An Afrocentric critique of China's Foreign Policy towards Africa: Case studies of Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2010-2020

by

Makhura Benjamin Rapanyane

Thesis

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Declaration

I, Makhura B. Rapanyane, hereby declare that this PhD thesis titled: **An Afrocentric Critique of China's Foreign Policy Towards Africa: Case Studies of Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2010-2020** is a by-product of my original work. As such, it has equally never been submitted to the University of Limpopo or any other Institution of Higher Learning in South Africa and elsewhere. I also proclaim that all the primary and secondary sources of data collection in this study have been acknowledged properly.

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Rapanyane MB (Mr) Date

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Dedication

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Abbreviations

ACIDH	Action Against Impunity for Human Rights
AfDB	African Development Bank
AFDL	Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire
ANIP	Angola National Agency of Private Investment
ASADHO	African Association for the Defence of Human Rights
AU	African Union
BCPSC	Coordination and Monitoring of the Sino-Congolese Programme
BNDES	Brazil’s Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Económico e Social
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CABC	China-Africa Business Council
CADF	China Africa Development Fund
CAQDAS	Computer-Facilitated Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CCCC	China Communications Construction Company
CCT	Congo Chine Télécoms
CDB	China Development Bank
CDM	Congo Dong Bang Mining
CGCD	ChangDa Highway Engineering Corporation
CIF	China International Fund
CITCC	China International Telecommunications Construction Corporation
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
CNMC	China Nonferrous Metal Mining Corporation
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation
CNPC	Chinese National Petroleum Corporation

CPC	China Petrochemical Corporation
CREC	China Railway Engineering Corporation
CSIH	China Sonangol International Holding
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EEC	European Economic Community
EIA	Energy Information Administration
ESPO	Eastern Siberia-Pacific Ocean
ES-TDB	Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank
FBN	First Bank of Nigeria
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FNLA	National Liberation Front of Angola
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRULAC	Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries
GTBank	Guaranty Trust Bank
HIPCs	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IFDI	Inward Foreign Direct Investment
IMF	International Monetory Fund
KBR	Kellogg Brown and Root
KKIA	Kenneth Kaunda International Airport

KMG	Kazakhastan’s KazMunayGas
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LNG	Liquid Natural Gas
LSE	London Stock Exchange
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MNCs	Multinational Corporations
MPLA	People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MPTT	Ministry of Post and Telecommunications
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDRC	National Development and Reforms Commission
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NOCs	China’s National Oil Companies
NOGCs	Chinese National Oil and Gas Companies
NTF	Nigeria Trust Fund
NY	New York
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OFDI	Outward Foreign Direct Investment
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PRC	People’s Republic of China
PRP	People’s Revolutionary Party
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

PSA	Production Sharing Agreement
RI	Regional Integration
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SASAC	State Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission
SEZs	Special Economic Zones
SGR	Standard Railway Gauge
SOEs	State-Owned Enterprises
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSE	Shanghai Stock Exchange
SSI	Sonangol Sinopec International
TCA	Thematic Content Analysis
TREC	Turfloop Ethics and Research Committee
UBA	United Bank for Africa
UL	University of Limpopo
UNIPEC	United Petroleum and Chemicals
UNITA	Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
WTO	World Trade Organisation
ZESC	Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation
ZNBC	Zambian National Broadcasting Corporation
ZTE	Zhongxing Telecommunication Equipment Corporation

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Abstract

The foreign policy of China which is also globally known as the People's Republic of China (PRC) has in the recent past become a substantial subject of both policy and academic debates. This is mostly due to the attention that China has given to the African continent. The attention expanded through the formation of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in the early 2000s. It is incontestable that FOCAC has been driving China-Africa political and economic relations, ultimately becaming the second biggest economy globally after the United States of America (USA). Contextually, this study has employed a comparative case study design to critique China's foreign policy towards the African continent. This case study design has utilised both Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as test cases to critique the post-2010 foreign policy of China towards the African continent. This was done through critical analysis of China's Africa policy, and therefore, unearthing China's global engagement (herewith referred to as foreign policy) with reference to both Angola and the DRC. To this end, the current study provides historical sensibility by locating China's global engagement with Africa, specifically the context of Angola and the DRC as far back as the colonial period. The exceptional acknowledgement of historicity in the current study extensively drew from the idea that the past customarily informs a vibrant premise for the understanding of the present and the future. In the current study, the researcher has championed the adoption and use of the Afrocentric theory as a replacement of the mainstream theories in interpreting the general foreign policy of China towards the African continent.

The adoption and the use of this theoretical lens in the study has been informed by its capacity to accentuate and underline China's international relations with both Angola and the DRC. A scholarly understanding of China's foreign policy on Angola and the DRC can be achieved when such analysis and interpretations are accurately located within the African continental context. Equally significant are the study's objectives which are attained through the use of interviews and document review. This is a type of qualitative research approach that appreciates the use of interviews and document review to generate relevant primary and secondary information in the quest to answer the study's main question. In consideration of the study's comparative case study design, the foundational highlights from the study are that: China premises its international relations with African countries (Angola and the DRC) on several factors that include access to oil, copper, diamonds, cobalt, and other important mineral resources-for-infrastructural-loans. In addition, both Angola and the DRC's slight stable economic and political environments have continued to play an important role in their continued engagement with China. This is the case, although there are various Chinese Multinational Corporations (MNCs) and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) with operations in both Angola and DRC that are still incompetent in the practice of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Overall, the CSR concept should precede all the operations of Chinese companies in Angola and the DRC economic stakeholders.

Keywords: Afrocentricity, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, China, Corporate Social Responsibility, Belt and Road Initiative, Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, Infrastructural-loans-for-minerals, Oil, Copper, Cobalt, Credit lines policy.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to the study

1.1. Background and Motivation

The continent of Africa inhabits a calculated position in the foreign policies of the global major powers such as the United Kingdom of Britain, China, Russia, France and the United States of America (USA), amongst others (Raphala 2017). This is produced a complicated web of both current and historical ties that the major powers had and continue to have with the continent. The current research has selected the People's Republic of China (PRC) also known as China to analyse its foreign policy towards the continent by refocusing on the test cases of Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

To get a clear understanding of China's relations with African nation-states under study, the current researcher firstly traces the China-Angola relations within a historical context and then proceeds to discuss the historical relations of China and DRC. This is done to capture the logical flow of the study since it is about critiquing China's foreign policy towards both nation-states. While Angola and DRC have their foreign policies towards China, it is established that the latter's relations' with Angola and DRC are largely framed by Beijing (the capital and administrative hub of the government of China). The explanation of this situation lies in the unequal power relations between China and African nation-states such as Angola and DRC. Such unequal power relations produces asymmetrical relationships which reduce the foreign policies of small and weaker nation-states such as Angola and DRC to nothing more than an "imperative" (Kapa 2007).

In over six decades, the relations of China with Angola have grown through the dynamics of the Cold War to the politics of the colonial and post-colonial struggles, reaching the juncture of having, and expanding their economic diplomacy with each other (Aidoo 2013). The relations between the two countries goes as far back as the period when most of the African nation-states began with their anti-colonial struggles, with China supporting such anti-colonial liberation activities and actions throughout Africa. In addition, by the year 2008 Angola was China's biggest trading partner in

Africa and ultimately the third-largest oil supplier to China in the year 2016 (Khodadadzadeh, 2017).

On the other hand, diplomatic cooperation between China and the DRC begun around the 1970s. This was when both nation-states equated their reciprocal concerns in ensuring a balance of power between Western nation-states and the Soviet Union (Shinn, 2008a). When looking at the recent Chinese economic dynamics in DRC, which is healing from decades of violent confrontation over resources and its international standing as a failing state, the likelihood of effectual help on the part of its government and governmental institutions should not also be set aside (Putzel & Kabuyaya, 2011).

The aforementioned analysis partially explicates the choice of Angola and the DRC as test cases for the current study on the foreign policy of China towards Africa. The year 2010 was used as the point of departure in the research due to the fact that it marked the time when the economy of China outperformed that of Japan in size and became the second biggest globally after the USA. The study ends in the year 2020, which served as a historical landmark of a decade since China ascended into being the second biggest economy globally. It also represents the year for hosting the 12th annual BRICS summit of the group of the Heads of Government and State held through a video conference due to the Covid-19 pandemic that made it impossible for leaders to physically meet (CGTN 2020). This is the same period whereby Afrocentric scholars deepened the scholarly debate on China's neo-colonial practices in Africa and engage in China's real intentions in Africa (Rapanyane & Shai 2020; Rapanyane & Sethole 2020). Based on this, the ten year focus is deemed adequate for present a qualitatively rich picture of the phenomena under study.

Inasmuch as the primary focus of the current study is the period between the year 2010 and 2020, it is inevitable for a research of this nature to also reflect in passing on some of the key political and socio-economic developments that have affected the evolution of China's foreign policy towards Angola and DRC during the period under review. In addition, Angola and DRC are strategically selected as case studies and this is enriched by the location of this investigation within a broader historical and African continental context.

1.2. Research problem

The existing body of scholarly knowledge on China's international relations with both Angola and DRC is under-researched and most of the already conducted studies have been framed from State Centric and Chinese theories and/or perspectives, mostly rooted within the Euro-American and Chinese worldviews. This tendency has furnished scholars and the society in general with Chinese, realist or idealist views, perspectives and critiques including liberal perspectives on this subject. This state of affairs has induced the dearth of uniform analysis and complete understanding of China's international relations and foreign policy to a point wherein policy uncertainties are observed during the period under review. Most importantly, the existing body of scholarly literature on China's foreign policy accessible to the current researcher greatly suffers from the shortage of an Afrocentric perspective.This implies that the existing scholarly discourse on this subject is unable to explain the realities and practicalities of China's Africa policy as expressed through the African voices. The combination of the above views inaugurates an epistemic injustice by creating a false ideal that African theories, ideas, and concepts do not have a place in modelling the development of international politics scholarship and practice.

1.3. Definition of the main concepts

The study is tied up to the four concepts of CSR, Afrocentric critique, Debt- Trap Diplomacy and Foreign Policy. Due to their various roles within the study and their presumed different roles in international politics and their ensuing competing interpretations, this section, briefly presents their varying interpretations and explanations in the study's setting.

1.3.1. Foreign policy

Foreign policy can be defined as the principal strategic plan of a government's engagement in its various collaborations in international relations (Gold &

Pevenhouse, 2011: 78). Within the context of the current study, foreign policy and/or engagement together with international relations are utilised interchangeably to communicate the international collaborations of a nation-state in all socio-economic and political spheres for the protection and preservation of national interests.

1.3.2. Afrocentric critique

As explained broadly by Asante (2003), an Afrocentric critique is progressed by African scholars and is premised upon the elements of the Afrocentric theory. The principal analytic elements of the theory include “grounding, orientation and perspective” composing of the main analytic classifications of the theory as argued by Modupe (2003: 62) and Shai (2016). Indifferently, the mainstream political theories of Marxism, idealism and realism’ elements are informed heavily by Euro-American value systems (Chilisa, 2012). Despite this propounded difference, an Afrocentric critique always embraces the use of progressive views in the interpretation and explanation of international relations (Rapanyane, 2020).

1.3.3. Corporate Social Responsibility

This is an embodiment of global private business self-regulation that intends to contribute to the societal objectives of activist, philanthropic and charitable behaviour through supporting and/or engaging in voluntarism or ethically-centred practices (Matten & Moon, 2004).

1.3.4. Debt trap Diplomacy

This explains a situation whereby a powerful politically and economically leading nation-state and/or institution seeks to over-burden a borrowing nation-state with huge debts to increase its leverage over it (Brautigam, 2020). Practically, this happens when a creditor nation-state offers excessive credit to a less-powerful indebted nation-state intending to extract political and economic concessions from the indebted nation-state in situations when it is unable to meet the skewed debt repayment obligations (Brautigam, 2020).

1.4. Purpose of the study

1.4.1. Aim

This study aimed to employ Afrocentricity as a theoretical and contextual lens to critique China's foreign policy towards Africa looking at the case studies of Angola and the DRC between 2010 and 2020.

1.4.2. Objectives

To achieve the above aim, the study delved into the following objectives:

- To locate China's foreign policy towards Angola and DRC within a historical and broader context of China's Africa policy;
- To identify key drivers of China's foreign policy towards selected African states;
- To examine Chinese companies' operations in both Angola and DRC's mining and manufacturing sectors;
- To explain China's adherence and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility in both Angola and DRC;
- To analyse the major steps undertaken by China when both Angola and DRC default on Chinese loan reimbursement; and
- To compare and contrast China's foreign policy towards Angola and DRC.

1.5. Research questions

- What is the history of China's relationship with both the DRC and Angola?
- What are the key drivers of China's foreign policy towards Angola and DRC in the context of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative international policy?
- To what extent are the Chinese mining and manufacturing companies' operations in both Angola and DRC affecting Beijing's engagement with these countries?
- How is China adhering to the international norm and practice of CSR in both DRC and Angola?
- What are major steps are often undertaken by China when selected African countries default on Chinese loan repayment?

- What are the similarities and differences of China’s foreign policy towards Angola and DRC?
- What is China’s general foreign policy stance towards Africa within the context of the cases of Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2010-2020

1.6. Chapter Breakdown

Chapter one: Introduction of the study

This chapter provides an orientation of the study. It covers the research aim and objectives of the study, research questions, research problem and definition of main concepts.

Chapter two: Literature review and theoretical framework

This chapter is an account of an overview of the existing body of literature regarding China's foreign policy towards DRC and Angola, knowledge gaps, and theoretical framework.

Chapter three: Research methodology

This chapter outlines and justifies research methodological techniques used in the study.

Chapter four: China's historical relations with Angola and DRC

This chapter focuses on the history of China's international relations with both Angola and DRC.

Chapter five: Key Drivers of China's Foreign Policy towards Africa: Angola and DRC within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

This chapter discusses the key drivers of the foreign policy of China towards both Angola and DRC and zooms into China's recent international policy on the Belt and Road Initiative.

Chapter six: Chinese companies operating in both Angola and DRC's mining and manufacturing sectors

This chapter examines some of the Chinese companies' operations in both Angola and DRC's two sectors of Mining and Manufacturing.

Chapter Seven: China's adherence and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility in Angola and DRC

This chapter discusses Corporate Social Responsibility and the extent to which Chinese mining and manufacturing companies in Angola and DRC mining adhere and practice corporate social responsibilty.

Chapter Eight: Neo-colonial steps taken by China when African countries (Angola and DRC) default in loan repayment

This chapter exposes Neo-colonial Chinese activities undertaken when African countries such as Angola and DRC default in repayment of their respective loans obligations. This is accompanied by critical Afrocentric comparison and contrasting of China's international relations towards both Angola and DRC.

Chapter Nine: **A comparison and contrasting of China's Foreign Policy towards Angola and the DRC**

This chapter compares and contrasts the general foreign policy of China towards Angola and the DRC.

Chapter Ten: General conclusion, findings and recommendations

This chapter closes with general concluding remarks, sums up the research findings and provides both Angolan and DRC governments with counter neo-colonial policy recommendations and decolonial steps to strategically engage with China in an attempt to dismantle the debt-trap diplomacy in both Angola and DRC.

The next chapter presents a critical review of the academic literature related to the subject of this study. It also addresses the choice and rationale for the study's theoretical framework, which is broadly considered as an integral part of the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review and theoretical framework

2.1. Introduction

This section of the study has reviewed a considerable breath of academic materials relevant to the subject on China's international relations with Africa, particularly Angola and the DRC. It did so by fully examining the foreign policy documents China towards the African countries under review. In addition, the current researcher has studied the results and limitations curbed out by relevant scholars and academics on the subject under review. This review of the relevant literature has immensely helped the current researcher in the identification of the existing gaps of knowledge on the subject and provided a satisfactory direction for the current study. The subject of China-Africa relations: test cases of Angola and the DRC has regrettably received little scholarly and/or academic awareness from scholars of various disciplines including those in Economics, Developmental Studies, International Relations (IR), Political Science, History, Peace Studies, and Econometrics.

For the current study, various scholarly works from the realm of Political science, IR, History and African Studies were reviewed as part of the literature review. These included the works of scholars such as Rapanyane and Shai (2019a), Rapanyane and Shai (2019b), Rapanyane and Sethole (2020), Rapanyane (2020a), Rapanyane 2020b), Shai (2016), Clarke and White (1989), Scott and Garrisson (2012), Viotti and Kaupi (2010), Dlomo (2010), Kiala (2010), Khodadadzadeh (2017), Nkrumah (1965), Tukumbi (2011), Corkin (2011), Kushner (2013), Kabemba (2016), Wu (2013), Ehrbar (2013), Mila (1992), Dunn (2004), McGowan and Nel (2006), Dunne and Schmidt (2008), Maphaka (2020), Asante (1980, 1983, 1988, 1990, 2003), Woodyard (1995), Gilroy (1993), Collins (1991), Aidoo (2013), Mthembu-Salter (2010, 2012), Taylor (2009), Brautigam (2009, 2011, 2020) and Kinyondo (2019).

Despite having refined the study's conceptual framework, which focused on the foreign policy concept; it should equally be stated that the resultant literature review of the study has followed the elements of the scholarly and/or academic discussion and analysis addressed below. This means that the researcher in this PhD thesis could not follow the incessant list indicated below in the review of the most relevant scholarly materials on the subject of the study. As such, the main organisation of this chapter has followed five satisfactory discussions and analyses (conceptual framework, identification of the existing gaps of knowledge on China-Africa affairs; China-Angola relations; and China-DRC relations. Theoretical perspectives, which involve the role of theory; drawn from varieties of mainstream theories and adopted theory of Afrocentricity) are dictated by the periodisation proposition adopted against the alphabetical order sequence of the revisited authors.

2.2. Conceptual exploration

2.2.1. Foreign policy

The concept of Foreign Policy is often understood to mean the "foreign relations policy" and/or "International relations policy." Simply put, foreign policy emphatically interjects the practice of how nation-states conduct their coordination of international relations matters (Shai 2016; Rapanyane 2020). Some politicians and analysts often draw themselves into unnecessary arguments on the adoption of the concept of "foreign", leaving outside what we call foreign policy, which is principally found at the national level and that it shows itself as having nothing to do with a country's internal and/or domestic policies. Even if different definitions and explanations are given for the comprehension of this concept (Clarke & White 1998; Rapanyane 2018), it remains important to take note that foreign policy in the current study is presented without any globally acceptable definition, therefore scrapping the unnecessary semantic questions in the current study. Both Scott and Garrison (2012: 138) understand that "international policies affect relations between or among nations, such as trade, war, educational exchanges, and disaster relief efforts and so on."

Equally significant, foreign policies are not the consequence of the subject of one person in national government (President) who often presides over various administrations that conceived and/or adopted them (Scott & Garisson, 2012). This is the reason why it is almost an impossible task to associate a nation-state's foreign policy with one person, more like "Ramaphosa's Zimbabwe policy" and/or "Jinping's Angola policy" and "the foreign policy of Jintao" in books on Historical and International

Politics. Where found, such claims can be untrue and very much misleading as foreign policy is the consequence of the collection of people who come together in implementing national policies (Shai 2016). The collection mostly includes the President (Head of State and Government), Parliament (Legislative body), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and/or International Relations and alternative concerned departments such as (Economy, Defence, etc.) (Clarke & White 1989).

The collaboration outlined above execute an integral role in the formation and execution of a foreign policy of a nation-state either from those of the third world and/or first world. The combination above remains the principal and formal drivers of domestic and foreign policymaking, tasked with executing domestic and foreign policy desires of the masses in the splendid possible matter (Viotti & Kaupi 2010). In the interval, it is not astonishing for International Relations and Political Science students and practitioners to disassociate international relations, foreign policy and diplomacy. This is due to the concepts being different even though they are linked intrinsically. In the current study, the concept of diplomacy is distinguished from all of them with a focus on the cunning and practice of negotiations between two or more representatives of different nation-states in the international political and economic system. Essentially, it is aligned with international relations' simplification as a practice and phenomenon as opposed to the entire discipline. Shai (2016: 18) together with Dlomo (2010: 3) remind us that the practice of diplomacy in foreign policy has to do with being "a political instrument with which to maximise the national interest of States and to pursue foreign policy goals and objectives".

The utilisation of capital letters (IR) ought not to be variated from the lower case (ir) that is extensively connected to the concerns harrowed from the desire to make a variance between the actual practice and academic discipline of international relations (Viotti & Kauppi 2010). The International Relations field offers much more than relations between nation-states. Several other actors are involved such as international organisations, terrorist groups and etc., which all form part of what is often referred to as "world or global politics" (Viotti & Kauppi 2010). Shai (2016: 19) complements the above views as correct and necessary to place the international relations field as one that is mixed with context inquiry. Additionally, Shai (2016: 19) says that this serves as the pursued usage of "politics" within the context of “international politics” and “world politics” which are inter-dependent with international relations which “is devoid of the honest appreciation of the multi-dimension and complex character of this field”.

2.3. A Review of Knowledge Gaps

2.3.1. China-Africa Relations

Edoho (2011) wrote a very informative article titled “Globalization and Marginalization of Africa: Contextualization of China-Africa Relations” whereby a resource curse theory is deployed to provide a broader examination of the China-Africa relations within the context of economic engagements and implications of the emerging economic development engagements in African countries. Essentially, Edoho has centrally focused on the contributions of globalisation to the marginalisation of Africa in the world economy. As such, Edoho argues that China-Africa close relations are a consequence of the marginalisation of the latter in the globalisation context. This is with implications of China in Africa to fill the space left out by Imperial and Neo-colonial Western States since the end of the Cold War. Edoho shows that Africa’s embracing of China is greatly motivated by the issues of the post-colonial dependency engagements including harsh colonial experiences. Contextually, we can pick up the three pictorial eras shown in the article which are, first, that China is a progressive development partner with stiff strategic economic interests in Africa; the second being that of a voracious competitor, implying that China does not seek to assist Africa with real development, as it will neither promote governance and human rights in Africa within the process of its economic venture. The last one depicts China as the new colonizer that seeks to recolonise Africa.

Edoho has further demonstrated that there are more than 800 Chinese companies in Africa in full operation. This means that globalisation has not only disengaged Africa from the west, but further promoted resource-based relations at the heart of China-Africa relations thereby, promoting the voraciousness perspective. Most importantly, this article has projected that Chinese investment in Africa involves various areas of seaports, railroads, industrial infrastructure, road networks, telecommunications, and power generations. Although Edoho’s work has helped greatly in shaping the direction of the undertaking of this study from the continental level, it fell short of narrating the globalisation process and/or role in the marginalisation of case-point countries such as Angola and DRC broadly.

We also have Mohan and Lampert (2013) who in their article “Negotiating China: Reinserting African Agency into China-Africa relations” adopt a win-win game theory to provide a broader examination of the degree of agency needed on Africa’s engagement with China. Both projects are various phases of engagement, where African nation-states have modelled, bargained and drove political and economic engagements with China in various significant ways. Their discussion has placed focus on China-Africa political relations and showcased how the former is glorified as the commanding advocate with little respect for the African agency. Their article has gone deep into the investigation of the Africa agency placing the central focus on Chinese investments in Angola, Ghana, and Nigeria (with Zambia given little attention). Both also argue that there is a very indestructible interest-based class element to both political and social agencies in the China-Africa relations. They also add that within the context of various opportunities and threats brought about by China’s entry into Africa, the local civil society is often affected and forced to safeguard the privileges of the African elites who are at the forefront of letting China into Africa.

This is the case, because Chinese investment benefits are largely skewed towards these favourable select elites only. Mohan and Lampert have also referred to how the replacement of Western oil exploration companies in Angola by Chinese oil companies has not changed anything. It is also showcased that Chinese companies are searching deeply for markets in Nigeria and Ghana utilising the help of the local patrons aligned to their survival and prosperity to formulate what we understand as an African agency. The sectional link captured from their discussion and analysis draws scholars to a broader understanding and acknowledgement of the African nation-states’ significant role in their international relations with China. However, this does not imply that African countries’ international relations with China are synonymous with those of the DRC. Principally, the DRC and Angola in the current study are employed as test cases for comparison and contrast. This is because both countries have been victims of real Chinese nefarious fangs in Africa. Thus, their limitations to Angola, Ghana and Nigeria could have motivated the undertaking of the current study to also include DRC in the discussion.

2.3.2. China-Angola relations

From a win-win perspective, the study of Kiala (2010) titled “China-Angola aid relations: Strategic cooperation for development?” explores the China-Angola aid relations. The undertaking of Kiala’s study was motivated by China’s aid that does not conform to the terms and standards of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Development Assistance Committee (DAC); which Beijing is not a member of. Firstly, in admission, Kiala has observed that Angola is at the centre of Chinese activity in the African Continent as poverty remains rampant in Angola whilst it is the largest African oil-exporting country. This study has instituted China’s emergence in the international donor community and how it has reconceived the aid parameters in Africa by indicating that, unlike the OECD that financially assists Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs), China also seeks to engage in the provision of aid to the Less Developed Countries (LDCs). Equally, most of the concessional loans from China are furnished by its Export-Import Bank (Exim Bank) going along with subsidy interest provided by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce.

This is followed by a strong quantification of Chinese aid to the African country around the reconstruction of the latter, especially of electrical systems in Namibe, Tombwa, Lubango and Luanda and different themes that were attached to the aid. Kiala (2010) also examined the risks of the credit line motivated by China in Angola which includes major concerns around China’s non-adherence to its policy of non-interference and condition of free loans as there are considerable risks attached to China’s unlimited credit to Angola. Despite its contribution to the current study, Kiala’s research article did not locate China’s historical relations with Angola nor provide a broader examination of the Chinese Belt and Road initiative.

From a Neo-Colonialism perspective, Khodadadzadeh's (2017)’s Master of Arts dissertation titled “China in Africa: A Modern Story of Colonization? A Case Study of China’s engagement in Angola” engages a descriptive analysis of China’s international relations with Angola and examines if there were any features of Neocolonialism between the years 2000 to 2017. The operationalisation of the concept of neocolonialism into the five dimensions including economic influence, political interference, military appearances, culture/education reinforcement and financial dependence were done to understand how China is recolonising Angola. The adoption of Neo-colonialism itself as the established theoretical framework is understood better by Nkrumah who says that it consists of countries that are officially independent but still are economically dependent on the adopted political policy that is influenced by foreign economic and political forces. This is evident in his book “New Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism” (Nkrumah 1965: 7; Khodadadzadeh, 2017: 13).

Although Khodadadzadeh does not find any worrisome concerns regarding China’s engagement with Angola in the context of political interference, military appearances, and cultural/ education reinforcement, both economic and financial fields are purely characterised by extensive neo-colonial tendencies. In economic terms, Chinese companies including those in the mining industry tend to hire Chinese labour instead of Angolan workers (2017: 37). This study further makes a shocking revelation about China’s foreign aid policy as supported by Tukumbi (2011: 257) who noted that the latter in Angola comes with terms and notions that the aid should be utilised to “only hire Chinese workers and to only purchase Chinese products and equipment” (2017: 38). The other significant aspects relate to the unfair agreements as the Asian giant decides on the aid to purchase Chinese manufactured goods instead of those made locally.

The second dimension of financial dependence is shown by the economic prosperity of Angola which is heavily dependent on China as their biggest trading partner and infrastructural build-up pillar. Implying that a weaker China would mean less demand for Angola’s natural resources of gas, oil and copper and ultimately few investments in infrastructure, mining and other areas. Yuan has also been made the second legal tender in Angola through a monetary agreement that decreased Angola’s dependence on the dollar and increased China’s economic influence in Angola (Khodadadzadeh, 2017). Observably, Angola’s financial dependence on China comes from the Asian giant being the principal funder and responsible for “at least one-third of Angola’s GDP” (Khodadadzadeh, 2017: 43). With 40% of the total trade export from Angola, China is in charge of Angola’s financial support in terms of inflations and depreciation of the local currency or export products’ increasing or decreasing prices. In the final analysis, China is depicted as a successful capitalist and colonialist even though it preaches mutual benefit in Angola.

The above scenario implies that China is not transparent with its activities in Angola, which leads to huge suspicions and mistrust as its organised system of economic exploitation and financial dependency in Angola is led by a pattern of unfair credit packages, infrastructural loans, aid in exchange for natural resources of gas and oil that contributes to the negative effects of labour and business markets in the African country. Admittedly, the study contains the most relevant and most updated neo-colonial practices in Angola which makes it very much important and analytically appropriate for the current study to build on. However, the study fell short of outlining the Chinese companies operating in Angola and their operations including the significant impact of the Chinese practice of dumping processed goods and services in Angola's local industries such as the broader analysis of China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Corkin's (2011) study titled "China and Angola Strategic partnership or marriage of convenience?" explores the oil-backed concessional loans provided by Chinese banks to Angola to counter check if the nature of China and Angola's partnership is strategic with shared goals and/or an uneasy marriage of convenience. Corkin highlights that China-Angola relations can be traced from the anti-colonial struggle when China supported the liberation movements such as the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) although their official bilateral relations are of recent origin. He says that after the 2002 Angolan Conflict, China had shifted attention to economic collaboration with Angola based on the win-win strategy and the reconstruction and development of Angola including the exploration of the latter's natural resources. As the largest Angolan trading partner, it also accounts for the largest Angolan oil imports. After a synopsis of the historical relations between the two countries, Corkin examines how the China Exim Bank (policy bank) entered Angola as the key instrument of the facilitation of economic cooperation between the two countries.

The Chinese provision of loans are said to be more generous than European and American banks' oil-backed financing. The loan terms stipulate that Chinese companies should be awarded 70% of the Angolan government's public tenders in the construction and civil engineering contracts approved by the government of China. One of the major Chinese oil companies that is operating in Angola is the Sinopec which has historically been marred with controversy as its entry into Angola in the last two decades was accompanied by China Exim Bank's US$2 billion loan facility awarded to the government of Angola to finance the reconstruction of their infrastructure. This is said to be a loan to support Sinopec's entrance into a strategic African country.

Although this is the case, Sinopec had since experienced several challenges in bidding for other state-financed oil contracts over time as Angola sought to diversify its finance partners including the incorporation of the USA engineering firm Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR) for refinery purposes and competition and the China Sonangol international holding (CSIH), Canada's Export Development Bank, Brazil's Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Económico e Social (BNDES) to showcase the thawing of relations between international financial institutions and Angola. The trade relations between the two countries have over time shown that even if Angola is seen as a Chinese important source of oil, Angola is not regarded as an important strategic location of investment beyond the oil acquisition. This is in contrast to South Africa and DRC as important strategic locations of Chinese investment beyond the acquisition of minerals. In the final analysis, Corkin indicates that Angola's relations with China had matured from a heady embrace of "mutual convenience to a reassessment of each other's strategic significance as partners" (2011: 4). This is because they both see each other as strategic allies for the foreseeable future. Notably, the study did not broadly examine China's debt-trap diplomacy strategies and the key mineral resources that serve as China's interests in Angola.

2.3.3. China-DRC Relations

Kushner (2013) contributed an online report on "China's Congo Plan: What the Next World Power Sees in the World's Poorest Nation". Although the report focuses on the new style of investing that is helping Chinese companies take an economic edge over Africa, Kushner has addressed the latter through a win-win game theory. Kushner's study is relevant in this study because it advances China's Congo strategy. Central to his main assessment, Kushner asks if it is possible to align the success of China in

Africa with that of Europe, the USA and other western countries that have prospered there before? Kushner noted that in 1999, China introduced its Policy of 'Going out' which encouraged the businesses to go invest outside the country as well as families to open electronic businesses, restaurants and distribute medicines.

Kushner says that when there was an increase in the copper and cobalt value as well as other minerals, many Chinese businesses started their operations abroad such as in the province of Katanga in Congo to buy mineral processes dug by artisans in Congo mines. Kushner demonstrated that China saw Africa as a continent of mineral wealth needed for its economy, which is driven by manufacturing. According to Kushner, Congo has half of the world's cobalt reserves and supplies cobalt with a high grade. These minerals are what drove China to make the largest deal with Congo in its history known as Sicomines. This deal will ensure that China can extract 6.8 million tons of Copper and 427, 000 tons of cobalt. Kushner has observed that this new type of investment model led by China took Africa's economic edge and replaced the USA as its largest partner in trade. He argues that China will strip Congo of its natural wealth as did the Belgians in colonial times. Despite the usefulness of his work in understanding what the dynamics and implications of Chinese investment in Congo could be; there was no attempt to project both countries' historical relations. Equally, his report is too narrow to address all other fundamental aspects of both countries' relations such as the key drivers of China's foreign policy towards DRC and a broader explanation of all the trade and economic agreements of China with DRC.

Kabemba (2016) wrote a very informative article titled "China-Democratic Republic of Congo Relations: From a Beneficial to a Developmental Cooperation". In this article he attempted to unpack whether a win-win cooperative relationship is possible between China and the DRC using a Neo-extractivism theory. Kabemba has placed much of his emphasis on the Sicomines deals, which were signed between China and DRC. Firstly, Kabemba argues that the deal does not represent straight-forwardness and equity. He says that this deal was met with castigations and doubts upon its implementation. Kabemba postulates that its secrecy encouraged the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and civil society's suggestion for it to be made public. According to Kabemba, the Sicomines deals serve to increase DRC's foreign debt to an unacceptable level.

Even after the IMF advised both countries to reduce its size, this deal could still not solve the imbalances it came with. This is because it did not address the reduction of China’s capital investment in DRC which comes with the reduction of DRC minerals for Chinese MNCs. Secondly, Kabemba argues that Sicomines is no different to the western mining companies in DRC. He stated that Sicomines has enabled Chinese companies to receive fiscal, holiday and customs exemptions, which generally strip resource rich African nation-states of their minerals. Kabemba argued this is the case as most of the companies are operating in the informal sector. Hence, Sicomines was meant to accelerate commercial ties between the two countries. Thirdly, he demonstrated that Sicomines does not address the political economy of costs and risks which means that mineral pricing and infrastructural costs have never been discussed and the main analysis presented agree that DRC is likely to lose.

Fourthly, the problem with the deal is that it is solely administered by China. Gecamines which is the passive partner plays no administrative role and the decision making is left with Chinese companies especially in production and exports, equipment importation, and use of Chinese personnel. According to Kabemba, the discussion outlines the importance of taking into consideration that Sicomines has not changed the colonial extractivism approach of the west. Kabemba also asserts that despite China’s lies of a win-win partnership with DRC, this partnership, in reality, demonstrates the nature of international relations made in the pursuits of national interests through which the powerful nation-states dictate the terms of cooperation.

This situation, among others, serves as a fertile ground for this research and future studies in this area. It should be noted however that CSR as a key element in the current research has been overlooked in this work. There was no attempt to project China’s CSR in DRC. Unfortunately, Kabemba did not demonstrate the role of Chinese companies in ensuring corporate responsibility nor highlight the epoch in which such links can be traced including a broader analysis of some of the neo-colonial Chinese practices in DRC. Kabemba only gave a narrative of how both countries should strengthen their relations, China’s ambition in DRC, historical relations, DRC’s failure and its implications, reasons behind the non-interference policy of China and how it does not benefit DRC including how both countries' relations are not a win-win scenario. There was no attempt to analyse the above-mentioned issues although the two former (China's ambition in DRC and historical relations) are presented as key variables of the current study. Regardless of this, Kabemba (2016: 83) believes that China's international relations with the DRC are to achieve two important things; "support the building of a capable state and build an economy that is inclusive and sustainable". The argument's crux is ensuing in that; "as long as China does not help the DRC to achieve stability, the infrastructure development approach is not sustainable" (Kabemba 2016: 82). The DRC is massively losing its trade relations with China. The relations between China and DRC are not based on win-win cooperation.

Wu (2013) made a major contribution to this study through his online publication titled "China's Foreign Policy towards Africa". Wu's study provides insights into the status of the Sino-Africa relationship using a theory of comparative advantage. Although this publication is not based on the topic of the current research but around some of the crucial aspects shaping Chinese investment in Africa, Wu argues that China's policy towards Africa has moved from unconditional assistance to mutual benefits, which is now a priority. Wu also argues that China's policy towards Africa is not solely oil and mineral resources driven but the continent also plays a key strategic significance, premised on three considerations, namely diplomatic, commercial and resource imperatives. Wu stated that some African countries have become critical oil-exporters for China as extreme instability of the Middle East supply has increased.

Wu (2013) study is worth mentioning in the current study because it provides a rich existing knowledge of how Chinese foreign policy towards Africa is driven by oil, resource imperatives and Africa's strategic importance. What is more relevant about his study is that it corrects the naïve claims, which show that Chinese investment in Africa is good. Even though Wu's study concludes with the remarks that China and Africa's cooperation is grounded on mutual respect and complementary trade, it also considers the influence of the developing countries in global affairs, especially the political economy. Despite his contribution, Wu did not channel his views towards the comparison or contrasting of China's foreign policy relations with both Angola and DRC including a broader analysis of major steps undertaken by China when African countries like Angola and DRC default in their loan repayments.

2.4. Theoretical perspectives

Most of the already conducted studies are informed by the three predominant and/or mainstream theories of Marxism, Realism and Idealism. Correctly put, these theories have played a huge role in International Relations by theoretically and contextually guiding the analysis of the state behaviour; understanding of individuals and alternative actors in the international system. Equally, their reference to foreign policy analysis has also been very much helpful and cannot be easily overlooked as their significance is also catalogued. Accordingly, it is an almost impossible task to assess their significance individually as none is highly valued than another (Shai 2016). Marxism which focuses on economic nationalism is also an honourable ally within the fraternity of the Social Sciences, but it is often claimed that this school of thought has been overhauled by realism. This simply means that the belief that "Karl Marx had followed realist principles way before critical realism gained the required recognition of a theory within the academic circles" may be true (Ehrbar, 2013).

In the same vein, both Rapanyane and Maphaka (2019) including Milan (1992) understand and recognise that Marxism would not be suitable for adoption in studies that are directly linked to the Africans. The sentiment insinuates that Marxism is broadly understood and suitably adopted within the European knowledge production fraternities where it can best be conceptualised. This is the case because it does not consider the African ground conditions, and value systems in any analysis (Rapanyane & Maphaka 2019). Therefore, in dissolving and disputing the adoption of the principles of these theories in the critical reflection of the Afrocentric phenomenon, Dunn (2004: 149) does not shy away from indicating that this undoubtedly shows that "African experiences indicate a far more complicated picture of current international relations". Put differently, any African study on the IR scholarship ought to make the most of the African evidenced perspectives (Dunn 2004).

2.4.1. Realism

Far different from Afrocentricity, Realism is an advocate of the following propositions:

> *The international system is anarchic. Sovereign states are the principal actors in the international system; States are rational actors acting in their national interests; The overriding goal of each state is its security and survival and State survival is guaranteed best by power, principally military* (McGowan & Nel, 2006: 26-30).

As broadly explained, realism has been shaped and/or moulded with the trio elements of historical importance. One is classical realism which was advanced by Hans Morgenthau (renowned IR Scholar). The second is structural realism which was advanced by both Rousseau and Waltz. The last one was Neo classical realism that shaped the development of this theory. It is important to highlight that the theory's key elements have been self-help and survivalism including statism which have all shaped the central features of the theory (Dunne & Schmidt, 2008).

2.4.2. Idealism

Far divergent from realism, idealism is also another assertive theory of International Relations that advocates for justice, tolerance, liberty and order in the international relations fraternity (Dunne 2008: 111). The theory's proponents have advocated for the following propositions:

> *Absolute gains can be made through cooperation and interdependence, thus peace can be achieved; The international system presents plenty of opportunities for cooperation and broader notions of power; State preferences, rather than state capabilities are the primary determinants of state behaviour; and; Interaction between states is not limited to political (high politics), but also economic (low politics)* (McGowan & Nel, 2006: 30-33).

2.5. The Role of the Theory: Afrocentricity

Theoretically, this study drew from Afrocentricity that has been developed over time by the works of scholars such as Asante (1980, 1983, 1990, 2003) including other prominent and influential scholars such as Schreiber (2000), Maphaka (2020) and Shai (2016). The theory of Afrocentricity is often explained within the context of understanding a certain phenomenon from a position and/or point of view of an African individual. Agreeably, Asante (2003) acknowledges Afrocentricity as an illustrative found on the contemplative that African people should re-assert a sense of action for the attainment of wisdom and rationality. When adopting Afrocentricity, there are three most important tenets that one should follow. The first one is cultural centeredness which has to do with the contemplation of cultural elements of the group under study which in the current case is Africans (Woodyard 1995).

For this culture-centred specific theoretical point of view; epistemology comes from the view that culture is a central focus of attention overhauling the perspective of the researcher or that of the academy. This means that all researchers who aspire to adopt Afrocentricity should first locate themselves “with the people, using their cosmological, epistemological, axiological, and aesthetic orientations as a starting point from which to view their communication phenomena” (Woodyard, 1995: 37). Contexually, it is implied that the African people’s cultural experiences are very much deserving of a relevant intellectual pursuit as they prove to be unique, instructive and informative about human communication in any situation (Asante, 1988). Just as African languages and communication practices are inherently influenced by the experience, environment and language practices, this study is Afrocentric as its functionality for Africans comes in a way that is conducted to integrate ideals, subjective African reality and values (Asante 1990). This insinuates that not only Africans are to study Africans as the exercise is not only attached to the cultural background but also the perspective from which a researcher conducts their study is important (Asante 1990). Dissimilar to Euro-American perspectives which devolve from the American and European world, the theory of Afrocentricity dictates where, what, how and why some phenomena should be deliberated based on principles of applicable theoretical and methodological tools.

The foregoing observation implicitly suggests that the methodological assumptions, choices and conclusions made by the researchers are a true reflection of the paradigm they are from; that then shapes how they elucidate communicative behaviour. This expresses a view that when researchers explain a non-European culture from any given European standard and lenses; they then reveal an in-accurate result that is "misleading and a biased interpretation" (Hamlet 1998: xi). Vora (1995: 73) agrees with the above assertion that the latter also drives scholars towards a "limited view of social reality and an incomplete understanding of the human experience". Scholars who investigate and generate research questions centrically bring about research projects that are qualitatively different from those who impose their ethnocentric criterion (Asante, 1993). In order to eliminate this practice and tendency of biasness, the current study is poised to ground itself within the African cultural worldview and permit the research to evolve from the centre.

Within the context of paradigmatic pluralism, Asante (1990) supports the incorporation of alternative perspectives, methodological approaches and multiple paradigms in the analysis of other groups or in inter-cultural research between criticisms that is limited to one group (McPhail, 1998; Hamlet, 1998). Adopting what we understand as plural viewpoints can help various scholars in comprehending broadly how people come to develop different realities to make a "true transcultural analysis" conceivable (Asante, 1998: 8). The principal struggle of Afrocentricity is to place Africans at the research centre instead of being objects where they eventually become subjects.

The essence of the foregoing observation is that all Africans should be able to evaluate themselves from an African-centred perspective, Chinese from the Chinese perspective, Hispanic Americans from the Hispanic American perspective and Europeans from European perspectives. Based on Asante (1993: 4), in the process of the data analysis from an Afrocentric point of view, scholars ought to take note that the theory "is only one among many and consequently, the viewpoint, if you will, seeks no advantage, no self-aggrandizement, and no hegemony." Within this context of the theoretical model, pluralism, therefore, exists without various cultural groups' voices and hierarchy being heard equally to promote intercultural agency (Vora, 1995; Woodyard, 1995). This is complemented by the views of MchPhail (1998) who believes that all theories are interrelated and interdependent and none should be affluent over others. Consequently, the existence of different perspectives for the intercultural phenomena analysis can aggregate our knowledge whilst enlarging our tolerance of unorthodox perspectives.

The third most important tenet includes Liberation and Cultural agency, from which Afrocentricity looks for the liberation of all Africans from all levels of historical, methodological, social and epistemological approaches. Afrocentrists reject the primordial Greece folktale of history. To the detractors who argued that this equals to a romantic and idealised view of history that enforces denotation of victimology, Asante (1996: 32) has reminded us that it is clear that

> *The main point made by Afrocentrists is that Egypt was anterior to Greece, that Greece owes a substantial debt to Egypt, and that Egypt should be considered a major contributor to our current knowledge. You cannot begin a discussion of world history with the Greeks.*

Even though the ongoing debate on this is not concluded, the proponents of Afrocentricity still maintain that Egypt played a significant role in the making of history and made numerous contributions to the Greek civilisation and that African people have not been recognised accordingly and duly for such an enormous contribution (Karenga, 1993). Elucidating the historical events in this particular way has reduced the experiences of Africans in the human evolution and historical development, and perpetuated the Greeks mythology, whilst also creating a false perspective that Africans have not contributed anything in historical books.

African people’s contributions had long been disregarded and marginalised in the historical literature; sustaining an important need for a multicultural critique of history (Takaki, 1993). As much as Afrocentric theory inspires social progress escorted by intellectual progress, the espousal of the theory also serves to avow African culture, foreground social cohesion, cultivate self-worth and reconstruct African history, institutions and values to assist the historically disregarded and marginalised African people to break away from the long behind-schedule historical oppression (Gilroy, 1993).

Walter (1996) places the observation arguably well by indicating that liberation is at the centre of realising the political project of the people's struggle to control their destiny, their understanding of themselves, their cultural way of being and their agendas. The alternative component of liberation involves the ontological, epistemological and methodological aspects of the intercultural study. Explicitly, the current study critiques the subservient scholarship to free African scholars from an intellectual autocracy and stimulate the magnification of the cultural agency of research participants (Akbar, 1998). A culturally centred approach is capable of producing explanations and interpretations that are possibly beyond reach when studied from various conventional paradigms and the results can be employed to exculpate the previous research (Woodyard, 1995).

Additionally, Collins (1991: 202) reminds us that "subordinate groups have long had to use alternative ways to create independent self-definitions and self-valuations." Thus, various intercultural scholars ought to appreciate the concepts of cultural equality and cultural agency to make an intellectual space realistic to the resisting discourse, unorthodox perspectives and various scholarly studies that potentially have not been done based on the applicable rules. The Afrocentric theory was deemed the most relevant for the current study due to its embryonic nature to help in the provision of an African-rooted alternative perspective within the subject of International Relations deficient of negative critics, progressive spectacles and prospects emerging from elsewhere (Shai, 2016). It was deemed the best because of its potentiality to foster epistemic justice. This is victoriously achieved by providing Africa-centred philosophies, theories and ideas to work together as equals with their Euro-American theoretical counterparts who were previously and/or historically presented as universally applicable.

2.6. Modelled divergence between Realism, Idealism and Afrocentricity

Within the context of the current study, the theory of Afrocentricity has been deployed to restructure the setting of the reference to make sure that Africans, their history, ideas, and culture pre-dominate the analysis, critique and synthesis and correct the injustices historically observed in this field of study for the aim of decolonisation in

South Africa, and the Institutions of Higher Learning in the African continent (Rapanyane, 2019). That the adoption of the view expressed above is utilised in a simplified fashion implies that even if it is not an ideology yet; it is used as a theoretical lens and a guiding instrument in the study for a serious analysis of China-Africa relations using the cases of Angola and DRC (Rapanyane 2020; Rapanyane & Shai 2019a). Afrocentricity, whose attributes have been elucidated above against other mainstream theories does not deviate from the adoption of some views expressed within the currently dominant mainstream political theories (Chinese perspective, Idealism, Realism and Marxism) in the study of international relations (Shai 2016). Despite this, the Afrocentric theory stood its firm groundsss in the rationale between the pre-existing dominant theoretical frameworks and ideologies to separate the myths from the truth and stand with the latter that is often not true to alternative ideologies and/or theories (Asante 2003: 53).

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a conceptual exploration, with a central focus on a broader explanation of the concept of foreign policy, the level of foreign policy making in a government and who is responsible for foreign policy making. Equally, the researcher has provided a comprehensive review of the current literature to draw the knowledge gaps which gave the current study a consistent and logical direction. The literature review has involved a critical review of the existing knowledge both at the continental and national levels with a special focus on research articles. The researcher has reviewed and drawn knowledge gaps from China-Africa, China-Angola and China-DRC relations. Equally, the section on the theoretical perspectives has also been elucidated and explained broadly. The researcher focused on explaining realism, idealism, Marxism and the Chinese perspective to differentiate them from Afrocentricity. Additionally, Afrocentricity has been broadly explained and various justifications on why it was adopted in the current study were advanced. Among these arguments is that it is best suited to this type of inquiry as it gives respect to African experiences on the subject matter.

The next chapter accounts for the choice and justification of the the research methodological techniques used in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The Faculty of Social Sciences comprises three principal research paradigms, specifically: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The current study is located within the qualitative research methodology. In other words, it has employed the use of a qualitative research approach, which permits a detailed analysis within the context of a limited number of persons (participants), with reduced potential elements of generalising findings (Shai 2016). This research approach equally assumes that people, in general, employ various interpretive schemes which should be broadly comprehended and that the local context should be explained. Contributing to the understanding of the research paradigms subject is Holloway (1997: 1) who has indicated that a qualitative research approach “is a type of social analysis that looks into how people understand and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live”. The denoted expression is shown by the social research complexity and the reaching of objectivity difficultness in an approach that puts the respondent’s empathy first. Even though the current study is a by-product of empirical analysis, the researcher has embraced the view expressed by Hall (2007: 93) who cautioned that:

> *Binary branding of social science methodologies (subjective or objective and empirical or non- empirical) risks the polarisation of practices of inquiry that share substantive interests, and that may share more common ground methodologically than the distinctions would suggest.*

Informed by the above view, the this chapter describes the broader research methodology including research design, sources of data, sampling methods applied, data collection methods, data analysis tools including the elements of quality criteria and ethical issues that were considered in undertaking the study.

3.2. Research design

The comparative case study design has been adopted for the sole purpose of comparing the foreign policy of China towards Angola and DRC. This design explored the current practical realities in the context of life and used different methods of data collection especially when it comes to document review and semi-structured interviews (Yin, 2003). The significance of this method in the current study manifests in its exploration and critique of the general Chinese foreign policy similarities and differences within and between the chosen case studies. This form of analysis ensured that the researcher does provide information that is not in the public domain about China's foreign policy towards the two chosen test cases. The study's comparative case study design was preferred on the premise of its ability to synthesise and analyse differences, similarities and patterns across the two case points, with the possibility of sharing outcomes. Both Angola and DRC case points were found significant in discovering the current analytic tool on the foreign policy of China towards Africa. All comparative case studies are mostly used to understand and interpret the contextual features of the influence of a policy directive (Goodrick, 2014). As such, comparing similarities and differences of China's intervention in both nation-states capacitated the researcher to stipulate an in-depth exploration of the patterns and factors which define China's Africa policy.

Above all, the comparative case study has allowed the researcher to access the actual factors that explain the everyday experiences of different cultures on the topic (Baugh & Guion, 2016: 08). Equally, this empirical enquiry explores a "contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context". The importance of the comparative case study method within the current study comes from its ability to access rich data with high validity meanwhile interpreting and situating it within their broader context (Connell *et al*., 2013). This is also one observation endorsed by Shai (2016) who agrees that it can be used with other methods. This follows the fact that the entire analysis made cross-references to the literature as the study proceeded. Whilst the adoption of literature and/or document review as a method of data collection was an innovative and inclusive process; it has equally been highly applauded by specialists in historical research and policy analysis; even-though its embracement is not integrated clearly because of the cohabitation of data collection and analysis in qualitative studies (Morse & Richards, 2002). Informed by the above assertion, the researcher elaborates and demonstrates the nature of the research problem empirically, analytically, and qualitatively. To this end, the empirical element of the study is shared by alternative Afrocentrist arguments that favoured “pluralism in philosophical views without hierarchy” (Mkabela, 2005: 180). What can also be deduced from all of this would be that the current study does not focus on the quantification of fieldwork results; but makes a huge contribution in line with the recording of qualitative analysis and case information.

3.3. Sources of data

For the current study, two main sources of data were utilised. The first one was the use of document review. The secondary data generated through document review were complemented through primary data retrieved through structured interviews with key informants on the subject under investigation.

3.4. Sampling

Sampling refers to research conditions and all the research targets from which the researcher poses research questions and draws relevant information (Babbie, 2010). Various sampling techniques are often employed in qualitative research. These include the most well-known and commonly used snowball, quota, and purposive sampling techniques which all form part of non-probability sampling.

3.4.1. Sampling technique

For the current study, purposive sampling has been employed to select individual participants, research settings, and the number of documents to be analysed. Purposive sampling is underpinned by the desire to discover, understand and gain inside knowledge about a certain phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This form of sampling was employed due to its ability to select those who are knowledgeable and experienced in foreign policy analysis. A purposive sampling at best practice or its equivalent opposite is uncomplicated for exploration. This is fairly explained by Morse and Richards (2002: 173) who indicated that “when sampling, qualitative researchers maximise access to the phenomenon they are studying and select cases in which it is most evident”. It should be established in the study that the location of participants and in the least relevant outputs of research that has been produced before the current study, took considerable pre-eminence over the topic and data generation. It was also additionally advisable to use purposive sampling in the study due to its uncomplicated nature of identifying people who are well-informed on the subject of China-Africa relations. Document review, was useful for the identification and location of reputable scholars in International Politics and History who gave beneficial inputs in the study.

3.4.2. Sample size

The researcher sampled between 450- 500 documents including books, journal articles, website reports, official and policy documents, and periodical articles. All participants in the study were purposively selected until the level of saturation was reached. Saturation in this study implies that the researcher had enough complementary interviews (despite those who rejected or did not reply to the email/telephonic email interview requests) to support the already collected data from secondary materials. In the end, the combined number of the interviews conducted with participants equalled 7 participants within the age range of 18-60 years. Out of the combined number, 6 were males whilst the rest (1) were females. The ratio is in this way because most of the female participants who did not respond to my interview requests. It is equally important to indicate that all the participants were drawn from various stakeholders relevant for the subject of enquiry. The rest of those who rejected the interviews were not tabulated although the reasons for their rejections are included in the next section of the chapter. The sample is summarily tabulated below.

Table 1: Sample summary

South Africa	Democratic Republic of Congo	Angola	China	**Total**
Scholars and/or	Citizens (1)	Citizens (0)	Citizens	

Academics (6)			(0)	
6	1	0	0	7

Source: researcher's own illustration

The concurrent selection of researchers and academics as study participants was guided partly by the current researcher's desire to curtail biasness by complementing the results of the interview with academically and officially documented records. Most of the studies that are already conducted in the area of International Relations by academics are considerably grounded in knowledge about the theoretical facets of the study on foreign policy. The arguments already advanced are well-articulated in the recent academic and policy discourses without turning a complete blind-eye to the particularities towards deeply synthesizing the specific issues under study.

In as much as some International Relations scholars and practitioners (who refused to participate) have had a substantial engagement in ultra-careful studies of the different theoretical methods to the current study of international relations and foreign policy analysis; it is important to take note that their absent activeness would have been drawn from the emphasis of the empirical aspects of diplomacy and international relations. Therefore, the undertaking of this comparative case study took the first steps in giving preference to both Angolans and Congolese from the diplomatic front to capacitate the current researcher in the advancement of refined discussion about Angola and the DRC. However, it became clear during fieldwork that the diplomats did not want to participate in the interview process and could have not deviated from their official government's policy directives. Angolans were also not accessible.

One can argue that this may be because they (diplomats) are predominantly concerned and interested in hiding their country's real agenda as they deal with daily realities and practicalities of the cause and effect of China's foreign policy towards Africa (Angola and DRC) in particular. Above all, the refusal to partake in an Afrocentric study by some of the Chinese diplomats should be interpreted within the idea that the Chinese foreign policy in Africa is driven by the maintenance of debt-trap diplomacy in all spheres of life throughout the world. Therefore, any chance of a Chinese national contributing to the findings of an Afrocentric study is self-defeating. Thus, the findings of this Afrocentric study undoubtedly enchant the desirability and possibility of dislodging debt-trap systems and the symptoms of recolonising Africa in the patterns of political economy, both at the national, and international level (Welsing, 2015). Additional to this, the interface of experience and knowledge of both diplomats and academics has enhanced the potential of the study in introducing refreshing and new scholarly insights on the research theme.

The use of purposive sampling has capacitated the current researcher in bridging the extending gap between the theories and practice of international relations and explaining foreign policy issues (Mvulane-Moloi, 2012). This was realised through robust synthesis of the personal accounts of academics, African and Chinese diplomats and alternative people with a special interest in the subject under study. Despite all the challenges encountered, the current researcher could have held the complete participation of the Chinese diplomats in the study with high esteem due to their views, especially when compared to those from Africa to lend credence and value to this research.

Precisely, it should be clear that the careful decision to generate the study's sample from a diversified population with characteristics that are distinctive as outlined above was motivated by the desire to conceptualise foreign policy affairs for the ordinary people in general. As a sub-discipline of International Relations, foreign policy analysis has been dealing with affairs that are not so typical and straightforward for laymen. Undeniably, foreign policy has been miscomprehended domestically to be dealing with affairs that are very far from the people of local descent. Therefore, this study has rotted out the foreign policy within the all-inclusive domestic policy framework of a country. The researcher argues that when utilised effectively and efficiently, public diplomacy would teach the local people in general about the pillars of a country's foreign policy, relevance, the true meaning and strategic significance to their lives. Fundamentally, foreign policy has been an uncommon feature among African people for them to understand how they have historically not been exposed to it. This is especially the case when it relates to China's foreign policy towards Africa (Angola and DRC in context).

3.4. Data collection methods

Data collection method is defined as a procedure by which the researcher gathers data mandatory to provide answers to central questions asked in the research of a certain study (Nalzaro, 2012). On data collection, the current research has used primary documents, sources including oral participants and online informants in particular (Platt 2007). Alternatively, this study has used a dual set of data collection methods to enhance the credibility, and dependability of the findings (Shenton, 2004).

Document analysis is mostly used with alternative qualitative research methodologies as a particular way of triangulating the study (Raphala 2017). The latter refers to an intersection of methodologies on one study of a similar situation (Bowen 2009). The researcher in the current study has been able to draw up multiple sources of data as anticipated to corroborate and converge the utility of various data methods and sources. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were adopted to complement document review in the current study as they can provide flexibility in questioning sessions. This means that the researcher can ask research participants to explain more broadly their answers to provide deeper knowledge and exhibit a complete understanding of the theme under review. Klenke (2008) notes that these forms of interviews are done to dig deep below the surfaces of the superficial responses to obtain primary data without limitations but with a focus. Semi-structured interviews also enable the researcher to ask for clarity where necessary (Raphala, 2017). The interviews were favoured and considered on the basis of their ability to allow research participants to openly answer questions and give detailed information within the confines of the study focus (Kajornboon, 2005).

3.4.1. Document study/review

This involved a process of embarking on a review of the official, academic and popular literature to understand the patterns and trends involving China's foreign policy towards Africa: with a special reference to Angola and the DRC. The foregoing exercise is upheld in critical enquiries of this nature as it has the ability "to enrich the amount of data to be analysed" (De Vos 2002; Mabelebele, 2008: 40 quoted by Shai

2016: 62). Contextually, the current researcher categorised and utilised the combination of primary and secondary sources of information. The main criterion utilised for the classification of these sources was borrowed from De Vos (2002: 322) who indicates that "primary sources are seen as the original written material of the author's own experiences and observations, while secondary sources consist of material that is derived from someone else as the source". The secondary data was also collected through the review and reflection on Afrocentric political magazines, newspapers, speeches, electronic correspondences, official government communiques, conference papers, monographs, books, journal articles (especially from history and international relations) including declassified government official records and raw research information (upon availability).

3.4.2. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews in the study included among others established and knowledgeable International Relations scholars with an interest in China's foreign policy towards African countries and foreign policy at large; as it is their area of expertise. Preference was afforded to scholars and international relations practitioners who are based in the Limpopo and Gauteng Provinces, complemented by others located in the North West Province, South Africa. The choice of the location of research participants was enlightened by the rationale of proximity and advantage. The research participants were initially planned to be accompanied by Pretoria-based diplomats of China, Angola, and DRC since the subject of this research is in line with their areas of proficiency, however this was not possible.

The combination of researchers based in both Gauteng and Limpopo provinces (supplemented by those in North-West province) were given special preference. The third and last leg of primary key informants included the community of scholars with keen interest in the subject of foreign policy analysis, in so far as China-Africa relations are concerned. Despite the acclaimed expert nature of the current study, the current researcher wished to consider the views of non-political academics from Angola (although not accessible) and the DRC based in South Africa, especially from Limpopo and Gauteng provinces (supplemented by those who were in the North West

Province). Contextually, the semi-structured interviews were carried out between October 2021-March 2022.

Semi-structured interviews with participants based in South Africa initially took the form of either electronic correspondence (due to lockdown regulations) and/or direct one-on-one sessions. The electronic correspondence was done through either (email, zoom and/or skype) where face to face interviews with South African participants and others were not possible. Semi-structured interviews were opted because of their capacity to draw more information from the key informants without limitations; including that they can provide a broader context of the current study (Gay, 1992: 231). All the participants were asked open-ended research questions on “Chinese engagement with Africa” with an idea to collate their views on the subject matter. One-on-one correspondence between the interviewees and the researcher was preferred because of its ability to allow the researcher to make prompt follow up questions for broader clarification of comments from the informants regarding the context and meaning of their immediate expressions. As proclaimed by De Vos (2002: 301), the researcher also undertook to get the semi-structured interview participants to do the following: “Open up and express ideas; Express ideas clearly; Explain and elaborate on ideas; Focus on issues at hand rather than wander to unrelated topics.”

Altogether, the study participants who wanted the face to face interviews were interviewed at their workstations during office hours. Similarly, the email request for participation was disbursed during office hours. The combination of the data collection techniques had initially reduced the chances of intruding into various busy schedules for participants whilst also permitting them to acknowledge and respond to the questions at a convenient time for them. Electronic correspondence was also expedient due to its ability to enable the researcher to directly quote (where allowed) the participants whereby response paraphrasing might have reduced and/or compromised the essence of the point that they would have loved to advance. Where permitted, the researcher pleaded for clarity by employing telephonic calls.

3.4.3. Telephonic/email responses from diplomats

All diplomats from Angola, the DRC and China who were invited to participate in this research through email did not respond to the email request in the period of 3 months. The researcher did also try to reach out to the embassies through telephonic calls. Unfourtunately, such an attempt was tried numerous times with no one response to the telephonic calls with some going straight to voicemails. This combined with the Covid-19 restrictions on movement and physical interaction became a stumbling block as the researcher could not barge into the offices of foreign embassies without having set an appointment.

It is without any doubt that the diplomats within the embassies of Angola, DRC and China did not want to participate as the email also made it clear that should they wish to do an online-interview or fill the interview guide; such a choice was permited. This overall challenge resulted in the researcher concluding that the study should progress as enough literature review has been gathered complemented by various interviews with a community of scholars with special interest on foreign policy and China's Africa policy.

3.4.4. Telephonic/email responses from active International Relations scholars who refused to participate

> *Thanks for your email. Your research is on three countries, in particular foreign policies of those countries. While I have some general ideas about China's foreign policy, I am not certain that I know enough about all of them to be of assistance to you. Anyway good luck in your studies* (John, 2022)* [1]

> *For some reason I don't know, I have never really paid attention to China and her policy to Africa. I am not the best person to interview.* (Donald, 2022)*

> *Dear Benjamin, Kindly note that while I have a broad knowledge of China's foreign policy of non-interference, I am not sure I will be of much assistance as a resource person in your data collection as I am*

[1] * Denotes that pseudonym has been adopted due to ethical reasons

> *not familiar with the intricacies of China's foreign policy especially with respect to your case studies.* (Kenneth, 2021)*
>
> *Good Evening, Thank you very much for your email. Unfortunately, I don't think I am the best person to assist you with your study. However, I will put you in touch with a couple of people who may be better placed to assist you.* (Happiness, 2021)*

It is very important to indicate that some of the propective participants invited to partake in the interview process as they came highly recommended, did not respond to the interview requests by the researcher. This is amongst the several challenges the researcher encountered during data collection, which became as a stumbling block in the inclusion of authoritative voices in the subject under study.

3.5. Data analysis

This study adopted Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) which is better explained by Anderson (2017) as an eloquent illustration of qualitative data. In most case points, Microsoft Word fits well when using TCA. There are various steps to follow in the use and application of TCA. The first step would be that "an adequate TCA depicts thematic content of other texts by pinpointing common themes in the provided texts for analysis. Second, in all TCA analysis, the researcher's epistemological position ought to be objective" (Rapanyane 2020a: 7). To add, the third step based on Rapanyane (2020a: 7), involves "the researcher who combines and distils from the provided texts, a list of familiar themes to give an articulation to the collective voices across all texts". The fourth step involves an " attempt that is created to engage names of the themes from the actual texts to group these themes in a way that directly depicts the texts in their entirety" (Rapanyane 2020a: 7). The fifth step involves engagement in the explanation of the themes, which is mostly kept at minimum level whilst the six-step involves the researcher's feelings and biased thoughts being regulated as they are insignificant and become irrelevant in the analysis. Finally, the researcher then reserves the final explanation of the meaning of the themes for a later discussion and analysis in the main research report (Anderson 2017; Rapanyane 2020a: 7).

TCA has been complemented by the deployment of Nvivo 8 in the analysis of data which is a computer-facilitated qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). This analytic package of the QSR international is often employed in qualitative and mixed-methods research projects to analyse interview transcripts, video, web content, open-ended survey responses and image files. This tool has been used to analyse interview transcripts. It is used by researchers to code, annotate, visualise and model imported multiple sets of data on a large dataset (Sloan, 2011). Protocol steps to follow include the importation of interview documents into the system. This involves exploration by opening the interviews, coding by nodding the collection of references on related themes and interesting topics, querying by running texts search to find out about more related themes and interesting topics. Subsequently, the process continues to reflect by reviewing all the material collected in one place, visualise by displaying the word tree to counter-check more talk on related themes and lastly provide a memo of the record of the insight and utilize the memo to write the entire research project (Sloan, 2011).

Concurrently, the current study's success was dependent chiefly on the sustained document analysis and thematic review in the event of the impracticality of obtaining enough primary data from the fieldwork through semi-structured interviews, especially with the reluctance of Chinese government officials. Due to this level of secrecy involved in diplomacy, the researcher embarked on analysing written text (especially the Chinese foreign policy documents, popular and academic publications on the theme of the research) and results of the interview to answer the research questions of the study. For Ridley (2008: 151), in the process of interpreting the findings, "it is important to point out how your work either supports or contradicts related previous work in your field". Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2013: 51) have made such observations as follows:

> *Those who have researched before you belong to a community of scholars, each of whom has journeyed into the unknown to bring back an insight, a truth, [and] a point of light. What they have recorded of their journeys and findings will make it easier for you to explore the unknown: to help you also discover an insight, a truth, or a point of light.*

As such, the deep interpretation of both the primary and secondary data was integrated by the identification of variations and consistency from any predominant themes emerging from the overall discourse.

3.6. Quality criteria

The emerging scholarly discourse about the relevance and application of simply exploitative concepts such as validity, objectivity and reliability in undertaking any scientific research enquiry has been contested extensively amongst the qualitative research academics and pure natural scientists since time archaic. Afrocentric scholars who understand that orthodox western science and natural sciences are not adequate and good enough for the provision of a broader understanding and explanation of humanist viewpoints have since joined this contested debate. The argument is relatively elevated by Owusu-Ansah and Mji (2013:1) who explain that “knowledge or science, and its methods of investigation, cannot be divorced from a people’s history, cultural context and worldview”.

It is important to indicate that whilst Asante (2003: 12) has advanced that Afrocentrists study every action, thought, value and behaviour. Whenever, there is a discovery of contraditions in the African history and culture; it is therefore explained broadly by not dismissing whatever available in contradictory to African history, values and culture. Nevertheless, given the historic mission and purpose of the theory of Afrocentricity as highlighted (in chapter 2), particular attention ought to be drawn to the issue of not denying Afrocentric studies with a chance to borrow from non-Afrocentric studies. This can be done whilst at the same time, doing away and/or completely with cancerous systems of thought to the humanistic and moral fabric of the African society. Whilst in recognition of the fact that Africa is not an isolated island and acknowledgement of the spirit of valuing the theory’s diversity; it is fundamentally understood that Africa stands to immensely gain from borrowing from alternative parts of the world including from America, Asia and Europe.

Equally, it is appropriate to emphasise that any research that completely advocates for objectivity and neutrality is mostly inadequate whenever it does little to challenge social oppression. Similarly, Reviere (2001: 714) argues that "objectivity is an impossible standard to hold for researchers; rather, researchers should be judged on the fairness and honesty of their work". Based on the epistemic location of the current researcher; it is flagrantly laid out that he is devoted to the application of an exceptional line of thought to liberate African individuals. This includes liberating the African continent from the colonial vestiges (including underdevelopment, debt-trap diplomacy, poverty, scramble for Africa) to marshal them towards development and progress (Maserumule, 2015).

In qualitative research, there is credibility, which accounts for the findings' trustworthiness in the research project. It is tasked with making sure that the research results are believable. This is dependent on the gathered information's richness (Serfontein, 2006). Secondly, there is dependability, which deals with research findings to check for consistency and if they can be repeated elsewhere. Rapanyane (2020a: 8) believes that "this implies that researchers using the qualitative method explain in detail, the main methods of data collection, analysis and also the interpretation methods used to ensure that the study is auditable to explain the situated conditions and for other researchers to follow on the footsteps of the study". Lastly, there is Conformability, which "indicates the open-mindedness and non-alignment of the information to check the potential compatibility between two independent people about the relevance of the data, meaning and accuracy" (Rapanyane 2020a: 8; Polit & Beck, 2004).

Credibility, dependability and Conformability in this study were ensured by the subjection of the draft study to a rigorous review by the researcher's self-identified Afrocentric scholars. These scholars were sought primarily for verifying and checking if the enquiry including the findings has subsequently conformed to the principles of the qualitative research approach through an Afrocentric prism. Equally, the incorporation of scholars as participants in the present study has had a latent effect to offset the biasness altitude that might have been experienced out of self-attentiveness, circumscribed and/or restricted responses by interviewees who were meant to extensively contribute to the subject of the study. It is equally argued that the triangulation of the qualitative research approach's document analysis and interviews including cross-pollination of the progressive ideas of identified Eastern perspectives (Chinese perspectives in context) with the Afrocentric perspective in this study has amplified the credibility (validity), dependability (reliability) and conformability (objectivity) of the findings of the study (Shenton, 2004).

3.7. Ethical considerations

3.7.1. Permission to conduct the study

The commencement of the study was predated by the formal application and granting of the clearance certificate by the Turfloop Ethics and Research Committee (TREC) at the University of Limpopo (UL). The clearance certificate of the study is therefore attached under Annexure 3.

3.7.2. Academic fraud

All the collected secondary and primary materials indexed and/or cited in the current research report were exclusively used for academic intentions and/or purposes only. An extra effort was actualised to ensure that unless expressly articulated, all the collected secondary and primary materials cited in the PhD thesis were duly acknowledged. All quotations marks adopted were utilised accordingly in line with the unmediated interpretations in a way that the main writers' integrities were duly guaranteed.

3.7.3. Informed consent and voluntary participation

With regard to informed consent, the current researcher ensured that participants were given consent forms to sign before partaking in the interviews. This was done to ensure that the participants could be fully aware and had an understanding of the study, methods applied and expectations. The research participants were notified of their right to either choose to partake or not to partake in the study. This was also extended to their right to withdrawal from the study should any disturbing circumstance arise including unfair language or unfair treatment or when they feel that they cannot proceed due to their engagements.

3.7.4. Confidentiality and anonymity

Where direct quotations have been used; the researcher formulated and utilised pseudonyms as testimonials during the writing-up stage of the entire study. In the context of the use of indirect quotations or pseudonyms; the researcher abstained from utilising characteristics that may, unfortunately, be utilised to implicate or trace any respondent. For those participants who wanted complete identification, such request was honoured with kindness; since the current study was not a classified or secretive one. The foregoing ultimately implies that the researcher had asked all the informants if they desired to have their identities revealed or to remain anonymous when reporting the findings of the study.

3.7.5. No harm to the participants

Whilst the researcher upheld the view and considerable significance of being adherent to the above outlined ethical research principles; it is without a doubt that the study's nature did not pose any threat to the ethics. The foregoing is subject to contestation amidst the likelihood that some of the key informants could have been victimised by some of the research questions since the entire research project is a political study. This notion is dependent on personal and/or an individual stance in respect to other issues; although made sense when the entire political environment is characterised by high levels of censorship and intolerance. This escape clause has been addressed by the cautious selection of key informants that are intellectually and politically mature. The key informants had a good grip on the general foreign policy issues and academic research and were chosen based on their understanding of the study motives, which was not to promote the provocation of any sensitivities but to produce a broader comprehension of the Chinese foreign policy towards Africa. Therefore, this was a substantially acceptable political discourse to analyse foreign policy issues in an academic context in so far as academics and diplomats are concerned.

3.8. Conclusion

The foregoing chapter has discussed the meaning of all concepts adopted for this study including a clear distinction between research methodology and research design. The chapter has also identified data collection, sampling methods, sources of data, analysis tools of the study and advanced various reasons for their choice of use. Critical to this, ethical issues in the study including concerns relating to credibility, dependability and confirmability of the findings have been explained. Subsequently, the decision of the current researcher to triangulate both the written data and interview results shows that the written and spoken word were not linear and there is a long-standing close collaboration between them as argued in Buthelezi (2015).

The next chapter critically explores China's historical international relations with Africa: case studies of Angola and the DRC.

CHAPTER FOUR

China’s historical relations with Angola and DRC

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses China's foreign policy towards Angola and DRC within a historical and broader context of China's Africa policy. The study follows the sequential presentation in terms of China-Angola relations and China DRC relations. A discussion on China-Africa relations is also important as China interrelates with Africa at the continental level. However, this will be preceded by a discussion on how China has interrelated with the two individual countries historically. The focus on China-Africa relations gives an outline of how China rose in Africa and what motivated China’s rise in Africa. This is followed by a general continental observation on China’s Africa policy particularly in the twenty-first century; with a special look into the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). A synoptic highlight of various FOCAC conferences is also done to explore how China engages with Africa and/or individual African nation-states in the twenty-first century.

4.2. China- Angola Relations

A period of six decades has passed since China expanded its fascinating economic and diplomatic ties with the African continent, especially with Angola. This includes wading through different dynamics of the Cold War to the colonial and post-colonial liberation scuffles, stretching to the point of possessing and even enlarging both nation-states' economic diplomacy (Aidoo, 2013). Both China and Angola have strengthened their relations from the early 1950s when the anti-colonial liberation struggles and/or anti-colonial movements were reinforced where China had strongly endorsed Africa and Angola in particular in opposition to colonialism. Angola has been at the receiving end of China’s restored support for the African continent all through the years post-1950 as it waged a protracted liberation struggle against the Portuguese predomination from 1961 (Marcus & Alves, 2012). There is no gainsaying that Angola was involved in liberation struggles against the colonial administration instigated by the Portuguese (Aidoo 2013), with enough support from alternative major powers where China supported the Angolan liberation movements like the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA), Union for the Total Independence of Angola

(UNITA), and People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) with arms and other resources to counter colonialism in Africa (Khodadadzadeh, 2017).

China did support the FNLA even when it faced its internal cultural revolution (1966-1969) ambivalent of the Cold War. Immediately after receiving military training in China, Jonas Savimbi publicly endorsed "Maoism"[2] which categorically meant full support to Mao Zedong (Founder and Former Chairman of the Chinese Community Party) and Zhou Enlai (Former Chinese premier) (Campos & Vines 2008: 02; Chi-Yu 1990). In certainty, the Angolan liberation movements were supported by different global major powers. This made Chinese support to Angola to pause because of the various ideological conflicts that existed by then (Wekesa 2021, interview). Although still supported by UNITA led by Savimbi who used different military, weaponry, arms training and other necessary resources (Aidoo, 2013), the MPLA had considerable support from the Cubans and Russians; and Angola was declared independent in the year 1975 from the Portuguese.

Despite its victory to power, MPLA did not receive an immediate endorsement and recognition from China as the power politics played a significant role between Russia and China, of which the former supported MPLA. It is important to indicate that China did come to the diplomatic table in the year 1983 and signed a comprehensive trade and economic commission with Angola in the year 1988 (Campos & Vines 2008). Regrettably, more like alternative post-independent African nation-states, Angola had suffered a brutal civil war that lasted for 27 years (1975-2002) between its liberation movements because of the various convoluted and/or impenetrable socio-economic issues (*SAHO* 2015: online). The long-lasting civil war ceased in the year 2002 when both MPLA and UNITA concluded a peaceful settlement. This is the very same year that marked a brand-new shift towards means of peace, security and defence of Angola to economic win-win with international major powers like China who intended to trade with Angola on oil for different infrastructural loans (Corkin, 2008).

[2] Maoism is a form of communism developed by Mao Tse Tung. It is a doctrine to capture State power through a combination of armed insurgency, mass mobilization and strategic alliances

This was observed when China credited Angola with an estimated US$2 billion-dollar oil-backed loan for Angola's development of infrastructure that was dilapidated during the period of the civil war (Khodadadzadeh, 2017). The year 2004 also marked a brand new period of reconstructive plans to enhance brand-new cooperation that was to focus centrally on different implementation of social, cultural, political, diplomatic and economic deals that would generally drive China-Angola relations into the future. Equally, Angola had transmuted into China's treasured African country when it comes to the trade of oil for China's economic feed (Khodadadzadeh, 2017). Angola is certainly an African petro state and it remains the African second-biggest exporter of oil through its Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) membership with a Growth Domestic Product (GDP) that is oil-sector led (Le-Pere, 2006). Angola is not only oil-rich but has infinite natural resources that include phosphate, iron and diamonds even though most of the people remain poor due to corruption, demolished infrastructure, and gross mismanagement including the strained economy (Al Jazeera, 2012).

It is within this context that the Former Angolan President Dos Santos once argued that "China needs natural resources and Angola wants development" (Hanson, 2008). Scholars and practioners in international relations need to be aware that China-Angola relations became more appealing and multifaceted post-2002 when both countries started to prioritise different economic components such as loans, trade, ventures, and economic deals including various strategic mechanisms to expand their relations (Grion, 2006). This included the various deployment of Chinese State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to the African country to bid for different Angolan oil and construction deals to predominate the significant resource concessions handed out by Angola (Atlamazoglou, 2016). Consequently, in 2008, China then became Angola's largest trading partner and the third-biggest oil exporter to China in the year 2016 (Khodadadzadeh, 2017).

China's presence in Angola is a reflection of an interesting case of China's oil-driven international engagement with the oil-rich African nation-states. This has resulted in a complex interplay of challenges and benefits that might occur and should be taken into consideration. It is this study's well-considered view that the presence of China in Angola is one of the modest ways parallel to that of the Western oil drilling companies found historically and contemporarily in the continent. Undoubtedly, the share of the stake percentage of the loans of China for oil deals with Angola showcases an increasing reach and point of innumerable unembodied implications (Corkin, 2011). This is due to African nation-states slowly starting to opt for these alternative attractive loans than those of the presumed west international financial institutions that can have democracy advancement strings attached to them. It is also this study's submission that the global economic policy of China is predominantly resource-driven and goal-orientated; and that being so, its non-interference policy can then oppose and/or dispute Western nation-states' hopes of domestic encroachment in Angola (Zhao, 2011).

A significant question that ought to be attended to relates to the moral responsibility issue partly related to the equation of whether oil deals are important business transactions or not (one trade to another). The second one relates to the type of balance that is gratified amongst the economic development objectives and economic growth of Angola. There is little doubt that the Angolan GDP increase is required for the increase of its standard of living for its general population but the substitute oil-rich countries such as Saudi Arabia and Oman are under-going "windfall gains from oil and will need time for adjustment" (Zhao, 2011: 6). Thomas L Friedman's "*First Law of Petropolitics*" reminds us of the unenthusiastic interrelations between crude oil and the face of freedom (Friedman, 2006). As such, China is supplying the government in Luanda (Angola's capital and administrative hub of government) with the much needed infrastructural loans at the cost of sensible transparency and eradication of corruption often required for IMF help. Quoted directly, Ian Taylor (well-known IR scholar) strongly comprehend that Angolan government elites are "deeply appreciative of China's non-interference stance" (Zhao, 2011: 6).

In turn, China's non-interference stance makes the flow of condition-free, low-interest and infrastructure friendly Chinese loans to remain appealing to the government of Angola. Although in the year 2011, Angola's largest challenge was to diversify its economy beyond oil, having China basing its relations with Angola on oil is still a sustained important feature for the coming decades. It is also significant to avoid over-emphasising that the presence of China in Angola is conclusively on oil as it is also based on alternative mineral resources as Chinese National Oil Companies (NOC) activities are evident in Angola (Whitehouse, 2020). The neo-colonial viewpoints and/or principal agents within the bilateral relations of both China and Angola have overlooked the two-way process. The Angolan government's policy is that their relations with China within its global economic cooperation and the long-term development agenda is based on oil exploration. Also, China has always sought to re-look into larger stakes in the oil sector of Angola including that both countries are currently favouring the infrastructure for oil *quid-quo*[3] disposition contemporarily (Corkin, 2008).

4.3. China- DRC relations

Under the 'Great Helmsman' Mao Zedong, in the early 1950s, China had given vocal support for then Belgian Congo's movement for independence. This was particularly due to its very own communist revolution approach to blockade the advancement of Moscow's version and even went further to cultivate ties with the independence activists of Congo. Chinese officials first met the independence activists led by Patrice Lumumba in Ghana's Accra at the first all-African people's congress in the year 1958 (Larkin 1971). However, Lumumba seemed less appealed by China and instead developed ties with the Soviet Union at the horror of the USA government. After twelve weeks in office, the legally elected Prime Minister Lumumba was overthrown by Joseph Kasa-Vubu in September 1960. However, this move had attracted an international castigation and a local contestation as it was illegal. Antoine Gizenga who deputised Lumumba in due course developed a rival administration in Stanleyville (hereafter referred to as Kisangani) (Bavier, 2007). The rival administration established diplomatic relations with China and in a letter dated 12 September 1960, China offered the rival administration an estimated GBP2 1 million (although it is not clearly articulated as to whom the money was disbursed to and/or for and waited for some years until officiating an embassy in the city (Larkin 1971).

The opening of the embassy in Stanleyville took place after the murder of Lumumba in the year 1961 who was then replaced by the Chinese-friendly Syrille Adoula but this

[3] This simply means trade-off

embassy was short-lived (Mthembu-Salter, 2012). This was because of the reconciliation measures agreed upon by Gizenga and Adoula's governments in Leopoldville (hereafter referred to as Kinshasa) which finally shut down the doors of the Stanleyville administration in the mid-1961. China then reinforced diplomatic cooperation with the government in Leopoldville in December 1961 although Gizenga and Adoula's accord proved short-lived as Gizenga was untimely arrested in early 1962 (Mthembu-Salter, 2012). Under normal circumstances, China was not impressed by Gizenga's revolutionary potential and had written a report, presented by the Chinese minister in the year 1961 elucidating that:

> *The national liberation movement of the Congo is mainly led by capitalist nationalist elements. Among them, wavering and compromise prevail and so they cannot undertake correct and firm leadership (Mthembu-Salter, 2012: 6).*

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) had approved a military mediation in the Congo in February of the year 1961 to bring about an end to a declared secession that was taking place in both the Kasai and Katanga provinces. The 'Operation Grand Slam' that followed in the years 1962 and 1963 through the assistance of the UN forces had assisted in seizing control of (Jadotville) now called Likasi and Elisabethville (now Lubumbashi) from the secessionists (Mthembu-Salter, 2012). Pierre Mulele (Former Stanleyville government Ambassador in Cairo) from Bandundu formerly known as Kwilu had spent the year 1961 in Cairo but later moved to China to be trained for 'revolutionary guerrilla warfare'. Mulele later returned to the Congo in the year 1963 and the following year instigated a Maoist rebellion in Kwilu that persisted for 5 years. In the middle of the rebellion, Joseph Mobutu Sese Seko took control of the country's presidency and directed all his energy towards the disbandment of Mulele's rebellious forces and an intersperse of alternative rebel insurgencies elsewhere in the country (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002).

The pressured Mulele was then forced to flee to Brazzaville in the year 1968 wherein he was later smooth-talked back to the Congo with a commitment of amnesty by Mobutu who then had Mulele tortured publicly to death (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002). The death of Mulele led to China's support being withdrawn, particularly from supporting the revolution in the Congo as Mobutu formerly hoped it would. This might have been since Mobutu's ascension to power was heavily backed by the USA government as they had close ties. Predictably, given its dynamic support for Mulele and other Maoist rebellions against Mobutu's rule, China and Mobutu became combative to each other even though less vigorously than he was to the Soviet Union (Curtis, 2008). In the year 1973, Mobutu visited China including North Korea. He then surprisingly came back with a Chinese financial commitment of $100 million in technical aid, valuable ideas for brand new, leftist policy plans and treasured tips on how to best generate a personality cult (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002).

Instantly after his return, the ruling *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution*[4] political bureau pronounced on their adoption of the Mao-style, ten-point 'radicalisation' programme in which the scourge number one was recognised with 'liberty being confused with the license'. The bureau then proposed a solution and/or remedy as 'discipline, fidelity to Mobutu, and the designation of places which marked the life of the president as sites of pilgrimage'. In the year 1975, Mobutu who until then had called himself 'the Helmsman' declared that all food shortages country-wide were going to be defeated with agricultural brigades (Curtis, 2008). He further committed to liquidating unemployment and also abolishing inflation through state-decreed price reductions that were a 'malady inherent in the capitalist system'. This eventuality promised a rash of disastrous nationalisation plans in the country. Mobutu then also committed to 'major economic initiatives' that sought to be 'the exclusive domain of the State' (Young & Tuner 1985). Concurrently, the post-Salazar Portuguese dictatorship diminished and paved a resolute way forward to independence in Africa and a total subsequent end to civil war in both Angola and Mozambique which were Portugal's main African colonies. In Angola, Mobutu was more friendly to the armed liberation group of *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* (FNLA)[5] and more unfriendly to the *Libertação de Angola* (MPLA)[6] which enjoyed the Soviet Union's support (Young & Tuner 1985).

[4] This simply means Popular Movement of the Revolution.
[5] This simply means the National Liberation Front of Angola
[6] This simply means People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola

The Chinese had endorsed Mobutu's support of the FNLA and also added their support for the União Nacional para an Independência Total de Angola (UNITA)[7] which was considered a possible way to do away with the Soviet Union's ambitions in the African continent (Young & Tiner 1985; Langa 2021, interview). Soon, the Chinese had started to provide FNLA with various weaponry through Zaire (Congo renamed Zaire later by Mobutu) to different FNLA camps that were situated in Zaire whilst both the Soviet Union and Cuba were ramping up MPLA with military supplies. Whilst these initiatives by both Zaire and China seemed to improve their relations, it unfortunately did less to make FNLA defeat MPLA in Angola (Mthembu-Salter, 2012). One could argue that MPLA had indeed received enough support to proclaim the independence of Angola by capturing Luanda in the year 1975. A decisive defeat on the FNLA was recorded officially in February of the year 1976. UNITA on the other side was more concerned with controlling the large territories of the diamond-rich Angola which bordered Zaire. These territories are what made UNITA fight until the death of its leader Jonas Savimbi in the year 2002. At the time of the assassination of Savimbi, China was now in political ties with MPLA starting from the 1980s having broken ties with UNITA, which enjoyed ties with Mobutu through the trading of diamonds before he lost power in the year 1996 (Mthembu-Salter, 2012; Langa, 2021, interview).

In the year 1996, a rebel group by the name of the Alliance of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) overran Zaire and swiftly moved through the country crushing the little resistance encountered from the armed forces of Zaire. AFDL managed to enter Kinshasa in May 1997 with Laurent Kabila who was elected to represent it publicly, declaring himself the president of Zaire and immediately renaming the country 'Democratic Republic of Congo'. Mobutu initially fled the capital to Morocco where he died four months later (Mthembu-Salter, 2012). Kabila, the new President was primitively a 'Lumumbist'. The latter's rebel commandership career had started when he was deployed to Burundi in 1964 to make contact with officials of China to enlist their endorsement of the rebellion in Eastern Kivu province (Stearns 2011), which was finally launched with the support of China.

[7] This simply means The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

The rebellion inconclusively rumbled for years, whilst degenerating at times into banditry that was unprincipled (such as when the forces led by Kabila kidnapped several foreign students from Jane Goodall's Chimpanzee research camp, in Gombe of Western Tanzania andsought $500,000 in ransom) (Stearns 2011). Kabila who had travelled to and even stayed in China for months in the late 1970s had revived the various Chinese links once he was installed as the President of the DRC. From the beginning, his main concern related to military help and China obliged by helping where possible, understandably supplying large quantities of weapons during the later 1990s to Kabila's government (Shinn, 2008a).

Several military officers of Kabila indeed went to China for military training during the same period including his very own son Joseph Kabila. During this period, Kabila DRC's relations with former western allies had degenerated, with spattering donors willing to assist on Kabila's terms. It is in this context that Kabila mostly depended on China for military and political ties. One of the initial fruits of his efforts was the development of the joint business amongst the Chinese State-Owned Telecommunications Company called Zhongxing Telecommunication Equipment Corporation (ZTE) with the DRC government in the year 2000 (Shinn 2008a). ZTE then took over 51% of the brand-new mobile phone operating company called the Congo Chine Télécoms (CCT). Hardly after Kabila had ordered the withdrawal of all the Rwandan troops out of the DRC in 1998, there was a Congolese Rally for Democracy which was a Rwanda-backed rebel movement that began to challenge his government (Beswick, 2012).

This conflict had dragged swiftly into most of the neighbours of DRC including Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe which supported Kabila far different to Uganda which opposed him. After spending a year in fighting, a ceasefire was signed in Zambia's Lusaka (The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement) between the Presidents of the five nation-states of Angola, Zimbabwe, DRC, Rwanda and Uganda. Later in the year 1999, the UN authorised a military operation in DRC to oversee the enforcement of the fragile ceasefire agreement (Mthembu-Salter, 2010). The United Nations Organisation Mission in the Demoratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) had received troops from China for the missions in 2001 and 2008 whereby a 234 Chinese military personnel were deployed to the DRC out of 1487 needed by the UN missions globally (Shinn, 2008b).

By the year 2001, Kabila was assassinated by one of his very own bodyguards and was briskly replaced by his son, Joseph Kabila. The assassination transmuting into leadership change immediately prompted an impetus to the DRC's faltering process of peace (Mthembu-Salter, 2010).

This motivated both Paul Kagame (Rwandan President) and Joseph Kabila to sign a peace agreement in July 2002 in Pretoria, South Africa which was initiated by Thabo Mbeki (Former South African President). After this move, most of the foreign troops took off from the DRC and in the year 2002, a landmark political ceasefire accord was signed between Joseph Kabila and the armed groups' leaders who had initially castigated his father's presidency and those of the political parties which did not have private armies. This turn of events led to a brand-new government of national unity led by Kabila who was formally sworn in July 2003 (Mthembu-Salter, 2010). The continuation of the Chinese sale of military equipment to the new DRC government was the order of the day until around 2008. Also, Chinese instructors have been placed at the Kamin base in the Maniema province to train the Congolese military and each year, some Congolese military officers are sent to China to receive training (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019b).

The visit of Charles Mwando Nsimba (DRC Minister of Defence) to China in October 2009 for various government-level talks with the counter-part Liang Quanglie, prompted for an official Chinese proclamation indicating that both governments were now ready for their relations to be raised from armed forces to a 'higher level' (Economist Intelligence Unit 2009). This is because Kabila had been so interested in developing relations with China just like his father and/or predecessor towards fostering economic links. Passionate about increasing the Chinese economic reach in the DRC, Beijing in September 2008 signed a Multibillion dollar infrastructure for resources between a Congolese State Owned Company called La Générale des Carrières et des Mines (Gécamines)[8] and the two Chinese State Construction companies. The money to finance this deal was to come from the Chinese State-Owned- Export-Import (Exim) Bank) (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019b).

[8] Congolese commodity trading and mining company headquartered in Lubumbashi, in the Katanga region of the Democratic Republic of Congo

Equally, the Chinese government had tried several efforts to utilise its permanent seat at the UNSC for the benefit of the DRC. This strategy has produced a total irritation of the British, USA and French governments. A DRC UN candidature for the 'Group of Experts' was Chinese vetoed in the UNSC at the request of the DRC government, in favour of the candidate which was formerly aligned to the US-based lobby group, Human Rights Watch (HRW) (Mthembu-Salter, 2012). The government in China equally declared that should the DRC government give the UN Stabilisation Mission a clear decline to vacate DRC, it would endorse the call.

China had historically perpetuated cordial and close diplomatic ties with the DRC even before the independence of the African country. During the African historical struggle for independence, China had bestowed itself as a partisan of the world's exploited and oppressed (Kabemba, 2016). It is in this context that China believes it is not an opportunist and a newcomer in the DRC. In the year 1965, the government of China led by the Chinese Communist Party had pronounced to the Congolese people that: "They were not alone in their just struggle against capitalism. All the Chinese people are with you. All the people opposed to imperialism are with you…. American imperialism will concur" (Anshan, 2007: 71).

China was a dedicated and/or dependable supporter of most of the liberation movements in Africa (Wekesa 2021, interview). The Asian giant had used radio propaganda, programs, various books and arms supplies in the promotion of its support to the African revolution against colonial rule (De-Gruben 1962). China had laid down various intensive training of guerrilla warfare, the act of sabotage and political subversions to many of the young anti-colonial African fighters. In his study, Kabemba (2016) says that China had greatly assisted in the Simba rebellion of July 1963 that was led mainly by Pierre Mulele. China also endorsed Laurent Kabila when he formulated what we understand to be a secessionist Marxism organisation of the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) in the year 1967. In its endorsement of the various rebellion movements in Africa, China also socially supported the government of Mobutu in the post-colonial era. In between the years 1970 to 1990, China is understood to have aided the government in Congo with various small investments that were initially linked to science, education, health, culture and social services (Richer, 2008).

Within the context of the education sector, books were provided in various schools and this was also accompanied by financial aid to the tune of $3 million. The Bumba region of Equateur Province also benefited in terms of agriculture on rice investment (Kabemba, 2016). Utilising the infrastructure, China had constructed various symbolic buildings including the national football stadium and a parliament for the DRC. The interrelations started slackening in the early 1990s between China and DRC as the latter was beginning to be engulfed in prolonged political instability and a decline of the State in Congo. The renewal of the interrelations between the two countries regained momentum when Laurent Kabila assumed office in the year 1997 (Simon & Smith, 2008).

In consideration of the resuming instability in the Congo, China had started to follow a slow penetration approach to rely on various Chinese individual traders to directly buy cobalt and copper from the artisanal miners in the mineral-rich provinces of Congo such as the Katanga Province. This commodity boom had carried along with a great Chinese influx into the Katanga province in the early 2000s. By the year 2011, the province had now recorded over 60% of the 75% copper processing plans, which were mostly co and/or directly owned by Chinese nationals (Simon & Smith, 2008). In the year 2013, both countries concluded a technical and economic cooperation agreement that amounted to $9 million which was accorded as a donation to the DRC (Kabemba 2016).

Most importantly, the relations between China and DRC are characterized by what we call the Sicomines deal in the 21st century (Kabemba 2016). This is because of the more proactive step undertaken by China after DRC’s triumphant in the 2006 general elections by negotiating the 2008 massive resources-for-infrastructure deal worth $6 billion (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019b). Based on this deal, China was poised to invest $3 billion in mining and $3 billion in infrastructure construction-development of railways, roads, schools, mines, hospitals and dams. This is one of the biggest trade deals of the last two centuries globally that was an emblematic step in the relations between China and DRC. One may argue that China’s decision to launch this deal was motivated by the desire to access the huge high grade DRC copper and cobalt reserves for its economic feed. It is within this context that both Rapanyane and Shai (2019) noted that China is expected to get 10 million copper tonnes including 600 000 cobalt tonnes. In this way, the other $3 billion that is to be invested in the infrastructure would be reimbursed by mineral benefits. The year 2008 witnessed the negotiations of the Sicomines, signed in the year 2014, and the infrastructure total expenditure stood at $459.764 million. However,, the total infrastructure expenditure was later earmarked around $750 million from the total of $3 billion (Ntwambe and Mthembu-Salter 2012).

4.4. China-Africa relations

4.4.1. Beijing's rise in Africa

The Afro-Chinese relations simply means the historical, economic, military, social, cultural and political connection between China and Africa. In the contemporary period, the diplomatic and/or official relations between China and Africa became more prevalent in the late 1950s as a result of the Bandung Conference (April 1955) (Maphaka 2021, Interview). During the period of the Cold War, until the early 2000s, China and selected African countries cooperated in various areas of shared interest ranging from decolonisation, economic development and peace (Rapanyane, 2020a).

In November 2006, the capital city of China hosted various African delegates from 40 African States who gathered for a 3-day summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). As these leaders from Africa strode up the Great Hall of the People's red carpet to shake hands with Hu Jintao (Former Chinese President), the outside streets were filled with various salutation billboards some of which were written: "Amazing Africa" (Perlez, 2012). The opening speech of Hu brought about applause from African leaders as he outlined a new plan for the development of strategic partnership and the strengthening of the economic collaboration with Africa. For the next three years from 2006, Hu and his government had pledged to double aid for Africa, speed up concessional finance for infrastructure and trade to permit duty-free entry for various African exports (The New Humanitarian, 2006). China also made sure that it sets up a fund for African investment, construct hundreds of rural schools and thirty hospitals and promote the establishment of trade and economic cooperation zones across the African continent (Rapanyane, 2020a).

This Beijing summit had placed more attention on the development of the parts of Africa where attention has not been placed before dispiriting headlines. This had compelled the western countries to now start focusing on the Chinese aid in Africa that was rising sharply for economic engagement. The Asian giant was indeed on track to transmute into the largest trading partner of Africa replacing Britain and the USA in 2010 (Le Pere, 2008). By the latter period, almost 900 Chinese MNCs had already invested in Africa in various sectors ranging from farms, oil exploration, factories, retail shops and many more (Rapanyane, 2020a). The Chinese Export-Import Bank (Eximbank) was the leading financing institution in most of the investments.

Even though the western countries had only regained consciousness of China’s infiltration of Africa after the Beijing Summit of 2006, this was too late as China was already into Africa much of a decade long. In this period Beijing constructed forty-five years of aid plan that China committed from the start would be premised upon mutual benefit. China had almost given aid to all African nation-states except Eswatini (previously known as Swaziland) which is still in recognition of Taiwan (Le Pere, 2008). The Chinese official aid is still very much valued as a state secret and/or sensitive area. The combination of this practice fuelled western states to raise and intensify concerns both in Africa and elsewhere, particularly where China is involved. But this was not be a subject of concern as Western states are not immune to this type of practice (Brautigam, 2009). The western attention has delved much into the Chinese multibillion-dollar, resource-backed loans that were offered to African nation-states for infrastructural development, especially those which are recovering from violent conflict like the DRC and Angola (Adebajo, 2008). Other Western states have gone further to condemn China’s international policy of engagement with all African nation-states including those run by dictators although it promised to not interfere in their internal affairs. These include Sudan and Zimbabwe (Brautigam, 2009).

The unfolding debates in various Western nation-states' conference rooms, media outlets and blogs about China in Africa had been mainly led by this brand new aid program that formulated an alarm mix and anticipation of neo-colonialism. It has been an obvious case that various Western bloggers, debaters and journalists might have drawn their justifications and conclusions with scant data (Adebajo, 2008). Whilst this was the case, the Chinese press was painting a consistent rosy picture of mutual and friendship benefit. This is what made African countries' leaders uniformly positive in respect of benefits embraced from China (le Pere, 2008). African journalists including those from the Western nation-states were sceptical. One of the fastest-growing myths is the issue of China's aid provision only targeting mineral rich African nation-states with questionable governance records. Also, China has reportedly been giving African nation-states aid which is three times more than aid provided by Western countries combined. As a predicted rogue donor, with operations outside governance and normal rules, Chinese aid then became slowly toxic. Accordingly, the rogue tendencies and/or practices have "stifled real progress while hurting ordinary citizens" (Freschi, 2010: online).

This is because Chinese MNCs tend to import their Chinese workers for various projects in Africa, particularly the prison labour force. China was also poised to push for the manipulation of debt relief for political leverage. Throughout all the hasty conclusions and misinformation, it became very clear that no one had fully satisfied the following objectives: identification of key drivers of China's foreign policy towards selected African nation-states; examination of Chinese companies' operations in both Angola and DRC's mining and manufacturing sectors; explanation of China's adherence and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility in both Angola and DRC; critical analysis of the major steps undertaken by China when both Angola and DRC default on Chinese loan reimbursement and consequently, a broader comparison and contrast of China's foreign policy towards Angola and the DRC.

4.4.2. Reasons for Beijing's Africa intervention: Poverty reduction and promotion of prosperity

There is no gainsaying that Africa is negatively affected by the effects of underdevelopment, and this can be spotted across the entire continent at night. For example, in South Africa, a light sprawl would mark Johannesburg whilst a small glow would mark Cape Town. Between the South African border and the continental curve around the Bay of Benin, it iswould be extremely black, broken only by the unruly spread of Lagos. The African continent is truly in the dark at night and no one would wonder why it is often referred to as the “Dark continent”.[9] However, the world’s majority of the poor do not reside in Africa but belong in South Asia. But this dubious distinction does not eliminate the fact that Africa is home to the desperately poor who have access to primary schools, sanitation, clean water, and various opportunities although very scarce. This composite is understood as a large share of the “bottom billion”. The poverty in Africa and its main causes are still debated although very complex. In the past three decades, Africa was united in revealing the failures of the colonial masters and blaming their exploitation for the continent’s poor progress (Brautigam, 2009).

There is a considerable political and economic success of the former British colonies like Botswana, South Africa and Mauritius with relative developmental democracies as like those of the former Japanese colonies (Korea and Taiwan). This made sure that colonialisation no longer had the adequate causal interpretation. In the previous 30-50 years, most of the African nation-states have been victims of the combined debt, export low prices, liberalisation programs and excruciating measures often called the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) which were imposed by global financial institutions in the interchange for access to different new loan plans (Cheru & Obi, 2010). Even though growth rates have turned up well in some African nation-states, the start of the new millennium had ensured that poverty does fall below the 2008 economic crisis and tampered with the progress of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets by the year 2015. The global innovations and/or ideas such as the “Green revolution” that capacitated rural Asia to enhance their production of food surpluses have not been successfully implemented in the African continent, and most of the governments in Africa have also not given credible and clear endorsement for job-creating investment in Africa. Amongst the principal measures of the quality of governance in Africa which are lagging behind are accountability, transparency, and rule of law (Lin, 1989). Concurrently, it was only in the last three decades that China abandoned the Mao Zedong’s socialist economy to embark on a gradual economic

[9] This phrase is often used to describe Africa

transformation with special economic results. This began with reforms in agriculture that were first tested in the Sichuan province of China.

The policymakers in China have also unleashed various market incentives to only be labelled later as a “capitalist running dog”. The coming alive of the market economy advanced by Deng Xiaoping’s Open door policy had initially invited foreign skills, investment and brand-new technologies and motivated the sending of Chinese students abroad to seek the latest thinking strategies at cutting-edge universities in the Western countries (Chih-Yu, 1990). The entrepreneurs in China started to flourish across a combination of market and plan mix, through the state sector which gradually formulated its leaders in business, motivating them to develop global brand names and also look for profits abroad (Chih-Yu, 1990). China has the second-biggest economy worldwide and remains the global centre of workshops, for garments, toys, and other first stages of export manufacturing including IPod, digital medical devices, and laptop computers. Between the years 1981-2001, China significantly reduced poverty from 53% to now 8% (Jianjun & Qiang, 1997).

The ideal of China presented as a prosperity model has caught the imagination of various African scholars as it also enters the African markets and industrial juggernaut (Ampiah & Naidu, 2008; Jacques, 2009). Alternatively, we have observed anticipation and excitement about the Chinese aid and state-sponsored economic development in various African nation-states; even though some argue that it may indirectly but negatively affect these nation-states (Chih-Yu, 1990). Most of the African scholars have taken a stance that China is not having a colonial hangover and that whatever it is doing in Africa is most credible and that Africans do learn from China almost every day (Brautigam, 2009:7-10).

4.4.3 The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation

The above-explained new and concrete foreign policy stance of China towards Africa has continued through the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in the year 2000 in Beijing as the contemporary driver of China-Africa relations. It works as an integrated and multilateral platform for Chinese and African policy makers to intensify the friendly cooperation and relationship that already exist between China and Africa. This is done to deal with various challenges of globalisation, promote common objectives and development in various fields of economic development, diplomacy, prosperity and security. The first meeting of the FOCAC that took place in the year 2000 managed to gather together 800 officials from China and those from 44 African nation-states and 17 important international and regional organisations including various business representatives from interested Multinational Corporations (MNCs) (Anshan & April, 2013:1). The main agenda of action debated in this multilateral forum include the promotion of trade, investment, joining business ventures and increasing cooperation in various areas of interest: poverty reduction, medical care, infrastructure, food/agriculture, human resources development, security, banking, capacity building, exploitation of different natural resources and cultural exchange (Anshan & April, 2013:1). The Chinese government offered a series of inducements to speed up its entrance into resource-producing African regions throughout the continent. These inducements included:

> *Participation in peace-keeping operations in places such as Liberia, DRC and Sudan - Giving cheap loans linked to infrastructure development - Targeted debt relief - Political visits for African leaders to Beijing - Support for Africa in global forums such as the UN, WTO, IMF and The World Bank - Competitive military deals - Political "non-interference in the internal policies of African countries - The promotion of south-south linkages - The establishment of parallel funding agencies to institutions such as the IMF and World Bank (Executive Research Associates, 2009:12)*

Even though the forum is understood as a collaboration amongst China and African States, its activities are much controlled and driven by the government in Beijing. This is to argue that the forum's ambition is to preserve China's natural and economic interests in Africa (Khodadadzadeh, 2017). Amongst the many regional groupings global-wide, including Africa-EU partnership, Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and European Economic Community (EEC); FOCAC has emerged effective and dominant in respect to Africa's international relations or any other relevant international groupings. This is particularly led by the FOCAC's much output-based agenda containing detailed and specific goals that are premised upon the resources-for-infrastructure (Le Pere, 2008). The principal agenda is analysed or reviewed every four years to examine the impacts. FOCAC is equally an important tool deployed in terms of Chinese influence in the African continent (Anshan & April, 2013:3).

4.4.3.1 FOCAC Conferences: Asymmetric relations

Based on the customary interpretations, FOCAC meetings advance the chances for new business undertakings and realms of collaborations to be communicated over four years (Qiang, 2007). Within this collaboration, attention is paid to debt relief, industrialisation, market access expansion, investment promotion, infrastructure development and poverty eradication. In addition, it also focuses on health cooperation, science and technology cooperation, people to people cultural exchanges, educational and agricultural cooperation (Business Report 2015). Drawing from the above discussion, this study deemed it necessary to highlight that China and Africa have engaged in win-win cooperation although the unequal power relationship that exists between the Asian giant and African nation-states has yielded what is called an asymmetrical collaboration (Rapanyane & Shai, 2020). That is why even in the FOCAC conventions, China makes a lot of commitments to African nation-states. The fundamental argument raised here shows well that in all the FOCAC conferences, China has been at the forefront, pledging its allegiance in assisting most of the poor African nation-states. Even though this could have meant that China plays a more prominant role in policy formulation and execution due to the unequal power relations that exist between it and its partners in Africa (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019a).

FOCAC's first conference took place in Beijing in 2000. At this conference, it was resolved that all-inclusive participants of all the conferences will be the African Union (AU), China and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (Mwanawina, 2008). The first convention issued out the "Beijing Declaration of FOCAC; Guideline of China-Africa Cooperation in Economic and Social Development" which highlighted the recommendations on Economic and Social Development of China-Africa collaboration. This convention also highlighted that special attention should be redirected towards the formation of a just and fair brand-new global order. This was espoused to strengthen collaboration between China and Africa on social and economic advancement (Enuka, 2011: 212). At this sitting, China made several commitments to Africa. Amongst these was to assist Africa by awarding it with an imports preferential treatment. Others included encouraging Chinese businesses to establish their business undertakings in Africa by providing them with special funds for their procurements (Hannane, 2012).

Flowing from the above, it can be observed that the first sitting resulted in China making some of the significant commitments to Africa. This should be interpreted within the lens that China was the fastest growing economy in the world then, and it was engaging with the least developed and developing economies (Le Pere, 2008). The first sitting also discussed the establishment of the China-Africa Products Exhibition Centre and the China-Africa Business Council (CABC) which served to advance bilateral trade-offs. Another proposed establishment was the African Development Bank (AfDB) together with the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank (ES-TDB). The interesting thing about the first meeting was its resolution which transmuted into the 'exploitation and effective utilisation of natural resources on the African continent', crucial to the economic growth of China (Gongyuan, 2010: online).

Therefore, this meant that despite all the commitments that China had put on the table, a brand new argument can also arise that China was making commitments to access Africa's mineral resources for the effective economic blossoming of the Asian tiger. In the light of this, Edinger and Naidu (2006: 315-316) still see China as benefitting more since it was largely involved in Africa's resource sector because of her huge demand for raw materials like oil which was the motivator behind all of these commitments. Both Edinger and Naidu (2006) argue that Africa provided China with one-third of its crude oil needs before it became the second biggest global economy. This is the result of Africa having to grant Chinese companies with rights to explore oil fields in nation-states like Libya, Chad, Angola, Nigeria, Sudan and Mauritania (Edinger & Naidu, 2006). In the DRC, there was Sicomines by 2008 (the largest Chinese trade deal in Africa) showing that China had already made significant steps into the African continent (Kabemba, 2016). As such, Africa serves as a good strategic win-win partner in its engagement with China. For example, the Sicomines deal is for China's acquisition of Africa's mineral resources in exchange for infrastructural development (Kabemba, 2016).

FOCAC's second convention took place in Ethiopia's Addis Ababa in December 2003 with the ultimate issuance of the FOCAC-Addis Ababa Action Plan (2004-06). The second convention sat mainly to review the successes of the two implemented documents of the first convention. This convention also sat to explore brand-new propositions and expedients to strengthen collaboration in significant areas such as "human resources development, agriculture, infrastructure construction, investment and trade" (Enuka 2017: 212). At this convention, China made another commitment to bid for tariff exemption to Africa's products transported to China. This was to be done by enhancing bilateral economic collaboration, premised upon a push for the preferential market entrance to Africa (Cisse, 2012).

It is equally important to highlight that Africa's markets that are open to big powers like China include Karatina open-air market in Kenya's Nairobi, Merkato open-air market of Ethiopia, Kejetia open-air market of the Ashanti Kingdom in Ghana, Kahn el Khalili as a shopper's paradise of Egypt, Onitsha international Marine Market priding itself as the biggest market in West Africa (Babatunde, 2017) and others which include Johannesburg Stock Market/ Exchange [10] (JSE) which is open to Chinese goods and services. There were other accords to improve on FOCAC, especially in the tourism cooperation, to denominate African nation-states for China's tourist groupings to travel to Africa. Nation-states beneficiaries included Zambia, Seychelles, Zimbabwe, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Mauritius. The same countries were also awarded the Chinese Approved Destination Status (ADS) (Cisse, 2012).

The third FOCAC ministerial convention took place in November 2006 in Beijing with the Beijing summit of FOCAC and FOCAC-Beijing Action Plan (2007-09) adopted as the discussant papers. This convention was held to lessen the heavy debts on African nation-states and aid Africa with huge investment, but the content or discussions

[10] JSE Limited is the largest stock exchange in Africa. It is located in Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa, after it moved from downtown Johannesburg in 2000

otherwise show a different picture (News Blaze Digital Team 2018). Despite attempts to reduce heavy debts, China also committed to furnishing Africa with $2 billion preferential buyer's credits and $3 billion of preferential loans. This was configured through the China Africa Development Fund (CADF) to finance the "$5 billion" dollar investment in Africa. Realistically, Africa did have its financial institutions to draw financial support from. Most importantly, African nation-states had financial institutions such as the Banking Association of South Africa, South African Reserve Bank, Development Bank of Southern Africa (ACTSA, 2016) and others such as the Guaranty Trust Bank (GTBank), First Bank of Nigeria (FBN), United Bank for Africa (UBA) (AnswersAfrica, 2014/2015) and others at the continental level such as the African Development Bank subsidized by the African Development Fund (ADF) and Nigeria Trust Fund (NTF) (African Development Bank, 2019).

The above-mentioned financial institutions are available to assist African nation-states which are heavily indebted and need financial assistance. This assertion is based on the view that even if CADF was in the picture, there were alternatives to it. China also committed to constructing the Conference centre of the AU, doing away with some of the matured debts of African nation-states by 2005, providing "zero-tariff treatment" to almost 30 African nation-states, erecting at least 3-5 economic zones, dispatching about 100 exports of agriculture to Africa. Despite all the commitments made by China to Africa, it should not be forgotten that trade was immensely growing between China and African nation-states as it was heading towards overtaking Japan as the second global biggest economy after the United States of America (Rapanyane & Shai, 2020). Following this engagement, in less than 6 years after this convention, China also became the biggest trading partner of Africa.

At the seventh convention of FOCAC which took place in Beijing (Chinese Capital City) in 2018, Tiezzi (2018) contends that Xi Jinping (Chinese president) welcomed Gambia, Sao Tome and Principe, and Burkina Faso as new members who now formed diplomatic ties with China and severed ties with Taiwan. This was exclusive of Iswatini (previously known as Swaziland), alone still collaborating with Taiwan. At this convention, the FOCAC Beijing Action Plan (2019-2021) was adopted. At this sitting, Xi extended the previous commitments by announcing that China through private investment will extend "US$10 billion" to Africa. Alternative pledges made by China involved “US$20 billion in new credit lines, US$15 billion in foreign aid: grants, interest-free loans and concessional loans, US$10 billion for a special funding for development financing” ” (Tiezzi 2018: online). China also pledged “US$5 billion for a special fund for financing imports from Africa” (Tiezzi 2018: online). Xi’s commitments in this instance illustrate well that the two other latter pledges are not loan-conditioned, but their explanations were not well articulated.

At the FOCAC’s fourth convention dating back to November 2009 in Egypt’s Sham el-Sheikh, the discussion was premised upon the Declaration of Sharm el-Sheikh of FOCAC and the FOCAC harm el-Sheikh Action Plan (2010–12) (Cisse, 2012). It was at this convention that China and Africa had a strong accord that pillared on tackling global climate change and erecting 100 virtuous energy undertakings for Africa. This accord also highlighted the strengthening of Sino-Africa technological and scientific collaboration which sought to accomplish “scientific and technological research demonstration projects” (Anshan, Haifang, Huaqiong, Aiping and Wenping., 2012: 19). This was to be done by welcoming “100 African post-doctoral fellows” to do their scientific experiments in China. China also promised to expand agricultural centres to 50 from 20, instigating “China-Africa joint research and exchange program” (Anshan, et al., 2012: 19). During the establishment of this centre, there were other significant growing Chinese trade deals with some of the African countries such as the DRC.

China’s intention to promote peace and security in Africa was most prevalent at the FOCAC’s fifth convention which took place in July 2012 in China. It was at this convention that the Beijing Action Plan of the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (2013-2015) was formulated and adopted (Le Pere, 2008). Now, attention moved to consolidating political consultations and strategic conversations by expanding governmental visits exchange. This was to be done by advancing the dispense of encounters of governmental experience, in the name of admiring and aiding each other to realise the principal interests on problems of “sovereignty, independence, security, unity, territorial integrity and national development” (Mulungeta & Hongwu, 2013: 59). In addition to the latter, China and Africa made an accord premised upon the expansion of collaboration to the areas of peace and security in Africa by working towards an effective Peace and Security Architecture. This was done to aid African states to increase the potential in preserving security and peace and strengthen partnership and conveyance with UNSC in helping Africa and sub-regional organizations to realize solidarity and consonance via unity.

This convention also had a resolute to the enhancement of Regional Integration (RI) in Africa. Moreover, it also pushed for the encouragement of maintainable progressive measures through AU and/ New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (Mulungeta & Hongwu, 2013). Hence, attention was moving towards the incorporation of security and peace affairs into the discussion papers. This was signified because in the period post-2010, Africa was hit hard by civil wars and terrorist activities which sought to destabilize the continent. These cases included those of the Libyan Civil war, Sudan airstrikes, Djiboutian-Eritrean border conflict, Tuareg rebellion, Kenyan crisis, Second Tuareg rebellion, invasion of Anjouan, Chadian Civil war, Northern Mali conflict, Boko Haram Insurgency and Central African Republic war (Shah, 2014). China and Africa also concurred on entirely traversing and effective utilization of each other's "comparative advantages" by fully supplementing mutual favourable business collaboration and dispassionate trade (Voltaire Network, 2012: online). Both parties also embraced methods to uplift collaboration and engage in measures of effectively handling security difficulties. They also agreed on effective ways to nourish and advance democratic principles in international relationships, boost a peaceful global world by advancing long-lasting peace and recurrent prosperity (Voltaire Network, 2012).

The FOCAC's sixth convention took place in South Africa's Johannesburg City in December 2015 themed China–Africa Progressing Together: Win-Win Cooperation for Common Development. The convention's paper discussed was the Johannesburg Action Plan for the years 2016–2018 (Lennon, 2017). At this convention, China bestowed considerable propositions that were to be executed in the following three years with special attention given to the areas of infrastructure, trade facilitation and investment, industrialisation, poverty reduction, modernisation of agriculture, peace and security, people-to-people exchange, and public health together with wealth creation (Monika, 2016).

Though education was not included, it became apparent that China intended to offer numerous scholarships to Africans. China offered that it would fund the erection of regional construction of universities and professional training centres in Africa. However, both investment and trade collaboration received little consideration. To extend the discussion in this context, China also committed to the erection of a collaboration plan of action such as industrial parks. The Asian tiger also extended support to the supervision and training of Africans in the arenas of professional skills and management. Cultural collaboration was also committed by advancing the ideas of reconstructing African heritage by expanding entry to satellite televisions and providing scholarly funds (Monika, 2016: 165).

4.4.4 China's General Africa Policy

> *From confrontation to cooperation, from revolution to economic development, and from isolation to international engagement (Muekalia, 2004:7).*

For China, the eventual decision making power in the leadership system of the country is benchmarked and/or administered by a small oligarchy of individual leaders at the top-most enchelons of the government and the communist party. They express their power through the various command of the established formalized coordinating mechanisms (Zhao, 2008). The most formalised decision making institution at the top is made of the Politburo and the Standing Committee, Central Committee, The State Council, Secretariat, Central Military Commission (CMC) and the National People's Congress (NCP) standing Committee of the overall Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (Zhao, 2008; Mancall, 1984).

China remains the biggest developing country worldwide and it is set on pursuing the road to peaceful development. This follows its maverick foreign policy which is centred on cooperation, peace and solidary. As a continent with the global biggest number of countries, Africa is strategically placed in the Chinese special foreign policy that is comprehensively understood as also moving to focus on oil-rich African countries such as Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nigeria (Jacques, 2009). The principal goal of China’s Africa policy is to offer various developmental measures and objectives in various fields which would ultimately lead to secure growth of China-Africa relations in the long run. This also involves bringing about a brand-new dimension to the existing mutual-beneficial cooperation (Cemiloglu, 2015: 203).

Disguising to be formulating a policy that is friendly and collaborative with Africa, China has sought to focus on some of the important elements in its foreign policy implementation including mutual trust, cultural exchange, political equality, cooperation and the economic win-win approach. The combination of the principles and objectives of China’s Africa policy include:

> *The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence” which consist of 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 coexistence (Brautigam 2009: 30).*

As such, having an unconventional choice of determining their pathway towards development and therefore supporting the African States in evolving unity, mutual benefit, common prosperity and reciprocity is very vital.

China endorses African countries in measures of nation-building, cooperation, and economic development in different fields and forms including social and economic development and also supports what we understand as mutual prosperity between the continent and the Asian giant. To China, close cooperation and mutual support are very important and it ensures this by strengthening its partnership with various Multinational institutions and promoting progressive and/or cooperative international relations in international affairs (Cemiloglu, 2015: 205). China does this by endorsing African countries’ demands and/or propositions that focus on development and peace in Africa. China also pushes for the promotion of the improvement of various inter-governmental consultations and close cooperation mechanisms. Seeking knowledge for common development is also one of the most important features of China’s foreign relations with Africa in various fields such as science, health and culture including development and governance. China assists and collaborates with African states in respect of the improvements towards capacitating the development of agricultural, energy resources, tourism, radio, film, television, the press and financial cooperation including various alternative fields that can assist in increasing sustainable development in the African continent (Cemiloglu, 2015).

One of the most important features of China's African policy relations relates to Africa's conformity and respect for the "One China Principle" including the continent's regional organisations (Rotberg, 2008: 25). Simply put, African countries including others in the international system which want to do business with China, receive support and/or Chinese aid should be in a position to recognize and respect that: "The government of the People's Republic of China is the only legitimate government representing all China, and Taiwan is an inalienable part of the Chinese territory" (Leger, 2017: online). This is not mandatory as other countries can still establish state-state relations with China especially diplomatic relations only if China is ready for such, especially in contexts where such countries may be disregarding the One-China principle (Cemiloglu, 2015).

The development of various Special Economic Zones (SEZs) is also part and parcel of China's Africa policy. These are special areas whereby both foreign and domestic companies can invest in and trade without having the same control and regulations from the Chinese central government back in Beijing. These are zones that are formulated to boost investment abroad for China and seek to increase and promote a win-win situation for China with African countries whilst promoting economic growth (Britannica, 2009). One might argue that the overall Chinese policy in Africa is to some extent, promoting and placing priority on economic nationalism where the national goals of China are shaping all of China's policies, and priorities on economic development setting abroad. For example, with the disintegration of the Cultural Revolution and the replacement of the Chinese leadership, China then moved its focus and foreign policy priorities towards the development of the economy whereby the attention was refocused from "economy serving diplomacy" to now "diplomacy serving economy" (Rotberg, 2008: 22).

There are other scholars such as Cheng and Wankun (2002: 236) who argue that the foreign policy of China towards Africa includes an important strategic element of placing focus on geopolitical factors. This is because of the Asian giant's desire to transmute into a significant global power that is strong and important. As such, its policy takes note of the overall strategic view on issues of international relations and foreign policy in general. Beijing seems to see Africa from a strategic viewpoint with a focus on strategically important regions for its development (Snow, 1995: 290-291). Even though it is not always about the strategic significance in respect of economic sense, such considerations can be observed with Nigeria where it is mostly seen as being Africa's largest oil producer but placed in a region that is strategically not important to China. We also have South Africa which is politically important to China and a vital ally in the developing world in respect to voting in different multilateral institutions.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter has critically reflected on the historical relations of China with the African continent. Special attention was centred on revisiting China-Angola relations to establish a historical basis of the relations of China with one of the important oil-rich and/or producing African states. The researcher has also furthered the attention in exploring China-DRC historical relations as one of the important units of analysis in the current study. Both cases have a fresh insight for the current researcher to redirect the scholarly conversation and/or analysis towards the discussion of Beijing's arrival in the African continent. Various factors including oil, mineral resources and economic win-win relations are provided as the main drivers of China's contemporary relations with Africa through the FOCAC. This Afrocentric reflection is accompanied by the reflection on the various core principles that shape China's current Africa policy. Such nuanced principles are broadly explained including economic development, economic win-win strategy, peaceful cooperation, strategic geopolitical factors and considerations. FOCAC became the principal driver of the current China- Africa relations through the broad discussion in the various conferences that depict a picture of asymmetric relations.

The next chapter reflects on the key drivers of the foreign policy of China towards both Angola and DRC and broadens a critical overview of the recent Chinese international policy initiative in the form of the Belt and Road Initiative.

CHAPTER FIVE

Key drivers of China's foreign policy towards DRC and Angola within the broader context of the Belt and Road Initiative

5.1. Introduction

This chapter identifies the key drivers of the foreign policy of China towards both Angola and DRC. This explanatory chapter entails the overview of the discussion on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as the current leading Chinese policy tool for global engagement. In this chapter, the researcher presented the history of the BRI, economic demography and how China seeks to globalise through the BRI and push for global economic influence. At the centre of the BRI analysis, the current researcher draws initial attention to some of the key drivers of China's foreign policy in Angola and the DRC as observed from China's international relations with both countries in the period where BRI is dominating the Asian giant's global foreign policy affairs.

5.2. Belt and Road Initiative

5.2.1. History and economic geopolitics

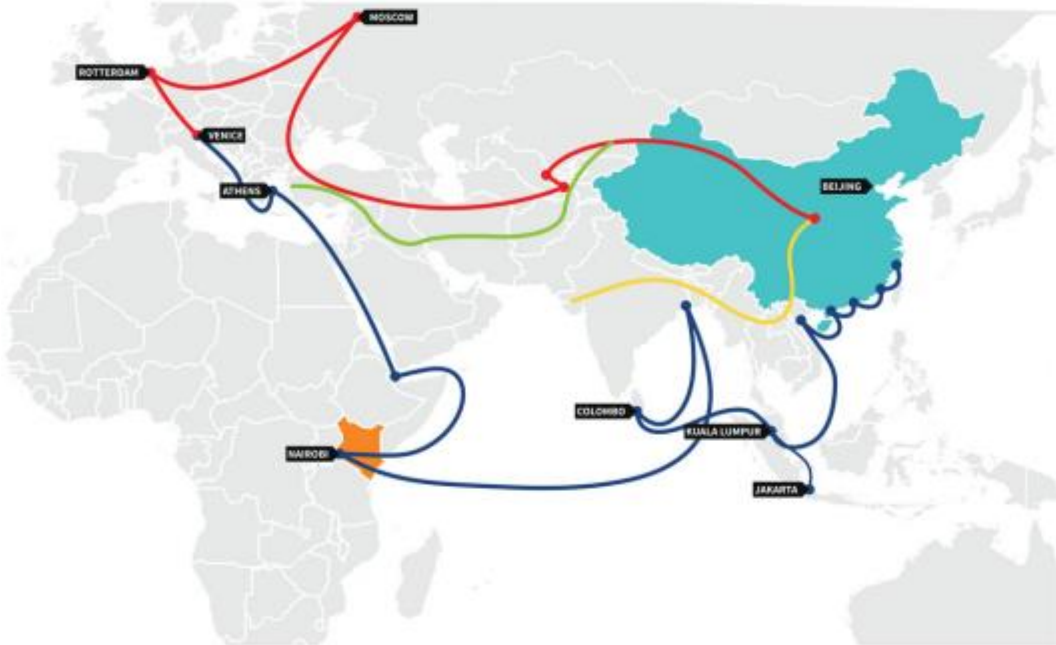
The BRI name is aligned to a geographic focus. The "Belt is understood to be the historical trade partner of China within the Eurasian mainland within the latitude of China" (Hu, Liu, & Yan, 2017: 410). For a more comprehensive explanation; the road only refers to the coastal developing countries' economies both in South East Asia, Africa and the Indian Ocean Rim. The corridors in Figure 1 (Page 78) underscored are not exclusively a central focus of the entire initiative. Beijing has been very much reluctant in indicating that the BRI is open to all countries and not limited to any geographic focus (PRC State Council 2015). Be that as it may, the launched corridors underscored in Figure 1 are to some extent, linked to history, demographics, and economics. Historically, the Chinese fleets have managed to reach as far as the coasts of Angola through and/or alongside the primary South East and South Asian destinations and the Eurasian Silk Route (Sun, 2010).

The above view applies despite that contemporary Angola and the DRC of are English speaking countries and host various Chinese SEZs and/or ports of sub-regional importance (Johnston, 2018). Additionally, Africa is a continent known worldwide for its rich natural resources (Commission on Growth, 2008: 75). Coastal resource-rich economies have in the past half of the 20th century undertaken upon a succour path of industrialisation which provided only improved intangible and tangible access to those countries through trade-validating port facilities. This was for for landlocked and coastal countries to assist in stabilizing the economic growth trajectory of their proximate resource-rich countries (Commission on Growth, 2008: 74–75; Collier & O'Connell, 2006). Hence, both Angola and DRC's conduit economic significance to its region, continent and China are prospectively significant to the BRI global development aspirations (Johnston & Yuan, 2012; Johnston, Morgan, & Wang, 2015).

The BRI projects are extensively prominent in the African continent (Kabecha, 2018). For example, BRI has a Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) of 480-km railway project in Mombasa, Kenya. The organised extensions will formulate a rail network inter-linking the SGR to the nearby nation-states' economies including Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Burundi. There is an interchangeable network plan to interconnect ports in Tanzania with other neighbours such as Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda alongside the DRC. The SGR survey is a good example of a BRI-related regional infrastructural project that is in line with infrastructural-related constraints and economic demography in complete support of economic development in various poor African nation-states (Johnston, 2018). To this end, the BRI's infrastructural focus in Africa does not only reflect the Asian giant's competitive strengths within the sector but also the various inadequate infrastructural challenges faced by Africa (World Bank, 2017: 71).

In the same context, the "Belt" seeks to connect China with the whole of Central Asia, parts of Africa and Europe including processing a better integration of some of the poorest landlocked provinces of China and autonomous regions such as Qinghai, Yunnan and Gansu with alternative neighbouring states such as Pakistan, Myanmar and Kazakhstan and other developmental parts of China (Johnston, 2018). This is a sample of the benefit for the Asian giant within the broader win-win prospect in the proximate "Belt" states that can benefit from the bigger foreign investment in line with progressive China towards its own development goals.

Figure 1: The Belt and Road Initiative Map



Source: (Johnston, 2018: 44)

5.2.2. Demography of the economy

There is an aligned economic demography dialectics fortifying the option of the BRI launch in both Indonesia and Kazakhstan. Figure 2 (Page 81) below shows countries designated into four economic-demography codification of the economic demography grid: “poor and young; poor and old; rich and young; rich and old” following the degree of explanations based on ageing population and higher per capita incomes (Johnston, Liu, Yang, & Zhang, 2016: 223). The figure focuses on the agglomeration of the “poor” especially the demographically “young economies” with the biggest unrealised development potential, and low and middle-income nation-states which are mostly found in the Central [CENTRAL WHAT?, South Asia and Africa composing of the regions of the early BRI focal-point (Chen & Yip, 2018).

A significant factor that rebalances the economy of China away from the labour-intensive export-oriented manufacturing towards a bigger role in the services and innovation is the nation-state’s working-age population that had been failing greatly in absolute terms since the year 2010 (Garnaut, Song, Fang, & Johnston, 2016). The population in this instance would be “getting old before rich” at some point, the 2020s would mean that China would and/or sit in the category of the “poor and old”. Within this economic demography conditions, BRI is thus broadly comprehended as the Asian giant's programme for institutionalising capital outflows principally to various developing nation-states, especially within the parameters of the "poor and old; poor and young countries" as depicted in Figure 2 below (Johnston et al., 2016: 223; Garnaut, Song, Fang, & Johnston, 2016).

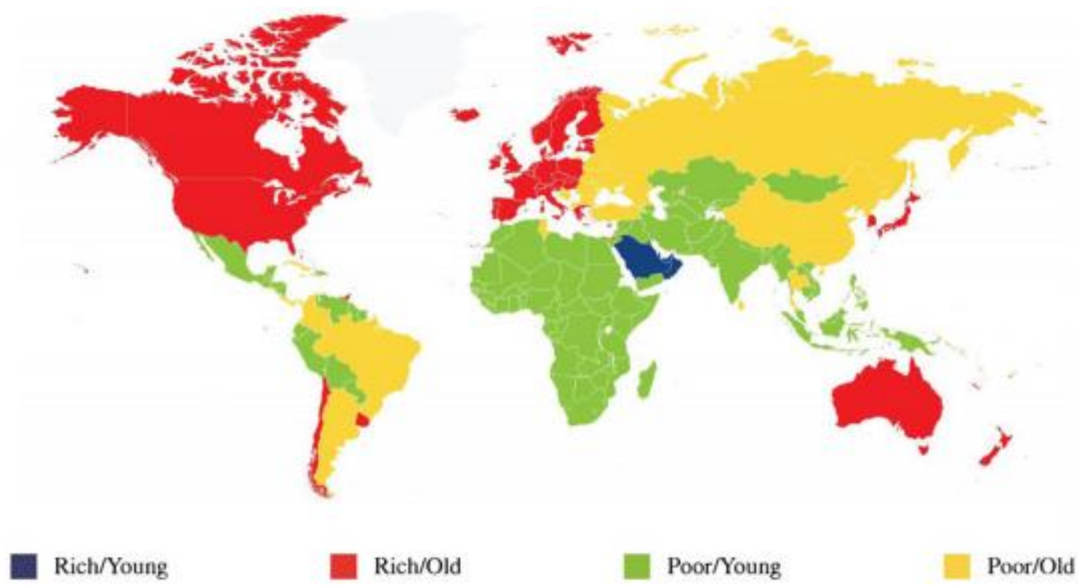
Within the context of the Chinese outbound investments, there seems to be a clear diminishing demand for such [… what?] in Africa, particularly in East Africa where the demand is slowly diminishing although still heavily emphasised under the BRI. For example, China is considered the largest provider of infrastructure-relayed foreign investment in East Africa and it has established itself as a major player in the sector (Geda, 2008). This may be because much of the investment within this sector is unfair and conditionally loan-funded in the continent (Pairault, 2018). Various concerns have been conveyed that boundless borrowing by African developing nation-states such as Kenya, Angola, DRC, Ethiopia and etc... including where concessional loans are concerned may reinforce earlier idiomatic expressions of borrowing for development that leads to indefensible sovereign debt levels (Onjala, 2017; Hurley, Morris, & Portelance, 2018; Chauvin & Golitin, 2010).

Ansar, Flyvbjerg, Budzier, and Lunn (2016) deliberate on the strains of superintending an infrastructure-led growth process. Similarly, the study of Onjala (2017) has given us a relevant case of Kenya's heightened debt sustainability risks within the context of the most contemporary increased infrastructural-related loans from China. This is even though both China and Africa share a huge potential new economic supplementary. Collier (2017) reminds us that this is despite the fundamental structural problem of sub-Saharan African states' urbanisation that emerges at a very lower per capita income levels than that of East Asia. Simply put, the issue of fiscal systems and property rights in the underdeveloped African nation-states presents unique challenges including the opportunity to prolonge the financing of related infrastructure that is needed from China, and/or is promoted by China's foreign investors as this is a developmental constraint in Africa (Lin & Wang, 2017).

Such conditions often necessitate what we call the concept of "patient capital" from China. In Wang's (2018) view, "patient capital" is often defined as capital that is injected in a collaboration whereby the stakeholder takes or accumulates a stake in the development of the host nation-states, pursuing a win-win situation. This process involves investors who are almost equal to real investors but are willing to pour more money into the real sector for incoming unlisted and/or ghost projects for a very long time, for as long as 10 years and beyond. This means that Chinese investors who also pursue patient capital under the BRI policy in Africa remain in a better position to undertake risks for the development of cooperative advantage, especially in infrastructure financing over those who are more aligned to the traditional neoliberal context of short term investor interests and absolute capital account liberalisation (Lin & Wang, 2017). This kind of approach deals with various high barriers encompassing the possibility of the class of various potential regimes and the financial viability of the concerning cross border projects (Huang, 2016).

The case of the BRI-linked lending-funded construction of Sri Lanka's Hambantota port project gives scholars a clear view of the various challenges drawn from international criticism of the entire Chinese international policy directive. To this end, Assef (2018: online) has highlighted that "not all projects that China has sponsored along its Belt and Road Initiative have been economically successful for the host county. Sri Lanka is a key example of a country riddled with debt, and limited options to escape it". The persistence of this challenge can easily be overcome by the transformation of the foreign aid mechanisms which are fundamental. This is because foreign aid plays an important role as a concessional element of project lending towards various developing nation-states worldwide. As for China, BRI seeks to explicitly support the inhibitive costs and risks aligned with investment and trade with and within developing nation-states. As of late, there is relatively little information known in respect of the aim of Chinese foreign aid. The context of Chinese foreign aid and the significant transition points and/or parts in the evolution of the Asian giant's use and provision of foreign aid.

Figure 2: Economic demography



Source: (Johnston 2018: 44)

Figure 2: *Where 'old' = share of the population aged 65 years and over ≥7% (and young otherwise); 'rich' = GNI per capita at or above $12,476 in 2016 (and poor otherwise). Data source: World Development Indicators, World Bank (2016). Please see Johnston (2018) for elaboration and analysis of the underlying Economic Demographic Matrix concept.*

5.2.3. Globalising China: Unveiling the real drivers of Chinese BRI

5.2.3.1. China's rise as a global economic power

As already articulated, the BRI roots lie in various developments. Amongst them is the rise of the Asian giant as a global economic power and progressively globalised economy. This development has followed the Asian giant's absorbption of managerial expertise, massive Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows and adoption of an export-oriented developmental model. In the year 2014, China was the second biggest nation-state globally in respect to the GDP, third biggest in Outward Foreign Direct Investment (OFDI) and biggest in commodity trade. The Asian giant has indeed seen 25-30% of the annual increase in global GDP growth (Johnston, 2018). Just three decades earlier, China was considered only a small semi-closed economy that accounted for 5% of the global GDP and 1.5% of the global exports although having 23% of the global population. Alternatively, China has now assumed its spot as the manufacturing workshop of the globe, accounting for about 24% of the global output in comparison to its counterpart, the USA which only accounts for 20%.

Additionally, OFDI has jumped extensively to over US$100 billion annually in the past decade from only a few billions a decade earlier. These substantial changes have importantly changed and/or transformed the global economic geography whereby now the leading three continental-scale zones in domination are North America (composing of Canada and USA) which is responsible for 27% of the global GDP, followed by the European Union with 26% and also East Asia (composing of Hong Kong, Macao, China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan) with a total of 25% by the year 2014. So in total, the three biggest regions indeed are responsible for 78% of the global output and by reflection, scholars believe that the geographic centre of the global economy is slowly shifting eastwards (Quah, 2011; Dunford et al., 2016), and this is likely to lead to a more equitable global socio-economic order. The speedy growth of China and alternative emerging economies is transforming the traditional core-periphery or what we understand as “north-south” conceptualisations of the global and international division of labour (Hudson, 2016), to a more compounded networked configurations premised on individual nation-states’ roles in sectorally differing world production networks and/or global value chains.

5.2.3.2. China’s rise as a global investor

The second driver of the start of the brand-new phase of the economy of China’s globalisation is specifically the unfolding of its crucial outward investor programme (Alon 2008). Various trade trends, OFDI, Inward Foreign Direct Investment (IFDI) recognise three various stages of Chinese globalisation. During the 1990s, the economy of China had seen a very fast IFDI whereby between 1990-2000, the annual growth rate of the IFDI standing at 27.8% was higher than that of its trade that stood at 15.2. Often times, the stage is understood as the dependent stage of globalisation where more reliance was placed on the IFDI to gain new technologies and new managerial skills, creation of new industries and upgrading of the existing industries and also improvement of efficiency (Liu & Dunford, 2016).

Soon after China joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in the year 2001, its trade grew astonishingly to 23.5% annually meaning that it doubled in volume. Within the same period, the yearly IFDI growth rate stood at 10.8%. This meant that this stage extensively involved trade globalisation. As both the combination of trade surplus and/or trade volume grew; the OFDI also started to increase. Then since the year 2006, the OFDI of China had grown much faster than IFDI and trade respectively. Between 2006 and 2014, Chinese OFDI grew at 23.7% annually juxtaposed with the 11.8% and 8.3% of the IFDI and trade (Liu & Dunford, 2016).

Therefore, the 2008 global financial crisis allowed China to globalise its capital even further. The Chinese globalisation of its capital differs from the initial attraction of the FDI and the exporting of manufactured goods. This has required extensive expertise in doing business abroad, involving even closer global cooperation and relations whichrelies heavily on international economic governance with various implications on the development model. This new stage of globalisation that has ushered China as the second biggest global economic power is a rudimentary driver of the Asian giant's brand-new global economic cooperation initiatives (Liu & Dunford, 2016). Although China's OFDI is concentrated principally in Asia (68% of the stock in 2014), this trend is declining and suggests that even without Hong Kong, China's OFDI is also evenly dispersed between the continents, with Latin America ranking first. Getting a clear picture of the Chinese OFDI destination is almost an impossible task but it has become clear that it is principally South-South investment (Yeung & Liu, 2008).

For as long as most of the developing economies are without an exemplary market environment, China will remain automatically concerned with the security of the current and future investments. Sectorally, the OFDI of China is more focused on leasing and business services, mining, wholesale, transport, finance, retailing, storage and postal services. By the year 2014, these sectors were accounting for up to 87.7% of the total OFDI stock of China. The manufacturing sector accounted for 5.9% whilst the mining sector accounted for 14%. China is also poised to focus on exporting more manufacturing capital in the nearer future to contribute to a brand-new world shift in manufacturing, even though it does not want to follow the USA model of hollowing-out manufacturing (Liu & Dunford, 2016).

5.2.3.3 China's heavy appetite for energy investment

Due to the size of its economic growth and the population, China's energy production and consumption needs have rapidly increased, placing it as one of the largest producers and consumers of energy. In the year 2014, coal was accounting for 66% of the total Chinese energy requirements with oil standing at 18% followed by hydroelectric power with 8% and finally, natural gas with 6% (British Petroleum, 2016). During the early 1990s, China was inextricably a crude oil net exporter. By the year 2014, 53% of the Asian giant's consumption came initially from imports. "Motorization, in particular, is expected to see imports increase to 8 bbl/day in 2020, 11.4 in 2030 and 14.3 in 2040" (IEA, 2014 as cited by Liu and Dunford 2016: 331), in part to deal with environmental problems and promote the reduction of CO2[11] emissions/GDP ratio. Paik (2013) noted that:

> *China's natural gas consumption is expected to reach 350 million Bcm in 2020 and 550 Bcm in 2030, accounting respectively for 10–12% of China's primary energy consumption. Domestic production is expected to rise from 28 Bcm in 2000 and 99 Bcm in 2010 to 300 Bcm in 2030.*

From being a net exporter previously to now attending to the existing gap between the demand and domestic supply that will surely need a rapid growing net import, China now secures its energy needs and acquisition of the relevant technical expertise through diversifying its supply sources and import routes of national oil and gas. The Asian giant is also establishing prolonged overseas investments and promoting the establishment of strategic partnerships within the upstream gas and oil projects. Indisputably, the Chinese National Oil and Gas Companies (NOGCs) account for most of the global reserves of gas and oil (Dunford, 2021).

Various global companies can therefore have access to these reserves in executing accords with nation-states that hold them and/or even enter into collaborations with

[11] This is Carbon dioxide in acidic colorless gas with a density of about 53% higher than that of the dry air.

NOGCs. In Eurasia, both natural gas and oil reserves are far from being consumption centres enabling higher costs of transport. For example, in the past two decades, a compressed natural gas (CNG) pipeline was valued at more than US$1 million/km. Approximately US$ 1000/MMT/year is spent on liquefaction prerequisites such as liquid natural gas (LNG) infrastructure (EIA 2002).

For suppliers, various pipelines can sustain the non-recovery risk of capital outlays because of the deficient demand and income. Therefore, consumers are confronting the lock-in risks to a single supplier and high switching costs. In instances where pipelines intersect through various national territories, transit operators need payment and if the flow transforms, risks arise. These various projects principally have to do with complex risk-split negotiations. The suppliers of gas need prolonged contrasts, take-or-pay clauses and stable prices to ensure revenue streams. Whilst this is so, there are consumers who also require long-term contracts with a pricing formula that allows for equity share and market-driven renegotiation in transport and resource extraction to safeguard access over supply and costs control (Ericson, 2012). China's BRI was formulated to assist in addressing some of these issues. For example, within the context of the oil sector, assets worth US$73 billion between the years 2011-13 alone have been obtained in North America, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Asia and Australia (Dunford, et al., 2016).

Also, Chinese MNCs have consented to various oil-for-loan agreements and formulated pipeline connections with Kazakhstan and Russia. In the year 2011, Russia began to supply China with 300000 bbl/day of oil through the spur from its own East Siberian oil field, particularly from the Eastern Siberia-Pacific Ocean (ESPO) pipeline to Daqing[12]. The Russians are also exporting oil from their Western Siberian oilfields and the Chinese transnational pipeline of oil from Kazakhstan. The Kazakhstan pipeline was Chinese financed and constructed as a joint business deal between Kazakhastan's KazMunayGas (KMG) and Chinese National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC). A Chinese strong increase in commitments to this course means a complete diversion of the Russian oil exports as their production of oil is not expected to increase within the current decade. There is an estimated 440 00 bbl/day pipeline which in the

[12] Daqing is a prefecture-level city in the west of Heilongjiang province, People's Republic of China.

year 2015 was transporting oil to China from Myanmar through the alternative transport route for the Middle Eastern oil, which completely avoided the Strait of Malacca (Liu & Dunford, 2016).

Since then, the Asian giant had increased its liquefied natural gas and pipeline gas through brand new and proposed pipelines from Myanmar including neighbouring nation-states such as Russia and those in central Asia which connect them with the expanded domestic pipeline system. It is also important to refer to the Chinese second and third west-east pipelines (WEB II that was finished in 2011 and the WEB III that was finished in 2015) which source gas from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and the other one sourcing Caspian gas from Turkmenistan. Acquiring enough gas from WEB III and alternative planned WEB IV and V will need far-reaching pipeline imports from both Western Siberia and Central Asia. This is because the projects in Central Asia stimulate the gas resources exploitation and development of construction industries and local equipment, but also ended the Russian monopolistic stance in the exportation of gas from these former Soviet Republics. In the year 2014, after a decade of negotiations, the Gazprom of Russia authorised a US$400 billion deal with CNPC to acquire 38 Bcm of natural gas yearly for three decades starting in the year 2018 from the East Siberian gas fields (Liu & Dunford, 2016).

The Russian pipeline line is to via through the combined Kovyktin and Chayandin gas fields to the Vladivostok Far East port city; whilst the consolidated China-Russia East Route Natural gas pipeline will go through the North East of China occupied by 100 Million inhabitants and traditional industries. This deal is also alternatively comprehended as the convoluted Chinese investment both in the energy and transport infrastructure of the Russians. The deal also reflects a second "Altai Natural Gas pipeline that should expand the aggregate capacity to an estimated 70 billion M3 annually" with Russia extensively eager to uncover the new buyers along the western routes for the dependence reduction on both Ukraine and European gas markets. These and other alternative initiatives are a composite of the comprehensive energy collaborations signed by both Presidents Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping in the year 2014 and the goal of Russia in expanding its efforts in developing its Eastern territories for the integration into the speedily growing Asian economies. Equally, China is also constructing LNG imports from the Middle East, Southeast Asia, North America, East

Africa, and Australia whilst Russia seeks to avoid various exclusive dependence tactics on the Asian giant by adopting different options for access to gas in Japan and Korea (Liu & Dunford, 2016: 334).

5.2.4. China's desire to influence the international economic system

Any nation-state's economic success in the following decades is poised to benefit heavily from the open international economic system. For many decades, China had been the biggest recipient of various FDIs. To this day, China has assumed the status of being the second biggest global economy after the USA. China has benefitted heavily from the process of globalisation. The current global economic system, which was formulated in the year 1944, contains three key important features. First, the USA is a commanding leader in the designation and enforcement of the global economic rules. Second, the USA dollar is the cornerstone of the global monetary system, both before and after the Bretton Woods System (BWS)'s breakdown (Liu & Dunford, 2016).

Finally, the three international organisations which are based in the USA (World Bank and International Monetary Fund [IMF] including the WTO are the commanding cornerstone of the global economic order. For almost the entire century, this governing system had facilitated the balanced growth of the international economic system, despite the recent calls on the reform of the global economic system. Two significant events, have facilitated the growth of these calls. The first is the growth of the emerging market economies, which would be expected naturally to call for transformation and a move of the global economic system from the peripheries to the centre stage of the global economic decision making process.

The second one has to do with the USA subprime crisis that raised various concerns and questions in respect to the future global roles of the USA dollar and the USA. The contemporary global economic system is a principal replica of the developing nation-states' economic systems, particularly that of the USA. It promotes free investment, strict market disciplines, and free trade. But the recent subprime crisis initially divulged some issues with the USA system. Various economists have come out guns blazing questioning the USA monetary policy and financial regulations' effectiveness including that of the global reserve system. Whilst there is no agreement about what should be the next move, there is a consensus that the USA-led system needs to be transformed and/or adapted to best suit the brand-new international market and economic ground conditions (Rapanyane, 2020d).

The international economy has overtime gone through transformation since the previous seven decades when the current system was established. At the end of the second world war, most of the developing nation-states' economies were experiencing hardships of serious and widespread poverty problems. As a result, they were at the receiving end of considerable financial aid that came with conditions for advice on poverty alleviation and their economies' development. This was the same for global organisations encompassing industrialised nation-states. In the current period, emerging market economies are significant players in the international economy. A practical example would be the BRICS nation-states: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa that account for 42% of the global population and 18% of the global GDP.

As for China, when it comes to reforming, it first started by following the Deng Xiaoping principles which categorically stated that China needed to keep a low profile in handling international affairs even when this became an increasingly difficult act. This is because the Asian giant is now the second biggest economy globally in line with the market-based GDP measures. In the contemporary period, China is repeatedly contributing one-third of the global GDP growth. The global economic influences of China are mostly depicted in the global markets for labour-intensive raw materials, commodities and manufactured goods. Another important magnification of the Chinese influence was recorded in the year 2015- where the Fed quoted slowdown of Chinese growth as an important factor for its policy decision, while volatilities in the A-share market and *renminbi*[13] exchange rate triggered shock waves around the world (Liu & Dunford, 2016).

[13] The renminbi is the official currency of the People's Republic of China and one of the world's reserve currencies, ranking as the eighth most traded currency in the world as of April.

In view of the above arguments, there is a growing tension between various existing powers in the global economy and China. The first kind of tension has to do with the prospective conflict amongst the existing and rising powers. Practically, China is anticipated to overtake the USA to become the global biggest economy in the coming two decades, therefore, granting suspicions of the alternative party's intentions. Historically, the change of global leadership especially from one nation-state to another has been actualized through wars. Even if such suspicions have not led to a direct war between the USA and China, they could transmute into difficulties within the global economic system in the coming decades (Rapanyane & Shai, 2021).

5.3. Key Drivers of China's Angola Policy

5.3.1. China in Angola: Oil-backed loans for infrastructural development

The visit of the former vice-premier of China Zeng Peiyang to Angola in the year 2005 initially transmuted into the signing of nine cooperation agreements which were mostly in line with the energy sector. Sonangol through one of the agreements agreed to enter into an upliftment deal for the supply of oil to the UNPEC, which the Africa Energy Intelligence predicted would result in SINOPEC uplifting up to 10000 barrels per day (Mosala, 2021, interview). Both China and Angola also managed to sign a memorandum of joint understanding in the study of the exploration of shadow offshore blocks 3/05A and 3/05 historically known as the block 3/80 which had been drawn from Total (Company) in the year 2004 (Weimer & Vines, 2012).

Since the year 2004, China had also managed to obtain equity partnerships in Angolan deep water oil blocks through SINOPEC's majority in the SSI including the shallow water blocks through the CSIH, a joint business deal between the Hong Kong-based private business interests and Sonangol. Apparently, CSIH was awarded the equity in blocks 3/05A and 3/05, SSI was also awarded equity in the deep-water block 18. The latter was also awarded various equity blocks of 18/06, 17/06 and 15/06 (with AgipENI, Petrobas and Total) emerging respective operatorship winners of the oil licensing awards. In one of the most recent periods, the CSIH had considerably consolidated its hold in Angola in the acquisition of various blocks (Weimer & Vines, 2012).

In the past decade, Angola has emerged successfully to become a significant source of Chinese oil reserves. At the end of the prolonged civil war in the year 2002, Angola had publicised a considerable increase in the output of oil (which was to the fore of Azerbaijan, Russia, Libya, Kazakhstan, and Brazil) (Yates, 2006). From the year 2004, China's Oil MNCs started the securitisation of oil blocks in Angola. To date, Angola has played a key role in becoming one of the African continent's biggest producers and exporters of oil, surpassing Nigeria in the year 2008 to become the leading Sub-Saharan producer of oil (Yates, 2006). In the year 2010, the Chinese imports of crude oil from the Angola was standing at 18% of the total (equal to that of Saudi Arabia) and from the time of January-June 2011, Angola ultimately become China's third-biggest important supplier of crude oil (after that of Iran and Saudi Arabia). It is further understood that by the year 2010, China had received 24% of the total Angolan oil exports as compared to the 23% that was received by the USA (Weimer & Vines, 2012).

The successful relations between China and Angola are mostly pronounced by the following significant feature. That is the triumph of the oil exploration strategies deployed by China in Angola through the interlinking of diplomacy and state-directed businesses (Wekesa 2021, interview; Yates, 2006). This is because most of the business deals that were formulated by the Hong Kong-based private interests in collaboration with the Angolan national oil company (Sonangol) and the China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation (Sinopec) have been in the service of the Asian giant well in constructing up a portfolio of nexus deals with the Angolan leadership that have been widened beyond aviation and real estate and oil to construction across the global world (Maphaka 2021, interview).

It is important to highlight that before the civil war, Angola indeed portrayed a diversified and booming economy that was made up of the manufacturing, oil and fishing sectors and industries and a vibrant local market. Angola was also self-sustaining in food production as it remained a major export of cash crops including tobacco, cotton and coffee. The breaking out of the civil war in the year 1975 negatively affected the country's economy to a bigger extent (Kiala, 2010). Most of the railway and road infrastructure was demolished and the practice of agriculture became almost impossible due to the landmines making it hard to till the land. The agricultural sector was critically affected due to the large groups of people moving from the rural areas to safer urban areas. The combination of both commercial and subsistence farming sectors which relied on capital and human resources to fully become operational was severely affected by this movement of people from rural areas to urban areas (Yates, 2006). The damage had also escalated into the manufacturing industry as the destruction of railway and roads infrastructure was the order of the day. This made the transportation of the raw materials to become almost impossible to various places of economic strategic importance (Weimer & Vines, 2012).

This ultimately led to the total collapse of both the manufacturing and agricultural industries in Angola during the civil war. Observably, there is one sector that was not severely harmed which is that of the oil. This is because oil fields are offshore and therefore, making the impact to not reach it directly because of the land instabilities. This is though, the direct output was heavily affected as it decreased as the oil fields were not operating at full capacity (Weimer & Vines, 2012). The fragmentary survival of the oil sector capacitated Angola in absconding the economic disruption which had been brought by the civil war. The government in Luanda also relied heavily on the small diamonds exportation and contribution to a small percentage of their GDP (Weimer & Vines, 2012).

This is because formal diamond production was not completely possible as most of the insurgents had taken over control of the major areas where these valuable minerals were initially found to fund their activities with these proceeds (Oliveira, 2015). The civil war though did come to an end in the year 2002 and the production and exportation of oil and diamonds formally resumed thereafter. The increase in the demand for both oil and diamonds and the Angolan increase in their prices set the African nation-state's economy on the right path towards recovery (Oliveira, 2015). Today, diamonds are accounting for 5% of Angola's total GDP and oil is still playing a major role in the economic development of the African nation-state. This is because, in the recent period, oil exploration and output including exportation have increased resulting in Angola's post-war economic reconstruction, as far as a contribution towards the national GDP is concerned (Weimer & Vines, 2012).

In the early 2010s, Angola had emerged victoriously as the biggest oil supplier and/or producer in the African continent, outperforming Nigeria where the Boko Haram insurgents have contributed to the destabilisation of the oil extraction industry (Rapanyane & Sethole, 2021). This has made Angola to become one of the fastest global expansions of the oil reserves having discovered brand new deposits more than three times its proven reserves. The flake of the newly discovered ultra-deep water proven reserves in Angola in the last decade has raised the profile of the African nation-state from a medium oil producer to one of the contemporary big oil-producing nation-states. Additional expansions are expected in the coming years as an investment into Angola's oil sector keeps soaring up. In the year 2007, Angola was admitted into the OPEC. For the first time, Angola has managed to host the OPEC meeting in the year 2009 exemplifying the African nation-state's increasing significance as a global oil producer (OPEC, 2021).

The joining of Angola into OPEC has paralleled the sharp rise of the African country's oil output; as production has more than doubled since the end of the Angolan civil war in 2002, to .9 billion b/d in 2008 from 905 000 b/d in 2002. Based on the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), Angola exported 1.36 million barrels per day in the year 2006. This surge has also been observed for the years 2010-2015 as the new ultra-deep water fields were discovered (Weimer & Vines, 2012). Historically, Angola has been producing more oil than it initially consumes and redirecting it towards bulk export. This implies that the increase of crude oil over the previous two decades, therefore, increased the Angola's oil exports to other nation-states in need. Angola's contemporary reserves and the prognosticated production reveal that oil reserves in Angola are likely to last for years to come. The oil production in Angola is also expected to swell up to 2.5- 3 million b/d in the next 5-10 years even if there is no discovery of the new reserves country-wide (Corkin, 2008).

As highlighted above that the bulk oil exports of Angola mostly get exported to the two global biggest economies of the USA and China; even though the share of China has dramatically increased in recent times. For example, China became Angola's biggest oil export destination in the year 2007, getting away with 26.3% of the total oil export value, as compared to the 24% which was exported to the USA. Also in the year 2009, Angola exported over 1.7 million b/d of crude oil, which accounted for more than 90%

of the African nation-state's total production essentially to China and the USA (Corkin, 2008). Whilst the USA's share had not seen much dramatic increase; that of China's share of the total imports from the African nation-state had increased dramatically. One can argue that the exceptional rise of the bilateral trade between both countries is a by-product of the rapid expansion of the Asian giant's oil imports from Angola which has been evident since the year 2004 (the year of the first credit line), directly encapsulating the driving force strengthening China's successful relationship with Angola (Weimer & Vines, 2012).

China's demand for oil has greatly grown in the past three-four decades. Due to this increasing oil demand, China's National Oil Companies (NOCs) have made considerable efforts in attempting to acquire and/or secure stakes in the exploration and production projects in Angola and elsewhere, including the purchasing of more Angolan oil on the spot-market. The first of these was the opening of the SONASIA office in Singapore by the Sonangol in the year 2004 aimed at encouraging the trade of crude oil from Angola to Asia (Lwanda, 2011). Both the Eximbank and the China Infrastructure Development banks have been at the centre of financing the Angolan infrastructural development in the past two decades since the year 2002 (Corkin, 2012b). The Angolan Ministry of Ffinance always has little to inject into some of the project arrangements since initial funding was often directly provided to Chinese firms by both banks (Corkin, 2008). China's Exim bank is currently and increasingly making use of this deal structure globally known as per the World Bank to be the "Angola model" and/or 'resources for infrastructure' whereby the loan repayments are done in natural resources exchange (Sun, 2014).

There are several questions in respect to the quality of the infrastructure delivered in return for oil including the timelines intricate. Amongst these would include stopping several Chinese construction projects in the years 2007-2008 that were inter-linked to the Chinese global fund. These include the Benguela railway line project that was a subject of a sequence of various contractual revisions after it was discovered by Angola authorities that it contained irregularities (Xhinua, 2021). Although this did not stop the Chinese companies from continuing with this project, the government in Luanda did start to invite alternative competitors to tender for complementary projects. The sixteen Chinese camps that have been disassembled due to the cancellation of the contract were given a go-ahead to resume work from October 2010 with the project being completed in the year 2014 (Xhinua, 2021). This infrastructure is also understood to be carrying 4 million passengers and 20 million tons of goods per year, transported along the line (Corkin, 2012a).

5.3.2. Dismantling of western donors in Angola

The driver has to do with the disinclination of Western donors in financing Angola's essential post-war reconstruction and China responded to this by providing oil-backed infrastructural loans (Weimer & Vines, 2012). A quick review of how the above came about, shows us that at the end of the civil war in Angola, the speed reconstruction topped the agenda of the government of the day (Lesmana, 2011). China which has been in an unstable diplomatic partnership with Angola since the year 1983 had played an important role in helping some of the efforts of reconstruction. China's technical and financial assistance ranges from over 100 projects in Angola since the year 2004 in various areas including water, energy, education, health, fisheries, telecommunications, and public works. During the visit by the Former Premier of China Wen Jiabao to Angola in the year 2006 (Reuters, 2006). Former Angola President Dos Santos recounted the bilateral relations between both countries as 'mutually advantageous' and the collaboration as being realistic and/or practical with no unnecessary 'political pre-conditions'. By the year 2009, China had facilitated loans to Angola which amounted to at least $13.4 billion. Between the years 2009 and 2010, an additional $10 billion worth of credit lines was signed between both nation-states (Vines & Campos 2010; Weimer & Vines, 2012).

This had been the culmination of the earlier 2008 visit of Dos Santos to China where he underlined the significance of the Chinese relations with Angola. After this visit, scholars had been able to observe China's Sinopec group primarily obtaining the oil equity through the Sonangol Sinopec International (SSI) business vehicle in a beneficial deep-water block, and later acquired equity stakes in three additional offshore blocks and pre-salt blocks. Dos Santos would earlier in November 2007 would highlight this historical remark: 'China needs natural resources and Angola wants development' (Weimer & Vines, 2012). The visit of the Chinese Vice President and the future secretary-general of the Chinese Communist Party, Xi Jinping to Angola's Luanda in January 2011 further cemented the relations between the two nation-states. Xi Jinping's visit had seen the signing of brand new agreements in mining, transportation, and construction sectors including augmentation of further credit lines (Vines & Campos, 2010).

5.3.3. Sinopec's first steps: Promotion of credit lines

After the opening of China's first credit line in Angola in 2004, Sinopec managed to secure its first stake in the oil industry of Angola of the same year "50 per cent of the BP-operated block 18". SSI was developed for the exploration of the stake on the block. This is also a joint business deal "majority-owned by Sinopec (55% stake) with Beiya (currently Dayuan) International Development Ltd, including China Sonangol International Holding Ltd (CSIH)" in charge of 31.5% and SSI respectively holding 13.5% (Weimer & Vines, 2012: 88). SSI has also managed to secure a 7 year loan that was covered by a pre-completion guarantee from Sinopec during the construction period. This was amongst the first Sonangol deal involving the Chinese off-taker; amounting to a 3 billion loan that was reimbursed back over 7 years by the delivery of the Angolan crude oil to China"s International United Petroleum and Chemicals (UNIPEC) at a considerable rate of 40000 barrels per day for the first three-year period (Weimer & Vines, 2012: 92).

5.3.4. Small scale trade and restaurants

The data accessible from the Angola National Agency of Private Investment (ANIP) from 2005 depicts a total of 290 foreign investment-recognised projects estimated to value US$2.5 billion (Ferreira, 2008). China is considerably at the 4th place behind Portugal, Brazil and South Africa, although ahead of the USA and UK. From this, one can conclude that the Chinese general FDI in Angola has not been considerably high historically. However, this has changed especially after the third FOCAC conference at which a US$5 billion development fund was promised to Angola as a means to motivate Chinese companies to invest heavily in Africa. In the contemporary period and/or the past two decades, there are growing signs of Chinese investment in the small-scale retail trade and restaurants in Angola. China is also extensively involved in Angola's iron and steel industry including cement production (Ferreira, 2008).

The Chinese-Japan Corporation is heavily invested in the Kicombo commune cement factory in Angola's province of Kwanza Sul. Chung Fong Holding has also principally signed a 15-year management contract with the Luanda government for the steel producer *Siderurgia Nacional* and Luanda based iron reparation which ceased operations in early 2000. In 2010, Hangxiao steel-structured signed two contracts for the supply and/or provision of construction materials including the "installation of the steel structures, which will be produced in the company's factory" (Ferreira, 2008: 305). The very same ought to have been generated with the modernisation and diversification of the *Siderurgia Nacional* company's plant. The launching of the CSG Automóvel Angola through the China International Fund of about US$30 million investment was also to assist assemble Japanese Nissan Cars in Luanda. With such continuous small investments in the country, China has shown considerable interest in the extractive industries of the African nation-state (Ferreira, 2008).

5.3.5 Access to Angolan diamonds

For the diamond sector, the agreement between the China International Fund (CIF) Limited and the Endiama EP (key state player in the diamond sector) was fully endorsed by the Angolan Council of Ministers and came into effect in April 2005. This has initially approved that Endiama EP could take part in the construction of the Hong Kong-based company called the Endiama China International Holding Limited. The latter was developed with the principal intention of prospecting, producing and marketing diamonds. Including the cutting of diamonds and producing jewellery and alternative diamond linked activities in Hong Kong (Ferreira 2008; Legodi 2021, interview).

5.3.6. Copper

Based on Maphaka (2021, interview) and Miami-Herald (2004), the recent development points out to an increasing Chinese interest in the African nation-state's copper reserves. One of the leading Chinese companies in the assistance of the exploitation of the Mavojo Tetelo e Bembe copper mines falling within the Municipality of Maquela do Zombo in Uíge Province is the China National Electric Equipment Corporation which has been involved in the construction of the viable electricity infrastructure as well (Legodi 2021, interview).

5.3.7. Promotion of debt

The China-Angola bilateral trade stood at US$120 billion in the year 2010 making the African nation-state the largest African trading partner. The increased bilateral trade is a by-product of the huge Chinese interest in the African nation-state's crude oil. Zhao (2011) who relies heavily on the analysis provided by Economist Intelligence Unit highlights that crude oil composes Angola's 95% of the exports in which China remains an important trade destination. It is within this context that the Chinese Exim Bank has been at the facilitation centre of the increasing Chinese-Angola cooperation in the crude oil trade. Bearing this in mind, we have seen the Chinese Exim Bank providing US$10.5 billion in oil-backed credit lines to the Angola. Although these credit lines were enabled specifically for the targeting of the public investment in Angola, Corkin (2011: 15) argues that "Chinese companies are largely contracted to undertake required projects and are paid directly by China Exim Bank, which writes down the contract amount against oil sales made to the Chinese government." Generally, the conditions and terms are comprehensively often generous as compared to some of the Chinese counterparts both in Europe and American oil-backed financing.

One of the significant things that deserve attention is the agreements on the public tenders especially those in the construction and civil engineering contracts on Angola's reconstruction deals, designated to be awarded (70%) to mostly Chinese state and private Companies rubber-stamped by the Beijing government (Corkin, 2011). From such Chinese approved loans, the rest of the 30% is then dispensed to the Angolan private sector for the sole reason of motivating Angola enterprises to engage in the reconstruction process even though the labour contract is not completely 100% Angolan in under both reference terms.

China's presence in Angola shows an interesting case for China's oil partnership with African nation-states, and there appears to be a compounded interplay of various challenges and benefits included. The modest Chinese credit lines and promotion of debt in Angola has gained considerable admiration in the African continent and even beyond Africa (Vines & Campos, 2010). One can argue that the Chinese Exim Bank's strategy of pouring loans into Angola for oil deals has speedily secured an attractive place for China as compared to the Asian giant's international financial counterparts in the Global North. Under normal circumstances, China's economic policy worldwide is often both goal and resource-driven and oriented and has had a considerable benefit through its non-interference approach to challenge its various Eastern and Western major powers' aspirations of trade advancement in Angola. Nonetheless, the contemporary scholarly literature divulges that the Chinese promotion of debt trap diplomacy is the most currently discussed Chinese model of engagement with Africa and a pure symbol of recolonisation utilising economic neo-colonialism (Wekesa 2021, interview; Rapanyane, 2020).

Equally, Paraskova (2020) has alluded that China's engagement with Angola through the promotion of debt-trap diplomacy has promoted a literal exchange of minerals for loans. These loans have also reached a point whereby they are no longer repayable by the government in Luanda without disturbing the normal provision of social needs to citizens. Within this context, Olander, Staden and Alves (2018) have observed that as of 2018, Angola had been indebted to China and owed the Asian giant roughly US$60 billion that was secured in the last two decades. This is besides Angola owning abundant oil reserves, whereby one would have anticipated that it would sell its crude oil within the global market to ascertain enough funds to repay the loans.

Payne and Zhdannikov (2020) highlight that China's neo-colonial approach of debt trapping African nation-states does not allow any debt-trapped nation-state to put their mineral resources on the global open market for debt repayment purposes. Alternatively, the oil reserves found in Angola including other natural/mineral resources are utilised as collateral for the Luanda government accrued debt accumulated over time. This suggests that inasmuch as Angola is an independent African nation-state, it is running short of clearness as its reliant biggest trade destination is Chinese trapped. Worst, as the African nation-state keeps going back to Chinese financial institutions for more loans; the condition of repayment becomes more and more complicated to handle. The resulting consequence would be the loss of strategic national resources even though this is not an expected global norm and practice (Olander et al., 2018).

5.3.8. Desire to bring Chinese workers into Angola

Certain autonomous evaluations proclaim that there are more than a hundred thousand Chinese workers found in Angola in the contemporary period. João Manuel Bernardo (Angolan Ambassador to China) announced publicly that in the year 2008 alone, his consulate had issued more than 40 000 visas to the Chinese to travel to Angola (de-Morais, 2011). In a certain single project, located in the outskirts of Luanda of the Kilamba Kiaxi Social housing development, China International Trust and Investment Corporation employed more than 10 000 Chinese workers and several local Angolan workers (Mosala 2021, Interview). This is a state-owned enterprise that constructed apartheid buildings and supported infrastructure, in a project that stretched for up to 38 months valued at $3.53 billion (de-Morais, 2011).

Most of the Chinese workers found in Angola are located in the reconstruction projects, although some have divaricated out and had then become real estate developers, photocopy shop owners, retailers, masseurs and street hawkers. The government in Luanda is impressed by the fact that Chinese nationals are skilled and hardworking (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019a). This is because such a responsibility is often attributed to the nation-state’s institutionalised culture of disregard for public safety, corruption and incompetence. Above all, the Portuguese and Brazilian construction companies have also adeptly exploited this environment for many decades, leading Angolans to formulate a definite lexicon for the evolving public works such as the Styrofoam bridge and disposable roads (de-Morais, 2011).

5.4. Key drivers of China’s DRC policy

5.4.1. Promotion of credit lines

Just like in Angola, the majority of Chinese workers in the DRC are also engaged extensively in the reconstruction sector. Precisely, China has committed to construct a national road in the DRC that would stretch to Kinshasa's central station from the

D'jili Airport in Kinshasa through a Sicomines-type barter deal. The actualisation of this dream would be economically and/or financially aided by the “China Development Bank credit line” (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019b: 4). Jansson (2011: 24-25) also believes that the loans poured into this project would be paid or reimbursed with profits that would be made by the largest deal between both nation-states (Sicomines).

5.4.2. Complete realisation of the Sicomines deal

The Sicomines deal is a by-product of the work of the Chinese SOE known as the China Railway Engineering Corporation (CREC). CREC is broadly comprehended by international observers as being amongst the largest international manufacturing companies (Curtis, 2008). The company traversed the Sicomines as it was in the admittance of formulating its game plan of diversity to flesh out into the mineral resource extraction (Nkuna 2021, Interview). Two direct institutions are invested with the administration of this deal: “l'Agence Congolaise des Grands Travaux and the Bureau de Coordination et de Suivi du Programme Sino–Congolais”. The Ministry of Infrastructure, Public Works and Reconstruction is in charge of the former in all projects that deal with the construction of infrastructure; and the latter administers over the covenant conferences, budgetary side and surveying including the entire mining project (Jansson, 2011: 09). All loans furnished for the Sicomines deal are financed through the China Exim Bank which is operating under the Chinese government as an appointee bureau. The ultimate purpose of China Exim Bank’s credit line is to ensure the subsidisation of the post-civil war construction is the way of building infrastructure so as to appear in the best possible terms of endorsing the DRC’s economic development (Jansson, 2011).

Both the DAC and the OECD’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) of the Chinese credit lines can be broadly understood as vouchsafe portion. This is one method of calculating the costs brought by the loans based on lowness and also highlighting them in the form of give-and-take methods (OECD 2011). In respect to the original 2008 Sicomines deal, there is a piece of clear evidence in the loan conditionalities exemplifying that they do not necessarily meet the concurrence conditions. This is though the amended 2009 version depicts an interest rate decline of loans provided for the development of the infrastructure in the country from “6.6% to 4.4%” (Marysse & Geenen, 2009).

By the year 2011, this deal was hypothesized by both the Bretton woods institutions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) to be “at least 42%, which far exceeds the 25% minimum level required by OECD–DAC.” Practically, this implied that in its re-evaluated configuration, all the conditional loans which were furnished through the substructure of the Sicomines did not adhere to the “OECD–DAC's definition of official development assistance” (Jansson, 2011:12; Marysee & Geenen, 2009). Within the context of the initial ingredient of bargaining, the complemental nature of the initial China-DRC trade and Sicomines deal drift is only roundabout (Curtis, 2008). Therefore, under this deal, all the mineral resources mined in the DRC can only be predisposed to the global mineral merchandise and/or straight to China, more like all the alternative Chinese mining corporations in Africa, although this is not broadly explained by the deal (Jansson, 2011).

Although the Sicomines deal is a by-product of growing China- DRC commercial relations, it still offers several problems. First, there is no equity and transparency. This is made up of the great environment of opacity under which this deal was signed. That is why it had initially created important complaints from both the global community (more especially western nation-states) and even within the DRC. The secrecy that surrounds this deal encouraged the IMF and various other international and local civil society groups to end up requesting that it be made public (Kabemba, 2016).

An extraordinary Chinese perspective on this deal postulated by Lee (2010) demonstrates that “it will increase the DRC’s potential foreign debt to an unacceptable level and the IMF demanded that it be reduced in size” even though the meeting of this demand took some time. After the China Exim Bank reduced the amount of investment from $9 to $6 billion, several vindicated critics argued that the deal was mostly unfavourable to the DRC, although the reduction could not permanently do away with the existing imbalance; but instead worsened it as the other parts of the deal were not revised based on the reduced capital investment from the China Exim Bank (Kabemba, 2016: 80). In that way, the capital investment reduction did not automatically lead to the reduction of tonnage or exportation of minerals to China. This situation has created an impression of two interpretations relating to the incapacity of the DRC as a compromised nation-state to be accountable especially when it comes to interrogating the deal due to corruption and/or either a symptomatic act of the DRC that cannot question the complex development of agreements (Curtis, 2008).

The invocation of the shocking behaviour of China cannot be avoided as it failed to assist DRC in understanding the inherence imbalance communicated in the deal. Also, Sicomines is far different from those other mining deals signed by the DRC with the other Western nation-states; as the Chinese MNCs thought the deal has welcomed a substantial holiday, customs and fiscal exemptions (Curtis, 2008). The global observation from this would be that it is a known fact that excessive exemptions have deprived most of the African resource endowed nation-states of benefiting from their mineral resources. Additionally, the fiscal revenues predicted from the augmented commercial ties with Beijing are precipitated by the exemptions of tax agreeable to the SOEs of China who have extensive operations in the Sicomines framework and by the private businesses of China who desire to operate in the informal sector (Lee, 2010).

Of equal importance is that “neither the Congolese nor the Chinese parties have properly explained how the minerals are to be priced, nor infrastructure is to be built and at what cost” (Global Witness, 2011: online). The lack of explanation of the imbalanced benefits to accrue to both China and DRC is of serious disquiet. The intercepted analysis on the deal reveals that the chances of the DRC losing out are very high. One of the issues that might lead to this is the lack of the internal Kinshasa government discussion on the political economy of risks and costs of this very Chinese ambitious investment deal in the DRC (Curtis, 2008). What the government in Kinshasa is only focused on is the deal benefits that came with the increased bargaining power for minerals exchange by recognising alternative investment sources beyond the normal western investment.

In addition, this deal is a composite of the foreign clause absolving the venture from any new laws that may be instituted by the government in Kinshasa. This simply means that if the DRC reviews its legislation in either customs or tax or even environmental legislation (e.g. mining code), all Chinese companies are to be exempted. In the same context, this deal does not offer any benefits linked to the possible windfall taxes to the DRC and this move has severely exposed the DRC's vulnerability to the global finance mechanism (Hellendorff, 2011). At the speed of exposing the Congolese government's deficiency in parleying mining contracts and development agreements; it also exposed the claim of the Asian giant to economic win-win collaboration. As well, China manages the project in its entirety. We have seen the Gecamines (DRC state company) partnering with the Chinese companies; but it remains a passive partner and does not play any administrative role in the partnership (Curtis, 2008).

This can be partly attributed to the fact that Chinese companies are in charge of making decisions when it comes to operations, production, importation of equipment, exports and the use of Chinese personnel in various projects. The foregoing analysis reveals the Sicomines deal as a departure from the models employed by Western nation-states in Africa, even though not changing the colonial extractive approach of the West (Curtis, 2008). China's rhetoric regarding a win-win approach to DRC in partnership display a realist international relations where the pursuit of national interests matters the most, and in which the power partner state establishes itself and dictate the cooperation terms (Kabemba, 2016). The intervention of China in the DRC is a preservation of the old extractive approach that contemplates the DRC as a mineral resources reservoir to be cheaply accessed. The problem in this context may be the DRC is incapacitated to define, defend and engage its interests globally (Nkuna 2021, interview).

5.4.3. Investment drivers

5.4.3.1. Infrastructure

Despite the huge infrastructural investment carried out across the Sicomines agreement framework, the government in Beijing together with the companies are involved in various alternative infrastructural projects in the DRC. Such activity has included the renovation of the road between the Kavumu and the Bukavu airport within the South Kivu Province which has been moderately financed by donations from

Beijing. The contractor was the “China Communications Construction Company (CCCC)” (Jansson, 2009: 16). The Sino-Congolese Program administered by the Congolese Agency for Major Construction Works (CAMCW) also included tandem infrastructural projects that were initially designed in line with the same barter principles as the Sicomines deal. Topmost, both the ACGT and the Bureau for Coordination and Monitoring of the Sino-Congolese Programme (BCPSC) negotiated with Sinosure to finance the “Kinshasa’s Avenue de l’Université”’s[14] renovation. The independent that was given the reconstruction project was the “China Guangdong Provincial ChangDa Highway Engineering Corporation (CGCD)” and the investment was to be repaid in various chrome and nickel concessions (Jansson, 2009: 17).

Also, both the BSCPSC and the ACGT negotiated with the China Development Bank (CDB) to finance the establishment of the highway in between the N’Djili Kinshasa Airport and Kinshasa’s central station including the airports’ modernisation. This investment was to be repaid through the cobalt and copper extracted from the Kolwezi[15] concessions in the Katanga Province and CCCC was the project contractor. One unfamiliar feature of the Chinese-DRC relations is that both CREC and Sinohydro have been active in the latter as contractors for various Western and African funding agencies. Sinohydro has executed the construction of a various and large road projects financed by the World Bank. Such projects includes the one between Kimpesi and Matadi; a road between Niania and Beni [upgraded as part of the Sicomines deal); and a bridge in the province of Bandundu. Also, the Sinohdydro has signed a contract with the African Development Bank (AfDB) in the year 2008 (Jansson, 2009) for the tandem road projects in the province of Bandundu that were both completed in the year 2010. There is also a completed reconstruction project in the artery of Kinshasa, *le Boulevard du 30 Juin* [16] and this project was financed by both the DRC government and the city of Kinshasa but carried out successfully by the CREC.

5.3.3.2. Telecommunications

[14] This simply means the University of Kinshasa
[15] Kolwesi is the capital city of Lualaba Province in the south of the DRC, west of Likasi
[16] This is a major 5-km street in Kinshasa, capital city of the DRC.

In the DRC, there is a huge China-Congo Telecommunications Corporation that was established by the Chinese telecoms equipment provider- ZTE Corporation. The entity was established in partnership with the DRC Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (MPTT) in the year 2000 (Jansson 2009). This joint business deal is a beneficiary of China Exim Bank's RMB 80 million of the concessional finance (ZTE, 2000). Although MTN was the leading bidder, (Africa Asia Confidential 2009), ZTE has since sold its 51% stake in the company to the France Telecom-Orange (ZTE, 2011). Additionally, the two Chinese companies of China International Telecommunication Construction Corporation (CITCC) and Huawei have implemented the first phases of the two pioneering projects in support of the MPTT. These projects were financed by concessional loans from the China Exim Bank.

5.4.3.3. Forestry sector

Although not an important feature of contemporary China-DRC relations, forestry is an interesting sector. Within the context of trade, China's share of timber imports remains low. Although expected to simultaneously increase, not so many Chinese companies have foreign concessions in the DRC (Tidal, 2007). There is only amongst the few Chinese companies called the La Nouvelle Société de Bois Yang Shushan which has a forest concession in the DRC especially in the Ingende[17] in the Équateur province. This company's concession was granted in the year 2005 and covers 188 672 hectares. As part of this concessional agreement, Yang Shushan has since through the FOCAC pledged to construct a power transmission line between the Bandundu and Mbandaka including a hydroelectric power plant in the Ruki river as part of the packaged agreement. Although this concessional project was cancelled at a later stage due to the violation of the DRC's moratorium on the issuance of the forestry titles by the Inter-Ministerial Commission accountable for the review of logging titles (Greenpeace 2008). Since the cancellation of this major deal, no any other historical major deal in this sector has been awarded to any of the Chinese companies.

[17] Ingende is a town in the Province of Équateur in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the headquarters of Ingende Territory.

5.4.4. Access to mineral resources

It is also interesting to take note of the fact that even though China's arrival in Sub-Saharan Africa was late, its entrance into the DRC was swift and sudden. For example, the investment of China into the nation-state's mining sector drastically rose from 10% to 50% by mid-2013, purportedly encompassing over 90% of the exports from the mineral-rich Katanga province (Economist Intelligence Unit 2013). Since the early 2000s, the active diplomacy of China in the DRC has been part and parcel of the Asian giant's foreign policy which include the search for commodities in the brand-new markets globally and/or abroad, intending to pursue its economic development for the maintenance of its own social and political stability. Minerals remain important for the development of China, which explicate its strong interest in the central African nation-state's cobalt, platinum, copper, diamonds and manganese ore (Wekesa 2021, interview; UNCTAD, 2012).

The collaboration between both nation-states (China and DRC) burgeoned after Joseph Kabila won the 2006 democratic presidential elections and he thus needed investment for the rebuilding of the country. The government in Beijing was seen suitable to assist as the best "alternative" to all forms of Western aid to meet the interests of Kinshasa. This conflux of national interests led to the intensification of economic ties and a cooperative and friendly relationship between both nation-states. In between 2007 and 2010, a group of Chinese State-Owned enterprises and the government in Kinshasa signed various "resources for infrastructure" deals: several public infrastructural build-up projects financed by loans from China; and to warrant reimbursement, a Chinese-Congolese joint business deal was formulated for the extraction and the selling of cobalt, copper and gold (Wekesa 2021, interview; Maphaka 2021, interview). Whilst this had initially brought about the brand new opportunity and windows- and even increased a room to manoeuvre for the DRC as the Asian giant accorded the Cconflict torn nation-state a "competitive leverage" bestowed by its financial amplitude to replace Western aid; and also generated the risk of fabricating a new South-South dependency (London School Economics and Political Science, 2015: online). China is not only the top buyer in DRC as it accounts for 90% of the entire mineral and fuel exports; but sharp in increasing the dependency tactics as observed every year in the increase of DRC's exports of copper and base metals to China (Legodi 2021, interview).

The increasing control of China over the cobalt and copper resources in the DRC could indeed pose a serious threat to all Western and/or European market participants (Nkuna 2021, interview). Based on Roskill's conviction as quoted by the London School Economics and Political Science (2015: online):

> *China's decision to write off debts from the DRC and welcome the country as a new partner for the Belt and Road Initiative is likely to further drive cooperation between the two countries and incentivize more Chinese miners, like China Molybdenum, to make new investments into the Congolese copper and cobalt industry, increasing their ownership in local mines*

The DRC is home to over 51% of the world's cobalt reserves, based on the 2019 data released by the USA Geological Survey. In the year 2020, the DRC provided as good as 70% of the entire cobalt feedstock production worldwide (Rapanyane, 2021). Before this, over 40% of the country's cobalt mining capacity was hitherto in the hands of the Chinese companies due to the decades-long development aid and investment into the central African country, with various 'resource-for-infrastructure' deals having been negotiated and signed since the early 1990s (Rapanyane, 2021). In line with Roskill's as postulated by the London School Economics and Political Science (2015: online):

> *On the cobalt refining side, particularly for the production of chemicals suitable for battery applications, China plays an even more dominant role, with its production of cobalt sulphate and oxides accounting for around 80% of the global total output in 2020*

Accordingly, China has entered the central African country bearing in mind that it contained roughly half of the global reserves of cobalt and an important portion (10%) of the high-grade copper ore whose value in the international market has enormously increased over the past decade. As such, most of the Chinese MNCs have since flooded the DRC since the historical landmark election win of Joseph Kabila in the year 2006. It is in this context that scholars would know and understand that with a democratic government in power, a more commendatory environment for the management of resources and validation of the trade deals assisted in attracting most of the Chinese MNCs' investment into the DRC. China is now considered the largest investor of the DRC and most of the optimists have voiced out their views and deliberated how this is most likely to drive the DRC to prosperity and recovery. On the other hand, pessimists have argued that the DRC will be stripped of its most resource wealth that could have assisted to uplift the majority out of poverty in exchange for the enrichment of the elite few or Congolese officials (Rapanyane, 2021).

5.4.5. Promotion of Chinese MNCs into DRC mining

There is a need to discuss the signing of the historically biggest trade deal between China and African nation-states and particularly the DRC in 2007 known as the Sicomines. This is one particular deal that motivated the extensive debates on its impact on the African nation-state's strategic development. This was completely anticipated, as it was extraordinary to have been an exclusive biggest economic deal the nation-state has negotiated with billions of investment dollars descending into the DRC and billions of valued resources being extracted extensively in exchange. This deal has considerably undergone an evolutionary process since the year 2007 and the mining sector has always been at the forefront. There have been grey areas since the agreement's onset and throughout its negotiations. For example, most of the deal's terms and conditions were not outrightly explained even though the deal was all about the extraction of the DRC cobalt and other mineral resources in exchange for various construction of some railways, roads, health centres, hospitals and universities etc. Through this deal, such construction is dependent on the determinable profits following extraction and supply to the marketplace (Rapanyane, 2021).

The precariousness and instability of the government in Kinshasa has been perceived, with various verdicts often quickly reserved as they are made, and the likelihood of conflict impeding with operations had been an agonising feature *vis-à-vis* of the DRC end of the deal. Astonishingly though, the deal has also received super storm from the side of China, with one of its chief financer, Exim banker, pulling out as the financier in the year 2012 before coming back to resume its involvement in the following year (London School Economics and Political Science, 2015: online). This may have been because China needs DRC *vis-à-vis* as the Chinese MNCs have been mining in the DRC for decades now with huge several Chinese artisanal miners working and living in the DRC. The most evident thing is that most of the Chinese workers' involvement in the nation-state comes *vis-à-vis* industrial mining contracts awarded through the state bodies.

It is unquestionably true that the DRC State-Owned mining company Gecamines which gesticulated for the Sicomines deal on behalf of the DRC has been predominantly dealing with big Chinese companies that are often State-owned. Although, the "the idea of a homogenous Chinese-style state-sponsored involvement in the DRC mining industry is an inaccurate portrayal of the reality" (Ryan, 2014: online). China still controls and owns the vast portion of DRC's mining resources (90% of the processing plants in the province of Katanga is Chinese owned). With its heavy investment into the nation-state, China has been accused of neo-colonising the DRC through a new fabricated "win-win" approach as postulated by Chinese leaders and others (Nkuna 2021, interview). It is mostly clear that the significance of sending more Chinese MNCs into the mining sector of the DRC, especially of the cobalt and copper has served the economy of China well as the catalyst for investment in the resource-rich DRC. The current study though understands that in such unequal power relations between both nation-states, the development of both economic and political ties is heavily driven and dictated by China's self-interest (Rapanyane, 2021).

This is particularly important as sovereign nation-states do not engage in trade agreements outside their self-interest. It is safe to argue that China is in DRC for commerce and not charity. Whether the Asian giant will emerge victorious in assisting the DRC with economic development is yet to be observed in the long run. The complete success of the Sicomines deal is still contingent on several factors such as the agreement on the actual wealth to be extracted, commodity prices and future demand including domestic factors that determine which label should be used to describe the role of China in the African country (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2015). What is most clear is that all the Chinese "sweetheart deals" in the DRC are well known to all the citizens including historical deals from those which plundered the DRC resources from the times of Leopold through to Mobutu Sese Seko and even beyond but still laud the involvement as more favourable than all of them- with the Western nation-states interference included (London School Economics and Political Science, 2015).

5.5. Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has contributed satisfactorily to the subject of China's international relations with both Angola and the DRC. Suffice to say that the current researcher could not go straight into analysing all the fundamental key drivers of China's engagement with both Angola and DRC without diverting attention to the discussion and broader analysis of China's global foreign policy posture. This takes the form of reflecting deeply into the BRI. This policy broadly reveals that China wants to connect itself with the whole of Central Asia, parts of Africa and Europe. This to some extent is a sample of the benefit for the Asian giant within the global broader win-win prospect in the proximate "Belt" States that can benefit from the bigger foreign investment in line with China's attempts at progressing towards the attainment of its economic goals. Such goals are the real drivers of the BRI globally and include the rise of China as a global economic power; global investor and energy importer.

China is also eyeing a greater international economic influence through accessing the various growth trends of the emerging market economies. This would be expected naturally to call for transformation and encourage the movement of the global economic system from the peripheries to the centre stage of global economic decision making processes. Equally, the current researcher has revealed that China is driven by various factors in both Angola and DRC. Within the context of Angola, China is driven by the desire to access Angola's crude oil, access to its oil blocks including the promotion of credit lines, investment into the small-scale trade and restaurants and access to Angola's abundance of diamonds and copper. It practise sought to dump some of the Chinese workers into Angola. More or less like the Asian giant's engagement with the DRC: promotion of credit lines, complete recognition of the Sicomines deal, investment drivers, access to mineral resources and also promotion of various Chinese MNCs into the DRC are the key features of the drivers of China into the DRC.

The next chapter examines most of the Chinese companies operating in both Angola and DRC's two sectors of Mining and Manufacturing.

CHAPTER SIX

An Examination of Chinese companies operating in both Angola and DRC's mining and manufacturing sectors

6.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the activities of most Chinese companies operating in both Angola and DRC's two sectors of mining and manufacturing. This is done through a critical overview and assessment of the various Chinese mining and manufacturing companies in both countries. The objective of this chapter is fully realised through the broader overview of the China-Angola and China-DRC trade and economic agreements and a deep reflection on some of the key Chinese MNCs' operations in both Angola and DRC's mining and manufacturing sectors.

6.2. China Angola trade and economic agreements

Zeng Peiyang (Former Chinese Vice Premier) inscribed a total of nine cooperation deals with Angola during his most recent visit to the African nation-state. The deals predominantly include the development of Angola's gas and oil riches but also cover widespread financial aid and infrastructure development. Most of the Chinese-Angola signed deals are therefore related to the combination of oil and energy sectors. The governments in both Luanda and Beijing have also signed various deals that oversees cooperation between Angola Ministries of Petroleum and Geology and Mining including China's National Commission for Development and Reform that places the attention on technical aid. Amongst some of the concrete oil agreements signed between China and Angola is a general agreement on the long term provision of oil to China's Sinopec oil company (afrol News, 2021).

Both China and Angola have also endorsed a deepened cooperation in the development of infrastructure in the African country. This is one of the sectors that China has vast technical knowledge in and that some of the Chinese engineers are presently serving various governments globally in several developing nation-states in large-scale infrastructural projects. The last visit of the Vice Premier Peiyang was a considerable door-opener for the Asian giant's private sector to enter into Angola's booming telecom market. A “US$ 69” million agreement between China’s ZTE Corporation and Angola’s Mundo Startel to formulate telephone networks in Angola was also authorised during his visit in March 2021. ZTE is also poised to be coming to infuse about “US$ 400 million” in Angola, and an extra US$ 300 million which will be utilised for the expansion and modernisation of Angola’s Telecom fixed network line. The vice-premier also promised that China would infuse an extra US$ 100 million into the Angolan military communications for the development of a telecommunications training institute for Angolan employees and a mobile telephone factory. This follows the historically good relations between both governments in Luanda and Beijing (afrol News, 2021: online).

6.3. China - DRC trade and economic agreements

A look into the trade figures reveals that China’s economic involvement in Africa has significantly transformed. In between the years 1996 and 2015, China’s Africa trade share surged from 8% to 9% with a trading volume of 32 billion in the year 2005 that keeps climbing the ladder (Hoslag et al., 2007; Davies 2007: 25; Rapanyane, 2020). This increase is attributed to the principal rise in trade of natural resources. In the bilateral trade, both Sudan and Angola are comparatively disadvantaged with China as raw materials are mainly exported without any value-added and various cheap Chinese manufactured products are then imported (Marysse & Geenen, 2009).

The same patterns are also depicted in the trade between China and DRC. In less than two past decades, the significance of the bilateral Sino-Congolese trade has dramatically increased. In the year 2021 (first half), it stood at $6.49 billion increasing by 108.9 % year-to-year with China’s direct investment in the DRC amounting up to $176 million making China the biggest importer of exports from China (Global Times 2021). Up to the early 1990s, the DRC had just a symbolic value for the government in Beijing. The latter tried to preserve the friendly relations with the DRC of Mobutu through the construction of prestigious and large infrastructural projects that no other western donor wanted to finance. Such projects included the “People’s Palace’ and ‘The Kinshasa football Stadium’ (Marysse & Geenen, 2009: 377).

The seemingly superficial investment of China into the DRC has changed into vigorous and tangible involvement. From the year 1997, various engagements for authentic and future cooperation agreements have culminated with Laurent Kabila and his son Josepha Kabila. Presently, most of the Chinese companies are mostly active within the Katanga Province. The recently signed Sino-Congolese agreements are variated into a more formalised and organised structure, commercially and industrially sound exploitation of the African country’s natural resources. This is mostly explained in the comprehensive modernisation of the mining infrastructure and a reformation of the transport routes utilised for the export of natural resources. Most observably, the combination of copper and cobalt has caught the attention of Chinese MNCs. From the viewpoint of the Non-Ferrous Metallurgie companies, mineral ores are commercially most fascinating due to the more complex refinery process that allows them to realise a substantial value-add (Rapanyane, 2021).

In spite all of the above, Chinese contemptible imports are best suited for the DRC population’s modest incomes. Additionally, there is substantial production of manufactured goods within the African country. Most of the Chinese imports do not make up a competitive threat as they could have done in other African nation-states. Apart from that, this definite result only survives when the DRC considers price superior or equal to the international market prices for all its exports. In the paradoxical case, when the Chinese purchase at underneath world market price levels; the DRC advantages for the DRC fade away completely. These are the risks mostly found in weak African nation-states that enter contract negotiations with stronger commercial and economic partners in the international system (Rapanyane, 2021).

6.3.1. Characteristics of Chinese-DRC trade and economic agreements

Both China and the DRC have centralised their trade and economic engagements within the context of the 2007 Protocol including the Sicomines deal [2008-present] in the contemporary period. The China Exim bank is at the forefront of the financing of the various projects in the DRC. Just after emerging victorious from the 2006 general elections, Joseph Kabila announced this cinq chantiers (five work sites) that were going to be the principal pillars of his development policy in the DRC. The Chinese loans into this development policy have assisted a lot in terms of his government ending up meeting some of the ambitious goals he has initially set. The Sicomines deal in particular and unfortunately has been mistakenly understood as a grant although it is a loan that will be reimbursed through the granting of the necessary concessions (Tshilombo, 2007).

Admittedly, in most of the organised joint ventures between both countries, the Asian giant always emerges victorious in amassing two-thirds of the voting powers in the venture boards, leaving the DRC with only one third. This is one of the significant points of departure in the determination of the terms of reimbursement. As understood broadly by Brautigam (2011), the government in Beijing utilises a different set of tools for the facilitation of its international economic engagements and the Sicomines deal has been one of the more prominent exemplars of this. This is because of the political backing of the Chinese SOEs' request for mining titles by the government in Beijing. One may argue that such political backing has the ramifications of making DRC access even more loans for the infrastructural refurbishment as it continues to even be more indebted. This deal's arrangement as unfamiliar as it is in the DRC has formulated uncertainties over the labelling of the agreement since its initial inception, regarding whether it is an aid agreement, investment deal, trade agreement or all three. This section as it seeks to showcase the contemporary Chinese trade and economic engagement with the DRC then dwells into how well this agreement has depicted the components of the development assistance (in OECD-DAC terms) and investment although not that well distressed with trade (how the extracted minerals are to be sold and to who).

Going by the OECD-DAC standards, any loan to a developmental nation-state ought to be comprehended as an ODA if it is apportioned by different official agencies including the state, provincial and governments or even administrative agencies. That is then arranged with the economic development promotion and welfare of the developing nation-states as its predominant objective. Also, it should be characteristically concessional and devolve a grant element of at least 25%. Most of the loans characterising the ongoing Chinese trade and economic engagement with the DRC are fortunately provided by the China Exim Bank is administered and owned by the government in Beijing to make it seem like an official agency (Corkin, 2011).

As both China and DRC continue to have stable political and strategic inter-relations, China will continue with the promotion of the credit line as wrongly interpreted to finance the post-conflict reconstruction in the DRC and promotion of economic development whilst the opposite is true. To both Marysee and Geenen, the general Chinese investment into the DRC was also made by private companies (Marysee & Geenen, 2009). The investment as-it-is of private character is not disparate from other large-scale ventures operations in the mining sector of the DRC. In connection with the trade component, the connecting lines between the Sino-Congolese and the Sicomines agreement trade flows are only indirect. This is because of the mineral products that may be sold on the global market and/or simply to China, as it is the context for all mining companies with operations in the DRC, although this is not modulated in the initial agreement (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019b).

6.4. Chinese companies in Angola

6.4.1. Chinese Oil Companies: Sinopec, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC)

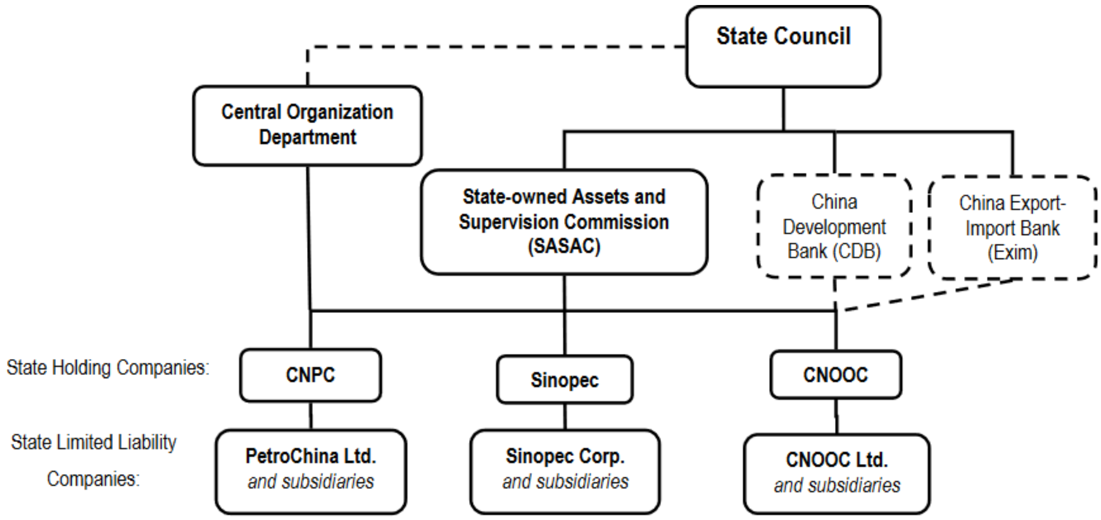
One of the most suitable case studies of the Chinese companies with operations in the DRC is Sinopec, China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation. This is an energy and chemical company that has operations both in the downstream and up-mid sectors. Equally, this company is one of the biggest integrated chemical and energy companies in China with various operations sheathing a wide range of areas with the principal scope encompassing: “(i) oil and gas exploration and production, (ii) extraction, (iii) oil refining, (iv) import/export agency business of crude oil, and (v) development and application of technology”. Sinopec is the biggest supplier and producer of refined oil products (diesel, gasoline) and crucial petrochemical products in China. Into the bargain, Sinopec Corp remains the second-biggest crude oil producer in China after the Daqing oilfield under the operations of the CNPC (Vanhanen & Yiu, 2012: 71).

In the year 2000, the State-controlled China Petrochemical Corporation (CPC) consolidated Sinopec Corp to develop a brand-new, big enterprise identity, the

Sinopec Group. This is broadly understood on the Sinopec's website as "a state-authorized investment institution and state holding company" (Sinopec, 2012a: online). Nevertheless, the ownership of the Sinopec Group is still under China as well as Sinopec (here on: Sinopec Corp) is still indexed in Hong Kong, London Stock Exchange (LSE) and New York (NY) including in the Shanghai Stock Exchange (SSE) (Sinopec, 2012a).

This is to generally not avail the stock to only "Shanghai stock exchange" (domestic investors) but also to "non-Chinese investors". To comprehend the history of Sinopec, it is important to take note of the "Chinese oil industry development". Historically, little was known in respect to the oil companies, which started their development in the 1960s until the "open door policy" implementation in the 1980s. Considerably, there are other two principal oil companies in China, which include the CNPC and CNOOC, which were established earlier in the 1980s and were followed by Sinopec in the year 1998. The Beijing government restructured the industry of oil through redistribution of assets and the reorganization of the entire supply chain and responsibilities of the three companies in the year 1998 when they were setting off for oil exploration including in Angola (Houser, 2008: 155; Francisco & Baechler, 2013). After this restructuring, these companies started to operate independently with little influence from the Beijing government and they were set to compete with each other globally. The directorial charter below shows how well the Chinese oil industry led by the three companies discussed above are under the State Council's control (Guo, 2010).

Figure 3: Organizational Chart of Chinese State-Owned Oil Companies



Source: Francisco and Baechler (2013: 21).

For the Sinopec corporation, the company boards consist of 15 members of which 11 are executive directors and the outstanding 4 being non-executive directors. The directors are elected after every three years at the shareholder's general meeting. The candidates for the executive directors are proposed by the board of directors of Sinopec, the supervisory committee including shareholders who have more than 5% of Sinopec's voting shares (Sinopec, 2012b). Technically, the three companies are still operating under Chinese control, even though they are assumed to be operating independently and receiving little government from Beijing. They are administratively under the different state regulators comprising of the National Development & Reforms Commission (NDRC) and the State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) (Houser 2008). These regulating organisations represent the views advanced by Chang (2004) on the promotion of privatisation.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the three companies are operating for their crux, although meeting the increasing energy demand of the Asian giant with supplies from nation-states such as Angola. They might be operating in the same market even though their operations might not take place in the same area. Due to these, the economy of China has steadily grown in the past with round-the-clock GDP growth, which has had a cavernous impact on the energy consumption level of the Chinese people, exceeding a considerable 1.3 billion in the year 2010. Due to this surging energy consumption demand, Angolan oil has become the second most important energy source, only surpassed by the utilisation of coal whilst the Asian giant has become the global biggest consumer of oil (EIA, 2010).

Based on the EIA which disclosed China’s oil consumption and production levels from the year 1991 until 2011, it is appropriate that the oil production in China has not been able to meet the consumption demands since the year 1993 when the open door policy was still in the infant stages, implying that the deployment of the oil companies into other countries for oil exploration and net importing oil from these nation-states including Angola has alternatively become an option for China to meet its demand. This dependency on alternative nation-states including Angola has made Beijing to be very active with oil diplomacy, oil informed credit lines and the promotion of infrastructural finance in exchange for mineral resources (Zweig & Jianhai, 2005). Some of these practices also encompass the utilisation of the national oil companies and also the provision of political and economic support for the securing of oil supplies in a long run. In some oil-producing nation-states, China has tightened the diplomatic interrelations by furnishing such countries (i.e. Angola) with large amounts of loans.

6.4.2. Sinopec operations

When Sinopec agreed to a collaboration with Sonangol in 2006, the combination developed a new entity called the Sonangol-Sinopec International (SSI) for the expansion of Angola’s second-biggest refinery in Lobito (Vanhanen & Yiu, 2012). For Sinopec, it owns 55% of the USD3 billion projects leaving Sonangol with only 45% of the project owner. With this partnership, Angola transmuted into being the second biggest exporter of oil to China in the year 2006, exceeding Saudi Arabia. Based on the press release of Sinopec in March 2010, this partnership is the first one that motivated its first overseas accretion of upstream assets. With this, Sinopec had superintended an estimated “55% of the Block 18 shares in Angola through the SSI” (Africa Asia Confidential 2011: online). In February 2011, China Sonangol, a partly owned Sinopec company, obtained three deep-sea fair concessions in “Blocks 19, 20 and 38 adding to the existing shares of Blocks 3, 31 and 32”. The SSI presently has considerable stakes in Blocks 15, 17 and 18 which are the three principal deep water oil asset blocks with the biggest production volume and reserves of projects of similar type (Africa Asia Confidential 2011: online).

6.4.3. Dongfang Nissan and Golden Nest

Several big Chinese companies have their Angolan subsidiary devised for procurement strategies even though such should be approved by their head offices back in China. Accordingly, China also sources cement, electricity, charcoal, and gravel from the African nation-state even though sometimes, lack of continued supply or quality force makes it to procure from elsewhere. It is in this context that local quality has become a problem with companies often opting to import from third countries than using local materials and this also applies in China (Corkin, 2012b). So the Asian giant has also become one of the biggest import sources. Whilst this is so, alternative aspiring companies like the Dongfang Nissan have also set up their operational factories in Angola. Others have set up their factories in Angola to manufacture bricks including inputs fabricated from locally obtainable materials such as windows, wooden door frames, and balustrades. This localised production to promote development is slowly becoming a trend. As such, there is also the Golden Nest International (Chinese construction company) with five discreet factories manufacturing concrete blocks, steel, paint, sand products, and alnico (Davies & Corkin, 2006; Corkin, 2012b).

After this move, various smaller private Chinese companies began to follow extensively in the wake of larger firms who provided distribution of Chinese services and products needed in the Angolan construction industry. On the construction contracts of the vastness needed in the public investment programme of Angola, these companies subcontract from the bigger companies and also initiate the procurement chain to provide materials and equipment from China (Davies & Corkin, 2006). Other companies have expanded their business operations to alternative consumables. One private company entered the African nation-state by supplying aid-conditioning units to the Chinese constructed buildings and has since expanded to now deal with alternative ‘items of daily use’ (Corkin, 2012b). It is also important to indicate that most of the Chinese private companies with operations in Angola are working ‘parallel’ to the Chinese SOE activities and tend to provide ‘complementary actions’ to all the projects of the Chinese SOEs.

As such, smaller investments and projects from the private Chinese companies often come out of the bigger projects that are financed by the China Exim Bank. The state financing through the China Exim Bank is also able to attract politically connected Chinese companies to tender for the infrastructural contracts. This process then enables the private and smaller Chinese entrepreneurs and companies to signify themselves in the market to provide services and goods needed by the principal contractors. This then leads to the establishment of the value chain that is more transplanted almost completely from China, quarantining itself from the local context risk but also limiting the local content. This is then very much compatible with the findings of the Horizon Research Consultancy Group (2007: online) which differentiated the three steps in the value chain’s progression as:

> *(i) Exporting Chinese goods and services directly to the host country. (ii) Investing in industrial chains whereby parts are imported from China to be assembled in the host country. (iii) Establishment of an industrial zone for manufacturing.*

It is evident that whilst most of the Chinese companies are still engaged in the first phase and the second phase, various steps have been underway towards the attainment of the third phase. Amongst the relevant example would be the Dongfang Nissan establishment of a car assembly plant in Luanda of the Viana Industrial Zone (Brautigam, 2011). Alternative Chinese companies as broadly outlined have invested in their factories to assemble and manufacture certain inputs. Whilst these developments insinuate geographic localisation, the participation of locally-retained or managed industry in Chinese procurement and value chains is still less clear. Also, the various Angolan brick manufacturers have been replaced by Chinese brick-making machinery in the market.

Subsequently, “local producers are generally only used in an emergency to make up a short-fall, if material quantities were under-estimated” (Corkin, 2012b: 478). This is also in extension to the basic consumables such as vegetables as some of the Chinese companies proudly report the self-sufficiency of the Chinese workers who grow their produce in their own vegetable gardens and some indeed supply the urban households in Luanda, cordially expanding further than a pure subsistence basis to the possible handicap of local providers. In addition, different Chinese MNCs with extended existence in African markets have shown surging adeptness at growing advanced local linkages. This is based on the findings of Tang (2010). It must equally be indicated that the former projects of China undertaken within the Angolan construction sector after the 2002 dissolution of the prolonged civil war in the country, particularly the Chinese private contractors encompassing the SOEs were too focused on their local content’s increase in Angola.

6.5. Chinese companies in the DRC

6.5.1. Sinohydro and China Railway Engineering Corporation

Through the Sicomines deal that was struck in 2008 utilising agreement, a Sino-Congolese joint venture would furnish the DRC with the much-needed infrastructural investments in the interchange for mineral concessions of the Katanga province and other rich mineral provinces in the country (Burke et al., 2009). The Sicomines deal is the composite of the initial China Railway Engineering Corporation (CREC) and Chinese companies Sinohydro including a DRC state-owned company of Gecamines (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019b).

6.5.2. Other companies

Other companies include the Congo Dong Bang Mining (CDM): Lubumbashi smelter and Kolwezi Depot and Congo Loyal Will Mining: Lubumbashi smelter, COTA Mining. Others include Emmanuel Mining: Kolwezi depot, Huachin: smelters in Lubumbashi and Likasi, Jia Xing: Kolwezi depot, JMT: Kolwezi depot. Others include Song Hua. COTA, Luc Ndubula Mining, and Kamoto Copper Company including the Feza Mining: Likasi smelter are amongst the many Chinese companies with extensive operations in the DRC (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009; Molintas, 2013).

6.5.3. Overview of Jia Xing Mining Industry Congo, Feza Mining and Metal Mines

The Chinese companies have been purchasing minerals from both the formal and informal sectors within the DRC Katanga province and alternative mineral-rich provinces for many years. It is well-known that the reliance of China on imported copper fixate on the increasing growth of its domestic ore production is on higher levels. During the last 2-3 decades especially in the early 2000s, Chinese traders used to operate within the informal sector where traders would often operate secretly by purchasing the ore from middlemen or forthwith from artisanal miners which were then transported across the Zambian border for further processing (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009). In the year 2005:

> *Officially recorded copper exports from industrial and artisanal sources were 27,925 tonnes of copper metal and 177,310 copper concentrates. Cobalt exports were 17,770 metric tonnes of cobalt and 84,835 metric tonnes of cobalt concentrates* (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009: 20).

In between the years 2001 and 2005, a projected 75% to 90% of the ores and concentrates that were China imported originated in the DRC. This is because most of the Chinese brokers used to be gloomy figures glimpsed on the outskirts of the mine and if anyone tried to ask them questions or photograph them including filming them, they would violently react to such conduct (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009). Since the year 2005, Chinese entrepreneurs including private companies have been openly operating in the Katanga province. Companies like Congo Loyal Will Mining and Huachin have since been permitted to buy and process heterogenite from artisanal miners. Amongst all companies active within the Katanga province, the 2008 World Bank report has highlighted that 10 active mining companies traded on the global stock exchange (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009; Molintas, 2013).

The interest and influence of crucial Chinese companies cannot be overemphasised in the need to access the DRC cobalt and copper mining sector. China possesses a very strategic and long-term approach to the African continent. It would also seem like most of the Chinese companies are part of the regional and integrated investment strategies in various nation-states. The local processing plants, smelters including trading houses repeatedly have close partnerships with bigger Chinese enterprises; many of which have cross border interlinkages with the Chinese companies in alternative nation-states in the same region such as those found in South Africa and Zambia (Molintas, 2013). There are also state-owned companies such as the China Nonferrous Metal Mining Corporation (CNMC) which holds 85% shareholding through the NFC Africa Mining company (it is a subsidiary) in the Chambishi Mine in Zambia. Chambishi is amongst the many Nonferrous metal mines that managed to obtain the Chinese government's approval for the development abroad. This is an important symbol of the growing Sino-African cooperation (Molintas, 2013).

5.3.2.1. Jia Xing Mining Industry Congo

This is subservient to the Yingkou BL Mining Company Ltd, a conglomerate company, initially located within the Liaoning province of China. This company is a composite of the Eletro-refined plant and Yingkou BL Mining Company refractory plant in China. Despite the Jiaxing Mining Industry Congo, Yingkou possesses an extra two African mega corporations: TCKY Mining South Africa (PTY) Limited and Jiaxing Mining Zambia Limited. The company has also been diversified into the nonferrous industry with operations in Africa focusing on cobalt and copper ore prospecting, smelting and mining. The main products have been other ores and blister copper. Their African conglomerates have more than 1200 employees and all their technical and managerial staff are imported from China's head offices. The Jiaxing Mining industry Congo was established in the year 2007 and still has operations with employees of more than 350 people, composite of 200 Congolese and 150 Chinese (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009; Molintas, 2013).

5.3.2.2. Feza Mining

This is a joint business between Wanbao Resources Corporation and Comide, a conglomerate of the Wanbao Mining Limited. Wanbao Mining was established in the DRC in the year 2005 through the approval of the Beijing government and is headquartered in Beijing. Fan Zhenshui (Former Chinese Ambassador to DRC) and Augustin Katumba Mwanke (Former Katanga Governor) were present during the inauguration of the Feza Mining's polymetallurgical plant in April 2005. This is whereby Kabumba Mwanke has yielded huge influence over the allocation of the mining rights of the Katanga Province for many years, and his presence has shown that he had supported China's involvement in the DRC's Katanga province (Molintas 2013). COMIDE on the other side is broadly known to be a joint business between Gecamines and CICO whereby Joseph Kabila had huge interests in the latter. The Chinese ordnance company called the Noringo has utilised the revenue generated from the operations of this business deal to pay for the arms delivery. Also, it has been historically reported that Mama SIFA (The mother of DRC's Former President Kabila) had huge interests in the Feza mining, whereby the Israel-based DGI international Ltd Ramat Gan held shares too (Molintas, 2013).

5.3.2.3. Metal Mines

This is a by-product of the Hanrui Cobalt that was established in the year 2007 and went straight into production in March 2008. This was with a considerable "initial annual production capacity of 1500-2000 MT Coarse Cobalt Carbonate and 20000-30000 MT Cobalt Concentrates" (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009: 22). Metal mines are also extensively engaged in the marketing and sales of related cobalt products. This company is located within the Likasi Industrial Zone. The Hanrui Cobalt holds 70% of the shares in the Metal mines whilst unspecified local shareholders hold the remaining 30%. Metal mines employ 50-60 local workers including 30 Chinese nationals (Molintas, 2013). This is also one of the ten foreign-invested businesses permitted to export staple cobalt products. We also have the Nanjing Hanrui Cobalt Co Ltd which is one of the biggest intercontinental megacorporations in China that bought the three high-grade copper-cobalt mines in the DRC's Lubumbashi. This follows as it has grown over the past two decades to now ranking to be the leading cobalt power producer in Asia and top three globally (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009).

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter broadly examined some of the Chinese companies operating in both Angola and DRC's mining and manufacturing sectors. This was done through a reflection of the general overview of the China - Angola and China - DRC trade and economic engagements. The latter has been adopted to critically revisit the extant literature that shapes the contemporary China-Africa trade and economic engagements, particularly within the context of Angola and DRC. This was followed by an analysis of the various Chinese companies that have extensive interests and operations in Angola. These included amongst others Sinopec, CNPC and the CNOOC. The latter was accompanied by a reflection on the activities of other initiatives including the general review of the operations of the Sinopec, Dongfang Nissan and Golden Nest companies.

The chapter also discussed the various Chinese companies that have operations in the DRC including the Sino hydro and China Railway Engineering Corporation which are found within the Sicomines arrangement. Additionally, the chapter reflected on the Chinese companies such as Jia Xing Mining Industry Congo, Feza Mining and Metal Mines including other companies with extensive interests and operations such as the Congo Dong Bang Mining (CDM): Lubumbashi smelter and Kolwezi Depot and Congo Loyal Will Mining: Lubumbashi smelter, COTA Mining. Others include Emmanuel Mining: Kolwezi depot, Huachin: smelters in Lubumbashi and Likasi, Jia Xing: Kolwezi depot, JMT: Kolwezi depot and Song Hua. Including COTA, Luc Ndubula Mining, and Kamoto Copper Company.

The next chapter explores the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility and the extent to which Chinese companies in Angola and DRC mining and manufacturing sectors adhere to and practice social responsibility.

CHAPTER SEVEN

China’s adherence and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility in Angola and the DRC

7.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses China’s adherence to and practice of CSR in both Angola and the DRC. Such is realised through a reflection on the Concept of CSR within the global context by narrating its standard implications. The chapter also outlines some of the critical definitions that have been nuanced to shape the concept of CSR and also gives some of the elements of CSR and contours that shape the practice of CSR. Essentially, the study further elucidates the CSR policies within the context of China, Angola and the DRC, reflecting on the Chinese adoption of CSR in Angola and the DRC.

7.2. The CSR concept in the international context: A brief overview on the true agenda

Contextually, CSR can be understood broadly as a method of conducting affairs that apply to all global companies in their practice and/or conduct for the intention of producing and managing total positive results in the areas and communities they are operating (Baker, 2004). This method of conducting affairs should cover ethical practices, social impact and sustainability, and if correctly practised, could be all in the name of doing business and how it manages to realise profits and not all about charity (Baker, 2004). CSR has over time changed to be one of the most important elements recognised by the MNCs who pursue profits. As such, its application and adoption is a comparison affair in various nation-states. Even if they vary from one nation-state to the other, there is an agreeable view that CSR ought to be a mastery code of all corporate citizens in various nation-states. Within the context of the current study, all mining companies found in different host nation-states globally are anticipated to engross CSR as a fundamental norm of practice.

In both Angola and DRC, the practice of CSR is not only a problem of the mining companies of China or any other MNCs but accustomed to the practise of all business entities including those of the banks, hotels and telecommunications which are anticipated to acknowledge CSR in different ways (Womba, 2014). Likewise, it is important to note that the concept is often utilised in various ways.

In some instances, it is constantly an exceptionally contestable global topic as it has various interpretations and connotations, which are constrained to various nation-states (i.e. Angola and DRC) and economic, and political affairs. Cramer (2006) prompts that the CSR concept is forever constrained to the political conditions of a particular transparent host nation-state. Since its introduction decades ago, CSR interpretations have been distorted to the operations of companies in their host communities and nation-states. The main cause of the problems has been that the affairs of the companies are widened to appear disparate in their business affairs in all of their host communities. A practical example within the current study would be in both Angola and DRC as developing nation-states to expect the companies to be focused on philanthropic activities and socially giving back to their host communities than making profit (Rapanyane, 2020b).

Cramer (2006) argues that philanthropy is not so significant when it comes to most of the Chinese mining companies. The underlying reason behind this would be that most Chinese employers often hire on short-term periods and/or contracts. To Chinese employers, only food supply and a place to sleep for their employees is the only important and relevant aspect. This assertion has been advanced in the current study because the researcher was more concerned with the extent to which these aspects could be realities or myths of the Angolan and DRC employees. In the interconnection of the real difference of the CSR context in various nation-states, one could argue that social programmes consolidating both social and economic policies are important as endorsed by De Haan (2007).

Above all, there is a need for cavernous comprehension of what the latter means to understand what might be happening in both Angola and DRC. De Haan (2007) indicates that the combination of both social and economic policies of a country can have a better chance of contributing into the economic and social development. Equally, this is understood to be a forerunner rule for the achievement of economic growth which is more significant than anything else (Zambia EITI, 2016). The significance of incorporating this narrative would be to counter-check the balance that exists between economic, social and philanthropic commitments simultaneously with political impacts on the agenda of CSR global-wide before a deep reflection of the adherence and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility in Angola and DRC.

Practically, in Africa, the CSR agenda is depicted by the efforts of companies in assisting their host areas and/or communities in various developmental initiatives unlike in the Global North (Canada, UK, USA etc..) (Rapanyane 2020b). Haalboom (2012) has proclaimed that this may involve the construction of schools, provision of indigenous and/or local people with job opportunities, helping with electricity infrastructure and also road construction involving availing the microcredit lending schemes. Primarily, they are disconcerted with the social and environmental footprint issues, cardinal human rights of the native or host people involving the health and safety of their works including even humane incomes (Haalboom 2012). Within the context of the African continent, the latter is expected to take place almost near to the operations of the MNCs in their host communities.

The interjection of profit-making within this context would be to ensure that these companies do not only focus on making profit as their central focus. This is as it may promote the side-lining of the host communities, and disregarding the two important practices of transparency and accountability (Kumar, 2016). The real driving force of this injection is to highlight that the stakeholders of all businesses from one nation-state to the host nation-state can be well enlightened of the various expectations that seek to motivate good economic, social and environmental implications of the proceedings of businesses in the African continent (i.e. Angola and DRC) (Kumar, 2016). Having drawn enough attention to the concept of CSR globally, the next section discusses the role and/or expectations from the conduct of all Chinese mining companies in Angola and DRC’s mining sectors. The ensuing section shall also broaden an analysis of the successes and failures of Chinese mining companies’ operations in both Angola and DRC as deemed important.

7.3. CSR: Interpretations and contours

Since the previous section narrows down the broader CSR agenda in the global context and Africa (cases of Angola and DRC) for better comprehension, this section revisits the practice and adoption of this concept broadly. In other words, this section of the chapter revisits all the significant aspects of the invocation of the CSR practice assisting scholars to understand CSR. There are indisputably some definitions that have been offered that define the concept of CSR in the past 2 centuries. It is Dahlsrud (2006) who points out that there was a study (though not specifically named) that discovered that there were 37 definitions of the concept of CSR. Complementarily, both Caroll and Shabana (2010) demonstrated that the 37 definitions did not encompass the strived definitions which if adopted could have given a wrong meaning to the entire subject of CSR practice. In the current study, it is significant to underscore that the adopted definition including the principal themes of CSR has been generally rented from elsewhere including from the study conducted by both Rapanyane (2020a) and Caroll (1991).

Suffice to say that it is not a 'transversal error' and/or academic suicide to utilise google searches and/or exhaust internet sources to assimilate the definitions which mostly explain the different organisations in their contexts including concepts such as 'Corporate Social Responsibility Newswire [CSRwire], Business for Social Responsibility and the Commission of the European Communities as examples. The practicalities of what the CSR can side-line and include are equally observed in the current study. Within the context of the invocation and the use of content analysis as used by Dahlsrud (2006), CSR in some contexts uses the five categories and/or social, voluntariness, economic, environmental and stakeholder dimensions, which have been google-discovered. Although important, they remain irrelevant as they are scientifically weak to invoke the analysis of the CSR practice within the mining sector as done under the current study. But they still exist in alternative sectors of CSR adoption and application elsewhere (Rapanyane, 2020b).

The above-mentioned combination though not applied can still serve in the future Afrocentric studies of comparison with the current elements adopted in the study. The most important step of the identification of what CSR should compose in Africa is to attempt to first check the continental ground conditions. From there, a relevant dimension(s) and/or categories can be placed suitably in the pursuit of convincing MNCs that wish to do business in Africa. Within the context of the invocation of CSR in Africa; and/or Angola and DRC, Caroll (1979, 1991) has contemplated that the four elements and/or dimensions of the "classifications of CSR should be made up of the MNC's actualisation of the legal, ethical and discretionary and/ philanthropic and economic liabilities" (Caroll & Shabana, 2010).

What this means is that special attention should be afforded to the fact that "the social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary [later referred to as philanthropic] expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time" (Carroll, 1979: 500; Carroll, 1991: 283). The study of Caroll and Shabana (2010) has revealed that there had been more studies, which have invoked the four elements as indicated above, and the four have been in existence for almost 25 years and actively used or cited to date. Drawing from this analysis, the current researcher saw it fit to first place attention on the broader discussion of the two categories and/or dimensions to appropriate them to the role expected to be placed by the Chinese mining companies in Angola and DRC (Caroll & Shabana, 2010).

7.3.1. Economic and legal responsibilities

In line with the economic operations of any business, there is a justified need to produce "goods and services that society desires and to sell them at a profit" (Carroll, 1979: 500). In the interim, the whole process will ensure that all business operations fulfil the predominant economic goal of their host societies. There should not be confusion about how a business operation should go beyond expectation to realise its profit margins. In dealing essentially with this, the current researcher has been able to appreciate that all businesses are driven by the principles of profit margins as indicated and/or argued to be something that can be sustainable for as long as a business exists and that is 'profit maximization' (Caroll, 1991). The maximisation of profit elements is still relevant in the current period of the context of the study. Intrinsically, when these businesses are after profit; they are then highly motivated by the classical economic liberalism advocated by Milton Friedman (1962) who is alluded to by Caroll (1991: 41) to indicate that:

There is one and only one social responsibility of business – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud.

The advanced argument by Friedman (1962) has been subsumed and utilised by scholars such as Drucker (1954/2006) who acknowledge the function played by the classical economic point of view, even if he adds more to make it broader to the community of scholars. Drucker (2006) believes that if businesses are single-handedly driven by profit; they have to at least fulfil and subsume the trio's elementary responsibilities of calculating their engagement efficacy. This can be assisting in allowing the well-known “risk premium” prescribed for all businesses and/or companies to remain unscathed in all their operations. This view corroborates the sequential consolation for all the capital flows. By so doing, Drucker (2006: 76-77) argues that “a profitability objective, therefore, measures not the maximum profits the business can produce, but the minimum it must produce.”

Alternatively, the business legal responsibilities are to liaise with both the negative and positive agreements set down on the businesses and/or companies by regulations and laws of the host communities and/or nation-states in which they are operating. By merely admitting to the little knowledge of what constitutes the context of the legal responsibilities, Caroll (1991) further argued that the host communities should be in charge of imposing the rules and laws that govern the CSR operations of the businesses. Additionally, the views incorporated on legal agreements of the owners of businesses should forever be recognised as they related straight with the influence of their businesses towards the host nation-states and/or communities. Essentially, this implies that the laws drawn should have the 10% views from the owners of the businesses who directly influence their operations (Caroll, 1991).

The key point to draw from the above argument would be the view that both parties should be recognised from the initial drawing board, in the legal responsibilities of any companies in the host communities. Caroll (1991: 41) further reminds us of the clear example that is relevant by demonstrating that both regulations and laws are the "codified ethics of any society". As such, should "depict partial fulfilment of the social contract between business and society". The operational framework and/or scope of the legal responsibilities of any business or company may be broader to the inclusion of extended commands. Scholarly debates have also been abound in the past three decades that counter-check if indeed regulations are pertinent to the business fulfilling its CSR. De Schutter (2008: 203) gives us a better understanding by pointing out that CSR in all businesses and/or companies "rests on certain presuppositions about markets and the business environment, which cannot be simply assumed, but should be affirmatively created by a regulatory framework for CSR".

Within this context, the castigated assertions are open for debates and to some extent, opposed and even in the case of De-Schutter (2008:). The point raised earlier by Philips, Freeman and Wicks (2003) argues that CSR engagement should have management stakeholder interactions to enable the continuity of the voluntarism prevalence. Philips et al. (2003: 491) dissolved the earlier perspective which revealed that "business performance is highly influenced by the stakeholders in their relationship with management, which then changes the transformation of regulations and laws and promotes expansion", as informed by the stakeholder theory advocates. The authors have also quantum leapt their perspective on the stakeholder theory to indicate that it "does not require a change in the law to remain viable" (Phillips et al., 2003: 491).

The evolving scholarly debate on the CSR context of the legal frame till today continues from all the perspectives involved by different polemical presentations to safeguard the legal demands' materiality to be given attention in all companies and businesses. From an antithetical point of view, there are also advocates of regulation such as Williamson, Lynch-wood and Ramsay (2006) and Valor (2008) who interrogated the capacity of the "free-market apparatus" in advocating the adoption and application of the CSR activities within the host communities.

Valor (2008) and Williamson et al. (2006) extend their views by indicating that they have discovered that the business environments and market failures prohibit the rewarding of the committed businesses even if they complete CSR engagements. Alternatively, it is the rejectionists of regulation who point out that societal and individual interests are magnanimously rewarded by the free market apparatus than those who practise CSR *modus operandi* [18] which is individually favoured (Caroll & Shabana, 2010). Summarily, there are specific CSR activities that are taken for granted because of their valuelessness, and that most people are blinded to see the significance of endorsing them. Hence, all the CSR credit activities should forever be considered relevant in the free market apparatus (Caroll & Shabana, 2010).

7.3.2. Ethical and philanthropic responsibilities

As already stipulated, the second of the foursome-part of the simplification and/or interpretation of the CSR is the ethical and philanthropic duties which are some of the requests handed down to the company bosses by the host communities as well as the stakeholders of the company. The inclusion of this part is advantageous in the sense of the categorisation found within the considerable analysis of McGuire (1963: 114) who believes that the "purpose of social responsibilities presumes that a business does not only have legal and economic obligations, but also irrefutable obligations to the host society which go beyond the former responsibilities".

Informed by the above assertion, it is then obvious that the four-part definition provided by Caroll has played an important role in the reconstruction of the current researcher's broader understanding of the study conducted by McGuire. This is because Caroll managed to commence the development of the ethical/ philanthropic and discretionary constituents of CSR to broaden it. Rigorously, this is discovered within the explanation that they are allowed to go beyond economic duties (Caroll & Shabana, 2010). For this reason, the researcher in the current study is of the understanding that whatever is broadly discussed here as an extension of the views advanced by Caroll can best be deployed beyond philanthropic responsibilities. Equally, the legal and economic functions which are applicable necessitate the obligation of the inclusion of all philanthropic duties that are caved. The central narrative drawn out by the current

[18] A particular way of doing something.

researcher would be that the combination of the modern and traditional functions in the block always accentuate the best.

By looking at both the classical interpretations of the legal and economic responsibilities, it is even more comprehensive that classical companies should have a sizable fair share of their particular social contracts with their host communities. A synopsis argument would be that the highlighted new functions in the philanthropic disposition responsibilities now demonstrate the modern reality of what the current social contract in the way of CSR ought to be like. Both Caroll and Shabana (2010) point out that in the contemporary period, there is a surfacing scholarly perspective that goes beyond the two obligations. Realistically, in the current period, both Angolan and DRC citizens should ask all the MNCs of China with operations in their nation-states a question about: “the extent to which their businesses and/or companies are going to honour and respect both the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities and even beyond?” Kotler and Lee (2005) pointed out that the same view that CSR should be discovered within the desire to improve the lives of the host communities and nation-states through the use of donation and philanthropic practices by utilising business resources is correct.

7.4. CSR policy approaches in China, Angola and the DRC

7.4.1. China

CSR transmuted into a comprehensive debatable topic in China since the year 2004 (Lin, 2010). There has been a considerable rise in private and public CSR initiatives supported broadly by key players including the government in Beijing. Lin (2010) bolsters a comprehensive breakdown of the recent activities of the Beijing government regarding these initiatives, even transforming the Chinese legislation for better ‘upgrade’ to accommodate CSR. One of the contemporary CSR activity includes corporate law going along with the guidelines for the implementation of the standards of CSR; disclosure of information in respect of environmental and social regulations; market capital regulations in the areas of accountable production and environmental performance (Mihić, et al., 2019). The concept of CSR in China was broadly explained within the 2006 Company Law. In the year 2008, there was also another document which further expanded the explanation on the “Guide Opinion on Social Responsibility

Implementation for State-Owned Enterprises Controlled by the Central Government" including giving additional information on the attitude of the central government towards CSR.

Presently, there are an estimated 150 SOEs that have straight access to the Chinese central government and are being subjected to the Guide Opinion (Mihić, et al., 2019). The Guide Opinion synchronises four reasons for the CSR necessity in the succeeding order: (i) being that CSR ought to be interpreted as one of the drivers of harmony; (ii) being that meeting the expectations of the public in CSR becomes very significant; being that taking into account that the basis of China's security and the economy is its SOEs, (iii) being that when sustainable development is concerned, CSR is then unavoidable; (iv) being that CSR is most imperative for the SOEs participation in the global society and market. For Lin (2010), there are fundamental CSR principles for all Chinese SOEs (Mihić, et al., 2019). The first one is that all of them should comply with the local law and legitimately conduct their business affairs. Secondly, they ought to focus on expanding profit and improving technology and innovation including service and product quality. Also they ought to aspire to realise these improvements by persistently upgrading their product safety and resource efficiency.

These significant principles are accompanied by three principles which are moderately less related straight to their services and products and are the protection of the employee's legal rights and environment including vigorous engagement in charity initiatives. Except for that, the information disclosure about environmental and corporate social initiatives is an overriding component of the various steps that are perturbed with the CSR implementation. The Chinese CSR disclosure initiative has been launched following alternative trends that surface in industrialised nation-states. For example, the Regulation on Environmental Information Disclosure of 2006 demands that environmental companies and agencies which are broadly understood as heavy-polluters disclose certain data in respect to the environment to the general public including the provision of the public with the right to ask governmental environmental data on such operations (MOEI, 2007). Be that as it may, Tan (2012) has confronted the interrelation between accountability and transparency within the Chinese context. He says that surged transparency has not led to the improvement of accountability. It can also be argued that these reports' qualities need to be improved since fewer companies can provide more than just a narrative of their CSR activities incorporating their statistical data.

Both Graafland and Zhang (2014) referred to an audit of 890 companies with business operations in China who have provided a clear insight that an important number of these businesses equate CSR with welfare. This dispute can be understood as an inadequate amount of apprehension and consistency when it comes to the adoption of CSR strategies. Even if such initiatives that are altruistic gain the media attention and are attractive for producing a positive brand reputation, they annex little to the CSR dimensions in respect to the environmental and worker concerns. In conclusion, the government in Beijing following the established trends of CSR in industrialised nation-states had also made its first steps in connection with the implementation and elaboration of the CSR dimensions, which ought to be adopted by all SOEs from the start of the operations. One of the motives, despite the prerequisite for the higher value of the rights and better working conditions of the employees, is the “go abroad” policy of the government in Beijing, which needs its SOEs to be international and competitive in business conduct. In this way, a greater devotion and commitment to the CSR policies are of key significance. Yet, the concept of CSR as understood by the Beijing government is still a long-term strategy with basics, although even rudimentary, per the analysis of the strategic significance of the CSR in most of the Chinese companies’ headquarters including their abroad subsidiaries (Cheng & Liang, 2011).

7.4.2. Angola

The appreciation and comprehension of the environment are the key processes in evaluating the potential success of a global project (Aaltonen, 2013). When dealing with the CSR issue project within the Angolan borders, it is important to comprehend the entire nation-state’s socio-economic and political environments. By doing this, the potential partner/investor associates the key stakeholders within the African nation-state, most significant stakeholder dependency ties, including the CSR issues that need to be dealt with. It is significant to distinguish the fact that Angola had concluded 27 years of civil war at the start of the 2000s. The conflict resulted in up to 1.5 million deaths and the destruction and ravaging of the infrastructure (United States

Government Accountability Office, 2013). Even with the dissolution of the long civil war, Angola remains behind Nigeria with oil production within Sub-Saharan Africa. This is the case even if the African nation-state has experienced production increase in the years that followed the war dissolution including the resumption of duties in various oil fields located in the deep waters. In addition, the timing was and is still right with the steep oil prices in the global market supporting Angola's high growth rate (United States Government Accountability Office, 2013).

Despite its comparably high-income level of individual people and oil reserves, more than 54% of the African nation-state's population lives on less than '$1.25 per day' (United States Government Accountability Office, 2013). In alternative interpretations taking into consideration, other mineral resources which are of abundance in Angola, this phenomenon has been interpreted and broadly understood as 'resource curse' (Genasci & Pray, 2008), with the general implications that nation-states that are mineral resource-rich often evolve at a very slower rate than those which are not. In Angola, both the oil and petroleum industry is still the principal engine driving the development of the economy. In the previous decade, the industry accounted for almost 46% of the nation-state's GDP and accounted for almost 96% of the its exports (World Bank, 2013). Angola is understandably known to be a developing nation-state that is recovering from a prolonged civil war. Its post-conflict process is also made up of intensive development of various state institutions, brand new legislation adoption and implementation and alternative regulatory process in various sectors including agricultural cultivation, resource extraction, infrastructure construction, renovation and so forth.

One might argue that with only less than 2 decades since Angola has evolved from the political instability period, this might have not been sufficient time for the African nation-state to formulate a comprehensive approach to the CSR issues. During the time of the research performed for this thesis, no important legislation and/or strategic documents of government in Luanda devoted to the issues of CSR in particular (like to Chinese Guide Opinion and Company Law), have been discovered by the researcher. Nonetheless, in the year 2012, 'Law Nº 8/12' was appropriated which introduced the well-known patronage law, as a significant supporting instrument, through which the government in Luanda sought to find a way in which it can free itself from its obligation to furnish funding in the areas that can easily be funded by the private sector (Mihić, et al., 2019).

By adopting this law, Luanda has provided different tax and incentive benefits for various charity donations and activities in cultural, sports, educational, social, technological and youth sectors including within the healthcare sector (PwC, 2016/17). Angola has witnessed important disparities in various sectors of its industries in line with CSR. In gas and oil, more mature management of CSR can be easily observed (UNDP, 2013). One of the driving forces for this is the companionship of the leading global petroleum companies, such as ENI, ExxonMobil, Total and Chevron with their well broadly explained and applied CSR approaches. Not all of the companies though show a similar degree of maturity and involvement in the CSR initiatives and practices. Generally, positive development of social responsibility paradigm is evident. This is even the case when findings propound that CSR initiatives are customarily deemed not very significant when appraising applications for contracts and licenses with the principal differentiating factors in respect to the pricing and technology strategies (Wiig & Kolstad, 2010).

Based on the UNDP (2013), instead of endorsing donations and/or infrastructural construction as a charity, various businesses and companies are extensively concentrated on detailing and implementing the integrated projects that emphasise economic growth and people development, through the vocational training of people and higher education programs. This is also comprehensively understood as one of the ways of endorsing poverty reduction (Skedsmo et al., 2013). For example, Total has reported that in each project undertaken in Angola, the stakeholders anticipate the company to provide employment. The company attains its aims of CSR through captivating local staff, which is often seen on the company projects where 70% of the affiliates workforce are local and fosters economic diversifications of most of host nation-states and communities by endorsing the local initiatives (OSISA, 2012).

According to the results of the UNDP's (2013) study, most of the business entities and/or companies that were analysed still had no strategic framework regarding the social responsibility initiatives, contemplated in the percentage of companies in this sector which showcased no single CSR strategy. When analysing the issues of CSR in Angola, it is deemed significant to understand that the active development of the oil and petroleum industry has been escorted with additional legislation within the sector, although the study has not mentioned a comprehensive CSR document/ strategy that has been adopted till this date. There are still three various channels that are deployed to encourage contribution to the social activities, two of which are mandatory by law and one is voluntarily (OSISA, 2012). Within the first channel, the Petroleum law mandates all companies to perform various activities coordinating with the distinctive government organisations and representatives towards the attainment of the goal of further promotion and development of economic and social advancement of Angola. This is also meant to give preference to national services and products and the integration, recruitment and training of the Angolan personnel and equipping them with relevant skills (Mihić, et al., 2019).

The very same law mandates that the segment of the signature bonus that is recompensated to the National Concessionaire (State Owned Company Sonangol) has to be set forth into projects and initiatives for the promotion and advancement of the Angolan private sector on the regional and local level under the terms which are government supervised. Even if this is the case, little is known as to how these funds are utilised (UNDP, 2013). The second channel has to do with the Production Sharing Agreement (PSA), which need companies to support the projects of CSR (Mihić, et al., 2019). For the current study, the researcher used the PSA that perform the duties of model agreement between a partner on production and exploration of Hydrocarbons in Angola and Sonangol.

The obligation of the Contractor Group in this instance is mandated to recompensate Sonangol with certain contributions and bonuses for social projects. From this, one can argue that the obligation scope differs from one PSA to the other (Mihić, et al., 2019). The very carbon-copy document has outlined an obligation for the knowledge improvement and professional qualification of the local personnel of Angola, encompassing the knowledge improvement and/or know-how on petroleum technology, and imperative management practices. All of the activities in training originate out of the Contractor Group and are inspected by the authorities of Angola based on the three-year planning. The last channel has to do with various projects that are funded by post-tax voluntary contributions.

These are commonly promoted by Multinationals. They are administered by the oil companies themselves, and to some extent, in collaboration with the churches and other NGOs. The oil and gas sector is one of the most methodical CSR activities in the African country. This is the case even though alternative areas are still in the process of modelling their broader comprehension of what CSR and its actions should entail. The UNDP (2013) reports that the oil and gas sector has shown more maturity than the construction sector. This is because most of the construction companies are still without any strategic approach to CSR. Equally, identical problems can be nuanced from within the banking sector and transportation which the CSR is to a greater extent rudimentary. From the general overview, one can conclude that the Angola approach to CSR is based on the notion of global companies themselves individually taking upon themselves the responsibilities of financing and supporting the multiple social programmes and initiatives in the African nation-state. The effort by the Angola to embark on a comprehensive legislature that explains certain CSR activities and make them mandatory can assist in preventing multinationals in Angola from generating profits deficient to the country's development and reconstruction efforts (Mihic et al., 2019).

7.4.3. The Democratic Republic of Congo

At rock bottom, all companies are mandated to respect the regulations and laws of their host communities and nation-states; and all Chinese companies are no exception. This obligation is communicated within the Article of the Congolese Labour code and is also explicitly recognised by the highest levels of the Chinese authorities and/or the Beijing. China's Ministry of Commerce has categorically stated that Chinese companies and SOEs operating in DRC should observe all the regulations and local labour laws to fulfil their social commitments. The omnipresent issues that erode the administration of justice in the DRC are well known. DRC is engulfed with an impunity culture that assists the perpetuation of human rights violations and motivates for a climate that completely disregards the rule of law.

Government inspectors are poorly trained and easily overruled. Based on Goethals et al. (2009), most of the institutions of government mandated to regulate and supervise the mining sector are not effective. They need substantial strengthening and restructuring and a greater accountability measure. Most of the mining titleholders often fail to recompensate their annual surface tax for the exploitation. Meaning that failing to comply would mean that the title will be forfeited (Goethals et al., 2009). Cases to refer to would be that of the 2008 Mining Cadastre where 80% of the title holders failed to comply. It is not within the Chinese policy to intervene and/or criticise the internal affairs and politics of other nation-states.

This is confirmed by Wu Zexian (Chinese Ambassador to DRC) who has highlighted that “we will work economically in countries without interfering at all in their internal affairs” and also articulate that “our policy is always that Chinese companies operating outside China must respect the laws and regulations of the countries where they work. That is very clear. But we can never be 100 per cent sure that all companies do that” (Jopson, 2009: online). In the year 2003, Kinshasa produced a chasten guide in English for all MNCs who wish to invest in the DRC’s mining sector. The guide demystified the role of different government agencies and departments involved in synchronising the mining sector and provided a summary of the mining code (Jopson, 2009).

This is despite the little said about the obligations of investors under the mining code in the protection of the environment and only fleeted references to the labour code. A significant opportunity, therefore, has been disorientated in ensuring that all foreign investors are adequately informed about their commitment regarding health, human rights and safety of their environment and workers. Such a document has served as the historical genesis of DRC’s promotion and protection of the various CSR commitments and obligations (Goethals, et al., 2009). Despite such an important historical guiding document in terms of mandating all companies to oblige to the CSR commitments, there have been various provisions of the DRC labour law including the 2002 Code du Travail which has been transgressed by the Chinese MNCs in the Katanga province. These include amongst others:

The prohibition on employing children below the age of eighteen (Article 133); Ensuring safe and salubrious working conditions (Articles 55 and 170); Payment of the minimum wage for the job or sector (Article 86-97); Payment of sickness and injury benefits (Articles 105 and 108); Providing access to health care (Articles 160 and 177); Respecting the maximum working week of 45 hours or nine-hour shifts per day (Articles 119 and 120); Provision of a written employment contract, registration with the Congolese Employment Bureau (Office National de l'Emploi-ONEM) and payment of national insurance contributions (Articles 44-49); 22-day limit on hiring workers on a casual basis (Article 40); Termination of contracts and dismissing workers (Article 57-60) (Road & Accountability in Development, 2009: 6).

7.5. The Context of Chinese adoption and practice of CSR in Angola

In the context of the case study designs, it is also significant to comprehend the context of the case of Angola (Yin, 2014). This is important because the African nation-state is mineral-rich with an abundance of gas and oil that heavily relies on resource extraction and has unfortunately turned its economy mostly dependent on revenues generated from the extracting industry. Eventually, Angola has recently embarked on the path of economic diversification. In the year 2008, the oil and gas share in the African country's GDP accounted for almost 57% and declined to 46% by the year 2012, permitting the construction sector to rise from 5 to 8% as per the findings of the African Economic Outlook (2014). Recently, the construction industry of Angola has depicted important growth and government officials hope that this shall be the normal trend.

The reconstruction process has been there in the past two decades with Chinese companies also partaking alongside the long term players of the Brazil corporation such as Oderbrecht and the Portuguese Corporations such as Soares da Costa, Mota Engil, and Texeira Duartes in the African nation-state's construction market (Centre for Chinese Studies, 2006). The favourable oil-backed loans of China have formulated a framework for all Chinese leading role players in this sector and have made China seem as a much expedient partner to the government in Luanda. However, its practice is popularly criticised by the Angolans. This is because they still attribute low CSR practices which should be discussed in a detailed format. Following several credit lines approved by the Exim Bank for the reformation of Angola's infrastructure, there are several Chinese MNCs including SOEs which entered the Angolan market.

From the long list of those who entered, Duarte, Santos and Tjonneland (2014) mention the following companies: Jiangsu Company, China State Construction Engineering Corporation, Guangxi International Construction and China Road and Bridge Corporation. These Chinese companies now have operations in all levels of construction, from building housing Units in Luanda and 17 other provinces to repairing roads, constructing schools, hospitals, stadiums and condominiums, and also repairing railways and airports (Corkin, 2012a). Most of these Chinese companies are competitive in the construction sector partially because their construction business practices keep salaries of construction workers low, accompanied by long work days.

Equally, their equipment and movement of material costs to new sites are lower as compared to others (United States Government Accountability Office, 2013). Part of the reason would lie in the need to directly support Beijing together with its SOEs that have operations in the construction projects encompassed by specific preferential terms. Corkin (2012b) has drawn one significant disparity amongst the SOEs and private investment regimes in Angola. Firstly, we start with the latter and draw attention to the earlier. There is no longer a requirement under the Angolan law for global investors to set up collaborations with the local companies.

Alternatively, investments above US$ 5 million require the Council of Ministers' approval. This is the case even though projects that are financed by the China Exim Bank credit lines (bilateral government-government agreements and/or partnerships) do not tumble within the ANIP authority. Such agreements also do not need the utilisation of the 70% of the local labour force as antipathetic to the private investment regime, which is principally attributed to the SOEs and does not encourage their Chinese companies to utilise the Angolan labour force. As such, one may argue that the investment of China in Angola unmistakably proclaims the existence of multidimensional and multiple problems in overseas projects (Jovanonic et al., 2009).

These vary between control and maintenance, project management to the failure to appreciate, as Jovanovic et al. (2009) demonstrates, the significance of definite cross-cultural approach in social integration, cooperation and project management in the local host communities. This is a significant aspect that ought to be a constitutive part of a well-elaborated strategy of CSR. Crucial problems in project investments in Angola have been anthologized (Macauhub, 2015).

What needs the attention of scholars is the expanding concern of Angolans with the several Chinese people who enter Angola. There are only estimations without exact data, whilst other sources claim they are more than 200 000 (CCTV, 2014). The general view from the Angolans has been that there are more Chinese than the predictions and this has been a 'labour export' strategy of the Chinese companies and SOEs leading to further growth of a disregard for the CSR trend. This, combined with the Chinese SOEs' unwillingness to employ the Angolan local people has resulted in the rising hatred of the Chinese people who are considered to not take some of the important internal elements that shape the CSR approaches (Mihic et al., 2019).

7.6. The context of Chinese adoption and practice of CSR in the DRC

Most of the companies of China with operations in the Katanga province utilise the local workers of DRC and also make extensive use of Chinese workers. The working circumstances differ between the two groups, as most of the Chinese workers are generally paid more and provided with accommodation (Maphaka 2021, interview; Jansson, 2010). It has been clear that "even if, by Western standards, the conditions for Chinese expatriate staff are tough, they are distinctly superior to those of the Congolese workers." (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009: 23). The conditions of work for the latter are mostly understood as second-rate. In a survey that was carried out earlier in 2009, by the Rights and Accountability in Development (RAID) also an NGO, that examined the job security, primary remuneration, freedom of safety, health, association, and social benefits "only a few respondents had anything positive to say about conditions in Chinese companies" (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009: 8). This finding is endorsed by the experiential research by the DRC NGO, Action against Impunity for Human Rights (ACIDH) (Jansson 2010).

There are also undeviating acts of criminality instigated by the Chinese employers against the DRC workers that have been reported too. These include physical abuses of some of the DRC workers at the hands of the Chinese companies' representatives and the liquidation of hospital bills of some of the local workers who have buttressed injuries at work. These are coupled with the various incidents that have been reported to the Congolese NGO ACIDH that pertained to the Chinese companies. Such reported incidents mostly related to the problems of illegal retrenchments of workers affiliated to trade union activities, outstanding indemnities for injured workers, and the various workplace accidents (Jansson, 2010). Additionally, the issue of child labour when it comes to the criticisms levelled against the Chinese companies cannot be avoided too as the latter have been accused of buying goods from artisanal miners including children. When it comes to environmental management, not a lot of initiatives have been delineated on the Chinese companies’ side.

All-inclusive information is not yet availed on this issue. It has been propounded that the Chinese MNCs and SOEs with operations in the mining sector of the DRC have neither concluded the necessary environmental impact assessments, nor the compulsory environmental management plans for the projects of mining, as outlined in the article 15 of the DRC mining code. It has additionally been proposed that the Chinese MNCs and SOEs disregards the regulatory conditions relating to the transport, storage and sales of the mineral products. Within the context of governance, it has been revealed that in the complex environment of Katanga, “Chinese companies are both the beneficiaries and victims of this system.” (Jansson, 2010). Whilst the representatives of the Chinese companies have demonstrated their despair at the persecution directed at them by the dishonourable local government officials, disgruntlement has been demonstrated by the DRC civil society representatives and workers over the Chinese company representatives’ tendency of recompensating bribes to “get out of situations” and this has intensified their CSR problems. It is in this context that the RAID as quoted by Jansson (2010: 3) indicated that:

> *Congolese workers spoke about the complicity between the Congolese authorities and Chinese companies and denounced the widespread practice among Chinese managers of bribing labour*

inspection agents, security services and members of the judiciary as a means of settling labour disputes to their advantage.

One of the driving forces is the issue of the language barriers which is mostly recognised in terms of the relations of Chinese companies with local community stakeholders and employees at large. The combination of the communication problems and residential segregation is collectively reinforcing factors within this context. Chinese managers and workers do not feel safe in the DRC environment and on that account, barely leave the compounds where they are accommodated. This implies that they then have limited exposure to the local culture and languages (Rights & Accountability in Development, 2009). Likewise, most Chinese Company representatives are mostly distinguished as reluctant to participate in dialogue with the DRC stakeholders such as community and trade union representatives. This is a by-product of the four principal drivers characterised by cultural differences to avoid the costly execution of the improvement of working conditions and alternative CSR initiatives, language barriers and the experience of the corrupt activities within the DRC government making the Chinese stakeholders wary of unnecessary engagements (Jansson, 2010).

One of the critiques relates to the difficulty to validate Chinese ethical conduct in the extractive sector of the DRC. Squarely, there is a piece of evidence that proclaims that Chinese influence in the DRC has back-pedalled a positive trend. Whilst the DRC mining practices have had a trajectory that is positive since the dissolution of the civil, Premicongo (Lubumbashi-based NGO) released a report in November 2018 detailing socially and environmentally unscrupulous conduct by the Huachin (China Nonferrous Metal Mining Corporation) with operations in the Mabende in the Haut-Katanga region. This report catalogues various issues that relate to waste-water land pollution, deforestation, restricted movement of the local people, and contamination of the drinking water. More or less, the 2017 Amnesty Report detailed adults and children mining cobalt in the tapered man-made tunnels at the DRC mine sites that are inter-linked to the Huayou Cobalt (Chinese Processing Company).

The report assessed the development that the other 28 mining companies together with Huayou Cobalt had made since the 2016 Child labour risks emerged. Instead, it had initially concluded that not much has been done by the companies to take sufficient action for the compliance with the global standards (Karlsson, 2019). Antithetical to this, there are several indications that China made progress in accountable sourcing and production beyond some areas. The China Chamber of Commerce of Metals Minerals and Chemicals Importers and Exporters (CCCMC) instituted the Chinese Due Diligence Guidelines for accountable supply chains of minerals in the year 2015 and it was also influential in initiating the 2016 Responsible Cobalt Initiative (RCI). In line with RCS Global, there are an escalating number of Chinese processors and producers who strive to bring company enactments in line with the global standards (Karlsson, 2019).

7.7. Overall analysis of the low Chinese CSR environmental and social standards in Africa

> *Reports suggest that Chinese companies hardly adhere to CSR. Unabated environmental pollution has been reported in Chinese mining operations in these countries. Illegally mining and smuggling of minerals has been reported in the DRC. The state of the roads, particularly in the DRC, where some Chinese companies operate indicates that CSR is not a priority. The poverty of locals where some of these companies operate tells the story (Mosala 2021, interview).*

To support the above assertion, in the year 2006, Philippe Maystadt (Former President of the European Investment Bank (EIB) popularly complained to the Financial Times that the Chinese policy banks had snatched projects from under the EIB's nose" with the continued lack of environmental and social conditions. Most of the Chinese MNCs are known for poor practice of global labour standards. Concessions for tropical hardwood and big rainforest plantations, roads, hydropower dams and large scale mining all constitute a huge risk to the African environment. All of the above need that the affected people be consulted, recompensated and resettled properly. Even though most of the investors from China are way behind the curve on all of the above and so are most of the African countries, exampled by news reports such as: *China Lets Child Workers Die Digging in Congo Mines for Copper*[19] alleged one headline.

This is to communicate the message of Chinese smelters with operations in the DRC's Katanga province who purchase copper ore from the Middlemen who alternatively collect it from children (responsible for digging in extensively precarious circumstances). Neither the middlemen nor the Chinese smelters feel morally accountable to ensure that their copper and/or cobalt is produced under bearable conditions. This shows that the realities of poverty within the Katanga Province will need the resolution of the dilemmas that are much more impenetrable than to easily enforce labour laws. With that said, one of the most long-lasting critiques of the Beijing government engagement in Africa relates to the underhanded labour practices.

Chinese construction companies in Africa have continued to contravene the local minimum wage laws including the affirmative action training preconditions. They have also dismally failed to recompensate the social security and allowances resulting in complaints by the African workers in most of the Chinese factories, shops, and construction sites. This is not only about African workers with such concerns because part of the issue lies in the ignorance of the Chinese MNCs of the local labour regulations. Basically, most of the Chinese MNCs in Africa have a history of applying low standards in the 'town and village enterprises.'

Some of the Chinese MNCs have also gotten around their worker obligations by shifting contracts to local companies that can provide temporary labour services, moving the accountability to the broker to recompensate the benefits needed under the local law. In this instance, not only the Chinese are involved. This problem is called sub-contracting and is a common practice in alternative non-Chinese companies including the mining areas of Zambia, Angola and DRC (Rapanyane, 2020a). Observably, the non-Chinese MNCs and SOEs such as Mopani Copper mines have frankly subcontracted far more Zambian local workers under "unacceptably poor conditions" than did the company of China at the Chambishi mine.

[19] One-line access to this website and/or headline has been denied.

Subsequently, one can argue that the tolerance of Chinese officials of most of these practices is a reflection of the stark difference in the evolution models- what scholars would understand as the “Beijing Consensus” and the “Trade Union consensus”. One of the motivating factors of the continuation of this injustice is the fact that China’s economic development success started with comparably low wages that allowed most of the Chinese people to find jobs. This is based on the advice of Liu Kungyuan (China’s Economic and Commercial Counselor) who advised the African nation-states to “sacrifice on labour costs now for future generations” arguing also that “Let people be paid lower wages now and attract more FDI and set up manufacturing so that the future generation will reap the benefits of the sacrifices” (Brautigam, 2009: 301). With the environmental sphere, most of the Chinese companies have been accused and implicated in unauthorised harvesting of ‘old-growth timber and illegal fishing’ and in attaining concessions without respect for the rights of the local host communities.

Some guidelines are expected to be used by the Chinese logging companies abroad as communicated by China’s State Forestry Administration and the Ministry of Commerce which include greater emphasis on consultations and compensation of local host communities. Just as there are no penalties for not adhering to these guidelines; also, without much of the civil society protests against holding the Chinese MNCs and SOEs responsible; progress will forever be slow. Additionally, most of the ethnic Chinese companies who stem from Taiwan, Malaysia and Hong Kong have also been very much active in these unwanted scenarios and often created additional complications for any effort from Beijing to monitor the Chinese firms (Johnson, 2016).

Since all of these companies explicitly ship their timber, cobalt and copper straight to China, the environmental responsibility buck stops ultimately there. Amongst the centre of the critique is the hydropower dams’ construction on China’s social and environmental role within the African continent. These include the Adjarala Dam between the border of Togo and Benin, Imboulou in DRC, Tekeze in Ethiopia, Bui in Ghana and Merowe in Sudan which have been financed by China’s Exim Bank (Johnson, 2016; Brautigam, Hwang, & Wang 2015; Brautigam, 2009). As many more others are only beginning to find scholarly expression, this study was able to discover that the Merowe Dam in Sudan across the Nile is a bitter, far extreme example of the project that is problematic. Several farmers have been protesting against the compelled resettlement in the arid conditions far away from the lush banks of the Nile due to this project and on some occasions, the police had to shoot to kill some of the protestors (Zeitoun, 2019).

The financing of big hydropower dams in poor nation-states often has both the environmental and social costs that planners including China Exim Bank, the IMF and World Bank often fail to incorporate. It is important to take note that up to 70% of the hydropower potential in the Global North countries and/or wealthy countries were done during the era when a dam was interpreted as an indication of progress; not a breastpin of environmental and social devastation (Brautigam, 2011). The African continent is admittedly late to the hydropower development, running headlong into the growing complaints regarding the social and environmental impact. As a consequence of this, only 8% of the African continent's hydropower energy potential was ever developed leaving many Africans to also heavily rely on kerosene and firewood for light, heating and cooking (Brautigam, 2011). This includes those who are privileged with connection to the grid as they continue to suffer duplicated power outages. In the DRC for example, they can contemplate up to 170 days with power outages yearly; and 120 days in Tanzania.

There are considerable big rivers in central Africa that can undoubtedly be blossomed to provide enormous energy security to various African nation-states. Such big rivers have now become targets for big Chinese SOEs and MNCs like Sinohydro for maintenance. It is without a doubt that through the BRI, the promotion of the dams in the whole world is based on an analysis that does not recognise the true cost. It is also pleasing that following the establishment of the Guide opinion, China's Exim Bank in July 2008 also published their guidelines for environmental and social assessments that align to the approach of the policy bank with the Beijing government's "Green Credit" policy based on the Guide opinion that includes resettlement and land rights as important brand-new concerns (Yao, Pan, Sensoy, Uddin, & Cheng, 2021). It is without a doubt that even if such initiatives have been developed, the concept of CSR is still very new in China itself, including amongst the Chinese MNCs and SOEs with aspirations to operate abroad.

In the previous two decades (2000-2020), China has been battling with the human rights core of the CSR issues whilst focusing on building clinics and schools. Chinese MNCs and SOEs equally are taking time to understand the need to engage with their host communities abroad for permission matters. As they are struggling with this; their attitude has been that they will bring jobs, build schools and clinics. This is a desperate attempt at wanting to always do the right thing. CSR can come in handy to them in avoiding exorbitant reputational risks. Rio Tinto and Anglo American with satisfying environmental, social and governance standards as partners of some of the Chinese multinational mining companies have repeatedly offered to assist Chinese MNCs and SOEs to maintain similarly high standards and assist them in various ways to maintain all CSR requirements. The interest of China in collaborating with these companies that are more experienced, better technologically equipped with more assets makes these areas of collaboration promising, as long as the international expectations for better environmental and social performance remains strong through these complicated social and environmental challenges.

7.8. Conclusion

This chapter concludes that CSR can best be adopted when it meets the economic and legal responsibilities including philanthropic and ethical duties of corporate entities. Even if there are multiple definitions to the understanding of what CSR means and implications, the current study deemed it important to adopt the four elements and/or dimensions of the classifications of CSR, namely; legal, ethical and discretionary and/ philanthropic and economic liabilities as explained broadly by Caroll and Shabana (2010). It is in this context that the latter liabilities were broadly explored in this chapter. Similarly, the chapter refocused its attention on the CSR approaches of China, Angola, and the DRC to acknowledge that all these nation-states have had historical challenges when it comes to addressing the CSR issues although they are taking steps in addressing them. Such steps in China would include the introduction of the Guide Opinion and the Company Law; in Angola its the Petroleum law and Production Sharing Agreements and in the DRC its the 2002 Code du Travail. Just as much as China has had challenges in terms of meeting some of the significant CSR requirements and/or expectations in Angola and the DRC; this has also been experienced elsewhere in Africa including in Namibia, Sudan, Zambia, DRC, Angola, Tanzania etc.

The next chapter explores neo-colonial Chinese activities undertaken when African countries such as Angola and the DRC default in the repayment of their loans.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Neo-colonial steps taken by China when African countries (Angola and DRC) default in loan repayment

8.1. Introduction

This chapter highlights some of the Chinese activities adopted when African nation-states such as Angola and the DRC default on the repayment of their credit loans. Firstly, the current researcher offers an overview of the Chinese loan and aid system as part and parcel of the unfair subsidies to generate a broader pictorial understanding of the structure of Chinese funding to African nation-states. Such effort is made up of the inclusion of the famous *Angolan model* accompanied by a critical evaluation of China as a rogue donor through the exploration of the myths and realities. This is comparatively discussed with the China-DRC model of engagement and how China best deals with DRC when it comes to loan-reimbursement. Above all, the current researcher has also extended the analysis to the inclusion of how China generally interrelates and best responds to African countries, especially those who are debt-trapped.

8.2. Overview of Chinese aid and loans as part of the system of unfair subsidies

China's provision of export credits and preferential loans has increased worries regarding its heavily subsidised export credits. Canada, USA, Europe and Japan historically used to fight trade battles jointly utilizing heavily subsidized export credits, or infusing ODA with an alternative method of credits. Now all the OECD members have moved to the playing field level led by USA. Historically, the 1978 concessional export credits and the Arrangement on the Officially Supported Export Credit from all OECD countries were conjectural to be endorsed for insubstantial projects that were not viable economically: the erection of public goods like health clinics and primary schools. Members acquiesced to offer export credits for alternatives such as airport construction, ships, and bulldozers at standard commercial rates. This was primarily executed for the exporter benefits, steering clear a race to the bottom instead of recipient nation-states that would recompensate more. Under this arrangement, the aid has been separated from the system of export promotion, and members report their export credit efforts to the OECD (Brautigam, 2011).

These offers can be matched and/or challenged by member nation-states if they believe that the offers are violating the voluntary agreement. Whilst the prerequisite for the protection of the commercial concerns meant that the entire system was closed to the outside world, it had, theoretically, assisted to ensure that aid is used for non-commercial purposes and that countries can choose goods and projects that they need on the reasoning of technology, quality and price, and not subsidised credit. As most of the Chinese engineering, mining and construction companies and SOEs increase their project bids in Africa, including Chinese exporters moving into military and aircraft markets that were formerly monopolised by the American and European companies, most of the Africans still believe that this is highly motivated by the low prices on commercial projects that are determined by the preferential lines of credit presented from the Chinese policy banks (CDB and China Exim bank) (Brautigam, 2011).

There is no doubt that most of these subsidised loans do assist as they are specifically part and parcel of the instrument portfolio rolled out to endorse the “Going global” policy initiative, even though their role ought to never be overemphasised (Brautigam, 2009). Most of the Chinese private companies with operations in Africa are not able to access subsidised loans. Similarly, Chinese saving rates simply meant that Chinese finance is moderately low-cost, even for companies without the initial preferential loans. For example, a Chinese company that is new in the host nation-state will be directed by their home office to provide a cut-rate price as a “loss leader” simply to break into the market, to compete with other companies including those from China. When this happens these companies become more competitive, more expanded and financially well-off. Many have operated within the African markets for decades and they know their market well to keep them stable (Brautigam, 2009).

Both the Sinosure and the China Eximbank have been experiencing the evolving norms around the export credits. Although untrue, the Chinese Exim bank’s website has stressed that its export buyer’s credits “customarily” followed the Arrangement even if the Asian giant was not a member of the OECD (Brautigam, 2009). This is surprising because the Chinese still believe that various MNCs from the Wealthy west kicked off operations with assistance from their governments, under various unfair rules that were transformed right before the Chinese MNCs and SOEs became international players. It is in this context that as compared to the USA, the latter's Exim bank kicked off in 1934 whilst the China one began in 1994; and that it is generally unfair to agree to put their companies at the same level playing field without spending a few years studying how to "go global". This problem continues to be the bone of contention to this day (Brautigam, 2009).

8.3. The dynamics of China- Angola economic affair in perspective

8.3.1. *The Angolan model*: Mineral resources for loan repayment

There is no gainsaying that China's 'debt trap diplomacy' has assisted its presupposed hegemony over the African continent and other countries across the globe. Such is mostly done by adopting the well-known *Angolan model* where natural resources are utilised as collateral for various credit lines and/or loans (Vines & Campos, 2010). Practically, this is how it is done: Angola factually owes China an estimated US$21.5bn billion and negotiating further US$4.4 billion, with the earlier having cumulated debts over more than 2 decades (Olander, Van Staden & Alves, 2018). With so much oil in Angola, the African country should never be found to be making efforts of trying to sell its oil in the international market to attain proceeds that shall service the loans from China. This practice is not allowed under the Chinese debt-trap diplomacy to sell oil in the open market. Instead, the oil itself should be utilised for the loan reimbursement. This implies that Angola is not liquidated as the country's biggest earner (oil) is debt trapped by the Asian giant. As the African country returns to Beijing to borrow more loans; such is alternatively digging a more sizeable hole for the debt trap process to continue unabated (Olander et al., 2018).

In Angola's attempts at attracting foreign investors to assist it in the diversification of its oil-sustained economy; China still takes a leading trading role as Angola is still heavily indebted to it and it becomes an almost impossible task to drive some difficult trade bargains when debt-trapped. Globally, we have seen the role played by China's Belt and Road Initiative that motivated the struck some deals that handed Beijing some control of key projects in various countries including Port of Sri Lanka and Pakistan, encouraging local complaints about the loss of economic sovereignty to China. This happens when the Angolan debt keeps stacking up with demands for new loans in the projects of economic diversification pushing Luanda into default. Since oil is utilised as the collateral for the Chinese credit, Angola's current oil production upturn combined with the increased repayment pressure and/or requirements might fasten the shipments into China, which is the principal market for the Angolan crude oil (Obi, 2010).

This has been similar to the debt-ridden Venezuela (another of China's suppliers) which has contemporarily been struggling with meeting its oil-backed loan obligations. As Joao Laurenco (Angolan President) goes ahead with various reforms that are intended to create a more business-friendly domain and roll back the economic influence of Jose Eduardo Dos Santos (Former Angolan President), his cronies and family, it is still not clearly understood on whether the wealthy west investors have been persuaded enough to collaborate with a nation-state that was long a victim of mismanagement and corruption. China, in the interim, quickly moved to wave that it desires to upgrade its partnership with Angola (Alaco, 2018).

This partnership is the by-product of ties long based on loans for infrastructure construction mostly given to Chinese companies. Wang Yi (Chinese Foreign Minister) categorically indicated that China was in full support of Lourenco's strategy of economic diversification including that "Chinese companies have the capabilities and conditions to supply equipment and technologies to re-launch industry in Angola" (Alaco, 2018: online). In response to this, Laurenco then called on the Asian giant to start investing more in tourism, animal husbandry, mining and agriculture. He also indicated the fastening of the improvement phase to the country's business and investment environment, to warrant what he understood as the legitimate interests and rights of the Chinese MNCs and SOEs. Based on this current model of engagement, and if, kept the same, most of the Chinese investment loans would then be recompensated in oil (Alaco, 2018: online).

Furthermore, as President Lourenco has turned his entire attention on the economic diversification, China might clout the mounting Angolan debt for the sealing of even bigger stakes in the state-of-the-art projects, as it emerges to have done in South Asia and inflate the obligations of Luanda's loan repayment. Arguably, all the Chinese loan repayments are supposed to be inter-linked to the oil price during the negotiating period, and so Angola would have to ship more crude oil when the value is depreciating. Repayment is also likely to get harder as Angolan oil production has slumped in the recent period due to the diminishing investment in the offshore fields of the African country; fall in the price of oil turning extraction profitably less (Wekesa 2021: interview).

Some energy companies have been contemplating the various strategies of exit, with their only concerns heightened by the various delays reported in the project approvals and payments within the State Oil Company Sonangol. Based on the International Energy Agency as quoted by Alaco (2018: online), "production is forecast to fall to 1.3m barrels a day in 2023 from a peak of 1.9m barrels a day in 2008, unless new investment is made in oil exploration, with existing fields nearing depletion" in Angola. President Lourenco has adopted the various measures to restore the confidence within the energy sector that is western oil companies dominated. This was done by invoking the process to restructure Sonangol and firing its Chairperson Isabel Dos Santos (Eldest Daughter to Former President Dos Santos) and more latterly trimming the tax rates on the development of the marginal oil fields to boost investment (Alaco, 2018).

Despite the various reforms by President Lourenco for the dismantling of Dos Santos' economic legacy, both China and Western investors remain very much cautious. Even with these good reforms on incentivising investment and dealing with corruption, there are still stumbling blocks such as the truanting of correspondent banking interrelations for severe foreign currency shortages and dollar transactions including raised questions on how well this sustained overhaul of the environment of business will be. Combined with implications that shortly, President Lourenco will most likely rely extensively on China for funding of his plans of the diversification of the economy. This potential risk might deepen the already dependence of Luanda on Beijing and expand what others see as the recolonisation of Africa by China (Maphaka, 2021, interview). Beijing on the other hand should be worried by the expanding Angolan debt through oil-backed investment loans as the repayment deal. For Beijing, Angola needs to remain solvent with an improved outlook due to the oil price rebound and government policies. Otherwise, the Angolan default might easily cut oil supply to the Asian giant-with which China could not do well without, as the downward spiral of Venezuela has already squeezed China's significant source of crude oil (Alaco, 2018).

Certainly, Angola has lost power over crude oil to trade as more Angolan oil flows to China debt repayment, leaving little revenue for the Angolan industry towards development of social services in the biggest oil producing nation in the continent. The same is a direct follow-up pattern that has been spotted well in Venezuela, Iraq, Russia, Kazakhstan, and is repeated in Angola as it has trapped more of its oil output in pre-funded deals to usher a drop in income due to the 70% fall in the prices of oil in the year 2016. The price slump meant that some of the Western oil companies which managed some of the oil platforms and fields that assisted the African country to export 1.8 million barrels daily were taking more oil in return for their services and investment too (George, 2016). Equally, we have seen globally that oil-rich countries have used it for loan-collaterals, and during the 2008 oil price collapse, the entire collateral process assisted these countries until better times. In the recent past, just over half the African country's 50-60 monthly cargoes went towards oil companies with just four to five cargoes headed straight to reimburse the pre-funded oil deals, leaving Angola state oil Company Sonangol with two dozens to place on the market and/or to coinage the continuing contracts (George, 2016).

The deal struck with China's state-run Sinochem Group in December 2015, which embroiled as many as six cargoes monthly that were earmarked for sailing east as part of the repayment initiatives. This has prompted various oil cuts for trade to the wealthy west through their Chevron, Total and BP with more cargoes sailing east while the price falls. Chinese fresh rounds of pre-funding Angola often doubles the cargoes that sail to the east for repayment. On top of this, the continued oil-backed credit lines are predicted to have ballooned to $25 billion. Roderick Bruce (West African Principal Energy Analyst) argues that "the lower the oil price, the cruder oil it costs to service debt" and that this is "an increasing amount of crude that cannot be sold to directly fill government coffers," (George, 2016: online).

Dos Santos who was the Angolan president for 36 years since the Angolan independence had requested China in 2015 for a freeze of debt repayment. This happened as the debt-to-GDP ratio hit around 46% when his government was negotiating a new loan with the World Bank. At the same time, spending was already 40% lower than in 2014 and 2013 respectively and did cut across the rubbish collection and water sanitation allowing the spread of diseases in a country ranking 6th from the World Bank's inequality index. At the time, the Dos Santos government had forecasted a budget deficit of 5.5% of GDP in the year 2016, premised upon the prices of oil that stood at $45 per barrel. But this was also based upon the rating agency Moody's which placed the African nation-state's credit rating under extensive review, intimidating a downgrade further into junk territory. The oil woes of Angola will never be unique: Iraq had also constructed debts of above $2 billion to oil companies after encountering problems with budget needs; Venezuela also has billion-dollar oil-backed loans from China whilst Kazakhstan and Russia borrowed extensively from Glencore and Vitol oil traders. With only a little portion of the leverage assets, there is a tiny room for manoeuvre. "Probably, there is no way out of this dilemma for many countries, and that they should have to live with less oil to sell" (George, 2016: online).

8.3.2. Rogue Donor: Myths and/or realities?

Undoubtedly, Angola is heavily endowed with natural resources that are alternatively a curse despite its oil. This is a tropical paradise blessed with haemorrhagic fever, landmines, gold and bauxite. The African nation-state also features as one of the principal victims in the condemnation chorus regarding China's interrelations with the African continent. The researcher started this section of the chapter with a reflection into this interrelation. Reflecting on the vast layers for some of the realities and myths of China's international relations with Africa. Firstly, it is imperative to highlight that with the dissolution of the prolonged Angolan war for independence, there emerged several issues related to debts including the Angolans owing more than 2 billion to the Paris Club. The 8 U$ billion was also owed to the alternative creditors (including the Russians group) who were all clamouring for the repayment.

Some have tried to capture the government assets outside the African nation-state. The Angolans considered the IMF's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) in the period post-2004 that sought to clean Angola to open a space for improving oil revenue transparency. China entered in Angola in the last two decades and offered Angola billions of dollars in aid. Flushed with a lot of cash, Angola then turned its back on IMF and took the Chinese aid that came with no attached strings. The story of China in Africa does not often go to an end without narrating this cautionary tale. It is without a doubt who ends up playing the villain. The current researcher shall muddle through this story by explicitly summarising it.

> *In this story, Jose´ Eduardo dos Santos, Angola's president since 1979, begins using the state-owned oil company Sonangol as a cash cow to finance the war, political payoffs, and other state expenses. By the end of the war, Angola has taken out an estimated forty-eight oil-backed loans, nearly all arranged, very profitably, by respectable Western banks: BNP Paribas of France, Standard Chartered of the UK, Commerzbank of Germany, and so on. The IMF tries to wean Angola off its risky diet of expensive short-term loans (Brautigam 2009: 273- 278).*

The IMF then requested Angola to anchor several reforms. This included a reform program that contained 44 benchmarks and conditions with the inclusion of liberalisation of trade and raise of income taxes. Such implementation of SAPs would ensure the loan approval that was to make Angola eligible for continued debt-rescheduling amid the international aid and the Paris Club. The Angolan commitment of reform to the IMF lasted for some time and included various reform commitments such as to "create greater transparency in oil revenues, turn over customs management to a British firm (Crown Agents), reduce fuel subsidies, raise water rates, rein in borrowing, and privatise several money-losing enterprises" (Brautigam 2011: online).

But such commitments have proven over time that Angola kept failing the IMF set test, especially in the condition of stopping to borrow. With such developments, China entered this contested territory with an oil-backed loan in the past two decades offered through the Exim Bank in the year 2004. As a remarkably high-risk nation-state, Angola has historically been borrowing at a considerable premium of 2.5% over the London Inter-Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR).[20] The Chinese loans over time have been offered at LIBOR with an added 1.5% premium. This allowed for reimbursement over 17 years with the inclusion of a grace period, far prolonged than the normal 4/5 years of the European Banks without any considerable grace period (Brautigam, 2009).

The most unusual feature of this type of aid has been that it is interpreted as not foreign aid. This is despite it being a wonderful rate that is also a credit line utilised completely for infrastructural construction, similar to the oil-for-infrastructural Japanese model deployed in China 4 decades ago. Angola opened to China because of the decades of war that destructed the nation-state's road systems leaving them in a desperate state, 300 bridges were destroyed by bombs, farming fields and rural roads were planted with landmines, the urban infrastructure was also exotically deteriorated and streets were mostly in a collapsed state; including the raw sewage that sprinkled out of the unbolted gutters during the period of heavy rains and scampered along the alleys of the tumultuous shanty towns (Brautigam, 2011).

An initial look at whether China is a rogue donor as depicted by Western media through their various attempts of pictorially be-devilling China might not necessarily be completely true; even though Chinese loans are questionable and seek to recolonize the continent. The most questionable part relates to why they should be repaid with oil from Angola. As such, this research argues that Western banks and media alike are not victims in Africa's resource extraction and the total scramble for Africa as they were there in Angola before China, providing cash flows for the ruling elite to access Angola's oil. For the first time, the Chinese deal has not been with any risk and can be interpreted with a revolutionary eye for the African nation-state; as Angola is now able to trade its richest trade earner and translate it into development projects.

What can be deduced from all of this would be that the story of China in Angola nor Western countries in Angola is neither white nor black, without a victim, villain and a

[20] The benchmark interest rate for international finance.

clear verdict of guilty. It is also wrong that the Western media have taken a front step in speaking largely for African scholars in their various media headlines such as:

> *(i)"European Investment Bank Accuses China of Unscrupulous Loans*," (ii) "*Wolfowitz Slams China Banks on Africa Lending*," (iii) "*China's Taking Over Africa, and Why the West Should Be VERY Worried*." and (iv) "*Chinese Aid to Africa May do More Harm than Good, Warns Benn*." (Brautigam 2009: 273- 278).

Alternatively, all these accusations have often reappeared in various official platforms and reports including in the European Parliament.

8.4. Revisiting the political economy of the China-DRC's engagement

When the Sicomines deal was finalized in the year 2008, several fears were stirred between Western countries and some African nation-states that Beijing was hungry for mineral and/or natural resources that would ultimately erode their influence and thwart the DRC with uncontrollable debts. Eight years later, the Sicomines deal was preparing to launch its first copper deal along with long delays stirred by controversial issues (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019b). What can be deduced from this entails that investment into one of the continent's most politically unstable and chaotic nation-states is frustrating and messy for a business irrespective of who it involves.

Whilst a lot of mining projects in the DRC were established some years prior to the recompensating taxes under the code of mining, Sicomines was made to have a prompt economic impact. The DRC government by 2015 had indicated that the deal had already furnished the it with '$800 million in infrastructure investment' (Rapanyane & Shai, 2019b). The combination of China Railway Group Limited and Sinohydro SINOH.UL has built hospitals and roads in the exchange of an estimated 68% stake in the Sicomines cobalt and copper mine, one of the biggest continentally with 6.8% tonnes in the substantiated reserves. The Chinese banks including the State-run Exim Bank have coughed up a combination of 3 billion to develop Sicomines and $3 billion for infrastructure with all the loans understood to be repaid with the mining profits (Ross, 2015).

The DRC managed to extract more than 1 million copper tonnes for the first time in the year 2014 making them the continent's preeminent producer. The various challenges of the DRC's unstable business and political environment at one stage threatened to sink the deal completely. This is due to the fear of the DRC citizens who believe this deal might burden the African nation-state with more debts. Despite this, the Chinese managed to return to the table with additional financial guarantees, although the initial deal in the mining industry is heavily ingrained with secrecy representing one of the contemporary problems in respect to this deal. It is also concerning that even Kofi Annan (former UN Secretary-General) through the 2013 Africa Progress Panel had been able to point out that the DRC had overlooked the '$1.36 billion' in revenues between the years 2010-2012 by auctioning their state-run mining assets below their value (Ross, 2015).

The current research's stand would be that Sicomines had brought the blur of state-of-the-art extremes. The residents of Katanga in the mining hub of Kolwezi have voiced out that they became aware of this mining deal only 3 years later after it was executed especially when the land survey was conducted by workers. There is also another report by the African Association for the Defence of Human Rights (ASADHO) in 2015 which highlighted the failures of the government when it comes to monitoring infrastructural projects of poor quality that are also over-priced within Kinshasa.

There have been some criticisms levelled against those responsible for the execution of this mining deal. A case in point is Moise Ekanga who was accused of having developed a blurred shadow government that is only subjected to the Head of State from his Yellow offices that are located next to the Banks of the DRC river in Kinshasa. Ekanga was accused of not accounting to the Minister of Mines in respect to the entire project. Those who are champions of this deal in defence argued that the criticisms levelled did not take into account the fact that Ekanga's Bureau for Coordination and Monitoring of the Sino-Congolese Program collaborated with the agencies and ministries relevant in tracking the infrastructural disbursements over time. For Oscar Melhado (IMF resident representative), the entire mining contract needed adjacent supervision (Ross, 2015). Hence, it made almost everything impossible to know exactly how China plans to strategise around making DRC repay all of its infrastructural loans. Till this today, the general agreement is that China is still pursuing the same strategy of mineral-resource backed loans including in DRC.

8.5. Chinese Aid: Reflecting on General African and Western Concerns

As much as China's rise in the African continent is a cause for much disquiet; it does not necessarily need to raise any level of alarm or fear, especially from those who have been levelling their continued condemnation of the Chinese aid engagement as a replica of destabilisation, and promotion of bad governance that is not in all probability to assist African nation-states like Angola and DRC to end poverty (Legodi, 2021, interview). It is the well-considered view of the current researcher that most of the fears on Chinese aid in Angola and DRC especially from Wealthy Western countries are misinformed. Firstly, the Chinese aid into Africa is not huge as compared to the traditional donors located in the wealthy west.

Secondly, Chinese aid is commonly lower than its export credits. Also, the Chinese novel approach both in DRC and Angola including elsewhere has been applied before as learned from the Japanese interrelation with China: utilising these very large credits, at considerable rates of markets; tied to the Chinese equipment, machinery and services construction with oil and other mineral resource repayment. The only concerning part would be that oil should not necessarily be used in exchange for debt repayments, or any other mineral resources. This is a complete scramble for Africa that was earlier applied by Western colonial powers. Under such circumstances, one might argue that everything shall reflect the “zero-sum” approach. This is informed by the problem of debt sustainability which has deepened African nation-states into even more problems (Rapanyane, 2021).

China's ‘Four Modernization’ approach has stressed the importance of ending poverty through construction of roads that were launched in the 1970s (Muscato, 2021). It is clear that not all of China's engagement with Africa is on bad terms. China's prioritisation of building of ports, roads, rural power plants, factories and modernised agriculture as also assessed through the new approach of constructing SEZs should be applauded. It is clearer for the Chinese ‘Beijing Consensus’ to outrightly allude that the Asian giant is more concerned about experimentation and less concerned about easy certainties. It is the current researcher’s well-considered view that the Chinese deals offered to Africa are almost similar to the Western and Japanese deals that were offered to both Africa and China decades ago with which the post-Mao Chinese embraced with the credence that China could also win from this strategic approach of placing attention on business and not aid. The Western countries have mostly transformed their developmental programs, advice and approach to Africa (example including the rural development in the 1970s, 1980s policy reform and the governance reform in the 1990s and so on). China on the other side has claimed to know little about how to best advise Africa for its development.

For China, nation-states should be independent to explore various ways in which they can get out of poverty on their own. This move has encouraged mainstream economists and political scientists from the West to question the importance of most of the imposed conditions on aid over the recent past, especially looking at how China was advancing so fast into Africa. On this note, exchanging perspectives instead of lessons learned and various strategic approaches to cooperation and aid could transmute into more convenient scholarly engagement between Africa, China and the West.

The worries about China’s export having to crush the manufacturing sectors in Africa are real even if most of the African nation-states have based their economies on the import substitution model with old-fashioned equipment and poor roads and atonic electricity supplies that are mostly promoting the fall of the business. On the one hand, without damaging China’s reputational investment in Africa, it is imperative to underline that China’s abroad economic zones including those in Africa are made to also promote investment in Africa’s manufacturing industry including in the shoes, leather, plastics and consumer appliances and also foster the spirit of competitiveness in Africa. The most surprising gesture would be the bringing of Chinese nationals to work in these economic zones whilst Africans are available.

As much as China’s aid to the African agricultural and industrial sectors is not that sustainable, we can already see various Chinese companies serving as industrial catalysts for some local firms and/or companies just as the Japanese have done to Southeast Asia decades back. This is like a flying geese model that is prolonged even if it is slowly proving its potential use. Agriculturally, just because African lands seem quite empty, it does not denote that the governments should sign large tracks of lands to the Chinese foreign concessionaries without the local communities' informed consent.

Also, the patented hybrid seeds of the Chinese entry into Africa could assist modern African farmers even if this is continuously presenting various risks to the subsistence farmers found in the perilous rural African lands. The Chongqing Seed Company as smallholders of discretionary out-growers is doing a great job in Tanzania. However, it remains an economically and socially sustainable compromise (Makundi 2017). The out-grower system has historically moved most of the risks of farming straight into the contract farmers. For China, the rural development strategy was a cornerstone of the land reform; followed by rural farmers' incomes; only to open up foreign investment much later to the agri-business.

As the current researcher was researching and writing this thesis, there was a lot of transformation. The latter included economic and political changes in China, with the state-of-the-art domestic pressures for Chinese MNCs and SOEs to take into account the CSR, and social and environmental protection measures expanding inside China. Advanced labour laws were being executed and new guidelines were being published promptly. Such guidelines outlined the social and environmental responsibilities of the forestry and bank companies abroad. This was slowly becoming a practical moral move as most of these norms were not historically taken seriously. Various challenges still existed even when the Chinese SOEs were developing various global reputations to curb the expensive reputational risks.

They are also managers of factories who demand long working hours, scrap metal buyers, tough businessmen and women, and traders. Their self-interest has driven frank deals that are expected to benefit China, but slightly for Africa: broadband, high-tech seeds, land lines and road construction. They are also aid-workers, agricultural specialists, youth volunteers, vocational teachers and water engineers including others who are in Africa out of curiosity as a sense of adventure or to assist the poor.

Considerably, they have not just arrived in the African scene; they came to also serve in the African governments including as finance ministers, parliamentarians and foreign affairs ministers such as Jean Ah-Chuen, Eugenia Chang, Jean Ping, Fay King Chung and Manuel Chang (Tao undated). Their long history in post-African independence has given them credibility and legitimacy between Africans. Africans and West nations did not notice the Chinese teams working upcountry building small hydropower bridges and stations including managing the state-owned factories, fixing irrigation systems where they were welcomed with both hands. To this day, Africa is fitting well into the Chinese going global international policy strategy for natural resources opportunities, trade, industry, construction and business.

The Chinese in Africa have interlinked both aid and business in various fascinating ways. The Chinese aid in Africa has also worked to subsidize the Chinese MNCs and SOEs in setting up the development and cooperation centres and agro-technical demonstration stations. The experimentation of Chinese companies in Africa has made the profit and resource acquisition efforts very sustainable; finally releasing the Beijing government from returning to resuscitate its aid projects. As the Chinese continue to transform, grow and learn from these experiments, some African countries have undergone the process of learning from China as well. As for some of the Western standards and norms of conducting business in Africa, China is forever secretive about the export and aid credits. This lack of lucidity unsurprisingly raised various legitimate concerns and suspicions. This is because of the lack of Beijing's efforts in reporting the standards adopted long ago, especially in the OECD and currently in some African nation-states.

China has also proven to be permanent in Africa as their embracement of the African continent is planned, strategic and unfolding. The 2008 Global economic recession might have disrupted the normal global economic proceedings. But Beijing was able to live up to most of its pledges made both during the 2006 and 2009 FOCAC conference respectively as they became the second global economic power house (Rapanyane, 2020d). These included the doubling of aid to Africa including the setting up of SEZs and agro-technical stations. Whilst the wealthy west was still disrupted by failures of the Washington consensus, the Chinese companies were buying assets at bargained prices as they did first in the early 1990s (Rapanyane, 2020d). It is truly up to most of the African nation-states to assist in shaping their encounter with China for the benefit of the African people. Equally, the wealthy west should assist in attaining a more realistic picture of China's Africa engagement instead of becoming African nation-states' representatives in their mainstream media. As we deeply reflect on China's Africa engagement, it is important to respect and recognise African voices in this regard, to assist the wealthy west in redefining African understanding of China's involvement in Africa.

This can greatly curb unnecessary paranoia and sensationalism expressed by some western states. As this is equally not an admission that China is not in Africa for the 'scramble for Africa', it is important that Africans take note of the Chinese model of consistent non-interventionism that is perfectly working well for all African nation-states. The results should not be like those of the former colonial masters who regularly intervened in the internal affairs of African political issues and military spaces to foster their un-African mechanisms and systems of governance. The researcher submits that at the end of the day, we should remember that technology, investment and trade are the drivers of development. Equally, un-exploited natural resources are also the drivers of prosperity and modernisation.

For China, African countries' embracing the capitalist business development can expeditiously lead to poverty reduction. This includes the creation of SEZs that can attract clusters of mature industries from within the African continent, Europe, America and Asia and assist in providing high-tech and jobs. These lessons as overemphasized have nothing to do with the 'evil aid' and 'unwarranted loans' but fascinating experiments that can reduce the creative destruction of competition and the green slides of up to date opportunities. As Brautigam (2009: 307-312) puts it, "This may be the dragon's ultimate, ambiguous gift". But even if this is the case, there are a lot of concerns that are very much legitimate and deserve the attention of African scholars particularly when it comes to China's disregard and unbecoming conduct in specific African countries. Such is given attention in the following section of the chapter.

8.6. Lessons from other countries

8.6.1. China's disregard for Africa, Africans, and African economies: A miscalculation of mutual respect

Despite the above analysis, there is a tendency of misunderstanding China's Africa engagement broadly and/or from a continental level as premised upon mutual respect in some specific African nation-states that are mentioned specifically later in the chapter. From a general Chinese perspective, this is a perpetuated fallacy that is proliferated by some African leaders who directly benefit from China. They emerge ready to still worship China as the 'messiah' amid several legitimate concerns. It may be due to the effective propaganda machine adopted by China through various initiatives. Both Rapanyane (2020) and Songtian (2018) have highlighted that even if China-Africa relations are based on the principles of "equality, mutual trust, and mutually beneficial cooperation", the various stories told about China in Africa have shaped the whole arrangement with various suspicions. There are several incidents that showcase China as disregarding some of the African nation-states and have considerably shown clear signs of Neo imperial and Neo colonial tendencies (Wekesa, 2021, interview; Kinyondo, 2019).

Such stories cannot go untold even if China has the best model of economic development that both Africa, Europe and America can take a few lessons from. It is in this context that such cases are revisited. Zambia is one of the first test cases that can depict this as Lusaka has had to capture a Chinese coal mine after the Chinese nationals were found to have dismally failed to conform to the normal health, environmental and safety conditions. This follows the 2011 report by the Human Rights Watch (HRW)'s elucidation of the gross human rights violations and disrespect for CSR (Rapanyane, 2020). In the year 2011, there were also accusations levelled against two Chinese executive line managers who were blamed for shooting and killing local miners after a minor misunderstanding with the labour dispute (*Al Jazeera,* 2014).

It is Esosio and Tse (2015) who observed that far and wide and/or right through the succeeding years, several Zambian miners were working in Chinese controlled mines without any considerable safety helmets with operations in a poverty-stricken ventilation ground, whereby a lot of accidents were also taking place daily. They also reveal that some of the jobs are given to Chinese nationals in Zambia (Rapanyane, 2020c; Esosie & Tse, 2015). This is not only happening in Zambia where one can spot Chinese nationals being favoured with jobs meant for Zambian locals, as this is a growing trend for Chinese companies operating in Africa including South Africa where almost 75000 jobs were lost to the Chinese nationals in the years 2000-2011 (Esosie & Tse, 2015).

In Southern China, there is a well-known African traders' city originally known as the Kwangchow and/or Canton that has previously been arraigned with possessing an abundance of fake, cheap goods that are fabricated for resale in the African continent only (Hong, 2018). For example, in the year 2018 during a Chinese New Year Break, there was turmoil on State television in the course of a gala show that exhibited an African actor who was wearing a monkey suit. Despite this enormous disdain and/or mockery of Africans, and a succeeding uproar and complaints, all the critics of the clip were censored and/or avoided. Even so, this was not the elemental time such a racist video was live broadcasted on Chinese national television (Kinyondo, 2019).

There is another 2016 blasphemous racist advert that was exhibited showing a black man who was thrown into a washing machine, only to come out as a white boyish-looking Asian man, light-skinned (Hong, 2018). The most important issues to note are the distribution of the conditional diplomatic motivated mineral resource-backed loans and the complete practice of dumping[21] in several of the African markets. China's MNCs dump cheap and fake goods and products in the African continent (see Brautigam, 2011; Hong, 2018; Rapanyane, 2020) who also believe that the presence of China in Africa is not completely impactful in line with the measurable upgrades, development skills and sufficient technological transfer. By quickly reviewing the Nigerian situation, one can then note that the practice of Chinese dumping of low priced textile goods has led to the shut-down of 80% of the local indigenous Nigerian firms that were operating within the manufacturing industry (Esosie & Tse, 2015).

[21] when a country or company exports a product at a price that is lower in the foreign importing market than the price in the exporter's domestic market.

This very same approach is being adopted in the DRC, particularly of exchanging mineral rights for infrastructural construction through the well-known 2008 Sicomines deal (Rapanyane & Shai 2019). This is a by-product of the gap identified by DRC's traditional Development Partners (DPs) in being less fascinated in developing its infrastructure but various infrastructural needs of the African country in exchange for mineral rights (Kinyondo 2019). We also have the same cases of Chinese Neo Imperial and Neo-colonial tactics in African countries like Djibouti where in the year 2016, the African country's external debt to China stood at 82% (Wekesa 2021, interview). Additionally, there are still considered legitimate concerns and/or worries that China is now planning to capture the African country's port (Heanue 2018), as it is not well-positioned to recompense its debt to China.

The very same worries were raised in Tanzania wherein China is finalizing plans to build the Bagamoyo Megaport worth of US$ 10 billion investments (Zheng 2019; Ali & Stewart 2018). After the delayed process of the execution of this deal in the year 2015, as John Magafuli (former Tanzania President) was taking power, it has since been communicated that this deal would continue as planned. Under complementary circumstances of allowing this deal to continue, Bagamoyo is expected to become the continent's largest African port (Chellaney 2017). The anxiety and distress with the building of this particular port are informed fundamentally by the fact that Tanzania is hitherto owing billions to China for the construction of the Mtwara Dar es Salaam gas pipeline. This then means that additional billion debts will be added on top of the billions already owed to China (Financial Times Reporter, 2018).

8.6.2. Case studies of Africa: Angola, Zambia, and Kenya

An evaluative Afrocentric review of the relevant scholarly data has revealed that indeed there are legitimate doubts concerning China's engagement with several African countries (Rapanyane 2020). Also, in Angola, the combination of oil and natural resources are utilised as collateral for loan reimbursement (Paraskova 2020). In the recent past, Angola is considerably inferred to be owing China roughly US$25 billion accumulatedover the previous two decades (Olander, Staden and Alves, 2018).

Despite possessing such a compound web of plentiful oil and mineral resources, the African country is thus expected not to be grappling with the reimbursement of China's infrastructural loans, as the country would simply just sell its mineral resources including the oil in the international market and recompense all the loans with extra earned proceeds.

Unfortunately, the questionable Chinese imperial and neo-colonial approach and/or agenda of the debt-trap diplomacy does not allow Angola to hawk its mineral resources including the oil in the open international market (Wekesa 2021, interview). For preference, all the mineral resources including oil reserves are then questionably used to repay the Beijing government for debt accumulated over time (Payne & Zhdannikov, 2020). This simplifies that Angola's biggest export earner will be forever trapped as it keeps going back to China asking for infrastructural loans. This does not though morally mean that loans are obliged to be repaid by oil or mineral reserves as this is not part of the global norm and practice of trade (Olander et al., 2018).

It is also well-known that Kenya incurred 66% of its international bilateral debt to China, all of which is the by-product of the erection of the Nairobi to Mombasa Standard Railway Gauge (SGR) (Masiga 2018). Even if it is general knowledge that the Kenyan government had accrued billions of debts in loans from the Chinese investment banks, no justification warrants the probability of China having the rights to inflate the real loan costs of the SGR Project. Since Kenya has imprecise chances of reimbursing the loans accrued over time, China has propounded Kenya with a neo-imperial opportunity of giving its Mombasa Port for the settlement of the loan, compelling Masiga (2018) to have suspicions that Kenya might start to slowly become a 21st century colony of China, which would be a pure and/or direct delineation of Neo-colonialism and Neo imperialism.

In the Zambian context, some critical concerns and reports include those communicated by the African Confidential as highlighted by Rapanyane (2020) that reveals how China has already captured the Zambia economy's national strategic assets including the physical and business assets such as the Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation (ZESC), Lusaka International Airport (currently renamed to Kenneth Kaunda International Airport [KKIA]) and the Zambian National Broadcasting

Corporation (ZNBC) that are all comprehensively understood to be collateralized in the event of the inability of Zambia to repay its debts (Chiwanza 2018). The collateralization process of Zambia's national strategic assets does not necessarily mean that Zambia is off the hook as it keeps dwindling to the debt-trap diplomacy of the Asian giant by increasingly going back to China for more loans (Chellaney 2017). It is Schneidman and Wegert (2018) who believe that the debt-trap diplomacy of China has landed the Asian giant status as the largest creditor to the African continent and the Southern African region in particular Angola and DRC including Zambia, accountable for 14% of the entire debt-stock of the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The loans provided by China in Kenya are volumed six times bigger than the second and traditional donor and/or creditor, France (Schneidman & Wegert, 2018).

8.6.3. Lessons Learnt from Elsewhere: Debt-Trap Diplomacy in Ecuador, Venezuela, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal and Cambodia

Elsewhere in the world, the Chinese concept of Debt-trap diplomacy motivated for a pure neo-colonialism including even with the Ecuador case in the year 2009 wherein factual evidence demonstrates that China wanted to be reimbursed with oil after pouring in enormous loans that would have not been repaid on time under real possible terms (Goldman, 2017). There is also the relevant case point of Venezuela wherein the Asian giant flooded the country with massive loans in 7 years between the years 2007 and 2014 with a 'roughly US$50 billion' (UImer & Pons, 2016). These loans were going to be reimbursed accordingly and on time until the collapse of the oil prices, and by then, Venezuela stumbled that it was unable to recompense the accrued debts (Anoba, 2018).

One of the international worst cases of the Debt trap diplomacy of China took place in Sri-Lana wherein the accrued loans from China were used to build the Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport that was opened in the year 2013 with the inclusion of Hambantota's Magampura Mahinda Rajapaksa port of which both ultimately transmuted into what we call and understand as 'white elephants' accompanied by the Gwadar Port in Pakistan (multibillion-dollar projects).[22] Both Pakistan and Sri Lanka

[22] These are understood as unwanted or useless installations.

are heavily bleeding from the debt-trap loans of China after it has auspiciously taken control over these white elephant installations (Kinyondo 2019; Heng & Var 2019). What is most politically disturbing is that China has fortunately managed to land its warships in the Gwadar Port Security of Pakistan more than once without any reporting first (Sutton, 2020), including various docked submarines in the Sri-Lanka captured port more than once to showcase its direct control (Dasgupta, 2014). There is another worrying case factor that has to do with the clinched Chinese deal in Nepal for the construction of a dam in the year 2017.

After a careful analysis of the entire country's financial status, China then decided to acquire 75% of the stake in the dam construction through its SOEs company called Three Gorge Corporation. This was despite that the deal was completely scrapped by Nepali with various revival plans on the way (Giri, 2018). This has left Afrocentric scholars with a negative and reputationally damaging impression that when countries are heavily indebted to the Asian giant; they are then compelled to reimburse such loans with either mineral resources, handing over of management of the infrastructures or even capturing of such through the Chinese SOEs (Chellaney 2017), which ultimately violates the non-interventionism principle. The combination of the above factors reflects pure practices of neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism in the way of debt trapping by borrowing countries that are deeply in need of infrastructural development (Keet, 2010). The test case of Cambodia is also relevant in the analysis of the Chinese debts repayment methods, which added projects in exchange for the capture of national assets in the absence of mineral resources. By totally cancelling the Cambodian US$90 million debt, China worsened the situation by demanding the impossible conditions of always securing the new government contracts (Manero, 2017; Chellaneyc, 2017).

8.6.4. Chinese Aid: It is all about oil, minerals and wresources

There are several versions of this narrative that has spilt several mediaoutlets and scholarly reports. Other scholars have been able to advance that China is funding Africa intending to build water pipelines, hospitals, airports, railways, soccer stadiums, hotels, parliamentary buildings and dams which are all extensively inter-linked somehow to gain access to mineral and natural resources (Legodi 2021, interview).

As such, it is the current research's well-considered view that the Asian giant is indeed attempting to develop a particular form of control over the continent's natural resources and national strategic assets including in Angola and DRC. Equally, this is driven by China's huge confinement to the resource cursed and/or rich African countries whilst giving less attention to the resource-poor African countries.

Similarly, the observed events have revealed that most of the Chinese MNCs and SOEs in Africa follow a grand strategy of 'roads and railroads leading directly from mines and oil wells to ports, to ships, to China'. This implies that China is erecting multiple infrastructural projects intending to assist it to buy and export such natural resources back to China. This notion of the presumed grand strategy underpins many views on the Chinese investment in Africa as principally master-mined by Beijing, intending to create viable channels of transporting mineral resources back to China. This belief mostly stems from the fact that China has huge investment and is very active in the continent's resource-rich areas and the huge interest in these resources has been proven to be real over time. The argument that China gives aid to all nation-states in Sub-Saharan Africa through the One China policy is overlooked by the fact that such aid to resource-poor African nation-states is too little compared to the pouring of aid and loans into those that are resource-rich.

We have observed with a careful look into the cases of Angola and the DRC including Equatorial Guinea where the China Exim Bank has furnished very competitive and large loans to finance infrastructure with reimbursement plans committed on oil (alternative mineral resources). This shows that resources matter most in China's international relations with Africa including iron ore, copper, timber, and oil; it equally shows that China cares less about Africa. As Africa's resources matter more, the mutual approach is still about generating business that is led by profit. It is just that China has seen a gap that most of the traditional donors have been avoiding and is exhausting this gap to self-sustain just like any other country within the international system.

This is an infrastructural development and/or a needs gap for Africa. There is no gainsaying that African countries are not able to fully finance some of these infrastructural needs. Therefore, they often jump into the full comparative utilization of their resources to secure loans that can assist to repay these loans. Following the road map by the companies of Japan in China a few decades ago, most of the Chinese companies also bidded for contracts that might have earlier gone to the Wealthy west. An example of this would be found in the Bui Dam of Ghana, which was pre-funded with the cocoa export revenues that were poured into the escrow account from the Exim Bank of China (Kirchhrtt, 2016). In this instance, one might argue that China is interested in locking up Ghana's premium cocoa beans without the consideration of possible ways of guaranteeing repayment, strongly disenabling the African country from moving forward on a prolonged electricity power project.

There is also a major concern that China has been constructing an infrastructure that only runs from mines to the ports similar to the old colonial infrastructural construction models (Rapanyane 2020a). Likewise, this may be untrue for some African countries but true for others. This view may beinaccurate for Angola as most of the Chinese Funded-Angolan projects have been found far away from the deep coastal offshore including irrigation systems, hospitals, and roads. Also, this applies to the DRC which is involved in resource-backed infrastructural projects from railroads to universities far away from the deep coastal offshore (Brautigam, 2009). This is true for Gabon as it is planning to construct a port inter-linked to the railway deeply cutting into the pristine area of the rainforest to reach the mother lode of the iron ore. Also, it is interesting to know that it may not be applicable for most of the African countries such as Botswana, Rwanda, Mauritius, Kenya, and Madagascar.

8.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, the current researcher has made several revelations about China's engagement with African nation-states, particularly the cases of Angola and DRC. Additionally, the current researcher has reflected on the Chinese aid and loans as part of the unfair Chinese system of debt-trapping nation-states and those who are unable to repay the debts, who are then either forced to release their strategic national assets or give up mineral rights. It is without doubt that all of these practices have re-energised the spirit of recolonisation, scramble of Africa and an imperial agenda, showcasing China as the most unreasonable rogue donor of the 21st century both in Africa and elsewhere.

Arguably, it is very much clear that China does not respect Africans and African nation-states, particularly with much that has been happening in China recently including the continued racist mockery of Africans. Except making a mockery of the continent, China is engaged in various neo-colonial and imperial activities in Africa particularly in responding to African nation-states who are not able to repay their debts (Wekesa, 2021, interview). Such includes resources for infrastructural construction, the capture of national strategic assets, and warship military dispatches to captured ports in Africa. This is not only a special case for African nation-states like Angola, Zambia, DRC, Kenya, Tanzania, Djibouti and others. Beijing is doing the same elsewhere in the world including in Venezuela, Pakistan, Ecuador, Cambodia, Nepal and Sri Lanka. After all, this conduct is all about access to oil, minerals and/or natural resources for the selfish benefit of China.

The ensuing chapter compares and contrasts the general foreign policy of China towards Angola and the DRC.

CHAPTER NINE

China’s foreign policy towards Angola and DRC: A comparative study

9.1. Introduction

This chapter compares and contrasts China’s foreign policy towards Angola and the DRC. It does this by evaluating the general foreign policy stance of China towards Angola first and further highlights the most fundamental features that shape China’s international relations with Angola. Equally, the same is done for the DRC wherein the current researcher outlines the fundamental features that shape China’s engagement with the DRC. Finally, the chapter differentiates and correlates these features to achieve the aim of this chapter.

9.2. China’s Foreign Policy towards Angola

Since the dissolution of the 27 year long civil war in Angola, the Asian giant has been very much instrumental in terms of shaping and supporting the development of Angola’s infrastructure across commercial and economic cooperation agreements. These have resulted in a cosmic investment in crucial projects especially those in agro-business, mining, transport, energy, infrastructure, and telecommunications including the provision of oil-backed loans. It is without a doubt that with the credit line policy stance, including the boosting of the infrastructural development, in exchange for oil exports, the economy of Angola grew by an average of 10% between 2006-2010. The oil policy between the two nation-states grew to a considerable point of 46% oil exported to China from Angola in the year 2012.

Similarly, the African nation-state now accounts for almost 16% of the Chinese total oil imports, making Angola China’s biggest African supplier of crude oil. The oil exports to China keep rising and have made China to increase its oil imports from Angola even if the Asian giant is still commanding less influence, particularly with the huge presence of Western oil companies in oil exploration and extraction such as BP, ExxonMobil, Eni and Total SA. China’s presence in Angola is without doubt growing and is also felt within the energy sector. This was prevalent in the year 2004 when China was also able to execute a partnership deal with Sonangol (Angola's State-Owned Oil Company) obtaining 50% of the stake in BP's offshore block 18.

Whilst the Chinese benefits to Angola have had a considerable material impact on the development of Angola, there have been various legitimate gloom-ridden concerns that have gained attention recently, that include the various claims levelled against the Chinese companies in providing the sub-standard construction and/or manufacturing and mining services including various labour concerns that should be taken into consideration. Even if the various contractual deals awarded to the companies of China outline that 50% of all the materials acquired including 70% of the projects should emanate from and/or be assigned to all Chinese firms and China; the companies of China have in some instances had to drift their labour completely instead of utilising the Angolans. By utilizing their labour; most of the companies of China are diminishing the likelihood of skills transfer to the local labour force and with such a huge number standing at 250 000 in the year 2014, this importation of Chinese labour fosters a specific level of resentment towards Chinese companies and all their business operations in Angola.

The well-known Chinese policy of "no-strings-attached" has partly promoted the longevity of Dos Santos as the president who was in power since 1979 to 2017. He remained in power by way of a harsh system of suppression on mass protests opposing his government and also attempted to control the mass media. The 2012 Constitutional amendment permitted him to name the Vice president, Cabinet and provincial governors. As such, the MPLA remained the most authoritative party in power and stood accused by the opposition parties as being solely accountable for the malapportionment of the big portions of the oil revenue and Sonangol inter-linked funds dissipating. This was all attainable because of the corruption that pervaded him to maintain a strong influence on the politics of Angola. This has been perpetuated to permit the ruling elite a chance to carry on with being subsidised by the Chinese oil-backed loan and/or investment policy for infrastructural construction. All of this provided very little benefit to the Angolan majority, as infrastructure-for-oil deals were normally not inspected, and allowed China to also continue with the projects whilst using the predominantly Chinese workforce.

9.3. China's foreign policy towards DRC

China's international relations with Angola differs slightly from that of the DRC. With the DRC, China has mostly focused on a collaboration that is based upon energy matters. Even if the total Chinese oil imports from the DRC accounted for 43% in the year 2012, the situation has slowly changed to less than 10% of the oil demand from the DRC. With no difference at all, China is backing up the need to secure this energy, copper and cobalt with complimentary infrastructural construction contracts that include interest-free loans and credit line investment policy. China is also behind the dominant purchasing of the diamonds, copper and cobalt resources in the DRC because of the competitive involvement of the western companies. This has considerably pushed the Asian giant to even closely collaborate with the politically unstable central African state. In the year 2013, the DRC government asked for the expertise of China in the construction of SEZs intended for the reduction of the country's oil dependence, and expand its ability to process various other raw materials.

The 2015 meeting of both president Xi Jinping and former president Joseph Kabila was aimed at the amplification of further partnerships in finance, infrastructural development, petroleum, oil, SEZs and the expanded China-DRC cooperation, which brought certain benefits to the African nation-state. The DRC had accomplished a GDP growth rate of 6% in between the years 2008 and 2012. However, this was not all attributed to China but is slightly linked to China's continued purchase of the raw materials and collateralisation of the crude oil, wood, copper and cobalt. The DRC is equally a victim of Chinese utilisation of imported Chinese workers just like the Chinese projects in Africa that have been using Chinese imported workers instead of locals.

Thus, DRC workers in most of the Chinese companies also complain about low wages for performing very dangerous work in various diamonds, oil, copper and cobalt mines. Despite the substantial oil, copper, cobalt and wood revenues, corruption is running unbridled within the DRC's extractive industries. This is attributed to the institutional weaknesses in the DRC. For example, this involves contracts that are not effectuated with standards and funds that are mostly lost and misappropriated. The information on the revenue of oil is also mostly held back by the government and the principal state-owned companies are often under the direct control of the head of state and government.

The profound corruption has ensured that the nation-state's copper and cobalt revenue is inter-linked with the sustenance of the ruling elite to remain in power.

9.4. Contrasting and Comparing China's Foreign Policy towards Angola and DRC

Generally, the policy in question is both a self-serving foreign policy advanced to fulfil China's resource diplomacy and a quest for diplomatic support in the multilateral institutions (Maphaka 2021, interview). There are several conflictual issues between China and its African companions. Whilst, the Chinese investment in the development of Africa's infrastructural needs has been slightly beneficial, the DRC and Angola's mineral resources-for-infrastructural loans interrelations with China have been a worrying factor and unsustainable (Wekesa 2021, interview). Despite China's efforts in offering the various scholarship opportunities for Africans to study in China, the utilisation of Chinese workers in Chinese companies operating in Africa leaves little room for the transfer of skills, with various limitations to the long-term impact on development supposed to be brought by Chinese companies in Africa.

Into the bargain, one might argue that China is mostly interested in oil in Angola whilst it is more interested in the copper and cobalt in the DRC. This slight difference does not mean that there is no oil in the DRC, nor does it mean that there is no copper and cobalt in Angola. Such a slight difference means that China is mostly focused on both nation-states' extractive resources that have a comparative advantage. Also, it is mostly observable that the acquisition strategy of these resources is almost the same in both nation-states. This implies that the use of mineral-backed loans and aid including the use of Chinese workers is a norm in both Angola and DRC (Wekesa 2021, interview).

It is a matter of concern that as China is engaged extensively with these African partners, it is less interested in the level of autocratic control exercised by the ruling elites. This can be understood within the context that autocratic control ensures that anyone who frowns at the lack of employment opportunities and substandard quality work that is accompanied by less consideration of the CSR is completely suppressed in order for the governments to continue benefiting extensively from the mineral revenues. Such an environment is also conducive for profit maximisation by Chinese companies.

The displeasure towards the Chinese companies including the limited ability of the populace in expressing their exasperations and having their complaints addressed, including their interests come second to the Chinese companies and DRC politicians who have their deep pockets filled with mineral revenue. Such a growing huge resentment could escalate into violence against Chinese companies, as has been with the case of Zambia several times. The very same unrest might also have a considerable effect on the investor confidence, unsympathetically impacting the prospects of alternative investment, which further brings into question the sustainability of the developmental role of China in its engagement with Angola and the DRC.

Therefore, both African nation-states' GDPs shall keep growing and/or developing meanwhile, the real development is most likely to be hindered by the lack of resource-export diversification, high unemployment and the continued perpetuation of corruption braced by the Chinese companies and their investment. There is no gainsaying that dependence levels expressed by both Angola and the DRC on Chinese demand of oil, copper and cobalt could ultimately lead to political unrest, and/or instability should this demand diminish. In this instance, if both the DRC and Angola wish for substantial sustainable development; they should thus reflect and reconsider their current model of engagement with China (Williams, 2014).

9.5. Conclusion

The foregoing chapter has reflected on China's international relations with both Angola and the DRC. This was done by comparing and contrasting the Asian giant's engagement with both nation-states to understand the bigger picture of the China-Africa relations. It is without a doubt that China's general foreign policy towards Angola is informed fundamentally by the desire to acquire and/or access the huge abundance of oil reserves. Marginally, China's foreign policy model towards DRC is informed by the need to acquire the DRC's mineral resource complex; mostly made up of the abundance of copper and cobalt reserves. Above all, China's foreign policy in general towards both countries may be slightly different in terms of the key drivers but is anchored by the principle of Non-interventionism. It is also entrenched by the extractive-resources-for-infrastructural-construction foreign policy model.

The next chapter sums up the study and based on the major findings, recommendations for both theory and practice are advanced.

CHAPTER TEN

General Conclusion, Findings and Recommendations

10.1. Summary of findings

Based on the Afrocentric perspective, this study has used both Angola and the DRC as test cases to critique the foreign policy of China towards Africa in the 21stcentury. Owing to the African continent's geographic scope, this study does not in anyway submit to be representative but is limited to case studies of Angola and the DRC to demonstrate the patterns of China's engagement with Africaparticularly in southern Africa. Both Angola and the DRC were considered as the best cases in the current research owing to the active engagement of Beijing with Luanda and Kinshasa in the recent past. The following subheadings are organised in sequential order as per the objectives of the study towards the summation of the study findings.

10.1.1. Location of China's historical relations with both Angola and DRC

This study has discovered that China's international relations with Angola started in the early 1950s when the Angolan liberation movements were beginning to take arms against colonialism. Since then, Angola had been receiving Chinese support throughout all the years post -1950 when the liberation war against the Portuguese began. China supported Angolan liberation movements such as FNLA, UNITA[23], and MPLA. This support continued throughout to the time when Angola gained independence in the year 1975 from the Portuguese to the dissolution of the 27 years old civil war in 2002. Since then, China had been engaging with Angola on a win-win approach. This period of win-win collaboration is mostly marked by the pouring of huge loans and aid into Angola for what is called infrastructural loans for oil (Wekesa 2021, interview).

This study has also discovered that China had been a staunch supporter of the earlier Belgian Congo's liberation movement for independence. This had to do with the

[23] The characterisation of UNITA as a liberation movement is debatable as it at times presented a posture of a rebel movement in the mode of National Resistance Movement (RENAMO) in Mozambique.

Chinese's own communist revolutionary approach to stop the advancement of the Russian version of Communism and even to further strengthen the ties between both countries, especially with independence activists in the DRC such as Patrice Lumumba. Historically, China is argued to have perpetuated ties with the DRC even before independence including the post-1960 independence period. China had always presented itself as a partisan of the world's most oppressed and exploited its relationship with some of the DRC's political activitists such as Joseph Kasavubu, Antoine Gizenga and Joseph Mobutu and with this, it managed to maintain cordial relations with all post-independence era governments in Kinshasa.

China has also articulated that it is not an opportunist and a newcomer in the DRC as it would always remind the DRC that in the year 1965 "they were not alone in their just struggle against capitalism. All the Chinese people are with you. All the people opposed to imperialism are with you…. American imperialism will have concurred" (Anshan, 2007: 71). To this day, the contemporary China-DRC relations are informed by what we recently understand as the Sicomines deal of the 21st century. This is also understood to be the most proactive Chinese step following DRC's successful 2006 general elections to negotiate the biggest 2008 century deal of massive resources for infrastructural construction worth more than $6 billion.

10.1.2. Identification of the key drivers of China's foreign policy towards Africa: Case study of Angola and DRC

This study has succeeded in discovering that China is mostly driven by two significant things in Angola. The first one has to do with the exploration and exploitation of oil through state-directed business including the funding of private companies in oil exploration. This is because of the enlarged business partnerships that were developed by the Beijing and Hong Kong-based private interests with a partnership with the China Petroleum & Chemical Corporations (Sinopec) and Angolan state-run company (Sonangol). All of the mentioned have been in the service of China in developing a portfolio nexus deal with Angolan government that extended beyond real estate and aviation to construction and oil exploration and exploitation across the world. The second one has to do with access to various Angolan minerals including diamonds and copper. This includes the desire to dismantle Western donors in Angola and bring Chinese nationals into Angola to promote unemployment of the locals to expedite the exploitation of minerals. China is also interested in establishing various small scale businesses including restaurants, small shops and factories in Angola within the manufacturing sector.

For the DRC context, this study has found out that since the DRC is home to 51% of the global cobalt reserves as per the USA Geological Survey data in 2019, indeed, this has been of great interest to China historically. Another huge discovery has been that the DRC has as good as 70% of the whole cobalt feedstock production globally. This has motivated China to enter the DRC bearing in mind that it contains roughly half of the world's cobalt reserves and a significant portion of the high-grade copper ore whose value in the global market has increased over the past two decades. As such, most of the Chinese MNCs and SOEs have since flooded the DRC since the historic election that resulted in Joseph Kabila taking power in 2006. It was also discovered that the sending of Chinese MNCs and SOEs into the DRC's cobalt and copper industries. although slightly serving the DRC economy; has benefitted China heavily as the conditions of the multilateral partnerships between both nation-states are dictated on an unequal power relations model which favours the self-economic interests of China.

10.1.3. Broad examination of all the Chinese companies operating in both Angola and DRC's mining and manufacturing sectors

This study has discovered that numerous Chinese oil companies are operating in Angola and some of these include China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation, China National Offshore Oil Corporation, Sinopec and China National Petroleum Corporation. These are among the emerging energy and chemical companies with various operations in the downstream oil sectors. Among others that are in the mining and energy sectors are the Jia Xing Mining Industry Congo, Feza Mining and Metal Mines including other companies with extensive interests and operations (although with limited operational data) such as the Congo Dong Bang Mining (CDM), Lubumbashi smelter and Kolwezi Depot and Congo Loyal Will Mining, Lubumbashi smelter, COTA Mining. Others include Emmanuel Mining: Huachin, smelters in Lubumbashi and Likasi, Jia Xing, Kolwezi depot, and JMT. Others include Song Hua, COTA, Luc Ndubula Mining, and Kamoto Copper Company including Feza Mining. The other aspiring companies in the manufacturing sector include the likes of Dongfang Nissan which has vast operation factories in Angola. We also have the Golden Nest International in the construction sector with five various manufacturing factories operating in concrete blocks, paint, steel, alnico and sand products.

This study also discovered that various Chinese companies were cooperating within the DRC including the Jia Xing Mining Industry Congo, Feza Mining and Metal Mines. The first one is a subsidiary of Yingkou BL Mining Company Ltd, a conglomerate company, which is a composite of the Eletro-refined plant and Yingkou BL Mining Company refractory plant in China. The second (Feza Mining) is a joint business between Wanbao Resources Corporation and COMIDE, a conglomerate of the Wanbao Mining Limited. Whilst the third one (Metals mines) is a by-product of the Hanrui Cobalt that was established in the year 2007. This was with a considerable "initial annual production capacity of 1500-2000 MT Coarse Cobalt Carbonate and 20000-30000 MT Cobalt Concentrates" (Rights & Accountability in Government, 2009: 22). Equally, this company is also heavily engaged in the sales and marketing of the related products of cobalt.

10.1.4. Reflections on China's adherence and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility in both Angola and DRC

This study discovered that China is engaging extensively with Angola through oil-backed loans for infrastructural construction. It was also established that most of the Chinese oil companies with operations in Angola have been historically accused of low CSR practices and are heavily criticised by the Angolans. In a detailed format, it is revealed that the China Exim Bank's approval of many credit line loans and/or aid has encouraged multiple Chinese MNCs and SOEs to enter the Angolan market. As such, there have been growing worries about Chinese people who have entered Angola with data predicting that they were more than 200 000 by the year 2014.

Accusations levelled against these Chinese companies have to do with the importation of Chinese workers, abuse of local Angolan workers and also various human rights violations. The most notable of the labour export strategy is the growing concerns in respect of adherence to the CSR trend. A combination of the above issues including the Chinese companies' hesitation to employ the Angolans has led to increased hatred of the Chinese who are understood to be inconsiderate of internal elements that shape the CSR engagement.

It was also discovered that in the DRC most of the Chinese MNCs and SOEs with various operations especially within the Katanga province have employed the local workers whilst also expatriating and using Chinese workers. The working conditions for the DRC employees are different in the two groups with Chinese being paid generally more wages and provided with accommodation. Equally, there had been indefatigable concerns on the rising acts of criminality by some of the Chinese employers which includes physical abuses of some of the DRC workers at the hands of the Chinese companies' representatives and the liquidation of hospital bills of some of the local workers who have sustained injuries at work.

In addition, it has been revealed that most of the Chinese MNCs and SOEs with different operations in DRC's mining sector have neither concluded the needed environmental impact assessments nor the compulsory environmental management plans for the projects of mining, as outlined in the article 15 of the DRC mining code. One of the driving reasons behind this would be the issue of the language barrier recognised in terms of communication between Chinese employers and local workers, including the local community stakeholders. There are also issues of adults and children mining cobalt and copper in the tapered man-made tunnels at the DRC mine sites that are inter-linked to the Huayou Cobalt and other Chinese mining companies. This is a child labour risk and does not comply with the international standards and norms of CSR invocation.

10.1.5. Major steps taken when Angola and DRC default on Chinese loan reimbursement

This study notes in this context that China has mostly deployed the use of negotiating access to oil and alternative mineral resources as collateral for loan repayments unlike in other African nation-states such as Zambia where it negotiates towards the capture of national strategic assets. It has been revealed that Angola is considerably owing China roughly US$25 billion and has accumulated this debt over the previous two decades. Although not yet under a complete curatorship, the African country's compounded web of huge mineral resources and oil reserves does not warrant causeit to struggle with repayment of the Chinese infrastructural loans; as it should simply place its mineral resources including oil on the global market and repay the loans with extra earned proceeds. This unfortunate process is not tenable under the current circumstances as the Chinese debt-trap diplomacy does not allow debt-strapped African nation-states to place their resources on the open global market. Preference is given to repaying Beijing with mineral resources and oil reserves for the debt-accumulated over time.

For the DRC, this study has discovered almost the same strategy employed in Angola of using mineral resources to repay debts although this is still blurred. Apparently, the Sicomines deal that was signed in 2008 has been struggling over time to completely start operations although various operations have slightly been in place. One concern about the deal has to do with the huge secrecy. The residents mentioned that they only became aware of this huge deal of the century 3 years after its signing, particularly when the land survey was conducted by the workers. For Oscar Melhado (IMF resident representative), the entire mining contract needed adjacent supervision (Ross, 2015) as it made almost everything impossible to know exactly how China plans to strategise aroundDRC's repayment of its infrastructural loans. To this day, the general agreement is that China is still pursuing the same strategy of mineral-resource backed loans including in the DRC particularly in respect of copper and cobalt.

10.1.6. Comparison and contrast of China's Foreign policy towards Angola and DRC

This study has found that China's engagement with Angola is mostly informed by China's desire to access the abundant oil reserves in the African country. Slightly variant in terms of the mineral resource acquisition, China's engagement with the DRC is informed by the desire to access the DRC's mineral resource complex: mostly made up of cobalt, and copper reserves. Most importantly, it was discovered that China's general foreign policy towards both nation-states may differ slightly in terms of the key drivers. Notably, it is pillared by the non-interventionism principle and mineral-resources-for-infrastructural-construction policy model.

10.2. Significance of the study

This study makes its contribution to the field of international politics by magnifying the current literature on China-Africa relations. Secondly, it is a first full-fledged comparative case study on China's foreign policy towards Angola and DRC that unreservedly and meticulously adopts Afrocentricity as the contextual spyglass that captures the ethos and contextual voices of African people and realities. Relatedly, it shall restoratively intensify the emerging scholarly discourse on China's foreign policy in Africa in the socio-economic, and political amphitheatre. Fourth, the findings drawn from each test case are expected to transform the community of scholars, policy makers and general readers' thinking and broader comprehension about the impact of China's foreign policy towards African nation-states based on the socio-economic and political development of Angola and the DRC. Equally, this study employs a unique scientific inquiry that has the ability to enlighten readers on counter policy strategies of Angola and the DRC in respect to the general foreign policy of China towards these individual countries and the African continent.

10.3. Delimitations for theory and practice

Despite the contributions of the study's findings; this study makes a huge scientific contribution to Foreign Policy Analysis and International Politics in general, especially on the aspects and place of the African nation-states as they interrelate with China's foreign policy. Also, the distinctive foreign policy towards Angola and the DRC is an important purview with which to understand the global Chinese foreign policy framework. Complementary to this is the fact that this study has shifted the foundations of thinking away from Eurocentrism, Chinese dominant thinking and American perspectives by showcasing how a historically marginalised Afrocentric perspective can explicitly assist in the comprehensive understanding of China's international relations with Africa and world affairs in general.

10.4. Limitations of the study

Both major and minor challenges have been encountered during this study. Amongst these challenges were the fact that it took place during the period of the Coronavirus (Covid-19). Covid-19 affected all people globally and country-wide economically, socially and mentally. All of the mentioned aspects are inter-linked to academic operations and achievements. The general stress that the current researcher underwent had a considerable negative effect on his academic life. This is because the current researcher was not sparred from losing close family members due to the Covid-19. The various Covid-19 governmental regulations and restrictions, particularly on the movement of people also denied the researcher the smoothsailing operationalisation of the study. Even though all of these governmental regulations and restrictions were understandably set to contain the spread of Covid-19, the study was impacted directly and indirectly by their implentation.

Also of importance to state in this subsection was the unwillingness of the Chinese active diplomats' to directly participate in the current study due to the secrecy levels in their trade (diplomacy) and/ or hesitation to voice their views on the debt-trap diplomacy involving the mineral-resources-for-infrastructure development. The issue of language barrier has also been a challenge when conducting this study as some of the official Chinese government documents that would have served as informative records were written in Chinese mandarin and the current researcher was not well resourced to ask for language translation. Such impediments made it difficult for the researcher to access information as most of the language academics in South Africa's institutions of higher learning were not able to speak Chinese mandarin.

Despite all this, these challenges did not have an overarching impact on the reliability and admissibility of the findings of the study. The identified and elaborated findings outlined in this study may not necessarily be generalised; but they can be utilised as a stepping-stone for future studies on the same subject. Moreover, Platt (2007: 104, 114) has indicated that the generalisation of case studies is mostly limited to testable theory and not empirical findings. This concurs with Hall's (2007: 95) view that comparative case studies can provide a step to evaluate a certain argument's validity and not necessarily generate any general knowledge.

10.5. Recommendations of the study

- The Angola and DRC governments ought to develop plans that will enable them to sell their crude oil, copper, cobalt and alternative mineral resources to obtain enough funds and/or economic proceeds to repay the Chinese loans.
- International Relations scholars as well as policy makers in both Angola and the DRC should study this research extensively, particularly on theincreasing concerns involving the Chinese-Debt-trap diplomacy and relevant evidence-based accounts of the same allegations elsewhere in the African continent to produce well-informed studies and policy directives regarding choices of Chinese banks as potential lenders.
- African nation-states ought to develop strategic policy directives that are informed by counter-initiatives on how to superlatively engage with Chinese lenders especially when it relates to well-known mineral-resource-for-infrastructural-construction policy models including capturing of national assets for loan repayments stated in this study.
- African nation-states should equally develop counter-policy mechanisms that will deal decisively with corruption to promote transparency, access to information from the government, reform of finance and public administration for enhancement and the development of anti-corruption monitoring units.
- China should clarify its international strategy of engagement with developing but weak African states, especially when it relates to the provision of loans. The disbandment of the military bases for good reputational risk is advised for China in African nation-states such as Djibouti. This should include the dissolution of any military encroachment into the affairs of African nation-states for the continued promotion of the non-interventionism principle. Without this, there will be a continued impression that China is recolonising the African nation-states.

- African nation-states such as Angola and the DRC are advised to be strategic in their deployment of a win-win approach particularly in loan and trade negotiations with multi-national companies.
- Counter neo-colonial and new imperial policies like developing African investment banks and coming up with unconditional loans within Africa should be the priority for African nation-states.
- The terms and conditions of loans and aid provision between nation-states with unequal power relations (i.e. China with Angola and DRC) ought to be made comprehensive and clear to generate an environment of trust within the African partners.

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Annexure 1: List of Interviewees

Maphaka D. Masters Student: University of Limpopo. Online Interview Guide. 4 October 2021.

Nkuna M. Doctoral Student: University of Limpopo. Online Interview Guide. 28 October 2021.

Wekesa B. Acting Director, African Center for the Study of the United States: University of the Witwatersrand. Online Interview Guide. 30 October 2021.

Legodi LT. Senior Lecturer: University of Limpopo. Online Interview Guide. 5 October 2021.

Langa N. Doctoral Student: University of Kwazulu Natal. Online Interview Guide. 4 January 2022.

Mosala SJ. Part-Time Lecturer: North West University. Online Interview Guide. 28 December 2021.

Annexure 2: Research Interview Guide

My name is Makhura Benjamin Rapanyane, An International Politics Doctoral Student from the University of Limpopo in the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences School. I am conducting a study **A Comparative Afrocentric Critique of China's Foreign Policy towards Africa: Case Studies of Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo, 2010-2020**. These interview questions are for research purposes only and confidentiality will be highly maintained. Therefore, you are not compelled to disclose your names or surname.

NB: Please take full note that your full participation in this study is not financially rewarding to either participants or the researchers as it is done voluntarily for only academic purposes. Your full participation in this study will assist in the shaping and deepening of the current policy and academic discourse on questions relating to China's Africa policy. The culminating product of this research will expand knowledge production on China-Africa affairs amongst academics, students, and other interested parties. Therefore, your assistance in answering the questions will be highly appreciated.

Should you agree to fully-partake in this research, please assist in filling the interview guide attached in detail and e-mail it back to me at either makhurabenjamin2@gmail.com or/ 201521803@keyaka.ul.ac.za. Should you require any further supervisory clarity on the context of this research, the supervisor Professor Shai KB is available at: Kgothatso.Shai@ul.ac.za or +27 15 268 3231

Research Questions

- What is the history of China's relationship with both DRC and Angola?
- What are the key drivers of China's foreign policy towards Angola and DRC in the context of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative international policy?
- To what extend are the Chinese mining and manufacturing companies' operations in both Angola and DRC affecting the Beijing's engagement in these countries?
- In terms of the natural resources, where lies Chinese interests in both Angola and DRC?
- Does trade and economic agreements between China and the two selected African countries have mutual benefit for them?
- Is there a sound basis to believe that China is engaged in neo colonial practices in both Angola and DRC?
- How is China adhering to the international norm and practice of Corporate Social Responsibility in both Angola and DRC?
- What are major steps undertaken by China when selected African countries default on Chinese loan reimbursement?
- What are the similarities and differences of China's foreign policy towards Angola and DRC?

Consent Form and/or Personal Particulars

Signed at__________________ Date……Month…….Year……......

…………………………………….. ...……………………………………..

Name of Researcher Signature of Researcher

Participant's consent form

I ……………………………………………hereby declare that I agree to participate in the project voluntarily. I understand that I can withdraw my participation at any time without giving reasons and that I will not be penalized for withdrawing. Nor will I be questioned on why I am withdrawing. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation. The use of the data in the research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.

Signed at ……………………… Date……Month……. Year……......

…………………………………….. ...……………………………………

Name of Participant Signature of Participant

questions about the project and my participation. The use of the data in the research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.

Signed at ……………………… Date……Month……. Year……......

…………………………………….. ...……………………………………

Name of Participant Signature of Participant\

Annexure 3: Ethical Clearance Certificate

University of Limpopo

Department of Research Administration and Development

Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa

Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: **14 September 2021**

PROJECT NUMBER: **TREC/195/2021: PG**

PROJECT:

Title: An Afrocentric critique of China's foreign policy towards Africa: Case Studies of Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo, 2010-2020

Researcher: MB Rapanyane

Supervisor: Prof KB Shai

Co-Supervisor/s: N/A

School: Social Sciences

Degree: PhD in International Politics

PROF P MASOKO

CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

i) **This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.**

ii) **Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.**

iii) **PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.**

Finding solutions for Africa