

UCLA

Honors Theses

Title

A New Age of Empire: China's Growing Influence on the Continent of Africa and its Implications for Global Powers *A HISTORICAL AND TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF CHINA'S ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA.*

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3439s7x3>

Author

SCHMIDT, KYLE

Publication Date

2023-05-10

A New Age of Empire: China's Growing Influence on the Continent of Africa and its Implications for Global Powers

A HISTORICAL AND TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF CHINA'S ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

AUTHOR: KYLE SCHMIDT

ADVISED BY ANTHONY PAGDEN

The Thesis Statement

Economically and culturally, China's investments in South Africa are strategic mechanisms to exert Chinese hegemony over the African Continent and re-orient global power dynamics. South African hegemony on the African continent exists, drawing its power from Chinese backing and reinforcement, exemplified by Chinese diplomatic, trade, and banking assistance. Chinese involvement in South Africa is emblematic of a neo-colonialist approach towards continental control--fueled by economic and cultural manipulation of South Africa on the African Continent. China uses economic and social capital to intermesh Chineseness within South African decision-making. The domination of Africa highlights the potential for the Chinese to capture the global trade infrastructure and transform the current multi-hegemonic system. This possibility has staggering implications as Africa continues to develop and grow in international importance.

Literature Review

The Theory of Hegemony

The theory of hegemony asserts that "man is not ruled by force alone, but also by ideas." Coined by Antonio Gramsci, hegemonic theory has become a guiding economic and social theory. Hegemony and hegemonic discourse have been applied most extensively to the discipline of international relations by the scholar Robert Keohane. Keohane applied hegemonic theory to international affairs creating a comprehensive theory on hegemonic stability. His theory laid out a relationship between the relative economic power of states in the international economy and the orientation of the international economy as a whole¹. In other words, Keohane's work posited that all economic systems were interrelated and that a result of a gain or loss of an individual state economy relative to the international economy would have implications on the whole. This basis for understanding relative hegemonic power between nations as a scalar modal, where relative power gains or losses matter more than a nation's absolute capacity and power, highlights the growing controversy between political scientists on the balance of the international world.

While there has been a shift in the scholarship away from absolutes in capacity and objective military power, scholars such as Paul Kennedy highlight that capacity still plays a crucial role. In his book, the Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, Kennedy highlights that the ability of nation-states to utilize and sustain their hegemonic powers, and global hegemony, is a product of their maximal productive capacity². Kennedy highlights a critical component of hegemonic theory: relative power changes also require economic and social bandwidth. In other words, the means to pursue a national hegemonic agenda, is facilitated by a limited and dwindling supply of social capital. The dilemma of unlimited wants and limited resources

harkens back to universal economic constraints on societies. The Kennedy scholarship applies this dilemma to exercising social will towards hegemony and highlights the myriads of opportunities and conflicting desires that could interfere with hegemonic activities. Through a capacity-based framing, a nation may rise to global hegemon for a short time but run out of capacity relative to its social wants and needs. By running out of capacity, it would reallocate its limited resources and shift its focus away from its hegemonic accumulation/maintenance activities. Therefore, hegemony must be understood as a conscious process that requires upkeep, and capital outlays, and deliberative actions aimed at extension rather than a passive attribute that a nation possesses and wields at its discretion, as some scholarship highlights³.

The capacity of a nation and its ability to tradeoff between its domestic and international priorities must then be seen as central to hegemonic accumulation. Should a nation be unable or unwilling to tradeoff between its localized issue areas and its international aspirations, its international influence will decline. However, the inverse is also true if a nation focuses excessively on its global priorities over its domestic problems. For example, Angola heavily invested in its diplomatic relations with strategic allies such as the USSR and Cuba; however, with its extensive external focus, it fell victim to corruption, civil war, and internal actors' influence which threatened its independence. Angola highlights the tenuous relationship of state actors grappling with the internal needs of their citizens and the external needs of diplomatic statecraft when positioning themselves in the international system. Due to a lack of capacity, in the form of a weak, contested governmental regime and limited natural resources, Angola exemplifies why capacity and the ability to switch between priorities without overextending either external or internal priorities is key to building and maintaining a states' foothold in the international community.

Viewing the controversy through a distinctly American lens, scholars such as Christopher Layne describe this hegemonic divide forming in the absence of US involvement in the wake of the cold war. Through starkly "gamey" and "in-group vs. out-group" terms, Layne denotes a shift from a global value shift from the absolute power of nations to a relativist lens, wherein nations judge themselves relative to the nations they compete with. In this shift, Layne argues that growing relative power by nations such as China poses a grave threat to the United States not because of their absolute power gains but as a combination of modest power gains and US stagnation in influence⁴. Therefore, a minimal power gain experienced by China poses a far greater threat than the rise would imply because of US failures to gain influence at an equal or greater rate—a war of relative power. However, power is a multifaceted vehicle. In his analysis of the evolving Sino-US power grapple, Joseph Nye has highlighted a new dimension of power quantification: soft power⁵. Soft power, or the relative influence of a nation's economic and diplomatic control over the international community, was enacted to parallel and complement a nation's hard or military power.

This dual conception of what defines national power is central to the economic and diplomatic discourses that underline hegemonic stabilization theory and underpin hegemony more centrally. Despite a widened conception of power, scholars such as Pinar Bilfrin and Ellis Berivan believe that definition of power must be further expanded to explain coercive power not expressed in the current definition of soft power⁶. This analysis agrees with BPinar and Ellis Berivan. It highlights the means by which soft power must be expanded to include existing mechanisms of social control sparked by technology and changes to diplomatic and economic practices. As global power dynamics diversify and complicate, states may attempt to curry favor

and gain influence globally. The historical practice utilized predominantly to this end occurred through colonialist and imperialistic activities.

In modern times, however, due to technological advancements and globalization, gaining and expanding a nation's hegemony or national influence is more complicated to identify and measure. The lexicon of hegemonic theory is changing as the world becomes decentralized and as technology levels the playing field of influence politics. Central to the modern development of hegemony is a discussion of the inputs of technological evolution, rare earth metals. Researchers from the University of South Florida highlight this aspect of hegemony to be central to the future of green technology, military technology, and general social progress⁷. Moreover, they find that rare earth metal control is critical to the next phase of global development.

For my research, colonialism will follow Osterhammel's definition, such that colonialism is the domination that one nation asserts over another but does not involve the presence of actual colonies. The dominance mechanics are not expressly physical or overly diplomatic, or social. Instead, colonialism will be redefined in this research as an active effort by a colonizing nation over a colonized nation to effect social control and influence in neighboring countries as seen through diplomatic and social influences on the dominated nation. This dynamic involves a clear and expressed focus on capital and social outlays into the colonized nation coupled with coercive diplomacy, mediated by the colonizer's economic, social, and diplomatic leverage over the colonized. This concept operates parallel to but separately from hegemony.

Hegemony is held by one nation and exerted over other nations for national gain and ascension; however, there is no explicit and physical exploitation component. This area of social control can be seen by many outside observers as a quid pro quo or a thinly veiled collaboration to improve the good of both nations. For example, the British exercised hegemony over many

peoples during the 16th and 17th centuries, wherein populations began to rely on English rulemaking, practices, currency, and resources to ground their society. While technically, adopting British practices was a choice by these localities, these actions were driven by a pervasive undercurrent that relayed that they could not continue to operate without change. As it will apply to my research, my definition of colonialism focuses on redefining the traditional form of colonialism prevalent between the 16 to 19th centuries. More specifically, it centralized on what the colonizer and colonized relationship look like in a globalized, interconnected world. The capital typically extorted from the colonized nation—people and raw materials—is replaced by influence and strategic leverage. The influence and leverage are then later utilized to control long-term production and manufacturing as the continent grows in complexity and influence.

Colonialism

Colonialism is a much-debated subject with little agreement over its definition and how it interacts with modern understandings of international practices of dominance. Jürgen Osterhammel examined the subject in his groundbreaking text, "Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview," in which he addresses how colonialism differs from other forms of dominance, the relationship between colonialism and imperialism, and how we interpret colonialism in the modern era⁸. Osterhammel highlights in his work that colonialism is not a one-sided mechanism of effectiveness—that instead, the 'oppressor' and the 'slave' both affect and shape each other through the action of colonizing.

Furthermore, Osterhammel defines six different classifications of colonialism, six major periods of colonialism, and three typologies for understanding colonial behavior and effect. Centrally, colonialism is described as a systematic influence of one nation over another;

however, when determining the impact and relative level of colonization, there is ambiguity—especially in the modern 'post-colonial' era. Of maximal importance, Osterhammel concludes his book with an assertion that classic colonialism and imperialism, as we have defined them, are dead⁹. Thus, our historical conceptions of colonialist and imperialist activities must be reimagined to meet contemporary changes in global structure and influence strategies. Osterhammel's ending to his complex theoretical overview of colonialism is crucial because it underlies the need for a re-understanding of colonialism, not as a physical activity wherein groups of settlers are deemed colonists, but rather as an umbrella mechanism to describe the pervasive control and domination of one's peoples by another.

Colonialism is a vague, amorphous, complex conceptual framework of oppression and oppressors. Resolution 1514 of the UN General Assembly outlawed the physical colonization of other nations¹⁰; however, prominent scholars readily acknowledge that a new breed of colonialism is developing, and existing colonial lineages are still in place¹¹. The literature indicates that colonialism has not been eradicated as the UN would have wished; instead, it has redefined itself and its effectiveness in the modern era. In my research, I center colonialism as a historical organizing principle to describe the relationship between nations and cycles of abusive influence of one people over another. Most central to this re-understanding of colonialism has been in the nation of China. While lacking a formal colonial history, China has been strongly influenced by the predominant Western colonial countries, including Great Britain. China has since burgeoned into a global player in the financial system and become a "Semi-colonizer" of its own in international affairs¹².

Case Study: South Africa

China, in this research, will be viewed as a colonizer through its physical and non-physical extractive activities in South Africa. Critically, China employs neo-colonial tendencies by leveraging soft and hard power over South Africa to exert its will on the nation for its long-term strategic gain. Moreover, through the gradual integration of peoples and indoctrination of South African citizens, China has created a positively valenced compliance environment in South Africa characterized by thinly veiled control mechanisms (under the veneer of collaboration). The relative trade imbalances imposed on South Africa and Africa exemplify such activities, accelerated through 'collaboration' with South Africa concerning raw material exports from the state(s). Through the extraction of rare earth materials and strategic choices not to invest in industries related to the translation of raw materials to finished goods, China is starving South Africa dry through its trade with the nation.

China's extensive use of diplomatic, trade, and social leverage over the nations it interacts with enhances Osterhammel's conception of China as a semi-colonizer. In perspective, China invests in Africa annually over \$167 billion through a combination of loans and direct aid geared primarily towards South Africa¹³. While the economic relationship between China and South Africa is the most easily accessible metric to break down the relationship between investment and leverage, Chinese non-economic infusions of personnel, trade, and diplomats are all key mechanisms that advance Chinese control over SA.

South Africa's historical background is riddled with trials and tribulations, including being colonized by the Dutch in 1652, enduring a racially charged apartheid period, and now realizing a hegemonic position in Africa. Scholars such as Olusola Ogunnubi indicate that the hegemonic standing of South Africa over the continent may be subordinate to the capital that it derives from the international economy and endures a lack of experience wielding its power as a

hegemon¹⁴. This scholarship and many others indicate a disjointed and off-balance hegemony in South Africa that depends on external funders such as China to maintain its dominance on the African Continent. South Africa is a modern example of a historically colonized nation struggling under a new form of economic and social control. Understanding the complex history of South Africa and its road to hegemony has been insufficiently studied by scholars who instead focus on the implications of South African Hegemony rather than the international implications of a new form of colonial system spearheaded by China.

Moreover, South Africa is a tangible example of the dynamics unfolding on the continent of Africa. It demonstrates the critical impediments to development that the continent must cope with to fulfill its potential. Moreover, It offers key lessons to be heeded by developing African countries, who must choose to interact with external actors and the most beneficial means to leverage their own development along with larger multi-national goals. SA furthermore serves as a model to explore larger global economic and social development questions. It highlights the lack of focus on external actors, the critical leadership and funding gaps that developing countries must cope with, and the actions such nations must take, sometimes against their own interests to grow economically.

South Africa is a unique economic and political actor on the African continent. It embodies the potential for the continent's evolution and is the most internationally connected nation—South Africa regularly serves as the representative of African interests in International Affairs—highlighting African states' collective and individual needs. Given SA's proximity to internal political and African political development efforts, it is critical and decisive in determining what the 'new' Africa will look like post-development. Due to this, international

actors, namely China, have flocked to South Africa with intentions to shift the development activities to their long-term interests.

The Model

The model in this paper's conclusion represents the transnational flows to capital between China, the neo-colonizing nation, and its dynamics with South Africa, the colonized nation. A potential Neo-Colonizing country is characterized by an abundance of capital resources that can be utilized for one's foreign policy prerogatives by 'trading' them for influence in their nation-state. A Neo-Colonialized nation is one that, in return for capital resources from a colonizing nation, allows a level of control to be had by the colonizing nation. The arrows' colors in the diagram indicate the phase of Chinese occupation in the global hegemonic sphere. It highlights how power is extended through the same process and mechanism through all globalized powers in a long-term time horizon. Once the cycle is completed, China will receive investments from the international community to tap into its relationships built with South Africa and the African market. The cycle is a cycle of dependence. Once one rung on the ladder of dependence is achieved, sequential ripple effects will flip other members of the international community, bringing them into compliance and magnifying dependence on China through its 'colonies.' A critical factor in this control system is the systematic relationship building on the continent of Africa, favorable trade terms, access to rare earth metals and other raw inputs, and stable distribution infrastructure.

Hypotheses

H₁: The more Chinese assistance South Africa receives, the higher levels of influence it exerts over the African Union.

H₂: As public and private Chinese funds flow into South Africa, South Africans will grow more dependent on Chinese funds, and Chinese investors will become more invested in the success of South Africa and the African continent.

H₃: As South Africa's investment level rises, South African investment in neighboring trading nations will rise.

H₄: As the level of investment in South Africa rises, Chinese-African Transmigration will also increase.

Concept Specification

Hegemony

Robert Keohane's comprehensive theory on hegemonic stability, which described the dynamic between the relative economic power of a state and the international economy, is foundational to my understanding of hegemony.¹⁵ I frame hegemony in this paper as a relative understanding and comparison of global powers in which nations accumulate power and are powerful in relation to the relative power of other international actors. Therefore, this paper will view power as relational and weigh actors' subsequent gains or losses in conversations with their competing nations. In comparison, not a zero-sum game, hegemony is, to a certain extent, a game playing out on the international stage. Hegemony is a multi-dimensional catch-all to describe the relative power between nations—consisting of economic and social determinants of power and international relations.

As a framing tool, hegemony is a dynamic means to describe how individual nations interact with the international community. When one nation is considered a hegemon or exudes a hegemonic presence in its given region, they exert outsized influence on surrounding countries—supporting its own interests. There is disagreement in the scholarly community on measuring hegemony in the abstract due to its complex nature and cross-metric impacts. Hegemony spans both physical and non-physical domains. The non-physical attributes such as goodwill and political influence are difficult to picture accurately. They are expressed imperfectly through the decision-making and reported public sentiments of nation-states. In framing my paper and my definition of hegemony, I give more weight to the non-physical attributes as the dynamics of international communication and interactions have shifted to less tangible means via the introduction of the internet. That said, some scholars claim that hegemony should be measured

solely in terms of transnational capital flows and trade patterns. In contrast, others focus on the exchanges of social, diplomatic, and public policy influence by a nation to measure its international presence, with more influence on other nations being reflected in positive institutional changes to better the country in question. These limited conceptions of hegemony intended to simply scholarly analysis do a disservice to evolving international relationships between nation-states that employ technology and practices formerly unknown or little applied during the writing of previous scholarly accounts of hegemonic measurement.

In summation, there is an overall ambiguity on whether to weigh soft or hard power iterations more heavily. I acknowledge this disjunct and find value in viewing hegemony as predominantly soft-power driven rather than hard-power dominated. In the rapidly globalized economy, with nations rapidly developing nuclear armaments, there is a disinclination toward a hard, global conflict under the principle of Mutually Assured Destruction¹⁶. I thus take a soft power-driven approach toward deconstructing hegemonic regimes. With this approach, I acknowledge that most publicly available information only regards international interactions on a hard-power basis.

Colonialism

The trend towards resource domination over specifically rare earth metals has been central to modern nation-building tendencies. Prominent scholars highlight that although the tangible exploitive dynamics of legacy colonial structures aren't being replicated in lockstep with the historical norms, the physical drive of colonialism is present in the race for what's left of global resources¹⁷. Emblematic of the changing dynamic can be seen in the context of cobalt, a key component of renewable resource adoption. Over the past decade, China has accumulated the rights and control of the world's foremost store of cobalt in the Congo (where it is estimated

70% of the world's cobalt is deposited). The critical component of this relationship between Chinese companies and the mining operations in the Congo is the remoteness of the contact. China works in effect as the owners and extractors of the rare earth metal while having minimal connection to the day-to-day operations of the mines¹⁸. Edward Luttwak describes this development as a manifestation of colonialist tendencies wherein colonialism has morphed into a system "with disposable capital in lieu of firepower, civilian innovation in lieu of military-technical advancement, and market penetration in place of garrisons and bases."¹⁹ This profound new understanding of colonialism, as dominated by the needs of the developed and developing world to maintain and extend their economic security with a basis on geo-economic consequences, colors a new age of colonial exploits.

On the historically physical basis of colonialization, it is critical to note the evolving scholarship on rare earth metal hegemony exerted by China through its Belts and Roads Initiative. Thus, my paper will integrate and evaluate the role that rare earth metal extraction and trade practices are a manifestation of current colonialist activities. Central to exploring the changing physicality of colonialization is framing the voluntary trade of goods between South Africa and China. The trade dynamic between the two countries is emblematic of a larger-scale economic constriction by the Chinese government to leverage its debt and economic policies toward its agenda in South Africa. Thus, the description of 'voluntary' trade action between China and SA is subject to review, given China's leverage over SA. This omnipresent sense of Chinese economic control would induce SA into Chinese-preferred outcomes both economically and diplomatically—a geopolitical quid-pro-quo leveraged exclusively on Chinese terms.

Translation to Variables

Hegemony

In this paper, I will employ a two-pronged approach (physical and non-physical) to analyze South African Hegemony's presence and extent. First, I will focus on physical, hard resources. Hard resources will be measured by: 1) the trade exchanges between neighboring nations, as measured by the world bank, and 2) the level of trade, both in South Africa and leaving South Africa, as reported to the world bank. In the second method, I will concentrate on non-physical, soft resources. Soft resources will be measured by: 1) relative diplomatic influence as measured by votes in the African Union, 2) South African media coverage measured in terms of favorability towards China, 3) level of academic leverage as measured by the exportation and transfer of South African students to Chinese education systems. Bifurcating the hard and soft measures of resource changes in South Africa relative to the African continent will evaluate a subsidiary question in the literature regarding whether or not South Africa is a Hegemon on the continent.

In addition to the question as to whether South Africa is a Hegemon on the continent of Africa, there is the question of Chinese influence on South Africa and its use of the nation for relative dominance of the continent. The relative influence of China in South Africa will be measured in three ways: 1) South African dependence on Chinese loans as measured by the relative level of in-debtness reported to the world bank. 2) Transnational people flow as measured by the South African immigration department. 3) Media coverage in South Africa, measured in terms of favorability towards China. Bifurcating the hard and soft measures of resource changes in South Africa relative to the Chinese involvement in the region will evaluate

my primary research question of whether China is utilizing South Africa for its international political and diplomatic goals. It will also explore to what extent they are effective.

China's articulation and enforcement of its demands are exercised through the calling of Chinese debt. When China uses its economic position of strength to leverage its agenda, China creates diplomatic pressure placed on political officials, which in turn creates the political change that China envisions. Compliance is ensured through political favors, diplomatic leverage, strings-attached loans, and the presence of Chinese officials in South Africa. These compliance factors are empirically validated through in-depth diplomatic, trade, and economic analysis. The most empirically validating metric is the calling in of Chinese loans to South Africa in conjunction with diplomatic behavior.

Colonialism

Colonialism, as emblematic of the relationship between China and South Africa, will be measured by the relative dependence of South Africa on China and China's difference in trading and diplomatic strategies with the nation. Relative reliance on China will follow many of the data strategies above, looking at 1) South African dependence on Chinese Loans as measured by the relative level of in-debtness reported to the world bank. 2) Chinese Foreign Direct Investment in South Africa, reported to the World Bank. 3) Trade balances between China and South Africa, reported to the world bank. Due to colonialism's physical ramifications and the need to cement evidence of an incursion, these strategies should highlight a growing dependence of South Africa on China but not the inverse. Secondly, the factors mentioned above will be viewed proportionately against current Chinese relationships with other international actors to ascertain whether the relationship is unique and whether China values South Africa as a colonial outpost or rather sees it as an investment destination.

In line with a view of colonialism centered on influence politics, the level of colonization indicated in this research will be indicative of China's relative control over the operations of South Africa and the continent of Africa. China's colonialism will involve the subtle and overt changes to South African operations preceding China's economic and social incursion into the states' operations. It will be manifest in the internal and external processes of SA. It will take primarily an ideological and governance tint as the political elites and the common people begin to adopt a China-centric worldview or, at minimum, a pro-China view of economic and diplomatic development on the continent.

Data Sources and Methods

The World Bank houses the migration data to measure transnational people flows between China and South Africa and ascertain levels of cultural diffusion and indoctrination over time. The World Bank also stores yearly reports and monthly updated data sets on Foreign Direct Investment inflows and outflows. While the world bank reports aggregate data describing South Africa's net inflow of nearly 11,000 migrants in 2021, it is opaque in its coverage of the national origin of such migrants²⁰. However, some reports suggest that there are over 1 million Chinese citizens in Africa, and over half of these individuals are based in South Africa²¹. Moreover, these sources indicate that South Africa is unique on the continent for its population of second, third, and even fourth-generation Chinese-South Africans.²²

These long-term migration patterns and focus on South Africa highlight the nation's centrality in Chinese aspirations for the continent. More importantly, it indicates the level of depth in the connection between China and South Africa and the entrenched roots of Chinese citizens in South Africa. Furthermore, Chinese settlers in the region coexisted with South Africans during the apartheid period. They used their political leverage to carve out distinctive mixed-race areas beyond the racially segregated areas [designated by the apartheid period] redundant. This level of deference to a particular ethnic group by the South African state was unheard of during this strict, racially dominated period where the Chinese were considered "colored." Thus, individual designation beyond the "colored" label and special treatment to that effect further amplify the longstanding separateness of the Chinese in South Africa and the state's desire to maintain a positive relationship with China.

The close relationship between China and South Africa is also indicated in the trading of personal capital through tourism and education. Through its people-to-people exchange

mechanism, China has strategically engaged with South Africa to create tourist pipelines between the two nations. In 2019, these strategic initiatives, including twinning arrangements between cities and provinces in South Africa and China, resulted in over \$140 million in contributions to the South African economy²³. These relations were disrupted by the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020; however, as of February 2023, China has removed all restrictions for South Africa, allowing them to enter and exit the country freely, continuing the facilitation of education and leisure between the two countries.

Along related lines, China is investing in the future of South African youth. In 2018, China sponsored more than 2600 South African students in their aspirations to study in China, a year-over-year increase of over 11.5%²⁴. The dynamic of Chinese education of South African youth and these youths' return to South Africa is emblematic of what some scholars, such as John Mihelich and Debbie Storrs, consider a "negotiated process of hegemony." Or in other words, it is representative of the modern manifestations of hegemonic expression and influences politics²⁵. Through this educational indoctrination process, China can affect future generations of South African leaders who will be more responsive to Chinese needs and priorities.

China's influence, however, is not just limited to the government. A recent analysis of South African media via a corpus-based method examining the discursive mechanisms through which South Africa represents China in its media. This research revealed that despite negative attitudes present by the media when describing Sino-SA relations, the SA media structure has continued to advance a positive image of China²⁶. This finding adds credence to previous scholarship extended by De Beer and Schreiner in 2019 that African citizens' media perceptions viewed China as less of an exploitative colonialist and more of a complicated strategic partner

working in their best interests²⁷. China has been instructive in the changing media dynamics and warming image of the Chinese state in African nations, namely SA.

Research from Rhodes University in South Africa highlights that importing Chinese media technology and information magnified African dependence on Chinese media intervention²⁸. Critically, the findings indicated that such interventions resulted in "infrastructural realignment, ideological expurgation, and cultural reproduction," allowing China to shape the narrative and positively influence the framing of its actions in SA. The Chinese government's direct intervention in the SA media landscape indicates a level of criticality in its desire to be seen as a positive force in SA and gain popular approval. Chinese manipulation of SA's media system exemplifies colonialist control policies by influencing and constricting the information system of a subservient country relative to its national aims and interests. Moreover, through its infrastructure alignment programs, China enhances dependence dynamics between SA and China—a task a Western power could not easily replace.

As with other examples of Chinese dependence, in the media landscape, 'help' is rife with instances requiring SA and other African nations to engage in quid pro quo activities. For example, the provision of FM transmitters to state-owned media agencies in Zambia always occurs in election years. It is meant to ensure that pro-China officials are put into office²⁹. By using technology assistance to progressively leverage and stock the governments of African countries with pro-Sino officials, China is gradually building its dependency network in its connected nation-states and magnifying and controlling its narrative. Moreover, the Chinese media-scape isn't entirely built into the traditional media network. In recent years, China has invested in physical manifestations of its reeducation campaign, Confucius institutes.

Chinese Confucius institutes were created with the intention of promoting the study of the Chinese language and culture, forging positive bonds between educators and students. Political scientists en masse have critically viewed Confucius institutes as physical tools to embed Chinese management into areas of interest and bolster soft power. A 2017 study published in the journal *China Economic Review* found that Confucius institutes are not motivated solely by resource seeking and thus indicate longer-range influence goals in the region³⁰. To arrive at this conclusion, researchers analyzed the presence of Confucius institutes and the relative FDI flows into the region and found that although a Confucius institute yielded immediate gains to FDI, it was non-sustained in subsequent years. This unsustained increase denotes an alternative reason why Confucius institutes are created.

Despite the intentions of Confucius institutes, the impact in South Africa has been mixed. A recent analysis published in the *Journal of East-Asian Affairs* by Maddalena Procopio indicates that the effect of Confucius institutes is based more on the level of interaction between the center and the surrounding community than the offerings' breadth³¹. In other words, the level of connection with a particular Confucius institute's community is more impactful when spreading Chinese influence than the center's menu of community offerings. Independent of this fact, Confucius institutes are constantly reinforcing tools for Chinese soft power. They provide critical check-in locations for continuing people exchanges between SA and China and strengthen Chinese educational and social indoctrination activities.

Another measure of the connection between China and South Africa is the relative level of investment and economic relationship. China has been South Africa's largest trading partner for nine years, with \$39.7 billion traded in 2017, up from \$2 billion in 2002. On a direct investment basis, China has invested over \$25 billion. Privately, Chinese investors have poured

an additional \$800 million in direct investment into the country³². These staggeringly high investment amounts highlight the level of economic involvement of China in South Africa, addressing more than simply preference, but instead an intricate economic interdependence and rooted status, unlike its position in any other nations on the continent or the world.

In the years that preceded the initial Chinese investment, South Africa invested billions in neighboring nations to shore up its strategic priorities. However, there has been downward pressure on FDI and the ability of South Africa to exert it on the continent. South Africa's average annual FDI outflows were \$56 billion in 2004–08, rising to \$114 billion in 2014–18³³, which mirrors increases in Chinese FDI into the country where in economic terms, Chinese FDI has risen from \$74.8 million in 2003 to over \$5.4 billion a year in 2018³⁴. Due to the changes in funding over time and the shifting of capital from South Africa to neighboring countries, China's priorities for the nation are based more on continental influence politics than a desire to invest solely in South Africa. This capital shift further indicates a long-term motivation for continental influence through the specific insertion of capital into South Africa and subsequent redeployment to neighboring countries through South Africa.

On a macro scale, since 2013, the Chinese government has been laying the groundwork and building inroads across the world through its Belts and Roads Initiative (BRI), or its new silk road. BRI aims to build connectivity and cooperation among the nations in greater Asia and Africa through \$26 trillion in infrastructure investment by 2030. BRI is not only seen as an economic tool and an act of Chinese benevolence to assist developing economies; it is also a tool for coercion of the 72 BRI participating economies through debt. From a Confucian viewpoint, the Chinese state should not extend benevolence towards others beyond the immediate kin group.

BRI, seen in this context, highlights the implicit and explicit notion that BRI is not a tool to 'help' the developing world—it is a tool to help China.

Moreover, BRI's hardware-first strategy stimulates demand for China's technology and knowledge and the accumulation of critical natural resources. Control of natural resources and the centralization of technological production practices have contributed to what the Brookings institute has described as the primary factor in China's evolution into a leading player in contemporary geopolitical competition³⁵. Between 2005 and 2018, China invested over 25% of its total debt portfolio in BRI participating economies which rose progressively over this period.

The overall allocation and the progressive increasing investments in BRI regions highlight China's focus on developing its status in the geopolitical arena. As of the 2018 fiscal year, China's investments in troubled programs were worth \$369.5 billion, which signifies that vast amounts of Chinese FDI are in programs unlikely to recoup their investments. The critical component is that China entered into such contracts knowing the economic climate of such investments. Therefore, it is likely to have an alternative motivation for entering into such agreements. While the exact reasons cannot be ascertained, China tends to leverage its unpaid debts to fulfill its programmatic and geopolitical aspirations; moreover, analysis from the AidData lab at Virginia's College of William and Mary analyzed over 13,000 development projects conducted by China over an 18-year period and found that Chinese debt practices left poorer countries with over \$385 billion in hidden debts³⁶. In other words, China not only leverages the debt it incurs to curry political favor, but its debt practices also disproportionately burden economically connected countries, leaving them more affected by Chinese influence.

Echoing concerns regarding the overwhelming debt obligations, the International Monetary Fund repeatedly warned China and participating countries of the unsustainable debt

levels, predatory lending, and lack of transparency regarding its projects³⁷. In direct response, the IMF further describes how China took a hardline approach toward its debt practices. So despite violating international best practices, China has expanded its lending efforts. China created an un-transparent, independent court system centered on Chinese law meant to settle disputes outside the customary arbitration of international courts³⁸. Furthermore, due to IMF concerns and more stringent conditions on co-lending through the IMF, China has contemporarily limited its use of IMF-connected loans. China's lending strategy indicates a clear disregard for the international community and a focus on expanding its control and monopoly over third-party loans and influencing infrastructure.

Almost contradictorily, China also uses the relief of loans to strengthen its position with SA and the African continent. By effectively turning loans into aid, China has garnered significantly positive relationships with countries around Africa, wiping out \$1.2 billion in 2000 and \$750 million in 2003 with commitments to eliminate \$10 billion more in 2023 through forgiving 23 interest-free loans to 17 different African countries³⁹. Ethiopian prime minister, Meles Zenawi, proclaimed that these actions taken by China were an "endeavor to ease African Countries debt problem is indeed a true expression of solidarity and commitment."⁴⁰ In the case of Prime Minister Zenawi, and potentially other African leaders, China's minimal actions to cancel certain debts on the continent have sparked a perception of growing Chinese benevolence, improving the African perception of China. China's practice of debt cancellation has had significant implications for the generation and extension of Chinese soft power, indicating a dual focus on Chinese debt: as leverage and structured benevolence politics.

Given the current inflationary environment, the promise of some Chinese loan debt cancellation and the possibility of more to come makes Chinese loans very attractive to African

nations already struggling under their current debt loads that have magnified since covid-19 began. Despite the perceived benefits of this debt relief policy, a recent analysis of Chinese debt cancelation efforts highlights that the debt ultimately canceled is likely modest. Even more critically, it's predominated by debt whose balance is nearing its conclusion, only affecting the interest, not the loan's principal⁴¹.

Given Africa's status as a resource-laden continent, particularly in deposits of rare earth metals such as cobalt, building relationships and trade zones with the continent is important for China's long-term strategic goals. Through the hundreds of billions (\$USD) that China has been lending and investing in the continent, China has been progressively building an extensive influence infrastructure. These factors have positively contributed to the changing perception of China as what has been deemed a positive force for the continent's future, with 77% of young Africans saying that China was the foreign actor who helped the continent the most (The

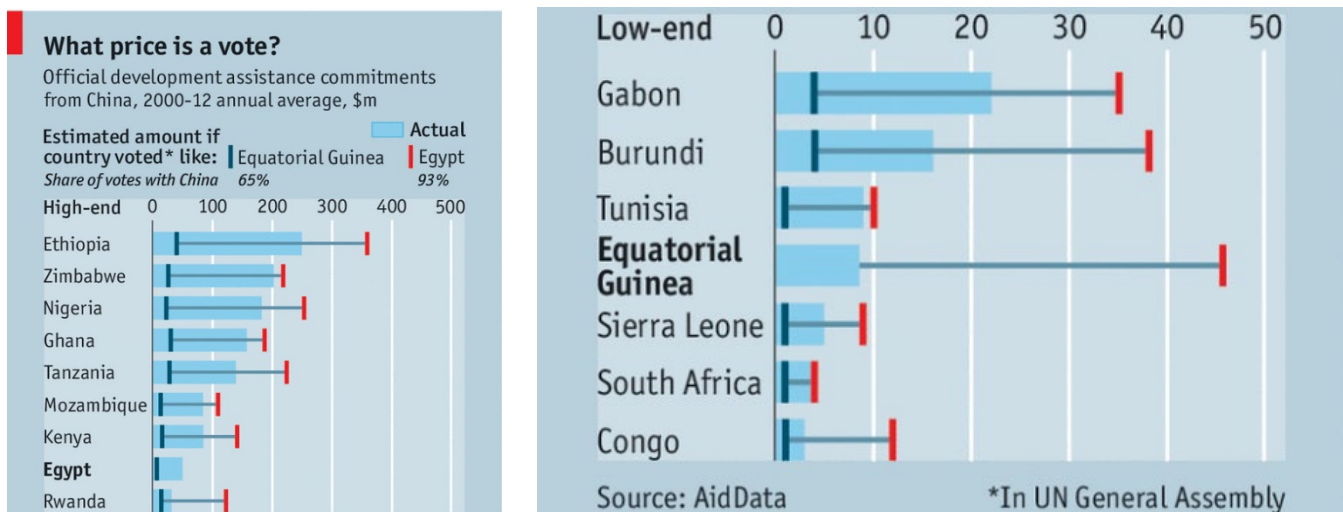


Figure 1. "A Despot's Guide to Foreign Aid." The Economist. The Economist Newspaper. Accessed February 18, 2023. <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2016/04/16/a-despots-guide-to-foreign-aid>.

European Business Council for Africa, 2022)⁴². Despite a viewpoint by Africans (those surveyed include the countries of Angola, Congo Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan,

Uganda, and Zambia) that China's actions are working toward the benefit of Africa, data from Williams and Mary College in 2020 found a correlation between the voting pattern of African countries at the UN and how much aid it receives from China⁴³.

Figure 1 models the data from the Aid Data lab at Williams and Mary College and describes the relative price of a vote in the United Nations. Critical in this analysis is the relative cost of a vote in South Africa, which, next to the Congo, is the cheapest country to influence. These findings indicate that the relative cost of a ballot is scalar based on the level of connection between China and African countries. South Africa and the Congo have long histories and economic connections with China. By building these relationships, the relative cost of obtaining their votes is far diminished.

Moreover, the implicit finding endemic to the AidData results is that Chinese money and the quantity of such is directly related to the garnering of votes in connection to Chinese priorities on the UN level. SA's particular data indicates a low cost per vote and a relatively consistent cost relative to other African nations. The cost-effectiveness of bribing SA indicates the long-term economic benefit of influencing SA over other African economic and political actors. The finding of economic influence over SA votes on the international level highlights a potential spillover potential to other governing bodies. It magnifies the need for China to influence SA as it gains international recognition and influence.

In a political influence arena, the African Union, the main political organization for the continent of Africa, publishes all votes on international matters and records the voices of participating nations, including South Africa. While the AU has been fraught with enforcement challenges, funding, and non-compliance throughout its existence, scholarship highlights that it has assisted in creating a sense of community governance on the continent⁴⁴. Therefore, despite

the hurdles and ongoing challenges of the organization, it has created a sense of governance legitimacy that extends to its member states, and those who exert influence on its operations are perceptually strong in terms of interstate negotiations. This sense of legitimacy implies that South Africa's leadership role translates to a more influential position to enact its changes on the continent despite the weak nature of the AU and its enforcement struggles.

Beyond localized leverage through the AU, China has been central in pushing South Africa to form and lead international cooperative efforts, including the Forum on China-African Cooperation (FOCAC) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)⁴⁵. By co-chairing FOCAC with South Africa, China created legitimacy that underlined its stated motivation to enhance the long-term goal of China-Africa growth and development. On a larger scale, the creation of FOCAC serves as evidence not only of a more extensive China-South Africa relationship but also of the growing ability of China to utilize its relationship with South Africa to achieve its strategic goals for itself and the continent. Conversely, the CFTA creates a free trade area unlike the world has ever seen, involving 54 countries across Africa. The creation of CFTA is crucial for expanding China's Belts and Roads Initiative and further strategic investment in Africa. The South African connection provides China with a critical political player to induce legitimacy into its proposals and remove barriers that would hamper its investment in the continent and reduce the efficacy of its long-term prerogatives.

Furthermore, Chinese use of these cooperative efforts, namely the Forum on China-African Cooperation, has led to recent (2023) developments in Chinese trade policy towards the continent to shore up wavering support among nations and ensure goodwill. China agreed to eliminate tariffs on 98% of goods from 12 politically central African nations and provide food assistance to Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, and Djibouti⁴⁶. While externally viewed as a gesture of

benevolent aid, these countries are central to Chinese aspirations across the continent to spark collaboration, reduce transnational disputes, and create soft power. China's engagement in these formative activities furthers its long-term aims to build leverage that it can use to craft its vision of Africa. Thus, by creating international governance groups, China has built a framework for advertising its acts of benevolence. Furthermore, China uses these governance groups to shore up support for its efforts and quell discontent among the neighboring nations. These self-promotion activities indicate that China's motivation on the continent is more than extraction and is instead part of a long-term vision.

In perspective, prominent political scientist Peter Frankopan, in his book, *The New Silk Roads*, finds that the economic ties that bind countries are critical in creating hegemony. Moreover, his research indicates how countries are commanded and manipulated to attain power, and international dominance (hegemony) is essential in defining geo-economics⁴⁷. This dynamic is particularly true of the evolving relationship between China and South Africa. The data indicates that the Chinese are using their influence over South Africa to secure beneficial trade agreements, political deals, and international influence (through the UN and other such organizations). These inductions are partly premised on creating a modern Africa and fairer economic/social dealings, yet are backed by the ever-present threat of Chinese capital flight, pushing them along. Therefore, the assisted formation of governance organizations and trade blocks by South Africa seems to be in part implicitly or implicitly backed by the Chinese state in furtherance of national interests and by proxy of South Africa.

Moreover, South Africa plays a central role in the leadership and agenda-setting of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Internationally, South Africa has been involved with BRICS, a consortium of

developing or emerging economies that aspire to change the architecture of global political and economic governance⁴⁸. It is critically important to highlight that China was the leading voice for the appointment of South Africa and the nation's ultimate candidacy for a position on BRICS. This support is a strategic move by China to extend its influence on the international stage and gain a crucial vote in the UN Security Council. Furthermore, in conversation with the data indicating that African players, particularly SA, are susceptible to vote-buying tendencies, China is incentivized to 'partner' with African nations to extend their international influence and hegemonic powers.

Prominent political Scientists Chris Alden and Yu-Shan Wu analyzed the voting patterns of the UN security council. They discovered that during South Africa's first two tenures as a non-permanent Security council member, SA's voting patterns mirrored those of China⁴⁹. Furthermore, they argued that the close working relationship between South Africa and China on African security issues showed starkly similar viewpoints on African development practices. Alden also describes what he calls a systemic indebtedness of South Africa to China, whose economic involvement in 2008 helped the nation to weather the financial crisis and thus creates an endemic sense of obligation of South Africa to China. This sense of responsibility resulted in an interesting paradox of development such that South African companies, up until 2007, invested far more into China than China invested into South Africa, \$800 million and \$160 million, respectively⁵⁰. Moreover, Naidu describes the Sino-SA relationship as more than practicality and access. He argues that inequality and Chinese domination will become more apparent as the relationship develops and grows. Naidu's scholarship belongs to a contemporary scholarly discourse that sees the 'partnership' as less of a partnership and instead as a tool to disguise Chinese influence, garnering tactics in its aspirations of becoming a global hegemon.

As the only African state involved in BRICS, South Africa plays an overtly continental leadership role whose actions have staggering implications for Africa's economic and political affairs. SACU, SADC, and BRICS provide detailed record-keeping from their sessions and outline the impacts of South African vicarious leadership on the regional and international levels. South Africa's connectivity to Chinese voting habits in the UN and Chinese backing in creating SACU, SADC, and the propulsion of SA onto BRICS indicates a vested interest in the proceedings. Furthermore, South Africa's history of deference to the Chinese on long-term goals for China, as demonstrated in its UN voting history, implies that SA would act similarly to advance the collective Sino-SA interests through SACU, SADC, and BRICS.

On an applied note, when the international community, in the mid-2010s, started investigating China for human rights abuses through the UN's Commission on Human Rights. The UN found that China used its influence to remold the council filling it with countries including Zimbabwe, Sudan, and Eritrea which supported China's efforts to deflect human rights abuse claims⁵¹. By extending Chinese influence to transnational African powers, China denotes its growing influence on the continent and indicates effectiveness in leveraging its control over South Africa to push for the reconstitution of the UN Commission of Human Rights. Moreover, at every turn in the international community, China makes its commitment to African interests and sovereignty known, despite the international outcry. For example, when the UN security council attempted to address genocide in Darfur, China intervened and blocked the action, supporting the Khartoum regime and enhancing its economic presence in the region⁵². This action, among many, indicates China's emphasis on its relationship-building activities in Africa and its willingness to divert from international norms and practices to advance its geopolitical

aspirations, seeing the opportunities of its African relationships as greater than the cost of international disinclusion.

The Reaction

Despite a growing body of evidence regarding South Africa's growing dominance, the literature is ambiguous regarding whether South Africa can be classified as a true hegemon on the continent of Africa⁵³. Broadly, South Africa is referred to as having a "quiet democracy"; in other words, many scholars reject the notion of South African Hegemony because of a lack of leadership and the presence of South Africans in the African community. Furthermore, scholars indicate that due to the "dependent development" paradigm, South Africa cannot be classified as a hegemon in the region⁵⁴. However, the methodology these scholars employ is limited in their perceptions of hegemony and segment off South Africa from China in their analysis of South Africa's hegemonic stature. So while there is no "correct" means to analyze or define hegemony, it is critical to explore South Africa's hegemonic status with a widened lens to the non-physical components and include China as a variable.

Landry Signé at the Brookings Institute reinforces this sentiment, arguing that the case for South African dominance is shrouded by its material weakness and uneven success in the foreign policy arena⁵⁵. The literature also highlights a potential hegemony in South Africa that is underdefined and lacks structured enforcement procedures fueled by the weak footing of the South African economy. The Brookings Institute and other international think tanks emphasize that regardless of whether a SA hegemony exists, should it be sufficiently constrained, it has no effect in enacting any change. Therefore, despite involvement in numerous international governance committees, these scholars highlight a disconnection between South Africa's participation in these affairs and the attainment of SA priority areas.

The question of Nigeria is critical to the question of hegemony and the extent to South Africa's ability to exert tangible control over the African continent. Nigeria and South Africa are

the two foremost political and economic actors in Southern Africa. They have independently and collaboratively engineered transnational trade and political organizations. Therefore, some scholars see Nigeria as a mitigating force to the exertion of South African power and a functional blockade to the development of South African Hegemony.

Furthermore, the ability of China to exert its influence over South Africa is a significant area of contention, with some scholars highlighting the ineffectiveness of modern Chinese leverage practices. For example, in media impact, contemporary scholars emphasize the recent decreasing influence efforts lobbied by the Chinese government to create positive Chinese narratives in SA⁵⁶. Moreover, current 2022 data indicates a regression in viewing China as a positive force, with more individuals "displaying a high degree of skepticism of the Chinese state."⁵⁷ This regression could imply a reduction in overall Chinese soft power in the region and signal a loss of focus on SA as a vehicle to exert hegemony over the continent. Others argue that the impact of the physical manifestation of Chinese soft power, Confucius institutes, as a means to bolster localized Chinese soft power, are ineffective in achieving Chinese aims⁵⁸. Thus, these scholars highlight a disjunct between Chinese efforts to assert its influence and the effects of the influence behavior. Using this framework, these scholars denote that Chinese soft power is potentially inadequate to meet the required level to enact the level of social influence in SA to attain its programmatic objective relative to its geopolitical aims.

Whether China can achieve the level of control over South Africa required to fulfill its geopolitical aims or not, there is serious skepticism in the scholarly community South Africa has enough political clout to shape African development. In 2003, Benoit Dupont, Peter Grabosky, and Clifford Shearing published an article in the *Journal of Criminal Justice* that found that there is a result of structurally weak governance institutions and corrupt African state governments' diminished ability to

forward coherent governance policies⁵⁹. Moreover, the literature yields a profound cynicism regarding the ability of individual African states to come together for a common continent good⁶⁰. This analysis of African state relations is underlaid by the assumption that continental development will be state-dependent rather than SA-led. Therefore, many scholars would dispute that SA has adequate influence over the continent to force despondent and diplomatically disinterested states to collaborate. Should this description of the African geopolitical environment hold, it would vastly undercut the effectiveness of transnational trade and political governance groups intended to foster positive relations and enhance continental wellbeing.

Moreover, many of the same scholars and a consortium of others find that alternative international actors who promote alternative development practices are theories that may deride the Chinese-led development of Africa. Therefore, despite the China-fication of Africa and its many efforts to influence the citizens of SA economically and socially, scholars such as Messay Kebede argue that the long-term roots of Africa still retain their West-ness and Anti-Chinese sentiment⁶¹. This finding would indicate that China is fighting an uphill battle in converting Africans despite South Africa's assistance. Furthermore, this result suggests a long-term hurdle for China in reeducating and indoctrinating African citizens in their drive to attain and extend their influence on the continent.

Adding to the theme of continued West-ness in Africa is the continuance of Western aid and investment dollars, which stimulate local economies, including SA. As recent as 2022, the United States, along with other European powers, have been ramping up their investment activity in Africa, including (on the US side) the creation of more than 800 two-way trade and investment deals totaling over \$18 billion and over \$8.6 billion from the US private sector⁶². The United States has also been instrumental in creating the African Continental Free Trade Area

(pioneered by China), signing a Memorandum of Understanding to accelerate the creation of a continent-wide market valued at over \$3.4 trillion⁶³. The dramatic and expansive enhancements of recent US aid, investment, and development activity comes with the recognition by the US Trade Office that the country was losing ground and influence in an area that they described as having "tremendous economic potential."⁶⁴ The words of the US Trade Office highlight the United States' view of Africa as a war, where the battles are won on the balance sheet, not the battleground. The rapid introduction of American capital does have the potential to disrupt developing Chinese influence structures; however, China has had decades to build its infrastructure and has entered the ecosystem \$billions ahead of the United States

Despite playing catch up to Chinese investments in the region, research indicates that Western aid is more benevolent and contributes more in 'no strings' attached' assistance than its Eastern counterparts⁶⁵. Therefore, many African countries view the aid that the West gives as more favorable than the aid that China provides. This aid viewpoint can impact Chinese soft power as Western aid to the region continues to rise, theoretically displacing Chinese assistance and infrastructure. The view of Western aid supremacy, in effect, would limit the ability of China to influence SA actions within Africa and the likelihood that other African nations would follow Chinese-led SA-directed leadership of continental development.

It is unclear to what extent China will be able to capitalize on the gains experienced by the continent via intermediary states. A multi-state analysis by Jing Gu, Chuanhong Zhang, Alcides Vaz, and Langton Mukwereza, published in the prominent journal, *World Development*, emphasized the patchwork system of Chinese individuals, agencies, and agencies the central government all act with different agendas in molding African identities⁶⁶. If these scholars are correct, the finding that no central driving force underlying Chinese strategy in the aggregate is

hobbling any theory stressing a China-fication of Africa. Therefore, these scholars would assert a broad diffusion of Chinese influence across the continent rather than a localized or focused Chinese impact, which this paper argues is centered on the state of South Africa.

More to that effect, many scholars characterize China's Africa policy as simply extracting, drawing from China's "2025 Made in China Plan" and goals of centralizing industrial activity and technological development⁶⁷. The 2025 Made in China Plan was introduced by China in 2025 to eliminate the dependence of China on foreign technology and prioritize Chinese technology manufacturers in the global marketplace⁶⁸. This policy platform has been a driving force in the reallocation of Chinese capital projects, shifting away lower complexity jobs to the country's far reaches or exporting them to developing nations. These reallocations have frightened scholars of global affairs who note that a change in Chinese priorities would displace the existing power structure and hierarchy in the high-skill high-effort technology industry.

Some entities take this concern seriously, going so far as to denote that the Made in China 2025 policy could threaten global trade⁶⁹. The analysis of international operations' ramifications hinges on the reallocation potential of China's expansive policy agenda, framed in a seemingly larger conflict between China and the West. It exposes a relative weakness in western technological superiority in the progressively more geopolitically important field of advanced manufacturing and development. Thus, these scholars would argue that the effective interest of Africa from the Chinese perspective would be motivated mainly by resource reserves and, subsequently, Chinese extraction and repurposing. This extractive motivation would, in turn, supercharge the aspirations espoused by China's Made in China 2025 policy and allow the nation increased flexibility in its scaling of operations and cross-sector expansion. While it is

well-founded that China is interested in rare earth metal deposits, largely in the Congo, China invests significantly in countries that are not as resource-laden, such as SA.

The Response

Various economic and political indicators highlight the evolving relationship between SA and China as more than a strategic partnership. China has been intimately and more centrally involved in its relationship with SA for decades. China, during these years, has been building an infrastructure and system of dependency in the nation, which it uses to leverage its international aspirations and geopolitical goals. Key studies have indicated that South Africa is the most cost-effective African country regarding international influence gathering. Moreover, survey results highlight that the SA populous is primed to positively associate China with action to further its domestic and international goals.

China has taken a proactive approach to mold South Africa into a state receptive to Chinese needs. Through numerous physical and intangible manifestations of its influence, China has developed its tools of neocolonialism to advance its long-term geopolitical aims. China has taken an economically mobilizing, strong-arm approach towards governance in the region and influence buying in South Africa, using loans and economic promises to influence SA behavior on the international level. Beyond manipulating the SA's internal governing mechanisms, China has progressively created dependency systems that reinforce and output positive Chinese messaging. The data regarding media saturation in SA indicates a dependency on Chinese aid and knowledge as well as a deference to Chinese leadership in media output. These actions to regulate the public word and perceptions of China further induce soft power gains for the Chinese state.

Moreover, FDI is critical to consider in the context of Chinese soft power accumulation. Through its FDI regime, China gains the ability to leverage the South African Government towards its particular areas of interest, namely rare earth metals, and induce them to join

economic alliances that further Chinese trade policies. Research indicates no direct connection between the relative level of FDI and the economic payoff in SA. Moreover, the FDI connected to economic payoff leads to significantly more debt for SA. The dual function of FDI in SA to influence and extend influence through debt burdens highlights China's long-term thinking on its regional investments. Despite warnings from the IMF that such practices are unsustainable and would not net a return on investment, China has recently doubled down on its lending and extricated itself from the international lending scene. China's choice to expand its loan offerings to SA and SA's choice to continue to accept such loans in the face of IMF's warnings indicates the level of SA dependence. This practice also underscores the value which China places on debt burdens as a means of control over SA.

Crucially, recent scholarship has indicated that Chinese investment in Africa is "significantly" different from other developing nations and centralizes on natural resources as a key motivation⁷⁰. A differentiation in South African aid suggests that China views Africa as a unique investment opportunity that derives a different kind of value than its other investment—indicating a long-term plan for Africa. This plan includes gaining access to and exploiting Africa's natural and personnel resources at a time when the continent is rapidly developing. The intention to ride on the coattails of Africa has made China inclined to invest in unfavorable conditions to build out the infrastructure needed to have controlled leverage on the continent. Thus, despite the decentralization of current Chinese investment and prerogatives on the continent, China's central planning-oriented approach towards foreign policy and investment signals a trend towards a unified China or Chinese policy on Africa. This approach would draw together the seemingly divergent lines of funding and goalposts in current Chinese funding patterns and highlight the underlying belt and road framework of China's master plan for Africa.

To China, SA represents its most proximal opportunity to influence African affairs and expand its influence in the international arena. Given SA's long diplomatic, social, and economic relationship with China, it gives China a prime opportunity to shape the evolution of the African continent by proxy of SA. Current data indicates that China has significant power over the voting power and actions of the SA state in international affairs. Furthermore, China's continuing pressure to integrate Africa through differing trade and diplomatic structures under the leadership of South Africa denotes a commonality in desire or a Chinese push towards SA leadership—or Chinese leadership via a SA proxy. The resultant governance structures created out of Chinese pressure have created a system of African international affairs centered on South African leadership, economic dependence, and political reliance. These factors have contributed significantly to the rise of SA as an African hegemon with rising international recognition.

Despite the garnering of the African continent's leadership roles and perceptual power, the pervading narrative in the literature labels South Africa as a quiet diplomacy. Recent scholarship argues that that label is based on a historically inept understanding of regional hegemony and that South Africa is a regional hegemon⁷¹. Reconceptualizing regional hegemony validates the far-reaching political and economic capital South Africa has been applying to transnational problems. The finding that SA is more than a quiet democracy and holds real power reinforces the nation and influences the building behaviors of Chinese investment into SA.

Moreover, some literature concludes that South Africa is not a Hegemon, under a limited definition that excludes china and puts enhanced weight on physical qualifications of hegemony due to the "development-dependency" paradox. The development-dependency paradox is that one political actor cannot serve as a hegemon when they are subservient to another political power. Under this paradox, I argue that South Africa can indeed be classified as a hegemon that

is critically enhanced in its abilities through its relationship with the other political power. The question of relative control is another matter entirely. This finding highlights the transitive benefits of viewing South Africa as a pass-through entity for exercising Chinese influence. It also provides additional credence for examining China as a neo-colonizer that regulates the activity of a political actor through informal means and selectively exerts a regional hegemony for its geopolitical aspirations at the expense of SA. The ability of a nation to remotely exert its influence on another country systematically to exercise the hegemony of its subservient nation, as evidenced by the literature, highlights the importance of analysis regarding the Sino-SA relationship. South African hegemony, evidenced by a widened conception of hegemony influenced by a third-party nation, China, can be wielded as an extension of the dominant nations' hegemonic structure. However, despite China using South Africa as a tool to enhance Chinese global hegemony, it does not diminish South African hegemony. Instead, it magnifies it as Chinese tools are utilized to extend South African hegemony further than it would naturally reach. The enhancement of South African hegemony and its continued direction by the Chinese state indicates an expansion of Chinese global power and influence on the African continent.

South Africa is a pass-through mechanism to exert Chinese influence on the continent; it is no longer development dependent; instead, it is capital-rich and effective at addressing its policy priorities and those of China in the region. For example, South Africa's post-apartheid government's first significant foreign policy decision was to recognize China's people's republic and open official diplomatic relations⁷². Some scholars highlight this moment as a turning point as South Africa re-establishes itself as an accepted regional power by amassing soft power⁷³. SA's acceptance of China formally had the benefit of assisting reform of China's image on the

continent away from that of a semi-colonizer to a positive force that would reinvigorate the SA economy and improve the lives of its citizens.

While the importance of the Sino-SA relationship is instructive in describing the evolution and exertion of SA Hegemony, some scholars downplay this shift and instead focus on the dynamic relationship between South Africa and Nigeria to explain and elucidate the changing power dynamics of the continent⁷⁴. Daniel Flesmes, who published an influential article in the *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, identified a dichotomous relationship between SA and Nigeria that led to the creation of a SA hegemony in the region due to the Nigerian inability to assume the leadership role. Scholars Alden, Chris, and Mills Soko further characterize South Africa's relationship with Nigeria as limiting to SA's hegemonic abilities⁷⁵. However, other scholars, such as Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Ufo Okeke-Uzodike, highlight that Nigeria is limited by many factors that prevent the country from becoming a regional hegemon⁷⁶. With these findings in mind, Nigeria may play an effervescent role in the development of African leadership by South Africa. However, despite blunting the potential impact of SA hegemony, the evidence does not indicate that Nigeria has become or is likely to subsume the hegemonic position on the continent.

Rather, scholars on Nigeria highlight that Nigeria is likely to continue to play its role as a prominent regional player, which positively contributes to international peacemaking and development efforts due to its growing soft power divide between Nigeria and South Africa⁷⁷. These findings highlight that despite similarities in size, natural resources, and economic capacity, South Africa can leverage its resources better to influence the continent. South Africa's ability to influence international operations thus outpaces that of Nigeria and mitigates the impact of contrasting scholarship commenting on the relationship between the two nations. So

while Nigeria may have a mitigating effect on the exertion of South African hegemony, it does not block the effects of South African leadership on the continent, as some scholars have posited. Therefore, the development of the African continent necessarily involves the interaction between South Africa and Nigeria; however, the effects of differing priorities between SA, China, and Nigeria may blunt the potential hegemonic influence of the Sino-SA efforts.

Limitations

There is currently no consensus in the literature on measuring hegemony or colonialism. Therefore, framing these concepts in a widened scope to address technological, diplomatic, and social dynamics that other definitions do not cover is not widely accepted as "the" definition for these concepts. Thus, many scholars may come to alternative conclusions based on more concise and localized explanations of such concepts. This work pioneers a unique blend of hard and soft factors, which have, in parts, been endorsed by the literature but not in the same configuration. Therefore, findings may be subject to heightened scrutiny among scholars. Separately, this work is centralized on long-term predictions and escalating patterns of policy and influence, which may not be entirely evident in the data or manifest themselves to the casual observer. The inability to see directly behind closed doors will hinder the level of confidence that this paper hopes to arrive at in its conclusion.

A secondary hindrance is the relative secrecy of the Chinese government and the heightened need to utilize international agencies for information on the interactions between China and South Africa. This secrecy of information could lead to data that is unrepresentative of the actual activities of the Chinese state in South Africa. It also highlights reliance on the truthfulness of Chinese information made public. It may not be entirely representative of Chinese aims or be long-term enough to encapsulate China's strategy with South Africa.

China has stopped officially reporting the aggregate levels of aid it gives African countries, so it is impossible to know the extent of Chinese economic ties between the Chinese Government and SA⁷⁸. Therefore, without a clear and transparent breakdown of Chinese investment in South Africa, the current data set reported by South Africa and the international community likely underestimates the total amount of Chinese investment. However, it could also

be that China invests significantly more in other countries, which could indicate a shifting focus of Chinese priorities and a perception that the extension of SA hegemony is not as cost-effective to Chinese geopolitics.

The most proximal limitation to this analysis is the question of South African Hegemony and its effectiveness. Although the data indicate that SA yields significant hegemonic power in Africa, it is still unclear whether Africa's disjointed, economically disparate, and politically misaligned nations will follow its lead. Therefore, based on a spotty record in international governing bodies, many scholars highlight that SA's influence may not be enough to enact the kind of structural change needed to spark cohesive development of the continent and realize China's geopolitical aspirations. Yet others denote that the internal conflicts within South Africa, some stemming from lingering apartheid sentiments, may hamper its distillation of influence across the continent and, thereafter, its ability to serve as a role model for other nations. While the efficacy of these perceptions is unclear, they invite further study and analysis on the effectual impact that SA can have and the multitudes of hindrances that may obfuscate the direction of its leadership position on the continent.

Moreover, it is critical to consider China's ability to coordinate its diverse array of actors both internally, privately, publicly, and externally through its relationships on the African Continent. Internally, China's long-term vision has to mitigate the distinct interests of its government apparatus's public investment and aid arm with the business interests that desire enhanced gains through investing in developing nations. Therefore, China must attempt to match the state's and business interests' goals in its investment efforts on the continent. This ongoing conflict of desires will invariably lead to differences in desires and, thus, a difference in resource allocation. This difference in resource allocation could potentially skew the results of this paper

in the sense that businesses may want to invest in South Africa independent of their ability to work towards long-term strategic priorities. Thus, there is a mitigation factor to this paper's conclusions and the data landscape recorded on the investment and trade indexes. However, despite this fact, private investor input could independently signal a comprehensive social understanding that South Africa is critical to future growth on the continent. While it is impossible to separate the motivation of private citizens' investment and Chinese governmental investment into SA, the simple presence of heightened economic flows into SA indicates a preference for SA as an investment destination. These capital flows have important spillover effects for the Chinese government regarding its geopolitical aims.

The external consideration on the African continent is critical to the ultimate conclusions regarding an SA-led African development strategy pioneered by China. Achieving the productive ends of which Africa is capable would require effective and coordinated movement between African states, many of which are corrupt and dealing with internal conflicts. Therefore, a conclusion that China will attain a controlling global hegemony would inherently be limited by the failures of African states to come together comprehensively to pursue continental development. The clear difference in priorities of African member states and their devotion to their respective development projects could potentially undercut larger goals of transnational collaboration. By reducing international cooperation through individualized focus within respective nation-states, China's influence over continental development and geopolitical goals connected to holistic African development will be limited.

Conclusion

Chinese investment and involvements in South Africa are emblematic of China's larger goal of extending its hegemony on the continent. Through strategic impositions of capital in SA, China has managed to direct SA diplomatic action and influence international voting patterns of the state, form positive social perceptions of Chineseness, and build inroads across the continent through diplomatic and trade dealings. Using South Africa as its face in African affairs, China has leveraged its hegemony in the region to create a regional hegemon (South Africa) and magnify its presence on the continent. China's strategic building up of South Africa's capacity and the long-term preferential treatment, which has scaled with increasing Chinese involvement, is part of China's geopolitical goals for the region.

South Africa is being used as China's springboard into the African market and is central to shoring up African nations' support for domestic and international Chinese proposals. The data indicated that Chinese funding has allowed South Africa to grow into a regional hegemon. Research from the Aid Data Center also suggested that China was utilizing the financing in the region to influence political affairs and shift South African international politics into alignment with China. It is also critical to note that prominent analyses of these economic affairs have yielded that Chinese loans left nations more in debt than was initially predicted and have been frowned upon by the international community. China's practice of over-indebting countries, knowing they will not be able to pay off their loans, indicates the central non-monetary rationale of Chinese lending—influence. Moreover, Chinese loan calling has become a central tool in China's arsenal to enact its vision of the region—one loan-dependent South Africa cannot ignore.

Furthering the air of dependency, China's implementation of cultural subversion through the control of local media and Confucious institutes highlights the value China sees South Africa

hold in its vision. Moreover, it is indicative of a larger semi-colonialist mentality that China employs toward its Chinese loan-burdened nations. This semi-colonialist mentality is exploitative but structurally a remote-first policy. Through China's use of local overseers, the internet, and decentralized means of economic control, China is able to extract political, economic, and social concessions from South Africa without even setting foot on its shores. Critically, these exploitative activities extend to Africa. South Africa is a vessel for China to access rare-earth metal deposits and cement its control over the international supply chain. Through the dominance of South Africa and rare earth mineral, China creates a dependency of the developed world on Chinese resources—locking out nations from creating critical technology, which they need to continue their development and innovation.

In South Africa, China has not only found a means to extend its influence via proxy over the continent of Africa, but it has also created a virulent new form of colonialism that diverts from historical conceptions of physicality-oriented control. Through remote means and a decentralized economic structure, China has leveraged its economic and social advantages to assert its dominance over South Africa and extend its geopolitical aims. China's actions in South Africa highlight that colonialism is not abolished, as the UN would believe; instead, it has shifted form. While not easily defined or identified, the modern era has created new means of control of exploitation. No longer does a nation need to be physically present or impose its emissaries to prove an exploitative and domineering force.

China's evolution into a semi-colonizer diverts from the expansive conception of China by the African continent that it is a benevolent foreign actor working to improve the continent. I note this discrepancy to highlight the growing scope of Chinese Hegemony over Africa (and in the aggregate). Through the strategic use of SA to express the "good" of China and the dispersal

of this perception across the continent, China has begun to open doors with formerly hostile nations and cement its role in shaping the African continent. Without an entry point into the African market to personalize and provide positive testimony with the economic actor, China's rapid accession to the continent of Africa would be unlikely, if not entirely impossible. South Africa has been China's primary vehicle to humanize the power and push for mass China-fiction of the African continent and, in time, the world

In context, China has been pushing its currency towards mainstream use through the dominance of natural resource production on a global scale. The superpowers' recent dealings in the middle east, with Russia and other BRICS nations to usurp the dollar as the world's de facto reserve currency, highlight the long-term implications and strategic leverage which a controlling presence in BRICS (of which both SA and China are central players) could have on the global economic system⁷⁹. Finally, China's actions are especially important considering that historic hegemonic ascension has hinged on currency adoption bases (see the United States post World War 3).



Thus while the relationship between China and South Africa continues to evolve, it is one on which scholars should center attention and scrutiny. The implications of a China-led-Africa are too essential to occur unwatched by the academic community, especially when contextualized by other international actions China takes to cement its hegemonic position.

-
- ¹ Keohane, Robert O. "The theory of hegemonic stability and changes in international economic regimes, 1967–1977." In *Change in the international system*, pp. 131-162. Routledge, 2019.
- ² Kennedy, Paul M. *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*. Random House, 1990.
- ³ Taylor, Ian. "BRICS and capitalist hegemony: passive revolution in theory and practice." *Emerging powers, emerging markets, emerging societies: global responses* (2016): 55-84.
- ⁴ Layne, Christopher. "Rethinking American grand strategy: hegemony or balance of power in the twenty-first century?." *World Policy Journal* 15, no. 2 (1998): 8-28.
- ⁵ Nye, Joseph S. "Soft power." *Foreign policy* 80 (1990): 153-171.
- ⁶ Bilgin, Pinar, and Berivan Eliş. "Hard power, soft power: toward a more realistic power analysis." *Insight Turkey* (2008): 5-20.
- ⁷ Trigaux, David. "'The US, China and Rare Earth Metals': The Future Of Green Technology, Military Tech, and a Potential Achilles Heel to American Hegemony." (2012).
- ⁸ Osterhammel Jürgen. *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*. Princeton: Wiener, 2010.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ N/A. "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial ..." Office of the high commissioner. United Nations, December 14, 1960. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-granting-independence-colonial-countries-and-peoples>.
- ¹¹ Yazzie, Robert. "Postcolonial Colonialism." *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (2000): 39-49.
- ¹² Osterhammel, Jürgen. "Semi-colonialism and informal empire in twentieth-century China: Towards a framework of analysis." (1986): 290-314.
- ¹³ N/A. "Chinese Economic Engagement in Africa: Implications for U.S. Policy." Foreign Policy Research Institute, February 3, 2022. <https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/01/chinese-economic-engagement-in-africa/#:~:text=Between%202001%20and%202018%2C%20China,in%2078%25%20greater%20voting%20alignment>.
- ¹⁴ Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Adeoye Akinola. "South Africa and the question of hegemony in Africa." *Journal of Developing Societies* 33, no. 4 (2017): 428-447.
- ¹⁵ Keohane, Robert O. "The theory of hegemonic stability and changes in international economic regimes, 1967– 1977." In *Change in the international system*, pp. 131-162. Routledge, 2019.
- ¹⁶ Parrington, Alan J. *Mutually Assured Destruction Revisited. Strategic Doctrine in Question*. AIR UNIV MAXWELL AFB AL AIRPOWER JOURNAL, 1997.
- ¹⁷ Klare, Michael. *The race for what's left: the global scramble for the world's last resources*. Macmillan, 2012.
- ¹⁸ Kennedy, Charles. "China Is Now Remotely Controlling Cobalt Mines in the Congo." OilPrice.com, December 8, 2022. <https://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/China-Is-Now-Remotely-Controlling-Cobalt-Mines-In-The-Congo.html>.
- ¹⁹ Luttwak, Edward N. "From geopolitics to geo-economics: Logic of conflict, grammar of commerce." *The national interest* 20 (1990): 17-23.
- ²⁰ Park, Yoon. "Living in between: The Chinese in South Africa." migrationpolicy.org. Migration Policy Institute, August 27, 2021. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/living-between-chinese-south-africa>.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² N/A. 2010. Boundaries, Borders and Borderland Constructions: Chinese in Contemporary South Africa and the Region. *African Studies* 69 (3): 457-79.
- ²³ Nyabiage, Jevans. "Africa Looks Forward to Return of Chinese Tour Groups." South China Morning Post, January 29, 2023. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3208303/africa-looks-forward-return-chinese-tour-groups-egypt-south-africa-and-kenya-first-line>.
- ²⁴ Wenjun, C. (2018, September 25). Twenty Years on, China-SA Embrace a New Chapter. Business Day (Johannesburg).

-
- ²⁵ Mihelich, John, and Debbie Storrs. "Higher education and the negotiated process of hegemony: Embedded resistance among Mormon women." *Gender & Society* 17, no. 3 (2003): 404-422.
- ²⁶ Huan, Changpeng, and Menghan Deng. "Partners or predators? A corpus-based study of China's image in South African Media." *African Journalism Studies* 42, no. 3 (2021): 34-50.
- ²⁷ De Beer, Arnold S., and Wadim N. Schreiner. 2009. Of 'Ominous Dragons' and 'Flying Geese': South African Media Coverage of China in Africa. Boston, USA: The Annual Convention of the Association for Journalism and Mass Communication Education (AEJMC), 05 August 2009. http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p375444_index.html.
- ²⁸ Banda, F. (2009). China in the African mediascape: a critical injection. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 1(3), 343–361. doi:10.1386/jams.1.3.343/1
- ²⁹ N/A. *Journalism.co.za*. (2007), 'China grows its role in Africa's media', available at: <http://www.journalism.co.za>. Accessed 14 August 2008.
- ³⁰ Akhtaruzzaman, Muhammad, Nathan Berg, and Donald Lien. "Confucius Institutes and FDI flows from China to Africa." *China Economic Review* 44 (2017): 241-252.
- ³¹ Procopio, Maddalena. "The effectiveness of Confucius Institutes as a tool of China's soft power in South Africa." *African East-Asian Affairs* 1-2 (2015).
- ³² Wenjun, C. (2018, September 25). *Ibib*.
- ³³ Morgan, Stephen, Jarrad Farris, and Michael E. Johnson, October 2022. Foreign Direct Investment in Africa: Recent Trends Leading up to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Number EIB-242, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
- ³⁴ N/A. Economic Relations With Africa. Chinese State Department. Accessed February 10, 2023. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2021-09/29/content_5639984.htm.
- ³⁵ Chhabra, Tarun, Rush Doshi, Ryan Hass, and Emilie Kimball. "Global China: Technology." Brookings. Brookings, March 9, 2022. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/global-china-technology/>.
- ³⁶ Smith, Elliot. "Chinese Loans Leave Developing Countries with \$385 Billion in Hidden Debts, Study Says." CNBC. CNBC, September 30, 2021. <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/09/30/study-chinese-loans-leave-developing-countries-with-385-billion-in-hidden-debts.html>.
- ³⁷ Gerstel, Dylan. "It's A (Debt) Trap! Managing China-IMF Cooperation across the Belt and Road." CSIS. Accessed February 18, 2023. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/its-debt-trap-managing-china-imf-cooperation-across-belt-and-road>.
- ³⁸ *Ibib*.
- ³⁹ Monteiro, Ana, and Tom Hancock. "China to Forgive Loans to 17 African Countries, Offer \$10 Billion in IMF Funds." Bloomberg.com. Bloomberg, August 23, 2022. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-23/china-to-waive-some-africa-loans-offer-10-billion-in-imf-funds>.
- ⁴⁰ Zenawi, Meles. "True Partnership, Key to African Sustainable Peace, Development: Ethiopian PM." True partnership, key to african sustainable peace, development: Ethiopian PM, December 15, 2003. http://en.people.cn/200312/15/eng20031215_130462.shtml.
- ⁴¹ Bartlett, Kate. "China Cancels 23 Loans to Africa Amid 'Debt Trap' Debate." VOA. Voice of America (VOA News), August 25, 2022. <https://www.voanews.com/a/china-cancels-23-loans-to-africa-amid-debt-trap-debate-6716397.html>.
- ⁴² N/A. "China Wins Battle of Perception among Young Africans." n.d. www.globalsecurity.org. Accessed April 1, 2023. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/china/2022/06/china-220614-voa01.htm>.
- ⁴³ McCullough, Leslie. "AidData Sheds Light on Chinese Foreign Aid." William & Mary, July 8, 2020. <https://www.wm.edu/news/stories/2020/aiddata-sheds-light-on-chinese-foreign-aid.php>.
- ⁴⁴ Okumu, Wafula. "The African Union: pitfalls and prospects for uniting Africa." *Journal of International Affairs* 62, no. 2 (2009): 93-111.

-
- ⁴⁵ le Pere, Garth. "The Political Economy of South Africa—China Trade and Economic Relations." SpringerLink. Springer International Publishing, January 1, 1970. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-54768-4_5#ref-CR36.
- ⁴⁶ Monteiro, Ana, and Tom Hancock. "China to Forgive Loans to 17 African Countries, Offer \$10 Billion in IMF Funds." Bloomberg.com. Bloomberg, August 23, 2022. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-23/china-to-waive-some-africa-loans-offer-10-billion-in-imf-funds>.
- ⁴⁷ Frankopan, P. (2018). *The New Silk Roads: The Present and Future of the World*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- ⁴⁸ Uzodike, Ufo Okeke. "South Africa and BRICS: Path to a new African hegemony." *State of the Nation Who is in Charge* (2016): 437-456.
- ⁴⁹ Alden, C., & Wu, Y.-S. (2014). *South Africa and China: The Making of a Partnership* (Occasional Paper 199). South African Institute of International Affairs.
- ⁵⁰ Alden, C., & Wu, Y.-S. (2014). *Ibib*.
- ⁵¹ Eisenman, Joshua, and Joshua Kurlantzick. "China's Africa strategy." *Current history* 105, no. 691 (2006): 219-224.
- ⁵² *Ibib*.
- ⁵³ Fledes, Daniel. "Regional power South Africa: Co-operative hegemony constrained by historical legacy." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 27, no. 2 (2009): 135-157.
- ⁵⁴ Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Adeoye Akinola. "South Africa and the question of hegemony in Africa." *Journal of Developing Societies* 33, no. 4 (2017): 428-447.
- ⁵⁵ Alden, Chris, and Maxi Schoeman. "South Africa's symbolic hegemony in Africa." *International Politics* 52, no. 2 (2015): 239-254.
- ⁵⁶ N/A. "South Africa: Beijing's Global Media Influence 2022 Country Report." Freedom House, 2022. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/south-africa/beijings-global-media-influence/2022>.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibib*.
- ⁵⁸ Liu, Min, Cong Su, Fangfang Wang, and Liangxiong Huang. "Chinese cross-border M&As in the "One Belt One Road" countries: the impact of Confucius Institutes." *China Economic Review* 61 (2020): 101432.
- ⁵⁹ Dupont, Benoit, Peter Grabosky, and Clifford Shearing. "The governance of security in weak and failing states." *Criminal justice* 3, no. 4 (2003): 331-349.
- ⁶⁰ Noman, Akbar, and Joseph E. Stiglitz. "Strategies for African development." *Good growth and governance in Africa: Rethinking development strategies* (2012): 3-47.
- ⁶¹ Kebede, Messay. "African development and the primacy of mental decolonization." *AFRICA DEVELOPMENT-SENEGAL*- 29, no. 1 (2004): 107-130.
- ⁶² N/A. "Fact Sheet: U.S.- Africa Partnership in Promoting Two-Way Trade and Investment in Africa." The White House. The United States Government, December 16, 2022. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/12/14/fact-sheet-u-s-africa-partnership-in-promoting-two-way-trade-and-investment-in-africa/>.
- ⁶³ *Ibib*.
- ⁶⁴ Signé, Landry. "US Trade and Investment in Africa." Brookings. Brookings, March 9, 2022. <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/us-trade-and-investment-in-africa/>.
- ⁶⁵ Lancaster, Carol. "U.S. Aid, Diplomacy, and African Development." *Africa Report* 29, no. 4 (Jul 01, 1984): 62. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/u-s-aid-diplomacy-african-development/docview/1304060057/se-2>.
- ⁶⁶ Gu, Jing, Chuanhong Zhang, Alcides Vaz, and Langton Mukwereza. "Chinese state capitalism? Rethinking the role of the state and business in Chinese development cooperation in Africa." *World Development* 81 (2016): 24-34.

-
- ⁶⁷ Eisenman, Joshua, and Joshua Kurlantzick. "China's Africa strategy." *Current history* 105, no. 691 (2006): 219-224.
- ⁶⁸ Donnelly, .st5 {fill-rule:evenodd;clip-rule:evenodd;fill:#718B94;} AuthorDrew. "Made in China 2025 Initiative [Everything You Need to Know]." *Horizons*, July 2, 2022. <https://nhglobalpartners.com/made-in-china-2025/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CMade%20in%20China%202025%E2%80%9D%20is,the%20plan%20first%20took%20root.>
- ⁶⁹ McBride , James, and Andrew Chatzky. "Is 'Made in China 2025' a Threat to Global Trade?" Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed February 8, 2023. [https://www.cfr.org/background/made-china-2025-threat-global-trade.](https://www.cfr.org/background/made-china-2025-threat-global-trade)
- ⁷⁰ Gunessee, Saileshsingh, and Shuang Hu. "Chinese cross-border mergers and acquisitions in the developing world: Is Africa unique?." *Thunderbird International Business Review* 63, no. 1 (2021): 27-41.
- ⁷¹ Prys, Miriam. "Developing a contextually relevant concept of regional hegemony: The case of South Africa, Zimbabwe and 'quiet diplomacy'." (2008).
- ⁷² Alden, Chris. "Solving South Africa's Chinese puzzle: Democratic foreign policy making and the 'two Chinas' question." *South African Journal of International Affairs* 5, no. 2 (1997): 80-95.
- ⁷³ Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Ufo Okeke-Uzodike. "South Africa's foreign policy and the strategy of soft power." *South African Journal of International Affairs* 22, no. 1 (2015): 23-41.
- ⁷⁴ Fledes, Daniel. "Regional power South Africa: Co-operative hegemony constrained by historical legacy." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 27, no. 2 (2009): 135-157.
- ⁷⁵ Alden, Chris, and Mills Soko. "South Africa's economic relations with Africa: hegemony and its discontents." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 43, no. 3 (2005): 367-392.
- ⁷⁶ Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Ufo Okeke-Uzodike. "Can Nigeria be Africa's hegemon?." *African Security Review* 25, no. 2 (2016): 110-128.
- ⁷⁷ Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Christopher Isike. "Regional hegemonic contention and the asymmetry of soft power: A comparative analysis of South Africa and Nigeria." *Strategic Review for Southern Africa* 37, no. 1 (2015): 152.
- ⁷⁸ Eisenman, Joshua, and Joshua Kurlantzick. "China's Africa strategy." *Current history* 105, no. 691 (2006): 219-224.
- ⁷⁸ Glover, George. 2022. "Russia and China Are Brewing up a Challenge to Dollar Dominance by Creating a New Reserve Currency." *Markets Insider*. June 24, 2022. [https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/currencies/dollar-dominance-russia-china-rouble-yuan-brics-reserve-currency-imf-2022-6.](https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/currencies/dollar-dominance-russia-china-rouble-yuan-brics-reserve-currency-imf-2022-6)

References

- Akhtaruzzaman, Muhammad, Nathan Berg, and Donald Lien. "Confucius Institutes and FDI flows from China to Africa." *China Economic Review* 44 (2017): 241-252.
- Alden, C., & Wu, Y.-S. (2014). *South Africa and China: The Making of a Partnership* (Occasional Paper 199). South African Institute of International Affairs.
- Alden, Chris, and Maxi Schoeman. "South Africa's symbolic hegemony in Africa." *International Politics* 52, no. 2 (2015): 239-254.
- Alden, Chris, and Mills Soko. "South Africa's economic relations with Africa: hegemony and its discontents." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 43, no. 3 (2005): 367-392.
- Alden, Chris. "Solving South Africa's Chinese puzzle: Democratic foreign policy making and the 'two Chinas' question." *South African Journal of International Affairs* 5, no. 2 (1997): 80-95.
- Banda, F. (2009). China in the African mediascape: a critical injection. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 1(3), 343–361. doi:10.1386/jams.1.3.343/1
- Bartlett, Kate. "China Cancels 23 Loans to Africa Amid 'Debt Trap' Debate." VOA. Voice of America (VOA News), August 25, 2022. <https://www.voanews.com/a/china-cancels-23-loans-to-africa-amid-debt-trap-debate-/6716397.html>.
- Bilgin, Pinar, and Berivan Eliş. "Hard power, soft power: toward a more realistic power analysis." *Insight Turkey* (2008): 5-20.
- Chhabra, Tarun, Rush Doshi, Ryan Hass, and Emilie Kimball. "Global China: Technology." Brookings. Brookings, March 9, 2022. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/global-china-technology/>.
- De Beer, Arnold S., and Wadim N. Schreiner. 2009. *Of 'Ominous Dragons' and 'Flying Geese': South African Media Coverage of China in Africa*. Boston, USA: The Annual Convention of the Association for Journalism and Mass Communication Education (AEJMC), 05 August 2009. http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p375444_index.html.
- Donnelly, .st5 {fill-rule:evenodd;clip-rule:evenodd;fill:#718B94;} AuthorDrew. "Made in China 2025 Initiative [Everything You Need to Know]." *Horizons*, July 2, 2022. <https://nhglobalpartners.com/made-in-china-2025/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CMade%20in%20China%202025%E2%80%9D%20is,the%20plan%20first%20took%20root.>
- Dupont, Benoit, Peter Grabosky, and Clifford Shearing. "The governance of security in weak and failing states." *Criminal Justice* 3, no. 4 (2003): 331-349.
- Eisenman, Joshua, and Joshua Kurlantzick. "China's Africa strategy." *Current History* 105, no. 691 (2006): 219-224.
- Flemes, Daniel. "Regional power South Africa: Co-operative hegemony constrained by historical legacy." *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 27, no. 2 (2009): 135-157.
- Frankopan, P. (2018). *The New Silk Roads: The Present and Future of the World*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Gerstel, Dylan. "It's A (Debt) Trap! Managing China-IMF Cooperation across the Belt and Road." CSIS. Accessed February 18, 2023. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/its-debt-trap-managing-china-imf-cooperation-across-belt-and-road>.
- Glover, George. 2022. "Russia and China Are Brewing up a Challenge to Dollar Dominance by Creating a New Reserve Currency." *Markets Insider*. June 24, 2022. <https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/currencies/dollar-dominance-russia-china-rouble-yuan-brics-reserve-currency-imf-2022-6>.
- Gu, Jing, Chuanhong Zhang, Alcides Vaz, and Langton Mukwereza. "Chinese state capitalism? Rethinking the role of the state and business in Chinese development cooperation in Africa." *World Development* 81 (2016): 24-34.

- Gunessee, Saileshsingh, and Shuang Hu. "Chinese cross-border mergers and acquisitions in the developing world: Is Africa unique?." *Thunderbird International Business Review* 63, no. 1 (2021): 27-41.
- Huan, Changpeng, and Menghan Deng. "Partners or predators? A corpus-based study of China's image in South African Media." *African Journalism Studies* 42, no. 3 (2021): 34-50.
- Kebede, Messay. "African development and the primacy of mental decolonization." *AFRICA DEVELOPMENT-SENEGAL*- 29, no. 1 (2004): 107-130.
- Kennedy, Charles. "China Is Now Remotely Controlling Cobalt Mines in the Congo." *OilPrice.com*, December 8, 2022. <https://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/China-Is-Now-Remotely-Controlling-Cobalt-Mines-In-The-Congo.html>.
- Kennedy, Paul M. *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*. Random House, 1990.
- Keohane, Robert O. "The theory of hegemonic stability and changes in international economic regimes, 1967– 1977." In *Change in the international system*, pp. 131-162. Routledge, 2019.
- Klare, Michael. *The race for what's left: the global scramble for the world's last resources*. Macmillan, 2012.
- Lancaster, Carol. "U.S. Aid, Diplomacy, and African Development." *Africa Report* 29, no. 4 (Jul 01, 1984): 62. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/u-s-aid-diplomacy-african-development/docview/1304060057/se-2>.
- Layne, Christopher. "Rethinking American grand strategy: hegemony or balance of power in the twenty-first century?." *World Policy Journal* 15, no. 2 (1998): 8-28.
- le Pere, Garth. "The Political Economy of South Africa–China Trade and Economic Relations." SpringerLink. Springer International Publishing, January 1, 1970. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-54768-4_5#ref-CR36.
- Liu, Min, Cong Su, Fangfang Wang, and Liangxiong Huang. "Chinese cross-border M&As in the "One Belt One Road" countries: the impact of Confucius Institutes." *China Economic Review* 61 (2020): 101432.
- Luttwak, Edward N. "From geopolitics to geo-economics: Logic of conflict, grammar of commerce." *The national interest* 20 (1990): 17-23.
- McBride , James, and Andrew Chatzky. "Is 'Made in China 2025' a Threat to Global Trade?" Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed February 8, 2023. <https://www.cfr.org/background/made-china-2025-threat-global-trade>.
- McCullough, Leslie. "AidData Sheds Light on Chinese Foreign Aid." *William & Mary*, July 8, 2020. <https://www.wm.edu/news/stories/2020/aiddata-sheds-light-on-chinese-foreign-aid.php>.
- Mihelich, John, and Debbie Storrs. "Higher education and the negotiated process of hegemony: Embedded resistance among Mormon women." *Gender & Society* 17, no. 3 (2003): 404-422.
- Monteiro, Ana, and Tom Hancock. "China to Forgive Loans to 17 African Countries, Offer \$10 Billion in IMF Funds." *Bloomberg.com*. Bloomberg, August 23, 2022. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-23/china-to-waive-some-africa-loans-offer-10-billion-in-imf-funds>.
- Morgan, Stephen, Jarrad Farris, and Michael E. Johnson, October 2022. *Foreign Direct Investment in Africa: Recent Trends Leading up to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*, Number EIB-242, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
- N/A. "China Wins Battle of Perception among Young Africans." n.d. *Www.globalsecurity.org*. Accessed April 1, 2023. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/china/2022/06/china-220614-voa01.htm>.
- N/A. "Chinese Economic Engagement in Africa: Implications for U.S. Policy." *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, February 3, 2022. <https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/01/chinese-economic-engagement-in->

- africa/#:~:text=Between%202001%20and%202018%2C%20China,in%2078%25%20greater%20voting%20alignment.
- N/A. "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial ..." Office of the high commissioner. United Nations, December 14, 1960. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-granting-independence-colonial-countries-and-peoples>.
- N/A. Economic Relations With Africa. Chinese State Department. Accessed February 10, 2023. http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2021-09/29/content_5639984.htm.
- N/A. "Fact Sheet: U.S.- Africa Partnership in Promoting Two-Way Trade and Investment in Africa." The White House. The United States Government, December 16, 2022. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/12/14/fact-sheet-u-s-africa-partnership-in-promoting-two-way-trade-and-investment-in-africa/>.
- N/A. "South Africa: Beijing's Global Media Influence 2022 Country Report." Freedom House, 2022. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/south-africa/beijings-global-media-influence/2022>.
- N/A. 2010. Boundaries, Borders and Borderland Constructions: Chinese in Contemporary South Africa and the Region. *African Studies* 69 (3): 457-79.
- N/A. Journalism.co.za. (2007), 'China grows its role in Africa's media', available at: <http://www.journalism.co.za>. Accessed 14 August 2022.
- Noman, Akbar, and Joseph E. Stiglitz. "Strategies for African development." *Good growth and governance in Africa: Rethinking development strategies* (2012): 3-47.
- Nyabiage, Jevans. "Africa Looks Forward to Return of Chinese Tour Groups." *South China Morning Post*, January 29, 2023. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3208303/africa-looks-forward-return-chinese-tour-groups-egypt-south-africa-and-kenya-first-line>.
- Nye, Joseph S. "Soft power." *Foreign policy* 80 (1990): 153-171.
- Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Adeoye Akinola. "South Africa and the question of hegemony in Africa." *Journal of Developing Societies* 33, no. 4 (2017): 428-447.
- Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Christopher Isike. "Regional hegemonic contention and the asymmetry of soft power: A comparative analysis of South Africa and Nigeria." *Strategic Review for Southern Africa* 37, no. 1 (2015): 152.
- Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Ufo Okeke-Uzodike. "Can Nigeria be Africa's hegemon?." *African Security Review* 25, no. 2 (2016): 110-128.
- Ogunnubi, Olusola, and Ufo Okeke-Uzodike. "South Africa's foreign policy and the strategy of soft power." *South African Journal of International Affairs* 22, no. 1 (2015): 23-41.
- Okumu, Wafula. "The African Union: pitfalls and prospects for uniting Africa." *Journal of International Affairs* 62, no. 2 (2009): 93-111.
- Osterhammel Jürgen. *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*. Princeton: Wiener, 2010.
- Osterhammel, Jürgen. "Semi-colonialism and informal empire in twentieth-century China: Towards a framework of analysis." (1986): 290-314.
- Park, Yoon. "Living in between: The Chinese in South Africa." *migrationpolicy.org*. Migration Policy Institute, August 27, 2021. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/living-between-chinese-south-africa>.
- Parrington, Alan J. *Mutually Assured Destruction Revisited. Strategic Doctrine in Question*. AIR UNIV MAXWELL AFB AL AIRPOWER JOURNAL, 1997.
- Procopio, Maddalena. "The effectiveness of Confucius Institutes as a tool of China's soft power in South Africa." *African East-Asian Affairs* 1-2 (2015).
- Prys, Miriam. "Developing a contextually relevant concept of regional hegemony: The case of South Africa, Zimbabwe and 'quiet diplomacy'." (2008).
- Signé, Landry. "US Trade and Investment in Africa." *Brookings*. Brookings, March 9, 2022. <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/us-trade-and-investment-in-africa/>.

-
- Smith, Elliot. "Chinese Loans Leave Developing Countries with \$385 Billion in Hidden Debts, Study Says." CNBC. CNBC, September 30, 2021. <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/09/30/study-chinese-loans-leave-developing-countries-with-385-billion-in-hidden-debts.html>.
- Taylor, Ian. "BRICS and capitalist hegemony: passive revolution in theory and practice." *Emerging powers, emerging markets, emerging societies: global responses* (2016): 55-84.
- Trigaux, David. "'The US, China and Rare Earth Metals': The Future Of Green Technology, Military Tech, and a Potential Achilles Heel to American Hegemony." (2012).
- Uzodike, Ufo Okeke. "South Africa and BRICS: Path to a new African hegemony." *State of the Nation Who is in Charge* (2016): 437-456.
- Wenjun, C. (2018, September 25). Twenty Years on, China-SA Embrace a New Chapter. *Business Day* (Johannesburg).
- Yazzie, Robert. "Postcolonial Colonialism." *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (2000): 39-49.
- Zenawi, Meles. "True Partnership, Key to African Sustainable Peace, Development: Ethiopian PM." True partnership, key to african sustainable peace, development: Ethiopian PM, December 15, 2003. http://en.people.cn/200312/15/eng20031215_130462.shtml.