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A CONSTRUCTIVIST ANALYSIS OF CHINA'S GEOPOLITICAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY TOWARD AFRICA: A CASE OF SINO-TANZANIAN SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

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A CONSTRUCTIVIST ANALYSIS OF CHINA'S GEOPOLITICAL ECONOMIC STRATEGY TOWARD AFRICA: A CASE OF SINO-TANZANIAN SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

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ABSTRAK

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji politik luar negeri Tiongkok terhadap Afrika dengan menganalisis Kerja Sama Selatan-Selatan (KSS) Sino-Tanzania. Dengan menggunakan konstruktivisme sosial yang dimodifikasi dan berpusat pada negara, studi ini mengidentifikasi ranah domestik dan internasional dari struktur normatif Tiongkok yang bertanggung jawab untuk membentuk identitas Tiongkok dalam komunitas internasional. Ini juga menjelaskan bagaimana Tiongkok dapat menyelaraskan identitasnya yang bersaing, yakni sebagai Negara Selatan dan status kekuatan besar yang sedang bangkit, sehingga Tiongkok dapat melengkapi kepentingan normatifnya (yaitu, solidaritas Negara Selatan) dan kepentingan material (yaitu, strategi geopolitik-geoekonomi) menjadi proyek KSS yang beragam dengan persepsi positif dan proaktif dari Tanzania. Studi ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap teorisasi KSS Tiongkok, geopolitik-geoekonomi Tiongkok, dan kebijakan luar negeri Tiongkok terhadap Afrika sekaligus. Dalam konteks ini, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa konstruktivisme sosial dapat menjelaskan rekonsiliasi antara kewajiban normatif negara dan keinginan material dalam komunitas internasional.

Kata kunci: Tiongkok, Tanzania, Kerja Sama Selatan-Selatan, Negara Selatan, Konstruktivisme

ABSTRACT

This article discusses China's foreign policy toward African countries by examining Sino-Tanzanian South-South Cooperation (SSC). By utilising a modified, state-centric social constructivism, this study identifies domestic and international realms of China's normative structure responsible for shaping China's identities within the international community. It also explains how China can reconcile its competing identities between a Global South and rising great power statuses, which gives China the ability to combine its normative interest (i.e., Global South solidarity) and material interest (i.e., the geopolitical-geoeconomic strategy) into a diverse project of SSC with positive and proactive perception from Tanzania. This study contributes toward the theorisation of China's SSC, China's geopolitics-geoeconomy, and China's foreign policy toward Africa at once. This study has shown that social constructivism can explain a reconciliation between a state's normative obligation and material desire within the international community.

Keywords: China, Tanzania, South-South Cooperation, Global South, Social Constructivism

INTRODUCTION

Sino-African relations in the modern era (since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949) have been heavily influenced by ideological notions like "Third World solidarity" and the international revolution against imperialism and colonialism (Duggan, 2020, p. 105). Mao Zedong at that time perceived African nations as "partners in the struggle against imperialism" (Mao, 1998, p. 286). Xi Jinping even highlighted this description in his speech in opening the 8th Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in December 2021 (Xinhua, 2021). Moreover, China and South Africa's involvement within BRICS countries reemphasise their political economic stances that global economic order should be multipolar and accommodate Global South interests instead of being monopolised by Global North countries. With Brazil, India, and Russia, they represent significant alternative sources of economic and development engagement available for developing countries (Rugumamu, 2014, p. 3).

Like other African countries with official relations with China, Tanzania (established on 26th April 1964 after the unification of Tanganyika and Zanzibar) had a strong relationship with Mao's China through several economic and development assistance. After stagnation due to Deng Xiaoping's inward-looking policies guaranteed by its triangular relations between the US and the Soviet Union between the 1970s-1990s, Sino-Tanzanian relations flourished again during the third millennium's beginning. Started from Jiang Zemin's initiative to establish the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000, Xi Jinping's China continued Mao's recipe in approaching Tanzania by offering investment, trade, and development cooperation (Shangwe, 2017, p. 95). To make it like his predecessor, Xi's development cooperation initiative with Tanzania (and other African countries) uses the term "South-South Cooperation" (SSC), which is marked with several features like principles of non-conditionality, equal partnership, solidarity, mutual benefit, and respect for sovereignty (Tasker, 2018, p. 11). The most recent milestone they have achieved is the establishment of the Strategic Cooperative Partnership (SCP) between the People's Republic of China and the United Republic of Tanzania on 3rd November 2022. This agreement allows the two sides to continue elevating their two-way trade. Further, its volume promotes industrial complementarity and production capacity cooperation, strengthens people-to-people collaboration and cultural exchanges, improves regional peace and security, and implements many investment mechanisms through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (MFA PRC, 2022). Symbolically, both countries agree to

commemorate the 60th Anniversary of their diplomatic relations in 2024 through mutual state visits.

This article discusses Sino-Tanzanian development and technical cooperation under the South-South Cooperation (SSC) framework. Despite its effort to involve a few roles of Tanzania in this venture, it should be noted that further analysis will emphasise China's foreign policy point of view. Secondly, it will scrutinise China's domestic and international agential power dynamic that shapes SSC policies toward African countries like Tanzania.

Research on Sino-African development cooperation which focuses more on the role of the state's norms is yet to be explored. For example, some of them discussed political roles played or discoursed by Chinese or African counterparts (Chanaka, 2022; Elnor, 2022; Serem, 2022; Elbadri, 2022; Wang & Elliot, 2014), while others explicate each counterpart's agency/capacity to conduct and institutionalise their pertinent policies/practices (Huang J., 2018; Iyabo, 2018; Abegunrin & Manyeruke, 2020; Huang, Xu, & Mao, 2019; Alden & Hughes, 2009). Other studies situated Sino-African development cooperation in the African regionalism context, showing a trend of China's multilateral approach to development cooperation with the continent (Gazibo & Mbabia, 2012; Shelton, 2016; Wu, 2020). Although several studies have identified the role of international norms in shaping Sino-African development cooperation (Wang Z., 2014; Gros & Fung, 2019; Esteban & Olivie, 2022; Marques & Spanakos, 2014; Matambo, 2014), their lenses are international society-centric (instead of state-centric), which is incompatible for this study that aims to explain Chinese perspective on its development cooperation with an African nation. In other words, state-centric constructivist research contributions to Sino-African development cooperation topics are yet to be developed.

Three empirical instances justify the urgency. Xi's statements during SCP establishment that "President Hassan is the first African head of state China has received after the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). It speaks volumes about the two countries' close ties and the important position of China-Africa relations on China's diplomatic agenda," and "Tanzanian side reaffirmed its firm commitment to the one-China principle [...] The Chinese side expressed firm support for Tanzania in exploring independently a development path suited to its national conditions" (MFA PRC, 2022), showing that material and normative interests intersect within Sino-Tanzanian Partnership. Moreover, Sino-Tanzanian commitment to implement BRI under SSC shows that bilateral

commitment to common international principles and norms can support what Óscar Garrido Guijarro termed “geopolitical pairing” (Guijarro, 2022).

This research contributes to developing state-centric (social) constructivism within research concerning Chinese foreign policy toward Africa regarding development cooperation. Furthermore, this research offers an alternative stance on whether material or normative interests drive Chinese involvement in African economic development. This study argues that China’s normative structure, influenced by interactive dynamics of international and domestic normative realms, has shaped Chinese identity within international politics and, therefore, generated its material (Chinese geoeconomic factors matched with Tanzanian needs for affordable national growth and development) and normative interest (South-South Cooperation) toward African nations like Tanzania. These interests are embodied in various forms of development cooperation between China and Tanzania, individually or collectively, through FOCAC or BRI.

The following structure of this study is as follows. First, it will identify China’s normative structure within international relations—from international or domestic dynamics. Second, the analysis will identify China’s diverse and competing identities within international politics based on the convergence of the previously mentioned domestic and international normative structure. Third, it will clarify China’s normative and material interests toward Tanzania based on previously discussed normative structures and identities. Finally, the analysis will detail, verify, and interpret Sino-Tanzania development cooperation programmes as a manifestation of China’s foreign policy that reflects their journey in processing domestic and international normative structures, including their identity that appears in the international realm and their shaped normative and material interests.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

State-Centric Social Constructivism

Social constructivism argues that social normative structure determines a state’s identity and interest, resulting in the state’s behaviour in international politics. The normative structure is a set of autonomous and constitutive norms that exist independently from the state (Hobson, 2000, p. 148). For constructivists, a state’s behaviour follows its normative structure, which has two dimensions. The first dimension is the domestic realm, shaped by domestic institutions (i.e., state-society relations or state-transnational linkage) and domestic norms (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 20, 42). The second dimension is the international realm, shaped by international

socialising norms or principles and international organisations or institutions (Hobson, 2000, p. 150). Therefore, a constructivist may say that a state follows the “logic of appropriateness” (March & Olsen, 1989).

Hobson (2000, p. 148) identifies three variants of constructivism: (1) international society-centric, (2) state-centric, and (3) radical or postmodern (further exploration will focus only on the first two variants). In international society-centric theory, the international realm becomes the “realm of obligation” whose dynamics will affect the state’s behaviour to conform to what becomes internationally recognised “appropriate” behaviours. International Society and its principal normative structure will reproduce themselves (Hobson, 2000, p. 150). Meanwhile, state-centric theory rarely focuses on the international level. Its focus on the “domestic realm” affects the state’s identity, interests, and behaviour in foreign affairs (Hobson, 2000, p. 167).

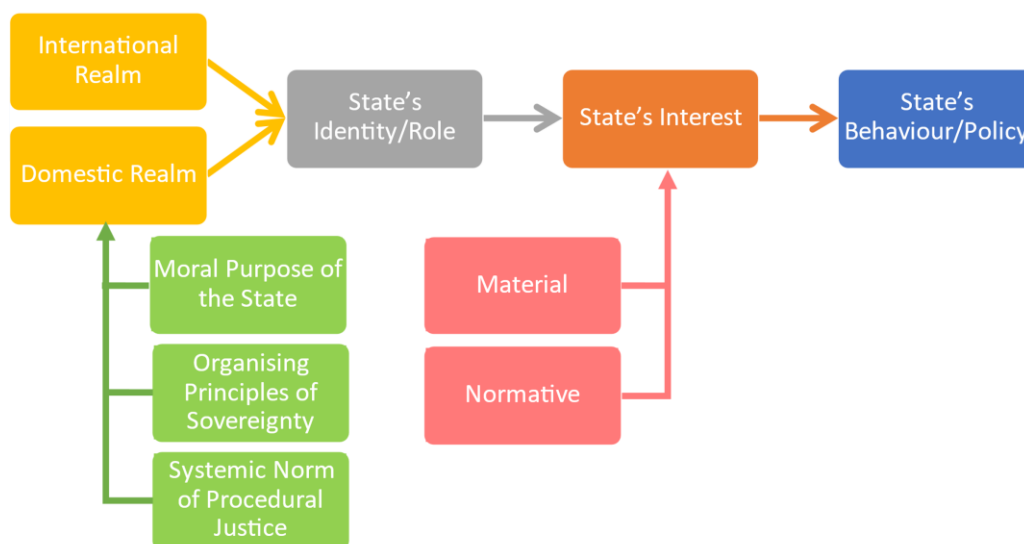


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of Modified State-Centric Social Constructivism
Source: Author

This study aims to choose the state-centric theory while modifying two of its elements. First, it complements the “domestic realm” of normative structure with the “international realm” variable. Their dynamics become a new normative structure that will shape the state’s identity within international politics. Second, this study will borrow the logical framework of the state’s “moral purpose” from Christian Reus-Smit (1999). According to him, a state’s basic institutional practice or habit is shaped by its prevalent systemic norm (of procedural justice) that regulates the state-society relationship, which comes from the organising principle of

sovereignty that is originated from the moral purpose of the state itself (Reus-Smit, 1999, p. 31). Reus-Smit's framework will help this study grasp a state's "domestic realm" of normative structure. Third, this study will also adapt its analysis of state interest according to Clemens Six's approach to defining what interests constitute a state's foreign policy. Six argues that a state's foreign policy combines material interest (based on the state's calculation of strategic value in international engagement) and normative interest (based on the state's sense of self-obliging to perpetuate domestic and international norms) in responding to foreign affairs issues (Six, 2009, p. 1111). A detailed illustration of this theoretical framework can be seen in Figure 1.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study follows what David L. Morgan (2007, p. 67), Thi Tuyet Tran (2017), and John W. Creswell (2013, pp. 9-10) termed a "pragmatic-constructivist" research paradigm. It seeks the "middle ground" of tension between the objectivity of observable phenomenon of CCB as international assistance as part of inter-state behaviours (e.g., the network of actors, institutions, material capabilities) and its inherent tendency to be driven by "non-material/intangible factors" (e.g., norms, identities, and ideas). It manifests in a case-based comparative analysis design, which tries to compare a limited number of cases in return for more exploration of numerous "variables" to thicken the description. The definitive conceptualisation or theorisation within the research is constructed simultaneously with the research progress, and the case selection would be very paradigmatic according to the research purpose (della Porta, 2008, p. 208). Because of its paradigm, this research can be determined as qualitative research.

This research obtained data that consists of two referent sets: (1) Chinese foreign policy profiles and (2) Sino-Tanzanian development cooperation programmes which belong to SSC. The data are primarily qualitative from primary and (mostly) secondary sources found through desk-study activity, such as official documents or press releases, online archives, media reports on journalistic websites, and academic works (e.g., books, journal articles, and research reports) that issue news and studies related to Sino-Tanzanian development cooperation (Lamont, 2015, pp. 79-91). The method of the data analysis will be qualitative, with a tendency to go to both content and discourse analysis. Discourse analysis delves into a text's implicit and hidden meanings, whereas content analysis focuses on what is openly expressed in it (Johannesson & Perjon, 2014, p. 65). The reason for this combination is to get the whole picture

of each obtained data, which will benefit this study's analysis. This study will present and analyse the data based on this paper's analytical framework and writing structure.

DISCUSSION

Global South Solidarity: When China's International and Domestic Realms of Normative Structure Converge

One must look at the Chinese state's historicity to find out China's domestic realm of normative structure. From ancient dynasties to modern states, the moral purpose of the sovereign power has been around the effort to establish a "harmonious society." Back in the dynastic era, the term *Zhongguo* (meaning "Central Kingdom") entailed the Confucian moral purpose of the state in bringing propriety, order, and peace to the world—inferior non-Chinese polities—as one universal family under the emperor—the patriarch mandated by heaven (Zhang, 2015, p. 159). During the early republican era (1911-1928), China adopted a five-coloured flag representing the harmony between the five ethnicities constituting the Chinese nation (Fitzgerald, 1998, p. 180). Such conceptualisation is continued as the Chinese state's moral compass under the communist regime. It can be seen from Hu Jintao's foreign policy of "peaceful development" and "harmonious society" that essentially continues even under Xi Jinping's leadership until now (Buhi, 2014, p. 241; He & Feng, 2013, p. 209).

"Harmonious society" has been adaptable to China's organising principle of sovereignty, based on socialism with Chinese characteristics. It means that China's sovereignty must be conditioned under the corridor of the communist party's objectives, in which its orientation has transformed from Maoist "proletariat dictatorship" to the "marriage" of socialism with New Confucianism. The historicity of this sovereign principle can be explained as follow: after the Xinhai Revolution, which marked the establishment of the Republic of China, the conceptualisation of Chinese statehood changed from imperial sovereignty—based on the sphere of influence toward individual—to Westphalian sovereignty—based on territoriality (Carrai, 2019, pp. 1-8). This change had also been influenced by the "century of humiliation," Imperial shame due to its impotence to fight against European and Japanese colonialism at the international level. Until the current communist regime, its legacy has affected the Chinese state's assertive "victim mentality," especially when dealing with issues like territorial disputes and domestic affairs that got international attention.

As for systemic norms regulating state-society relations, Chinese socialism also mandates CCP to run the state. It is where the state system and its bureaucracy are

“incorporated” into the internal logic of the CCP’s decision-making process. Any state official’s designation and state’s policy at any level must have approval from the CCP (MERICS, 2019). Even the CCP’s electoral and systemic power within the National People’s Congress, China’s unicameral parliament, can change the constitution in their favour. Therefore, foreign policy in this context is no exception. With respect for Chinese and surrounding states’ sovereignty, a “harmonious society” can be achieved by the CCP through the adoption of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence: mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence (Grimm, 2014, p. 998).

China’s international realm of the normative structure was established after World War II, at the beginning of the Cold War and the decolonisation of Third World nations. New international norms such as human rights, equality, self-determination, respect for sovereignty, and anti-colonialism/anti-imperialism emerged. Bandung Conference 1955 encapsulated those norms with Third World perspectives and materialised Afro-Asian solidarity (Weber & Winanti, 2016, pp. 396-397)—China became a participant. Non-aligned movement (NAM) against Cold War polarisation became one of its legacies. United Nations (UN) upgraded those norms into a more concrete and strategic normative framework under the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) in 1978 by adding the context of partnership and solidarity for achieving an economic and development agenda (Tasker, 2018, p. 25). It gave birth to the term “SSC.” Those political-economic developmental norms can be seen as the deep normative structure (first tier), while their institutionalisation—Bandung Conference, NAM, and UN—embodies the surface structure (second tier).

As an inference, China’s domestic and international realms of the normative structure converge. On the one hand, China’s Confucian notion of a “harmonious society” has adapted toward postcolonial, Westphalian international order through socialist internationalism. On the other hand, “Chinese characteristics” have absorbed that adaptation to lay the Five Principles which guide China’s foreign policy. In the context of the North-South divide, such Principles have always obliged China to maintain political and economic solidarity with developing countries—now the Global South—since China’s participation in Bandung Conference until now (Liu, 2021, p. 13). In other words, the Global South solidarity norm has always been an essential normative structure driving China’s modern international relations.

Between Global South and Great Power: How China Reconciles Its Competing Identities

China's Global South identity cannot be separated from the Chinese Government's official discourse. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao stated that China-Africa cooperation is part and parcel of SSC (Xinhua, 2003). How can this speech imply China's identity among Global South countries? According to John Longshaw Austin (1975), a speech act has a performative effect on identity construction that can be observed based on three aspects: locution (the mere utterance), illocution (the active result of the implied utterance by the communicator), and perlocution (the effect of utterance for the communicant). Applied to this microanalysis, Premier Wen's literal speech ("locutionary act") has reflected all of China's foreign policy history and its following institutional habit toward Africa; The "illocutionary act" of his speech conditions China-African cooperation becomes eligible to be called SSC; The "perlocutionary act" of the speech then concludes that both China and its African counterparts hold common identity as part and parcel of Global South countries.

Nevertheless, one should also ask how they can confirm Chinese official discourse, not to mention that the term "Global South" itself is inevitable from the debate. In the 1980s, former German Chancellor Willy Brandt became one of the earlier persons who introduced the notion of the "North-South" divide—see Figure 2. He divided countries between developed and developing economies through imaginary borders that still rely on geographical reality (Brandt, 1980)—China belongs to the developing countries. This new term slowly began to change the phrase "Third World" as it belonged to the Cold War-era division between the Western bloc ("First World") and Eastern Bloc ("Second World"). This notion becomes the first approach to identifying Global South countries and their characteristics.

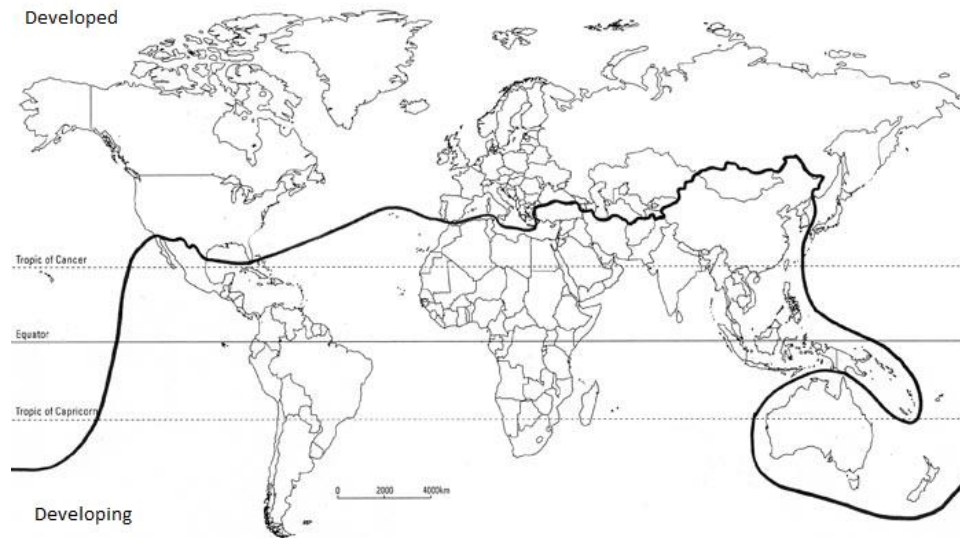


Figure 2 The Brandt Line Dividing North and South Countries
Source: Brandt (1980)

The second, more contemporary approach considers the “South” as a “political movement” initiated to address global inequality issues in global political economic governance—e.g., poverty, racism, gender gap, and health quality. This issue-oriented movement becomes relevant in reading about diverse conditions of global economic development regardless of geographical reality (Trefzer et al., 2014, p. 2). In China’s context, the “project” itself can be indicated by China’s involvement as a BRICS country. Belonging to emerging economies such as Brazil, Russia, India, and South Africa, China’s political-economic manoeuvre on the global stage challenges “old establishments” such as the US, European Union (EU), and Japan (Cooper, 2016, p. 1). Moreover, China had also participated in several historical Global South fora, such as the 1955 Bandung Conference and the 1978 United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries; both conferences laid the foundation for today’s Global South solidarity and SSC principles.

Despite China’s historical Global South identity, the diversity of international perception toward any country, including China, also leads to different identities. Therefore, China cannot hold only one identity within international discourse. In this case, the international community also sees China as a rising great power that becomes a comparable rival to the US or the EU. The international society is divided in interpreting this status. On the one hand, negative narratives have constructed China’s predatory presence. This kind of narrative mainly occurs from the Western side, namely Europe. Many European media are concerned about several issues, including China’s unstable “geostrategic encirclement” that would risk EU stability and undermine traditional European influence in other regions—such

as China's BRI projects in building Belgrade-Novı Sad railway section of the Budapest-Belgrade railway project, Peljesac Bridge in Croatia, and the refurbishment and expansion of Piraeus Port in Athens, Greece (Arifon et al., 2019). Moreover, they perceive China as a resource and energy-hungry giant, an exploiter of corrupt and incompetent governments, a trade opportunist, and a massive polluter (Maru, 2019). On the other hand, positive narratives that have constructed China's status as a "responsible great power" come from non-Western entities. Several African leaders and the public see China as a "saviour," a trustworthy ally of Africa, and one that respects other cultures and states (Maru, 2019). Although describing it as challenging, one example of Chinese academician also argues that the more closely China integrates itself into international economic and political mechanisms, the more willing it will be to play a responsible role in the international community (Xia, 2001, p. 17). Even China calls itself a responsible great power (Morris, 2018).

It must be admitted that China is now an exceptional Global South country. They have better political and economic resources such as high purchasing power parity (PPP), big market, relatively cheap human resources, industrial output, export volumes, technology and know-how, and state intervention toward domestic and foreign economic development strategy. Moreover, their unitary solid government gives the country excellent foreign and security affairs planning. As a result, China's engagement with fellow Global South countries, especially Africa, seems ambiguous. China's identity at that moment is unclear. Nevertheless, it is still legitimate for China to bring and utilise its Global South identity to define its interest within international relations, for they reflect what domestic and international normative structures have imposed on them throughout history.

The Convergence of China's Normative and Material Interests in Africa

Given its exceptional Global South identity and its norm of Global South solidarity, China must maintain an equal partnership with fellow Global South countries (bilaterally or multilaterally) that promotes peaceful means, mutual benefit, and respect toward each other's sovereignty. China had initially shown this approach during Mao's leadership. His foreign policy during Cold War was concerned with "international revolution" by Third World countries against colonialism-imperialism and dominant Cold War bipolar. He demonstrated such tenets through intensive technical and economic cooperation with African countries—despite being limited and symbolic in most cases (Duggan, 2020, pp. 105-106). Being an ideologist in his foreign policy, Mao did not necessarily try to impose the general or Chinese communist system on

their African counterparts. He just supported a similar “revolutionary spirit” from each country that became China’s partner.

Xi Jinping reemphasised this notion in his keynote speech at the 8th FOCAC Ministerial Conference opening ceremony in Dakar, Senegal. He explained that the key to Sino-African close, deep friendship “lies in an everlasting spirit of [...] friendship and cooperation forged between the two sides, which features sincere friendship and equality, win-win for mutual benefit and common development, fairness and justice, and progress with the times and openness and inclusiveness” (Xinhua, 2021). Such a political spirit continuation—from Mao to Xi—explains the Sino-Tanzanian long-standing relationship (Shangwe, 2017, pp. 81-86). In this context, SSC suits the normative foundation of Sino-Tanzanian relations, which can be traced back to the Bandung Conference, NAM, and BAPA. Its technical and development cooperation represents norms such as “respect for sovereignty,” “non-interference,” “mutual benefit,” and “partnership.” In other words, China’s choice to improve its SSC with African nations like Tanzania is part of its normative interest to perpetuate Global South solidarity and strengthens China’s Global South identity.

As for China’s material interest, the Sino-Tanzanian SSC is directly and indirectly related to China’s geopolitical economic strategy. China needs to expand their economic activities globally by accessing new foreign markets and economic resources to fulfil industrial resurrection domestically. It can be done through China’s two currently prominent policies: Made in China 2025 and BRI.

“Made in China 2025” is China’s newest industrial plan to develop Chinese high-tech manufacturing to surpass Western high-end industries into global domination—i.e., information and technology, computerised machines and robots, aviation and space, maritime engineering and technology, railway transportation, renewable energy vehicles, energy, agriculture, new materials, and (bio)medicine (Chinese State Council, 2015). Since its initiation in 2015, this state-led plan has included two elements. The first is several policies for tax reduction, incentivisation for foreign companies’ merger and acquisition, increase in research and development funding, and roadmap for industrialisation (Agarwala & Chaudhary, 2021, pp. 429-431). The second element is building sufficient research and development centres, initiating high-end projects in all key industries, standardising smart and green manufacturing practices, and producing new materials independently (Talin, 2021). Ironically, to support such an ambitious plan, availability and access to raw materials (e.g., iron, copper, platinum, cobalt) and energy supplies (e.g., oil and coal) are very crucial (Duggan, 2020, pp. 109-118).

Meanwhile, BRI is China's global development strategy to invest (mostly in connectivity infrastructure) in many countries and international organisations whose locations resemble ancient mainland and maritime silk trade route from China to Southeast and South Asia, Middle East, North and East Africa, and Eurasia (McBride, Berman, & Chatzky, 2023). This strategy will support "Made in China 2025" by intensifying and diversifying Chinese goods, services, labour, and capital exports through many frameworks (e.g., trade agreements, investment or loans, and development projects). This policy should be understood by tracing China's economic background since the Global Recession. The aftermath of the 2008-2009 Global Financial Crisis slowly hit China. Because transactional costs increased highly and decreased the incentive to invest and further financialisation, China's demand for real economic output subtracted and lowered their exports. It was harmful to China, which depended its economic growth on export and foreign investment. Even the Chinese Government has helped their enterprises, mostly state-owned ones, through economic stimulus to save them (Barboza, 2008).

"Made in China 2025" and BRI constitute China's interest in Sino-Tanzanian SSC because the latter's projects also wrap China's venture for domestic industrialisation and market expansion toward Africa. First, to boost Chinese industrialisation, its output—relatively-cheap commodities—with decent quality like motorbikes, mobile phones, IT structures, and transportation (Fujita, 2017, pp. 41-52) should enter and be consumed by Tanzanian consumers. Luckily, the Tanzanian market welcomes Chinese commodities very well. From the Tanzanian perspective, their development agenda sufficiently represents most African countries that still focus on the agricultural sector and its derivatives. It requires affordable knowledge, technologies, and commodities that can be used to support Tanzanian's economic activities, which, unlike the Chinese latest stage, are still very infant (Zhang, 2019, p. 113). Tanzanians also need to afford commodities they cannot produce by themselves or because of the high import cost. Second, agricultural technologies produced by Chinese industries are relatively demonstrable and applicable to the Tanzanian context. Thus, the Tanzanian market for agricultural technologies is accommodating Chinese middle-to-high-technological products. Moreover, Sino-Tanzanian agricultural cooperation has been done since the 1970s (Li et al., 2014, p. 26), legitimating China's SSC portfolio to sell Chinese pertinent commodities. Third, the principle of non-conditionality—where a donor-recipient relation within cooperation is not bound to any unequal term—is part and parcel of the nature of China's SSC. Sino-Tanzanian SSC treats both China and Tanzania equal business partners,

which morally allows Chinese business to increase their industrial penetrability toward the Tanzanian market. Moreover, to ease their development cooperation, China even created a scheme where China will provide financial support for development in African countries in exchange for access to their natural resources, namely oil and coal deposits (Abdalla, 2006). As an inference, Sino-Tanzanian SSC represents the convergence of China's normative interest to perpetuate its status and solidarity among Global South partners and its material interest in securing geopolitical economic strategy. China can solidify its engagement with Tanzania "through the same development paradigm" and ensure the sustainability of its industrial and investment policies.

Sino-Tanzanian South-South Cooperation

Departing from their mainstream forms, most Sino-Tanzania SSCs take technical-development, science and technology, and cultural cooperation forms combined with an investment paradigm. For China's technological and development collaboration in Tanzania, several notable projects are extractive, energy, agricultural, textile, and transportation and logistics industries. There have been Liganga Iron Ore Projects, Mchuchuma Coal Mines, Kiwira Coal Mines, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (Eacop), Mtwara-Dar es Salaam Gas Pipeline, Mubarali Rice Farm, Mahonda Sugar Cane Plant, the 1984 Tanzania-China Friendship Textile Company rehabilitation, the 1970s Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA) establishment, Tabora-Kigoma Railway, and Mwanza-Isaka rail construction (Nyabiage, 2021; China's Embassy in Tanzania, 2008; Bahemu, 2022; Xinhua, 2015; TanzaniaInvest, 2023; Duggan, 2020, p. 106; Railway Technology, 2021; Malanga, 2022; Oirere, 2023). These do not include SCP-related agricultural trade agreements, which include a protocol on Inspection, Quarantine, and Veterinary Sanitary Requirements for Wild Aquatic Products to be exported from Tanzania to China and a protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for the Export of Fresh Avocado Fruits from Tanzania to China (TanzaniaInvest, 2022). Other investments include acquiring Tanzania Sunshine Gypsum Ltd. by Chinese private entities and greenfield investment by Xinghua Tannery (Xia, 2019, pp. 9, 19).

On science and technology cooperation, through Chongqing Sino-Tanzania Agriculture Development Company, China-Tanzania agreed to build an agricultural technology demonstration centre project in late 2007. This project undertakes the mission of construction assistance for Tanzania's agricultural technology transfer from China's counterparts (Zhang Y., 2019, p. 114). Another similar technology transfer project is the institutionalisation of the

China–Tanzania Village-based Learning Centre to become the China–Tanzania Joint Research Centre for Agricultural Development in February 2014. Its purposes include encouraging local people to explore endogenous development and poverty reduction mechanisms, ensuring a pivotal role for small farmers, and forming linking mechanisms between local government, university research institutes, and households (Xu, Ma, & Li, 2019, p. 132). On cultural cooperation, the Chinese Ministry of Culture (MCC) organised the training of African entertainers and artists and dispatched Chinese-trained acrobats to Tanzania and Sudan. Academics were also sent to teach or research African art and culture.

Another interesting sector is information and communication technology (ICT). China cooperated with Tanzania in building broadband infrastructure and digital media joint ventures from 2012-2014. For the former, through Export-Import Bank's (Exim Bank) low-interest infrastructural loan, China provided US\$573 million and appointed China International Telecommunication Construction Corporation (CITCC)—a subsidiary of state-owned company China Telecom Corporation—as well as Huawei to implement the project with the Tanzanian Ministry of Communication Science and Technology (MSCT) (Mbarawa, 2012). For the latter, a Chinese company Star Communications and the Tanzanian Government accumulated around US\$265 million to conduct a digital switchover of Tanzanian broadcasting (MOC, 2014). Despite creating local employment that reached up to 60%, these investments hardly result in intergovernmental experience sharing in ICT-related foreign direct investment, direct assistance, or any technological transfer targeting Tanzanian enterprises (Makundi, Huyse, & Develtere, 2016, p. 144)

Due to the nature of SSC's interstate relations, the Chinese Government implements almost all those investments. CCP becomes the principal planner and supervisor of China's domestic and foreign policy. In this case, Xi Jinping (MFA PRC, 2015), the General Secretary of the CCP, proposed exploring diversified development pathways, promoting the alignment of development strategies among different countries, making pragmatic achievements and improving the global development architecture. These include issue linkage with other political projects such as BRICS, FOCAC, and BRI. While FOCAC provides China's SSC multilateral channel for discussing and negotiating SSC implementation (Xu et al., 2019, pp. 127-128), BRI integrates China's SSC with its geostrategic blueprint (Zhou & Zhang, 2018, p. 18). Therefore, it can be said that Xi and his party, especially in the diplomatic corps, are obliged to approach each African country, including Tanzania, to ensure that China's SSC in Africa, especially Tanzania, meet both agreed normative and material interests from both sides.

Others include the China Centre for International Knowledge on Development (CCIKD) and the Institute for South-South Cooperation and Development (ISSCD), which have become the “epistemic community” of China’s SSC. They contribute to (re)defining, translating, interpreting, and disseminating knowledge about the SSC itself toward the public sphere. In the Sino-Tanzanian SSC context, they can also perform as “think tanks,” giving inputs for China’s policy-making process. Specifically, while CCIKD is responsible for developing shareable theories and practices of development suitable for respective partners’ national conditions regarding China’s development experience (CIKD, 2023), ISSCD also follows a similar purpose in addition to its core business to provide degree and non-degree training programmes in Development studies, international development cooperation, and SSC under the institutional umbrella of the National School of Development (NSD) of Peking University (ISSCAD, 2016).

There are also the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and several “technical ministries” such as MCC, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. Together with China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), they derive, implement, coordinate, monitor, and evaluate all specific cooperation for technical and development projects (Duggan, 2020, pp. 77-82). However, there is also private involvement in China’s SSC—the role of Chongqing Sino-Tanzania Agriculture Development Company and Chongqing Academy of Agricultural Sciences that specialised in providing epistemic resources for the Sino-Tanzania SSC in the agricultural sector (Zhang, 2019, p. 114) They carried norms by translating and implementing the technical, daily aspects of the policies.

Because China incorporates its SSC and investment strategies, it is not difficult to see a connection between the Sino-Tanzanian SSC with China’s BRI. Sino-Tanzanian SCP, which “integrates” both cooperation lines, proves that China’s geoeconomic strategy in Africa can intersect and even complement with Sino-African aims for Global South solidarity. As a result, the Sino-Tanzanian SSC can enhance political trust and mutual support on issues related to their national sovereignty and security interests, deepen bilateral economic and development cooperation, strengthen people-to-people relations, exchanges, and transactions, and finally promote regional peace.

On the Chinese side, the government can have one additional ally in the East African region for political and diplomatic cooperation. Such warm bilateral relations let Chinese enterprises expand their economic activities abroad and open and access new market

opportunities. Eventually, China will be seen as a trustworthy partner for African nations like Tanzania within the international community. On the Tanzanian side, Sino-Tanzanian cooperation helps urban and rural people improve their access to better daily infrastructure, open employment opportunities for Tanzanian people, enhance the nation's productivity and competitiveness, and support national development visions. Moreover, the Tanzanian Government can obtain more reliable political, diplomatic, and development partners outside mainstream actors like the US or European nations. Eventually, the Tanzanian Government will improve its legitimacy among its citizens.

CONCLUSION

This article has discussed China's geopolitical economic strategy toward African nations by examining the Sino-Tanzanian SSC that takes forms of economic, development, sociocultural, and science-technological cooperation. By modifying and utilising the state-centric theory of social constructivism, this study has explained the role of the domestic and international realm of China's normative structure (i.e., Global South solidarity with Chinese characteristics) that has given China the ability to reconcile its competing identities—Global South identity and rising great power. Because of that, China can also combine its Global South commitment with its geostrategy in Africa through BRI, showing that normative and material interests can complement each other. Such a combination becomes responsible for China's diverse forms of SSC, which is warmly welcomed by African countries like Tanzania.

This study has contributed to the theorisation of China's SSC, China's geopolitics-geo-economy, and China's foreign policy toward Africa at once. In that case, this study has shown that social constructivism can also provide a profound explanation that reconciles a state's normative obligation with material desire within the international community. Eventually, social constructivist international relations theory can open other possibilities for research and theorisation about China's foreign policy and geostrategy toward other Global South countries in other regions.

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