

北京在非洲的戰略影響： 以中共吉布地海軍基地為例

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摘 要

自從中共在吉布地建立第一個海外軍事基地以來，不僅在非洲，在國際關係地緣政治與戰略研究，常被冠上「新殖民主義者」的惡名。中共反擊指出，這般惡毒指控毫無根據。因此，本文以國際關係理論為先導，檢視中共在非洲大陸之利益與意圖，採綜合性的研究途徑對中共進行個案分析，探討北京如何在吉布地建立第一個海軍基地，以維護其在非洲的核心利益。本文三個相關的問題如下：(一)非洲是否具有足以誘使其建立海軍基地的地緣經濟利益。(二)建立海軍基地有助中共延伸其全球性的國家利益（馬漢主義）。(三)非洲是否願意接受中共（非洲對中共行為的觀感）。本研究認為，從與一些非洲議會成員國面談中發現，儘管中共經濟模式相當成功，但成員國普遍厭惡中共獨裁政權，然中共官方文件顯示中非關係一片榮景，實際是誇大不實。¹

關鍵詞：馬漢主義、吉布地、中非關係、一帶一路、史瓦帝尼

壹、前 言

吉布地以非洲大陸東道主身分成為中共第一個海外軍事基地，象徵中共在非洲相當程度地增加利益和影響力，同時顯示中共對非洲地區不干預政策已出現轉變，反映出中共強國本質以及更大戰略目標。對照於當前情勢發展，本研究嘗試檢驗中共在非洲戰略利益和影響；觀察中共海軍在吉布地建立長期基地的根本意圖；整體探究中共是否顯示其霸權意圖。尤其戰略上吉布地港毗鄰蘇伊士運河、其他海事貿易路線甚至中東地區時？本研究根據中共文獻，查證中共對外所聲稱有關吉布地的戰勝意圖，是否純粹只是後勤補給設施。

本文同時觀察在美國、法國與其他和吉布地結盟西方國家既有地緣優勢下，中共對西方列強的可能挑戰。要言之，本研究將檢視中共是否刻正同時運用著孫子兵法的戰略途徑和馬漢主義，意圖蒙騙國際社會，使其相信中共「永不稱霸、永不擴張、永不謀求勢力範圍」。² 本研究之重要性在於補充學者探究吉布地駐軍議題不周延之處，特別是中共在非洲地區利益、影響、意圖方面一些過度抽象的說法。當前學術界對於中共在非洲地區與日俱增的利益和影響充

1 感謝國防大學戰略研究所所長沈明室教授、郁瑞麟教授及淡江大學戴萬欽教授對本研究的支持。

2 Timothy Heath, "An Overview of China's National Military Strategy," in Joe McReynolds ed., *China's Evolving Military Strategy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2016), pp. 1-39.

滿各種錯誤、僵化、樂觀的看法，這些看法若從非洲角度切入，則會被揭穿。因為這和非洲諺語「除非獅子產生自己的歷史學家，否則狩獵史將永遠只是榮耀著獵人」道理是一致的。³ 換句話說，本研究在本議題上不以東、西方世界為其學術分析中心，而是聚焦於非洲的視角，由於這是一個包含兩個國家在內的大型戰略項目，因此中共海軍吉布地基地建案需要兩個戰略合作夥伴之間的雙邊談判，雙方於是自2015年開始談判，並於2016年達成共識。⁴ 根據在此議題上權威學者之一的周蘿拉(Laura Zhou)表示，估計初期基地建設經費約為5億9千萬美元，⁵ 當然實際數字可能更高，因為大家都知道，中共對於國防經費支出一向保密。由於該建案項目得到了當地居民的支持，因此建港過程是順利的，儘管美國及其盟友，尤其是日本對此先後表達了質疑。⁶ 中共吉布地港於2017年7月11日正式對外開放，現任司令官是梁陽。透過2018年至2019年間周邊觀察發現，中共以逐次增強的途徑不間斷地進行著港內其他大型工程。⁷

顯然中共駐吉布地基地並非如前所述支持後勤設施而已，實際上已是可進行實彈射擊練習的軍事基地。目前，該基地不只是中共最初聲稱的維和行動後勤設施而已，為支持中共的戰略目標，也是情報蒐集中心，及在緊急狀況和遂行人道主義時，尖端的醫療所在地。

本研究分為九段：(一)前言；(二)目的、問題與命題；(三)理論與方法；(四)中共崛起暨中共與非洲關係發展；(五)中共「一帶一路」倡議暨中共在非洲的利益；(六)日積月累的戰略影響中共在非洲隱藏意圖；(七)非洲對中共政權的觀感；(八)中共在非洲榮景的不確定性；(九)結論和建議。

貳、目的、問題與命題

本研究主要目的如下：(一)檢驗中共在非洲的利益，尤其是相對於中共公開宣稱的背後利益，以及相對於美國和西方國家所宣稱的內涵；(二)證明國家行為者除非時機成熟時，否則通常僅會戰略性的掩藏其意圖；(三)檢驗美國對中共觀感。具體而言，本研究的核心問題是：中共在吉布地建造海軍基地時，其在非洲有意保護和推動的核心利益是什麼？衍生出來的三個次要問題如下：(一)中共在非洲具有足以誘使其建立海軍基地的地緣經濟利益嗎？(二)建立境外海軍基地有助中共延伸其全球性的國家利益嗎？(馬漢主義)(三)非洲接受中共嗎？為利於上述問題之探究，我們提出四個命題(proposition)如下：(一)中共在非洲之核心利益環繞民族主義路線，中共基於中國夢，有意強化其海洋實力，美國與西方盟邦主要聚焦於反中。(二)當中共尋求非洲豐厚的

3 “Until the Story of The Hunt Is Told by The Lion…African Proverb,” *Africa Redemption Magazine*, November 25, 2013.

4 Agence France-Presse, “China ‘negotiates military base’ in Djibouti,” *Al Jazeera*, May 9, 2015, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2015/05/150509084913175.html>>(檢索日期：2020年9月5日)

5 Laura Zhou, “How a Chinese investment boom is changing the face of Dibouti,” *South China Morning Post*, May 18, 2017.

6 FP Staff, “China sends troops to Djibouti base: Beijing’s growing presence in Indian Ocean Region should rattle India, US,” *Firstpost*, July 13, 2017, <<https://www.firstpost.com/india/china-sends-troops-to-djibouti-base-beijings-growing-presence-in-indian-ocean-region-should-rattle-india-us-3807909.html>>(檢索日期：2020年9月5日)

7 Charlotte Gao, “China Officially Sets Up Its First Overseas Base in Djibouti,” *The Diplomat*, July 12, 2017, <<https://thediplomat.com/2017/07/china-officially-sets-up-its-first-overseas-base-in-djibouti/>>(檢索日期：2020年9月5日)

天然資源時，利益包括經濟層面。(三)中共試圖抵制美國在蘇伊士運河、其他海事貿易路線甚至中東主宰地位時，目的在建構中共船艦在上述地區的自由航行權及無所顧慮後勤補給（衍生於海上阻絕管制的概念）。(四)非洲各國彼此間對中共觀感有所差異，主要原因是否涉及實際利益。

參、理論與方法

本研究將透過馬漢主義、戰略理論、珍珠鏈、外援等理論加以詮釋。首先，本研究引用馬漢主義，參考其主要論述「世界貿易、領土擴張和海權三者是支撐民族榮光的三大主軸」。⁸其次，本研究引用戰略理論，旨在確認、預判非洲賽局上所有參與者的戰略利益，特別是中共的利益。再者，針對中共「從本土迄非洲之角蘇丹港一線，其海上交通所依附的軍事設施和發展出的商業關係網絡」之事實，本文以珍珠鏈觀點予以詮釋。⁹最後，本文以外援理論詮釋中共和非洲的軟實力運用。在以上所述理論詮釋前，本文同時將於相關節次細部描述各理論內容。至於研究方法，鑒於顧巴(E. G. Guba)曾將研究途徑區分為「量化、質化、混合」三種，¹⁰本研究考量探討議題之複雜度且觀察對象需兼顧計量與計值，故決定採取混合途徑，亦即本研究是以量化暨質化相輔而成。此外，研究全期為確認中共未來戰略意圖，釐清非洲對中共觀感，本文透過電話和面談管道，按議題種類進行分層抽樣式訪談，輔以次級資料，藉以分析中共利益所繫。要言之，整個研究執行採取全方位途徑，此處所謂全方位途徑是指「一種強調研究複雜系統的切入途徑」。¹¹

肆、中共對非洲的影響與聯結

在國家戰略環境下，回顧近年中共經濟和軍事崛起背景，此舉或許可揭示非洲在更大戰略格局處於何種位置。本研究不證自明的認定，戰略理論足以詮釋戈爾茨坦(Avery Goldstein)對中共崛起的描述；也「開啟賽局心理以及權力可能性，促使決策而考量其成本和風險，進而衡量對手、盟友和其他參與者決策的後果」，以上雖是葉格(Harry Yarger)所提出假設，¹²前後兩者有助於詮釋中共在非洲戰略部署。戈爾茨坦首先描述中共自鄧小平提出改革，開啟1970年代後期中國開放後演化迄今的戰略，¹³接著又指出「鄧小平看出中國大陸身為開發中市場，其需求在於經濟發展和滿足內部優先，決定開放對外關係，進入多邊機制」。¹⁴換句話說，在戈爾

8 Wayne P. Hughes, "Implementing the Seapower Strategy," *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 61, No. 2, 2008, pp. 47-59.

9 Lintner Bertil, *The Costliest Pearl: China's Struggle for India's Ocean* (London: Oxford University Press, April 15, 2019), pp. 1-2.

10 E.G. Guba, (ed.), *The paradigm* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990).

11 Hsif Amini, "The Holistic Approach to Development Research," *Journal of Interdisciplinary Economics*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 2001, pp. 375-394.

12 Harry R. Yarger, *Strategic Theory of for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), p. 2.

13 Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge-China's Grand Strategy and International Security*, *Studies in Asian Security Series* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 20.

14 Ibid.

茨坦眼中，鄧小平是主張中共在國際戰略事務保持韜光養晦。

本研究則認為，中共在最近期間之前的韜光養晦作為，和《孫子兵法》裡的戰略加以檢驗，對應於西方帝國主義列強數世紀的霸權地位，是否達到「強而避之，怒而撓之，卑而驕之，佚而勞之，親而離之。攻其無備，出其不意」之境界。¹⁵ 無論如何，中共終歸已經崛起，故根據戈爾茨坦的看法，中共冀望有一套能落實更高目標的戰略，「透過一種能降低他國恐慌，不因挑釁他國而對其採取對立的作法，順勢完成中共大國崛起」。¹⁶ 事實上，中共的巨額成長有大量資料可證，除了國際貨幣基金(IMF)關於中國大陸經濟成長發布的正式統計數據，中共「現階段是全世界公布國內總生產額(GDP)榜單排名第二」，¹⁷「按購買力評價的標準在全球居首」。¹⁸ 此外，中共擁有「世界最迅速成長的大型市場經濟，30年餘來的平均成長率都還能保持在6%以上」。¹⁹ 以上這些趨勢從任何標準觀之，尤其檢視中共過去經濟史時，都象徵傲人的成就，但同時說明美國將中共視為霸權威脅是可以理解的。

有關「霸權」(hegemony)，本研究採用一組國際關係領域較為旁徵博引、不受爭議的定義如下：

霸權代表以下條件：一個國家(一)握有極大不均衡的物質條件在手；(二)導致握有足夠的軍事能力在國際體系裡一再規律地擊敗潛在的競爭者；以及(三)管控著原物料、天然物資、資本、市場的路徑；同時(四)在生產附加價值時擁有競爭優勢；並且(五)能激發出既能反映現狀，又能不受排斥的意識形態；最後(六)在現有體系裡能發揮不同於其他國家的職能，並期望能提供某些公共財，例如安全或商業、財政之穩定。²⁰

上述有關「霸權」面面俱到的定義，讓學術界順理成章地透過馬漢主義體會出中共海軍從事擴張的現象。馬漢主義者強調「世界貿易、領土擴張和海權三者是支撐民族成就的三大主軸」，²¹ 這句話凸顯馬漢主義和霸權的關聯性。

一、中共與非洲戰略發展

如果我們宏觀檢視中共戰略就會注意，中共對非洲的戰略作為主要聚焦於軟實力和硬實力兩個領域。通常我們會將中共對非戰略本質視為新殖民主義路線，主因在於中共利用非洲天然資源支撐日趨茁壯的經濟，本研究將這個現象詳述於後，本節先為「新殖民主義」下定義。

諷刺的是，「新殖民主義」這個專有名詞據說來自於非洲，一位已故的迦納政治家恩克魯瑪(Kwame Nkrumah)。他將「新殖民主義」定義為使用「資本主義、全球化、文化帝國主義以

15 Lionel Giles, *The Art of War by Sun Tzu-Special Edition* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2007), p. 62.

16 Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge-China's Grand Strategy and International Security*, *Studies in Asian Security Series*, p. 23.

17 IMF Report for China, "International Monetary Fund," October 2018.

18 "Report for Selected Country Groups and Subjects (PPP Valuation of Country GDP)," *IMF*, January 21, 2018.

19 Ibid.

20 Luis Schenoni, "The Argentina-Brazil Regional Power Transition," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 2018, p. 473.

21 Wayne P. Hughes, "Implementing the Seapower Strategy," p. 59.

影響某個開發中國家，其殖民手段已不復往昔，不再是直接軍事管控（帝國主義）或間接的政治操縱」。²² 換句話說，「新殖民主義」就是上述定義裡的霸權展現形式之一。按此邏輯，批評中共對非洲戰略的人士，認為中共拉攏進而賄賂非洲境內一些有影響力的菁英，只是為了中共全球戰略而對非洲大陸進行剝削。持這項看法的學界人士受到著名的美國外交界泰斗亨利·季辛吉(Henry Kissinger)之影響，後者曾間接指出，霸權國家若有意在外國領土取得本國國家利益，必須贏得當地國人心：

『「給予當地國人民…細緻精美的服飾和名車，才能腐蝕他們的目光；給他們山珍海味，才能腐蝕他們的味覺；給他們音樂和女人，才能腐蝕他們的耳聰目明；提供他們華夏巨宅、穀倉和奴僕，才能腐蝕他們的慾望…同時，對於那些屈服誘惑者，應該舉辦帝王式的歡迎宴會給予褒賞，宴會中這位帝王應該親自向屈服者敬酒、款待美食，來進一步腐蝕他們的心智。或許這可以稱之為五項誘惑。」』²³

事實上，季辛吉圓滑外交戰略似乎更適合本研究，因為中共經常與非洲極權主義政體與那些貪腐的領導人沆瀣一氣，例如，已逝的辛巴威總統穆加比(Robert Mugabe)、南非前總統朱瑪(Jacob Zuma)、且當前吉布地仍是一個民主不及格的政權等等。²⁴ 在非洲越來越多的這群批評中共戰略的人士當中，一位備受尊崇的學者暨著名的中共對非洲戰略批評者是盧蒙巴(P.O.L. Lumumba)，渠之批評受到重視。²⁵ 以上所述道出殖民期間的若干西方殖民詐騙式強奪行為，也就是「擄獲」(capture)某些有影響力的非洲人，經由賄賂和其他意識形態手法釀成「遭俘獲的國家」(state capture)，²⁶ 歷史上前後相似處可謂昭然若揭。誠如名聞遐邇的自由鬥士布倫博(Benjamin Burombo)其所見如下：「每當我要為非洲權力拚搏時，他就嘶聲力竭的吼叫著。我只能用一隻手拚搏，因為另一隻手忙著擋住那些打擊我的非洲兄弟之手」。²⁷

事實上，布倫博要說的是，每當道義一方非洲人和外國勢力拼搏時，就有道德淪喪、退縮妥協的非洲人掣肘。最貼切的案例是中共要從中華民國挖走史瓦帝尼王國(Eswatini)邦誼時，就是透過情報圈找出史瓦帝尼王國國會裡最具影響力的人士，免費邀請這批人士訪問中國，最終達到中共地緣政治的目的。²⁸ 這些參訪活動中暗示可能金錢交易，史瓦帝尼王國的年輕一輩忌妒地盯著那些民選代表汲汲營營周遊於中國旅途之間。更重要的是，國會議員剛剛回國後，年輕一輩目睹渠等推動以友中為路線的社會／經濟立法，整個過程已遭解讀為規避大眾監督，

22 Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (Washington D.C.: Black Rose Books Ltd, 1979), p. 42.

23 Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014), p. 215.

24 Mpho Raborife, "Zuma Defends Relationship with Guptas-Report," *News24*, March 23, 2016.

25 Lumumba, Patrick L. O., "Dumsorisation' of Africa Must Stop-P.L.O Lumumba.," <<http://citifmonline.com/2015/08/29/dumsorisation-of-africa-must-stop-p-l-o-lumumba>> (檢索日期：2019年5月5日)

26 John Crabtree and Francisco Durand, *Peru: Elite Power and Political Capture* (London: Zed Books Ltd), 2017, p. 1.

27 Bhebe Ngwabi, *Benjamin Burombo: African politics in Zimbabwe, 1947-1958* (Harare: College Press), 1989, p. 4.

28 Vusi Sibisi, "Controversial Members of Parliament's China Trip," *The Times of Eswatini*, August 25, 2019.

純為個人私利。

中共推動「擄獲」某些有影響力人士的外交戰略後，導致非洲大陸出現兩個分立體，一批是腐敗、已遭收買卻有影響力的人；另一批則是一般大眾。一旦遭收買，無論是政客、高階將領、私有企業經理人或資深文官公僕，從此與非洲發展宏圖漸行漸遠。這種現象在非洲聯盟(AU)裡產生沮喪、冷漠、自滿和依賴症候群。換句話說，遭到扭曲使用的中共援助非洲款項，已經成為誘發非洲出現貧窮現象之主謀，那怕這筆款項當初是中共聲稱用來減輕非洲貧窮的。就從那時起，非洲大陸在公部門或是許多公共領域持續出現兩個分立體主要原因，就是貪腐的政客不願意退休，不退休才能繼續把持權力，居公職的位置才能掩飾其貪腐行徑。情況更嚴重是，這批人在栽培年輕一輩的領導人和經理人方面毫無建樹，可說是繼續荼毒非洲年輕一代，不顧制度缺點橫生，但求官位確保。由於非洲文化一向自詡人性面、強調同理心和非消費主義，出現這種自私的情形時，通常中共或西方國家會受到譴責，而不是非洲自己人。當文宣資料屢屢述及中共和非洲擁有堅實而長久的夥伴關係時，當然只是門面之詞。本質上，中共的對非戰略手法是將非洲人加以分化對立，以換取非洲更加易於受其剝削的代價，即如布倫博和其先祖所預見的，這已經回到數十載前，西方國家在非洲的殖民主義的老路。

伍、中共「一帶一路」倡議及非洲利益

中共「一帶一路」呈現出中共在非洲利益增長，若認定「一帶一路」是中共強國夢願景的核心，則研判其利益範圍將及於非洲各海域和濱海地段，同時按照馬漢概念「任何不能控制海域的國家無法確保或成為大國」。²⁹ 我們就能順此發展出檢驗中共的下述假設：「鑒於藍色海軍是大國的標誌，大國必須擁有藍色海軍」。中共的紅頭文件裡，特別是官方媒體和國防白皮書，早就以同樣口吻，註記著國家主席習近平以「中國夢」描述的「復興」大國地位的壯志。³⁰ 習近平曾進一步指出，中共必須積極促進「一帶一路」裡國際合作，努力實現政策溝通、設施聯通、貿易暢通、資金融通、民心相通，打造國際合作新平台，增添共同發展新動力。³¹

上述談話引發各造之間懷疑中共的實際意圖，尤其是中共是否有意開始對外施展軍事能力。基於以上背景，本研究也加入中共和平崛起所引發的各式猜忌，持這方面猜忌論調的還包括學者時殷弘。後者力陳「一帶一路」違背中共過去所聲稱希望尋求「和平發展」之路線。³² 就像本研究先前所言，在意圖和疑慮之間，吉布地等一些非洲國家掌握世界最重要的戰略要

29 Mahan, Alfred T., *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783*. 1890, reprint (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970).

30 Xi Jinping, "The Governance of China," Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2014; "The 2015 Chinese Defense White Paper on Strategy in Perspective: Maritime Missions Require a Change in the PLA Mindset," *China Brief*, Volume 15, Issue 12, 29 May 2015, <<https://www.refworld.org/docid/556c27634.html>> (檢索日期：2019年4月10日)

31 Xi Jinping, "Speech Delivered at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC)," October 18, 2017, <<http://www.xinhuanet.com/english>> (檢索日期：2020年2月10日)

32 Yinong Shi, "China's Complicated Foreign Policy," *ECFR*, 31 March 2015, <https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_chinas_complicated_foreign_policy311562> (檢索日期：2019年4月25日)

點。吉布地的地理位置，誠如許多學者所說，在世界最好的貿易路線竟使吉布地成為戰略咽喉。對一個崛起的強權而言，囿於進出口貿易限制，吉布地的戰略特點在於其經濟上不可或缺，更是「一帶一路」倡議的關鍵。

但必須指出另一個關鍵點，就是中共在吉布地的戰略利益正代表中共在非洲的多重利益。顯而易見的是，非洲對中共是戰略關鍵區，因為非洲某些國家戰略關乎「一帶一路」的成敗。以肯亞、坦尚尼亞、南非、莫三比克等印度洋的地緣戰略為例，渠等一直是全球航運不可或缺的油料補給點。本文所附非洲地圖（如圖1）上列出的部分國家，例如衣索比亞，堪稱是周邊國家門戶。事實上，衣索比亞在非洲屬於人口稠密的國家之一，也是非洲聯盟總部所在地，以上兩點足以吸引任何有意崛起的大國，對衣索比亞諸多的政策施展各種形式的影響力。據此研判，中共在吉布地設海軍基地，旨在強化中共海外利益，主要是保護經濟利益，但在中共大戰略裡，經濟利益涵蓋經濟和軍事兩個目的。此種三角關係可由統計數字佐證，例如「2017年中共與非洲的貿易總額是1,550億美元，2018年上升到1,850億美元」。³³



圖1 吉布地戰略位置

資料來源：Andrew S. Erickson's Analysis, "U.S. AFRICOM Commander GEN David Rodriguez, USA Confirms: China Signed 10-Year Contract for Military Logistics Hub in Djibouti—Beijing's 1st-Ever Overseas "Base" / Facility," *GADM*, November 24, 2015.

陸、中共在非洲隱藏的意圖與日積月累的戰略影響力

一、反制美國在蘇伊士運河主宰地位

本節試圖勾勒中共如何地在戰略竭盡其國家機制，以之作為國家權力工具，影響所及，無論採取公開或秘密的管道，非洲都不可小覷中共的這股力道。本研究的第二個研究目的是要凸顯國家行為者不到成熟時，通常只會低調處理那些掩藏的意圖。至於本文所提的三個命題，就是透過馬漢主義和孫子兵法驗證後的發現。在現階段仍然有其關聯，特別是以珍珠鏈觀點和外援理論來詮釋時。此處扼要地說明珍珠鏈觀點—「針對中共在印度洋區域潛在意圖的地緣政治理論」。³⁴ 本研究貢獻在於提供從全球戰略格局中，理解中共於吉布地建構海軍基地的概念架構。另一方面，蘭凱斯特(Carol Lancaster)將「外援」定義為「自願性地從一個政府移轉公共資源到利一個獨立政府、非政府組織或國際組織」之行為。³⁵ 針對此一定義，本研究推論中共

33 Johns Hopkins University's, School of Advanced International Studies, "Data: China-Africa Trade," *China Africa Research Initiative*, February 10, 2019, <<http://www.sais-cari.org/data-china-africa-trade>> (檢索日期：2020年4月2日)

34 "Issues and Insights," *Pacific Forum*, <www.pacforum.org> (檢索日期：2019年11月22日)

謹慎地爭取的霸權地位極有可能不只是所謂的「中國夢」而已，何況「中國夢」是一個難以詳細說明，卻又和習近平霸權主張難以區分的概念。本研究最後對「韜光養晦」的說法存疑。易言之，我們對中共公開聲稱的不尋求全球霸權懷疑，因為中共公開文件裡的對外說法總是和其史跡斑斑的欺騙行徑相逆，況且中共又是《孫子兵法》裡各種欺敵戰略的門徒，必須觀察中共行為模式是否真以「冷靜觀察、穩住陣腳、沉著應付、韜光養晦、善於守拙、絕不當頭」為指導。³⁶

中共在非洲意圖，尤以制衡美國為最。本研究所見可由圖2所示，中共境外海軍基地位置毗鄰美軍萊蒙尼耶營區(Camp Lemonnier)，此舉已經激起美軍的反對聲浪，認為中共未顧及美國感受到的監視威脅。至於中共海軍基地毗鄰曼德海峽(Bab al Mandab Strait)此一因素，可以理解中共對此項投資效益甚為滿意，因為進駐於此後，等於是中共在本地區取得了隨時可對其他地緣對手進行偵蒐。曼德海峽在經濟和軍事上更是舉足輕重的衢道，已有報導指稱中共刻正同時蒐集商情與軍情。³⁷

美國非洲司令部情報總監柏格(Heidi Berg)少將在國際會議發言，經媒體引述指出，中共在非洲企圖「限制國際領空，禁止飛機飛越中共軍事基地，且以地面雷射照射美軍飛行員的眼睛，還部署無人機干擾美國飛行任務」。³⁸媒體引述柏格少將之控訴時，還披露中共有意暗中破壞美軍的萊蒙尼耶營區。³⁹至於其他類似顧慮則來自非洲聯盟若干成員國。這些國家目前使用中共製情資系統，主要是由非洲聯盟總部的中共部門出資、安裝和操控的設施。有報導指稱非洲聯盟情資已外流至中共手裡。⁴⁰另外，美國「2017年國家安全戰略報告」結論提及「中



圖2 美、中兩軍吉布地駐防區距離示意圖

資料來源：紐約時報，<<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/25/world/africa/us-djibouti-chinese-naval-base.html>>（檢索日期：2019年12月10）

35 Carol Lancaster and Ann Van Dusen, *Organizing Foreign Aid: Confronting the Challenges of the 21st Century* (U.S.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), p. 5.

36 Pham Tuan, "The Chinese Dream and Beijing's Grand Strategy," *Center for International Maritime Security*, December 19, 2017, <<http://cimsec.org/the-chinese-dream-and-beijings-grand-strategy/35066>>（檢索日期：2019年3月5日）

37 African Union Commission, "Communique of the 868th Meeting of the PSC on The State of Foreign Military Presence in Africa," Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, August 14, 2019.

38 Geoff Hill, "US Commander Says China Tried to Sneak into American Military Base in Africa," *Special to The Washington Times*, June 16, 2019.

39 Ibid.

40 Joan Tilouine and Ghalia Kadiri, "The Seat of the African Union Spied on by Beijing," *Le Monde*, January 26, 2018.

共和俄羅斯有意投射兵力於全球」，⁴¹ 以上報導說明美國對於中共駐軍吉布地抱持疑慮。從經濟層面來看中共海軍基地和美國軍事基地分別在吉布地的影響，可從三個戰略要點來分析。根據本研究蒐集非洲聯盟總部若干受訪者說法，吉布地政府官員通常不願意直接談論有關來自非洲以外的國外駐軍狀況。首要因素是因為外國軍事基地毫無疑問通過租金和其他溢出效應提供了吉布地可觀的收入，但是卻又與非洲聯盟的集體防衛概念相抵觸。例如，美國與吉布地之間的現行協議是在2014年達成的，其中美國同意每年向吉布地支付6,300萬美元，並進一步以10億多美元擴充現有萊蒙尼耶營區設施。⁴² 而另一方面，美國對外兵力投射方面的主要競爭對手是中共，後者目前向吉布地支付的租金不到美國所付租金的一半，每年僅區區2,000萬美元。⁴³ 其次因素是根據聯合國國際貿易統計數據庫COMTRADE最新資料，目前雙邊貿易中，中共每年向吉布地的出口額為18.7億美元。另一方面，吉布地卻僅是「美國排名的第154位商品貿易夥伴」，在2018年間雙邊商品貿易總額僅達1.61億美元。⁴⁴ 第三個因素則是通過援助，美國和中共的存在都對吉布地的經濟產生了積極的經濟影響，雖然這些條款常夾帶有利資助國前提的特定條款。透過援助之力，美國和中共都促進了吉布地的經濟表現。世界銀行的統計數據支持了這一發現，資料顯示吉布地的經濟成長近年來保持不少於3%，⁴⁵ 這也可歸因於外國軍事基地的租金和對其港口設施的徵稅。就短期和中期而言，都有助於改善吉布地人民的生活。

二、中共海軍基地效益評估

中共在非洲與日俱增的影響力，見證距國土數千里之遙的部署能力，這一方面更可從其第一個駐非洲的海軍基地效能和軍事演習執行加以評估。囿於中共官方文件的透明度、列計判斷標準以及觀察效度，對吉布地基地的效益評估難免會有所出入。但是，至少可以確認，中共駐吉布地基地現階段兵力約解放軍陸戰隊150員，並可容納約4,000員。一旦設施完工，該基地更可駐紮10,000員兵力。⁴⁶ 共軍駐防吉布地的主要任務是提供中共官方對非洲、對印度洋、對中東地區的軍事、非軍事活動之支援。⁴⁷ 除了以上支援任務，駐防官兵還有能力針對非洲地區的競爭對手國執行情蒐和秘密活動，特別是對手美國。

三、中共情蒐活動衝擊各國戰略布局

中共在非洲境內與日俱增的影響力可見於支援外交事務的情報職掌內容，在許多從事戰略

41 United States, President of the US, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington DC: The White House, 2017), p. 51.

42 Eric Schmitt, "US Signs New Lease to Keep Strategic Military Installation in the Horn of Africa," *New York Times*, May 6, 2014.

43 Edward Paice, "Djibouti Wins Jackpot – Renting Out Desert for Military Bases," *The Cipher Brief*, May 30, 2017.

44 United Nations COMTRADE, "database on international trade," <<https://tradingeconomics.com/china/exports/djibouti>>(檢索日期：2020年9月5日)

45 Ibid.

46 Africa Union Commission, "Side Event of the 33rd AU Summit: Inauguration of the Headquarters of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services (CISSA)," Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, African Union Headquarters, February 9, 2020.

47 Ibid.

的部門裡，中共在非洲的這處海軍基地負有提供情資的任務，再次印證了中共具有影響非洲地區內外政治版圖的能力。從非洲聯盟成員國針對吉布地中共海軍基地使用情形所提出的諸多報告顯示，中共強化對吉布地附近各國海軍基地情蒐時，等於是補強並提升在非洲原本既有的情蒐活動。⁴⁸ 其實各種官方和非官方文件論及中共對非洲的影響力時，都會歸功中共情報部門的促進作用及關鍵角色，這方面的佐證文獻可溯至殖民時代。以安哥拉為例，中共從當年迄今仍關注著安哥拉的能源，致力於散播共產主義的意識形態。在安哥拉周邊區域，中共情報部門同樣也以居間指揮的角色影響著外交事務，導致聖多美普林西比、甘比亞、塞內加爾以及最近才轉向的布吉納法索等國最終決定和中華民國斷交。

據報導中共駐莫三比克和南非的情報部門，刻正利用兩個駐地國企圖影響中華民國在非洲僅存的政治邦交國史瓦帝尼王國（昔稱史瓦濟蘭），誘使後者轉向中共。有關史瓦帝尼王國和中華民國邦交的議題也是中共相當棘手的任務，最終導致中共駐南非大使在該議題上出現荒腔走板的行徑。原因是中共對史瓦帝尼有意進入中國大陸簽證手續，頒布更嚴峻的條件，中共駐南非大使林松添除公開宣稱這是中共的決定，高調表示「沒有邦交，沒有好處」外，⁴⁹ 甚至提出下列警告：

『讓我公開聲明我方已經決定禁止史瓦帝尼和中國貿易，因為該國和中國沒有外交關係，但是我方認為雙方最好還是從較不重要的某些限縮政策開始，如果貴國持續不尊重中國的話，接下來的日子就會比較嚴峻。』

如果本研究就此提出結論，指出中共恫嚇戰術勢必能威懾史瓦帝尼，導致對中華民國的外交生變，恐怕這是造謠之舉，且已然跳出本研究所關注的範圍。然而，本研究的確間接佐證了中共駐吉布地的海軍基地所涉入的外交支援角色。

要言之，由於位處印度洋一隅，中共駐吉布地的海軍基地在平行支援或執行情報作業方面是發揮成本效益。情報作業內容包括蒐集伊斯蘭武裝分子情資，尤其是附屬於中國境內新疆省級自治區內的恐怖組織。⁵⁰ 以上情報作業主要集中地在埃及、阿爾及利亞和其他薩哈拉(Sahel)地帶的國家，內容包括非傳統情報角色。特別是中共視為有相當機會可擴充的戰略情報作業，其活動範圍主要在奈及利亞、蘇丹、南蘇丹等關鍵區域，上述區域涉及中共的能源利益和新市場。⁵¹ 據報導中共駐各地大使館和國營企業刻正汲汲營營於建構與吉布地基地相關單位的人脈關係，也說明儘管吉布地基地仍屬草建階段，但是其重要性指日可期。

四、吉布地政府同意中共建構基地的官方說詞

中共成功地說服吉布地政府，在不顧美國反對下，允許中共在吉布地港建造海軍設施，不

48 African Union Commission, "Discussion of Report of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services (CISSA) on Status of Foreign Military Bases in Africa," Closed Session, African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, August 19, 2019.

49 Lin Songtian, "Eswatini Can Now Get China Visas But," *EswatiniS Times*, February 19, 2020.

50 Nodirbek Soliev, "China: Xinjiang Province," *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2020, pp. 77-81.

51 Donovan Chau, *Report* (US Army War College:Strategic Studies Institute, 2007).

僅暴露中共狡黠之處，更顯示中共的確是藉助外援為國家工具，自此證明外援理論的觀點。根據吉布地政府的說詞，特別是吉布地總統古雷(Ismail Omar Guelleh)的表述，該國允許中共興建海軍基地是理性的決策。該決策據稱討論過一系列的多層因素，還包括考慮吉布地和衣索比亞人民之間的經濟鏈結等。⁵² 在本研究實地訪問期間，受訪非洲聯盟暨吉布地境內政客與學者們紛紛表示支持古雷總統的說詞，甚至進一步地強調極有可能是中共軟實力所致。因為早在2000年時，北京方面即透過外援資金支持吉布地各種開發計畫，內容包括在吉布地的阿爾他(Artta)一地出資興建一座醫院；為吉布地的外交部撥款新蓋一幢總部；2005年吉布地出現旱災，北京提供糧食援助等。⁵³ 顯然，任何人都可能堅定地支持蘭凱斯特，因為蘭凱斯特對外援理論的概念提供一套詮釋，有助於說明中共是如何說服吉布地政府的。

五、中共在非洲地區暨聯合國影響力日增

最後，有關中共在非洲逐步上升的影響力，同時可由中共對非洲國家在聯合國的外交活動窺出端倪。這個推論基於以下前提，那就是我們發現在吉布地的中共海軍基地，同時負有支援中共在非洲的外交活動之角色。當所有國家在聯合國大會享有平等的投票身分時，對中共有意主宰聯合國而言，非洲具有外交價值，且爭取非洲是中共有志於霸權的基礎。其中一個案例發生在2019年7月，當時來自50個國家，包括吉布地在內的各國大使，發出了一封聯合公開信給聯合國人權理事會，捍衛中共對維吾爾區和其他在新疆的穆斯林少數民族問題。⁵⁴ 這個事件說明中共在聯合國系統裡，對非洲國家外交官具有決定性的影響力，同時說明在中共大戰略的藍圖裡，非洲是舉足輕重的。

另一個相關案例則是親中的世界衛生組織(WHO)秘書長譚德塞(Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus)。譚德塞的母國是衣索比亞，該國更是中共在非洲的重要盟友。譚德塞原先是一位職業政客，後來經推薦以非洲聯盟衛生部會首長的支持下出任世衛秘書長一職。⁵⁵ 但是譚德塞處理新冠肺炎疫情方式在非洲和川普陣營裡，引起原本就對中共不信任者更深的積怨。例如美國眾議院外交委員會，共和黨的瑪科(Michael McCaul)曾信誓旦旦地指出「譚德塞秘書長是中國共產黨的傀儡，是中共在世衛組織裡挑選出來的候選人，中共支持譚德塞後現在得到回報。」⁵⁶ 就在譚德塞遭人檢舉，指責其故意「遲緩發布新冠病毒，延誤公共衛生緊急應變，忽略公諸疫情人傳人警訊，一味地讚揚北京政權，不顧後者隱匿疫情範圍和嚴重程度，失職已是證據確鑿」後，⁵⁷ 美國隨即對世界衛生組織的資金展開檢討，川普總統也在數周之後，以同樣的理由宣布美國終止和世衛的合作關係。本研究無意捲入以上控訴之是非功過，但是譚德塞獲

52 Bill Chappell, "China Reaches Deal to Build Military Outpost in Djibouti," *NPR*, January 21, 2016.

53 Interviews conducted by the author in Djibouti and Ethiopia, November 9, 2019 -January 26, 2020.

54 "Ambassadors from 50 countries voice support to China's position on issues related to Xinjiang," *Xinhua*, July 27, 2019, <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-07/27/c_138263116.htm> (檢索日期：2020年3月10日)

55 "All Roads Lead to Universal Health Coverage," *World Health Organization*, January 3, 2018.

56 Deirdre Shesgreen, "Public Health 'Superstar' or Pro-China Propagandist? WHO Chief Lands in US Political Crosshairs," *Usa Today*, April 22, 2020.

57 Ibid.

得中共支持後，從此他的政治生涯扶搖直上令人瞠目，也證實先前的論述，那就是中共總是尋找、培植、政治「擄獲」某些非洲菁英，藉此落實中共的長期戰略目標。

六、對中共未來意圖之研判

我們不能排除中共有可能利用吉布地海軍基地作為某種形式的學習平台。許多非洲學者肯定這種看法，例如南圖里亞(Paul Nantulya)就認為「中共在非洲增加軍事接觸活動旨在推進北京方面的經濟和戰略利益，特別是『一帶一路』倡議」。⁵⁸基於此，預判中共會在吉布地活絡各項計畫作為，構成學習曲線，為未來繼續擴充非洲利益而暖身。另外，基於珍珠鏈戰略，預判中共極有可能沿著印度洋的非洲國家，建構更多海軍基地，主要國家包括塞席爾群島、肯亞、坦尚尼亞、模里西斯和莫三比克。再者，大西洋地區攸關中共戰略利益，這方面中共和納米比亞夥伴關係是一個指標。要言之，中共從吉布地個案汲取許多心得，吉布地勢必成為未來外交進軍上述非洲國家的有利教材。

以上預判是基於南圖里亞的分析和論述。南圖里亞論及中共在非洲的外交作為及其作為與中共大戰略關係時指出，中共大戰略是「中華民族偉大復興」政策和恢復「世界強國」願景的一部分。⁵⁹但是上述願景將無可否認地，持續以既是威脅又是機會的樣態呈現於非洲。再者，美中競逐將提供非洲黃金般的機會，也是強化非洲落實避險戰略的契機。但是相反地，萬一美、中競逐局面出現失控，非洲各國勢必受害，非洲的諺語就曾警告過：「兩頭大象爭鬥，遭殃的會是草皮」。

柒、非洲對中共政權的觀感

本節首先簡述研究背景和方法，最終目的是檢視非洲各國於目睹中共在非洲的利益暨影響力節節上升，至吉布地出現中共的第一個海外軍事基地時，非洲整體對中共的觀感。方法論上，本研究採用了綜合性的研究途徑，兼容量化與質化二法進行審視，俾能宏觀地分析非洲對中共行為觀感。如前述，本研究提出和探究的問題是：非洲接受中共嗎？接下來的命題是：非洲對中共所持觀感各有不同，主要原因是有無獲取利益，這個命題業經確認為真。研究觀察顯示，代表非洲看法者分為三個群體。一是泰半獲益於中共對非洲戰略之當地菁英／政客；二是以出賣技術掙扎於收支平衡的一批非洲中產階級；三是以窮人為主的街頭升斗小民。對以上三個群體之訪談作法已於（參）理論與方法述及，並輔以問卷、參加會議經驗以及憑藉觀察所見的閉門會議經驗，另外，本研究針對次要資料均已完成效度查核。

鑒於2020年非洲聯盟是由8個區域經濟共同體組成，本研究決定將非洲概分為8個區域進行分層抽樣，分別是：阿拉伯馬格里布聯盟(UMA)、東部和南部非洲共同市場(COMESA)、薩赫勒—撒哈拉國家共同體(CEN-SAD)、東非共同體(EAC)、中部非洲國家經濟共同體(ECCAS)、西非國家經濟共同體(ECOWAS)、政府間發展管理局(IGAD)與南部非洲發展共同體(SADC)。

58 Paul Nantulya, "Chinese Hard Power Supports Its Growing Strategic Interests in Africa," *Africa Centre for Strategic Studies*, January 17, 2019.

59 Ibid.

就非洲對中共觀感而言，現有若干有信度的統計資料，例如「非洲氣壓計」(Afro-barometer)網站的資料，但迄今仍欠缺可以有效引述的數據。特別是討論到中共第一個駐非洲軍事基地時，一些從非洲聯盟領導下的各個經濟共同體角度資料，仍然付諸闕如。儘管非洲聯盟近年來窮其所能地調和成員國的各種特殊立場，導致好幾個非洲媒體辦公室通常充斥了類似「非洲的問題非洲解決」、「我們希望要的非洲」等等樣版文宣，⁶⁰但是都不足以實際反映非洲觀感。最後還須承認的是，受限於資料來源，無法進行大樣本抽樣，故採取分層抽樣。

本研究採取分層隨機抽樣法，原本只律定抽樣50位而已，結果還是從非洲聯盟下轄所有社群裡，總計抽出了100位為樣本，這是因為同意受訪的回應踴躍。另一個原因則是本研究所邀約的訪談者碰巧參加非洲聯盟會議，就近之便導致本研究得以在最短時間內累積出具有顯著水準的抽樣訪談數。更有受訪者出於協助心態，使得有些訪談長達兩個小時，而非原定的平均半小時即結束。事實上，基於非洲文化裡的敬老尊賢，本研究也極少主動中斷受訪者之發言。100人中，有33位受訪者來自政治／企業菁英，來自官僚體系（主要是中產階層）也有33位人士受訪；另外還有34位受訪者是來自較低社會階層或升斗平民。基於客觀考量，訪談問題裡刻意避開「吉布地」一詞。然而向30位受訪者提出既定的問題，測定本研究之假說，結果顯示「經濟收益導致中共在吉布地議題是受到歡迎的」、「吉布地違反非洲聯盟共同防衛政策」。

一、中共全球化和西方全球化所反映的觀感問題

在中共權力擴張與美國確保霸權導致的競爭格局下，本研究預設文化全球化的選項問題，應答者如預判一般，回答時既非選擇中國文明，也非西方文明。在政治／企業菁英（33位）裡，100%比例選擇非洲文明。在官僚體系樣群裡，79%(26/33)表示無固定對象，主張應在中國和西方之間選出對非洲有利的部分，12%(4/33)回答樂見持續的西方文明全球化，9%(3/33)表示樂見由中國文明主宰的新時代到臨。在升斗平民方面採樣的數據如下：45%(15/34)傾向選擇西方文明，42%(14/34)選擇中國文明，13%(5/34)未表態。以上各數據綜整詳圖3。

圖3顯示有極高比例的受訪者在西方文明全球化與中國文明全球化之間保持中立，反而是模稜兩可地採取烏托邦式平等概念。這項數據暗示出泛非洲民族主義在非洲本土正值成長，非洲人民刻正努力爭取國際社會的平等地位，此舉可從聯合國架構窺出端倪。換句話說，上述政治光譜內的選項極有可能受到非洲民主運動的締造者之影響，其中南非當時的總統曼德拉(Nelson Mandela)特別值得一提。誠如他所說：「我在有生之年奉獻一己，為非洲人民而奮鬥，既反抗白人的宰制，也反抗黑人的宰制。我崇奉民主自由社會的理想，在此理想的引導下，所有人和睦生活，並享有平等機會，這是我期望為之而生，努力達成的理想，甚至如果有必要的話，也是我準備以死換取的理想。」⁶¹

60 African Union Commission, "African Union Strives to ensure a Conflict-Free Africa in line with the theme on Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development," Press Release African Union Commission, Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, February 10, 2020.

61 Joel Joffe, *The State vs. Nelson Mandela: The Trial That Changed South Africa* (U.K.: One World Books, 2007); Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (U.S.: Little, Brown, 1995).

二、期待的經濟與政治模式

本報告冀望從受訪者獲得訊息的訪談主題還包括：在中共和美國／西方強國之間，何者的夥伴關係可能有助於非洲的經濟發展暨永續經營？在屬於政治／企業社群的訪談者當中，63.6%(21/33)表示青睞於中共的經濟發展模式，27.27%(9/23)選擇西方模式，另有9.9%(3/33)表示未決定或提出了其他選項。而在官僚體系樣群裡，75.75(25/33)青睞於中共

的經濟發展模式，24.25%(8/33)回答願以西方模式優先，僅6%(2/33)無法決定。至於升斗平民樣群則有35.29%(12/34)表示優先選定中共的經濟發展模式，41.11%(14/34)選擇是西方模式，17.64%(6/34)表示未決定或提出了其他選項。總體而言，58%(58/100)青睞於中共經濟發展模式，31%(31/100)選擇西方經濟模式，11%(11/100)未決定或建議其他模式。

本研究另一個相關問題是，在對中共和對美國／西方國家兩組關係之間，何種夥伴關係有助於建構非洲政治機制，以落實非洲聯盟推動的「2063計畫」(Agenda 2063)？來自政治／企業社群的受訪者有75.7%(25/33)表示與西方民主國家的夥伴關係，24.3(8/33)選擇中共政治模式的關係。在官僚體系樣群裡，84.8%(28/33)選擇西方政治模式關係，9.09%(3/33)選定對中共關係，6.6%(3/33)表示未決定。升斗平民樣群裡則有64.7%(22/34)選定與西方民主國家的夥伴關係，20.5%(7/34)選擇中共，11.7%(4/34)主張另尋其他夥伴或者無意見。要言之，75%(75/100)認定與西方民主制度的夥伴關係，18%(18/100)選擇了對中共關係，7%(7/100)未決定或其他。

以上數據顯示中共經濟發展模式備受非洲青睞，但中共政治模式吸引力有限。西方民主價值是受到歡迎的，但是西方經濟發展模式接受度並不明顯。西方經濟發展模式受到質疑的原因，在於絕大多數非洲人民目睹自由經濟模式，導致原本就已富裕的資本主義族群，越來越富有。

在非洲，將西方經濟模式和中共統治經濟模式並列時，後者勝出原因在於人們表面上認為國營企業產生利潤，勢必回流到公庫，嘉惠大眾。但本研究已經觀察到中國大陸經濟本質刻正呈現變化，或許已非受訪者原有的認知。例如，近年中國大陸境內的億萬富翁人數竄升，說明了中共已經擁抱資本主義，過去的經濟模式恐難延續。

捌、中共在非洲榮景的不確定性

上述各節一再強化本研究之立論：凡是認為中共對非洲關係處於一片榮景的說法，其實是浮誇之詞，造成浮誇主要原因是，中共對非洲外交戰略和非洲長程戰略計畫或各項政策都呈現矛盾，尤其是表現在非洲聯盟的「2063計畫」。「2063計畫」是非洲在2063年前試圖達到第一

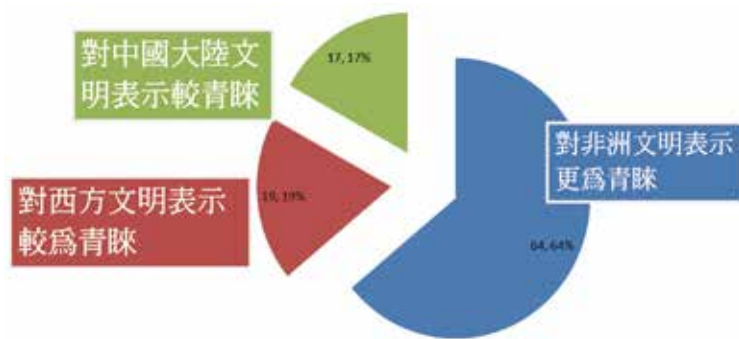


圖3 非洲社會對當前文明青睞度調查

資料來源：本研究自行整理，地點：衣索比亞非洲聯盟總部，蒐集時間11.9, 2010—2.7, 2020，2020年2月13日繪製。

世界水平的一套紮實的未來規劃藍圖，刻正由非洲聯盟推動執行中。「2063計畫」核心戰略目標包括如下：

『「…經濟發展（包括以30年時間根除貧窮）、政治整合（尤其是透過聯邦或邦聯的手段建立聯合非洲）、民主、正義機制之改良、整個非洲大陸的安全與和平體制、以非洲文藝復興和泛非洲文化理念強化的認同感、性別平等、政治不依賴於外來強權等等…。」⁶²』

從以上願景看出中共戰略是和非洲願景扞格不入的：這可從「非洲民主化的藍圖」不同於「中共支持非洲國家的專制者」；「中共提供劣質的基礎設施」不同於「中共在中國擁有優質的基礎設施」；「中共越來越頻繁於干預非洲國家的國內衝突」不同於「『2063計畫』強調非洲問題應由非洲人解決」等立場窺出冰山之一角。鑒於篇幅限制，本節在「2063計畫」脈絡下，僅僅將以下兩者對照描述：中共支持極權主義，以及非洲力圖實現民主願景。

一、非洲民主化與中共支持專制者

在中共言行和非洲所冀望的政治系統之間，可以清楚識別出兩者矛盾之處，該項矛盾導致本研究認定中共在非洲的榮景是不確定。舉例而言，作家夸特(Kwei Quartey)在其「為什麼非洲轉向中共」(Why Africa is Turning to China?)一文裡，整體檢視非洲某些社會環節特別青睞於中共的心理基礎，夸特得出類似於上節裡政治／企業菁英受訪者的看法。這種看法還包括肯亞總統甘耶達(Uhuru Kenyatta)在內。具體而言，渠等認為中共視非洲為夥伴，認為雙方致力於「相得益彰的合作」與「共同繁榮」，並未將非洲視為只會到處乞援「沒未來的大陸」。⁶³然而，按照本文觀察所見，上述正面譬喻經常言過其實，不能代表整個非洲族群的看法，而只是一部分人沾到中共全球化好處的意見。南非開普敦大學學者赫曼·瓦瑟曼(Herman Wasserman)在其「中共—非洲媒體關係：我們迄今所知道的」論文裡，特別採關懷自由報導的角度，針對上述褒揚中共的內容，尖銳地提出過批判。

事實上，中共傳媒是由國家全力掌控，⁶⁴非洲聯盟力推的「2063計畫」卻是媒體言論自由。從大方向而言，兩者就存在著矛盾。非洲要邁向民主必須以活絡的媒體作為民主的先驅，因為媒體在揭發非洲僵化貪腐方面可扮演關鍵角色，而非僅是搽脂抹粉。瓦瑟曼(Herman Wasserman)在其所撰「中共—非洲媒體關係」一文裡，同時還質疑中共在非洲媒體文宣的真正目的，認為中共在非洲廣發文宣只是要渲染中共的軟實力，藉以擴充其對非洲的戰略影響力。由此確認「非洲是否支持中國文明全球化，端視個人受益的程度而定」之命題為真。不論是本研究的主要發現或是次要發現都可證明，通常是那些貪腐政客和獲利甚豐的企業主，才會支持

62 African Union Commission, "Goals & Priority Areas of Agenda 2063, African Union," <au.int> (檢索日期：2020年4月5日)

63 Kwei Quartey, "Why Africa Is Turning to China," March 11, 2013, *HUFFPOST*, <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/africa-china-investment_b_2338142> (檢索日期：2020年3月10日)；Uhuru, Kenyatta, "Uhuru Discusses Infrastructure, Trade with Official of China's NPC," *Daily Nation*, 13 April 2019.

64 Herman Wasserman, "China-Africa Media Relations: What We Know so Far," *Global Media and China*, 2018, <sagepub.com/journals-permissions> (檢索日期：2020年3月30日)

中共媒體操作途徑或經濟發展的概念，因為某些暗盤利益而與中共關係深厚。

二、非洲各國對中共政權的觀感

對此，林根(Stein Ringen)用「管控統治」(controlocracy)精準表達出當前中共的實質。⁶⁵ 本報告支持林根有關中共「政府系統業經轉型成為較諸過去更為強硬、更具意識形態的新政體」之描述。⁶⁶ 換句話說，隨著非洲各國通過決議朝向民主邁進，設定2063年前達成目標，對應於中共強化其極權路線。我們若說中共和非洲關係是一片榮景，在邏輯上是不通的。據悉，暴力恐懼症是非洲各國對中共的觀感，獨裁政治的缺陷尤其在近期爆發的新冠肺炎疫情上印證，令人特別有感。本研究同時也支持林根以「管控統治」描述中共獨裁政體，該描述業經學者蕭強適當地轉述於其撰文「新冠肺炎是如何在習近平的『管控統治之下失控』的？」，⁶⁷ 臺灣方面由於循民主規範保持透明度，反而對疫情管控良好。無怪乎，有些非洲人會將新冠肺炎稱作「中國肺炎」。以上所述即是對中共抱持疑慮的具體案例，說明仍有非洲人認為中共不太可能支持非洲邁進善治大道。因此，談起非洲觀感下的中共與非洲關係，若從諷刺的角度切入，會有人將中共比作是假裝有愛心、富裕卻又卑劣的凱子，隨時想對那些又窮又容易上當的美麗女子占便宜，最後成為雙方關係下的完全受益者，甚至可能更糟的是帶病傳染給對方。以上論述可由新冠疫情爆發得到驗證，事實上已有許多明顯的案例，可歸因於中共極權主義式的疫情處理途徑。再者，中共言行飄移的行徑與外援理論相違背。沒有國家能透過外援而發展有成，必須要國家一波波的內部改革才行。

最後，表1顯示非洲的其他角落受到中共對非洲戰略之影響，出現若干反證案例，證明中共官方說法和非洲對中共行為觀感有落差，各個案例都引起了非洲人民對中共的不良感覺。要言之，中共在非洲行為和中國大陸境內中國人施予非洲人待遇，可以用傾銷、霸凌、種族歧視、駭人勞動措施和貪腐形容，嚴重程度已足以破壞中共外交在非洲一度絕佳的榮景，這個災難般錯誤是和中共所揭櫫的政策背道而馳。

玖、結論與建議

為達成「中國夢」，中共在非洲核心利益是民族主義式的，試圖強化海洋實力。而美國和其西方同盟國家的利益主要聚焦於制衡中共（馬漢主義）。本研究確認上述命題為真，其主、次要推論材料均相互支持。舉例而言，本研究發現中共建立境外海軍基地的多項動機旨在支撐民族主義式的目標。後者包括在和平崛起的大旗下尋求建立霸權，中共為顯示「中國夢」標誌，屢屢在非洲和其他角落啟動諸如軟實力、軍事力等國家機器，積極地挑戰著美國霸權。換言之，將中共視為非洲救世主的論述是空洞的，因為到頭來發現中共和非洲發展夥伴關係的長

65 Ringen Stein, *The Perfect Dictatorship: China in the 21st Century* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2016), p. 135.

66 Ibid., p. 143.

67 Xiao Qiang, "How Xi's Controlocracy Lost Control of The Coronavirus," *The Japanese Times*, February 12, 2020, <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp>> (檢索日期：2020年2月26日)

表1 中共在非洲種族主義行徑整理表

案例編號	發生地	議題	中共種族主義行徑
1	非洲聯盟委員會暨成員國(南非、迦納、奈及利亞)	新冠疫情期間中國大陸境內對非洲仇外心理引起之抗議事件	旅居中國之非洲人民控訴遭強制驅離、片面隔離並集體接受新冠病毒檢驗，自此揭穿「兄弟般平等」的說法。 ⁶⁸
2	肯亞	基礎設施營建成本	1.控訴中共浮報鐵路施工成本。 2.運輸成本高漲50%，漲幅原因自稱是償還貸款所需。 ⁶⁹ 3.賄賂案。 4.中國人稱肯亞人爲「猴子」後遭驅離的一樁種族歧視案。 ⁷⁰
3	坦尚尼亞	漁民質疑	該國漁民對坦尚尼亞沿岸開發計畫表達疑慮，憂心影響國內製造業。 ⁷¹
4	馬拉威	對鄉郊地區進行傾銷和不公平競爭	1.提供劣質產品，傾銷低成本有毒貨物。 2.出售仿冒品。 3.大型廠商和馬拉威鄉間小舖的不公平競爭。 ⁷²
5	賴索托	不公平勞務合作	1.陸資紡織廠內發生種族歧視案件。 2.工資過低。 3.私自引進陸籍勞工。 4.工時冗長。 ⁷³
6	南非	傾銷	1.出售過期有毒產品。 2.外銷低價同型產品進入南非。 ⁷⁴
7	安哥拉	油價	以不公平條件簽訂石油外債協定。 ⁷⁵
8	尚比亞	侵犯主權	操縱媒體暨機場等。 ⁷⁶
9	史瓦帝尼王國	以霸凌外交壓制該國放棄對臺關係，威脅轉向中共	1.停發簽證，史瓦帝尼商務簽證需至南非普勒托利亞(Pretoria)。 2.影響政治版圖之秘密活動。 ⁷⁷

本研究自行整理

68 “South African Diplomats Join Intervention over Treatment of Africans in China amid Coronavirus,” *TIMESLIVE*, April 12, 2020.

69 Interview conducted by the author with Kenyan nationals, AU Headquarters, Ethiopia Addis Ababa, November 26, 2019.

70 Joseph Goldstein, “Kenians Say Chinese Investment Brings Racism and Discrimination,” *The New York Times*, October 15, 2018, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/world/africa/kenya-china-racism.html>> (檢索日期：2020年1月10日)。

71 John Weiss and Jalilian Hossein, “Competitiveness in African Manufacturing: Some Evidence from Tanzania,” in Potts David ed., *Tanzanian Development: A Comparative Perspective* (U.K.: Boydell & Brewer, 2019), pp.182-198.

72 Richard Chirombo, “Has Malawi Become a Dumping Ground for Chinese Products?,” *Malawi's Sunday Times*, September 10 & 17, 2017.

73 Carolyn Baylies, and Caroline Wright, “Female Labour in the Textile and Clothing Industry of Lesotho,” *African Affairs*, Vol. 92, No. 369, 1993, pp. 577-591.

74 Mieke Eoyang, Allison Peters, Ishan Mehta, and Brandon Gaskew, “Hot Topics in National Security, Report,” *Third Way*, 2019, pp. 14-22.

期贏家竟是中共當局、非洲貪腐的高階政客、官僚、私有企業大亨。再從美、英、法、德在非洲的利益觀之，同樣可確認本研究另一命題為真，那就是西方國家正制衡著中共行為。

此外，中共在非洲經濟層面的利益是汲取非洲豐厚的經濟資源，該命題經本研究一連串的證據確認為真。儘管事實上中共在非洲採取剝削式經濟手法，且公然程度已毫無遮掩。我們也發現中共投資走向，主要是集中在一些天然資源豐厚的國家。這種投資趨勢即使對那些高度樂觀於中共／非洲夥伴關係的人而言，當渠等要面對有人質疑中共辭令過度浮誇時，會顯得些許詞窮。

本文接續提出下一個命題，那就是中共試圖制衡美國在蘇伊士運河、其他海商路線甚至中東地區的主宰地位，以利中共船隻在上述區域航行自由，後勤補給無虞（衍生於海上阻絕管制的概念）。這項確認為真的命題是基於中共在吉布地軍港實施實彈演練而推論，該命題和僅是尋求後勤設施的說法，是南轅北轍的。

最後，本研究曾提出非洲各國彼此間對中共觀感出現差異，主要原因是有無涉及攸關利益的命題，該命題業經確認為真。本研究結論指出，非洲整體上正確認知到中共並非民主政體。因此，若說中共／非洲關係前途一片看好是言過其實。一片榮景的說法可能因為中共控制非洲聯盟成員國的媒體、中共資助的研究單位，也可能是中共情報部門在網絡上泡製民意調查，亦或論者恐懼於成為可能受害者等等因素而成。

本研究建議如下：

第一、本報告建議任何中共／非洲之協議均應比照「中國夢」考量到非洲願景，特別是非洲聯盟推動的「2063計畫」。中共／非洲未來協議應考量關於兩造之間勞工配額比例，以及中共必須只能提供專業人力資源等議題，有關中共提供專業人力以輔佐非洲走上勞務自主的哲學觀，過去已見證於坦尚尼亞政治人物尼雷爾(Julius Nyerere)的「社區家庭獨立自主計畫」(Ujamaa)內。本項建議落實後，才有機會創造雙贏，兌現中共2014年度對外援助白皮書所勾勒之目標。然而從事實面顯示，中共現階段在非洲的行徑與所揭櫫「相互尊重、平等相待，樹立雙贏」政策，⁷⁸卻是背道而馳的。

第二、為抑制非洲聯盟成員國出現沮喪、冷漠、自滿和依賴症候群，本研究認為中共若堅守對非洲夥伴關係的話，應該在其各項發展計畫裡提供一定比例的資金。本研究觀察到中共於非洲聯盟總部內到底有多少影響力，我們應有所保留。據報導，中共僅以微薄的2億美元出資

75 Felix Edoho, "Globalization and Marginalization of Africa: Contextualization of China-Africa Relations," *Africa Today*, Vol. 58, No. 1, 2011, pp. 103-124.

76 Interview conducted with Zambian nationals, AU Headquarters, Ethiopia Addis Ababa, November 26, 2019; also Lumumba, Patrick Loch O., "Africa is on dinner table Eaten by Superpowers," *Rwanda National Security Symposium*, May 14, 2018.

77 Martin Dlamini, "Bullying China's Threat to Africa," *The Times of Eswatini*, January 24, 2020.

78 The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *White Paper on China's Foreign Aid* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, July, 2014), p. 5.

興建非洲聯盟總部大樓，何況非洲聯盟接受中共對外援助那段期間，非洲聯盟成員國的國內生產總值每年已高達數兆美元。事實上，中共官方正式移交非洲聯盟總部新大樓前，非洲聯盟成員國早就開始抱怨中共的過度干預，特別是前文提及的情報活動。

第三、值得讚譽的是非洲抵制外國勢力的干預部分，非洲刻正努力於降低政治干預，制衡對象不僅指向中共，也指向包括其他來自全球大國。本文順此建議，宜透過強化各項政治機制和集體作為來加速降低政治干預，全面提倡非洲集體防衛的概念。其中，吉布地港就是一個現有的漏洞，中共以雙邊關係為由，充分利用這個集體防衛的漏洞。其他中共干預非洲國家的案例包括文前所提到的霸凌史瓦帝尼外交政策，以及涉入近期辛巴威發生的政客財產繼承糾紛，以上案例都和中共國家政策相違背，因此我們不得不承認中共國家政策是空話，是一場騙人的把戲，僅是藉由公共外交（文宣）名義，營造國家形象。

第四、建議中共和其他強權國家爭取在非洲影響力之際，亦應扭轉遭受質疑的現階段夥伴關係，不能僅以虛幻式的順其自然發展為滿足，而回應非洲的要求，將天然資源納入製程，不能一味地劫取豪奪原物料而已。唯有如此才能有助於非洲的失業紓困計畫，符合「2063計畫」原旨。非洲也應該不放棄避險措施，儘量從東、西方世界吸取有益的公共財。

總之，本研究試圖從全方位角度，藉由四個理論採取綜合研究途徑，探究一個涵蓋多面向的議題。儘管如此，由於範圍甚廣和行政資源限制，仍留下若干認知差距。對於本議題感興趣之後續研究，宜在本研究的基礎上，思考下列未善盡討論的部分：(一)在中共政策制定到推動之間，有無料想不到的矛盾處？或者，中共政策就是對中共／非洲關係的一場詐騙(二)如果中共「不稱霸」，為何從事大規模軍備整頓？(三)美、中在非洲甚至其他地區競逐，是否會引起第三次世界大戰？

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Beijing's Strategic Influence in Africa: A Case Study of the Naval Base in Djibouti

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Abstract

Since Beijing established its first military base abroad in Djibouti, it has earned itself the scoundrel title of being a neo-colonialist both in Africa and within the geopolitical landscape of international relations and strategic studies. Beijing on the other hand has prodigiously decried these vitriolic critics as groundless. As realities are more than what meets the eye, this study is premised on the employment of international relations (IR) theories and sets out to examine Beijing's interests and intentions in Africa as part of its grand national strategy by taking a mixed approach in a case analysis of establishing Beijing's first naval base abroad in Djibouti, exploring Beijing's strategic interests and growing influence in Africa. Scholarly attempts by this study that have been made include questions such as: what is Beijing's core interest to protect and advance in Africa with its naval base in Djibouti? Also, three subsequent questions are as follows: (1) Does Beijing have geo-economic interests in Africa that are the primary consideration for its decision to establish the naval base? (2) Does Beijing intend to sustain its global national interests that could be best achieved by establishing the naval base in Djibouti (Mahanism)? and (3) Is the Beijing regime accepted in Africa? (Africans' perceptions of Beijing's moves). This study argues that Beijing's well-documented cloud nine status in Africa is exaggerated since, as it is found in the interviews, some Africa Union Member States abhor China's tyrannical political system although they admire its successful economic models.¹

Keywords: Mahanism, Djibouti, China-Africa Relationship, The Belt and Road, Totalitarianism, Eswatini

1. Introduction

The first overseas military base of the People's Republic of China (hereafter referred to as Beijing) in Djibouti epitomizes Beijing's considerably heightened interest and influence in the African Continent.

¹ This study was supported by governments of the Republic of China (R.O.C.) and that of the Kingdom of ESWATINI (KOE) whilst he was with the NDU under the guidance of Dr. Yu (Navy CAPTAIN) and Prof. Tai. The Director of GISS, NDU, ROC, Dr. Shen, provided administrative support for this study.

It also demonstrates a shift in Beijing's well-documented non-intervention policy that denotes Beijing as an assertive expansionist big power, aiming for a much bigger strategic objective. Against these strategic developments, this study seeks to examine Beijing's strategic interests and influence in Africa and then predict its intentions to establish a permanent naval presence in Djibouti. Principally, such a move indicates a global hegemonic ambition as the Djibouti base is strategically located near the Suez Canal and close to other naval trade routes as well as to the Middle East. Consequently, Beijing's litany of public statements that the naval base in Djibouti is purely meant to be a logistical support base are investigated, too.

Beijing's potential challenge to the Western powers is also examined in this study cognizant of the contested dominance of the African Continent by the United States of America, hereafter referred to as the US, France and other Western allies that already have military bases in Djibouti. In retrospect, the study investigates whether Beijing is applying the concept of Sun Tzu's strategic approach and Mahanism simultaneously in the quest to deceive the international community into believing that “China will never seek hegemony or expansion and China's armed forces will remain a staunch force in maintaining world peace.”² The study is poised to fill the void left by scholars on this subject in particular that has given a too much elusive picture of Beijing's interests, influence and intentions in Africa without elaboration. For instance, the scholarly discussions on Beijing's growing interest and influence in Africa are littered with various misleading stereotypes and optimism about Beijing, which could be readily demystified from an African perspective. This is in line with an African proverb that “until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.”³ Hence this study seeks to add an African perspective that is detached from the Western- and the Eastern- perspectives. As it is a grand strategic project comprising two countries, the establishment of China's Naval Base in Djibouti needed bilateral negotiations between the two strategic partners and they started in 2015. Negotiations were concluded in 2016.⁴ According to one of the most respected scholars on the issue, Laura Zhou, the construction “commenced on the site with an estimated cost of 590 million US Dollars,”⁵ however, the figures could be much more higher than this amount as China is known to be very secretive with

2 Timothy Heath, “An Overview of China's National Military Strategy,” in Joe McReynolds ed., *China's Evolving Military Strategy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2016), pp. 1-39.

3 “Until the Story of The Hunt Is Told by the Lion...African Proverb,” *Africa Redemption Magazine*, November 25, 2013.

4 Agence France-Presse, “China ‘negotiates military base’ in Djibouti,” *Al Jazeera*, May 9, 2015, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2015/05/150509084913175.html>>, accessed date, September 5, 2020.

5 Laura Zhou, “How a Chinese investment boom is changing the face of Dibouti,” *South China Morning Post*, May 18, 2017.

regards to defense expenditures. As the project had the support of the local population, the construction process proved smooth, despite suspicion from the US and its allies, especially Japan.⁶ It was officially opened on 11th July 2017 with the current commander being Liang Yang. Construction of the base continued through an incremental approach as evidenced by other large-scale constructions which have been ongoing between 2018 and 2019.⁷ It is not operating as a support logistics facility as previously stated but essentially as a military base as typified by the conduct of live military fire exercises. Currently, the base serves more than just a logistic facility in support of peacekeeping operations as initially stated by China, but also serves as an intelligence collecting facility and host a first-class hospital for both emergencies and humanitarian purposes in support of PRC's strategic objectives.

The study is structured into nine sections as follows: first, introduction; second, objectives, research questions and propositions; third, theories and the method; fourth, Beijing's influence and its nexus to Africa; fifth, the *Road Initiative* and Beijing's Interests in Africa; sixth, Beijing's growing strategic influence and hidden ambitions in Africa; seventh, Africans' perception of Beijing's regime; eighth, uncertainty over Beijing's cloud nine status in Africa; and ninth, conclusions and recommendations.

2. Objectives, Research Questions and Propositions

The main objectives of the study are as follows: to examine Beijing's strategic interests in Africa and in particular its hidden interests as opposed to its public declarations vis-à-vis that of the US and other Western powers; to demonstrate that governments at times would normally downplay their strategic ambitions until an ideal moment; and to examine Africans' perceptions towards Beijing. Therefore, the central question that sets this study into motion is what Beijing's core interests are with its naval base in Djibouti to protect or advance in Africa? Consequently, three secondary questions are raised, viz., Does Beijing have geo-economic interests in Africa that could be seen as the primary cause to establish the naval base in Djibouti? Does Beijing have globalized national interests that could be best achieved by establishment of the naval base in Djibouti (Mahanism)? Is Beijing's regime accepted by the African population? In a quest to answer the above questions, four propositions are herein put forward as follows: (i) Beijing's core interests in Africa are nationalistic and Beijing seeks to strengthen its maritime power to have the *China's Dream* come true whilst the US and its Western allies mainly

6 FP Staff, "China sends troops to Djibouti base: Beijing's growing presence in Indian Ocean Region should rattle India, US," *Firstpost*, July 13, 2017, <<https://www.firstpost.com/india/china-sends-troops-to-djibouti-base-beijings-growing-presence-in-indian-ocean-region-should-rattle-india-us-3807909.html>>, accessed date, September 5, 2020.

7 Charlotte Gao, "China Officially Sets Up Its First Overseas Base in Djibouti," *The Diplomat*, July 12, 2017, <<https://thediplomat.com/2017/07/china-officially-sets-up-its-first-overseas-base-in-djibouti/>>, accessed date, September 5, 2020.

focus on countering Beijing; (ii) Beijing's interests are economical as it seeks to tap on Africa's rich natural resources; (iii) Beijing seeks to counterbalance the US dominance near the Suez Canal and other naval trade routes as well as the Middle East in order to facilitate free movement of Chinese ships in the region backed by logistics (sea-power chokepoints control concept); (iv) Africans' perceptions of Beijing varies mainly as a result of benefits or lack of.

3. Theories and the Method

The observation data will be explained by Mahanism, Strategic Theory, the concept of Pearl of Strings and the Theory of Foreign Aid. Firstly, Mahanism as a theoretic framework is employed in this study, taking into account its key arguments that “world trade, territorial expansion and seapower are the keys to national greatness.”⁸ Secondly, Strategic Theory is employed mainly to ascertain and then foresee all the players' strategic interests in Africa and, in particular Beijing's. Thirdly, the concept of String of Pearls explains the rationale behind China's “network of military and commercial facilities and relationships along its sea lines of communication as they extend from the Chinese mainland to Port Sudan in the Horn of Africa.”⁹ Finally, the Theory of Foreign Aid explains the soft power in use by China in Africa. Detailed elaborations of these theories are articulated in the following related sections. Concerning methodology, Guba categorized research approaches into three: namely, “quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods.”¹⁰ The study employs a mixed method as it takes into account the complexity of this topic. In the course of this study, interviews were conducted with interviewees chosen by stratified sampling across various categories including telephone and face-to-face modalities and secondary data was used to analyze China's interests in order to clarify its strategic intentions and African' perceptions. In sum, a holistic research approach that can be defined as “an approach to research that emphasizes the study of complex systems” is to be employed in the overall conduct of the study.¹¹

4. Beijing's Influence and Its Nexus to Africa

It is of paramount importance to firstly provide a brief background of China's rise both economically and militarily in recent years in the context of its national strategy. Such could shed some light to us

8 Wayne P. Hughes, “Implementing the Seapower Strategy,” *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 61, No. 2, 2008, pp. 47-59.

9 Lintner Bertil, *The Costliest Pearl: China's Struggle for India's Ocean* (London: Oxford University Press, April 15, 2019), pp. 1-2.

10 E.G. Guba, (ed.), *The paradigm* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990).

11 Hsif Amini, “The Holistic Approach to Development Research,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary Economics*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 2001, pp. 375-394.

where Africa stands in the bigger picture of Beijing's strategy. This study asserts that Goldstein's and Yarger's narrative of China's rise and Beijing's strategic maneuver can be helpful in this case. Yarger postulates that “strategic theory opens the mind to all the possibilities and forces at play, prompting us to consider the costs and risks of our decisions and weigh the consequences of those of our adversaries, allies, and others.”¹² Goldstein narrates that Beijing's strategy evolved with Deng Xiaoping initiating the reforms and opening-up a period in China at the end of the 1970s,¹³ noting that “Deng saw the need for China, as a developing country, to focus on economic development and domestic priorities and therefore to open up towards foreign relations as well as within multilateral institutions.”¹⁴ In other words and according to Goldstein, Deng advocated that Beijing should strategically keep a low profile in the international affairs.

Thus, it was worth investigating whether Beijing had been keeping a low profile until most recently has been in line with Sun Tzu's strategy that “when the opposition forces are strong, avoid them. If they are of high morale, disturb their morale. Look humble to trigger their conceits. If the opposition forces are at ease, exhaust them. If united, separate them. We emerge at the point where is to their surprise.”¹⁵ Despite the fact that the Western imperial powers have been enjoying the hegemonic status for centuries, China is eventually rising, and in Goldstein's view, Beijing is employing a grand strategy with a broad objective “to facilitate China's rise by reducing the likelihood of its growing capabilities to alert the bystanders or provoke them to think of opposing Beijing.”¹⁶ China's gigantic growth is particularly noteworthy, considering the official statistics of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) regarding China's economic growth. China “currently ranks as the second largest in the world by nominal GDP”¹⁷ and it is “the largest in the world by purchasing power parity.”¹⁸ Moreover, China has “the world's fastest-growing major economy, with growth rates averaging 6% for over 30 years.”¹⁹ These trends indicate a remarkable achievement by any standards, considering China's economic history. It is thus understandable for the US to view Beijing's regime as a threat to its hegemonic status.

12 Harry R. Yarger, *Strategic Theory of for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), p. 2.

13 Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the challenge-China's Grand Strategy and International Security*, *Studies in Asian Security Series* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 20.

14 Ibid.

15 Lionel Giles, *The Art of War by Sun Tzu*-Special Edition (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2007), p. 62.

16 Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the challenge-China's Grand Strategy and International Security*, *Studies in Asian Security Series*, p. 23.

17 IMF Report for China, “International Monetary Fund,” October 2018.

18 “Report for Selected Country Groups and Subjects (PPP Valuation of Country GDP),” *IMF*, January 21, 2018.

19 Ibid.

The definition of hegemony in this study is judged as a widely accepted one within the field of international relations that is quoted below:

hegemony denotes a situation of (i) great material asymmetry in favor of one state, that has (ii) enough military power to systematically defeat any potential contender in the system, (iii) controls the access to raw materials, natural resources, capital and markets, (iv) has competitive advantages in the production of value added goods, (v) generates an accepted ideology reflecting this status quo; and (vi) is functionally differentiated from other states in the system, being expected to provide certain public goods such as security, or commercial and financial stability.²⁰

This comprehensive definition is comprehensive enough to be a non-discourteous academic chore and helpful to understand Mahanism regarding Beijing's expansive endeavors in its deployment of naval forces. When Mahanism asserts that “world trade, territorial expansion and sea-power are key to national greatness,”²¹ it effectively highlights the connection between Mahanism and hegemony.

When examining Beijing's strategy holistically, it should be noted that its strategy on Africa is mainly supported by a combination of both soft power and hard power. Beijing's strategy in Africa is often said to be neocolonialist in nature mainly because Beijing seems to be exploitative of Africa's natural resources to sustain its growing economy, a case which is examined in detail later in this study. It is of vital importance to firstly define “neocolonialism” in this section. Ironically, the term “neocolonialism” is said to have been coined by an African, the late Ghanaian statesman, Kwame Nkrumah. Nkrumah defined it as the effort of using “capitalism, globalization and cultural imperialism to influence a developing country without the sign of the previous colonial methods of direct military control (imperialism) or indirect political control.”²² As defined above, neocolonialism is also a form of hegemony to the extent that critics of Beijing's strategy in Africa are of the view that Beijing is of neocolonialism in that Beijing recruits or corrupts influential elites in Africa to exploit the whole continent as part of its global strategy. This school of thought is informed by renowned US foreign policy guru, Henry Kissinger, who suggested that to achieve national interest in foreign lands, the dominant power often wins the hearts of the local leaders by the following effort:

20 Luis Schenoni, “The Argentina-Brazil Regional Power Transition,” *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 2018, p. 473.

21 Wayne P. Hughes, “Implementing the Seapower Strategy,” p. 59.

22 Noam, Chomsky & Edward S., Herman, *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism* (Washington D.C.: Black Rose Books Ltd, 1979), p. 42.

To give them...elaborate clothes and carriages in order to corrupt their eyes; to give them fine food in order to corrupt their mouth; to give them music and women in order to corrupt their ears; to provide them with lofty buildings, granaries and slaves in order to corrupt their stomach...and, as for those who come to surrender, the emperor [should] show them favor by honoring them with an imperial reception party in which the emperor should personally serve them wine and food so as to corrupt their mind. These are what may be called the five baits.²³

Kissinger's conception of this cunning foreign strategy indeed seems to be relevant to this study as Beijing is often associated with totalitarian regimes and corrupt leaders in Africa, i.e. the late Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe, South African then President, Jacob Zuma and the Djiboutian non-democratic regime, to mention but a few.²⁴ A growing body of critics in Africa, include Africa's respected scholar and a renowned critic of Beijing's strategy in Africa P.O.L. Lumumba, who also concurs with this critical narrative.²⁵ It is certainly reminiscent of the historical anecdotes from Western colonial strategy during the colonial era. The similarities are glaring with regards to states' effort of "capturing" some influential Africans ("state capture" ²⁶) mainly through bribes and other ideological means. As one prominent African freedom fighter, Benjamin Burombo poignantly summarized, "each time I want to fight for African rights I use only one hand because the other hand is busy trying to keep away Africans who are fighting me." ²⁷

What Burombo meant is that every time when morally upright Africans fight against foreign manipulation and exploitation, the morally bankrupt, compromised Africans pull them down for selfish gains. A case in point is Beijing's quest to win ESWATINI from Taipei. Beijing through its intelligence community identified the most influential members in the ESWATINI Parliament and sponsored a visit to Mainland China.²⁸ There is no evidence that money does not exchange hands during such tours as such. However, the younger members in the Parliament watched all the process of the tours in envy. Most importantly, upon returning from the trip, Members of Parliament were seen to be pushing for Beijing-friendly socio-economic laws for private gains, with a circumventing path before the eye of the

23 Henry Kissinger, *World Order* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014), p. 215.

24 Mpho Raborife, "Zuma Defends Relationship with Guptas-Report," *News24*, March 23, 2016.

25 Lumumba, Patrick L. O., "Dumsorisation' of Africa must stop-P.L.O Lumumba." <<http://citifmonline.com/2015/08/29/dumsorisation-of-africa-must-stop-p-l-o-lumumba>>, accessed date, 05 May 2019.

26 John Crabtree and Francisco Durand, *Peru: Elite Power and Political Capture* (London: Zed Books Ltd), 2017, p. 1.

27 Bhebe Ngwabi, *Benjamin Burombo: African politics in Zimbabwe, 1947-1958* (Harare: College Press), 1989, p. 4.

28 Vusi Sibisi, "Controversial Members of Parliament's China Trip," *The Times of Eswatini*, August 25, 2019.

mass population.

Beijing's strategy to capture a few individuals from the elite has created a division between the corrupt influential and the masses in the African Continent. Whether they are politicians, military Generals, managers in the private sectors or senior civil servants, these captured elite become irrelevant to Africa's development agenda. Moreover, this irrelevance feeds the so-called despondency, apathy, complacency and dependency syndrome within the AU Member States. Hence the glaring polarity between the public sectors is mainly a result of corrupted figures' reluctance to retire from official capacities in order to keep on covering up their corruption. Further complicating the situation is their failure to groom young leaders/managers. Instead, some aged elites remain relevant despite their shortcomings. Since African culture is characterized by humility, empathy and non-consumerism, the above negative selfish traits are often criticized as they are said to be foreign. That said, the widely docudramatic narrative that the Beijing-African partnership is solid and sustainable is often recounted as a façade at best. In essence, Beijing's strategy in Africa is purely meant to pit Africans against each other so as to render the Continent more vulnerable to exploitation as envisaged by Burombo decades back when referring to the case of Western colonialism.

5. The *Belt and Road Initiative* and Beijing's Interests in Africa

Beijing's *Belt and Road Initiative* illustrates Beijing's growing interest in Africa. Beijing's interest in Africa's seas and littorals as indicated above was expected when considering that Beijing's *Belt and Road Initiative* is at the heart of *China's Dream* of being great. Thusly, Alfred Mahan's hypothesis was tested against the propositions that “no nation could become or remain a great power without control of the seas,”²⁹ which indicates that great nations must have great navies as the hallmark of being great. On the same note from the Chinese official documents, in particular, the press statements and Defence White Papers, President Xi Jinping describes Beijing's ambition in the *China's Dream* of being great, stating the need to “resurrect” Chinese ancient power as follows.³⁰

Beijing will actively promote international co-operation through the *Belt and Road Initiative*.

In doing so, we hope to achieve policy, infrastructure, trade, financial, and people-to-people

29 Mahan, Alfred T., *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783. 1890*, reprint (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970).

30 Xi Jinping, “The Governance of China,” Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2014; “The 2015 Chinese Defense White Paper on Strategy in Perspective: Maritime Missions Require a Change in the PLA Mindset,” *China Brief*, Volume 15, Issue 12, 29 May 2015, <<https://www.refworld.org/docid/556c27634.html>>, accessed date, 10 April 2019.

connectivity and thus build a new platform for international co-operation to create new drivers of shared development.³¹

President's Xi's rhetoric triggers skepticism on Beijing's true intentions of, in particular with reference to hegemonic aspirations for establishing its first military abroad. Against this background, the study takes into account the various observation data skeptics of Beijing's peaceful rise. These include Shi Yinghong, who asserts that Beijing's ambition stands in contrast to its claims in the past that it wished to pursue a course of “peaceful development.”³² Henceforth, as pointed out in one of the preceding sections of this study, some African countries, Djibouti in particular, have partial jurisdiction over one of the most important choke points in the world. The geographic location of Djibouti, as stated by various scholars, gives it the strength as one of the world's most ornate trade routes and makes it economically indispensable for a rising superpower that is mostly reliant in either imports or exports. Hence Djibouti is most relevant for Beijing's *One Road One Belt Initiative*.

Moreover, it is equally vital to point out that Beijing's strategic interest in Djibouti signifies its interests in the African Continent and beyond. Clearly, in this context Africa is very important to Beijing as one of the continents that are strategically relevant for its *One Belt One Road Initiative*. For example, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa and Mozambique to mention but a few geographically and strategically located countries within the Indian Ocean are of vital importance to global shipments of goods such as refueling. Some of these countries as shown on the African map (Figure 1 below) also serve as gateways for imports and exports for countries such as Ethiopia. Ethiopia is worth mentioning in that it is one of the most populous African countries and it hosts the African Union headquarters. All these give any aspiring global power some form of leverage onto a wide array of policies if it inserts its influence at this corner of Africa. This study thus asserts that Beijing's naval base in Djibouti seeks to enhance the protection of Beijing's interests abroad, not exclusively economic interests. This naval base in Djibouti represents a signpost of economic and military interests subject to Beijing's grand strategy. This narrative is supported by effective statistics such as “the value of Beijing-African trade in 2018 was \$185 billion, up from \$155 billion in 2017.”³³

31 Xi Jinping, “Speech Delivered at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC),” October 18, 2017, <<http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/>>, accessed date, February 10, 2020.

32 Yinghong Shi, “China's Complicated Foreign Policy,” *ECFR*, 31 March 2015, <https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_chinas_complicated_foreign_policy311562>, accessed date, 25 April 2019.

33 Johns Hopkins University's, School of Advanced International Studies, “Data: China-Africa Trade,” *China Africa Research Initiative*, February 10, 2019, <<http://www.sais-cari.org/data-china-africa-trade>>, accessed date, April 2, 2020.

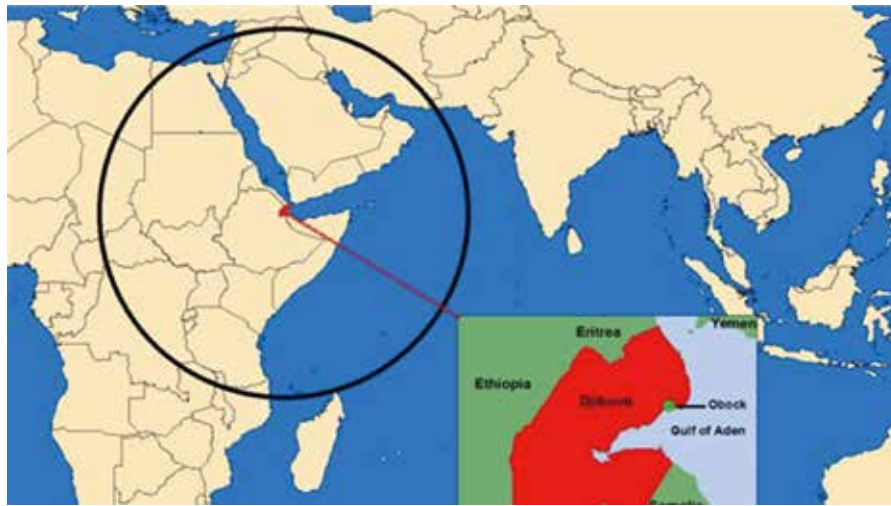


Figure 1 Map Indicating the Strategic Importance of Djibouti

Source: Andrew S. Erickson's Analysis, "US AFRICOM Commander GEN David Rodriguez, USA Confirms: China Signed 10-Year Contract for Military Logistics Hub in Djibouti-Beijing's 1st-Ever Overseas "Base" /Facility," *GADM*, November 24, 2015.

6. Beijing's Growing Strategic Influence and Hidden Ambitions in Africa

6.1 Counter-balancing the US Dominance Near the Suez Canal

This section seeks to highlight how Beijing as strategically capacitated its state institutions as instruments of national power to the extent of turning itself into a potent power to be reckoned with in Africa to exert strategic influence both covertly and overtly. The second objective of this study is to demonstrate that governments at times would normally downplay their strategic ambitions until an ideal moment. The first three aforementioned propositions are to be tested again to see whether Mahanism and Sun Tzu's theories are still relevant in the contemporary era especially laid bare by the concept of String of Pearls and the theory of Foreign Aid. It is worth highlighting briefly that the concept of String of Pearls is "geopolitical" to shed light on potential Beijing's intentions in the Indian Ocean region (IOR).³⁴ This geopolitical concept also provides a reference point for us to see Beijing's establishment of its naval base in Djibouti within a global strategic context. Lancaster on the other hand defines foreign aid as "a voluntary transfer of public resources, from a government to another independent government, to an NGO, or an international organization."³⁵ In this regard, this study determines that Beijing is most likely to be cautiously seeking hegemonic ambitions not only the so-called greatness which is very

34 "Issues and Insights," *Pacific Forum*, <www.pacforum.org>, accessed date, November 22, 2019.

35 Carol Lancaster and Ann Van Dusen, *Organizing Foreign Aid: Confronting the Challenges of the 21st Century* (U.S.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), p. 5.

difficult to unpack and differentiate from hegemony by President Xi. These analyses are in line with Beijing's official public pronouncements to the effect that “bidding its time” which is credited to be Deng Xiaoping's dictum, (Beijing being a student of Sun Tzu's deception strategies). The scepticism on Beijing's declaration not to be in the pursuit of global hegemony proves a check of Beijing's image. This comes as a contrast between Beijing's public declarations on public documents and its well-documented deception tactics in history-perhaps Mao Zedong's and Deng Xiaoping's legacies. These legacies were the model to follow to the effect that Beijing's geopolitical strategy should be crafted in such a way as to “observe calmly, secure its position, cope with affairs calmly, hide its capabilities, bide its time, be good at maintaining a low profile, and never claim leadership.”³⁶

First, chief among Beijing's hidden ambitions is to counterbalance the US. This claim is supported by the geographic positioning of its naval base in Djibouti in close proximity to that of the US as illustrated on the map (Figure 2). The fact that the naval base in Djibouti is not that far from US Camp Lemonnier triggered the protests from the US, who is cognizant of potential intelligence threats from Beijing. With regards to the proximity to the Bab al Mandab Strait, Beijing is satisfied, for the naval base in Djibouti provides access to surveillance over other geopolitical foes in the region. As it is, Beijing is reportedly gathering both economic and military intelligence.³⁷



Figure 2 Map Showing Proximity Between PRC's and US Military Bases in Djibouti

Source: New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/25/world/africa/us-djibouti-chinese-naval-base.html>, accessed date, December 10, 2019.

36 Pham Tuan, “The Chinese Dream and Beijing's Grand Strategy,” Centre for International Maritime Security, December 19, 2017, <<http://cimsec.org/the-chinese-dream-and-beijings-grand-strategy/35066>>, accessed date, March 05, 2019.

37 African Union Commission, “Communique of the 868th Meeting of The PSC on The State of Foreign Military Presence in Africa,” Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, August 14, 2019.

The US Director of Intelligence at the US Africa Command (AFRICOM), Rear Adm. Heidi Berg, was excerpted to international media houses, predominately African ones, that Beijing attempted to “constrain international airspace by barring aircraft from flying over the Beijing's military base, flashed ground-based lasers into the eyes of American pilots and deployed drones designed to interfere with US flight operations.”³⁸ Rear Adm. Berg was further quoted to accuse Beijing of attempted espionage at Camp Lemonnier.³⁹ Similar concern was also raised by the other AU Member States that a Beijing's-type information system at AU headquarters was financed, installed and operated principally by Chinese personnel, who is in close proximity to the Beijing's naval base in Djibouti.⁴⁰ As *The US 2017 National Security Strategy* concluded that “China and Russia aspire to project power worldwide,”⁴¹ the US is skeptical the functionality of Beijing's naval base in Djibouti, too. Economically, the impact of the Chinese Naval Base and that of the US military base in Djibouti have to be analyzed from three strategic imperatives. According to some interviewees at the African Union headquarters during this study, Djibouti government officials are often uncomfortable discussing the issue of foreign military basis in Africa. First, because foreign military bases indisputably generate notable revenues for Djibouti through rents and other spillovers although it is repugnant to the African Union concept of collective defence. For instance, the current agreement in place between the US and Djibouti was agreed upon in 2014, wherein the US agreed to pay Djibouti 63 million dollars annually and further spent more than 1 billion on the military base's (Camp Lemonier) expansion.⁴² On the other hand, the US's main competitor with regards to projecting military power abroad, China currently pays Djibouti less than half of what the US is paying on rents, which is a meager 20 million dollars per year.⁴³ Second, through trade, China exports to Djibouti was US\$1.87 billion annually, according to the most recently updated United Nations COMTRADE database on international trade. On the other hand, Djibouti is the US's “154th largest goods trading partner with \$161 million in total (two way) goods trade during 2018.”⁴⁴ Third, through aid, despite terms often favorable to the funders, both the US and Chinese presence have a positive economic impact on Djibouti's economy. Statistics from the World Bank support this finding

38 Geoff Hill, “US Commander Says China Tried to Sneak into American Military Base in Africa,” *Special to The Washington Times*, June 16, 2019.

39 Ibid.

40 Joan Tilouine and Ghali Kadiri, “The Seat of the African Union Spied on by Beijing,” *Le Monde*, January 26, 2018.

41 United States, President of the US, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington DC: The White House, 2017), p. 51.

42 Eric Schmitt, “US Signs New Lease to Keep Strategic Military Installation in the Horn of Africa,” *New York Times*, May 6, 2014.

43 Edward Paice, “Djibouti Wins Jackpot – Renting Out Desert for Military Bases,” *The Cipher Brief*, May 30, 2017.

44 United Nations COMTRADE, “database on international trade,” <<https://tradingeconomics.com/china/exports/djibouti>>, accessed date, September 5, 2020.

as they indicate that Djibouti's economy has been growing by no less than 3% in recent years,⁴⁵ which could also be attributed to rents on foreign military bases and levies on utilities of its ports. This is also a positive trend for improving the lives of the people in Djibouti in the short and medium-term.

6.2 Assessments of Utility on the Beijing's Naval Base in Djibouti

Second, Beijing's growing influence in Africa is exemplified by its ability to deploy and conduct military operations thousand miles away from the Chinese mainland. It is of vital importance to point out that there has been so far no credible assessments on the utility of the naval base in Djibouti as there is a lack of transparency, accountability or availability of reliable Beijing's official statements. However, this study is certain that the base currently hosts about 150 PLA Navy Marines and it can billet up to 4,000 troops. Once construction is complete, it will accommodate up to 10,000 troops.⁴⁶ The primary mission of the Chinese troops on the base is mainly to provide support to the Beijing's military and non-military endeavors in Africa, the Indian Ocean and the Middle East.⁴⁷ Most importantly, the aforementioned utilities are also capable of intelligence activities and covert operations in Africa, aimed at the US in particular.

6.3 Beijing's Strategic Influence via Intelligence Collection

Third, Beijing's growing influence in Africa is demonstrated by its capacity of intelligence services to support foreign policy. The naval base in Djibouti among other strategic utilities is reportedly used for intelligence collection and strengthening Beijing's strategic influence in the political landscape of Africa and beyond. According to various AU Member States' reports on the current use of the naval base in Djibouti, Beijing is to carry out intelligence collection aimed at other foreign military bases situated within Djibouti, a strategic move that is supporting and strengthening already established intelligence activities in Africa.⁴⁸ In fact, various official and non-official reports have pointed out Beijing's intelligence services is playing a key role in boosting Beijing's growing influence in Africa. This can be dating back to the colonial era such as the days in Angola wherein Beijing was and still is largely interested in Angola's energy sector and in promoting the communist ideology. Similar cases

45 Ibid.

46 Africa Union Commission, "Side Event of the 33rd AU Summit: Inauguration of the Headquarters of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services (CISSA)," Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, African Union Headquarters, February 9, 2020.

47 Ibid.

48 African Union Commission, "Discussion of Report of the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services (CISSA) on Status of Foreign Military Bases in Africa," Closed Session, African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, August 19, 2019.

to Angola, where Beijing's intelligence services also played a central role in influencing events include Sao Tome Principe, Gambia, Senegal and most recently Burkino Faso, who are noted for switching recognition of the Republic of China, hereafter referred to Taipei in this study.

Beijing's intelligence services stationed in Mozambique and South Africa were reported to be utilizing these two countries in the quest to influence the political landscape of Taipei's only official ally in Africa, ESWATINI (formerly Swaziland), to switch to Beijing. The issue of ESWATINI has proved to be a thorny one for Beijing. Evidenced can be found from Beijing's ambassador to South Africa, who burst into anger on the issue. Regarding the introduction of stringent Visa requirements for Emaswati (Swazis) intending to travel to Mainland China, Ambassador Lin Songtian, claimed that Beijing takes a firmer stance on the issue with the statement “No Diplomatic Relations, No business with Beijing”.⁴⁹ As Lin warned:

let me state that we have taken a resolution to ban ESWATINI from trading with Mainland China because it does not have diplomatic relations with Beijing. We thought it was wise to start with restrictions that are not stricter. This is the beginning of tough times to come if you continue disrespecting us.”

It would be casting aspersions and premature to conclude that such bullying tactics would coerce ESWATINI to switch recognition of Taipei and it is beyond the scope of this study-the main topic of this study is the utility of the Beijing's naval base in Djibouti. However, it has shed some light to the supporting roles of the Beijing's naval base in Djibouti.

To sum, the Beijing's naval base in Djibouti, due to its strategic location on the Indian Ocean, is reported to be cost effective with regards to either support intelligence services or conduct intelligence operations. These intelligence activities also encompass intelligence collection on Islamic militants in Egypt, Algeria and other Sahel countries that are affiliated to Chinese domestic terrorists in China's Xinjiang.⁵⁰ For Beijing, these intelligence operations consist of non-traditional and strategic intelligence effort of exploring opportunities for Beijing. Nigeria, Sudan and South Sudan, for example, are the places where Beijing has an interest in energy resources and new markets.⁵¹ In other words, Chinese embassies and the state-owned enterprises are to be liaising with the authorities of the Beijing's naval

49 Lin Songtian, “Emaswati Can Now Get China Visas But,” *Eswatini Times*, February 19, 2020.

50 Nodirbek Soliev, “China: Xinjiang Province,” *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2020, pp. 77-81.

51 Donovan Chau, *Report* (US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007).

base in Djibouti. The role of the base in Djibouti is therefore seen to rise given it is still at its infancy phase.

6.4 Official Narrative on Djibouti's Agreement to Host Beijing's Naval Base

Fourth, Beijing's success in convincing the Djibouti authorities to allow the establishment of the Beijing's base in Djibouti regardless of the US 's objections illustrate its shrewdness in leverage of financial aid as an instrument of national power that is in line with the theory Foreign Aid. According to Djibouti's authorities, particularly, Djibouti's President, Ismail Omar Guelleh, the decision to permit Beijing to establish its naval base in Djibouti was a rational move. It is said that the policy has taken into account a wide array of factors, including possible economic linkages to the people of Djibouti and Ethiopia.⁵² Those politicians and academics coming from the African Union and in Djibouti prove supportive of Djibouti president's stance in the interviews. They further highlight that Beijing is most likely to have employed its soft power through aid to support Djibouti economically as early as 2000, since then Beijing has supported various development projects in Djibouti. These projects include financing the construction of a hospital in Arta, grants for construction of a new headquarters for the Djiboutian Foreign Affairs Ministry and food supplies for a drought in Djibouti in 2005,⁵³ as indicated in other sections of this study.

One may be thus strongly inclined to echo Lancaster's theory of Foreign Aid theory as a means to achieve objectives of national strategies. In this context, Lancaster's conception of Foreign Aid may provide an explanation in this milieu as to how Beijing “captured” the Djibouti authorities.

6.5 Beijing's Growing Influence in Africa and in the United Nations

Finally, Beijing's growing influence in Africa is also evidenced through its lobbying effort to have impact on Africa's diplomatic activities within the United Nations (UN). The assertion made by this study is premised on the findings that the Beijing's naval base in Djibouti also supports Beijing's diplomacy in Africa. Africa is of diplomatic value to Beijing for its dominating the UN as all countries have equal voting status within the UN General Assembly, where Beijing is seeking hegemony across the agendas. A case in point was happening in July 2019, when UN ambassadors from fifty (50) countries, including Djibouti, signed a joint letter to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to stand up for Beijing's ill treatment of Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in the Xinjiang region.⁵⁴ This collective

52 Bill Chappell, “China Reaches Deal to Build Military Outpost in Djibouti,” *NPR*, January 21, 2016.

53 Interviews conducted by the author in Djibouti and Ethiopia, November 9, 2019-January 26, 2020.

54 “Ambassadors from 50 countries voice support to China's position on issues related to Xinjiang,” *Xinhua*, July 27, 2019, <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-07/27/c_138263116.htm>, accessed date, March 10, 2020.

move illustrates Beijing's dominating influence over Africa's diplomats as part of a voting mechanism within the UN system as well as an indication how relevant Africa is when it comes to Beijing's grand strategy.

Another case in point worthy of note is World Health Organization's (WHO) Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who is said to be pro-Beijing. Ghebreyesus' origin of state is Ethiopia, a key African ally of Beijing in the African Continent. Ghebreyesus used to be a career politician prior to his competing for the Secretary General of WHO supported by African healthy ministers.⁵⁵ His handling of the novel Coronavirus outbreak has earned him the wraths from Africans and US. President Trump's camp. Michael McCaul, a Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee has alleged that “Director-General Tedros is a puppet of the Chinese Communist Party who was the CCP's chosen candidate for the role, and their support for him has paid off.”⁵⁶ Thus US funding for the WHO is subsequently under review as the WHO Director-General is accused of deliberate “delayed declaring of the novel coronavirus as a public health emergency, ignored warnings about human-to-human transmission, and heaped praise on the Beijing's regime despite evidence it was hiding the scope and severity of its outbreak.”⁵⁷ Without going to the merits and demerits of these accusations, this study is of the view that Ghebreyesus is supported by Beijing in his political career progression. This has raised eyebrows on its own. This is not an exceptional case, however. It feeds to the narrative that Beijing identifies, grooms and politically captures some African leaders to achieve its long-term strategic goals.

6.6 Prognosis on Beijing's Possible Future Intentions

The use of the naval base as some sort of a learning endeavor cannot be ruled out in the case of the Beijing's naval base in Djibouti. As many African scholars including Nantulya have asserted, “Beijing's growing military engagement in Africa is aimed at advancing Beijing's economic and strategic interests, in particular, its *Belt and Road Initiative*.”⁵⁸ It is therefore not a surprise if Beijing utilizes its activities in Djibouti as a starting point in its overall learning curve for further expansions in Africa. This is in line with the concept of String of Pearls, where Beijing is most likely to establish more naval bases in African countries around the Indian Ocean including Seychelles, Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritius and Mozambique. The Atlantic Ocean is also of interest to Beijing as is indicated by the Namibia-Beijing

55 “All Roads Lead to Universal Health Coverage,” *World Health Organization*, January 3, 2018.

56 Deirdre Shesgreen, “Public Health ‘Superstar’ or Pro-China Propagandist? WHO Chief Lands in US Political Crosshairs,” *Usa Today*, April 22, 2020.

57 Ibid.

58 Paul Nantulya, “Chinese Hard Power Supports Its Growing Strategic Interests in Africa,” *Africa Centre for Strategic Studies*, January 17, 2019.

partnership.

This forecast is evidenced by Nantulya, who analyzed the connection between Beijing's activities in Africa and its grand strategy as part of a policy that “has at its core the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation (zhonghua minzu weida fuxing) and its restoration as a Great Power (shi jie qiang guo).”⁵⁹ However, these developments will continue to present both threats and opportunities to the African Continent. On the one side, the competition between the US and Beijing will provide a golden opportunity for Africa to strengthen its hedging strategy. On the other side, in the event the competition between Beijing and US turns nasty, Africa stands to suffer as the African saying that when two elephants fight, the grass suffers.

7. Africans' Perceptions of Beijing's Regime

A brief background of the interviewing method is provided in this section. Firstly, one of the objectives of this study was to examine Africans' perceptions towards Beijing in light of Beijing's growing interest and influence in Africa as the case of its first military base abroad in Djibouti. This study employs a mixed methodological approach featured by both quantitative analysis and qualitative examinations conducted in a quest to holistically analyze Africans' perceptions of Beijing. In a nutshell, to the question “Is Beijing's regime accepted by the African population?”, those answers that represent Africa's views are categorized into three, namely: the elites/politicians who mainly benefit from Beijing's Africa strategies, the Africa middle-class people who tend to strive to make ends meet by selling their skills, and the ordinary folks in the streets, mainly the poor. As indicated in the methodology and approach sections, interviews were conducted in the form of questionnaires, participation in conferences including closed sessions (observation) and secondary source of literature in the past.

The stratified sampling consists of representative from Africa's eight regional blocs under the African Union in 2020 when there are eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) including Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC).

There are also various reliable statistics on Africans' perceptions of Beijing such as data downloaded from *Afrobarometer*. However, there have not been copious surveys specifically dealing with Africans'

⁵⁹ Ibid.

perceptions from the African angle such as the African Union in the context of the case study regarding Beijing's first military base abroad. The African Union can be seen as a bloc as it has strived in recent years to harmonize the various idiosyncrasies of its Member States. By contrast, there are also several African media houses that are often inundated with statements such as “Africa solutions for African problems,” ‘the Africa we want’ and so forth.⁶⁰ In terms sampling, it is worth noting though this study was limited by resource and therefore a stratified approach is employed.

Through the stratified random method of sampling, one hundred participants were selected from all the regional blocs of AU. Initially, the targeted interviewees were fifty (50) cognizant of time and other resources constraints. However, the response was so overwhelmingly active that it was not only the higher official levels to agree to participate in the interviews, but the number of the interviewed ends up at 100. The fact is that most participants that were approached were attending meetings and they were within the AU premises. This has made it feasible for this study to do interviews within a short space of time. To the benefit of this study, some interviews exceeded more than two hours expressing their viewpoints, well beyond the planed average 30 minutes. In the interviewing process, interviewees are rarely cut short particularly with elders or politicians in accordance with African cultural norms. In retrospect, thirty-three (33) participants are interviewed in categories of politicians/business community (mainly the upper class/elites category). In the category of bureaucrats (mainly middle-class) thirty-three (33) participants are interviewed while in the lower class/ general population category, thirty-four (34) are interviewed. Participants from Djibouti were purposely omitted in the interviews to reduce the degree of bias. However, thirty (30) participants are asked of selected questions in a quest to test the study's hypothesis that Beijing was popular in Djibouti because of economic gains.

7.1 Perceptions on Chinese Globalization vis-à-vis Western Globalization

Secondly, in the context of the competition between an expansive Beijing and the hegemonic US, the question of a preferred globalization of civilization was put to the sophisticated respondents, and as expected, the respondents chose neither the Chinese civilization nor the Western civilization. In the category of political and business communities, 33/33 (100% indicating Africa civilization). In the category of bureaucrats, 79% (26/33) preferred none, but rather taking what's considered to be good for Africa from both, whilst 12% (4/33) indicated preference for the continued globalization of Western civilization and the remainder 9% (3/33) indicated preference of a new era dominated by the

⁶⁰ African Union Commission, “African Union Strives to ensure a Conflict-Free Africa in line with the theme on Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development,” Press Release African Union Commission, Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, February 10, 2020.

globalization of Chinese civilization. The general populace category, on the other hand, indicated some preferences as follows: 45% (15/34) is for the Western civilization, 42% (14/34) Chinese, 13% (5/34) none. The total breakdown is indicated in Figure 3 below.

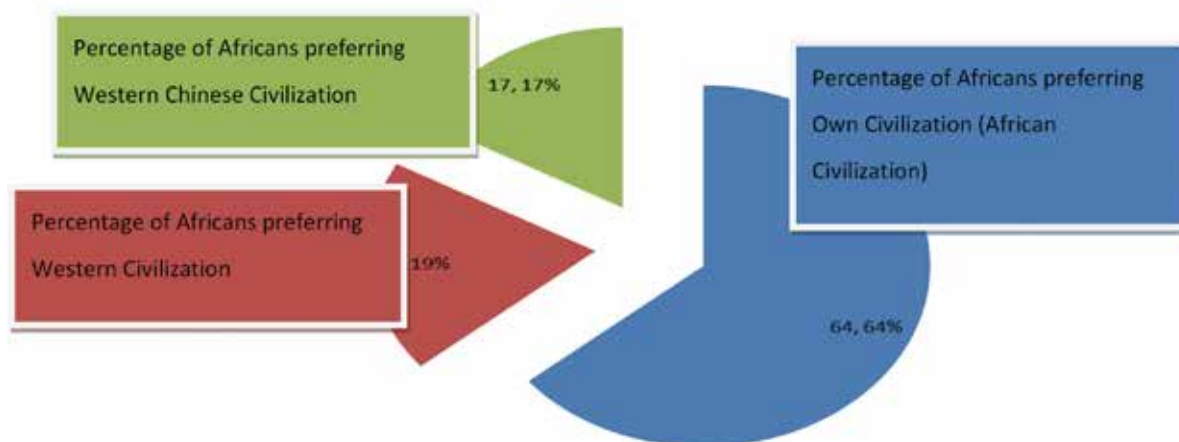


Figure 3 Statistics on Africans' Civilizations Preferences

Bheki M.P. Dalmini, February 13, 2020, Source: Interviews Conducted at the African Union Headquarters, Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, November 9, 2019-February 7, 2020.

As shown in Figure 3, a high percentage of the respondents indicate neither a preference for the globalization of the Western civilization nor the Chinese civilization. They instead had preference for an elusive utopian equality concept within the world stage. It indicates a growing Pan-African nationalism within the Continent wherein Africans are fighting for an equal footing within the international community as well as under the UN structures. Thus, the political category's choice is most likely to have been influenced by the Continent's democratic movement's founders, in particular the then South African President, Nelson Mandela, who has once remarked that:

During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.⁶¹

7.2 Preferred Economic and Political Model

61 Joel Joffe, *The State vs. Nelson Mandela: The Trial That Changed South Africa* (U.K.: One World Books, 2007); Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (U.S.: Little, Brown, 1995).

Thirdly, regarding the question, between the Beijing's regime and US/Western powers, which partnership is likely to benefit Africa economically and sustainably? 63.6% (21/33) in the political/business communities category indicated a preference for the Chinese economic model of development, the remainder 27.27% (9/33) indicated preference for the Western model whilst 9.9% (3/33) is either “not decided” or proposes an alternatives. In the bureaucrats' category, 75.75% (25/33) preferred the Chinese economic model, whilst 24.25% (8/33) indicated preference for the Western approach to development, whilst 6% (2/33) indicated “not decided” in this category. The general populace category, on the other hand, indicated their preferences as follows: 35.29% (12/34) is for the Chinese model, 41.11% (14/34) Western, 17.64% (6/34) “not decided” or propose a new approach.

In total, 58% (58/100) Western, 31% (31/100), Chinese Economic Model and 11% (11/ 100) “not decided” or prefers other approaches.

Another question posed was: which partnership is likely to develop Africans' political institutions for the realization of *Agenda 2063* between the Beijing's regime and US/Western powers? In the category of political/business communities, 75.7% (25/33) indicated preference for the Western democracy, the remainder 24.3% (8/33) indicated preference for the Chinese political system. In the bureaucrats' category, 84.8% (28/33) prefer the Western democracy system, whilst 9.09% (3/33) indicated preference Chinese political system while 6.6% (3/33) indicated “not decided” in this category. The general populace category indicate their preferences as follows: 64.7% (22/34) are for the Western democracy, 20.5% (7/34) Chinese political system, 11.7% (4/34) proposed new approaches or “no idea”.

In total, 75% (75/100) indicated preference for Western democratic system, while 18% (18/100), Chinese political system and 7% (7/100) indicated “not decided” or other approaches.

The above statistics indicate that the Chinese economic model is very popular in Africa, although its political model is not. Western democratic values are equally popular while the Western economic model is not that preferred. The Western economic model was criticized because most Africans perceive that the liberal economic model enriches the already rich capitalists.

When the Western economic model was juxtaposed with the Chinese command economy model, the latter was favored. This is because those revenues generated from state-owned firms are perceived as directed back to public, a mechanism of benefits for all citizens. This study, however, has its reservation on this because there have been some changes in the economy of mainland China from what are perceived by the interviewees. For instance, the number of billionaires in China has ballooned

in recent years, which indicates emerging capitalism in China and leaves some doubts about its existing economic model in use.

8. Uncertainty over Beijing's Cloud Nine Status in Africa

The preceding sections strengthen the argument of this study that Beijing's cloud nine status in Africa has been exaggerated. This is mainly because, first of all, Beijing's strategy in Africa contradicts with Africans' policies and the latter's long-term strategic plans, in particular Africans' *Agenda 2063*. It is pertinent for ease of follow-through to firstly provide a synopsis of the *Agenda 2063*. *Agenda 2063* is a solid blueprint of Africans' future initiatives of achieving a first-world status by 2063 and is currently an undergoing effort made by the African Union. The main strategic aims of *Agenda 2063* are as follows:

...economic development (including the eradication of poverty within one generation), political integration (in particular through the establishment of a federal or confederate United Africa), improvements in democracy and justice, establishment of security and peace on the entire African Continent, strengthening of cultural identity through an African renaissance and pan-African ideals, gender equality, and political independence from foreign powers.⁶²

Some incongruities existing between Beijing's Africa strategy and *Agenda 2063* can be identified in the following areas: Africans' democratization agenda versus Beijing's support for African despots; African Union's *Silencing the Guns* theme versus Beijing's setting up new military base; Beijing's provision of poor quality infrastructure in Africa versus China's own first-class infrastructure in the Mainland China; and Beijing increased interference in African domestic conflicts versus Africans' *Agenda 2063* which emphasizes Africa solutions for Africans' problems. Due to space limitation, the emphasis of this study is on contradictions between Beijing's nature of totalitarianism versus Africans' democratic endeavours in the context of *Agenda 2063*.

8.1 Africans' Democratization versus Beijing's Support for African Despots

Second, there were glaring contradictions of political systems identified between Beijing and Africa. These contradictions will put to question Beijing's cloud nine status in Africa. For instance, Quartey, provides an overview of the rationale behind the preferences for Beijing that are shared by some African sectors in the article titled *Why Africa is Turning to China?* Similarly to the above narrative

62 African Union Commission, "Goals & Priority Areas of Agenda 2063, African Union," <au.int>, accessed date, April 5, 2020.

advanced by the elites including President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, Beijing is said to portray Africa more positively as a partner in “mutually beneficial cooperation” and “common prosperity,” rather than a “doomed Continent “requiring aid.”⁶³ However, this study finds that these positive analogies are often exaggerated and not fully representative of the entire African population but only certain segments that have benefited a lot from China's effort of globalization. Wasserman, an academic at the University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa, in his paper titled *China-Africa media relations: What we know so far*, highlights a critical dimension from the perspective of press freedom distinctive from the above narratives.

The contradiction that the media on the Chinese mainland is predominantly state-owned,⁶⁴ whereas AU *Agenda 2063* advocates for free media stands sharply on its own. For Africa to democratize, a vibrant media is indeed a necessity for democracy, as it shall play a critical role in exposing the rot among corrupt Africans, rather than only telling stories in a positive tone. Wasserman's article further questions the aim of Beijing's media presence in Africa, arguing that it is purely meant to advance Beijing's soft power in support of its strategic influence in Africa. Hence, the proposition put forward by the study to the effect that preference on Chinese civilization varies according to the benefits or lack thereof. Evidently, both primary and secondary findings prove that those in support of the Chinese approach to the concept of media are often corrupt politicians and businesses gurus with strong links with Beijing and with something to hide.

8.2 Africans' Perceptions of Beijing's Totalitarianism

Third, as Ringen rightly articulated that “contemporary Beijing is a *controlocracy*”,⁶⁵ this study aligns itself with Ringen's further explanation that “its system of government has been transformed into a new regime harder and more ideological than what was before it.”⁶⁶ Such observations cast the light of an incongruity within the auspice of the Beijing-African partnership as Africa's resolutions on the democratic future Africa are striving to achieve by 2063 while its partner, Beijing is strengthening its totalitarianism. The phobia of tyranny is understood in the context of Africans' perceptions of Beijing

63 Kwei Quartey, “Why Africa Is Turning to China,” March 11, 2013, *HUFFPOST*, <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/africa-china-investment_b_2338142>, accessed date, March 10, 2020; Uhuru, Kenyatta, “Uhuru Discusses Infrastructure, Trade with Official of China's NPC,” *Daily Nation*, 13 April 2019.

64 Herman Wasserman, “China-Africa Media Relations: What We Know So Far,” *Global Media and China*, 2018, <sagepub.com/journals-permissions>, accessed date, March 30, 2020.

65 Ringen Stein, *The Perfect Dictatorship: China in the 21st Century* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2016), p. 135.

66 Ibid., p. 143.

as the disadvantages of autocracy were recently experienced in the case of the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus. Thusly, this study asserts that, Xiao Qiang justifiable resurrected Stein Ringen's articulation on Beijing's dictatorship in the article “how Xi's controlocracy lost control of the Coronavirus,”⁶⁷ while Taiwan proved to be in control because of transparency in line with democratic norms. It is thus not surprising then that the novel Coronavirus is often referred as the “China virus” by some Africans. This is a case in point for Africa's sceptics about Beijing that Beijing is less likely to support Africans' good governance course. Henceforth, when applying the concept of satire in the context of Africans' perceptions of Beijing-African partnership, one would liken Beijing to a filthy rich sugar-daddy who pretends to be all caring whilst he's the net-benefactor in the relationship at the expense of the poor gullible gorgeous shortsighted lady, even worse with the capacity to infect her with communicable diseases. This is illustrated by the case of the novel Coronavirus outbreak among other conspicuous cases which is chiefly imputed on Beijing's totalitarian approach. Moreover, this drift is in contradiction with the assertion that no country can develop through foreign aid but only through domestic internal reforms as rightly asserted by the Foreign Aid theory.

Finally, Table 1 below highlights cases of Chinese racism happening to the other parts of Africa. They throw some lights on the ominous part of Beijing's image in Africa that may disprove the saying that Beijing is as positively perceived in Africa as it is documented on its official statements. Table 1 renders Beijing's conduct obnoxious and threatening in Africa, where the Chinese have sometimes been characterized by dumping, bullying, racism, horrific labor practices and corruption to the detriment of what Beijing claims cloud nine statuses in Africa—a cataclysmic mistake in stark contrast to its foreign policy in Africa.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, Beijing's core interests in Africa are nationalistic and Beijing seeks to strengthen its maritime power to have the Chinese dream come true whilst the US and its Western allies mainly focus on countering Beijing (Mahanism). This proposition has been confirmed as true throughout this study, in particular when considering various findings on primary research and secondary material that they validated each other on such. For instance, it was found that even the motivations for the establishment of the naval base in Djibouti were meant to achieve nationalistic goals. These nationalistic goals include vying for hegemony under the guise of peaceful rise to greatness as denoted by accelerated use of state instruments, including soft power, military buildup and ferocious challenge to the US hegemony

67 Xiao Qiang, “How Xi's Controlocracy Lost Control of The Coronavirus,” *The Japanese Times*, February 12, 2020, <<http://www.japantimes.co.jp>>, accessed date, February 26, 2020.

Table 1 Sources of Chinese Racism in Some Parts of Africa

S/N	AU Member State	Issue	Perceived Transgressions
1.	African Union Commission and other Member States, i.e. South Africa, Ghana and Nigeria	▪Uproar over Chinese Xenophobia towards Africans living in China related to the Coronavirus outbreak.	-Allegations of Africans being targeted in Mainland China and they are subjected to forced evictions, arbitrary quarantines and mass coronavirus testing, ⁶⁸ tearing down the notion of brotherly equality.
2.	Kenya	▪Cost of Building Infrastructure	- Alleged inflated costs of railway construction. - Transport costs shooting up by nearly 50%; charges are said necessary to meet loan repayments. ⁶⁹ - Bribery - Racism case: some Chinese deported as referring Kenyans as monkeys. ⁷⁰
3.	Tanzania	▪Fishermen concerns	- Fishermen' concerns on the impact of Beijing's development projects on Tanzania's shores that negatively impact on their substance businesses. ⁷¹
4.	Malawi	▪D u m p i n g a n d Unfair Competition in Rural Areas	- Corrupted standards and dumping low costs poisonous goods from the Chinese sides. - Selling counterfeit products - Unfair Competition between Chinese big business and rural Malawians. ⁷²
5.	Lesotho	▪U n f a i r l a b o r practices	- Racism in Chinese-owned textile firms - Low wages - Domestic labor smuggling from Mainland China - Long working hours ⁷³
6.	South Africa	▪Dumping	- Dumping poisonous and expired products - Unfair competition: Chinese products at lower prices against home-made products that are readily available in the South Africa markets. ⁷⁴

68 "South African Diplomats Join Intervention over Treatment of Africans in China Amid Coronavirus," *TIMESLIVE*, April 12, 2020.

69 Interview conducted by the author with Kenyan nationals, AU Headquarters, Ethiopia Addis Ababa, November 26, 2019.

70 Joseph Goldstein, "Kenyans Say Chinese Investment Brings Racism and Discrimination," *The New York Times*, October 15, 2018, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/world/africa/kenya-china-racism.html>>, accessed date, January 10, 2020.

71 John Weiss and Jalilian Hossein, "Competitiveness in African Manufacturing: Some Evidence from Tanzania," In *Tanzanian Development: A Comparative Perspective*, edited by Potts David, 182-98. Boydell & Brewer, 2019.

72 Richard Chirombo, "Has Malawi Become a Dumping Ground for Chinese Products?," *Malawi's Sunday Times*, September 10 & 17, 2017.

73 Carolyn Baylies, and Caroline Wright, "Female Labour in the Textile and Clothing Industry of Lesotho," *African Affairs*, Vol. 92, No. 369, 1993, pp. 577-591.

74 Mieke Eoyang, Allison Peters, Ishan Mehta, and Brandon Gaskew, "Hot Topics in National Security. Report," *Third Way*, 2019. pp. 14-22.

7.	Angola	■Oil Prices	- Unfair terms of oil for debts arrangements ⁷⁵
8.	Zambia	■State Sovereignty Issues	- Dominating influence on state institutions including media houses and airport ⁷⁶
9.	ESWATINI (Swaziland)	■Diplomatic Bullying	- Suspending regular approach in visas issuance other than in Pretoria for businessmen from ESWATINI - Covert actions to change political landscape ⁷⁷

Compile by Bheki M.P. Dlamini, February, 2020.

in Africa and elsewhere. The discourse of seeing Beijing as a Messiah in Africa was proved to be all baloney as the net-benefactors in the Beijing-African partnership was proved to be Beijing and corrupt African high ranking politicians, bureaucrats and connected private sector gurus in the long-term. The increasingly renewed interests by the US, UK, France and Germany also confirm the proposition regarding the counter-balancing Beijing's regime by Western powers as true.

Furthermore, the proposition that Beijing's interests are also economical as it seeks to tap on Africa's rich natural resources has been confirmed as true. A litany of evidence has been found that even Beijing's economic strategy in Africa is exploitative as there is absence of skills transfer underway. Besides, Chinese investments were found to be mainly clustered in African countries that are heavily invested in natural resources only. This is a trend, which even the crème de la crème optimists on Beijing-African partnership were found to have a difficulty explaining away the skepticism over Beijing's altruism rhetoric.

It is also worth mentioning that the next proposition has been confirmed as true that Beijing seeks to counterbalance US dominance near the Suez Canal and other naval trade routes as well as the Middle East to facilitate free movement of Chinese ships in the region backed by logistics (sea-power-chokepoints control concept). This confirmation is premised in the case of conducting of live-fire exercises by PLA in the naval base under review, a sharp contrast to the publicly stated motivation of establishing a logistical facility as cited in some other sections of public affairs.

Finally, the proposition that Africans' perceptions towards Beijing varies mainly as a result of

⁷⁵ Felix Edoho, "Globalization and Marginalization of Africa: Contextualization of China-Africa Relations," *Africa Today*, Vol. 58, No. 1, 2011, pp. 103-124.

⁷⁶ Interview conducted with Zambian nationals, AU Headquarters, Ethiopia Addis Ababa, November 26, 2019; also Lumumba, Patrick Loch O., "Africa is on dinner table Eaten by Superpowers," *Rwanda National Security Symposium*, May 14, 2018.

⁷⁷ Martin Dlamini, "Bullying China's Threat to Africa," *The Times of Eswatini*, January 24, 2020.

benefits or lack of has also been confirmed as true throughout the study. This study concludes that generally, Africans correctly perceive that Beijing is not a democracy. In effect, in this regard Beijing's cloud nine status is exaggerated in Africa, probably because of Beijing's control over African Union Member States' media, Beijing's sponsored research, interference of Beijing's intelligence services with internet-based poll surveys and fear of victimization to mention a few.

Recommendations

First, Beijing-African agreements should be negotiated cognizant of Africa's dreams, similar to that of the Chinese Dream, African Union's *Agenda 2063* in particular. These agreements should include the issue of labor quotas and spell out what percentage Africa should contribute and China should only contribute skilled workforce. The agreements should also include a clause compelling Beijing to contribute on skills transfer so as for Africa to be self-reliant as advocated by Tanzania's statesman, Julius Nyerere in his *Ujama* (people doing things themselves) philosophy. Such could result in a win-win situation as encapsulated in Beijing's *White Paper on China's Foreign Aid* of 2014. As things stand in this regard, this study concludes that Chinese current conduct in Africa is in contradiction to this aforementioned policy which states that “Beijing upholds in providing foreign assistance are mutual respect, equality, keeping promise, mutual benefits and win-win.”⁷⁸

Second, to curb the so-called despondency, apathy and dependency syndrome within the AU Member States, Beijing should insist to its African partners to contribute a certain percentage on development projects financed by Beijing. For instance, the study observed that AU Member States have reservations on Beijing's influence within the AU headquarters. It is reported that what gave leverage to Beijing is the fact that Beijing financed the building to the tune of a meagre 200 million US dollars. This was despite the fact that AU Member States' gross domestic product was worth trillions of dollars at the period when they accepted Beijing's aid. Interestingly, even before the building was officially handed over to the AU by the Chinese authorities, AU Member States were already complaining about excessive Chinese influence within the AU headquarters, including espionage as highlighted somewhere in this study.

Thirdly, regarding interference, it is commendable that Africa was found to be making an effort to minimize political interference, not only from Beijing but also from other global powers. Therefore, it is recommended that these efforts should be accelerated through strengthening of its political institutions

⁷⁸ The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, *White Paper on China's Foreign Aid* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, July, 2014), p. 5.

and collective endeavors. The concept of collective defense in Africa should thus be fully developed, as the case of Djibouti demonstrates a loophole, which Beijing capitalized on along the lines of bilateral agreements. Cases in point of Beijing's interference in affairs of African countries include the case of bullying ESWATINI and alleged political interferences in Zimbabwe's recent succession battles as explained in this study. As such contradicts Beijing's own national policies unless these policies do not mean anything, other than serving as a charade to deceive in a quest for national image building through public diplomacy (propaganda).

Finally, to turn the tide against the current fatuous trajectory nature of the partnership as perceived by skeptics, it is recommended that while contending for influence in Africa, Beijing and other powers be compelled to process natural resources in Africa, not the one-sided effort of extraction of raw material. Processing programs on natural resources may alleviate Africans' unemployment, which is also in line with its *Agenda 2063*. Africa should also continue with its hedging strategy of taking what is good for Africa either from the Western world or from the Eastern World.

In sum, this study attempts to approach a multifaceted subject from a holistic perspective with mixed methods directed by four aforementioned theories. Notwithstanding, epistemological gaps remain due to investigation scope and administrative limitations. Hence it is proposed that in the future researchers build on this study and consider the following thematic issues which may not be addressed adequately in this study. First, is there any unintentional contradiction between Beijing's policy formulation and implementation? Or, is it deception on the Beijing-African relations? Secondly, if Beijing is not seeking hegemony, why is it to have massive military build-ups? Third, would Beijing-US competition in Africa and elsewhere trigger a WW III?

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