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CHINA's EXPANDING CULTURAL INFLUENCE IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE CHINESE MEDIA IN KENYA

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by

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DEDICATION

To my loving parents

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation seeks to demonstrate China's growing cultural influence in African countries and illustrates how China attempts to use its economic power and cultural influences to shape African countries' foreign policies towards China by using the Chinese media and cultural expansion in Kenya as a case study. In order to achieve this objective, this study examines the internal and external economic and political forces in both China and Kenya that have helped to establish the current pattern of China's media involvement and other cultural engagements in Kenya. This study also explores the extent and nature of China's cultural and media involvement in Africa with a specific focus on Kenya; penetration of Chinese news and other cultural productions in Kenya was examined. This study analyzed the response of Kenyan media to China's recent engagement with the country, especially China's increasingly involvement in media and other cultural production in the country.

China's growing presence in Africa has provoked a heated debate about the nature of Chinese engagement and its implication for the African continent. Critics argue that China is using its power to develop a neo-colonial system in Africa. Rather than direct

political control of African countries, China operates behind closed doors to influence African countries' foreign policies toward China. Despite criticism of colonialism, some observers perceive current Sino-African relations as a partnership for development. Both China and African countries are gaining significant benefits from this relationship. After analyzed two leading Kenyan newspapers' coverage of China's involvement in Kenya, this study found that both newspapers' representations of China are natural; unlike Western media's negative views of Chinese presence or China's positive self portrait. However, Kenyan media's framing of China's engagement in the country should not be viewed as stagnant because China-Kenya interactions are rapidly evolving.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

When the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded in 1949, Mao Zedong, the eventual chairman of the Party, adopted the Marxist-Leninist theories of communist ideology. The objective of Marxist-Leninism theories is to create a social structure that is classless, that has a centrally planned economy, and that operates by collective economic production (Andrain, 1994). During the Mao era, the Chinese economy was relatively stagnant and inefficient. China was isolated and had little interaction with the Western world.

After the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, Deng Xiaoping became the new leader of the Chinese Communist Party. Instead of following Mao's central economic planning and public ownership, Deng initiated a series of economic reform programs and the Open-Door policy of 1978, for the purpose of modernizing China (Brautigam, 2009). China's economy has grown rapidly since the reforms. In order to sustain rapid economic growth and political stability, China sought to secure energy resources, broaden their investment activities, and search for new markets for their manufactured goods. These objectives led China to the African continent (Alden, Large & de Oliveira, 2008).

In addition to China's rapid economic growth, African countries' economic performance has also improved over the past decade. As its economy continues to grow, Africa has become a huge consumer market with strong commercial potential. As a result, Chinese companies have been able establish and expand their business ventures into the global arena (Leak, Lund, Roxburgh & Wamelen, 2010). Lowpriced, Chinese manufactured goods have emerged as popular trade items among African countries; almost all African countries are flooded with low-cost Chinese merchandise (Leak, Lund, Roxburgh & Wamelen, 2010).

China's growing economic interest in, and engagements with, Africa has received considerable attention over the past years. However, there is no united perception regarding China's active engagement with Africa. The proponents of China's engagement are optimistic about the increased Chinese presence in Africa, while the critics are concerned about the negative impacts that might be caused by a large Chinese presence. Optimists suggest that the African economy is benefiting from China's recent investment. The Chinese government's aid, as well as monetary investments has helped African countries improve their infrastructure and stimulate their economies (Kurlantzick, 2009; Suzuki, 2009; Jakobson, 2009). Unlike the positive perspective, opponents are skeptical about China's real interest. They argue; that China is a resource extractor and only cares about its own interests and the exploitation of African resources rather than benefiting the host nations, and thereby, this type of interactions is a threat to African interests (Zweig & Bi, 2005; Frynas & Paulo, 2006; Taylor, 2006; Melber, 2007; Herman, 2007; Rich & Recker, 2013).

Research Objectives

Over the past two decades, the Chinese economy has grown rapidly. In order to meet domestic demand, and to stay competitive in the global market, the Chinese government and private sectors are expanding their economic investment around the world. The search for natural resources and consumer markets for its growing economy drives the intensity and diversity of China's recent engagement with the

African continent. For China, Africa is not just a political object for countering the United States and Soviet Union's hegemony; instead, it is a source of natural resources, energy, consumer markets and investment opportunities for the Chinese government and its private sectors (Lampton, 2008).

China's engagement with Africa is not effortless. China and its private companies are facing many challenges in Africa; one of them is a cultural misunderstanding between the Chinese and the African people. Such misunderstandings often lead to social tensions and, consequently, difficulties for the Chinese government and private sector entities to conduct business in Africa (Ighobor, 2013). In order to minimize such social tensions, China is using its economic and political power to bridge the cultural gap within African countries and to assure other nations that China is Africa's new development partner (Naidu, 2010), and is not a threat or "neocolonialist" (Kurlantzick, 2007). The Chinese government promises that the purpose of its engagement with Africa is nothing more than promoting both stronger trade and investment relations between China and African nations (Mbaye, 2010).

To enhance its relationship with African countries, China has acknowledged that it needs to win the hearts and minds of the African people. In doing so, it altered its national image management strategies and is employing new approaches to introduce an unbiased image of China to the outside world. As part of this image-rebranding effort, the Chinese government has invested numerous resources to expand its cultural and media operations in other countries, with the goal of improving China's image. Billions of dollars are being invested in China's state-owned seeks to establish its own global media empire and to break the Western media monopoly (Shambaugh, 2015).

This study used Kenya as a case study to examine the expanding operations of Chinese media in the country and the growing Chinese presence in Kenyan media. Kenya was chosen as a case study for this project due to its economic and political importance in the African continent. On economic front, when China increased its economic activities in Africa, Kenya became an important hub for the Chinese government and private sectors. In recent years, China has increased their investments in Kenya's local infrastructure, manufacturing, technology and media sectors (Patroba, 2012).

In addition to the economic significance of Kenya, it is also an important cultural hub for China. By the end of 2016, the Chinese government has established forty-eight Confucius Institutes in more than thirty-three African countries; four of them are in Kenya. China has also awarded a large number of scholarships to Kenyan students, and Nairobi has become the home of China's state-run media headquarters in Africa. Examining the Chinese media's expansion in Kenya as a study case, this study seeks to demonstrate that China has a growing cultural influence in African countries, and to illustrate how China uses its economic power and cultural influences to shape African countries' foreign policies. In order to achieve this objective, this study attempts to accomplish the following:

1. Examine the internal and external economic, political and technological forces in both China and Kenya that have helped to establish the current pattern of China's media involvement and other cultural engagements in Kenya:

i. Political and economic developments in China that have led to its growing presence on the global stage.

ii. Global political and economic developments that have facilitated China's growing presence on the global stage.

iii. Political and economic developments in Kenya that have led to China's growing presence on the global stage

iv. The shift in international alliances and political, economic and technological developments in Kenya as well as in Africa in general that have facilitated increasing economic and political ties to China.

2. Examine the extent of China's cultural and media involvements in Africa with a specific focus on Kenya:

i. Penetration of Chinese news and other cultural productions in Kenyan media including newspapers, television, film, etc.

ii. Financial, technological and other material support such as personnel training by China for Kenyan media and other cultural production enterprises.

iii. Cultural exchange programs through government agencies and non-state actors.

3. Analyze the response of the Kenyan media to China's recent engagements in the country, especially China's increasing involvement in media and other cultural productions.

Methodological Framework

China has made great economic achievements since initiating the economic reform and the Open Door policies in 1978 (Barboza, 2010). However, China's economic success does not guarantee a positive national image or reputation that favors China in many parts of the world. Since the 1990s, the term "the rise of China" is often countered by the phrase of "China threat" (Roy, 1994). The national image refers to the way a nation is viewed by other countries. In recent years, China has acknowledged huge conceptual differences between its self-perception and the way other countries perceive China. To narrow this gap, the Chinese government took a more active approach to improving its international image with the ultimate goal of shaping national policies in other countries, especially those in Africa, towards China.

Media has the power to construct appropriate and inappropriate views and to determine what events or information are important and unimportant for the public (Hall, 1997). The media is a critical instrument in building a positive national image or a means to criticize any event, issue, and country. China's rapid economic growth has drawn increased attention around the world, especially in the Western media. However, the images represented in most of the western media are not completely real; they are biased and sometimes deliberately demonized (Liss, 2003). Such inaccurate portrait in foreign media motivated China to defend itself and speak to the world in its own ways. Since 2009, the Chinese government has invested billions of dollars in its media's global expansion. The goals of Chinese media's international expansion are to build a positive national image and provide an accurate reflection of a modern China to foreign audiences.

This research seeks to analyze the response of Kenyan media to China's recent engagements with Kenya, especially on China's increasing involvement in media and other cultural productions in the country. By analyzing some of Kenya's leading newspapers, this study seeks to obtain a better understanding of Kenyans' perception of Chinese presence in the country and how China was presented in the mainstream Kenyan media. Framing analysis was employed to examine the Kenyan media's coverage of China's engagement in Kenya to see how Chinese presence and China were framed in the Kenyan newspapers.

Framing is defined as the way in which events and issues are organized by the media to help their audiences understand the content (Reese, 2003). Framing theory was first developed in 1974 to explain how the information senders construct a piece of information to the public in the communication process (Goffman, 1974). It is often uses to analyze how a certain issue, event, and phenomenon is constructed and confined by the media (Gamson, 1992; Reese, 2001). According to Entman, "to frame is to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993:53). In other words, frames are functioning as an instrument to "define problems, make moral judgments and suggest remedies" (Ibid) and help the media to shape the public's perceptions of the event, issue, and world (Bryman, 1998).

Media frame is an effective tool for producing and maintaining the hegemony of a preferred frame. Using framing analysis will allow a greater understanding of how different media frames produce power and create knowledge to favor certain groups. The purpose of analyzing Kenyan media's response to China's involvement in the country is to obtain a better understanding of how Chinese presences and China is framed in the leading Kenyan newspapers after China intensified its cultural and media investment in the country.

Selection of Media Texts

National newspapers can be used as a powerful communication system in any given country because of their power to constitute the perceptions that shape and change people's views of certain events and nations. In this way, the national newspapers circulate "definition and of the situation" that have great impacts on the formation, maintenance, and reproduction of a dominant consensus (van Dijk, 1993). Knowledge of any type news "is never neutral or an objective phenomenon but a matter of place from which one speaks, to whom, and for what purpose". Therefore, the national newspapers' discourse is a form of ideological representations of events (Barker & Galaninski, 2001:22).

This study used the leading Kenyan newspapers to unpack the ways Kenyan newspaper represented China engagement in the country, especially its increasing involvements in media and other cultural productions. Using framing analysis as a methodological tool enables the researcher to obtain a better understanding of the ways media texts are encoded the potential forces that are influencing such media frames.

This study will analyze media frames of *the Daly Nation* and *The Standard.* Both *the Daily Nation* and *The Standard* are respected publications in Kenya. According to K.J. Ho, a prestigious newspaper should include two standards: quality of news reports, and its influence on other media organizations and political elites (1962). Following Ho's standards, both newspapers were selected as the representative of Kenyan newspapers because of its quality of journalism and political influences. *The Daily Nation* is viewed as the most influential of all the newspaper in Kenya (BBC). Together with other sister publications such as Sunday Nation, the Nation media group is the largest newspaper group in Eastern Africa (Nation, 2013). *The Standard* is the oldest newspaper in Kenya. It was established in 1902 as The African Standard. It is owned by the Standard Group Limited, whose primary shareholder is SNG Holding Limited, the Standard Group also owned the Kenya Television Network (KTN) (Onyebadi & Oyedeji, 2011). The time frame of news articles selected for analyzing is between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2016. The reason for selecting this time period was due to the limited newspaper data access.

Related Literature

Over the past years, China's presence in Africa has triggered conflicting reactions and assessments. The debate on the impact of China's contemporary engagement in Africa has been divided between those optimists who believe China's intention is to promote mutual benefit and that African states are benefiting from Chinese trade, investment, and aids. They argue that China is making a real positive difference in African countries' economic development, and that recent African nations' economic growth is an evidence of such engagement. While many Western and African critics view Chinese presence in Africa with suspicion, considering China's political rhetoric and generous aid packages to be a means to achieve its exploitative agendas. They perceive China as a neo-colonial power in Africa (E. Cheng, 2007); the real intention of China's current engagement in Africa is to exploit Africa's natural resources and raw materials (Taylor, 2009).

Western often views China and African critics as a neo-colonial power that "is capable of the same exploitative practices as the old colonial powers" (Flynn, 2013). Robert Rotberg depicted China as an "extractive and exploitive" economic power with neo-colonialist tendencies in his book China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence. He argues, like old colonial powers, China's engagement damages African nations' development, delays industrialization, and ruins the local industry. China also risks good governance in Africa by supporting dictatorships and corrupt African governments who violated human rights (as in Sudan & Zimbabwe). China is only interested in Africa's natural resources, not in the long-term development of the African countries (Rotberg, 2008).

In his book, Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World, Joshua Kurlantzick details a critical view of China's recent approach to global politics. Kurlantzick suggests this approach is a dangerous form of "imperialism." He argues that, instead of using military power, China is using its economic and cultural power to achieve its goal to be a major player in the international community. He warns the rest of the world to be skeptical of Chinese intentions and motivations and uses African countries as the primary example of this dangerous manipulation (Kurlantzick, 2007).

Some African officials also voice their concerns. For instance, the Nigerian Central Bank Governor, Lamido Sanusi, published an article in the Financial Times that warned African nations to "get rid of its romantic view of China and accept Beijing is a competitor as much as a partner and capable of the same exploitative practices as the old colonial powers." He believes African countries are opening themselves up to a "new form of imperialism", in which China extracts Africa's natural resources and selling back the manufactured goods to African markets. He worries low-cost Chinese manufactured goods imported to Africa will hurt the local economy (Flynn, 2013).

In "Special Report: China Storms Africa" Richard Behar makes the connection of China's current investment in Africa with Africa's painful history with colonization. In this article, China was portrayed as an emerging hegemonic power that is using its dominant power to exploit a vulnerable continent. He suggests that China's current presence in Africa is a second "scramble for Africa", and the current one is harsher because it is more rapid and spread-out (2008).

Some Sino-Africa scholars found both the silences on the role of the West and flawed understanding of the West's ongoing neo-colonial relationship with Africa characteristic approaches are problematic. Kwesi Kwaa Prah contended, it is hypocritical of Western nations to bring up concerns about China's engagement in Africa, given the fact of the West's long history of colonial relations with the Africa, which continues to the present day (2007). Garth Le Pere also suggests, the perception of China as a "neo-colonialist" power in Africa is a product of Western motivated misrepresentations that aims to contrast self-representation of the West in Africa, which is altruistic or beneficent, to the opportunistic, exploitative and damaging role of the emerging powers, like China (2008). For these scholars, the purpose of the West to label China's engagement in Africa as a form of "neo-colonialism" or China as an "economic colonizer" is to warn African countries to back away from China's investments. However, they believe this objective is neither realistic nor supportive of the African countries to participate in global economics or to benefit from China's engagement with African countries.

Unlike critics that criticized China's presence in Africa as a form of "neo-colonialism", some observers perceive China's engagement with Africa as being based on "profound friendship" to promote mutual benefit (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012:13). In China in Africa: An African Argument, Chris Alden presents a balanced and comprehensive exploration of China's involvement. In this study, Alden not only discusses the opportunistic nature of China's involvement in Africa but also praises China's contributions on the continent. For him, China has undoubtedly done more good than bad in Africa. China's engagement with Africa is "part of a long-term strategic commitment to the continent," and is motivated by economic demands and to "build effective cooperative partnerships across the developing world" (2007:5).

He suggests that the narrative of Sino-African relation is still in the making. It is impossible to determine the role that China plays in Africa in such a short period of time. However, the impact of China's engagement with Africa will be determined in the upcoming decades. Alden concludes his study with a suggestion to African leaders to take an active role in determining the parameters for China involvement (2007).

This mutual benefit perspective is strongly promoted by Chinese officials. The Chinese officials constantly remind the international community China's engagement with Africa is mutually beneficial because they are constructed on a basis of equal partnerships, mutual interest, and reciprocal respect (G. Sun, 2004; Hu, 2006). Some Western officials also shared this mutual benefit perspective. For example, former President of the World Bank, Robert Zoellic mentioned on several occasions that China's investment in Africa's infrastructure is good for the African countries. He even suggested that the World Bank would like to partner with China as a joint effort to ease poverty in Africa (Beijing Review, 2008). Former Zambia's Minister of Finance Felix Mutati also claimed, "there is no doubt China has been good to Zambia…They are bringing investment, world-class technology, jobs, and value addition. What more can you ask for" (Polgreen & French, 2007)?

In short, optimists who view China as a positive force for African countries' development believe that China's presence in Africa is a win-win situation, benefiting both China and Africa. African countries receive, aids, technological expertise, human resources, and industrial production know-how from China. For China, Africa provides energy resources, new consumer markets and investment opportunities China needs to sustain its economic growth. Both Africa and China meet their economic needs (G. Sun, 2004; King, 2010).

Other than perceive positive or negative perspectives of the impacts of China's current engagement with Africa, there are also a group of commentators who try to characterize China' growing presence in Africa as part of the trend in globalization: a global quest for resources and development. For instance, Luk Tak Chuen argues, China is operating within a larger system of neoliberal globalization and following the Western neoliberal economic policy (Chuen, 2008; Manji, 2008). The main argument of Chuen's article is that China's engagement with Africa is operating within a large system of neoliberalism, China is not the only global power player that is extracting natural resources and raw materials from Africa; indeed, many developed countries are doing precisely the same thing. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every country that has a stake in Africa's development, including China, to make every effort to limit the negative impacts caused by their practices in Africa (Chuen, 2008).

It is problematic for any narratives that only offer a one-dimensional interpretation of Chinese involvements in Africa. For studies only focusing on the negative aspects of Chinese involvements in Africa, they often fail to acknowledge the positive contributions and the possibility that ordinary African citizens may benefit from the Chinese presence. On the contrary, for those studies that fail to acknowledge the negative impact of Sino-African relations, they are ignoring the pain and suffering that is caused by Chinese business practices in many African countries. Maybe the truth lies somewhere between these positions. It all depends on how individual African government manages to enhance benefits and reduce harmful effects of Chinese influence.

Significance of the Study

This study examines China's expanding cultural in the age of globalization. It is a case study of Chinese media and cultural expansion in Kenya. This study unpacks the political, technological, and economic forces, internal and external, in China and Kenya that have helped to establish the current pattern of China's media involvement and other cultural engagements in Kenya. Moreover, this study examines the extent and nature of China's cultural and media involvements in Kenya in particular; and in Africa in general. It is grounded in the political economy perspective of communication, focusing on the expansion of Chinese media and other cultural engagement in Kenya.

In recent years, the growth of Chinese influence and companies across Africa has brought about a heated debate. Both economic and political implications emerging at the global level raise concerns within the academic world and media. Most of the recent Sino-Africa studies are focused on the debate of China's military, political, and economic presence in Africa, very little literature examines China's growing presence in Africa from a cultural perspective. This research tries to shed light on the growing Chinese cultural influence in Africa. In doing so, this research uncovered the internal and external factors, both in China and Kenya, intensified China's engagement in Africa.

Plan of the Study

This study comprised of six chapters. Chapter One includes a brief review of China's contemporary engagement with Africa, the objectives of the study, methodology, Sino-African relation literature, theoretic framework, and the plan of study sections. Chapter two looks at the transformation of Chinese media from a political economic perspective. Chapter three provides a detailed account of China's political, economic and cultural cooperation with African countries. Chapter four focuses on the Chinese culture and media involvement in Kenya. The chapter offers a detailed discussion of current Chinese media and other cultural expansion in Kenya. The chapter also uncovers China's technological support to Kenyan media and other cultural production enterprises. In addition, the chapter also addressed various Chinese cultural exchange programs, either provided by government agencies or non-state actors. Chapter five provides an analysis of the leading Kenyan newspapers' response to Chinese presence. The chapter introduces the theory of framing analysis that was employed to analyze data from the Daily Nation and The Standard, for the present project. Chapter six presents a summary of all the findings, contributions, and limitation of the study.

CHAPTER 2

TRANSFORMATION OF THE CHINESE MEDIA

In order to gain a better understanding of the current Chinese media's global expansion, it is important to review the important stages of Chinese media transformation. In doing so, this chapter begins with a brief review of the Chinese media system since Mao's era through Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms and open-door policy in 1978, which was the driving force for the dynamic transformation of contemporary Chinese media. The review of the media system during the Mao era helps to understand how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) employs the media as propaganda apparatus to propagate the CCP's policies, to instruct the public, to unite the public, and to mobilize the Chinese people (Bishop, 1989). Followed is a section that examines the Chinese media development after Deng Xiaoping initiated economic reform and open-door policy in 1978. The internal and external social, political, and economic factors would be discussed in this section to gain an understanding of how the Chinese media outlets transformed from pure propaganda instruments to business enterprises, and how market competition has undermined the influence of state-owned media and assisted market-oriented media to gain more autonomy. The next section is a brief review of the process of Chinese media internationalization. It discusses the impacts of globalization on the Chinese media.

Chairman Mao Era

According to the traditional Marxist principle, the mass media is a powerful instrument of a government's propaganda machine. To propagate its ideology, to rationalize its authority, and to prevent conflict, the ruling party should hold a total control over media content (Hong, 1998; C. Huang, 2006). For the leaders of the communist country, the control of intellectual production, such as mass media, is an important element of controlling the society. As Marx and Engels pointed out, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas . . . The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it" (1970:64). When the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) defeated the Kuomintang and became the sole ruling party in Mainland China in 1949, the CCP took over all newspapers, magazines, and radio stations that were established during the Republican period (1911-1949) and structured its media system based on Marxist-Leninist communication philosophy. Under the Marxist-Leninist media model, media functioned as a tool of the Communist Party to achieve its objectives (Chang, 1989). One of the basic functions of the Marxist-Leninist media was to “control, limit, and restrict information, as well as to diffuse new ideas and values” (Barnett, 1979:391).

Since the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 until the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, China was a fundamentalist communist society; every aspect of people's life was strictly under the CCP control. During this period of time, the economic development was sidetracked from the CCP’s political agenda and media functioned as the ideological state apparatus to serve the CCP’s political needs and social control (Chu, 1986; He, 2003; Wu, 1994).

During the Mao era, media’s operations were guided by the “Party’s principle”. They adopted the CCP’s ideology as their own and propagated “the Party’s programs, policies, and directives; and that they must propagate the Party’s leadership and stick to the Party's organization principles and press policies" (Tong & Cheng, 1993:148, cited in Zhao, 1998). Moreover, media not only needed to propagate Party's policies, they were also required to play "the role of leading social opinion, helping political stability and resolving various social problems" (Li, 1991:355). Under such circumstances, the communication between the Party and the public was basically a top-down process, as information flowed from the Party to the public by the media (Zhao, 1998). In short, the objectives of the mass media during the Mao's ear were to strengthen Party power and to maintain the Party's leadership status among the masses (Ibid).

Prior to the inception of Deng's economic reforms in 1978, the government subsidized all media in China (Akhavan-Majid, 2004). The government is the owner, the manager and the practitioner of the media (Chu, 1994). After the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, his successor Deng Xiaoping took over the leadership of the country and began a process of decentralization, commercialization, and internationalization that transformed the Chinese media system dramatically.

The Chinese Media Under the Reforms

The structure of the Chinese media experienced tremendous change after the introduction of economic reforms in 1978. When Mao died in 1976, the Chinese economy totally collapsed. China was on the edge of famine and faced not only serious economic crisis, but also a high level of social and political insatiability. Against this background, Deng used economic reform as a means to reconstruct China's economic system and to restore Chinese people's faith in the Party (Chan, 1993; Gordon, 1997; Keller, 2003). Under Deng's leadership, the CCP abandoned its ideological orthodoxy in favor of a pragmatic approach to economic development (Gordon, 1997). Economic development and the replacement of Maoist political struggles became the country's top priority (Naughton, 1993).

Deng realized that the challenges Chinese society faced at the time were the increasing demands of people's material and cultural needs and the backwardness of production. Deng acknowledged, his legitimacy and success were dependent on his ability to improve the economic situation and to raise people's living standard (Kuan, 1991; Rowen, 1996; Wang & Chang, 1996). The economic prosperity market economy brought to the Western countries helped Deng to convince other CCP leaders to embrace the market economy. For Deng, the building of socialism could not skip the period of the market economy; regardless if it was viewed as capitalism (Bettelheim, 1988; Qian & Wu, 2000; Xiao, 1993).

As a result of the economic reforms, the average Chinese citizen living standard improved significantly and their agricultural production increased. After its successes in agriculture, the reform expanded to other sectors and industries. Under the planned economy, the government allocated the raw materials to factories and distributed their products. The situation changed during the reforms because market-oriented economy required the companies to adjust their production to meet the needs of both domestic and international markets, rather than rely on the central government instructions (Bettelheim, 1988; Qian & Wu, 2000).

The shift from a planned economy to a market economy was a long process and required various practices. The economic reform was initially introduced at the CCP's Eleventh Central Committee in 1978, suggested that the class struggle must stop, and economic development should be the top priority of the country. During his speech at the twelfth national congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1982, Deng acknowledged the importance of the market economy and suggested the party changed its goals and methods of operations (Dittmer, 1983; Kuan, 1991). He declared that the aims of the reforms were to end China's isolation from the world and to encourage foreign investment, "science, technology, and management systems, and to new ideas from anywhere in the world, regardless of the country's political system" (Vogel, 2011:58). After the Fourth Plenary session in 1991, the Chinese government announced that in order to accelerate the development of a socialist planned commodity economy China should create an economic system that combined planning with the use of market forces. As a result, the Chinese economy has shifted from a planned economy to market economy, adopted some market economy functions, and promoted market economy as the core of its economic policy (Bettelheim, 1988; Qian & Wu, 2000; Shirk, 1993). The transformation from a planned economy to a market economy has not only altered production approaches and the Chinese people's economic and social life; it also had a great impact on the Chinese media (Lull, 1991).

Media Development Between 1978 and 1989

Under the planned economy, the Party took full responsibility for the media's financial management; no matter if it was a profit or loss. No need for media organizations and media practitioners to worry about the financial condition of their organizations (Y. Zhao, 1998; Akhavan-Majid, 2004). As time went by, media operation's financial support became a burden to the government and the state was unable to meet the increased funds required by the media. The situation forced the Chinese government to withdraw its subsidies and gradually required all the media to be financially self-sufficient by 1994 (Zhao, 2000). Media organizations, like other

State-owned Enterprises (SOEs), began to take responsibilities for the revenue and financial performance. Although the concept of commercialization was new, it did not take too long for media organizations to understand and adopt the market principles (Lynch, 1999).

For the Chinese government, the main objective of the media reform was to reduce media's financial dependency on the government through the process of commercialization (White, 1990). Being a financially independent organization, mass media had to place profit making on the top of their business objective list, to make money by themselves, rather than on their connections with the government (Wu, 1994). In other words, to be financially self-sufficient, "mass media have had to reorient themselves to the needs of the market and to increase their financial assets by all legitimate means" (Chan, 1993:6).

Media reform was also designed to increase the media's ability to help the government communicate with the public. Stimulated by China's modernization and economic growth, it did not need government support and did not increase the government's financial burdens (Lynch, 1999). The Chinese government's goal was to turn "media outlets into public units under business management", and media organizations would get a "limited amount of state support for infrastructural investment" and be "responsible for additional financial resources needed for their normal operations" (Pan, 2000).

Another important media reform policy during this period was the Chinese government giving the media permission to receive advertising in 1979 (He & Chen, 1998; C. Huang, 2000). This policy was designed to increase the media's ability to be financially independent, and to boost the country's modernization process and economic growth without the need for increasing media subsidies (Lynch, 1999).

During the Cultural Revolution, advertising was labeled as a capitalist evil and was prohibited in China for decades (J. Wang, 1997). When China launched the economic reforms and reopened its doors to the West, the government's negative view against advertising was radically revised. The Chinese government's justification for readopting advertising was "advertising transmitted important economic information that helped link producers and consumers" (Stross, 1990:488). The government claimed that advertising is a tool to introduce products to potential customers; it is no different than what factory sale representatives already did in China (J. Hong, 1994).

Since advertising was reintroduced and endorsed by the Chinese government it has gradually become the primary source of revenues for media organizations. Competition for advertising revenues between different media organizations was very intense and most of the Chinese media outlets became more entertainment-oriented for the purpose of attracting more audience. The commercialization of media sectors has transformed the Chinese media from the party masses model in Mao's era to the market audience model in Deng's reform era (Y. Zhang, 2000).

Deng's economic reforms and the Open-Door policy have greatly improved the living standard of ordinary people. With more money and free time, people's lifestyle changed; they began to pay more attention to the outside world and tend to consume more entertainment. In order to meet readers/audiences' demands, media organizations reduced the proportion of the government propaganda materials and expanded the entertainment section. Diversified entertainment information has gained increasing popularity among the Chinese households, to some extent; it has become an important aspect of people's lives (Y. Huang, 1994; Lee, 1994; Zhao, 1998).

The Chinese media content has changed dramatically since the reforms, the commercial and entertainment content increased significantly, even though the Party still tightly controls ideology. For the print media, the number of soft stories was increased to gain more readerships. Two types of journalistic content became more prominent than before, one is societal news that covers human-interest stories, news of crime, and breaking news of accidents or natural disasters, the other one is criticism reporting, ranging from coverage of everyday problems faced by ordinary people to investigative exposes of corruption (Pan, 2000). In addition to increasing soft news stories, the front page of the Party newspapers was no longer just published top Chinese leader's speeches, Party's policies, government documents and other national affairs, instead, important domestic and international news were routinely reported on the front page of these Party organizations (Y. Zhao, 1998). The increasingly diversified newspaper content offered the readers with more alternatives and changed people's perceptions of the world (Chang, 1989).

Despite the content changes, the print media also moved toward a direction to expand its pages to make more room for commercial advertising since the early 1990s. One of the examples is Wenhui Daily, a Shanghai-based newspaper published a four-page newspaper for 53 years, has expanded its paper to eight pages in 1992. There was a combination of factors driven this page expansion trend. People's need for different types of information, especially economic news and information is one important factor contributed to the newspaper's page expansion (Cao, 1999). Increasing profits from advertising is another important factor. Since the media reform, advertising industry grew rapidly; there was not enough room for most of the newspapers to accommodate all the advertising. Advertising clients must wait for several months to put their advertisements on the major newspapers. To resolve such market demand, most of the print media expanded their pages (Cao, 1999).

In order to survive the intense market competition, the news media employed another strategy to boost the revenue: publishing evening newspapers, lucrative tabloid and weekend edition newspapers. As a supplement of morning newspapers, evening newspapers are mainly feature human-interest news, cultural news, sports, and community news. Their focuses are on readability and popular appear. The portions on economic and world news were also increasing in the evening newspapers (Chu, 1994; Lynch, 1999).

Changes not only occurred in the content of the media, the style of media reporting changed as well. Chinese journalists began to alter their reporting style and incorporated elements of Western-style news reporting in their reports (Huang, 2003; Pan & Chan, 2000). Their study examined the change of journalistic paradigms, Pan and Chan discovered that a number of Chinese journalists were keen to embrace western news values and norms although they were still playing the role as an ideological apparatus of the Party (Pan & Chan, 2000).

Like newspapers, similar changes also occurred in the broadcasting sector. For instance, domestic and foreign news coverage was expanded. Entertainment programs such as soap opera, traditional opera, and foreign feature films became routine. All the content changes were brought by the market economy for the purpose of increasing advertising revenue. The quality of live news presentation and commentaries also improved. Both the numbers of daily news bulletin airings and the quantity of investigative news programs increased dramatically (Zhao, 2000; Yin, 2006).

Decentralization policy was introduced to decentralize media ownership and to expand a national-provincial media system into a national, provincial, municipal, and county media system in order to increase the flow of information for economic development and to enhance the power of the propaganda (Lieberthal, 1995). It also encouraged lower levels of the state apparatus to set up and operate their own media organizations to increase production and profits, unlike centralized system, in which all media were owned and operated by the state (Zhang, 2011).

Since the initiation of the policy, the central government started to grant more autonomy in production and marketing to lower level governments (Chan & Qiu, 2003). The process of decentralizing media ownership led to several important changes in the Chinese media. In print media, the circulation in the newspapers located in the national center declined; circulation in the provincial media and sub-provincial levels media grew rapidly in the early the 1980s (Wu, 2000). A similar result of structural decentralization also occurred in the broadcasting sector. In the late 1970s, all television stations belonged to the central, provincial, and some metropolitan governments.

Because of an important decision made by the All-China Radio at the Television Conference in 1983, China's broadcasting system was decentralized to four levels scheme-center, province, city, and county. Consequently, only the CCTV and its affiliated stations remained supervised by central party, all other stations were reported to lower-level authorities (Y. Huang, 1994). The number of television stations increased rapidly in the early the 1980s (Polumbaum, 1992). By the end of the 1990s, only one-third of stations were national television stations, the rest were sponsored by lower-level local governments (Wu, 2000).

Prior to the decentralization process initiation; local television stations were allowed to air only the programs that already broadcasted on CCTV. Under such constraint, local television station’s development was limited. However, the circumstance changed after the initiation of the decentralization of ownership and operation rights over media to lower levels of the government, the local media organizations were given more autonomy over financial, production, and marketing decision (Cho, 2007).

Newspapers also granted journalistic autonomy in deciding the content of their newspapers in the late 1980s. It was in this relaxed environment that journalists were able to play a role in educating the public and in promoting the liberal ideals in the late 1980s before the student's protest took place at the Tiananmen Square (Goldman, 1994). Moreover, bad news and critical (negative) news reports, which had not been seen under Mao's rules, began to resurface in the media in the late 1980s (Polumbaum, 1990). News media began to publish the perspectives that embraced concepts such as freedom of the press, democracy, political reform and media reform (He, 2006).

There were several positive outcomes of this decentralization policy. Politically speaking, the newly established lower level new media organizations provided an excellent chance for local leaders to express their concerns as well to spread central party propaganda. From the economic perspective, increasing number of media outlets means the revenue of advertisements also increased, those newly founded state media organizations became profit-making enterprises and contributed a greater number of advertising profits to the central government (Esarey, 2005).

Even though China's media environment became more diverse and increasingly commercialized in the 1980s, the mass media still needed to play their role as the state's propagandists (Brady, 2006; Thierstein & Kamalipour, 2000). Also, the reforms in the 1980s were not designed to change the political structure or the Party ideologies; the CCP's ideology towards the media has remained unchanged. Freedom of the press was still a taboo in Deng's regime. In Deng's view, the media is valuable ideological instrument for the Party to use to unit and stabilize the country

(Chan, 1994). Thus, the Chinese media continued playing the role of the propaganda instrument of the Party, while they practiced under a market economy and a loosened ideological atmosphere. In other words, the CCP still holds dominant power over the media (Zhao, 1998). In the competitive market environment, Chinese media needed to serve two masters, the Party and the market, they are no longer regarded as pure tools of Party's mouthpieces like their role before the reforms (Chang, Wang & Chen, 2002; Luther & Zhou, 2005; Zhao, 1998).

Under strict media control, there was no way the media could host any debate on policy issue until the introduction of economic reforms. During the 1980s, policy debates became an important part of politics in China. The exchanges exposed many social issues that the state had tried to neglect. The CCP was too afraid to endure more challenges; therefore it demanded the media to reserve 80 percent of their coverage for positive reporting or reporting a favorable image of the Party (Y. Hu, 1986). Despite the government's intervention, journalists started to urge the government to reform media policies. They demanded the government grant more autonomy to news organizations and keep the state's intervention to a minimum (Pu, 1986). Moreover, the print media continued to publish Chinese intellectuals' critical opinions that called for a new ownership structure and political liberalization. During this period, journalists tried to show they supported the general direction of the reforms, and they were loyal to certain pro-reform power groups (X. Zhang, 1993).

In the spring of 1989, student-led protests against official corruption because of the lack of political democratization exploded in Beijing and other cities across China (Fathers & Higgins, 1989). In response to a massive protest, the Chinese government shut down the World Economic Herald, a regular forum of its critics. The government's action triggered journalists and people to join the protests. More than

1,000 journalists signed a petition demanding more freedom of press. Freedom of the press became a catchphrase of this movement (Jernow, 1993).

The Chinese government then imposed martial law in Beijing. Escorted by tanks, the troops imposing martial law blasted their way into Tiananmen Square and killed more than 1,000 civilians. In the following months, thousands of people were arrested because of their connections to the protest movements (Brook, 1992). This student-led pro-democracy movement has a serious impact on the history of politics and media development in China in different ways to different degrees (Hazelbarth, 1997).

After the Tiananmen crackdown, the media was negatively affected because during the student protests, a great number of media workers, even those who worked for the Party's organization, joined the protests in Beijing, openly discussed the movement and called for democracy. Since the Tiananmen crackdown, the Chinese government reimposed constricted media control by issuing more restrictions on reporters and editors (Wong, 2005). The government silenced independent and liberal voices; thousands of journalists were persecuted and dismissed from their positions or forced into exile. Between 1989-1992, more Chinese journalists were jailed. Any potential risk for the media to threaten the Party's political and ideological authority was carefully monitored (Y. Zhao, & Z.Z. Guo, 2005).

After the Tiananmen crackdown, the CCP has put social stability back on the top of its priority list over any other issues in development (Naughton, 1993). The media sector was one of the fields that was seriously affected by this new priority because they were labeled by the government as one of the "hardest hit disaster zones" of the creation of liberal ideas and protest activities; journalists were accused of having "turned their backs" on the country (X. Zhang, 1993). The short-term experiment with better autonomy for the media from 1986 to 1988 was perceived by the CCP as an “editor-in-chief doing whatever-he-wants-to-do system” and declared unacceptable (Q. Yu, 1989:4).

Media Development between 1992 and 2000s

For three years after the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, the process of commercializing media sector was harshly stunted. The process of commercialization regained momentum in 1992 when the Party initiated another reform of programs and called for faster economic growth (Pei, 1994). New market forces started to have a profound impact on the media sector, even though media was still tightly controlled by the government (Brady, 2007).

After the Tiananmen crackdown, the majority of Western nations imposed economic sanctions against China and condemned Chinese government's violent actions against the student's protests. Such economic sanctions led to the deterioration of China's international relations and the decline of foreign investment. China’s economy was stagnated for three years (1989-1991). In 1992, Deng traveled to the southern cities of China and gave a series of important speeches to reaffirm the importance of the free market, opening up to other countries, and economic development (Pei, 1994). After Deng’s southern tours, the 14th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party introduced a new economic development model named the “Socialist Market Economy”. Economic reconstruction was once again the top priority of the national development and the market was a driving force for economic change and development (Zhao, 1998). The purposes of the 1990s economic reforms were to re-centralize, emphasize market integration, support reforms of ownership, and improve regulation, unlike the reforms in the 1980s, which objective was decentralization (Naughton, 2009).

The process of commercialization and privatization of state-owned enterprises was accelerated in the 1990s. In 1993, the Chinese government carefully started the process of privatization and gradually let uncompetitive companies collapsed. As commercialization process progressed, most Party organs gained some financial autonomy from the state and became profit-making organizations in 2000 (Zhao, 2000). This kind of new independence in media financial structures brought the changes on media content, media functions, and the relationship between media organizations and government (Winfield & Peng, 2005). The incentive to attract more readers and audience has transferred media's priority from propagating government's policies to meeting the public's demands (Lynch, 1999; Lai, 2005). In order to satisfy the general public’s demand, many party newspapers extended their reporting from pure political propaganda to a broader coverage in the economy, technology, culture, entertainment, sports and other social issues (Lee, 2000). Newspapers also employed methods such as customer survey, letters to the editor, and reader’s feedback to engage and interact with their readers (Chang et al, 1994).

Unlike their role under Mao’s planned economy, the Chinese media became important social agents actively constructing people’s understanding of social reality through the discourse of news content. As China accelerated the speed of its economic reforms in the 1990s, the aim of the Chinese media shifted from promoting the CCP’s ideologies to constructing the people’s perceptions of the world based on the values and national agenda constructed by the Party (Chang et al, 1994).

The political atmosphere during the 1990s, especially after the 14th Party Congress, was relaxed. Operated under such political environment, media became more decentralized and autonomous. Investigative reporting increased in the media content to reveal the public opinions and examine the efficiency of the government officials' performances. Under the decentralization policy, "the central press was no longer the sole authority on many subject areas, and new opportunities emerged for provincial media to examine governance issues at a distance from higher authorities" (Repnikova, 2015). This function is known as "yulun jiandu" (輿論監督) literally translated as "supervision by public opinion", meaning the media acted like a watchdog to watch the government officials' performances. This is one of the important elements of the media development in this era (de Burgh, 2003).

During the process of commercialization, the Chinese media was encouraged to establish market-oriented publications to increase their profits (Zhao, 1998). A small number of publications emerged. Most of them were technically connected to quasi-official institutions with only indirect ties to the Party-state and not under propaganda department supervision (Wu, 2000). For instance, Economic Observer, a Beijing-based weekly paper that focuses on in-depth economic news, is owned by a commercial enterprise with links to the Shandong Province government (Liebman, 2005).

Another important media development during the 1990s was the rise of non-Party newspapers by different social and scientific institutions and mass media. The rapid growth of the non-party papers has led to a new stage of Chinese media's structural change. The growth of such non-party indicates the Chinese government's determination to push the reform further (C. Huang, 2000; He, 2000; Y. Zhao, 2000). One of the important influences of the rise of not-party commercial papers was the decline of the party organs' circulation (C. Huang, 2001).

As the 1992 policy required all party organs to become financially self-sufficient by 1994, the party organs began to publish the subsidiary weekend editions and mass appeal newspapers and magazines to maximize their profits. The situation was intensified more in July 2003, after the Chinese government abolished the policy that required party and state offices to subscribe the party newspapers (Roberts, 2003). In addition, the major party-owned media, including People's Daily, have begun to expand their business activities in non-media sectors. These include investments in some of the most profitable business in China, such as real estate, hotels, tourism and telecommunication (He, 2000; Lynch, 1999).

Since the late 1990s, the process of marketization of Chinese media has begun. Broadcasting industry followed by print media could be traded on the stock market. Since early 2002, nonmedia state companies were allowed to invest in media sector (Y. Zhao, 2005). Even though there still were restrictions that prohibited nonstate investors to hold more than 49 percent share of media organizations, the government has partly shifted media from the public toward private ownership. The combination of changes in management, financing, and ownership resulted in the media marketization (Hu, 2003).

The emergence of large media conglomerates in the late 1990s was the product of the government orders, not driven by market forces. Media conglomeration lead to the concentration of power in the hands of a small group of elite individuals who would continue to dominate the Chinese media industry (Sparks, 2008). The process of media conglomeration began in 1996 with an objective to build stronger media team to compete with transnational media corporations (TNMCs) in the process of globalization (Z. Hu, 2003). In early 1996, the Guangzhou Daily, China's most financially success party organ, was selected by the central government as China's first newspaper group. This press group operates, as a conglomerate owns six publications and a wide range of business sectors in various areas. In 1998, the Guangzhou Daily Group became an important economic powerhouse in Guangzhou (Lynch, 1999). The central government approved seven major party organs to be transformed into media conglomerates between 1996 and 1998 (Y. Zhao, 2000). For the Chinese government, media conglomeration was China's the first move to "link up the international track" and an important plan to strengthen the competitive position of the domestic media in the global market (Y. Zhao, 2000:17; Z. Hu, 2003).

Two decades after the reform, Chinese media has become more market-dependent rather than market-oriented (Sparks, 2008). Both big advertising and circulation revenue providers have increasingly interfered with media practices (Tong & Sparks, 2009). An example of advertising buyer interfering with media practice was the China Eastern airline pilots' protest over working conditions and salary. Four local newspapers' coverage of the event was similar: two did not report it; one newspaper did report the protest but did not mention the name of the airline, and the fourth one simply used the press release supplied by China Eastern. China Eastern airline's power to control the narrative of these newspapers was based on its huge contributions to the newspapers' advertising and circulation revenues (I. Wang, 2008).

Since the early 1990s, China has actively participated in the process of globalization and the best example is its endless efforts to join the World Trade Organization (WTO). After more than thirteen years of negotiations, China finally became a member of the WTO in December 2001. The Chinese government is fully aware of the benefits and possible risks of China's accession to the WTO's membership. On the one hand, China hopes the international media corporations will offer China's media industry advanced technology, management, professional training, and foreign capital to help China's media renovate their infrastructure. On the other hand, the government is not sure about the ability of Chinese media to compete with international media players. As Ding Guangen, the Minister of China's Department of Propaganda warned the Chinese media that, "their good days will be over when China joins the WTO" (Z. He, 2003:209).

What concerns the Chinese government most is the political-ideological threat posed by the western media. Through media content, western hegemony can promote its ideology effectively. To prevent such political-ideological threat, the Chinese government approves only foreign investors to invest in the production and distribution of cultural products and some entertainment services at the beginning of its WTO accession. The Chinese government insisted that for the time being, the media content should still produce by the domestic media (Chin, 2003).

Despite the concerns and challenges, WTO accession led some significant changes in China's media industries. In the film industry, the Chinese government placed a strict ban on any foreign involvement in film distribution, claimed it is critical to autonomy. The reasons behind this decision were to avoid Hollywood's control of film distribution and to give the domestic media sectors more time to become a competitive competitor (Brent, 2000). In addition, China promised to import 40 films per year the number will increase to 50 films by 2005. The Chinese government also allowed foreign investors to keep up to a 49% share of media corporations that build, own, and operate cinemas in China (Y. Zhao, 2008).

While China's motivation was to learn know-how of modern media management, producing and marketing from global media groups, the Western transnational media companies were motivated by China's huge market potential. International media conglomerates were eager to enter the Chinese media market to share huge advertising markets (Hughes, 2002). Since the 1990s, TNMCs have been actively expanding their business in China through different means to explore the market potential. Speed increased in the 2000s after China's accession to WTO (Wei, 2000; R. Tang, 2005). After years of resistance, the Chinese government granted broadcasting permissions to "government friendly" TNMCs allowing them to broadcast non-news programs to cable television audiences in the southeastern province of Guangdong (C. Huang, 2004), even though the WTO agreement does not require the Chinese government to open up its broadcasting market to foreign investors (Dudek & Xu, 2002; Hughes, 2002).

In China, the mass media industry was the most profitable industry with the high investment return rate of 17-30 percent between 1988 and 1998 (Dong, 2000). This suggests China's mass media industry "might be the last industry with staggering profits in the world" (Tao, 2001: 2). Many observers believe that as long as China's economy continues growing, the advertising business "will continue to boom as China heads towards an advertising bonanza with the 2008 Olympics in Beijing" (Hughes, 2002). It is based on this belief that major international media players desired a share of the Chinese market even they were losing money in China. The needs to maximize profit and know-how are the foundation of the collaboration between Chinese media industries and foreign media companies (Leow, 2004).

There is a common hope that increasing economic liberation of the media and the presence of TNMCs in China will accelerate the country's political democratization process (Kan, 2003). Unfortunately, this does not result in political liberalization (Hackett and Y. Zhao, 2005). In order to control an increasingly internationalized media, the Chinese government tightened its policy on foreign media entering China in 2005, as part of plans to control the domestic cultural industry; the situation remains the same at present time.

<u>Global Expansion</u>

As discussed above, the major factors that motivated the Chinese government to open its domestic media market was its needs for media management and marketing know-how, the advanced technologies to produce and distribute media content, and foreign capitals to compete with international media companies. However, the information flow is not limited to inward flow from overseas, the Chinese government also realized the importance of expanding its cultural influence around the globe. The "going out" policy was first introduced in 1999 for the purpose of promoting Chinese economic interests abroad. In 2001, a new "going out" campaign was initiated with two major objectives: to improve China's international image and communicate its perspectives with the world through its own media (Lu, 2006). It is estimated that China has invested more than 60 billion RMB in four state-owned media organizations: Xinhua News Agency, Central China Television (CCTV), China Radio International (CRI) and the China Daily in 2009 (X. Zhang, 2009).

After the Beijing Olympic Games in the summer of 2008, the "going out" campaign has been put in full speed because of the growing concern of Chinese media's weak international influence. The western media's negative news coverage of the Tibet crisis and the protests during the Beijing Olympics torch relay in 2008 reinforced the Chinese authority's concerns (Xin, 2009). As part of the Chinese media's global expansion, Xinhua's African News Service was launched in 2008 (Xin, 2009). Its multimedia service in the English language was launched July 2009. In 2010, Xinhua also launched its own television network, China Xinhua Network

Corporation (CNC) broadcasting via satellite, cable, mobile phone, and the Internet (Barboza, 2010). According to Xinhua's President Li Congjun, "the launch of CNC (was) an important move for Xinhua to enrich the agency's business sectors, and embrace the multimedia world" (Xinhua, 2010). At the beginning, CNC World News Channel was only broadcasted in Chinese, and only aired news events and special news bulletins. A 24/7 English news service was offered a few months later, covering breaking news and major international political, economic, and cultural news. When CNC launched in early 2009, its programs only broadcasted to the Asia-Pacific countries and to a couple of European nations. In January 2011, its English offering expanded its broadcasting service to all of Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa (Cao & Liang, 2011). In 2010, Xinhua relocated its North American headquarters from Queens to the middle of Time Square in New York City. This move shows Xinhua's ambition in international operations. It was designed to persuade the world that Xinhua is more than a propaganda instrument of the Chinese government (Peters, 2010). In 2011, Xinhua teamed up with the Kenyan telecommunication company Safaricom to start a mobile newspaper in Kenya (McKenzie, 2012).

According to David Shambaugh, professor of the George Washington University and an expert on China foreign policy, Xinhua's international expansion was driven by several factors, and making money is the first incentive that motivated Xinhua's global expansion. For Xinhua, "going out" is an opportunity to compete with its western counterparts such as AP, Thomson Reuter, and Bloomberg and to become a "real" international news agency. The business strategy Xinhua uses to achieve this objective is to lower its product price so that it is cheaper than other big Western news agencies (Shambaugh, 2013). The second factor is "to report the 'real China' to the world" through its own media (Q. Zhou, 2009). For the Chinese government, the media becomes vital to building positive international image and eliminates misunderstandings of China. Finally, Xinhua's global expansion is a move to transform Xinhua into a modern multimedia organization to challenge transnational news media such as CNN and Al Jazeera (Shambaugh, 2013).

Central China Television (CCTV), originally Beijing Television, was established in 1958 and renamed China Central Television in 1978; the same year Deng initiated economic reforms and an Open-door policy. The State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) (Propaganda Department) strictly control CCTV's contents and daily administrative operations. Like other media organizations in China, CCTV had to serve two masters: The Party and the Market. It must function as the government's mouthpiece and also be commercially successful. CCTV represents an excellent example of how the media can operate as a propaganda instrument for the government and as a commercial enterprise that makes huge profits. Its viewership is greater than any other major television network worldwide (Si, 2014).

As previously discussed, the aims of the CCTV's global expansion are to enhance China's international image and increase its influences, especially in the countries China has great political and economic interests. CCTV's first overseas operation was opened in 1990 with an attempt to reach out to Taiwanese and overseas Chinese audiences. In the 1990s, president Yan Weiguang transformed CCTV from state-funded media organization to commercial broadcaster. When the new "going out" policy initiated, CCTV was aimed to transform itself to become China's CNN (Zhu, 2012). In 2000, the twenty-four-hour English Channel, CCTV International (CCTV-9) was launched. CCTV-9 entered the American cable market in 2002 as part of a deal that allowed AOL-Time Warner and News Corp access to cable systems in

Southern China (X. Zhang, 2011).

CCTV and other eight provincial Chinese television stations launched Dish Network Great Wall Platform in 2005 targeted the Asian Community outside China (Si, 2014). In January 2012, CCTV opened a broadcasting hub in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi. This was China's first news production center in the continent. The major tasks of CCTV-Africa are to "change the narrative about Africa" (McKenzie, 2012), to build the positive image of China, and share China's viewpoints on international affairs with the Africans (Gorfinkel et al., 2014).

China Radio International (CRI) is another State-owned media company that expanded its operations to foreign countries as part of new "going out" campaign. CRI was founded in 1941 as wartime propaganda instrument against Japanese invasion. During the Mao era, CRI functioned as the CCP's ideological apparatus to propagate Party ideologies and policies. Like other media, CRI began its reform in the late 1970s when Deng's economic reforms started. The process of economic reforms has transformed this state-funded radio to be a market-oriented media (Sun, 2010).

Like BBC and Voice of America (VOA), CRI also used different platforms and new technologies to communicate with its listeners. For example, CRI established a multi-language website to report political, economic and cultural information about China (C.C. Chen et al., 2010). CRI also collaborated with other international media organizations to produce and share program contents. Thus far, CRI's cooperation with the NHK (Japan's national public broadcasting organization) is the most successful collaboration with other international media. China believes this kind of partnership will enhance China's international image and increase its influence overseas (C.C. Chen et al., 2010).

China Daily, an English-language newspaper founded in 1981, also selected by the Chinese government to “go global”. In February 2009, China Daily launched its U.S. edition in New York. The content of the U.S. edition focuses on the United States and Canada’s business news and China’s economic, political, and cultural development (Shambaugh, 2013). In December 2012, an African edition of China Daily was launched in Nairobi. The emphasis of China Daily Africa is on Sino-African relations because “the relationship between China and the African continent is one of the most significant relationships in the world today…it is growing and complex and not always understood-- not just by those in other parts of the world but Africans and Chinese, too” (Green, 2012). For the Chinese government, China Daily is an important medium allows China to communicate its own stories to the world and for the foreigners to understand China (Shambaugh, 2013).

As discussed above, the reasons behind China’s state-owned media’s global expansion are to improve China’s international image and to promote a mutual understanding between China and the rest of the world (Si, 2014). Currently, the media’s “going out” strategy is still supported and promoted by President Xi Jinping. In his inaugural speech, Xi emphasized the importance of media’s role is to serve the state’s interests. He explicitly demands all journalists, at home and abroad, must introduce positive national image to foreign audiences to confront the Western media’s biased representations of China and to promote a mutual understanding between China and the rest of the world (Xi, 2012).

In the past few decades, mass media in China have undergone dramatic changes. The media industry has transformed from a purely political instrument to one of the most profitable industries in China. This chapter offered a brief overview of the important stages of Chinese media development. It examined the impacts of the political and economic factors, both internal and external, affected the transformation

China's media. It first discussed the media system under the leadership of Chairman Mao. During the Mao era, all the media was subsidized by the state. As the state-owned and party-controlled organs, mass media only functioned as a political tool to transmit the CCP's ideologies, to confront western imperialists, and to mobilize the public.

Then it examined media development during Deng’s economic reforms period from 1978-1989. The transformation of the Chinese media took place when Deng Xiaoping decided to introduce the economic reforms and open to the West in 1978. From 1978 to the crackdown on the student pro-democracy movement in the spring of 1989, the Chinese government reduced it subsidies, most of the media organizations were forced to be financially self-sufficient. In order to survive, mass media turned to advertising for the profits. As a result, advertising became the major source of funding for the media. The decentralization of the government control over media ownership also led to dramatic changes in Chinese media. Regardless of the reduction of the government subsidies or the decentralization of media ownership; the policy was part of the Chinese government’s economic development drive to modernize China.

There was a setback between 1989 and 1991 right after the Tiananmen crackdown. During the student protest, the majority of news media such as *the People’s Daily* and CCTV were sympathetic to the protesters. After the Tiananmen crackdown, the Party tightened its control over the mass media because of the potential threat to political stability. The crackdown also caused a significant impact on the Chinese economy and China’s international image (Y. Zhao & Z.Z. Guo, 2005).

After two decades of reform, the structure of the news media was changed. For instance, the number of newspapers increased. Print media’s sponsorship became more diverse and decentralized. The number of publicly circulated newspapers grew rapidly, with more than 1,600 circulating in 1988 while there was only 200 ten years earlier (Polaumbaum, 1991). The second structural change during this period involved the emergence of a media market. When the number of the media companies increased, information market emerged. The state-owned media and the local media began to compete for audiences. The growing advertising business also offered the potential for the media's financial autonomy. The final structural change was the personnel structure of the print media. The reason for this change was due to the need to hire the millions of rehabilitated intellectuals who had been victims of persecution. In 1985, the number of the journalist was 70,000; in 1988, the total number of employees in the press and publishing industry had increased to about 600,000 (X. Zhang, 1993).

The process of marketization and commercialization of Chinese media sped up during the 1990s and had profound impacts on the media structure and practice (Wei, 2000). For instance, the Chinese government consolidated different newspapers and other periodicals into media groups and closed down a huge number of unprofitable party newspapers to enhance state organs' capacity to compete with international media outlets. In 1998, six national and regional newspapers were consolidated by the state (Y. Zhao, 2000; Kuhn, 2001). In addition to media consolidation, the Chinese government also initiated a policy to conglomerate domestic media industries to strengthen its political control and capital accumulation. To compete with global counterparts, the Chinese government combined social resources and invested resources into major state-owned media organizations to strengthen their ability (Nolan, 2001; Moore, 2002). The processes of conglomeration and consolidation had turned the state-owned media organizations into a profit-driven enterprise. Operating under such environment, media conglomerates are given more operational autonomy to foster the commercial potential of advertising and distribution services and investing in other business sectors (Y. Zhao, 2000; Ma, 2000).

The Chinese government views its WTO accession in 2001 as an indication of integrating into the global economy. Under the WTO agreement, China opened up its domestic market to foreign capital with an attempt to learn the know-how of modern media management, marketing mechanism, and advanced technologies. With China’s economic growth and a huge consumer population, transnational media corporations such as Time-Warner's and News Corp. entered China with the hopes of expanding their revenues.

China realized its rise on the global stage as an economic and political power player does not automatically bring a more favorable perception of China in the international community. China is constantly depicted by the Western media as a rogue and human rights abusing regime that does not play by the international rules (Sun, 2010). To counter such hostile media representation, China decided to expand its state-owned media overseas to improve China’s national image, to communicate its viewpoint to the international community, and to expand its global influence (Nelson, 2013).

CHAPTER 3

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CHINA's ENGAGEMENTS IN AFRICA

The present research seeks to explore China's expanding cultural influence in the age of globalization, particularly in media and communication industries in African countries, a continent China has significant investments in. To understand how the political and economic factors contributed to current China's media and cultural engagement in Africa; knowledge of its past is essential. The objective of this chapter is to provide a historical background of China's contemporary engagement with Africa. It will begin with a brief review of Sino-African relations. The purpose of this review is to illuminate how Sino-African relation has transformed in the past decades from ideology to pragmatic policies (Moumouni, 2006); how the internal economic and political forces in both China and Africa contributed to the current pattern of China's media involvement and other cultural engagements in Africa.

Early Sino-African Encounters

China's involvement in African countries is not a new phenomenon as some people perceived. Historical evidence shows that Sino-African relations dated back to China's Tang Dynasty (Northrup, 2002). The economic relationship between China and African countries began with the exchange of goods and services, and was facilitated by Muslim traders, who transported merchandises such as silk, pottery and bronze utensils from China. By that time, the travelers already had knowledge of Africa from Muslim merchants (Dathorne, 1996; Snow, 1988).

The cultural encounters between China and African countries began sometimes around 206BC because of trade brought by the Silk Road. Chinese made pottery objects were discovered on the east coast of Africa and the northern part of South Africa. Ivory, frankincense, tortoiseshell, and spices were the goods the African merchants transported to China. There was no evidence of human contact between Africans and Chinese during this time period. In the Tang Dynasty (168-907 AD), Chinese porcelain and currency from this period were found in East Africa (A. Li, 2005; Snow, 1988).

In 1346, Ibn Battuta, an African explorer who traveled to China, published his experiences and introduced Chinese customs, architecture, the legal system, currency and politics to Africans (A. Li, 2005). Between 1417 and 1419, Chinese explorer and admiral Zheng He took his expedition to Africa and reached the eastern coast of Africa, Swahili coast, and Somalia centuries before the Europeans arrival. When the Europeans arrived in Africa, Sino-African contact had ceased (Snow, 1988; Shinn & Eisenman, 2012). After Zheng He expeditions, China turned inward and the Portuguese-mediated the official Sino-African contacts during the mid-1600s.

During the 1700s, a small number of Chinese people lived in South Africa. During the Imperial period, the Chinese who lived in South Africa were treated as slaves, same as Africans, by European colonial governments. During the period of European colonialism, China and Africa did not have direct contact; their relation was facilitated by the colonial powers. Around 60,000 Chinese were sent to work in South African mines by the British between 1904 and 1906. By 1910, they were all deported due to the European settlers' resentment and racial intolerance (ibid).

Sino -Africa Relationship between 1949 and 1978

Over the past decades, Chinese and African relations have grown dramatically. The expansion of Sino-African relations was the result of a combination of major world issues, to which the scale of contemporary China's engagement with African states is unprecedented. China's Africa policy has shifted from completely political and ideological in the 1950s and 1960s to an emphasis on economic and pragmatic today (Liang, 2012).

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, China was not concerned about its relations with African countries. It was until the second half of the 20th century when the Chinese Communist Party became the dominant party in China, and China needed African countries to support its position in the World War II, China and African countries became allies to fight for common causes (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012).

Modern Sino-African relations began with the Bandung Conference of 1955 when twenty-nine countries joined together to promote economic and cultural cooperation between Asian and African countries and to fight for their independence from oppressing western superpowers. This conference was commonly viewed as a landmark in Sino-African history (Muekalia, 2004:6). During the conference, China's former Premier Zhou Enlai addressed the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" that "covered mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non-aggression; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence" (Looy, 2006:2). Since then, the five principles have become the foundations of Sino-African relations.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and until the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, China relied on a central plan economy and was isolated from the international community. During the Mao era, China received little international support, and its relations with both the US and the Soviet Union were tense due to its separation with the Soviet Union. In addition to its tense relations with the two superpowers, China also faced serious security threats from other international events: the Korean War in 1950, Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1958 and the Vietnam War in 1961. As a result, China's international diplomatic influence was limited during the 1950s and 1960s (Snow, 1988).

In order to break through this diplomatic isolation, Chairman Mao turned to the Third World countries and asked them to join China's fight against imperialism and colonialism. To advance Mao's anti-imperial agenda, China provided economic, technological, and military support to African countries to help them battle European colonialists and imperialists despite urgent development demands and economic difficulties at home. Through aid and military supports, China was able to establish its diplomatic relations with newly independent African nations (Moumouni, 2006; Muekalia, 2004; Shimazu, 2014).

During the Mao era the Sino-African relations were driven by ideology and political interests (Alden et al. 2008). Two main purposes of China's African foreign policy during the 1950s and 1960s were to isolate Taiwan diplomatically, and to counter the West's and the Soviet Union influence on the African continent (A. Li, 2008). With African countries supported, China has successfully replaced Taiwan as a member of the United Nations in 1971, and able to break "imperialism's strategy of isolating China" and gained international recognition (X. Yan, 1997).

Although the Chinese government was facing a very difficult economic situation during the Mao era, it still managed to offer substantial resources to assist African countries development. From the mid-1950s to mid-1970s, the Chinese government gave about $2.5 billion to 36 African states in aid (Le Pere & Shelton, 2007). One of the highest-profile examples of China's assistance to Africa was the TaZara railway; a railway that connects Tanzania and Zambia. TaZara railway allows Zambia to export copper without having the export to pass through South Africa in the years of Apartheid (Antwi-Dans, 2011). In the early period of Sino-African relations, China financed projects not only improved industrial development in the host countries but also reinforced China's diplomatic power in Africa (Tu, 2008).

However, China's ideology-driven relations with Africa were not without conflict. When China broke ties with the Soviet Union in the 1960s, China accused the pro-Soviet communist parties in African countries as "revisionists" and treated them as ideological opponents. Such political difference intensified China's relationship with these pro-Soviet political regimes. In contrast, many African regimes viewed China's "export revolution" campaign as a threat to their political stability; only small group African countries continued their relations with China. It wasn't until China abandoned its "exporting revolution" strategy at the end of the 1960s that it regained its good relations with African countries (A. Li, 2007).

Sino-African Relationship between 1978 and 1989

Under Mao's leadership, China's economy was stagnant, and its economic policies were inefficient. In addition to economic stagnation, there was chaos in cities and rural areas because of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Chinese people were suffering; they blamed the government and the CCP leaders for allowing such a disaster to happen. People were praying for changes to occur in the present system of government (Goldman, & Goldman, 1987-8).

In the early 1970s, the Chinese government began to design a reform plan to modernize the country and integrate its economy into the global economy. It wasn't until the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, Deng Xiaoping, a long-time advocate of policy change, assumed control of the party in late 1978. Deng initiated economic reforms and opened the country to outside world. As the Party leader, Deng understood that for China's economy to improve, and thereby maintain the status of the CCP, economic and social reforms were inevitable. China needed to transform its economic system, replacing the centrally planned economy with a market-oriented economy. The ultimate objective of Deng's economic reforms was to modernize China, to strengthen the fields of agricultural, industry, defense, and science and technology, known as "the Four Modernizations" in China as first introduced by former Premier Zhou Enlai in 1964 (M.H. Chang, 1996; Chow, 2004; Tisdell, 2009).

The successful economic performances of other market-oriented economies, in comparison with the centrally planned economies, such as South Korea Vs. North Korea, reinforced Deng and other CCP leaders to reform China's economic system. The huge gap in the economic performance between East and West Germany also strengthened Deng's viewpoint (Chow, 2004). In addition to the reasons stated above, the public's hunger for a market-oriented reform also supported Deng's reform plans. Since the founding of the PRC, the Chinese people have experienced the negative economic results of central planning, including the shortage of consumer products, limited selection, and the lack of improvement in quality (Chow, 2004). With the stagnation economy and the public's support, Deng Xiaoping launched economic reforms and adopted an Open-Door Policy at the end of 1978 to increase productivity and improve the standard of living after three decades of political unrest (Tung, 2005).

Under Deng’s new economic plans, China began to adopt some of the market-based principles with its distinct ideological characteristics (So, 2011). Unlike Mao who perceived the world negatively, Deng had a more positive reading of the world; his economic reforms opened China to the outside world for trade and technology advancement (Baum, 2010; Moumouni, 2006). One of the major components of economic reform was to privatize and commercialize state-owned enterprises. In doing so, the Chinese central government gave state enterprises some autonomy in production, marketing, and investment decision making to make them financially independent (M. Chang, 1996). The core principle of the open-Door policy was to relax the government’s control on both foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade to attract foreign investment and increase foreign trade.

Prior to Deng’s economic reforms, China’s economy was basically a closed economy. After it witnessed other Asian countries’ success with “export process zones” in the 1960s and 1970s, China launched four special economic zones (SEZs) on the coast of northern Guangdong. The functions of the SEZs were “to import high technology, increase exports, earn foreign exchange, create jobs, assimilate foreign managerial and entrepreneurial skills, and attract foreign investment” (Tung, 2005:4). These SEZs were designed to increase foreign investment. SEZs promote international trade and foreign corporations are granted easy access to China and Chinese businesses due to more flexible policies in SEZs. After the successful experience of the first four SEZs, China gradually opened all of China to advance its economy (Park, 1997; Tung, 2005). As a result, China's trade volume increased rapidly year after year (Smart & Hus, 2004).

After the launch of the economic reforms and the Open-Door policy in 1978, the focus of China's foreign policy was shifted from ideological pursuit to trade and economic development (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012). The aims of China's foreign policies were to develop its economic capability and expand trade relations with developed countries. The Chinese government knew that for the economic reform to succeed, China needed developed countries' technical support and commercial connections (Onderco, 2007). By the end of the 1970s, China's relationship with the US was improved and both nations were united against the Soviet Union (Naughton, 2007).

The economic reforms changed the priority of foreign policy; the Chinese government's focus had gradually shifted from ideology to economics with a more pragmatic approach. As China's economy progressively became market-oriented, it needed to attract foreign investment, and China's foreign policy became increasingly West-oriented. China turned to the West for advanced technology, know-how, and capital. Not surprisingly, China's political interest in Africa faded during the mid-80s (Muekalia, 2004; Snow, 1989).

Despite China's political and economic changes at home, the African governments faced governmental challenge, instability, economic chaos, and other developmental problems during this period. Africa was perceived "as economically deficient and technologically ineffective to its domestic policy aims" (Mawdsley, 2007: 445). The combination of the political and economic factors mentioned above led to decreased Sino-African relations.

When African countries encountered the "lost decade" of the 1980s, China's foreign policy was focused on its cooperation with Japan and the U.S. During this period, China's relationships with African countries declined (Taylor, 1998). However, following the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989, the U.S. and other Western governments strongly condemned China's violent actions against peaceful protestors and placed an embargo on weapon sales to China. When the West isolated China, African countries, and other Third World nations quietly provided their support to China (McGurn, 1990; Taylor, 1998).

The success of Deng's economic reforms improved Chinese people's economic conditions. Subsequently, the Chinese public demanded greater political freedom. During the 1980s, students and the intelligentsia in China were granted more intellectual freedom; this situation stimulated requests for continued political reform. In 1989, thousands of students took their demands for democratic reform to Tiananmen Square. The CCP was unwilling to negotiate with protestors; the central government imposed martial law and ordered military force to solve the crisis. When the military forces moved in, student's demonstrations continued, and violence among both the army and protesters caused hundreds of deaths. The Chinese government's violent actions led to widespread international condemnation, a package of economic and political sanctions were imposed on China. The fragile relations with the West forced the Chinese government to reevaluate its relationship with the Third World countries, especially African nations. Since then, China focused efforts to develop relations with its old African friends. Some of the African countries were perceived as China's important partners against the West (Naughton, 2007; Taylor, 1998).

Unlike western countries' harsh sanctions, African countries were silent on China's military actions for several reasons. First, the main issue surrounded Tiananmen crackdown was the Chinese government's human rights violation, which was the same issue that concerns most African leaders. Therefore, to those African leaders, the Tiananmen incident represented a dangerous effect that might also endanger their power base (Naidu, 2008). Secondly, African leaders believed Western countries' condemnation over China's Tiananmen crackdown had less to do with human rights issues and was more focused on weakening China's rapid economic growth (Snow, 1995, cited in Taylor, 1998). The third reason was an economic calculation. As the Cold War was nearly ended, Africa's status in the international community was becoming increasingly uncertain. African leaders were forced to reconsider their relations with traditional development partners. African leaders also did not want to jeopardize the aid and the assistance they have been receiving from China although it has declined during the early 1980s. African leaders were afraid that if they condemned Chinese government's violent action, China would stop providing aid for them. These were the reasons why the African governments were hesitant to join the Western nations condemnation of the Chinese government's military crackdown at the Tiananmen Square (Konings, 2007; Naidu, 2008).

Post-Cold War Sino-African Relations

During the Cold War, Africa was a battleground of superpower competition; both the United States and the Soviet Union used economic assistance and military aid to safeguard African countries' loyalty. China's influence in Africa during this period was limited. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early the 1990s, Africa lost its geopolitical importance and was marginalized in the diplomatic strategies of various superpowers. The West's engagement in African countries had declined (Taylor, 1998; Renou, 2012). The Chinese government took this opportunity to strengthen its political and economic connections with Africa and renew its interest in Africa at end of the 1980s. It launched an intensive campaign to expand its interactions with the developing countries to counter and challenge the U.S. hegemony and enhance its international position (Payne & Veney, 1998). Between 1989 and 1992, Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen visited fourteen African countries and sixteen African top leaders of the state or government have been invited to visit China. The political relations between China and African countries deepened. China and Africa continued to support each other in international affairs and worked on establishing a fair and reasonable new international order (Taylor, 2004).

During the 1980s, China's economic relationship with African countries was relatively slow. However, after the Tiananmen crackdown China promised to increase its aid and development assistance as a reward for African countries' support. Before the Tiananmen crackdown, only US$60.4 million was distributed by China to approximately 13 African nations in 1988, but by 1990s the amount of aid increased to US$374 million a year to 43 recipient African countries (T. Lin, 1996, cited in Taylor, 2004).

Like many countries, China's foreign policy objectives are designed to achieve its political and economic agenda. Followed by the introduction of economic reforms in 1978, the focus of China's foreign policy has shifted from Cold War ideology to a pursuit of economic self-interest. Four factors motivated China's engagement in Africa during this post-Cold War era. First, China needed raw materials and natural resources to fuel its economy. The search for reliable suppliers of raw materials and energy resources led China to Africa, a continent rich in the natural resources. Secondly, Africa's huge population represented a huge potential consumer market for China's manufactured goods. Thirdly, many African countries' economic reform accelerated China's economic collaboration with Africa. Finally, resource-rich African states were targeted by China for profitable investments (Konings, 2007). In short, the demands for energy resources, consumer markets, and investment opportunities were the major factors contributing the rapid expansion of

Sino-African relations over the past decades (Alden, Large & Soares de Oliveria, 2008).

There were also economic and political factors that motivated the African countries to strengthen their ties with China. First, African governments and business elites sought new opportunities in China to increase their trade and investment opportunities. Collaborating with China in various fields to help stimulate African countries' socio-economic development. Second, African countries were faced with a steady decline of foreign assistance after the end of the Cold War. Thus, China's "no strings attached" aid and foreign direct investment (FDI) were warmly welcomed by African states. Third, China's large population, the growth in Chinese per capita incomes, and increased spending power, African governments forecasted that Chinese tourism would grow as time progressed. China's outbound tourism market is perceived as a valuable asset to many African economies. The Chinese government often used its policy to endorse "official approval travel destinations" to the Chinese public as a means of rewarding African governments' friendship. Finally, with traditional Western donors interfering in domestic affairs, particularly in the countries that violated principles of good governance, Africa leaders were looking for an alternative source of foreign support. Unlike Western donors' "demands for minimum standards of governance," China's "no strings attached" and "non-interference" principles were appealing to African governments (Alden, 2005). These political and economic efforts enabled China and African countries to broaden their relations since the 1990s (Taylor, 1998).

Sino-African Relations in the 21st Century

At the beginning of the new century, domestic and international circumstances brought Sino-African relations to a new stage. For China, after more than two decades of rapid economic growth, it needed an international policy to reinforce its status as a peaceful rising power. As the largest developing country, China sought to collaborate with the continent with most developing countries for mutual development in a world controlled by developed countries. As for African countries, since the beginning of the 21st century, their national agenda was to achieve stability and promote socio-economic development. To achieve such objectives, African governments knew that they needed to control their fate and to make their own choices; China has become the primary choice for them for collaboration. On the international front, as African countries sustained their economic growth in the mid-1990s, Western powers started to sense their strategic importance. Since the turn of the 21st century, those Western power players were constantly modifying their policies toward Africa. As a result, African countries regained their strategic importance and moved from the periphery to the center of the world stage, becoming the focus of intense strategic debate. Under these new circumstances, the Chinese government acknowledged that it needed a new operating mechanism to expand Sino-African relations in the new century (Qiang, 2010).

It was against this background that the China-Africa Cooperation Forum (FOCAC) was established in 2000. The FOCAC is a platform that provides the integrated framework for Chinese and African governments to promote a new type of strategic partnership. It is based on the principles of political equality, mutual trust, economic positive-sum game cooperation, and cultural exchange. Since its establishment in 2000, FOCAC has become the official channel for China and African states to discuss and collaborate in economic, political, technical and cultural areas. With the mechanism operated by FOCAC, China's engagement with African countries has entered a new period of development and produced better outcomes (Hanauer & Morris, 2014; Qiang, 2010).

In addition to the Chinese government's economic interest, the FOCAC also aimed to weaken the US hegemony in the African countries. It operated as an instrument for China to disseminate its non-interference approach to counter Western moral absolutism. Moreover, the conditionality of Western aid was perceived by African countries as an effort to recolonize Africa. Aid was employed by Western donors as a political instrument to improve recipient the countries' governance (Condon, 2012; Taylor, 2009).

The first FOCAC conference was held in Beijing in October 2000. Over 80 ministers from more than 40 African countries attended the meeting. The goal of the first summit was to create and promote a fair international political and economic order (a response to the failure of globalization), to promote equal international relations, and to strengthen economic, education, and cultural cooperation between China and African countries (Cisse, 2012; Peiliang, 2005; Shelton & Paruk, 2008). During the conference, the issue of debt relief was proposed by South Africa representative, but rejected by China. Three years later, China announced that it would provide a total of $1.27 billion USD in debt relief and aid packages to African countries (Alden, 2005a).

The second FOCAC meeting took place in December 2003 in Addis Abba, Ethiopia with the goal to enhance political and socio-economic cooperation between China and African nations (Shelton & Paruk, 2008; Cisse, 2012). During the meeting, China's Prime Minister Wen Jiabao promised to open China's market and granted preferential market access for African products to export to China. The Chinese government also promised to finance infrastructure projects to help African countries boost their economic development (Cisse, 2012). The importance of cultural exchanges was emphasized at the second FOCAC meeting (Shelton & Paruk, 2008).

The year of 2006 was an important year in the Sino-African relations. It was the 50th anniversary of formal Sino-African relations; the Chinese government declared 2006 as the "Year of Africa". In 2006, China released an important white paper, China's African Policy that covered a comprehensive plan to broaden Sino-African relations and reemphasized African countries' strategic importance to China. The focuses of China's African Policy paper were on political equality and mutual trust, positive-sum game economic cooperation, cultural exchange, and cooperation in international affairs. The aim of China's African policy paper is to foster a different kind of strategic partnership with African countries for the purpose of enhancing the interests of both parties. Those principals have become the new foundation of China's policy towards Africa (A. Li, 2007a).

The third FOCAC summit in Beijing was convened in November 2006. The Beijing summit in 2006 enhanced Sino-African collaboration even further, as China and African countries decided to accelerate cooperation, especially in joint resources exploration and exploitation. At this summit, China committed to provide African countries a multi-billion-dollar aid package. President Hu also pledged to enhance Sino-Africa cooperation in the area of human resources to help African countries to train professionals in different fields. China also agreed to open more markets to Africa's commodities, expand tourism cooperation with African countries, and to increase people-to-people exchange with Africa (Shelton & Paruk, 2008). This summit served as an example of how the Chinese government uses public diplomacy to secure a long-term relationship with the African countries. The African governments got more than they requested, and in return China secures the natural resources and raw materials it needs from Africa. China refers it as a "win-win" relationship (Naidu, 2007).

Since the formation of the FOCAC in 2000, China has honored its promises to assist African countries' development through its aid, reduced or removed African countries' debts, expanded its trade and increased investment in Africa. However, the global financial crisis in 2007 slowed down China's investment in Africa because China faced great financial pressure at home. It needed to devote most of its financial resources in its domestic economy instead of to Africa or other countries. This global financial crisis put huge pressure on the Chinese government to fulfill its old promises and to start new ones (Brown & Chun, 2009).

The fourth FOCAC conference took place at the peak of the global recession in November 2009. At the opening ceremony, China's Premier Wen Jiabao announced eight new plans to reinforce Sino-African cooperation. The plans comprised of financial assistance in African countries to increase their financing capacity, offering $10 billion USD concessional loans to help African countries develop their imports, build schools and hospitals, and train African professionals (Lucien, 2011).

The 5th FOCAC conference took place in Beijing in 2012. In his keynote speech, President Hu pledges, "In the next three years, the Chinese government will take measures in the following five priority areas to support the cause of peace and development in Africa and boost a new type of China-Africa strategic partnership" (Hu, 2012). Environmental challenges were discussed in this conference. China and African countries are increasingly aware of the tensions between industrial development and environmental protection. Both parties agreed to collaborate to build a greener and sustainable environment. The two objectives of this sustainable development plan are to help China achieve its agenda as a leader in green technology and to improve its national image in Africa (Chun, 2013; A. Li et al., 2012).

Before the 6th FOCAC conference held in 2015, many Chinese observers were worried about the impact that China's economic slowdown would have on Africa's economy because of China's financial commitments to Africa. As Africa's largest trading partner and major investor, a slowing Chinese economy means China's demands for African natural resources might decline. If Chinese demand declines, then Chinese investments in African states' infrastructure projects might decline as well. Consequently, it will affect African countries' economic development (Rotberg, 2015).

China has constantly doubled its financing commitment to African countries from $5 billion in 2006 to $10 billion in 2009 and $20 billion in 2012. During the 6th FOCAC meeting in 2015, China tripled its financial commitment and promised a $60 billion USD loan to African countries for infrastructure projects and human resource development. The $60 billion aid package is an indication of China's strong support of African countries' quest for independent development (Guest, 2015). In addition to China's financing assistance, the Chinese government also proposed a ten-point plan for Africa's development that included almost every aspect of Sino-African economic relations. China's ten-point plan reflects its new policy of "Industrial capacity cooperation" and "strategic complementarity." The Chinese government's new strategy intentionally downplayed its demands for Africa's natural resources. Rather, China focused on the overreaching ten-point plan for Sino-Africa cooperation, although statistics show that most of the African exports to China remain were natural resources during the first three-quarters of 2015. The reason that China intentionally deemphasized the importance of Africa's natural resources during the 6th FOCAC summit was to the negative national image associated with the role played by African natural resources in China's recent engagement with Africa (Y. Sun, 2015).

Through the FOCAC mechanism, China-African economic and trade relations have evolved from a singular pattern of aid between the governments to a diversified cooperation method based on the principle of mutual benefit. Over the past 15 years, trade between China and Africa has increased from $10.5 billion in 2000 to over $220 billion in 2014. China has surpassed the U.S. as Africa's largest trading partner since 2009 (Y. Sun, 2015). China's development assistance also played an important role in enhancing China's cooperation with African countries (W. He, 2013).

China's African policy is also motivated by political reasons such as isolating Taiwan from the international community and fostering a favorable political environment for its strategic agenda. In order to achieve the political agendas, China proposed an international political and economic order at the first FOCAC meeting in 2000. In the second FOCAC meeting, Premier Wen claimed that it is essential for developing countries to work together to challenge Western hegemony and to protect their own interests in international matters. The regular FOCAC meetings and frequent visits from high-level officials articulated a loyal political partnership between China and African countries (W. He, 2013).

Following the principle of non-interference, the Chinese government brings aid, trade, and investment opportunities to Africa without interfering the internal affairs of African states. Many African states embraced this policy and viewed it as an alternative to the West. The policy has been employed selectively to serve Chinese interests at different times, starting in its earliest days of implementation in the 1960s and 1970s when China supported Africa's revolutionary movements. Although China insists on non-interference, there is one precondition, the "One China" principle to marginalize Taiwan from the international community (Hanauer & Morris, 2014). As Robert I. Rotberg, President emeritus of the World Peace Foundation, notes, "the reason why China continuously emphasizes its non-interference principle is due to its own worries over sovereignty issues relating Xinjiang, Tibet, and Taiwan" (2008).

Cultural Cooperation

As Sino-African relations deepened, the CCP leadership acknowledged certain aspects of its presence in Africa have produced negative perceptions of China among Africans and that this situation needs to be changed. Instead of exercising hard power, China uses culture is an instrument to enhance its national influence. As former Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao addressed in an article published by the People's Daily, China needs to expand its cultural collaboration with other nations because "cultural exchanges are a bridge connecting the hearts and minds of people of all countries and an important way to project a country's image" (People's Daily, 2007). General Secretary Hu Jintao followed Wen's viewpoint and suggested, "culture has become a more and more important source of national cohesion and creativity and a factor of growing significance in the competition in overall national strength" (Xinhua, 2007). Premier Wen acknowledges that in order to sustain its growth; China not only needs to be "economically strong but more importantly, be cultural strong" (Xinhuanet, 2010). Based on these viewpoints, the foundation for China's international influence cannot solely depend on economic ability; it also will need a strong cultural force to enhance it. Against this background, a variety of cultural exchange and educational programs have been carried out to boost China's international influence (J. Li, 2012).

China’s rapidly expanding engagement in Africa has triggered a range of reactions in the West and Africa. In order to show the world that China’s presence in Africa is for mutual benefit, and not to extract natural resources for China’s own economic interests, the Chinese government has invested a considerable amount of time and money to foster a positive and favorable relationship with African countries through the different kinds of cultural engagement. One of the important strategic tools the Chinese government employs to achieve its objective is culture (Wei, 2012).

Since the first FOCAC meeting initiated in 2000, China has made great efforts to broaden its cultural cooperation with African states. For example, culture was an important feature of the Addis Ababa FOCAC meeting in 2003(Shelton & Paruk, 2008). At the Beijing FOCAC summit in 2006, China promised to establish a “new type of Sino-African Strategic partnership” on the basis of “political equality, mutual trust, economic cooperation, win-win, and cultural exchanges” (People Daily, 2006). Since 2006, China has been utilizing its powerful cultural resources in Africa to win hearts and minds of African people.

Education exchange is one important element of China's cultural cooperation with African countries. Through short-term training programs offered by the Chinese government, Africans have the opportunity to obtain an understanding of Chinese culture and its modernization experiences. China has offered scholarships for African university students to study in Chinese universities in the areas such as education, science, technology, and economics to benefit Sino-African relations. By providing training programs and scholarships to African students, China can increase its influence and improves its image in Africa (King, 2013).

The Confucius Institutes in Africa

Another crucial component of Sino-African cultural cooperation is the establishment of the Confucius Institutes (CIs) in Africa. Like many Western countries that establish cultural institutes in foreign states to promote their own culture, the Confucius Institute is a non-profit educational and cultural institution governed by the Chinese Office of Language Council International and operated by Hanban to promote Chinese language and culture to foreign audiences (Hartig, 2012). In addition to exhibit the richness of Chinese culture around the world, CIs also function as an instrument to present a "correct" understanding of China to a "mainstream public that mostly does not have any special China-knowledge" (Hartig, 2012:63) and to develop "positive opinions of China within a global setting" (Siow, 2011:1).

In the past decades, China has been represented by Western powers and media as "threat" because of its authoritarian political system, poor human rights record, and the handling of Tibet. The western media's narrative of the "Chinese threat" not only damages China's international image but also forces China to "face a tougher complex international environment and withstand more external pressure" (People's Daily, 2012). Facing such biased and negative representations, the leaders of CCP realized that it is important for China to present the real China to the international community to counter Western media's misrepresentation (Zhou & Luk, 2016). This is one of the reasons that the Chinese government was motivated to invest a huge amount of resources to establish Confucius Institutes around the world. The CCP leaders acknowledge, culture plays an important role in national power and "the expression of Chinese culture through language will have a strong impact on individual language learners and the host nation" (Wheeler, 2014:52). By engaging in

Chinese culture, the Chinese government hopes CI students will foster affection toward Chinese culture and people, and ease their concerns about China's rise (Schmidt, 2013). In addition to sharing Chinese culture with foreigners, another important CI other objective is to cultivate a favorable image of China to counter Western negative depiction of China's rise (Hubbert, 2014; Hartig, 2014).

The establishment of CIs is affiliated with China's foreign policy, with the objective to influence foreign public opinion (Hoare-Vance, 2010). Thus, the location of CIs often reflects China's political and economic interests in the country. By the end of 2011, China founded CIs in countries that it was major trading partners with, such as the US and the UK. When China's economic engagement increased in Africa, its cultural cooperation expanded as well. After the Beijing FOCAC Summit in 2006, the number of CIs increased dramatically from one to ten within six months in African countries (Lien, Chang, & Selmier, 2012). During the fifth FOCAC meeting in Beijing, both Chinese and African governments promised they "will continue to promote the establishment and development of the Confucius Institute and Confucius Classrooms in Africa" (FOCAC Beijing Action Plan, 2012).

As part of FOCAC commitment, the first African Confucius Institute was established in 2005 in Nairobi, Kenya affiliated with the University of Nairobi (Procopio, 2015). By the end of 2016, China set up forty-eight Confucius Institutes and Classrooms in thirty-three African countries with four Confucius Institutes and one Confucius Classroom located in Kenya. Kenya has the second highest number of CIs in Africa, behind South Africa with three Confucius Classroom and five institutes (Hanban, 2016). As Sino-African relation grows, the number of CIs will continue to increase in Africa.

The objective of CIs is to promote cultural exchange between China and the host country. In the case of Africa, CIs are functioning as platforms for the Chinese government to create a favorable environment in Africa that enables China to achieve its economic and political agenda (Hubbert, 2014). What motivated China to expand its cultural influence in Africa its need to strengthen its economic engagement with African countries so that it can pursue its economic interests. In this case, economic and cultural powers are united as one important component of China's foreign policy strategy (Wei, 2012; Wheeler, 2014).

From African government's hope that educational and cultural cooperation will strengthen their economic ties with China. African governments also know that learning Mandarin is a way to make African students become more competitive in the job market because China is a major player in the global economy (Wheeler, 2014). Like professor Wu Qianlong, deputy director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Cape Town, noted, "For those who are really committed to learning Chinese, the reward is obvious: this can give them an edge when entering the world of an economic powerhouse and exposing them to a mixture of West and East cultures" (Makoni, 2010).

Over the past years, the Confucius Institutes have received criticism from their host countries, especially in the West. Most of the criticism comes from the Confucius Institute's political connection with the CCP. Critics argue that the Chinese government uses CIs as the propaganda instruments to propagate its policy and expand its global influence. They also contend that the CI's affiliation with foreign universities could restrain academic freedom by excluding discussion of sensitive topics such as Tibet and Falun Gong. To those critics, China is using Confucius Institutes to present a non-threatening China through education on Chinese culture and language; the aim of CIs is to support China's peaceful rise narrative (Brady, 2008; Chey, 2008; Edney, 2012; Gill and Huang, 2006; Procopio, 2015; Starr, 2009; Youngman, 2014).

While there are concerns over the Chinese government's political influence on the Confucius Institutes, a group of scholars who are involved in CIs operation found little evidence of the Chinese government's political interference on the Confucius Institutes academic freedom (Hartig, 2012b; King, 2014; Paradise, 2009; Starr, 2009; R. Yang, 2010). They claim that the CIs are the component of China's strategy to influence international public opinion and win hearts and minds of foreigners; their objectives are similar to other Western countries that set up cultural institutes in foreign countries to promote their own culture around the world. The Confucius Institutes help to facilitate cultural cooperation and enhance academic exchange between China and the host country (Hughes, 2014). Despite their cultural and educational objectives, the Confucius Institutes also involve commercial concerns, which is to boost business activities for both countries (Y. Zhou & Luk, 2016).

Unlike Western critics who are concerned about the Chinese government's political influences on the Confucius Institutes, African commentators are concerned about practical issues such as financial sustainability because China does not guarantee long-term funding (R. Yang, 2010). Initially, the Chinese government or Hanban will provide the host university between $100,000 and $200,000 to set up a Confucius Institute and promised the same amount for next few years. Although the Chinese government covers most of the cost of CIs operations, the host universities in Africa worry about the issue of financial stability because of the uncertainty of Chinese financial commitment. The issue of financial sustainability apparently outweighs concern of losing academic freedom in Africa (Hartig, 2015).

Another concern of the African Confucius Institutes operation, is the issue of the quality of education provided. Teacher shortages and insufficient teaching materials are two critical challenges the African Confucius Institutes are facing. Since the establishment of CIs in African countries, recruiting qualified teachers to teach Mandarin in Africa became a huge challenge for Hanban. Another practical concern is the teaching materials prepared by the Chinese government in Beijing do not always meet local demands; they do not reflect the needs of African students (Procopio, 2015).

In Addition to the practical worries about the financial sustainability and the quality of teaching, there is a general ideological concern among the African intellectuals. They claim that the establishment of the Confucius Institutes is a form of cultural imperialism; the CIs are the tools the Chinese government and are used for its international ascendancy. Affiliating with Africa's most prestigious national universities enable China to spread Chinese culture into the minds of Africa's future leaders in different fields. One possible consequence is that these future national leaders “may increasingly look East, seeking to imitate the master” (Sishuwa, 2015).

Media Cooperation

In the past few years, China's media collaboration with African countries has become an important component in Sino-African cooperation. Sino-African media relation dates back to the early 1950s when China's state-owned news agency Xinhua developed an African network and the Chinese government supported African liberation movement radio in the 1960s (Xin, 2009). The aim of China’s media engagement in Africa between the 1950s and 1970s was to assist China established diplomatic relations with newly independent African countries. When China opened to the outside world in the late 1970s, repairing China's international image and reinforcing its political connections with developing countries became a major priority for China's media engagement in Africa (Y. Wu, 2012).

Since the first FOCAC meeting in 2000, media cooperation between China and African countries progressed alongside the FOCAC platform. Between the launch in 2000 and the Beijing Summit in 2006, the focus of the engagement was mainly on China's media infrastructure assistance to African countries. For example, Xinhua offered satellite equipment for a Uganda television station in 2000 (Y. Wu, 2014). China's media engagement in Africa gained a huge momentum during the 2006 FOCAC Beijing Summit when the Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009) identified media cooperation as one of China's top priorities in constructing mutual relations. Following the Beijing Action Plan (2007-2009), China will "continue to host workshops or African correspondents and invite heads of press authorities and media groups as well as correspondents from Africa to China to exchange views, cover news and explore ways of conducting effective cooperation". This plan also called for Chinese and African "news media to play a positive role in enhancing mutual understanding and friendship" (FOCAC, 2006: 12–13). After the FOCAC Beijing Summit in 2006, the Chinese government increased funding to its state media's international expansion and provided huge loans to African governments for them to develop media and telecommunication projects (Banda, 2009; Gagliardone, Repnikova, & Stremlau, 2010; Nelson, 2013).

In recent history, China has been negatively portrayed in the Western media from an unsophisticated and isolated country under the Mao's leadership, "dark China" during the Tiananmen Square crackdown, to a threat to international security over the past decades. When the Western media claim to be objective and balanced in their coverage of China, the Chinese government blamed them for their biased reporting (Ding, 2011; Ke, 2009). The Chinese government officials strongly believe that international media's narratives are biased and ignored the positive aspects of Chinese society. As China rises as an important global power, global media's negative portrayal of China has become one of the major concerns of the CCP leaders. Such concerns motivated the Chinese government to support its media's "going out" campaign (Hu & Ji, 2012).

Most observers of China agree that the constant biased and negative Western media towards China has motivated the recent Chinese media's international expansion. In order to contest negative representation of itself by Western media, the Chinese leaders recognized the need to take control of their own voice (Jacobs, 2012; McKenzie, 2012; Rhodes, 2012). The Chinese government used a variety of strategies, including self-promotion through hosting mega-events likes the Olympics and internationalization of Chinese state media to achieve the objectives (Gagliardone, Repnikova, & Stremlau, 2010).

The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games was employed by the Chinese government as a platform to showcase its rapid growth, its rise as an emerging global power and to present a positive image to replace the defensive image of the Tiananmen Square crackdown. It is China's "coming out party to signify the country's reinvention for world recognition" (Price, 2007:6). Unfortunately, the reality turned out to be quite different. During the build up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Chinese government was under extreme pressure from Western activists who condemned China for its abuse of human rights, especially in its connection to Sudan and the genocide in Darfur (Budabin, 2011; Cha, 2008; Economy & Segal, 2008). They used the Olympic spotlight to put intense pressure on China to change undemocratic policies. For instance, Mia Farrow, the actress and UNICEF goodwill ambassador, and her son Ronan Farrow, a former U.S. government advisor, published an op-ed article in The Wall Street Journal condemning China for not doing enough to address the Darfur conflict. They claimed that instead of “One World, One Dream”, the slogan of the Beijing Olympics, it should be identified as “Genocide Olympics” (Farrow & Farrow, 2007). Moreover, eight Nobel Peace Prize laureates wrote an open letter to President Hu Jintao demanding China to end its trade and aid to Khartoum regime (Leonard, Spencer, & Moore, 2008). Under such massive pressure, the Chinese government was forced to play a more active role in resolving the Darfur conflict. It helped the UN to negotiate with the Sudanese government to agree to the deployment of UN peacekeepers to protect civilians in Sudan (Budabin, 2011). Additionally, China initiated correspondence with the international news media and hosted press conferences to discuss the issues (Holslag, 2008).

At the same time, the Chinese government's crackdown in Tibet in March 2008 led to an international boycott of the Beijing Olympics. In March 2008, on the eve of the Beijing Olympics, a group of Tibetan monks marched to the Tibetan capital of Lhasa demanding more autonomy and the return of the Dalai Lama, their exiled spiritual leader. In the following days, peaceful demonstrations turned to violent protests. The Chinese government responded with armed policies squads and controlled media reporting. The international community immediately condemned the Chinese government's actions and demanded that China engage in direct talks with the Dalai Lama. When the Olympic torch made its way across the globe, it encountered anti-China protests along its path to Beijing. These wide-ranging disruptions of Olympic tradition embarrassed the Chinese government and enraged Chinese citizens, who believe that the Western media are biased toward Tibet and disrespectful of China (Economy & Segal, 2008; Grass, 2014).

China’s leaders recognized the that risks were great and understood that if the Chinese government could not resolve these issues peacefully and successfully it would jeopardize China’s “credibility as a global leader, its potential as a model for the developing world, and its position as an emerging center of global business and culture are all at risk” (Economy & Segal, 2008:49). Thereby, the Chinese government decided to carry out its state media internationalization plan with an effort to repair its public relations and re-brand China.

In 2009, the Chinese government launched a new round of the media "going out" campaigns. The aim of the new media “going out” campaign is to counter biased narratives by articulating China's own stories overseas. Another aim of this campaign is to enhance China's international media conglomerates' abilities to compete with their Western counterparts. A huge budget was committed to this effort, and a small group of state-run media conglomerates were selected as forerunners to promote a much friendlier environment, enabling China to achieve its agendas (Hu & Ji, 2012). The media “going out” initiatives ranging from Xinhua news agency renting a huge LED billboard on Time Square in New York City to the establishment of CCTV Africa in Kenya (Grass, 2014).

Like the establishment of CIs, the focus of the internationalization of Chinese state media is also focused on the developing countries where China maintains a strong presence (E. Pan, 2006). Due to its increasing strategic and economic importance for China, and the negative Western media coverage of China's presence in Africa, the African continent becomes an important region for China's state media global expansion (Mawdsley, 2008).

As mentioned earlier, China’s increasing presence in Africa has attracted many criticisms within African states. The issues, such as China's dealing with corrupt African governments, imbalanced trade relations, the poor quality of Chinese consumer goods, the practices of importing Chinese labors to African infrastructure projects, and lack of social responsibility are the major concerns of these critics. Facing such harsh criticism, the CCP leaders recognize that China needs to use its own media to break the Western media's domination in Africa and to counter biased "China in Africa" narratives that depict China as a neo-colonialist whose presence in Africa is to exploit its natural resource and raw materials (Grass, 2014; Nelson, 2013; Y. Wu, 2012).

Chinese Media in Africa

Since the FOCAC Beijing Summit in 2006, the campaign to improve China's international communication capability, to articulate a favorable objective, and to balance public opinion in Africa, the Chinese state media initiated a steady expansion in African media markets. This expansion covered all forms of media from newspapers, to radio stations, to satellite television. Over the past few years, China has invested around $2 to $ 9 billion in its state media's global expansion (Shambaugh, 2013). Among them, Xinhua, China's state-owned news agency relocated its regional editorial office for Africa from Paris to Nairobi, Kenya in 2006. This move signified the first symbolic phase of China's "going out" campaign (Gagliardone, 2013). In the same year, China Radio International (CRI) began to request that its African partners transmit some CRI content and make it more appealing to African audiences (Cooper, 2008). From 2006 onwards, China's four major state media players (Xinhua News Agency, CRI, CCTV, and China Daily) aggressively increased their overseas services to counterbalance increasing anti-Chinese sentiment (Xin, 2009).

Xinhua News Agency, a leading news agency in China, was first established as an official Party mouthpiece in 1931. The establishment of Xinhua was politically motivated. According to its former editors, the major responsibility of the Xinhua was to oversee the newspaper Reference News (Cankao Xiaoxi) (Feng, 1991). Within the newspaper, Xinhua aimed to legitimize its status and to promote political ideologies of the CCP. Before the founding of the People's Republic of China, it was Xinhua's responsibility to set up and manage the Party's newspapers. During the anti-Japanese War (1937-45) and the Civil War (1945-49) Xinhua established a number of local offices to disseminate the CCP's propaganda and report on local situations. Xinhua's early development in the 1930s and 1940s was generally connected with the establishment of the Party's newspaper (Xin, 2006). In 1944, Xinhua inaugurated English-language broadcasts to reach foreign audience.

Xinhua's development is parallel to China's political and economic development. In the early 1980s, Xinhua began to participate in diversified business practices, partially encouraged by the tax-free policy and partially motivated by financial needs (Cai, 1999). Xinhua's economic information service began in the late 1980s. The newspapers provided Xinhua access to a huge amount of readership and brought Xinhua massive advertising revenue. During this period, Xinhua developed as a wholesaler and retailer of news, unlike its original roles as a news agency and newspaper (Xin, 2006).

In the 1980s, Xinhua offered free news services to most of the domestic news subscribers. It charged only its foreign clients a small fee. Without an economic incentive, Xinhua did not have a specific department within the agency to handle newspapers and other media subscribers until 1994 when Xinhua set up news delivery center. In the 1980s, Xinhua began to worry about its economic interests and political impact. This business practice also prepared Xinhua for transition during the process of marketization (Xin, 2009).

The media industry changed dramatically in the 1990s. While Western scholars labeled the decade of the 1990s as a period of cultural globalization, Chinese scholars considered it as a period of media reform (Chu, 1994; Lee, 1994; Pan, 2000). In this period, China began to develop a market economy with Chinese characteristics to boost economic and social development. After Deng's famous speech in 1992, commercialization and marketization became a predictable trend in China's media sector (Zhao, 2000). Against this background, Xinhua redefined its products as "commodities" that could be sold for profits (Lu, 2002a).

Following the principles of Deng's economic reforms, Xinhua was encouraged to extend its global reach and to become a leading world news agency (J. Hong, 2011). Two decades after the reform began, Xinhua stated that it had reached its initial goal (D. Zheng, 2002). In 2008, Xinhua became one of the largest news agencies in the world, with a total of 33 domestic offices and 123 overseas bureaus across 190 nations. Xinhua launched its own international English television network, "CNC World News", on 31 December 2009. Xinhua planned to use the establishment of China Xinhua News Network Corporation (CNC), to enhance its status in the global television news market (J. Hong, 2011).

CNC is modeled on CNN and BBC as a 24-hour English-language channel that aims to bring China's worldview to emerging markets (Xinhuanet, 2010). The launch of CNC was a breakthrough in the history of world news agencies because it was the first of the news agencies to have its own platform to broadcast its own stories and footage. In the past, both AP and Reuters have offered television news stories and footage to their subscribers. However, they don't have their own broadcasting service. In this part of information war, Xinhua surpassed other leading global news agencies and became the frontrunner in this contest (J. Hong, 2011). In 2011, Xinhua relocated its North America regional headquarters to New York's Times Square with services provided in eight languages. These initiatives indicate Xinhua's intention to become a powerful international media player (Wu, 2012).

Xinhua has held a presence in Africa since the 1950s. During the 1950s and 1960s, Xinhua's presence in Africa was "to help the Chinese government from diplomatic relations with recently independent African states" (Wu, 2012:11) by providing material aid and journalist exchanges for African liberation movement. Xinhua was inactive in the following three decades due to social turmoil in China. In 1986, Xinhua opened its African regional bureau in Nairobi, Kenya. Since then, Xinhua has made great progress in its news service to African countries. It collaborated with the local state news agencies and signed cooperation agreements with African national broadcasting companies on content sharing. To broaden its influence, Xinhua continues to offer free newswires, technical assistance, and equipment to local news organizations in Africa. Xinhua also launched its China-African News Service in 2008 with an attempt to increase news coverage on issues of mutual interest (Wu, 2012; Xin, 2009). Consequently, Xinhua became a cheaper alternative to Western news agencies such as the Associated Press and other major news providers of African news media. Currently, African newspapers adopt more news from Xinhua than from other western sources. (Grass, 2014; Shambaugh, 2010; Xin, 2009).

Another important aspect of the media “going-out” campaign is the expansion of China Central Television’s (CCTV) news broadcasting channels. In 2012, CCTV launched its African broadcasting center, CCTV Africa, in East Africa with its headquarters in Kenya's capital Nairobi, a city where other international news media are present. CCTV Africa is the first Chinese media outlet to broadcast from a production center outside China (Wekesa & Zhang, 2014). It has also been regarded as the leader of the Chinese media expansion in Africa (Rönning, 2014). The function of CCTV is to foster a positive image of China, to share "China's view" on the global events with the world, and to offer "a real China to Africa and presenting a real Africa to the world" (Gagliardone, 2013).

Motivated by both economic and political interests, the Chinese government sensed a strong needs to strengthen its media activities abroad and to increase the influence and the competitiveness of its media in an international environment (Wu, 2012). Within this context, CCTV was determined to win hearts and minds of millions of viewers and compete with other media players in Africa. Competing with other international media outlets such as the BBC, CNN, and Al-Jazeera for global influence is part of media “going out” strategy (Sanchez, 2016). Initially, CCTV Africa produced a one-hour daily news program that broadcasts in English. Six months later, a program was developed including Africa News, Talk Africa, and Faces of Africa. These programs covered political, economic, social, and cultural issues across the African continent. Indeed, programs such as Faces of Africa, a weekly feature program, and Talk Africa, a talk show that frequently invited African elites to discuss current issues, initially formulated to contest BBC's Focus Africa and Reuter’s African Journal. Hence, building on its substantial capital, CCTV Africa turned out to be the only international news media that aired the one-hour daily news program, Africa Live, that was exclusively focused on Africa and covered a wide range of issues (Wekesa, 2014).

Like Xinhua, CCTV also sought partnership with national broadcasting stations in Africa. For instance, it signed an agreement with Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) and authorized KBC to air programs from CCTV's channels. According to the Kenyan minister for information, transport, and communication, this media cooperation allowed Kenya to have more news sources instead of concentrating on Western media (J. Wang, 2001). Additionally, CCTV also contributed a set of equipment to KBC to receive satellite signals from CCTV (Chau, 2007).

China Radio International (CRI) was founded in 1941, as the only Chinese state-owned radio station allowed to broadcast to overseas audiences. In the initial stage, the sole function of CRI was to repeat the CCP leaders' statements (Kurlantzick, 2007). CRI's first overseas broadcast was in 1941 and first English broadcast was in 1947 (Kenichi, 2011). Since Deng's economic reforms began in the late 1970s, CRI became a more profit-driven media outlet, like other state-owned media in China. As the Chinese government replaced pure propaganda with a public relation strategy, CRI became a vehicle to make Chinese culture more visible globally (Cooper, 2008).

According to Chen et al, establishing partnership and collaborating with overseas media organizations are two successful approaches that helped China to enhance its international influence (2010). When CRI relocated its African headquarters from Paris to Nairobi, it signed a cooperation agreement with the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) in 2006 to share its production content. At the same time, an FM radio station was launched. It provided 19 hours of daily programing in English, Mandarin, and Swahili to the Nairobi listeners (Xinhua, 2006). Since its partnership with the KBC, CRI programming gained a large listenership in Kenya in a relatively short period as compared to other African countries and was an example of a successful local partnership. Relocating its regional headquarter to Nairobi demonstrated China's determination to enhance its influence in Africa (Cooper 2008).

China Daily, an English-language newspaper, was established in Beijing in 1981 to target foreigners in China. China Daily's editorial control is less strict than most Chinese language newspapers (Heuvel & Dennis, 1993). China Daily launched its online edition in December 1995 and became one of the major online Chinese newspapers. As part of "going out" media, *China Daily* has aggressively expanded its foreign editions of the newspaper over the past years. It established a US edition in February 2009 and European and Asian weekly editions in 2010 (d'Hooghe, 2015). African weekly edition was inaugurated in December 2012 in Nairobi. It is available on paper and the Internet as well as an application with video content (Rönning, 2014). The focus of *China Daily* is on Sino-African relations, to improve communication and cooperation between China and African countries (R. Rotberg, 2013). As Zhu Ling, *China Daily*'s editor-in-chief addressed at the launch of *China Daily* Africa "the relationship between China and the African continent is one of the most significant relationships in the world today. It is growing and complex and not always understood not just by those in other parts of the world but Africans and Chinese, too" (cited in Green, 2012). Thereby, the purpose of *China Daily* is to "set that straight" (Ibid).

The Challenges of Chinese Media in Africa

Many Western media observers often perceive the growing Chinese media as the rise of Chinese "propaganda". They are also worried that the presence of Chinese media in Africa poses a threat to African journalism by forcing African journalist to avoid controversial issues and only report favorable stories about China and China's involvement in Africa. They are concerned about the issue of censorship, whether the Chinese government imposes it, or self-censorship practiced among Chinese media professionals in Africa. For those critics, censorship has seriously compromised the general public's ability to access critical information (Wekesa, 2014; Y. Wu, 2012). The fear is due to China's poor record of freedom of the press at home, and its history of imprisoning journalists and blocking controversial issues (Rhodes, 2012). In other words, "With generally low official credibility, China's state media have a hard time winning over a skeptical audience" (X. Zheng, 2010: 49).

Zhang Yanqiu, director of the Africa Communication Research Centre at the Communication University of China, argued "the generalization of Chinese state-run media as a propagandist in Africa might be too reductive". According to Zhang, Chinese media is practicing "constructive journalism" in African countries (Y. Zhang, 2014). Unlike Western media's "watchdog" role, the purpose of constructive journalism is to find solutions, "it can be both positive and negative" according to Zhang. The ultimate goal of constructive journalism is to offer "a new kind of balance and shine a new kind of light on the continent" (ibid). By practicing constructive journalism, Chinese media operations in Africa often ask to offer a solution, not just report the stories. The notion of constructive journalism is that providing solutions is far more important than just objectively reporting the stories, because if reporting the truth of conditions only getting worse, then foreigners will be afraid to travel to Africa. Moreover, such coverage is only hurting African countries even more (Ibid).

Lacking credibility is another challenge Chinese state-owned media face when they entered international media markets. Pressures have ascended in African countries where the Chinese government has heavy investments in local media infrastructure. Since their inception, Chinese state-owned media organizations are constantly accused of editorial bias, no matter how hard the Chinese officials and the executives of major Chinese-African media outlets defend the legitimacy of their organizations (Cusack, 2015). China recognizes that there is a credibility gap that exists in its overseas media initiatives despite its efforts to improve its image. To narrow credibility gap, Chinese media needs to develop credible information and build media organizations that are "strong, influential and credible" (Xi, 2014 cited in Cusack, 2015). Many believe that transparency would improve Chinese state-owned media's credibility globally (Y. Wu, 2012).

Chinese Telecommunication Sector in Africa

Like its state-run media international expansion, Chinese telecommunication firms also expanded their operations in Africa and became key players in Africa's telecommunication markets since 2006 (Beebe et al., 2006; Gagliardone, 2013). Similar to Chinese state-owned media, the objectives of Chinese telecommunications companies' engagement in African states are to enhance China's international standing, to counter Western hegemony, and to expand business operations overseas (Dumbaugh, 2008).

In Africa, the telecommunication sector was owned and controlled by the States. The majority of African States started to reform their communication sectors, through the process of deregulation and convergence in the late 1980s. Under pressure from the World Bank and other international organizations, these developments led to the privatization of state-owned telecom sectors in Africa and have a significant impact on African telecommunication growth (Gilward, 2005; McCormick, 2003;

Wallsten, 2001). The growing numbers of telecommunication players in the industry, new services and products all have positive effects on the economic growth (Chavula, 2013).

Over the past years, telecommunication sectors have become increasingly intertwined with the operations of the government departments and other organizations (Adam, 1996). This has led to a growing belief within African governments "that productivity of the entire economy in a country depends upon the efficiency of the telecommunications system" (Chavula, 2013:6). As the telecommunications cross-border information flow accelerates and enables easy access to knowledge and resources, it becomes a key element of African state's social, economic, and technological development (Cissé, 2012; McCormick, 2003).

The willingness of African governments to modernize their telecommunication sectors has created a favorable environment for international investors to invest in Africa's telecommunication industry. Over the past decade, African telecommunication markets have attracted an increasing number of foreign investors (Berg & Hamilton, 2002). Among them are two leading Chinese telecommunication firms, Huawei Technologies, a private hi-technology company, and Zhongxing Telecommunications Equipment Corporation (ZTE), a State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). Huawei, a leading telecommunication equipment manufacturer in China, has achieved great success in internationalization in the past decade. (A. Wong, 2015).

Over the past years, Chinese telecommunications companies have gained overwhelming popularity in Africa through low price strategy, responsive customer service, and the support from the Chinese government. In order to succeed in African telecommunications markets, Chinese telecommunication companies employ a lowerpricing strategy to compete with other competitors in Africa. For instance, Huawei's price is 5-15 percent lower than its Western rivals. When ZTE later entered, it cut the price 30-40 percent lower (A. Wong, 2015). According to Caixin Century Weekly, "price remains Chinese companies' biggest competitive advantage" (Zhao & Zhang, 2012). Although Huawei's price is cheaper, it still manages to generate more profit margins than in China. However, the low-pricing strategy has negative effects on company's reputation; Chinese products are generally perceived as being of poorer quality (Chang et al, 2009).

Another important business strategy of Chinese telecommunication firms is their outstanding customer service; they concentrated on customers' needs. Both Huawei and ZTE are taking their customer service seriously. Huawei's customer service is available "24 hours a day, seven days a week" (Chang et al, 2009). This highly responsive customer service earned Huawei a reputation for reliability that helps its operations in Africa. This customer-oriented strategy is one of the major advantages of both Huawei and ZTE's success in Africa (Cissé, 2012).

The Chinese government has played an important role in its telecommunications companies' expansion in Africa (Berg & Hamilton, 2001). The primary source of government support is through credits that are offered by the Export-Import Bank (China Exim) and the China Development Bank (CDB). The loans are designed to provide financial assistance to Chinese exporters to obtain foreign business deals and to assist foreign companies to import goods and services from China (Brautigam, 2011:206). The credit provided by China's national banks are loans, not subsidies. The loans from either CDB or China Exim to African states can only use to purchase equipment from Chinese companies (Zhao & Zhang, 2012). These loans led to guarantee business deals for Chinese telecommunication companies. Since 2004, CDB and China Exim and other Chinese national banks have continued to offer huge credit to Huawei, ZTE, and other Chinese telecommunications companies. Chinese national banks' strong financial support has facilitated Chinese telecommunications companies to speedily extend to most of the African states (Marshall, 2011).

In addition to its strong financial support, the Chinese government also offers diplomatic assistance to its telecoms companies. When the top Chinese officials visited African states, Huawei and ZTE executives often accompanied them. Such diplomatic meetings bring opportunities for both Huawei and ZTE executives to build a close relationship with African governments and provided an advantage for both Huawei and ZTE in winning the contracts in African states (Cissé, 2012; F. Cooke, 2011).

The presence of Chinese telecom companies in Africa benefits African consumers, businesses, and governments. For ordinary African consumers, the affordable consumer goods and services are the most important benefits of Chinese telecommunication's presence on the continent. For business users, Huawei and ZTE offer training courses to train local staff and local network providers. The other positive contribution of Chinese telecommunication firms is their partnership with local telecommunications operators, such cooperation helped to improve telecommunications technologies in African states.

The lack of telecommunication infrastructure has always been a hurdle for African states' socioeconomic development. While Africa's Western allies hesitated to support its telecommunication development, China offered aid and loans to African countries with no-strings-attached. China's investment in the African telecommunication sector has an important impact on the rapid growth of the African telecommunication market. To counter China's growing presence in Africa; many Western countries increased their investments in Africa's ICT infrastructure. The most important contribution of Chinese telecoms companies' engagement in Africa has narrowed the digital gap between haves and have-nots (Cissé, 2012).

Like other Chinese engagement in Africa, Huawei and ZTE's presence provoked criticism from both the international community and Africa. Critics claim China's engagement in African telecommunications markets pose a cybersecurity threat, fearing that Chinese telecommunications companies might engage in espionage. Michael Chertoff, the former US Secretary of Homeland Security, told Foreign Policy that " There are a lot of concerns about Huawei acting to advance the interest of the Chinese government in a strategic sense, which includes not only traditional espionage but as a vehicle for economic espionage" (Reed, 2013). By building telecommunication infrastructure for African states, Huawei has a great opportunity to spy on African information system via technological "backdoor". Thus, there is a possibility that each time African customers upgrading their service, there are installing spyware on their devices. Critics also fear that the Chinese government is using African information networks to spy other nations (Ibid).

China's officials and Chinese telecommunication companies have denied the spying charges; they claimed the criticisms over spying are baseless allegations. An 18-month investigation commissioned by the White House found no evidence of Huawei involves in espionage (Kauri, 2012). Although there is no evidence of Chinese telecommunication company surveillance other nation, evidence shows that many African governments like to use Chinese-made telecommunications equipment to control communication system for political reasons. For example, China helped the Zambian government install Internet surveillance and censorship equipment to monitor its citizens' online behaviors (Reed, 2013).

Overall, these cultural interactions have fostered cross-cultural understanding, as both Chinese and Africans are receiving more Sino-African stories from Chinese media. These initiatives enabled the Chinese government to promote its own agenda in Africa (Gagliardone et al., 2010; York, 2013). The factors that motivated both Chinese media and telecommunications sectors' international expansion, its mode of engagement, and the impact on the continent has been briefly discussed in the previous sections. The following chapter will detail China’s current cultural and media expansion in Kenya.

CHAPTER 4

CHINA's GROWING CULTURAL INFLUENCE IN KENYA

Over the past decade, China has increased its engagement in African countries to pursue its political and economic interests. As a result, Kenya has become an important hub for China's operations in East and Central African countries (Patroba, 2012). For China, the importance of Kenya is not its natural resources; instead, it is the geostrategic importance of the country. Kenyan ports, such as Kilindini Harbor, have become an important trading and resources transition hub for the Chinese government and Chinese companies' operations in Africa. Chinese companies depend on these ports to transfer manufactured goods to East and Central African markets. Kenya's political stability is another important factor behind the Chinese government's decision to pour huge resources into Kenya. In comparison to other African states, Kenya's political stability helps China and its companies to safely import and export goods and natural resources from Africa (Bergeron-Oliver, 2012; Onjala, 2008).

Over five decades of China's engagement in Kenya, the relationship between China and Kenya has had its ups and downs. Under the leadership of President Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya was inclined more towards the West, while his Vice President Odinga was in favor of building bilateral relations with the East. Both President Mwai Kibaki and his successor Uhuru Kenyatta, especially President Uhuru Kenyatta, wanted to maintain the strong diplomatic relations with China and to further strengthen and expand the friendly cooperation between the two nations. Both Presidents Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta looked for partners in developing countries that could strengthen Kenya's economic and political position in the international community. Political and economic interests pursued by the two countries led to cooperation. In other words, the cooperation was largely based on the common political and economic interests.

China's economic and trade relations with Kenya dated back to the Ming Dynasty when Chinese explorer and fleet admiral Zheng He commanded seven expeditions to visit many places in Eastern Africa, including Mombasa in Kenya. Even though the economic systems in two countries were different, China practices communism and Kenya embraces a capitalist system, Sino-Kenya economic relations have remained friendly. Bilateral economic and trade relations have been developing smoothly. Over the past decades, numerous collaborative agreements in the areas of technology, energy, education, media, and tourism were signed to boost cooperation between the two countries. The Chinese government has been aggressively implementing these signed collaborative agreements by encouraging Chinese companies, both private and state-owned, to expand their investments and cooperation with the Kenyan government and companies (Onjala, 2008).

China and Kenya also cooperate in the field of politics. For instance, the Kenyan government supports China's "One-China Policy" to diminish Taiwan's diplomatic presence worldwide; in return, the Chinese government supports the Kenyan government position on the International Criminal Court (ICC) trials of Uhuru Kenyatta and other Kenyan political leaders. In November 2013, "China voted in favor of a draft resolution in the United Nations Security Council, calling for deferral of Kenyan cases" (Ongiri, 2014). In order to advance its economic and political interests in Kenya, the Chinese government also expands the bilateral cooperation to the fields of culture and media for the purpose of cultivating mutual understanding and friendship between both nations and people.

Nairobi, the capital of the Kenya, is the base of many international news outlets' African operations. Because of its relatively relaxed media environment and a growing economy; Nairobi became an ideal place for transnational news media bases in the region (Bergeron-Oliver, 2012). A strong economy means more money to spend on advertising, which is what a media organization needs to maintain their operations. The Kenyan media industry has experienced a rapid growth in advertising between 2006 and 2010. The Kenya media industry is expected to grow 16.3 percent annually from 2013 through 2017 and expand to the size of $3.1 billion by 2017 (PwC, 2013).

The global financial crisis of 2007- 2008 provided excellent opportunities for the Chinese government to expand its state-owned media into the global media market. Western countries' economy slowed down by the financial crisis. Faced with such financial difficulties, Western media was forced to cut their operating cost and reduced the size of international operation, and in Africa in particular. While Western media's operations in Africa were limited, the Chinese government took the opportunity and aggressively expanded its media operations in Africa (Farah & Mosher, 2010; Grass, 2014).

China believes the national image of the country presented by foreign media, especially Western media, is biased and misleading and that it is comprised of an intensive effort to demonize China. Chinese leaders understood that national image is a result of "a combination of objective facts about a country, image projection by that country, and interpretations and even contractions of facts about that country by the mass media and other actors in foreign countries" (Tao & Page, 2013: 855). After it lost its national image management battle over the Tibet riot in early 2008, the

Chinese government realized that on the international battlefield of image projection, winners successfully present a national image that is favored among the foreign public, while a loser's image is defined by others. To be a winner, the Chinese government determined to improve its national image. One huge step China took was to invest US$8.7 billion in 2009-2010 to improve its international communication ability, including international expansion of its state-owned media (Shambaugh, 2013).

China acknowledges that there is a connection between culture, politic, and economy; the growing cultural influence will help China and its companies to pursue their political and economic interests in Africa. This chapter examines the evolution of China's presence in Kenya's media and cultural sectors, and how the internal and external economic and political forces in both China and Kenya helped to establish the current pattern of China's media presence and other cultural engagements in Kenya. The first section will briefly review the Sino-Kenyan relations and the internal and external political and economic factors, both in China and Kenya that influenced the relationship between the two countries in each period. The second section examines China's investments in Kenya's infrastructure projects and focuses on the link between these projects and China's national rebranding agenda. The third section focuses on the penetration of Chinese media and other cultural productions in Kenya. The fourth and final section explores the development of Confucius Institutes in Kenya.

Brief History of Sino-Kenyan Relations

China and Kenya relationship dated back to the 15th century when Chinese admiral Zhang He reached Mombasa and Lamu, the coastal cities of Kenya, during his seven voyages to the western seas. Modern Sino-Kenyan relations began in 1949. China's African policy during this initial stage was influenced by the ideology of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism. In order to battle the hegemony of colonial and imperialist powers, China established diplomatic relationships with other Asian and African colonies to demand independence from oppressive regimes in 1957. China supported these liberation movements because it believed that independence struggle across Africa were connected to the socialist movements in East Asia, therefore, they could joint forces to fight against imperialism (King, 2010; Snow, 1988).

<u>President Jomo Kenyatta Era: 1963-1978</u>

Kenya was formally colonized by Great Britain in 1895. After a long struggle against the British for independence, Kenya gained independence on December 12, 1963. Two days after its independence, its diplomatic relations with China, as opposed to Taiwan, were established. China became the fourth country to recognize Kenya's independence (Onjala, 2008). In the early years of President Jomo Kenyatta's era, China's relations with Kenya evolved smoothly and trade was in Kenya's favor. After 1965, the relationships between the two countries were cold with allegations and counter allegations of undermining sovereignty (Enock et al, 2015).

Jomo Kenyatta, president of Kenya African National Union (KANU), led Kenya's delegation in the negotiation for independence. When Kenya gained its independence in 1963, Kenyatta was elected as prime minister and became the first President of the Republic of Kenya in 1964. When the official diplomatic relation was established in 1963, the leaders of KANU were uncertain about building close relations with China because the Chinese government closes ties with Vice-President Oginga Odinga, who had been a friend to China during the struggle for independence.

Because of their ideological differences, Odinga did not agree with the Kenyatta government and Kenyatta perceived Odinga as a threat to his leadership. Therefore, when Odinga proposed for a close relationship with China, Kenyatta was in favor of approaching the Western powers (Shinn & Eisenman, 2012).

The tension between Kenyatta and Odinga led to a cold period in Sino-Kenya relation filled with bad blood. The Kenyatta government accused China of funding opposing parties and plotting a revolution in Kenya. A Chinese third secretary and a journalist affiliated with the Xinhua News Agency were expelled in 1965. China denied the accusations and accused the Kenyatta government of defamation (Chege, 2008; Larkin, 1971; Patroba, 2012). In response to the Kenyatta government's accusations, Chinese people protested outside Kenya's Beijing embassy. In retaliation, Kenya recalled its ambassador to China and initiated a counter-demonstration outside the Chinese embassy in Nairobi. Both countries expelled the other's chargé d'affaires in 1967 (Chege, 2008; Enock et al, 2015).

In addition to the above-mentioned bad blood between the two countries, Kenyan media criticized China's Cultural Revolution. They called for the Chinese government trained African diplomats in Beijing to carry out similar revolutions in their home countries, resulting in negative impacts on Sino-Kenyan relations (Larkin, 1971). China denied its involvement, but its reputation in Africa suffered as a result of the Kenyan government and its people's suspicion that China supported an opposing party to overthrow the existing government. The Cultural Revolution changed the focus and behavior of China's foreign policy; China's relationship with Kenya was put on hold until Kenya's second president Daniel Moi assumed power (Chege, 2008).

President Daniel Moi Era: 1978-2002

During China's Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), Sino-Kenyan relations went through a dark period. Relations between two countries were revived after Daniel Arap Moi came to power as the successor of Jomo Kenyatta as the second President of the Republic of Kenya in 1978. Under the leadership of President Moi, Sino-Kenyan relations were good politically, socially, and economically and the collaboration between the two countries reached outstanding achievements in many fields. During the 1970s, Kenya experienced a period of domestic, political, and economic obstacles that resulted in radical structural changes. On the political front, a political divide among the principal members of government led to a period of political uncertainty. Kenya's economy performed relatively well in the first decade of independence (1964-1973). Then came the oil crisis in 1973 and the economic crisis of the 1970s. As a result, the country's GDP dropped, the standard of living declined, and there were widespread food shortages. Such circumstance had a negative impact on Kenya's economy, and its economic decline forced the Kenyan government to depend on China's development support to meet its demands (Rono, 2002).

Around the same time, China's national priority also began to change. After the death of Chairman Mao, his successor Deng Xiaoping and other leaders of the CCP initiated economic reforms in 1978, two years after Mao's death. The economic reforms opened China up to the world for the purpose of seeking and receiving foreign investment, technology, and know-how, as well as expanding domestic markets into global ones (Brandt, 2008). In order to achieve its objectives, the CCP leaders established an outward policy to improve China's relations with other countries (Onjala, 2008). Within this context, the two countries started to rebuild relations when President Moi came to power in 1978. Soon after he was in power, President Moi visited China to sign the first bilateral cooperation agreement between the two countries since the 1960s. Although this agreement covered a number of fields, the main focus of the new bilateral agreement was culture (Masta, 2009).

During President Moi ear (1972-2002), great efforts were taken to promote the bilateral relations between the two countries. Frequent high-level state visits between Kenyan leaders and prominent Chinese leaders and officials resulted in a number of economic and technical cooperation initiatives include projects such as Moi International Sports Center, the expansion of Eldoret hospital, Gambogi-Serem Highway and Nairobi-Thika Highway. Cultural exchange agreements were also signed that included the annual scholarships, provided by the Chinese government for African students to study in China, and Xinhua News Agency set up a regional office in Nairobi in 1985 (King, 2010; Masta, 2009).

During this period, China and Kenya also singed many economic cooperation agreements. By the mid-1990s the bilateral trade volume had increased significantly, though it was mostly imports from China. When President Moi left office in 2002, relations between the two countries were better than they had ever been. Both President Moi's attitude towards China and China's interested of Kenya as an important regional hub were the key factors for this success (Chege, 2008).

President Mwai Kibaki Era, 2002-2013

In December 2002, the ruling party KANU lost the general election to the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), a reform coalition. Mwai Kibaki, the candidate of NARC, won the election, took over government leadership, and ended Moi regime's influence. Sino-Kenyan relations strengthened and deepened after President Kibaki took office (Sheen & Eisenman, 2012). After Kibaki came to power, his administration initiated a comprehensive economic and governance reform program that resulted in speedy economic recovery and accelerated growth subsequently. Those reform programs also led to the longest period of sustained growth since the prosperous Kenyatta era (2003-2007). GDP growth increased from 2.9 percent in 2003 to 7.1 percent in 2007; poverty level also dropped from 56 percent in 1997 to 46 percent in 2006. Economic growth was the result of the growth of all sectors including agriculture, tourism, trade, manufacturing, telecommunications, construction, and financial sectors (Chege, 2008).

President Kibaki embraced the Chinese partnership approach and was willing to strengthen Sino-Kenyan relations (Patroba, 2010). Trade and investment are two major areas of the relationship. The relations between the two countries started with high-level state visits followed by a series of agreements (Onjalla, 2008). In 2005, President Kibaki visited Beijing accompanied by a group of Kenyan trade and investment delegations looking for business opportunities between the two nations. During his visit, President Kibaki met with Chinese President Hu Jintao and other Chinese government officials to discuss economic cooperation. During the meetings, China promised to increase its assistance to help the Kenyan government's modernization and development projects (Sheen & Eisenman, 2012). China signed five agreements with Kenya that included "official development assistance in grants (for infrastructure and energy), extended air services between the two countries, technical assistance for assessment and classification of standards in industrial products, and modernization of equipment and training at the state-owned Kenya Broadcasting Corporation" (Chege, 2008:26).

The following year, the Chinese president Hu Jintao visited Kenya to strengthen the relations between the two states. During the trip, the two countries signed a billion-dollar offshore oil exploration deal that granted Chinese National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) a permission to drill in Kenya’s north and south coasts. In return, China donated half a billion shillings to Kenya’s malaria prevention programs. President Hu also agreed to help Kenya repair and maintain the Moi International Sports Complex and repair Nairobi’s road network from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport to the UN Complex in Gagarin (Barber & England, 2006). Although China had economic cooperation with Kenya before 2006, it was the agreements Hu signed with Kibaki during Hu's trip that strengthened China’s status as one of Kenya's key economic partners (Enock et al., 2015).

Since Kenya gained its independence, the Kenyan government held a close relationship with the West, especially the US and the European Union. However, after President Kibaki settled into power, he introduced a "Look East" policy to reduce its dependence on traditional Western markets and donors. Unlike traditional Western donors constantly lecturing Kenya on corruption, good governance, and human rights, China practices a non-interference policy. It is a policy that is derived from the Five Principle of Peaceful Coexistence, and it does not interfere with the recipient countries’ domestic affairs. China’s “non-interference” policy was fully embraced by the Kibaki government. China’s aid and assistance, including road construction projects and cultural exchange programs, to Kenya were increased (Sheen & Eisenman, 2012).

After engaging in intense battles for powerful positions, the incumbent Mwai Kibaki was declared the winner of the Presidential election by a narrow margin over the opposition candidate Raila Odinga, on December 27, 2007. After the election results were declared, Odinga and his supporters refused to accept the results. They insisted the elections had been rigged, a claim that had been confirmed by the international election observers (Gettleman, 2007). Foreign election observers also claimed both parties manipulated the elections (Kanina, 2008). The election disputes led to a huge violent protest, over 1,500 people were killed, and 600,000 Kenyans were forced to escape their homes (Branch & Cheeseman, 2008). Major economic activities were disrupted by the post-election violence. Before the elections violence, Kenya's economic growth stood at about 7 percent at the end of 2007; it was suddenly dropped to under 2 percent in the first quarter of 2008 (Kanyinga & Long, 2012).

Given the great impact of the election crisis, both domestic and international, former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan arrived Kenya one month after the election to lead the mediation between the two parties. After weeks of negotiation, Kibaki and Odinga signed a power-sharing agreement called the National Accord and Reconciliation Act 2008 on February 28, 2008. Under this power-sharing agreement, an official position of the Prime Minister was created, Odinga as Prime Minister, and founded a coalition government. This agreement terminated the state of emergency and foreign investors began to recommence their commitment in late 2009 (Romero, Kimenyi & Dercon, 2008).

Under Moi administration, the country's economic growth had slowed down from 4.5% between 1978 and 2001 to 0.6 % in December 2002 when Moi handed over power to his successor Mwai Kibaki. When President Kibaki come to power, economic recovery became the top priority of his national agenda. During President Kibaki tenure (2003-2007), Kenya experienced the longest period of economic growth in its modern history. It was also a period that attracted many foreign investors, such as China, to take advantage of this promising economy. President Kibaki also made the significant improvement in other areas, for instance, by the end of his first term in office, many infrastructure plans were being executed, poverty levels dropped, and HIV rate declined (Chege, 2008). However, this growth rate dropped in 2008 because of the global financial crisis, and post-election unrest and deterred foreign investment (Wallis & Manson 2011).

In 2008, the Kenyan government launched Vision 2030 development plans to achieve Kenya's Millennium Development Goals to "transform Kenya into a newly industrialized middle-income country" by 2030. Vision 2030 called for political, economic and social reforms so Kenya could reach an annual growth rate of 10% over twenty years and become an industrialized nation with a high living standard. Attracting foreign investments from other developing countries, such as China, were an important part of President Kibaki's development strategy. The expansion of infrastructure in transportation and telecommunications are two important components for Kenya to achieve the goal of Vision 2030 (Government of Kenya, 2008).

In order to improve its economic productivity, the Kenyan government recognizes the need to build and upgrade its infrastructures. Since 2004, the Kenyan government began to rebuild its road system, with a focus on the important trade routes from the coast to inland. Because of its financial difficulty, Kenya turned to international donors and institutions for its road construction and infrastructure projects. China became a major donor of such projects (Chege, 2008; Onjala, 2008).

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations, China has contributed significantly to assisting Kenya's large infrastructure projects such as upgrading the national airport, construction railways, roads, building new seaports, etc. These projects were completed quickly and cheaply with minimum bureaucracy (Chege, 2008; Onjala, 2008). These infrastructure projects not only created more employment opportunities for Kenyans, they also improve Kenya's economic performance, therefore, making Kenya a strong competitor (Chege, 2008).

In addition to the positive contributions of Chinese investment in Kenya's infrastructure projects, its companies' operation in the country's infrastructure sector generated controversy in the Kenyan media. One controversial infrastructure project is Mombasa-Kampala Railway Project; a railway project that runs from the busy port city of Mombasa, Kenya, inland to the capital Nairobi and extends onwards to Kampala, the capital of Uganda. This is an important railway network that will better integrate East African markets. The Kenyan government and Uganda signed an agreement to build a high capacity standard gauge railway within their territories. Under the agreement, each state is responsible for the cost of the construction; each government can seek joint financing from different investors. The deal was signed on October 2, 2009.

During the first two years, both Kenya and Uganda tried to find a consultant firm to conduct a feasibility study for the project. The research process was delayed by bidders' objections. Initially the Kenyan Railway Corporation (KRC) planned to reward the project to an Italian firm, Italferr SPA, however, the Ministry of Transport dismissed the process. In the end the China Road and Bridge Corporation replaced the Italian firm because the Chinese construction company convinced the Kenyan Ministry of Transport to undertake a new proposal for the railway, and to accept Chinese concessional loans (Kisero, 2011). When the Kenyan Minister of Transportation changed their plans, it did not inform its Ugandan counterparts; the Ugandan government accused both Kenya and China of making side deals. This incident shows how both the Chinese government and its companies use their power to further their own economic interests (Randall, 2010).

In addition to its heavy investment in the railway sector, the Chinese government also financed two major road projects in Kenya, the Nairobi Eastern and Northern Bypasses (Bonyo, 2010). Exim Bank, a Chinese state-owned bank, also signed a deal of Sh 16.9 billion loans to build the southern bypass road project (Mugwe, 2011). Chinese companies' involvement in Kenya's infrastructure projects has attracted criticism from local construction companies. They have expressed their anger over the increasing number of construction projects awarded to Chinese and other foreign companies. In response to this resentment, the Ministry of Transport arranged a meeting to discuss strategies to increase local construction company's chances to win more infrastructure contracts. At this meeting, Kenya's Prime Minister Raila Odinga demanded local construction companies to improve the quality of their work saying, "You have to be more competitive vis a vis the Chinese in terms of costs, quality and speed" (Reuter, 2010). Local contractors did not agree with Odinga's comment. Instead, they argued that the reason they cannot compete with foreign construction companies is because of the Kenyan government's underinvestment in the construction industry over the past years (Ibid).

Another issue that concerned the Kenyan public was the labor issue. Among them are Chinese prisoners working on Kenya's construction sites and Chinese companies bring their own workers from China. Chinese companies have been criticized for not honoring their promise to create jobs for local people. Many Western scholars have dismissed the assertion as false and proposed it is part of "China threat" narrative created by the competitors. Two of the leading scholars on this issue, Barry Sautman of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and Yan Hairong of Hong Kong Polytechnic University conducted an extensive research project to uncover these misunderstandings. After they conducted research in 10 African countries that claimed to be affected by Chinese worker imports, the researchers did not find any evidence to support such claims. They believed rumors of Chinese companies importing convicted labors to work on construction sites are due to "cultural difference in work and living habits" (2010).

Another study conducted by Sautman & Yan on localizing Chinese initiative in Africa, learned that most of the Chinese company's operations in Africa have a high percentage of local employee rates. In the study, they surveyed 75 Chinese companies in Kenya; local employees do 78% of work. The study indicates that the major dissatisfaction is in management positions, and the media's stereotypical discourse plays an important role (Sautman & Yan, 2015). The success of Chinese construction companies operating in Kenya help China to enhance its image and influence in Kenya.

Another public relations nightmare the Chinese government facing in Kenya is ivory smuggling, the poaching problem continues to damage China's image in Africa, where Chinese consumption of elephant tusks and rhino horns has driven two species ever closer to extinction. Chinese nationals smuggling ivory out of Kenya has been regularly reported in the Kenyan media (Kuo, 2017). As one of the largest illegal ivory markets of the world, China is under extreme pressure from conservation groups to shut down the illegal ivory trade. To highlight its determination to stop poaching, the Chinese government announced its "commitment to phase out legal, domestic manufacture, and sale of ivory products" to support international action against elephant poaching and illegal ivory trade in 2015 (Mathiesen, 2015). China also signed an agreement with the US government to fight poaching in Africa, the agreement "almost completely" banning ivory trade in China (Mutambo, 2016).

Facing such criticism from the Kenyan media and public regarding their presence in Kenya, the Chinese government feels the need to improve its national image in Kenya to achieve its economic and political interests in the country. To do so, China has invested heavily in its state-owned media and telecommunication companies' international expansion, the establishment of Confucius Institutes and cultural exchange programs in Kenya to articulate a favorable environment in the country. The reason that China chosen culture was as its instrument to create a favorable environment and influence the Kenyan public, was based on a belief that culture "lays a foundation of respect and tolerance by foreign actors, who, over time, may help to shape an international environment conducive to China's growth" (Li & Worm, 2011: 75). The rest of this chapter will examine the presences of Chinese media, telecommunication companies and the construction of Confucius Institutes in Kenya; how these sectors have been used by China as a means to improve its national image and enhance its influence in Kenya.

Penetration of Chinese Media and Cultural Productions in Kenya

As China's economic and trade relations with Kenya evolved, so had the Chinese media engagement in Kenya. The Chinese government's interest in expanding its media oversee is a response to the painful experience of the 2008 Beijing Olympics torch relay. Initially, China was intended to use the Olympic games as a platform to showcase its rise in a positive light (Budabin, 2011). It turned out foreign activists used the media focus on Beijing Olympic Games to condemn China's connection with Sudan and its passive stance on the Darfur crisis. Within this context, the Chinese government recognized the need to consolidate different perceptions, both domestic and global, of the country (Sun, 2010).

One specific concern that motivated China's media expansion in Africa is the narrative of China's engagement in Africa told by third-party media. Especially concerning the Western media that often depicts China's engagement as "grabbing land, extracting resources and neo-colonialism [force] in Africa" (W. Chen, 2013). The Chinese government acknowledged that its involvement in Africa is misrepresented by the third-party voices. Such misrepresentations have created a gap between public perceptions and the realities of the events. In order to narrow this gap, China should utilize its own media platforms to engage with audiences in strategically important countries. China expanding its media operations in Kenya is an example of how China uses its own media as strategic communication tools to serve multiple goals, from advancing its influence in the international community to the profit-seeking enterprise (Ibid).

Since 2009, Africa has been one of the main target destinations for Chinese media's ambitious "going out" campaign. Since the campaign launched in 2009, Chinese media engagement in Africa, especially in Kenya, has covered all media sectors and platforms. For instance, Xinhua News Agency relocated its Regional Editorial Office from Paris to Nairobi in 2006. It was the first symbolic step of Chinese state-owned media's expansion in Africa to break "the Western media monopoly" (Shambaugh, 2015).

In addition to its function as China's mouthpiece overseas, Xinhua's global expansion was also motivated by economic interest. Xinhua believes that expanding its operations in Africa would strengthen its ability to compete with the major Western news agencies, such as the Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, and Bloomberg. The aim is to become a "real world international news agency" (Shambaugh, 2015) and a multimedia conglomerate, competing with other media conglomerate such as News Corporation.

As for its economic interest, Xinhua targeted emerging markets, such as

Africa, where there is no domestic competition for international news, and where there is a limited presence of Western media. In Africa, one of the effective business strategies Xinhua employs is to offer African media outlets free or extremely low-cost news wires and photos when compared to Western news agencies (Jacob, 2012; Wu, 2012; Xin, 2009). While other African media outlets did not use of Xinhua's news wires frequently, due to those outlets standards and editorial policies, Kenyan media adopted more news images and wires from Xinhua and CNC (China Xinhua News Network Corporation World) (Jacobs, 2012). The lower cost of Xinhua news wires fit the budget of Kenyan media outlets as the news wires and photos from Western news agencies were nearly prohibitively expensive (Xin, 2009). Although Xinhua delivered an ever-increasing number of stories enhancing its public presence, African media markets were still dominated by Western news agencies (Wekesa, 2013).

Even though Kenyan media embraces Xinhua's news wires and photos, Xinhua staff's constant phones call, emails, and visits to Kenyan media newsrooms have been perceived as "overbearing". As editors at the Daily Nation noted, since its organization signed the news-sharing agreement with Xinhua, Xinhua's officials are constantly contacting the Daily Nation office to push them to publish articles and photos (Jacobs, 2012). Woka Nyagwoka, a managing editor of The Standard, also complains about the editorially bias of Xinhua's news wires. According to Nyagwoka, "Kenyans are skeptical of a free lunch, especially when it's made in China" (Ibid).

In 2011, Kenya's leading newspaper signed a partnership agreement with Xinhua. According to Eric Shimoli, a senior editor at the Daily Nation, "You would have to be blind not to notice the Chinese media's arrival in Kenya," it is an overpowering charm offensive (Jacobs, 2012). Some China experts suggest that Chinese media expansion to the East African media markets is mainly motivated by the economic incentives such as advertising revenue potential (Bergeron-Oliver 2012; Rhodes 2012). On top of pursuing a "charm offensive" agenda, the Chinese media inroad has been viewed as an investment; it is no different than other Chinese investments in Africa (Rhodes 2012).

The launch of CCTV Africa has been considered an important move in China's state-owned media's international expansion. CCTV Africa was launched in January 2012 and became the first broadcast production center outside China and the biggest "non-African TV initiative in Africa" (Gagliardone & Geall, 2014:2). The mission of CCTV Africa is to compete with other international media channels in African media markets and to expand "English and Chinese broadcasts with footage from the continent to China, Africa and the rest of the world" (Burning Spring, 2011).

The focus of CCTV Africa is mainly on news and interviews with leading newsmakers and documentaries. CCTV Africa also launched a mobile application "I Love Africa" six months after test broadcast (P. Zhang, 2012). Currently three major programs are broadcasting on CCTV Africa channel. The first is "Africa Live", a one-hour daily news program that focuses on current affairs, business, and sports. Second is "Talk Africa", a weekly half an hour talk show discussing important events of the week. Third is "Faces of Africa", a half an hour weekly program devoted to extraordinary people in African history and to everyday African who has accomplished the extraordinary (Gagliardone, 2013).

CCTV Africa is planning to extend its coverage to establishing a 24 hours African news channel concentrating on the African affairs similar to other international news channels such as France 24. CCTV Africa aims to broadcast a combination of special features programs and the routine newscast with a clear African identity. The fundamental goal of CCTV Africa is to become a great competitor to the international news channels such as CNN, BBC and Al Jazeera (Rönning, 2014).

According to Helge Rönning, professor of media and communications at the University of Oslo, CCTV Africa's approach needs to be viewed within the context of the Chinese government's media strategy for Africa that contains three major components. First, it is related to China's growing presence in Africa and the way it has been portrayed and analyzed by the Western media over the past decades. China's business and political engagement on the continent have been critically reported and analyzed in both international and African media. Often, there is negative media coverage about Chinese companies' business practices and labor relations in African states. Within this context, the Chinese government felt the need to establish the alternative image of its engagement in Africa to advance its investments and other interests (Rönning, 2014).

The second aspect is the Chinese government's attempt to offer an alternative style of journalism to counter Western-dominant international media's negative coverage of the continent that often focused on famine, poverty, conflicts, and war. Although it is impossible to avoid conflicts in journalism, the studies conducted by Western media scholars uncovered that coverage of Africa has been tilted towards the negative and with clear Western perceptive (Rönning, 2014). CCTV applies a different approach to journalism. Chinese media are trying to provide a "positive reporting," a style of journalism that "focuses on collective achievements rather than divisive issues like political crisis or sensational negative news like famines" to Africa to prevent critical political investigation (Verhoeven & Gagliardone, 2012). Even though Chinese media's method may be understood as a new method of reporting African stories, it also raises concerns regarding Chinese style of journalism. It has been seen as holding journalists back from reporting the real issues and problems (Rönning, 2014).

The third perspective is about the journalism practiced by CCTV Africa as a way of testing different journalistic standards and practices than those traditional ones coming out of Beijing (Gagliardone, 2013). CCTV Africa has been used as a journalistic laboratory for trying out new methods of news dissemination with a Chinese viewpoint. If this is the case, Rönning notes, “it also represents a challenge in the struggle over how to understand not only Chinese but also other countries’ interests in African markets and economies” (2014:32).

Unlike other western media organizations downsizing their operations and not employing many foreign correspondents on the African ground, Chinese media, CCTV in particular, receive vast financial support from its central government (Shek, 2013). The Chinese government’s funding allows CCTV Africa to commission Africa 24 Media and many other local Kenyan media houses, to produce segments for the “Faces of Africa” (Wekesa, 2013). Moreover, there was enthusiasm within Kenyan journalistic circles when CCTV Africa announced its recruitment plans to employ highly competent African journalists and reporters. In its inception, CCTV Africa recruited more than 100 employees working for its Nairobi office. The majority of those employees were African journalists and news anchors from local television, and about 30 to 40 Chinese journalists and technicians. Losing talented journalists, anchors, and media professionals caused negative effects on local television station’s rating and advertising revenue. In order to complete with CCTV Africa, local broadcasters began a process of reform to enhance their position in a highly competitive media market (Bergeron-Oliver 2012).

Although CCTV's African expansion has caused some negative consequences to the Kenyan media outlets, its entry had a positive impact on local media professionals. On one hand, it offers alternative job opportunities for well-trained and talented native broadcast journalists. On the other hand, television stations that lose talented journalists to the Chinese need to recruit talent from other radio or television stations or hire unemployed media professionals, as a result, it creates more job opportunities (Rönning, 2014). Many media scholars agreed that localization of news production, such as hiring African reporters and anchors, is an effective way to win the hearts and minds of the African people (Wekesa 2013; Gagliardone 2013).

Perhaps it is too early to assess CCTV penetration in the African news market because it takes a time to build a stable audience base. Some studies conducted by the Kenyan research institutes indicate that from April to June 2013, CCTV Africa had not reached any significant audience in Kenya. CCTV Africa was not among the top ten most popular channels list, indeed, its lowest rating commanded only 1 percent viewer base. However, there may be a sense of relief for CCTV Africa because none of the other international news channels are on the list (Rönning, 2014). Furthermore, only a few studies have been conducted that focused the issue of Kenyans' perception of CCTV in Africa. One of the studies indicated that only a small group of audiences who have access to the channel found it attractive (Gorfinkel, Joffe, Van Staden, & Wu, 2014). Again, it may be too early to determine whether African audiences view CCTV Africa as a critical news source for the understanding of Sino-African relations or global affairs. One thing is for sure, the competition for viewership and for cultural and ideological influence in the area of a broadcaster is intense in the Kenyan media market (Rönning, 2014).

CCTV Africa is an important example of Chinese media penetration in Africa. Its major task is to enter the African media landscape to offer and disseminate a

Chinese perspective of Africa and international politics. The key challenge of Chinese media's African operation is the practice of censorship by the Chinese government and media's self-censorship. The successes of CCTV penetration in the Kenyan news media will depend on its capacity to provide Africans with objective and reliable content (Rönning, 2014).

China Daily, the largest English-language in China, is another Chinese state-owned media company that expanded its operation in the African countries. In December 2012, China Daily opened new news bureaus in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Nairobi, Kenya and chose to locate its lead editorial office in Nairobi. It also launched an Africa Weekly edition at the same time, with the goal of enhancing China's influence over local power elites, opinion leaders, and the urban middle-class across the African continent (Shi, 2015). The function of the China Daily in Africa, like other Chinese state media operations in Africa, is to promote China's interests in Africa. In order to achieve this agenda, it is necessary to build the favorable national image of China and to improve the African readers understanding of China because China's presence in Africa has created tensions between Chinese investors and local citizens. Therefore, the Chinese government and companies need the channel to tell their side of the story. Indeed, they have already used the *China Daily* to communicate with the African public; a weekly publication gives them a regular presence on the street corners (Green, 2012).

African Weekly is available in print and digital format, and as an application with video content. China Daily partners with the Kenyan's private media group, Nation Media Group, the largest media group in East and Central Africa, to print and distribute the weekly China Daily Africa Daily. This deal helps NMG to boost its profits (Wekesa, 2013). The hard copies of the China Daily are available on newsstands in Nairobi area together with other Kenyan major newspapers such as the Daily Nation and The Standard.

China Radio International (CRI), China's major state-owned radio station, was established in 1941 with an objective to function as an international broadcaster with programming that simply broadcasted the CCP leaders' announcements (Kurlantzick, 2007). It is the only Chinese state-owned radio station authorized to broadcast to the overseas audience. CRI's first English broadcast was in 1947 to target overseas listeners (Kenichi, 2011). The transformation of CRI began when Deng introduced the economic reforms and Open-door policy in the late 1970s. Like other state-owned media in China, the economic reforms and open-door policy shifted CRI's priority from an ideological struggle to economic development (Sun, 2010). After China joined the WTO, its communication strategy has changed from pure propaganda towards a public relation strategy. A key component of this strategy is the global expansion of Chinese state-owned media under the "going out" policy that aims to enhance China's cultural influence globally. The main objective of Chinese media's international expansion is to win international public opinion and build a favorable environment for China's rise, especially after the public relations disaster of the Beijing Olympic Games (Chen, Colapinto, & Luo, 2010).

In March 2006 CRI officially launched its first international FM station in Nairobi. CRI Nairobi FM station offers 19 hours programming daily in English, Mandarin, and Kiswahili. It estimated that it had about two million listeners in the capitals of the East African countries. CRI programs cover topics on China's economic, social and cultural development, China's cooperation with African states, and major events around the world. The mission of CRI's FM station in Nairobi is "to promote mutual understanding and friendship between the Chinese and Kenyan people", and to offer "the best programs to meet Kenyan listeners' needs", CRI director Wang Gengnian stated during the launching ceremony (China Daily, 2006).

In 2009, CRI formed a partnership with the Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation and other local stations and added six new languages to its broadcasts. Eastern African governments, especially the Kenyan government, offered their airwaves to Chinese media such as CRI to air their programs. Critics criticized local governments for indirectly providing a platform for the Chinese government to an extend its cultural influence (Jacobs, 2012). The cooperation with local radio stations and the governments not only helped CRI gain a larger listenership in the region, but also promoted understanding between China and African countries because African people have more access to China-related stories (Banda, 2009).

StarTimes is a privately owned enterprise founded in Beijing in 1988. It represents one of the most successful stories of Chinese media's expansion in Africa. In the beginning, StarTimes was focused on domestic broadcasting; however, it soon became "the largest digital television integrator, technology provider and network operator in China" (Rönning, 2014:24). StarTimes began its African operation in 2002 with an attempt to establish the company as a key international player. In 2007, StarTimes founded a company called Star Africa Media Co. Ltd. in Rwanda that specialized in digital terrestrial television (DTT).

The company benefited greatly from the television signal migration from analog to digital. During the digital migration process, StarTimes employed different business strategies, such as offering cheaper set-boxes, and signed agreements with African governments and public broadcasters to obtain digital migration contracts. Currently, StarTimes is doing business with 23 African countries and has network operations in 12 of these states. In the case of Kenya, StarTimes has succeeded to place itself in the leading position by offering cheaper subscription fees; cutting deals with the Kenyan government, and partnered with Kenyan public broadcasters (Rönning, 2016).

The International Telecommunication Union's digital migration agreement has changed the Kenyan media landscape dramatically. At an international conference convinced in Geneva, Switzerland in 2006, the ITU members signed an agreement to switch from analog to digital broadcasting signals by June 17, 2015. The purpose for changing broadcasting signals from analog to digital is to bridge the gap of the "digital divide". The "digital divide" is the gap that exists between privileged people who have access to information and digital technology, and those who have limited to no access to information and digital technology. By converting to digital signals, it is believed that the quality of life will advance for citizens, not only of Kenya, but also other parts of the world. Many believe that an informed public is more likely to contribute to the economic development in any society than an uninformed public. Other benefits of the digitalization of broadcasting include advancements in technology that make it possible to integrate with various types of network communications, enriching audience's experience, and improving the quantity and quality of programs (Ochieng, 2015).

Even though the deadline the ITU sets for digital migration is 2015, there is no guarantee that all the nations can complete the transition before the agreed date. Kenya commenced its digital migration in December 2009 and set to switch off analog signals and complete migration process by June 2012. The migration project was incorporated into the Vision 2030 program. The migration process led to great changes and has resulted in significant challenges to the government, local media houses, and the ordinary media consumers (Biwott, 2015).

The process of migration from analog broadcasting to digital broadcasting is quite comprehensive. It requires a substantial amount of capital in its preparation and operation. This process brought various challenges for all the players involved. One of the challenges for Kenyan government is the citizens' understanding of digital migration program and the associated benefits. In other words, to educate the public on the meaning and technical issues of digital broadcasting, and to convince the public that it is necessary for them to invest in digital equipment in order to enjoy the benefits of digitalization (Biwott, 2015). According to a Daily Nation report, many citizens were not aware of the necessities of a digital platform and the benefits of digitalization of broadcasting (Musa, 2014). Despite the lack of knowledge of digital migration, affordability is another major obstacle for the transition. In Kenya, huge numbers of people are living below the poverty line. Indeed, the majority of Kenyan citizens cannot afford to purchase the necessary digital broadcasting equipment (Agwata, 2015; Nyabuga, et al., 2013). This is one of the reasons local media houses used to protest against the government's decision to switch off the analog signals (Agwata, 2015).

Kenyan media houses also faced critical challenges during the migration process. They faced unfair distribution or allocation of broadcast signal distribution licenses. Most of the Kenyan media houses supported digital migration program until they learned that only limited Broadcast Signal Distribution licenses (BSD) were offered. The first signal distribution license was granted to Signet, a subsidiary of the Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), in 2009. Since Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) gave Signet, owned by the Kenyan government, the first BSD license, it received harsh criticism from local media houses because they believed Signet received preferential treatment from the government (Sihanya, 2012).

On the same note, critics also argue that this unfair BSD bidding process negatively affected the media market because it compromised the principle of private competition (Ochieng, 2015). Based on their study of the Kenyan media, Peter Oriare, Rosemary Okello, and Wilson Uganda found that the Kenyan government has granted many broadcast licenses to individuals and organizations whose identity remained a secret (2010).

After what Kenyan media houses indicated as biased procurement processes, the Communication Authority of Kenya (CA) issued second BSD license to Pan Africa Network Group-Kenya (PANG) and the African Digital Network Consortium (ADN) made up of local broadcasters, the Nation Media Group, Royal Media the owner of NTV and Citizen TV, and QTV (Asuelaa, 2016). ADN's BSD license was granted after local media houses challenged the legitimacy of the result of BSD license bidding in the high court. Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) granted a BSD license to local broadcasters, under a condition that requires them to form a consortium. ADN rewarded a BSD license on November 26, 2014. However, the license was suspended on January 21, 2015, on grounds of misleading advertisements broadcasted by three media houses against customers purchasing GOtv and StarTimes Set Top Boxes (STBs) (Wahito, 2015). The suspension was lifted on February 13, 2014, the same day the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK) ordered that all analog signals must be terminated by midnight (Ochieng, 2015).

In Kenya, the process of digital migration sparked controversy and a series of high-profile court battles. The Chinese company, PANG, owns StarTimes TV and is the only company that has a license to distribute media content. This is the center of Kenya's digital broadcasting signal distribution controversy. The Kenyan government's decision to give a Chinese company a sole license to distribute media content in Kenya has led to a bitter war in court between the Kenyan government, the Communications Authority of Kenya (CAK), and the three leading media houses (National Media Group, the Standard Group, and the Royal Media Service). These three leading media houses "were eventually shut out of the Broadcast Signal Distributors (BSD) procurement process. They then lost the appeal to the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board (PPARB) and to their chagrin, the Communications Authority of Kenya authorized their rivals to carry their content without their consent" (Wachira, 2015). After several lost court battles at Kenya's Supreme Court, the three leading broadcasters (Nation TV, Kenya Television Network, and Citizen) were forced the off air on February 14, 2015 by the CAK after the digital migration deadline passed. The only local news choice for Kenyans was the Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) and President Kenyatta family's K24TV (Ibid).

After they lost their BSD license bids, the media houses challenged the Kenyan government and argued the CCK should not grant media content distribution rights to a foreign company, especially a company from a country that does not have the free press and has a long history of suppressing media freedom and freedom of expression. What is troubling these media houses is that the Chinese companies have been granted too much space in the local media market, especially in the process of the digital migration. Critics worry that the dominance of Chinese companies in Kenya's digital migration process could be utilized to suppress freedom of press. They argued that it is not a common practice to allow foreigners to have such a huge share in media ownership in other nations. PANG was awarded 120 frequencies out of the existing 211 frequencies that are close to 60 percent of national digital spectrum. For perspective, the KBC's affiliate Signer was allocated 54 frequencies, and the AND consortium was granted only 21 frequencies (Ohito, 2015). The AND consortium frequencies were withdrawn after they ran "misleading and illegal infomercials" that alleged StarTimes and GOtv illegally broadcasted their content, therefore, violating copyright (Mwenesi, 2015).

The local broadcasters also challenged the credibility of PANG. They argued that PANG has no experience in Kenya and only registered in Kenya a week before the BSD license bidding was opened. They claimed the government should have issued the second license to local companies to promote local businesses instead of issuing lucrative media contracts to Chinese companies. Most importantly, the local media houses argued that unlike the Chinese company who needed to build new infrastructure, they already have the infrastructure. In response, the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) stated that the three local broadcasters ignored the fact that digital broadcasting infrastructure will soon replace the existing analog broadcasting infrastructure, thus, anyone who won the bid will need to build new infrastructure to distribute digital signals (Wanjiku, 2011).

What concerns the Kenyan critics is that Chinese who have never been known for supporting freedom of press at home, is now gaining the opportunity to control Kenya's television channels. They argued, air frequencies are national resources and should remain in the hands of Kenyans, not controlled by the foreign company. They viewed the tendering processes, in which local broadcaster lost due to poor technical details, as biased, unfair and lacked transparency and accountability. Like SK Macharia, chairman of Royal Media Services recalled how the local media houses lost in the digital distribution tendering in the process, “As it stands, only StarTimes will be able to broadcast to all parts of Kenya with the preferential allocation of many frequencies. It is not comprehensible why the government would want to give Chinese this chance and deny Kenyan investors or even KBC such as reach" Macharia said. "This is a scheme that reflects the frustration of locals as the government converts Kenya into a compulsory pay TV society dominated by Chinese profiteers targeting the middle-class who are able to pay and watch and black out the rest of the people who are poor and cannot afford monthly subscription costs" (Macharia, cited in Ohito, 2015).

As discussed above, StarTimes, the newest player in the Kenya television market, has benefited greatly from Kenya's migration from analog to digital television broadcasting. It emerged as one of the leading companies in the market by providing affordable services and cheap set-top boxes. During the launch of StarTimes in Kenya Leo Lee, the chief executive officer of StarTimes Media Kenya, stressed that the aim of the company is "to meet the needs of varied subscribers who have not been able to access pay television in Kenyan and handle competition, we are going to offer low monthly subscription fees for our content" (cited in Itosno, 2012).

Despite employing a lower price marketing strategy, other factors also helped StarTimes' penetration in the Kenyan media market. StarTimes' ability to negotiate deals with ministers of communications, telecommunication regulators, and powerful political brokers in Africa helped the company to become an important power player in the digital migration process in most African countries. StarTimes are often criticized for making opaque deals with local governments and taking over the local broadcasters in African countries (Kisero, 2015).

Though StarTimes is a private company, its African operations are also supported by the Chinese government as a "Cultural Exports Key Enterprise," and are authorized by the Minister of Commerce to participate international media projects.

The most important advantage that StarTimes has is the significant financial assistance from the institutions such as the Export-Import Bank of China (China Exim Bank) and the China-Africa Development Fund, the second largest stockholders in the StarTimes, to help the company expand its operations in Africa. While many African state broadcasters are facing financial troubles and struggle to compete with other international players, China Exim Bank and China-Africa Development Fund are offering huge of loans for StarTimes' African operations. Thus far, China-Africa Development Fund has offered \$220 million to StarTimes' African operations (Olingo, 2014; Rönning, 2016).

As part of localization plans, StarTimes announced on July 14, 2014, that the company plans to build a Sh6.9 billion new Kenyan headquarters and broadcasting center in the Nairobi suburb of Karen. This broadcasting center will produce both television and film programs and increase the airing of Chinese soap operas in Kenya and other African countries. This 20,000 square meter center serves as production studios and distribution center in African countries. It will also employ local talent to produce cultural materials and to construct the building. StarTimes' extension plan was a response to the Kenyan government's plan to increase the local content share for broadcasters from 40 percent to 60 percent. One of the major tasks of the center would be to dub its content in African languages. It would also set up a digital television research center, development unit, and a training facility. The ultimate goal of the center is to increase local content and meet the demands of the African audiences (Ochieng, 2014), as well as to introduce more Chinese programs to African audiences, an objective also emphasized at the launch of the Beijing Television Series Exhibition the same year in Nairobi. The goals of the exhibition were to enhance cultural exchange between China and African states and to promote Chinese television drama, films and documentaries to African media and audiences. The selected programs were expected to air in Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, and Nigeria from July to the end of 2014 on StarTimes' channels dubbed in English. In order to meet African audiences' demands of Chinese television programs and films, StarTimes has set up a professional dubbing team in 2011. By 2013, StarTimes had dubbed over 900 episodes of Chinese television series and over 40 Chinese films and documentaries (Mutegi, 2014).

According to Rönning, the marketing strategies of StarTimes in Africa can be analyzed by the following method. First, when StarTimes entries an African media market, the company will partner with local broadcasters and often in minority situation. The business started by offering cheap subscriptions and set-top-boxes to enable more African consumer to access higher-quality digital television and more channels than the existing analog broadcasting providers. While the company executes its lower price marketing strategy, StarTimes also negotiates with local public broadcasters and governments with an attempt to acquire the BSD license before the deadline of the switching off of analog signals. Thus far, this business model has produced profitable results for the company's African operations (2014).

StarTimes represents an example of how economic power can be used to achieve China's economic interests and national agenda in Africa. Financial support from the China Exim Bank and China-Africa Development Fund enabled StarTimes to set up a national infrastructure for digital transmission and offer lower service fees to attract more subscribers. The digital migration process provided an opportunity for Chinese companies to foster strong partnerships with local broadcasters to introduce Chinese media content to Kenyan audiences. StarTimes' African operations have been viewed as an important component of Chinese media international expansion.

Serving as a channel for Chinese media, StarTimes has great ideological and symbolic power to help its government to enhance its cultural influence in Kenya.

An important objective of China's "Going out" campaign is to enhance the competitiveness of Chinese companies through their investments and operations overseas and to explore overseas markets for their products and services (Dumbaugh, 2008). The telecommunications sector is one of the important parts of "Going out" campaign. Along with the Chinese media's huge investment in Africa, Chinese telecommunications companies are heavily engaged both "in the production of content meaning and in the infrastructure on which African information is being built" (Gagliardone & Geall, 2014: 3). The Chinese government believes that "social and mobile media development will pave the way for increased interaction and engagement between Chinese media outlets and local communities in Africa" (Shi, 2015:138). The success of Chinese telecom companies' operations will also enhance China's international status and counter Western influence in Africa (Executive Research Associates, 2009).

Since the 1990s, many African governments recognized that the telecommunication industry is an important sector for economic development because the industry is closely linked to services trade, the most vibrant component of the international trading system. In order to modernize and boost their economy, many African countries, including Kenya, began a process to loosen the telecom policies to develop and modernize their telecom sector. The liberation of telecommunication has made the African telecom industry attractive to overseas investors, like Huawei and ZTE (Berg & Hamilton, 2001).

Huawei, the leading Chinese telecommunication company, has successfully operated in the African telecommunication market, the world's fastest-growing telecommunication markets for telecom investors (Thussu, 2016). Since Huawei started its African operations in 1997 in Kenya, the company has invested billions in the African telecommunications sector and heavily involved in building towers, fiber optics and cell phone networks (Gagliardone & Geall, 2014: 3). In 2012, it has become the biggest telecommunications equipment provider in African (The Economist, 2012). Currently, China is the biggest provider of telecom equipment and service in the African continent (Wekesa, 2016) and Huawei is one of the powerful players dominating the African telecommunication markets (A. Li, 2016).

Huawei is one of the Chinese private companies that have been successfully expanding its operations in Africa, including Kenya. According to Anshan Li, Director of Center for African Studies at Peking University, Huawei's global corporate social responsibility programs played an important role in its success in Africa (A. Li, 2016). Since the beginning of its African operations in the 1990s, Huawei has paid special attention to inform the African public that the company is operating in a socially responsible manner on the continent (Lu & Li, 2011).

Huawei is proud of its contributions to the ICT development of the African community. In Kenya and other African countries, its mission is to accelerate ICT development in the host country (Xinhua, 2016). In order to achieve this objective, Huawei employed different business strategies, such as offering technical training to local engineers, to its African customers and donated educational communication equipment to local schools. Huawei's training programs not only help improve the local economy by creating more jobs and localized management, but also contribute to local communities' sustainable development. Huawei also contributes to the development of ICT education in African countries by donating computers and funding to schools and offering college scholarships to local engineering students.

The underlying principle of Huawei's engagement in the local community is the notion that these programs will help economic development in African nations. Apparently, Huawei's corporate philosophy on social responsibility in Africa reflects China's vision of co-development that strengthens Sino-African relations. Huawei's success and its contributions to technological development in Africa built a favorable corporate image in local communities and potential partners. The company's positive contribution also enhanced China's image and influence in African countries (C. Chang et al, 2009; Lu & Li, 2011).

To help African countries to enhance their ICT skills and development, Huawei developed a program called the "Telecom Seeds for the Future" to help train local ICT engineers to, "transfer knowledge, promote a greater understanding of, and interest in, the telecommunications sector and encourage regional building and participation on the digital community" (Huawei, 2013). In Kenya, the "Telecom Seeds for the Future" initiative was launched in June 2011 through a partnership with three leading Kenyan universities, Moi University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, and the University of Nairobi, and Safaricom Ltd. Under the agreement, Huawei provided modern ICT skills to the engineering students from these universities to meet the current industry standard. Huawei also provided the latest ICT technologies training at its Nairobi training center (Marks, 2011).

In 2013, Huawei signed an agreement with Kenya's SlumCode Group, a non-profit organization founded by local young people. The objectives of SlumCode Group is to encourage technological innovation, to develop tech capabilities among Kenya's youth, and to bridge the digital divide gap between disadvantaged groups in the country. Under an agreement, Huawei provided training programs for Kenya's youth who are "underprivileged but innovative and creative" (Nalika, 2013). In 2014, Huawei signed a three-year partnership agreement with Kenya’s ICT Authority to promote ICT literacy and awareness and enhance ICT skill development in Kenya. In this partnership agreement, Huawei promised to offer a total 100 internship opportunities to top engineering students from Kenyan universities between 2014 and 2016. The top 10 students were given an opportunity to travel to China to further develop their professional and practical skills in technology. In addition, regular workshops were set up in an effort to teach different local groups about modern technology and how can benefit them (Buba, 2014). Huawei’s Nairobi training center also provided training courses for their clients. At this training facility, Kenyan engineers did the majority of the training, the Chinese specialist taught very few training courses. Over the years, Huawei contributed over Kshs160 million to programs such as the “Telecom Seeds for the future” in Kenya (PC Tech, 2014).

Thus far, Chinese telecom companies’ investments in Kenya have contributed to Kenya’s ICT development at various levels, such as technology and skills transfer. They have a positive influence on job creation, human capital development, and corporate social responsibility in Kenya by creating employment, training facilities, and offering low-cost equipment and products to Kenya's telecom market. Moreover, with the presence of Chinese telecom companies in Kenya, its citizens are benefiting from up-to-date technologies and faster customer services at affordable prices. The skills and technologies transfer from Huawei’s training center benefit from local network providers and staff members. The collaborations and partnerships with Kenya’s telecom companies and ICT authority have contributed to Kenya’s development in many ways. The establishment of telecom networks and equipment by Chinese companies has assisted Kenya in modernizing its telecom technology. Additionally, the widespread telecom network coverage contributed to the country’s transmission technology innovations. Thus, Chinese telecom companies are playing an important role in expanding the telecom infrastructure in Kenya.

Although Chinese telecom companies have brought opportunities to Kenya and helped its ICT development, the Chinese companies' presence in Kenya raised many concerns. Chinese investments in Kenya have always lacked transparency. For instance, state-owned Telkom Kenya awarded a wireless network contract to expand its CDMA wireless network to Huawei without public tender. By law, this project needed to be put out for public tender because of Telkom Kenya's state-owned status. Instead, the Kenyan government quietly and exclusively awarded the contract to Huawei (Malakata, 2011). Another problem that concerns the Kenyan critics is that the Chinese telecom companies are buying politicians to achieve their agenda. In 2010, Safaricom purchased equipment from Huawei, and Huawei only delivered half of the equipment promised in the contract. This situation forced Safaricom to cancel the contract. After the contract had been canceled, Michael Joseph the CEO of Safaricom, received multiple phone calls from different Kenyan ministers and members of parliament lobbying on behalf of Huawei (Marshall, 2011).

All of Chinese telecom companies' engagements with the Kenyan communities are based on the notion that those corporate engagements will help Kenya speed up its economic development and sustain China's long-term economic and political interests in the country. In other words, Huawei and other Chinese telecom companies' success and their contributions to ICT development in Africa, and Kenya in particular, not only help the companies establish a favorable corporate image in the eyes of local consumers and partners, but also help to promote China's international image and enhance its influence in Africa (C. Chang et al, 2009; Lu & Li, 2011).

The Confucius Institutes in Kenya

The Confucius Institutes are another key component in Sino-Kenyan cultural cooperation. The objectives of the Confucius Institutes are to promote Chinese language and culture to help Kenyans gain a better understanding of China. They are important platforms for the Chinese government to "present a kinder and gentler image of China to the outside world" to counter the Western media's negative representation of the country (Gill & Huang, 2006:18). In other words, Confucius Institutes play an important role in enhancing China's cultural influence and are designed to foster international cooperation and to advance China's relations with other countries (Wheeler, 2014).

In Africa, the first Confucius Institute was established in Kenya at the University of Nairobi in 2005. Because of the success of the first Confucius Institute in Kenya, the Confucius Institute has been greatly welcomed by its host country. Since then, the number of the Confucius Institute grew rapidly around the Africa. By the end of 2015, there were 46 Confucius Institutes and 23 Confucius Classrooms across the continent, including four Confucius Institutes in four universities in Kenya (Hanban, 2017).

As China's economic and political engagement in Kenya increases so does its ability to shape the images and perceptions of China (Starr, 2009). Over the past years, both China and Kenya are keenly engaging in cultural collaboration to promote a mutual understanding between Chinese and Kenyans. The Chinese leaders believe that language and other forms of Chinese cultures are the effective tools to win the hearts and minds of Kenyan people and cultivate a favorable image among the Kenyan public. The Kenyan government sees the Chinese language as a professional tool, by learning to speak Mandarin and learning Chinese culture, Kenyan students will obtain a certain professional skill in order to get jobs and participate in a competitive market. In other words, Kenyan leaders assume that there is a direct connection between the having the skill to speak Mandarin and opportunities for social and economic development. Moreover, learning Mandarin will help Kenyan students engage with Chinese people and companies in Kenya, and give their students a competitive edge in the job market and will ultimately lead to the growth of the country's economy (Hartig, 2011; M.W. Lai, 2012).

Against this background, China and Kenya signed an MOU agreement in June 2004 to set up a Confucius Institute at the University of Nairobi. The Confucius Institute at the University of Nairobi officially launched in December 2005. It was a collaboration between China's Tianjin Normal University and College of Humanities and Social Science of the University of Nairobi. Since its inception in 2005, with strong financial support from the Chinese government, Confucius Institute at the University of Nairobi has the capacity to build the finest Chinese language laboratory with high-quality equipment, a library, and can offer different levels of Chinese language and culture programs. As one of the most developed Confucius Institutes in Africa, the Confucius Institute at the University of Nairobi not only offers language and culture programs, but it also functions as teaching resources for other local Chinese schools. Due to increasingly close economic relations and personal exchanges between the two nations, the number of students and the size of classes at Confucius Institute at the University of Nairobi grew. More and more Kenyans wanted to learn the Chinese language so that they could seek development opportunities in the future (Wheeler, 2014). In June 2016, China invested $20 million in the University of Nairobi's Confucius Institute to construct a complex to host lecture halls, offices, and a student dormitory. This project is one of the largest

Chinese education investments in Africa and the biggest in any Kenyan university (Business Daily, 2016).

Due to the increase in bilateral trade and an increase in Chinese companies' presence in Kenya, the demand and interest in Chinese language and culture merited a second Confucius Institute that was launched at Kenyatta University, through a jointed collaboration between China's Shandong Normal University and Kenyatta University in 2010. The institute provides free one-year certificate courses to any students who are interested in learning the Chinese. The programs have been welcomed by students, local businesspersons, and tour operators who took the opportunity to enhance their professional skills (Xinhua, 2010). The Kenyan leaders hope that learning Chinese will open opportunities for Kenya's tourism industry. If many Kenyans can speak Chinese, then they can provide travel services for tourists from China. Thus, the language courses offered by the Confucius Institutes are an incentive for a boost in tourism from China. In order to boost the country's tourism industry, the Kenyan government asked the Chinese government to encourage its citizens to visit Kenya to help boost Kenya's tourism industry (Wheeler, 2014).

In 2014, the Chinese government partnered with Egerton University to launch its third Confucius in Nakuru, Kenya. The establishment of the Confucius Institute at Egerton University was also part of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of diplomatic relations between the two countries (Damary, 2013). Unlike the Confucius Institutes at the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University, the Confucius Institute at Egerton University not only offered language and culture lessons and scholarship opportunities, it also offered agricultural training and research to local students and community members (Mwangi, 2014).

In March 2015, China launched fourth Confucius Institute in Kenya's western region at the Moi University. The Institute is the Shanghai-based Donghua University's collaboration with Moi University. It was the first Confucius Institute featuring the textile and fashion design course, as Donghua University is famous for its expertise in textile and costume design. Moreover, the Confucius Institute at the Moi University to help train students and local professionals skilled in textile design and trade. As Zhu Min, the chairman of the Donghua University Council said at the launching ceremony, "The institute will help the local textile and costume design industries to learn about China's textile technologies and experience. Donghua University will organize professors specializing in textile and costume to give lessons at the Confucius Institute" (N. Wu, 2015). Chinese counselor Yao Ming attended the ceremony, saying that he hoped that this institute would be an example for future Sino-Kenya industrial collaboration, to provide a platform to promote cultural and people-to-people exchange between China and Kenya (Mo, 2015).

Since the launch of the first Confucius Institute in Nairobi, the Confucius Institutes in Kenya have made an important contribution to strengthen cultural and economic connections between China and Kenya. Through the special courses they offered, Kenya's Confucius Institutes accelerated educational and cultural exchanges, smoothed trade cooperation, and strengthened the friendship between the two countries. However, there are concerns of some university faculty and administrators about the study of Chinese language and culture in Kenya. One of the concerns is that the teaching of foreign language, including English and Chinese, received from the Kenyan government is places the indigenous language speakers at a disadvantage. The Chinese government subsidized Institutions operating in Kenya public universities without the critical oversight of the host university administrators is another issue they was concerned with (Wheeler, 2014).

CHAPTER 5

MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF CHINA IN KENYAN MEDIA

China has ascended as a major power player in the international community. However, its rises to power in the twenty-first century surprised and provoked significant media attention around the world. The emergence of China as a great power is under the scrutiny of both the Western nations and their media (Ding, 2011). Some commentators portrayed China's rise in a positive light, while others painted the same stories in the cynical ways, and perceived China as "harmful" and a threat to global stability (Deng, 2006). A similar situation occurred when Sino-African relations intensified, the international community began to be concerned about China's growing interests and presence on in Africa. Proponents view China's investment in Africa as a partnership both parties are benefiting from. Critics have accused the Chinese of pursuing a neo-colonialist policy in the continent (Large, 2008).

Since the 1990s, The Chinese government acknowledged the importance of building up a favorable image in its foreign relations. Over the past years, the Chinese government has invested a huge amount of resources to improve its international communication capacity. The previous chapter reviewed China's tremendous efforts to enhance its influence in Kenya by intensifying its media and cultural cooperation in the country. The Chinese media's global expansion was the Chinese government's effort to dismiss neocolonialist criticism, to improve its international image and to enhance its influence in Africa. Although these initiatives might lay a solid foundation for China to enhance its image in Africa, they do not automatically translate into favorable perceptions. The aim of this chapter is to examine the Kenyan media's coverage on China's engagement in the country and to gain an understanding of how China has been perceived in the Kenyan media. Whether that perception is that China's involvement has been depicted in a positive light and that both parties benefit from its partnership, or in negative lens that portrays China as a neo-colonialist whose presence is to exploit Kenya's resources.

Regardless of the introduction of modern technology, the majority of people in the world have limited personal contact or information with other countries and people. Therefore, individuals depend on the media to provide them with information about foreign countries (Potter & Baum, 2016). The social and political reality of a society is often constructed by the mass media, especially in a setting that is "out of reach, out of sight, out of mind" (Lippmann, 1922:21). In other words, "it is based largely on journalism that we make up our national mind" (Zelizer & Allen, 2002:1). The mass media can contribute to people's perception or misperception of each other's nations and have a significant impact on the relations between countries. Mass media also can be viewed as "society centric" that reflects the economic and political forces of a society (McQuail, 2010). The way the media frames issues and events certainly can influence or change the meaning people received (McQuail, 2010). It is within this context that the Kenyan news media's coverage of China's engagement in the Kenya is analyzed. To put the analysis of the Kenyan media coverage of Chinese presence in the country into perspective, this chapter starts with a summary of China's image both globally and in Africa. Followed a brief review of the media development in Kenya.

The Images of China

China's engagement with Africa has been under scrutiny from African media over the past years. Stories reported by the African media about the Chinese involvement in African countries have created a mixture of positive and negative perceptions of China. Proponents view China's engagement with Africa as a "win-win" relationship, where China acquires natural resources for its growing economy and finds new markets for its manufactured goods, while African countries need China's assistance for their socio-economic development (Carmody, 2011; Fergus, 2013; Kofi, 2014). Other observers suggested that China offers an alternative to Western hegemony in Africa. Traditional Western power players are being challenged by China because most of the African governments found China's non-interference approach to be more appealing than Western countries' "good governance" agenda (Alden & Davies, 2006).

Sino-African relations do not hold a favorable, positive image in most of the Western media. China's increasing interest in importing natural resources from Africa has been depicted by Western media and critics as "the new scramble for Africa" (Carmody, 2011). Critics are skeptical about China's motivation. One accusation is that the Chinese government uses aid to receive special treatments from corrupt African leaders (Power & Mohan, 2008). Their concern is that China's engagement in Africa is motivated primarily by economic interests (Carmody & Taylor, 2009; Infed, 2014).

Perceptions of China in Africa

Several studies indicated that the majority of Africans perceived China in a positive light unlike Western media's depiction of the Chinese presence in Africa

(Rebol, 2010; Rossouw et al., 2014). Based on the findings of his study on South African media's coverage of China, Herman Wasserman dismissed binary notions of China's presence in Africa, either an exploitative, predatory force or a benevolent development partner. Wasserman found that the coverage of South African media presented a more balanced perception of the Chinese presence. It was neither plainly positive nor plainly negative but cautiously optimistic. The findings of Wasserman's study showed a balanced representation among positive, negative and neutral (Wasserman, 2012).

Kitta Hirvensaloor in a comparative research of media coverage of Chinese aid and cooperation with Africa found a similar pattern. The study identified a pattern of increasing bias in both the Chinese and Western news coverage. The tone of the Chinese media was overwhelmingly positive, while the Western media news coverage portrayed a negative bias in Sino-African cooperation, and African media's coverage was neutral (Hirvensaloor, 2012).

In his study "The Role of China in the Portuguese Speaking African Countries: The Case of Mozambique", Fernanda Ilhéu argues that even though there are problems, such as the illegal cutting and exporting timber, that arose from in China's engagement Mozambique, both the people and government welcomed the Chinese presence. Ilheu's findings indicated that these illegal activities did not alter the positive perceptions of China's engagement and the mutual collaboration between the two nations was viewed as mutually beneficial (2010).

A study conducted by Fei-Ling Wang and Esi A. Elliot analyzed the perception of eight sub-Saharan African countries of China's involvement in Africa, including Kenya. The study found diverse African perceptions about China's presence and Chinese business activities (F. Wang & Elliot, 2014). According to the researchers, there is a contrasting perception about China's presence in Africa. In a positive light, China was perceived as a valuable business partner, investor, and donor that contributed significantly to many host nations' economic development. However, there was an increasing number of Africans that criticize the opportunistic, even predatory, conduct of the Chinese companies in Africa, whose actions damaged the local business environment and weakened labor rights. Wang and Elliot concluded that even though China had received considerable support in Africa, it is still facing increasing number of obstacles. Amongst them was that some Chinese officials and businesspersons tried to bribe the governments of the host countries to accept deals (Wang & Elliot, 2014).

While most of the studies' findings showed positive perceptions of China in Africa, a survey of three African countries (Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa) perceptions of Chinese companies conducts in Africa uncovered that the perceptions of African people were more negative than positive in 42.4 percent of responses. This study shows that, although Africans recognize some positive contributions of Chinese investments and trade in Africa, they still are concerned about the social, environmental, and labor reliability of Chinese companies in Africa (Rossouw et al., 2014). After a brief review of perceptions of Chinese presence in African countries, the next section reviews the media development in Kenya.

Media Development in Kenya

To obtain a better understanding of the influence of the media in Kenya's society today, it is necessary to review the historical situations and the economic, political and social environment in which the current Kenyan media developed. Because of the capacity of the study, the evolution of print media will be the main focus of this review. The historical review of the print media development in Kenya provided a better understanding of how the development of print media was shaped by the political and socio-economic changes in Kenya (Kareithi, 1996). In Kenya, the development of the print media can be divided into three periods: the colonial period (1895-1962), the post-independence period (1963-1990), and the multiparty period (1991-present) (Ireri, 2012).

The development of the print media has been influenced by the country's political and socio-economic changes since the first publication of the Taveta Chronicle in 1895 (Ochilo, 1993). There were three systems in the Kenyan print media during the colonial era, the European, the Indian, and the African print media. The European print media was the most prestigious, followed by the Indian, and the African print media at the bottom (Faringer, 1991). The objectives of the European print media were to function as a vehicle for delivering government information to the white settler communities. They served as an instrument for the colonial masters to maintain their status quo, to rule, and to function as a platform for social communication within the settler community in Kenya (Mshindi, 2008). In 1901, Indian trader Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee established The East African Standard. Later, the paper would be sold to people who would use it to serve the settler community's interests. The Indian media made a huge contribution to end colonial rule in East Africa after WWI (Abuoga & Mutere, 1988).

During the colonial period, the African print media was motivated by a political cause and mostly focused on the issue of political independence (Ali, 2009). From the mid-1920s to 1950s, the indigenous African people developed several African language publications in Nairobi (Makali, 2003). With increasing discontent among Africans and Indians, fueled by the "blatantly discriminative policies of the colonial regime," almost all the nationalist leaders launched their own newspapers to propagate their visions and express their fears (Karanja, 2000:33). These papers became important instruments for disseminating liberation messages among African communities. The key role the print media played during this period was to mobilize people to pursue independence from the colonial powers (Oriare et al., 2010).

Worrying that a free press would advocate for independence, the colonial government passed the Penal Code of 1930 to ban anti-colonial publication and criminalized people who possessed the same material. In 1951, the government initiated a Declaration of Emergency to respond to the Mau Mau revolution. Under Declaration Emergency, all indigenous publications were banned and propaganda against nationalist movement was intensified (Makali, 2004). In addition to the law enacted to silence anti-colonial voices, the colonial government launched Habari (News) in 1921 to stop the African press from gaining readership among literate Africans and to boost loyalty to the colonial government (Abuoga & Mutere, 1988). A weekly newspaper printed in Swahili, Baraza, was established in 1939 by the colonial government (Ali, 2009).

The first newspaper owned by the African people was Mwigwithania ("work and pray" in Kikuyu ethnic language), established in 1928 by the Kikuyu Central Association. The editor of the newspaper Jomo Kenyatta, was Kenya's first President after independence. According to William Hachten, there were over 40 African vernacular newspapers in the 1940. The colonial British authorities suppressed all the newspapers when the liberation struggle began (1993). In 1952, the colonial government founded the Kenyan vernacular press, another effort to minimize the African press's influence. This led to the closing of African vernacular newspapers (Bourgault, 1995). There were fifty newspapers in Kenya in 1952, most of them closed after the country gained independence in 1963 because their mission to see Kenya's independence was accomplished (Ainslie, 1966). During the colonial era, the mass media was strictly controlled and censored by the government and were used as anti-nationalist propaganda instruments (Mshindi, 2008).

Kenya's media development is closely connected to its political history. The political transition from British colony to independent nation also transformed the mass media in Kenya. Following independence in 1963, the newly independent government faced difficult political, economic, and social challenges. Under such harsh circumstance, the Kenyatta government constantly used state machinery to alienate political rivals. Oftentimes, the media was employed to achieve this objective (Ajulu, 2000). One important piece of influence the Kenyan government had was to repress the freedom of expression. This was Kenyatta's "ideology of order" (Adieno-Odhiambo, 1987). The media was expected to collaborate with the government and honor national unity narrative (Ochilo, 1993). The mass media were controlled by the Kenyatta administration for propaganda purposes and to mobilize the public to participate in Kenyatta's nation-building project (Mbeke, 2008). Through this nation-building ideology, the Kenyatta administration was able to create a coercive nation, where opposition was systematically crushed, normally by violent force (Hyden, 2006). By employing the institutions such as the media, the Kenyatta regime guaranteed that any opinion challenged the Kenyatta' rule was censored because this kind of disagreement conflicted with national development. Therefore, the media was transformed from liberation tools to propagandists to propagate the Kenyatta government's nation-building project (Ireri, 2012).

During the 1970s and the 1980s, a number of African governments adopted the concept of development journalism for the purpose of national development (Bougalt, 1995; Nyamjoh, 2005). The concept of development journalism was first introduced in Asia in the late 1960s. The term is used to refer to "journalism was believed and excepted to play a key role in facilitating and fostering national development" (Xu, 2009:357). In the case of Africa, development journalism means close cooperation between the media and the states, rather than critical reporting on development efforts. While it can be a powerful tool for nation building, it is also a means suppressing information and restricting journalists. Oftentimes, the state-owned media and the government will work together to compete with private media (Barton, 1979). In Kenya, the government that found development journalism was a perfect match for its nation-building project (Ogola, 2011).

Most of Kenya's alternative printed media was closed when the country gained independence. Only two mainstream newspapers *the Daily Nation* and the East African Standard (after this referred to as The Standard) survived. Both newspapers took a different position on the country's self-determination. *The Daily Nation* was opposed to Kenya's independence, however, its support of independence was a clever move by the newspaper's principal shareholder, the Aga Khan, to safeguard his business interests in the Islamic communities in Kenya (Winsbury, 2000). In contrast with *the Daily Nation*, *The Standard* took a hostile position towards Kenya's self-determination. An Indian businessman, A.M. Jevanjee, as the African Standard in Mombasa, established the newspaper the paper then relocated to Nairobi under new owners who renamed it the East African Standard. Later, the East African Standard became the voice of the white settler community; it was viciously against the country's independence. The reason *the Standard* supported the government was to give the new government favor. When the new owners, Roland Rowland's Lonrho

Plc., bought the newspaper in 1967, this support increased (Bougalt, 1995)

The newly independent government acknowledged that the control of information flow was a necessary precondition for consolidating political power and maintaining political stability (Amutabi, 2013; Hachten, 1993). The control was done both directly and indirectly through its control of advertising revenue because the government was the largest advertiser for these newspapers during this period. In other words, the government used its advertising buying power to support the media that followed its policies and censored the voices that were against it. The Kenyatta government also indirectly supported major media houses to eliminate the alternative media. Most of the regional and local-language media collapsed, only a few survived. For those that survived, they increasingly expressed their discontent with the pace of change. For the government, they are a threat to the nation-building project (Ndegwa, 1997).

During the Kenyatta era, both *the Daily Nation* and *The Standard* directly and indirectly participated in fostering the government's nation-building project. In order to help the government to achieve its agenda, both newspapers intentionally framed the president, Jomo Kenyatta, as the father of the country and the whole country as a family. These framed references were chosen by design and were part of a grand strategy designed to help Kenyatta deliver his message and executed his power. In Kenya, "Father of the Nation" represents a hierarchy of relations. The title was used to enhance Kenyatta's political legitimacy. Both newspapers employed references to deliver their messages and to make sure their implications were greatly observed. Under this circumstance, *the Daily Nation* and *The Standard* became an informal publicity instrument of the government (Ogola, 2011).

After the death of Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel arap Moi became second President in 1978 (Ogola, 2011). When he took over the presidency, Moi inherited the worst economy and a major political challenge; a challenge that came from the leader of the ruling party, Kenya African National Union (KAUN). This group of leaders became known as the “Kiamba Mafia” that had organized themselves into the Change of the Constitution Movement (W. Ochieng, 1995). The goal of the movement was to prevent Moi becoming the President. The movement failed, primarily because of the resistance it encountered from President Moi’s supporter, Attorney General Charles Njonjo. In order to overcome the political challenges and reconstruct the stumbling nation-building project, Moi was forced to consolidate his political positions. In doing so, Moi began to centralize power and to institute “an authoritarian and oppressive one-man state rule” (Adar & Munyae, 2001:2). When the Moi government started to institutionalize, centralize, and personalize the presidency, the government used state machinery to restrict and limit political freedom, especially the freedom of press and expression. Independent and critical publications were banned completely, and journalists and editors were constantly intimidated and detained by the Moi regime (Ogola, 2011). Foreign news media also restricted, foreign wire services were forbidden, and many foreign correspondents were deported (Mshindi, 2008).

The history of the media during the Moi era was filled with stories of government intervention, arrest and imprisonment of journalists because the government viewed alternative voices as a threat to its status quo. Instead of using the mass media for the national development agenda, President Moi employed the media to obtain and sustain his power. Under the Moi dictatorship, the oppositional voices were eliminated from media discourse and only those in power had a chance to broadcast their opinions on national television and radio. Gradually, the state-owned media were transformed into propaganda tools for the ruling party. Such media function was totally departed from the development objective that was supposed to be a channel to fight against poverty and disease (Mbeke, 2010). In order to avoid government's abuses, media workers began to self-censure where journalists gave certain stories a pass if they felt the stories would upset the government or officials. During this period, the government tightly controlled media ownership. There were only a few media companies that were privately owned, and these private investors knew how to survive under such harsh circumstance (Oriare et al., 2010).

The media practice during the Moi regime was an authoritarian model that assumed the mass media are influential forces of persuasion (Ellul, 1965). Like other authoritarian regimes, the media was employed by President Moi as an important tool to achieve his political agenda. During the Moi era, the media environment was harsh, and the media restricted from performing any democratic role. There was no breathing space for the media to criticize the ruling parties. For instance, the Daily Nation was suspended in 1989 from reporting parliamentary proceeding because the newspaper was viewed "disloyal" to the country. During the end of Kenyatta's era and beginning of Moi's era, the media gained some autonomy, and several newspapers were established, unfortunately, the poor market made it difficult to sustain. During the Moi presidency, the Kenyan media operated in a very harsh environment. It was a very dark period for the Kenyan media, the media was suppressed, censored, intimidated, and journalists were prosecuted and detained (Mbeke, 2010). The Kenyatta government (1963-1978) was marked as having less rigorous controls over the media (Obonyo, 2003), media freedom during the Moi era remained incomprehensible (Ireri, 2012).

President Moi recognized the impact of the media on the society. Therefore, he tried to take control of the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard*. He acquired a huge amount of *The Standard*'s shares with an attempt to control the newspaper. His also planned to gain direct control of the *Daily Nation* but failed. Although Moi failed to gain the direct control of the *Daily Nation*, his relationship with the newspaper was enhanced through his business connections with the Nation Media Group's principal shareholder, the Aga Khan. The government's relationship with big media houses has always been friendly during the Mio era. A significant amount of both *the Daily Nation* and *The Standard* shares are held by the country's ruling elites. This affiliation accelerated both newspapers' progress, with minimum state intimidation (Ogola, 2011). The Aga Khan also benefited greatly from these relations. Similarly, the Standard Group also had good relations with President Kenyatta and Moi. Such close connections also benefited *The Standard*. Powerful members of Moi's and KANU's regime acquired significant shareholding and became major shareholders before the general elections in 2002. As the major shareholders of The Standard, the Moi and KANU regime openly interfered with the newspaper's editorial view. Additionally, the newspaper's dependence on government advertisements made it vulnerable to government control. In order to survive, the newspaper was deeply compromised. *The Standard*'s campaign for Moi in the 1997 presidential elections was an example of the government's involvement in the newspaper's editorial choice. *The Standard* published an infamous headline on the eve of the elections that requested its readers to vote for the incumbent. The paper's endorsement was unprecedented in Kenya's political and media traditions (Ogola, 2011).

The lack of direct control of major newspapers forced Moi to establish a new newspaper, the Kenya Times, to function as a government propaganda instrument and to counter the influence of established newspapers such as the Daily Nation and The Standard. The Moi administration's awareness of the increased influence of the media on the political process made control of the media even more important (Iraki, 2010). According to Ben Bagdikian, the majority of political leaders and parties understand the importance of news media control because how they are portrayed to the public will have great impact on people's perception of them and the agenda they want to achieve, therefore, the news media need to be influenced or controlled (Bagdikian, 2004).

During the Moi's ear, the government exercised a tight control of political expression in the media until the late 1990s. Moi regime also criminalized important journalists and the media outlets through sedition trials (Kalyongo, 2011). To make sure that the privately owned newspapers always promoted the government's agenda, the Moi regime demanded the private newspapers select their news sources, especially regional news, from the government, owned news agency, Kenya News Agency (KNA) (Ogola, 2011). In fact, on a daily basis, both *The Standard* and *the Daily Nation* carried several news stories from KNA, even when they could obtain the same news stories from their regional networks located in different provinces of the nation. The Moi regime also had great influence over the editorial agenda of Kenya Broadcasting Corporate (KBC) and expanded its role in the Kenyan society. As public media, the main function of KBC was to propagate the interests of the ruling elites not the interest of the Kenyan public. The government employed the KBC Act to control broadcasted content and other interrelated concerns because this law clearly indicated that no broadcasting license could be issued without KBC's authorization (Heath, 1997).

While Kenya attained its independence in 1963, the independence constitution offered a multiparty political system with democratic structures. However, this system only lasted a very short period of time. Soon after independence, the government was determined to make Kenya a one-party nation. In 1982, President Moi forced the parliament to pass a law to make establishing another political party other than the ruling party (KANU) illegal. This law was done due to fears that some Kenyans were planning to organize an opposition party. By law, Kenya became a one-party nation in 1982 (Wanyande, 1995).

Between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the Kenyan media continued to report the socio-political issues that concerned the public. These reports were mainly focused on the pursuit of multi-party politics. The objective was reached in 1991 after the reintroduction of multiparty politics. Since then, the media plays an important role in Kenya's multiparty politics. In fact, the media, especially the press, has been playing the role of political educator. To educate the Kenyan public on the concept of democracy, on what it means to belong to different parties in one nation and the importance of the individual's right to vote. Furthermore, after the birth of multi-party politics, the print media became a platform for vigorous political debates. These debates often took place in harsh environments for the journalists and were often unstructured (Mbeke, 2008).

Better freedom of expression led to the liberation of the media sector, ownership of media expanded, and a number of new publications and broadcast programs were launched in an attempt to provide more diversified media content to the public. Prior to the multi-party politics introduced in 1991, the Moi regime controlled both the political environment and the airwaves. Under the Moi government, the television and radio functioned as mouthpiece and propagandists for the government. The media was forced to report on any events Moi and his ministers participated in, even the events were not newsworthy. The circumstance changed after the media liberation process took place in the early 1990s. Many new television and radio stations emerged and began to compete with the state-controlled media, the KBC. For the first time, the public opinion was not only shaped by the ruling elites, but also by the independent media as well (Wasserman, 2013).

For a long time, Kenya's television and radio market were monopolized by KBC. As state-owned media, KBC enjoyed monopoly status for over six decades. The liberation of airwaves in the 1990s introduced competition in the media industry by allowing the licensing of more broadcasting stations. The liberation of media led to intense competition in the media sector and diversified the content of the media. When the Moi regime ended in 2002, the media were allowed to openly criticize the government and became the major information providers on the current political, economic and social development in the country (Somerville, 2011).

Under the Moi regime, the media silenced general public's opinion on the current events. Since the 1990s media liberation, the newly emerged television and radio stations became a platform that citizens could communicate with each other via interviews and they called into the news programs to talk about their views. Under such circumstances, the media helped the Kenyan citizens understand and appreciate the concepts of freedom and democracy by giving them a voice and platform to express themselves. Not only the ordinary people used media to discuss current events with others, the Kenyan politicians and officials also began to call in to comment on the issues posted by media, defend their positions and safeguard reputations. The content of news became more diversified from the 1990s onwards as a result of the market competition (Amutabi, 2013). However, many obstructions to media freedom continued with the criminal libel laws and the Official Secrets Act, in particular. Also distressing was the Kenyan media’s tendency to lobby on behalf of political parties and being a mouthpiece for government and opposite parties instead of a watchdog to keep an eye on the government's wrongdoings (Ogola, 2011).

In 2002, opposition leader Mwai Kibaki unseated President Moi and became the third President since the independence in 1963. After Kibaki succeeded Moi, he guaranteed the Kenyan public a new constitution within the first hundred days of his presidency. However, the new constitution was approved eight years later in 2010. The media were given more autonomy and allowed full freedom of expression during President Kibaki's first term (2002-2007). The print media continued to have great influence over the Kenyan elites. In 2007, three other dailies were established, increasing the total number to eight. Nation Media Group launched *The Business Daily* that focused on economic affairs and finance. Soon after the establishment of *The Business Daily*, The Daily Metro developed. The owner of numerous commercial radio stations Patrick Quarco also launched The Nairobi Star, like The Daily Metro, *The Nairobi Star* is a tabloid that provided the young Kenyans a less political and more lifestyle, music, sport and brief news content (Rambaud, 2008).

Since the liberation of the airwaves began in 1996 and with the Kibaki government giving many radio and television frequencies to private investors, the number of television and radio stations grew rapidly. There were fifty new privately owned radio stations that emerged between 2003 and 2007. The television market also crowded with new players during the same period. The growth in both television and radio sectors created a new dimension to the Kenyan political environment. Even though KBC still enjoyed the majority share of the market, the Kenyan public seemed to prefer the privately owned Kenya Television Network (KNT) and Nation TV (NTV). Kenyans can now acquire the information from different media sources, unlike previous period the print media was their only source of information (Somerville, 2011).

With the highest degree of independence, the media has uncovered government misconduct, political corruption, and accountability. The media now can challenge the government publicly and safeguard a degree of public responsibility unlike the media environment before, which was previously manipulated by elites and could not be the voice of the general public. Thus, this new constitution that ensured media's independence is no doubt the greatest achievement in the Kenyan's media development since the independence in 1963 (Allen & Gagliardone, 2011).

There were number incidents of press repression that occurred under the leadership of Kibaki (Ibelema & Bosch, 2009). In May 2002, a new unpopular media law, The Book Newspaper Act, was passed that requires publishers to post a costly bond to be deposited prior to publication. This bill frightened a number of publishers, particularly in the magazine sector because they could not afford the security bond (Amutabi, 2013; Okoth, 2009). Attacks on the media continued during the Kibaki era. Two isolated incidents occurred that had a great impact on press freedom. In 2005, First Lady Lucy Kibaki, accompanied by her security detail, stormed the Daily Nation production center to protest at the paper's depiction of a quarrel she had with a neighbor. Lucy Kibaki stayed in the newsroom for five hours, confiscating notebooks, mobile phones, tape recorders, cameras, and other equipment. The first lady was enraged over the reports of how she had disrupted a farewell party for the outgoing World Bank Kenya director, who lives next door to the president's private home. She said the Daily Nation's reports were unkind to her and her family. She destroyed equipment and assaulted some journalists. The Kenyan government offered no comment on this incident and no charges were offered against her (Vasagar, 2005).

The tension between the government and the media reached its peak on March 2, 2006, when the government authorized the raid on The Standard and the KTN for "publishing and broadcasting news stories that undermined the legitimacy of President Kibaki's regime" (Kalyongo, 2011: 99). Groups of masked police raided The Standard printing plant in the industrial area and the KTN television. Ten of thousands of newspapers were burnt and production equipment confiscated. The damage was so severe KTN had to suspend broadcasting for 13 hours until the following day (Lacey, 2006). In addition, the Kibaki government asked all public organizations to boycott the Standard Media Group and channeled their advertisement to the media companies that were supportive of the government (Rambaud, 2008). This raid was the first time in Kenya's history the government has shut down a major media outlet. It was the most aggressive assault on a mainstream media outlet since Kenya's independence in 1963 (Nguyen, 2006).

The Kenyan media play a critical role in multi-party politics. Indeed, the media, especially the print media, have played an increasingly significant role in the political, cultural, and economic transformation in the country. They have done this by educating and informing the public about various important issues as well as offering a platform for collective discussion and evaluation of choices to allow the public to reach thoughtful decisions (Ogenga, 2008). The Kenyan media played an instrumental role both during the campaigns to the nation's general election in 2007 and the aftermath. In both circumstances, the media performed dual missions: to keep the public informed of the current political events and to condemn the elites' wrongdoings. The media also functioned as a civic educator to provide a platform for debate, where politicians and the general public engaged each other in discussing major political issues (Rambaud, 2008).

During the election campaign, Kenya's mainstream newspapers, the Daily Nation and The Standard demonstrated professionalism. These papers continued to inform the public on the election's progress after disputed results of the presidential election were announced. When the post-election violence began, two leading newspapers continued performed their role to inform Kenyans of progress. They wanted to help the public understand the reasons behind the violence. They condemned both Party of National Unity (PNU), the Kibaki government, and Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) led by Raila Odinga for their involvement in the campaigns and urged Kenyans to stay peaceful and be united for the welfare of the nation (Ojwang, 2009).

When the post-election violence broke out in Kenya because of a delayed announcement of results. The government used Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), a state-owned media to declared Kibaki as the winner of the presidential election on December 30, 2007, three days after the vote took place. Only KBC was allowed to run the footage of the announcement, the rest of media could only retransmit the KBC signals to broadcast the announcement (Rambaud, 2008). Moreover, the Ministry of Internal Security decided to suspend live broadcast of all news bulletins in "the interest of security and public tranquility" (Rambaud, 2008:94). This move sparked outrage and led to protests across the country. The government justified the decision in a statement "in the present atmosphere, some people are using the media in inciting violence" (Reporters without Borders cited in Rambaud, 2008:94). A ban on live news broadcasting imposed by the government was designed to defuse public anger. Any media organization violating this rule would be shut down indefinitely. Despite the public outrage, the chairman of the Media Council also strongly resisted government's action and announced that the media owners had decided to disregard the government's ban on live coverage (The Standard, 2008).

The media's coverage of the 2007 elections has become an intense debate in

Kenya's media industry. It was the first time the media witnessed police brutality and was shocked by the unexpected violence and domestic conflict. The media was terrified, and newsrooms were filled with the tension. Under this circumstance, they chose to censor themselves. The media intentionally censored certain news and didn't investigate much about the truth of the voting results to not to feed hatred and to calm the situation. During the entire month of January 2008, the media tried to bring the message of peace to the nation.

In the aftermath of the crisis, the Kenyan journalists and the editors of mainstream media sensed they had failed in their watchdog role to defend the public interest. As Frank Ojiambo, an editor of the Editor's Guild of Kenya expressed in a report, "I wish we could have done a better job…had we played our role as media, perhaps hundreds of people would not have died" (Ojiambo, 2008:4). David Makali, director of the Media Institute criticized the Kenya media houses for not challenging the government's live reporting ban because of media practiced self-censorship. Moreover, Makali argued that the reason why journalists did not report the truth was that they were afraid both the government and the public might turn their outrages against them (2008, cited from Reporters Without Borders).

<u>The Political Economy of the Kenyan Media</u>

In the past decades, the ownership of the Kenyan media has been concentrating on a few corporations and individuals. Media owners are profiting from the concentration of ownership. These powerful media houses have successfully rejected government plans to regulate cross-ownership (Mbeke, Ugangu, & Okello-Oriale, 2010). Although Kenya has more than seven daily newspapers, over 100 radio stations, 17 television stations, and 13 weekly and monthly papers, the media market is dominated by four groups: The Nation Media Group, the Standard Group, the Royal Media and Radio Africa. Each media group owns print and broadcasting media station and has their own platform to distribute and publish their content. A few powerful players shape the media ownership structure. In order to monopolize the market, they employed of different methods to block new players from entering the market. The methods they use ranged from interfering with licensing processes and monopolizing advertising and distribution networks (Allen & Gagliardone, 2011).

Even though major media houses have been reinforcing barriers for media entry nationally, their efforts to control media ownership in the region have been ineffective to date. Powerful media players used their political power to influence the government's registration process and the Kenya Communications (Amendment) Act of 2008. President Kibaki issued an order to review elements that major media houses thought were restrictive. This was a result of an aggressive lobbying campaign carried out by the Kenya Media Owners Association (Allen & Gagliardone, 2011).

In spite of progress in media freedom and development, the Kenyan media is still influenced by institutional, economic, and political forces. As discussed above, Kenya's unique history of colonialism, political competitions, and political and economic liberalization has had a great impact on the pace of media development. Kenya's political history raises barriers to its media independence. For instance, print media continues to switch their support from one party to the other. The quality and credibility of their reports are also compromised. Kenya's economic liberalization encouraged and promoted by the international donor community has helped the Kenyan media grow to an extent. Through following a neoliberal economic liberalization model, Kenya is facing potential crises of media ownership concentration because there have been no ownership regulations imposed or proposed on corporate interests (Allen & Gagliardone, 2011).

Unlike many of Kenya's neighboring countries, widespread violence and governmental repression are not major concerns to the country's independent media. Instead, Kenya faces its own unique political, cultural, and economic challenges such as the political corruption that remains a critical socio-cultural issue in Kenyan society. Despite the issue of political corruption, the concentration of media ownership also restricts the voices of the Kenyan media and the choices of the Kenyan public (Allen & Gagliardone, 2011).

News Framing of China in Africa

According to Herman Wasserman, "China's presence in Africa is usually viewed as a controversial one and often portrayed as a Manichean binary – either 'predator or partner'" (cf. Le Pere, 2006), "friend or foe', 'comrade or colonizer'" (Nullis, quoted in Zeleza 2008: 173). Questions are frequently asked in terms of "either-or". China's engagement in Africa is often framed in the questions such as: "Is China just the latest in a line of exploiters of Africa's rich natural resources who put their own economic interests above humanitarian, environmental or human rights concerns, or is China's engagement an extension of 'South-South solidarity'?" (Manji, 2012).

Olorunnisola & Ma's study examined newspaper's framing of China's presence in Nigeria, South Africa, China, and the United States found that China's engagement with Africa was framed as "controversy", "partner", and "new power" by South Africa and Nigeria newspapers, "partnership" and "refutation" by Chinese newspaper, and "competitor" and "watchfulness" by the US newspaper. The controversy frame presented China's engagement with Africa as complicated, including both positive and negative consequences of Chinese presence in Africa. One of key controversy frames was the negative portrayal of China's no-strings approach. The partnership frame depicted China's engagement with Africa as a cooperation and collaboration relationship and China as an investor in Africa's railways and infrastructure development. The new power frame presented China as a new economic power and a model for Africa's development (2013).

Two major frames in China Daily's coverage of Sino-Africa relations were partnership and refutation. The partnership was the frame China's state newspaper employed to promote and strengthen Sino-Africa relations. China Daily also employed refutation frame to explain its presence in Africa and refuted the Western allegation of neocolonialism. The competitor frames in the Wall Street Journal emphasized China's contest with Western powers for Africa's natural resources and markets. Another frame frequently used in the Wall Street Journal was the watchfulness frame. The watchfulness frame highlighted the need to be cautious of China's engagement with Africa and the concern that China might surpass Western influence in the Africa (Olorunnisola & Ma, 2013). The findings in Olorunnisola and Ma's study mirror the popular narratives of Chinese presence in Africa. On the one hand, China is framed positively as a partner. On the other hand, China's motives are questioned. Olorunnisola and Ma note that there is an important element missing from the media frames, which is African countries' counter approach to the Chinese involvement.

Methodology

Like other countries, where media outlets depend on elite media to set their news agenda (Castell, 2009), in Kenya, most of the media houses get their news agendas from the daily newspapers report of the major events and issues. Therefore, the two most influential dailies—the Daily Nation and The Standard are the suitable representations of the Kenyan media and the general public's perception of Chinese presence.

Sample Collection

News articles that published by *the Daily Nation* and *The Standard* between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2016, were retrieved from the LexisNexis Academic database and The Standard website for the current study. While the LexisNexis Academic database included articles for *The Daily Nation*, *The Standard*'s articles were obtained from the publication's official website. The timeframe selected was based on the accessibility of the news articles in the library database. The units of analysis were the individual newspaper articles and the sampled articles were read in their sums.

Kenyan news media plays a key role in shaping the Kenyan people's perception of China's engagement in the country. Although there are seven daily newspapers in Kenya, the press was dominated by two powerful media houses, the Nation Media Group (NMG) and the Standard Group (SG). There were no ideological preferences that could clearly distinguish these two newspapers (Obonyo, 2003). Instead, the key factors that influenced these two newspapers' political preferences are the issues of ownership, ethnic considerations, and business interests (Esipisu & Khaguli, 2009).

The Daily Nation was first published in 1960 in Nairobi on the verge of independence. It was founded by the NMG with Aga Khan as the principal shareholder. *The Daily Nation* was established after the founder Aga Khan purchased the Kiswahili paper Taifa (now Taifa Leo) in 1958 and decided to launch an English-language newspaper called the Nation to support Kenyan independence and protect the owner's interests (Loughran, 2010). According to an Open Society Foundation report, *the Daily Nation* is the most widely read and influential newspaper in Kenya (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013). It is also "arguably *The New York Times* of Kenya's newspaper industry" (Onyebadi, 2008: 20).

The Standard is the oldest newspaper in Kenya, established in 1902 as The African Standard by Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee. The Standard Group Limited whose primary shareholder is SNG Holding Limited owns the newspaper. Over the past 100 years, *The Standard*'s circulation was mainly focused on the Kenyan market. In 1905, British businessmen Rudolf Mayer and A.G.W. Anderson purchased the newspaper from Jeevanjee and renamed it into the East African Standard. The objective of the new owners was to make the newspaper the "most influential and widely read publication in colonial East Africa" (Karanja, 2000: 29). When The East African Standard dominated the Kenyan press, it continued to represent the "voice of the largely conservative white settlers and opposed African nationalist aspirations" (Faringer, 1991: 11). Because of its status as the voice of conservative white settlers, The Standard's shift to "identify with the aspirations of Africans was painstakingly slow even after independence" (Obonyo, 2003: 530).

Keywords used in this data search were "China", "Chinese" and "Chinese media". Only articles that directly related to China's engagement in Kenya were included in the analysis. The results of the search were screened in order to eliminate duplicate and irrelevant results. The initial keyword search of articles found 127 articles of *the Daily Nation* and 50 news articles of *The Standard*. After removing duplicated and not relevant articles, 85 articles were identified and focused on the topic of China's engagement in Kenya. Among them, 45 articles published by the Daily Nation and 40 articles appeared in *The Standard*.

The specific data analytic steps employed conducted the framing analysis are as follows: first, retrieved the most relevant news articles used the combination of search words mentioned above. Then, each news article was read carefully to underline aspects of the texts that were relevant to China's current engagement in Kenya. Next, a second immersive reading was conducted to take notes of recurrent themes of China's presence in Kenya that were selected and narrated by the newspapers. Finally, a repeated reading of each text was done where frames were clarified, and important meanings were distinguished. News texts from both newspapers were constantly compared to distinguish the similarities and differences between their coverage.

News Framing of the Chinese Presence in Kenya

This analysis seeks to answer two key questions: How China's engagement in Kenya was framed and represented in the Kenyan newspapers and how was China being represented in their reports? After a close reading of all retrieved articles focused on China's engagement in Kenya from the Daily Nation and The Standard, this study finds that the focus of both newspaper's coverage falls into three categories: diplomatic visits and meetings, business deals, and cultural cooperation. Business investments were an essential feature of Kenyan newspapers' coverage of Chinese presence in the country during the study period.

China's growing engagement with Kenya has drawn extensive attention and triggered heated debates about the impact of its presence in Kenya. This study was particularly interested in determining how China's engagement with the country was framed in Kenya's two leading newspapers. The findings indicated China's involvement in Kenya was framed as "development partner", "economic competitor", and "controversy" by Kenyan newspapers. The findings show that the main focus of 85 articles in the two newspapers was on economic engagement between two countries. Among them, 52 articles focused on economic engagement, 17 focused on culture and media, and 16 focused on diplomatic involvement. The findings also indicated that there was a similar tendency in the key focus of both newspapers. The majority of the reports focused on China's economic engagement in Kenya. The Daily Nation had 27 articles and The Standard had 25 articles. The focus of both newspapers' coverage of China's economic involvement was on Chinese investment in large infrastructure projects such as the construction of the Standard Gauge Railway.

The majority news articles framed China's involvement as a development partner highlighted the positive aspects of China and Chinese companies' contributions to the country's industrialization. The frame focused on the potential benefits of Chinese engagement to boost Kenya's economic development. The Daily Nation and The Standard used recurring words such as "spurring", "progressive", and "beneficial" to frame Chinese presence as an important solution to the country's current economic condition. The majority of the sources quoted under the partner frame were the Kenyan officials who strongly praised China's involvement, presenting Chinese presence as a means to help Kenya improve its social and economic standing.

Statistical evidence was frequently used to illustrate China's positive contributions to the country's economic development. For instance, a news article from the Daily Nation cited statistical evidence from a policy research paper published by the World Bank to indicate Chinese companies' contribution to increasing employment opportunities in Kenya. The World Bank report found that, unlike the popular belief that Chinese companies bring their own workers to work in their Kenya sites, “93 percent of companies report hiring Kenyan employees" (Okoth, 2016). The Daily Nation published another article that also used statistical evidence to indicate a positive impact of China's loans on Kenya's social and economic development. China’s engagement with the country was framed as the strategic partnership.

When the Kenyan media framed Chinese presence as the country’s development partner, not as an exploitative foe, the narratives focused on China’s solid economic contribution and assistance to infrastructural development in Kenya. By framing China as a “development partner,” the readers were encouraged to view the engagement from a mutual benefits perspective and downplayed the potential negative impact of China's involvement in Kenya's industrialization process. Even though readers can still exercise their own judgment to make sense of China's involvement in the country, there is still a strong possibility the dominant news frames still have a great impact on readers' perceptions of the events and issues.

While China’s engagement with Kenya has been framed in favorable narratives as a “development partner”, the Kenyan media also expressed their concerns regarding the economic consequences of the increasing Chinese involvement. For instance, in the Daily Nation’s commentaries on China’s economic engagement with the country, the economic competitor frame was represented in a cautious manner such as “cheap Chinese imports may hurt Kenya’s bid to industrialize" (Okoth, 2016) and "if we are not careful, the idea of Chinese engagement with us could lead to deindustrialization may not be far-fetched" (Otuki, 2016). The focus of the coverage on the Chinese manufactured goods import is concentrated on the competition aspect of China's involvement in the country. It is clearly perceived in the newspaper that local industries have lost business and are facing serious business competition from China in both domestic and foreign markets. The concern expressed in these news commentaries is the fear that Chinese competitions might have a negative impact on Kenya's economy because if the manufacturing sector stagnates, Kenyan workers might lose their jobs. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to move people out of poverty and to improve Kenyan's living standard (Sanghi & Johnson, 2016).

In addition to the concerns over the impact of cheap Chinese imports on local manufacture sector, Chinese construction companies won Kenya's infrastructure bids is another key feature that was frequently reported and commented in both newspapers' coverage of China's involvement in the country. A variety of concerns about China and Chinese companies' involvement in Kenya's infrastructure projects have been raised.

The need for infrastructure development in Kenya has forced Kenyan government to open its infrastructure sector to foreign investments. It made easy for China and Chinese companies to invest in Kenya's infrastructure projects. Since the FOCAC summit in 2000, China has become a major player in Kenya's infrastructure sector. The majority of current Kenyan construction projects were done by Chinese companies (Enock et al, 2015).

Economic competitor frame depicted China's investment as potentially harmful to local business sectors. The negative representation of Chinese engagement with Kenya's infrastructure is often associated with corrupt practices by Chinese construction companies, as an editorial in the Daily Nation states, “it is a statement of growing power and influence of a certain group of Chinese constructors, who have learnt the art of patronage politics and how to play different factions in government against one another” (Kisero, 2016). Similarly, The Standard reports, after a local construction company SS Mehta & Sons Limited won a construction tender, "the tender committee is unable to execute the award after instructions from high-ranking officials in Government demanded that the tender be awarded to Chinese firm China Wu Yi Construction Company Limited, giving a glimpse into Chinese influence in major infrastructure projects in Kenya” (Omondi, 2016).

The main sources quoted under this frame where local business operators. In *the Daily Nation* and *The Standard*, the articles that framed Chinese presence from the competitor perspective indicated China’s involvement is hurting local business, for instance, "Chinese constructors rule the roost in Kenya" (Kisero, 2016) and "Chinese firms' dominance in major projects jolts Kenyan constructors" (Omondi, 2016). The words and phrases used to emphasize this perspective are " jolt" "edge out" "pushed out" and "gobbled up" to frame Chinese companies as strong competitors to local enterprise.

The surge in Chinese investment and China’s growing influence in Kenya has sparked controversy, mainly through questions about cheap Chinese imports, Chinese companies' misconducts and Chinese loans. Over the past two years, China's loans have attracted a heated debate, concerns of China's loans intensified after the World Bank warned the Kenyan government that it's "appetite for Chinese loans risks choking the economy on the huge repayment burden" (Ngugi, 2016).

News articles used the controversy frame depicted China's involvement in terms of disagreements with Kenya's practices. For example, there are multiple articles about the debate over the impact of the Chinese loans. In an opinion piece, the *Daily Nation* columnist criticized loans the Kenyan government borrowed from China are expensive and "poorly-negotiated," and these loans would pose risks to Kenya's future generations (Kisero, 2016). On April 6th, 2016, *the Daily Nation* opinion piece warned "China's loans can bring debt to unsustainable levels. Some of China's loans are non-concessional, which can raise debt-to-gross domestic product levels quickly" (Ngugi, 2016). On May 25, 2016, the *Daily Nation* article headlined "In looking at 'friendly' Chinese loans, the devil is in the detail" also questioned the intention of these Chinese loans. In this article, *the Daily Nation*'s columnist Jaindi Kisero highlighted the terms of the loan agreement and explained why the Chinese loans are controversial. A few months later, *the Daily Nation* published another article headlined, "Why Chinese Loans are a recipe for huge debt burden on Kenya" (Okoth, 2016). In this article, a Kenyan economist Gitau Githogo warned that "Kenya risks choking in the heavy loans whose 'no strings attached' outlooks are deceiving given the way the country gives into various economic benefits during the implementation of the projects done by the Chinese" (ibid). Githogo said that the Chinese government is using its financial leverage to win Kenya's infrastructure projects and successfully deny local companies' opportunities to contribute to local economy. The biggest controversy of China's loans is that Chinese companies performed the projects' feasibility research, won the tenders, and were financed by China Exim Bank. Apparently, it is contradictory. This article ended with a quote from another economic analyst Robert Shaw indicating that Chinese loans are very expensive. Undoubtedly, Chinese loans would burden Kenyans for generations and the situation can be avoided if the Kenyan government borrows from other alternatives (ibid).

Articles with controversy frames related to China's involvement often revolved around unfairness or secrecy over contracts. On July 4th, 2016, The Standard published an article headlined "Chinese fish floods Kisumu markets" reports about controversial sentiments between the Chinese company and Kenyan fish farmers over Kenyan fish markets. It showed how cheap Chinese fish retailing in local markets and "killed the fishing industry" around Lake Vitoria regions (Ogutu, 2016). This news report has opened a debate and led to local "leaders protest over fish imports from China" (Ayaga, 2016). According to the PMs from affected regions, China fish imports have caused serious economic damage on local fish production. As a result, "hundreds of local fishmongers have been pushed out of business". These leaders also argued, "lack of guarantees on the safety of the fish has exposed consumers to lead posting and cholera, among other health effects" (Ibid). They demanded the Kenyan government "to protect local fish farmers and these communities that stand to lose out in any competition with large Chinese fish imports" (*The Standard*, 2016).

Representation of China in the Kenyan Newspapers

Another objective of this news analysis is to uncover how China has been represented in two leading Kenyan newspapers. The articles were grouped into three broad categories: positive, negative, and neutral. The majority of articles portrayed China in neutral terms, 8 articles portrayed China positively, and 14 articles portrayed China negatively. There were 32 articles in *the Daily Nation* that portrayed China in neutral terms, 5 portrayed China positively, and 8 articles with a negative portrayal. For *The Standard*, there were 31 articles that portrayed China in neutral terms, 3 articles depicted China positively, and 6 articles represented China in a negative light.

Most of the articles that gave positive portrayals were about China's financial assistance and Chinese projects to Kenya. Other articles focused on cultural collaboration between the two countries. China's benevolence in giving economic assistance to Kenya was reflected by several stories. The story, "Future is bright for China-Kenya cooperation" highlighted the positive results of mutual and pragmatic cooperation between the two countries (Liu, 2016). Another article framed China provided the loans with its successful experience in which Kenya could benefit. In an opinion piece headlined "Chinese loans useful for Kenya's progress", the writer noted that the Chinese loans and projects would boost Kenya's economic and social development significantly if the Kenyan government deployed them properly. Three decades ago, China experienced a similar economic situation. China was in need of capital to support its social and economic development, just like Kenya's current circumstance (Guo, 2016).

In addition to China's economic assistance, another positive presentation of Chinese presence in Kenya is that the Chinese increased employment opportunities for ordinary Kenyans. For instance, a story headlined "Chinese firms hire more locals than foreigners" reports that Chinese companies running in Kenya employ more locals than other foreign countries, contrary to popular belief that Chinese firms are importing workers from China and hire less local workers as they promised (Okoth, 2016). Other articles focused on the cultural aspects of Chinese support to Kenya. In an article headline, "Chinese experts train farmers on modern farming methods", indicated that the Kenyans have benefited from China's advanced agricultural technology (The Standard, 2016).

The negative portrayal of China was mostly related to the controversy surrounding the standard gauge railway (SGR) and the cheap Chinese manufactured goods. The SGR projects are one of many of Kenya's infrastructure projects financed by China. China's state-owned Export-Import Bank loaned Kenya $3.6 billion for the project. Kenya is expected to use its revenues to repay the debt. However, some analysts are raising concerns that the SGR will be a huge financial burden for generations of Kenyans. Some of the media coverage depicted China in a negative light and criticized the Chinese government using its economic assets to advance its geostrategic interests. Critics condemning Chinese loans have left Kenya stuck in a debt trap that makes Kenya vulnerable to its influence. In the articles headline "In looking at 'friendly' Chinese loans, the devil is in the detail" the columnist wrote that "the Chinese are worse than the merchants of Venice—overloading us with high-priced loans and viciously promoting their exports by giving us more and more expensive export credit financing" (Kisero, 2016).

In another article headline, "Why Chinese loans are a recipe for huge debt burden on Kenya", the reporter quoted Nairobi-based economic analyst Gitau Githogo indicates that China "attaches the financing to its participation in the projects and effectively denies Kenyan firms a chance to bring about more economic impact locally" (Okoth, 2016). In the same article, Okoth interviewed another economic analyst Robert Shaw. According to Shaw, "Unlike the conditions are given by the IMF and other multinational lenders, China is simply looking for business and the more projects they get, the easier they lend Kenya. They are very costly loans through and Kenya is definitely connecting its feature generations in heavy indebtedness that could have been avoided by taking other options" (Shaw cited in Okoth, 2016b).

The impact of cheap manufactured goods imported from China raised great concern in Kenya. Even though cheap Chinese imports have helped improve the standing living for many poor Kenyans who could not afford costly Kenyan-made products, China has been blamed for the decline of the local manufacturing sector. For instance, an article headlined “Cheap Chinese goods threaten to dim Vision 2030", reported that Chinese manufactured goods are edging out local businesses. China was portrayed negatively as a threat to local manufacturing sectors (Okoth, 2016a). The article warns that increasing flow of cheap Chinese manufactured goods will undermine “Kenya's status as an exporter of products to the East African market” and weaken the country’s industrial growth (Ibid).

The analysis of portrayals of China's engagement in Kenya in the selected newspaper articles found that most of the news articles portrayed China neutrally, rather than positive or negative. The perceptions were not at the positive end or negative end but fell between the two extremes. Despite the perceived smooth relationship, voices of individuals critical of China have raised concerns about cheap imported Chinese goods undercutting local traders and are driving the local companies out of business, and that controversial Chinese loans might burden future generations.

This chapter uses Kenya media’s response to China’s increasing engagement with the country as a case study to gain a better understanding of how China’s engagement with the country was perceived by the Kenyan media after it invested huge amount of resources in its media’s international expansion. The literature review shows that the general perception of China’s involvement in Africa in the West is predominantly negative and that China is depicted as a neocolonialist, therefore Sino-African relations are exploitative. Unlike Western media’s representation of Chinese presence in Africa, the present study found that the Kenyan media’s perceptions of China’s involvement in the country are generally neutral rather than negative or positive. However, China’s growing influence in the country should not be viewed as stagnant because there are many factors at play, including Kenya's relations with traditional Western donors and other countries like Japan and India.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Over the past three decades, China has gradually ascendant as an important power player and its rise has attracted considerable attention from scholars and media around the world. In just few decades, China has transformed itself from a massively impoverished agricultural country into an impressive economic powerhouse. The economic reforms had lifted half of its population out of poverty and became the world's second-biggest economy. Along the way, China's economic rapid growth also stimulated other countries' development, due to the country's demand for raw materials, energy and capital flows. As China's economic power strengthened, the Chinese government gained the resources to create and enhance its cultural influence over other nations (Zhang, 2010).

China's rise has become a hot topic in international media narratives, especially its relationship with African countries. Many conflicting views that have emerged to interpret China's increasing engagement with African countries, some of them see China's engagement as win-win cooperation that benefit the parties involved. Others view China as a new colonial power, whose purpose is to exploit Africa's natural resources and new consumer markets. Sino-Africa relations are far from mutual, Chinese presences are to exploit African countries' wealth for their own interests (Chin, 2014). Such criticism damages China's national image and has the negative impact on Chinese companies' operations in Africa (Large, 2008). Against this background, the Chinese government initiated a "going out" campaign to encourage its state-owned media to expand their operations overseas (Xin, 2009;

Gagliardone, 2013; Zhang, 2010).

The concept of a political economic of communication is applied in this study to uncover the impacts of political and economic forces on the transformation of the Chinese media. This concept connects the media to a broader political economy; it examines the influences of both economic and political forces on media and how social power is exercised in shaping media (McChesney, 2008). For the political economy of communication, the changes in media are often caused by changes in the country's economy and politics. The transformation that occurs in media is both a cause and result of societal changes. In the current study, the theory of political economy of communication was used to understand how internal and external economic forces and political power in both China and Kenya influence the media system.

An analysis of the transformation of media in China from the perspective of the political economy of communication explains how the internal and external economic and political forces have transformed Chinese media from a pure propagandist to media conglomerates that serve two masters: the Party and the market. The notion of political economy of communication also helps to unpack the current development of the Kenyan media, how the economic and political forces in Kenya shifted its media landscape. A historical review of the transformation of the media in both China and Kenya is conducted to offer essential background information and to show some of the major changes that have occurred in the process of the media transformation.

Before the introduction of the economic reforms and Open-door policy in 1978, most of the Chinese media companies were owned and fully subsidized by the state. Party organ such as the People's Daily did not need to worry about circulation because they were supported by compulsory subscriptions from public office. News media and media professionals were perceived as mouthpieces of the Party and the news media was tightly controlled by the state (He, 2006). After the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, his successor Deng Xiaoping adopted an Open-door policy to modernize the country and improve Chinese people's living standard. Deng suggested a change from a planned economy to a market economy and modernization. In doing so, he launched the economic reforms and partly privatized its state-owned companies and encouraged them to initiate joint ventures with foreign capital (Wei & Pan, 1999).

During the reforms, market principles were introduced and adopted by the Chinese media. The media began to practice multi-channel financing methods such as advertising and sponsorship to make up for the loss of governmental subsidies. Such multi-channel financing policy was designed to enhance and modernize China's media without the need to increase the state's financial burdens (Lynch, 1999). Between the different channels, advertising has become the major non-governmental method of financing since its reintroduction in 1979 (Y. Zhao, 1998).

The economic reform in 1978 also expanded the role of the state in the media system. The Chinese media system was moved from complete state regulation to partially deregulated industry. This deregulation of the media industry was carried out through four developments: commercialization, privatization, liberalization, and internationalization. These actions are what political economists called the most important examples of the "state's constitutive role" (Mosco, 2009).

Commercialization took place when the Chinese government replaced state regulation with the market mechanism. The Party's top leaders adopted a capitalistic media reform experience to promote a greater market reform and mass media's serious financial obstacle (Winfield, 2005). As previously mentioned, the media in

China was completely subsidized by the state before the economic reform. However, after the introduction of economic reforms, the government gradually cut the media companies' subsidies and forced them to be financially independent. Under such circumstances, media companies were forced to establish close connections with advertisers. By the end of the 1980s, advertising revenues had become the major source of income for China's newspapers and broadcasting companies. In 2003, all the newspaper's subsidies were terminated except three Party newspapers and a journal (Moro & Aikat, 2010). As a result, advertising revenues became media's means of support. Chinese media's functions and structure have become increasingly diversified since the reforms (Y. Zhao, 1998, 2008).

The process of commercialization has depoliticized the media and made them more responsive to their audiences' need (He & Chen, 1998). Although media commercialization has some positive impacts on the media sector, many studies suggested the negative impacts of media commercialization on media content. They criticized that the media has to give too much space to entertain and neglects public welfare content, such as education. The pursuit of commercial interests may lead to the vulgarization of media content. Too much advertising is another common complaint of media consumers; some newspapers even sell their entire front page to an advertiser for a day (Lian et al., 2010). As Y. Zhao claimed, "advertising is itself a form of propaganda for the market system, and it reveals . . . political propaganda as the dominant form of mobilization speech and subjective making" (2008:85). With increasing market forces and deregulation, media transformed themselves into the mouthpiece of market forces.

The media commercialization not only changed the relationship between media and market, it also altered the relationship between state and media, even though the government still strictly controls media. The only difference is before the launch of the economic reform; the media was controlled by ideological means for the purpose of strengthening the political power and sustaining social stability (Q. He, 2008; Stockmann, 2012). After media commercialization, the Chinese government perceived media control as the way to control public opinion that is extremely important for social stability. Media control is an important element for the Chinese government to increase China's international influence and strengthen its global status. A controlled media would faithfully deliver the Chinese government's message and to present China as a peaceful rising power to their international audience (Q. He, 2008). With intensifying economic reform, speedy market liberalization, increasing commercialization, technological advancements and the influence of globalization, media has become one of China's important social agents that help the country boost its economic, political, cultural, and social development.

Since China became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), it has been recognized as an emerging superpower in the international community. Foreign media tends to be extremely selective in their reporting of China by focusing on human rights issues, environmental degradation, government corruption, or the potential threat to international stability posed by China's growing economic and military power. From China's perspective, foreign media's coverage of the country, especially Western media is biased and constitutes a concerted effort to "demonize" China. In order to counter foreign media's negative representations, promoting a favorable national image on the global stage has been a top priority of the Chinese government. Between 2009 and 2010, the Chinese government reportedly invested US$ 8.7 billion to enhance its international communication capabilities (Xie, & Page, 2013).

In the information age, people's perceptions of other countries are unquestionably influenced by the news stories they read and how these nations are depicted in local and international media (Brewer, Graf & Willnat, 2003). The image of a nation is important in the conduct of international relations because a favorable image plays an important role in emphasizing a country's international influence (Benoit & Brinson, 1994). On the international battleground of image projection, the winners effectively project images that are embraced by the foreign public, while others define a loser's images (Xie, & Page, 2013). This explains why the Chinese government tries to use its economic power and cultural influences to improve its national image in Africa.

China's increasing presence in Africa has drawn enormous attention and concern from around the world. Some scholars interpreted China's engagement in Africa as part of China's new international approach for power and influence that may benefit African countries' economic development (Kitissou, 2007). Others view China's engagement in Africa as a neocolonial predator acting aggressively for influence and wealth (Bangui, 2011). Those critics argue China has entered a new "scramble for Africa" and started "new Chinese imperialism" that has great impacts on the continent (van Dijk, 2011).

There is great dichotomy in African perceptions about China's involvement in Africa. Proponents perceive China as a non-confrontational economic partner, contributing significantly to the economic development in many host African countries. Many Africans perceive China as an alternative influence in Africa that is different from the role the West played in the past, as resource-extractors and political-nanny (Wang & Elliot, 2014). Despite the favorable perception of Chinese presence, China's involvement in Africa also receives criticism from Africans.

Certain business practices by the Chinese companies have created resentment over the issues such as labor rights and employment opportunities. For those critics, the Chinese companies who invested in Africa are for quick-profits, resource-extraction, and not treating Africans as their equal business partners, such perception lead to a huge gap between Chinese approaches and African perspectives (Harneit-Sievers et al., 2010; Shelton & Kabemba, 2012). Such resentment led to resistance and China is depicted as an economic and cultural imperialist power. In order to narrow such a perception gap and articulate a favorable image, the Chinese government invested massive resources to enhance its media and cultural influence in African countries.

A nation's outreach reflects the purposes and domestic situations of that country. This is true in the case of China's media and cultural engagement in Africa. In China's early media engagement with African countries, media was used to achieve China's desires to establish diplomatic relations with newly independent African nations. During the 1980s and 1990s, media collaborations were used to repair China's international image, strengthen its political ties, and engage audiences in the important regions (Wu, 2012). As Sino-African relations evolved, so has the nature of China's media and cultural engagement in African countries. Currently, Chinese media and cultural engagement in Africa is a component of China's "going out" campaign that is aimed at strengthening diplomatic and economic relations. Mass media, the Confucius Institutes, scholarship programs, and exchange of academics have been employed to engage audiences and shape their perceptions of China in strategically important countries in Africa.

The expansion of China's media operations in Africa is widely read as China's "charm offensive", an attempt to use the media to make China more appealing to its international audiences (Kurlantzick, 2007). However, Anbin Shi, professor of media and cultural studies at Tsinghua University, suggests that China's "going out" campaign to improve its image abroad should be viewed as "charm defensive" that is a response to the negative representation of China in the international media and an attempt to counter such misrepresentations (2015).

China's current media expansion is intertwined with its heavy investment in the growing African media markets. Today, African cable audiences have access to CNC World, the English-language television channel of the Chinese state news agency. CNC has reached 6.7 million subscribers to DStv, Africa's biggest digital satellite television platform. Xinhua News Agency relocated its editorial office from Paris to Nairobi in 2006. The objectives of the relocation are to provide news portfolios to African subscribers and compete with Western news agencies. Today, Xinhua's news wires are published by African leading newspapers (Jacobs, 2012). Xinhua also launched a mobile application in 2011 to offer its news services to millions of mobile phone users in Africa (Shi, 2015).

In the broadcasting sector, CCTV Africa was launched in Nairobi in 2012 to cover news on the continent and offered daily news programs from a Chinese point of view. As Iginio Gagliardone, who studies CCTV's Africa operations, suggests that the Chinese government is using CCTV Africa to influence Africans' perceptions of China. CCTV Africa's presence on the continent is not only to present positive images of China, but also to develop new ways of looking at Africa. By showing a positive image of Africa and framing a "Africa rising" narrative, CCTV Africa can position China as a partner of African countries, a continent who is also a victim of Western media's negative representations (2013). Also, in 2006, China Radio International (CRI) moved its African broadcasting headquarter from Paris to Nairobi and partnered with Kenya Broadcasting Corporation. CRI broadcasts on various platforms from shortwave, to the Internet, and apps. It covers all kind of programs, news, and entertainment, telling China and Africa stories in different ways (Rønning, 2014).

On the print media sector, China Daily, China's leading English-language newspaper, has extended its reach to English-language readers in major African countries, as well as online. China Daily has been publishing its African edition plus a special supplement of African Weekly and a magazine titled China Africa since December 2012. China Daily can be purchased in the newsstands together with Kenya's leading newspapers such as The Daily Nation and The Standard in major African cities (Shi, 2015).

StarTimes represents one of the most remarkable Chinese success stories in Africa. It began its African operations in 2002 with a specialization in Digital Terrestrial Television. The company has benefited greatly from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) decision to switch television signals from analog to digital television broadcasting by 2015. During the migration process, StarTimes successfully placed itself in the lead by providing cheap subscriptions through set-top boxes that provide access to digital broadcasting and negotiated digital provider contracts with governments and public broadcasters (Rønning, 2014).

In addition to Chinese media's expansion, the Chinese government also invited African journalists and media professionals to China to attend workshops or training programs. The topics of these workshops and training programs included Chinese political, economic, social, technological and cultural development. The participating Chinese media companies also provide internships to these African participants. The African visitors and trainees were not limited to Marxist journalism, but also given access to market-oriented media outlets and invited to join in debates on topics such as objectivity, professionalism, citizen journalism, and media management (Shi, 2015).

Among African states, Kenya was selected as an important cultural and media hub where China has established a strong media presence. For example, CRI developed more partnerships with local radio stations and added six new languages to its broadcasts since 2009. CNC World was established by Xinhua television in 2010, later it partnered with Safaricom, Kenya's leading mobile operator, to launch their first mobile newspaper in Africa in 2011. The most recent move of Chinese media engagement in Kenya was the launch of CCTV Africa and China Daily Africa Weekly in 2012. Both media companies chose Nairobi as the headquarters of their African operations (Zhang & Mwangi, 2016).

Currently, China's media functions as alternative media in Africa and is embraced by the Kenyans for the positive and constructive reports on African affairs. Despite their positive contributions, Chinese media still faces numerous challenges in Africa. The issues such as editorial independence, reliability, and freedom of expressions are major concerns of both the Western and African scholars (Zhang & Mwangi, 2016). Additionally, Kenyans might have difficulty to accept China's top-down media model due to their strong tradition of independent and critical media power (Harber, 2013). Although the Chinese media's positive reporting will help position China as an ally of Africa, it will take time for the Africans to accept this approach and build trust. Thus, Chinese media needs to find more balanced strategies for their operations in Africa to be favorable and sustainable. The influence of Chinese media depends on how much they have been accepted by the African public and media markets (Y.S. Wu, 2012).

Understanding African media's responses on China's engagement with their homeland have become essential in comprehending China's growing influence in

Africa. As the literature review shows, the general perceptions of China-Africa connections discussed in the West are predominantly negative. China is often portrayed as a neocolonialist, and Chinese presence in Africa is depicted as exploitative. Unlike the Western media's negative portrayal of the Chinese presence in Africa, the present study found that the Kenyan media's depiction of China's involvement in Kenya are generally neutral rather than negative or positive. In most of the articles analyzed, China was portrayed in neutral terms. Although this media is not determinative of how Kenyans think, however, the influence of the news framing cannot be ignored because media forces often mobilize the public.

The Kenyan media's framing of China's engagement in the country should not be viewed as stagnant because China-Kenya interactions are rapidly evolving. It would be useful to take a wider range of media platforms to get a broader insight to obtain a better understanding of China's growing cultural influence in Africa. Moreover, a large-scale survey might help to collect Kenyan people's perceptions about China's state-driven cultural and media investment in Africa.

A case study of China's increasing culture and media involvement in Kenya can provide a general picture of China's expanding cultural influence in the age of globalization. However, this selection is less than perfect because Kenya is only a small, if a highly influential nation of the African countries. Additional studies are required to conceptualize how cultural, political, and economic forces, both at home and aboard, contribute to China's growing cultural influence in different countries.

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