



Discussion Paper

LIVE, TALK, FACES: AN ANALYSIS OF CCTV'S ADAPTION
TO THE AFRICAN MEDIA MARKET

Bob Wekesa and Zhang Yanqiu

Stellenbosch | May 2014

2/2014

ABSTRACT

This paper is part of the ongoing China Africa Reporting Project based at University of the Witwatersrand University's department of journalism which is committed to understanding China-Africa relations from a media narratives and engagements perspective. Views expressed are those of the authors. For correspondence, job.wekesa@gmail.com

The authors:

Bob Wekesa is a Research Associate at University of the Witwatersrand and reading for a doctoral degree in media and public diplomacy at Communication University of China.

Professor Zhang is Director at the African Media Research Centre and deputy dean at the Institute of Journalism and Communication at Communication University of China.

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INTRODUCTION: WHY THE STUDY CCTV AFRICA?

This discussion paper is a study on China Central Television – Africa (CCTV Africa), launched in January 2012. The paper seeks to find out the types of journalistic genres, practices and styles that CCTV Africa has employed in Africa.

The key Chinese media with a presence in Africa are: China Radio International (CRI, made first broadcast from Kenya in 2006), Xinhua News Agency (XNA, established a regional office in Kenya in 1986, re-calibrated into Africa regional headquarters in 2006), StarTimes (established first office in Rwanda in 2007), China Daily Africa edition (published since December 2012, launched January 2013 with African headquarters in Nairobi), China Africa magazine (set up an African office South Africa, 2012), People's Daily (set up Africa based in Johannesburg in 2011) and CCTV Africa.

The entry of Chinese news media into the African media-sphere has spawned a growing number of analyses – both in popular press and academic journals. Although literature is growing, scholarly studies on Chinese media are largely in their formative stages relative to studies on China-Africa links in other social sciences. Generic studies have been undertaken by various scholars to try and provide a bird's eye into the China-Africa media phenomenon notably, Wu (2012), Gagliardone, Repnikova and Stremlau (2010) and Farah and Mosher (2010). With specific reference to CCTV globally, Nelson (2013) makes a descriptive analyses of the broadcaster's global tentacles subsuming Africa. In the case of CCTV Africa, an overarching study taking an ethnographic approach has been contributed by Gagliardone (2013). Probably the first major study that drills down to content analysis is the paper by Xiaoling (2013) which focuses on CCTV's news bulletins. Zhang's discourse analysis drew content from a 21 day period in 2012, shortly after CCTV Africa went live.

This paper seeks to build on the literature to offer a more comprehensive picture of journalistic practices at CCTV Africa by extending into the channel's news, talk shows and features programming. By accounting for all the content available on CCTV Africa's electronic platforms for the 25 months between January 2012 and early January 2014, the paper proposes to explicate emerging journalistic practices in the early days of the broadcaster's Africa sojourn. Equally, the paper contributes the perspective of responses from other media on CCTV's arrival as well as the linking thread of CCTV's dynamics within China itself.

The insertion of Chinese media into the African mediasphere has attracted a flood of intense reporting by international and particularly western media. This would perhaps merit a thorough content analysis and audience survey in future with an eye on comparing how Chinese, African and Western media responded to these Chinese media forays into Africa. It is however sufficient for the current paper to illustrate responses by selected Western media though this may not be a singularly nuanced study that would account for all the responses. We deem this a necessary first step for the current paper precisely because we look to analyse the emerging Chinese media journalistic styles in Africa with special focus on CCTV.

However, even without the benefit of an empirical study, it would appear that the rolling out of CCTV Africa has attracted much more attention from its would be rivals (BBC, VoA, Deutsche Welle, France 24 and Al Jazeera). We indeed extend this line of thought to suppose that CCTV Africa elicited much more interest than the launch of other CCTV channels such as CCTV Arabic (July 2009), CCTV Russian (September 2009), CCTV Spanish and French (2004) and CCTV America (also 2012).

One factor explaining the intense focus on CCTV Africa could be that it was the first Chinese media channel to be broadcast from a news production centre outside China. However, this does not explain the whole story. Interpreting Farah and Mosher (2010) it can be said that the asymmetrical focus on CCTV Africa's African entry might have been seen as a threat to western media's long standing influence in Africa both in terms of audience share and journalistic philosophy.

This paper will therefore seek to address a number of emerging questions on China's journalistic practices: we shall compare and contrast what has been said by popular press and scholars against what emerges from analysis of CCTV Africa's two years of broadcasting from Africa. In doing so, we shall especially pay attention to the reportage of the CCTV Africa's launch by Western media outlets. Mindful of the fact that the China-Africa communications field is fledgling but growing rapidly, we shall also offer some scholarly perspectives on the topic.

It bears refraining that our major thrust is to explore what we learn from CCTV's five-plus-decades of broadcasting within China itself and hold this up to programming strategies and reporting leveraged to CCTV Africa. Of essence we shall investigate the media and journalistic philosophy underpinning the Chinese media system and how it pans out into CCTV premier in Africa.

APPROACH

We take a four step approach to the study: analysis of news media coverage of CCTV Africa's launch; analysis of scholarly literature on CCTV; content analysis of CCTV Africa and last but not least, discussion of these three levels and, comments on what we see as further research considerations.

In the first step, the authors used the search terms 'CCTV Africa' in the Google search engine and collected a total of 16 articles. 11 of the 16 articles were from Western media outlets and four were from African sources while one was from an international blog. The authors applied a loose framing analysis, first to break down the content into neater packages of categories and secondly, to afford a more incisive examination and assessment. By 'a loose framing analysis', we mean we shall not follow a rigorous approach as theorised by communication scholars of the media effects persuasion. Ideally, we would have undertaken a purist approach in which we would have sought to find out the central organising ideas uppermost on Western media reporting of CCTV Africa's launch. However, this would have distracted from the core objective of the study. We thus settled for mining emerging points of convergence, divergence and perspectives on the topic.

In sum, we latched on to the conception of news frames as persistency/frequency/consistency, selection/placement/contextualization, inclusion/exclusion/insertion/emphasis/elaboration (Wekesa 2013a drawing on the extensive framing scholarship). Essentially, these terms speak to a news frame as an idea or topic that can be seen occurring repeatedly from one news item to another and often over a substantial period of time. The upshot is that audiences may be influenced to see an issue, event or topic negatively or positively based on the frequency of a news frame. We identified the following 'loose' frames: 1) Economics; 2) Chinese media model/journalism; 3) Experimentation with new model in Africa and 4) Comparison/competition with other media.

Obviously, these frames are complementary, linked back and forth by interplay between the said frames. Categorization of frames is a convenient theoretical and methodological approach in a bid to drill down to the particularities of the sense-making employed by international media.

For the second step, the authors explored secondary literature ranging from Chinese media systems; China-Africa communication studies and specific studies on CCTV. After a brief introduction in which we share general phenomenon, we drilled down to themes, issues, challenges and opportunities informing CCTV's internationalization project.

The third and main step is essentially a content analysis of CCTV Africa's three main programming slots namely, *CCTV Live* (news and current affairs); *Faces of Africa* (features) and *Talk Africa* (debate and talk show). The content is derived from CCTV Africa's online archive videos.

In the fourth and fifth steps we discuss some of the findings and offer forward looking considerations.

NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF CCTV (AND OTHER CHINESE MEDIA) ENTRY

ECONOMICS

Because CCTV Africa is based in Nairobi, most news articles sought to make sense of this choice of location. There is a level of consensus that Kenya is doing ‘relatively’ well economically. China is Kenya’s leading investor and partner in communications (for instance StarTimes winning of a contract for the International Telecommunication Union-driven digital migration and the fact that the Kenyan government allocated radio broadcast airwaves to CRI in 2006). Chinese firms are heavily involved in infrastructure projects and that Kenya is a trading hub for the eastern Africa region (Bergeron-Oliver Huffington Post July 2011).

It was pointed out that Africa’s economic rise is the motivation for the entry of Chinese media and a matter that other international media would do well to consider (Bergeron-Oliver Huffington Post July 2011; Deutsche Welle January 2013). This was in the context of increased advertisement revenue that international media could tap into.

Several articles point out that the Chinese state is investing in a ‘multi-billion soft power push’ in Africa and globally. Media along with Confucius Institutes is seen as the cultural dimension of economic competition between China and the West (Branigan The Guardian December 2011, quoting Leadership Decision-Making Information of November 2011). Soft power is seen as a means of creating “a fertile business environment” (McKenzie September 2012 citing Jinghao Lu of the South African consultancy Frontier Advisory, and Yu-Shan Wu, South Africa Institute of International Affairs).

The figures specifically mentioned for the Chinese outbound soft power investments are £4bn, \$7 billion, 45 billion Yuan (Branigan The Guardian December 2011; Jacobs New York Times August 2012; Day Polityorg.za April 2013). Day supposes that these figures are for the “global expansion of Chinese state media in Africa” and the ambiguous phrasing of this supposition itself speaks to rather foggy knowledge of the Chinese party-state’s resource allocation for media projects in Africa and globally.

Most articles conflate Chinese media establishment in Africa with China’s pursuit for natural resources. This has occurred as governments in Europe and the United States scale back support for independent journalism in the developing world, with private broadcasters and newspapers closing foreign bureaus and/or retrenching staff (Jacobs New York Times August 2012; McKenzie CCN September 2012; Al Jazeera December 2012). Media expansion is seen not in isolation but as part of the “dramatic expansion of the presence of Chinese diplomats, peacekeepers, commercial actors and ordinary citizens” (Verhoeven and Gagliardone CNN December 2012).

This latest entry of Chinese media is seen as progression from the fact that China is Africa’s largest trading partner (trade volume of US\$ 166 billion in 2012) including as a leading investor in communication infrastructure, broadcasting upgrades and journalistic training (McKenzie CCN September 2012). China is seen as intent on shaping a narrative concomitant with its economic heft in Africa, after surpassing Western economies as the largest trading partner and as a means of countering the ‘neo-colonialist encroacher’ charge (Keita New York Times April 2012).

Lu points out that corporate social responsibility activity by Chinese companies such as Huawei Technologies assistance of a \$200,000 laboratory to University of Ghana are excluded from international media coverage of China in Africa (China Africa Project March 2013).

CHINESE MEDIA MODEL/JOURNALISM

A slant that speaks to a critical framing is at the headline level. A sample of some of the headlines speaks for itself: *Pursuing Soft Power, China Puts Stamp on Africa's News* (Jacobs August 2012 New York Times); *Journalists who left Citizen TV, KTN and NTV...are now crying* (Africa News Post October 2012) and *Africa's Free Press Problem* (Keita New York Times April 2012). Some articles seem to critique an ostensibly, inherently negative view of Western media coverage of China in Africa (for instance *Will Western media report good news about the Chinese in Africa?* (Lu China Africa Project March 2013) while others seem to call for a sober response to the issue, for instance *Are we Getting China-Africa Media Relations Wrong?* (Gagliardone CNN 2012).

A good number of the articles express 'fear, alarm, worry' (especially by human rights activists, media freedom advocates and Western officials) of 'a different kind of journalism' that Chinese media look to introduce.

Chinese media, through censorship and tight 'centralised' controls, avoids criticism of the Chinese government and Chinese companies (McKenzie CCN September 2012 citing a Kenyan CCTV anchor and Lu Jinghao of Frontier Advisory; Jacobs CNN 2012 citing Tom Rhodes of CPJ; Day Polity.za April 2013). Verhoeven and Gagliardone (CNN December 2012) indeed advise that Chinese media 'should uncover malfeasance in Chinese companies. It was pointed out that CRI in Kenya for instance has to get clearance from Beijing before stories are aired (Deutsche Welle July 2013). Some of the articles describe in detail the Chinese propaganda and control systems (Day Polity.za April 2013 for instance) and this feeds into the anticipated censorship and self-censorship journalism that would be at play in Africa.

Dynamics domestic to China are seen as blind spots for Chinese media and the cases cited include: Tibet, human rights (the blind activist Chen Guangcheng case is an example) political developments and democracy (such as the manoeuvring for power among the party's top leaders with reference to the Bo Xilai case). There was little or no coverage by CCTV America on these stories. Rather, the majority of stories are positive such as state visits or less controversial stories is pointed out as an indication of how Chinese media would operate in Africa (Jacobs New York Times August 2012; Fromer CNN August 2012). The case in which CCTV gave scant attention to a deadly grenade attack in Kenya when local media covered it as a big story is pointed at as an example of avoidance of negative narratives (Bergeron-Oliver July 2011). China, it was argued, has "earned a reputation as one of the world's most restrictive countries for journalism" (Jacobs New York August 2012).

Alarm is raised about 'positive reporting' as an 'acute' challenge in the context of China's training of African journalists to follow the Chinese policy script (Rhodes CPJ EA June 2012; Deutsche Welle July 2013). While seeing some strong points in positive journalism, some urge that the other important function of journalism as a provider of checks and balances and as a watchdog should not be ignored (for instance Verhoeven and Gagliardone CNN December 2012). The challenge of covering only positive stories when journalists have no control of negative incidents is put forth as a difficulty faced by Kenyan journalists working for Chinese media (Deutsche Welle July 2013).

Incredulity is expressed about the possibility of Chinese media to resonate in Kenya (Bergeron-Oliver July 2011) and reluctance of Kenyan editors for uptake of Chinese media content (read Xinhua News Agency). A Kenyan editor is captured in the statement: "Kenyans are sceptical of free lunch...especially when it's made in China" (Jacobs New York Times August 2012 exemplifying with China's dalliance with "brutal government of Omar Hassan al-Bashir" of Sudan). The failure of CCTV managers to respond to inquiries as well as Kenyan journalists opting to speak off the record is implied as a tell-tale secretive Chinese media agenda (The Guardian December 2011; Deutsche Welle September 2013).

It was proposed that for China to have an audience impact in Africa, it would have to change or alter its policy outlook (The Guardian December 2011 citing a China-Africa communications scholar). Verhoeven and Gagliardone (December 2012) counsel that Chinese journalists should not “feel too attached to their idea of telling upbeat stories (such) that they will miss many opportunities to learn about the complexities of the continent”.

One sees mixed analyses of what constitutes Chinese journalism. On the one hand, it was pointed out that Chinese media have abandoned strenuous ideological content and embraced some forms of Western news production values. On the other hand it was adjudged that ideology still overrides impartiality and that propaganda remains key feature (Jacobs New York Times August 2012, exemplifying with avoidance of the word ‘democracy’ in Chinese media during the Arab Spring; Day Polityorg.za April 2013 citing Reporters without Borders’ 2012 press freedom index).

Fears are expressed about the exportation of a propaganda approach of journalism. To bolster this view, Hu Zhanfan, president of CCTV is quoted thus: “The first social responsibility and professional ethic of media staff should be understanding their role clearly and being a good mouthpiece...journalists who think of themselves as professionals, instead of as propaganda workers, are making a fundamental mistake about identity” (Jacobs New York Times August 2012; The Guardian December 2011).

Most articles see the Chinese state’s support for African state broadcasters and government communication infrastructure as extending “China’s poor press freedom record at home” in to African countries where “freedoms are fragile” (Jacobs New York August 2012, Tom Rhodes CPJ EA June 2012; Deutsche Welle July 2013; Verhoeven and Gagliardone CNN December 2012). Cases of Equatorial Guinea, Zimbabwe, Angola and Ethiopia using Chinese communication technology to clamp down on media freedom are given to support this argument, and in one article, an exiled Ethiopian TV producer gives voice to these concerns. Keita (New York Times April 2012) connects Chinese economic links with Ethiopia and Rwanda to the practice where journalists have been silenced from reporting certain topics or have been imprisoned and some websites blocked. However one of the articles points out that such deleterious support in the communication infrastructure sector should not be seen as uniform across the continent as in the case of Ghana where Chinese support in the telecommunication sector does not seem to have rolled back press freedom (Gagliardone CNN April 2012). It was pointed out that while China was candid about its internet control practices in the interest of socio-political stability, some Western companies (such as Cisco Systems and Hughes Networks) were involved¹ in the particular case of Ethiopia in what was described as “hypocrisy of Western capitalism” (Gagliardone CNN April 2012).

By implying reifying of ideology, Verhoeven and Gagliardone (CNN December 2012) argue that “entrenchment of old positions and repetition of sterile debates” might cost the journalism field an opportunity to reflect on the ethos of good journalism that Chinese media entry into Africa portends.

Most of the news coverage sought to make sense of why Nairobi, Kenya, was chosen as the African regional headquarters of Chinese media. The reasons advanced for this choice included the fact that Kenyan media operate with relative freedom from government interference in comparison to other African countries and is the news hub for English (Bergeron-Oliver Huffington Post July 2011)².

¹ China-Africa communications scholar Ignio Gagliardone writing in Huffington Post explains that the two US companies were involvement in 2006 in the development of the ‘Network of district administrations’ (Woredanet), an e-government project that employs internet-based and satellite communications technologies for connectivity between Addis Ababa, the capital and the peripheries. The salutary aspects of the project are ostensibly sullied by its being used for surveillance on citizens and being used for political ends. It appears both Chinese firms and Cisco and Hughes were involved in setting up the project but focus on the deleterious dimensions of the project was trained more on the Chinese firms than these Western companies as literature shows.

² In choosing Nairobi as the base for CCTV Africa, Chinese authorities are following the same logic that many international media (BBC, Reuters, CNN, etc.) made use to station for their Africa bureaus. Over and above relative press freedom in Kenya, other factors include central location on the continent, proximity to the war torn countries that need to be covered (Somalia, South Sudan, DRC), relative political stability, fairly good internet connections, the fact that Kenya is also serves as the base for UN agencies (UN-Habitat and UNEP) that are sources of news, among others. We must point out however that Johannesburg South Africa is increasingly challenging Nairobi’s ‘media centre of Africa’ stature – this can be an interesting further research question.

EXPERIMENTING WITH AN ALTERNATIVE JOURNALISM MODEL IN AFRICA

Chinese media are seen as introducing “a radical challenge to Western style journalism” (Verhoeven and Gagliardone CNN December 2012). While this would be seen as challenging Western normative journalistic practices, some welcomed it as “bringing fresh wind into the African media sector” (Deutsche Welle, July 2013 citing BBC’s Mary Harper). Verhoeven and Gagliardone (CNN 2012) are on the same wavelength, advancing the view that China in the African media sphere presents an opportunity “for experimentation and mutual learning and...soul searching by the international media, whether Asian, Arab, African or Western”. This is seen as providing a possibility for Africa to change China rather than the unilaterally reverse view.

The byword for the new journalism CCTV is introducing is ‘positive reporting’ with Salim Amin of A24 (a continent-wide media house), one of CCTV Africa’s partners pointing out that this constitutes: “focusing on African leaders, African heroes, African entrepreneurs, positive stories about business and sport, and music and the art, the environment, health...to tell very different stories about Africa that a lot of other international media houses are not doing at the moment” (Al Jazeera December 2012).

Most commentators agreed that the entry of Chinese media is motivated by the failure of Western media to offer Africans a ‘correct image’ of Chinese success stories and economic partnership, and culture and thus the need for China to ‘explain itself’ and create better understanding (Rhodes CPJEA June 2012 citing Chinese ambassador to Nairobi, Liu Guangyuan; Jacobs August 2012 citing former Chinese president Hu Jintao; BBC December 2012). This would call for China to command control of their own voice and to counter what is considered Western media’s biases, distortion, lies, untruths, stereotypes, prejudices and assumptions (McKenzie CCN September 2012 citing Lu of Frontiers Advisory and Xinhua News Agency and managing editor of CCTV Africa; Jacobs New York Times August 2012 citing former Chinese media official Li Changchung; Verhoeven and Gagliardone CNN December 2012).

The question as to whether the entry of Chinese media would “ result in a fresh, alternative, and balanced perspective on the continent” is posed with the hindsight of Al-Jazeera’s redefinition of media landscape when it made its entry in 2006 (Rhodes CPJ EA June 2012).

It was pointed out that Chinese authorities have in recent years allowed investigative journalism and that CCTV Africa was operating with more editorial latitude (Jacobs New York Times August 2012; Bergeron-Oliver Huffington Post July 2011 citing Rhodes of CPJ). A Kenyan newspaper photo editor agreed that Xinhua pictures had changed for the better over time but that quality and editorial policy challenges remained (Jacobs New York Times August 2012).

What is characterized as alternative journalism constitutes ‘objectivity’; coverage of as much of Africa as possible and not just China’s closest friends such as Sudan, being more detailed; awareness of African’s weariness with the West’s limited and negative reporting; focus on collective achievements and mobilization of public support for the states; limiting of negative news (Rhodes CPJEA June 2012 citing Kenya’s former vice president Kalonzo Musyoka). It was argued that “China and African governments tend to agree that the press should focus on collective achievements and mobilize public support for the state, rather than report on divisive issues or so-called negative news” (Keita New York Times April 2012). Training of African journalists serving on Chinese media is seen as a means of furthering these goals (Itumbi, China Africa Reporting Project November 2011). Against counterpoints that this is no less than propaganda journalism, Zhou Xisheng of Xinhua News Agency equally countered that “what really matters is which perspective you are coming from” (Jacobs New York Times August 2012).

The managing editor of CCTV Africa, Pang Xinhua was quoted pushing back on accusations of censorship by insisting that the CCTV Africa editorial board is “dominated by Kenyans who make most

of the decisions on the coverage” (McKenzie CCN September 2012) while admitting that the editorial angling was one-sided “we tell a positive story of African people”. A Kenyan editor explained that CCTV Africa would cover crises such as wars and hunger but that a deliberate tilt would be undertaken to show potential solutions (McKenzie CCN September 2012). The anticipated narrative would be one where China is not portrayed as an exploiter but opportunity (McKenzie CCN September 2012). However, Verhoeven and Gagliardone (CNN December 2012) argue that this alternative reporting risks the pitfall of replacing a stereotypically negative image of Africa with a stereotypically positive depiction, seminally introducing an afro-pessimism versus afro-optimism prism. Shek (Al Jazeera January 2013) captured this paradox by quoting Martin Plaut a research fellow at Institute of Commonwealth Studies thus: “The western media tend to be too concerned about the bad news. The Chinese tend to be rather too concerned about the good news”.

Expansion into the African media is seen as part of a global push especially after the image challenges experienced by China during the 2008 Olympic Games. This led to strategies subsuming hiring of local journalists and experts in foreign countries and initially targeting opinion shapers. Another strategy pointed out is for Chinese media to focus on non-news programming to increase appeal (The Guardian December 2011 citing journalism scholars). Generally, the alternative journalism offered by Chinese media would be in the mould of the optimism attendant to the ‘rising Africa’ narrative away from the ‘hopeless continent’ narratives of yesteryears (Shek Al Jazeera 2013 citing the often quoted Economist magazine headline of 2000: ‘Africa, the hopeless continent’).

It was proposed that to counter some of the supposedly negative effects of China on African media, there is need for support for African political and media reforms ostensibly from the West (Keita New York Post April 2012)³. Is Western negative reporting of Africa just what Chinese officials want to advance or is there evidence that Western media go out of their way to frame Africa negatively? Virtually all scholarly commentary from China-Africa communications sub field, save for Farah and Mosher (2010) seem to affirm that the bulk of Western media’s ‘ideas of newsworthiness, portrays (Africans) in negative light’ and that ‘Africans have pressed this claim for decades, and academic analysts have supported their claim’ (Brautigam 2011:7). One of the earliest works on the subject by Franks and Ribet (2009:132) cites former African correspondent for The Times, The Independent, and The Economist thus: “pressures facing Western journalists to focus on negative stories (dictate that they) [...] overlook positive trends in Africa. This often results in popular depictions of Africans as poverty stricken, corrupt and incapable of managing their own affairs properly leaving them as easy prey for the callous and untrustworthy Chinese.”

COMPETITION WITH OTHER MEDIA

It was pointed out that African countries receive scant coverage from international media and that there was a gap in the absence of a regional TV to cater for an African audience (Bergeron-Oliver Huffington Post July 2011). This perspective however does not seem to take cognisance of the presence of international/Western media in Nairobi, some of them using Nairobi as the base for African operations. The Foreign Correspondents Association of Eastern Africa (FCEA) lists among other international media in Nairobi as: AFP, Al Jazeera, ARD German Radio/Television, Reuters, Associated Press, Agencia EFE (Spanish News Agency), BBC, CNBC, Christian Science Monitor, South African Broadcasting Corporation, ZDF German TV, German News Agency, De Volksrant, RTL Nieuws, Dutch television,

³ We venture to comment that a differentiation should be made about the so-called Western negative reporting. Where press freedom and human rights is concerned, negative reporting might be taken as an extension of China’s own battle with the West over interpretation of these ideals. On the whole, sections of Western media often ignore positive stories as a consequence of a media philosophy that is big on media as watchdog as opposed to the media for development or give them only token coverage and this can be seen as an imbalance in the reporting. Straightforward negative reporting can be seen in the focus on wars, disease and poverty as the selling stories in line with the adversarial-liberal-polarised media philosophy obtaining in the West.

VOXCOM, New York Times, Financial Times, Radio Televisione Italiana, Bloomberg, Kyodo News, The Daily Telegraph, Swedish National Television, The Times and Norwegian Broadcasting. We mention all these media to drive home the point that Western media still retains a strong presence in Africa even in the wake of cutbacks.

A reference that captured the worries that Chinese (and other emerging) media portended for the West is from former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton: “We are engaged in an information war, and we are losing that war,” (Jacobs New York Times August 2012).

Chinese media competing with Western media was writ all over the articles discussing the topic. The entry of Chinese media was seen as a challenge to Western media which had hitherto enjoyed a longer track record in Africa generally and in Kenya specifically. It was thought that CCTV was looking to follow in the footsteps of Al-Jazeera’s 2006 entry into African broadcasting space, but also that Al-Jazeera was planning to set up a Swahili language channel to up the competition (Bergeron-Oliver Huffington Post July 2011; Verhoeven and Gagliardone CNN December 2012). Indeed, CCTV is counselled to ape the editorial independence of Al-Jazeera if it is to succeed in Africa (for instance Day polity.org.co.za April 2013).

Most of the commentators saw the entry of CCTV as replacing the then downsizing, retrenching and shrinking Western media such as BBC, France 24 and that increasingly, Kenyans were consuming “global perambulations” of Chinese media (Rhodes CPJ EA June 2012; Jacobs New York Times August 2012).

Worries were also expressed on the ideological front. That Chinese media would advance autocratic media practices and supplant Western media’s public interest functions. That Chinese media were taking these media models to the US doorsteps for instance as seen in the launch of CCTV America was broached as further evidence (Jacobs New York Times August 2012 citing Douglas Farah who has written an academic paper on the topic). However, it was pointed out that Kenyan audiences remained devoted to local media as well as CNN, BBC and Al-Jazeera although Chinese media were gaining momentum (Jacobs New York Times August 2012 citing Vivien Marles of Inter Media Africa, a research firm). It is generally held that Western journalism would be more welcome in Africa than would the Chinese version of journalism.

Examples were given to show a vying contest between Chinese and the Western media on a soft power mission to capture ‘the hearts and minds’ of Africans. These include al-Hurra, a US-owned Arabic language satellite television beaming into the Middle East from 2004 and France 24’s going global in 2006. However these two initiatives are appraised positively on the editorial independence continuum relative to Chinese media’s supposed advancement of a communist state’s agenda (Day Polityorg.za April 2013). Iran’s international English news channel, Press TV is another channel seen to be on a soft power mission.

Various motivations for Western media to focus on negative stories while Chinese media focus on positive stories are offered. One is that both Western media and audiences are hard-wired to Africa as a source of negativity which is difficult to change (Jinghao China Africa Project March 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Having gleaned, collated and categorized the four broad angles that inform international new media reportage and analysis of CCTV Africa’s launch (along with Chinese media generally), we now turn to scholarly works on the phenomena. Our thrust here is to further narrow scope with an eye for the following: Chinese media and journalism paradigms with an infusion of perspectives on their African sojourn; studies on CCTV generally and CCTV Africa specifically. Ultimately, we seek to gain insights

into the dynamics in Chinese journalism specifically and media at a broader level and how they impact CCTV Africa's silk road to Africa.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

A number of studies have concluded that African media cover China more positively than negatively and that Chinese media too seem to cover Africa in similar version (for instance Wekesa (2013a), East Africa; Jura and Kaluzynska (2013), Angola and Zambia; Zhang (2010), China Daily and Xinhuanet and Liang (2010), China Daily and People's Daily to mention two).

However a recent online content analysis study concludes that there are many instances of negative perceptions by Chinese netizens (which might be equally true for African netizens) sometimes stretching the limits of bigotry and racial prejudice. These sobering findings by Jinghao and van Staden (2013) might require that content analysis of mainstream media eschew an exclusively positive versus negative split given that this might not reflect perceptions at the crucial 'downstairs' audience level. Indeed the findings of Shubo and Ronning (2013) based on two surveys by *China Youth Daily* and *Sina.com.cn* (2006) and *Global Times* (2009) call for a re-think if not sophistication in future positive-negative perception studies given a key finding that "the party-state's guidelines can also be observed in the main trends of the (Chinese) media's reporting on China-Africa issues." This bolsters Jinghao and van Staden's findings implied in the artificiality inherent in using mainstream media for perceptions mining.

While Hu and Ji (2012:33) put forth the figure for Chinese media investment abroad at \$6 billion, Xialong (2013:5) suggests a price tag of RMB 15 billion (\$2.19), ambivalently suggesting this includes monies allocated to *People's Daily's* international expansion. For Lew and Chong (2010:7) the media projects constitute a "war chest" of 45 billion yuan (\$6.6 billion). Nelson (2013:17) quoting the father of soft power, Harvard Professor Joseph Nye suggests the figure for public diplomacy might be \$8.9 billion. Indeed the matter of how much China has invested in soft power globally and in Africa specifically will remain speculative for some time to come.

Notably, it is clear that Chinese media engagement has drastically shifted over time. While researchers such as Banda (2009:53) analyzed Chinese media support to Africa particularly in terms of training and equipment as intent to "promoting certain kinds of positive representations of China in Africa", the ball has clearly moved on to Chinese media undertaking their own representation and only secondarily relying on African media (see Wekesa 2013b for trends and patterns).

CHINESE MEDIA AND JOURNALISM GENERALLY - MEDIA GOING OUT

While Chinese communication scholars confirm that an outbound Chinese media strategy is underway, this phenomenon – called media going out – is global rather than limited to Africa as some news reports cast it. Hu and Ji (2012) point out that the project was intensified in 2009 for a dual purpose: to combat negative portrayal by Western media and to create Chinese media conglomerates to challenge dominant Western media. Other scholars demarcate 2001 as the commencement of the Chinese media going out project (Nelson 2013 for instance).

Would the Chinese media be looking for returns on investment with hindsight of this hefty overseas media expansion? Nelson (2013 citing Ying Zhu, a China media scholar) proposes commercial success is one of the reasons. But as we have argued elsewhere, the very fact of lack of advertisement in CCTV Africa segments, a matter also discernible in other Chinese media, suggests commerce might not be top of the agenda – at least not at this point in time (see Wekesa 2013b:75). Still, the elevation in 2012 of Liu Qibao, an economist, to head top Publicity Department (Information Office of the State Council) may have something to do with looking at the bottom line in the media generally including overseas

dimensions. Mention is worthwhile here that Li Changchun, the head of this crucial media bureaucracy, is largely credited as the architect of many reforms in the communications sector during his ten year tenure that included his sitting on the Chinese Communist Party Politburo.

Others see this strategy through the lenses of public diplomacy and its sobriquets such as soft power and cultural diplomacy. The literature indicates that the initiative kicked off around 2010 with former premier Wen Jiabao indicating that China would do more to promote Chinese culture abroad as a means of shaping perceptions and with media being a major cog in these motivations.

However, a limitation that Chinese media would have to battle with is that ‘many nations’ most effective public diplomacy activities are often independent of their governments’ (Zhang 2008:12 citing the cases of France 24 or CNN).

The point to underline is that Chinese media such as CCTV are intent not just on establishing a presence in Africa but globally, as indeed evident in CCTV’s news production centres in Washington and London and 70 bureaus around the world. But because Africa seems torn between the West and China, one sees Western media seeming to suggest that the African media sphere needs to be protected from Chinese encroachment, conveniently forgetting for instance that CCTV correspondents are to be found in virtually all the important commercial and political capitals of the world today. Zhang (2013:9 citing the Economist and noted China-Africa scholar He Wenping of the think tank, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) suggests that Chinese media entry into Africa offers the framers of Chinese public diplomacy a testing ground and stepping stone for construction of a discourse that China hopes to be an alternative globally. The supposition in this ‘crossing the river by feeling the stones’ approach is that ‘the level of expertise and technique are lower there (Africa), while in the West it is harder for China to compete’ (Xiaoling 2013:10).

However while pushing back on supposed negative Western framing of China is a key motivation, the Chinese party-state is also said to be keen to leverage a media approach to lessen ideological tensions and disputes and instead project a peaceful and ‘harmonious’ rise in line with the Confucian philosophy (Hu and Ji 2012:33). It is probably for this reason that Chinese media beaming abroad are viewed as averse to selling any particular political and social values to the world at least not in an overt way (for instance Xiaoling 2008).

Chinese media systems, African media systems

It is a statement on the power and longevity of perceptions that Chinese media is regarded as propaganda machines and no more. This is despite various scholars providing compelling examples of how Chinese media have transformed since the commencement of the reform and opening up period from the late 1970s. Hugo de Burgh, a well-known Sinologist suggested that Western media are often wide off the mark when commenting on Chinese media because of ‘wilful ignorance’ of developments in that country. This, he says, is as a reflection of long held prejudices that block a realistic view of the media ecology in China (International Media Support 2008:15).

What has underpinned the transformation of Chinese journalism for close to 35 years? Wanning (2007) points out that media dynamics toward commercialization has spawned journalistic genres that such as expose, compassionate and investigative journalism touching off discussions on issues such as social equality and economic justice. Noted political economy of communication scholar Zhao Yuezhi points out that analyses have often underestimated the courage and ingenuity of Chinese media professionals in exposing official corruption, stirring up public debate and crusading against social ills (International Media Support 2008). Hadland and Shinxin (2012:318) concur that while content may have been left in the hands of the state even as other aspects of Chinese media such as advertisement, printing and distribution were deregulated, “this didn’t prevent the emergence of a vibrant journalism tradition in China.” Nelson (2013) points out that the appointment of a seasoned editor, Hu Zhanfan in 2011, as

head of CCTV to replace a predecessor who came from without the profession might have been an indication of a push towards professionalization of the channel.

Probably lack of appreciation of the strides made by the Chinese journalistic genres away from an orthodox version of communist party control is because the state still plays a crucial role in media management. Hadland and Shinxin (2012:253) points to a dual track media control system in the sense that media remains largely state-owned and state-controlled and that content, particularly on sensitive issues must go through a filtering system. However Shubo and Ronning (2013:118-119) in a study of Chinese media coverage of Africa, characterize Chinese media as a complicated mix in which spontaneity and diversity calls to mind a libertarian model or “half free” style on the one hand. On the other hand, they point out that Chinese media “is used instrumentally” and therefore fall into the Soviet-Communist model (citing Schramm 1956).

Despite advances made at home, various scholars still raise issues with the credibility gap extant in Chinese media if nothing else, for being part of government, a unique trait in a global situation where media is conceived as best to play its role when de-linked from governments – at least at the conceptual level. Xiaoling (2008:12) is of the view that the journalistic tenets of real-time global communication marked by accuracy, objectivity and timeliness may be breached in view of the control systems that require clearance for certain topics both at home and abroad. Lye and Chong (2010) are of the view that Chinese media would have to contend with the tendency to be assessed “according to certain Western standards and norms.”

Shubo and Ronning’s (2013) study relates to a content analysis of China-Africa issues in Chinese media. Their depiction of the role of agencies such as the Department of Publicity (initially known as Central Propaganda Department) in amplifying narratives of the state’s African policies speak to the potential for the Chinese state to also seek media such as CCTV Africa as a means of outbound propaganda. In the African context, Wekesa (2013b:66) reviews both official documents and secondary literature to conclude that “the traits of the Chinese media model include focus on stories that showcase China as peace-loving; emphasis on commonality of China and Africa; accentuating mutual benefits and win-win principles; focus on cultural exchanges; and China as a development role model.”

Solidarity with the developing world

One of the works that frowns on the Chinese media spread into Africa, Asia and Latin America is by Farah and Mosher (2010). Appreciating the Chinese leadership’s goal to correct a supposed deliberately biased and slanderous portrayal of the developing world, the authors suggest that the Chinese state-party is rolling out a developing world media alliance against the West. In fact this anti-West theme is not a secret from the China end of things and indeed from some African countries as many have openly complained in much the same terms as Farah and Mosher put it. Citing Richard Dowden a veteran Africa correspondent for *The Time, The Independent and The Economist*, Franks and Ribet (2009:132) stated there was confirmation of Western journalists being pressured “to focus on negative stories at the risk of overlooking positive trends in Africa”. Indeed, CNN more than Voice of America or BBC is said to have been the target for the global prominence that CCTV would challenge (Nelson 2013) this being an indication of from whence perceptions of negativity is most cringing for top Chinese media officials.

Lamentations about Western media’s negative or limited coverage of African countries has been explained as one of the opportunities that Chinese media seek to take advantage of. Xiaoling (2008) and Gagliardone (2013) point out that compared with CNN and BBC, they (Chinese media) report more on the developing countries and within that the relationship of China and African media is framed as one of allies. However, the uptake of the call to positive journalism among sections of the African journalistic fraternity is not always assured. As Gagliardone, Stremlau and Nkurumah (2012:189) found out, “the references made by both Ghanaian and Chinese policymakers to ‘positive reporting’ and to greater

cooperation between countries in the Global South to redress a Western dominated flow of information appear to have found little resonance among journalists in Ghana.” On the other hand however and within the Chinese media ecology, Shubo and Ronning (2013) find that solidarity with Africans is a stable theme in Chinese coverage of Africa.

CCTV SPECIFIC STUDIES

HISTORY

When viewed from the viewpoint of media reporting of a launch, it may appear that CCTV’s arrival in the African media market is a straightforward case of Chinese media seeking to flex muscle. A closer analysis as we have seen transiently above is that this is a subset of three decades of transformations of Chinese media attendant to the transition from a socialist central planning model to a market inclined one (Yong 2009). For instance, it has been pointed out that the immediate trigger for CCTV’s going global might have been as a result of a wake-up call after Xinhua News Agency launched CNC World, its TV version in 2009. Up till then, Xinhua’s remit in the Chinese media set up was limited to text and picture distribution, until, as Guo and Lye (2011:i) point out (Xinhua News Agency) “managed to break into TV broadcasting by obtaining permission from the central leadership, overstepping the authority of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT).” However, if we go back in time, we see three phases that CCTV has undergone: 1) establishment in 1958 as a mouthpiece of the Communist party; 2) liberalisation and commercialisation from 1978 onwards 3) that CCTV was initially established in 1958 as the ‘throat and tongue’ of the Communist Party of China but started embracing liberalization, commercialization and 3) internationalisation beginning with South East Asia broadcasts from 1990 and eventually to the rest of the world as stated in the introduction.

Table: Key CCTV milestones towards internationalization

Year	Milestone/developments
1958	CCTV launched as Beijing Television, mainly ideological broadcasts
1978	Renamed China Central Television (popular simply as CCTV) as part of reform and opening up. Increased news content
1979	CCTV starts experimenting with the commercialization/marketization model by attracting advertisement
1983	First broadcast of Spring Festival Gala shows now a hugely popular staple for ushering in the Chinese Lunar new year
1998	Six part documentary known as River Elegy (Hensheng) goes on air challenging certain cultural notions of Chinese culture and civilization
1990	New channel for East Asian audience marks CCTV’s first overseas channel (although an earlier initiative had targeted overseas Chinese and Taiwanese audience)
1991	A drama series drawing on the Cultural Revolution and named Yearnings (Kewang) goes on air to popular acclaim
1992	CCTV 4 an international Chinese channel launched; distribution links forged with Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation (US)
1993	Major editorial, human resource and financial reforms get underway;

	pioneering magazine programme, 'East Time and Space' goes on air
1994	'In Focus' or 'Focal Point' a trail blazing investigative program soon to be followed by other innovative programmes such as 'News Probe' (1996)
1996	Oriental Time Space, a kind of therapeutic TV show goes on air in which ordinary people can pour out their sorrows to a sympathetic anchor and a live audience
1997	First live broadcast (72 hours) to mark the handover of Hong Kong back to China from the UK
2001	State Administration for Radio Film and Television (SARFTI) announces the 'media going out' policy
2004	French and Spanish channels launched
2008	Sichuan earthquake and Beijing Olympics establish CCTV as a significant international player (exclusives and rebroadcasts)
2009	Arabic and Russian channels go on air
2012	CCTV Africa launched in Nairobi followed shortly by the launch of CCTV America

Compiled by authors from various sources cited in this paper

Xinhua's diversifications into television seems to have opened the floodgates with CRI, a formerly radio only outlet dabbling into TV by launching China International Broadcasting Network and engaging in television dubbings such as *moudoudou na wakwezake* (Chinese soap opera translated into Swahili – moudodou and her in-laws) and with the *People's Daily* following suit in May 2010 with establishment of a suit of online platforms in various languages as well as *People's Television*. Thus, rather than being the monolithic voices of the Chinese state as they have been perceived, Chinese media are engaged in competition of their own. Indeed, an analysis of the different approaches and audience share of the five main state-owned Chinese media in Africa and elsewhere globally remains an underexplored area save for a transient comment by (Xiaoling 2013) to the effect that while *China Daily* and *Xinhuanet* have a tendency towards positive news on Africa, negative reporting outweighs positive reporting on many occasions. Indeed another potentially productive inquisition would be to take an area study approach and look at how CCTV is performing in Africa, Latin America, North America, Europe, Middle East, South East Asia and Russia.

CCTV has seen many changes since its establishment in 1958. Saying "power must be exercised under open sunlight", Sun Yunsheng, a former vice president of CCTV pinpointed CCTV's investigative programme, 'Focus' (Jiodian Fangtan) that unearths social ills especially in the public service as an example of reforms towards a watchdog function of the media (International Media Support 2008:8). Some of this investigative reporting has led to disciplinary action against some officials. In addition, Zhao Yuezhi points out that the roll out of the hugely popular and synchronized Spring Festival Gala (aired on CCTV on the evening of the commencement of the Chinese new year since 1983) amounts to the an 'indoctrination' kind of journalism, by which she implies the leveraging of a collective event for infusing of the ethos of the Communist Party of China (CPC) through entertaining programming (International Media Support 2008:11). The Spring Festival Gala is but one among other increasingly popular TV shows on Chinese television.

Many of the changes in Chinese media are a result of new media paradigms in a global context. Former CCTV vice president Sun Yunsheng for instance told a conference that the 2007 execution of for Iraq

leader Saddam Hussein that was filmed on mobile phones and widely distributed worldwide including in China posed a major challenge to CCTV as it demonstrated challenges with controlling the circulation of globally significant events (International Media Support 2008, other similar events that spurred transformation include the 9/11 US terror attacks and the war in Afghanistan). Earlier, in 2003, limiting coverage on the SARS outbreak and the criticism it elicited, served to hasten more openness in CCTV's (and other state media) editorial policies (see Nelson 2013 citing Ying Zhu, author of *"Two Billion Eyes: the Story of China Central Television"*).

JOURNALISTIC STYLE

The view from other parts of the world and more so the West is that there is no journalism going on in China. Westminster University professor Hugo de Burgh told a conference that he was greeted with incredulity whenever he mentioned that he studied Chinese media "as if there were nothing to study but propaganda" and that "the concept Chinese journalist must be an oxymoron" (International Media Support 2008:16).

Former vice president of CCTV Sun Yunsheng alluded to the cautious journalism practiced by his channel when he explained that the media not only have an obligation to fulfil the 'right to know' role, but that this must be balanced with releasing news and information only after ascertaining 'truthfulness' (International Media Support 2008:10). This is clearly one of the differences between Chinese journalistic practices and Western paradigms and in the African context, a number of Western media have been rightly accused of blowing out of proportion some events (the case where CNN had to apologise to Kenyan audience). The cost in this gate keeping pursuit for stability and the principles of 'responsible, fair and objective' journalism is what has drawn years of criticism since it entails officially sanctioned censorship.

CCTV AFRICA

Xiaoling (2013:7) studied CCTV Africa between its launch in January 2012 and April 2012 pointing out that CCTV has shifted from wishing only to be heard to creating a new discourse that "can conquer global discussion of norms and values" and to challenge the obtaining world order. This new discourse shift is seen as crucial in winning the hearts and minds of Africans whose source of information on China has traditionally come from Western news sources. In probably the most comprehensive study, Gagliardone (2013) concludes that CCTV Africa heralds the first case (in recent years) where resources have been allocated for a pan African television news and features coverage.

It has indeed been pointed out that one of the value propositions for CCTV Africa is that it offers insightful information thanks not only to its close relations with African political leaders but also its avoidance of narratives that would disappoint African leaders (Xiaoling 2013; Wekesa 2013b). Various scholars (Wekesa 2013b; Gagliardone 2013) have reached consensus that localization of aspects of news production, for instance by having African reporters and anchors, is equally a draw in 'winning the hearts and minds' of media consumers.

Why has CCTV Africa's news programme, *Africa Live* opted to cover events such as political turmoil and wars more or less as they occur rather than lending a positive spin as the case would be in China? (Xiaoling 2013:17) advances this question as the motivation for the need to attract international audiences and adds that the talk show programme, *Talk Africa*, equally airs debates on topics "such as elections and democracy that are not able to make their way to the talk show at home." Writing on the global expansion of CCTV, Nelson (2013) concurs that much more latitude is afforded to the station's outbound broadcasts than the case is with domestic content. Citing the CCTV Africa Bureau Chief Song Jianing, Gagliardone (2013:32) points out that news coverage of negative news coming from places like

Somalia and Democratic Republic of Congo also provides angles for positive aspects, for instance efforts at conflict resolution. CCTV Africa seems to have sidestepped the supposition that it would focus only on positive reporting in the mould of exclusively encouraging an emphasis on collective achievements while overlooking diverse (read contentious) issues as this might have had challenges gaining traction in Africa (Gagliardone 2013).

CONTENT REVIEW OF CCTV AFRICA

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The location of CCTV Africa regional headquarters in Nairobi gives coverage of Kenyan news and features an upper hand relative to other countries. Indeed one hears comments such as CCTV Africa is really “CCTV Kenya”. However, CCTV is not the only broadcaster that can be accused for this Kenya-centricity as other international broadcasters seem to give Kenyan stories higher coverage probably based on the fact that news production teams based in Nairobi cannot resist the temptation to cover events or stories happening right in front of them.

AFRICA LIVE

A review of the news and current affairs slot, *Africa Live*, disabuses the notion that CCTV would focus only on positive reporting. Indeed a question posed by both Western journalists and scholars (as we saw above) is whether CCTV would cover news events as they occur, spin them positively or altogether turn a blind eye to these stories.

The authors’ viewing and analysis of *Africa Live* archives confirms earlier studies that conclude that news events that would fall in the negative category are indeed preponderant. A sample of the coverage shows that the first/lead items on the news programme are about conflicts, such as wars in Democratic Republic of Congo, Central Africa Republic and South Sudan (for instance “crisis on the horizon” – January 3 2014; “Reign of terror in Central Africa Republic” – third item September 19 2013); Islamic fundamentalism-inspired violence in Libya, Kenya and Nigeria (for instance, “Kenya terror attack – September 23 2013); political protests (“Clashes in Egypt – January 4 2014); labour unrest in places such as South Africa (“Amplast strikes – September 30 2013; “Marikana Inquiry” – second item, September 23 2013); controversial electioneering situations in Madagascar and Zimbabwe (“Mugabe big moment” – August 23 2013); accidents and incidents (“Fire at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport” – August 7 2013).

The question to pose here is whether reporting conflicts as they happen constitutes negative reporting or just being realistic about situations as they unfold. We would venture to advance the view that CCTV Africa journalists have elected to remain faithful to the concept informing the framing of the news and current affairs programme as ‘Africa Live’. Covering events happening in the real world (*Africa Live* promotion footage frames this as “real Africa”) is not necessarily negative reporting, to the extent that CCTV Africa journalists are merely being truthful to classical news values as seminally theorised by Galtung and Ruge (1965). In the communication field, classical news values are often taken from Galtung and Ruge to constitute the following variables in the coverage of events and themes: frequency, threshold, intensity, meaningfulness, proximity, relevance, predictability, unexpectedness and reference to elites. All these values seem to force the hand of CCTV journalists to cover events as they are but we deduce threshold – how big is an event or happening – as perhaps the most relevant value for instance in priming war situations as top news.

What, however, differentiates *Africa Live* from other global broadcasters is foremost, avoidance of undue Chinese interpretation in airing political or controversial events and happenings internal to Africa. A

point of note here is that if there is any negative, positive interpretation or criticism of players in the news matrix, it comes more from ‘experts’ brought into the news segments either as studio guests or video conferencing from various global capitals to offer perspectives. A further clarification is that a Chinese perspective is discernible in those events internal to Africa that have a global perspective or those that attract international attention (for instance the arrival of Chinese envoy for Africa, Zhong Jinghua in Nairobi and Addis Ababa to push the peace agenda in the South Sudan war).

However, while events that would be ‘depressing’ to a viewer are presented more or less as they happen, there is a proclivity to introduce a positive angle in separate news items. The case of the break out of war in South Sudan in December 2013 is illustrative. After showing footage of the military movement and display of deathly weapons and humanitarian crisis a follow up item is themed ‘doing business even as war rages’ (4 January 2014). A more telling example of focusing on positive dimensions of otherwise negative developments is seen in lead/first items angled on resolutions to wars (“Sudan’s peace quest” – 3 January 2014).

While salience may be placed on a positive angle to negative developments as in the case of South Sudan, one can always expect to see wholly positive stories slotted into the bulletins, probably to balance out unavoidably negative fare. In this mould would be lead items ‘happily’ announcing cathartic resolving of conflicts (“A new chapter for Mali” – 19 September 2013).

Our analysis indicates that in most, if not all news bulletins, there is a positive item and a few cases illustrate this point. The widely reported attack on the Kenyan mall in Nairobi in September 2013 is illustrative. “Somalia children back to school” and “Kenyans pray for peace” (30 September 2014) seems to positively counterweigh the terrorist attack on the mall attack.

We concur with Xiaoling (2013) that China specific coverage is positive through and through but equally note, as various journalistic articles and academic papers have pointed out, that Chinese officials are quite candid about Chinese media playing just such a role. This then is the soft power dimension of the CCTV Africa. In practice however, you hardly see ‘soft power’ items of the variety that Jacobs (2012) calls “global perambulations”, that is, reporting of high level visits by Chinese officials (*Pursuing Soft Power, China Puts Stamp on Africa’s News*, New York Times) as lead items.

Rather, ‘soft power’ items are ingeniously tucked and weaved into stories are run as secondary items. This sophistication is for instance seen in the reporting of Nelson Mandela’s funeral where received wisdom would have it that the Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao’s speech at the event would have been a standalone story but is instead covered as part of the event only with more time allocated to Li’s speech relative to other leaders who eulogized the great man. Two other happenings to bolster this strategic sophistry in public diplomacy are the case of the call by a Chinese warship to the ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam in early January or an exclusive interview by a CCTV anchor with Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta shortly before his visit to China (“*Kenya-China relations*” – 19 August 2013), both inserted as follow up items.

Just as Chinese soft power is expended coyly so is criticism of the West. A review indicates that Africa Live does not take the West head on but rather through tale-tell coverage of developments such as: effects US’ financial crisis; conflicts between the US and an Angolan oil company over the latter’s intent to do business with sanctioned Iran; criticism of US’ involvement in Egypt and Syria; the appointment of a US citizen as head of World Bank when a Nigerian diplomat was supposedly better qualified...the list goes on. Within this criticism of the West, there is a generous China-Africa solidarity trope, equally rendered subliminally, for instance in the case of Zimbabwe’s Robert Mugabe’s tirade against the West and tacit praise for China attendant to the 2012 electioneering in the southern Africa nation. It is probably for this same reason that “(*The Gambia withdraws from the Commonwealth*” (3 October 2013) has the kicker: No to neo-colonialism”, the very charge that has often been levelled at China. In this category would also

be “*Somalia black hawk anniversary*” (3 October 2013) a narration of US military’s failed attempt at pacifying in the horn of Africa nation in 1991.

TALK AFRICA

In contrast to the ‘real-time-real-life’ constraints inherent in the news programme, the talk show, *Talk Africa*, offers wider latitude for the journalists to experiment with various alternative journalism genres and to discuss topical issues. Following in the tradition of the global English talk show – *Dialogue* – produced in Beijing by veterans Tian Wei and Yang Rui, *Talk Africa* episodes habitually commence with background reports and features. These lay the ground for the anchor to navigate debate and discussion with studio guest(s) usually joined by experts in video conferencing from one or several other global capitals.

We delineated economics and conflict as the major frames following various communications scholars’ conclusion that these are two of the five common frames in news content. Conflict frames relate to disagreements between individuals, institutions or countries and emphasize the points of divergence between the conflicting parties. On the other hand economic consequence (simply economics for this paper) is seen as the preoccupation with the bottom line, profit and loss and with matters to do with commerce and industry (for instance Vreese, Peter and Semetko 2001). However, an initial analysis along these two frames indicated the possibility of a separate frame relating to topics on relations between African nations and international players, be they other nations and regions or global institutions - in other words geopolitics. Convinced that no country is an island, we also put country-specific episodes in the geopolitics category as well as issues that may appear to be economic but are in essence geopolitical to the extent that they are discussed in the context of global dynamics. Thus we came up with conflict, economics and geopolitics. The content was drawn from *Talk Africa* archives for the period January 2013 to December 2013.

There are twelve episodes in the conflict category, six for economics and thirty one for geopolitics. These data therefore indicate that *Talk Africa* is more inclined towards deliberating Africa in a global context than it in contrast to the *Africa Live*, the news programme that focuses more on matters internal to Africa.

DEBATING CONFLICTS

The conflict dimension of *Talk Africa* comprises wars and political turmoil and we include ongoing conflicts, those for which resolutions seem underway as well as any matters military or peacekeeping.

Similar to *Africa Live* we see a blend of strategies in *Talk Africa* rather than a one-size-fits-all approach as supposed particularly by news media. For instance a review of episodes shows straightforward analysis on topical issues with the Egyptian political turmoil taking the lion’s share: *The Morsi trial* (10 November 2013), *Deadly siege at Nairobi mall* (29 September 2013), *Egypt in delicate transition* (14 July 2013), *What next for Egypt* (7 July 2013).

Many of the journalistic styles and strategies we saw in *Africa Live* are also true for *Talk Africa*. The selection of topics indicates that salience is placed on a progressive reading of conflicts: *Somalia refugees’ journey home* (24 November 2013), *Guns fall silent in eastern DRC* (17 November 2013) *Reclaiming Mali from Jihadists* (3 February 2013). These are but three of the most overt instances when African conflicts are covered in optimistic strokes. The main *Talk Africa* anchor is veteran Kenyan journalist Beatrice Marshall and one sees that she has brought her skill, expertise and experience to the positive spin on African stories. On many occasions, one sees Marshall navigating discussions towards a positive interpretation of issues even though some situations are so grim.

There are many instances when the West comes in for a sideways criticism in a strategy where a frontal attack is eschewed. *US military footprints in Africa* (20 January 2013) for instance may seem like a mere discussion on this phenomenon but listening in reveals valence on the fact that China doesn't have US' military ambitions in Africa. Indeed, echoes of the US' pivot to Asia are discernible in the debates as well as the fact that China is more inclined towards her 'men in boots' serving a conflict resolution role rather than engaging on combat (see for instance Zhang 2012:60; Saferworld 2011:72-74). This dovetails with an independent episode (*Peacekeeping in Africa*, December 1 2013). In *Militias and the Libyan state* (27 October 2013) the discussants are nearly agreed that the NATO intervention in Libya and the toppling and assassination of Muammar Gaddafi is the cause of the violence with this particular episode inspired by the 'shocking' abduction of the country's prime minister!

However, areas of confluence between a Chinese and Western perspective are seen for instance in *Fight against terrorism in Africa* (6 October 2013) riding on the attack on a mall by Somalia's Al-Shabaab fighters.

ECONOMICS

While one would have expected to see CCTV beaming China's stellar economic performance in Africa, this is not overtly the case. As we saw in the news segment, Chinese companies involved in natural resource extraction or commerce are conspicuous for their absence in the news coverage roster. This is true for *Talk Africa's* economic dimension as well. Even an episode such as *The big oil boom in Africa* (26 May 2013) does not necessarily gloat about the involvement of Chinese energy State Owned Enterprises (Sinopec, China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC for instance) but instead tends towards the resource curse versus resource benefaction considerations.

What can be confirmed is that the salience is here placed on the 'rising Africa' optimism as seen in (The state of African continent, 3 November 2013), Rebuilding Somalia (12 May 2013), 'Can Africa trade with Africa' (5 May 2013) but this is somewhat muddled by topical discussions attendant to events that render an economic pessimism outlook. These include: 'Migrants die at sea' (13 October 2013 about the tragedy of hundreds of African economic refugees who have drowned trying to cross the Mediterranean into Southern Europe) and South Africa labour standoff (8 September 2013 with a background report showing South African security forces mowing down striking Marikana workers in mid-2012).

The classic case of 'optimistic Africa' turning a new leaf debate is seen in 'State of the African' economy show. The talk show is fore-grounded by footage showing Africa from the Limpopo to the Sahara on an economic mend. The anchor – Beatrice Marshall – then primes the optimism further by asking leading questions to her guests, Dlamini Nkosazana-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (interview at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa) and Olusegun Obasanjo former president of Nigeria in a studio interview. With such eminent guests of the pan African persuasion, the discussion ends up decidedly forward looking for Africa with praise for China's role in the economic renewals featuring aplenty.

GEOPOLITICS

In this category, some of the Talk Shows are topical and straightforward: *Fare thee well Madiba* (15 December 2013); *Nelson Mandela 1918-2013* (8 December 2013), *Happy Mandela Day* (21 July 2013), *Get well Madiba* (23 June 2013) for instance or *Row over the Nile* (28 July 2013), *Change of guard at WTO: What's in store for Africa?* (19 May 2013) and *Sudan and South Sudan fresh start* (21 April 2013).

South Africa's soft power in Africa (28 April 2013) is a curious topic in which the discussants more or less tie on the significance of the Rainbow nation in Africa. This is a curious topic precisely because debate

continues on the place of South Africa as the leading economy on the continent vis-a-vis other BRICS countries or even the competition between South Africa and Nigeria for prominence on the continent.

Most journalistic and academic analysts take cognizance of the fact that Western broadcasters (and to some extent Al Jazeera) are often too adversarial to the extent that they are seen as foes by the leaderships of many African countries. Of course Western journalism celebrates this as watchdog journalism; seeking to ensure that authorities are held accountable to the people. Taking advantage of the fact that Western broadcasters have boxed themselves in by placing themselves in opposition to government, CCTV has become probably the only international broadcaster on which one can find exclusive presidential interviews.

For the period from January to December 2013 the following African leaders were interviewed, often in the presidential palaces: *Dr Joyce Banda, Malawi* (25 August 2013); *Omar Bongo Ondimba, Gabon* (11 August 2013); *Goodluck Jonathan, Nigeria* (16 June 2013), *Uhuru Kenyatta, Kenya* (9 June 2013), *Somalia president interview* (24 February 2013), *Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of African Union Commission* (10 February 2013) and *Pierre Nkurunziza, Burundi* (6 January 2013). The number and geographical spread of these interviews would go to confirm CCTV as the international channel of choice for African leaders although we can also speculate that Chinese diplomatic missions might have played a role in securing the presidential exclusives (in any case every journalist knows the value of using contacts to secure sources and often the end justifies the means). Apart from each president extolling the virtues of his or her leadership, the presidential interviews are also the place where Chinese soft power is at play, as all the leaders throw in a word or two about their appreciation of China's involvement in their economies. Nearly all the leaders seem to express what has been characterized as 'weariness of the West's proselytizing'. A minor though significant point to note here is that presidents of big nation's like Nigeria appear on the *Talk Africa* roaster alongside presidents from places as war wracked as Somalia or as tiny as Burundi.

It is in some of the geopolitics episodes that we see tirades fired at the West especially from interviews with leaders with strained relations with the West. The most strident of these interviews is that of Kenya's president Uhuru Kenyatta, indicted by the International Criminal Court (*President Kenyatta lays it bare* 9 June 2013). In *Kenyan cases expose ICC soft underbelly* (20 October 2013), *Kenyan cases big test for ICC* (15 September 2013) and *Kenyan presidential election 2013* (17 February 2013), the message that comes through from the debates is that the West is targeting African leaders with an ulterior motive whilst China is voicing and even shielding African nations (especially by leveraging the United Nations Security Council veto power vote). One such episode of *Talk Africa* is shot right at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa on the occasion of an extraordinary summit to discuss the possible mass withdrawal from the Rome Statutes by African signatories. The stage is set for a West-bashing by background reports on the speeches by various leaders railing at the West for ostensibly hiding behind the ICC to further their own agenda. After the background reports, the anchor and the guests, apparently anti-ICC activists launch into a full scale denigration of the ICC specifically and the West generally.

The African solidarity exhibited over the Kenyan case is also visible in less dire circumstances in *OAU-AU at 50* (2 June 2013) and *Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of African Union Commission* (10 February 2013). The point to make here is that CCTV seems to increasingly see the continent in its constituent parts as well as Africa as 'one place'.

President Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe comes through as another country fending off incessant condemnation from the West albeit the debate sessions are much more freewheeling than the Kenyan case. In one episode (*Zimbabwe fights back* 22 September 2013) a heated debate ensues between a South African professor and a Zimbabwe ruling party official (on video conference) and a studio guest around issues of democracy, human and economic rights, transparency and accountability in the context of the mid 2013 elections (also *Zimbabwe decides* 4 August 2013). The exchanges are so fiery that one might be excused for imagining being on any of the bare knuckle shows on ABC, BBC, CNN, etc.

In the case of the *‘I have a dream speech lives on’* (1 September 2013), this commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of Martin Luther King-led civil rights movement is infused with interviews from the race relations experts from the US and South Africa and a studio guest to argue the case that black people remain a lowly lot five decades later. Background reports of the launch of the movement in Alabama are paired with archival images of the 1958 independence in Ghana and Kwame Nkrumah’s fiery pan African speeches calling for a United States of Africa.

Two events marked the heightening of a supremacy contest between the US and China in 2013: President Xi Jinping’s March visit and President Barack Obama’s visit in June. While talk shows attempting to make sense of these two visits did not necessarily rail at Obama, it was obvious that both events were an opportunity for CCTV Africa to go an all-out soft power push (*Obama returns to Africa* 30 June 2013; *Economic & political implications of President Xi’s African tour* (7 April 2013), *Key outcomes of Durban BRICS Summit* (31 March 2013), *President Xi Jinping Africa visit* (24 March 2013). Not long before these was an episode on the *Change of guard in China* (3 March 2013) – in essence therefore there was quite a bit of discussions on president Xi’s elevation but as to whether an African audience would be keen to savour this content for days on end is another kettle fish altogether.

FACES OF AFRICA

If the news and current affairs (*Africa Live*) and the talk show (*Talk Africa*) productions strategically introduce a Chinese standpoint and seek to balance viewpoints from the West on African and global issues, the features programme, *Faces of Africa*, exclusively focuses on African content. To this extent therefore, this is the segment of CCTV Africa that most gives meaning to the *‘New Voice for Africa’* tagline that accompanies CCTV’s signature tune.

In our study of 48 shows from January 2012 to December 2012, not a single programme has Chinese cultural content. In the absence of a Chinese element in the features, it is perhaps more productive to attempt to understand the choice of shows and what they tell us about the thinking informing decisions by CCTV Africa editors and journalists. A point of note here is that most of the *Faces of Africa* shows are solicited from independent producers rather than being ‘CCTV-owned productions. On this score, further research would be worthwhile to understand the motivations behind CCTV deciding to use content from independent producers rather than making their own features even though one assumption can be that cost dictates this.

We delineated the following broad categories from the 48 yearlong long shows: sports; culture (heritage and traditions); Nature, wildlife and conservation; education; personalities; arts (music, film, artefacts and entertainment) and business, entrepreneurship and creativity. We also note that the running thread in the shows is a proclivity for inspirational stories whose unique selling point is that they inspire confidence in the continent’s diverse cultures.

SPORTS

Inspiration and uniqueness are the key themes in this category of features. Two of the episodes are a cross between sports and culture, in other words, sports as a carrier of cultural phenomenon. These are *The Bullfighter of Kakamega* (30 July 2012) telling the story of the Kenyan version of Spanish matadors and *Sabar’s goal* (20 February 2012) which is about an Egyptian sportswoman’s passion for football in a society otherwise marked by conservatism.

While the above examples are fairly ordinary, the bulk of the productions tend towards African sports heroes: *Kipchoge Keino: The runner* (12 February 2012) is about a pioneering long distance gold medallist-cum philanthropist. *Footballer with a heart* (11 June 2012, repeated 10 December 2012) is the story of how

Kanu Nwankwo, the Nigerian football star converted the adversity of a heart condition into charity. *Tragedy to triumph* (12 November 2012) is about the Zambian national football team – Chipolopolo – that perished in an air crash off the coast of Gabon in 1993 but rose from the ashes to win the 2012 Africa Cup of Nations title, coincidentally in Gabon.

Two of the sports features are about sports competition in a rural setting in Uganda and dwell on the therapeutic value of football (*Football fever* 30 April 2012; *Running for your life* 8 October 2012).

At a glance these programming may seem mundane. However one sees diversity in the choice that speaks to targeting audiences from diverse backgrounds: urbane sports greats blend with less known names in rural settings. Interesting to note too is the fact that the bulk of the sports features have a strong underlying moral – overcoming adversity and contributing to society. Equally, CCTV Africa completely eschews bringing in Chinese sports heroes.

CULTURE (HERITAGE AND TRADITIONS)

Within the culture category (in the sense of unique African way of life), three further tropes can be delineated: the tension between modernity and old habits/traditions; new urban culture and an attempt at forging a pan African cultural agenda.

The Last Oloibon (23 January 2012) *Modern Warrior* (20 August 2012) and *Polygamous love* (30 January 2012) are all about the siege traditional heritage of the Maasai, a Kenyan community known to have more or less preserved its culture, is facing in the wake of modernity.

Passing on a cultural heritage (10 September 2012) shows Zanzibar islands Swahili culture as a resilient historical mix of African, Arabic, Persian and Phoenician heritages.

Matatu: My life, my art (13 February 2012) is a narrative of Kenyan public transport vehicles as ‘art-on-wheels’ and the public vehicle crews as ‘hustlers’. *Kaveke: Fashion redefined* (16 April 2012) the single nouveau riche episode in the content.

Living the chimurenga life (17 September 2012) takes a pan African perspective on the basis of a Cape Town, South Africa based avant-garde award winning print magazine.

With salience placed on traditional African cultures as being midway between resilience from modernity and an affront from the same modernity, CCTV Africa offers introspection into cultural tensions. Interesting to note is that this seems to be a strategy borrowed from CCTV international’s frequent coverage of Chinese minorities and their own preservation of their cultures. A casual observation of much of African television programming would yield the fact that these are no longer popular offerings and thus this may constitute a unique selling point CCTV to attract and grow audience. With the exception of two episodes, most are focused on local communities rather than the middle or elite classes that seem to be the target of most African television.

NATURE/WILDLIFE/CONSERVATION

Probably to show that Chinese officials are just as concerned about matters environmental and especially elephant poaching in Africa, it is observable that nature, wildlife and conservation, often married with traditional (Maasai) culture takes prominence.

Conserving the future (6 February 2012); *Guardians of the wild* (28 May 2012); *Walking with elephants* (5 November 2012); *Messengers of nature* (26 November 2012) all have story lines about the joy tourists experience when they see African wildlife against the danger posed by poaching, human-wildlife conflicts and climate change.

The only other feature in this category: *Turning lemon into lemonade* (7 May 2012), is about using a parasitic weed (water hyacinth) suffocating Lake Victoria in Kenya to make artistic and utility crafts.

EDUCATION

All except two features on education in 2012 were on schools within Masindi town in Northern Uganda and the themes are those of struggling through difficult circumstances to acquire an education with eyes on the future. *Tumanka goes to school* (16 January 2012, repeated 17 December 2012) is about a Maasai boy who starts school at ten, defying many cultural, physical and financial challenges ranged against his desire education. Features handling similar themes but with an additional sub theme of teenage pregnancies are: *All about love* (3 March 2012); *Masindi dreams* (2 April 2012); *Fred gets to Zed* (18 June 2012); *All about babies* (13 August 2012).

Atiku's school of thought (31 December 2012) is an inspiring story of how former Nigerian vice president Atiku Abubakar started a world class university – the American University of Nigeria – in north eastern Nigeria drawing students from Nigeria and the rest of Africa.

PERSONALITIES

Features in this category fall in two broad categories, ordinary Africans and globally recognizable African ‘brands’, but with the running thread being inspiration for contribution to society.

Ordinary, ‘everyday people’ stories include: *Grace under pressure* (23 April 2012) – a Ugandan woman’s triumph over personal and family misfortunes; *Female pilot* (4 June 2012) – Ghana’s first African woman licensed pilot who rose from humble backgrounds; *Fisherman on the Nile* (25 June 2012) – an Egyptian fishing family; *1000 orphans and a mother* (24 September 2012) and *Jaja's new home* (12 December 2012) – women community leaders helping orphaned/abandoned children.

In the extraordinary, outstanding and pioneering African leaders’ category, Nelson Mandela’s legacy grabs generous airtime in a four-part series attendant to his foreboding demise: *Finding Mandela* (from 2 to 23 July 2012). Also featured are Kenneth Kaunda and Jomo Kenyatta, Zambia’s and Kenya’s founding presidents respectively (27 August 2012 and 29 October 2012). *Wangari Maathi- The eco warrior with a smile* (6 August 2012) pays tribute to Kenya’s first African woman Nobel Prize winner shortly after her death.

As with preceding analysis, the duality inherent in representation of ordinary folk while at the same time allocating airplay to prominent Africans speaks to need to capture audiences across social strata. However, personality features are decidedly inclined towards elites and within that, one person, the icon Mandela. It goes to show CCTV Africa is no different from global media’s lionisation of ‘madiba’ as the defining media narrative of the twenty first century. The whole matter of CCTV’s journalism revolving around Mandela vis-a-vis the treatment of the topic by other news media could indeed provide pathways for future research.

ARTS (MUSIC, FILM, ARTEFACTS, ENTERTAINMENT)

In the music sub category, we see a predilection for repertoires and artists with a social cause. In *Youssou N'Dour: A Music Legend* (22 October 2012) we meet the Senegalese musician-activist who has been involved in the politics of his country and in global political and humanitarian causes while *Tiken Jab Fako: Songs for society* (5 March 2012) is on the same wavelength, appropriating local cultures to pass messages on identity and development in Ivory Coast. *Medicine of the soul* (14 May 2012) features a Congolese musical band - Mangelepa – that majors in nostalgic vintage musical genres in Nairobi. *The Bochabela String Orchestra* (1 October 2012) features the teaching of young black South Africans in Bloemfontein classical music that was for long a no go zone for blacks and the therapeutic value thereof.

Our film future (26 March 2012) tells the story of how Tanzanian artists are overcoming limitations such as lack of equipment and skills training to produce innovative, low-budget films and documentaries in rural and urban settings. *The junk art family* (15 October 2012) similarly celebrates innovation in that Cape Town artists make the best out of a bad situation recycling litter and rubbish to create artistic products such as masks, sculptures, décor and *vuvuzela* (trumpets) and many others. *Carving a future* (19 November 2012) shows up art as a means to a livelihood by telling the story of a Kenyan soapstone carver.

BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Features proximate to ‘Africa rising’ can be seen in *Aslam Khan flying high* (12 March 2012) about starting an aviation firm from scratch and seeing it grow into a thriving business by a Kenyan of Indian descent and *A millionaire's dream* (9 April 2012) is the uplifting tale of a black South African businesswoman succeeding in a male, white dominated precious metals sector and grapes farming industry. *Wadongo's little lamp* (21 May 2012) is a feature on an innovator using cheap materials to make lighting products that allow children from Kenyan villages without electricity to study at night.

DISCUSSION

The literature review and the content analysis indicate that one cannot conclude that Chinese journalism generally and CCTV journalism is as monolithic as to amount to the exportation of a single model to Africa. Positive journalism would be driven by years of lamentations about Western negative reportage. Propaganda journalism would emanate from the control systems at play in China but done with finesse.

Conventional journalism with an echo of ‘objectivity’ could be motivated by the fact that the African media market appears to tend more towards a liberal polarized model than a command and control system. An alternative kind of journalism may be characterized as constructive journalism may be seen in lessening of ‘naturally’ negative news events such as wars with the positive spin of say efforts underway to resolve conflicts or the ‘Africa rising’ narrative. It is thus more a question of the magnitude to which any of these journalistic genres are at play than it is a question of one kind of journalism tramping all the rest.

Indeed it's our considered view that those who seem ‘opposed’ to Chinese media presence in Africa are essentially polarizing the matter and instead, all and sundry should let Chinese media set up in Africa and succeed or fail due to their editorial policies and practices.

The fact that there are no advertisements in the CCTV Africa segment of CCTV News (as CCTV international is known) and the fact that Xinhua News Agency often subsidises its wire service or gives free content doesn't support this notion unless this viewpoint is expanded to include China-Africa economic engagements generally (Wekesa 2013b). An interesting finding is also that Chinese companies are not covered in any major way – whether in a promotional way or on the investigative continuum.

The scope of the current study has been on CCTV Africa. However a further research area that we see going forward is a more nuanced comparative study on CCTV Africa versus various other CCTV channels such as Russian, Arabic, American, French and Spanish. Such a study would also look at similarities and differences between CCTV programmes produced at the Nairobi production centre (Africa Live, Talk Africa, Faces of Africa and various other special reports and documentaries) vis-a-vis programmes produced at the Beijing headquarters such as Asia Today, China 24, Insight, Dialogue, Travelogue and others.

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Editorial Team

Sven Grimm
Indiana Jones
Harrie Esterhuyse



**CENTRE FOR
CHINESE
STUDIES**
STELLENBOSCH - SOUTH AFRICA

Contact Us

Centre for Chinese Studies

Stellenbosch University

T: +27 21 808 2840

F: +27 21 808 2841

E: ccsinfo@sun.ac.za

W: www.sun.ac.za/ccs