Neo-Colonization or Continental Realization

Sino-African interaction examined and analyzed

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Extract

This essay examines early-modern to modern Sino-African relations and interactions, with a particular focus on African voices and sources. Starting with a brief history of interactions and aid focused on the Chinese side of the equation, where the two main periods of Chinese thought on international relations are qualified, it then goes into detail about how the Chinese State currently operates in Africa, with a look both at the postitive sides of its support, both political as well as economical as well as the problems that follow said support. It then goes into the private sphere, looking both at the costs and benefits of Chinese corporate entry into Africa, by examining the effects on firstly resource extracting industries and then the service sector. Finally it briefly discusses how African and international public organizations are affecting the equation.

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Introduction

When examining Sino-Africa relations, there are two extreme paradigms most of the coverage falls into.

One is that the Chinese invasion has arrived to act as a new colonial overlord in Africa, using their inscrutable oriental mentality and endless money to take African jobs, minerals and food to fuel their own takeover of the world. They stifle democracy, peddle both technology to oppress and spy on the people as well as selling snake-oil, called "Traditional Chinese Medicine" that leads ever more people to death.

The other that the Communist party has extended a hand to the global South, to which the African countries belong, as equals. Hoping to help Africa rise up and make it into the continent it should have been, if not for the Western Imperialism they have all suffered, the Chinese State Owned Enterprises and Cultural and Educational ministries are all working to make Africa into a strong and equal partner, that can stand with them to make a better world for all people.

When presented with these two extremes, it is easy to assume the golden mean, that the truth lies somewhere in the middle but the Chinese influence in Africa undeniably has the possibility of furthering and changing Africa for the better. The question is if Africa is able to harness the Chinese economic and political support into a stronger position for itself on the world stage or if it has simply had a new entity extracting resources while leaving nothing of lasting value to the African peoples.

The situation in Africa is complex, varied and ever changing. Many of the sources I rely on are partly made outdated by several recent events: the last financial recession and furthermore the shale-oil boom are two examples that have led to large changes for resource-extraction reliant African states such as Angola and would warrant a closer academic review in the future. Nevertheless there is much that remains relevant, both historical facts as well as attitudes and policies that have not had time to change. The problems African nations face have not been radically altered, though they may have become more or less severe and new ones arisen with time.

The purpose of this essay is to show that Sino-African interactions are multifaceted, both at the private and public level, but on the whole are a positive influence on the African continent. Rather than simply disregarding the problematic elements of these interactions, they will instead be analysed, with a particular focus on relying on local, African sources when that is possible.

In order to do this, I will firstly examine the history of Chinese and African interaction, in

particular the difference between the earlier, Mao-driven period and the later, post-opening period, so as to give a proper background to the modern approaches, ideas and policies that permeate the field.

Secondly, I will look at some of the major issues and themes that predominate discussions on Africa and China on the state level, such as aid, corruption and agency: whether China has changed the paradigm or, as some claim, returned it to an older form by making triangulation viable again and bringing more options and competition into Africa.

Thirdly, I will examine how Chinese non-State actors, whether corporate or individual have been operating in Africa and what influence this has, with a focus on the various forms these activities take.

Finally, I end with a conclusion and various thoughts on the subjects discussed in the essay itself.

1.0 China and Africa in the Past

„The people of the countries in the socialist camp should unite, the people of the countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America should unite, the people of all the continents should unite, all peace-loving countries should unite, and all countries subjected to U.S. aggression, control, intervention or bullying should unite, and so form the broadest united front to oppose the U.S. imperialist policies of aggression and war and to defend world peace." -Mao-Tse Tung (Tung, 1966)

While there had been limited contact between Chinese envoys and African states in ancient times, the first real interaction between China and Africa (on a level higher than mere commerce) were the tributary missions of the Admiral Zheng He in the 14th century, under the Yongle Emperor (Hansen, 2015; Prah, 2007). Their primary purpose was to expand the tributary system outside the periphery of the Chinese state, wherein nearby states would pay material and symbolic tributes to China and admit to its supremacy, while China would then gift the states in return in various ways. These seven missions travelled throughout southeast Asia all the way to the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa, with the Chinese dispensing silver, porcelain, silk and other goods while receiving novelties such as zebras, ivory and most famously, a giraffe, which was thought to be a mythical Chinese animal called 'qilin' and taken as proof of the favour of heaven for the mission (Hansen, 2015). The successors of the Yongle Emperor however decided not to continue the voyages for reasons both economic and political, so interaction between the two areas once again went back to the mercantile level. While of symbolic value, these interactions had little to no lasting influence on Sino-African relations (Jacques, 2012).

It wasn't until the post-revolutionary period in China, when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) under Chairman Mao gained power after defeating the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) in the Chinese Civil War, that they once again turned their eyes on the continent to any serious degree (Haifang, 2010).

When examining the modern history of Sino-African co-operation, it is possible to divide it into two distinct periods, where both are defined by differing leading visions on how the Chinese state should behave in on the international stage and what its purpose in the world is: the Mao Period and Deng Xiaoping Period.

The Mao Period, where Chairman Mao's vision of the purpose of the Chinese state included ideological intervention in the third world for the purposes of supporting revolution in the third world, opposition to the Western imperialist powers and infrastructure constructed primarily as political tool (Naidu, 2010). During this time, Mao prioritized the self-sufficiency of the Chinese state and thought the self-sufficiency of all the third-world to be of paramount importance (Tung, 1966). Various independence movements and later socialist groups were supported with material and training, with economic support being limited by

the fact that China itself was still a developing country. In many ways equally important was Zhou Enlai, Premier and Foreign Minister of China, whose diplomatic prowess helped create the positive basis for Sino-African relations (Spence, 1999).

The second period can be called the Deng Xiaoping period, wherein the opening of the Chinese economic system following the death of Mao and Enlai and the defeat of their more conservative followers, the Gang of Four, meant that China moved to a more market oriented system, or "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" in 1978 (Gamer, 2012). This meant less ideological support, a more moderate view and diplomatic response towards the 'Imperialist powers' and abandoning the goal of self-sufficiency. This meant a vastly increased need for natural resources to power Chinese industry, which necessitated either engagement with already powerful industrialized countries or the opening of new areas, such as in Africa (Gamer).

As part of this period, the beginning of the "Going out" initiative of the Central government meant that both the powerful State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) as well as private businesses were encouraged to invest abroad, with investments in Africa rapidly increasing following it, as the Chinese economy allowed greater and greater levels of intervention in foreign economies. (Gamer) Following the 2008 financial crisis, there has been both official and unofficial focus on market diversification in the third world, so as to avoid over-reliance on the Western economies for Chinese growth, making Africa a part of the renewed focus of the Chinese economy (Gamer).

1.1 The Mao Period

"To make friends first, then to reinforce understanding and finally to establish official relations naturally." (Karumbidza, 2007)

Following the breakdown of the United Front against the Japanese in World War 2 and their victory against the Nationalists in the Chinese Civil War, the Chinese Communist Party found itself internationally isolated, with the small nationalist enclave of Taiwan having recognition at the United Nations as the official Republic of China. Alongside a wish to spread the revolution further this led to the Chinese focus on positive foreign relations as The Communist Party of China sought official recognition by the world as the legitimate government of the country of China (Gamer, 2012).

The quotes at the start of Chapter 1.0 and this subchapter are therefore given to try and explain part of the purpose of Chinese "developmental aid" though the Chinese shied away from using the term as it was employed by the West. While sometimes today called an "emerging donor" (Shaw, 2010), China began its support at much the same time as the West in the 1950s, often in the exact same way; the granting of scholarships, loans and improvement of infrastructure, as well as in support of independence movements and armed groups such as UNITA but also in cultural contributions: Chinese musical troupes,

translations of Chinese works and invitations for African artists to perform in China (Naidu, 2010).

Africa itself was going through an upheaval just as the Chinese finished their revolution; as the various countries of the continent rose up against their colonial overlords and sought full and partial independence. As the former overlords variously sought engagement, attacked or simply acquiesced to the demands of the nations, they finally succumbed to decolonization; often because this was simply cheaper, as they then could disavow responsibility for the care of their colonies even while they were able to still plunder them at will using market mechanisms (Bräutigan, 2010).

The main difference at the time between Chinese and Western aid was one of ideology and perception: both in its form of socialism (later "with Chinese characteristics") as opposed to Capitalist democracy (and then against Soviet Communism), as well as the fact that to both the Chinese and the Africans had perceived shared grievances with Western Imperialism; the Opium War and unequal treaties having been turned from domestic failures of governance into acts of rampant foreign imperialism (Lovell, 2014).

The perception, therefore, was that deals were between two groups that had suffered the same way, from the actions of the same people, and the language and tone of the deals and treaties written at the time reflect this. The "Five Guiding Principles of Chinese Aid" were:

Five Guiding Principles of Chinese Aid
1. Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity
2. Mutual non-aggression
3. Non-interference in each others internal affairs
4. Equality and mutual benefits
5. Peaceful co-existence

Already the principles of non-interference were visible at the policy level and in diplomatic missives. In fact, "friendship" was the term used most frequently when describing this relationships. With the export of a model of self-sufficiency, based firstly on the achievement of national unity through force of arms, then an economy that was not dependent on foreign goods and capital, China sought therefore to shape Africa, to the extent it could with its limited power (Monson, 2006).

In contrast to the Chinese principles, the United Nations (UN), under United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) attempted in 1964 to help the now defined Third world by suggesting a 'New International Economic Order' (NIEO) whose principles were the following:

New International Economic Order
1. Developing countries must be entitled to regulate and control the activities of

multinational corporations operating within their territory.

2. They must be free to nationalize or expropriate foreign property on conditions favourable to them.

3. They must be free to set up associations of primary commodities producers similar to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, created on September 17, 1960 to protest pressure by major oil companies (mostly owned by U.S., British, and Dutch nationals) to reduce oil prices and payments to producers); all other states must recognize this right and refrain from taking economic, military, or political measures calculated to restrict it.

4. International trade should be based on the need to ensure stable, equitable, and remunerative prices for raw materials, generalized non-reciprocal and non-discriminatory tariff preferences, as well as transfer of technology to developing countries; and should provide economic and technical assistance without any strings attached.

While the language contained in these principles was to be lauded, efforts on the ground proved less than satisfactory as none of the directives contained within the NIEO ever came into fruition. At the time, the Americans no longer wanted dollars to be converted into gold in 1971 (Dubosse, 2010, Bräutigan, 2010). Even setting aside the results of the NIEO, its language stood in stark contrast with that of the Chinese, with a proliferation of demands and a lack of challenge to the status quo.

Meanwhile, China, an emerging country itself and a part of the third world itself, had already been supporting Africa materially, technologically and ideologically for decades at that point. Technical training and support, as well as huge projects like the TAZARA Railway in Tanzania were all being undertaken at Chinese behest in Africa. These initiatives were not without their problems however, with the TAZARA railway, despite good intentions having several deep flaws discussed in the later chapter "Limits of Aid" (Monson, 2006).

Therefore as the various problems arose in the co-operation between the two, the "Five Guiding Principles of Chinese Aid" were refined into the "Eight Principles of Economic and Technical Aid":

8 Principles of Economic and Technical Aid
1. China always bases itself on the principle of equality and mutual benefit in providing aid to other nations.
2. China never attaches any conditions or asks for any privileges.
3. China helps lighten the burden of recipient countries as much as possible.
4. China aims at helping recipient countries to gradually achieve self reliance and

independent development.

5. China strives to develop aid projects that require less investment but yield quicker results.

6. China provides the best-quality equipment and materials of its own manufacture.

7. In providing technical assistance, China shall see to it that the personnel of the recipient country fully master such techniques.

8. The Chinese experts are not allowed to make any special demands or enjoy any special amenities.

All of the reformed principles had grounding in the work already done in Africa, with many of the details based on African request for changes in Sino-African interaction. Following them came the first of the great booms in Chinese focus in Africa, as from 1966 to 1977, Chinese aid to Africa grew from $428 million to $1.9 Billion, as the Chinese used political, economic and cultural means to curry favour with African nations, which undeniably contributed to their admission to the United Nations, replacing Taiwan (Haifang, 2010).

The timing of this acceptance was no coincidence. The end of the Cultural Revolution and various Soviet policies and interventions such as the 1968 Prague spring, where the Soviets claimed the right to "correct" any "incorrect" forms of socialism, had lead the CCP to the conclusion that disengaging from the Soviets, with whom they shared a large land border and aligning with the United States instead was the thing to do. The fact that the US had endorsed the Chinese in the UN vote was but the first of many signs of the growing closeness between the nations, as well as reform within China itself (Gamer, 2012).

1.2 Deng Xiaoping Period

"*A basic contradiction between socialism and the market economy does not exist.*"
- Deng Xiaoping (Spence, 1999)

Deng Xiaoping rose as the events of the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward were still leaving marks on the political landscape. Mao's death as well as that of Zhou Enlai, followed by the toppling of the Gang of Four meant that while the words and thoughts of Mao were still partially venerated, his economic ideas and theories were ever more a thing of the past (Spence).

The underlying focus of the Chinese national myth and the cornerstone of the CCPs right to rule had begun to erode as the State abandoned communist values; Whereas before the idea had been that together the people and the CCP were creating a more just world, where all benefited under an equal society of the workers, peasant and party actors, now it shifted towards more capitalist ones, where the CCP merely guaranteed that any and all that wanted could become 'rich' could attempt that, as well as focusing on creating a stable society and environment for such growth; this became ever more important as the atmosphere in China became more embroiled with discontent over growing inequality, the

lack of transparency in governing and other issues related to society at large that were less pertinent under Mao (Gamer, 2012).

In order to revamp the economy towards a more capital and export oriented one, the CCP needed vast amounts of resources, both in the form of human ones, capital and raw materials. While China was bountifully blessed with the first and the second wasn't long in coming as policies under Deng sought rapprochement with the wealthy Chinese diaspora, the third became an ever larger problem for the Chinese state. It's important to note what a complete turnaround this was for China. The capitalists and landowners were now praised and sustained internal growth. One of the guiding points of Mao's vision of an independent China was discarded in favour of explosive growth. The setbacks of the Mao period were to be overcome through rapid commercialization of Chinese industry, foreign funding and technology acquired. China had been a country that was exporting revolution and changes to the world and now they wanted to export commodities and consumer products (Gamer, 2012).

While the earlier period of re-adjustment to a more capitalist society or "Communism with Chinese Characteristics" is important to the understanding of the Chinese involvement in Africa, illustrative of the change are the "Four Principles on Sino-African Economic and Technical Cooperation":
Four Principles on Sino-African Economic and Technical Cooperation
1. Equality and mutual benefit
2. Emphasis on practical results
3. Diversity in form
4. Economic development

Greatly simplified from their earlier, more verbose forms, while the language of equality and non-interference remained, the focus on the economic parts of the co-operation strengthened considerably. While many cheered a focus on "Bread, not votes", where the focus on economic reform came before political reform, others saw this as a beginning of a different kind of co-operation between the two (Obiorah, 2007).

Meanwhile, the African countries were mostly under-performing. Stagnant and corrupt economies were ruthlessly being taken advantage of by western powers, while open conflict and civil war arising from various sources, political, ethnic and religious shook the continent. While economic aid continued, it seemed that there was no way for the African nations to escape being merely a sideshow of the world. Culminating in the aggressive neoliberal doctrines (also known as in economics as "Shock Therapy") forced upon them in the 1990's by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, many African nations were on the brink of societal collapse or even past it (Klein, 2007).

Liberalization of these governments also made the old form of Chinese support more difficult, as prior to this they had mostly been on the state-to-state level, but now as the state had been kneecapped and hobbled, this severely influenced how China could interact with them. This coincided with the shifting of national values and goals for China; as they continued to support various African nations, this time more through their State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and the granting of interest free loans to African governments and credit to promote Chinese trade and investments (Cheru & Calais, 2010).

During all this, the discourse China put forth on its engagement in Africa only intensified; it portrayed its rise as a "peaceful" one, as it began to focus even more on cultural co-operation and work in Africa. Several programs started then that are still ongoing and as the new millennium arrived, the first Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was held in Beijing, with one held every 3 years since.
The main results of the first forum were the "Programme for China-Africa Cooperation in Economic and Social Development" and the "Beijing Declaration of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation". Both set out in detail the grievances both Africa and China had with each other as well as the rest of the world and its systems and how they could work together to end them (Naidu, 2010).

It was just prior to the first FOCAC, as China went through the second stage of its economic opening, that the CCP began the "Going Out" policy, wherein the Chinese government gave economic subsidies to companies who would either start direct branches or joint-ventures abroad, so as to make Chinese enterprise internationally competitive (Kragelund, 2010). As Africa was seen as an easier market to enter, it became somewhat of a "training ground" for Chinese companies (Chidaushe, 2007).

As the Chinese private interests invested heavily in Africa and changed their private sector, the stage was set for the last major event, the 2008 financial crisis. As the resource-exporting economies weathered the crisis, China redoubled a focus on Africa, as a way of exporting both its products for market diversification, but also to keep their construction boom going (Alves, 2013). As China's economic situation looks ever less stable, it is obvious Africa cannot rely on unchanged support from China, which has already caused a change in the policy of African nations (Chen, 2013).

2.0 The CCP and African Governments

By far the majority of significant Chinese interactions with Africa remain on the state-to-state level, (Shaw, 2010) even as the "Going Out" policy of the CCP has meant even more private investment since its inception in 1999 (Dubosse, 2010). According to Haifang (2010),

it is at this level that the Chinese Communist Party is most comfortable and able to use its influence. Furthermore, we can see the most direct influence of the Chinese money, ideology and political efforts on the various countries of Africa at this level.

But has China changed the paradigm of intervention in Africa? Or is it simply continuing in the old patterns already established by the West, albeit seemingly more successfully?

There is no doubt that the Chinese are altering the international climate for foreign aid and support. The problem here being, of course, that China is one country dealing with an entire continent where every African country that recognizes the People's Republic of China (PRC) rather than Taiwan (Republic of China [ROC]) as the legitimate government of China receives some level of support. In addition to this, China often deals differently with different countries: as strategic interests and political ones clash, when a deal is made, when prestige is on the line or simply when the leaders in charge are able to make better or worse deals than others (Kragelund, 2010). This means that an exhaustive analysis of Chinese intervention in the continent is unfeasible, if only for reasons of length.

The fact that China is a unified voice, dealing with individual countries is a matter of some importance to many in Africa, as it leaves Africa in a weaker bargaining position than the European Union or the United States, but as the African Union has not been able to organize together well enough, deals mostly remain on the individual state-to-state level (Cheru & Calais, 2010, Ikome, 2010).

It is therefore better to focus on certain issues, such as corruption, aid policy and intervention as well as agency, in certain countries, starting with the issue of aid and autonomy and then going into corruption and the limits of aid.

2.1 Aid and Autonomy

"... all the money in this world is either Red or Blue. I do not have my own Green money, so where can I get some from? I am not taking a cold war position. All I want is money to build it." – Julies Nyere (Monson, 2006)

The TAZARA Railway is often used as the ideal example of positive infrastructural aid from China where the recipient country was dealt with fairly and provided with aid that helped develop and strengthen its own industrial capacity (Mutesa, 2010). When Zambia in the 1970s first attempted to solicit funds from traditional western International financial institutions (IFIs), such as the World Bank, IMF and several western governments, including the US and Great Britain (their former colonial master) for the TAZARA Railway, they were with simple denials based on "economic viability". The project was meant to connect the central province of Zambia with the Tanzanian port of Dar el Saalam, to lessen and perhaps eliminate the dependence on "white settler" regimes in South Africa, Rhodesia and to a

lesser degree Mozambique and Angola. All the existing infrastructure led to these countries, which meant that in order to export their products, Zambians had to rely on governments opposed to the idea of black self-rule. Understandably, this reply was not well received and the government then widened the net of potential donors (Monson, 2006).

It was at this juncture that the Chinese, still under the stewardship of Chairman Mao, began the $500 million project that finally resulted in the railway going from plan to reality. At the time, Cold War politics meant that the move was met by scepticism, then outright hostility by the West, with the United States even starting a competing project with the Tanzam Highway. All of this happened only after they were already engaged with the Chinese. Monson (2006) points out that until the Chinese got involved, the West did not see fit to send any material aid for the construction of infrastructure whatsoever.

The story of the Uhuru (Freedom) railway became symbolic of Chinese aid because it contained several thematic elements that still resonate today when it comes to aid politics, whether Chinese or Western.

Firstly, it is an example of the often frustrating reality that when African nations are reliant on outside funding from the West to create large-scale improvements or engage in projects of various sorts, they have little to no say on whether they receive the funding or not regardless of how important they themselves think it is. This lack of agency is common all over the third world, with the donors having the upper hand more often than not. Chinese speeches at the time of the railway directly criticize this attitude that "it is too costly and is not worth the while to build railways in Africa" and that "Africans are too backward to master technology" and this discourse has only grown stronger with time (Dubosse, 2010) (Monson, 2006). This lack of respect and faith for African institutions is all the more ironic considering the subtle criticism China exhibits towards democracy; where it criticized democratic institutions as "unreliable", such as after the 2007 presidential elections in Kenya (Jacques, 2012).

Secondly, while the Chinese were more focused on ideological goals at the time, the language of co-operation and "self-strengthening" still resonates to at least some degree: rhetoric on both the African and Chinese fronts is less about the weakness of Africa and how they must be "helped" and more about how Africa is a worthy partner with which to engage and a market worth investing in (Chidaushe, 2007). China is seen as a fellow developing country, rather than as either former or even current imperialist overlord, with concepts like "friendship" or "comrades in arms" being used widely early on and retaining their strength today (Monson, 2006) (Gadzala & Hanusch, 2010). The largest change is that China no longer engages in direct political involvement. During the Mao period, they provided support not only to governments but also various groups seeking independence, socialist revolution or other goals that aligned with the Chinese. Nowadays, Chinese aid is aimed

more widely and prides itself of non-political string. Indeed, the lack of conditionality for Chinese aid, whether in the forms of grants, loans or direct aid throws them in stark contrast with the conditions and patronizing language of the West, showing "respect in action and not only words" when it comes to African sovereignty (Obiorah, 2007).

Thirdly, it is an example of "triangulation", where the various countries of the world could play the Cold War powers against each other to their own benefit. After the fall of the Soviet Union and the rise of the United States as superpower, developing countries had only the Western neoliberal countries and institutions to deal and engage with. The time of triangulation has now returned; competition between not only China and the West but also other developing and rising economies can give various African countries a stronger point from which to negotiate by playing interested parties against each other, again increasing their agency and independence (Large, 2007).

It is excellent a modern example of all these elements exists. The country of Angola, where The People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) found itself in a precarious financial situation after the cessation of its 2002 civil war, as it desperately required funds to rebuild and revitalize its war-torn country and utilize its bountiful natural resources (Isaac, 2010).

Having already made several deals with private banking institutions for oil-backed loans during the civil war that needed repaying, the MPLA was now in the position of having to ask the Bretton Woods nations (United States, Canada, Western Europe, Australasia and Japan), who had directly funded their opponents in the civil war for access to loan funds for reconstruction (Isaac, 2010).

Two years of negotiations followed, where the various countries demanded as pre-conditions "that the Angolan government restart negotiations with the World Bank and IMF on fiscal monitoring and control of public expenditure and that they openly demonstrate some level of political will and commitment to national reconciliation and to hold free and fair elections" (Isaac, 2010). Furthermore, the government was also required to use revenues gained from resource extraction "for reconstruction and to put in place a plan to combat corruption and promote transparency" and "reduce state monopolies in various sectors" (Isaac, 2010).

After two years of negotiations with the IMF and World Bank, it was clear that the bilateral donors and IFIs had no interest in consolidating peace in Angola and help reconstruct destroyed infrastructure. In fact, with the end of the civil war, donor funding for humanitarian aid was dwindling drastically and nothing significant was being received by the government for development. The West essentially gave up on supporting Angola, a move which many Angolan economists and politicians saw as "a classic blackmailing strategy to

force Angola to adhere to IMF and World Bank conditions and prescriptions which…have failed in most parts of Africa" (Isaac, 2010).

It was at this juncture that China again stepped in and provided financial support. Three loans, totalling $4.5 billion were to be controlled and managed by the Angolan Ministry of Finance, as well as several others under "complimentary agreements" directly under the President and his "Office of National Reconstruction". While these were loans, not grants, they had better interest than the private loans Angola had already engaged in and allowed it to negotiate better terms in later deals with other financial institutions and countries. Furthermore, the Chinese were interested in a wide variety of economic investments, though oil and diamonds were the predominant ones, with preferential trade deals following these treaties that lowered or even abolished tolls on many Angolan products, leading to Angola becoming China's biggest African trade partner as of 2013. All the while, the IMF criticized it not only for its lack of transparency, but also for "wasteful expenditures" despite a greatly increased national budget as the Angolan state went from a budgetary deficit to a stronger and stronger budget surplus (Aguilar & Goldstein, 2009).

Though you can point to Western aid that is similar to Chinese aid, in that it has given many African countries both material benefits, in the form of infrastructural and trade assistance, it is undeniable that Chinese aid has granted African nations increased political and economic leverage against the West (Dubosse, 2010).

2.2 Corruption and the limits of Aid
Corruption is a world-wide phenomena, but Africa has always had a reputation for being inundated with it (Cheru & Calais, 2010). One of the many problems Western critics have with China is that it is enabling and supporting corruption in Africa; both directly as a tool to grab resources or achieve political favours, such as in the support it showed the Angolan government or in Zimbabwe where they shipped arms to the government (Karumbidza, 2007) or indirectly, by ignoring existing corruption and problems, such as in Sudan or Ethiopia (Wenping, 2010).

Furthermore, these criticisms are echoes not only by Western critics or civil organizations, but also local ones like established political parties and academics. In many cases, the opposition to Chinese intervention in the national apparatus has reached a fever pitch, with some parties even making it one of their main electoral issues (Bariyo, 2015).

China's aid is problematic both in the way in which China gives aid as well as the form they arrive in. Even famous and positively thought of aid projects such as the TAZARA railway suffer from the problem of lack of training, making the receiving nations reliant on China for technical expertise to maintain and expand the project, as skills were not transferred properly (Monson, 2006). The fact that much of the projects funded are for the purposes of

resource extraction that directly benefit China and must use products and labour from China makes it so that it benefits China more, as well as the fact that rather than reducing unemployment in Africa, many of the projects seem to be more about reducing it in China (Chidaushe, 2007). The usage of resource-backed loans helps further over-specialization of their economies, even as the countries themselves strive to diversify their economies in the face of competition from China in those industries.

Beijing's official policy of non-intervention in the internal political affairs of other nations, (Enlai, 1956) can furthermore be criticized on several fronts for enabling behaviour that directly stands against the betterment of African society and enables serious negative social elements (Askouri, 2007). They point out that it is to the benefit of the Chinese leadership in several ways to keep such a policy; it allows it to paint itself as being politically neutral, when in fact it merely stands with those in power and the status quo (Isaac, 2010). It allows it to paint its ideological enemies as imperialists of various stripes, whether economic, cultural or otherwise; helping to create an atmosphere of "South-South Solidarity" (Haifang, 2010) and allowing it to dismiss any criticism of its own state as being imperialism, whether in disguise or no (Karumbidza, 2007).

The fact of the matter is however, that corruption in African nations is to the benefit of China from a purely economic standpoint; it allows them to utilize resources efficiently by simply supporting the ruling elites and therefore gain easy access to natural resources, even though they might not be the ideal candidates. Furthermore, this follows established cultural norms in China, where corruption of this sort is widespread (Aguilar & Goldstein, 2009).

Even infrastructural projects with definitive positive effects, like ZTE's (a major Chinese telecommunications company) construction of a centralized, modern telecommunications network in Ethiopia is balanced by the fact that they not only helped insure the state monopoly, they also allegedly installed Chinese monitoring software, allowing the quashing of civil dissent (Read, 2013). The fact that all the telecommunications equipment's spare parts can only be acquired from China further entangles the situation, as while they train local staff to replace the Chinese, Ethiopia cannot maintain the physical part of their network even after the Chinese workers have left (Read).

In their defence of Chinese actions in Africa, many academics are quick to point out that Western intervention has rarely, if ever, been without strings or solely to help Africa (Dubosse, 2010, Wenping, 2010, Haifang, 2010). In many cases, such as with the Angolan loans following the cessation of their civil war in 2002, many other private financial institutes had provided loans similar to those provided by the Chinese (Bräutigan, 2010).

Even when the Chinese provide credit rather than direct funding, they are accused of simply

engaging in base mercantilism, as mostly the credit agreements stipulate that it must be used for Chinese services and products, even when they are already by far the cheapest available (Cheru & Calais, 2010, Alves, 2013).

Furthermore, many of the economic actions China commits are only possible thanks to the liberalizations forced upon African nations by Western-led financial institutions. Without them, the lax and easy environment for Chinese entry simply would not have been there, and in many cases they feel that the concern the West shows for African nations is more paternalism and sour grapes than genuine care (Yonghong, 2010).

Meanwhile, academics like Yonghong, Haifang and Alves also point out that the cultural efforts, direct educational grants and other such programs that directly help African people, transfer real knowledge and skills and help develop human resources are among the oldest of the Chinese programs and ones that are constantly being strengthened, with the opening of numerous Confucian institutes being one such example (Haifang, 2010).

Yet these counterpoints mentioned above do not detract from the fact that China, as other academics like Hansen or Gamer point out, is itself a country struggling with corruption and has done next to nothing to curb corruption in those areas it engages in with Africa, and that as China exports the 'Chinese model' or strengthens the 'Beijing Consensus', it does so often at the expense of Democracy and Human Rights. (Aguilar & Goldstein, 2009, Jacques, 2012) The general gist of it was exemplified in the idea, that because the west engages with China, despite its poor human rights record, so could China engage with other countries with poor records (Cheru & Calais, 2010).

The fact that the CCP does not allow social organizations not under their direct or indirect control, whether international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or local civil society organizations (CSOs), to operate in China means that they are dismissive of them in policy as well as in word, and seem unwilling on a fundamental level to agree to the commonality of human rights legislation (Shaw, 2010, Yonghong, 2010). Chinese aid therefore has often been used against various such organizations, whether in indirect forms, such as with the monitoring of said organizations via internet infrastructure in Ethiopia or more direct means, when Chinese arms are used to quell protests or riots even crimes against humanity (Wenping, 2010).

Africa needs all the aid it can get, but it becomes hard to say if it helps more than it hinders when it further exacerbates existing social woes, whether by maintaining existing unjust elites and status quos, when Chinese aid is in the form of arms and other equipment to suppress citizens and when it directly undermines international efforts to enforce peace in situations in the world.

3.0 The Private Sphere

While state level grants, loans and other interactions are often the most internationally visible and discussed part of the Chinese interactions in China (Brautigan, 2010), they are by no means the limit of Chinese involvement in the African continent. While in some cases, these interactions happen under the auspices of the Chinese State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) or as a direct extension of Chinese diplomacy, the private sector has increasingly been involved within various African countries ever since the "Going Out" policy began in 1999 (Kragelund, 2010).

In many cases, Chinese companies are only one of many foreign companies to do business in these countries, such as with Huawei entering the telecom market in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) or Chinese-based CITIC Constructions operating in Angola. Others, such as ZTE working with the state telecom monopoly in Ethiopia, are more exceptional, as was the closure of the Chinese-owned Collum Coal Mine in Zambia (Kragelund, 2010).

Academics argue whether the nature of these companies is any worse than other capitalist ventures, whatever their national origin. On one hand, there are criticisms that Chinese corporations treat their staff more poorly, both in terms of working conditions as well as pay and other material benefits, (Chen, 2013, Disenyana, Draper, & Biacuna, 2010) with the entry of Chinese corporations in general having a downwards trend on wages and benefits (Kamau, 2010). In some cases, the treatment of workers has gone so far as to prompt government intervention due to poor working conditions (Mutesa, 2010).

Environmental destruction, whether as a side-effect of Chinese corporate policy, such as with mining or as a primary cause, such as with logging, has also been criticized (Kabemba, 2010). Furthermore, they point out corruption scandals as symptoms of a negative relationship between Chinese corporations and African governments.

While many of these criticisms are similar to those of Chinese state-run operations, the Chinese state itself has only a limited amount of pull over the corporations, as opposed to the near absolute control it does over the official ones. Some, such as the introduction of "Traditional Chinese Medicine" in Africa runs directly counter to Chinese policy (Chen, 2013). Regardless of this, the actions of these corporations are pertinent in policy circles, as they are drivers in both the area of public relations, where China has thus far mostly been positively received as well as often being the face of China on the ground to the average African, who likely may have encountered the Chinese only in the form of the infrastructure left behind, if at all (Gadzala & Hanusch, 2010).

It is also here at this level that African opposition to China is most prevalent, as various NGOs and CSOs have proposed opposition to the Chinese, whether on the basis of workers' rights, undue disintegration of local environments or simply prejudice (Ong'ayo, 2010).

Academics, whether independent or parts of organizations in official or unofficial positions, as well as non-governmental political figures (such as celebrities or traditional leaders) are also predominantly noticeable here, whereas their voices are lacking at the state-to-state level (Ikome, 2010). While there is increasingly top-level pressure from China to at least moderate this behaviour, it remains to be seen if there is any great change to it (Kragelund, 2010).

Therefore this chapter has two, inter-related parts; firstly "Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics", wherein the state, reputation and influence of Chinese corporations is examined and "Non-Governmental Actors in Africa" where the influence, or lack thereof of various organizations is examined and their purpose examined.

3.1 Capitalism with Chinese characteristics in Africa

In differentiating Chinese corporate involvement in Africa from the rest of the world, the first point of difference has been stated to be the easy access to credit for projects via institutions such as the Export-Import Bank of China (Exim) which gives Chinese corporations a competitive advantage (Disenyana, Draper, & Biacuna, 2010). While other corporations have access to credit lines of similar nature to those used by Chinese corporations, none are of the magnitude Chinese financial institutes offer to Chinese companies (Cissé, 2012).

When combined with the easy access to cheap labour and materials from their home markets, this allows Chinese companies to underbid competitors, both local and international for various projects, as well as allow them to continue to operate on profit margins that would be too slim for Western companies (Cissé, 2012).

In many countries, Chinese firms have entered into Africa due to the extremely lax and liberal laws that present few barriers of entry and subsidize their initial investments via special economic zones, preferential treatment and other policies. While the liberalization of economies in these host countries has therefore enabled them to enter the market, it has also made it difficult to enforce or deal with the result of China's entry into these countries. It has also made supporting local industry more complex, as they cannot withstand Chinese competition (Kragelund, 2010).

Chinese corporate investments have mostly been in two main areas: resource extraction and services. While they share some common elements on the labour front, they are distinct not only in nature but also in their effects on the ground in Africa, with extractive industries being targeted more often by civil society actors (Dubosse, 2010).

3.1.1 Resource extraction

A large part of the oil being extracted from Africa is extracted by SOEs and other state run or supported corporations. To a lesser degree, the same applies to all resource extraction in the continent, with mining coming second, then lumber extraction and finally agricultural production. But both as sub-contractors as well as competitors, independent Chinese corporate entities compete not only with these but also with other foreign entities (Prah, 2007).

Of these extractive industries, two stand as examples of being more involved in the private sphere than the governmental one while also being two of the most politically infamous. The first is mining, due to the stories of extremely poor working conditions that have led to widespread protests and even government interventions in several places in Africa and also the environmental destruction it wreaks on a scale that no other extractive industry can match. The second is that of agricultural production, due to the highly politicized nature of food and land in not just Africa but all over the third world, with accusations of exporting food as people starve, land-grabs and other issues being prevalent (Rocha, 2007). For both, issues of corruption between local governments and the corporations have been flashpoints for discontent, with the government sometimes siding with the corporations and sometimes with the people (Chen, 2013).

Whereas all resource extraction takes a toll on the environment, the apparent complete disregard of Chinese corporations in Africa for anything but profit has long began to take a toll on the reputation of not only the corporations themselves, but also the Chinese government and Chinese people in general (Cheru & Calais, 2010). One of the most infamous examples the Zambian Collum Coal Mine, where the 2010 shooting of at least 13 striking miners followed by the 2012 murder of a Chinese supervisor and the injuring of two others lead to the Zambian government, ostensibly pro-Chinese, revoked the mining charter of the company and closed the mine, with it only re-opening in 2015 (Bariyo, 2015).

Zambia is no stranger to negative effects of Chinese mining, with the biggest single accident in Zambian mining history happening at the Chinese-run GRIMM mine, while in neighbouring Zimbabwe, corruption among local elites meant that Chinese corporations had easy access to their diamond mines despite local opposition (Chan-Fishel, 2007). Lax safety records, low pay and an unwillingness to deal with local unions is commonplace, with South Africa, Nigeria and Tanzania as well as the two aforementioned countries all having numerous incidents serious enough to reach media attention (Karumbidza, 2007). Additionally, the act of hiring many Chinese workers for jobs that would be perfectly suited to African labourers has also raised tensions (Aguilar & Goldstein, 2009).

The accusation that Chinese corporations are repeating the "Chinese model", meaning a

lack of worker compensation and a disregard for environmental concerns, has some support to it. Meanwhile, natural resources are mostly a sellers' market, with Africa being described as "a bride with many suitors", even if "none of them have her best interests at heart" (Ikome, 2010). As prices on all raw materials have risen with Chinese demand, regardless of Chinese investment in Africa, with oil only recently becoming an exception after the American shale oil boom, it is questionable that Chinese corporations provide much benefit compared to local or international ones when it comes to resource extraction. And while Chinese corporations often do underbid, problems later on the labour front make them less and less attractive to African peoples (Ikhuoria, 2010).

3.1.2 Service Industry

Services are a more complex topic, as Chinese intervention there has had positive effects, with the construction of infrastructure, healthcare and telecommunications all being examples of this, while negative effects are similar in some ways to extractive industries, with some differences still in force (Cissé, 2012).

Firstly, there is the problem of direct Chinese competition with established sectors of African production, most notably and famously textiles, but also to a lesser degree light industry and consumer goods. While there has been some export of these industries by Chinese companies to Africa, alongside transfer of skills, in many cases Chinese competition simply uses its established base to completely crush the sometimes burgeoning and often long established textile markets and producers of Africa with prices that are significantly cheaper than those produced in Africa (Kamau, 2010).

This has often lead to the accusation that much of the Chinese state-sponsored investment is less about helping Africa, dealing with societal-level problems there such as unemployment, rather than attempting to solve these problems in China by exporting them to Africa. They point out both the slowing construction sector in China following the recent financial crisis as well as problems with unemployment, where rather than solve these on domestic soil, they simply support Chinese corporations in moving them over to Africa (Kamau, 2010).

This criticism however rings partially hollow when compared to how various service corporations, such as Chinese telecommunication have helped revolutionize African ways of living. Telecommunications in fact are one of the strongest examples of the positive influence of China in Africa, where corporations not only supply the market with phones that are affordable to the majority of Africans, but also help create the infrastructure that made the "cell phone revolution" possible (Gagliardone & Geall, 2014).

The "cell phone revolution", where Africa has used their "late-adopters advantage" to

sidestep landlines to help integrate and connect their societies was and is directly fuelled by Chinese consumer electronic products and Chinese infrastructure, with companies such as Huawei or ZTE both supplying the phones as well as connecting even the poorest of citizens (Cissé, 2012). The empowering and enabling effects of this cannot be understated, as the phones are a multiplier on an individual's ability to participate in society.

But whereas domestic competition on those fronts has been non-existent, direct competition between China and Africa when it comes to textiles has not been as positive however, with African textiles manufacturers suffering heavily, with closures of factories common and the industry on the brink of collapse in many countries, even as traders of these textiles, both Chinese and native make the Chinese made products available to all levels of society (Axelsson & Sylvanus, 2010).

Light industry has also suffered to some degree, though Chinese corporations have begun off-shoring some of their industry as rising wages in China have made local production in Africa more affordable. Whether Africa wants these often extremely dirty industries is a different question and one that has not yet been answered (Naidu, 2010).

Finally, when it comes to the issue of healthcare, where it is illustrative of the problems China faces on domestic fronts. The introduction of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which has no scientific or medicinal basis tied to reality to Africa is only one of many examples of harmful Chinese practices being exported to Africa (Wan, 2014) As China itself supports TCM and refuses to sanction its own industry, even as few if any of its remedies have proven to be helpful, while many are not only dangerous, but some sourced from near-extinct or endangered animals (Wan, 2014).

On the whole, the good that Chinese corporations have brought to Africa is much like the good that China has brought to itself; easier access to material goods and infrastructure has rapidly improved living conditions, but at a dire cost environmentally and politically. The point of difference being that Africa need not accept the same conditions of totalitarian control of the political sphere as does China (Chen, 2013).

3.2 Civil Society and its challenges to the Status Quo

International NGO opposition to Chinese action in has been growing at a steady rate ever since their entrance to the African continent, with several notable points of interest, such as the internationalization of the Darfur situation in Sudan, the weapons deal in Zimbabwe or the interfering of Chinese ambassadorial staff with Kenya's election (Askouri, 2007). International NGOs and CSOs mostly focus on political issues, such as democratization, anti-corruption and pollution, with overlap with local CSOs mostly forming around pollution and environmental degradation (Jie & Yingbao, 2010).

In co-operation with local peoples, these organizations are often some of the primary drivers towards change in Africa, with various causes political and social being supported. It is through these organizations furthermore that the various issues first gain prominence, as local people organize to make their voices heard about issues. When farmers protested land expropriation in Ethiopia individually, they were easily ignored by the local government, but as they organized together and caught media attention their ability to enforce their demands improved. Many of these organizations are driven by the actions of the Chinese, whether official state sponsored acts and treaties or the acts of private corporations (Kabemba, 2010). Whether illegal logging in the Democratic Republic of Congo, collusion between governmental agencies and phone companies in Nigeria or inhumane work conditions in Zambia, there is a multifaceted backlash against excesses both Chinese and otherwise. (Kabemba, 2010) Oppositional political parties who's platform extends towards more serious dealings with Chinese misconduct, local grassroots organizing together to fight against illegal logging, labour unions fighting against lax worker conditions and benefits, all of these are examples of how the people of Africa have joined together to assert their agency and rights all over the continent (Ikome, 2010).

Yet some of the largest groups continent wide political entities, such as the African Union, where the African countries in 2001 attempted to start at a framework similar to the European Union, have failed to provide Africa with the unity it needs to make deals with China on an equal footing (Ikome, 2010). Various academics all agree that Pan-African considerations are a necessity, not only to help African nations in strengthening themselves and helping each other deal with logistical and civil problems, but also to help strengthen national institutions. Yet, both the West and China actively undermine these actions, the West by creating various binding treaties that counter-act any regional co-operation, China by focusing on merely bilateral action and there playing 'divide and conquer' with the continent (Ikome, 2010).

It is here that academics pin their hopes on larger changes happening, as the various countries of Africa get more connected, not only economically but through the power of the internet (Obiorah, 2007). As people organize together for reform, as they pressure for a focus on democracy, rule of law and human rights, as they publicize and uncover corruption and problems in their society on the grassroots level, they work to improve their country however they can. While Pan-African hopes are kept, as they represent the best possible path for Africa to follow, the various parts of the countries struggle not only against foreign issues, but against a fabric of society that needs mending and even replacement.

4.0 Conclusion

The Chinese entry into Africa has given both great benefits as well as adding to existing challenges and even adding new ones. The Chinese model for governance, with its focus on national unity in the hands of small elite which does not recognize the legitimacy of democracy is attractive to some regimes and it supports and enables its own negative political sides, such as nepotism, ethnic conflict and corruption through its non-interference policy.

These new challenges China creates, such as that of even laxer environmental standards than were already in place, the downwards trend of wages and workers benefits in Chinese-owned corporations and extracting resources every more dangerously and quickly without chance for natural replenishment or care means that the damage China is causing is often permanent and serious, with little thought placed on long term consequences that these countries might have to face. While there has been official pressure from both sides to solve these problems, only time will tell if any serious reforms are instituted.

As Chinese construction of media and telecommunications on one hand connects the continent, allowing for heretofore unseen levels of interaction on the national and international level, bringing modern conveniences and creating vital infrastructure, they also offer a more complete control against dissent than before, as they let governments monitor dissent in a way previously impossible, even as they supply these governments with military materiel.

The benefits of the stronger bargaining position of various African nations however, not only towards traditional donors that now find themselves in a weaker negotiating position with China in the picture, but also towards other rising economies, has undeniably been a positive effect for African self-growth. The increase in agency, as well as the possibility of emerging from under the ruling western economic systems and remorselessly neoliberal economic control is a tremendous boon for the entirety of Africa.
Where China enables change in people's lives indirectly, through its thirst for African commodities and market interactions, even as direct Chinese material goods and infrastructure better the lives of Africans everywhere, it is easy to say that things are looking up, even as the Chinese economic engine turns towards Africa with a view of exporting many of its manufacturing industries to the continent.

The main issue of whether the countries of Africa can harness this strong position for the good of their nation as a whole rather than merely for local elites, is up to the Africans themselves: for local NGOs and CSOs to act as watchdogs, for Africa to seize the flawed, but still potent addition that Chinese aid is to the continent and embracing democratic positions and a love of the rule of law.

Africans as a whole are now in a position to seize the future they so well deserve, to make the most of not just China but also other emerging powers as well as Western ones, but there are no guarantees of success. Even as Chinas economic engine slows down and more

and more people see the negative effects upon their systems of governance from them, so might they see China repeat the same systems of environmental destruction and oligarchy in their countries, if they do not unite to strengthen their position or create capable civic institutions to deal with the problems that arise.

When writing this essay, the conspicuous lack of analysis of cultural factors, as well as that of action on the grassroots level in my sources was a major hindering factor. While various articles would on occasion mention cultural factors, they were never the centrepiece, with deeper analysis almost always being relegated to news media, which unfortunately lacked the academic discipline and techniques to do in-depth analysis.

While some academics had studied African views, these were mostly quantitative studies, with very little qualitative research being done on the topic. There were a few excellent studies on Chinese views of Africans, but without a counter-point, fitting them into the essay proved problematic.

In addition to this, there is too much of a focus on purely material and economic factors, while societal and cultural ones were ignored. While articles mention cultural co-operation and influx of Chinese media, at no point do they try and analyse how this influx not only of Chinese cash and infrastructure but Chinese people has changed Africa. The few studies that did study something close to it did so almost solely, again, as economic actors, not examining the changing familial patterns, issues of cultural clash and different familial systems, religions and other such intra-societal issues.

Furthermore, there seems to be a distinct problem in finding academic African voices on these subjects that are more modern. While various reporting projects and media initiatives partially made up for this, the lack of academic anthropological factors in particular forced a complete change from the initial thesis of this essay, which was to focus more on familial ties and personal interactions with the Chinese entry into Africa.

Chinese entry into Africa has had lasting and far-reaching consequences on every facet of Africa and the various societies within the continent. While by necessity focused on the bigger picture, various topics of study would be interesting to follow, both on individual subjects as well as specifically by country or region. Unfortunately even relying on non-academic sources, there is difficulty in getting at the crux of these subjects at this current time.

However as the interest in these interactions increases, there will hopefully follow an increase in anthropological work done on this subject, as there has been on the subject of Africans in China.

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