Mieu, 2013).

In 2017, former ex-rebels in Ouattara's Force Nouvelles began a series of highly publicized protests against Ouattara, saying he owed them back pay from 2002 to 2011 for their help in securing the presidency for his administration. The group totals about 8,400 men from the north of Côte d'Ivoire. Unlike the higher ranking warlords of Force Nouvelles who won overnight wealth with the taking and sackaging of Abidjan in 2011, these soldiers were the working class footmen who supplied the sheer numbers it took to overrun the country in 2011. As of September, 2017, Ouattara's administration has paid out several thousand dollars to each soldier, with the final quantity not yet paid out (Mbaye, 2017).

## **News Industry in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire**

### **Today's Press in Côte d'Ivoire**

Today in Abidjan, a thriving daily newspaper industry flourishes. Each day, news kiosks around the city of 4.7 million staple the day's new print editions to a signboard, typically at a busy intersection. Each morning, a band of informal "titrologues" (Ivorians skimming the day's headlines, but not buying the newspaper), collects in front of the local news kiosk to absorb the

day's news. A paper costs between 60 cents to \$1. News kiosks only buy a set amount of "quotidiennes" (daily newspaper, in French) per day, meaning most kiosks are sold out by 3 or 4 p.m. (a fact I glumly discovered after trudging a sweaty half mile in the hot sun and sand to the nearest kiosk after work last summer in Abidjan).

There are 29 active daily newspaper publications in Abidjan and 24 weekly newspapers, according to Conseil Nationale de la Presse, the country's state watchdog institution. However, just as with many media industries in the West, there are a select "most popular" newspapers which audiences seek out. On an informal assessment from speaking with 11 journalists in summer 2015 (the summer before conducting formal interviews), I learned that *Fraternité Matin*, *Notre Voie*, *Le Temps*, *Le Patriote* and *Le Courrier* carry the most political clout in the city. These are the newspapers I selected for the framing analysis, as they represent both pro-Gbagbo and pro-Ouattara politics.

- *Fraternité Matin*: state-owned daily, supports whichever party is in power
- *Notre Voie*: founded by Gbagbo himself, also run by Front Populaire Ivoirien
- *Le Temps*: supports Gbagbo, founded by Gbagbo's wife Nady Bamba, official mouthpiece of the Front Populaire Ivoirien.
- *Le Patriote*: owned by Hamed Bakayoko, a minister of Ouattara's party, official mouthpiece for Rassemblement des Republicains (RDR)
- *Le Nouveau Courrier*: Now out of business. Supported the ideology of Front Populaire Ivoirien, owned by Theophile Kouamo, a former journalist for *Le Monde*

•  
Source: (Théroux-Bénoni, 2009, p. 126)

In Côte d'Ivoire, the private founders of most newspapers are politicians, starting in the 1990s, during the springtime of the press after the death of Houphouët-Boigny. Today, the political affiliation of each newspaper is directly tied to the political party that owns that newspaper.

In daily life in Abidjan, whether in the streets or in civil servant offices, these newspapers are perceived as falling into three categories: 1) pro-government (pro-Gbagbo) newspapers are referred to as the “blue” newspapers 2) Opposition newspapers are referred to as a “G7 papers” as they are close to one of the seven political and military entities that form the opposition (to Gbagbo’s presidency) 3) the newspapers do not have clear political preferences are said to be walking on a tight rope and are called “funambulists”- tight rope walkers (Théroux-Bénoni, 2009, p. 125).

Théroux-Bénoni loosely summarizes the rhetoric in the pro-Gbago newspapers (which includes *Notre Voie* and *Le Temps*) as reliably anti-French and anti-colonial.

The discourses of these papers explain the roots of the Ivorian crisis as a neo-decolonization struggle against ‘French President Chirac’s Imperialist France.’ Revelations of conspiracy plots against the Ivorian Republic, hatched by ‘the enemies of Côte d’Ivoire, the major international powers, the foreign media and traitor African Heads of State’ constitute the main body of their journalistic rhetoric (Théroux-Bénoni, 2009, p. 127).

### **Political Economy of Newspapers in Abidjan**

As mentioned before, political economy of the media addresses the production, distribution and consumption of media content and its implications as they are influenced by political, financial, and cultural contexts. The political system and economic order affects the way in which news organizations are set up and operate. Thus, political economy is significant to understanding the story of Abidjan’s local newspapers, many of which have direct connections with political figures with ties to large economic interests in the country and internationally. It is hard to summarize *all* of the 29 newspapers commonalities in who owns them, as each newspaper has a highly specific tale of how it came to be. The five newspapers used in this study are listed above with their respective owners. As can be seen, the ownership of each newspaper is typically a prominent national politician, whose viewpoints and political agendas greatly guide the editorial content of the newspaper. For example, the owner of *Le Patriote* currently works as a minister within Ouattara’s government. *Le Patriote* is the main political mouthpiece for Rassemblement des Republicains (RDR). This is a direct method for Ouattara and his administration to communicate their specific

political agendas to print and online readers of *Le Patriote*. Owners of these newspapers typically do not work in the newsroom itself. Politicians instead are typically out working in their political career which is supplemented by favorable coverage from their respective newspaper. For example, *Notre Voie* is owned by Gbagbo, but he is incarcerated at the International Criminal Court while *NV* supports him with favorable, supportive coverage about his ongoing criminal trial in Switzerland.

A political economic aspect of Abidjan's newspapers is how their newsroom's operation is financed. Interviews with local journalists show typical income streams for these small newspapers come from three main sources; newspaper sales on stands and through Abidjan.net, donations from political supporters and direct donations from the politicians who own them. Gbagbo's political party, Front Populaire Ivoirien, has thousands of supporters, including former soldiers, former members of his administration and civilians. These people regularly buy *Notre Voie* and *Le Temps*, and wealthier supporters often give large donations. *Notre Voie* and *Le Temps* operate directly off these revenue streams.

Another, more hidden stream of revenue for journalists of these newspapers are the small bribes they receive when out in the field. While it is no secret that each newspaper already has its own editorial policy and political alignment, journalists still accept small amounts of money from sources to cover an event. A common explanation for this activity from journalists when I spoke with them was that sources know journalists make very little money in Africa, so the source is expected to pay their "transport" to the news event. Essentially, when any organization in Côte d'Ivoire wants a high amount of publicity, they are expected to include a small reimbursement fund for each journalist as a way of paying their "transport." Clearly, giving journalists money as they arrive to cover a news event will predispose them to covering said event favorably.

Together, the factors of media ownership, revenue streams for newspapers and bribes to journalists form a political economic filter through which Ivorian news content is then created. While it is already clear the content of these newspapers is politically affiliated, the added knowledge of the financing of these newsrooms deepens the understanding of how journalists operate in a daily routine or in crisis, as in the instance of 2011.

In Chapter 6, I have two graphics which show patterns in how Ivorian journalists, both local and foreign, faced different types of harassment. For example, after Ouattara was officially named the president in mid-April 2011, the Force Nouvelles created a hit list of journalists who worked for newspapers supporting Gbagbo and then sent militias around the city looking for these journalists. Most journalists went into hiding outside Abidjan or fled to Ghana. Gbagbo's militia had done the same in the months before he was arrested (January, February, March, 2011), causing journalists from Ouattara's newspapers to also go into hiding. These political economic motivations for politicians in the country to own newspapers and to exert control over journalists help us understand frames in news coverage (Chapter 5), and the repression, censorship and monkeywrenching faced by journalists (Chapter 6).

### **International Newswires in Abidjan**

The foreign correspondents covering the civil war in 2011 were journalists who 1) were well-established Ivorians that had worked for foreign news outlets for many years 2) journalists that flew in from other nations, namely France, Canada and the U.S. Interestingly, the majority of news journalists working for AFP, Reuters and *Jeune Afrique* were almost all Ivorians who have worked in these news offices for a decade or more. This is an important distinction to make in this dissertation, which compares the coverage in the international news outlets to that of the local. One cannot assume that all journalists working for international outlets are automatically Western,

white, European journalists. By referring to the Western press or the foreign media in this dissertation, this does not imply, in any way, that the journalists *working* for those organizations are also from the West. To the contrary, the majority of journalists that produced news on Côte d'Ivoire during the electoral crisis for the major newswires were Ivorians. That said, most of the journalists that flew in when the crisis peaked in March 2011 were indeed, French or European and were sent from mainstream Western publications that didn't have a permanent stringer in Côte d'Ivoire. For example, the Christian Science Monitor sent an American journalist in for a few weeks; France 24, a mainstream French TV station funded by the French government, sent several teams of French journalists and videographers down as well.

As a result of interviews in 2016 with journalists working for AFP, AP and Reuters (see Chapter 4, Methods), I also learned that many journalists were called on to freelance for major U.S. or French publications during the electoral crisis. This meant many permanent, salaried journalists were freelancing for two or more international Western publications at the same time. Instead of sending in a parachute journalist, *The New York Times*, for example, paid a permanent Reuters journalist to provide weekly articles on the crisis. The U.S. National Public Radio (NPR) called the Associated Press reporter stationed there, Marco Oved, and interviewed him on NPR. That story went live on NPR channels, syndicates and their published text throughout the U.S.

These porous transfers of labor between journalists and ethnicities constitute an important contribution to this study. This helps challenge the stereotype that all foreign correspondents are necessarily Western and necessarily unfamiliar with the Côte d'Ivoire's history. It also complicates our knowledge of the jobs performed by these journalists, as the "journalist" working for *The New York Times* in Côte d'Ivoire was the same journalist working for Reuters. This empirical knowledge gained from personal conversations with journalists adds a layer of nuance to the discussion of

foreign correspondents working in Africa, delineating the media ownership of one's publication from the ethnicity of the journalists working for that publication. In Chapter 5 of this dissertation, we will visit the four major frames found in the writing of the international press and compare them to those found in the local newspapers. Both camps mainly consist of native Ivorian journalists, but the editors and owners of the international press are based in the West and are coaching their journalists to write for international audiences. This helps explain why the the political-economic factor of who *owns* a particular publication rather than who *writes* for it, is so important.

The following is a list of the major international news wires with a permanent stringer based in Abidjan:

- Associated Press
- Agence-France Presse (physical bureau located on Avenue du Docteur Croze, Abidjan. Current AFP bureau chief is Frenchman Patrick Fort, about five Ivorian journalists form the news team)
- Reuters (team is mostly composed of Ivorian journalists. During the electoral crisis, an American, Tim Cocks, was the bureau chief).
- *Le Monde Afrique*
- Radio-France Internationale (current correspondent is Marie-Pierre Olphand, French citizen)
- British Broadcasting Company (current correspondent is Tamasin Ford, English citizen)
- Opération des Nations Unies en Côte d'Ivoire FM radio station<sup>5</sup>

This review of Côte d'Ivoire's political and press history forms the contextual background for this dissertation. Through understanding the timeline of major events in the country's history, readers can more clearly understand the analysis of news frames in the coming chapters.

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<sup>5</sup> ONUCI-FM closed in June 2017, along with the entire ONUCI mission, as the UN felt its mission in Côte d'Ivoire was finished



## **CHAPTER III**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The theoretical framework for this research draws on postcolonial theory in the era of globalization. I approach globalization from a critical perspective with a focus on the international flow of media, addressing issues of misrepresentation, identity and voice in how journalists, particularly Western news outlets, report across borders. A political economic framework also is necessary to examine media ownership and explain issues of media censorship. This dissertation examines how media ownership led to the monkeywrenching, censorship, and repression of journalists in Côte d'Ivoire. I include related studies of news coverage on African conflict. This literature is also paired with literature from media studies on how the news is framed, along with social movement literature on collective action frames as used in social movements. In particular, I focus on studies which contrast local African media producers (such as Kenyan journalist bloggers) to the work of international newsrooms. After this review, I revisit the three central research questions for this research, having grounded their premises in these theories.

#### **Media imperialism and globalization**

International communication includes the study of the control of content production and content flow across borders, with particular focus on the relationship between Western transnational corporate empires and the Global South. Postcoloniality and international communication have some overlapping concepts about the hegemony of Western media corporations dominating and profiting from weaker economic markets in the Global South (Hedge & Shome, 2004). International communication scholars have since labeled this ongoing dominance of Western newswires “media imperialism.”

Firstly, processes of imperialism are in various senses executed, promoted, transformed or undermined and resisted by and through media. Secondly, the media themselves, the meanings they produce and distribute and the political-economic processes that sustain them are sculpted by and through ongoing processes of empire building and maintenance, and they carry the residues of empires that once were (Boyd-Barrett, 2015, p.1).

Media imperialism, a subset of structural imperialism, refers to the ongoing dominance (often through size and economics, and general political economic means) of one culture's media industries over another, and is commonly examined in the context of Western media companies interfering in the coverage of the Global South (Boyd-Barrett, 2015; Carlsson, 2003; Taylor, 1997; Wasserman, 2017). Media imperialism denotes the problems that occur in media ownership (such as France's state-funded radio station Radio France International serving as the main radio station throughout West Africa, the former colonies of France).

As McMillin (2007: 55, 66) points out, the media have historically played a role in the reproduction of imperial power and their position in contemporary global power relations often show similarities to that earlier era. Journalistic narratives often still repeat discourses of "civility and barbarity" (McMillin, 2007; Wasserman, 2017, p. 193).

Despite massive efforts to decolonize and reestablish independent nations with independent systems of commerce and governing, many African nations still find themselves "entrapped within a disciplining colonial matrix of power," (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. xi). Côte d'Ivoire's ongoing problems with the French government or French transnational media corporations speak directly to this matrix of power.

### **Political economy and media ownership**

Questions of hegemonic power, imperialism and ownership are best explained by using a political economic lens. Political economy of the media addresses the political and economic organization in which media systems are set to operate. It probes how ownership structure and its intersection with state policies drive the motivations and strategies of media corporations, sometimes at the risk of heavily influencing the content produced by news agencies. Political

economy of the media analyses the power wielded by media owners of media conglomerates to affect the actual news content distributed to audiences, largely to the economic benefit of these media owners. In some cases, these benefits extend to the elite political classes of a society. This research in Côte d'Ivoire uses a political economic framework to compare two media camps (international and local) which have very different ownership structures and publics to serve. Chapter 6 of this dissertation explores the monkeywrenching of journalists behind the scenes as they covered the electoral crisis in 2010 and 2011. A political economic framework helps explain this monkeywrenching of journalists by inspecting who profits financially and politically from the control and censorship of journalists. The ownership of one's news organization often has a direct impact on a journalist's safety, and what they are and are not allowed to cover and publish for audiences. In this section, I explore the basic premises of political economy and its role in the censorship of media.

Jonathan Hardy (2014) explains that Adam Smith, an eighteenth-century thinker, thought political economy was concerned with the study of wealth. Smith was interested in understanding the allocation of resources to satisfy certain needs. He paired this with political decision making to understand how the political system organized rules and regulation to assist in economic growth for the benefit and development of capitalism. Classic political economists, like Smith and others such as David Ricardo and James Mill, were interested in capitalism as a system of production, distribution and consumption of wealth. In the nineteenth-century, Carl Marx and Frederick Engels added class analysis, spearheading a critical view of capitalism and with it the advancement of a critical political economy, which in the 1960s-1970s was incorporated into the study of media and communications (Hardy, 2014).

Murdock and Golding (1995) wrote a general description of the major issues at stake in the political economy of mass media: ownership of media corporations, the effect of advertising dollars on the media content, the impact of a strong or weak economy on media as businesses and the operation of media agencies as businesses driven to earn profits. Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman published perhaps the most famous of all political economic texts, *Manufacturing Consent*, in 1988, which crystallizes many of the issues raised by Curran, Gurevitch and Woollacott (1982), as well as Murdock and Golding (1995). The book's propaganda model argues that news professionals filter news through five filters, ultimately creating a media environment in which the government "manufactures" a consenting attitude from the population, which is steeped in this government propaganda. The five filters are 1) size and ownership of mass media (ownership is consolidated into multi-billion dollar corporations, which also hold stock and sit on the boards of businesses not in media, such as arms manufacturing corporations) 2) reliance of media on government or official sources for regular news reporting 3) reliance of media on advertising dollars in a capitalist economy 4) "flak" as a means of disciplining the media 5) anti-communism as a unifying narrative.

Political economy of the media in the era of globalization focuses on how media ownership can cause perversions and manipulations of news content, often at the expense of Global South peoples. In the instance of this dissertation, strongholds of corporate or government media power in countries like France or Ivorian politicians owning their own newspaper definitely have direct consequences on the bias seen within these respective media outlets. Consider the political economic influence on media studies in Africa in Steeves' 2008 study of the portrayal of African peoples and culture on reality TV segments (Steeves, 2008). Steeves analyses three network reality TV shows (Survivor, The Amazing Race and Idol Gives Back) as they visit different African

nations. Their at-times reductive and colonizing perspectives on African cultures leads Steeves to conclude such shows are commodifying African culture into an exploitable, saleable package of entertainment that fits easily into Western audience's stereotyped perceptions of Africa. "Hybrid encounters on reality television provide opportunities for global entertainment, commodification and profit," (Steeves, 2008, p. 425).

A political economic analysis of a particular media scene often examines how the final published media product works to benefit the owners of said media organizations. Herman and Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent* issues a convincing example of this in the case study the McNeil-Lehrer news hour, a TV program, from 1985 to 1986, analyzing all programs which dealt with the Cold War, terrorism or communism (Chomsky & Herman, 1988, 20-38). Chomsky and Herman found that over half of the sources invited to speak on the show were either from the U.S. government or from private right-wing think tanks which employed former U.S. government officials. In terms of maintaining class dominance, political economy argues that the mass media legitimate the status quo because of their excessive reliance on government sources for news or the "official" stance on news. Relative to this dissertation, Chomsky and Herman help illuminate how mass media privileges the elite opinions in a society, with the end results benefitting those same elite voices. More specifically, the U.S. government was able to strengthen the tenants of capitalism (benefits elites of U.S.) by manipulating mass media to express opinions that work in favor of this strengthening (spotlighting the dangers of Communism by privileging officials who worked on such projects with the U.S. government). I later draw on this political economic assessment of media ownership in Chapters 5 and 6, using interviews with local and international journalists to explore how the political agendas of the upper management in their newsrooms trickled down to affect journalist safety.

## **Postcolonial Theory**

Despite massive development efforts for the past seventy-some years, scholars can still point to the world's most wealthiest and most powerful people/nations and articulate a noticeable pattern of neocolonialism, to which Global South nations still largely play subservient economic roles (Amin, 2000; Boyd-Barrett, 2015; Memmi, 2006; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Steeves & Melkote, 2015; Schiller, 1991; Straubhaar, 1991; Martin & wa Muiu, 2009). Postcolonial studies refers to the ongoing extension of Western colonial practices in Global South nations, despite the formal end of colonialism (Mignolo, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Quijano, 2000; Said, 1981). One definition of postcolonial theory reads, "A global neo-colonial hegemonic model of power that articulates race and labour, as well as space and people in accordance with the needs of capital and to the benefit of white European people," (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. x). African economist and scholar, Samir Amin, furthers the conversation on the West's coloniality of power by pointing to five global monopolies held by Western nations: technology, finance sector, natural resources, control of communication means and weapons of mass destruction (Amin, 1997; 2000). Clearly, the monopoly of French and British transnational media companies (Agence France-Presse, Jeune Afrique, Reuters) over Côte d'Ivoire news is a classic example of the colonial-era power of France continuing to operate in this nation.

Postcolonial literature emerged in the late 1960s and 1970s, within the period of decolonization and within the same time period as the rise of international communication. This body of literature was largely formed by scholars from the developing world who began to join academic circles and read the often stigmatized representations of Third World people within Western literary circles. Scholar Edward Said, a well-known postcolonial scholar, problematized the West's troubled concept of the Middle East and Asia with his term "orientalism," in which

Western scholars and Western media place entire geographical regions under the umbrella of the Orient, discursively constructing a homogenized sculpture of Oriental people. He also wrote *Covering Islam*, a book which lambasts the Western press for consistently applying traits of Islamic terrorism to all of the Middle East, painting a grossly inaccurate image of the many diverse peoples practicing Islam through the region. In the following excerpt, Said discusses the American media's obsessive focus on the 52 Americans released in the Iran hostage return in 1981.

Very much in keeping with the narrowly focused range of problems explored by the media during the crisis (with few exceptions), there was no careful scrutiny of what the Iranian trauma has meant, what it suggests about the future, what might be learned from it. The London *Sunday Times* reported on January 26 that before he left office President Carter allegedly advised the State Department to "focus all public attention on building up a wave of resentment against the Iranians." Whether or not this was in fact true, it appeared to be plausible at least, since no public official and few columnists and journalists were interested in reevaluating the long American history of intervention in Iran and other parts of the Islamic world (Said, 1981, p. lxi)

Similar to French coverage of the Ivorian conflict in 2010, little was said in the international news outlets that Licorne, the French military mission in Côte d'Ivoire, has been stationed there since 2004, and has engaged in minor military conflict several times with Gbagbo's Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI). Said's work in *Covering Islam* correctly pinpoints how the journalists of powerful nations lend a favorable pen to the actions of their nation, sometimes by simply focusing on the travesties of their enemy (in this instance, Iran) and not their own history of hegemonic dominance.

Scholar Chandra Mohanty, also a classic postcolonial scholar, problematizes the discursive construction of Third World women within Western feminist literature.

"It is in the production of this Third World difference that Western feminists appropriate and colonize the constitutive complexities which characterize the lives of women in these countries" (Mohanty, 1988, p. 63). Both Said and Mohanty, as postcolonial scholars questioning the ongoing hegemony of the West over the Global South, address the problem of Western writers discursively

constructing the Other, in this instance, the Other being Muslims or women in Third World nations. The link between international communication's one-way flow of information and postcolonial theory, of course, is that both fields problematize the power of Western media/academia/politicians to speak *for* or *in place of* the situations in Global South nations. As mentioned earlier, this same claim was championed by the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1970s, when these 29 developing nations were so concerned about the implications of Western journalists writing about their politics that they pushed UNESCO to help create the MacBride Commission.

### **Frames in social movement literature and media studies**

My dissertation puts discussions of frames/framing from the fields of social movements and media studies in conversation, reflecting the reality that the borders between journalism and activism and between journalists and activists are at times quite porous.

In 1974, Goffman offered the first sociological work on frames, identifying it as a way of thinking in someone's mind that uses a "schemata of interpretation" to locate, identify and perceive the world around them. It's a filter of specific interpretations based on an individual's background and intentions. This definition was later picked up by media scholars such as Entman (1993), Tuchman, (1978) and Gitlin (1980). They transferred the use of the term to how journalists and editors in the mass media intentionally "frame" broadcasts. Entman says a news frame is a matter of selection, salience, emphasis and exclusion of certain signifying agents in a news text, with the overall effect of creating a particular, often persuasive *interpretation* of a news event. In *The Whole World is Watching*, Gitlin identifies a list of framing devices used in news to simultaneously delegitimize the student New Left movement and uphold the U.S. government; trivialization (making light of movement behaviors), polarization (emphasizing counter-demonstrations),



marginalization (showing demonstrators as deviants), overemphasizing right-wing opposition to the movement, and relying on government officials for tips (Gitlin, 1980).

Within the field of social movements, scholars Snow and Benford in the 1980s and 1990s also drew on Goffman's 1974 definition of frames to talk about how people invoke collective action frames to further social movements. According to Benford et al. (1986), a collective action frame is a message of action-oriented beliefs and values that serve to legitimate and stimulate a social movement. In effect, the field of social movements understand frames as action-oriented public campaigns focused on rallying more adherents to a particular cause. Collective action frames are formed with the intent of *causing the mobilization of people and actions*. A social movement often moves through a process of framing, say Snow and Benford (2000);

- diagnostic framing (In which a group identifies a collective source of injustice. Gamson said many diagnostic frames in a movement start as "injustice frames," in which a group does the initial labor of identifying a common problem and rallying around it. Diagnostic frames can often be disputed in social movements, which we'll discuss later in frame disputes)
- prognostic framing (In which a group prescribes an action plan or solution for their collective grievance. The authors give the example of the 1989 student protests in China, where students intentionally framed their movement as being in favor of "self sacrifice and community devotion" to strategically avoid being labeled anarchists or rebels by the government)
- motivational framing (in which the social movement diffuses frames for a call to action, mobilizing people to act to solve this collective grievance. This is often the point at which protests, press conferences, or military fighting break out) (Benford and Snow, 2000, p. 616-617)

### **Normative roles of the press**

International media correspondents and Ivorian print media in their operation of journalism may come from fundamentally different paradigms, both in funding, organizational structure and political aims. The differences in news framing vary, to be sure, but can some of these differences be understood better as a normative function of how each media camp is predisposed to operating?

The foreign journalists who covered the civil war were working for out-of-country multi-million

dollar Western news corporations, where Ivorian journalists were primarily working for low-budget, extremely low salary newspapers that relied mainly on funds from their respective politicians to maintain an operating budget (Campbell, 1998; Théroux-Bénoni, 2009). The LinkedIn profiles of each foreign correspondent showed their journalism education came from journalism schools in their Western country of origin, i.e., Britain, France and the U.S. According to the four theories of the press model, the journalism practiced in these Western nations typically upholds a more libertarian or socially responsible model of journalism which values bringing objective information to the public. Beyond those four theories, later Western communication scholars pointed out four overlapping “expected” or “normative” roles of the media; monitoring, facilitating, challenging authority and a more collaborative role between state, citizens and the press for mutual interests (Christians, Glasser, McQuail, Nordenstreng, White, 2009). Christians et al. in their section on the monitoring role of the press, make a strong connection between mainstream media and the ease of getting news tips from official sources, as well-funded government bodies and organizations are often looking to have their viewpoints well-publicized in a favorable way.

The first of these tendencies is likely to favor the reproduction of news from sources that are best organized to supply what the media want: news agencies, public relations firms, official sources, or other well-financed organizations or lobby groups. The general effect is to limit journalism’s independence and critical thrust, as well as preventing a full and balanced monitoring of what is going on. Often this factor plays into the hands of the would-be managers and manipulators of news and news events, increasing the chance of news being propaganda. (Christians et al., 2009, p. 153).

Indeed, the foreign journalists working Abidjan during the crisis, many of whom were Ivorians who worked in the offices of AP, AFP, Reuters and *Jeune Afrique* for 10 years or more, relied heavily on commentary from Licorne and ONUCI for commentary on the ongoing electoral crisis in 2010. Considering it was the UN, paired with France’s military mission Licorne, who joined Ouattara’s military advancement in April, 2011 to arrest Gbagbo at his palace, one can hardly

consider the UN an objective source of information in the crisis. However, scholars of normative journalism (as well as scholars in political economy of the media, such as Chomsky), argue that the mainstream press tend to rely on the more official sources of news because it is more readily available (Chomsky, 1988).

The focus of attention is determined by economic and political criteria, according to the interests of the source of monitoring...more attention is attached to objects who seek publicity and wish to be monitored and less to those who wish to avoid it. The use of power and money by the objects of monitoring often shapes the difference... Monitoring is not simply a matter of observing and recording isolated facts *but of viewing the world from a limited number of interpretive frames*. The choice of frames is likely to be limited by the range and strength of elite and popular opinion, and by considerations of national or sectional interest (Christians et al., 2009, p. 156) (emphasis added).

The manner in which print journalism is practiced in the Côte d'Ivoire and much of the press industry in other neighboring African nations does not fit very well into the mold of “normative journalism” as presented by scholars in this area. In fact, Christians et al.’s comments on traditional journalism would likely label West Africa’s politically affiliated print industry as more on the side of propaganda and advocacy, than journalism as recognized in the West. In the ensuing section on frames, in which I argue journalists serve as both activists and journalist in some settings, I further explore the grey areas around “traditional journalism” and politically-affiliated newsrooms of Côte d'Ivoire. Journalism is never objective, despite the textbook definition of traditional journalism, as Christians et al. defines it.

### **Studies of foreign and local news production in Africa**

The idea that Côte d'Ivoire’s news flow continues to be greatly influenced by the former colonizer France is disrupted by the growing industry of African journalists and bloggers taking their politics and news to the internet. Globalization and new media can continue to make transitions in the world, while at the same the Western ruling class (or France’s state-run media) will continue to fight for the most power and the most material gain (effectively, media imperialism

and neocolonialism). Both eras can occur at the same time. There will never be a binary transition between the West's capitalistic monopolies and the growing interconnectedness of fair, asymmetrical globalization; the world changes through time in shades of grey. That said, within the era of globalization in the field of international communication, postcolonial scholars have recognized for the past 10 or so years the magical ability of localized news markets in the Global South to speak back to the more mainstream representations of their nations in Western media outlets. Instead of the core-periphery relationship between the West and Global South nations (Galtung, 1971; Wallerstein, 2004), scholars in the field of international communication, particularly in Africa, now factor in the existence of online African news organizations as a growing alternative voice to mainstream media coverage of African events (Badawi, 2017; Bunce, 2015; Nothias, 2017; Nyabola, 2017; Ogunyemi, 2017).

Ivorian journalists are certainly not alone in this effort. Recent studies show African journalists using social media to report the news to a growing online audience of Africans in-country and abroad (Atton and Mabweazara 2011; Awino, 2012; Bunce, 2015; Chala & Lemke, 2016; Mabweazara, Mudhai & Whittaker, 2014).

Consider the recent testimony of a blogger in Kenya, reflecting on the 2007 riots.

Foreign journalists learned this the hard way in the build up to the Kenyan election in 2013. First they discovered that there are several thousand Kenyans on Twitter, using and shaping the space, and second they found that these several thousand Kenyans are not afraid to disagree with journalists and the representations they see within mainstream media.

Six years earlier, in December 2007, Kenyans were paralysed and helpless as alarmist reports often inaccurately depicted our country as another in the litany of African failed states...But even in the haze of violence, watching a CNN journalist completely mistranslate the cries of a protester waving a white flag in the streets of Nairobi in 2007 (he was crying for peace, but the journalist translated this as a cry for support for his ethnic group) was degrading and offensive and dimmed any esteem I had for international media houses (Nyabola, 2017, p. 113).

Twenty six percent of Ivorians had access to the internet in 2016, up from twenty one percent in 2015, according the International Telecommunications Union (ITU, 2016). That is a huge leap in internet connectivity compared to 2010 and 2011 during the time of the crisis, when the rate was 2.7 percent and 2.9 percent of the population, respectively (ITU, 2016). As the number of Ivorians online continues to climb, more Ivorian readers will turn to online news for updates.

### **Comparing international news frames to local news frames**

There is a fair amount of literature on how journalists frame conflicts in African nations, and how framing can legitimize or delegitimize aspects of a crime or civil war (Bartholomé, G., Lecheler, S. & de Vreese, C., 2015; Bunce, 2017; Joye, 2017; Nothias, 2017; Steeves, 1997). A recent comprehensive study of foreign correspondent coverage of Africa showed a marked improvement in positive news coverage in certain topics, comparing 1994 coverage to 2013 (Bunce, 2017, p. 17 - 29). Results showed that writers for AFP, AP and Reuters are now writing more positively about the topics of business, human

itarian, and domestic politics but have actually increased negative coverage of conflict and crime in this 20-year span. Another study showed that Belgian foreign correspondents covering the former Belgian colonies of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi tend to frame news stories for their home audiences. Such stories will frame a situation based on, for example, a Belgian family's tale of terror within a political conflict (Joye, 2017, p. 55). Perhaps the most current trend in literature on framing conflicts of Africa is the "Africa Rising" narrative, in which it has become popular for national and international media to speak of more hopeful, more positive representations occurring across the continent (Baker, P. & Santora, M., 2015; Bunce, 2017; Hunter-Gault, 2006; Nothias, 2014).

Several studies compare the coverage of international correspondents to local African journalists (Anderson & hMensa, 2011; Ariss, Schiffrin & Chahine, 2017; Vincent, P. 2017). Most scholars find a distinct difference on how events are framed by international journalists compared to local coverage, a powerful phenomenon when one considers the power of international journalists to reach external decision-makers that impact in-country lives. Ariss et al. found the U.S and UK's media coverage of the Millennium Villages Project (in which 12 villages in 10 African countries were holistically wrapped in development services over many years) to be more in-depth, more critical and more nuanced. In contrast, African media tended to write shorter, positive pieces that drew primarily on press releases and conferences with local politicians.

### **Framing conflict in Africa**

I discussed earlier how media studies scholars argue that journalists tend to frame news content in favor of the dominant hegemonic view (Gitlin, 1980). For the most part, the following body of literature on how journalists cover African conflict adopts the same stance as Entman, Tuchman and Gitlin, even citing them extensively to show how the media in African nations, both local and international, tends to maintain the class domination in its framing. Instead of conceptualizing journalists working as activists in their more opinionated pieces, this body of literature problematizes the role of journalists in *promoting* violence in their more opinionated pieces.

Two studies examined the role of the press in Rwanda, mainly radio stations such as the Radio-Television Libre des Mille Collines, in further inciting the 1994 genocide (Kellow and Steeves, 1998; Thérroux-Bénoni, 2009). It was later shown that some Hutu radio hosts were intentionally broadcasting lies about the Tutsi people, in order to encourage Hutus to rise against them in a three-month blood bath. Thérroux-Bénoni issues a careful correction to what she herself

terms “the Rwandan paradigm” in her 2009 dissertation about how the Ivorian press covered the 2004 Ivorian civil war. She cautions readers not to assume that the strong political affiliations of Ivorian print newspapers fanned the flames of the 2004 conflict, as in Rwanda. Instead, Thérroux-Bénoni lists several alternative ways Ivorian citizens receive and absorb their political news, often relying on word of mouth, radio or touring lorry trucks with massive radios mounted in the bed of the truck.

This dissertation questions the emphasis placed upon the role of media in African conflicts, which I term the Rwandan paradigm. The Rwandan paradigm is the reductionist notion that mass media indoctrination plays a decisive role in mobilizing African audiences to commit acts of communal violence. Ultimately, I suggest two avenues to broaden our understanding of the intersection between communication and conflict: 1) a recognition of the complex agency of media producers and their audience; 2) an exploration of alternative media and public spaces (Thérroux-Bénoni, 2009, p. ii).

Thérroux-Bénoni adopts the stance of media scholars Berelson, Lazarsfeld and Bandura in her emphasis on the *agency* of Ivorian audiences, concluding that all audiences filter the news through a myriad of personal and environmental factors (Bandura, 2002; Berelson and Lazarsfeld, 1948).

One qualitative study of Dutch journalists found that journalists do indeed take an active interventionist stance when writing about conflict, and are more likely to take an even stronger stance when “politicians or parties with political power are involved,” (Bartholomé et al., 2015). Another study explored how Kenyan and international journalists framed a mass gang rape and killings of school girls by school boys in Kenya, revealing that journalists tended to frame the crimes in ways that softened or rationalized the boys’ behavior (Steeves, 1997).

Likewise, the *Washington Post* headline, “When Women are Prey,” may be viewed as implying that males (in Africa) are predatory animals...a less ambiguous international example is Sheryl McCarthy’s *Newsday* opinion article headlined, “Cavemen Try Taking Women Back in Time: the Stone Age” (Steeves, 1997, p. 62).

Steeves' study draws in part on Gitlin's work on news media as sustaining the hegemonic order, as well as on feminist theory, showing how Kenyan authorities, both in the government and at the school, were cited extensively by the press and allowed to speak for the rape victims.

As rape became more a part of the local news stories about St. Kizito, the unchallenged presence of rape myths became increasingly apparent, a presence that blatantly served to support patriarchal hegemony and to sympathize with the assailants (Steeves, 1997, p. 63)

How does a discussion of an African journalist inciting violence in their news frames fit with a discussion of African journalist-as-activist? How does a reader sift out the difference between a news story that contains strong frames for action and a news story that essentially contains a collective action frame in which the journalist is intentionally trying to mobilize people? As one can see, there isn't a clear line between these approaches.

### **When collective action frames and news frames collide: journalist as activist**

In Côte d'Ivoire, the actions of journalists-as-activists challenge researchers to integrate two previously separate fields of study; media studies and social movement theory. In media studies, scholars argue journalists tend to frame their news stories in favor of the "status quo" or cultural elites, in essence maintaining the class domination in a society through the news (Entman, 1991; Gamson et al., 1982; Gitlin, 1980; Tuchman, 1978). According to Entman and Tuchman, the mainstream media can largely be relied on to support the political parties and corporate means of production within a culture. Scholars of social movements focus, in contrast, on "collective action frames," where a group of people seeking social change mobilizes around a collective cause and advocates for action, often against the economic, political, or cultural elite. Collective actions frames (CAF) are often associated with people championing grassroots action from the bottom, starting with the masses of a population. These people strategically and intentionally construct frames that will be most successful for mobilizing supporters and achieving their ends (Benford et



al., 1986; Noonan, 1995; Viterna, 2013). This literature generally separates those undertaking collective action from those reporting on it. Thus, the media in social movements literature act as a recipient or interpreter of collective action frames, rather than potential producers of such frames, as we witness in Côte d'Ivoire. A key focus of this dissertation is to explore how Ivorian journalists play a double role as both politically affiliated activists, but also media professionals.

News frames and collective action frames look separate on paper, but the case study of daily newspapers in the Côte d'Ivoire shows they can overlap empirically. Journalists working for *Notre Voie* (a pro-Gbagbo, anti-French newspaper) are working as news professionals, but their strong political affiliation with the Front Populaire Ivoirien during the conflict turned their writing more into political activism for the FPI. Many of their news articles were intentionally written to mobilize the agitated population to their cause, leaving behind a more Western, neutral type of journalism. This type of news writing calls into question some of the assumptions made in both media studies and social movement literature about the role of *power* in frames, where instead of a top-down news frame or bottom-up collective action frame, the journalist sides with a minority cause and uses the power of journalism to champion and amplify a collective action frame.

The idea of journalist-as-activist is not new to media studies, but approaching this idea as a combination of social movement theory and media studies may very well be. The following are a few examples within the field of communication that highlight the idea of a non-objective journalist openly writing for a political cause. What is missing from the following media studies literature though, and what can potentially be contributed by my dissertation, is how the field of social movements and collective action frames can also contribute and restructure the conversation on journalists as activists.

Within media studies, the conversation on journalist-as-activist picked up with the rising popularity of blogs, Youtube and other online news venues, in the mid-2000s. For the continent of Africa, the bulk of this literature has centered on the work of social media users during the Arab Spring movement, which started in Tunisia in late 2010 (Allam, 2014; Chapsos and Frangonikolopoulos 2012; Khamis & Vaughn, 2014; Segev, Wolfsfeld and Sheaffer, 2013). For example, Tunisia's political repression and censorship of its media created a unique socio-political environment which cultivated the use of social media for *activism* (Joyce, 2011; Khamis & Vaughn, 2013). When a blogger posted a video to DailyMotion of some government-led killings, the government responded by shutting down all of Tunisia's connection to YouTube, Facebook and DailyMotion, which only succeeded in drawing more citizen attention to both the killings and the government's attempt to censor the video (Joyce, 2011). Additionally, the Zone9 bloggers of Ethiopia are a group of blogger activists in Addis Ababa and the U.S, that routinely criticize the Ethiopian regime, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (Biddle and Chala, 2015). Six of the eight bloggers were imprisoned in 2014 and released in 2015, partially because of the continued blogging and international commentary from one of their free members, Endalk Chala. The conversation on journalists working as activists is important to the central issue of the media imperialism of France over the Côte d'Ivoire, because it is one more way to examine Ivorian resistance to France.

### **A new hybrid frame: journalist as activist**

A key inquiry in this study is the types of frames that emerge in the international press and the local press coverage of Côte d'Ivoire, and how power was exercised and manipulated through these frames by Gbagbo, Ouattara and France to get their candidate in power. A key theoretical contribution of this study is to introduce the idea of a hybrid frame in how journalists cover conflict,

pulling from both media studies and social movement theory. This research offers a new outlook on how these two abstract concepts collide in complex ways in the real world of reporting. I refer to this type of frame as a “hybrid frame.” As a new contribution to the literature on social movements and media studies, this “hybrid framing” introduces a new way of considering how journalists frame news stories. *A hybrid frame implies that the complex circumstantial factors of reporting in intense political arenas pulls apart the canonical ideas of only activism or only news, and instead implies that all journalists dabble in both, often unintentionally.* Journalism under extreme circumstances, when a limited number of sources are available or when a political party is actively hunting journalists to kill them, is no longer traditional journalism as we understand it. The framing is no longer the way we understand it. Journalists in these circumstances, as we will see in the results of this study, write from intentional and unintentional spaces, often due to political and economic forces outside their control.

RQ1: What are the frames in local and international media papers during the conflict? How do they compare? What themes were found in interviews with both local and international journalists that speak to their ideas about “la ligne editorial” of both types of media? Where are the loci of editorial and economic power in the media systems that produce news about the Côte d’Ivoire? What do we learn about journalists as activists in the ways news frames are produced?

### **Monkeywrenching the media**

Another key inquiry of this study is how hard political parties were willing to battle for control over the news narratives (frames) leaving Abidjan. The most read news reports were those of the international media publications. As a result of interviews with journalists, I learned both Ouattara and Gbagbo’s officials were actively censoring and hunting down local and international

journalists, as examined in Chapter 6. France engaged in its own manipulation, but in different platforms, also discussed in Chapter 6. This aspect of monkeywrenching the media, using behind-the-scenes tactics to threaten journalists or coerce journalists did not fit well in many of the theories visited earlier in this literature review, such as normative theories of the press or the usage of soft power to influence people. The discussion of a battle over news frames reaches a higher, more real level when coupled with this monkeywrenching, which involves violence against journalists or privileging access to some journalists but not others. I advocate then, that monkeywrenching the media and the fierce editorial battle over frames, were part of the same package when considering how to win a war in Françafrique. Politicians, Licorne, ONUCI, Gbagbo's FPI, Ouattara's RDR, *Notre Voie*, *Le Patriote*: all these political actors were using these multiple manipulative tactics to further their own party. This introduces a new element to the literature on Francophone Africa because I go behind the scenes, using interviews with journalists, to show how political parties, including France, were more than willing to monkey-wrench the media as a political weapon for winning the war. These manipulative and violent tactics bring to life the continuing postcolonial struggle for Ivorian sovereignty against the ever-present France, its media and its historic economic lust for African capital. I want to be careful not to cobble Gbagbo's media and Ouattara's media into the same camp when I use the term "Ivorian sovereignty," because Ouattara and his affiliated media sided with France on its military and political intervention into Côte d'Ivoire. But this is only further fodder for the idea of postcolonial struggle for Côte d'Ivoire, as Ouattara's friendliness and willingness to grant favorable trade agreements with Western corporations, mainly French, is part of the same neo-colonial struggle. In other words, the manipulative tactics and monkeywrenching of the media, as struggles within a postcolonial framework, are further complicated when one local political body (Ouattara) is willing to side with a Western power (France), to the chagrin and wrath

of a second local political body (Gbagbo) at the cost of native civilians and the country's natural resources.

RQ2: What do the personal experiences of both local and foreign journalists tell us about the behind-the-scenes battle or “monkeywrenching” for control over Abidjan's media? In light of the idea of coloniality of power and Entman's idea that frames typically support those in power, which media held the most power to further their own framing of the conflict? Who benefited from being the loudest voice heard in the coverage of Côte d'Ivoire's election crisis?

Lastly, a key inquiry of this study is how the voices of Ivorian journalists were expressed at the local and international level online, challenging the media monopoly held by the international news wires operating in Abidjan. International media outlets largely dominated all foreign news on the electoral crisis, framing the conflict to the international community. So any glaring flaws in those same frames become glaring flaws in the final telling of the electoral crisis, opening up a Pandora's box of issues of representation. This monopoly eliminates some highly crucial frames found in local newspapers, such as journalist's protests against France's multi-million dollar military intervention into the country's politics (Licorne). The internet access available to Ivorian journalists gave Ivorian newsrooms the opportunity to publish daily editions to Abidjan.net. In this new media sphere, flows of news from Global South nations, once weak, now see more and more products like Abidjan.net that can speak from a hyper-localized news location, thus strengthening the flows of local news frames emerging from the Global South.

RQ3: Largely, local Ivorian media did not have enough political power to internationally influence the media coverage of the conflict online, despite having an international online presence through Abidjan.net, blogs and social media. They had some impact locally. What

role does CI media's growing online presence play in the overall picture of media imperialism in Françafrique?

# **CHAPTER III**

## **METHODS FOR FINDING NEWSPAPERS AND LOCATING JOURNALISTS**

This dissertation is a critical, qualitative case study that uses a textual analysis of 210 newspaper articles and interviews with 24 journalists to explore the central questions of media imperialism and framing in Côte d'Ivoire and Françafrique. As a journalist, I included more colorful, contextual details, as “thick description” helps describe the rough dynamic on the ground during the electoral crisis (Geertz, 1973). As Geertz notes, thick description adds helpful cultural details from an era to give more historical and cultural meaning to the results. While my methods draw on interviews and textual analysis, there is an ethnographic approach to some of the results, as I included smaller observations and details about journalists’ offices, working conditions and newsroom dynamic. I approached this study from an interpretive perspective, aware of my etic standpoint as a French-speaking American making observations of another culture.

Most critical scholars acknowledge that their analyses are interpretive and that interpretation is never complete and always contested. As van Zoonen argues, the researcher’s task is to “find a balance between faithfully reconstructing the meanings, definitions and interpretations” that emerge from the research material and “an analytic and encompassing picture” that illuminates the process of meaning-making under study (Steeves, 1997, p. 28).

As a white American female traveling to Côte d'Ivoire to speak with native Ivorians about their writing, I realize my standpoint and privilege must be addressed. I’ve embarked on media-related trips to both Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire in 2005, 2008, 2014, 2015 and 2016; the latter two trips were to Côte d'Ivoire. I speak fluent West African French as a result of these trips. All

of my journalism-related work in West Africa has occurred in either of these francophone countries. On four of these sojourns, I shared an apartment for several months with my Senegalese or Ivorian friends in the suburbs of Dakar or Abidjan, respectively. I regularly talk on Skype with my Ivorian and Senegalese friends. For all this, though, I am still considered “une blanche” (a white person) when I walk through the city, despite the acceptance and warmth I have living with my Senegalese or Ivorian friends’ homes. That said, how I choose to write about the electoral crisis in Côte d’Ivoire is coming from the perspective of a relative outsider. The issue of representation is already a central tenant to this dissertation, as I seek to offer a clearer representation of the local Ivorian journalists, their motives and their framing of the crisis. Conversations with local journalists are a first attempt at better representing a different, alternative experience of what covering the electoral crisis was like for those not working in well-paid Western newsrooms.

The issue of representation between the researcher and subject is frequently discussed in the arena of qualitative research and in ethnography, in particular (Abu-Lughod, 2002, 2013; Clifford, 1986; Mascia-Lees et al., 1989; Mohanty, 1984). As an observer, one is forced to balance one’s own qualitative, etic observations about a situation with the more emic perception of the actors *within* the situation.

Postmodern anthropologists claim that the aim of experimentation with such forms as intertextuality, dialogue, and self-referentiality is to demystify the anthropologist’s unitary authority and thus to include, and structure the relationships among, the “many voices clamoring for expression” in the ethnographic situation (Mascia-Lees, Sharpe, Cohen, 1989, p.9)

The beauty of an interview with participants is it offers them a platform to represent themselves. The factor of bias, then, is ushered in when the researcher must then cluster multiple opposing viewpoints and assemble these voices into a coherent project which represents multiple



aspects of an issue. The researcher's own bias and areas of inquiry certainly cloud the organization of this effort, as Mascia-Lees et al. note above. Local journalists from both media camps and foreign journalists held highly diverging perspectives on the electoral crisis, in multiple areas. For example, most foreign journalists were dismissive of Gbagbo's newspapers, yet journalists from those newspapers defended their role in the crisis as one of patriotism, and supporting Gbagbo's civilians. My place as the researcher in these issues of representation is to be aware of my interpretive, subjective standpoint and assemble conflicting viewpoints in a way that still answers the research inquiries of the study.

The UO Internal Review Board approved this research project in June, 2016. I first conducted interviews with journalists in August and September, 2016 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Based on 31 interviews with 24 journalists, I established a list of key publications, local and foreign, that journalists believed were the most significant during the electoral crisis. In this chapter, I'll first discuss the textual analysis of these publications, and then discuss the interviews with journalists.

## **Textual Analysis**

### *Locating articles in the local press*

Most paper editions of Abidjan's newspapers were not saved by their respective newspapers in 2010 and 2011, partially because of a lack of interest and staff time to organize an archive. In fact, one of the few archived collections of physical Ivorian newspapers is held in a single room at Conseil National de la Presse in Abidjan (CNP), which is the government watchdog of the country's media industry. A daily edition of every newspaper in Abidjan is delivered to the CNP office everyday. In the summer of 2015, I originally set out to photograph every page of 20 editions from this archive, from the time period of Nov. 2010 to March, 2011.

Then I discovered Monkiosque.com, an online news archive hosted by the popular Ivorian online news site Abidjan.net. Ivorian dailies submit a daily PDF to this site every evening, beginning in 2008 and 2009. Consequently, every article used in this study was pulled from 2010 and 2011 news editions, which I purchased off Monkiosque.com for 50 cents to a dollar in the fall of 2016.

I drew from four pro-Gbagbo newspapers or la presse bleue, as it is referred to in Côte d'Ivoire; *Fraternité Matin*, *Notre Voie*, *Le Nouveau Courrier* and *Le Temps*. There are only two prominent pro-Ouattara newspapers in Abidjan; *Nord-Sud* and *Le Patriote*. I included *Le Patriote* as the fifth newspaper represented in the study. I bought editions of each of the five papers from the months of November, 2010, December, 2010, and then from March, 2011 and May, 2011, with more editions pulled sparingly from the months in between. I selected editions based on how heated the front page headlines were. If the headlines included hot, political news with louder, bolder pictures and text, I chose that edition. I targeted these months because the national turmoil progressed most quickly during these time periods in terms of news coverage. November and December 2010 saw the two presidents both claiming they were now the presidential candidate, supported with thousands of protesters taking to the streets. March 2011 saw the dramatic acceleration of violence in the streets of Abidjan, the escalation of France and ONUCI's military involvement, and, at the end of that month, the descent of Ouattara's Force Nouvelles from the north of the country into Abidjan.

Of great interest to this study is the eerie lack of any Ivorian newspaper editions available on Monkiosque.com starting on April 1, 2011. The sudden halt in publication was because the Force Nouvelles had reached Abidjan, and most neighborhoods were in active lockdown or active crossfire. Bullets were flying in many neighborhoods; armed teenagers staffed makeshift

barricades at key intersections, stopping vehicles to ask for identification. Licorne and ONUCI both issued a stern curfew to citizens, which took effect every evening. Thus, the laborious process of calling sources, visiting news events or driving the paper edition to the various printing presses in Abidjan became impossible for local newsrooms, most of which had already evacuated their newsrooms and were writing from the home of the editor. There are no Ivorian papers published until about April 10; some newsrooms waited until April 20 or even early May to begin producing a daily edition again. From April 1 to April 20, the international news outlets were exclusively producing the news of the electoral crisis for both in-country and exterior audiences, as the local papers couldn't publish under these conditions. I report later that most foreign journalists were filing stories from the safety of the Hotel Novatel in downtown Abidjan, and by April 8, were filing stories from the safety of France's military compound, the 43e BIMA, outside Abidjan.

### *Locating articles in the foreign press*

Associated Press, *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, Agence France-Presse and Reuters are each transnational news outlets that publish in multiple countries. Their headquarters are in Paris (*Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, Agence France-Presse), the U.S. (Associated Press) or London (Reuters). The articles used from the foreign press were also pulled from online databases.

- Agence France Presse is the state-owned newswire of France, which has subscribers worldwide. AFP articles during this period were *heavily cited* in the other four international media outlets as a source of hard news. David Youant, a former journalist with AFP whose interview is included, donated his database of every AFP news clip from March to May, 2011 to my research.
- *Jeune Afrique* is owned by Ben Yahmed, a Tunisian-French citizen in France. This weekly magazine of high circulation publishes out of Paris and covers most of Francophone West Africa. I typed in keyphrases on *JeuneAfrique.com* to compile 20 articles printed in 2011 and 2012.

- *Le Monde*: This prominent French daily was only available via subscription. I purchased a one-month online subscription and then randomly pulled 20 or so articles from 2011.
- Associated Press is a world-wide U.S. newswire service. Stringers for AP work in countries throughout the world. News clips from AP are available via an online database search using EBSCO. An AP staff member also provided me with about 10 additional AP news clips published in 2011 that comment on conditions for journalists working in Abidjan.
- Reuters is another world-wide newswire service, which now contains a business news focus. News clips from Reuters are available via an online database search using Ebsco.

### ***Local and International Samples of News***

I included 12 articles from *Le Nouveau Courrier*, 16 articles from *Le Temps*, 17 articles from *Notre Voie*, 27 articles from *Le Patriote* and 24 articles from *Fraternité Matin*. I used a total of 101 articles from the local press.

I included *Le Monde*, 17 articles; Associated Press, 15 articles; Reuters, 14 articles; *Jeune Afrique*, 14; Agence France Press, 41 articles. I used a total of 106 articles from the foreign press.

### ***Translation***

Eight of the 10 publications used in this study publish exclusively in French (the two exceptions are Associated Press and Reuters). I read each article in French, but took notes in English. All headlines and article texts for this study were translated from French into English by myself, with the occasional help from an Ivorian academic (Oulai Goué) at the Université de Montréal, Québec, Canada, in the instance of a difficult French-to-English translation.

### ***Analysis***

Using a table in Excel, I created nine columns of analysis for each article. The first five columns were date, title, author, sources cited and if the article was fact or commentary.

The next four columns asked:

Who are the victims in this story?

How is the Côte d'Ivoire referred to in relation to France?

Does the article mention France's economic or military investment in Côte d'Ivoire?

What is the general summary of the article and any specifically strong language used to describe key political actors?

By translating and coding each of the 210 articles into these nine categories, I identified some helpful patterns in how journalists framed the stories. The category noting the sources cited, in particular, led to some crucial findings on which government bodies were favored by the media for interviews. Tracking the type and quantity of sources used within each media body was a helpful indicator toward the framing aspect of these articles. A key observation about frames, according to Tuchman, is that often one source is *chosen* over another source, allowing a dominant party to narrate their version of a particular event over another (Tuchman, 1978). The two categories which examined the relationship with France and Côte d'Ivoire yielded some key patterns on how the two media camps differed in their coverage here.

The last and most fruitful category of analysis (summary of article and key terms used) helped denote major patterns in each article. In particular, this category targeted how the journalist *framed* the major political actors in the electoral crisis in terms of word choice. For example, AFP had a pattern of consistently identifying Ouattara as "the candidate widely considered the winning president by the international community," or la presse bleue would frequently refer to Ouattara's troops as the "franco-rebel terrorists," implying they are rebels working on behalf of France.

From this last category, I found patterns between articles which resulted in four key frames found in international media and four key frames found in the local media, which will be discussed at length in Chapter 5.

## Interviews

In-depth interviews with journalists were imperative to understanding the underlying, real-world events that took place behind the production of news during the electoral crisis. The majority of these interviews were conducted in French. Conversations with journalists help contextualize news frames and revealed the practical logistics of their daily reporting routines while trying to keep news production moving. I used a snowball method to contact journalists for interviews in Abidjan in summer 2016, making phone calls to a contact at *Notre Voie* before I left the U.S. The UO Internal Review Board approved (June 2016) the following list of questions for both local and foreign journalists. These questions were translated into French, but are listed in English below.

The following are the final eight questions posed to international journalists involved in the study:

1. One focus of this dissertation is the fact that the international community didn't hear the news written by the local Ivorian journalists, but instead read the international outlets like AFP, BBC, or *Le Monde*. How would you compare the Ivorian print coverage to the international press's coverage of the presidential elections? Can you name three key differences?
2. Where were you and most foreign correspondents located during your reporting in Abidjan? Who were your key sources for information?
3. Did you read Ivorian newspapers while in Abidjan? How would you compare the local press to the international press?
4. What are your thoughts on the French economic interests and colonial past in the Côte d'Ivoire? What are your thoughts on the French influence of Ivorian politics and why?
5. Can you take me through a day in the life of your reporting routines during the elections? How did the political situation affect your daily interview schedule and office resources?
6. How were international journalists treated by official sources (such as the UN) compared to Ivorian journalists?
7. Do you have any stories that stand out from your time reporting during the elections?
8. What types of online technology and new media did you use during the electoral crisis?

The following are the final eight questions I posed to the local journalists involved in the study:

1. One focus of this dissertation is the fact that the international community didn't hear the news written by the local Ivorian journalists, but instead read the international outlets like AFP, BBC, or *Le Monde*. At the time, what did it mean to you and your fellow journalists that most of your readership was inside the country and could not be accessed by international readers?

2. Did it matter to you or your newspaper colleagues at the time if Ivorian newspapers could have had a more international audience during the presidential elections? Why?
3. Do you know of any journalists, including yourself, who tried to blog online or publish online so that other nations could hear an Ivorian perspective?
4. What are your thoughts on the French economic interests and colonial past in the Côte d'Ivoire? What are your thoughts on the French influence of Ivorian politics and why?
5. How would you compare the Ivorian print coverage to the international press's coverage of the presidential elections? Can you name three key differences?
6. Can you take me through a day in the life of your reporting routines during the elections? How did the political situation affect your daily interview schedule and office resources?
7. How were international journalists treated by official sources (such as the UN) compared to Ivorian journalists?
8. As your newspaper published political coverage during the elections, what were your goals as a journalist at this time? Were there specific foci that you and your newspaper had for audiences?
9. Do you have any stories that stand out from your time reporting during the elections?

### ***Sample***

I visited Abidjan from Aug. 25 to Oct. 6, 2016. I started interviews with journalists at *Notre Voie*, which was kind enough to provide phone numbers for journalists at the four other local newsrooms I wished to visit. Participants signed an IRB consent form in French, indicating they would be kept anonymous in this study (Appendix).

With the foreign press, I interviewed nine journalists from the following publications: AFP, AP, Reuters, *Jeune Afrique* and *Le Tribune*. Note that these nine journalists were also working for two to three other international news outlets as freelancers, in addition to their daily work. With the local press, I interviewed 15 journalists from the following news agencies: Alert.info (an online text-based news agency), Abidjan.net (Côte d'Ivoire's main online news agency), *Le Temps*, *Le Nouveau Courrier*, *Notre Voie*, *Fraternité Matin* and *Le Patriotee*.

Interviews were taped on my personal recorder. I provided each journalist with a short summary of the study and a copy of the questionnaire before we began the interview. I typically interviewed one to five journalists per newsroom, individually, in a quiet office. Most interviews were 45 to 75 minutes long. Deadlines in the newsroom tended to fall around 4 to 6 p.m., so I

typically visited in the mornings. In four instances, I felt the journalist was substantially more involved in the media coverage of the time after reviewing our interview tape later in the day. I revisited four separate journalists for a second, hour-long interview to better understand some of the stories they told and their testimony during the crisis.

In total, I held 31 interviews with 24 journalists. Twenty were men and four were women. Twenty-one of these journalists were Ivorian, two were French and one was Canadian. A typical Ivorian journalist was male, had worked for his newsroom for 10 years or more, and was supporting a family on his monthly salary. All journalists were in their 30s, 40s or 50s. Every journalist had a college degree. Some mentioned travel to France, U.S. or parts of Europe during the interview, an indicator they were middle to upper-class income. No matter the politics of the newsroom they worked for, every Ivorian journalist openly criticized the intrusion of French corporations in the Ivorian economy. The three white journalists were not as critical.

### *Coding interviews with journalists*

Before leaving Côte d'Ivoire, I hired two college-educated Ivorians (siblings of my housemate) to transcribe all interviews from audio format into transcripts in Word. I changed the names of each participant on their respective audio file and then uploaded all the files to the two computers of the transcribers before leaving Côte d'Ivoire. The UO School of Journalism and Communication compensated me to fund these transcribers. Once I had all transcripts in hand, I revisited my research questions for the study. I was primarily interested in learning from journalists their personal experiences of reporting during the crisis, their thoughts on the political-media dynamic between France and Côte d'Ivoire and how they compared the local newspapers to the Western news outlets, both in terms of the story content and the treatment of



journalists. After reading back through multiple transcripts from my time in Côte d’Ivoire and reviewing my research questions, I assembled five basic codes for analyzing interviews:

- Conditions facing journalists
- Their opinions on the political intentions and role of the local press
- Their opinion on the political intentions and role of international press
- Role of France in Côte d’Ivoire
- Use of social media/internet during combat

For example, if I was speaking with a local journalist and he or she mentioned that their organization’s news team was reporting from the home of the editor using the internet, a statement of this type would be added to the code, “use of social media/internet during combat.”

Once all transcripts were assembled into these five categories, I used three-step coding to find basic themes within each respective category. Three-step coding works by first finding many small codes within a body of data (such as, fear of violence or harassment of white journalists), and then grouping those numerous codes to form specific themes. The resulting largest themes can be considered the results of coding the data.

The key results from each of the five categories provided a stronger context and backstory for the frames found in the textual analysis, discussed in Chapter 5. For example, the textual analysis of the international media showed a heavy bias toward citing Ouattara’s officials for interviews, while very few Gbagbo officials were quoted. Interviews with the foreign press showed a consistent pattern in *why* this happened; journalists told me Gbagbo’s officials refused to speak to them after a certain point in the electoral crisis. The two methods, textual analysis paired with interviews, work together to create stronger, more accurate answers to the research questions by exploring information on multiple fronts. Chapters 6 and 7 draw directly on two key

themes which emerged from interviews with journalists; the monkeywrenching or manipulation of various journalists for the political gain of those in power and the widespread use of social media and the internet by Ivorian journalists as an alternative voice to mainstream media reporting on the crisis.

## CHAPTER IV

### NEWS FRAMES AS A TACTIC OF WAR

*“But it happens to everybody to have a heart that beats, that leans toward someone,”*  
(personal interview, anonymous journalist, *Le Temps*, September 2016)

This chapter assembles the results of the textual analysis of news frames in both local and international media. This chapter contains three sections; I first detail the frames found in international media. Secondly, I explore frames in a pro-Ouattara newspaper and pro-Gbagbo papers. Lastly, I then compare the frames found in both media camps, pulling from the conceptualization of frames in both social movement literature and framing theory to help understand the motivations of media during this conflict.

#### **Introduction**

At first glance, comparing the international media to the local press during CI’s electoral crisis seems like comparing apples to oranges. Associated Press, *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, Agence France-Presse and Reuters are each transnational news outlets that publish in multiple countries. Their headquarters are in Paris (*Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, Agence France-Presse), the U.S. (Associated Press) or London (Reuters). The news content in the international press is largely designed for an international audience that does not live in Côte d’Ivoire. Further, as will be discussed in Chapter 8, the economic beneficiaries of the international media (such as the French politicians who hire journalists for the state-funded AFP newswire) all benefited from how the international media framed the conflict. This also differs from the beneficiaries of frames in local newspapers.

In comparison, the five Ivorian newspapers sampled for this study (*Le Temps*, *Fraternité Matin*, *Notre Voie*, *Le Patriote*, *Le Nouveau Courrier*) were writing to a much different

audience: an urban, literate, French-speaking Ivorian audience based in either Abidjan or Paris. The content from these newspapers did have some international reach because of editions uploaded to Abidjan.net, but readers had to know about the website, have a debit card to pay for/download an edition and be able to speak French. The headquarters of all five newspapers are in Abidjan and largely make their economic way through the world by funds from loyal political readers who ascribe to their political viewpoints.

Lastly, the hardest fact to swallow about the local Ivorian press is how few readers it had compared to the massive reach of Ivorian radio and TV stations. BBC, Radio France Internationale and ONUCI FM broadcast radio stations throughout the country, supplying the majority of the country's hard news via radio via Western-owned news outlets. Newspaper clips were chosen for this study because the radio and TV content produced by Ivorian media were not recorded in 2010 and 2011. However, it is a well-known fact within the African radio industry that most radio broadcasts, particularly international news, come from radio journalists reading the headline of a paper in the recording booth and then rebroadcasting their own paired down version of the story. I interned at Oxyjeunes Radio in Dakar, Senegal in 2014 and observed first-hand how this process of newspaper-to-airwaves operates. In short, much of the news frames produced at the local and international level during the electoral crisis were likely reproduced on both state and private radio/TV mediums throughout Côte d'Ivoire.

Further, the 20-some dailies which publish a 10-page plus paper every day in Abidjan contain an excellent cross-section into the political rhetoric of the time period that is irreplaceable and difficult to capture anywhere else. In particular, the heated editorial commentary in this chapter evokes emotion, fear and a nervous insight into the time period that is crucial to understanding how Ivorians on the ground experienced these events.

The strange inequality of comparing local news frames to international news frames is that transnational media corporations typically have vast, literate audiences around the world, where the local newspapers had a narrow, middle to upper class audience confined to urban Ivorians and Ivorian expats living abroad with online access. The wide abyss between international and local newspaper audiences and ownerships shows how dissimilar the two camps are in their economic and political foundations. This difference alone is an exciting void to explore, because the professed motivations of Côte d'Ivoire's underfunded local newspapers are largely political and propagandistic, whereas international news corporations have an international audience in mind, to whom Côte d'Ivoire's financial markets and political stability are more important.

### **Frames in International Media**

To review, five major international news outlets were examined from a period of December 2010 to December 2011, with a few articles taken from 2012 and 2014 as well. Among Associated Press, Agence France-Presse, *Le Monde*, *Jeune Afrique*, and Reuters, AFP and *Le Monde* are both French-owned publications. AFP is a state-owned newswire that has subscribers worldwide, where *Le Monde* is a print and online French newspaper that distributes hard copies in France.

AFP articles during this period were *heavily cited* in the other four international media outlets as a source of hard news. Many of the 107 articles I analyzed cited AFP as a partial resource for the article. Further, because it is a newswire service, AFP stories also ran in several of the local newspapers, including staunch pro-Gbagbo newspapers like *Le Temps* and *Notre Voie*. As a 24-hour newswire with subscribers worldwide and a well-funded newsroom, AFP was also able to generate an enormous amount of content by publishing shorter, hard news pieces that

typically focused on a single news event with little analysis. In late March and through April 2011, AFP's news team (consisting of one French man and a handful of Ivorian and West African citizens) produced five to eight articles a day, becoming an easy, plentiful source of information for local and international journalists alike.

Articles were analysed in the international media according to 1) where and from whom the journalists gathered their information 2) if the former colonial relationship between CI and France is mentioned 3) if France's military, economic ties in CI are mentioned 4) the general focus of the article 5) if the article seems to support Ouattara, Gbagbo, Ivorian independence or France. Smaller side notes, such as a reference to another media outlet like AFP, were also noted.

Four major frames are identified in the international media's coverage of the election crisis.

**1. Frame of international community as authority:** The first frame frames international organizations, French or internationally supported Ouattara officials as the real voice of authority over other Ivorian or African sources.

**2. Frame of isolated political conflict:** The second frame frames the conflict as a head-to-head between Ouattara and Gbagbo, neglecting to mention the immense French military and economic presence in the country or France's colonial ties with CI.

**3. Good guy/bad guy frame:** For the third frame, I found journalists give considerable column space to quotes by Ouattara and French/UN politicians in support of Ouattara. However, Gbagbo's officials were quoted very little, and their atrocities and violence were almost always accentuated, far beyond those of Ouattara's troops

**4. Frame of justice according to international standards:** Lastly, a fourth frame framed the end goal of the conflict as the pursuit of justice according to *international standards*, such as the UN's stance on human rights or the International Criminal Court's stance on war

crimes. The pursuit of justice as the overarching goal of the entire conflict becomes clear in the way journalists talk about Ouattara, (“the president recognized by the international community”) and also how they quote the International Criminal Court, Human Rights Watch and Red Cross instead of choosing more regional African sources for information on justice (such as the African Union or CEDEAO).

I first explain each frame separately, and then contextualize its implications with supporting commentary from in-person interviews with local and international journalists. Interviews with journalists provide context and flesh out why the frames emerged this way. For example, several journalists said Ouattara received the bulk of citations in the international press because his administration officials made themselves extremely available, answering their cell phones for reporters day and night. Supporting explanations from journalists help explain the behind-the-scenes reasons for how these frames emerged the way they did.

### **1. Frame of international organizations or internationally-supported Ouattara officials as the real voice of authority**

The number one cluster of sources cited for information by international news organizations were international organizations (32 percent or 71 sources of the 224 sources quoted in the 106 articles used in the study) (see Figure 1). The primary sources in this group were UN officials first, then the European Union, the U.S. government, and then international peace-keeping bodies such the International Red Cross or Human Rights Watch. The second most frequently cited body of sources were officials in Ouattara’s political party or his militia soldiers in the Forces Nouvelles ( 21 percent or 47 sources of 224). The third most frequently cited body of sources were Ivorian civilians, some living abroad, some working for Ivorian

institutions and many of whom were cited anonymously as eye-witnesses to bombings around the country (17 percent or 38 sources of 224).

<b>1</b>	<b>UN, US, European Union, Human Rights Watch, Red Cross</b>	32% (71 sources of 224)
<b>2</b>	<b>Pro-Ouattara officials</b>	21% (47 sources of 224)
<b>3</b>	<b>Ivorian expatriates, institutions, civilians, anonymous Ivorians</b>	17% (38 sources of 224)
<b>4</b>	<b>French officials</b>	12% (28 sources of 224)
<b>5</b>	<b>Pro-Gbagbo officials</b>	9% (22 sources of 224)
<b>6</b>	<b>References another French/US media Channel, like France 24 or RFI</b>	6% (14 sources of 224)
<b>7</b>	<b>African Governing Body (like African Union or ECOWAS)</b>	4% (10 sources of 224)
<b>8</b>	<b>References another Ivorian media channel, like TCI or RTI</b>	3.5% (8 sources of 224)
<b>9</b>	<b>Journalistic Observation</b>	3.5% (8 sources of 224)

*Figure 1: Sources cited in international media coverage of Côte d'Ivoire. 224 sources cited in 106 articles, published between Nov. 2010 and December 2011. Articles were published in *Le Monde*, *Jeune Afrique*, *Associated Press*, *Agence France-Presse* and *Reuters*.*

<b>UN officials</b>	18% (41 sources of 224)
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<p><b>International actors such as US government, Human Rights Watch, European Union</b></p>	<p>13% (30 sources of 224)</p>
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*Figure 1.1:* A further breakdown of the category of UN and other international officials, as cited in Figure 1, category 1. In this figure, UN officials make up 18 percent of all sources cited by international media, and other international actors make up a full 13 percent of all sources cited.

International, non-African bodies like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the U.S. government or the European Union were cited almost three times as often (30 sources out of 224) as regional African organizations like Economic Community of West African States or the African chapter of Committee to Protect Journalists (10 references out of 107 articles).

Ivorian citizens tended to be contacted for stories for the exclusive purpose of providing an eyewitness confirmation that a particular event occurred (of the 38 times a regular citizen or Ivorian institutional official was cited, 26 of those sources were anonymous civilians). Citizens were not factored into stories for their political opinions of the crisis, such as their thoughts on the French military increasing its military power. Citizens were almost always cited anonymously for protection, which, while crucial to their protection, further served to portray them as a sort of invisible Ivorian voice.

For example, in one AFP article, an eyewitness living near Gbagbo’s palace describes hearing heavy artillery fire hours after the French and the UN fired on Gbagbo’s palace.

‘It was heavy firing, and the bursts of automatic rifles,’ said one resident to AFP, specifying that the combat wasn’t immediately near the residence, but in a zone between the state television RTI and l’Ecole de Gendarmerie, two other fiefdoms of the leaving president, equally situated in the neighborhood of Cocody. (Combats au Sol Après les Frappes Vers la Résidence de Gbagbo; Témoin, Ground Combat after the Bombing of Gbagbo’s Residence, 2011, AFP).

Effectively, international journalists tended to cite UN officials, Ouattara's party politicians, and French officials, in addition to other international bodies like the European Union as the lead authority on issues in the Côte d'Ivoire. This creates a frame of *Western organizations or internationally-supported Ouattara officials as the real voice of authority over other voices*. Many of the officials cited in the international press were not located in Côte d'Ivoire, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees or officials in the European Union. For example, French president Nicolas Sarkozy is quoted many times in AFP and *Le Monde* for his opinion on what is happening in Côte d'Ivoire, yet he clearly wasn't visiting CI during the electoral crisis. Further, many of the French officials cited in the international press were residing at the heavily guarded Licorne military base (43e BIMA) located outside Abidjan. Officials working specifically with ONUCI were often located inside the heavily guarded ONUCI military base also outside Abidjan. Their lives were removed from the day-to-day violence and gunfire happening in the city.

Gitlin's *The Whole World is Watching* finds that news agencies often cite official sources for information on a conflict, as in the instance of coverage of the Vietnam war. This perpetuates a hegemonic, top-down type of news coverage. However, my frame of Western authorities speaking on issues of Côte d'Ivoire goes beyond this observation by Gitlin, in that this frame points to the emphasis on quoting *foreign officials* living outside Côte d'Ivoire. Much like other international coverage of Global South conflict, reporters writing in the Côte d'Ivoire are choosing to cite French or European officials, which privileges a Western analysis of the conflict. This is important to note when speaking of this frame, as I do not consider it a generic *news value* as Gitlin observes, but more a frame specific to the situation of Côte d'Ivoire. Specifically, French officials who are still very much part of the colonial legacy of France were

cited again and again by the foreign press, which served to privilege the specific opinion of France and Europeans on the conflict; that Gbagbo had long run afoul of decent democratic actions and the people of Côte d'Ivoire needed to be rescued from his military by voting for Ouattara. Another way to add perspective to this frame is I did not find that *African* officials from African governmental organizations like CEDEAO or the African Union were cited to the same extent as French or European officials. This lack of citing African officials also distinguishes this frame from being a generic news value of citing officials, because foreign journalists were clearly choosing to cite foreign European officials over the closer, more connected African officials who were also affected by the conflict on their own continent.

Consider this Associated Press article which includes a justification for why Licorne and UN bombed Gbagbo's palace. The article is written exclusively from the perspective of the UN and French officials who bombed Gbagbo's palace on April 11, 2011.

French, U.N. fire rockets on Gbagbo

United Nations and French helicopters fired rockets on strongman Laurent Gbagbo's residence Sunday in an assault the world body said was to retaliate for attacks by his forces on U.N. headquarters and civilians.

Residents from nearby neighborhoods reported seeing two U.N. Mi-24 attack helicopters and a French helicopter open fire on the residence, where Gbagbo is holed up in a bunker. The residents did not want to be named, for fear of reprisal. An Associated Press reporter saw the helicopters take off from the French military base, followed minutes later by explosions coming from the direction of the residence. Successive waves of French helicopters took off from the base in the following hours, and additional bombardments could be heard.

Gbagbo has been living in a bunker in his residence in Abidjan for nearly a week. After a decade in power, he refuses to step aside even though the United Nations has ruled that he lost the presidential election to Alassane Ouattara.

Forces loyal to Gbagbo were encircled at the presidential residence last week but broke out Saturday, ambushing a patrol of soldiers supporting his rival and advancing downtown. Pro-Gbagbo forces also attacked U.N. headquarters Saturday and Sunday. "This is in retaliation for a series of attacks for the last three or four days not only against [the United Nations] but also against the civilian population - often with heavy weapons," U.N. spokesman Hamadou Toure said....

"I am concluding that Mr. Gbagbo has lost contact with reality," said Choi Young-jin, head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission.

The United Nations said the Golf Hotel in Abidjan where Ouattara is based came under attack late Saturday and one peacekeeper was injured. (Oved, 2011).

Notice the journalist quotes officials as discrediting Gbagbo, reinforcing further the frame of good guy/bad guy, despite the fact that UN and France committed the bombing runs on his palace in this article.

Framing news reports to privilege international authorities on a localized crisis creates several framing conundrums. 1) It tells the readers that the UN, France and Ouattara's politicians are the *real* and *true* sources for the best information on the Côte d'Ivoire situation, which implies, then, that other voices, such as pan-African organizations like ECOWAS or the African Union are not as valuable. 2) It subtly reinforces the idea that UN, France and Europe are better qualified to referee Côte d'Ivoire's politics than Ivorian or regional African officials. 3) It furthers a top-down approach to reporting the news, in which accounts from officials in high-ranking positions, often located far from the actual crisis, are valued over quotes from people working and living in the day-to-day situation.

In another example, consider a late December article in *Le Monde* about refugees fleeing CI for the Liberian border. The journalist here cites the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the European Commission, as well as Ouattara officials promising to "leave refugees alone" as they flee to Liberia.

**More than 14,000 Ivoirians have fled to Liberia, according to HCR (Plus de 14,000 Ivoirians ont fui au Liberia, selon le HCR)**

Close to 14,000 Ivoirians have fled to Liberia to escape the violence born in the second tour of the presidential election, according to the High Commissioner of United Nations for Refugees (HCR), which says more deaths from people with malaria or diarrhea are among those newly arrived.

"Because of a number of refugees, the humanitarian needs are more elevated for women and children refugees in the villages that are welcoming them," said an HCR press release. "Refugees are coming from the west of Côte d'Ivoire and are obligated to

march long hours for multiple days, before boarding boats to multiple channels of water that mark the natural entry between Côte d'Ivoire into Liberia.”

...The High Commission is concerned that certain members of the Force Nouvelles, which support Ouattara, will detain refugees trying to reach Liberia...A press release by the military spokesman of FN, Seydou Ouattara was released later saying, “We aren’t stopping anyone crossing through our zone. After the area of Danane, we leave refugees to the care of HCR which concerns itself with a psychological plan, both mental and nutritional.”

The European Commission indicated Thursday that around 11,000 Ivoirians, the majority of which are women and children, have fled to Liberia, Guinee and Ghana. Five million euros have been released by the European Commission to help face the humanitarian crisis in the neighboring countries of Côte d'Ivoire to help with an influx of refugees.

(“Plus de 14 000 Ivoirians ont fui au Libéria, selon le HCR,” [More than 14,000 Ivoirians flee to Liberia, according to HCR], 2010).

This article demonstrates the frame of relying on international authorities, as well as of ignoring the military and economic presence of France in Côte d'Ivoire. It relies heavily on quotes from international actors, it pitches the election as a conflict between two Ivorian politicians and it supports Ouattara as the legitimate president who has the support of the international community. It also relegates Ivoirians somewhat voiceless by speaking about them in mass groups; “these refugees arriving have malaria and diarrhea”, or “more than 14,000 Ivoirians have fled.”

Both Entman, Gitlin and Tuchman have demonstrated that the media tends to reinforce hegemonic forces by relying on high-ranking officials or government sources for the official “truth” of an event. In this article from *Le Monde*, journalists place the framing emphasis on international actors such as High Commissioner of United Nations for Refugees. In this way, *Le Monde*, a French daily with high readership in France, highlights higher ranking officials as those best qualified to speak on behalf of the Ivorian crisis, reinforcing their hegemony in the situation.

**AFP and its reliance on French authorities for sources**

Going deeper into how the media tended to frame articles in favor of international elites, the way AFP chose sources is particularly problematic. In fact, the evidence pointing to Agence France-Presse as a subtle extension of the French government in Francophone Africa runs deep enough that one long-term AFP journalist David Youant (an Ivorian who was AFP bureau chief in Kinshasa, Congo) *resigned from his job* over how AFP was writing about the election crisis.

He then went on to publish a 298-page doctoral dissertation with Université Felix Houphouët-Boigny de Cocody in 2016 (an Ivorian university) about just how skewed AFP's coverage of the election crisis was.

As one foreign journalist said, "We often put AFP up there with the BBC, but it really isn't the same quality of independent journalism," (email, anonymous foreign journalist, May, 2017).

The random sample of 106 articles analyzed for this study contained 41 articles by AFP, all of which were short hard news pieces (200 to 300 words). French officials were the number one source of quotes and information on the electoral crisis by the AFP (18 references, see Figure 1). The second highest source of information came from pro-Ouattara officials (13 references), followed by UN officials (7) and Ivorian civilians as eyewitnesses (7). Gbagbo officials were cited a mere five times in all 41 articles, and African organizations were cited four times. It's important to keep in mind AFP was and is an international media corporation with subscribers for content in hundreds of countries. It was the most frequently cited hard news source in other international news content (for example, many *Jeune Afrique*, Associated Press and Reuters articles often attribute some of their coverage to AFP at the end or beginning of an article). AFP's content provided key facts in many of the major Francophone and Anglophone

articles published on the crisis, acting as a sort of “mothership” of information upon which other media frequently relied (even local newspapers ran content from AFP, discussed later).

Youant, who flew to Abidjan twice from Kinshasa in November and December 2010 to help the AFP bureau write about the election crisis, said the heavy bias toward quoting French officials was coming from Thomas Morfin, the acting AFP bureau chief from 2008 to 2012.

What bothered me was the censorship that certain journalists at AFP were doing. It isn't AFP's behavior normally, it was individuals, one person, who I think turned things around in Côte d'Ivoire was Thomas Morfin...Thomas Morfin set himself up as a protagonist in the crisis, like someone who was fighting too, like someone who was making war too. He didn't distance himself and look at things like a journalist. He took a political stance in the conflict....Because AFP was covering the post-electoral crisis, there were also AFP bureaus in Paris, in Dakar, in New York, in Lagos, in Washington. It [his coverage] was everywhere. Everyone reused his same words. The subjectivity of the crisis here was how offices read the writing of Thomas Morfin, or his “frames” as you've said. So, all the other offices started to follow him also, and even today, this has stayed the official version of the crisis...Frequently, writers would recopy his paragraphs or a part of what we wrote to support their own analysis (Youant, personal interview, September, 2016).

The progression of how AFP journalists, including Morfin, covered the crisis is worth mentioning because AFP's specific phrasing evolved from December to mid-April 2011, when Gbagbo was arrested and held at the Golf Hotel. Youant, for example, notes that between December and January, AFP stopped referring to the national military as the Forces for Defense and Security (FDS), which had been the title of Côte d'Ivoire's military for years. Instead, after the contention began between the two candidates, AFP started referring to the national army as the “pro-Gbagbo military.” Youant compared this with calling the U.S. military, the “pro-Obama military,” instead of the U.S. armed forces.

The most extreme point in the evolution of how AFP covered the crisis came on the day Licorne and ONUCI helped Forces Nouvelles lock down the area around Gbagbo's palace and arrest him. For days after April 10 and 11, 2011, AFP published press releases that spouted direct

explanations and excuses from the French ambassador, Jean Marc Simon, about the French involvement in the conflict. Despite the fact that the neighborhoods around the palace were in pieces, that hundreds of bodies still lay cold and rotting in the streets, and that Ouattara's military soldiers had started extorting businesses and civilians in exchange for their safety (Mieu, 2011), the AFP office instead chose to help France cover its ass. Here are five shortened AFP news clips published worldwide on April 12, 2011, the day after Gbagbo's arrest.

**Arrest of Gbagbo: "Images of the entire operation" (Des images de toute l'opération, ministre français)**

PARIS, 12 April 2011 (AFP) - The French minister of defense Gerard Longuet said Tuesday that all "images of the entire operation" will be distributed of the arrest of Laurent Gbagbo and that will show that French soldiers didn't participate in the taking of the ex-Ivorian president.

"All the images will be very available. Everything was filmed permanently by those in front and by others," declared M. Longuet the day after the arrest of M. Gbagbo in the president's residence, where he had hunkered down in Abidjan.

"I am absolutely certain we will have all the images of the entire operation, not only of the French army, but an assemblage of all the actors, and you will see that not a single French soldier or ONUCI soldier came into the residential palace."

"This will be proof for those who contradict. It will be the work for historians," he said.

**2. The French government says it is unassailable in the case of Gbagbo (Le gouvernement français se juge inattaquable en CI)**

PARIS, 12 April 2011 (AFP) - A spokesman for the French government Francois Baroin declared Tuesday that France was completely unassailable in its intervention in Côte d'Ivoire and "doesn't accept any moral lessons from anyone."

"It wasn't France that deposed Gbagbo. It was the Ivorian people," declared M. Barois on the French radio RTL.

"France intervened in the framework of resolutions by the UN Security Council, at the demand of its general secretary. She acted like this since Monday in the resolution taken by the international community," he underlined.

"France was, I think, in my point of view and in the view of all the observers, absolutely remarkable and unassailable." She doesn't "accept any moral lesson from anyone nor any political lessons," he said, answering those who would implicate a return to "Françafrique."

"When you have heavy weapons positioned everywhere in the presidential residence and they are bombing the civilian population, that is strictly forbidden, exclusively in the application of the resolution of 1975 in the UN," affirmed M. Baroin to



justify the participation of the French force Licorne and its bombing against the residence where the ex-Ivorian president was arrested Monday in Abidjan...

### **3. The French press muses that Ouattara is weakened by the intervention of France (La presse française estime Ouattara affaiblié par l'intervention de la France)**

PARIS, 12 April 2011 (AFP) - The French press mused Tuesday that the conditions for the fall of Laurent Gbagbo weaken Alassane Ouattara in his accession to power in Abidjan which was made possible by the intervention of the ex-colonial power which, according to its media, has renewed a "Françafrique."

"Ouattara has perhaps won, but his victory yesterday showed the weaknesses of the elected president for the past four months," revealed *Liberation* [a French daily]. "It wasn't him who finally dislodged and collapsed his rival (the outgoing president) Laurent Gbagbo, but the forces of the UN led by the army of its old colonizer."

"Even ensconced with a UN resolution and supported by other countries in the region, the mission of France resembles its interventions of years past and risks always being seen like this by young Africans learning about history," said the left-leaning daily.

"The awful Gbagbo is arrested and it is thanks to the intervention of the French force Licorne under the banner of the UN...one thing is certain: (the French corporations) Bolloré, Total, Bouygues and others like France Telecom can breathe now," said ironically *l'Humanite*, another French daily.

With the intervention of Licorne, "what kind of legitimacy does the new strong man in Abidjan, propelled into new power, really have, in his country?" asks the community daily.

Because, writes the regional daily *Les Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace*, "all the oratory precautions taken by Paris change nothing: Alassane Ouattara stays, in most minds, a president installed by the bombing of French helicopters."

If the arrest of Laurent Gbagbo "can only be rejoiced, because its potentially synonymous with the end of massacres and terror for the population, it's still permissible to worry about the consequences of the direct military action by France," wrote the regional communist daily, *La Marseillaise*.

"In terms of security, economic emancipation and freedom, France will certainly have a role to play. But it must not override it if it wants to give the country a chance to recover democratically," said *La Nouvelle République du Centre-Ouest*.

For *Le Figaro*, (right-leaning), "the fall of Laurent Gbagbo tells the world a universal message somewhat elementary: people who lose elections need to leave power."

"It's a message that should be applied first and foremost to Africa, and France should commit itself to this without reservation," added the daily, which is closely linked to the French administration...

### **4. Gbagbo's camp accuses "the French special forces" of taking him out (Le Camp Gbagbo accuse "les forces spéciales françaises" de l'avoir enlevé)**

PARIS, 12 April 2011 (AFP) - Gbagbo's camp on Tuesday accused "the French special forces" of taking out the former president arrested yesterday in Abidjan, a version already categorically denied by Paris.

"Laurent Gbagbo was taken out by elements of the French special forces who then drove him to the Golf Hotel," which is the headquarters of his rival Alassane Ouattara, recognized as the president elect by the international community, said Toussaint Alain, the Paris spokesman for Gbagbo...

France has already denied multiple times that its troops intervened directly in the final assault against the presidential residence.

"Mt. Toussaint must be sick. I will be happy when he regains contact with the realities in his country," state again Tuesday to the AFP, the spokesman to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bernard Valero...

### **5. Côte d'Ivoire: An "extremely strong message to all dictators" (CI: message "extrêmement fort à tous les dictateurs")**

PARIS, 12 April 2011 (AFP) - France and the UN have sent "a symbolic message extremely strong to all dictators," said Tuesday the Prime Minister of France, Francois Fillon, the day after the arrest of the former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo.

"We have sent, with the UN, a symbolic message extremely strong to all dictators. We have told them that legality, democracy must be respected and that there are risks for those who don't," said M. Fillon in front of the National Assembly during a question session at a government workshop.

The former chief of state refused to quit power since the second round of the presidential election in November, in which his rival Alassane Ouattara was declared elected by the electoral commission and recognized as such by the quasi-totality of the international community...

I selected these five AFP articles from the day after Gbagbo was arrested because they demonstrate how AFP journalists went from barely mentioning the French military or economic presence in Côte d'Ivoire in December, January and February, 2011 to then introducing the fact the France had an active military hand in the fighting. Secondly, a sub-frame emerges in the AFP coverage, one of justifying and rationalizing the French and UN intervention for humanitarian purposes, taking a substantially political role when reporters could have instead been writing stories about the terrifying conditions in the streets of Abidjan that same day. The city had been a war zone for weeks at that point. With Gbagbo arrested, the country's leadership had changed overnight. Again, if part of understanding frames is what is left out of news coverage, AFP at

this point in the election crisis has selected and emphasized the French and UN political position to the exclusion of the opinions or lives of Ivorians living in the bombed streets of Abidjan.

Here, first, in Abidjan, Thomas Morfin -he validated [edited] the work here and then the editors also in Paris. But it was more Thomas Morfin who was changing little things in the articles. ...I think it was maybe more here, according to what I know, it was the ambassador to France here at the time, and then he [Morfin] also had friends...I think he let himself be influenced by his sources, by his contacts in Ouattara's camp. And then among the Western ambassadors, like the French ambassador who was one of his permanent contacts during the crisis (personal interview, Youant, D. September, 2016).

### **Counterpoint to framing international actors as the real authority**

The article about the reaction in French dailies in Paris helps represent a counterpoint in how AFP framed its coverage in the days after the arrest, as does the article quoting Gbagbo's spokesman saying French soldiers were the ones who arrested Gbagbo. In the only mention of French corporations in 107 articles, *l'Humanite* talks somewhat cynically about how happy the major French corporations operating in Côte d'Ivoire must be.

"The awful Gbagbo is arrested and it is thanks to the intervention of the French force Licorne under the banner of the UN...one thing is certain: [the French corporations] Bollore, Total, Bouygues and others like France Telecom can breath now," said ironically *l'Humanite*, another French daily (The French press muses that Ouattara is weakened by the intervention of France, AFP, 2011)

This cynical comment in *l'Humanite*, picked up by AFP, counters my overall observations about a subframe of *justifying* French and UN intervention for humanitarian reasons. The journalist here is hinting that France's ultimate motive in Côte d'Ivoire was to secure the region for its 600-or so corporations to continue operating in peace. This perspective on French imperialism is mentioned little in the French and English international coverage of the crisis. However, as I will show later in this chapter, this perspective becomes the *dominant frame* in pro-Gbagbo Ivorian newspapers; that France is still a selfish colonial beast looking to profit from Côte d'Ivoire's natural resources. The local papers, particularly the blue press who support

Gbagbo, pride themselves on having a consistent anti-French editorial line that maligns France for its economic plundering of Côte d'Ivoire. Articles in French newspaper *Le Monde*, despite their overall pattern of citing international officials and Ouattara's administration, tended to carry at least a smidge more analytical coverage of the election than the hard news stories of AFP and AP. Consider the *Le Monde* story that cites a French socialist leader, Pierre Moscovici, saying that Africans need to be responsible for Africans.

For the deputy socialist Pierre Moscovici, France doesn't need to "be first in line" in the Ivorian crisis, because it's "on Africans to regulate themselves this affair." "We aren't in Françafrique anymore," he said Tuesday on RTL [French radio], to spread his argument. "We have some interests in Côte d'Ivoire, some military, some citizens; we don't have to forcefully put pressure on the first chief," to resolve the crisis, he said.

In his eyes, the mission of CEDEAO (Community Economique des Etats d'Afrique de l'Ouest), which arrives in CI on Tuesday, is the best situated to regulate the situation.

"I believe it's this pressure that we need to leave be and let flourish, and we also shouldn't accept the language of Laurent Gbagbo," who is "playing with tensions and deterioration" of the country. I want to believe that a diplomatic solution is still possible in Côte d'Ivoire ("Pour Pierre Moscovici, La France n'as pas à "être en première ligne" en Côte d'Ivoire " Dec. 28, 2010).

I included this passage from *Le Monde* because it also helps contextualize how the international media framed the crisis. Certainly, the 106 news articles revealed a definite reliance on international voices and Ouattara's spokesmen, but there are exceptions, as I've shown above. Further, when I asked an AFP reporter if he thought the international media supported Ouattara politically, he was quick to disagree. I had proposed to this reporter that multiple local journalists for local papers, along with some of the international journalists, had told me the international media supported Ouattara or tended to support the opinions of their home government (this emerged as a strong theme in coding interviews with local and international journalists).

That's not true....journalists debate the government....French journalists aren't pro-Sarkozy and they weren't pro-Ouattara at the beginning, but Gbagbo was really anti-French and maybe he got to a point with the French journalists where everyone was so

aggressive with them on the Gbagbo side that they covered more Ouattara’s side. But I don’t think, and I’m sure there’s no French journalist or AFP journalist who is pro-Ouattara or who thinks, ‘I hope Ouattara wins or I’m going to write stuff for Ouattara,’ (AFP journalist B, September 2016).

This same journalist then pointed me toward French journalist Fanny Pigeaud’s 2015 book *France Côte d’Ivoire: Une Histoire Tronquee*, in which this former AFP journalist argues that France intervened in the Côte d’Ivoire to protect its own economic interests, not out of humanitarian reasons. The thesis of Pigeaud’s work points out the French media industry had a narrow and fixed perspective on Gbagbo’s politics versus Ouattara. The point of her book is to uncover the various ways Licorne and France manipulated Côte d’Ivoire’s politics so they could have a trade-friendly Ouattara in office. To that end, this study’s finding of the frame of international organizations or internationally-supported Ouattara officials as the real voice of authority over other voices, adds another dimension to the existing literary analysis of how French media impacts Côte d’Ivoire and Françafrique in general.

## 2. Framing the electoral crisis as an isolated political conflict between Gbagbo vs. Ouattara

	Does the article mention the colonial relationship with France?	Talk about French military investment or economic investment?
<b>Le Monde</b>	5 percent (1 of 17 articles)	17 percent (3 of 17 articles)
<b>Associated Press</b>	16 percent (3 of 18 articles)	16 percent (3 of 18 articles)
<b>Jeune Afrique</b>	0 percent (0 of 15 articles)	6 percent (1 of 15 articles)

<b>Reuters</b>	21 percent (3 of 14 articles)	21 percent (3 of 14 articles)
<b>AFP</b>	5 percent (2 of 42 articles)	31 percent (13 articles of 42)
<b>TOTAL</b>	8 percent (9 articles of 106 articles)	22 percent (23 articles of 106)

Figure 2: How the international press mentions relations between Côte d’Ivoire and France.

As noted previously, frame analysis recognizes that *leaving out* certain facts about a situation is also evidence of framing. Another significant observation on the frames in international media were the degree to which the colonial, economic and political ties between Côte d’Ivoire and France were ignored. This is dangerous. Readers learning about Côte d’Ivoire conflict would, for all intents and purposes, become very focused on the back and forth between Gbagbo’s militia and Ouattara’s militia, as the majority of stories left out the fact that France *and* the UN have their own military bases in the country. Additionally, the UN was providing 24-hour security to Ouattara’s administration at the Golf Hotel. ONUCI formed the third military presence in this conflict, but largely went unmentioned in the international media until April 10 and 11, 2011, when Licorne and ONUCI finally opened fire on Gbagbo’s palace, cleared the area for Force Nouvelles to gain the palace steps and arrest Gbagbo.

According to Figure 2, it is clear that France’s relationship takes a backseat in the international media coverage on the crisis (nine out of 107 articles mention Côte d’Ivoire is a former colony, 23 out of 107 mention France’s economic/military/political domination in Côte d’Ivoire). These results seem strange when considering how extensively French officials were consulted for

quotes on Côte d'Ivoire. For example, consider the following March 30, 2011 AFP news article that depicts how Ouattara's Force Nouvelles are marching from the north of the country down to Abidjan to defeat Gbagbo. The battle is painted as a head-to-head struggle between the two sides, yet the journalist neglects to mention the multiple reports in local Ivorian newspapers that Licorne and ONUCI also helped arm Ouattara's military as they descended through the country (a claim that may or may not be true, depending if you talk to a pro-Ouattara supporter or a pro-Gbagbo supporter). The article also fails to quote any of Gbagbo's officials for information about the offense of Forces Nouvelles.

**Côte d'Ivoire: Ouattara's forces control three quarters of the country (Les Forces de Ouattara contrôlent les "trois quarts" du pays)**

The ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire in France named by Alassane Ouattara, Ally Coulibaly, reassured people on Wednesday that the forces of the president recognized by the international community control "three quarters" of the country.

"Three quarters of Ivorian territory are today in the hands of the Republican forces, which are the forces of liberation," declared Ally Coulibaly to French radio RTL, two days after the debut of an offensive by Ouattara, which is progressing Tuesday to the south of the country.

"The Republican forces are doing everything to avoid a civil war," he said. "There will not be a civil war, things will be settled very quickly."

"Faced with Gbagbo's (leaving president) obstinance, we have to gather force. Ivorians have thus taken their destiny into their hands to avoid a massacre of the civilian population," he justified.

The ambassador named by Ouattara guesses that Laurent Gbagbo has "no more money." "We have to cut him off, he continues to buy certain people but in reality, he doesn't have any more means to pay his servicemen," said Coulibaly.

Fighters supporting Ouattara have rapidly progressed Tuesday near the Ivorian south, threatening Gbagbo's regime, which has asked them for an immediate ceasefire.

(Les Forces de Ouattara contrôlent les "trois quarts" du pays, AFP, March 30, 2011).

Note this is an AFP article citing a quote off a French radio station (RTL) and that it features quite patriotic (almost heroic) quotes from Ouattara's spokesperson located in Paris: "Ivorians have thus taken their destiny in their hands." The framing here is in favor of Ouattara, just as the journalist has drawn from Ouattara's spokesman in France speaking on French public

radio. Despite the heavy implications of French relations, the article neglects to mention that Côte d'Ivoire is a former colony of France or that France maintains colossal military and economic power in CI. Or that he is the favored candidate of France. The problem with this frame is it renders France's power in the conflict invisible, making the French influence a non-issue in the news coverage and focusing readers' attention on the two political actors instead. By emphasizing the Ouattara/Gbagbo conflict over and over, journalists thus de-emphasized the role of France and the African/ international community, all of which were major actors in this civil conflict. In creating a reductionist, one-dimensional conflict, this news coverage drew reader attention away from the grosser realities of the civil conflict- that France was gambling hard on Ouattara through every means possible. Francfrigue, then, gains power through international media frames as it reinforces the voices of international and French authorities over local ones, but de-emphasizes the real economic/political power of France over Côte d'Ivoire.

### **3. Good guy/bad guy framing of Alassane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo**

A third observation in how the crisis was framed is that international journalists wrote about the conflict as a head-to-head battle between two political figures, one good (Ouattara) and one bad (Gbagbo). The media rarely showed that Ouattara had international financial and political support beyond saying he is widely "recognized as the winner" by the international community. Ouattara is largely framed as the "good guy" acting alone. Figure 1 shows journalists cited Ouattara's officials 47 times in the 106 articles, compared to a mere 22 references by Gbagbo officials. Indeed, the first mention of Ouattara in most news articles introduces him as "the man widely recognized as the president by the international community." A few articles in AP referenced that "crimes had been committed on both sides," but stories referencing violence in Côte d'Ivoire attributed them to Gbagbo's FDS. In terms of



the “bad guy” part of this frame, the international media often portrayed Gbagbo’s military as cruel, determined, violent and incompetent. Consider the following quotes.

1. “‘I am concluding that Mr. Gbagbo has lost contact with reality,’ said Choi Young-jin, head of the U.N. peacekeeping mission,” (Oved, M., Associated Press, *French, U.N. fire rockets on Gbagbo*, April 11, 2011).

2. “‘Since our engagement for the Houphouëtiste coalition, we are regularly the object of threats and intimidation, explains Koffi. But we only really realized the danger when the Cecos - the soldiers loyal to Laurent Gbagbo - came to hunt down our old homes. Unfortunately, we both had to change our address.’” (Two “ADO” Boys in Paris, *Jeune Afrique*, Jan. 31, 2011)

3. “‘Laurent Gbagbo believes he is invincible. Behind his smiles and hugs, he has only contempt for his adversaries. A ruse, he has stayed in power for ten and a half years. Gueï, Bédié, Ouattara...They’ve all been rolled in the flour so many times he thought he could do it again. But this coup here, it’s different. The tightrope walker has fallen. Why a fall so brutal?’” (Les secrets d’une offensive éclair, April 8, 2011, *Jeune Afrique*, C. Boisbouvier)

4. A senior United Nations official warned incumbent Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo and other senior officials on Friday they may be held criminally accountable for human rights violations.

...A dispute between Gbagbo and rival candidate Alassane Ouattara over who won the Nov. 28 presidential vote has plunged the West African state into turmoil; UN experts have reported killings, disappearances and arbitrary detentions. In a New Year address broadcast on TV late Friday, Gbagbo accused world powers of an "attempted coup d'etat" by backing his rival.

"I will stay where Ivorians have placed me with their votes. We will not concede," he said.

"When committed in certain circumstances, enforced disappearances amount to a crime against humanity," a UN working group on enforced or involuntary disappearances said of attacks by gunmen on pro-Ouattara neighbourhoods. (T. Cocks & S. Nebehay, Reuters, Jan. 1, 2011)

5. “‘Alassane Ouattara was declared the winner of a presidential election in November but Laurent Gbagbo has refused to hand over power.’” (Oved, M. Associated Press, April 8, 2011, Ivory Coast mercenaries are ‘burning people alive’)

6. “‘If Gbagbo’s regime has been floundering in the last few days, it isn’t only for tactical reasons. It’s also because his troops don’t have any morale left.’” (Boisbouvier, C., *Jeune Afrique*, Les secrets d’une offensive éclair, April 8, 2011)

There are, however, some strong reasons for why this particular good guy/bad guy frame emerged in the coverage, as explained in interviews with international journalists.

First, journalists said Ouattara's military officials made themselves easily accessible to every international media outlet that flew in, answering their phones day and night and holding multiple press briefings at the Golf Hotel where Ouattara was guarded by the UN (personal interview, former AFP journalist, September, 2016; former AFP journalist, September, 2016; *Jeune Afrique* journalist, September, 2016; former AP and RFI journalist, May, 2017). A *Jeune Afrique* reporter told me this much over a beer at the local gas station in Cocody (a neighborhood in Abidjan) in September, 2016.

In fact, at the time, all the foreign press who worked in Abidjan were influenced by Ouattara's camp. So all the coverage tended to be like this, in general. Even today, when I see journalists I tell them, 'In 2010, we didn't do our work well because we were content to talk about deaths by Gbagbo's camp, even though men in Ouattara's camp killed a lot of people too.' So, the coverage was concentrated uniquely on Abidjan or Abobo, but when Ouattara's men made their descent through the country, they killed people. And since the people who gave the most info in general were Ouattara's men, because most of us couldn't get out to be on the ground [up there] (personal interview, *Jeune Afrique* reporter, September, 2016).

This quote helps explain why Ouattara received so much positive coverage from international news outlets. Reporters on deadline are often willing to talk with anyone they can get on the phone.

Second, journalists told me that Gbagbo's administration not only stopped answering phone calls from the international press somewhere in December 2010, but some pro-Gbagbo militant parties were actively harassing international journalists. Gbagbo's officials just stopped answering their phones overnight for the international media (personal interview, former AP and RFI journalist, May 27, 2017). This helps explain why the 106 samples of articles show such minimal direct quotes from Gbagbo's side. At least four international journalists each told me

separate stories of either barely escaping FDS visits to their offices or being arrested by FDS and then let go. Consider this story by an Ivorian AFP journalist:

There was a day that had me really fearful. There was a large meeting at a military camp here where the Chef de Patriotes (Jeune Patriotes) Ble Goude called the youth to come join his army and we all went. I took a cameraman with me and he was a little white, he couldn't get through and had to go back to the office because people started threatening they would smash his camera, so he went back. That same journalist, the next day he came back and they beat up his car -it was the AFP bureau car...

Then I got there and they ask you which journal you are in. I said I was with AFP. L'AFP is what, they asked. It's all the same for them. I said no, me, I want to know what is happening...they started roughing me up...Then a moment came when someone saw me, a boy I knew who calmed down the chaos. This is all to tell you it was really hard to work, because everyone who saw a foreign journalist say, 'these are the people who writing god knows what, you are liars, you aren't telling the truth, the press international are all liars, you are telling everyone false stories, you are all with Ouattara. So, it was not easy to work during that time. It was people who wanted really...who were angry against everything about the international press (AFP journalist A, September, 2016).

This topic of harassment of journalists will be visited more in-depth in Chapter 6, but as can be seen, the anger and hostility of Gbagbo's party against the French and the international press was palpable in many interviews. If every military squadron of Gbagbo's police and military forces was harassing or threatening to kill foreign journalists, it is only natural the foreign press might write unfavorably of them. How does one remain objective and civil when writing hard news about a military front that is actively harassing oneself or one's colleagues?

Third, why is there so little mention in the international coverage about the violent crimes committed by Ouattara's Force Nouvelles (which also adds to his one-dimensional "good guy" image in the international press)? On March 29, 2011, soldiers for Amade Ouremi's pro-Ouattara forces, alongside other pro-Ouattara groups, shot and hacked almost 800 civilians to death in the northern city of Duékoué. Human Rights Watch, and International Red Cross both arrived to help the wounded and give supplies to the shell-shocked village. The massacre received some coverage in the Associated Press, but was quickly forgotten amid the chaos that occurred when

Ouattara's larger Force Nouvelles arrived in Abidjan on April 1, 2011. Predictably, AFP wrote about the massacre as a simple military success for Ouattara, framing the event as a simple taking of the city of Duékoué, among two other cities.

### **West Côte d'Ivoire: Pro-Ouattara forces attack Duékoué**

Forces supporting the Ivorian president recognized by the international community, Alassane Ouattara, attacked Tuesday Duékoué, a strategic intersection for the west of Côte d'Ivoire, held by the army loyal to leaving president Laurent Gbagbo, said the two camps.

"We have engaged in hostilities to secure the grand West, in particular Duékoué, and Guiglo, where miliciens are distributing terror," said a military spokesman for Ouattara to AFP.

The Republican Forces are essentially a regrouping of old, ex-rebels from Forces Nouvelles, which control the north of the country since their failed coup d'Etat in 2002.

"We've encircled Duékoué, and it is possible that the two villages, Duékoué, and Guiglo, will fall today," said the spokesman for Bouake, a center for the Forces Republicaines. (AFP, March 28, 2011).

### **Combat in Tiébissou, 40 km from the capital Yamoussoukro**

Lead: Combat with heavy weaponry was heard Wednesday near the village of Tiebissou, located 40 km to the north of the Ivorian capital Yamoussoukro, between the forces of the president recognized by the international community, Alassane Ouattara, and their rival, said residents....

...Tuesday, the pro-Ouattara soldiers took down important villages like Bondoukou (east), Duékoué (west) and Daloa (central east), but also Abengourou (southeast), which is only 220 km from the economic Ivorian capital, Abidjan. Gbagbo's camp called Tuesday evening for an immediate ceasefire. (AFP, March 30, 2011).

Notice the above journalist frames Ouattara as the legitimate leader and then lists the military actions as victories; "took down important villages." Several days later, when press releases from the International Red Cross and a Catholic NGO, Caritas, emerged on the actual massacre, AFP then attributed the deaths to both political sides in its coverage.

### **West Côte d'Ivoire: One thousand "deaths or disappearances" at Duékoué**

One thousand people have been killed or disappeared in the village of Duékoué, in the west of CI, the scene of a massacre perpetrated by combats between Sunday and Tuesday, announced the Catholic NGO Caritas in a press release.

“Teams from Caritas went to Duékoué, in Côte d’Ivoire, reported that a thousand people were killed or taken away to be disappeared,” according to a press release on the Catholic NGO’s catholic website (AFP, April 2, 2011).

If frames are an interpretive schema that emphasize or de-emphasize some facts over others, AFP’s coverage of Duékoué here has *greatly* glossed over one of the biggest massacres committed by Ouattara during the conflict. As an interpretive frame, the Duékoué story is a strong example of a good guy/bad guy framing in the electoral crisis, where Ouattara’s Force Nouvelles killed almost 800 people is *barely* mentioned in all five news outlets studied. Whereas, the deaths committed by Gbagbo’s FDS received almost *daily* and extensive attention in all five news outlets. Here we see clearly what the international press has emphasized: Gbagbo’s crimes and what it has de-emphasized: Ouattara’s crimes. It isn’t enough that several reporters told me they didn’t hear about the massacre until several days after everyone was dead, when the Red Cross finally made it up to the region and sent out press releases. After these three AFP articles emerged on the Duékoué massacre, little else was written by AFP on it for the rest of the civil war, nor did any of the four media outlets mention it in the remaining articles selected for study. AFP reporters returned to citing Ouattara’s spokesmen regularly, writing about Ouattara as the legitimate president and *neglecting to remind readers* about the 800 deaths seen in Duékoué, in subsequent articles.

“I admit, do I regret having missed that while it was happening? Yes. It’s a pretty logistical reason why it went on...not a lot goes on up there in the north so it’s not like we had contacts up there,” (personal interview, former AP journalist, May, 2017).

It was also practically impossible to drive to the north or west of the country because of so many military roadblocks by both military camps. All major media outlets were based down in Abidjan. Clearly, Ouattara’s soldiers were not going to divulge how many civilians they killed

in combat to international reporters, leaving reporters dependent on parties like Human Rights Watch, International Red Cross and Caritas to instead report on killings.

Recall that Ouattara's political representatives were the second most cited source for information by the international press (Figure 1). The Ouattara officials cited in the international media were spokesmen, military officials and freshly appointed cabinet members who were clearly *very new* to running a presidential administration. In fact, most of the military officials quoted from the north of the country were largely regarded as rebel warlords who took over certain regions in 2002 and held a sort of anarchic control over that territory from 2002 to 2010.

The "Ouattara administration" that is given such sprawling access to the international media during the crisis was largely a sleeper army of angry rebel soldiers that had quietly stockpiled weapons for years, waiting for the moment that Ouattara had a chance at elections. Again, on the question of frames, I am highly skeptical of the decision of international journalists to heavily privilege the voices of Ouattara's representatives in their work, as it is clear many of those sources were working out of deeply corrupt political violence and a not-yet-functional administration.

#### **4. Frame of justice according to international standards**

Many of the journalists in the international media made constant references to international standards for justice and democracy when sizing up Côte d'Ivoire's electoral crisis. Framing their articles in this way stands out because the local press included almost no mention of pursuing justice, respect for democracy or humanitarian standards in the way militias kill, hunt or recruit people to their cause. Thus, this frame enunciates the fact that international journalists put an emphasis on cultural standards that are valued at an international level, in Europe and the

West, rather than cultural standards at the local level. This is a distinct difference from the local press' focus on ethnic protection as the final end goal for the conflict.

The following are three examples of journalists pulling from international organizations to frame an expectation or standard for justice within Côte d'Ivoire's election crisis.

### **1. From Reuters, "UN Warns Gbagbo on Abuses."**

President of Ivory Coast told he could be held criminally responsible for human rights violations

A senior United Nations official warned incumbent Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo and other senior officials on Friday they may be held criminally accountable for human rights violations.

A dispute between Gbagbo and rival candidate Alassane Ouattara over who won the Nov. 28 presidential vote has plunged the West African state into turmoil; UN experts have reported killings, disappearances and arbitrary detentions.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, said Friday she had written to Gbagbo and other senior officials "to remind them ... that they will be held personally responsible and accountable for human rights violations resulting from their actions and/or omissions, according to international human rights and humanitarian law." (Cocks & Nebehay, 2011)

### **2. From Associated Press, "20 soldiers, police killed in clashes"**

The United Nations, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have condemned the human rights abuses, which include executions, kidnappings and rape, carried out by pro-Gbagbo security forces against supporters of Ouattara.

Ouattara is considered the legitimate president of Ivory Coast by governments around the world, but he has not been able to assume office because Gbagbo is refusing to leave.

On Tuesday, a high-level delegation sent by the African Union was in Abidjan to meet the warring sides in an attempt to find a solution. They left Wednesday having made no progress (Oved, Feb. 24, 2011)

### **3. *Jeune Afrique*, "Côte d'Ivoire : La guerre civile a déjà commencé "[ The Civil War has Already Started]**

Under these conditions, the International Crisis Group wagers that Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which met Wednesday and Thursday in Abuja, Nigeria, must decide "the creation of a military mission" to protect the civilians of Côte d'Ivoire. But three months after ECOWAS threatened to employ a legitimate force against Gbagbo, the regional organization has not done this (Naude, 2011).

The actual phrases "justice" or "international standards" are not used here; the framing is a bit more subtle than that. For example, the Reuters article quotes UN High Commissioner for

Human Rights, Navi Pillay, as having sent a letter to remind Gbagbo there are consequences for his actions, according to international humanitarian law. Without explicitly saying it, this journalist has 1) assumed it is appropriate to introduce the opinion of a human rights lawyer in Switzerland to the actions of a politician in a small West African nation 2) assumed that the UN's location within the electoral crisis is the best law to cite in the land, disregarding ECOWAS or African Union policies on human rights, as well as the numerous human rights organizations operating in Côte d'Ivoire and neighboring countries 3) prioritized and applied the Western standards of a criminal court based on Western-designed humanitarian laws.

To be clear, I am not arguing that journalists' framing news events according to international justice is a negative phenomenon. I am merely pointing out that the five media organizations in this study based their analysis and sizing of the electoral crisis on a more clinical, official, international set of values as established by the United Nations. This is in contrast to the local newspapers, which rarely mentioned human rights abuses, international law or spoke of applying international justice to their local political crisis. Similar to the frame discussed earlier, in which journalists cited international figures as the real source of authority, the frame on international standards again prioritizes foreign actors as privileged to speak and intervene in Côte d'Ivoire's politics.

As my own observation and opinion, journalists used the discussion of international justice in the electoral crisis to assume that the final, ideal conclusion of the electoral conflict was the international will of the UN and its laws would be respected. Pigeaud in her 2015 book notes the French press paints the conflict as if France's intervention was to help bring peace and human rights to Côte d'Ivoire, when in reality, she argues France's political advocacy had far more to do with profits for the many French corporations operating there. Much like framing the



conflict as a head-to-head between Gbagbo and Ouattara, this frame of international justice may also distract readers by focusing their eyes more on democracy and human rights, rather than the profit to be made by French and other Western corporations off of Côte d'Ivoire's natural resources. By focusing readers' attention on France's calls for peace, Gbagbo's war crimes and the International Criminal Court, readers are less inclined to research or criticize France's economic intentions.

Another insight on framing stories with a Western perspective on democracy is it removes the authority off Ivorian politicians and instead emphasizes the values and authority of Western policies as more urgent. This dilemma isn't unique to conflict in Côte d'Ivoire: elections throughout multiple African nations often result in one leader refusing to step down, and the international community (United Nations, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, International Red Cross, European Union, among many others) banding together to assert the idea of democracy for a fair election, or human rights. A more recent example of this is Gabon's 2016 presidential elections of Jean Ping against Ali Ondimba, in which Ping and his representatives argued they had won the election. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called both men in September, 2016 to bend their ear toward reaching an agreement amid the extensive political violence that broke out. Another example is Kenya's 2007 presidential election, in which incumbent president Mwai Kibaki's win over Raila Odinga was locally and internationally contested by the UN and other international groups.

## **Conclusion**

These four frames working together broadcast a specific interpretation of Côte d'Ivoire's electoral crisis to audiences in 2010 and 2011. To quote Bennett (1993) and Gitlin (1980), the nature of symbolic construction of reality makes distortion not only inevitable but also

predictable in mass media, where preset narrative frames and rhetorical devices professionally govern and structurally constrict fact presentation (Guo, 2011, p. 21). I've attempted with these four frames to also reveal the positionality and conditions for the journalists who wrote them, showing a broader picture of how these media outlets function in the postcolonial landscape of Côte d'Ivoire at war with itself, and in some sense, with France.

### **Frames in the local Ivorian press: La Presse Bleue and *Le Patriote***

In this section, I introduce three key frames that emerged in the local press in a textual analysis of the 102 articles: attacking and criticizing the political enemy; invoking the power of God as working for one's political side; protecting one's ethnic group against unwanted ethnicities. The Ivorian newspapers published in 2010 to 2011 continue a fascinating journey into the local political and cultural rhetoric used at the time. The frames used by both pro-Gbagbo newspapers (*Le Temps*, *Notre Voie*, *Le Nouveau Courrier* and *Fraternité Matin*) and the pro-Ouattara newspaper, *Le Patriote*, use a wide and colorful rainbow of religious, dramatic and even metaphorical language to convey their opinions on the crisis. I occasionally refer to Gbagbo's papers using a local term, "la presse bleue," (the blue press), which notoriously relies on Gbagbo's socialist, left-leaning, anti-French, pro-Ivorian independence rhetoric often found in his party's political speeches.

First, most of the local news coverage *was* opinion, not fact. Of the 102 articles cited (71 in pro-Gbagbo papers and 29 from *Le Patriote*), most pieces were news commentary, not hard news. More specifically, I counted 49 commentary pieces, 16 pieces that contained equal parts opinion and fact, and 35 articles that stayed primarily in fact-telling, without obvious overtures into opinion. This effectively meant that in picking up a newspaper, a reader was more likely to

read the full analysis/commentary/opinion of the team of journalists that day, rather than traditional “hard news.”

*Sources in local Ivorian newspapers*

In writing more political commentary than news, local journalists cited far fewer sources per article compared to the international press. To give some perspective, of the 107 foreign news articles used for this study, 246 sources were cited (such as a press release or calling a pro-Ouattara spokesperson). Of the 102 local news articles cited for this study, journalists only quoted 127 sources for information; 16 stories had no sources quoted at all.

	<b>Number of Articles</b>	<b>Sources Cited</b>	<b>Articles with no source</b>
<b>International press</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Local newspapers</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>16</b>

*Figure 3: Quantity of sources cited in international news and local newspaper articles. 209 articles from Nov. 2010 to Dec. 2011.*

Bearing this in mind, Figure 4 shows all five newspapers relied on Ivorian citizens, institutions and Ivorians living in France for quotes, more than any other demographic (26 percent of sources in la presse bleue and 21 percent of articles in *Le Patriote*). While the sample size of 102 news articles, (29 of which come from the single opposition newspaper) may seem meager, it is a helpful snapshot of patterns in local newspapers. In the database of 102 articles,

	CATEGORY: Ivoirien civilians, anonymous sources, Ivoirien institutions	Mentions French/US media Channel, like AFP	African Governing Body (like CEDEAO or African Union)	Pro-Quattara official	UN official	French government/lacade micide/defense official	Other International Actors, like EU or Amnesty International	African Governing Body (like CEDEAO or African Union)	Articles with No source, Commentary on news events	References another Ivoirien media channel, like TCI or RTI	pro-Gbagbo official	Total Sources
Le Patriot (29 articles)	21 percent	17 percent	15 percent	15 percent	11 percent	6 percent	6 percent	6 percent	6 percent	2 percent	0	47
NEW MERGED CATEGORY: Ivoirien civilians, anonymous sources, Ivoirien institutions			Articles with No source, Commentary on news events	French government/lacade micide/defense official	Other International Actors, like EU or Amnesty International	Pro-Quattara official	African Governing Body (like CEDEAO or African Union)	References another French/US media Channel, like AFP	References another Ivoirien media channel, like TCI or RTI	UN official	Total sources	
La Presse Bleu (71 articles)	25	17	13	9	7	7	6	5	4	3	96	
	26 percent	18 percent	14 percent	9 percent	7 percent	7 percent	6 percent	5 percent	4 percent	3 percent		

16 stories had no clear source for the information.

*Figure 4.* Sources quoted in local CI newspapers.

Consider the following example from *Le Temps*, a blue paper that supports Gbagbo, where journalist Germain Sehoue uses no sources and writes almost poetically in anti-Ouattara rhetoric. I include this piece to introduce the section on the local press, because it demonstrates the type of exaggerated political rhetoric that was so popular at the time. In particular, notice how the parties of Ouattara, the international media and France are grouped together as a single

party: “under the *complicit* approval of the international media.”

<p>Du Tac au Tac</p> <hr/> <p>Par Germain Séhoué</p> <hr/> <p>Génocide «légitime»</p> <p>Les hommes de Ouattara tuent. Tuent. Et tuent. Les morts bien ciblés, s'accumulent. Les organisations des Droits de l'Homme tolèrent ces drames. La justice internationale avalise ces tueries. Parce que celui qui tue, représente leurs intérêts. Celui au nom de qui l'on tue, est leur poulain. Il fait donc un génocide « légitime ». Un génocide pour une bonne cause. Leur cause. Sans être au pouvoir, Alassane excelle déjà en épuration ethnique. Que fera-t-il alors ses 3 premiers mois de plein exercice du pouvoir ? Il tuera massivement. Et la communauté internationale étouffera ces tueries. Il tuera des civils. Des personnalités politiques. Militaires. Sous le regard complice des médias internationaux. On le laissera achever son génocide. On l'aidera même. Pourvu que les intérêts de la France et des Usa soient soignés. Pourriture !</p>	<p>Translation: “Legitimate” Genocide</p> <p>The soldiers of Ouattara kill. And kill. And kill. The deaths are well targeted and they are accumulating. Human rights organizations are just tolerating these dramas. The international justices accept these murders. Because the people who are killing are representing their interests. In the name of those who kill, is their horse foal. And so they are doing a “legitimate” genocide. A genocide for a good cause. Their cause. Without even being in power, Alassane is already excelling at ethnic cleansing. How else has he exercised his power in his first three months? He's killed massively. And the international community isn't quelling these murders. He is murdering civilians. Political personalities. Military people. Under the complicit approval of the international media. They let him achieve his genocide. They even help him. So that the interests of France and the US can be cared after. What rot!</p> <p><i>Le Temps</i>, March 16, 2011 By Germain Séhoué</p>
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This piece from *Le Temps* is also a strong example and segue into the next section, where we discuss three main frames that emerged in the local press.

## **Frames in the local press**

Three major frames were found in the local press coverage, across both political sides.

**Frame of attacking the political enemy:** La presse bleue emphasizes the violence and political scheming of “Ouattara-Sarkozy” in their coverage. *Le Patriote*, in contrast, vilifies the deaths committed by Gbagbo and writes stories that cast doubt on his strength.

**Frame of God aligned with one’s political candidate:** Both newspaper camps published coverage full of Catholic, Muslim and Christian sermons and other religious sentiments that lead one to believe God is supporting the soldiers of either Gbagbo or Ouattara.

**Frame of ethnic “othering”:** Over and over, the local press seemed to invoke an us/them dynamic, in which one’s political or ethnic group is important and is under perceived threat.

Additionally, each of the two newspaper camps (pro-Gbagbo and pro-Ouattara) carried special subframes not found in the other camp. A subframe in la presse bleue points to hatred for imperialist France. This editorial line in la presse bleue has been noted in other academic publications, notably Thérout-Bénoni’s *Manufacturing Conflict* (2008). A major subframe in pro-Ouattara press (*Le Patriote*) points to *deploying the international community’s opinion* to rationalize and encourage Ouattara’s political campaign. The pro-Ouattara press’s acceptance of France and the UN’s intervention points directly to its ties to Ouattara’s political party, RDR, which heavily advocated for help from these neocolonial powers. This collusion of parties points to the legacies of colonialism that continue in the present postcolonial era in Côte d’Ivoire where aspiring political parties seek alliances with Western powers in order to gain more in-country political power. This is exacerbated as the state is weak and governments are fragile within this weakened state.

I first explain each frame separately and then include the comments and back stories from my interviews with local journalists on these frames. Interviews with journalists help give context and flesh out why the frames in articles emerged this way. I used the same criteria to find frames in the local press as with the international media 1) where and who the journalist gathered their information from 2) if the former colonial relationship between CI and France is mentioned 3) if France's military, economic ties in CI are mentioned 4) the general focus of the article 5) if the article seems to support Ouattara, Gbagbo, Ivorian independence or France.

### **1. Attacking and criticizing the political enemy**

Some of the news pieces in the 102 articles almost sounded like journalists were cheering at a cockfight or a soccer game. For example, in *la presse bleue*, journalists used a slew of cynical names to describe Ouattara and the international community political side. This itself is a type of framing, as instead of simply saying "pro-Ouattara forces" like the international media, *la presse bleue* created a whole quiver of lexical arrows to hurl at the other side. Consider the language (in bold) used to describe Ouattara and France in the following pro-Gbagbo newspapers.

#### **1. From *Le Nouveau Courrier*, "Pourquoi Ouattara Joue Sa Survie" [Why Ouattara is Playing with His Survival]**

Kone Zakaria, one of the chiefs of war working for the rebellion, in a well-circulated video, attributed the paternal nature of the rebellion to Alassane Ouattara, even though it has never been denied...the last piece of proof of the ***perfect collusion in the rebellion*** was the nomination of Guillaume Soro as Prime Minister of Defense (Naismon, 2011)

#### **2. From *Notre Voie*, "Attaque Rebelle Contre les Biens Publics" [Rebel Attack Against Public Goods]**

Decidedly, Alassane Ouattara is becoming ***the puppy dog of the Occident***, and doesn't like schools. After fragile wins in the central, north and west zones of the country, now this candidate in the last election wants ***to ruin the hopes of future generations*** in Abidjan [article then describes the burning of l'Universite d'Abobo-Adjame] (Kore, 2011)

#### **3. From *Le Nouveau Courrier*, "L'Equation Francais" [The French Equation]**



The usage of violence and *terror by the rebels* will not strangle the resolute will of the Ivorians to bring the fight to a final victory...Don't hesitate to take decisions against France and the UN because the determination of the government to treat the enemies of the Côte d'Ivoire depends on the rapidity of the final victory...Consider even hovering over the *devil's den*, the Golf Hotel [where Ouattara resided]. The solution to the Ivorian crisis comes from within, not the exterior ([www.aucoeurdeselecteurs-ci.net](http://www.aucoeurdeselecteurs-ci.net), published in *Le Nouveau Courrier*, 2011).

**4. From *Le Temps*, “Operation Palais”**

For him (Ouattara), the phrase “international community” is nothing more than a euphemism for the word “*slavery*.” Meaning, **the international conspiracies orchestrated by African countries like Congo, Niger, Tchad, has for the objective to pillage our natural resources, which represents a form of modern slavery** (“Operation Palais”, 2011)

**5. From *Notre Voie*, “Aides Par l’ONUCI et Licorne” [ Helped by ONUCI and Licorne]**

France and the European Union really don't want cocoa to be sold to someone new or for the taxes on it to go to Gbagbo's government...We know well that the pressure applied by this company is from the *franco-rebelle coalition* to expel Gbagbo and permit trade to flow freely again ( Koukougnon, 2011).

**6. From *Notre Voie*: “La France Perd la Tete: Sarkozy Demand Au Nigeria d’Attaquer la Côte d’Ivoire”**

[France loses it's head. Sarkozy demands that Nigeria attack Côte d'Ivoire] (AVS, 2010)

**7. From *Notre Voie*: “3 Morts Dont 1 Policier” [Three Deaths]**

“The community of Sinfra was again the object of a violent attack by **the terrorists** of Alassane Ouattara.” (Kore, 2011).

As can be seen from this type of framing, one clear goal of la presse bleue is to smear the name of their opponent, including linking his name with the greater imperialist powers of France and the UN. In this vein, we see pro-Gbagbo journalists using frames to *challenge the status quo*, rather than *maintain a dominant paradigm* in their sourcing. This is partially because the pro-Gbagbo press was not only writing against the local opposing pro-Ouattara press, but was also writing against international leaders *and* the international media. In this sense, la presse bleue's frames were challenging two frame-makers: the domestic pro-Ouattara press and the

writing of the international community, which unanimously agreed Ouattara had won the election.

This same frame is reflected in the opposing camp- the pro-Ouattara press- that of attacking and criticizing the political opponent. In the 29 articles pulled from *Le Patriote*, many of the tactics used by pro-Gbagbo press are replicated. It's the same formula, just with a different enemy: Gbagbo.

1. From *Le Patriote*, "Appel a la Mobilisation a la Place de la Republique" [ Call to Mobilize at the Place of the Republic].

Alassane Ouattara is a modern leader, unifier, visionary and respected. The complete antithesis of the leaving president, Laurent Gbagbo. **Vomited out by the Ivorian people**, he can't find any other solution than to massacre people with heavy weaponry (Gaoussou, 2011).

2. From *Le Patriote*, "La CEDEAO Doit Adresser un Message Clair a Gbagbo" [CEDEAO Must Send a Clear Message to Gbagbo]

At present, the denunciation and condemnation of acts committed by forces loyal to M. Gbagbo are innumerable and unanimous; it means **massacres on a grand scale already executed, planning, preparation and systematic organization of mass crimes in the vein of ethnic, religious and xenophobic hatred** (Lagoutte, 2011).

The next example was written by a spokesman for Ouattara's Force Nouvelles, Affoussy Bamba, in which he lists the unfair military tactics used by Gbagbo's FDS troops. Several of his bullet points are translated below.

3. From *Le Patriote*, "Communique/ Les Forces Nouvelles: Gbagbo Montre Son Visage de Dictateur aux Ivoiriens" [Gbagbo Shows His Dictator Face to Ivoiriens]

- The constitution of a private militia composed of military from all grades of civil society, and also foreign soldiers recruited and paid using the public tax dollars of Ivoiriens
- The violation of the liberty of thought, by the interdiction of the state media against everyone who thinks differently than their camp. To this end, the tanks of the army even installed the equipment of RTI [state TV station], **which is equally infested with Angolians and Liberians paid in gold to kill every Ivorian** with a different sensibility than their own.
- The diffusion of a grotesque and heinous propaganda which lies about his glory
- The muzzling of the printed press

- The scandalous blockade outside the Golf Hotel, which lays siege to the residence of the legitimate authorities in CI (Bamba, 2010).

Considering the scale of hatred in the writing of both political camps, it becomes easier to imagine how people died in this war. This frame of attacking or criticizing a political enemy is certainly not new to politics, but the extreme nature of each camp's language bumps the media coverage during the 2010-2011 civil war to a new level. Attacking a perceived enemy as a political communication strategy works because it creates a bad guy, upon which one can then leverage and dump one's complaints or create solutions based on the other party's weaknesses. Attacking a perceived enemy also works as a political strategy because it can cast doubt on the person's character and abilities, in the eyes of readers.

The conundrum we see in the Côte d'Ivoire's local press is there are competing frames for competing politicians, and a very real, very vulnerable population caught in the political crossfire of this competition. The stark contrast we see in how each camp slings media mud at the other camp points back to the thesis of this dissertation: that every political party in this war (France, pro-Ouattara and pro-Gbagbo) was fighting, visibly and behind-the-scenes, for the most dominant, most widespread framing of the conflict. This way of framing one's political opponent in the media was the refined product that reached audiences, as a product of the grand monkeywrenching that went on behind-the-scenes for *control of how the crisis was framed*.

## **2: Invoking the power of God as working in favor of one's political side**

Journalists and editors in both political camps devoted a lot of their news hole to Christian and Muslim commentary on the crisis. Predictably, God was almost always on the side of Ouattara or Gbagbo, depending on which newspaper you picked up. Some pieces included in the papers were not directly implicating God's voice through a pastor, but used language that framed news from a religious perspective. In general, referencing God as a cause, motivation or inspiration for many

daily outcomes is common in African countries. For example, consider this ad for an upcoming news brief:



**A lire demain dans le Patriote**

PASTEURS, ÉVANGÉLISTES, PRÉDICATEURS,  
MARABOUTS, FÉTICHEURS

---

- Gbagbo pris en otage par des chasseurs de primes
- Comment on lui fait croire qu'il a une mission messianique sur la Côte d'Ivoire.

**Translation: Read tomorrow in *Le Patriote***

Pastors, evangelists, preachers, marabouts, voodoo witchdoctors

- Gbagbo is taken hostage by bounty hunters
- How they've made him believe he has a messianic message for the Côte d'Ivoire.

*Le Patriote*, Dec. 21, 2010

Framing the conflict in religious terms is a tactic that reflects the deeply religious Ivorian community. Framing the news in a way that harnesses a zeal for God with the urgent political situation at hand is a powerful tool to motivate a religious population in either direction.

Here are a few examples:

**1. From *Fraternité Matin*, “Dr. Yaye Dion Confie le Pays a Dieu,” “Dr. Yaye Dion Confides the Country to God”, April 1, 2011**

“Israel was attacked and demanded the help of its ally, Egypt, which refused. This is the same manner that Côte d'Ivoire asked for the help of France when she was attacked, and France refused.” He then said that Egypt preferred to make an alliance with Sancherib, the enemy of Israel. The difficulties for Israel were great. “That’s what we are going through today. France refuses to help us and she is allied with the rebels, has organized a rebellion, with the help of Burkina Faso, exactly like Egypt did with Sancherib in Assyria. And there is now an international coalition against Israel. Ezechias was a king who believed in God and prayed.”

Unfortunately, the international coalition against Côte d'Ivoire, with France, the African Union, the UN, CEDEAO and the US- **these countries won't triumph because their army is not spiritual.** They are mechanized. **We have angels who are spirits in the service of God and Côte d'Ivoire. That's why you have nothing to fear...** Angels are in front of and behind us. At this point in the sermon, a testimony was given by a repentant rebel from Abobo who, after **having seen angels at the side of the Ivoirian army during combat** declared to the congregation, "We aren't alone, because Côte d'Ivoire has done nothing wrong. She is the one who nourishes others. **Laurent Gbagbo has done nothing wrong.**"(Djidje, 2011).

## 2. From *Le Patriote*, "Nourrissez-Vous d'Amour et Non de Haine," "Nourish Yourself on Love, not Hate: the Signs of the Eternal." (March 24, 2011).

With the signs of the last few days, Mother Mary crying in Agboville, a heart found in a bowl of palm rice, the sun and a rainbow, it's clear God is giving us a message. But what message? We hear these things and interpretations of every genre, coming to us from famous false prophets or magicians who deal in, unfortunately, **lies, and manipulation and the heresy of my brothers in LMP (Ligue des Mouvements pour le Progres) ( a pro-Gbagbo militia)**...the heart in the Bible is the center of emotions, and the heart that appears in the bowl of rice of the wife of a soldier in the LMP, particularly in these crazy times, **is a call for intervention for the LMP- for the conversion of the hearts of leaders in the LMP.** (Sister Marie-Simone Douabou, 2011).

As *Le Patriote* is a pro-Ouattara newspaper, here we see a Catholic nun writing a commentary in which she is praying for the hearts of the opposing pro-Gbagbo militia, LMP. In the above *Fraternité Matin* example, we read the coverage of a huge sermon attended by Gbagbo's wife Simone at a church in Abidjan. In both examples, the journalist ties political allegiances to God's will, thus removing responsibility for political bias off the writer and onto God. Framing political commentary in a way that places God on one's political side makes sense in the context of Ivorian culture. The majority of the population is either Christian or Muslim, although several Ivorian acquaintances have told me the two religions believe in the same God and "have the same blood," (a common non-verbal response during this conversation is to run one's fingers down the inside of a wrist, to show we all have the same color blood under one God). God is held up in this culture as a powerful figure whose beliefs are expressed in the Bible and the Koran. By assuming that God supports one's political position, such as the testimony of

the man who saw angels walking next to the Ivorian army (*Gbagbo's* soldiers, not Ouattara), the authors are leveraging and manipulating their readership's belief in God to gain more political support.

The state-run TV station, Radiodiffusion-Télévision Ivoirienne, controlled by Gbagbo, also worked religious comments into its coverage. In a clip broadcast March 3, 2011, the station looped a video of the massacre of the women's march in Abobo, showing a young girl dying in the street, sprayed with her own blood. Another body is shown with its arms and part of the head blown off. The young girl with a growing pool of red around her tries to get up, then lays her head back down in the blood. Her movements are jerky, muted. She's dying. The station plays it as a repetitive loop; she picks up her head, lays it back down, then up again. The news anchor says, "This young dam dies when she wants to and comes back to life when she wants to. Even Jesus took three days before coming back to life." (Reportage de la RTI sur les mensonges des médias, 2011). The gist of this particular news clips was to deny that Gbagbo's soldiers had killed the women, rather, the news anchor claims that other protestors in the women's march fired on their own women. The news anchor is essentially accusing the dying girl of merely *pretending to die*, saying the deaths were staged. By bringing in Jesus, he is denouncing her fake death as an unholy rejection of good Christian behavior. And good Christian behavior, in this instance, apparently means dying permanently instead of popping back up again.

In another RTI clip, the news anchor, Brou Pierre, shows the bodies of several RDR soldiers killed by Gbagbo's FDS soldiers. The bodies are splayed in the street, one with an open bullet wound in the ribs. The next scene then shows an FDS soldier pulling baggies of white powder (drugs) allegedly found on the bodies. The news anchor makes sure to say, twice, that these soldiers were Senegalese, Malian or Burkinabe. The next scene shows a "cloud" floating down

on the headquarters of the FDS (it's a plastic bag), which then lands in the hand of a general, who shows the camera the cloud from God (still a plastic bag). The news anchor claims that God must be blessing the army of Gbagbo with angels, because angelic clouds are coming down on the station. The news clip ends with the anchor saying, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (La RTI sous Gbagbo, "RTI under Gbagbo," RTI 2011).

Théroux-Bénoni's dissertation (2009) on the press in Côte d'Ivoire analyses the propagandist nature of the Ivorian political press, cautioning readers to go beyond the idea that advocacy for violence in the press directly instigates violence on the ground. Rather than looking at this frame of invoking God's favor as a tactic to advocate war by journalists, this collective action frame pulls more from the religious paradigm of Ivorians, most of whom are deeply religious. Much like Bénoni cautions against a direct relationship between violence in the press and violence on the ground, the usage of God as a device for mobilizing people to action is better understood as a culturally-appropriate mobilizing strategy based on one's pre-existing faith. Interestingly, the Western foreign press and most mainstream publications in general would not write like this, because those journalists are writing for a different medium with different values; transnational media corporations. Where international journalists spoke to me about the perceived objectivity and reliability of fact-based foreign news operating out of Côte d'Ivoire, local journalists seemed to be operating more as political commentators who were *inside* Ivorian culture and Ivorian values, such as religion. Therefore, it is helpful to continue thinking of local journalists more as political actors in a social movement, who use their positions in the press as a mobilization tactic for their political party. The collective action frame of invoking God as being on one's side is part of this social movement package, then.

### **3: Protecting one's ethnicity against an unwanted ethnicity**

Both sides of the local press engaged in xenophobic rhetoric at times, which also reflects the cultural climate of the period. Specifically, la presse bleue seems to intentionally list neighboring African countries, like Burkina Faso or Senegal working for Ouattara's military, as a way of emphasizing that the *real* Ivorians of the country must stick together and protect their own interests. This type of language has a reified sense of patriotism or tribalism (both of which involve a community uniting on a common ethnicity). Here are some examples which point to a distinctly ethnic "us/them" dynamic.

1. From *Le Nouveau Courrier*, "La Crise en Côte d'Ivoire," March 1, 2011

The rise of the political consciousness of the Ivorian masses is admirable. The firmness of their commitment to take action to free themselves definitively from the imperialist and colonial yoke for the consolidation of national sovereignty is no longer in doubt...**Do not hesitate to take action against France and the UN because the determination of our government to treat the enemies of Côte d'Ivoire depends on the rapidity of the final victory...**Go further and declare Abobo a zone red or a zone of war and instigate the exit of the population from this area so it can become an operational war zone. In times of war, you have to have firm and rigorous decisions **to play with your adversary...**We are a people blessed by God. France can't do anything to us.

2. From *Le Nouveau Courrier*, "Conquete du Pouvoir Dans le Sang," "Conquest for Power in the Blood," March 1, 2011

A tract from the offices of "The Republic of the Golf Hotel" are being distributed by people for Alassane Ouattara and reaching certain Ivorian villages, notably Abidjan. **The tract promotes urban terrorism in favor of the leader of the Organization of Republicans against all Ivorians**, that they will become militants for his political party, or none. It's a sort of vendetta for RDR and his partisans, who is **encouraging them to ignite a "fatwa" against all who get in their way in their conquest for power for the state.**

3. From *Le Temps*, "Après Les Attaques de la Coalition ONUCI-Rebelles, Hier," "After the Attacks of the UN-Rebel Coalition, Yesterday." March 1, 2011.

**Their methods use tactics of terrorism (attacking private homes, attacking villages, ritual assassinations and slitting victim's throats, burning prisoners alive), is supported by the UN forces** who give them their strongest hand. Refusing his defeat which was decided by the Constitutional Council, Alassane Ouattara is supported with UN, the French force Licorne, and his military rebels, to undo the government of Laurent Gbagbo, the proclaimed president by the Constitutional Council (Essi, 2011).



4. From *Fraternité Matin*, “La Coalition Africaine en Côte d’Ivoire, comme la Coalition Americano-Europeen en Libye,” “The African Coalition in CI, like the American-European Coalition in Libya.” March 30, 2011

The evolution of the post-electoral crisis has intensified with combat between pro-Ouattara forces and the regular army of the Côte d’Ivoire, **which hides well the African conspiracy** against the regime of President Gbagbo. Just like American-European commission decided to get involved in Libya, the African coalition, **led by Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Senegal**, is ready to transform into reality the dreams of Nicolas Sarkozy and Barack Obama. In their strategy, **the black hands controlled by Nicolas Sarkozy are**, under the coverage of CEDEAO, even at this moment, using the threat of military intervention to install Alassane Ouattara (Yevou, 2011).

5. From *Fraternité Matin*, “Les Forces Onusiennes et Francaises en Premiere Ligne dans les Combats Contre l’Armee Ivoirienne,” “UN and French forces first in line in combat against the Ivorian army.” March 30, 2011

**These foreign forces**, which are supposed to be a source of intervention between fighting parties, are unfortunately **on the side of the rebels in attacking hideously the Ivorian soldiers, who** are obliged to respond at the moment and place... With nothing to protect against air attacks, loyalists are often obliged to fire back, permitting the advance of the rebels of Guillaume Soro, **strongly reinforced by Burkinabe, Maliens, Nigerian and Senegalese soldiers** (Kohon, 2011).

By framing these events in a manner that consistently places other ethnicities as *against* all Ivorians, these newspapers create a divide that again works in favor of their political party. Just as using God to enforce one’s political views works as a control tactic, vilifying someone for their ethnicity also functions as an useful frame for making war. Behind the name-calling is also the underlying cultural value of protecting one’s *own* group against attack. In the above example, when Kohon writes, “With nothing to protect against air attacks, loyalists are often obliged to fire back, permitting the advance of the rebels of Guillaume Soro, **strongly reinforced by Burkinabe, Malian, Nigerian and Senegalese soldiers,**” the reader is being told that loyalists to Gbagbo are blameless, i.e. “with nothing to protect against air attacks.” This type of framing leaves readers thinking that *their* Ivorian ethnicity makes them on the righteous side of the

conflict, despite the fact that Ouattara's troops are also Ivorian. Tying politics to ethnicity as a framing tactic is similar to tying politics to God, as journalists are harnessing collectively important cultural values in order to motivate people to act for either Gbagbo or Ouattara. As a frame is an interpretive schema that emphasizes or de-emphasizes some facts over others, these two frames pitch events in a way that subtly emphasizes what this culture already values; religion and ethnic belonging.

### **Explaining frames in local press**

Through interviews with local journalists for these five newspapers, some consistent patterns emerged in how they addressed the bias and sentiment in local newspapers. Coding these sections of interviews found that journalists essentially explain the bias in their writing as patriotism for their political side, or even propaganda, as one journalist said.

Here at *Le Patriote*, there's a good portion of propaganda because you write as someone who is close to a political party or a politician. **It's clear we participate in a little propaganda because our objective is to encourage the population to adhere to the ideas of the politician we are defending.** [We wanted] to call people to mobilise for Ouattara, call people to support RDR and specifically, call the population to refuse to accept what we are calling a holdup to the elections, fostered by Gbagbo's camp (Anonymous journalist, *Le Patriote*, a pro-Ouattara newspaper, September, 2016) p. 11.

Another journalist with *Le Temps*, a pro-Gbagbo newspaper, said he viewed his political writing less as "activism" in a social movement, but more as "patriotism" for the righteous fight to keep Laurent Gbagbo in power.

Our objective was to denounce the evil deeds, dangerous actions of the camp of Ouattara, the harmful actions of France, of ONUCI, and to promote the good image of president Gbagbo; promote a good image of the Côte d'Ivoire as it defends its sovereignty, defends its institutions... **To say that was activism is too much, but in one sense it's patriotism.** (Anonymous journalist, *Le Temps* (pro-Gbagbo), September 2016, p. 14, FT

In the same vein, another journalist for *Le Patriote* (pro-Ouattara newspaper) described his role in following the editorial line of his newspaper as "encouragement to the people."

When you write, it's more or less to call people, to try to bring them to understand the path found here [in our political side] and that the path they were trying to take has already passed. So there are people you are trying to bring to you, with you, **to bring people together in a unified combat...it was a war of opinions.**

(personal interview, Anonymous journalist, *Le Patriote* (pro-Ouattara), September 2016)

Journalists seemed to think of their role as journalist as more of a player for the same team, rather than an observer. This also helps explain the third frame, protecting one's ethnicity.

Therefore we work like everyone else, we put serious thought to our work, but it does not prevent one from having friends in politics. My friend may be a candidate, or even my friend may be the president, so our relationship can influence my work, but that does not mean I do not have journalistic technique, or I did not learn. **But it happens to everybody to have a heart that beats, that leans toward someone** (personal interview, anonymous journalist, *Le Temps*, September 2016)

A few moments later in this interview, the same journalist makes the connection between loving his country (patriotism), wanting independence for Côte d'Ivoire and why he writes in favor of this.

Fifty percent of the Ivorian crisis, at least, was born because of Westerners. They want to impose something on Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. In fact, it's imperialism. They want to have markets in our region, they want to have enterprise in our region, so they make a debacle where they can acquire power and so power stays in their hands or the hands of their friends. **And so for those who love their country and who want the majority of our economic goods to return to us, wish that our country could be left in peace. But what do they gain if they leave us in peace? If France leaves the Côte d'Ivoire in peace, she gets what? France is different than Germany; she counts on her colonies. If her colonies leave her, if there is no one to give her money, she has no more prestige.** So it's a difficult fight (personal interview, anonymous journalist, *Le Temps*, September 2016).

Comments from these journalists help crystalize the intention behind some of the more extreme quotes pulled earlier from local newspapers. Instead of seeing their work as activism, hate speech or political bullying, they instead talked about their work like they were *fighters* working on the side of righteousness. They see themselves as partisan participants in the electoral crisis.

The diaspora [Ivorian] was interested in the advantage of our articles, because we posed the problems of their country, they say we really tell what's happening. Because they'll see other articles that write that Côte d'Ivoire is on fire and blood, that people are killing other people right now, so to verify information, they took our articles and made a comparison. So, when they want to calm themselves, they call us from London, Paris, Washington and a little throughout to congratulate us. Me, I personally received money from people I didn't even know, because they were content with what I'm writing (personal interview, anonymous journalist, *Le Temps*, September 2016).

For as secure as local journalists sounded when they talked about the ligne editorial in the local media, international journalists were extremely dismissive of the local press and its leanings. This section has reviewed three key frames reflected in the local press: attacking the enemy, invoking the power of God in support of one's politics, and protecting one's ethnicity against unwanted ethnicities. Journalists working for international news outlets, of Ivorian ethnicity or not, made a point to tell me there was little worth in the local press because of its tendency to use this extreme type of rhetoric. Where journalists, as in this last example from *Le Temps*, talk about their work as helpful encouragement to loyal Ivorians, international journalists see nothing but spin doctors.

A journalist like me who writes for an international news outlet can't cite *Le Patriote* because I know they are defending Ouattara; I can't cite *Notre Voie* because I know they are writing for Gbagbo. If these newspapers were more professional and wrote in a more equal manner, I think even internationally, they would be read. (Anonymous journalist, AFP, Sept. 2016).

A former AFP journalist included in this study was reporting from another African country during the four months of the electoral crisis. He said he didn't read Ivorian local newspapers online for daily news of the conflict, because the information within is too biased.

People read the international press more, people listen more to the foreign radio stations. It's weird but Africans don't believe in their own media. They believe more what the Western media are saying...I think the Ivorian press should be less emotional, should search to separate themselves from politics. If the Ivorian press could separate themselves from politics, she would have more credibility, and then she would be respected and more influential (Anonymous former AFP journalist, Sept. 2016).

One former Associated Press journalist went so far as to call Côte d'Ivoire's newspapers "vanity projects."

When tensions got inflamed during the crisis, obviously the position of the papers grew more extreme. And they became more and more radical to the point where they aren't calling for outright violence but they are calling on people to erect barricades around their neighborhoods. I would argue that the press contributed to the tensions, rather than calming them ...They are just these **vanity projects** for political interests. So when everything became political, they got drawn into that conflict in the most extreme way possible. They didn't serve the role of intermediary like the American press would. In a campaign, the American press puts itself out as arbitrator, this candidate said this, and this one said that. In Ivory Coast, all papers are overtly saying, our candidate is the best, the other one sucks (former AP and RFI journalist, personal interview, 2017).

### **Comparing the framing in local press and foreign media**

To review, this chapter has so far revealed several patterns in the international media and the local media coverage of the electoral conflict. The results are reviewed briefly here.

The first portion of this chapter reveals that the international media, including the French media, heavily cited pro-Ouattara officials, UN and French officials more than any other source of information.

Four frames emerged in the analysis of 107 news articles; 1) international organizations, French or internationally supported Ouattara officials are quoted as the real voice of authority over other Ivorian or African sources 2) journalists frame the conflict as a head-to-head between Ouattara and Gbagbo, neglecting to mention the immense French military and economic presence in the country 3) journalists create a strict binary image of Ouattara as the "good guy" and Gbagbo as the "bad guy" 4) journalists seem to use the idea of "justice" as the main goals and motivation for the international community's involvement in Côte d'Ivoire's politics.

The second section of this chapter analyses 102 articles pulled from five newspapers of both the pro-Gbagbo press (*Fraternité Matin*, *Le Temps*, *Notre Voie* and *Le Nouveau Courrier*)

and the pro-Ouattara press (*Le Patriote*). Three key frames were found in analyzing the local press; 1) attacking and criticizing the political enemy 2) invoking the power of God as working for one’s political side, and 3) protecting one’s ethnic group against unwanted ethnicities. Journalists working for these local newspapers explained this more extreme rhetoric as a patriotic call of duty, where the international press was dismissive of the local press for its lack of factual focus and obsession with biased political commentary.

**Comparing Frames**

To conclude Chapter 5, I submit that frames from both media camps orient around three similar axis. The strongest themes and opinion in either camp coalesce around 1) the intervention of ONUCI and Licorne 2) a foundational version of what the election crisis is about 3) an underlying assumption about what the ultimate end or “best outcome” for the crisis could be. I put these frames in conversation with one another in Figures 5 and 6.

		<b>Corporate structure</b>	<b>Source Count</b>	<b>Most Frequent Sources for Stories</b>
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<b>International Media</b>	<b>International Media:</b> <i>Jeune Afrique, Le Monde, Agence France-Presse, Reuters, Associated Press</i>	<b>Transnational media organizations, headquarters in West</b>	<b>246 sources cited for 107 news stories</b>	<b>1) Ouattara's rebel officials, 2) UN, France 3) International Organizations 4) French officials</b>
<b>Local Newspapers</b>	<b>Local News: pro-Gbagbo papers</b> <i>Le Courier, Fraternité Matin, Le Temps, Notre Voie</i>	<b>Locally owned politically funded small business, headquarters in Abidjan</b>	<b>96 sources cited for 71 articles</b>	<b>1)Ivorian natives 2) Gbagbo's officials 3) Articles with no source 4) French officials</b>
	<b>Local News: pro-Ouattara paper,</b> <i>Le Patriote</i>	<b>Locally-owned politically-funded small business, headquarters in Abidjan</b>	<b>47 sources cited for 29 articles</b>	<b>1) Ivorian natives 2) French news media 3) African organizations 4) Ouattara's officials</b>

Figure 5: Comparing the sources quoted in international media vs. local newspapers, 2010-2011.

<b>Type of Frame</b>	<b>Frames in International Media:</b> <i>Jeune Afrique, Le Monde, Agence France-Presse, Reuters, Associated Press</i>	<b>Frames in pro-Gbagbo papers</b> <i>Le Courier, Fraternité Matin, Le Temps, Notre Voie</i>	<b>Frames in pro-Ouattara paper,</b> <i>Le Patriote</i>
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<b>Intervention of ONUCI, Licorne and international community</b>	International organizations, French or internationally-supported Ouattara officials are quoted as real voice of authority	Attacking and criticizing the political enemy, which is neocolonial France in league with ONUCI, evil Alassane Ouattara and politicians	Attacking and criticizing the political enemy, which is Laurent Gbagbo. Affirms the intervention of the international community
<b>Paradigm on electoral crisis</b>	Conflict is articulated as a head-to-head between Gbagbo and Ouattara, neglecting to mention France or UN military intervention until late in conflict	invoking the power of God as working for one's political side	invoking the power of God as working for one's political side
	Create a strict binary image of Ouattara as "good guy" and Gbagbo as "bad guy", overlooking atrocities committed by Ouattara's side	protecting one's ethnic group against unwanted ethnicities	protecting one's ethnic group against unwanted ethnicities
<b>Meta-Frame Ultimate end goal for electoral crisis</b>	Pursuit of justice: Point of the conflict is to pursue justice against Gbagbo via international laws and standards	Ethnic unity: Point of the conflict is to protect Côte d'Ivoire citizens from Ouattara militia, and foreign ethnicities, including French and UN power, Burkinabe immigrants and other African immigrants.	Point of conflict is to follow the correct election results and will of the international community to get Ouattara elected

Figure 6. Comparing frames between international media and local media.

Figure 6 helps us better picture the frames in relation to one another, when similar *categories* of frames (despite contrary views within the category) can match up. For example, frames in the international media largely show strong support for the international intervention of Licorne and ONUCI, which we learned comes from a heavy reliance on quoting sources within those camps (Figure 5), who are clearly going to represent their organization's opinion in media interviews. To the contrary, la presse bleue relies far more on nationalist or patriotic rhetoric to



reject the intervention of the international community, accusing foreign corporations and France of wanting better trade agreements and easier access to investments in Côte d'Ivoire and the region. Both frames address the intrusion of Licorne and ONUCI.

### **Frames and postcoloniality in Côte d'Ivoire**

To conclude this chapter on frames, I'd like to discuss these results in relation to the postcolonial structure of Abidjan's media situation in 2011.

Consider the reach (audience size) of local newspapers compared to international news outlets. The five international media outlets used in this study (AP, AFP, *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, Reuters) are each transnational media corporations. Three of these outlets (Reuters, AP, AFP) are worldwide newswires with offices in every region of the world. In terms of the political economy, the funds and resources available to these news offices are staggering when compared to the limited means available to tinier, local newspapers of Côte d'Ivoire. The local newspapers reviewed in this study had a circulation of 10,000 or less copies printed per day, the majority of which were sold in Abidjan. The frames found in the international media reached a far greater audience than Abidjan's tiny print industry or its fragile but growing online news forums like Abidjan.net. Because these international news outlets were the number one voice speaking on the electoral crisis to decision makers abroad, their gate-keeping, frames, and behind-the-scenes influence from other political actors (such as Ouattara's wife speaking to the *Jeune Afrique* journalist) told a specific tale of the crisis. *As actors in a framework of media imperialism, where transnational circulation ensures that transnational media frames receive worldwide audiences, any glaring flaws in those same frames become glaring flaws in the final telling of the electoral crisis, opening up a Pandora's box of issues of representation in how international audiences perceive Côte d'Ivoire. This global market dominance eliminated some highly crucial frames*

*found in local newspapers.* These include details such as journalist's protests against the French military, the local pulse on anti-French sentiment and atrocities committed by Force Nouvelles (Ouattara). International readers consuming AFP, *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde*, AP and Reuters would never know about the rising anti-French sentiment on the ground in Côte d'Ivoire because journalists with foreign media largely chose pro-Ouattara, pro-UN, pro-France sources for their information. As results in this chapter show, there was little to no mention of France's dominant economic presence in Côte d'Ivoire, meaning international readers would never know to question France's military presence in those same news stories.

However, the thesis of this dissertation argues each political party in this conflict was using media as a tactic of war. The lack of access to international readers doesn't make the news published in *Notre Voie* any less innocent or biased, it simply points to the weak financial status of most of Abidjan's newspapers in trying to compete with international media. Gbagbo, Ouattara and France were all equally culpable in their manipulation and framing in media coverage; everyone was trying to win this war in Françafrique. This chapter has shown clearly how extreme the frames became in the pro-Gbagbo press. To further complicate matters, the newspapers supporting Ouattara sided with the military intervention of the UN and France, meaning the local press of Côte d'Ivoire was heavily divided itself in how journalists visualized and wrote about the conflict. This also means some pro-Ouattara journalists (included in this study's interviews) were supportive of France intervening to help Ouattara gain the presidency.

From a postcolonial perspective, the newspapers supporting Ouattara and their support of the international intervention disrupt the more black and white argument that all Ivoirien media were angry about an international intervention or resentful of the economic monopoly on international news coverage held by foreign news bureaus in Abidjan. These newspapers, along

with RDR and Ouattara's Force Nouvelles, were willing participants in the interest of foreigners. This is a condition of the colonial legacy left by France in Côte d'Ivoire; Ivoiriens living in a weak economic state are willing to cut favors and make alliances with the same imperialist institutions that create this groundwork of inequality in the first place.

Part of the complicated nature of postcolonial theory on the ground in West Africa is the willing participation and engagement of many Africans with the former colonizer, France. Add to this France's immense corporate and political influence over the region (including media as well). The conditions created by France's continued postcolonial influence over Côte d'Ivoire and other francophone nations are *furthered* when native Ivorians, such as Ouattara, align their own political interests with France's capitalist interests.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Western countries forming alliances with one prominent politician in a developing country to the exclusion of another is a historically common tactic of international diplomacy and war. For example, the Zapatista rebellion in Mexico was in part waged against Mexico's national government and president Ernesto Zedillo. The Mexican government had just signed the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1994, which many argued was in favor of Mexican, U.S. and Canadian societal elites or the "one percent."

## CHAPTER VI

# MONKEYWRENCHING ABIDJAN'S JOURNALISTS AS A TACTIC OF WAR

*“They stopped us at the door and said, only foreigners, no Ivorians. And then we as a press corps banded together and said, all of us, or none of us. We actually at one point were standing, unprotected, just in jeans and t-shirts, like 40 of us, outside the door of the BIMA,”* (personal interview, anonymous foreign journalist, May, 2017).

This chapter assembles key patterns that emerged in interviews in 2016 with local and international journalists on the dishonest tactics used by politicians and militia to manipulate the media in Abidjan during the electoral crisis. I highlight five examples of this, drawing on long passages from interviews with journalists. I observe how the systematic battle over the media frames in Abidjan jumped the fence from mediated constructs to the actual, physical world. Journalists *as physical bodies* were now in danger. I explore the idea of monkeywrenching, or sabotage, of journalists and their production of content by political actors. I look at this monkeywrenching as a symptom of how the political and economic systems are organized in the country. I build on the idea of how power asserts itself in the framework of political economic theory and postcolonial theory, using five clandestine events of direct violence on Ivorian and foreign journalists. I build on the idea of political economy of the media in the discussion of corporate media monopolies.

The results explored in this chapter further reinforce the discussion of frames in Chapter 5, as both observations on the media demonstrate how Ouattara, Gbagbo and France used both aspects (framing and political manipulation) to fight for their economic and political interests.

The first section of this chapter, *Monkeywrenching the Media*, makes the case that Licorne and France, Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara's militaries all had a dog in the fight in the electoral crisis. I include two graphics which assemble the key patterns from interviews about the sabotaging of the media in Côte d'Ivoire. I pull five richly contextualized, in-depth examples from the crisis to illustrate these key patterns, drawing heavily on first-person narratives from journalists.

The second section of this chapter, *Monkeywrenching the Media and Political Economy*, draws clear connections to these five in-depth examples and political economy theory. I show how these instances of media manipulation are directly caused from the political leanings and financial interests of the media executives and politicians who manage such media institutions. Political economy itself forms a clearer platform upon which to better analyse and understand how journalists were manipulated as a tactic for war.

### **Monkeywrenching the media**

Each politician had a dog in the fight in Côte d'Ivoire's electoral crisis; it is just that France kept a tighter lid on how dirty they were fighting. To be clear, by "dog in the fight," I mean that Licorne, Gbagbo's Forces de Défense et de Sécurité de Côte d'Ivoire (FDS) and Ouattara's Force Nouvelles each had a host of loyal parties that stood to gain massive economic and political power *if* their party won. For example, when Ouattara continued to contest that the presidency was his, his rebel factions in the north rallied behind his cause with the strategy that if their troops could take Abidjan for Ouattara, they could split up the city's spoils among their own ranks (see Chapter 2, *Contemporary politics in Côte d'Ivoire; events of 2010-2011 electoral crisis*). And indeed, after Gbagbo fell, the ex-rebel warlords of the Force Nouvelles gained long-term territorial control over portions of Abidjan (Mieu, 2011).

In interviewing journalists in Abidjan, I came to realize just how much monkeywrenching of the media went on behind the actual printed publications. In using the term “monkeywrenching” I refer to sabotage by all three political camps (France, Ouattara and Gbagbo) to either strongly influence media coverage in their favor or to directly censor or destroy the other team’s broadcasting capability. Journalists, then, found themselves acted *upon* by political actors in bids to either censor their work or amplify it. For example, the AFP’s bureau chief Thomas Morfin and his close relationship with the French ambassador of Abidjan, Jean Marc Simon added a great deal of editorial bias to the resulting AFP news coverage- a direct symptom of political economy at work in Françafrique. Instances of media manipulation such as this are directly caused from the political leanings and financial interests of the media executives and politicians who manage such media institutions.

I’d like to pivot off the idea of in-fighting in the inner politics of Côte d’Ivoire to point out the party that always had the upper hand in the media coverage at all times: France, the former colonizer of Côte d’Ivoire. In terms of postcolonial theory, France and other Western publications still had the upper hand in this milieu of media censorship, as narratives from the international press had far greater international audiences than the in-country press could ever hope to attain. The sabotage that went on in Abidjan during the crisis did very little to censor the major news outlets that monopolize the international news emerging from the country. The transnational media corporations examined in this study (AFP, Reuters, *Jeune Afrique*, *Le Monde* and Associated Press), hold a veritable monopoly on the international news leaving the country, a symptom of Côte d’Ivoire’s colonial past with France. Within this somewhat complicated media structure then, where foreign media publications largely dominated international

audiences, a massive amount of sabotage of all sides of media structure took place. Some of these acts of censorship did make the news.

Last Thursday, Ouattara supporters marched on the RTI (Gbagbo's state run TV) headquarters in an attempt to take back the state TV and install a new station director. Troops loyal to Mr. Gbagbo opened fire on the marchers, killing at least 30 people on the streets in broad daylight.

In the immediate aftermath of the street violence, heavily armed soldiers arrived at the press that prints several major opposition newspapers, ordered everyone to leave and locked the doors. Al Seni, editor-in-chief at opposition daily *l'Expression*, said that this was a clear attempt to keep news of the day's violence from being printed (Oved, Associated Press, 2010).

Consider Figure 10, which helps organize some of these acts of media censorship.

<b>Local Press</b>		<b>International Press</b>
<i>Le Temps</i>	Newsroom burned by Ouattara's Force Nouvelles (2010)	30 international journalists saved by Licorne troops from Hotel Novatel, taken to safety at French military compound, where all April 8 to April 13 stories by international media were written and then broadcast. Licorne soldiers at gates try to keep out any non-French journalists (read: Ivoiriens) in the group, but journalists insist all of them, white or black, be let in.
	<i>Le Temps</i> Website hacked (2010 and 2011)	European Union and France paid for Ouattara's Television Cote d'Ivoire station to go rogue out of Golf Hotel
	Journalists worked from home of director (February 2011 to 2012)	
	Lead journalists flee Abidjan after finding they are on Ouattara's hitlist for journalists (April, 2011)	Gbagbo's tech staff cut off BBC and Radio France Internationale radio signal several times. Could not shut off ONUCI as they send out their own broadcast signal
<a href="#">Abidjan.net</a>	Hackers try to pressure Agence Orange and Cote d'Ivoire Telecom into shutting down Abidjan.net, but the Abidjan.net director had friends at the company who refused.	RFI's Norbert Navarro had to flee Abidjan when Gbagbo lost election; he had ingratiated himself to Gbagbo to gain political protection, but couldn't stay safe after Gbagbo's power came into question in December, 2010.
<i>Fraternite Matin</i>	Journalists got caught in crossfire when FN reached the city April 1, 2011: some journalists were trapped in the building for more than two weeks	CEO of Jeune Afrique is friends with Ouattara; pushes for favorable coverage of Cote d'Ivoire
	FM online website is hacked (2010)	Journalists for AFP, particularly white journalists, get harassed at protests by pro-Gbagbo supporters, Feb. to March 2011
<i>Notre Voie</i>	Newsroom burned by Ouattara's Force Nouvelles (2010)	Journalist with <i>Jeune Afrique</i> is arrested three times by pro-Gbagbo forces and threatened with death by burning. Each time, he is able to call higher politicians on the Gbagbo side to ask for his own release.
	Website hacked (2010)	Long-time Ivoirien blogger Venance Konan and partner had to flee to Paris because FDS found their homes
	Journalists flee Abidjan from Force Nouvelles, are caught and imprisoned anyway by Ouattara's administration from November to December, 2011	Editors for <i>Le Monde</i> , <i>La Liberation</i> and <i>France 24</i> clash with their French journalists on the ground in Cote d'Ivoire over how Ouattara's administration should be portrayed; Ouattara's administration leans on French media (via phonecalls) to promote favorable coverage of the administration
<i>Le Courier</i>	Started by editor Theophile Kouamou who quit Jeune Afrique because of its anti-Gbagbo bias	
	Gbagbo and Ouattara both distributed free laptops to supporters to put comments online in their support	
<i>Le Patriot</i>	Political journalists worked from home of director in chief, one more well-known journalist who appeared on TCI barely escaped a squad of FDS soldiers searching for him in his neighborhood	

Figure 7: A summary of media censorship or violence against media in Côte d'Ivoire.



Figure 7 helps organize my earlier point that every political party had a dog in the fight, and part of the political strategy at the time was to manipulate the media. To further support this point, a key question posed to local and international journalists during the interviews for this study asked about the conditions for journalists while trying to report. Responses can be grouped into four main clusters for local journalists, as well as four clusters for international journalists. You will notice the vignettes in Figure 10 are strong examples of the following four themes found in interviews:

Local Journalists	International Journalists
Mentioned major disruptions to reporting routines, such as having to evacuate, hiding their reporting credentials at events, difficulty getting out their printed edition	White or foreign journalists harassed by forces loyal to Gbagbo was the main problem reported by international reporters. Several reporters were threatened with death. Gbagbo's military hated the foreign press.
Threat of being recognized by name or face because of appearance on TV, radio, print or online. Being specifically hunted by their respective political enemy's militia, name listed on a "hitlist."	Journalists with the foreign press, (of African ethnicity or not) had option of returning to France, calling Licorne for evacuation or transportation from ONUCI for reporting in-country assignments. Local press did not have these advantages.
Fleeing Abidjan or hiding out at editor's home to avoid being found by respective political enemy's militia.	Foreign journalists said the foreign press is more trusted by government sources in Africa because foreign journalists won't accept bribes for stories, unlike local press.
Threat or actual destruction to newsroom equipment; RTI was marched on in Dec. 19, <i>Notre Voie</i> and <i>Le Temps</i> were both burned. <i>NV's</i> printing press was burned and completely destroyed.	Foreign press had better access to senior political sources for information, as sources knew their quotes would be read worldwide.

Figure 8. Summary of journalist responses on conditions for reporting during electoral crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, 2010-2011.

Figure 10 and Figure 11 summarize the scope of problems and advantages for local and foreign media during the electoral crisis. To revisit the thesis for this section, the political parties involved in the electoral crisis went to great lengths to promote their version of the crisis in the media or hunt down and terrorize the parties that didn't. The following five examples from Figure 10 draw directly from interviews with anonymous journalists to explore the monkeywrenching of media in the electoral crisis. As readers will find, most of these dramatic events took place clandestinely, again polluting the version of news broadcast to in-country and international readers.

### **Example 1: Licorne evacuation, April 7, 2011**

This story, recounted by two different journalists who were in the same evacuation, in addition to a first-person essay in *Time* published by a third journalist, illustrates the enormous power inequalities between the dominant international press and local journalists. It also highlights how differently black or African international journalists were treated by the French compared to white international journalists. On April 1, 2011, when Ouattara's Force Nouvelles reached the city of Abidjan and began shootouts with Gbagbo's FDS around the city, the political climate reached a tipping point for foreign journalists reporting in Abidjan. The city shut down, neighborhood by neighborhood. French and Ivorian journalists alike, from the Reuters newsroom, the AFP newsroom, and a huge selection of French journalists from French media outlets (France 24, TF1, Radio France Internationale, France 2, Vu, *Le Monde*, *France Culture*, *France Info*), as well as stringers for BBC had evacuated their various news offices, one by one, to come stay at Hotel Novotel in downtown Abidjan (*A vous quatre qui nous avez sauvé la vie au Novotel d'Abidjan*, 2011; Mark, 2011; personal interview, AFP reporter, September, 2016; personal interview, anonymous foreign journalist, 2017). The following story from an

anonymous foreign journalist speaks to the rising xenophobia experienced by white journalists in Abidjan at the time.

One day, Ble Goude, (in fact, they are using this speech he gave in his war crimes trial in the Hague) where he went on television and (this is not a direct quote) said, I want ...the youth of Ivory Coast, all patriots, to defend our country against the foreigners, set up roadblocks, check everyone's cars and don't let any foreigners in or out of your neighborhood. Of course, when he said "foreigners," it's all part of this code, that means northerners (from north CI), it means Ouattara supporters. But you know, he said foreigners and I'm a white guy in a pro-Gbagbo neighborhood that already has crowds of armed teenagers running roadblocks every night. And I was like, "Uh, I think this is when we are going to be pulling the cord. The AP always said if you don't feel safe, let us know and we'll put up in a hotel. So I called them and I was like, "That's my line. They just said foreigners can't move around anymore so I'm not going to stay in my house anymore." My roommates, it's actually kind of funny, my roommates hid my stuff because they were worried someone would search the apartment and find, obviously, white guy stuff (personal interview, anonymous foreign journalist, 2017).

This journalist left his home to stay at a hotel in downtown Abidjan. With so many French and international journalists holed up in the same hotel, word eventually reached FDS forces of their presence in the downtown hotel. On April 4, a dozen men in military attire broke into the Novatel. They found the director, Frenchman Stephane Rippel and asked him if there were journalists staying at the hotel, which he denied. The soldiers kidnapped Rippel, the president of French corporation SIFCA, as well as two other SIFCA directors (Kidnapped Frenchman, *France 24*, 2011; *Liberation*, 2011; Mark, 2011). Meanwhile, the 30 terrified journalists trapped on the seventh floor made call after call to Licorne to evacuate them from the hotel.

Finally, on April 7, after days of pleading from us and colleagues overseas, Licorne made it through the chaos in the streets to pick us up. As we were driven to the army base camp, I realized once again we'd glimpsed only a small part of the travails of Abidjan. My driver Ouattara, who had lived his whole life in the area we were driving through, kept making a soft guttural noise as he looked into the streets. He was grieving. A nightmarish version of Abidjan had been imposed on our familiar city. Shops had been systematically looted. The roadside was littered with corpses. The woman I used to buy fried plantains from was splayed on a grassy verge. But for the crimson stains on her clothes, she would have looked peaceful (Mark, 2011).

Licorne secured the hotel area with helicopters and sent in a large bus to escort the journalists back to the French military base, the 43e BIMA. FDS forces shot at the bus while it rumbled back to the military base. Upon reaching the gates of the military base, the Licorne security guards refused to let in anyone who wasn't a foreigner. It should be noted the following interview with this anonymous foreign journalist is a first-person account of how Licorne reacted to the arrival of the mixed bus of journalists, some Ivorians working for AFP or Reuters, some French citizens and some from other African nations working as stringers for an international news outlet.

So all the journalists got evacuated in one convoy. The convoy came under fire and we had to hide under...well, it was ridiculous. We weren't in tanks or anything, we were in canvas covered trucks. People were shooting at us: it was stupid. Everyone was worried someone got shot, but no one got shot. Then we get to the door of the BIMA, you know the big razor wire metal door of the BIMA and it was all the international press which included lots of local Ivorians. And they said, no Ivorians. They wanted everyone's passport to get in. They stopped us at the door and said, only foreigners, no Ivorians. And then we as a press corps banded together and said, all of us, or none of us. We actually at one point were standing, unprotected, just in jeans and t-shirts, like 40 of us, outside the door of the BIMA, in the wide open and we were saying if we stand out here much longer, someone is going to start shooting at us, so you better let us all in. So the only reason Ivorians got in is because we put pressure (personal interview, anonymous foreign journalist, May 2017).

The story of the Licorne evacuation points to several threads relating to the monkeywrenching of the media in Côte d'Ivoire. First, every journalist who was evacuated on April 8 to the French military base continued to write stories. Every major Western news outlet was now writing from within the confines of the French military base, which had also just saved their lives by evacuating them from Hotel Novatel. Many journalists, after a few days at 43e BIMA, were then flown out to neighboring African nations like Togo, where they caught flights back to Europe or back to their native African country. Effectively, this meant that all 30 rescued journalists were now 100 percent compromised in their coverage, as they had been rescued,

protected and hosted by the French government. While it is obvious now that French media came with significant bias to the coverage of the electoral crisis, the Hotel Novatel evacuation makes this problem even more glaring. It enunciates the position of the international press within this political dynamic as one clearly allied with the UN and Licorne. Could any of the French journalists who came to report for French media now find it in themselves to critique France's economic motives for Côte d'Ivoire?

The bodies of the Frenchmen kidnapped at Hotel Novatel were found May 31, 2011, in a water canal behind Gbagbo's presidential home. Their decaying skeletons were wrapped in black plastic bags in the brackish water. They had been tortured to death. On June 2, a contingent of the French journalists rescued from Hotel Novatel published an open letter in French newspaper *Liberation*, in which they publicly thank Stephane Rippel for giving his life to save them that day in April. A quote from the article, titled "To the Four of You Who Saved Our Lives at the Novatel in Abidjan," reads:

What was this commander of murderers on April 4 searching for that afternoon? Some whites? Some journalists? Some money? Expiatory victims for a regime in agony? Somehow, the men in arms made it to the seventh floor where they found the office of Stephane Rippel, whose last reflex was to save lives, our lives, and condemn his own. He denied the presence of journalists in his hotel, even though close to 30 of us were on the floor above. Coming out of their rooms to intervene, Yves Lambelin, his colleague Raoul Adeossi and Chelliah Pandian, all from SIFCA (a major French corporation), were also taken out by military means. We believe they were all equally executed in the hours that followed. For a long time, we hoped the four missing were detained as hostages, that traces of their survival would surface or a demand for ransom would emerge...The terrible confirmation of what happened to them has arrived. These men that we shared several days, several hours, we want to render hommage to you. A lot of us are convinced their death could easily have been ours.

Thank you to you, Stephane, for your courage. And to you, M. Lambelin, Chelliah Pandian and Raoul Adeossi. We are sympathizing with your family and those close to you.

We will never forget you. (*Liberation*, June, 2011).

This is a gripping story of loss. There is no question this corner of the Licorne evacuation is tragic. But the Licorne evacuation of Novatel helps highlight the immense inequalities in the treatment of Ivorians compared to foreigners, both as journalists and citizens. It also shows how the hegemony of France reigned supreme through and after the conflict, as French journalists broadcast their version and frames to international audiences from the confines of the French military compound. The letter in *Liberation* highlights the heroism of a Frenchman killed by Ivorians, even when the French military was quite willing to deny Ivorian journalists entrance to the 43e BIMA outside Abidjan. Had Ivorian journalists working for AFP or *Le Monde* or *Jeune Afrique* been shot to death outside the French compound if denied entrance, would they have received a touching spotlight signed by a dozen prominent French journalists in a French newspaper read by French audiences back in Europe?

The coloniality of French power and French media in Françafrique is almost too large in this example to even be glimpsed; Licorne, the military arm of France, saved 30-ish multi-ethnic international journalists who were trying to cover a war where France had enormous economic investments. On the front end, readers of *Time* and *Liberation* would be swept away with the emotion of the evacuation and never stop to ask the bigger question: what is France doing with an active military base with active weaponry in its alleged former colony? Why does France have boots on the ground, at all, in Côte d'Ivoire? The fact that these journalists largely dominated all the international news emerging from the country, but were now heavily indebted to the French government, further implicates their coverage as being susceptible to bias in favor of France. France wins at every corner in this story, from having the military power to rescue journalists who print international stories in favor of the French government or being able to hide

their racist policies on entrance to the 43e BIMA. Meanwhile, Francophone and anglophone audiences around the world consumed these news stories, which have a heavy layer of politics involved in their very production, a layer not visible to those same audiences. The Licorne evacuation received little to no news coverage on AFP, AP, Reuters or BBC news outlets., meaning journalists went on reporting the war with little attention to their own compromised position. As one foreign journalist I spoke with said, “I’m not waiting around to get kidnapped. I’ll take that evacuation.”

To be clear, these journalist’s decision to be evacuated is entirely human and entirely reasonable, given their lives were in direct danger. Their decision to save their own lives is certainly not under judgement here, but the impact this had or could have had on their resulting news coverage deserved more air time in their coverage. This evacuation should have been included as a hard news story that was published on AFP, AP and Reuters and it was not. This creates a problem of bias that leans a bit too favorably on an already weighty stack of biases in the international media’s favorable coverage of France and the UN.

### **Example 2: Escape and Arrest of *Notre Voie* journalist**

This example highlights the perspective of local journalists, who were far more susceptible to hits by opposing militias because they worked for economically fragile, politically ferocious newspapers. *Notre Voie*, a pro-Gbagbo newspaper which bills itself as the mouthpiece for Gbagbo’s Front Populaire Ivoirien, was attacked by the Force Nouvelles militia when they reached Abidjan in early April. The journalists of *Notre Voie* already abandoned their newsroom well before April. Journalists had grabbed the computers, small printers, cameras, other office equipment and quickly drove the entire newspaper’s technology to the house of the editor-in-

chief. They left the building unguarded and sometime in early April, Ouattara's rebel soldiers lit the newspaper's printing press on fire, smashed in windows and tried (unsuccessfully) to burn down the rest of the building. The journalists kept writing from the home of the editor-in-chief on shared computers, using wifi internet and downloading the day's edition to Abidjan.net each evening. On April 12, two days after Gbagbo's arrest, Ouattara's rebel soldiers had assembled a hit list of *Notre Voie* journalists and other pro-Gbagbo papers. Guillaume Soro was one of these journalists. They knocked on Soro's door on April 12. The following is his account of what happened next.

Me personally, on April 12 at 7 p.m., the rebels came to my house to kill me. I had to flee, I went to the top of my building and jumped. My family was already hidden, my little boy too. So, I climbed the next wall. I hid myself way down in a sewage pipe, like a gutter, I hid myself. The rebels were in Abidjan, they were searching out partisans of Gbagbo, the politicians of his former regime and the journalists of *Notre Voie*, but you also had journalists who wrote, so they knew the name, they knew my name. I write, so in my neighborhood, they were saying, 'we know there is a journalist who is here somewhere.' Me, I lived near the Riviera...

*Interviewer: When they arrived at the door, how did you know it was them?*

They knocked on the door and asked the security guard for the building- they knocked and they told him to open up and he told them there were no journalists here. There were seven of them. They beat up my security guard, they beat him really viscously. My next door neighbor saw this and told me quickly, 'Neighbor, soldiers are here, they are looking for you, you have to escape.' So I fled to the other side of the building, I got to my balcony and I jumped. I got cuts everywhere as I fell and I escaped. I hid myself in the sewage hole behind the house where the water passes through. I stayed from 7 p.m. to 4 in the morning there in the water.

I was a little bit in the water, mosquitoes bit me all night. My glasses were broken. I really suffered. Anyway, I stayed there until 4 in the morning when they finally left. They never came into the actual house because they noticed my maid is Baoule. That's the ethnicity of Bedie, and because these rebels were for Ouattara, they are also for Bedie. So because she was Baoule, they didn't come inside (personal interview, Soro with *Notre Voie*, 2016).



Soro's neighbor eventually came and got him out of the drainage pipe, where he called a friend who immediately drove him out to an Abidjan suburb where he hid for a month. He started writing for *Notre Voie* again and returned to Abidjan, but was arrested anyway by Ouattara's administration in November, seven months later.

I did a month and a half of time in prison. Hard, it was really hard. It did allow me to know how prisoners are treated. Then they took us out of there to the MACA [another Ivorian prison] and after they brought us to court for judgement (personal interview, Soro with *Notre Voie*, 2016).

Soro's story is a classic example of one political party trying to sabotage the media narratives of the opposing political party. In a reductive sense, Force Nouvelles militia were looking for revenge on parties supporting Gbagbo, which included these politically-affiliated news outlets. A journalist with *Le Temps* (pro-Gbagbo), a journalist with *Fraternité Matin* and a journalist with *Le Patriote* (pro-Ouattara) each shared with me a story similar to Soro's: militia from the FN or the FDS came sniffing around the journalist's home and the journalist fled Abidjan quickly, and went into hiding where they continued to file news stories online from May to July, 2011, when the city began to rebuild itself. Several lessons can be taken from these stories: it is clear journalists were considered to be *fighters in the political conflict*, by either political party. Indeed, if one revisits the themes found in the local press in Chapter 5, (for example, attacking one's political enemy or invoking the power of God as being on one's political side) or the conversation with local journalists on their role as propagandists, we start to see a clearer picture of the role of the local media in either militias' eyes. As an opposing voice to Ouattara's Force Nouvelles political strategy, Soro and *Notre Voie* became part of the political opposition to Ouattara. Journalists were considered just as offensive and dangerous, then, as soldiers in the military. The systematic battle over the media in Abidjan had jumped the fence from online to

the physical sphere. Journalists in real life were now considered to be personally responsible in the conflict and their actual bodies were now under threat, in real time. By attacking an opposing media voice and, consequently, the collective action frames expressed by that voice, the Force Nouvelles and Ouattara came closer to their goal of political domination over Côte d'Ivoire, and with it, the spoils of war.

### **Example 3: Gbagbo unplugs Radio France Internationale and BBC**

RFI is a world-wide radio service funded by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs in France (somewhat similar to Voice of America), with offices in many nations. Côte d'Ivoire's radio director is a politically-appointed position by the French government and has historically always been a French citizen broadcasting in French throughout Côte d'Ivoire. In the early 2000s, tensions between France and Côte d'Ivoire peaked. Anti-French sentiment had reached a fervor when Licorne opened fire on Gbagbo's air force, destroying all four of the country's planes. This was in 2004 in retaliation for the deaths of four French peacekeepers. In 2003, Côte d'Ivoire's RFI director and Frenchman Jean Hélène went to the Abidjan police headquarters to interview prison inmates who had just been released. Gbagbo was president at the time. Hélène got into a verbal altercation with police sergeant Théodore Séry Dago, who grabbed an AK-47 from the police headquarters and shot Hélène to death in the parking lot. To bring this example back to the electoral crisis of 2010-2011, frenchman Norbert Navarro was appointed to RFI in Côte d'Ivoire by the French government after Hélène died. He was the first journalist appointed to this position after Hélène's death, and as such, knew he was in a precarious political position. An anonymous source also working in international radio at the time described Navarro's reporting strategy as follows:

This guy is incarnate of everything that is wrong with Françafrique. He's like a big tall fat white dude walking around in downtown Abidjan and he looks like fucking Indiana Jones. Who is this asshole? He makes no secret of how close he is to the president, to Gbagbo. He was so tight with Gbagbo that he didn't even make it through the crisis. As soon as there was a dispute between who had won, he fled. He went back to France... This was because Norbert had a target on his head (personal interview, anonymous international journalist, 2017).

Effectively, Navarro tried to ingratiate himself to Gbagbo's power in the hope of self-preservation. He wasn't above broadcasting false news on RFI to garner more favor with Gbagbo.

As far as he [Norbert] was concerned, if he put out a few false reports to make the president happy with him, that was a down payment on his own security. A concrete example of how he did that was Gbagbo would have some kind of announcement to make or he would suggest that something was going to happen like the government was going to be dissolved today.

So RFI, Norbert Navarro, he goes on an noon, heard across the country, 'Here's Norbert Navarro, saying an exclusive RFI report: RFI has learned that the government is going to be dissolved today. Sources at the presidency say, 'bla bla bla.' So I call up Norbert, and I say, 'Dude, I work for Time. Our coverage is supposed to be more or less parallel, but I'm not going to go up there and say this shit. Who the hell is telling you this? I'm calling people at the presidency and no one is telling me this. What are you talking about? And of course, by 6 p.m. that same day, they were like, "RFI exclusive, the government is not going to be dissolved.'

The point is that RFI put out this fake information in order to make things appear one way, so Gbagbo could twist the knife on whichever part of the government he was trying to pressure to do whatever by threatening to dissolve the government. Then everyone starts losing their minds, then someone capitulates, then they say, oh RFI was 'just joking. Didn't actually happen.' But because they [government officials] heard it on RFI, they thought it was real (personal interview, anonymous journalist, 2017)

Essentially, French journalist Navarro with RFI was willing to publish the occasional false news report on behalf of Gbagbo, to ensure his own safety and goodwill with the president. The real damage in this situation, though, is the Ivorian people think they are listening to a neutral Western radio station, when in fact the sole RFI employee journalist (Navarro) was not only selected by the French administration to run the station, he was also granting favors behind-the-

scenes to Gbagbo. Navarro couldn't stay in Abidjan once Gbagbo's power was in question because he had little security or armed protection from either political side. It wasn't certain if Gbagbo himself could protect Navarro from Gbagbo's own angry anti-French soldiers, so he returned to France.

Consider in this example the battle for control over the narratives broadcast on RFI. France as the former colonial power in Côte d'Ivoire runs its own state-funded radio station consumed by millions of Ivoirians. The ownership of RFI points to the problem of a continuing media monopoly within Côte d'Ivoire's radio waves. This fact alone gives France much editorial power over Ivorian audiences. At the same time, Gbagbo, traditionally an anti-French leader, was capitalizing on the scope of RFI's editorial reach by befriending Navarro to write stories in Gbagbo's favor. Gbagbo was monkeywrenching RFI to control the narratives reaching the Ivorian population, but this relationship of corruption between Navarro and Gbagbo didn't last. What did last, though, was RFI being owned by the French government and continuing, to this day, to broadcast as the main Western radio station in Côte d'Ivoire. In this sense, both powers (France and Gbagbo) were wrestling for control over the frames that could reach the Ivorian people.

Interestingly, though, RFI and BBC's radio relay stations were cut off sporadically by Gbagbo's National Council for Audio-Visual Communication throughout the four month electoral crisis. RFI's broadcast relay went down for the month of December 2010 and went down again, along with BBC, on March 2, 2011 ("BBC, RFI go off air in Ivory Coast," Reuters, 2011; "Ivory Coast, BBC and RFI go off air," BBC, 2011; Oved, AP, February, 2011; Oved, AP, March, 2011). The radio frequencies available in Côte d'Ivoire are physically broadcast from the

state's National Council for Audio-Visual Communication building, making it easy for government technicians to shut off whichever station they choose.

The director of the state agency denied any involvement in shutting the stations down when interviewed by the Associated Press. That same week in March, many international news outlets ran one of the few stories about the local press: nine pro-Ouattara newspapers shut down that week under threats of intimidation from Gbagbo's youth supporters (BBC, Radio France International go off air in Ivory Coast, BBC, 2011; Oved, 2011).

ONUCI FM had its own radio transmitter within the UN compound, and as such, its relay signals across the country couldn't be manipulated by any political party. Despite this, Gbagbo's media regulatory body still called for ONUCI FM to halt its broadcast, and tried to jam its radio frequency signal when possible.

United Nations radio was ordered off the air in Ivory Coast by a regulatory board loyal to incumbent leader Laurent Gbagbo, though the station refused to comply Thursday. The National Council for Audio-Visual Communication revoked the U.N. radio's permit to broadcast in a decree Wednesday, saying the decision would take effect immediately. However, work continued as normal at the station's headquarters Thursday, said U.N. radio director Sylvain Semilinko, adding that preparations were being made in case their signal was jammed. In December, state radio was broadcast over the same frequency as the U.N. radio for several weeks, forcing the station to shift frequencies to be heard. "We've got 23 FM relays across the country," Semilinko said, "They'll have to jam each one individually." (Oved, 2011).

Much like journalist Soro for *Notre Voie*, we see here again the battle to control Abidjan's media through devious means. Navarro was appointed by the French foreign ministry to cover the country's politics in a way that pleased France, but ended up fleeing when his close alliance with Gbagbo could no longer ensure his protection. Meanwhile, Gbagbo's ministry tried to shut down the three existing international radio stations in the country, with the hope of manipulating

information in their own favor. Monkeywrenching the media then, becomes a political tactic for winning a war. The many politicians playing God with Abidjan's media were gambling on how to win a war in Françafrique.

#### **Example 4: *Jeune Afrique* journalist summoned by president's wife**

It is no mistake that Ouattara's image in the international media during and after the war was good. His administration took aggressive measures after Gbagbo was arrested to silence any bad publicity on Ouattara's clean-up efforts. A journalist with *Jeune Afrique* said he'd written about the deaths of 65 civilians in an area secured by Ouattara's military, well after the electoral crisis had finished (the inference being that Ouattara's soldiers murdered them). Ouattara's wife, Dominique, summoned him to the president's palace in 2011.

Since Ouattara came to power, I stopped writing politics for *Jeune Afrique*. Because under Gbagbo, we were more objective. Frequently, I'd write articles that Ouattara's people didn't like. But when the national power changed hands, because my boss (at *Jeune Afrique*) has been friends with the Ouattara couple for many years. So, suddenly, all my sensitive articles started not being published or they would add in little things which didn't reflect the reality in Côte d'Ivoire, so I quit writing politics.

*Interview: Who is writing politics now for Jeune Afrique?*

They are in Paris. Me, I was summoned one time by the minister of the interior and also the wife of president Ouattara, at her house (because I'd written some sensitive articles in *Jeune Afrique* after the crisis that they didn't like)...There were more than 65 dead bodies and the site where the deaths happened, security is assured by the society managed by the brother of the president. When she [president's wife] received me, she said, 'You know your boss is our friend? We go on vacation together, our children play together often. We could be very angry about this, but we always finish with an understanding between each other. But you, what are you becoming?'

I told her, 'Madame, you know me. I believe in God and for me, everything that comes to me in this life is the will of God, and I accept that.' She couldn't say anything. She had thought I was going to say, 'Excuse me, I won't write like this anymore.'

Even after this, the minister of the interior summoned me as well, Hamed Bakayoko. He summoned me because I wrote a sensitive article on him. At the time, police officers were beating up thieves and the minister went down and paid them money, like in the far west of the country. Can you imagine if in France or the U.S. if police officers finished beating up a thief and a minister came down to give them cash? He did that and I wrote about it. People were not happy with that and so he called me in. And after that, I stopped writing politics (personal interview, anonymous journalist, *Jeune Afrique*, 2016).

Another international journalist (who works with a newswire in Abidjan) also confirmed with me that *Jeune Afrique* is intentionally providing positive coverage for Ouattara because of his personal relationship with Ben Yahmed.

*Jeune Afrique* belongs to the Ben Hamid family. The Ben Hamid family is really good friends with Ouattara. So most of what you get in *Jeune Afrique* is pro-Ouattara. You kind of get the idea we are living in Switzerland right here, that everybody is happy and the economy is working so well and people are cheering every day, saying it's so great. That's not true. Some things are going well, but the economy isn't that good, Ouattara isn't that popular (anonymous foreign journalist, Sept. 2016).

#### **Example 5: ONUCI protects pro-Ouattara Television Côte d'Ivoire**

In this example, I draw on the experiences of *Le Patriote* journalist Pascal Otchi, who was head of this pro-Ouattara newspaper's political section during the electoral crisis. As a local journalist working for a pro-Ouattara newspaper, Otchi had a bit of political sway with ONUCI and the French government, as his paper supported Ouattara. Ouattara and his administration had entrenched themselves at the Golf Hotel on the outskirts of Abidjan, where the grounds were given 24-hour protection by UN security. Outside the UN security barrier, Gbagbo's FDS soldiers had set up their own blockade, killing any ground transportation that tried to get in or out. Helicopter was the only way in. Ouattara's pirated Television Côte d'Ivoire station broadcast from the Golf Hotel. Otchi had made several appearances on TCI, which broadcast his face to millions of Ivorians at home. Squads of pro-Gbagbo youth eventually came to find Otchi at his home, but he managed to escape. He went into hiding at the home of *Le Patriote's*

director-in-chief for the next months. Because of his connections with ONUCI, Otchi was able to fly by UN helicopter twice a week to interview Ouattara's staff for *Le Patriote*.

SEBROKO is the headquarters of the "blue helmets" (les casques bleus) or ONUCI. I took a taxi or a reporting car, I arrived at the headquarters of ONUCI. There was a helicopter that flew us to the Golf Hotel...The heads of RDR who were stationed at the hotel, I would chat with them. I chatted with friends who had to stay there too. Certain of them are journalists today, and some of them are deputies today...Some of those people couldn't leave [the security of the golf], if they did they'd be killed. So if they had gifts or if they had messages, I took their messages and I left by helicopter. I gave them to their families or to the person for whom they were intended...If you tried to leave [by ground] you were killed, because there was a colonel that I knew that this happened to. Colonel Major Doss, I was with, I had met with him just that day at the Golf he was killed. He missed the UN helicopter out that and he really wanted to leave by road, so he took the road and they killed him (personal interview, anonymous journalist, *Le Patriote*, September 2016).

It is clear ONUCI was helping support Ouattara's public relations agenda because the TCI station broadcast from the Golf Hotel, which was heavily secured by ONUCI. ONUCI helicopters were giving free rides to Otchi, a well-known local journalist writing for a pro-Ouattara newspaper. For all its claims to objectivity, the UN had clearly sided with Ouattara on the election results to the point that it was willing to fund the protection of his own TV station, as well as permit journalists from pro-Ouattara newspapers to partake in TCI programming. This story is astounding because at the same time ONUCI and France were publicly and privately supporting Ouattara every way they could, his own rebel militia in the north had slaughtered civilians in Duékoué (800 to 1,000) in early April, 2011. Further, pro-Outtara TCI programming was only broadcast in-country to Ivorian civilians, adding one more voice to the already heavy stream of international radio stations broadcasting in the country (BBC, RFI, ONUCI FM), all of which were publishing news proclaiming Ouattara the rightful president. The rogue pro-Gbagbo TV outlet at this point was Radiodiffusion-Télévision Ivoirienne, discussed earlier in Chapter 5 for it's somewhat wild framing of the electoral crisis, in favor of Gbagbo.



ONUCI's willingness to support TCI and visits from *Le Patriote* reporter Otchi further reinforces the idea of postcolonial theory and hegemony in Françafrique Côte d'Ivoire. The UN had the power to amplify or stifle the local media stations and their respective frames. As an extremely powerful international organization that sets itself up as an international peacemaker in unstable countries, the UN in Côte d'Ivoire's crisis chose to lend a hand to a local station it found convenient to its own mission: install Ouattara to return peace and stability to the country and avoid a worsening civil war. Clearly, ONUCI did nothing to fund or secure Gbagbo's Radiodiffusion-Télévision Ivoirienne, nor were pro-Gbagbo newspaper journalists allowed to travel in UN helicopters to the Golf Hotel or any other reporting destination. In this sense, the UN was able to push the narratives in the electoral crisis toward its own shared mission with France, by granting favors to Ouattara's own media outlets.

### **Monkeywrenching the media and political economy**

Through the five examples in the first section of this chapter, we learn how a powerful ruling class (France, Operation Licorne, Alassane Ouattara, Laurent Gbagbo, ONUCI, CEO of *Jeune Afrique* Ben Yahmed) worked to amplify or cripple media narratives that did or didn't work for their own political economic interests. It's a slow motion narrative of modern day neocolonialism, where the puppets are journalists working (willingly or not) for media outlets whose corporate sponsors have higher political agendas and profit margins in mind than mere journalism.

Perhaps the most clear example of monkeywrenching journalists of the five prior examples is Ouattara's wife summoning the *Jeune Afrique* reporter to the president's home. Her friendship (and strong political ally) in *Jeune Afrique* owner Ben Yahmed was utilizable as a

tactic to pressure the journalist into writing favorably about her administration. There is a clear connection here between politics and resulting news content, where political economic scholars would argue the news content is manipulated to support the interests of societal elites. In this instance, those elites are Dominique Ouattara and her husband, the president of Côte d'Ivoire.

Monkeywrenching the news can mean using nice *incentives* or, in contrast, violence and censorship. Both mechanisms work as manipulation for one's ultimate goals. Militias of either Gbagbo or Ouattara harassed journalists in the previous five examples, but France and the UN helped monkeywrench the news through their immense funds and resources. Licorne rescued the 30 international journalists and gave them shelter at the 43e BIMA in April, 2011. Such rescue serves also as a political act that in turn helps ensuring positive news coverage for Licorne, and this "kindness" influences the way in which Licorne is portrayed by media.

Some of the prior examples also highlight how finances impact the local newspapers. Ownership and the financing of local newspapers can be analyzed through a political economic lens. Local newsrooms during these four months lost massive amounts of money from newspaper sales and instead relied on the incoming donations from their political supporters. The political affiliations of each newspaper were creating extreme conditions for journalists, many of whom were writing in hidden newsrooms, yet the political ties of each newspaper were also helping fund the newsroom at the same time. One journalist with *Le Patriote* told me their kiosk sales went down dramatically and their newspaper delivery routes went undercover during the four months. Papers were often distributed "under the table" to specific kiosques that were asking for them. When I asked him how the newspaper survived financially, he said Ouattara's political party, (RDR), had a special fund for the newspapers expenses, which they relied on almost exclusively to keep publishing throughout the crisis and to continue paying journalists. RDR also has wealthy

supporters in the Ivorian expatriate community living in France who made overseas contributions to the party.

Clearly, the financing of these newspapers through times of conflict is deeply affected by the political-economic conditions surrounding them. A journalist's very salary hinges on the popularity and worthiness of their writing in the eyes of their respective political supporters and donors. Their safety as targets by the opposing party was also attached to their political affiliations at their newspaper.

The five journalists who resigned from writing for AFP or *Le Monde* also point to the political economic aspect of Côte d'Ivoire's complicated media dynamic (Chapter 5, Frames in Local Media). If journalists are refusing to write for editors they know have a hidden political agenda back in France (or Yahmed for *Jeune Afrique*) then clearly the political connections of their media ownership are deeply influencing that newsrooms content. These journalists knew the subsequent frames from these publications were misinforming the rest of the Francophone world, particularly when (as Pigeaud pointed out) French editors were avoiding publishing stories or events inconvenient to the narrative that Ouattara had created a flourishing economy.

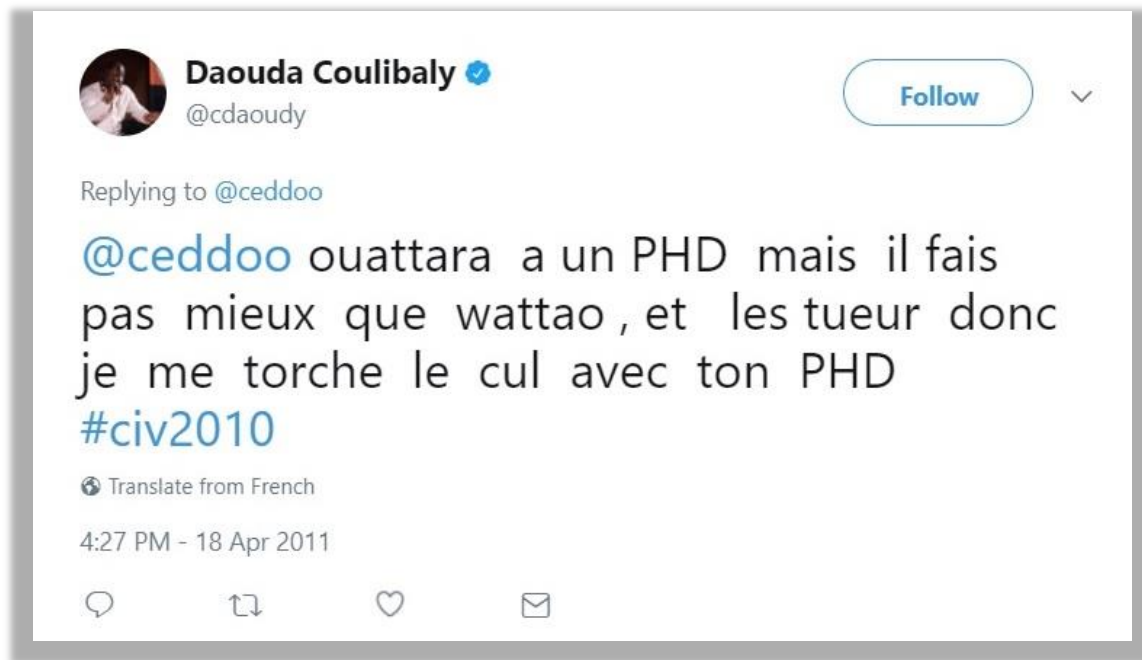
### **Ivorian media online: an alternative media for international readers**

Where in this framework can one locate the growing presence of Ivorian news media online? The results of Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 help paint a more nuanced picture of how France extends its lingering imperial power over Côte d'Ivoire via AFP, RFI and *Le Monde* (and other state-funded media) and how those frames contributed to the success of France's mission. Through this analysis of frames and behind-the-scenes problems with media coverage in Abidjan, the "contemporary global power relations," as Wasserman phrases it, between Côte d'Ivoire and France have become all too clear.

In light of these global power relations, I turn the lens back to how the local Ivorian press negotiates its role within this power structure. The final results chapter of this dissertation examines how Ivorian journalists fostered a canon of alternative coverage on the crisis via Abidjan.net, Facebook, Twitter and private blogs. International readership online, particularly Ivorian expatriates living in France, Canada, U.S. and Burkina Faso, frequented these alternative sites for hyper-localized perspectives on the conflict. The era of internet is the most recent chapter of international communication and as we will see, the online activity of Ivorian journalists at this time circumvented many of the challenges facing the printed edition of these newspapers.

## CHAPTER VII

### IVORIANS ONLINE: AN ALTERNATIVE AFRICAN VOICE AGAINST MAINSTREAM COVERAGE



**Translation:** *“Ouattara had a PhD, but he hasn’t done any better than Wattao, and they are killers, so I wipe my ass with your PhD.”* (Tweet on #CIV2010, April 18, 2011)

#### **Introduction**

The internet has interconnected news audiences like a fast-growing spider web in the era of globalization. Through the growth of internet, flows of news from Global South nations, once weak, now see more and more products like Abidjan.net that can speak from a hyper-localized news location, thus strengthening the flows of local news frames emerging from the Global South. Instead of the core-periphery relationship between the West and Global South nations

(Galtung, 1971; Wallerstein, 2004), the asymmetrical nature of communication today better explains communication flows in the era of new media and globalization.

In Chapter 5, we discussed how the frames found in international media reached world-wide audiences, meaning the editorial bias found in these frames influenced the perception of Côte d'Ivoire for international audiences. In this chapter, I explore the role of Ivorian journalists trying to counteract this monopoly by publishing online with Abidjan.net, Facebook, Twitter (a popular hashtag at the time was #CIV2010, or personal blogs like *La Plume*). These results came from an interview question on the interview guide, in which journalists were asked what types of online technologies they used in their reporting during and after the crisis.

The results of this chapter are more qualitative and descriptive in nature, based on journalist responses. The term descriptive is used here because the data on how journalists used online technology answers a “what is” angle on the situation, but falls short of assembling data into a deeper, more quantitative analysis. For example, in the section on Abidjan.net, I include vignettes of the interview with a staff journalist where they talk about the role of Abidjan.net in distributing news internationally, but don't have hard data on, say, how many hits per day the site received during the months of the crisis.

In terms of framing, the online work of these journalists made local news frames (visited in Chapter 5) more available to international audiences, presenting a small but feisty counter-framing apparatus. The use of the internet by Ivorian news agencies, journalists, bloggers, citizens and expatriates during the electoral crisis presents a stream of hyper-localized feedback to international audiences that would not have been possible in the coverage of a civil war in Africa 20 to 30 years ago. Within the era of globalization in the field of international

communication, postcolonial scholars have recognized for the past 10 or so years the magical ability of localized news markets in the Global South to speak back to the more mainstream representations of their nations in Western media outlets.

Instead of the core-periphery relationship between the West and Global South nations (Galtung, 1971; Wallerstein, 2004), scholars in the field of international communication, particularly in Africa, now factor in the existence of online African news organizations as a growing alternative voice to mainstream media coverage of African events (Badawi, 2017; Bunce, 2015; Nothias, 2017; Nyabola, 2017; Ogunyemi, 2017). Twenty six percent of Ivorians had access to the internet in 2016, up from twenty one percent in 2015, according the International Telecommunications Union (ITU, 2016). That is a huge leap in internet connectivity compared to 2010 and 2011 during the time of the crisis, when the rate was 2.7 percent and 2.9 percent of the population, respectively (ITU, 2016). As the number of Ivorians online continues to climb, more Ivorian readers will turn to online news for updates.

Ivorian journalists are certainly not alone in this effort. Recent studies show African journalists using social media to report the news to a growing online audience of Africans in-country and abroad (Atton and Mabweazara 2011; Awino, 2012; Bunce, 2015; Chala & Lemke, 2016; Mabweazara, Mudhai & Whittaker, 2014; Paterson, 2013).

Consider the recent testimony of a blogger in Kenya, reflecting on the 2007 riots.

Foreign journalists learned this the hard way in the build up to the Kenyan election in 2013. First they discovered that there are several thousand Kenyans on Twitter, using and shaping the space, and second they found that these several thousand Kenyans are not afraid to disagree with journalists and the representations they see within mainstream media.

Six years earlier, in December 2007, Kenyans were paralysed and helpless as alarmist reports often inaccurately depicted our country as another in the litany of African failed states...But even in the haze of violence, watching a CNN journalist completely mistranslate the cries of a protester waving a white flag in the streets of Nairobi in 2007

(he was crying for peace, but the journalist translated this as a cry for support for his ethnic group) was degrading and offensive and dimmed any esteem I had for international media houses. I wrote emails to CNN and they were ignored. That experience of voicelessness over the construction and dissemination of my national narrative is partly what prompted me to start blogging and writing op-eds (Nyabola, 2017, p. 113).

In the instance of the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, citizen bloggers used Youtube and Twitter as open forums of active resistance and protest against their respective government regimes (Allam 2014; Chapsos and Frangonikolopoulos, 2012; Khamis & Vaughn 2014; Segev, Wolfsfeld, and Sheaffer, 2013). To that end, the historically held monopoly of AFP, AP and Reuters over news emerging from the continent of Africa now occurs alongside an equally accessible canon of online news/blogs/commentary produced by African news agencies or bloggers. In the Côte d'Ivoire, a discussion of this asymmetrical relationship can start with Abidjan.net, which served as a crucial online distribution point for many of Abidjan's print newspapers during the electoral crisis and up until today. For the savvy Francophone reader, in-country and abroad, Abidjan.net was the main hub for hyper-localized political commentary from Abidjan's political newspapers.

In other words, the world-wide reach of AFP, AP, Reuters, *Jeune Afrique* and *Le Monde* visited in Chapters 5 and 6 still stands as the most read media on the events of Côte d'Ivoire, but the online presence of multiple Ivorian news agencies opens up a helpful space of local opinion to international audiences. Call it obscure, as readers had to be Francophone and be able to locate individual Ivorian newspapers on the Abidjan.net website, but Ivorian journalists were presenting alternative perspectives online. Through interviews with journalists from *Notre Voie*, *Fraternité Matin*, *Le Temps*, *Le Patriote* and *Le Nouveau Courrier*, I gathered that most international readers of online Ivorian newspapers were Ivorian expatriates living in France,



Canada or neighboring African countries like Burkina Faso or Senegal. Journalists told me they knew they were getting online hits because of the comments left by readers, which often showed where the reader lived and their tribal ethnicity, based on their last name. Commenters were almost exclusively Ivorian diaspora who were reading their home country newspapers for a more politicized perspective than what could be found in the international news coverage.

### **Online activity during the electoral crisis**

This section brings shape to the online activity of the electoral crisis, drawing on patterns which emerged from interviews with journalists: the types of online activity that occurred during the electoral crisis (including blogging or hackers trying to take down newspaper sites); and secondly, journalist commentary on why their narratives should have international audiences, including analysis of which frames became available to those audiences

#### *Types of online activity for Ivorian journalists during electoral crisis*

The following graphic helps summarize the types of online activity used by journalists to get their political viewpoints online during the electoral crisis.

Abidjan.net <a href="http://www.connectionIvoirienne.net">www.connectionIvoirienne.net</a> <a href="http://koaci.com">http://koaci.com</a>	Used by local newspapers for publishing daily edition. Featured a comments section and a live forum for live news tips.
Facebook	Used by journalists to gather news tips of developing events and to post news tips
Twitter	#CIV2010 became a popular hashtag for journalists and politically inclined citizens to tweet. Other journalists regularly tweeted updates.
Alert.info	A text-message based news service which delivers small texts to mobile phones for a monthly fee.

Collaborative blogs	La Plume, La Voie de Golfe.
Local newspaper websites	Most local newspaper sites were briefly active in the electoral crisis, but then hacked: <i>Fraternité Matin</i> , <i>Notre Voie</i> , <i>Le Temps</i> , <i>Le Nouveau Courrier</i> , <i>Le Patriote</i>

Figure 9: Main online or new media organizations producing news in Côte d'Ivoire, 2010-2011

Each online medium brings with it a special tool kit of advantages that circumvent some of the problems experienced by print distribution for these papers, such as collapsing the need for readers to travel from their homes or bringing news of the crisis into real-time (synchronous communication).

**Abidjan.net**

Abidjan.net, [connectionIvoriane.net](http://connectionIvoriane.net) and [koaci.com](http://koaci.com) are three local Ivorian news sites, all of which ran during the electoral crisis. The largest site, Abidjan.net, accepted PDF editions of Abidjan's daily newspapers each evening during the crisis. Editions were sent by the respective media editor at the newspaper and then uploaded by the respective staff member at the Abidjan.net office. This website was crucial to reporting the local political commentary on the crisis, as its name surfaced in virtually all of the 30 or so interviews for this study. Abidjan.net was the main portal for interested expats to catch up on their favorite newspaper's political take on the crisis. Users select the newspaper they want from a drop-down menu, pull up the edition, and pay about 50 cents to a dollar for access to the day's edition. The site also allows users to see headlines on the front page, meaning some users will only skim the news and not buy.

On a visit to their downtown office, Abidjan.net's company CEO shared four months of statistics of their online audiences from 2011, which showed the majority of their readership were located in:

- Côte d'Ivoire (40 percent)
- France (17.5 percent)
- United States (10 percent)
- Canada (4 percent)
- United Kingdom (3 percent)
- Burkina Faso (3 percent)
- Senegal (2 percent)

A journalist with *Notre Voie* informed me in Abidjan in August 2016 that his newspaper's daily edition was exported as a PDF to Abidjan.net each night during the electoral crisis. His email was published below many of his published articles. Readers, mostly in France, would call or email him with comments on his articles in *Notre Voie*, having them read off the Abidjan.net website.

We needed that Ivorians on the exterior of the country and those interested in the crisis also see our version of the facts, because there was also a battle of opinion. We know our medias are weak, so internet is an opportunity to have ourselves read on the exterior... We know that if there was a possibility to be read by a larger public, a public non-Ivorian, we think the opinion could change, we think people could better understand the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire and perhaps they could have avoided some of the decisions they made, like the implication of France, the resolutions of Conseil de Securite de l'ONU and all the condemnation they went through. We think that if people had had the possibility to read Ivorian newspapers, (our newspaper) and not just the version by the Western media, that could have played better, perhaps not in a big way, but on the public's general opinion (personal interview, *Notre Voie* journalist, 2016).

Interestingly, this same journalist traded political facts with a politician in France who wanted to use *Notre Voie* coverage as a justification for a more communist relationship between France and its former colonies.

A lot of people got back to me. I signed my articles, I put my email at the bottom. I had friends who work in the political parties of France. For example, I have a friend who works for the Communist Party in France, he's called Christophe Sembla, and he used to

send me dispatches. I wrote articles too and he took those to work with them in France. So we had people like that (personal interview, *Notre Voie*, 2016).

Abidjan.net rents an entire floor on a skyscraper in downtown Abidjan. The office features armed security guards (one at the door and three outside the skyscraper's ground floor entrance), journalists, advertising representatives and staff from Côte d'Ivoire and Morocco, where the company has opened a second news site. The company has plans to translate their all-French content into English soon, to expand their online readership to the English-speaking world.

“People who are overseas don't have access to the local newspapers. We put this [selling local papers online] into play to help newspapers generate extra revenue. It enables them to be visible and available to the world.” (personal interview, Abidjan.net staff member, Sept. 2016).

During the electoral crisis, multiple points on the Abidjan.net site ran hot. First, users could post comments to any story they wished, which often turned the day's home page story into a jumping bean of political commentary. Several journalists told me both Ouattara and Gbagbo's administration distributed dozens of free laptops at political rallies, urging supporters to take to the interwebs for the “battle of opinion.”

Through the years we have created a small online community. When people don't work, they have more time to be in front of the computer. In those times of crisis, there is so much news. There's no other source. We are trying to be as alert as possible to any information that comes in (personal interview, Abidjan.net staff member, Sept. 2016)

One journalist said she suspected the politicians were intentionally paying supporters to leave comments supporting their cause online, although it would be difficult, as a researcher, to tell which commentator is paid and which is not.

Abidjan.net hosted a live forum for a time, where users could post news updates.

At some point, one of the advisors to the president, sent me a message that helicopters were shooting at the president's house. At that time, we didn't know it was true. We were calling people in the neighborhood. We had a co-worker living in that neighborhood. At

some point, we were not publishing news anymore. It was just pieces of articles going on in the city. *Anyone could get on the live chat on Abidjan.net. It's a module we temporarily put in place during big events. We'll put it up for big events. It's like a chat. Since we have traffic, everyone could look at this chat.*

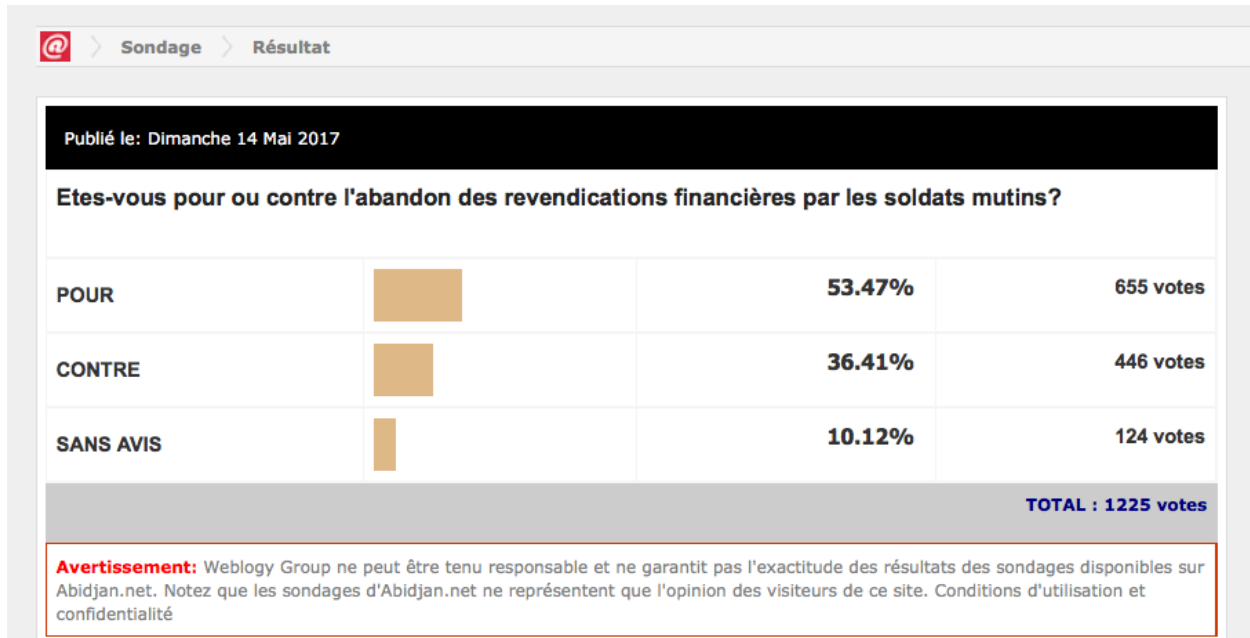
...They were quite active at that time. It was a liability. We had to take it down. There were a lot of insults It was really difficult to manage the liability for our brand and our site. People could stay anonymous, which was also not helpful. (personal interview, Abidjan.net staff member, Sept. 2016).

Staff at Abidjan.net said the crisis hurt their company's profits more than anything else, as they had to shut down the office at one point and withdraw all the equipment and staff. Too many other media institutions had been burned or targeted. The drawback with closing was companies looking to buy advertisements couldn't call their Abidjan office. With Abidjan.net back online after the situation stabilized, staff said they were more interested in promoting "good news" about Côte d'Ivoire, in the hope of encouraging new corporations to locate their business there.

The information we are looking for is info that can promote this region now. We lost so much time; the opportunity now is to tell a different story. Comfort the opinion of people. Say there are no problems. Who is going to be talking about Africa if Africans are not going to be talking about their countries? We need to have the point of view of the locals. If the [international] media is always looking at it from their interests, if you talk about Africa in the *New York Times*, a start-up is not a subject that interests your audience-maybe conflict that affects that country's investments (personal interview, Abidjan.net staff member, Sept. 2016).

Well after the electoral crisis finished, Abidjan.net continues to provide a highly interactive online media sphere, specific to Ivorian news, with Ivorian viewpoints for online readers. In a recent military debacle in January, 2017, former rebels in Ouattara's Force Nouvelles kidnapped Ouattara's Minister of Defense, Alain Richard Donwahi, for two hours as a publicity tactic to demand their back pay. Negotiations for pay lingered on into May, when they staged a second military shutdown of several key cities around the country (Hervieu, 2017; Gnago, 2017). On May 14, 2017, Abidjan.net posted a well-timed survey on its front page, asking users if they

thought ex-rebels should be awarded back pay by Ouattara’s administration. Translated into English, the survey question asks “Are you for or against the abandonment of financial compensation for the mutinying soldiers?”



Of the total 1,225 people who voted, 655 (53 percent) were in favor of Ouattara’s administration paying back the ex-rebels for their time in the military.

When Abidjan.net is situated in the larger structure of media flow leaving Côte d’Ivoire, it forms an alternative, localized news-making apparatus that can challenge some of the bigger international media houses working in Abidjan. The discussion of frames in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 shows three key political parties (Gbagbo’s FPI, France, Ouattara’s RDR) were championing specific frames to the public to present their particular interpretation of events, to attain their own political agenda. When online media structures like Abidjan.net open up the news sphere to greater international audiences, they begin to compete with the existing audiences of the international press, which largely *consume* the frames found in the international press (to review, results showed two of those frames to be 1) a head-to-head between Ouattara and

Gbagbo, and 2) a good guy (Ouattara)/ bad guy (Gbagbo) dichotomy in how each politician was depicted).

Thus, the hyper-localized frames in Abidjan.net (which drew most content from local dailies, its own news team, and also clips from, ironically, AFP) form an online competition to the frames broadcast to the world by the international press. This asymmetrical model of communication, where Ivorians can speak back to the international community via online technology, is a classic example of today's globalized media sphere. Globalization, particularly the crushing force of the internet, has interconnected news audiences like a fast-growing spider web. In this new media sphere, flows of news from Global South nations, once weak, now see more and more products like Abidjan.net that can speak from a hyper-localized news location, thus strengthening the flows of news emerging from the Global South. In this model, the frames represented on the many dailies that make up Abidjan.net's content, form a helpful counter-framing apparatus to the frames found in long-standing Western news organizations.

The lingering postcolonial issues of French media dominating the world's news coverage of Côte d'Ivoire are facing a growing online industry of Ivorian media and citizens which are interested in consuming news produced outside the political agenda of France. There are three problems with this claim though: 1) there is no easy way to gauge the audience size for Abidjan.net or the total audience size of online readership of international press coverage, particularly on coverage of Côte d'Ivoire. To say Abidjan.net's sales of news content, ad sales or online readership are *competing* with AFP, *Le Monde*, *Jeune Afrique*, Reuters or Associated Press is a stretch, at the very least. But it does provide an online alternative voice for online readers to this mainstream media coverage. 2) The news content produced on Abidjan.net may side step some of the frames represented in the international press and fill it with locally

produced content, but local dailies also carry their own biased frames, which we reviewed in Chapter 5. In effect, online African media structures like Abidjan.net have opened up the news sphere to greater international audiences, but this new space only partially circumvents the existing political agendas and structures within which it functions, including competition against global media corporations. 3) The majority of journalists working for the international media in Abidjan, as discussed in Chapter 5, are Ivorians.

### **Facebook and Twitter**

Facebook and Twitter also served as online hubs of news to the online world during the electoral crisis and after. Interviews with journalists showed they frequently used both sites to gather news tips and follow up with sources about developing news events. One journalist with *Le Patriote* said he checks multiple news sites each morning, including Facebook, Twitter and Abidjan.net. He also visits [www.connectionIvoirienne.net](http://www.connectionIvoirienne.net), <http://koaci.com/> and [l'informateur.com](http://l'informateur.com), the last of which is an online French news site. The same *Le Patriote* reporter told me they published weekly editorials to their own Facebook page, as a “teaser” piece to get readers interested in the full editorial published in the next day’s print paper.

I had a column, “un billet.” My “billet” is titled “Sans Rancune” [No Hard Feelings]. It’s a little article....[In the last one], I talked about how the rising price of electricity is creating tensions. There are agencies of the company that distributes it that then cut it off. When I write [on Facebook], people comment. I change things a little, and by that I mean, when I know I’m going to publish it, I change it a little because I don’t want to give it all away. If I give everything, they won’t pay for the journal the next day. So I give a little, and then you follow me to read it in the journal *Le Patriote* tomorrow. When they read it, they get really interested and then pay to read it (personal interview, journalist with *Le Patriote*, Sept. 2016).

Using social media to gather news tips, contact sources or tease the news for the next day all build on the model of asymmetric communication mentioned earlier. The functions of Facebook and Twitter add an element of interactivity to the news, such as the ability to contact other people



for what they have posted on their own page. Again, much like Abidjan.net, the interactive nature of social media strengthens the flow of inter-connected news within and outside Côte d'Ivoire, forming a second, alternative method for local journalists to build Côte d'Ivoire's media sphere with locally curated news tips.

### **Alert.info, a text-message based news organization in Côte d'Ivoire**

David Youant was mentioned in Chapter 5 and 6 because he resigned from his position as a former bureau chief for AFP in Kinshasa, Congo due to how AFP covered the electoral crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. He wrote a doctoral dissertation on the evolution of semiotics in the AFP's coverage, showing how the AFP news reports progressed from a relatively neutral political situation in December 2010 to a far more pro-French stance by early April, 2011. Youant went on to create Alert.info during the electoral crisis. Alert.info is essentially a team of six to seven Ivorian journalists who report the news via text messages to the mobile phones of subscribers to the Alert.info app. A reader downloads the app, and receives text messages with the day's news in Côte d'Ivoire. The longer story appears on the Alert.info website. Alert.info focuses primarily on branches of the Côte d'Ivoire government infrastructure, such as news emerging from the military branch or the cocoa industry or the San Pedro port industry. The subscriber base, which is mostly Ivorian businessmen and politicians, can quickly get updates on developing news in important industries.

But they might not know what is happening in finance, in the banks. They don't know what is happening in the gold or chocolate industry. So we, our role is to take the information from the military, or security to give it to everyone. That way politics knows what is happening in the military, thanks to us... So, here, we work on three rubrics: politics, economics and security (personal interview, David Youant, Alert.info, Sept. 2016).

The majority of customers are Ivorian politicians, Western embassy staff, government employees and Ivorian business men who travel or are in meetings frequently. Youant says the advantage of Alert.info is it collapses the need for a user to have an internet connection or be within the Côte d'Ivoire. At the time we spoke in September 2016, there were about 600 subscribers paying \$20 to \$40 a month for the service.

The story of Alert.info is particularly relevant to our discussion of counter-frames in the monopoly of international news written on Côte d'Ivoire, or how new African media are creating a more reflexive media sphere with the use of social media . Youant became disillusioned working for AFP and how it was framing the electoral crisis. His solution was to create his own Ivorian-based media outlet that writes from a more neutral journalistic standpoint.

[His journalists], they go to press conferences like everyone and they have their own

sources who give them their information. They do their work like all the other journalists, but we research with objectivity. My position as a researcher at the university permits me to have distance in regards to information. So, here in Côte d'Ivoire, we are liked by everyone (personal interview, David Youant, Alert.info, Sept. 2016).

The structure of Alert.info not only forms a new, counter-framing apparatus to AFP and other international media, but also occurs on a unique medium.

It works because it's practical. Because with telephones, you travel with them, you sleep with it, you wake up with it, you go everywhere with it. If you are in a room with a lot of people talking, you can't read a newspaper. But you can get a text. So, you are informed in a meeting, at the airport you know what is happening everywhere. So, that's how I had the idea to do it via text. It didn't exist before...Even in Africa, it didn't exist. Even in France, it didn't exist. It didn't exist anywhere when I had the idea (personal interview, David Youant, Alert.info, Sept. 2016).

Despite its helpful advantages, Alert.info fell prey to a new host of problems during the electoral crisis that didn't befall the international press. Subscribers fell from 600 to about 500, because many government officials went into exile, lost their businesses and were struggling to

make ends meet for their families. Youant, who stayed in Kinshasa for most of the crisis, would call his own news sources in Abidjan for updates on the crisis, because his journalists in Côte d'Ivoire couldn't leave their homes some days.

### **#CIV2010: Twitter during the electoral crisis**

Unlike the other new media visited above, active comments to the #CIV2010 hashtag during the electoral crisis were collectively produced by the *people*, en masse. The genius of Facebook and Twitter, of course, is that the population itself can now provide the news. Where other online forums can monitor the comments section or delete unfavorable comments, #CIV2010 more or less went wild during the electoral crisis. I sporadically examined several days of tweets from March 20 to April 20, 2011. The following is a mere descriptive analysis. I found many users created Twitter accounts that only existed for the duration of the crisis. Additionally, I found that most private citizens joined the hashtag to engage in back-and-forth personal attacks on the other person's politics. Many tweets were people bashing other people and their respective politician, using a kind of abbreviated French to write (much like people use abbreviations in texting, such

as “btw” (by the way) or “tyl” (talk to you later)).



**Daouda Coulibaly** ✓

@cdaoudy

Follow

Replying to @ceddoo

@ceddoo ouattara a un PHD mais il fais pas mieux que wattao , et les tueur donc je me torche le cul avec ton PHD  
#civ2010

🌐 Translate from French

4:27 PM - 18 Apr 2011



Tweet, April 18, 2011, on #CIV2010

In the above tweet, two commenters had been fighting about Ouattara’s Ph.D. (1979) from the U.S., and one of them mentioned he too had a doctorate degree. Coulibaly responds, “Ouattara had a PhD but he didn’t do any better than Wattao and he’s a killer, so I just wipe my ass with your PhD.”

In another tweet, a pro-Ouattara supporter waxes cynical on Gbagbo's innocence.



Tweet, April 17 2011, on #CIV2010

He says: “With all the arms bought by Gbagbo, how could you ever imagine for one instant he was going to accept the results of the vote?”

In addition to the angry tweets from Ivorians online, bigger organizations also chimed in, creating a stronger, more in-depth aspect to the hashtag. For example, Abidjan.net has a Twitter page, and frequently added a #CIV2010 to its news articles, meaning their articles show up regularly on the #CIV2010 thread. People posted articles from Huffingtonpost and AFP. Someone from Senegal posted a link to a Senegalese magazine that is publishing poetry on African empowerment, relative to Côte d’Ivoire’s problems. Citizens in Gabon, another Francophone country in West Africa with similar tensions with France, also left anti-French commentary in support of Gbagbo. Seemingly random Francophone news sites, like Canada’s

Business News Network site, also tweeted to the hashtag, presumably because their customers have economic investments in Côte d'Ivoire.



**Ivory Coast Crisis**

@bnnnewslive2

Follow

L'ONU et la France continuent à exfiltrer des diplomates (ONU) (AFP)

<http://goo.gl/fb/fZcWE> #civ2010 #civ2011

Translate from French

4:56 PM - 8 Apr 2011



Tweet, April 8, 2011, on #CIV2010

The above hashtag reads: “The UN and France continue to evacuate diplomats (UN) (AFP).”

Twitter presents a hybrid space in the conversation on frames and counter-frames in this dissertation, because it is a space that allows both local and international news producers to create news in the same thread. Even in the three brief examples listed above, one can notice that local Ivorian tweets focus on championing their politician or attacking their political opponent, while an international organization (Canada’s Business News Network) faithfully copies and pastes news from the two major international and hegemonic bodies operating in Côte d’Ivoire: France and the UN. This sounds very similar to some of the same frames found in the local press compared to the international press in Chapter 5. In effect, new media technologies in the era of globalization open up a more dynamic, asymmetrical space for news flow, in which the representation and perspectives of natives, expatriates and international organizations all join the

same mélange. The question of who is creating frames, who is distributing frames or who has the loudest or most dominant frame becomes more deeply scrambled with this added component of native Ivorians producing online news commentary alongside the rest of the Francophone world.

### **New media: an asymmetrical world or media imperialism?**

Chapter 6 examined how the media was manipulated behind the scenes in Abidjan during the electoral crisis. I explored the idea of how power asserts itself in the framework of postcolonial theory, using five clandestine events of direct violence on Ivorian and foreign journalists. The idea that Côte d'Ivoire's news flow continues to be greatly influenced by the former colonizer France is somewhat disrupted by this present discussion of African journalists and bloggers taking their politics and news to the internet. This may sound revolutionary, but globalization and new media can continue to make transitions in the world, while at the same the Western ruling class (the bourgeois, if you will) will continue to fight for the most power and the most material gain. Both eras can occur at the same time. There will never be a binary transition between the West's capitalistic monopolies and the growing interconnectedness of globalization; the world changes through time in shades of grey.

With that in mind, we see Côte d'Ivoire's international image still largely framed through transnational media corporations that operate there (AFP, AP, Reuters, *Jeune Afrique* and *Le Monde*), but we are also witnessing a fast-growing online news industry created by Ivorians that presents an alternative to those transnational media corporations. As mentioned earlier, online African media structures like Abidjan.net have opened up the news sphere to greater international audiences, but this new space only partially circumvents the existing political agendas and structures within which it functions, including competition against global media corporations.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SPOILS OF WAR

*“I can explain that my goal was to help French businesses to win parts of the market. Why not use my address book in the countries I know best to get the resumes of tricolored [French] businesses to the top of the pile?” –Jean Simon (Hofnung, 2016)*

A central research question in this study examined who had the most power to control the frames broadcast to the international community about the civil war. Chapter 5 addressed Research Question 1 by discussing the four frames found in international media coverage and the three frames found in local newspapers. Specifically, I drew from interviews with journalists to help explain *why* the media coverage turned out the way it did. Chapter 6 addressed Research Question 2 by examining in detail how media frames and monkeywrenching of journalists were used as political tactics by Gbagbo, Ouattara and the French to fight for their own interests. Media was a definite tool for each of these parties in maintaining and furthering their respective power. This dynamic occurs within the wider context of France’s long-term neocolonial domination of Côte d’Ivoire’s economy, giving France obvious advantages as it worked for its own political interests in the electoral conflict.

Chapter 7 addressed Research Question 3, which examines how the new space of online technology is opening up new flows of counter-narratives on Côte d’Ivoire’s politics to international audiences.

The following three sections of this chapter synthesize the results of Chapters 5, 6 and 7, showing how my study contributes to the literature and theory on these topics.

The first section of this chapter, The Spoils of War, connects the dots on the final beneficiaries of the tactics (frames and monkeywrenching strategies) used to win the electoral



crisis. I put frames in the local press in conversation with frames in the international press to explore their differences and what those differences mean to the thesis of this research. I show which actors benefitted and reaped their respective spoils from getting Ouattara into the presidency, and how those parties still benefit today.

The second section of this chapter, Hybrid Frames, discusses the role of hybrid frames as a unique player in times of conflict and the blurring of lines between journalism and activism. I discuss the findings of Chapters 5 and 6 in relation to the literature on journalists as activists and international media coverage in Africa.

The last section of this chapter, Implications for Françafrique, makes connections between the results of this study and its final implications for the future of Côte d'Ivoire and other Francophone nations in Françafrique in this postcolonial era. I situate why the representation of the Côte d'Ivoire matters in the eyes of the international community.

### **The Spoils of War**

The final step in the analysis of power in framing is looking at the ultimate beneficiaries of a successful frame. Political economy itself forms a clearer platform upon which to better analyse and understand how politicians were manipulating journalists as a tactic of war and what these politicians finally *gained* in using media for their own political agenda. Consider how the international media's beneficiaries could typically benefit parties abroad, like French politicians, whereas the beneficiaries of local newspapers were the local politicians and supporters of both Ouattara and Gbagbo's political parties. Recall Gitlin's 1980 study of news frames in the coverage of the New Left movement among students. Gitlin argues that when journalists exclusively quote high-ranking officials, this works *in favor* of the ruling class and its hegemonic influence. In routinely relying on government and official leaders, Gitlin found the U.S. national

media instead portrayed the student movement from the perspective of the cultural elites. This affirms Gramsci's hegemony, in which the ruling class proffers ideologies that work in their favor. Journalists end up writing for the ruling class and maintain class domination of the U.S. government, Gitlin says, because their definition of news reporting inherently relies on quoting certain official sources over others. Chomsky and Herman's *Manufacturing Consent: the Political Economy of the Mass Media* makes a similar argument in its five media filters, that the ownership and political alliances of a media organization force media organizations to write news in favor of these higher powers.

In the following section, I show how "the ruling class" both in Côte d'Ivoire and France benefited from their manipulation of the various media outlets in Abidjan.

First, I examine who benefited from la ligne editorial in Côte d'Ivoire's newspapers. Three key frames found in *Le Nouveau Courrier*, *Le Patriote*, *Fraternité Matin*, *Le Temps* and *Notre Voie* were: 1) attacking and criticizing the political enemy; 2) invoking the power of God as working for one's political side; and 3) protecting one's ethnic group against unwanted ethnicities. All three frames work from an assumption of *injustice*, a common pattern in collective action frames. All the newspapers were writing in favor of their political candidate. Looking more broadly at the local press as part of a social movement, it's clear their respective frames were targeted to a political win for their political party. The final incentive for the politically charged local press was to get Ouattara or Gbagbo in power. That's why asking local journalists about their role in their paper's ligne editorial was so crucial, because it became clear journalists knew their job was to try to help their political side win. This certainly qualifies as actors trying to win a social movement. Who then, were the final beneficiaries of how the pro-Gbagbo or pro-Ouattara press framed its articles?



Ex-war chief rebels for Ouattara’s Forces Nouvelles split Abidjan into small personal fiefdoms after Gbagbo fell. PHOTO CAPTION: L'ex-chef rebelle Chérif Ousmane, alias Papa Guépard, a pris le contrôle du Plateau à Abidjan. © Sipa. Translation: Ex-rebel chief Chérif Ousmane, alias Papa Guépard, has taken control of Plateau, a neighborhood in Abidjan. ( *Jeune Afrique*, July 22, 2011)

The above photograph accompanied a long story in *Jeune Afrique*, which lambasted the pro-Ouattara rebel soldiers who overran Abidjan after Gbagbo fell. These Forces Nouvelles soldiers split up the city into vast “comzones,” where their remaining soldiers began aggressive “raquets, military checkpoints and ethnic revenge,” according to the story (Mieu, 2011). The author ironically writes:

It doesn’t pass one day that the local press doesn’t denounce the evil deeds and exactions committed by the men of the army whose master now governs the country [Ouattara]. The population is so tired. Those who “liberated” Abidjan from the stubbornness of Laurent Gbagbo are at present now ‘the predators’ (Mieu, 2011).

We see most clearly in this article what was at stake for la presse bleue and pro-Ouattara journalists and why their news frames worked so hard for their political party. The winners in this

horse race were able to divide up their spoils into a permanent economic livelihood; the same war chiefs who controlled portions of north Côte d'Ivoire since 2002 (see Chapter 2: Contemporary politics in Côte d'Ivoire; events of 2010-2011 electoral crisis) could now play the same game with portions of defeated Abidjan.

The journalists working for the pro-Ouattara press got immediate political recognition from the Ouattara administration for their coverage of the crisis. Two bloggers for *La Plume*, a pro-Ouattara blog, were given prestigious editorial positions in the state newspaper *Fraternité Matin* (blogger Venance Konan, a former journalist for FM was reinstated as editor-in-chief of the newspaper by Ouattara after the war was over) (personal interview, journalist with FM, 2016). A third *La Plume* blogger was hired as the Director of the Cabinet for the country's Ministry of Interior Security.

Higher up the chain of command, too, were the pro-Ouattara politicians who funded the pro-Ouattara press and whose money paid off as well when Ouattara was inaugurated. These politicians were also awarded prestigious positions in Ouattara's various cabinets at the presidential palace, Gbagbo's former home ("Quelle Armee Pour Ouattara," *Jeune Afrique*, 2011; "Laurent Gbagbo Forme son Gouvernement sans les Barons du FPI," "Laurent Gbagbo Forms His Government Without the Barons of FPI," *Jeune Afrique*, Dec. 2010).

Perhaps most troubling about the *Jeune Afrique* coverage of war chiefs splitting up Abidjan is these were the same military chiefs that received immense international support from France, the UN, CEDEAO and the international media. Recall that Ouattara's soldiers and political supporters were the number one source of information in the 107 international articles included in the study. The violence committed by Force Nouvelles is also troubling when one considers how closely the international media stuck to framing Ouattara as "the good guy" and

Gbagbo as the “bad guy.” In fact, in January and of May 2017, about 8,400 of these same ex-rebels made world headlines when they orchestrated two countrywide shutdowns (about a step away from a coup d’etat) to demand back pay from Ouattara’s administration for the pay they were promised for their military service in Force Nouvelles (Hervieu, 2017; Gnago, 2017). In the first shutdown, ex-rebels kidnapped Ouattara’s Minister of Defense, Alain Richard Donwahi, for two hours as a publicity tactic to demand their back pay. Negotiations for pay lingered on into May, when they staged a second military shutdown of several key cities around the country. A handful of ex-rebels were killed in the mass protests against Ouattara in Bouake on May 23, 2017. The administration eventually agreed to pay each soldier about \$8,000 each, delivering the last part of their pay in mid-2017. I use this example to again help illustrate for readers the economic *incentives* involved for citizens (journalist or soldier) when taking sides in the politics of Côte d’Ivoire.

### **Final beneficiaries of how international media framed the electoral crisis**

Frames in the foreign press, particularly the French foreign press, ultimately worked in favor of France by ensuring international support of France’s political favorite Ouattara.

### Who profits from French media's framing of CI electoral conflict

On June 24, 2016, *Le Monde* ran a human interest profile on Jean Marc Simon, the French ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire during the electoral crisis. The French newspaper praises Simon's newly awarded title as an ambassador for France, as he is now "in effect, part of a very exclusive club where we find prestigious elders like Saint-John Perse or Paul Claudel" (Hofnung, 2016). Simon quit his job as ambassador in Cote d'Ivoire after the electoral crisis to begin an international consulting company that specializes in helping French businesses gain contracts in West Africa. The line between French politics and French corporations, it seems, was never very wide.

"It was me who asked to be heard by the Commission for Deontology for Public Functions [in France]," he said. "I can explain that my goal was to help French businesses to win parts of the market. Why not use my address book in the countries I know best to get the resumes of tricolored [French] businesses to the top of the pile?" Simon told *Le Monde*.

In effect, Simon used his time as a powerful well-connected French politician to gain access and wealth from the murky, but lucrative corporate connections between Cote d'Ivoire and France. The example of Simon helps pull together how certain frames in local and international media did the work of benefiting authorities higher up the chain of authority.

There are two levels of hegemonic behavior happening in this news article. First, this *Le Monde* journalist is choosing to frame the Cote d'Ivoire and its value in terms of subservience to France. The journalist is also choosing to cite Simon in a favorable light, privileging his opinions and work in Cote d'Ivoire as honorable, without criticism. The framing of this article reduces and assumes Cote d'Ivoire as a capitalistic frontier for French corporations. Without question, the article is complimenting Simon on his clever and noble pivot from public service to France into meaty trade agreements with French corporations in West Africa. According to Tuchman, this journalist is maintaining the status quo of French hegemony in Cote d'Ivoire by normalizing Simon's actions.

The second level of hegemonic behavior in this story is that Simon is one more beneficiary of how the Cote d'Ivoire was framed in French media, as are the French corporations for whom he now consults. Simon was one of the most outspoken sources cited in the international media coverage of the electoral crisis. His voice, opinions and standpoint on Cote d'Ivoire's politics affected dozens of AFP articles. If we are examining how to win a war in Francafrigue and who collects the spoils after the war is over, Simon is our best example.

In defense of the claim that all French media were working for the good of the French interests in Côte d'Ivoire, I'd like to point to five well-known French and Ivorian journalists who got wise to this editorial strategy and quit working for French media outlets. The political-economic constraints of working for French media were clear to these journalists. In their eyes, they valued a traditional model of journalism, which values neutrality. In their eyes, the French-funded media outlets operating in Côte d'Ivoire were delivering heavily skewed reports back to the French population, and these journalists (save for one) simply refused to keep writing for those newsrooms. This is a list of five journalists, four of whom I personally interviewed on why they had significant problems with the editorial bias (collective action frames) of their editors back in Paris.

1. David Youant. An Ivorian, he worked for AFP from 2005 to 2011, serving as the bureau chief for AFP in Kinshasa, Congo from 2009 to 2011. Youant was, famously, the very first African to serve as bureau chief for Agence France-Presse in Francophone Africa, instead of a white French citizen. He traveled from Kinshasa twice to help the Abidjan bureau cover the crisis in 2010. Youant became quickly embittered with AFP's coverage of the Côte d'Ivoire crisis, and resigned from his position in early 2011, after six years with the agency. He said he thought bureau chief Thomas Morfin was practically sending out direct memos from the French ambassador as AFP news releases. (personal interview, Youant, September 2016).

2. Fanny Pigeaud. This French woman worked for AFP in Gabon and Cameroon, and arrived in Abidjan in 2012 to write for a prominent French daily, *La Liberation*. "Very quickly after I arrived in Abidjan, I came to understand it would be really difficult to work like a journalist because the French media I was working for were really focused on a specific version of the story and weren't at all ready to hear things that were more objective. But very quickly I also met people who had worked during the post-electoral crisis and had stories to tell me, so I started working on the subject as a book," (personal interview, Pigeaud, May 2017).

After writing *France Côte d'Ivoire: Une Histoire Tronquée* (2015), Pigeaud told me she never wanted write on Côte d'Ivoire again for mainstream French publications. She now writes for Mediapart.fr, a left-leaning national French online news site. In May 2017, she interviewed Laurent Gbagbo face-to-face in jail at the Hague for Mediapart.fr, where he is being held for war crimes (personal interview, Pigeaud, May 2017).

3. Well-known Ivorian journalist Theophile Kouamo resigned from *Jeune Afrique* and *Le Monde* in the late 2000s because his editors back in France consistently edited his work

to be more anti-Gbagbo. He instead moved to Paris and started his own Ivorian newspaper, *Le Nouveau Courrier* ( used in this study) back in Abidjan (Théroux-Bénoni, 2009).

4. An anonymous AFP journalist (a native Ivorian) who stills works in the Abidjan office said he had deep anger over how his stories were edited by the lead AFP bureau chief in Abidjan during the crisis, Thomas Morfin, as well as by editors back in Paris. He said if he wrote positive commentary about Gbagbo, editors would accuse him of being pro-Gbagbo, but if he wrote positive stories about Ouattara, editors just left it alone. (personal interview, anonymous journalist, September 2016).

5. A journalist with *Jeune Afrique* stopped writing politics after Gbagbo's arrest and switched to writing about economics after he was summoned to Ouattara's presidential quarters by the president's wife, Dominique Ouattara (personal interview, anonymous journalist, September. 2016).

The actions of these journalists help clarify the bias of French editors back in France, and raise questions on *why* these editors and owners wanted a specific version told of the electoral crisis. AFP is a state-run newswire. According to interviews with journalists, French politicians regularly replace the news staff in AFP positions when they are in power. The decision to appoint the current bureau chief to AFP in Côte d'Ivoire is a political decision made back in Paris. Essentially, the parties who profited from the right kinds of frames in the electoral crisis are French politicians and the major French and European corporations drawing profits from Côte d'Ivoire, as Ouattara ushered in a friendlier era of trade agreements with them.

What makes the role of the French-owned media so didactic in this situation is their home government had so much to gain economically and politically from how editors were choosing to frame information to audiences back in France, Europe or the rest of the Francophone world (and AFP is also translated into other languages). Each journalist I spoke with was keenly aware of *why* their editors wanted more pro-Ouattara frames than pro-Gbagbo frames, and it was this specific knowledge that led four of these journalists to resign from their position.



To make the case that French politicians and corporations benefited from pro-Ouattara frames, I'd like to present a list of anecdotal evidence gathered through interviews with journalists and trade literature on the electoral crisis. I've so far made the case that the French coverage of the electoral crisis was biased toward Ouattara, and the following information shows how France benefited from those frames.

1. Licorne chose to support Ouattara when the election results became muddled. Licorne worked on behalf of the French government to help Ouattara secure the presidency. International journalists consistently chose to quote officials from ONUCI and Licorne for their perspective, which ultimately influenced their coverage to frame stories in favor of these organizations. It created an atmosphere of consent for the actions of the French and UN militia.

2. Ouattara worked as an economist for the International Monetary Fund in D.C. and Paris from 1968 to 1987. He then went to work for Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO). Ouattara worked with Nicolas Sarkozy on a number of political projects. He had long made it clear to France and European countries that he was open to economic trade agreements. In 2012 and 2013, Ouattara's oil ministry signed off on 18 different oil-drilling contracts with mostly European investors from major oil companies, including Anadarko, Tullow, Lukoil and Total (Bavier, J. & Flynn, D., 2014).

3. Ouattara's pro-trade stance with France not only meant his ministries signed new economic deals with international investors, it also guaranteed that existing French corporations in Côte d'Ivoire (whose profit margins struggled during Gbagbo's era and during the electoral crisis) would see increased business in the French-owned airport, water system, and

telecommunications industry (Orange, a major French telecommunication corporation operating throughout Francophone West Africa)(Mieu, 2013).

4. The French ambassador Jean Marc Simon, who was cited extensively in AFP, *Le Monde* and other French publications during the electoral crisis, quit his post as ambassador after the crisis was over in April 2011 and began an African consulting firm based in Abidjan. Some of his biggest clients today are the same French corporations he worked with as the French ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire (Pigeaud, 2015).

5. The cocoa industry in Côte d'Ivoire is a major source of foreign investment in Côte d'Ivoire. About 87 corporations gather, process and export raw cocoa beans out of Côte d'Ivoire each year, 19 of which are from the U.S., France, Switzerland, UK or Singapore (Reuters, 2013). Côte d'Ivoire's politics, and particularly, Gbagbo's angry relationship with France, were extraordinarily inconvenient to company CEOs trying to turn regular profits off the raw cocoa material. The cocoa economy had lagged under Gbagbo's reign and worsened when the electoral crisis halted exports of the nuts at the San Pedro port in early 2011 because of sanctions put on Gbagbo by the European Union. Most major exporters, including American firms Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland, as well as Swiss firm Barry Callebaut, complied with Ouattara's cocoa ban, but these same companies were anxious to begin buying beans again. Having Ouattara in power benefited the cocoa company because he campaigned as a trade-friendly candidate with economic connections to the West (Oved, 2011).

While I have no direct evidence of how foreign investors benefited from pro-Ouattara coverage in the international media, Ouattara's economic policies in the past six years have

called heavily on foreign investors to come invest in Côte d’Ivoire (Bavier, J. & Flynn, D., 2014).

I use this list of vignettes to help paint a more direct picture of who profited from the outcome of Côte d’Ivoire’s electoral crisis, which appears to largely be French and Swiss corporations who can now count on a far more steady, friendlier business climate with Ouattara at the helm. There is no question the international media’s coverage of the electoral crisis acted as a lubricant to creating a sense of consent for the military interventions of ONUCI and LICORNE. It makes sense, further, that France, Gbagbo and Ouattara would go to such great lengths to manipulate the narratives in the international media, as these frames helped support or destroy their attempts to stabilize their own power and interests in the region.

**Hybrid frames: when a journalist functions as an activist**

I argue that the empirics of this study show that local *and* international journalists face a complex amount of factors while trying to do their jobs, which produces hybrid frames that act as quasi-news and quasi-activism.

<b>Type of Frame</b>	<b>Frames in International Media: <i>Jeune Afrique, Le Monde, Agence France-Presse, Reuters, Associated Press</i></b>	<b>Frames in pro-Gbagbo papers <i>Le Courier, Fraternité Matin, Le Temps, Notre Voie</i></b>	<b>Frames in pro-Ouattara paper, <i>Le Patriote</i></b>
Intervention of ONUCI, Licorne and international community	International organizations, French or internationally-supported Ouattara officials are quoted as real voice of authority	Attacking and criticizing the political enemy, which is neocolonial France in league with ONUCI, evil Alassane Ouattara and politicians	Attacking and criticizing the political enemy, which is Laurent Gbagbo. Affirms the intervention of the international community

<b>Paradigm on electoral crisis</b>	Conflict is articulated as a head-to-head between Gbagbo and Ouattara, neglecting to mention France or UN military intervention until late in conflict	invoking the power of God as working for one's political side	invoking the power of God as working for one's political side
	Create a strict binary image of Ouattara as "good guy" and Gbagbo as "bad guy", overlooking atrocities committed by Ouattara's side	protecting one's ethnic group against unwanted ethnicities	protecting one's ethnic group against unwanted ethnicities
<b>Meta-Frame Ultimate end goal for electoral crisis</b>	Pursuit of justice: Point of the conflict is to pursue justice against Gbagbo via international laws and standards	Ethnic unity: Point of the conflict is to protect Côte d'Ivoire citizens from Ouattara militia, and foreign ethnicities, including French and UN power, Burkinabe immigrants and other African immigrants.	Point of conflict is to follow the correct election results and will of the international community to get Ouattara elected

Figure 6. Comparing frames between international media and local media.

Figure 6 is a good jumping point to evolve the idea of *power* as used in the frames. Both framing theory and social movement theory see power a bit differently as it works in frames. The three categories of this graphic organize frames within each media camp according to their stance on the intervention of France and ONUCI, their paradigm on the electoral crisis and (a meta-frame) the ultimate end goal for the electoral crisis.

I first revisit some observations about how each canon of scholars talks about power in frames, and then analyze how the frames in the local and international press compare in Figure 6 and its respective categories.

Framing is a political process that may have the power to subvert or reinforce existing power structures. The two fields approach this phenomenon from different directions. Media

scholars like Tuchman, Entman and Gitlin argue that journalists tend to frame situations in favor of the dominant class or status quo. Another perspective on hegemony comes from postcolonial studies, where some African scholars argue African nations are still caught in “entrapped within a disciplining colonial matrix of power,” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. xi).

Based on results of Chapter 5, the frames found in the international media, particularly by media giant AFP, certainly helped create an atmosphere of consent for the intervention of France and UN in the electoral crisis. When international journalists chose to quote and couple Ouattara’s officials (which, at the time, was literally a rebel army that had held the northern part of CI under anarchic control since 2005) with the political opinions of France and the international community, this lent a factor of legitimacy to Ouattara’s militia. As a framing mechanism, journalists pairing Ouattara, France and the international community as the same political team created an incredibly convincing frame of justice for international audiences. This frame, combined with reporters’ not mentioning France’s economic ties to Côte d’Ivoire, created a perfect mediated storm of consent for international audiences. When the story of Côte d’Ivoire’s election is told with these frames, it only *makes sense* that France would intervene.

Within that same picture of globalization, though, Figure 6 shows the counter-frames offered by the Ivorian press to resist the frames found in the international media, such as protest against France’s neocolonial desires for Côte d’Ivoire’s natural resources. Figure 6 shows how Ivorian journalists harnessed cultural values like ethnic unity and religion as a framing tactic for audiences, another key difference between this camp and the international press. Studies of collective action frames in social movements often comment on the scale of resonance a frame can have with audiences, as such frames are intentionally built to mobilize people to a cause (Benford and Snow, 2000, p. 616-617).

A basic component of today's globalized media implies news narratives that emerge, hybridize, connect and reconnect from points all over the globe (Sparks, 174; Steeves, 166). In Chapter 7, I showed how the emerging Ivorian press online is mostly an extension of written Ivorian newspapers, and how the new space of online technology is opening up new flows of counter-narratives on Côte d'Ivoire's politics to international audiences. The counter frames found in the local press, even among the pro-Ouattara newspapers, often directly contradict the information found in the foreign press, as we find in Figure 6. For example, in the category of "paradigm on electoral crisis," international journalists faithfully promoted a framing of the conflict as a "head-to-head" between Ouattara and Gbagbo, whereas local journalists framed the conflict using ethnic unity and the support of God as a context for war.

I pointed out in the last section of Chapter 5 (Chapter 5, Frames and Postcoloniality in Côte d'Ivoire) that the frames found in the pro-Gbagbo or pro-Ouattara press reflect alliances that are still culpable in their editorial leanings. I'd like to re-emphasize in my critique of the international media's coverage of the electoral crisis that their monopoly doesn't necessarily mean the indigenous media of Côte d'Ivoire has pure intentions either. In fact, interviews with journalists for both sides of the local press on the propagandist nature of the local press, also in Chapter 5, certainly show journalists are aware their newsrooms have an editorial bias in their news content. What makes these alliances interesting in a postcolonial analysis, as also visited in Chapter 5, is the frames in the pro-Ouattara media often reflect and agree with the French intervention. The pro-Ouattara newspaper (*Le Patriote*) frequently cited AFP, *Jeune Afrique* and other foreign publications to build its own editorial support for Licorne and the international community calling Gbagbo to step down. One complicated factor in postcolonial analysis examines how local elites will join forces with international powers to maintain their own localized agenda. Postcolonial studies traditionally

looks at *resistance* to the colonial legacies operating in the Global South, and problematizes Western influence. Yet, the participation and collusion of local elites *with* Western powers is also part of the package of postcolonial studies too, as massive contingents of wealth and earning power for Global South elites are based on complicit, sometimes corrupt, relationships with Western countries. Essentially, part of examining how frames in the local press operate in Côte d'Ivoire means acknowledging the *similarities* between the pro-Ouattara press and the international press in their assessment of the conflict as including frames that worked in favor of the Licorne and ONUCI intervening.

Recall in Chapter 7 the story of David Youant and his company, Alert.info. Youant's story is particularly relative to our discussion of political economy of the media in francophone Africa. Youant became disillusioned working for AFP and how its French-elected bureau chief was framing the electoral crisis. His solution was to create his own Ivorian-based media outlet that writes from a more neutral journalistic standpoint. If put another way, an Ivorian was dissatisfied with how colonial France and its state-run newswire were reporting biased coverage of his country, so he decided to create his own news media, which acts as resistance media and as a Global South voice rising up in the postcolonial era of Côte d'Ivoire to offer a "France-less" representation of facts. In political economic terms, Youant did the hard work of detaching his news writing from the political entanglement of AFP as a state-funded French enterprise. Instead, his news profits now fund Alert.info, which, he says, stays neutral in covering Côte d'Ivoire's politics.

Chapter 2 and Chapter 7 reviewed other studies in which scholars observe how African journalists are correcting the representation of their nation's politics to international audiences. A common point of strife for African scholars and journalists is how the international press chooses

to negatively cover and pinpoint various tragedies throughout Africa, to the exclusion of more positive news scenes, such as the growing economies of Ghana or Nigeria (Badawi, 2017; Bunce, 2015; Nothias, 2017; Nyabola, 2017; Ogunyemi, 2017). The “Africa Rising” narrative, as observed throughout major world magazines, is a new shift in the international rhetoric used to talk about Africa (Nothias, 2014). As one journalist with Abidjan.net stated to me:

The information we are looking for is info that can promote this region now. We lost so much time; the opportunity now is to tell a different story. Comfort the opinion of people. Say there are no problems. Who is going to be talking about Africa if Africans are not going to be talking about their countries? We need to have the point of view of the locals. If the [international] media is always looking at it from their interests, if you talk about Africa in the *New York Times*, a start-up is not a subject that interests your audience—maybe conflict that affects that country’s investments (personal interview, Abidjan.net staff member, Sept. 2016).

### ***Hybrid frames***

A hybrid frame implies that the complex circumstantial factors of reporting in intense political arenas pulls apart the canonical ideas of only activism or only news, and instead implies that all journalists dabble in both, often unintentionally. As a theoretical contribution, this concept of a hybrid frame marries the idea of intentional frames and unintentional frames in social movement theory and media studies, respectively.

Intentional and strategic frames in news are closer to the strategic types of collective action frames seen in social movement literature. The local newspapers of Côte d’Ivoire write primarily from the perspective of mobilizing people to their side, producing something like a collective action frame in their news product. Local newspapers are intentionally choosing to be political actors in the social movement for their political party. But circumstances while reporting in a conflict zone can also produce *unintentional* frames, such as Gbagbo’s officials receiving little coverage on their side because staff stopped talking to foreign press. In the traditional concept of journalism, there is little *intentionality* in how a journalist frames an article (i.e. the resulting emphases or lack of



emphases, location in the newspaper or choice of one source over another is often not intentional on the part of the journalist, but still privileges some voices over others). However, a key argument I make in this study is there are no clear lines between journalism and activism in the case study of Côte d'Ivoire. Journalists for the local newspapers were actively considered to be working as political mouthpieces for their respective party. Journalists for the foreign press were trying to maintain their objectivity as they wrote, but the politics of their editors back in France were also pushing their writing in the direction of advocacy for France. Further, where the theoretical end of news frames assumes that news frames work to support those in power, we see real-world evidence that the news can act as a site of activism *or* hegemonic maintenance, or both.

The results of this study show foreign journalists, many Ivorian, were often under enormous pressure from the French government, Ouattara and the UN to write news stories in favor of Ouattara, the favored candidate of France. This pressure on the ground heavily skewed the international news broadcasts on the elections. Journalists created *unintentional* frames that worked in favor of the status quo, pulling them more into a role of advocacy for French politics in Côte d'Ivoire, to such a degree that several Ivorian and French journalists quit working for state-run French media. Meanwhile, the Ivorian local newspapers each have deep, well-established political alliances to either Gbagbo or Ouattara, and journalists took a more public role as activist in their reporting, by openly advocating their candidate's party line in their writing.

The results of this study show why it is important to have a more expansive view of frames as a mechanism of interpretation during war. If we rely solely on social movement literature to understand framing, particularly collective action frames, we will only get a narrow look at intentional frames as strategic devices for a social movement. Power in collective action frames work from the ground up, in a more grass-roots manner of *challenging the status quo* for one's

social movement. But if we rely only on traditional journalism's literature on frames, this literature assumes there is little intentional framing on the part of a journalist (because that goes against traditional journalism ethics), when in fact, journalists are often forced into reproducing unintentional frames as a result of the circumstances under which they report.

In other words, due to circumstances on the ground and due to manipulative tactics by Ouattara, the UN and France, the international media ended up doing the work of a kind of activism *for* these political parties, yet this role was unintentional. For example, recall the press releases published by AFP on the day after Gbagbo was arrested at his palace in Abidjan, April 11, 2011. The majority of those press releases cited the French ambassador, military officials and French newspapers in a bid to defend the role of France in the capture of Gbagbo. Those releases were put on the AFP newswire and published in newspapers around the world, greatly magnifying the heavily skewed perspective of a handful of AFP reporters. Journalists for AFP in this instance no longer fit nicely into the clean confines of traditional objective reporting; their work had crossed over into advocacy for France. Further, the Licorne evacuation of Hotel Novatel resulted in every major international journalist in Abidjan to be transferred to France's military base (43e BIMA), meaning every news report written after April 8, 2011 can be considered deeply compromised. Again, news journalists from around the world never intended to rely on the graces of France, but this was compromised to to save their own lives, to continue to have internet access to file stories and a flight out of the country.

As another example of unintentional frames in the international press, consider how news reports cited Ouattara's officials twice as often as Gbagbo's officials. Yet this is partially not the fault of those international reporters. Gbagbo clearly turned his back on the international press halfway through the electoral crisis, thereby causing a great shift on how journalists wrote their

stories. As a political actor, Gbagbo contributed to his *own* framing in the news reports by refusing to let his staff to talk to the international press, which gave Ouattara's staff the upper hand in calling foreign reporters and being the loudest source. In effect, journalists working for the foreign media didn't think they were framing their stories in a particular direction, yet the results show they clearly did. Because of this, the international media broadcast a version of the electoral conflict that gave international readers and international decision makers news reports that contained elements of hybrid frames.

### **Implications for Françafrique**

The results of this study show how framing news stories and monkeywrenching journalists in Abidjan acted as strategic weapons for the forces vying to control Côte d'Ivoire. I've also examined how the growing online news production of Ivorians presents a helpful alternative voice for international readers outside Côte d'Ivoire. The results of this study, particularly the interviews with Ivorian journalists, add to the discussion on the international coverage of conflict in Francophone Africa. In particular, Chapter 6 (Monkeywrenching the Media) adds to the literature on African media by showing first-hand testimonies of the clandestine French and African politics that influence media in the making. Through interviews with journalists, readers of this study may gather new insight into the current political dynamic on the ground in Côte d'Ivoire, including the ongoing competition between local media and international, transnational media corporations, many of which are owned by France.

Many studies of local and international African media perform textual analysis of news coverage, but the added component of interviews with Ivorian journalists greatly strengthens and contextualizes this textual analysis. A major contribution of this study is the examination of the hegemonic influence of France and its neocolonial goals, in English for anglophone speakers to

understand the political-economic dynamic in Francophone Africa. A recent publication on media in Africa, *Africa's Media Image in the 21st Century* (M. Bunce, S. Franks, C. Paterson, Eds. 2017) is one of the best publications to emerge in the past five years on this topic, but the majority of its 27 chapters focus on English-speaking nations. This study's exploration of Françafrique in the social media era and the rising rates of internet usage among Ivorian audiences adds depth to the discussion of Africa's media image as covered by the state-run French media. The extensive trade agreements and wealth between France and Francophone African nations present a unique neocolonial dynamic, and the role of media in this power structure extends the literature on African media studies.

The final impact of this research lies in how Côte d'Ivoire and its politics are viewed in the international limelight. The mediation of Côte d'Ivoire's politics can upset or incentivize international organizations to relocate their business to the country or grant foreign aid or loans. Côte d'Ivoire's international reputation has the power to draw or repel talent, corporations, terrorism, university programs, non-profit organizations and many other actors to itself. In the 1960s to the 2000s, Western news outlets came under heavy criticism for misrepresenting African political events to the rest of the world. Yet a recent comprehensive study of foreign correspondent coverage of Africa showed a marked improvement in positive news coverage in certain topics, comparing 1994 coverage to 2013 (Bunce, 2017, p. 17 - 29). Results showed that writers for AFP, AP and Reuters are now writing more positively about the topics of business, humanitarian, and domestic politics but have actually increased negative coverage of conflict and crime in this 20-year span.

The results of my research show just how fierce the battle for the final framing of a political event can become in a former colony of France. The results show how France itself took great

measures to distribute its own version of Côte d'Ivoire's electoral crisis to the international community through AFP, RFI and Le Monde. The results also show the great lengths that Ouattara's soldiers and Gbagbo's soldiers went to harass and threaten journalists printing news unfavorable to their respective party. The censorship of local and international journalists in Abidjan also demonstrates the fighting behind the final framing of Côte d'Ivoire politics at the hands of local Ivorian politicians. What the international community ultimately read and heard was the final, refined mashup of this fighting. Decision-makers in the international community, such as the European Union, the International Monetary Fund or the African Union were absorbing these frames daily. We've also discussed the political economic aspect of the conflict in assessing the parties who benefited from their frames and their own manipulation of different media outlets. Part of how they benefited was winning the opinion and support of the international community through these same broadcasts.

I submit that these results help add a new dimension to the discussion of how conflicts are framed and mediated to the international community in Francophone Africa. The new idea of a hybrid frame helps articulate the grey area of intentional and unintentional frames that reach international audiences. Rather than villifying local or international news outlets, this research has given us a clearer lens to understand the political-economic processes that strain, push and manipulate journalists in Françafrique as they try to produce the news. The discussion of power in how the news is framed (to revisit Tuchman's concept of news as the maintenance of the hegemony of a society or bottom-up power in collective action frames) ultimately influences who has the final, loudest, most convincing dialogue for readers, for better or worse.

Consider, for a moment, what it would be like if Ivorian-owned or African-owned media companies were producing the widest-read international news about Côte d'Ivoire. Consider what it

would be like if only Ivorian politicians were picking the editors and journalists for their newsrooms, or better yet, if only the CEOs of Ivorian-owned media companies were picking editorial staff. This new dynamic can help highlight some of the residual problems found in Western-owned media producing the final narratives about Côte d'Ivoire to the international community. For example, local journalists in Côte d'Ivoire have many valid concerns about the neocolonial tentacles of France in the Côte d'Ivoire economy, but this concern is almost never expressed by Western owned news outlets (as we saw in Chapter 5). It is exceedingly important for Francophone African nations to have a voice in their representation at the international level in the era of globalization, as these nations are the most susceptible to more powerful nations creating unequal trade agreements with them.

A new trend in African media studies discusses an “Africa Rising” narrative, in which more African journalists are emerging online to cover news about their native countries (Baker et al., 2015; Bunce, 2017; Hunter-Gault, 2006; Nothias, 2014). As shown in Chapter 3, African journalists are choosing to frame their nation’s news through their own cultural framework and posting news online for the world to see. These journalists are still subject to the same problems of censorship, harassment and violence, just like journalists working for foreign news outlets. As shown in Chapter 6, they are often still allied with local political parties and still susceptible to bribes and favoritism. The growing industry of African journalists online is not a perfect picture, but in the case of Françafrique, newsrooms in this region can benefit from publishing online news that is free from the influence of the ever-present France. These news outlets have the opportunity to rectify the poorer frames found in Western-owned news outlets by adding cultural context and values to their representations of the politics at hand.

## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS OF STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

I've chosen to organize this study around the principle idea that each political party was fighting for its own political economic interests, and chosen to show the different, culpable roles of media as actors within this fight. As a solution-oriented conclusion to this study, the international press could have side-stepped some of their more problematic framing as a journalists. Journalists could attempt this in the future when covering complicated political crises in Africa.

Firstly, state-funded French media journalists are not in a position to be producing objective news on Côte d'Ivoire's politics. AFP, RFI, *Le Monde* and any other French-owned publication receive the majority of their funding from the French economy or government. Journalists working for these publications can't escape the neocolonial ambitions of France, quite frankly, when their French editors and politicians are in charge. *Jeune Afrique* journalists writing in Abidjan are also not in a position to be producing objective news because, as discussed, the magazine's CEO Ben Yahmed is actively publishing positive news on Côte d'Ivoire because he is close friends with Ouattara in his personal life. I've confirmed this connection with two journalists.

This leaves much terrain for the other media outlets operating in Côte d'Ivoire and West Africa to write news in the following way:

1. Journalists have a duty to try to present all aspects of an issue, even when on a tight deadline and even when sources are difficult to contact. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, I suggest news journalists in this region need to think clearly about the political objectives of their sources before allowing them expansive quotes in news coverage. Journalists need to go beyond contacting official representatives, like the French ambassador Jean Simon or ONUCI officials, and instead work harder to cultivate sources in the actual country. Respecting the voices, experiences and stories of Ivorians living in Abidjan, including their political opinions, was greatly lacking in the international coverage. This presents an enormous gap of misrepresentation for the Ivorian population. Their lives, *more than any other demographic in Europe or the UN military base*, were greatly disrupted and terrorized by this conflict. Their voices, subsequently, need to have a place of priority in the news coverage. What was it like in the rural areas? What was the crisis like for women? What was it like for the college students who were set back a year in school after the city closed down? What was it like for the elderly because of the embargo on medication? What was it like for people walking out of Abidjan on foot to escape the shooting? Native perspectives on the electoral crisis were more or less dismissed in the news.

As seen in Figure 1, Chapter 5, Ivorians were primarily cited in the international news stories as eye-witnesses, for the purpose of verifying if a certain event had actually taken place. This needs to change. Journalists writing in West African nations where huge corporate, UN and European interests define much of the political agenda must work to prioritize African interests, African industries, and African voices. True, the international press did cite many of Ouattara's officials in their writing (see Figure 1, Chapter 5) but journalists could have been much more open with readers about the political objectives and crimes committed by those same officials.



2. Journalists have to be conscious of other parties' agendas for using the media. The English-speaking international press, including AP, Reuters, BBC, unlike the French state media, were in a much better position to be critical of the French government for its military intrusion in April, 2011. Yet not a word of criticism was spoken against Licorne, or the military base of France, or France's extensive corporations in the Ivorian economy. This omission again created a convincing framework for consent from audiences. That said, journalists working in Francophone West African politics need to write stories that clearly show the incentives involved for the sources they are quoting. If a journalist is writing about the political turmoil in Gabon, that journalist needs to clearly portray what is at stake for each source they put in a story. This is the nitty-gritty business of how frames are issued through the media, which is often the *starting point of broadcast* for collective action frames. According to Entman (1993), the media is always going to be a site of conflict as social movements try to gain the loudest narrative to promote their own agenda. Again, taking the time to seek out sources with alternative incentives and alternative stories can do a great amount of good for audiences trying to understand a situation.

This type of contextual reporting can also avoid the good guy/bad guy image of Gbagbo and Ouattara found in the frames of the international media (Chapter 5). In particular, journalists writing in former colonies of France need to be cautious when citing or presenting French or European viewpoints on localized African conflicts. Everyone has an agenda, even officials working with departments of the United Nations. A basic component of being a journalist is to question those in power and hold them accountable. In the case study of the Côte d'Ivoire, the international media did a good job lambasting Gbagbo for trying to keep the presidency through violence, but did not do a good job lambasting Ouattara or France for their own ulterior motives. Had the international media connected the dots for readers in terms of what Licorne and

Ouattara's thousands of soldiers really wanted out of the electoral crisis, the frames within this coverage would tell a different story.

3. The groundwork already looks promising for independent, African-owned news outlets publishing news in Côte d'Ivoire. This space is easily the best and most promising terrain for Ivorian journalists to write stories that benefit Ivorians and the nation. The growing online connectivity of Ivorians (from 2.7 percent in 2010 to 26 percent in 2016, (ITU, 2016)) makes online news outlets a more feasible and fundable option when considering the news scene over the next 10 years.

A main critique of the local newspapers in Abidjan is their editorial staff are stuck in a pattern of rehashing the same ligne editorial supporting the same political party, as are many news outlets throughout West Africa. Further, most of Abidjan's newspapers exclusively report on politics, partially because it is cheap to cover and partially because (as one journalist told me) it sells better than other types of news. Journalists also tell me the major obstacle to improving Abidjan's newspapers is financial. Newspapers in Abidjan frequently miss big stories like fires, water shortages and crime because there is no newsroom budget to travel to these events. If you want an event covered in the local press, according to personal interviews with journalists, local journalists will expect you to pay a small bribe when they arrive at the site. Journalists earn so little from their salaried pay that they rely heavily on these "tips" to write news stories. This obviously creates a secondary problem of politicians using the media to further their own agendas; the parties willing to pay a journalist the most funds to cover their event favorably are going to get the best coverage. But there are many media organizations operating in Abidjan beyond the same 20 or 30 politically-funded newspapers, entrenched in the same patterns of bribery. Abidjan.net and Alert.info both present promising outlets for independent African

journalism to international audiences. Staff at Abidjan.net and Alert.info both told me, several times throughout our interview, how committed they and their staff are to writing news free of bribes, and national or international political agendas. They want to remain neutral, they said.

Other forms of Ivorian media are also in a strong position to pursue independent journalism. Radio stations broadcast in native languages throughout the rural portions of the country. Unlike the US, where TV is rapidly being replaced with online news and programs via a computer, millions of Ivorians still watch Ivorian state TV channels, imported Lebanese soap operas, and France 24, a state-run French TV channel.

### **Limitations of research**

Limitations of the research seem to be in two areas.

1) More in-depth interviews with the soldiers and politicians within each side of the crisis are advisable, as a better contribution to the social movement aspect of this study. I think their opinions on what they were fighting for and why could have added more muscle to the discussion of collective action frames in Chapters 5 and 8, because these parties were the main political activists, not the journalists interviewed. Many of these soldiers and politicians held meeting after meeting among themselves about their goals; channeling this into the research could find a better pulse on the discourse exchanged between the actors in the movement. Interviews with former soldiers or ex-Gbagbo staff could help contextualize the four frames found in Chapter 5 in the local media. Interviews with political actors would also get their opinions on how both the local *and* international press were covering their events.

2) Like many other nations in West Africa, the great majority of the Ivorian population is illiterate and consumes news via radio, TV and word of mouth. Particularly in the rural areas of the country, people may have a limited number of radio stations and TV channels to choose

from. Many times, I've asked my Ivorian friends how they got their news during the fighting and the responses were unanimous; we got news on TV or Radio France-Internationale. Many days of the crisis, people couldn't leave their homes to walk to find a newspaper, nor did anyone want to spend an extra 200 or 300 CFA (about 50 cents) for the paper. The regular distribution of papers had also been disrupted and so there was no guarantee in January, February and March that one's neighborhood kiosque would have gotten their papers on time that day.

Consequently, many of the actual news articles used in this study were not read by the Ivorian population. However, it is a well-known fact within the radio industry that most radio broadcasts, particularly international news, come from radio journalists reading the headline of a paper in the recording booth and then rebroadcasting their own paired down version of the story. I interned at Oxyjeunes Radio in Dakar, Senegal in 2014 and observed first-hand how this process of newspaper-to-airwaves operates. In short, much of the news frames produced at the local print and international level during the electoral crisis were likely reproduced on both state and private radio/TV mediums throughout Côte d'Ivoire. For example, ONUCI FM was the UN radio station of "peace" broadcasting on multiple channels throughout the country during the crisis. Additionally, France 24, Radio France Internationale, Radio Telediffusion-Ivorianne and BBC were on TV and radio waves, meaning listeners were likely consuming similar frames to those found in Chapter 5. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the main issue with analyzing radio content well after an event has passed is locating the recordings of broadcasts years later (Kellow & Steeves, 1998). All the same, this study could have been benefitted from the analysis of at least a few broadcasts from 2010 to 2011 to tune in to what the population was directly consuming.

### **Suggestions for further research**

Côte d'Ivoire's media dynamic with France is shared by many other countries in West and Central Africa; Senegal, Niger, Congo, the Gambia, Mauritania, Benin, Cameroon, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Central African Republic and Togo. AFP has offices in each of these countries, and RFI also broadcasts on radio stations throughout all of Africa. A quantitative study comparing Côte d'Ivoire's media relationship with France to another Francophone African country with political tension, (such as Gabon, Cameroon or the Congo) might help detect more quantifiable patterns in how news texts are framed. A simple point of inquiry in such a study could ask about how French media in both countries refers to the politics of French intervention.

Another suggestion for further research is the relationship between Côte d'Ivoire's growing online population and its new media outlets. How are journalists for print publications making the adjustment or taking advantage of this growing audience? How are new media technologies changing journalism practices in Côte d'Ivoire? How many Ivorians read their news online? Chapter 7 discusses the many advantages of reporting the news online during a crisis situation, such as synchronous communication and the erasure of needing to travel to report. How does the collapse of physical space and producing news synchronously contribute to journalism reporting practices in combat in different nations?

## APPENDIX<sup>7</sup>

### LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS ARTICLES

#### INCLUDED IN TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Author</b>
<i>Le Courier</i>	2/25/2011	Gestion de la crise post electorale en CI	P. Brou
	2/25/2011	Les entrepreneurs francais contraints de faire du troc	moniteur du commerce international, A. Cauchoix with MOCI
	2/25/2011	Zone CNO/ terreur avant et après les élections, les révélations d'Amnesty qui incriminent les rebelles	F Toti
	2/25/2011	Individuals attack the population with machetes	A. Dinguy
	3/1/2011	ONU tente d'obtenir en toute hate une couverture juridique	n/a
	3/1/2011	Assistance aux victimes d'Abobo: Eric Kahe: Les Ivoiriens sont formidables	G. Naismon
	3/1/2011	Pourquoi Ouattara joue sa survie	G. Naismon
	3/1/2011	Les Femmes patriotes assignent un camp de l'ONUCI	n/a
	3/1/2011	L'équation française au coeur de la résolution de la crise en Côte d'Ivoire	Sourced from blog, "Heart of the Readers," now defunct
	3/1/2011	Conquête du pouvoir dans le sang	G. Naismon
	6/21/2011	FPI: le refus de l'opposition	F. D'Almeida
	6/21/2011	Les preuves d'un malaise profond au sein des FRCI	E. Amichia

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<sup>7</sup> This appendix lists all stories about the electoral crisis used in the textual analysis of this study. This appendix does not include press stories cited in the Reference section. The acronym “n/a” means no known author, as the story has no byline.

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Author</b>
<i>Le Temps</i>	12/14/2010	La jeunesse dénonce des agissements lugubres	TBT
	12/14/2010	Quelques informations lexicales pour vous aider à comprendre la situation	Amnesty International
	12/14/2010	General Mangou saves his men	Frimo K.
	12/14/2010	Traitement des fonctionnaires et agents de l'état	Y. Bahl
	12/14/2010	Des militants LMP se réfugient au Liberia et en Guinée	T. T.
	3/16/2011	Célébration de la journée mondiale du consommateur 2011	B. Mfoungbe
	3/16/2011	ECOMOG and A. Wade en CI	K. Sonia
	3/16/2011	Destabilization: M. Théodore indigné par les manoeuvres de l'ONU	JBE
	3/16/2011	Un "commando invisible" menace, L'ONU a 72 heures pour quitter la CI	T. T.
	3/16/2011	Genocide Legitime	G. Sehoue
	3/16/2011	Après les attaques de la coalition ONUCI rebelles, hier; les activités reprennent a Yopougon	J. Essi
	3/16/2011	Les FDS repoussent violemment les rebelles	TBT
	3/17/2011	Operation palais	n/a
	3/17/2011	Rumeurs sur la présence de l'onuci à l'academic de la mer	E. Kamagate
	3/17/2011	Croyez-vous que Alassane va renoncer?	G. Sehoue
	3/17/2011	Sante/Penurie de medicaments en CI	J. Essis

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>News Outlet</b>
<i>Notre Voie</i>	12/11/2010	Sarkozy demande au Nigeria d'attaquer la CI	AVS
	12/11/2010	Here is how France is preparing	B. Sivori
	12/11/2010	Plus de 15000 Ivoiriens manifestent dimanche à Paris	Z. Krasso, a correspondent in Paris
	12/17/2010	Le jeu trouble de la communauté internationale	<a href="http://cameroon-info.net">cameroon-info.net</a>
	12/17/2010	Rebels attack and fail	n/a
	12/17/2010	Malgré les agitations du RHDP	B. Sivori
	12/17/2010	Ouattara et ses rebelles attaquent: plusieurs morts	F. Dally

12/17/2010	Les vraies causes des conflits armés en Afrique	G. Joachim, expert on petrol
12/17/2010	Les FDS et les populations determinees	V. Deh
12/18/2010	Sarkozy, une fabrication gaulliste 1ere partie	T. Meyssan
12/18/2010	L'ONU veut se maintenir par la force en CI	A. Kouyo
12/18/2010	Espionnage, mauvaise gestion	AFP
12/18/2010	Sarkozy "met en péril" les français en CI	AFP
3/25/2011	France and US, the evil in the world	B. Kore
3/25/2011	Attaque rebelle contre les biens publics	RK
3/25/2011	3 morts dont 1 policier égorgé et des maisons incendiées à Prognani	B Kore
3/26/2011	Une autre demonstration de force	C. Ebroke
3/30/2011	Aidés par l'ONUCI et Licorne: les rebelles prennent des villes de l'intérieur	Z. Koukou

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Author</b>
<i>Le Patriote</i>	12/20/2010	Asphyxie financiere	R. Sainfort, correspondant
	12/20/2010	Une délégation de Gbagbo refoulés à Conakry	K. Lassine
	12/20/2010	Odinga suggère la force pour déloger Gbagbo	n/a
	12/20/2010	Une ville morte qui ne dit pas son nom	Sory B. correspondant
	12/20/2010	Nous sommes prepare a tout	n/a
	12/20/2010	La CPI va poursuivre tous les tueurs	n/a
	12/21/2010	Faire tuer et, au besoin mourir, n'effraient pas Gbagbo	Ben Yahmed, from <i>Jeune Afrique</i>
	12/21/2010	Les populations dressent des barricades dans les rues	M. Keita
	12/21/2010	ADO doit designer son representant a l'OIF	n/a
	12/21/2010	Gbagbo et son entourage sanctionnés par l'Union Européenne	n/a
	12/21/2010	Pastors, evangelists, predicateurs, marabouts, feticheurs	n/a
	12/21/2010	Communique/les forces nouvelles, Gbagbo is a dictator	Spokesman for the military of Forces Nouvelles, written Dec.



		20
1/13/2011	Lakota bascule dans la violence aveugle	J. Coulibaly
2/22/2011	Quatre chef d'etat pour une mission presque impossible	From <i>Jeune Afrique</i>
2/22/2011	Soldats de Gbagbo tuent pour empêcher l'accueil de UA	Thierry Latt
2/22/2011	19 morts, 65 blesse dans trois jours	n/a
2/22/2011	Pourquoi Compaoré n'est pas venu	n/a
2/22/2011	le deux victoires de P. Ouattara	K. Lassine
2/22/2011	Ambassador for CI (Ouattara) in Paris	from <i>Le Parisienne</i>
2/22/2011	Avec ou sans le panel de l'UA pour Ouattara	n/a
3/24/2011	Nourrissez vous d'amour et non de haine	Sister Douabou Marie-Simone,
3/24/2011	On obus fait des dégâts à l'Université d'Abobo-Adjamé	A. Cisse
3/24/2011	ECOWAS must give a clear message to Gbagbo	R. Lagouttee, Quebec Canada
3/24/2011	Appel à la mobilisation a la place de la république	O. Gaoussou
3/24/2011	Les chefs d'etat envisagent de s'adresser à l'ONU	n/a
5/23/2011	Dieu est Dieu	D. Samou
5/23/2011	De la joie et l'émotion	Correspondent to Yamoussoukro
5/23/2011	Le temps est venu de consolider les piliers de notre république	A. Ouattara
5/23/2011	Dans quelque jours, plus de mercenaires ni miliciens	A. Leon, military official in RHDP
5/23/2011	UN accuse les FRCI d'avoir tiré sur un de ses helicop	n/a

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Author</b>
<i>Fraternité</i>	3/30/2011	Les confidences d'un chef d'etat sur ADO	G. Naismen

<b>Matin</b>			
	3/30/2011	Embrassement des fronts à l'Est et à l'Ouest: Comment la Licorne et l'Onuci volent au secours des rebelles	front page headlines
	3/30/2011	Les forces onusiennes et francaises en premiere ligne dans les combats contre l'armee Ivorienne	L. Kohon
	3/30/2011	Les congés de pâques anticipés au lycee francais	P. Soro
	3/30/2011	Duékoué, Daloa et Bondoukou aux mains des rebelles	P. Soro
	3/30/2011	La coalition Africaine en CI, comme la coalition Americano-Europeen en Libye	M. Yevou
	3/30/2011	no headline	P. Kouman
	4/29/2011	C'est un moment de tristesse que de visiter le Palais dans cet état	C. Tiesse
	4/29/2011	Les circonstances de la mort de IB	J. Beau
	4/29/2011	Probable desarmement des miliciens au'jourdhu	P. Soro
	4/29/2011	Individuals attack the population with machetes	regional correspondent
	4/29/2011	Le FMI laisse le temps au gouvernement d'évaluer ses besoins	n/a
	4/29/2011	L'etat de Côte d'Ivoire has a new chief: Ouattara	M. Koulibaly
	4/29/2011	France offre 230 millions de FDe produits pharmaceutiques destines aux Chu	M. Djidje
	4/1/2011	Les rebelles massacrent plus de 1000 a Duekoue	O. Robert
	4/1/2011	Annonce d'attaque de Yopougon	G. Boni
	4/1/2011	Don Mello, "la force est une voie sans issue	G. Boni
	4/1/2011	Un émissaire du Pape rencontre Gbagbo et Ouattara lundi	P. Soro, with AFP
	4/1/2011	Appel des binationaux à N. Sarkozy	J. Boquet, president of the association of binationals in CI
	4/1/2011	Le médiateur appelle à l'évacuation des personnes vulnérable	n/a
	4/1/2011	Dr. Dion confie le pays a Dieu	M. Djidje
	4/1/2011	La Paroisse St. Charles Borromée au secours des deplaces	A. Felix

8/24/2011	CEDEAO à l'écoute de la CI	P. Soro
8/24/2011	Le journal de la réconciliation	n/a
8/24/2011	Nous voulons un plan Marshall	P. Soro

## International Newspaper Articles

News Outlet	Date	Headline	Author
<i>Le Monde</i>	12/27/2010	Côte d'Ivoire: La France veut éviter d'être entraînée dans une crise militaire	Nathalie Guibert, Natalie Nougayrède, (avec Ricard à Bruxelles)
	12/27/2010	Plus de 14,000 Ivoiriens ont fui au Liberia, selon le HCR	No author, <i>Le Monde</i> with AFP and Reuters
	12/27/2010	Des partisans de Ouattara investissent l'ambassade de Côte d'Ivoire à Paris	<i>Le Monde</i> avec AFP
	12/28/2010	Pour Pierre Moscovici, La France n'as pas à "être en première ligne" en Côte d'Ivoire	<i>Le Monde</i> avec AFP
	12/29/2010	Nous, Africains formés en France, n'avons pas besoin des leçons de nos anciens maîtres	Faustin Aissi, premier vp de l'université du littoral Côte d'Opal and conseiller délégué de lille Metropole
	12/29/2010	Les Etats-Unis étudient des plans d'évacuation de la Côte d'Ivoire	n/a
	1/11/2011	L'esquisse d'un "budget de guerre" pour contourner le blocus économique	n/a
	1/11/2011	En s'interrogeant sur la responsabilité de l'université française dans la crise Ivoirienne et en estimant	Richard Petris, Grenoble
	1/13/2011	Côte d'Ivoire: les forces de l'ONU attaques par le camp Gbagbo	<i>Le Monde</i> avec AFP

1/13/2011	Un dandy à la présidence: cette présidence la n'est pas si facile a prendre, elle ne s'offre qu'à tout ce que Abidjan compte d'élégants, de fous dansants	Jean-Philippe Remy, jpremy@lemonde.fr
1/24/2011	Le blocus perméable de l'Hotel du Golf, à Abidjan	Beatrice Gurrey, Abidjan, envoyee special
1/25/2011	Nouvelle médiation de l'UA en CI	<i>Le Monde</i> avec AFP
1/26/2011	Côte d'Ivoire: Ouattara et Gbagbo s'affrontent sur la BCEAO	<i>Le Monde</i> avec AFP and Reuters, cites an actual AFP journalist
1/26/2011	Violences en Côte d'Ivoire: la Cour pénale internationale pourrait se saisir du dossier: someone with CPI is collecting data now	Alexandra Geneste, New York Correspondent with UN
5/3/2011	Laurent Gbagbo réapparaît en public	<i>Le Monde</i>
5/4/2011	A Abidjan, les derniers soldats de Gbagbo traqués	n/a
5/5/2011	<i>Le Monde Afrique</i> : Côte d'Ivoire, Yopougon, dernière bastion pro-Gbagbo à Abidjan, sous contrôle	<i>Le Monde</i> avec AFP

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Author</b>
<b>Associated Press</b>	December, 2010	Forces loyal to Gbagbo ambushed by opponents	published in Toronto Star (likely M. Oved)
	Dec. 16, 2010	Ivory Coast conflict deepens as protests mount over disputed elections	M. Oved, published in Christian Science Monitor
	Dec. 18, 2010	Ivory Coast violence escalates	M. Oved, in The Courier Mail
	Dec. 20, 2010	Ivory Coast death reports on the rise; world pressure mounts on leader to step down	M. Oved, published in Toronto STar
	Dec. 23, 2010	State radio is shut off	M. Oved
	Feb. 10, 2011	UN radio ordered off air in CI	M. Oved
	Feb. 24, 2011	Death squads reemerge in Ivory Coast as	M. Oved

	president contests election results	
March 2, 2011	Foreign radio pulled off air in CI	M. Oved
March 29, 2011	Heavy fighting pushes Ivory Coast to brink of war	M. Oved as interviewed by Michel Martin on NPR
March 31, 2011	Forces backing CI elected president size capital	M. Oved, UN writer Edith Ledere. Published in Washington Post.
April 2011	Fighting Moves into Major Ivory Coast City	NPR Quist-Arcton and M. Oved
April 5, 2011	Ivory Coast Fighting Centers on Abidjan	M. Oved, interviewed on NPR
April 8, 2011	Ivory Coast mercenaries are "burning people alive"	M. Oved, published in Evening Standard
April 11, 2011	French, UN fire rockets on Gbagbo	M. Oved, published in Washington Post
April 13, 2011	Gbagbo's generals swing to new Ivory Coast leader	M. Oved

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Author</b>
<i>Jeune Afrique</i>	Nov. 2, 2010	Duekoue, aux racines du mal	Andre Silver Konan
	Dec. 1, 2010	Résultats de l'élection présidentielle: la CEI sous pression, le couvre-feu prorogé	Pierre-Francois Naude
	Dec. 3, 2010	Ouattara vainqueur de l'élection présidentielle selon l'ONU, l'UE et G. Soro. Commission Electorale Indépendante (CEI) (sided with Ouattara) et Conseil Constitutionnel (Gbagbo).	Pierre Boisselet (avec AFP)
	Dec. 7, 2010	Gbagbo formé son gouvernement sans les barons du FPI	Pierre-Francois

		Naude
Jan. 31,2011	Deux "ADO" boys a Paris	Pascal Airault
Feb. 8,2011	Les archives des vignettes et patents partent en fumée	B. Mieu and Pierre-Francois Naude
Feb. 21,2011	Fermetures provisoires de banques se poursuivent en CI	B. Mieu
March 23, 2011	La guerre civile a deja commence	Pierre - François Naude
Apr. 8,2011	Les secrets d'une offensive eclair	C. Boisbouvier
Apr. 26,2011	Les derniers heures d'un président	Christopher Boisbouvier
May. 24,2011	Armée Ivoirienne: effectifs a revoir	B. Mieu
Jul. 20,2011	Quelle armée pour Ouattara?	n/a
Jul. 22,2011	Les comzones, maîtres d'Abidjan	B. Mieu

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Author</b>
<b>Reuters</b>	November 29, 2010	Candidates Charge Voter Intimidation in CI vote	n/a
	December 19, 2010	CI tells UN to get out	n/a, published in Toronto Star
	December 26, 2010	Election sparks exodus	n/a
	Dec. 27, 2010	Threats of strike, expulsions bring country closer to war	A. Aboa
	Jan. 1, 2011	UN warns Gbagbo on abuses	T. Cocks
	February 18, 2011	Banks Ordered Seized	n/a, published in NYT
	February 20, 2011	Ivoirienne Forces Fire on Protesters Seeking ouster of Incumbent	n/a, published in NYT
	March 8, 2011	3 killed in Attack in CI	n/a
	March 31, 2011	Ivory Coast rebels seize key cities	L. Coulibaly and A. Aboa
	April 4, 2011	Rival armies dig in	n/a, published in Toronto Star
	April 21, 2011	New Ivory Coast army turns against ex-allies	n/a

May 5, 2011	Mass grave discovered in Abidjan playground	A. Aboa
May 22, 2011	Ivory Coast inaugurates president	n/a
February 9, 2014	Analysis: War-scarred Ivory Coast reopens for business	J. Bavier, D. Flynn

<b>News Outlet</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Author</b>
<b>Agence France-Press</b>	March 30, 2011	Les Forces de Ouattara contrôlent les "trois quarts" du pays	CI journalist,
	March 30, 2017	Combats à Tiebissou, à 40 km de la capitale Yamoussoukro	n/a
	March 30, 2017	Cacao: Ouattara met en garde contre collaboration avec Gbagbo	n/a
	March 30, 2011	Environ 900 Ivorian réfugiés au Togo HCR	n/a
	March 30, 2011	Ouattara en force, mais Abidjan décidera de l'issue	T. Morfin
	March 31, 2011	Des pro-Gbagbo accusés de "massacres" de l'Ouest	n/a
	March 31, 2011	Les détenus de la prison d'Abidjan ont été libérés	n/a
	March 31, 2011	M. Gbagbo chez lui, pas "réfugie dans une ambassade" RTI	n/a
	March 31, 2011	Libération du prêtre de l'ONG Caritas enlevé Mardi à Abidjan	n/a
	March 31, 2011	Les Forces de Ouattara encerclent Abidjan, Gbagbo doit partir maintenant	n/a
	March 31, 2011	Violences: des soldats français	n/a
	March 31, 2011	Air France annule son Vol Paris-Abidjan de jeudi	n/a
	March 31, 2011	Ouattara a promise que l'intégrité physique de Gbagbo serait respecté	n/a
	April 9, 2011	Un blindé des forces pro-Gbagbo détruit pas les militaires français	n/a
	April 10, 2011	Villepin pour une solution politique et non militaire	n/a
	April 11, 2011	Poursuite des tirs anti-Gbagbo, à la "demande" de Ouattara selon lui	n/a
	April 11, 2011	Combats au sol après les frappes vers la résidence de Gbagbo	n/a
April 11, 2011	Fin des combats au sol vers la résidence de M. Gbagbo	n/a	

April 11, 2011	La résidence de Gbagbo partiellement détruite, Blé Goudé	n/a
April 11, 2011	Nouveaux tirs d'hélicoptères français vers la résidence de Gbagbo	n/a
April 11, 2011	L. Gbagbo a été arrêté lundi par les forces d'Alassane Ouattara	n/a
April 11, 2011	Simone Gbagbo, la "dame de fer" est tombée avec Laurent	n/a
April 11, 2011	Ouaga explose de joie après l'arrestation de Gbagbo	n/a
April 11, 2011	Je souhaite qu'on arrête les armes, tele pro-Ouattara	n/a
April 11, 2011	L'Objectif de ONUCI était que Ouattara puisse présider	n/a
April 12, 2011	Ban-ki Moondemande à Ouattara d'éviter un nouveau bain de sang	n/a
April 12, 2011	Arrestation de Gbagbo: Blaise Compaoré regrette le temps perdu	n/a
April 12, 2011	Des images de toute l'opération, ministre français	n/a
April 12, 2011	Le gouvernement français se juge inattaquable en CI	n/a
April 12, 2011	La presse française estime Ouattara affaiblie par l'intervention de la France	n/a
April 12, 2011	Le Camp Gbagbo accuse "les forces forces speciales francaises" de l'avoir enleve	n/a
April 12, 2011	CI: message "extrêmement fort à tous les dictateurs"	n/a
April 12, 2011	Arrestation de Gbagbo: une chance de mettre fin à la crise (CEDEAO)	n/a
April 12, 2011	Licorne: "mission accomplie" la force doit "se replier sur ses bases"	n/a
April 12, 2011	La Banque mondiale prête à reprendre son aide	n/a
April 12, 2011	Mort d'un ex-ministre de Gbagbo arrêté avec lui	n/a
April 12, 2011	Gbagbo assigner a residence	n/a
April 13, 2011	Intervention en Côte d'Ivoire: un "processus transparent du debut a la fin"	n/a
April 13, 2011	L'exportation de cacao va reprendre immédiatement	n/a
April 13, 2011	CI: exemple du besoin démocratique en AFrique de l'ouest	n/a
April 13, 2011	L. Gbagbo transféré vers le nord du pays (ONU)	n/a



April 13, 2011	Golf Hôtel d'Abidjan, le prisonnier Gbagbo s'en va, les autres restent	n/a
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