

Forum: The power of language: globalising the “Chinese Dream”***

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Abstract

Since Xi Jinping assumed the presidency in March 2013, he has made the slogan “Chinese dream” a central subject in most of his public speeches, both at home and abroad. However, so far nowhere has the catchphrase arguably received as much appeal as in Africa. Creating the vision of an African Dream within the framework of the Chinese Dream raises the question of what specific agenda the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is pursuing. In this paper, I argue that the Chinese and African Dream can be understood as narratives that are strategically used by the CCP to enhance its discursive power in the international system. Examining the construction and projection of the African dream, offers new insights on the Chinese government strategy to manifest its own narratives in China-Africa relations.

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Introduction

After assuming the presidency in March 2013, Xi Jinping used the term “Chinese Dream” several times in his keynote speech at the National People’s Congress (NPC). Since then, the slogan is a central subject in most of his public speeches. However, Xi does not only aim to promote the Chinese dream within but also outside of China. It has equally become a fix term in his speeches overseas. Additionally, the Chinese president has started to speak of a world dream and also tries to tailor different dreams according to the specific country or region he visits, such as speaking of an Indian Dream, a European Dream and an African Dream. However, nowhere has Xi’s catchphrase received as much appeal as in Africa. But what do the Chinese Dream and African Dream actually mean? How can we make sense out of these terms? While much has been written on how to understand the Chinese Dream, less attention has arguably been paid to the establishment of other “dream narratives” such as the African dream. In general, what has been neglected so far in the literature is the importance of formalised language in Chinese foreign policy.

As Michael Schoenhals (1996: 5) rightly asked: “Why is it that the art of doing things with words so dear to China’s *homo politicus* has not received the same attention as, for instance, the ‘art of guanxi’?” Formalised language plays an important role in Chinese politics and functions as a form of state power. By determining “(in) appropriate” formulations, the Chinese government attempts to regulate what is being said and written — and by extension what is being done within the Chinese political system (Schoenhals, 1992:3). Those formulations or official terminologies are known as *tifa*, “ways of putting things”, and are regarded as particularly useful for promoting its ideology. Understanding the substance behind the CCP’s formulations — thus the vocabularies it uses and why — is fundamental for making sense of the “topsy-turvy world of Chinese politics” (Qian, 2012).

While this political practice is common in China’s domestic sphere, it is only recently that the CCP has started to deploy diplomatic formulations in a more sophisticated way for foreign audiences (Callahan, 2007: 786). Along with China’s

rise, there has been growing fear and suspicion of a “China threat” among the international community. In response, to convey China’s benign intentions and a positive image to the world, the former President Hu Jintao put forward the formulation “peaceful development” as China’s foreign policy strategy. Though the Chinese leaders seek to assure that China’s rise brings opportunities and benefits rather than threats to peace and stability, the voices of scepticism have remained. Therefore, in recent years various scholars have highlighted the necessity to strengthen China’s “discursive power” in order to counter the Western “discursive hegemony”. According to Zheng Yongnian (2013), China currently has no discursive power on the international stage. Rather than letting the West dominate the discourse on China’s behaviour, he claims that the Chinese government needs to establish its own “discourse system” to explain China’s international behaviour properly. Similarly, Zhang (2014), former interpreter to Deng Xiaoping, argues that China should not leave the discursive power to the West but must rather use its own language to answer big questions such as “where it came from” and “which path it should take.”

The communist leaders are well aware of the struggle to communicate with global audiences and promote a positive image internationally. Therefore, they attach great importance to strengthening its international communication capability. The former head of the State Council Information Office (SCIO), Cai Mingzhao (2013) argued in a published article in *People’s Daily* Online that China must construct its own international discourse with new concepts and formulations to spread China’s voice rather than being forced to discuss itself in a discourse established and controlled by others. Cai’s article was written in light of Xi Jinping’s speech at the National Propaganda and Ideology Work Conference in August 2013. Xi has repeatedly demanded in various speeches that the stories of China should be told well and the voices of China spread widely internationally. Strengthening China’s international voice and winning discursive power globally has therefore become a significant part of Chinese foreign strategy. However, most scholars have mainly focused on related topics such as public diplomacy and soft power (Zhao, 2011). The latter term has become a very popular concept among Chinese political leaders. Since Hu Jintao’s

keynote speech to the 17th National Congress of the CPC in October 2007, the Chinese government particularly emphasises Chinese culture as its main source of soft power (Xinhua, 2007b). While the culture-based notion of soft power is a central component of China's strategic development of its "comprehensive national power", it remains unclear how this can be achieved. What is missing in the Chinese discourse on soft power is how it can be turned into attainment of specific foreign policy goals (Li, 2008). Or more specifically, how can cultural soft power be translated into enhancing discursive power?

Roselle et al. (2014) argue that soft power has become a catch-all term that has lost explanatory power. For instance, the concept does not identify the processes through which soft power operates and it does not explain under what conditions soft power resources can be used to support foreign policy (ibid., 74). Therefore, the authors suggest strategic narratives as a new concept, which seeks to explain how communication, persuasion and influence operate in international affairs. Further, they state "strategic narrative is soft power in the 21st century" (Roselle et al., 2014: 71).

Narratives are "frameworks constructed to allow people to make sense of the world, policies, events, and interactions" (Roselle, 2010: 6). Political actors use narratives strategically to achieve a desired purpose or intention such as explaining a particular worldview and their own role in the international system, identifying enemies and allies or contextualising historical events (Antoniades, Miskimmon and O'Loughlin, 2010). Thus, it can be viewed as an instrumental tool for great powers to shape the international system as well as influence the behaviour of other actors. Analysing narratives helps us understand how actors interpret the world in which they live, and at the same time allows us to trace how political actors strategically shape agendas, policy choices, the discursive environment and the international system.

Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream

Xi Jinping made his first reference to the concept of the Chinese Dream shortly after he took office as General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee. In November 2012, he visited the exhibition "The Road Toward Renewal" at the National

Museum of China together with the other six members of the Politburo Standing Committee (Xinhua, 2012c). In his keynote speech he said: “Nowadays, everyone is talking about the ‘China Dream.’ In my view, to realise the great renewal of the Chinese nation is the greatest dream for the Chinese nation in modern history” (Xinhua, 2012b).

The expression of realising “the great renewal of the Chinese nation” is nothing new in the Chinese official language. Rather, the term “rejuvenation” is deeply ingrained in Chinese history and is inseparably intertwined with the “century of humiliation” narrative (Wang, 2014b; Callahan, 2010), which refers to the period from the start of the First Opium War (1839) to the victory of the CCP in the Chinese Civil War (1949). China was forced to open its doors by the imperialists and colonialists, who allegedly left the country a legacy of political turmoil and chaos. This historical memory is still prevalent in Chinese politics today. According to Callahan (2010), the humiliation narrative is applied for various strategic reasons: Firstly, it creates a negative presentation of the out-group (foreign imperialist) and a hostile foreign enemy for the in-group (Chinese people). Secondly, China is presented as an “innocent victim” of international bullying, which potentially underlines the credibility of the Chinese government’s argument that, as an “inherently peaceful” civilization, China has never invaded a country — and never will (*ibid.*, 22). Thirdly, the narrative enhances the notion that the reason China is struggling today is because the country has to come to terms with the past. Moreover, it strengthens the CCP’s role in leading the nation to independence, putting an end to one hundred years of suffering and hardship (Schneider, 2014:153). Out of this context, the CCP has made national rejuvenation the grand mission of the country and aims to revive China’s historical position and glory (Zhang, 2012). Introduced by Sun Yatsen, the concept of rejuvenation has been used by different generations of Chinese leaders, from Mao Zedong to Deng Xiaoping and from Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao (Yan, 2001). Xi Jinping has not deviated from the tradition but has recontextualised the great rejuvenation narrative in the discourse of the Chinese Dream.

Constructing the African Dream

Besides Russia, Xi Jinping selected the three African countries Tanzania, South Africa and the Republic of the Congo for his first overseas trip abroad as China's new president. Arguably, this reflects the great importance the new Chinese leadership is placing on the relationship with Africa.

During his speech in Tanzania, Xi Jinping not only mentioned the Chinese Dream but also spoke of the so-called "African Dream", which entails "gaining strength from unity and achieving development and rejuvenation" (Xi, 2013). According to Xi, China and Africa are bonded by the dream they all hold on to. Further, he specifies: *"The Chinese and African people should enhance unity, cooperation, mutual support and assistance so as to make our dreams come true"* (ibid.). Except for the term "dream", all the words used here by Xi Jinping are commonly applied in the context of China-Africa relations, in particular when addressing developing countries. When referring to "bonded by dreams" and "our dreams", Xi strategically creates a we-group and thus includes the audience and China. He has used a large number of "we" pronouns and also the term "brother" throughout his speech and hence has established a unified relationship between China and Africa.

When talking about the Chinese and African Dreams, Xi further states:

We should also work with the rest of the world to realize the dream of the world for enduring peace and common prosperity, and make new and even greater contribution to the noble cause of peace and development of mankind (ibid.).

Xi uses exactly the same eight Chinese characters for "enduring peace and common prosperity" (*chijiu heping, gongtong fanrong*), as Hu Jintao did to describe his concept of a "harmonious world". It was at the summit meeting on the 60th anniversary of the United Nations in 2005 when Hu made a speech calling for building a harmonious world with enduring peace and common prosperity (Hu, 2005). It was not until 2007 that the expression "*chijiu heping, gongtong fanrong*" was officially incorporated into the CCP party congress political report, characterising the concept of a harmonious world (Guo & Blanchard, 2008: 3). As

stated by Hu (2005), “*all countries should join hands and strive to build a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.*” Comparing the above quote of Xi to Hu’s statement, it is striking to note that both use the same phrase except that Xi has replaced the goal of a harmonious world with his new “Chinese Dream” slogan.

Another noteworthy term that Xi put forward in his speech is the “*community of common destiny*”. As pointed out by him:

China and Africa have always been a community of common destinies. Similar historical experiences, common development tasks and shared strategic interests have bound us together (Xi, 2013).

The expression “*community of common destiny*” was initially presented by Hu Jintao in his report at the 17th CPC National Congress in 2007 to portray the relationship between China and Taiwan (Xinhua, 2007a; Xinhua, 2007b). However, Xi has recontextualized the term and made this “old” phrase his new diplomatic strategy, emphasizing China’s special relationship with other states, in particular with its neighbouring and developing countries (Kan, 2014). Behind the narrative of “community of common destinies” lies the logic that China’s goal of economic and peaceful development depends on a favourable international environment. According to Hu et. al., China can only obtain its greater development if the world becomes fully developed (2014: 9). This applies to economic growth, prosperity, and stability. This mind-set is also reflected in rhetoric such as: “China’s development cannot be isolated from the world’s development and vice versa” (Xinhua, 2014) or “the Chinese dream cannot be realized without realizing the world dream” (Wang, 2014a).

Promoting the Chinese and African Dreams

The increasing promotion of Xi’s notions of both the Chinese and African Dreams to a foreign audience is also evidenced by the inclusion of the slogans in speeches given by Chinese foreign policy officials. Taking a speech held by Lu Shaye, the Director-General of the African Department of China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs

as an example, I will by only highlighting the relevant passages of the text how these two narratives are projected onto the international audience.

In July 2013, the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and the Chinese embassy organized a two-day seminar entitled "Chinese Dream – African Dream: Achieving Common Development through Joint Effort" in commemoration of the 50 years of Sino-Tanzania diplomatic relations. On this occasion, Lu Shaye gave a speech.

Referring to Xi Jinping's trip to Africa back in March, Lu recalls the words Xi made on the Chinese Dream and African Dream. Lu reproduces Xi's words exactly as he uttered them in his Tanzania speech. He continues to explain the core of the Chinese Dream, namely: "*prosperity of the country, rejuvenation of the nation, and happiness of the people*" (FOCAC, 2013). Claiming that it is well received among the Chinese population, it is also providing a "*source of inspiration*", probably meaning to inspire other countries to pursue their own dreams. In order to foster this idea, Lu states:

"the Chinese Dream is in consistence with the beautiful dreams cherished by people of other countries and, in particular, highly consistent with the African Dream" (ibid.).

Stressing the particular similarities between the Chinese Dream and African Dream, he highlights the following four points:

"First, the Chinese Dream and the African Dream are both for peace" (ibid.).

Referring to their shared colonized past, both China and Africa therefore "pursue stability and peace in their dreams." As has been mentioned above, Xi's notion of the Chinese Dream has not led to the disappearance of slogans of the former leadership but are used as a complement for achieving the Chinese Dream. In line with that Lu states,

"we will unswervingly pursue the path of peaceful development. This is China's solemn commitment to the world, and the only choice we have to realize the Chinese dream." [...] "Our joint efforts to realize our dreams [...] will [...] add to

the efforts of building a harmonious world of enduring peace and common prosperity” (ibid.).

Lu continues with the second point: “[...] *Chinese Dream and the African Dream are both for development*” (ibid.). Since Deng Xiaoping’s “open door” policy in 1978, the CCP has placed high priority on economic development. According to the CCP’s constitution, “[...] *the Communist Party of China must persist in taking economic development as the central task, making all other work subordinate to and serve this central task*” (Xinhua, 2012a). Although China is seen as a leading economic power by the world, the Chinese leadership still emphasizes that it is a long road to eradicate domestic poverty. The Chinese government does not only regard continued economic growth as vital to maintain social stability but also considers it to be one of the most important sources of legitimacy for the CCP’s leadership.

Lu argues that Africa’s similar tasks of improving the socio-economic welfare for the population and achieving sustainable development will give them more common ground to work together. Thus, he highlights the common goal of development, which at the same time creates opportunities that will benefit both sides.

“Third, the Chinese Dream and the African Dream are both for greater strength through independent efforts” (ibid.). Adhering to its principle of independence and self-reliance, the origin of which dates back to the Mao era, it is stressed that sustained self-effort continues to be an important aspect for China’s foreign policy (Keith, 2011). Thus, from the Chinese perspective, independence means to make one’s own choices and choose one’s own development path without interference from outside.

Trying to point to analogies, Lu states that the *“African Dream, similarly, puts emphasis on strength through unity”* (FOCAC, 2013), highlighting Africa’s effort of regional integration and speaking with one voice at the international stage. However, unity does not directly or necessarily relate to the principle of independence. Thus, the connection between the Chinese and African Dream Lu tries to create does not appear very obvious but rather clearly reflects China’s foreign policy principle and

thus its own understanding of the Chinese Dream. Lu explains: *"By upholding independence and self-reliance, China and Africa can better understand and respect one another"* (ibid.).

Lu states in his fourth point: *"[...]the Chinese Dream and the African Dream are both for rejuvenation"* (ibid.). As has been previously stated, the rejuvenation narrative is always linked to history. In this context Lu referred to the notion of the "Chinese civilization." The expression *"great rejuvenation of Chinese civilization"* is commonly used within Chinese official jargon. According to Zheng Bijian, the former vice president of the Central Party School of the Communist Party, *"the profound essence and meaning of China's peaceful rise is the great rejuvenation of Chinese civilization"* (Study Times, 2006). In other words, applied to the idea of the Chinese Dream, realizing the dream essentially means the revival of the Chinese civilization.

Instead of trying to find similarities here, Lu simply uses the Chinese narrative of rejuvenation and civilization and applies it to Africa, stating: *"The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and Africa ultimately relies on the rejuvenation of our respective civilizations in all fields [...]"* (FOCAC, 2013). At the outset of his speech, Lu stresses that the Chinese and African Dream are consistent. This consistency, however, is primarily created by the CCP. Following the deliberation on what the Chinese Dream and African Dream encompasses, Lu's speech reveals that the "dreams" basically consist of various strands of the CCP's narratives. As reflected in his speech, China's foreign policy continues to hold high the banner of peace, development and cooperation, as it is regarded as the means to achieve national prosperity and rejuvenation. Therefore, it can be concluded that the essence of the African Dream is basically a projection of China's own principles and hence the projection of the notion of its Chinese Dream onto Africa under the guise of the African Dream.

Communicating the Chinese and African Dream narrative through the media

To understand how narratives are strategically employed by actors internationally, Miskimmon et al. (2013) highlights the importance of the media ecology as an arena

within which narratives are disseminated and messages are constructed. The diffusion of communication technologies—ranging from TV broadcasting to the new role of the Internet—allows actors to reach a broader audience and thus communicate their own views on various issues easily. Nowadays, one can observe the development of participatory, multimodal and multilingual media ecologies, comprising of overlapping local, national and transnational distribution of competing narratives (ibid., 11). The new media ecology offers new and vast opportunities for foreign policy actors to gain influence globally and challenge the established narratives of others. At the same time, actors compete to shape the infrastructure of those media ecologies in order to ensure that their narratives reach a wide audience. Hence, successful narratives are also a matter of institution building and technology transfer (Miskimmon et al., 2013: 148).

Media plays a significant role in mediating the Chinese Dream narrative. Over the years, the CCP has not only developed an awareness of the importance of the media as an essential component of its “governing capacity”, but has also created sophisticated strategies to manage the greatly transformed media for consensus and persuasion (Zhang, 2011). Thus, given that media and other new communication technologies are essential to strengthen legitimacy and maintain power within its borders, it is also used to engage with foreign audiences.

In 2009, the Chinese government launched its media “going out” project by investing 45 billion yuan (\$6.6 billion) to expand the presence of its main media outlets globally (Akkermans, 2009). The determination to create its own media empire to contest with established international media originates from its belief that Western media outlets portray China inaccurately and in a non-objective manner (Lu, 2012: 104). Recognizing the importance of international media as an important platform to shape the discourse on China, in recent years, the CCP leadership has repeatedly underlined the importance of strengthening Chinese media’s “international communication capability”. Thus, the purpose of the Chinese media expansion in global communication is twofold: First, to change the narrative on and counter the negative image about China shaped by foreign media, secondly, to present its own views internationally by projecting their own terminologies and

concepts that better explain the Chinese way of thinking. Similar to the notion of “peaceful development” and “harmonious world”, the CCP has promoted the Chinese Dream narrative heavily in the media targeting foreign audiences. In a lengthy article in *People’s Daily*, the chief of the CCP propaganda department, Liu Qibao, has unveiled the government’s Chinese Dream campaign abroad, which earmarks more resources towards disseminating the idea of the Chinese Dream in the media. Liu argues,

We should take a proactive approach to spreading and interpreting the Chinese Dream, to help the international community better understand it (Li, 2014).

The Chinese leaders clearly attempt to strategically employ the media to construct and project the Chinese Dream narrative. So far, its strategy has been successful in the sense that the slogan has drawn extensive international attention and has been analysed and dissected extensively by the global media and China watchers.

Targeting a worldwide audience in the digital era, the CCP has recognised the strength of the Internet as a dissemination device to enhance its external communication. It is common in the Chinese media to establish special coverage or reports on specific topics or events such as the 4th Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee or overseas visits by the Chinese president or premier. Accordingly, multiple state-run media websites such as Xinhua or CCTV have set up special coverages on the Chinese Dream in English for foreign audiences. Moreover, quotations, interviews or opinion articles of foreign political and economic leaders’ as well as diplomats’ and academics’ on the Chinese Dream are widely publicised in order to boost the idea of the Chinese Dream.

Similarly, the CCP has made extensive use of the media, not only through broadcasting but also media co-operation, to circulate the vision of an African Dream. For instance, a special website titled “Chinese Dream joins hands with African Dream” both in Chinese and English has been launched by the *People’s Daily Online*, which belongs to the leading and most influential newspaper in China and is regarded as the official mouthpiece of the CCP’s Central Committee (*People’s Daily Online*, 2013a; *People’s Daily Online*, 2013b). Though the English version

seems to aim at projecting the general notion of an African Dream, the presentation of the Chinese version shows that the initial idea of this special website was to report on the media seminar “Chinese Dream and African Dream” in September 2013, which was held in Beijing. An African media delegation was invited to visit the *People’s Daily* Online, but was also joined by Chinese high officials. However, this seminar was not a non-recurring event but a yearly occurrence, which focused on promoting the communication and co-operation between Chinese and African media (*People’s Daily*, Online 2013c). According to the *People’s Daily* Online,

After visiting China, the African media can report a real China to the African people, and let the African people know more about China. Such visits also make contributions to the friendly communication and cooperation between China and the African media. (ibid.)

Given the negative reporting and criticism by international media on China’s involvement in Africa such as exploiting Africa’s local industries and natural resources or taking a neo-colonialist approach, close media co-operation has become one of the priorities for China’s African policy in order to “*enhance mutual understanding and enable objective and balanced media coverage of each other*” (*People’s Daily* Online, 2006). Over the years, the Chinese government has not only invested heavily in information technology and telecommunications infrastructure in African countries (Grassi, 2014: 2), but it has also fostered the institutionalisation of media co-operation such as the Forum on China-Africa Media Cooperation or China-Africa Press Exchange Centre. Moreover, the Chinese government provides training and programs for African journalists. Every year about 30,000 short training courses and 18,000 scholarships are offered (Grassi, 2014:6). This is clearly another strategy the Chinese leadership has adopted in order to challenge the Western discourse hegemony.

Strikingly, during the media seminar Zhang Yong, *People’s Daily* Vice Director of External Communication Department, states that “*the People’s Daily is the reporter and recorder of the Chinese Dream. The development of the People’s Daily is part of the Chinese Dream*” (Zhang, 2013). Clearly, the *People’s Daily* plays a significant

role in promoting the idea of the Chinese Dream, but at the same time the “development” of the *People’s Daily’s* in the sense of furthering its co-operation abroad and expanding its field of influence is regarded as an essential component to realize the Chinese Dream concept. Notably, the Chinese narrative itself has been expanded to the media sphere.

At the seminar on “Enhance China – Africa Media Co-operation for Shared Dreams” in Nairobi Liu Guangyuan, Chinese Ambassador to Kenya, stresses in his speech: “*To realize the dreams of both China and Africa, our media must play a significant role*” (Liu 2013). His primary aim is to “*break the monopoly of the current international discourse*”. Expressing discontent about the current global media landscape, which is mainly dominated by a few developed countries, Liu claims that developed countries (they) behave in an unjust way toward developing countries (we) by creating distorted pictures of “us” and thereby establishing in- and out-groups. At the same time, he depicts developed countries as the “enemies”, claiming that they hold a monopoly over the media discourses and calling it a hypocritical system which Africa and China should refuse to be part of.

While the initial idea of the Chinese Dream primarily involves economic and social development, Lu has expanded the Chinese Dream narrative and has incorporated the media as an essential component of their “dreams”. Building on the “unfair treatment by the West” argument and “common identity as developing countries” narrative, Liu uses the “dream” narrative to set an overall goal that they both want to realise and this can only be done by further strengthening the media co-operation between China and Africa.

Conclusion

In line with his predecessors, the promotion of the concept of Chinese Dream is an effort by Xi Jinping to build his own legacy and it has already become a distinctive characteristic of his own leadership. However, close analysis of the construction of the Chinese Dream makes it clear that the basic principles and ideas of the Chinese Dream are not entirely novel but are linked to a number of past Chinese foreign policy narratives. His slogan differs in terminology but not in substance from the

previous principles of the CCP after all. Moreover, the CCP has not deviated from the previous concepts of peaceful development and a harmonious world but has recontextualised them into Xi's overall goal to realise the Chinese Dream.

In its on-going strategy to change the discursive environment to counter the negative perception which has emerged with China's continued economic, political and military development, Xi Jinping has expanded the notion of the Chinese Dream to a world dream, highlighting that every country or region has its own dream that needs to be pursued. Particularly striking is the establishment of an African Dream, which he closely connects and relates to the mantra of the Chinese Dream. The CCP seeks to create a collective dream by pointing out the similarities between the two regions. Though both of them share similar historical encounters and strive for economic prosperity, the construction of the African Dream is in essence based on the CCP's own understanding of the Chinese Dream.

The Chinese government has strategically made use of the media as a channel to disseminate the Chinese Dream and African Dream concept. The strategy it applies is twofold and intertwined: firstly, the CCP shapes the media environment within which Chinese and African Dream narratives are disseminated. Secondly, the idea of the Chinese and African Dreams is used as an argument to further strengthen the media co-operation between both China and Africa.

While focusing on the formation and projection of the Chinese and African Dream, due to the limitation of this paper, I have not investigated how these narratives have been received by the targeted audiences. However, there might be some evidence that the strategic narrative of the CCP has generated positive results. For instance, Olusegun Obasanjo, the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria stated:

If Chinese Dream — and it surely does — Africa, collectively, needs an African Dream and each of our countries needs its own dream. That is another lesson that Africa can learn and imbibe from China. We must draw up dreams that are attainable and that will carry Africa collectively and individually to the promised land in this century. (Obasanjo, 2013)

Moreover, Asha-Rose Migiro, a former UN deputy secretary-general and Minister of Justice and Constitution Affairs of Tanzania, pointed out that the “Chinese Dream resonated with the dream of Africa, as China and Africa can achieve common development through common efforts” (All Africa, 2013). Both statements of these high-ranking political officials indicate that the African Dream constructed by the CCP has caught the attention of African leaders and is not merely viewed as a propaganda campaign. However, it must be acknowledged that by picking up on the term “African Dream”, African high officials could likewise use language strategically to please the Chinese government or gain material support from Beijing. Therefore future research will have to elaborate on how these narratives resonate with audiences.

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