
This is the **published version** of the bachelor thesis:

Touray Fatty, Alasana; Peña González, María Alejandra, dir. Cultural, historical and identity factors in chinese and the US influence in Africa. 2025. (Grau en Relacions Internacionals)

This version is available at <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/321278>

under the terms of the  license



FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND SOCIOLOGY

Bachelor's Degree Dissertation

Title: Cultural, Historical and Identity Factors in Chinese and the US influence in Africa

Author: Alasana Touray Fatty

Supervisor: María Alejandra Peña Gonzalez

Date. 26/05/2025

Bachelor: Degree in International Relations

Abstract China has been projecting its power across the world especially in Africa eclipsing the U.S. long enjoyed sway. This dissertation research cultural, historical and identity factors behind the rising influence of China in Africa vis-à-vis the U.S. Constructivist analytical tools and qualitative methodology are used to compare and analyse the two case studies - FOCAC and AGOA. Through the case studies the dissertation aims to examine how Chinese and the U.S.'s distinctive approaches to the continent based on their histories, cultures as well as their perceptions of themselves account for their distinct levels of influence on the continent. The case studies are flagship policy tools of China and the US since the new millennium.

The research project argues that Chinese distinctive history, culture and identity and its shared historical experience with Africa strongly account for its rising influence in Africa vis-à-vis the US.

Key Words: China; United States; Africa; History; Influence.

Resumen China ha estado proyectando su poder en todo el mundo especialmente en África eclipsando el dominio que Estados Unidos ha disfrutado durante mucho tiempo. Este trabajo investiga los factores culturales, históricos y de identidad detrás de la creciente influencia de China en África frente a los Estados Unidos. Se utiliza el constructivismo como marco analítico y metodología cualitativa para comparar y analizar los dos estudios de caso: FOCAC y AGOA. A través de estudios de caso, el trabajo pretende examinar cómo los enfoques distintivos de China y Estados Unidos hacia el continente, basados en sus historias, culturas y sus percepciones de sí mismos, explican sus diferentes niveles de influencia en el continente. Los estudios de caso son políticas emblemáticas de China y Estados Unidos desde el nuevo milenio en sus relaciones con África.

El proyecto de investigación sostiene que la distintiva historia, cultura e identidad de China, así como su experiencia histórica compartida con África explican en gran medida su creciente influencia en África frente a Estados Unidos.

Palabras Claves: China; Estados Unidos; África; Historia; Influencia.

Resum La Xina ha estat projectant el seu poder a tot el món especialment a Àfrica eclipsant el domini que els Estats Units han gaudit durant molt de temps. Aquesta treball investiga els factors culturals, històrics i d'identitat darrere de la creixent influència de la Xina a l'Àfrica davant dels Estats Units. Es fan servir eines analítiques constructivistes i metodologia qualitativa per comparar i analitzar els dos estudis de cas: FOCAC i AGOA. A través d'estudis de cas, aquest treball pretén examinar com els enfocaments distintius de la Xina i els Estats Units cap al continent, basats en les seves històries, cultures i les seves percepcions de si mateixos, expliquen els seus diferents nivells d'influència al continent. Els estudis de cas

són eines polítiques emblemàtiques de la Xina i dels Estats Units des del nou mil·lenni amb Àfrica. El projecte de recerca sosté que la història, la cultura i la identitat distintives de la Xina i la seva experiència històrica compartida amb Àfrica expliquen en gran mesura la seva influència creixent a l'Àfrica davant els Estats Units.

Paraules Claus: Xina; Estats Units; Àfrica; Història; Influència.

Gratitude

I thank my various classmates and members of the Faculty over the last seven years for their support. I am grateful to the supervisor of this dissertation, María Alejandra Peña Gonzalez for her supervision, cordiality and sense of understanding during the process of elaboration. Finally, I am singularly grateful to my wife, Fanta and our four children Awa, Suwaibou, Aminata and Sanyang for their love, support and understanding. Had it not been for them this would not be possible. I thank you dearly.

Agradecimiento

Doy las gracias a mis compañeros de clase y miembros de la Facultad durante los últimos siete años por su apoyo. Agradezco a la directora de esta tesis, María Alejandra Peña González, por su supervisión, cordialidad y su comprensión durante el proceso de elaboración. Por último, estoy singularmente agradecido a mi mujer, Fanta y nuestros cuatro hijos Awa, Suwaibou, Aminata y Sanyang por su amor, apoyo y comprensión. Si no hubiera sido por ellos, esto no sería posible. Te lo agradezco mucho.

Agraïment

Dono les gràcies als meus companys de classe i membres de la Facultat durant els darrers set anys pel seu suport. Agraïixo a la directora d'aquesta tesi, María Alejandra Peña Gonzalez, per la seva supervisió, cordialitat i comprensió durant el procés d'elaboració. Finalment, estic singularment agraït a la meva dona, Fanta i als nostres quatre fills Awa, Suwaibou, Aminata i Sanyang pel seu amor, suport i comprensió. Si no hagués estat per ells, això no seria possible. T'ho agraïixo molt.

List of Acronyms

AGOA: Africa Growth and Opportunity Act

FOCAC: Forum for China-Africa Cooperation

EU: European Union

US: United States

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

MOFA: Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs

WB: World Bank

GSP: General System of Preferences

USTR: United States Trade Representative

TA: Trade Act

Lists of Figures

Figure 1. Africa`s export to China 2000 to 2023.....13

Figure 2. Africa-China Trade Balance, 2000-2022.....14

Figure 3. Africa's export to the U.S. 2000 to 2023.....16

Figure 4. Top AGOA countries non-energy product export to the U.S.
2018 & 2019.....17

Figure 5. Africa two-way trade with China and the U.S.....18

Figure 6. Comparative table on core historical, cultural and identity features
of FOCAC and AGOA.....19

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction..... | 6 |
| 2. Literature Review..... | 7 |
| 3. Theoretical Framework..... | 8 |
| 4. Research Design..... | 9 |
| 5. Analysis..... | 10 |
| 5.1 Forum for China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)..... | 10 |
| 5.2 Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA)..... | 14 |
| 6. Conclusion..... | 20 |
| 7. References..... | 21 |

1. Introduction

China, of recent, has been projecting power across the world, unravelling the U. S. sway since World War II (Allison, 2017). Africa is one where Chinese power is most deeply felt. Lee Kuan Yew states that the greatest “geopolitical challenge of our lifetime” has been the rise of China from an agrarian backwater to the “biggest player in the history of the world” (Allison, 2017 p. 5-6). Emboldened by its power and millennial history and predicated on a contradictory social system, China is today Africa’s “largest two-way trading partner” with figures reaching 254 billion in 2021 (Sheehy, 2022). Since 2000 as much as 37.1% of China's worldwide foreign direct investment has been in Africa (Duggan, 2017).

Superpower rivalry to dominate Africa follows a historical trend. Since Westphalia, when the modern World system emerged, developments within Africa have always been linked to and influenced by global dynamics and forces (Zezeza, 2019). These external forces have strong economic and geostrategic interests in Africa (Carvalho, 2023). In the current competition over Africa the “east wind” as Mao Zedong said decades ago, that is China is having sway over the “west wind,” the US.

This dissertation aims to better understand how social factors like cultural values, history and identity mediate in the influence of China in Africa vis-à-vis the US. Concretely, it seeks to uncover US and Chinese specificities in these social factors and how they underpinned their respective levels of influences in Africa since the new millennium began. China's culture, history and identity are rooted in its millennial Confucianism which prioritizes centralization of power in a hierarchical order and has a distinctive approach to relations with other political entities. China also identifies itself as a developing country and a rising power. For its part, the U.S. history, culture and identity are underpinned by its liberal democratic values with the “manifest destiny” of a Great Power and the responsibility to shape the rest of the world in its liberal image. Consequently, this dissertation aims to answer the following research question:

How do cultural, historical and identity-based factors shape China's influence in Africa in comparison to that of the United States?

To answer this question, the research utilizes comparative case study analysis methods. Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA) will be analysed and compared. The former aims to strengthen consultation and expand cooperation within a pragmatic framework as well as to promote political dialogue and economic cooperation to achieve mutual reinforcement and cooperation (FOCAC, 2024). The latter grants preferential access to the US market in the form of duty-free entry to qualified Sub-Saharan African countries to achieve democracy through economic growth. Both were established in 2000 and remain the cornerstone of foreign policy engagement with Africa since then.

The dissertation draws on Constructivism as the analytical framework. The core tenet of this framework is that social factors like culture, identity and history primarily influence behaviour of actors (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). China and the US have profound

differences in this regard. These distinctions factor profoundly in the perceptions and behaviours of both the U.S. and China. President Xi Jinping said Chinese traditional culture is the foundation of the nation, “its vision, concepts, values and moral norms and constitute the ideological and spiritual core of China (Shinn and Eisenman, 2023 p.145). For its part, the U.S. drew on the adage of one of the founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, when he states that the “manifest destiny” of the U.S. was to be a great power in the system ruling over an “empire of liberty” that expands for the sake of all humanity to ensure the principles of good governance (Kissinger, 2014, p. 236).

This dissertation will use qualitative methods. Thus, it will be based on content analysis of primary and secondary sources using a case study method. It is structured in the following way: the first part will focus on the literature review; the second part will focus on the research design. The third section will dwell on the theoretical framework focusing on the constructivist analytical framework. The final part will be analysis, and the dissertation will end with conclusion remarks. The dissertation argues that Chinese distinctive history, culture and identity and its shared historical experience with Africa strongly account for its rising influence in Africa vis-à-vis the U.S.

2. Literature Review

Chinese increasing presence in Africa has sparked intense academic debate regarding its implications on the continent but also on the U.S. led so-called “rules-based order.”

Different scholars focus on distinct aspects which, in their view, underpin the Chinese influence in Africa. Tiboris (2019) argues that the Chinese presence in Africa arose and will persist because it is deeply attractive to both China and Africa and partnership with China is “irresistible” because of the urgent need of many countries for infrastructure which China is readily willing to provide without strings attached unlike Western loans.

Other authors attribute Chinese influence on the co-optation of the continent's elites. Thus, “The pervasiveness of China's influence in Africa can be attributed to its overlapping latticework of relationship with thousands of African elites traversing distinct levels: bilateral, global, regional and subregional.” (Shinn & Eisenman, 2023, p 1). Similarly, Andrea & Matteo et al. (2022, p.64) argues that the Chinese influence in the continent consisted mainly in not only adopting its “leadership and dialogue to the exigencies of the different countries” but in its ability to establish strong links with African establishment without setting any conditions such as respect for human rights, or social and environmental responsibility.

Others still, like Moyo (2009) , argue that the western failed paternalistic aid-model in Africa is the factor responsible for the decline of the West and increased influence of China. Zhang & Wasserman et al. (2016) argues that the Chinese state-engineered soft power initiative of projecting a positive and alternative media discourse on Africa factors strongly in the influence in Africa. These authors argue that the African continent, its governments as well as its political and social realities are portrayed in pessimistic terms in the Western media. For Alden (2006), Chinese eruption in Africa with a comprehensive counter diplomatic and trade offensive to the western dominance has introduced a new dynamic in

the continent's relations with the outside world and this underlies its influence in the continent. He argues that African governments and top officials responded enthusiastically to these new investment and aid packages without political conditionalities. While these authors provide interesting insights, all have taken a materialistic approach in their assumptions. None has taken a systematic approach to examine how non-material social factors like culture, identity and history mediate in the influence of China in Africa. These historical and cultural factors have strong bearing on the behaviours of both individuals and states. Fukuyama states that, while it is true that Countries are not totally “trapped” by their pasts, things that happened hundreds and even thousands of years ago continue to exert a major influence on the nature of politics (Fukuyama, 2012, pp, xii). To understand the World better, therefore, analytical flexibility and inclusivity that enables the incorporation of social factors like culture, identity and history and the impacts they have on state behaviour especially in the realm of international relations is needed. This dissertation intends to fill this void by focusing on how these social factors underpin the U.S. and Chinese relations and influences in Africa.

3. Theoretical Framework:

Antonio Gramsci states that “In acquiring one’s conception of the world one always belongs to a particular grouping which is that of all the social elements which share the same mode of thinking and acting” (Morfino, 2020, p.51)

From this perspective, constructivism is the theoretical lens through which the U.S. and Sino-Africa relations will be analysed. Constructivism is a social theory and focuses on how social factors shape behaviours. Constructivism’s core assumption is that human interaction is shaped by ideational factors (Wendt, 1999). Such factors like norms, identity, ideas, history and culture shape patterns of human behaviour and interaction (Barnett, 2017 pp. 145). Finnemore and Sikkink defines norms as the “standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity’ (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, p. 891).

Identity is how one sees oneself or one’s collectivity and is at the core the existence of living beings. In this regard, Wendt states that “In the philosophical sense an identity is whatever makes a thing what it is (Wendt, 1999, p. 224). In a similar line, Campbell argues that identity is normally seen as ‘an inescapable dimension of being:’ without it, nobody could be (Campbell, 1998, p. 9). For Wendt identity has both subjective and intersubjective qualities. Identity, Wendt states, is subjective because is “rooted in an actor's self-understandings” as well as intersubjective which means that one’s self-understandings “depend on whether other actors represent an actor in the same way(Wendt, 1999, p. 224). This subjectivity-intersubjectivity qualities of identity gives it a relational as well as external and internal dimensions. This self-perception of an ‘intentional actor’ and how the actor is perceived by the others strongly influence the actions as it “generates motivational and behavioural dispositions” and fundamentally shape the preferences of states (Wendt, 1999, p. 224; Finnemore, 2001, p.398).

Culture, argues Fanon, is the first expression of a nation, its preferences, taboos, values, patterns and the result of its internal and external extension (Fanon, 1963, p. 196). Jepperson

et al. states that Culture remains strong incentives for distinct kinds of state behaviour and is also the basic character of states - the state "identity"(Jepperson & Wendt et al. 1996, p.31). In this regard state culture condition, the approach of states to sovereignty, international law and all aspect of the exercise of the overarching exercise of statehood (Jepperson & Wendt et al. 1996)

History, as a complex order of events, temporalities and meanings too, influence people's understanding of themselves, their status and their relations with the other and the meaning they attach to social phenomena (Said, 1978). For Gramsci, history is constitutive of the individual and is at the core of its existence. Gramsci states that "The starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is and is "knowing thyself" as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory" (Morfino, 2020, p.51). History is instrumentally purposeful. It allows for the possibility to go 'back and look' in order to scrutinize the conditions under which certain institutions emerged and which despite their remote temporality continue to have strong bearing in current thinkings, perceptions and behaviour of actors (Pierson, 2004) Therefore, the better appreciation of how history imparts its effects on the present will offer real possibilities for a more "constructive intellectual dialogue"(Louise L'Estrange, 2024).

Empirically, the articulation of identity, norms, ideas, culture and history is pervasive in foreign policy discourse and action of states, especially powerful states like China and the U.S. as stated by constructivist theorists. It's through these lens that Chinese and U.S. engagement with Africa will be examined to see how China's identity rooted in its millennial Confucius ideology but also a developing country and the U.S. self-perception as the embodiment of system of liberty and its duty to shape the rest of the world accordingly plays in their relative influence in Africa. This research utilizes this theoretical framework by taking FOCAC and AGOA as the case studies. These two are key policy instruments for China and US in their relations with Africa and are underpinned by strong social factors as constructivist indicates.

4. Research Design

The dissertation seeks to answer the following research question:

How do cultural, historical and identity-based factors shape China's influence in Africa in comparison to that of the United States?

To do that the qualitative methodological approach is used. Thus, the research will draw on content analysis of both primary and secondary sources. The research revolves around the idea that over the last decades China gained increasing influence on the African continent vis-à-vis the US and that social factors have strong bearing in this phenomenon. As a result, the dissertation intends to identify identity, cultural, historical traits of both the U.S. and China in their relations with Africa and how these account for differences in their level of influence on the continent. Qualitative methodology is used through the prism of case study analysis. Consequently, FOCAC and AGOA will be analysed and compared. FOCAC is a multilateral mechanism established between African countries and China in 2000 and aims is to enhance consensus and consultation for the common development of the two people (FOCAC, 2000).

For its part, AGOA remains the cornerstone of U.S. engagement with the countries of sub-Saharan Africa since 2000. It aims to achieve democracy in Africa through economic cooperation and trade between the U.S. and African countries.

As this dissertation uses the qualitative method, it will draw on such primary sources like official white papers, declarations from government officials and outcome documents of summits. Regarding FOCAC, the two key outcome documents of the 2000 summit that lay its foundation will be examined. These are the Beijing Declaration and China-Africa Cooperation on economic and social development as well as other posterior relevant policy papers like the 2006 and 2015 China-Africa policy papers. For AGOA, the US trade Act of 2000 that established the US-Africa preferential trade deal and the 1974 Act on which AGOA built on will be examined. And to examine the evolution and impact of AGOA, the latest 2024 biennial AGOA report of the United States Trade Representative report will also be examined. The secondary sources will include content analysis of books, academic journals and Think Tank publications to establish links and connections.

The selection of FOCAC and AGOA are relevant to examine and compare the influence of China and the United States in Africa for a number of reasons. Firstly, both cases are specifically delimited policy instruments developed by these superpowers at the dawn the new millennium to relate with Africa in which social, economic and political factors are intertwined. Secondly, the fact that both FOCAC and AGOA were coincidentally established in the year 2000 provides a rare opportunity to examine temporally delimited policies. Finally, both are stable, cross-government empirical foreign policy instruments of the U.S. and China towards Africa since the new millennium began, and both have been in existence for a sufficient period to examine their evolutions and impacts on the African continent. The dissertation argues that Chinese distinctive history, culture and identity and its shared historical experience with Africa strongly account for its rising influence in Africa vis-à-vis the US.

5. Analysis

Based on the constructivist analytical framework, this part will specifically shed light on the distinctive history, identity and cultural values of China and the United States through the prisms of the two case studies: FOCAC and AGOA to examine how these factors shape their relations with Africa and account for their relative levels of influence in Africa.

5.1 The Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)

FOCAC is a platform established in 2000 and aims to strengthen consultation and cooperation as well as to promote political dialogue and economic cooperation in order to achieve mutual reinforcement and cooperation (FOCAC, 2024). It emerged in the context of profound changes in the international situation where peace and development remain the main themes and one which remains elusive for many (China White Paper on Africa Policy 2006). Politically, it emerged in the post-Tiananmen and post-Cold War epoch characterized by western condemnation of Chinese human right record (Tailor, 2010). Economically, the Chinese economy was booming at an annual growth rate of 10% (Duggan, 2020 p.109). This created acute resource insecurities and urgent need for new markets and outward investment

(Amo-Agyemang, 2021). Consequently, Africa regained its strategic significance for China to access resources and dwarf Western criticisms (Duggan 2020).

Relations within FOCAC are underpinned by Chinese affinities of its Confucius history and culture as well as its identity as a developing country. Unlike the Machiavellian machination of power, this tradition was based on the principles of cultivation of *Taton*, Confucian concept of grand social universal harmony. Harmony is guaranteed through a hierarchical order with China at the centre of the universe having sway over *tian xia*, or “All under Heaven”(Fukuyama 2012). Confucianism reinforces “values of authority, consensus, avoidance of confrontation, and supremacy of the state over society (Allison, 2017, p.138). In the realm of relations with the outside it sees it as impractical proselytising. Rather, bounties of the empire are extended to the frontier such that they will voluntarily submit themselves to Chinese order (Kissinger, 2014). This strong hierarchical state order unrestrained by law lies at the heart of Chinese history, culture and identity and its greatness across dynasties to the present day (Magnus, 2019).

Colonial encounters with the West also form its identity as a developing country. This was institutionalised by Deng Xiaoping when he expounded on the Three World Theory formulated by his predecessor, Mao Zedong (Vicini & Andrea et al. 2022, p. 61). These realities underline Chinese identity and influence its relations with Africa in FOCAC. They are also determinant factors in shaping Chinese sway across Africa.

Chinese emphasis on strong state unrestrained by law and defence of the Westphalian principle of *cuius regio eius religio* (non-interference) is like “music” to the ears of many African leaders especially those with poor rights record (Tailor, 2010; Fukuyama, 2012). China institutionalised the non-interference principle during the 1955 Bandung conference when it laid out its ‘Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence’ (Escriche, 2024). Chinese cordial treatment of African counterparts in FOCAC also bears no resemblance to the paternalistic-order-giving of the West to Africa. Here too, it drew on its millennial tradition of consensus and cordiality in dealing with the people of the frontier. Unlike their erstwhile colonial masters, African elites feel that China treats them more courteously and with respect and have more sense of belonging in FOCAC, an opportunity that eluded their engagement with the West (Moyo, 2009; Tailor, 2010). These dissatisfied African elites see China as the champion of the developing world and are keen on building partnership with it as are unhappy with the West particularly the US dominance of international affairs (Tailor, 2010). For China, African countries provide the opportunity to boost its one-China policy vis-à-vis Taiwan (German Development Institute Briefing Paper. 4/2006). All African countries except Eswatini that recognise Taiwan are members of FOCAC (FOCAC, 2023; MOFA, 2023). And reminiscent of its history and sense of itself as the centre of the world, China places itself at the top of the hierarchy of the developing world specifically among the 53 FOCAC African countries that recognise Beijing although this is not heard in China's public message (Shinn & Eisenman, 2023).

President Xi Jinping incorporated FOCAC to his foreign policy of Harmonious Community of Shared Future for mankind, a Sinocentric foreign policy tool based on the exchange of

favours between China and like-minded African countries willing to accept their subordination to China as well as to respect Beijing's expectation about their proper conduct and obligations regarding Chinese “core interests” like state sovereignty, and national unification (Shinn & Eisenman, 2023, p. 2-3). If in the past, ‘barbarians’ had to accept the celestial authority of the embodiment of the ‘Mandate of Heaven’ that is the Chinese Emperor, in FOCAC African countries had to accept and respect China's superiority and core interests. Thus, as in antiquity, China is not in the mission of proselytising. Rather, it offers its bounty to countries willing to accept its superiority and terms. Mega infrastructure in “friendly” African countries are such bounties to submissive African countries.

Through FOCAC, China has helped African countries build and upgrade 100.000km roads, 10.000km railway, 66.000km transmission lines, 200,000km fibre-optic cable and the 752,7 km Ababa - Djibouti railway (FOCAC, 2024; MOFA, 2024). It is also rehabilitating the Legendary 1344 km Benguela railway from Angola's Atlantic coast to the borders of Zambia and the DRC originally completed by the British in the 1920s (Moyo, 2009, p.106). Such “generosity” built on a historical trend such as the construction of the paradigmatic 1860 km Tanzania - Zambia Railway (The Tazara) in 1975 and costing US\$ 500 million. The Tazara remained one of the lasting monuments and symbols of Chinese historical support to Africa and symbol of South-South cooperation during the struggle against imperialism (Moyo, 2009, p.103; Vicini et al. 2022, p.60). Chinese Investments in infrastructure, particularly energy and transportation, have helped to address the physical infrastructure constraints faced by many African countries and provide the continent with skills, technology and employment (World Bank, 2024). By prioritizing economic development over developmental assistance, China's Africa policies have shifted from aid and donor projects to economically viable projects (Tailor, 2010). In the education sector China offers degree and professional training to tens of thousands of Africans through FOCAC. It is paradigmatic that in 2016 more students in Anglophone Africa are studying in China than in either the US or UK. Zambia for example sent 3.248 students to China, compared to 469 to the US that year (Shinn & Eisenman, 2023, p 134-136). FOCAC is seen as the antithesis of Africa's relationship with the West rooted in neo-imperialism and exploitation in today's US led order (Tailor, 2010).

In FOCAC China and Africa instrumentalize their shared experience of historical aggression, dismemberment and “humiliation” at the hand of the West (Duggan, 2020). Bobo and Hutchings (1996) conceptualize this collective historical mistreatment as “racial alienation”: “a dimension of collective memory that reflects accumulated experiences of discrimination, subordination, and consists of a deep sense of disenfranchisement and exclusion” (Bobo and Hutchings 1996, p. 956). This historical “collective memory” is brought to the fore in the anti-imperial and anti-hegemonic discourse during FOCAC conferences. At the 2024 FOCAC, President Xi Jinping said that since the mid-20th century China stood with Africa shoulder to shoulder to fight “colonialism, and hegemonism, and advancing hand in hand along the path of development, revitalization, and modernization” (MOFA, 2024).

China provided Military and logistical support for the rebel movements in Zimbabwe and Angola that won their independence in battle (Vicini et al. 2022, p.60) Thus, the biggest

consequence of China's relations with Africa has been the image it has developed from its historical links with Africa, shared experience of European colonialism, and Chinese involvement in the early stages of state building and this have helped China to develop a reputation as a long-term 'All-Weather Friend to the African people (Duggan, 2020, p.108). While many may deny China's image and rhetoric as unreal, they have strong bearing on how China maintains and consolidates its current relations with Africa. The Afrobarometer found that over 60% show the Chinese presence as positive (Afrobarometer, 2021). Senior officials at the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said while some African countries complain that FOCAC has not aided them, for Ethiopia, it is the best venue for China-Africa cooperation (Shinn, 2023, p.55). Others, however, express strong concerns over the sustainability of Sino-African relations.

Ghana Foreign Ministry officials state that FOCAC is not a real multilateral organization, but a useful way to reduce bilateral visits. Also, Chinese engagement is concentrated in resource rich African countries such as South Africa, Angola DRC and South Sudan. Between 2000 and 2022 these countries exported 89 percent of Africa's exports to China which came from the extractives sector and were mostly oil, copper, iron ore and aluminium commodities while over 90% of China's export was from the manufacturing sector (Global Development Centre, 2024 p.7). China's excessive investment in the fossil energy sector and mining and debt to Africa worries many about Africa turning into a Chinese empire (Brautigam 2009). The figure shows the magnitude of Africa's extractive sector exports to Africa.

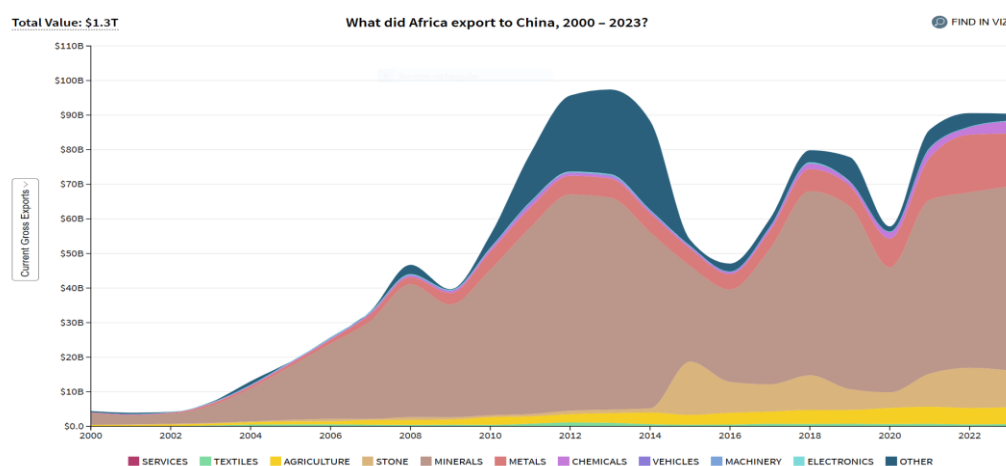


Figure 1. Africa's export to China 2000 to 2023

Source: Growth Lab at Harvard University (2025)

China's macroeconomic effects in Africa remain in a contradiction. Chinese demand is boosting export potentials and world market prices for raw materials, a development which benefits African producers, but at the same time Chinese companies threaten to overpower African competitors, especially the textile sector both in Africa and the third markets (German Development Institute. Briefing Paper. 4/2006). Africa also has a deepening trade deficit with China since 2012 as the figure below shows.

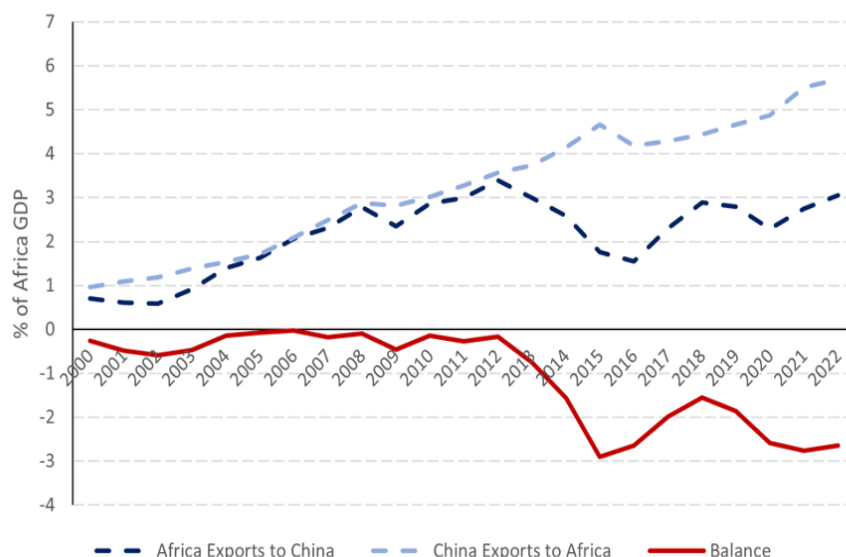


Figure 2. Africa-China Trade Balance, 2000-2022

Source: Global Development Policy Centre, Boston University (2024).

Furthermore, key Countries like Zambia, Angola, Egypt and Ethiopia are highly indebted to China according to the World Bank (WB). However, 80% of Africa's external debt stock in 2023 is shared between multilateral and private creditors with the former accounting for 40% and the latter 41% (World Bank, 2024, p. 79). Africa's bilateral debt in 2023 is 19% of which China accounts for 11% making China as the main bilateral creditor to Africa. In the light of these concerns and challenges, many believe that FOCAC is a unique mechanism that benefits both China and Africa, but Africa needs to work harder to fully benefit from the scheme (Shinn, 2023, p. 55).

5.2. Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA)

Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA) forms part of the US trade legislation and was signed into law in May 2000 (AGOA, 2000). AGOA builds on the 1974 General System of Preferences (GSP) by offering duty-free access to the U.S. market for additional 1700 products from qualified African countries. The GSP was enacted during the Cold War to facilitate access to US market to countries to non-communist states and conditioned on the fulfilment of requirements such as protection for intellectual property rights, reduction or elimination of trade barriers and upholding on internationally recognized workers` rights (USTR, 2024). AGOA and GSP Trade Acts (TA) provided access to the US market for over 5000 products to the African beneficiary countries (AGOA, 2024).

The scheme emerged during the post-cold war unipolar moment of western triumphalism when the US defined the political, economic and social reality of the World (Allison, 2017). President Bill Clinton declared that in the new moment individual freedom and free market economy and not great power competition should define the “New World Order” (Mearsheimer, 2018). Therefore AGOA`s aim was “to increase U.S. trade and investment to

promote economic growth, the rule of law and market-oriented reforms (US Congress, 2020). By providing duty-free entry into the United States, AGOA would expand and diversify African exports and foster an improved business environment in African countries (USTR, 2024).

Currently thirty-two sub-Saharan African countries are benefiting from the AGOA scheme, below the fifty-three African countries in FOCAC. To enter AGOA, African countries must fulfil stringent eligibility criteria based on democratic and free market conditionalities. Countries must have established or be making continual progress towards establishing a market-based economy that protects private property, the rule of law, political pluralism, rights to due process, fight against corruption and observance of internationally recognized human rights including those of the workers (AGOA, 2024). With these conditionalities, the U.S. articulates its identity, historical and cultural values as the leader of the liberal order as well as its foreign policy aim to export its model outside. Historically, from the Puritans to the present, the self-perception of the US has been its “manifest destiny” as a Great Power, and an embodiment of liberal values of universal validity, as well as the responsibility to spread those values (Mearsheimer, 2001).

President Jefferson wrote:

“We feel that we are acting under obligations not confined to the limits of our own society. It is impossible not to be sensible that we are acting for all mankind; that circumstances denied to others, but indulged to us, have imposed on us the duty of proving what is the degree of freedom and self-government in which a society may venture to leave its individual members (Kissinger, 2014, p. 236).

Like the Chinese, the U.S. sees itself as sitting at the helm of the World hierarchy. However, the stark difference is the centrality of proselytising found in the American tradition as AGOA’s stringent liberal conditions show. The Chinese draw on the Confucius tradition of “soft power” through economic bounties of empire, rather than conversion to lure others into the suzerainty of its “harmonious order” (Kissinger, 2014). The US foreign policy engagement abroad is centred on spreading its values which they believe is the aspiration of all people (Fukuyama, 2012). AGOA remains such US foreign policy instrument to spread democracy in Africa through economic intercourse.

The 2015 renewal of AGOA incorporated “Out-Of-Cycle Review” annual reviews which reduced the triennial review of the completion of AGOA democratic conditions to one year to suspend countries that experience “democratic backsliding” (Seyoum & Abraham, 2022). Consequently, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mali, and Burkina Faso were suspended for violations of human rights, rule of law and unconstitutional change of governments (Africa Growth Initiative, Brookings, 2023). Ten other countries, among them Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Mauritania, South Sudan remain ineligible for the program because of their incompleteness of AGOA’s liberal democratic conditionalities (U.S. Congress, 2020). Such conditionalities do not exist in FOCAC.

Suspension of countries raises serious problems for investors and the business communities in both the U.S. and Africa, especially the apparel sector heavily dependent on import and export (Tadesse, 2024). Business sectors of beneficiary countries that experience democratic backsliding are punished for reasons which they are not responsible. And when a country is suspended it is normally producers, exporters, women assembling apparel for export to the U.S. who lost their jobs and bear the cost hurting the very people AGOA and the US want to help (Schneidman & Signé, 2022). What's more, these conditionalities are seen by some as double standards.

The US is criticized for its democratic proselytising while having sustained rights-violating dictatorships like Idi Amin and Mobutu Sese seko of the Zaire as well as Gulf oil-rich monarchies like Saudi Arabia (Moyo, 2009). Deng Xiaoping criticised the West for hypocrisy stating that the talk about human rights and democracy is designed to protect the interests of the powerful countries which pursue hegemony and practice power politics (April & Shelton, 2014). Furthermore, concerns were raised over AGOA regarding the diversification of the economic relations for the excessive dependence of exports on extractive sectors like China. Oil exports from Africa to the US of \$7.3 billion made up the bulk of Africa's exports compared to non-energy products, contradictory to the aim of AGOA (US Trade Representative, 2024 Report, p. 9). Other top imports from sub-Saharan Africa are precious metals, gemstones, silverware motor vehicles, and apparel (US Trade Representative, 2024). The figure below shows the components and evolution of Africa's export to the U.S since AGOA begins in 2000. Compared to a similar figure in the Chinese case seen above, it shows a decline of U.S. import levels from Africa.

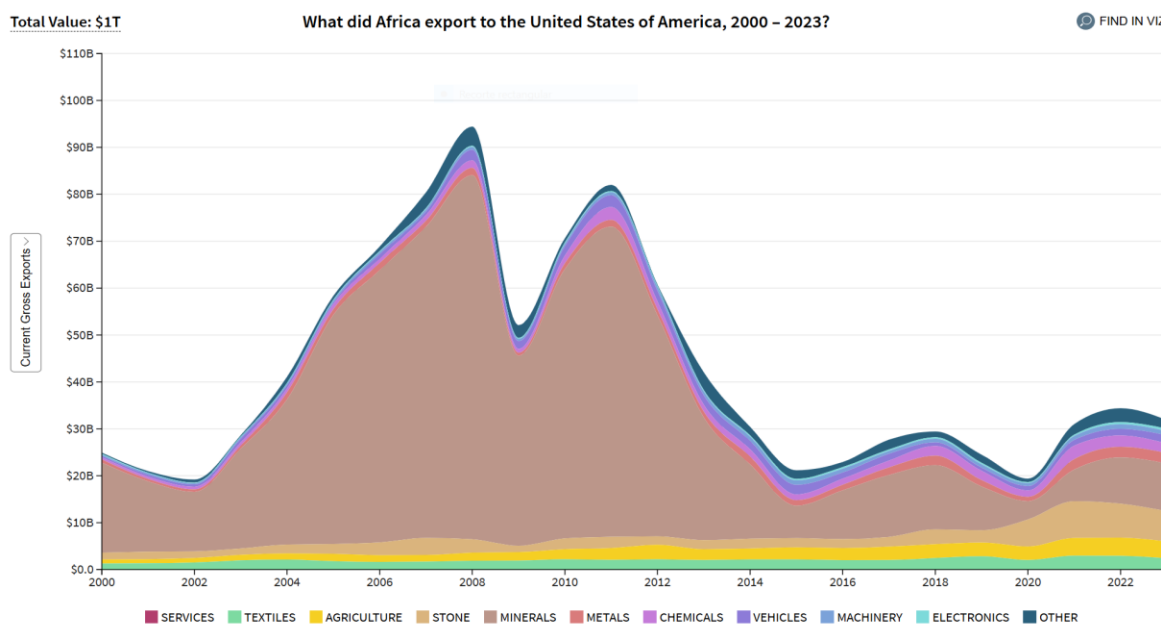


Figure 3. Africa's export to the U.S. 2000 to 2023

Source: Growth Lab at Harvard University (2025)

The figures indicate several crucial factors. Firstly, it shows Africa's continued role in the global economy as mainly a provider of raw material from colonialism to over more than half a century into the independent era. Secondly, and related to the latter, Africa's dream of transition to the industrial age and added value remains a nightmare. Thirdly, over the years Africa's export to the US of minerals increased steeply contrary to AGOA's goals through the decade of 2000. Reliance on primary commodities is associated with shocks as global prices of primary commodities are much more volatile (Moyo, 2009).

Africa thus remains in the situation of a 'commodity export trap' in trade relations with both China and the US. Dependence on natural mineral resources is at the heart of Africa's vicious natural resource trap, conflict trap as well as inefficient government trap and this hinders economic growth and democracy (Collier, 2005).

For its part, exports from non-energy and non-mineral are accrued to specific sectors like apparels, textiles and garments and agricultural products such that export diversification, meaning expanding the range of goods and services remains limited (Tadesse & Fayissa, 2008). Diversification is crucial for economic growth as it ensures resilience and learning spillovers necessary for development. In addition, there remains strong cross-country and subregional variations in sectors where AGOA spur export growth. The marked differences are underpinned by preexisting structural differences between countries and regions such that countries with dynamic economic sectors, stable political systems and functioning regulatory environments and macroeconomic stability tend to benefit the most from the preferential treatment afforded by AGOA (Frazer & Biesebroeck, 2010). South Africa, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Madagascar, Ethiopia, and Ghana are among these sets of countries as the figure below on exports for 2018/19.

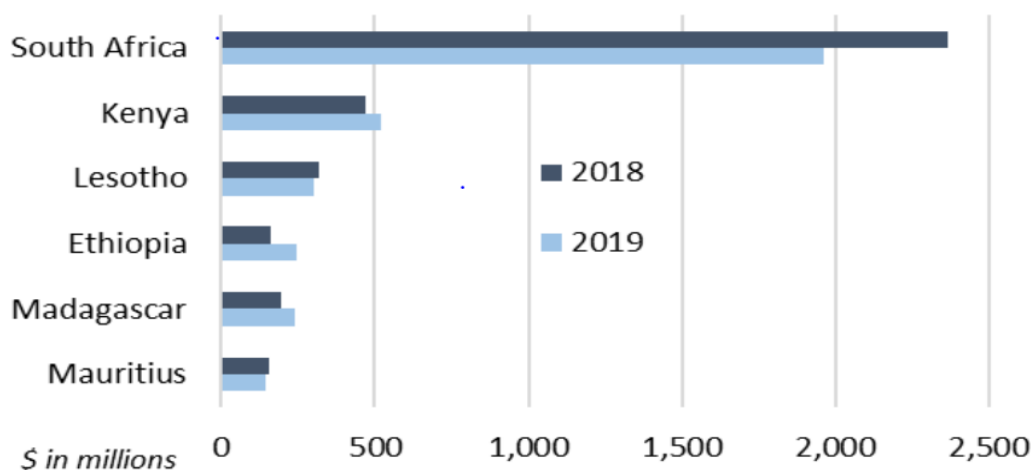


Figure 4. Top AGOA Countries, Non-Energy Products exports to U.S.

2018 & 2019

Source: The US Congress (2020)

Despite these loopholes in AGOA, studies confirmed that increased export from Africa to the U.S. market is beneficial though the utilization rate of the scheme remains low for reasons cited above. Since its inception in 2000, AGOA has played a critical role in the United States’ trade relationship with sub-Saharan Africa. It has fostered economic growth and development in Africa and has created thousands of jobs for its people” (US Trade Representative, 2024).

In 2023, U.S. imports under AGOA (including the Generalized System of Preferences or “GSP” program) totalled \$9.7 billion and the total two-way goods trade with sub-Saharan Africa totalled \$47.5 billion in 2023, a 6.2 percent increase (US Trade Representative, 2024 Report, p.8). While this remains a substantial increase in trade intercourse between the US and beneficiary African countries, its way below the Chinese trade with Africa.

In 2000 when both FOCAC and AGOA were established, China-Africa two-way trade amounted to \$11.67 billion and it rose to a peak of \$257.67 billion in 2022 (Global Development Centre, 2024, p.7). China is today Africa's major trading partner (World Bank, 2024). Furthermore, at least fifteen African countries, among them some of the strongest regional economies and resource rich countries, such as South Africa, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo have gradually moved from top trade relations with the E.U. and the U.S. to a closer trade relationship with China (Global Development Centre, 2024). While the European Union (E.U.) as a block remained Africa's major trading partner, China continues to be the continent's major bilateral trading partner overriding the US influence in Africa.

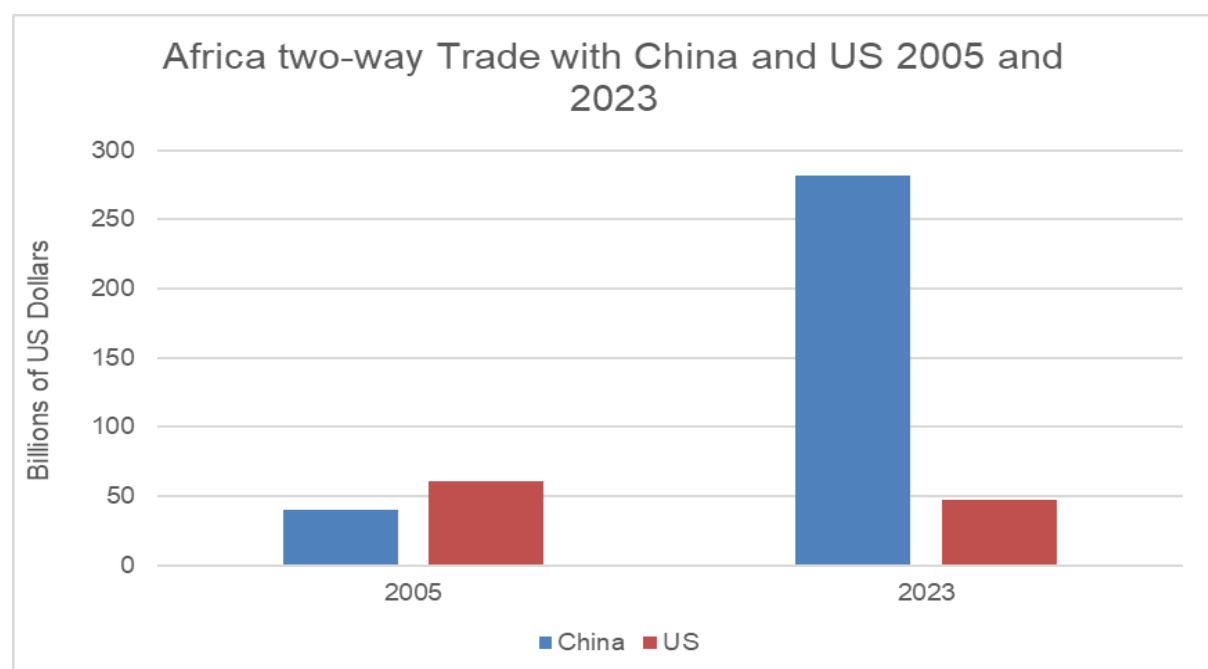


Figure 5. Africa two-way trade with China and the U.S. 2005 and 2023

Source: Own elaboration based on USTR, 2023; World Economic Forum, 2023.

Though limited and accrued to specific African countries and subregions with specific positive structural factors, AGOA’s impact on the economy and development of beneficiary

nations have been positive. However, the U.S., with its liberal cultural values expressed through the political conditionalities in AGOA, seems not to be winning many converts from Africa in a context of rising coup d'etats, domestic and sub-regional structural constraints and the eruption of China. Strong challenges remain in AGOA and the U.S. liberal historic mission of shaping Africa in its liberal image. The Chinese “east wind” virulently breezes across Africa.

| COMPARATIVE TABLE ON CORE CULTURAL HISTORICAL & IDENTITY FEATURES OF FOCAC and AGOA | |
|--|--|
|  |  |
| Confucianism of invitation through economic soft power | Export of liberal ideas and proselytising |
| Shared sentiment of imperial victimhood | Member of imperial West |
| Confucius ethos of cordiality and consensus | Democratic conditionalities seen as US-western paternalistic and imperial imposition |
| Confucius centralized state | Liberal democratic state |
| Developing country | Developed hegemonic country |
| Westphalian principle of non-interference | Post Westphalian principle of intervention |
| Recognition of Taiwan as the redline. | Unconstitutional change of government as the redline |

Figure 6. Comparative table on core cultural, historical and identity features of FOCAC and AGOA

Own elaboration based on Fuyama (2011); Kissinger (2014) & Allison (2017).

6. Conclusion

This dissertation seeks to provide answer to the following research question:

How do cultural, historical and identity-based factors shape China's influence in Africa in comparison to that of the United States?

It aims to better understand how these social factors mediate in the influence of China in Africa vis-à-vis the US.

Concretely, the research intends to unearth how Chinese, and U.S. distinctive history and identity and cultural values underpinned their relations with the continent and account for their levels of influences since the new millennium began.

The constructivist approach highlights the significance of state identity, shaped by history and culture, in making sense of international relations (Barnett, 2017 pp. 145). Since the dawn of the new millennium dynamics in International Relations have witnessed significant changes. China not only transitioned from an agrarian backwater to a major superpower but also as peer competitor of the U.S. for influence in Africa (Tailor, 2010). Africa is always linked to and influenced by global dynamics as external forces have strong economic and geostrategic interests there (Zezeza, 2019; Carvalho, 2023).

It is important to put into consideration that as constructivists argue, social factors like history, culture and identity mediate strongly in Africa's relationships with these two competing superpowers.

To unearth how these Chinese and U.S. distinctive social factors underscore their relations with the continent and account for their levels of influences and provide answers to the research question, the dissertation drew on qualitative approach and case study method. Two emblematic Africa policy instruments of China and the U.S. since 2000 - FOCAC and AGOA respectively are chosen as the case studies.

China's relations with Africa in FOCAC are governed by its millennial Confucianism. In line with core constructivist assumption, President Xi Jinping said the Confucius tradition is the foundation of the history, culture, norms, concepts and values of the Chinese nation (Shinn and Eisenman, 2023 p.145). Thus, relations within FOCAC are underscored by values of universal social harmony based on hierarchy, cordiality, consensus and non-social engineering, one which like-minded Africans elites value unlike US liberal imposition. In FOCAC China remains at the centre and willing to extend its economic soft power to African countries willing to accept its suzerainty without any democratic conditionalities. This hierarchical state order lies at the heart of Chinese history, culture and identity and its greatness across dynasties to the present day (Magnus, 2019).

For its part, the U.S. through AGOAs preferential trade for qualified African countries defined their relations with the continent based on its liberal hegemonic history, cultural values and identity to convert as many African countries as possible to its model. Democratic conditionalities to benefit from the AGOA scheme and suspension of African countries after deterioration of their democratic conditions remains clear examples of the U.S. liberal

hegemonism, one that underlie its identity from its founding to the present. No similar liberal conditionalities have governed relationships within FOCAC. Since it was founded the U.S. sees itself as an embodiment of liberal values and defines its foreign policy accordingly (Mearsheimer, 2001).

These distinctive approaches have strong implications in the perceptions and positioning of several African elites and countries vis-à-vis China and the U.S. Through the analysis of primary and secondary sources, the argument of this dissertation has been validated that Chinese distinctive history, culture and identity and its shared historical experience with Africa strongly account for its rising influence in Africa vis-à-vis the US.

Since 2000 China has turned itself as Africa's major economic partner including key resource countries like South Africa (Global Development Policy Centre, 2024; World Bank, 2024).

This enhanced Chinese influence in Africa, however, raises key political questions – how growing Chinese influence will impact the future of democracy and whether or not it will be translated into diplomatic, political and military power. In 2016 China established its first overseas naval base in Djibouti and is rapidly growing its naval capacities to be a fully fledged blue-water navy (Dannreuther, 2024, p.352). And while democracy remains the most preferred system by many Africans, such preference has declined in several countries and Chinese-type strong leaders like Ebrima Traore have captured the hearts of many across Africa and the world (Afrobarometer, 2025; Chothia, 2025).

These are important fertile ground for future research in Africa's relations with these two competing superpowers.

7. References

Afrobarometer (2025). African insights 2024: Democracy at risk: the people's perspective. Retrieved May 10, 2025., from <https://www.afrobarometer.org/feature/flagship-report/>

AGOA (2018). Spotlight on the AGOA eligibility criteria, annual and out-of-cycle, and related provisions Retrieved February 17, 2025., from <https://agoa.info/images/documents/15548/agoaeligibilitylegal.pdf>

Alden, C. (2005). China in Africa. *Survival*, 47(3), 147–164.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00396330500248086>

Allison, G. (2017). *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape the Thucydides Trap?* Scribe, London.

Alves, A. C., & Alden, C. (2024). China's economic and trade cooperation zones in Africa: from static model emulation to dynamic learning. *Area Development and Policy*, 9(2), 268–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23792949.2023.2300988>

Amo-Agyemang, C. (2021). The role of the state in Sino-Ghanaian relations: The case of Bui hydroelectric dam. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 7(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2021.1963575>

- Barnett, M. (2017). Social Constructivism. In J. Baylis, S. Smith, & P. Owens (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics* (pp. 144-172). Oxford University Press.
- Baskaran, G., & Ramkolawan, Y. (2023). South Africa's Reliance On Preferential Access To The Us Market And The Potential Impact Of An Agoa. *Africa Growth Initiative at Brookings*. Report November 2023. Retrieved March 16, 2025, from <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Baskaran-Ramkolowan-2023.pdf>
- Bobo, L., & Hutchings, V. L. (1996). Perceptions of Racial Group Competition: Extending Blumer's Theory of Group Position to a Multiracial Social Context. *American Sociological Review*, 61(6), 951–972. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2096302>
- Brautigam, D., (2008). Flying Geese or Hidden Dragon? Chinese business and African industrial development. In Alden, C., Large, D. & Soares de Oliveira, R. (ed.), *China returns to Africa: a rising power and a continent's embrace*. London: Hurst.
- Campbell, D. (1998) *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Revised edition, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Carvalho, G. D. (2023). África en la encrucijada: Autonomía e Intereses en el tablero geopolítico global. *Vanguardia Dossier*, no. 89, p. 58-62.
- Chothia, F. (2025). Why Burkina Faso's junta leader has captured hearts and minds around the world. *BBC*, 12 May 2025. Retrieved May 10, 2025, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c1egely9v3go>
- Collier, P. & Hoeffler (2005). Resource Rents, Governance and Conflict. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 49 No. 4
- Collier, P. (2008). *The bottom billion*. Oxford University Press.
- Duggan, N. (2020). *Competition and Compromise among Chinese Actors in Africa: A Bureaucratic Politics Study of Chinese Foreign Policy Actors*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Finnemore, M., & Sikkink, K. (1998). International Norm Dynamics and Political Change. *International Organization*, 52(4), 887–917. doi:10.1162/002081898550789
- FOCAC (2009). The Beijing Declaration of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. Retrieved February 23, 2025., from http://www.focac.org/eng/zywx_1/zywj/200909/t20090925_8079752.htm
- FOCAC (2024). The 2024 summit of the forum on China Africa-Cooperation. Retrieved February 23, 2025., from <http://www.focac.org/eng/>
- Frazer, G.; Biesebroeck, J.V. (2010) Trade Growth under the African Growth and Opportunity Act. *Rev. Econ. Stat.* 92, 128–144.
- Fukuyama, F. (2011) *The Origin of Political Order*. Profile Books. London

Global Development centre (2024) "China-Africa Economic Bulletin, 2024 Edition." Boston University. Retrieved March 15, 2025 from <https://aercafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/GCI-China-Africa-Bulletin-2024-FIN.pdf>

Growth Lab at Harvard University (2025) "The Atlas of Economic Complexity." Web application. Harvard Kennedy School. Retrieved March 5, 2025. from <https://atlas.hks.harvard.edu>

IMF (2025) Regional Economic Outlook: Sub Saharan Africa. Retrieved February 10, 2025 from <https://data.imf.org/?sk=5778f645-51fb-4f37-a775-b8fec6d6bc69b>

Jepperson, R. L., Wendt, A., & Katzenstein, P. J. (1996). Norms, Identity and Culture in National Security. In Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security* (pp. 33-78). Columbia University Press.

Kissinger, H. (2014). *On China*. New York. Penguin Press

Li, J., I. Vertinsky, and H. Zhang (2013) 'The Quality of Domestic Legal Institutions and Export Performance', *Management International Review* 53, 361–390.

Louise L'Estrange, F. (2024) Regionalism and shifting alliances in the Middle East. In L. L'Estrange (ed.). *International relations of the Middle East* (pp.173-195). Oxford University Press.

MAGNUS, G. (2018). *Red Flags: Why Xi's China Is in Jeopardy*. Yale University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv5cgbb7>

Mearsheimer, J. J. (2018). *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities*. Yale University Press. New York.

MOFA (2024). Full text: Toast by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the welcoming banquet of 2024 FOCAC Summit. September 5, 2024. Retrieved April 16, 2025 from https://2024focacsummit.mfa.gov.cn/eng/ttxx_3/202409/t20240905_11485532.htm

Morfino, V. (2020) The Layers of History and the Politics in Gramsci. In *A companion to Antonio Gramsci: Essays on history and theories of history, politics and historiography*. (2020). BRILL.

Moyo, D. (2009). *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. New York.

Pierson, P. (2004). *Politics in time: history, institutions, and social analysis*. Princeton University Press

Said, E. W. (1978) *Orientalism*. Vintage Books New York

Schneidman, W., & Signé, L. (2022). Growing US Trade and Investment in Africa. *Africa Growth Initiative at Brookings Institute*. (pp. 13-16) December 2022 Report.

- Shelton, G. & Paruk, F. (2008) The Forum on China-Africa cooperation: A strategic opportunity. Institute For Security Studies; Monograph 156, December 2008. <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/103618/mono156full.pdf>
- Shinn, D. & Eisenman, J. (2023). *China's Relations with Africa: A New Era of Strategic Engagement*. Columbia University Press. New York.
- Sibiri, H. (2021). FOCAC at Twenty “A Bargained Institutional Framework” for Shared Impacts. *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 199–217 DOI: 10.1142/S2377740021500081
- Tadesse, B., & B. Fayissa (2008). The Impact of African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) on US Imports from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), *Journal of International Development*, 20(7), 920–941.
- Thomas p. Sheehy (2022) Ten Things to Know about the US-China Rivalry in Africa. *United States Institute of Peace*, December 7, 2022. Retrieved February 18, 2025., from: <https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/12/10-things-know-about-us-china-rivalry-africa>
- Tiboris, M. (2019) Addressing China’s Rising Influence in Africa. *Chicago Council on Global Affairs*. May 2019. Retrieved February 13, 2025 from: https://globalaffairs.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/report_addressing-chinas-rising-influence-africa_20190521%20%281%29.pdf
- Tudoroiu, T. (2024). A Constructivist Theoretical Framework. In: China’s Two Identities. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-2883-1_2
- United States Trade Representative (USTR) (2018). Biennial Report on the Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act. Retrieved from https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/2018_AGOA_Implementation.pdf
- U.S. International Trade Commission (2020). US Trade and Investment with Sub-Saharan Africa: Recent Trends and New. Retrieved from United States International Trade Commission (USITC): <https://www.usitc.gov/publications/332/pub5043.pdf>
- U.S. State Department (n.d) African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Retrieved from United States Department (USSD): <https://www.state.gov/african-growth-and-opportunity-act-agoa/>
- USTR(n.d). Countries and Regions: Africa. Retrieved from United States Trade Representative (USTR):<https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/africa>
- Vicini, A., Ventroni, M. & Vicini, M. (2022). The Chinese Influence in Africa: Neocolonialism or Genuine Cooperation? *International Journal of Business Marketing and Management (IJBMM)* Volume 7 Issue 2 p.58-66.
- Wendt, A. (1999). Four sociologies of international politics. In *Social Theory of International Politics* (pp. 1–44). chapter, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wendt, A. (1999). The state and the problem of corporate agency. In *Social Theory of International Politics* (pp. 193–245). chapter, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

World Bank (2024). International Debt Report 2024. © Washington, DC: World Bank. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/42444> License: [CC BY 3.0 IGO](#). Retrieved April 10, 2025., from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/f1700aa0-cc73-42b7-8ceb-630c5528a574>

World Economic Forum (2024). Why strong regional value chain will be vital to the next chapter of China and Africa's economic relationship, June 25, 2024. Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/06/why-strong-regional-value-chains-will-be-vital-to-the-next-chapter-of-china-and-africas-economic-relationship/#:~:text=Over%20the%20last%20%20years,total%20trade%20volume%20in%202023.>

Yeshiel Panchia (2024) AGOA eligibility update: What it could mean for US-Africa relations amid global power shifts. Forbes Africa. Friday 12, January 2024. Retrieved from <https://agoa.info/news/article/16420-agoa-eligibility-adjustments-what-they-could-mean-for-us-africa-relations-amid-globalpower-shifts.html>

Zezeza, P. T. (2019). Africa's persistent struggles for development and democracy in a multipolar world. *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines*, 53(1), 155–170. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2019.1575757>

Zhang, X., Wasserman, H., & Mano, W. (2016). China's expanding influence in Africa: projection, perception and prospects in Southern African countries. *Communicatio*, 42(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02500167.2016.1143853>