The People's Republic of China's Understanding of African Security: Motivations and Limitations

<u>Introduction</u>

The People's Republic of China (PRC) stands at an excellent position to assess and assist with peacebuilding and development in Africa. This is because it has successfully emerged from civil wars and instability in its modern history and is currently enjoying a third decade of peace and economic growth. Further, its growing stature as a great power as well as its increasing dependence on African energy and resources means that it has increasing stake in African security.

Mao and his commanders viewed Africa's then situation as similar or identical to that of China's between the Boxer Rebellion at the turn of the 19th century and the Fourth May Movement of 1919. Despite this unique perspective most attention on China-Africa relations in both media as well as academic writing has focused on trade particularly looking at energy and mineral extraction from resource rich countries[1]. Increasingly, there are also reports of Chinese arms sales and support for rogue regimes where Chinese support purportedly exacerbates civil conflicts in Sudan, Zimbabwe and other countries[2]. The dominance of these discourses within the literature contributes to and reflects the fear and suspicion within Africa and the West about the nature and purposes of China's engagement in the continent. Most particularly commentators cite the role of SOE's as dangerous and reminiscent of previous colonial exploitative powers. China's presence on the continent is not new. [3] Nor are comments that China is emerging as a new colonial power.[4] However, new fieldwork based academic studies are generally depicting China as a benign presence with diverse interests in different sectors of the economy.[5]

A small but fast growing body of literature has begun to emerge on the issue of China on security in Africa; these assessments range from China's new security policy in Africa,[6] to human rights record,[7] to the impact of Chinese arms sales,[8] to Chinese investments in oil,[9] and Chinese cooperation with the EU.[10]

This paper is intended to begin to fill the gap in the current English language research on the Chinese perspective on African security. It tries to answer questions on how Beijing and its African and security epistemic community view African insecurity and how it sees its own role in African security to be. It is divided into three sections: The first section surveys the current debate on China's role in African security as seen from Western and African perspectives. The second section provides historical and ideological context within which Beijing sees the international order and Sino-Africa relations within it. The third section examines current Chinese literature on the issue of African security and the role of the People's Republic (PRC).

This paper finds that expectations for Beijing to abandon its principle of non-interference and participate more closely with Western interventions in Africa as unlikely. Even with the massive increase in Chinese investments in Africa and therefore increasing dependence of the Chinese economy

on African energy; as well as exposure of Chinese nationals and infrastructure to civil strife in Africa, African security remains of peripheral concern for Beijing. Beijing remains reluctant to move from the principle non-interference in domestic affairs because it ultimately protects its core security interest –its legitimacy. The principle of sovereignty deflects Western criticisms of its non-democratic system of government and support for peripheral regions of Tibet, Xingjian and Taiwan. African elites further acts as allies against Western hegemony. While Beijing will be practical and pragmatic as it always is in international affairs, Brussels is unlikely to socialize Beijing to embrace human rights values in African development and security issues.

I.   Sino-Africa Relations

Western perspectives on China in Africa

Within the West[11] observations on China's role in security Africa range from: outrage at support for rogue regimes, to disappointments at the lack of action, and to cautious acceptance that some of Beijing's diplomatic negotiations in African states have borne fruit. Media observations have tended to focus on China's alleged alliance with rogue regimes[12] while scholarly studies provide a more balanced assessment giving China credit for diplomatic successes.[13]

During the drawn-out post-election confrontation between Robert Mugabie's Zanu-PF and Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC in the 2008 Zimbabwe election, a Chinese vessel with arms destined for Zimbabwe came under the media spotlight. This arms ship was eventually forced to turn back under sustained pressure from civil society and great outcry of from media.[14] In the Sudan, Beijing is accused of shielding and enabling the Khartoum regime in carrying out genocide in the Darfur region.[15]

Socializing Beijing to accept and practice international norms have been a major factor on the part of the West in encouraging Beijing to participate in International Organizations and to participate in UN peacekeeping missions.[16]   However, this attempt at 'socializing' Beijing to 'international norms' has had mixed results[17]. In addition to this, 'international norm' with regards to sovereignty and intervention differs between what Washington and Brussels desires and what African capitals desire and communicate with Beijing. On the Chinese position on African security, an EU report concluded that there is "no evidence that it [China] will assume a level of responsibility in African security affairs that is commensurate with its strong economic presence in the region. China still has a penchant for *security free riding*."[18] This report concluded that: the Chinese need for raw materials still drives China's Africa policy; that the Chinese believe that support for African political elites will automatically led to political stability; that corruption is inevitable during economic-take off; and that conservative constituencies in China's decision making bodies such as the armed forces have not been influenced by Europe's engagement policies.[19]

Beijing is showing increasing support multilateral peacekeeping efforts by the United Nations and the African Union. Chinese peacekeepers are currently active in nine UN peacekeeping operations around the world, besides the UN mission in Haiti and East Timor, the remainder of Chinese attention in Africa.[20] Notably, Chinese delegation in the UN Security Council pushed for a UN resolution for a peacekeeping operation in Somalia in 2006[21] in June 2006 and for budgetary support and humanitarian

emergency aid to the AU's peacekeeping mission in Darfur in 2006 and is credited with persuading Khartoum to accept the UN-AU hybrid force in 2007.[22]

Western view on the PRC's role in Africa is that China has both the capacity and the economic interest and is therefore, obliged to contribute to African security alongside the rest of international community. For Brussels and Washington, the norms it would like to socialize China to accept are the 'universal values' of human rights, democracy and good governance, of which enforcements are necessary through diplomacy, public pressure and conditions imposed on loans and aid packages.

African perspectives on China in Africa

The term 'African perspective' with regards to governance and security need to be employed with great caution. Africa is not a homogenous continent. Different historical, cultural, economic and political factors affect the security situation in different African countries (and indeed within them) and no single perspective can provide an answer for different traditional and non-traditional security challenges. However, a core feature of African politics is that personal relationships "constitute the foundation and superstructure of political institutions".[23] As such, many states exhibit a neopatrimonial character in their political organisation. This means that states are run on a system of personal, patrimonial- client relationships: these relationships exist between the president and the elites, and also between the elites and the population. For this reason, the legitimacy of these political structures depends on the legitimacy and ability to sustain patronage networks by the 'big man'. Consequently, in order to maximise their domestic appearance of legitimacy, ruling elites jealously guard their domestic and international sovereignty. A recent example of the importance of this neo-patrimonial nature of African politics is the AU's position on the International Criminal Court's indictment of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir to account for the genocide in Darfur in 2009. African heads of states rejected what they saw as outside intervention into the domestic affairs of a sovereign state and were not enthusiastic to arrest Al-Bashir. In the Final Resolution adopted at the AU Kampala Summit, the Assembly declared that: "AU member states shall not cooperate with the ICC in the arrest and surrender of President Al-Bashir of Sudan"[24]. At the post assembly interview, the AU chairman, Malawi's President Bingu Wa Mutharika emphasized that al-Bashir could not be tried outside of Africa.[25] This rejection of external intervention, in effect Western norms of Universal human rights, was unanimously held by all African leaders. This rejection of universal human rights was not representative to all the peoples of Africa. There were wide ranging condemnations of the AU's position from African civil society reflected in the media attention the issue received. Commenting on AU's rejection of ICC's indictment, a Nigerian newspaper commented that,

> "It is therefore presumptuous of AU leaders, largely beneficiaries of flawed elections and with scant regard for the rule of law, to believe that they could logically dismiss the facts assembled thus far with a wave of the hand, and demand that a court of such a status, with UN Security Council backing, submit its charges (to the AU) for fresh examination."[26]

The division between civil society and the elites on this one issue demonstrates the analytical utility in dividing opinions on African security between the official and civil society. The official views from African leaders in communiqués are unfailingly affirmative and welcoming of friendship from Beijing.

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The view from African civil society, from opposition parties, NGOs and media are far more critical.[27] The tendency to sensationalize the Chinese as an 'exotic other' in African reports of China as either the saint or the devil reveals a generally superficial understanding of the Chinese amongst non- elites in Africa.

Furthermore, there remains a lack of understanding of the Chinese perspective on African security, in both the West and in Africa. The rapid ascendance of China in a continent that has been under Western sphere of influence for centuries has challenged existing power relations. Over the past decades the West has become accustomed to a particular power relationship with its African partners. Because of this durability of this power relationship, Brussels seems to expect China to adopt its values and perspectives on its African policy. This ignores the fact that China has consistently postured and conducted itself in Africa as an anti-colonial ally since the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in 1955. That Beijing's understanding of African security issues is shaped in a context of confrontation with the West (and the USSR) as well as exchanges it has had with African elites over many decades.

African elites have had experience of balancing one external power against another during the colonial era and the Cold War and the newly ascendant China has been welcomed and skilfully used in strengthening African bargaining position.[28]

II.   Development of Sino-Africa relations

Analytical factors that underlie China's African policy

Two dominant threads intertwine and dominate Beijing's Africa policy from the beginning of relations in the early 1950s to today. The first is the CCP's struggle to find a national identity for itself in the modern international system[29]. The second is the externalization in Africa of China's own understanding of its domestic development experience[30].

Prior to the modern era, China was the regional hegemon with a proud history of imperial dominance. China termed itself the 'middle kingdom' [zhong guo] and its emperor was the 'son of heaven' [tian zi]. At the receiving end of colonial aggression by Japanese and Western powers, both of whom 'inferior barbarians' in Chinese cosmology, gave Beijing an ambiguous attitude of "admiration and indignation" towards Japan and the West[31]. This sense of injustice suffered by the Chinese people, termed the 'Century of Humiliation', is still the dominant factor that propels Beijing's foreign relations.[32] When Mao defeated Chiang Kai-shek in the Chinese Civil War in 1949 and announced the founding of the People's republic at Tiananmen Square, he declared that 'the Chinese People have stood up' [zhongguo renmin zhancilai le].[33] The struggle to restore China to its former prestigious status in the prevailing international system underlies and motivates all Chinese foreign policy decisions. When analysing Chinese discourse and policy on Africa, the sense that Beijing is driving to restore China to the top table of international affairs is always present.[34]

The externalization of the CCP's own domestic experience in its African policy is inescapable despite Beijing's consistent policy of respect for domestic circumstances. Beijing's approach to Africa is clearly divided between the Mao and post-Mao periods. The two major ideological periods of CCP's rule can be divided between the era of communist revolution under Mao and the pragmatic market reform era initiated by Deng in 1978. The rhetoric of world revolution, socialism and Third World alliance

dominated Chinese domestic politics from the 1950s to the late 1970s and this revolutionary outlook was reflected in China's African relations where anti-colonialism dominated Chinese aid to Africa. Similarly, the emphasis on economic development and resource-backed infrastructure development that dominate Beijing's African policy reflect China's development experience in receiving aid from Japan in the 1980s[35].

Historical context of Beijing's Africa policy

Beijing's foreign policy principles were established in an era when the CCP had just won a long fought victory against the Nationalist Party [Kuomingtang] (KMT) and was facing an uncertain and hostile international environment. The 'Chinese experience' that of the newly established regime in Beijing that may be useful for other countries was summed up by Liu Shaoqi, the Chairman of the PRC in November 1949:

"the path taken by the Chinese people in defeating imperialism and its lackeys and in founding the People's Republic is the path that should be taken by the people of various colonial and semi-colonial countries in their fight for national independence and people's democracy".[36]

This statement's principle of anti-colonialism endures to this day within Chinese foreign policy making as do the foundations laid out by Mao in his essay "On People's Democratic Dictatorship".[37] In this essay Mao argued that China should not sit of the fence, China should either chose the side of socialist countries or the side of capitalists.[38] In the first years of the Cold War this policy 'leaning to one side' [yibian dao] meant the alignment with the Soviet Union against the West. At this time Mao viewed the international system through a lens of Marxist class struggle where Western capitalist countries were the exploiters of the Third World, as such the international arena reflected the same ideological struggle that was present in the Chinese revolution, between Communists and the KMT. Informed by this worldview, Mao entered the war against the American led UN forces in the Korean Peninsula in the 'resist America and aid Korea campaign' [kangmei yuanchao]. The Korean War prompted the Truman administration to abandon the wait-and-see stance towards the Chinese Civil War and throw its support behind the KMT regime exiled in Taiwan as the legitimate regime of China. The contest for legitimacy between Beijing and Taipei as the legitimate government of China is a major factor in Beijing's relations with African states.

It was in the context of world revolution and with an understanding of Third World alliance that Beijing framed its relations with Africa. With the cease-fire in the Korean War in July 1953, Premier Zhou Enlai visited India and Burma. During this visit, the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence were announced at the 'Joint Declaration of Chinese and Indian Premiers' on June 28, 1954.[39]

The five principles are:

1) Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity

2) Mutual non-aggression,

3) Non-interference in each other's internal affairs,

4) Equality and mutual benefit,

5) Peaceful co-existence[40].

The five principles received a further boost in 1955 when it was enshrined at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia. The conference consisted of twenty-nine newly independent Asian and African countries with a stated aim to oppose colonialism and neo-colonialism. It was considered a major diplomatic triumph by the Chinese as Beijing played leadership role in the newly emerging ex-colonial countries. The Bandung Conference would later lead to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement made up of Third World countries refused to belong to either camp in a rapidly polarising Cold-War era.[41].

The struggle for identity to play a leadership role meant that Beijing was not satisfied by playing the role of junior partner of the USSR in the 'Communist International'. In 1960 the Sino-Soviet split of official and Sergei Khurshchev cut off economic aid and withdrew all Soviet experts from China.[42] With the desire to break through the diplomatic siege by the Super Powers, in 1963-64 Zhou Enlai, who was both the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the PRC, embarked on a ground breaking trip to Africa in order to rally African support. During this trip, Zhou announced the Eight Principles of Foreign aid, as:[43]

1) China always bases itself on the principle of equality and mutual benefit in providing aid to other nations.
2) China never attaches any conditions or asks for any privileges.
3) China helps lighten the burden of recipient countries as much as possible.
4) China aims at helping recipient countries to gradually achieve self reliance and independent development.
5) China strives to develop aid projects that require less investment but yield quicker results.
6) China provides the best-quality equipment and materials of its own manufacture.
7) In providing technical assistance, China shall see to it that the personnel of the recipient country fully master such techniques.
8) The Chinese experts are not allowed to make any special demands or enjoy any special amenities

Commenting on these principles, King noted that, "These principles were not laid out by a donor nation for the enlightenment of its selected recipients. Quite the opposite."[44] China was under pressure from both the US and Soviet Union and had a desperate need to win friends in the international society. As such these principles were purposefully crafted to emphasize China's common experience with Africa with its history of colonialism, in order to maximise their appeal to many African states. The assistance was branded, not 'alms giving' but as mutual assistance between comrades.[45]

This diplomatic drive in Africa had mixed results. On the one hand, Beijing was successful in its bid to enter the UN and retake the seat on the Security Council with African support in 1971. On the other hand, despite being the largest non-OPEC donor to the developing countries between1953 to 1985, Beijing had limited ability to influence Third World politics in its favour.

In terms of supporting African revolutionary movements to overthrow colonial governments, Beijing's commitment was calculated to distract Soviet forces. Beijing's support for Zimbabwe National Union Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in South Africa and National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) were primarily as a result of them being in competition with Soviet backed movements in these countries.[46] Beijing's abandonment of the MPLA, an openly communist group in

favour of Holden Roberto's National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) shows that Beijing's support for FNLA was driven less by ideological consistency were designed strategically to "preoccupy Soviet forces in far off conflicts".[47]

Post-Mao Sino-Africa relations

After Mao's passing in 1976 and the fall of the Gang of Four, Deng Xiaoping and party pragmatists took control of the Chinese Communist Party. After Mao's death the two factors (outlined above) that underlay China's Africa policy changed. First, Deng had a different assessment of the international situation and second, Deng made the strategic shift away from world revolution to focus on domestic economic growth.[48] The impact of Deng's reforms had an immediate impact on China's African aid. During the initial periods of reform, new aid commitments announced for Africa fell from $ 254 million in 1980 to $ 25 million in 1981, however, this quickly recovered to $289 in 1984.[49]. Also, China did not send medical aid groups to Africa in 1979 and 1980[50].

During first decade of reforms in the 1980s, Chinese focus on Africa waned. Domestically, Beijing occupied itself in trying to find a more market orientated and open economy. Internationally, Beijing focused its attention on building and expanding relations with developed countries. However, because of the deterioration of relations between China and both Vietnam and Albania, (both former major Chinese aid recipients), Beijing was prompted to reassess its aid policy.[51] Announcing that no new aid projects on the scale of the Tanzam Railway will be undertaken, Beijing announced that "promoting joint prosperity" was its foreign policy goal.[52]

As China entered the 1990s, two major factors revived the importance of Africa for China. First, violent suppression of Tiananmen Square protestors led to condemnation and sanctions from the West. This ended the initial honeymoon period between China and the West and prompted a strategic rethink on the part of Beijing on overreliance on the West. As a result, Beijing 'rediscovered' Africa whose leaders were quick to support Beijing in the post-Tiananmen Square era.[53] As China's economic growth took hold, its domestic reserve of oil and minerals became insufficient to sustain the chosen development model of industrialization. China began to reengage with Africa with high level Beijing leaders touring Africa and emphasizing 'win-win' in re-enforcing diplomatic alliance and economic relationships.[54]

The beginning of the twenty first century saw the announcement of the official 'go out policy' [zou chu qi zhan lue] from Beijing.[55] With incentives from China Development Bank and related funding institutions, Chinese state-owned enterprises began explore the African market for exports, to bid for infrastructure contracts in African countries and to acquire Africa resources. Chinese household products, textiles, footwear at low prices suits Africa consumers far better than products made in Europe which had traditionally been the suppliers of products in African countries. The Go Out Policy from the CCP followed on the heels of IMF structural adjustment policies in many African countries that allowed Chinese SOE's and tens of thousands of small Chinese traders migrated to Africa to look for opportunities. In 2006, as Chinese trade with Africa showed radical growth and as Beijing began to enjoy confidence at the head of its momentous growth, Beijing declared it the year of Africa and invited the head of every African state it had ties with to a summit in Beijing.

The 2006 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation(FOCAC) Summit was a significant milestone. It was a dress rehearsal for the 2008 Beijing Olympics and was significant in the context of Chinese people finally

'standing-up'. The significance of the largest gathering of heads of states of Africa ever (forty-eight in all) in the context of Beijing finding its leadership identity was not lost on the CCP leadership nor Chinese citizens.

From the perspective of a leading Chinese Africanist, China's Africa policy has evolved in three ways. It is no longer explicitly driven by an ideology of anti-colonialism, exchanges have become multidimensional; the emphasis on economic assistance has given way to emphasis on 'win-win' economic cooperation[56].

III.   African Security: Perspective from Beijing

Africa in China's international security calculations

Beijing is receiving mixed messages from the West and African leaders with regards to greater involvement in African security. Brussels complains of Beijing not taking on responsibilities commensurate to its economic presence in Africa and is disinclined to work with international and regional organizations[57]. African leaders are inclined to declare 'African solutions for African problems', however, African civil society charge this merely translates to African leaders protecting each other. Beijing undoubtedly hears both the affirmation from African leaders on its stance on non-interference as well as criticisms from the West for not turning a blind eye to human rights abuses in Africa. How does Beijing negotiate these? What are the potential and limitations of current and future security engagement from Beijing? How important is Africa in terms of China's *own* security? And how does Beijing understand the causes of African conflicts?

Chinese policy makers and international relations scholars overwhelmingly view world politics through a realist lens. In terms of a priority list, Africa is not a priority in Beijing's security concerns. Jing Carong of Renmin University lists security priorities in six areas. In descending order of priority they are:[58]

1. The 'great powers'. The US, followed by Russia, Japan, France, Britain.
2. Neighbouring countries, the two Koreas in North East Asia, Vietnam and South East Asian countries, India in East Asia and Central Asian states.
3. Developing countries. Africa and Latin America.
4. Latin America. Of all the areas in the world, Latin America as a region ranks the lowest. This is due to its geographical distance and it being the 'backyard' of the US.
5. In terms of security, multilateral diplomacy in global governance such as the United Nations, World Trade Organization, World Health Organization, APEC, ASEAN and the newly formed and Chinese led BRICS.
6. Building 'soft power' through its Confucian Institutes, Central China Television Network globally to contest with CNN. In terms of projecting its soft power in Africa, Chinese academics have recognized and begun to argue for systematic action to propagate a favourable image of China in the face of Western criticisms[59].

In terms of China-Africa relations, there has been a shifting dynamic in their relative importance to one another: Whereas Chinese presence and importance for Africa has grown exponentially over the past decade, the relative importance of Africa for China from a political and security perspective has not changed significantly. From a security perspective, Beijing's focus in the foreseeable future will be

focused on the US, in East Asia and with its neighbours. While Chinese overseas interest in Africa is increasing and Chinese interests in Africa will be affected by African insecurity as can be seen in China's evacuation of its workers in Libya,[60] Africa will likely to remain a secondary consideration in terms of Beijing's core security concern with the Great Power and its neighbours.

Beijing's evolving stance on sovereignty, intervention and peacekeeping in Africa

Beijing was a latecomer to engage in UN peacekeeping missions. It had fought against an UN force in the Korea War and by 1973, two years after joining the UN Security Council, it still expressed the view that the super powers –the 'behind the scene boss', were ultimately in control behind international interventions.[61]

Beijing's stance against multilateral intervention softened in the 1990s and it began to participate in the field by sending observers to the Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission in 1991. Ever since then, Beijing's has slowly but steadily increased its participation. As of 2010 there has been over 15 000 Chinese solders that participated in 18 UN peacekeeping operations.[62] While Beijing has contributed to UN peacekeeping in Africa it is fervently resisted liberal reforms toward more intervention. Beijing's views on intervention and the principle of sovereignty are based on two factors. First, the 'Century of Humiliation' is seen by the Chinese as essentially colonial powers intervening in its sovereign domestic affairs. Given the centrality of this recent history for modern Chinese identity, it is central for the CCP to stand against erosions of sovereignty that intervention missions bring. Secondly, making a practical calculation, the CCP does not want the West to challenge its domestic legitimacy and interfere in its domestic affairs.[63]. The centrality of the principle of sovereignty is clearly illustrated. It is the first of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence and the principle of mutual non-interference and recognition that Beijing is the legitimate government of China (as opposed to Taipei) is repeated at every official communiqué.

Accounting for African conflicts with Marxist Historical Materialism

The study of Africa within China is still embryonic, most scholars study draw heavily on Western studies written in French and English. Due to a lack of funding, it is rare for Chinese academics to be able to carry out fieldwork research.[64] These problems are compounded by the fact that most Chinese Africanists read English or French with difficulty and do not publish outside China. However, the future is looking brighter for this small but growing field. Within China, a distinct field of Sino-African relations is emerging, and increasingly there are article being published on African security. For example, there are articles on consular protection of Chinese citizens in Africa[65], on illegal arms trade[66], on oil security[67], on African collective security mechanism[68] and on African regional peacekeeping[69]. Interestingly, Chinese Africanists examine African democratization and the resultant unrest presumably to bolster its argument that over-night and externally imposed democratization lead only to disaster.[70]

Chinese Africanists are unanimously non-interventionist and critical of Western meddling in published works. They see the legacy of colonialism and the continued neo-colonial intervention by the West as major factors in African civil unrest. Chinese Africanists who comment on politics are unanimously critical of the West's role in conflicts both in the colonial era and present continuing imposition of its values and institutions. In the words of Li Baoping of Peking University "external interference cannot

fundamentally solve Africa's security problem".[71]   He argues that the third wave of democratization destabilized African countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and has been counterproductive for sustainable peace:

> In the early 1990s, under the pressure of the US and the West, there was a wave of multiparty democratic reform that forced a majority of single party, authoritarian states to change. In states where the civil society is weak and economic foundation fragile this places these states in difficult positions as they had to travel the path of democratization in a few years where Western countries took hundreds of years to travel. It is even more difficult to embark upon democratization [in states] when regionalism is rife and the question of national unity is yet to be answered.[72]   (Author's translation)

The consensus among Chinese academics is that intra state ethnic (tribal) conflicts, a legacy of arbitrarily drawn boarders during the colonial era, is a major cause of African instability and obstacle to nation building.[73]. A comment in the People's Daily on the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya, sums up Beijing's position. Revealingly titled, "Stability comes first in a country's development", the comment notes the post-election violence "is a product of democracy bequeathed by Western hegemony; and a manifestation of values clashing when democracy is transplanted onto disagreeable land".[74]

When theoretical frameworks are employed in monograph length studies of African politics, Marx's historical materialism is explicitly utilized, reflecting a linear, deterministic worldview. According to historical materialism, there is a natural progression for societies to progress from one mode of production to the next. The economic base of the society gives rise to political, cultural and moral institutions of that society, constituting the superstructure. Artificially imposing political institutions of an alien culture, such as the West has done in colonial times and in its post-Cold War democratization drives, has led to destabilization. Luo Jianbo of the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China writes:

> External forces interference in domestic policies and inter-state conflicts in and between African countries, domestic inter-tribal conflicts, directly caused various intractable political and security problems. Even more direct security threat emanates from Western colonialists' reprehensible acts at frustrating independent movement of African peoples.[75] (Author's translation)

Beijing is critical of the legacy of colonialism in that it imposes an unsuitable governing superstructure and exploits the peoples of Africa for surplus. This criticism is made through China's own experience of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle and its current struggle against what it views as continued Western interference in its domestic affairs.

Concluding Remarks

This paper surveyed Beijing's worldview with regards to African security. In China, there is a strong discourse that it is Western imperialism and neo-colonialism that threatens China and continues to inflict insecurity in Africa. Post-election violence in Kenya, for example, is used by Beijing to illustrate this argument.

However, while international norm is Western directed, Beijing's embrace of non-interference principle bodes well and is echoed by African elites who generally hold cordial relations with Beijing. Officials in

Beijing and Chinese academics have excellent relations with African elites and derive much of its understanding of African problems from this engagement.

Given the pragmatic and flexible nature of Beijing's international relations, it will make case by case adjustments on its African security policy, as it did successfully when it intervened and persuaded Al Bashir of Sudan to accept an UN-AU hybrid force. It is likely that this will remain the modus operendi for Beijing's African security stance.

[1] See for example: RW Johnson, "China's empire-builders sweep up African riches - Times Online," *The Sunday Times*, July 16, 2006, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article688292.ece. Robert Lenzner, "The Chinese Oil Grab - Forbes.com," *Forbes.com*, February 10, 2009, http://www.forbes.com/2009/10/02/sinopec-petrochina-cnooc-personal-finance-investing-ideas-nigeria-venezuela.html. David Blair, "Why China is trying to colonise Africa - Telegraph," *The Telegraph*, April 25, 2011, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/3642345/Why-China-is-trying-to-colonise-Africa.html.

[2] See: "China arms ship left with no port of call as Britain and US apply pressure | World news | The Guardian", April 23, 2008, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/apr/23/zimbabwe.china.

[3] See for example Bruce D. Larkin, *China and Africa 1949-1970: the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China* (University of California Press, 1971).E J Hevi, *The Dragon's Embrace: The Chinese Communists and Africa* (Pall Mall, 1967). and John K Cooley, *East wind over Africa;: Red China's African offensive* (Walker, 1965).

[4] The most well know utterance of China is colonizing Africa is by the then British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, see Jian Junbo, "From capitalism to colonialism", *Asia Times Online*, 5 January, 2007, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/IA05Ad01.html accessed 22 Nov, 2010

[5] See: Ian Taylor, *China's New Role In Africa* (Lynne Rienner Pub, 2008); Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2010).

[6] Jonathan Holslag, "China's New Security Strategy for Africa" *Parameter*, 39, no. 2, (2009)

[7] Stephen Brown and Chandra Lekha Sriram, "China's role in Human rights Abuses in Africa: Clarifying Issues of Cupability*", in Robert I. Rotberg ed., "*China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*". Pp. 250-271.

[8] Ian Taylor, "China's Arms Sales to Africa*", in Arthur Waldron ed., "*China in Africa*"; Henry Smith, Thomas Wheeler and Bernardo Mariani, "Peace and Security in Africa Opportunities and Challenges for China-Africa Cooperation", *Global Review*, vol. 3. No. 3 Nov/December 2009; David H. Shinn, "Military and Security Relations: China, Africa and the Rest of the World" in Robert Rotberg ed., *China into Africa: Trade, Aid and Influence,* 155-196

[9] Assessments on China's so called "scramble for resources" has received the most attention in academic publications, see for example: Ian Taylor, *"China's New Role in Africa",* Ian Taylor, "Unpacking China's resource Diplomacy in Africa" in Margaret C. Lee et al., *China in Africa* (Nordic African Institute, 2007), 11-25; Henry Lee and Dan Shalmon, *"Searching for Oil: China's Oil Strategies in Africa"* in Robert I. Rotberg ed., *op cit.* pp. 109-136; Wenran Jiang, *"Fueling the Dragon: China's rise and its energy and Resources Extraction in Africa"*, The China Quarterly, 199, September 2009,

[10] , Jonathan Holslag and Sara van Hoeymissen, "The Limits of Socialization: The Search for EU-China Cooperation Towards Security Challenges in Africa", Brussels institute of Contemporary China Studies

[11] By West, I mean English language discourse from outside of Africa

[12] China's protection of Sudan and Zimbabwe are normally cited. See for example: "BBC NEWS | Africa | Chinese leader boosts Sudan ties", February 2, 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/6323017.stm.;

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