Global China pulse

volume 1 | Issue 1 | 2022

GLOBAL CHINA PULSE

Volume 1, Issue 1, 2022

Global China Pulse is published independently by a collective of scholars and practitioners

CHIEF EDITORS:

AIMS AND SCOPE:

Global China Pulse (*GCP*) is an open access biannual publication that focuses on China's international engagements in their various manifestations. The project stems from *The People's Map of Global China* (thepeoplesmap.net), an online map in which nongovernmental organisations, journalists, trade unions, and academics come together to provide up-to-date information on various dimensions of Global China in their localities. Alongside the informational infrastructure the *Map* provides, *GCP* offers a new space to publish content in a variety of styles and, possibly, experiment with different approaches and formats. *GCP* rests on two pillars: the conviction that today more than ever it is necessary to bridge the gap between the scholarly community, civil society, and the general public; and the related belief that open access is necessary to ethically reappropriate academic research from commercial publishers who restrict the free circulation of ideas.

INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS:

Authors are invited to submit articles, notes, or book reviews, but are encouraged to discuss their ideas with the editors beforehand. All manuscripts are subject to a refereeing process. Manuscripts and editorial correspondence should be emailed to: editors@madeinchinajournal.com.

INFORMATION FOR READERS:

Global China Pulse is published twice a year. It is freely available online at thepeoplesmap.net/globalchinapulse.

NOTE ON VISUAL MATERIAL

All images in this publication have been fully accredited. As this is a non-commercial publication, certain images have been used under a Creative Commons licence. These images have been sourced from Flickr, Wikipedia Commons, and the copyright owner of each original picture is acknowledged and indicated in the source information.

GLOBAL CHINA PULSE
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1, 2022

Global China Pulse is an initiative by:

Realised with the financial support of:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Global China
pulse

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,
We are happy to announce the release of this inaugural issue of *Global China Pulse* (*GCP*), a new open access biannual journal dedicated to all facets of Global China.

This publication stems from *The People's Map of Global China* (thepeoplesmap.net), an online map in which nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), journalists, trade unions, and academics come together to provide up-to-date information on various dimensions of Global China in their localities. Alongside the informational infrastructure the *Map* provides, with this journal, we are creating a new space to publish content in a variety of styles and, possibly, experiment with different approaches and formats.

GCP also draws from the experience that some editors have accrued over the years by editing the *Made in China Journal* (*MIC*, madeinchinajournal.com). Just like *MIC*, *GCP* rests on two pillars: the conviction that today more than ever it is necessary to bridge the gap between the scholarly community, civil society, and the general public; and the related belief that open access is necessary to ethically reappropriate academic research from commercial publishers who restrict the free circulation of ideas.

Ideally, the two journals should be read side by side, with *MIC* focusing on Chinese domestic politics and society and *GCP* looking at China's international footprint. We realise this distinction between 'domestic' and 'global' is blurred and China's internal issues are often not separated from broader international trends; it is not by chance that for the past few years, we have covered Chinese international engagements in *MIC*. However, given the level of attention and scrutiny that Global China has been receiving over the past decade and the polarisation between opposing narratives on the subject, we believe such an important and controversial topic warrants a separate, free-standing publication.

Our aim in launching this publication is to create a platform where it is possible to discuss Global China from a more grounded perspective that is not consumed by the geopolitical speculations and abstract and sweeping macroeconomic discussions that often dominate current debates. With this goal in mind—and in line with what we are attempting to do with our *Map*—in this space, we will mostly offer views on how Global China is playing out at the grassroots, focusing on how Chinese engagements overseas impact the lived experiences of people in different localities and the environments in which they live. Our contributions will be written not only by scholars, but also by NGOs, civil society practitioners, and journalists.

So, what will you find in this inaugural issue? We open with a series of briefs in which we provide summaries of key events related to Global China that have attracted our attention in the past few months and with an Op-Ed section featuring four pieces. **Ching Kwan Lee** discusses 'Global China Studies' as an emerging field of knowledge and argues that we can discern at least three meanings of 'Global China' in circulation. **Latinoamérica Sustentable**, an NGO based in Ecuador, offers a critical take on the operations of the China Development Bank in Latin America and proposes some steps to improve its operations in the region. **Vida Macikenaite** goes behind the scenes of the recent diplomatic spat between Lithuania and China over the opening of a Taiwanese Representative Office in the Baltic country's capital. Finally, **Ryan Mitchell** philologically excavates the genealogy of the concept of a 'community of shared future for all mankind'—one of China's most important foreign policy slogans during the Xi Jinping era—showing how this has less to do with Marx or Mao than it does with mid-twentieth-century German Christian Democrats and Japanese industrialists.

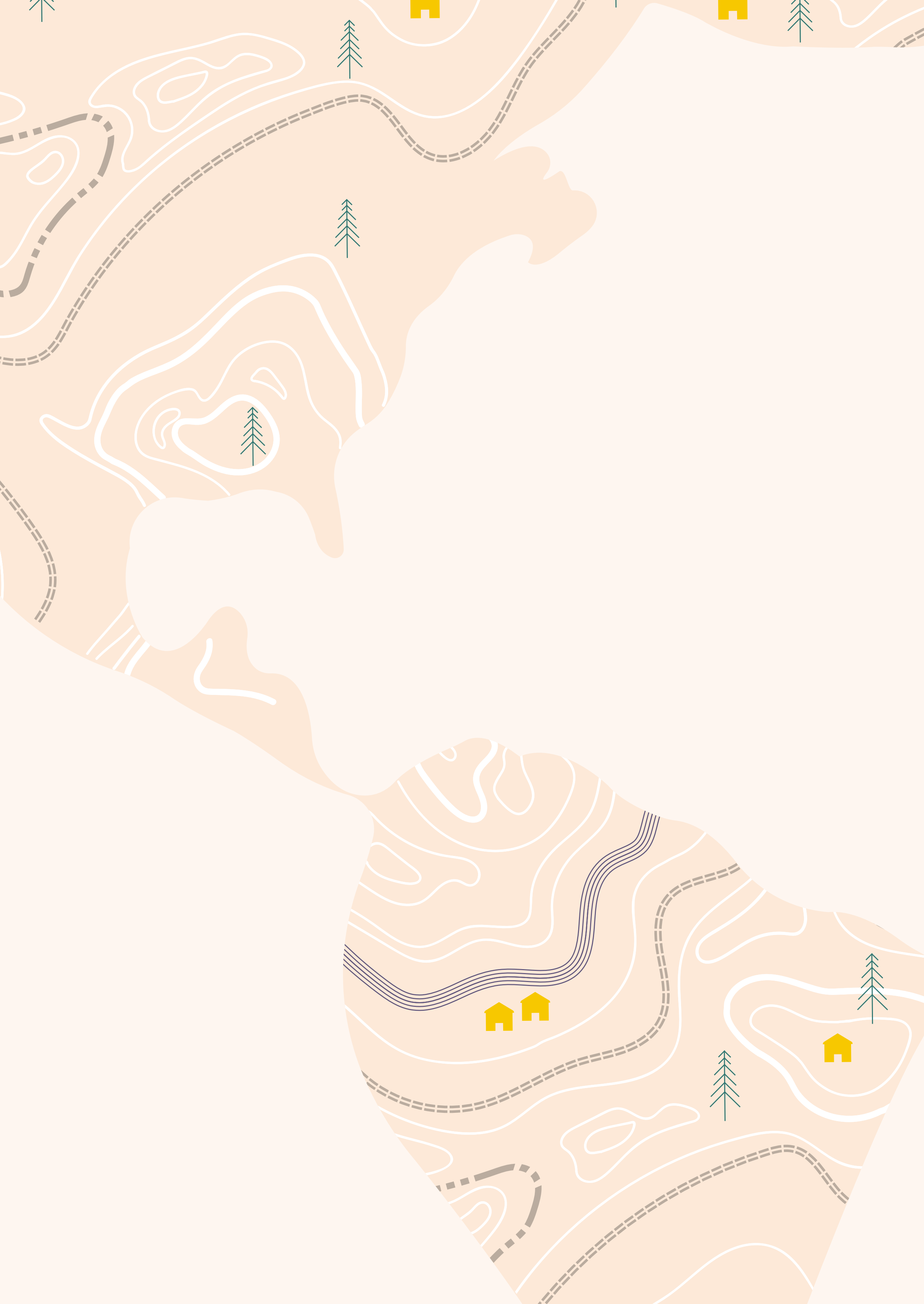
In the Essays section, **Siman Li**, **Danqing Li**, and **Mark Bo** take stock of the consequences and implications of Xi Jinping's announcement in September 2021 that China would no longer build new coal power plants overseas. **Charlotte Goodburn** and **Jan Knoerich** explore the impacts of trying to import a Chinese 'model' of special economic zones (SEZs) into southern India, displaying how this model interacts with local Indian contexts to create new, uneven forms of urban experience, particularly for local villagers and migrant workers. **Mark Bo** and **Neil Loughlin** focus on the Sihanoukville SEZ in Cambodia and, by taking a deeper dive into the history and development of the project, seek to cut through the competing narratives about the Belt and Road Initiative in Cambodia, outlining how China's global interactions often build on existing initiatives and development models, and how they can align with, adapt to, and support prevailing local and global dynamics. **Shawn Shieh** recounts how Chinese companies and investors have faced increasing pushback from communities and civil society organisations across the world and examines some of the common themes and strategies that emerge from this. **Austin Strange** analyses the link between Chinese infrastructure projects overseas and the country's pursuit of international influence, highlighting how these projects create significant risk by providing unique forms of political capital for different actors beyond China's control. Finally, **Romain Dittgen** unpacks the personal stories and experiences of two Chinese individuals who have lived in Johannesburg for a considerable time, offering contextualised glimpses of living and ageing in a city in which opportunity, success, hardship, and inequality coexist in complicated ways.

In the Project Spotlight section, we offer insights into Chinese projects that feature on our *People's Map of Global China*. Here, **Jessica DiCarlo** and **Nicholas Bosoni** dig into the lived reality of the Boten SEZ, Laos's largest infrastructure project to date in terms of capital investment. They do so through images and texts that take us to the streets of Boten to allow readers to feel the rhythms, pace, and experiences of city-making at the Laos–China border.

We wrap up the issue with a series of conversations. In the Voices from the Ground section, **Mark Bo** meets **Paulina Garzón**, the director of Latinoamérica Sustentable, to discuss how she came to work on issues related to Chinese investments in Latin America, as well as how she thinks the environmental and social performance of Chinese projects in the region can be improved in the future. Finally, in the Books section, **Nicholas Loubere** interviews **Maria Repnikova** about her latest book, *Chinese Soft Power* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), and **Hong Zhang** talks to **Ho-fung Hung** about his *Clash of Empires* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

We would like to thank you, our readers and contributors, for starting with us on this exciting journey. We hope that, with your help and enthusiasm, we will be able to make *GCP* into a prime site for informed debate on Global China, and hence a space for important conversations about some of the most crucial social issues of our time.

The Editors



BRIEFS

Solomon Sea

Sailors aboard Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Rafael Peralta. Source: U.S. Pacific Fleet (CC).

Solomon Islands Strengthens Security Ties with Beijing

In April, the Chinese Government confirmed it had signed a security agreement with Solomon Islands. The agreement was kept secret from the public until late March, when a draft of the document was leaked online. Its sudden revelation caught many off guard, including senior diplomats and other government officials of Solomon Islands, as well as the defence ministers of Australia and New Zealand. According to the text of the draft document, 'China may, according to its own needs and with the consent of Solomon Islands, make ship visits to, carry out logistical replenishment in and have stopover and transition in the Solomon Islands'. This resulted in pushback from the United States and Australia, who raised concerns that China would be able to establish a military base in Solomon Islands, thereby altering the regional security order. As a result, several Western governments scrambled to send diplomatic envoys to the capital, Honiara, and some Australian officials and media warned China to stay out of 'our backyard'. Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare and various Chinese government officials have denied any intention of establishing a Chinese military base on the islands. Sogavare also called the Western uproar over the agreement 'insulting' and reaffirmed his country's autonomy in choosing its security partners. The Solomon Islands envoy to Australia later affirmed that, if deployed, Chinese police would be under the jurisdiction of local forces. The decision to strengthen ties with Beijing follows riots against Sogavare's government in November 2021 in which several buildings in Honiara's Chinatown burned down. In 2019, Sogavare formally recognised China over Taiwan in a controversial move that produced popular protests and unlocked millions of dollars in Chinese financial aid. Outside powers have long battled for influence in Solomon Islands, exploiting domestic divisions for geopolitical gain. Responding to the growing Chinese presence, the United States announced in February it would open an embassy in Solomon Islands. *AK*

Overseas Coal Energy Projects Pause as Chinese Financing Pulls Back

Chinese President Xi Jinping's September 2021 announcement to the United Nations that China would stop building new overseas coal-fired energy projects has yielded mixed results on the ground. Notably, several such projects are known to have since stalled as Chinese financial backers have pulled out. At least 15 Chinese-backed overseas coal projects have been cancelled, because of either revised energy policies in host countries or withdrawal of support from Chinese firms. Since the announcement, new guidelines for greening the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by China's National Development and Reform Commission have the potential to stop 32 projects that are in the pre-construction phase, according to the Helsinki-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air. For instance, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chinese banks have stepped back from the 700 MW Ugljevik III coal power plant project, which has been plagued by environmental-impact issues. In Zimbabwe, RioZim's multibillion-dollar Sengwa coal plant project, which was set to double the country's energy capacity and was seeking finance from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and China Minsheng Banking Corporation, is now seeking alternative funders. In response to a letter from a local civil society group, Chinese Ambassador to South Africa Chen Xiaodong recently confirmed China's new policy shift and intention to 'actively promote the development of green and low-carbon energy'. However, many proposed coal projects and those under construction remain in a grey zone, having already secured financing and permits, and might therefore continue to completion. Moreover, while some Chinese banks, such as the Bank of China and the Export–Import Bank of China, have pledged to not provide loans for new overseas coal projects, a study by Just Finance International found that 17 Chinese state-owned enterprises had scored at least 67 unidentified overseas coal projects in 2021 alone, worth almost US$19 billion. *AK*

Controversies around China Eximbank's Loan for Uganda's Entebbe Airport

In November 2021, local media erroneously reported that China would seize Uganda's Entebbe Airport if the Ugandan Government defaulted on a 200-million-USD loan from the Export–Import Bank of China (China Eximbank) in 2015 to expand the airport. These reports were picked up by international media and reignited a hot debate about Chinese predatory lending practices in Africa. The Chinese Embassy in Uganda denied the reports, but it did not disclose the terms of the loan contract, which fuelled further media speculation. In February 2022, AidData, a research lab at William & Mary College in the United States, obtained and published the final, unredacted version of the loan contract, revealing that the airport as a physical asset was never a source of collateral China Eximbank could seize on default. However, the contract did require the borrower to provide a cash deposit in an escrow account to facilitate the repayment of the loan. Moreover, China Eximbank required all revenue generated by the airport be made available for guaranteeing timely repayment of the loan on a priority basis for 20 years, drastically changing the airport's value as a public infrastructure asset that has generated substantial government revenue for 42 years. In March, a Ugandan parliamentary committee investigation into the loan agreement concluded the deal is binding and it would be impossible for the government to pull out without dire consequences. The revelation of the contract's terms sharply contrasts with the Western discourse about 'debt-trap diplomacy', since China cannot seize the airport's physical assets, but it provides additional evidence that Chinese policy banks differ from official Western donors in applying measures more commonly seen in commercial lending to maximise repayment prospects, thus challenging the existing norms in international development finance. *AK*

Labour Issues Plague Serbia's Linglong Tyre Factory

Labour issues have plagued a 900-million-USD Chinese investment in a tyre factory in Serbia. Owned by Shandong Linglong Tyre Company and under construction by China Energy Engineering Group (CEEG), the factory broke ground in April 2019 and is expected to employ 1,200 people and generate 600 million USD in annual revenue once it is completed in 2025. However, recent media and nongovernmental organisation (NGO) reports detail how roughly 750 Vietnamese workers recruited by CEEG have been subject to substandard conditions: working in sandals in freezing temperatures and with inadequate protection gear; living in overcrowded rooms without heating, hot water, or mattresses; not being given sufficient meals; being denied medical treatment for Covid-19 symptoms; and receiving payment months late or for a fraction of their total days worked. Workers also described having their passports withheld and being pressured to sign contracts denying them the right to protest or strike. One human-trafficking organisation said their conditions were 'like a prison camp'. Local activists, environmental groups, and international monitoring organisations have also criticised CEEG and Linglong for withholding information on the factory's potential pollution and for refusing to engage in discussions with residents, and they have accused the companies of circumventing environmental impact assessments. Increasingly reliant on Chinese investment for economic growth, the Serbian Government has prioritised the factory by declaring it a project of 'national interest', granting Linglong 240 acres of land and pledging 85 million USD in state subsidies. President Aleksandar Vučić and Prime Minister Ana Brnabić have criticised labour NGO inspections and insinuated that Western anti-China forces were behind the negative reports about the factory's labour conditions.

The European Parliament passed a resolution in December 2021 expressing 'deep concerns over the alleged forced labour, violation of human rights and human trafficking' of workers at the factory. *AK*

Myanmar Energy Crisis Deepens, Chinese Developers Proceed with Caution

Blackouts have long been ubiquitous in Myanmar—especially when hydroelectric plants run low on water in the dry season. Through the 2010s, the percentage of the population with access to the national electricity grid grew from about 25 per cent to just over 50 per cent, although by 2020, the country still had the largest energy access deficit in Southeast Asia. Today, the country remains predominantly powered by hydro, although the share of domestic gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the electricity generation mix increased considerably during the 2010s. While progress in expanding and diversifying power generation had been made in recent years, in the year since the February 2021 coup d'état, electricity blackouts have again become a daily occurrence across the country, even in the commercial hubs of Yangon and Mandalay.

Chinese companies have played an important role in developing Myanmar's power generation capacity, but since the coup, progress has been limited. Some projects already under way continued slowly, while several of those under discussion have stalled.

In October 2021, two LNG power plants in Yangon—owned and operated by Hong Kong–listed VPower and its joint venture—reportedly halted operations because the projects were no longer financially viable. A month earlier, VPower, which was linked to nine power projects in Myanmar with a gross capacity of 916 MW, announced it was pulling out of two further proposed power stations. The Chinese central state–owned CITIC Group holds a minority share in VPower, and Vpower created a joint venture with China National Technical Import & Export Corporation (CNTIC) to develop three of its Myanmar projects.

A few projects have managed to move forward, including a 135 MW gas power plant being built by PowerChina in Kyaukphyu, Rakhine State, but they are in the minority. In September 2020, a tender for 1 GW of solar power projects was concluded under the now-ousted government led by the National League for Democracy. Various Chinese companies and consortiums won the bids to build 28 of the 29 solar power plants, with just two companies, Sungrow and China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC), winning nine and eight projects each, respectively. However, the coup halted the progress of all but three of these.

In May 2022, the military regime cancelled the other tenders for failure to implement the terms of the tender.

Chinese companies are not the only ones impacted by the political instability brought on by the coup and the international sanctions that followed. Myanmar's oil and gas sector—the major source of revenue for the military junta—also saw investor withdrawals. In January, Australia-based Woodside Petroleum, France-based TotalEnergies, and United States–based Chevron announced plans to pull out of projects in Myanmar. TotalEnergies, which has operated in Myanmar since 1992, co-owns and operates the Yadana gas field in the Andaman Sea and gas transportation company MGTC. Thailand's PTT Exploration and Production (PTTEP) and Malaysia's Petronas withdrew from the Yetagun natural gas project in April, following Japanese Eneos Holdings, which announced its withdrawal a month earlier. Further exacerbating the situation, soaring fossil fuel prices—worsened by the depreciation of the Myanmar kyat and the Russian invasion of Ukraine—have made it difficult for the junta to purchase costly LNG imports.

In May 2022, China's *Global Times* reported that Chinese firms were 'upbeat' about projects in Myanmar, but also quoted company sources who said they were cautious about investments due to political volatility. Adding to the uncertainty, resistance groups have warned Chinese companies working with military-linked entities that they could become legitimate targets. Powerlines have also become a target of some resistance groups, with attacks on lines and substations and troops deployed to protect them. *PHY*

Sri Lanka Seeks to Restructure Debt with China and Other Creditors

In late May, Sri Lanka defaulted on its debt for the first time in its history. Supply chain disruptions from the pandemic and Russia's war against Ukraine, ensuing spikes in commodity prices and interest rates, and dwindling tourism and remittances have strained Sri Lanka's economy and drained its foreign currency reserves. To purchase crucial raw materials such as fuel, food, and medicine, the government suspended repayments on US$7 billion of international loans this year and missed interest payment deadlines on two of its international sovereign bonds, leading various ratings agencies to label the country in default. 'Until there is a debt restructure, we cannot repay,' said Sri Lanka's central bank governor. Individual negotiations have begun with the International Monetary Fund and other creditors, including China, to manage Sri Lanka's approximately US$51 billion in foreign debt.

China has been a major financier of infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka, such as the infamous Hambantota Port, which was not a debt-for-equity swap, contrary to international media reports that made it the poster child for Chinese 'debt-trap' theories (for more details, see the Hambantota Port profile on *The People's Map of Global China*). According to its Ministry of Finance, Sri Lanka owes US$4.3 billion to the Export–Import Bank of China and US$2.8 billion to China Development Bank, making China Sri Lanka's largest bilateral creditor. However, almost 50 per cent of Sri Lanka's debt repayments due in 2021—about US$11.8 billion—was for international sovereign bonds. Beijing rebuffed early requests to restructure existing debts and instead offered to provide aid and additional loans. Despite having joined collective initiatives to alleviate the debt burden of low-income countries, such as the G20's Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) and the Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the DSSI, China remains hesitant to articulate a formula for debt restructuring, for fear this would create a precedent for its other debtors to demand similar treatment. While bilateral negotiations with China are ongoing, Sri Lanka has obtained US$3 billion in financial assistance, including currency swaps, credit lines for fuel, and deferred repayment of loans from India. *AK*

More Guidelines Issued for Chinese Overseas Investment

In 2013, China's ministries of Commerce and Environmental Protection issued the first ministry-level guideline specifically focusing on the environmental impacts of Chinese overseas investment and cooperation projects. Since then, a growing body of policies and guidelines has been issued by both state institutions and industry associations, some with application to specific stakeholders, such as state-owned enterprises, and some with a sectoral focus, including guidelines for the overseas rubber and mining industries. Over the past year, several new policies were issued, signalling support for 'green development' principles from leading Chinese government bodies, introducing more detailed guidance, and taking a project-lifecycle approach, with an increased focus on establishing systems at the institutional level to ensure implementation.

In July 2021, China's Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Ecology and Environment issued the *Green Development Guidelines for Overseas Investment and Cooperation*, calling on companies to integrate 'green development' throughout the various stages of the overseas investment process, properly manage environmental risks, and promote a green transition. Importantly, where host-country standards are inadequate, the guide encourages companies to follow higher international or Chinese standards—a provision that is now becoming the norm in such policies. This was followed six months later by another document from the two ministries, titled *Guidelines for Ecological and Environmental Protection in Foreign Investment Cooperation and Construction Projects*. This guideline provides more detail on environmental risk management throughout the project lifecycle, from planning to decommissioning, including specific provisions for high-risk sectors including energy, transport, and mining. The document references biodiversity assessments, re-emphasises the need for due diligence and environmental impact assessments, and instructs enterprises to enhance communication with local people and listen to opinions and suggestions.

In March 2022, China's state planner and chair of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Leading Group, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), issued a policy document along with three other ministries titled *Opinions on Jointly Promoting Green Development of the Belt and Road*. The opinion discusses aligning the BRI with the Paris Agreement and sheds additional light on how President Xi Jinping's commitment to end building overseas coal plants and support the expansion of renewable energy will be implemented (see Li, Li, and Bo's essay in the current issue of the journal). The opinion states that industry associations and chambers of commerce will be guided to establish 'codes of conduct' for environmental performance in overseas investments, suggesting an increasing role for 'self-regulation' by industry association bodies in strengthening the overall governance of Chinese overseas investment.

Most recently, in June 2022, China's banking regulator issued its Green Finance Guidelines for the Banking and Insurance Industry. This comes almost a decade after the regulator issued its first green credit guideline, which established the concept and instructed Chinese banks to improve due diligence, client compliance review, and project assessment with respect to environmental and social issues. This new guide builds on the 2012 guidelines and various documents that have been published in the interim, with a stronger focus on the establishment of systems for implementing green finance, and crucially, calls for banks to establish grievance mechanisms to manage clients' environmental, social, and corporate governance risks. This could create the foundation for stronger internal systems to prevent and address risks, and mechanisms that can receive and process complaints from communities impacted by projects financed by Chinese banks.

The myriad policy documents and guidelines issued by various bodies over the past decade indicate a recognition of the need to improve management of overseas projects, especially with regards to environmental and social performance. A major challenge in ensuring the implementation of these documents is that for the most part they are not mandatory and do not include enforcement provisions. However, opinions from the NDRC indicate a high-level push to direct investment towards 'green' industries, and the banking regulator's recent guideline demonstrates an increased emphasis on monitoring and a shift towards focusing on systems for implementation, rather than simply setting out basic principles by which overseas financing should abide. MB

Belt and Road Watch

In late 2021 and early 2022, several new countries signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to join the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), expanding China's economic and geopolitical opportunities. The most significant new member is Argentina, whose president, Alberto Fernández, signed an MoU with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Beijing Winter Olympics in February. Argentina expects its enhanced relations with China will bring about US$24 billion in Chinese foreign direct investment—equal to more than 17 per cent of the total Chinese investment in Latin America since 2005. As the third-largest economy in Latin America, Argentina has been an important source of beef, soybeans, and lithium for China, and joining the BRI may incentivise neighbouring countries to do the same. Nicaragua also joined the BRI, in early January, following President Daniel Ortega's decision in December to cut ties with Taiwan and formally recognise China. In mid January, Syria also signed on to the BRI. Despite instability in Syria from the ongoing civil war and Western sanctions on the Syrian Government, China's interests in the country lie partly in being able to connect trade routes between the Mediterranean, Black, Red, and Caspian seas and the Persian Gulf, and in Syria's oil and gas reserves. To the south, Eritrea joined the BRI in late November 2021. Although Eritrea has been weakened by US sanctions for its role in the Tigray War, its location on the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea is valuable for protecting shipping lanes and China's military base in nearby Djibouti. Elsewhere in Africa, China signed MoUs for the BRI with Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic in November, São Tomé and Príncipe in December, and Malawi in March, alongside agreements related to a mix of infrastructure, agriculture, and educational projects. As of March 2022, 149 countries have joined the BRI through MoUs, according to the official Belt and Road Portal. *AK*

OP-EDS

China in the World

World Map, seen from China. Source: Suzy Hazelwood, Flickr.com (CC).

What is Global China?

Ching Kwan LEE

In the past two decades, China's ascendance in the world has given rise to 'Global China' as a subject of public debate and scholarly inquiry. If 'Global China Studies' is an emerging field of knowledge, it may be helpful to reflect on what our central concept is. We can discern at least three meanings of 'Global China' in circulation.

Policy

At the most empirical and commonly used level, the term refers to China's expansive engagements beyond its geographical boundaries and national jurisdiction. In the past few decades, the international media has provided extensive, albeit uneven, coverage of China's presence and activities in different countries and arenas of world affairs, from human rights to climate change, commodity markets, digital technology, international development finance, foreign direct investment (FDI), soft-power projects, and medical diplomacy. In this usage, 'Global China' is widely portrayed as and assumed to be a grand strategy masterminded by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership and, more recently, motivated by President Xi Jinping's personal ambitions. As the policy names of this grand strategy—from Going Out to the Forum for China–Africa Cooperation, to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Made in China 2025—enter world headlines, Global China as an empirical phenomenon also becomes reified as a cohesive set of policies constituting an indomitable force that is predatory and imperialistic to some, but developmental and beneficial to others.

Thanks to China's immense geopolitical and economic influence, and the public's insatiable appetite for information on this global force, there is now a sizeable journalistic, non-fiction, and scholarly literature tracking Global China's footprint and its consequences. As a staple of international news, the Global China story has been told by amplifying key phrases in Beijing's policy announcements, aggregating volumes of outbound investment, loans and migration, or engrossing details of corporate battles for strategic minerals between China and the

United States in Africa. While the voluminous information reported is important to keep track of a monumental phenomenon, quantity is no guarantee of quality, or even accuracy. As Deborah Bräutigam (2009, 2015, 2020) has consistently highlighted in her myth-busting research, factual errors plague reports by even the most reputable Western media sources. The scope and secrecy of Chinese activities are definitely challenging constraints, but journalistic errors are sometimes egregious—from mistaking Chinese yuan for US dollars, thereby inflating Chinese concessional loan amounts, to stories about non-existent Chinese grabs for land and farms, and using inaccurate information about international loan standards to assess Chinese loan practices. Academic publishers have also joined in the market frenzy, releasing non-fiction mass-market tomes that offer no more than airbrushed descriptions and facile prescriptions (Strauss 2019). The peril of adopting a solid empiricist approach to Global China is that China's officialese often becomes the analysis rather than the object of analysis, drastically underestimating the existing scope, depth, and complexity of Global China.

Power

The second meaning of 'Global China' is more analytical and approaches the idea as a power project—that is, its essence is not policy or geography, but power. In this perspective, Global China is a bundle of generic power mechanisms—economic statecraft, patron–clientelism, and symbolic domination—that China deploys in specific ways in pursuing its project of outward expansion (Lee Forthcoming). The intellectual payoff of seeing Global China as a power project is that one will ask questions about agency (who?), interest (why?), method (how?), and consequences (so what?). Power is relational, so we would attend to resistance, bargaining, accommodation, appropriation, and adaptations by the germane players in this power project, not as an afterthought or secondary supplementary study but as *constitutive* of Global China. If you want to understand Chinese investments in African mines, you must look at the African elite and African labour and not just at China, and you must look at non-Chinese mining companies competing with Chinese ones to specify the Chinese method of FDI.

Emphasising power rather than policy also allows us to avoid singling out, essentialising, and demonising China. For instance, while only China has a policy like the BRI, the essence of the BRI is 'economic statecraft'—using economic means to achieve political and diplomatic goals. The use of concessional loans and infrastructure as geopolitical leverage is by no means a Chinese invention or exclusive practice. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and Western donor countries have famously imposed structural adjustment as a loan condition on debtor countries with the goal of changing the latter's political economy and forging dependence on the West. Noting Western parallels also opens comparative questions of process and politics: what and who are the unique interests and players driving China's lending spree? In most debates, people write about 'China' as though there was a wilful, sinister mastermind in Beijing pulling levers and making decisions. In reality, there are many bureaucratic, ministerial, corporate, and private interests behind the Going Out policy and the BRI (Jones and Zeng 2019; Zhang 2021); they compete as much as collude, and often end up defying, derailing, or defeating Beijing's grand strategy.

In *The Specter of Global China* (Lee 2017), I detail the relational dynamic producing these supply-driven loans in Zambia: they were initiated not by would-be debtor countries but by Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) going abroad to export surplus capacity. The clout and connections of these SOEs allowed them to secure financing from the Export–Import Bank of China or the China Development Bank and then peddle these approved, shovel-ready projects to government officials in Zambia. To maximise corporate profit, these powerful contractors exploited the clause of non-competitive single sourcing from China to set inflated price tags (30–40 per cent higher due to the lack of bidding, according to Zambian technocrats). Not only are these projects lucrative, they also guarantee payment by the Chinese Government as loans to African governments. African technocrats knew full well the problem of inflated loans would come back to haunt them, but election-minded politicians were more concerned about getting the roads and bridges built quickly to keep themselves in power than about repayment in 20 years when they would be long gone.

Elsewhere, China's united-front strategy has drawn a lot of policy and academic attention. Scholars at the Hoover Institution have popularised the notion of 'sharp power'—a term coined by international media and think tanks, and defined as the coercive, corrupting, and covert exercise of influence and power that undermines democratic institutions. But at its heart, the united front is just old-fashioned patron–clientelism—namely, the exchange of benefits for political loyalty or support, at either the elite or the mass levels. Once again, China is hardly the first regime to use this means of power. The US domestic lobbying industry and US security partnerships with autocratic regimes abroad are prime examples of patron–clientelism. The questions we should ask are comparative ones: how are Chinese ways different, why, and under what conditions does the united front work, fail, or become appropriated?

Other examples are China's Confucius Institutes (CIs) and the China Global Television Network (CGTN), which we can empirically examine as Chinese policy tools to achieve soft power. But viewing the CIs and CGTN, as well as scholarships, academic exchanges, and social media, from a power analytic means recognising them as generic strategies used by many nation-states, not just China, to achieve 'symbolic domination'—mobilising symbols and cultures to shape habits of thought, dispositions, and the classification of reality. The questions then become what is unique about the Chinese way of symbolic domination, and what explains its uneven local reception and effectiveness? Maria Repnikova's (2022) research on Chinese soft power and CIs in Ethiopia shed important light on the unique Chinese conception and practice of soft power; its target audience is not just international but also domestic, and its enticement not just cultural, but also pragmatic and economic.

A new generation of Global China scholars is producing cutting-edge scholarship adopting this power and relational approach. Among the works featured in a forthcoming special section of *The China Quarterly*, Liang Xu (Forthcoming) and Derek Sheridan (Forthcoming) consider the local dynamics and histories of South Africa and Tanzania, respectively, when they study Chinese investments in factories and wholesale trades. Their arguments are not just clichéd assertions or politically correct posturing that Africans have agency and can resist Chinese interests. They analyse how race, class, and gender hierarchies and imaginations in African contexts shape Chinese–African encounters. Juliet Lu (Forthcoming) and Wanjing Chen (Forthcoming) turn to Global China in Laos. Lu chronicles how a Chinese state investor in rubber plantations had to navigate the vagaries of local state politics in both China and Laos and was at times pulled by contradictory interests as a profit-driven business and a development partner. Chen, on the other hand, highlights how overseas Chinese business leaders can usurp the patron–client ties spun by Chinese united-front officials to privilege their personal interests above those of their patrons.

Method

The third approach to Global China emphasises the 'global' context, conditions, and impetuses of Chinese developments. Even domestic practices within China are influenced by global forces. Global China in this approach is less about China going out, and more about how transnational and global interests, imaginations, institutions, and politics shape what is happening inside China. I call it a 'method', as it is an analytical strategy that helps us overcome the longstanding 'methodological nationalism' that has plagued China studies, area studies, and the social sciences in general.

Darren Byler's (2021) new book on Xinjiang as a penal colony is a prime example. He shows how digital surveillance systems and forced labour in cotton fields, factories, and concentration camps targeted at Uyghurs are atrocities accomplished by both the Chinese Government and a litany of global actors. American research universities, global IT giants, and the global apparel industry are business partners complicit in Xinjiang's human rights violations. Beyond global capitalist interests, legal scholars have called out the global rhetoric and legalisation of the 'War on Terror' of the past two decades. The equivalents of the US *Patriot Act* enacted in 140 countries and counterterrorism measures required by the United Nations after the Security Council passed Resolution 1373 in 2001 (HRW 2012) have enabled and encouraged China's 'people's war on terror'. In short, China has been part of a global trend of leveraging national security legislation to curb civil and ethnic-minority rights and consolidate executive power in different regime types (Cody 2021). How autocratisation, as a global political movement not reducible to global capitalism, has shaped China and its variant of authoritarianism is an important topic for Global China scholars.

Beyond Xinjiang, Franceschini and Loubere (Forthcoming) illustrate a 'Global China as method' approach by tracing Chinese/global entanglements—that is, material and discursive parallels and linkages—in various domains, from labour practices, surveillance capitalism, and overseas development financing, to the neoliberalisation of universities and academia. Elsewhere, Hung (2020) reveals how US and Chinese corporate collaboration and competition underlie the rise and fall of 'Chimerica'. Before the 2010s, China recruited US corporations to be its proxy lobbyists in Washington. Amid China's economic slowdown after 2010, state-backed Chinese corporations became increasingly aggressive in expanding in domestic and global markets at the expense of US corporations, which ceased to lobby keenly for China in Washington. This means Reform and Opening-Up and its current incarnation are the results not just of the reform architect Deng Xiaoping or the CCP, as contemporary China scholarship has emphasised, but also of the alignment and contestations of global and domestic interests and players. Both global and domestic dimensions must be considered simultaneously, and not artificially compartmentalised as subjects for international relations and domestic Chinese politics, respectively.

Past and Present

A new wave of scholarship has exhumed from the dustbin of history a pre-globalisation and pre–reform era 'Global China'. During the Cold War, despite US embargoes, communist China sustained international trade with and imports of technology from Europe and developing countries (Kelly 2021). The predecessors of today's BRI were China's extensive international development cooperation projects (Monson 2021; Zhang 2021; Rudyak 2021). As a sociocultural force, the ideology and practice of Maoism travelled widely in the Global South during the 1960s, and among the American and European Left (Calhoun 2008; Lanza 2017; Lovell 2019). Mao's *Little Red Book*, consciousness-raising, armed struggle, the people's war, and more were inspirations for the Black Panthers in the United States and many national-liberation movements in Asia, Latin America, and Africa (Evans 2021; Snow 1989). Providing scarce material resources ranging from military training and medical aid to scholarships and railways, Maoist China was the self-proclaimed leader in the global fight against racial injustice and colonial subjugation and in the non-aligned movement that sought Third World solidarity and development models beyond those of the United States and the Soviet Union. Beyond the radical Left, transpacific exchanges between American and Chinese journalists, musicians, dancers, Christians, and diasporic activists defy the facile idea of an insulated China before the official beginning of the Reform and Opening-Up era (Gao 2021; Wilcox 2019).

In a nutshell, Global China is an exciting invitation to rethink existing paradigms of the study of China and the world, past and present. The China–global nexus—connection, complicity, competition, collaboration, contrast, and convergence—compels us to move away from naturalising China as a geographical entity defined by its territorial boundaries, and assuming without empirical evidence or comparison that anything that happens therein is uniquely and quintessentially 'Chinese'. At a time of rising (ultra-) nationalism and international rivalry, as methodological nationalism garners ever-more political, moral, and emotional purchase, *Global China*, as a critical and intellectual resource, is even more important and urgent.

China Development Bank

Xicheng District, Beijing. Source: Wikimedia Commons (CC).

Understanding the China Development Bank in Latin America

Latinoamérica Sustentable

In terms of lending power, the China Development Bank (CDB) is the largest development bank in the world, one of the most important financiers of infrastructure and extractive projects globally, and a key instrument to support Chinese international economic policies such as the Going Out strategy of the late 1990s and the more recent Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the CDB has provided finance to governments and companies for more than 200 projects in 18 countries (Song 2019), among which are numerous large-scale projects such as the Las Bambas mine in Peru, Mirador in Ecuador, and the Santa Cruz River Hydroelectric Complex in Argentina (on the Mirador and Santa Cruz River Hydroelectric projects, see LAS 2020 and LAS 2022, respectively). Some of these projects are in or near ecologically vulnerable areas and indigenous territories—a situation that has generated much debate and many concerns about the socio-environmental impacts of the CDB's activities in the region.

Despite the importance of its activities in LAC, the CDB is relatively little known in the region, partly due to the lack of information available in Spanish, as well as the very limited disclosure of information concerning its loans and standards. In December 2021, our organisation—Latinoamérica Sustentable (LAS) (for background, see Mark Bo's conversation with the organisation's founder, Paulina Garzón, in the current issue of the journal)—launched a report titled Understanding the China Development Bank: Financing, Governance, and the Socio-Environmental Challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean. In it, the authors provide information on the critical role of the CDB in China's international development finance system, its influence in LAC recipient countries, and its environmental and social governance mechanisms and standards, which we now summarise.

CDB's Role in Latin America

In the past two decades, China and LAC have developed a vibrant and interdependent relationship, in large part due to the voluminous financing deployed by the CDB in the extractive and infrastructure sectors. Since the CDB became a lender to Latin American governments in 2005, it has financed more than 200 projects in 18 countries and has established two representative offices, in Río de Janeiro and Caracas, as well as eight working groups for the region (Song 2019).

Much of the CDB's loans to LAC countries has been state-backed finance issued to governments or state-owned enterprises (SOEs) such as national oil companies (Petrobras in Brazil; Petroecuador in Ecuador; PDVSA in Venezuela). The CDB also provides corporate loans that are typically awarded to Chinese companies either to invest in extractive projects or to buy equity in companies that are participating in projects and sectors of interest to China. In LAC, the CDB has funded well-known projects such as the Santa Cruz River Hydroelectric Complex in Argentina, the El Dorado International Airport in Colombia, the Shougang Iron Mine and Las Bambas mining project in Peru, the Mirador Copper Mine and Villonaco wind power plant in Ecuador, and the Las Cristinas Gold Mine in Venezuela, among others.

Since the CDB does not publish details of its loans deal by deal, it is not possible to determine all the projects in which it participates, especially in the case of corporate loans. However, based on the China Latin America Finance Database (Gallagher and Myers 2021), which documents Chinese finance based on reports, official declarations of contracts, and other verified official and non-official documents, between 2005 and 2021, the CDB lent a total of US$111.3 billion (US$97.9 billion directly and US$13.4 billion jointly with other Chinese banks) to LAC countries. We found three patterns. First, 94 per cent of the loans were concentrated in four countries—Venezuela (US$57.3 billion), Brazil (US$28.1 billion), Argentina (US$15.5 billion), and Ecuador (US$9.4 billion)—with a minimal presence in countries like Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Chile, and the Caribbean. Second, the loans are highly concentrated in the energy sector, which received approximately US$41 billion, mainly for oil and gas projects. And third, in commodity-exporting countries like Brazil, Venezuela, and Ecuador, an important part of the CDB's lending has been conditioned on the sale of certain commodities to China, especially crude oil. These loan contracts often have collateral arrangements, in which the borrowing country holds an account with the CDB into which oil export revenues are deposited, and that account repays the loan through regular payments. If the borrower defaults on the loan, the deposits in the bank account can be seized (Gelpern et al. 2021).

Loans to LAC peaked in 2010 (reaching US$33 billion) and maintained a constant flow until 2017 when they began to decrease to the extent that no new credits were registered in 2020 and 2021. The CDB, and Chinese banks in general, have been more cautious in granting sovereign loans and more prone to disbursing corporate loans (Myers and Ray 2022). This is partly due to the difficulties faced by countries in paying their sovereign debt, and reflects the attempt by Chinese companies to shift towards public–private partnerships. Although CDB loans have declined, it does not mean the bank is retreating from the region. In fact, the CDB is diversifying its portfolio towards more sophisticated financial mechanisms in at least two ways. First, issuing finance directly to Chinese and LAC companies—for example, loans granted to the Chinese–Colombian consortium Autopistas Urabá or to the state-owned Chinese logistics firm COSCO for its BRI projects in LAC. Another mechanism is partially funding regional private equity funds such as the China–LAC Cooperation Fund, the China–LAC Industrial Cooperation Investment Fund, and the China–LAC Cooperation Fund.

We should bear in mind that the CDB is one of the most important financiers of the BRI—the Chinese Government's overarching strategy for global connectivity. At the time of writing in April 2022, 21 countries from LAC have signed agreements with China for cooperation under the BRI and even though the initiative has been challenged by the Covid-19 pandemic, it is anticipated its influence in the region will continue to grow. The visits of the presidents of Ecuador and Argentina to Beijing in February 2022 are a continuation of this trend, and renewed financing commitments within the context of the BRI were signed on those occasions. Even though so far very few projects in LAC have been officially labelled as part of the BRI, many of the more than 200 infrastructure and extractive projects financed by the CDB in LAC fit the priorities of the BRI—namely, enhancing connectivity.

Omissions and Commissions on Environmental and Social Governance

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP 2017), LAC hosts approximately 60 per cent of known terrestrial species, while it is estimated that the Amazon region is home to 10 per cent of Earth's biodiversity. Moreover, approximately 58 million people belonging to more than 800 indigenous communities live in the area, which represents almost 10 per cent of the regional population (ECLAC 2021). These unique ecosystems and territories have suffered serious impacts because of the large extractive and infrastructure projects financed by the CDB in LAC countries, most of which are within or close to ecologically vulnerable areas and indigenous lands.

As the CDB's foreign lending grew, the Chinese Government encouraged the bank to improve its methods for assessing environmental and social impacts in the approval and supervision of loans, just as it had been doing with green financing in China. However, a significant number of its projects in Latin America have been challenged by local communities, delayed, or even suspended because of the lack of meaningful and enforceable principles, policies, and methods for assessing and managing environmental and social risks. Examples include the mining projects Mirador and San Carlos Panantza in Ecuador, Las Bambas and Tomorocho in Peru, and Las Cristinas in Venezuela, as well as infrastructure projects such as the Santa Cruz River Hydroelectric Complex in Argentina (for more details on these cases, see the mid-term report for the Universal Periodic Review of China; CICDHA 2022).

The CDB has a dual nature, operating as both a national development bank (NDB) and a commercial bank. This makes it difficult to compare its environmental and social requirements with those of other financial institutions. Traditional NDBs such as the National Development Bank of Brazil (BNDES) or the US International Development Finance Corporation have for years been pressured by civil society groups and domestic legislatures to ensure their policies meet appropriate standards. Likewise, multilateral development banks such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank have faced civil society scrutiny for decades, and must meet the demands of shareholders, many of whom have utilised their influence to ensure that standards on project implementation and disclosure are developed and updated over time. These internal and external pressures have resulted in policies that are more sophisticated than those of the CDB in terms of environmental and social risk assessment, transparency, and participation principles and policies.

Moreover, regarding accountability and the disclosure of information about loans and standards, our report shows that the CDB has no public document that explains its environmental and social policies, their implementation procedures, or even the structures within the bank responsible for their administration and monitoring. Also, the CDB lacks a dedicated department or team to handle environmental and social assessment and associated complaints, and its bureaucratic structure does not promote effective coordination within the bank and makes it challenging for civil society to communicate with bank representatives. In fact, as we prepared our report throughout 2021, the working group at LAS attempted to contact the CDB offices in Beijing, Anhui, and Río de Janeiro several times with requests for interviews, comments, and feedback on drafts, but there was never any response.

To understand the bank's performance in the region, our report examined seven loan contracts signed with the CDB: three with Argentina, three with Ecuador, and one with Costa Rica. They confirmed that while contract clauses emphasise compliance with national and international laws, there is a lack of environmental and social provisions. For instance, no contract mentioned the CDB's obligation to monitor the use of the loans; only two contracts mentioned environmental law; all contracts had strong confidentiality clauses; just one contract had a clause on corruption prevention; and none of the contracts included information regarding the CDB's criteria for environmental and social protection, or guidelines for its loans in this regard. Moreover, the CDB's credit lines are often approved before the projects they finance become publicly known. These credit lines typically support projects with high environmental and social impacts in the infrastructure, mining, transportation, energy, and telecommunications sectors. These facts show that while China has proved it can learn very quickly on many fronts, improvement of environmental and social governance at the CDB is happening in slow motion.

Some examples of these problems can be observed in the Santa Cruz River Hydroelectric Complex in Argentina, the largest dam financed and built by Chinese entities in LAC, which is in Patagonia and affects the Perito Moreno Glacier, a World Heritage Site (for more details about this project, see LAS 2022). This project started despite having an incomplete and inadequate environmental impact study, which resulted in the Supreme Court of Argentina ordering that complementary studies be carried out before construction continued. Another instance is that of the Villonaco I Wind Power Plant in Ecuador, also financed by a CDB line of credit, which only carried out its definitive environmental and social study after construction of the plant was complete. In other cases, especially in Venezuela, projects financed by the CDB were suspended due to corruption issues—for instance, the Tinaco–Anaco Railway Line and the PDVSA Agriculture rice plant in Delta Amacuro. Despite this, the bank continued disbursing funds.

Challenges and Opportunities

In February 2020, the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) of China and the CDB announced that to 'minimise the impact of the pandemic', the CDB would provide special loans to increase financing support for selected enterprises implementing 'higher-quality' projects affected by the pandemic (MOFCOM and CDB 2020). Two months later, more than 260 civil society groups from across the world published a joint statement calling on MOFCOM and the CDB to refrain from granting such relief to 60 projects (14 of them in LAC) with severe environmental, social, climatic, and financial problems (IDI 2020). The organisations recommended specific principles to ensure that projects are of 'high quality', including ensuring credible, robust environmental impact studies; obtaining free, prior, and informed consent from indigenous communities; committing to not impact key biodiversity areas; and ensuring alignment with international norms, best practices, and China's green finance policies.

This opened a window of opportunity for improving the environmental and social governance of China's state-backed banks. As the Chinese Government has committed to reach domestic carbon neutrality by 2060 (NDRC 2022), and with President Xi Jinping's 2021 commitment to cease building overseas coal plants and support developing nations to expand their renewable energy capacity (see Li, Li and Bo's essay in this issue of Global China

Pulse), the CDB is expected to play an increasingly important role in greening the BRI and supporting clean energy in developing countries towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this matter, in October 2021, the CDB signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Green Climate Fund (GCF)—the world's largest climate fund and the operating entity of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement—the first Chinese financial institution to do so. The two parties agreed to 'carry out capacity building and knowledge sharing in such areas as climate project development, structured solutions for green infrastructure projects, climate investment standards, and project impact assessment' (CDB 2021). This could be a sign that the CDB is willing to learn from international experiences and best practices, implement green financial products, and help clean industries to grow.

There are also opportunities to explore new and innovative approaches to greening CDB finance. This includes debt-for-nature swaps—a financial mechanism in which a portion of debt is cancelled or reduced by a creditor in exchange for the debtor making financial commitments to conservation (Soutar and Koop 2021). In LAC, Ecuador is one of the top candidates for a debt swap with China based on its high biodiversity. In fact, there is already a very plausible proposal (Larrea and Ramos 2021) for a 10-year reduction in the country's deforestation rate in exchange for a debt reduction of US$421 million—equivalent to 8 per cent of the country's outstanding debt to China. According to the authors, this would save 200,000 hectares of Ecuadorian Amazon rainforest, while simultaneously avoiding the emission of 117 million tonnes of carbon dioxide.

We believe that to truly capitalise on these positive developments and opportunities, the CDB must begin by establishing rigorous and mandatory environmental and social safeguards, including environmental, social, transparency, and anticorruption provisions within loan contracts, and improving information disclosure and due diligence. These steps are essential if the CDB is to meet its responsibilities as one of the world's most important providers of development finance.

The full report, *Understanding the China Development Bank: Financing, Governance and Socio-Environmental Challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean*, can be read here in Spanish and English.

Lithuania

Vilnius, Lithuania. Source: Pxhere.com (CC).

What's Behind the Diplomatic Spat between China and Lithuania?

Vida MACIKENAITE

In late 2021, Lithuania, a small country in Eastern Europe, managed to infuriate Beijing by welcoming a Taiwanese Representative Office in its capital, Vilnius. In Lithuania—a member of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that gained independence from the Soviet Union only three decades ago—Taiwan's fight for freedom and democracy resonates strongly. But in addition, it appears that specific local security concerns and economic interests converged in late 2020, when traditional supporters of Taiwan gained office in Lithuania. This has led to a foreign policy change that also has significant implications for the European Union's relations with China.

Going against the Current

Over the past few years, the list of Taiwan's diplomatic partners has shortened significantly. During Tsai Ing-wen's first term as president (2016–20), Taiwan lost diplomatic recognition from seven countries; Nicaragua also shifted recognition to the People's Republic of China (PRC), in 2021. Back in 2019, the *People's Daily* warned Taipei it would lose all its diplomatic allies if President Tsai Ing-wen was re-elected in 2020 (Zheng 2019), in what Shattuck (2020) defined as Beijing's strategic 'race to zero'. At the time of writing in April 2022, only 14 countries still maintained full diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

Indeed, until recently, Beijing's strengthening diplomatic position worldwide at the expense of Taipei appeared to be an irreversible trend as China's economic clout gave Beijing great leverage. Against this background, it came as a surprise when, in late 2021, Lithuania openly signalled it was turning away from China and instead seeking to expand relations with Taiwan.

While the move fell short of extending formal diplomatic recognition to Taiwan, in November 2021, Lithuania welcomed the opening of a Taiwanese Representative Office in Vilnius. While there are 18 other such Taiwanese *de facto* embassies within the European Union, all bear the name of Taipei to avoid direct reference to Taiwan—a widely accepted balancing act between the red line drawn by Beijing and the willingness to extend at least limited recognition of Taiwan as a sovereign entity. Lithuanian leaders kept insisting the country still adhered to the One-China Policy, as the name of the office in Lithuanian (*Taivaniečių*) means 'Taiwanese People's' rather than 'Taiwan's'. Yet, once translated to Chinese, this distinction disappears. Thus, China strongly objected, arguing Lithuania had violated the agreement the two countries signed on the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1991. In response, Beijing downgraded bilateral diplomatic relations to the level of *chargé d'affaires* and launched an unprecedented campaign of unofficial economic sanctions against Lithuanian businesses (Macikenaite 2022a).

Given China's response, in early January 2022, Lithuania's President, Gitanas Nausėda (in office since July 2019), unexpectedly stated that choosing that name for the representative office was a mistake (BNS 2022a). In the same month, it was leaked that Lithuanian officials were discussing whether to ask Taiwanese authorities to modify the Chinese translation of the name of its representative office in Vilnius to reflect the original name as agreed in English—that is, 'Taiwanese' rather than 'Taiwan' (Sytas 2022). The following month, the leader of Lithuania's largest opposition party asked the prime minister to give him an official mandate to negotiate with China and resolve the conflict under the condition the government changed the name of the office (BNS 2022b).

But the name of Taiwan's representative office in the country was only the culmination of a longer process of estrangement from China under the new coalition government led by the Homeland Union–Lithuanian Christian Democrats (TS–LKD) (previously in power from 2008–12), which took power in late 2020. In February 2021, Vilnius refused to send the highest-level representative as requested by China to the meeting of the 17+1 platform, downgrading its participation to the ministerial level. In May of that year, Lithuania officially confirmed its withdrawal from the platform and called on other EU countries to follow (Lau 2021). To warn Lithuania of possible consequences, Beijing recalled its ambassador from Vilnius in August and demanded Lithuania reciprocate. Reportedly, Beijing had already enforced some retaliatory economic measures in the spring of 2021, when credit insurance became unavailable for trade between Lithuania and China (Ammann 2022), but the reaction escalated in the wake of the opening of the Taiwanese Representative Office on 18 November 2021 (Bounds 2021).

After the inauguration of the office, Lithuania was removed from the Chinese customs clearance system for a few days. Later, Lithuanian exports and imports were stalled at Chinese ports for 'technical reasons' (Bounds et al. 2022; Macikenaite 2021). As later became evident, Chinese export restrictions targeted specifically Lithuanian manufacturers, as the supply of components and industrial materials was shut (Macikenaite 2022a). Reportedly, China also pressured multinational corporations to cut ties with Lithuanian manufacturers. The situation escalated to a full-scale diplomatic row—a crisis that is now also engulfing the European Union. European policymakers widely regarded China's behaviour towards Lithuania as an attack on the European Union's single market. As a result, in January 2022, the EU referred China to the World Trade Organization.

Amid the wave of commentaries that have been published in the past few months, a key question has seldom been answered: How did this come to pass?

Changing Perceptions

Arguably, these changes took place in light of changing perceptions of China in Lithuania. Several factors—security concerns, economic interests, as well as ideological orientation—converged, and the results of the parliamentary elections in 2020 opened a window of opportunity for the new coalition government to reorient Lithuania's foreign policy away from China.

In its annual *National Threat Assessment* report released in February 2018, Lithuania's State Security Department for the first time identified hostile cyber activities against local state institutions coming from China—a finding that helped redraw a global map of threats previously dominated by Russia. After Lithuania's security agencies recommended excluding companies like Huawei from infrastructure projects and sectors of special importance, other Baltic states, Latvia and Estonia, followed suit (Deveikis 2020). The

National Threat Assessment released by Lithuania's security agencies in 2020 further elaborated on threats from China by pointing to its attempts to gather technical intelligence on Lithuanian information systems and gain access to critical infrastructure.

As this information was coming to light, the discourse regarding China's engagements within Lithuania also began to undergo a dramatic transformation. In November 2015, Lithuanian Railways had signed a joint-venture agreement with a Chinese logistics company (MTC 2015). The following year, the Lithuanian Government expressed strong support for prospective investment by the China Merchants Group in the Klaipėda Port, Lithuania's only seaport and a strategic hub for NATO in the Baltic states (MFA 2016); while in 2017, Lithuania officially joined the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). But by the summer of 2019, President Nausėda rejected the possibility of Chinese investment in the port due to concerns over national security (Jakučionis 2019). Later that year, the country's Defence Minister, Raimundas Karoblis, cautioned that any Chinese investment in the port could pose strategic risks as most US and overseas NATO forces arrive via Klaipėda (LRT 2019b), which should be read in the context of NATO having served as a guarantor of Lithuania's security and being widely seen as a protector against possible aggression from Russia since Lithuania joined the alliance in 2004.

These discursive changes led to China being included in Lithuania's security equation. Once perceived as a source of opportunities, China has increasingly come to be regarded as an approaching threat. Another sign of this shift was an investigation by Lithuania's national broadcaster, LRT, which exposed the possible conflict of interest of a Chinese company that owns an enterprise in Lithuania and takes part in strategic energy projects in the country (Aušra 2019b). First, it was pointed out that the company, North China Power Engineering, is a subsidiary of the state-owned Power China—a fact previously somewhat overlooked. Second, the same company is a key contractor connecting the Astravyets nuclear power plant, on the Belarusian side of the border with Lithuania, to the Belarusian power grid. Lithuanian authorities have long regarded the Astravyets nuclear plant, financed by the Export–Import Bank of China, as a national security threat due to its noncompliance with international standards of environmental and nuclear safety (MFA

2018). To address the problem, Vilnius has aimed to isolate Minsk by rallying its neighbours and the European Union to block energy imports from Belarus (Aušra 2019b).

Moreover, an incident in Vilnius in August 2019 has been widely framed in the local press as an attempt by China to draw on its diaspora to advance Beijing's agenda in the country. In a demonstration organised by, among others, now Vice-Foreign Minister Mantas Adomėnas, about 200 hundred people gathered in Cathedral Square in Vilnius to express their support for a free Hong Kong and a free Tibet (LRT 2019a). They were approached by a handful of Chinese counter-protesters, which led to verbal clashes. As a result, two Chinese protesters were fined by police for disturbances (BNS 2019). Lithuania's national broadcaster reported that diplomatic staff from the Chinese Embassy in Lithuania—including the Chinese Ambassador, the Defence Attaché, his deputy, and the embassy's second secretary—also appeared at the rally (Aušra 2019a). Footage from the rally was said to show the pro-China protesters removing banners from a car with diplomatic licence plates parked next to the venue (Aušra 2019a). The Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned Chinese Ambassador Shen Zhifei and handed him a note underlining that actions by the staff of the Chinese Embassy that violated democratic freedoms and disturbed public order were not acceptable and would not be tolerated (MFA 2019). This incident, while small in scale, significantly contributed to the change in popular perceptions of China in Lithuania.

When it comes to economic partnerships, under the current government, a narrative has emerged that years of efforts to engage China have not produced substantial economic results. As I have documented in the country profile I compiled for *The People's Map of Global China* (Macikenaite 2022b), contrary to high expectations, as of 2020, China ranked only 22 among Lithuania's export destinations, with exports to mainland China amounting to barely 315 million EUR. Foreign direct investment from China in Lithuania also remains limited, with China fortieth on the list of foreign investors in 2020. Thus, the current government is now aiming to diversify Lithuanian exports and open markets to other Asian destinations, including Taiwan.

Changes in Lithuania's China policy under the current government are also guided by normative principles and an increasingly widespread perception of China as an authoritarian regime. Within the Cabinet, which is led by the party traditionally very critical of Russia, there is a deep-rooted belief that sustainable and reliable economic partnerships are possible only with likeminded democratic countries. As Lithuania has long suffered from Russia's energy price manipulations and politically motivated sanctions on its exports, the perils involved in economic reliance on authoritarian partners are evident. When it comes to China specifically, after then Lithuanian president Dalia Grybauskaitė met privately with the Dalai Lama in 2013, China put all economic negotiations on hold for a few years. Learning from these experiences, the current government, in a program approved by the parliament in December 2020, has outlined its aim for strategic diversification—specifically: 'to get into new markets that would reduce our dependence on limited sources of supply in autocratic countries and open up new opportunities for Lithuania's exporters in the most advanced democratic world markets' (LRS 2020). Considering this, 'closer relations with East Asian countries, where Lithuania has not as yet used the full cooperation potential', are singled out (LRS 2020). South Korea, where Lithuanian embassy opened just last year (BNS 2021), and Japan are the countries in mind; Taiwan is also an attractive option.

A Political Shift

Amid such momentous shifts in narratives and perceptions, parliamentary elections that brought into power a new coalition government marked a turning point for Lithuania's China policy. In December 2020, a coalition led by the conservative TS–LKD backed by two liberal parties took office, promising a change in foreign policy, with the initial coalition agreement committed to supporting those fighting for freedom 'from Belarus to Taiwan' (Sytas 2020). This explicit reference to Taiwan did not survive in the final government program, and was replaced with the goal of 'expanding the area of freedom and democracy in our region and beyond' (LRS 2020).

Already in June 2020, then members of the opposition and now Minister and Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Gabrielius Landsbergis and Mantas Adomėnas, published a commentary titled 'Lithuania: It's Time for Choosing' in one of Lithuania' major online media outlets, outlining a new China policy for the country (Adomėnas and Landsbergis 2020). The steps at the top of the list were, first, to withdraw from the 17 + 1 platform and, second, to 'comprehensively strengthen … relations with Taiwan and support its political recognition in the international community as a *de facto* independent democratic state governed by the rule of law'.

While the publication of that article represented a milestone in the public discourse on China in Lithuania, Taiwan has had a support base in the Lithuanian Parliament for some time. The Parliamentary Group for Relations with Taiwan, which already existed in the 1990s (although its legal status has changed over time), is now dominated by members of the current ruling coalition. When the question of setting up a parliamentary group for relations with the PRC was raised in the late 1990s, it was also presented as a matter of making a sensitive choice between two options: an authoritarian China and a democratic Taiwan. In May 2000, the Parliamentary Group for Relations with Taiwan registered a resolution titled 'Regarding Relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan)' (Parliamentary Group for Relations with Taiwan 2000), which suggested the Lithuanian Government establish a trade representative office in Taipei that year. An amended resolution was then adopted the following month, enshrining the Parliament's resolve to expand economic, trade, and cultural relations with Taiwan (LRS 2000). However, at that time, the European Law Department under the Government of Lithuania ruled that referring to Taiwan as a state was not compatible with the European Union's official position on Taiwan.

In April 2020, 54 of 141 members of the Lithuanian Parliament from different political parties submitted a resolution calling for the Lithuanian President and government to support Taiwan's membership of all international organisations where recognised state sovereignty is not a membership criteria and in which Lithuania also takes part, as well as to support its observer status in those organisations where membership is based on recognition of sovereignty (Members of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania 2020). Notably, the resolution also called for the Lithuanian President and the government to raise the question of Taiwan's independence at the European Council and other channels for EU political activities. At the same time, about 200 Lithuanian politicians and public figures sent an open letter to President Nausėda calling on him to support Taiwan in its dispute with the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding membership and to advocate for the country's independence. The president rejected the calls on the grounds that only UN members can formally join the WHO (LRT 2020).

Yet, despite the support for Taiwan from some political groups in the country, Lithuania's decision to deviate from established practice and welcome a Taiwanese Representative Office in Vilnius came as a surprise. Reportedly, even members of the TS–LKD—many of whom traditionally support Taiwan—have questioned this decision, while the Lithuanian media has named Adomėnas as the architect of the policy (Samoškaitė 2022). No doubt, as the supporters of freedom and democracy in Taiwan (as well as in Hong Kong) took office, long-simmering issues with Lithuania's approach to China gained momentum. Moreover, as the country's government has eyed Asian markets for its companies, Taiwan, which sees the recent development as a diplomatic achievement, has offered to cooperate with Lithuania in its semiconductor industry, presenting the country's leaders with further incentives for the policy shift.

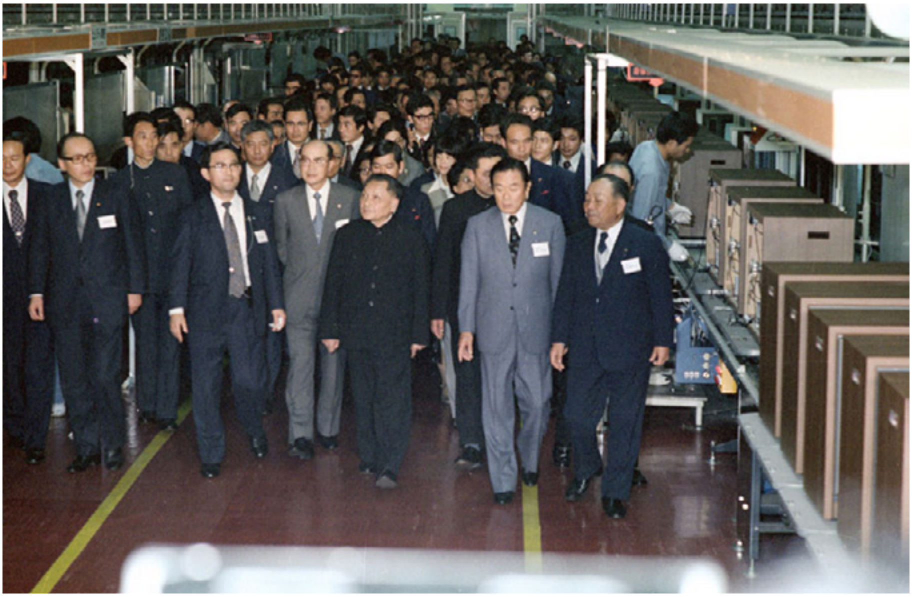
Small Steps, Significant Implications

Welcoming a Taiwanese Representative Office is far from an extension of formal diplomatic recognition to Taiwan, although Beijing has actively sought to frame it as a violation of the One-China Policy and Taipei has celebrated it as a diplomatic achievement. It is a rather small step, and likely one that will prove hard to sustain. The shadow cabinet in Lithuania has already vowed to change the name of the office should it win the next elections, in 2024 (Brunalas 2022). That is understandable given public support for the government's 'value-based policy towards China' had fallen to as low as 13 per cent in mid-December 2021, after China's response to the policy became evident (LRT 2022).

Nonetheless, Lithuania's case will likely send ripples beyond the country's boundaries for years to come. First, it has demonstrated to what lengths China is prepared to go to defend what it deems to be a violation of its interests. Importantly, it has revealed that China is prepared to use whatever economic leverage it has vis-a-vis European states and companies. Further, Lithuania's experience underscores the extent of economic interdependence in today's global economy and the vulnerabilities associated with this. It was indeed anticipated that the opening of the Taiwanese Representative Office in Vilnius under such a name would anger Beijing. Yet, it was deemed that Lithuania would not pay too high a price given its relatively limited economic relations with China.

When reports surfaced of Lithuanian producers losing contracts with European partners that shipped their finished products to China, it became evident that different channels of contact between countries put limits 'on the ability of statesmen to calculate the manipulation of interdependence' (Keohane and Nye 2012: 28). Moreover, the aim 'to seek a united principled position vis-à-vis China in the political formats of the European Union' (Adomėnas and Landsbergis 2020) has proved to be relatively difficult in the short term. While there have been signals that the European Union is changing its perception of China, a quick substantial change is unlikely, mainly due to the reluctance of some member states to antagonise Beijing (Barkin 2022).

Nonetheless, Lithuania's experience has put the spotlight on the necessity for the European Union to reconsider the implications of its often-asymmetrical interdependence with China. It has only reinforced the recent trend of worsening EU–China relations. In late 2020, many in the bloc were optimistic about future economic relations with the Asian economic giant as the European Union celebrated completion of seven years of negotiations on the EU–China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment. A year later, EU–China relations look radically different. In February 2021, the European Commission proposed introducing an anti-coercion instrument to protect European companies and citizens from unfair trading practices (EC 2021a). In May 2021, the European Parliament halted ratification of the agreement until Beijing lifts countersanctions on EU politicians in relation to Xinjiang (European Parliament 2021). As the European Commission returned to its proposal to counter the use of economic coercion by third countries against EU member states in December 2021 (EC 2021b), at the time when Lithuania was under unprecedented informal sanctions from China, Lithuania's case might be a harbinger of things to come. ●



Asking for Guidance

Deng Xiaoping visiting a Panasonic factory in 1978. Source: Panasonic Japan.

How Global Capitalism Became Humanity's 'Fate' in Xi Jinping's New Era

Ryan Martínez MITCHELL

Western media regularly and casually suggest that China is pursuing 'world domination' (The Economist 2021). US national security officials evangelise the view that the country has a 'grand strategy to displace American [global] order' and perhaps even reduce their country to a 'deindustrialized, English-speaking version of a Latin American republic' (Doshi 2021; Lind 2020). The Biden administration, in line with such views and its immediate predecessors, has characterised China as the 'most serious long-term challenge to the international order' (Forgey and Kine 2022).

Beijing rarely has effective responses as it tries to insist that it, not Washington, is a true defender of multilateralism and global stability. After successive rhetorical frameworks declaring China's 'peaceful rise', advocating a 'new type of major country relations', and insisting on the possibility of a 'win-win' relationship with developed Western states, Beijing's most recent slogan of choice is the cryptic call for a 'community of shared future for all mankind' (*renlei mingyun gongtongti* 人类命运共同体). A slightly more accurate English version, which as we will see would better reflect the phrase's etymology, is the 'human community of fate'.

It was this formula that took top billing when Chinese President Xi Jinping gave the most agenda-setting foreign policy address of his tenure thus far, in his September 2015 speech before the UN General Assembly. The slogan has since been advanced in Chinese resolutions at the United Nations and other important forums, included in thousands of official statements, and even written into the Preamble to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC) (Qian 2019). So, if the phrase is anything more than just empty verbiage, what does it imply for global society?

Somewhat surprisingly, the genealogy of Xi-era Beijing's most important foreign policy slogan has less to do with Marx or Mao than with mid-twentieth-century German Christian Democrats and

Japanese industrialists. Rather than some novel Sinocentric order, *renlei mingyun gongtongti* is ultimately about enshrining the core ideas and practices of today's extant capitalist order.

Romantic Origins

The expression 'community of fate' seems to have first become widespread as the nineteenth-century German expression *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*. Literally referring to a community (*Gemeinschaft*) of fate (*Schicksal*), the term was sometimes used to describe the various German-speaking lands undergoing gradual coalescence into a unitary nation-state. By the early twentieth century, this term often referred to the romantic idea that a shared 'fate' united the German (or any other) people, regardless of state borders or internal class conflicts (Weber 1991: 176; Bauer 1907; Renan 2012).

This flexible notion was taken in different directions by various voices in European politics. It was cited by forces as incompatible as leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, Catholic corporatists, Nazis, and even European integrationists, though orthodox Marxists were sceptical of appeals to communal identity not based on class relations.

None of those early twentieth-century uses, in any case, directly impacted on Chinese political discourse in any meaningful fashion at the time. Instead, like many other modern political terms, *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* was introduced to China via its reception in Japan, where it was rendered into Kanji characters as an item of '*wasei kango*' ('Japanese-made Chinese'). Today's Chinese term, *mingyun gongtongti* (命运共同体)—that is, 'community of fate'—is fairly easily traced to the original German expression via the discourse of *unmei kyōdōtai* (運命共同体) that emerged in 1930s Imperial Japan. Though it never exclusively denoted the Japanese drive for a 'Greater Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere', that was indeed the context to which it most often referred in Chinese texts of the period, generally now-forgotten collaborationist tracts, or direct translations from Japanese (Shanghai Branch of the Chinese Federation of the East Asian League 1942).

In the postwar period, of course, that history was seen by most in China as something to be either condemned or ignored. It would be decades before the term reappeared in wide usage, by which point its brief association with Japanese imperialism and more distant European political debates was almost forgotten. Ironically, however, it would ultimately be reintroduced to China primarily by association with Japan and Germany. Meanwhile, the term's new implications in Chinese discourse from the 1980s also closely mirrored its changing meanings in those countries.

While *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*/*mingyun gongtongti* initially referred mainly to a romanticised 'unity before fate' of peoples or cultures (even ones as contestable as 'Europe' or 'Asia'), by the late twentieth century, it became a way of portraying economic relationships as reflections of a fixed, unchangeable destiny.

Exporting Modernity

When *mingyun gongtongti* came back into Chinese discourse, it was again due to Japanese influences—this time in a primarily economic context. A small number of (negative) references to the term *mingyun gongtongti* appeared in the *People's Daily* in the 1960s and 1970s in connection with the developing United States–Japan–South Korea regional security alliance (Qian 2019). However, the term did not catch on at this point in Chinese discourse—certainly not in any positive sense. Instead, the floodgates for the term's new reception were opened in October 1978, two years after Mao Zedong's death and two months before the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress—the meeting of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that is viewed as the official start of the 'Reform Era'. As CCP Vice-Chairman Deng Xiaoping's modernisation and 'opening-up' push was gestating, he made an important symbolic visit to Japan with officials including members of China's National Economic Council, seeking to frame Beijing's new approach to political economy (Wu 2021).

Both the visit itself and subsequent reports produced by its participating economists were to have significant impacts on aspects of the early reform period. Among the symbolically important episodes was Deng's tour of a colour television factory in Osaka with Panasonic founder Kōnosuke Matsushita, during which he explicitly asked the latter for guidance on China's economic modernisation, entreating: 'Mr Matsushita, you are called the god of management in Japan. Would you be willing to help us advance the modernisation of China?' (West 2020).

Matsushita, along with Sony co-founder Morita Akio and other leading postwar Japanese CEOs who had developed reputations as management gurus and public intellectuals, had promoted the idea of a 'community of fate between workers and management' (*rōshi unmei kyōdōtai* 労使運命共同体), as a kind of third way between capitalism and socialism (Itō 1973). In practice, that supposedly new path mostly just referred to Japan's prevalent 'company as family' approach, emphasising loyalty, 'lifetime' job security, strict seniority structures, low lateral mobility, limited collective bargaining power for workers, and ambitious productivity goals in the service of world-beating exports.

Though this system was sometimes seen as representing patriarchal or even remnant feudal aspects of Japan's corporate world, Morita and especially Matsushita gave it a more grandiose image by drawing on quasi-Buddhist cosmic themes. These, for example, are still spread today via the Peace and Happiness Through Prosperity (PHP) Institute, founded by Matsushita in 1946 after several years contributing to Tokyo's wartime economic program, which aims to develop corporate leadership skills and free the 'untrapped mind … capable of transcending all concern for profit and loss, ideology, power, and social status' (PHP Interface 2022).

Naturally, during Deng's conversations with Japanese industry leaders, he did not explicitly embrace any of these more esoteric ideas. However, he did much to establish the basis for the reception of Japanese-style economic organisation as a compelling ideal in Reform-Era China. The notion of looking to Japan for guidance in transforming a 'backwards' China was one that Deng reiterated throughout the trip. After seeing robots in use at one of Nissan's automobile factories and hearing about the extraordinary advances in industrial productivity the company had achieved, for example, Deng had openly declared: 'Now I understand what modernization is' (Vogel 2011).

After this historically important journey, one of its participating economists, Ma Hong, wrote a report in which he echoed Deng's positive appraisal of the lessons to be learned from Japanese capitalism. Among the aspects that Ma picked out for analysis was the Japanese notion of the community of fate between owners and workers. The concrete aspects of this arrangement that Ma identified were lifetime employment, benefits tied to overall company and individual performance, a clearly defined seniority system, and company culture promoting belonging and esprit de corps (Ma 1979). While carefully noting that all these remained ultimately 'methods for the capitalists to carry out exploitation', Ma nonetheless praised the model's practical utility. Indeed, he even adopted the *mingyun gongtongti* concept into some of his own subsequent writings (Ma 1981).

As vice-president and then president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), as well as founding director of the PRC State Council's Research Centre of Technology and the CASS Institute of Industrial Economy, Ma's influence in the early 1980s was significant. He was also one of those who did the most to promote the notion of a 'socialist market economy' (Weber 2021). His influential 1979 report, and the study trip itself under Deng's unofficial leadership, marked a turning point at which the *mingyun gongtongti* notion started to become a fixture of Chinese discourse.

Fittingly, Matsushita Corporation (Panasonic) factories sprang up in China throughout the 1980s as one of the earliest models of Chinese–foreign joint enterprises. By the late 1980s, the firm's Chinese factories were helping to achieve the founder's stated goal 'to create material abundance by providing goods as plentifully and inexpensively as tap water' (PHP Interface 2022). Whatever its philosophical origins, that aim fitted well with the Deng-era Party's drive to 'develop the forces of production' in China. At the same time, the Japanese corporate credo of companies as 'communities of fate' increasingly caught on, seeming to capture the spirit of the times.

Stability and Risk

Throughout the 1980s, the term *mingyun gongtongti* gained currency with academics and eventually Party officials as a shorthand way to describe corporations that would be productive while avoiding some excesses of free-market competition and exploitation. Often explicitly linked with the Japanese examples then stunning their Western rivals, this discourse suggested that China did not have to look exclusively to Anglo-American capitalism as it transitioned away from a state-led economy (Zhang 1985; Huang 1985; People's Daily 1989; Chengdu Party School Research Office 1992; Chen 1996).

Although it was never a fully fleshed-out concept, the expression had appeal in part because the CCP itself at this time was deeply divided over the nature and pace of economic reform (Weber 2021; Gewirtz 2017). During these years, especially between 1987 and 1989, when Zhao Ziyang served as general secretary, an ideological contest raged between blocs of 'pragmatists' and 'package reformers', in which the former argued for caution about the latter's Friedmanite strategies of price liberalisation, privatisation, and deregulation (Weber 2021; Tooze 2021).

Aside from Japan's corporatist ideologues, a still more important source of support on which pragmatists could draw was German ordoliberalism—a loose body of thought associated with thinkers of the Freiburg School, such as Walter Eucken and Franz Böhm. In general, ordoliberals discouraged one-size-fits-all–style reforms and instead promoted ideas related to building an 'economic constitution' for society. While encoding many supposedly fundamental economic rights and relationships in law, the ordoliberal approach differed from Anglo-American ideals of laissez faire, and free and deregulated markets, especially as crystallised during the Reagan–Thatcher era. Instead, figures such as long-time Christian Democrat minister of economics Ludwig Erhard—credited as one of the main authors of West Germany's postwar *Wirtschaftswunder*—had invoked ideas of a 'social market economy', with regulatory action to safeguard ideal market outcomes and distribute responsibility (Cerny 2016; Slobodian 2018; Hentschel 1996). It was no coincidence that the 'socialist market economy' that would be promoted by Ma Hong and others closely resembled this West German formula.

Combining a commitment to market freedoms with an emphasis on rules to keep their operation orderly (and, ostensibly, to mitigate knock-on effects such as inequality) might seem well suited to a society transitioning away from state planning. However, explicit ordoliberal influence on Chinese economic discourse receded after 1989. Some pragmatists drawn to German-style orderly reforms left Beijing after Zhao Ziyang was removed from power over his refusal to support violent suppression of protesters. In the ensuing Jiang Zemin era, especially after the call to restart economic reform signified by Deng's 'Southern Tour' of 1992, rapid liberalisation in the economy was juxtaposed with a continued commitment to unchecked Party fiat. Spectacular and unequal wealth creation took place alongside mass exploitation of workers, rampant corruption, pollution, and other social ills. Rather than checking these trends with strict oversight, China's ensuing path to the World Trade Organization (WTO) more often involved removing existing regulations seen as overly protectionist.

China's rapid shift in the 1990s to becoming an export-oriented, trade-surplus–generating economy was thus very different from the 'Erhard miracle' of postwar West Germany. Nonetheless, German discussions of *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*, which had often been invoked by ordoliberal policymakers in the contexts of German and especially European economic integration, had a major new impact on Chinese *mingyun gongtongti* discourse. As the 1990s saw a dramatically new order constructed in Europe, largely based on economic interconnections and technocratically governed trade relations, the 'community of fate' notion became the byword for the project of European regionalism. Influenced by this example, Chinese commentators began to apply the notion to the relationship between mainland China and Taiwan, suggesting a path to unification by means of growing trade ties. This formula for the relationship with Taiwan was eventually endorsed by Jiang's successor, Hu Jintao, at the Seventeenth Party Congress, in October 2007 (CCTV.com 2007).

That same year, premier Wen Jiabao also broadened the term to refer to China's relationship with Asia in general. At the East Asia Summit held in Cebu, Philippines, he called for a 'new kind of community of fate that can develop together in tranquil times and respond together in times of crisis' (Oriental Morning Post 2007). These uses, referring to solidarity before shared risks, mirrored increasingly frequent references to the concept in Europe as what would become the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2008 gathered pace (Kundnani 2018). Between 2008 and 2012, as European leaders frequently invoked the notion of the fragile eurozone as a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* whose existential unity must be preserved, the CCP leadership under Hu's loose management also increasingly embraced the idea (Sina.com 2012).

It was during Hu's second term that the *mingyun gongtongti* idea as used in China fully took on its present implications for global geopolitics and geoeconomics. As the fallout from the GFC continued, and China embarked on a massive campaign of debt-fuelled infrastructure spending that was credited with rescuing the global economy, the CCP was also formulating new foreign policy ideas. The crucial 2008–12 period, during which Xi Jinping served as a vice-premier, was when the CCP formulated its current positions on a host of major issues, including the need for stable, rules-based international economic governance, a more decisive rejection of Western efforts of democracy promotion as well as NATO-led humanitarian interventions, and the need to invest China's own capital abroad to facilitate the country's dramatic transformation from a net debtor to a net creditor state.

Fated Relations

The period between 2008 and 2012 is also crucial for understanding the subsequent Xi era because—for the first time since Deng's Southern Tour—it saw the resumption of major ideological debate about the fundamental direction of China's political economy. Marking a partial return to the ordoliberal-influenced positions of the 1980s, the Hu–Wen leadership promoted regulatory efforts to curb the social and environmental excesses of the Jiang era's almost unchecked capitalism. Meanwhile, Chongqing Party secretary Bo Xilai staked out a radical position in favour of a turn back to more redistributive policies and invoking the Mao-era slogan of 'common prosperity' (共同富裕), alongside other callbacks to the pre-Deng period. Although Xi defeated Bo's implicit political challenge to become the core of the Party's next generation of leadership, his subsequent agenda has often borrowed from his erstwhile rival, as well as from the Hu-era Party leadership. Though Xi has attained a remarkably elevated intraparty status and his 'Thought' now stands unquestioned, the content of that Thought consists almost entirely of a grab-bag of intraparty consensus positions circa 2012.

It is in this context that the dramatic new emphasis on the term *renlei mingyun gongtongti* should be understood. The 'human community of fate' concept was in fact first articulated by Hu Jintao at the Eighteenth Party Congress in 2012, which concluded his second term (Hu 2012). Significantly, it was used in reference to PRC positions on a host of international policy challenges, including both the risks of an unregulated world economy put on display in the GFC and the 'instability' generated by the revolutions of the US-supported Arab Spring movement. All chaotic forces—whether those of unrestricted capitalism, environmental disaster, or democratic protest movements—are potential threats to stable, rules-bound growth. The term's subsequent uses by Xi and other officials have reiterated this sensibility (Wang 2021; Xi 2013).

A decade on from Hu's use of the term in 2012, the 'human community of fate' idea is now a pillar of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era (习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想). All PRC foreign policy positions are, one way or another, made to fit into this schema. To be sure, academics regularly secure funding and write publications discussing the 'meaning' of the concept, such as a notable recent initiative by international law scholars under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Research Team on Community of Shared Future for Mankind and International Law 2019). However, their conclusions tend just to reiterate China's longstanding positions on issues such as the legitimacy of the UN system, commitment to the basic principles of international law, emphasis on supporting development in the Third World, calls for increased global economic cooperation, and so on.

If there is something new in the *mingyun gongtongti* idea as deployed today by Beijing in countless forums, it is a feature that is shared by another of Xi's borrowed umbrella terms: 'common prosperity'. In both cases, the ideological platform carries an implicit critique of raw capitalism and its proclivities for both crisis and exploitation. In practice, however, that critique has only been invoked to check the most egregious forms of the 'savage growth of capital'—as seen in the limited crackdowns on China's tech and property sectors—without signifying any commitment to a more robust redistributive socialism, locally or globally. As was already the case in its early twentieth-century uses, the community of fate concept in modern China is most relevant as a way to diminish the relevance of class-based political struggles by invoking a rhetoric of 'destined' solidarity.

The major Xi-era international policies such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, increased participation in UN organisations, and active commitment to the WTO system, as well as pursuit of overlapping regional free-trade agreements—all fit well with a broad agenda of greater economic integration and stabilisation via rules-based institutions that, ultimately, reinforce the capitalist order as such (Shaffer and Gao 2020; Ewing-Chow and Losari 2020; Gelpern et al. 2021).

In the end, the concept rules out the idea of China forging some radical, disruptive new path of the type Western national security analysts ascribe to Beijing in their regular breathless warnings. Instead, stability of the extant order, including many of its inherent inequities, is paramount. As Xi himself said in his 2017 speech at Davos, economic globalisation is an 'irreversible historical trend', based on objective historical laws and conditions: 'Whether we like it or not, the global economy is the big ocean that we simply cannot escape' (He 2021).

ESSAYS

Sihanoukville

Steung Hav Coal Power Plant, Sihanoukville Province. Source: Dmitry Makeev, CC BY-SA 4.0, Wikimedia Commons.

China's Overseas Energy Investments after the 'No Coal' Pledge: An Assessment

Danqing LI, Siman LI, and Mark BO

In September 2021, President Xi Jinping announced that China would no longer build new overseas coal power plants. Companies and banks have begun to adapt to the pledge and impacts have already been seen, with several projects halted or in jeopardy. However, this essay highlights several important grey areas and loopholes that need to be addressed in order to ensure that new coal plants do not move forward. The authors, in particular, argue that the next crucial step is the adoption of more detailed policy guidance, matched by concerted efforts by both China and host countries to prioritise the transition to renewable energy and avoid simply replacing coal with gas.

On 21 September 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that 'China will step up support for other developing countries in developing green and low-carbon energy, and will not build new coal-fired power projects abroad' (Xi 2021). This pledge potentially has huge impacts, as in recent years China has become the most important—and, in many cases, the last—resort for public coal finance.

For the past decade, China has been by far the single largest source of public finance for cross-border investment in coal power plants, with loans channelled mostly via the China Development Bank and the Export–Import Bank of China (China Eximbank). Between 2013 and 2018, this accounted for 50 per cent of the world's cross-border public coal finance for projects that reached financial close during that period (Ma and Gallagher 2021). However, this left China in a difficult position, promoting green finance within the context of the 'Green Belt and Road', while state-backed finance simultaneously supported one of the highest carbon-emitting sectors.

Before President Xi's announcement, there were already signs that China was ready to begin a move away from overseas coal projects. According to a study by the International Institute of Green Finance (Wang 2021), in 2019 and 2020, Chinese-backed coal plants worth US$65 billion were cancelled, mothballed, or shelved. According to an assessment by the non-profit Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), between 2017 and 2021, 4.5 times as much capacity had been shelved or cancelled as began construction (Suarez 2021). No new coal plants in Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) countries were announced in 2020, and no coal plants or mines were financed during the first six months of 2021 (Wang 2021). This drastic reduction may also reflect a broader repositioning in China around global energy projects; in 2021, Boston University's Global Development Policy Center recorded no new loans for energy projects of any kind from China's top policy banks.

Why Did China Make This Pledge?

As noted above, a shift was occurring as far back as 2017, and Global Development Policy Center data indicate that China's public finance for overseas coal peaked that year. With new project and financing approvals declining, signs began to emerge that a policy shift was on the horizon. In February 2021, a potential indicator of the direction of travel emerged when a letter was made public in which China told Bangladesh's Ministry of Finance that China would 'no longer consider projects with high pollution and high energy consumption, such as coal mining and coal-fired power stations' (Shepherd 2021). This came in the context of negotiations for a package of US$3.6 billion in infrastructure loans that Bangladesh was seeking to repurpose. In April 2021, *Reuters* reported on a briefing attended by the Vice-Governor of China's central bank, the People's Bank of China, where he said: 'We will also push forward the green investment principles for Belt and Road projects, and strictly control the overseas investments in new coal-fired power plants' (Reuters 2021).

This shift reflects broader global trends, especially in the realm of public finance, where climate change commitments gradually whittled away the number of countries still willing to finance cross-border coal plants. Since 2013, public finance from China, Japan, and South Korea has accounted for more than 95 per cent of total foreign financing of coal-fired power plants (Liu et al. 2021). In 2021, South Korea (Reuters 2021) and Japan committed to ending the financing of overseas coal power plants (Arai 2021), incentivising China to catch up with the global trend. President Xi's statement came just a month before the UN Glasgow Climate Change Conference, where commitments to wind down and end public finance for coal power were front and centre in the discussions.

There is also a strong economic case for ceasing construction of new coal power plants. According to a study by Carbon Tracker (2020), the cost of new coal power plants is already higher than renewable energy plants in many BRI countries, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Turkey. Adding to the economic pressure, the Covid-19 pandemic has depressed energy demand across South and Southeast Asia, idling several plants, leading large coal consumers like Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Pakistan to reconsider further coal power development, and to explore how they can meet their needs with renewable energy (IEEFA 2020). Already in 2021, Bangladesh cancelled plans to build 10 coal-fired power plants (Karim

2021); Indonesia announced plans to stop building new coal-fired power plants after 2023 (Jong 2021); Pakistan's then prime minister Imran Khan (in office, August 2018 to April 2022) pledged that the government would not approve any more coal power plants (Chavez 2020); and Vietnam issued a draft energy development plan that proposed no new coal-fired power plants except those already under construction or planned for completion before 2025 (Adler 2021). China has traditionally framed its support for overseas coal as responsive to the market demands of its partners (Baxter 2021); thus, with that demand drying up, China's shift away from overseas coal has become increasingly inevitable.

Evidently, the pledge to end the building of new overseas coal plants is driven by a combination of political, economic, and practical considerations. The trends outlined above suggest China has more to gain from moving away from overseas coal than it has to lose. Coal power projects with Chinese involvement have for many years faced criticism and resistance from local communities, civil society groups, and environmentalists. In a handful of high-profile projects, this has led to delays or cancelations, as with the Lamu coal plant in Kenya (Kinney 2022). Combined with the decreasing cost of renewable energy, the slowdown in the growth of power demand, and the ongoing low-carbon energy transition of host countries, both the economic and the reputational risks of continuing to support overseas coal power projects increasingly outnumber the benefits.

The Impacts of the Pledge So Far

The pledge to end building overseas coal plants sparked significant discussion but, given the lack of specificity in President Xi's UNGA speech, much of this focused on what it would mean in real terms. This promoted heated debate about what constitutes a 'new' coal power plant and how broadly 'not build' would be interpreted. For more than six months, there was no further elaboration of the pledge in policy documents. This changed in March 2022, when China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and National Energy Administration (NEA) released China's *14th Five-Year Plan on Modern Energy Systems*, which filled in some gaps (we will discuss this further below). In the meantime, some movement was observed at the project level and on the part of corporate and financial actors, as Chinese stakeholders repositioned to adapt to the coming policy shift.

One of the first actors to respond publicly was the Bank of China (BOC), a commercial bank majority owned by the Chinese state. BOC announced in the days following the UNGA speech that, from the fourth quarter of 2021, it would no longer provide financing for new overseas coalmining and coal power projects, 'except for the projects that have signed loan agreements' (BOC 2021). Later in 2021, Ping An Bank updated its coal policy, stating: '[F]ollowing President Xi's recent declaration at the UNGA, Ping An

Bank will follow this requirement regarding overseas projects going forward' (Ping An Group 2021). In March 2022, the chairwoman of China Eximbank confirmed the bank would no longer provide financing for new overseas coal power projects, making it the first policy bank to make such a commitment (China News Network 2022). Crucially, this was followed in April 2022 by China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation (Sinosure) confirming it would not underwrite overseas coal power plants (WRI 2022). This is an important development, as Sinosure is the major provider of insurance for both equity investments and contracting for overseas coal plants and securing Sinosure backing is often a prerequisite for obtaining finance from Chinese banks (Li 2019).

On the corporate side, there has been less visible movement, although the first actor to respond to the UNGA statement was Tsingshan Holding Group, a privately owned Chinese conglomerate and major steel industry player, which announced shortly after the pledge that it would not build any new coal power plants overseas (Tsingshan Industry 2021). Tsingshan has invested heavily in countries such as Indonesia and Zimbabwe, building energy-intensive industrial parks that rely on captive power plants—that is, plants that act as a supportive facility to provide power for the industrial park only and are not connected to the national grid (for an example, see the Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park discussed in Ginting and Moore 2021). This commitment potentially takes several proposed coal plants off the table, and Tsingshan will need to explore other options to power future expansions, although, as discussed below, this remains a grey area.

Impacts have also been observed at the project level. In January 2022, Hong Kong–registered Sunningwell International Limited confirmed that Chinese financing was no longer available for the 700-megawatt Ugljevik III power plant in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In June 2021, the company had signed an engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contract for the project with state-owned China National Electric Engineering Company (CNEEC). However, in January 2022, Sunningwell International stated in a letter: '[A]fter the decision of the Chinese top leaders to stop financing coal fired power plants abroad, CNEEC informed Sunningwell about this decision. Since then we are exploring other alternative sources of financing the project.' Just a few months before this, in response to a letter from a local civil society group, China's Ambassador to South Africa Chen Xiaodong (2021) confirmed that China 'will not build new coal-fired projects abroad', indicating it would no longer be funding a 1,320–3,300-megawatt coal power plant for the controversial proposed Musina-Makhado Special Economic Zone (MMSEZ) (for a profile of the MMSEZ, see Reboredo 2021). This was the first clear confirmation from a Chinese embassy illustrating the impacts of the UNGA pledge. In his letter, Ambassador Chen emphasised China's plans to prioritise developing low-carbon energy and, in March 2022, the chairman of MMSEZ said a Chinese company had shown interest in building a 1,000-megawatt solar plant in place of the coal power station (Cronje 2022).

Turning Away from Coal

A street in Dali, Yunnan Province, with installed solar panels. Source: Asia Development Bank (CC), Flickr.com.

As noted above, these movements occurred during a six-month period in which there was little official guidance on how the UNGA pledge would be implemented. This changed on 22 March 2022, when China released the above-mentioned *14th Five-Year Plan on Modern Energy Systems*, setting the tone for development of the energy sector from 2021 to 2025 (Carbon Brief Staff 2022). This was the first time President Xi's overseas coal pledge was written into domestic policy. The next week, the NDRC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Ecology and Environment, and the Ministry of Commerce jointly issued 'Opinions on the Joint Implementation of Green Development in the Belt and Road Initiative', confirming that the building of new coal power plants overseas would cease and that plants 'under construction' should move forward 'prudently and cautiously' (稳慎) (NDRC et al. 2022).

What's Next for China's Overseas Energy Footprint?

Following the publication of these new policy documents, CREA (Suarez 2022) conducted an analysis of projects currently under construction or in the pipeline. It found that between September 2021 and April 2022, 15 coal plants that had received either financial backing or EPC support from Chinese firms had been cancelled (with total projected capacity of approximately 12.8 gigawatts). This was the result of either revised energy policies in host countries or withdrawal of support from Chinese firms. The March 2022 opinion from the NDRC has the potential to stop a further 32 plants (with capacity of 37 gigawatts) that are in the pre-construction phase. However, CREA identified a further 36 projects with capacity of 29 gigawatts that are under construction, and which could continue to move forward.

According to interviews conducted by the authors between February and April 2022 with observers of Chinese energy finance, the consensus was that if overseas coal projects had not reached financial close before the UNGA pledge, it would be extremely difficult to secure finance from Chinese policy banks or state-owned commercial banks. They expected the pledge to be carefully implemented by key stakeholders and that both financial support and equity investment—most of which is implemented by China's state-owned financial institutions and enterprises—would be directly affected by President Xi's pledge. Even without clearer guidance, state-owned banks may be inclined to implement the pledge to err on the side of caution. With that said, while the formalisation of the UNGA pledge in government policy is welcome, there are still areas that require clarity and potential loopholes that could allow Chinese finance to continue to flow to carbon-intensive energy projects.

While most observers believe that projects yet to reach financial close will struggle to secure financing, there is wiggle room. The NDRC guidance uses the language in the UNGA pledge that China will not pursue 'new' overseas coal power plants, but this leaves a grey area for projects that have not yet reached financial close but were already under discussion before the pledge. For example, in February 2022, it was reported that China and Pakistan had agreed to prioritise the 300-megawatt Gwadar coal power plant (Rana 2022). Although the project was included in the first phase of the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (2015–18), it has faced numerous delays and missed deadlines for financial close in 2019 and 2021, after the Chinese insurer declined to provide guarantees for the loans. The fact this project looks set to move forward indicates that pipeline projects that are seen as politically important to China and host countries may continue, even if they have not yet reached financial close.

Another category of projects that remains uncertain is those for which EPC contracts have been signed but are yet to secure financial support. The absence of clear and detailed rules for banks and enterprises to implement the pledge potentially leaves the door open for EPC companies and equipment manufacturers to push forward with these projects. According to the China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products (CCCME 2022), in 2021 alone, Chinese companies signed 67 contracts for thermal power plants worth a total of US$18.9 billion. The UNGA pledge seems to have dealt a killer blow to the Ugljevik III plant, as discussed above, but there is no clarity on whether other similar projects will suffer the same fate. The CREA analysis previously discussed (Suarez 2022) identified plants with a combined capacity of 11.2 gigawatts that have secured financing and the necessary permits but are yet to begin construction. These projects also exist in a grey area, being neither 'new' nor 'under construction'.

Captive coal power plants located inside industrial parks are another category of project that observers are concerned may slip through the cracks. Since the pledge, some coal power projects with Chinese equity support have moved forward under the cover of industrial parks. For example, in February 2022, China Energy Engineering Corporation won the bid for a 4 x 380-megawatt thermal power plant on Obi Island, Indonesia (BRproject 2022). The project owner is PT Halmahera Jaya Feronikel, a joint venture between Chinese Lygend and Indonesia's Harita Group. This exposes the loophole of captive coal power plants that are normally off-grid and serve as dedicated power sources for a specific industrial park. Observers of Chinese energy finance interviewed by the authors raised concern about this ambiguous area and fear that, without clear guidance, Chinese enterprises will keep building captive coal power plants, with limited information transparency. Several such projects are in the pipeline, with CREA identifying 8 gigawatts of capacity at proposed captive coal plants (Suarez 2022).

Beyond coal power investments, China's shift could have implications for other fossil fuel industries. When compared with the preceding plan, the *14th Five-Year Plan on Modern Energy Systems* specifically proposes improving cooperation with overseas oil and gas producing regions and strengthening connections with key oil and gas producing and consuming countries. While this renewed emphasis on oil and gas will be in large part to boost China's domestic energy security, there is also potential for Chinese energy companies to expand their footprint in overseas fossil fuel power projects, especially those utilising natural gas. As countries seek to implement their own climate commitments and move away from coal, a trend is emerging of shifting to gas, which is seen as a less carbon-intensive alternative and a potential 'transition' fuel. This is beginning to occur in Vietnam, where news emerged in March 2022 that fuel conversion is under consideration for Nam Dinh 1, Quang Tri 1, Vinh Tan 3, and Song Hau 2, which were originally envisioned as coal plants (Vietnam Energy 2022). In early 2022, it was also reported that Bank of China and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) were likely to join other international banks to finance the development of the greenfield 1.4-gigawatt Hin Kong gas-fired power plant in Thailand (Yapp 2022). While 'new' coal power plants can no longer receive finance from Chinese banks, host-country governments may begin to explore ways of replacing pipeline projects with gas power plants.

Redirecting Chinese Finance to Renewable Energy

Research by Fudan University's Green Finance & Development Center shows that although there was no new coal financing in 2021, China's overseas oil and gas investment tripled compared with 2020 (Wang 2022). Simply stopping overseas coal investment will not by itself address the climate crisis. As host countries still have growing energy demands, they will need to fill the gaps, especially when their development plans include coal power plants that were originally backed by Chinese players. Although the coal industry is in decline, concerted effort is needed to promote the development of renewable energy; otherwise, other fossil fuels will simply fill the gap.

Even though China has rapidly developed its domestic renewable energy sector in the past few years and has become a global leader in the industry, renewable energy development in most Asian and African countries still proceeds at a relatively slow pace. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA 2022), in 2021, Asia accounted for 60 per cent of new renewable energy capacity, with an increase of 154.7 gigawatts, 121 gigawatts of which was in China. Meanwhile, the whole African continent saw an increase of just 2.1 gigawatts. It is therefore important to ask why there has been so much less investment in renewable energy than in fossil fuels in countries that receive Chinese finance. Our interviews with observers identified several barriers to investment.

Compared with coal power projects, renewable energy often carries a larger investment risk as consumption is not always guaranteed due to the mismatch between supply and demand. Due to a lack of power storage technology, solar and wind power generated during periods of low demand cannot always be efficiently utilised. Without addressing the power storage gap, and in the absence of national policies to prioritise renewable energy consumption, the power generated from renewable energy is often wasted. As there are generally fewer host-country policies favouring renewables—such as subsidies and prioritisation of renewable consumption—the risk of low investment returns can demotivate foreign investors. This situation has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, as economic and energy demand growth rates have slowed.

There are also bottlenecks on the supply side. As the investment volume for renewable projects is usually smaller than for traditional energy projects, private enterprises are more competitive and have become the key players in renewable energy investment rather than state-owned enterprises (SOEs). However, private enterprises have lower corporate credit, making it more challenging to obtain financial support from Chinese banks and insurers.

Although renewable energy is increasingly cheaper than fossil fuels, the volatility of solar and wind increases the systematic costs of the grid. However, in many Asian and African countries, national grid systems are relatively antiquated, with low connectivity that cannot support high-ratio renewable energy coming online. Other important infrastructure to support renewable energy development, such as power storage facilities and systems for the transportation of wind turbine blades, are also underdeveloped. Broadly speaking, most countries that are recipients of Chinese energy financing are in the early stages of developing renewables, with national policy and energy planning, capacity, and expertise to develop the sector still lacking. While these challenges are significant, they must be addressed for countries to pursue opportunities to develop more sustainable energy systems. Financial and policy support are required from both China and host countries.

Energy Production

Wind Farm in Guangling County, Shanxi. Source: Hahaheditor12667, Wikimedia Commons.

Chinese companies and banks can play a crucial role in facilitating this transition. Although private Chinese companies are already leading players in renewables, there is much scope for their state-owned counterparts to do more. Many SOEs now have renewable energy subsidiaries, but these enterprises need to do more to recalibrate their strategic focus, proactively explore opportunities, and build their renewable energy portfolios. To enable this, Chinese banks must move on from the traditional approach of prioritising large/high-value energy projects and explore smaller (including off-grid) renewable opportunities and make financing available to support Chinese companies to implement President Xi's pledge to help developing countries expand green energy. As financial institutions increase support for renewable energy, entities also need to play a larger role—for example, Sinosure has optimised approval procedures to both facilitate such investment and better control risks.

Top-down policy adjustments both in China and in host countries are also essential. There is scope for the Chinese Government to promote cooperation in overseas renewable energy investment with practical and targeted policies and financial support, in addition to overarching policies encouraging Chinese stakeholders to invest in renewables. This support should focus on accelerating the incubation of different business models and explore opportunities to mobilise additional sources of financing. Crucially, host-country governments, which are the ultimate decision-makers on the development of their energy futures, must adjust domestic energy plans in line with their international commitments, including planning for more renewable energy projects and removing proposed fossil fuel projects. Proactively communicating and seeking renewable investment opportunities from China, as well as other national and international stakeholders, will be key. To attract investment, the bottlenecks currently slowing the shift to renewables must be addressed by directing more resources to and prioritising the development of energy storage technology and grid development rather than maintaining a focus on fossil fuels. To create an environment that enables a more rapid transition, lessons can be learned from the experience of China's domestic renewables development, which was led in part by the development and implementation of more favourable policies for renewable feed-in tariffs, power purchase agreements, subsidies, and concessional loans.

Moving the Transition Forward

Although this essay has focused largely on future projects, it is also important to consider operational coal power plants. As well as calling for an end to new overseas coal power plants and the cautious development of plants already under construction, the NDRC guidelines issued in March encourage upgrades to operational coal plants in line with 'international green rules and standards'. While on one hand it may be seen as beneficial to improve the performance and reduce the emissions of existing plants, on the other, by promoting this path, there is the risk of extending the lifespan of existing plants. The development of renewable energy cannot offset the carbon emissions of existing fossil fuel projects. Although the development of new coal power plants is slowing, many operational plants in host countries (mostly in Southeast and South Asia) are so young they will not be retired for decades. Thus, a mechanism for an expedited coal phase-out will be crucial to help host countries escape the carbon lock-in as soon as possible. While China should be commended for taking this crucial step in moving away from new-build coal power plants, a next step is to provide further binding policy guidance on the implementation of the UNGA pledge, closing the loopholes, while also making concerted efforts to honour the commitment to support global green energy development, decrease carbon emissions by accelerating the phase-out of existing coal power projects, and avoid the carbon lock-in by simply replacing coal capacity with gas.

Far Away from the Factories

An incorporated village remote from new factories, with thatch-roofed homes and an unpaved road. Source: Charlotte Goodburn.

Translating China's Special Economic Zone 'Model' into Rural Southern India: Impacts on Urban Development

Charlotte GOODBURN
Jan KNOERICH

This essay explores the impacts of trying to import a Chinese 'model' of special economic zones (SEZs) into southern India. Inspired by China's SEZ success, from 2005, India set up large, city-style zones. Based on in-depth examination of one such zone, we argue the Chinese SEZ 'model' is not a coherent strategy, but an amorphous mix of policies and practices imported by multiple actors at multiple levels. We show how the 'model' interacts with local Indian contexts to create new, uneven forms of urban experience, particularly for local villagers and migrant workers, rather than any straightforward 'replication' of China's path.

China's special economic zones (SEZs) facilitated the country's transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy from the 1980s, attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) and contributing significantly to Chinese economic development. The success of this model attracted many imitators across the developing world. Though China has recently been involved in 'exporting' its SEZ model through directly funding SEZs abroad, in many other cases, host countries have attempted to imitate China's success without any direct involvement from the Chinese state. These include India, which from 2005 attempted to establish new Chinese-style SEZs and reinvigorate older export zones based on its interpretation of China's model. Sharing similarities with China in population size, economic growth rate, and agricultural sector size, India offers an interesting case study of how China's 'model' can be translated elsewhere. Yet, the South Asian country's different political, social, cultural, and temporal contexts highlight the difficulty of attempting to copy China's experience—itself based on a complex genealogy and distinctive set of global, national, and local factors.

This essay examines the attempted replication of China's SEZ experience in India through a focus on one (anonymised) Indian zone, which is marketed as a new 'industrial city' and was directly modelled on a Chinese zone its founders had visited. It employed the same international consultants who had designed well-known Chinese zones, and attracted investment from several Chinese firms, which, alongside multinational firms with manufacturing experience in China, began to import labour practices from China.

This case study suggests China's SEZ experience may be translated into India by a variety of actors, with a variety of motives, going well beyond intentional 'policy transfer' by state policymakers. The Chinese model is diffuse, contingent, and dynamic, rather than a static template, and it produces results in the Indian context that are similar to yet different from those in China. Our research shows how different elements of the model are mobilised by different actors; how they mutate in response to local political, economic, social, and cultural contexts; and how they produce new forms of urban experience rather than replicating China's path.

Policy Mobilities and China's SEZ 'Model'

The field of policy mobilities has been developed by political and urban geographers over the past decade as an alternative to political science's policy-transfer approach (Benson and Jordan 2011). Policy transfer conceptualises policy movement in terms of careful selection and application of best practices by rational decision-makers, but the policy mobilities approach provides a more geographically sensitive approach, emphasising sociospatial contexts and the mutation of policies as they travel (Peck and Theodore 2012). One strand of the policy mobilities literature is concerned with urban models, in which groups of principles have become associated with particular cities and are increasingly used to inform urban development policy (McFarlane 2011). Such models were originally overwhelmingly European and North American, but Asian cities have provided more recent alternatives, especially for other Asian countries (Robinson 2002; Roy 2016). The literature suggests the export of these models is facilitated through the interaction of state actors, as well as cross-border networks and consultants, who contribute funding and expertise (Shin et al. 2020).

When a model is adopted, it is also adapted. Actors adopting the model prioritise aspects they find attractive (McCann and Ward 2012), transplant the model into different conditions (Ong 2011), and often work from an abstract ideal and not a realisable plan (Shin 2019). We suggest there may also be different actors at different levels involved in translating the model, some of whom are unintentional agents of policy mobility or who reproduce unwanted and/or unobserved aspects of the original. Moreover, the model itself may have antecedents that complicate a straightforward understanding of its development. China's SEZs—with their complex genealogy, ranging from the colonial entrepôts of Singapore and Hong Kong, newly industrialising Taiwan and South Korea, to the classic European example of Shannon, Ireland—provide an excellent example of such a policy model.

SEZs were established in China from the 1980s to overcome economic and technological weaknesses following three decades of relative isolation under Mao Zedong. Their core features have been enumerated by many and usually include: a large, geographically delimited, physically secured area of former rural land; governance by comprehensive national legislation, with local-level autonomy to develop laws and administer zones; benefits for foreign investors, including financial incentives, exemptions, and more relaxed labour regulation; and labour-intensive manufacturing, employing primarily young, female rural migrants (World Bank 2015). From the start, they were designed as experimental zones—sites of transformation as well as production. China's first four SEZs—Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Shantou, and Xiamen—were established along the coastal periphery, not only to attract investment from Hong Kong and Taiwan, but also so they could be easily erased if they failed (Bach 2017). The new term 'special economic zone' aimed to avoid association with capitalist export processing zones, instead connoting model cities with residential and leisure areas and diverse industries (Wong 1987).

Their flagship was Shenzhen: a new centrally planned industrial city with a range of urban functions, as well as an export processing hub. Its preferential treatment for investors, possibilities for joint ventures, and experimental contract labour system ensured rapid investment from overseas. Many multinational corporations set up manufacturing bases, employing workers recruited from rural China. By 1989, there were more than one million temporary workers in the zone, 80 per cent of whom were women (Sklair 1991). The Shenzhen experiment was a great economic success: it is now a 500-square-kilometre megacity of about 20 million people, one of China's principal import–export hubs, and a globally leading manufacturing centre attracting millions of internal migrants (Goodburn 2020a). China now has a wide range of other economic 'zones' of different shapes, sizes, locations, and nomenclatures, which are estimated to have contributed 22 per cent of China's gross domestic product, 45 per cent of FDI, and 60 per cent of exports, as well as accelerating nationwide industrialisation, agricultural modernisation, and urbanisation (World Bank 2015).

Indian Emulation and the 2005 SEZ Act

China's success in expanding manufactured exports and employment inspired many developing countries, including India, whose own export processing zones (EPZs) pre-dated China's SEZs but were not successful in attracting significant investment or promoting growth (Knoerich et al. 2021). In 1994, the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations sent a mission to China to identify 'useful features of Chinese zones that could be adapted to Indian conditions' (Cross 2014: 37) and, in 2000, commerce minister Murasoli Maran visited and was impressed by Shenzhen (Palit and Bhattacharjee 2008). Borrowing the Chinese term 'SEZ', Maran initiated new rules for the establishment of private zones in India and began converting EPZs into SEZs, which were intended to encompass the full array of facilities that make up a city, with housing, hospitals, schools, and leisure and retail developments, rather than the existing more modest industrial enclaves (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2005). In 2005, these developments were formalised in the new *Special Economic Zones Act* (*SEZ Act*), which was aimed explicitly to 'help India replicate the Chinese success story of rapid industrialization' (Parliament of India 2007).

The new Act encompassed not only trade and investment, but also radical deregulation, infrastructure creation, and tax regime changes, to overcome barriers raised by monetary, trade, tariff, and labour regulations. As in China, SEZ policy was strategic and experimental: in 2005, commerce minister Kamal Nath commented approvingly that the *SEZ Act* would allow massive 'rurbanisation' (that is, conversion of rural land for urban development) free of the 'shackles of the government inspector' (Kothari et al. 2010). However, in marked contrast to China, India's *SEZ Act* also encouraged private investors, rather than the state, to develop the zones (Aggarwal 2010; Sampat 2010). In setting up city-style zones, the developer would be responsible for providing civic amenities, roads, sewerage, housing, utilities, green spaces, and education—in essence, taking over the role of the municipal government (Menon and Mitra 2009). The state's role would be limited to that of broker in assisting private entities to acquire the land (Sood and Kennedy 2020).

Impacts of Emulation in the 'Industrial City' Case Study Zone

The anonymous 'industrial city' discussed here is a key example of this new type of Indian SEZ: it is large, at nearly 100 square kilometres; it is in an underdeveloped rural location; and it was established by private investors shortly after the 2005 *SEZ Act*. For inspiration, the founders looked directly to China, visiting several SEZs and other industrial zones before identifying one that could act as an immediate model. They were so impressed by the architecture and spatial layout of the Chinese zone—spread over a vast area in anticipation of industrial, commercial, and residential expansion—they hired the same third-country consultants who had designed it to work on the plans for their 'city'.

The model Chinese zone, founded in the 1990s, emphasised 'scientific planning', providing extensive infrastructure before the construction of factories, and strictly dividing the zone by sector and function. It was well connected to existing transport and services from the start and rapidly developed its own amenities, including commercial centres, education areas, leisure and recreation districts, as well as industrial and high-end residential areas. The Indian city followed a similar pattern in terms of the layout, but when we visited in 2018, its vast terrain was mostly still unoccupied and its wide, multilane highways almost empty. Leisure and commercial areas were unfinished—a source of much complaint from the Chinese firm managers we interviewed, who compared the lack of facilities negatively with China's zones. They highlighted the role of the state in Chinese infrastructural development; as one factory manager put it:

> In China all the basic facilities, like shopping malls and mobile [phone] signal, would be here first; it would be mandatory. The government would send a command to establish them. But here, it's democratic … the government can't just tell Airtel to set up a tower.

Different ownership structures played a crucial role in the provision of amenities: the private nature of the Indian zone meant there was no state-directed infrastructure development. Although the 2005 *SEZ Act* dictates that infrastructural services be provided, the state's responsibility ends at the gates of the zone (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2005). The outcome is that, with no state investment inside the SEZ, as well as the generally more limited state ability to mobilise large development projects in India than in China, the pace of SEZ expansion is much slower. The Indian zone developers had to expand cautiously in line with demand from investors, rather than rapidly based on broad policy ambitions for local development.

Another source of complaint for Chinese managers was the rural location, with the nearest big city nearly 80 kilometres away along poorly maintained roads. Though the zone's founders promoted the location as equidistant between ports and airports, it made urban integration more difficult than in the case of the Chinese model zone, while it also lacked the huge state investment to create new urban infrastructure that had ensured the rapid development of China's 1980s SEZs like Shenzhen. Therefore, despite its founders' attempts to emulate a specific Chinese model of internal spatial configuration, differences in ownership, location, and infrastructural investment meant the Indian industrial city developed in a manner fundamentally different both from its immediate model and from the original Chinese SEZs.

While firm managers bemoaned unfinished infrastructure, local villagers were also dissatisfied with spatial changes, complaining that much of the land they had sold to developers lay for years undeveloped, yet they were deprived of access through it by the internal customs boundary that divided the city's domestic production zone from the formal SEZ area. Just as in Chinese SEZs of the 1980s, this boundary could only be crossed by those employed within the formal SEZ, and then only with an official pass at the start and end of their shifts. The boundary thus meant locals' access to space was radically reshaped and the urban fabric of the city disrupted. Villagers who continued to farm after the establishment of the SEZ lost access to grazing routes and watering spots, and some were obliged to graze their remaining cattle within villages—sometimes causing damage.

Despite the roles of collective ownership and the *hukou* (户口; 'household registration') system in producing China's 'urban villages' (城中村) (see O'Donnell 2021), a surprisingly similar phenomenon was visible in the Indian case study, where, as in early Chinese SEZs, agricultural land was purchased for SEZ development while housing land was left intact, thus removing the need for resettlement. This mode of incorporating villages into the city enabled the founders to avoid the extensive protests that had characterised other cases of Indian land acquisition (Bedi 2013; Srinivasulu 2014), and it was lauded as a model for future development of large SEZs in India. Some villages benefited quickly: paved roads were dug past those near the new factories and residential areas, and electric streetlights erected. Some former farmers used the cash payment for their land to upgrade their homes and, in wealthier and better located (typically higher-caste) villages, rooms were let to white-collar in-migrants, providing a useful source of income.

This letting of rooms parallels the widespread construction of accommodation for migrant workers in Chinese 'urban villages', some of which has been so lucrative the original inhabitants have purchased property in the 'city proper', while continuing to let out apartments in the village (Liu et al. 2010). However, in the Indian city, incoming white-collar employees were few and many preferred to commute from elsewhere, given the city's lack of amenities. The more numerous blue-collar migrant workers were accommodated in hostels outside the city, so opportunities for rental income were limited. Moreover, the option of expanding homes for rental was not feasible financially or practically for most villagers, particularly in less well-connected (often lower-caste) villages, where their greater distance from new factories meant they remained without paved roads and public transport.

As in China's early SEZs, then, several 'off-grid' urban villages emerged, where roads and other facilities remained the responsibility of the lowest level of rural government, which lacked resources. Though a new private school was built, with subsidised fees for those formally employed in the zone, a public primary school was demolished to make way for new roads. Children from nearby villages now must travel several kilometres over unpaved tracks to attend school. Nor were the factory jobs, which villagers had been promised when they agreed to sell their land, available to all, since most villagers' low level of education meant they were not chosen for assembly-line work. As in the Chinese model zone, those villagers who were recruited were typically on informal contracts with local labour agencies, working in maintenance, gardening, or cleaning. While some found work outside the city gates, many were unemployed or dependent on the income of a single family member.

Factory employment in the industrial city primarily targeted young women educated to at least age 16—akin to the *dagongmei* (打工妹) of China's SEZs. While young women's factory labour is not original to China, the gendered Chinese regime of precarious employment in export-oriented multinational manufacturing has been elevated to the status of a 'model' (Smith and Pun 2006). The reproduction of these gendered patterns

New Village

An incorporated village close to factories, with a new paved road and upgraded homes with additional floors for room rentals. Source: Charlotte Goodburn.

in the Indian industrial city, by both Chinese and multinational firms moving from China, suggests how corporate actors may contribute to the importing of a development model, albeit unintentionally, by continuing practices in the new setting. Yet, in conjunction with India's differing labour regulations and sociocultural setting, the impacts on neither labour management nor the women themselves were straightforwardly reproduced.

Young women were preferred as factory workers in the Indian city for reasons like those in China. They were seen as more docile than men and unlikely to object to low wages. Young men complained it was difficult for them to find work, since they were viewed as potential troublemakers by factory managers. Moreover, the labour was seen as particularly suitable for women: gender stereotypes about 'nimble fingers' and the idea that women more willingly accept tedious work—long used to justify hiring women on Chinese assembly lines—were frequently mentioned by Chinese and other managers in the Indian city. An additional factor was that some work was in traditionally female roles such as sewing, which was highlighted as work to which husbands and fathers would not object. The much lower rates of female workforce participation in India than in China (Klasen and

Pieters 2015) made it more likely that male family members would reject women's engagement in paid labour without extensive assurances about the nature of the work as well as the working environment and accommodation.

These requirements meant Indian workers were subject to a far more repressive workplace and accommodation regime than their Chinese counterparts. Since firms demanded more female factory labour than was available locally, thousands of migrant women aged 18–23 were recruited from poor rural areas of the state to work for one to three years, before returning home for marriage. Unlike Chinese migrant workers, who were accommodated in factory dormitories, they were housed in privately run hostels subcontracted by the firms and located outside the city gates. Buses collected the women from the hostels before each shift and returned them as soon as the shift was over. All food was provided in the hostel and—apart from one weekly group excursion under the supervision of a warden to buy essential items such as toiletries—women were not allowed to leave without permission. These extreme restrictions were required by firms, since families would not allow their daughters to migrate for work if their 'safety' (physical, moral, and sexual) was not guaranteed. Controlling women's movements thus allowed firms to ensure an adequate supply of young, female labour.

These repressive conditions meant few Indian migrant women experienced the kinds of emancipatory effects—a greater say in spouse selection and family decision-making or, in the longer term, potentially settling down and marrying in the city—that some Chinese migrants experienced (Fan 2007; Goodburn 2015, 2020b). Although the zone's founders spoke positively of the social changes they believed would arise from women's employment (enhanced autonomy, later marriage, increased emphasis on female education), these gains applied predominantly to local women, who could avoid the hostel regime. For the zone's migrant women, any such effects were offset by their repressive living conditions, which prevented urban integration.

The Limits of Translation

Overall, our research shows how the Chinese SEZ model is translated into India by a range of actors (policymakers, consultants, firms, migrants, local people, and others) and interacts with specific local contexts—including differing roles for state and private capital, local and national institutional frameworks, and sociocultural norms and expectations—to create varied impacts. Although the Indian zone has achieved some level of industrialisation and urbanisation, it falls short of the rapid urban expansion of most Chinese zones and its impacts have been uneven. The extension of infrastructural development to only some villages has resulted in prosperity and poverty existing side-by-side; villagers who gave up fields lament working as low-paid labourers on the site of land they once owned; contact with better-paid migrants as well as villagers now occupying higher-status positions has led to resentment over new forms of inequality; and, while local women may benefit from temporary factory employment, migrant women suffer under the repressive workplace/hostel regime. Like its Chinese counterparts, then, the Indian zone raises questions about how multinational capital, and rural and migrant populations, can be integrated into the new city, and what sort of spatial features, social relations, and governance structures can emerge through management of the resulting diversity. Yet the outcomes for social change and cohesion, and for individual lives and livelihoods, have, in many and perhaps unforeseen ways, been different from those in China, as key actors, practices, and policies remain rooted in local contexts and resistant to convergence. ●

This essay draws on the authors' paper 'Importing Export Zones: Processes and Impacts of Replicating a Chinese Model of Urbanization in Rural South India', published in *Urban Geography* in December 2021, doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2021.2014669.

A City's Skyline in the Making

The developing skyline of Sihanoukville. Source: Max Pixel (CC).

Overlapping Agendas on the Belt and Road: The Case of the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone

Mark BO
Neil LOUGHLIN

Initiated in 2006, the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ) has become a flagship Belt and Road project in Cambodia. This essay examines the development of the project since its inception, considering the various drivers that have moved it forward and the numerous agendas and interests that have shaped it. With popular analysis and critiques of the Belt and Road Initiative and Chinese overseas investment often based on sweeping assessments and assumptions, the authors argue that this method of excavating the roots of projects and contextualising them locally generates a richer picture, which is essential to better understand project drivers and impacts and, ultimately, respond effectively when concerns emerge.

Since Chinese President Xi Jinping first announced it in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has evolved to become the overarching framework through which China frames much of its global engagement. Among many other countries, Cambodia has enthusiastically embraced the BRI and, during President Xi's visit to Phnom Penh in 2016, the Chinese and Cambodian governments signed a memorandum of understanding on bilateral cooperation under the initiative (Xinhua 2017).

The BRI has been subjected to much scrutiny in recent years. With the initiative encompassing many projects with high environmental, social, and governance risks, such scrutiny is valid, and indeed necessary. However, many critiques assume the BRI is a clearly defined masterplan and fail to pay attention to the detachment between (often vague) intentions and realities on the ground, overlooking, for instance, how local agency plays a fundamental role in shaping Chinese engagements overseas, for better or worse. Cambodia is an important case in point. As the country has become a major focus of Chinese diplomatic and economic engagement, some observers have raised concerns about the kingdom increasingly coming within China's 'sphere of influence' (Layton 2017), or even becoming a 'Chinese colony' (Sukumaran 2019). While China has clearly become a favoured partner of the Cambodian Government, broad-stroke assessments of the relationship often fail to consider host-country agency and the diversity of agendas in play. As we have argued elsewhere (Loughlin and Grimsditch 2021), more grounded assessments that consider local dynamics and interests are key to understanding the BRI and projects that carry its branding.

A longer-term historical perspective is also helpful to put the dynamics we are seeing today in context. In the case of Cambodia, although discussion of the two countries' ever strengthening ties is now often framed within the narrative of the BRI, the bilateral relationship long pre-dates these developments, with the two countries celebrating 60 years of friendship in 2018. This bond navigated lengthy interruptions during that period, but the mid 2000s marked a new phase (IDI 2021b). The year 2006 was a watershed moment, as a visit from then premier Wen Jiabao resulted in several bilateral agreements and a package of US$600 million in loans and grants (AP 2006). Ties have since gone from strength to strength, with relations upgraded in 2010 to a 'comprehensive strategic cooperation partnership'—China's highest level of bilateral relations. Beijing has since become Cambodia's top source of investment and aid, and its number one trading partner.

An exaggerated emphasis on state interactions also gives a skewed picture of the relationship. In Cambodia, alongside state-backed investment leaving China via formal channels, a parallel world of loosely regulated and often illicit private capital flows has emerged and grown exponentially in the past decade. This has manifested most starkly in the coastal city of Sihanoukville, where a boom in property development and 'legitimate' gambling investment became intertwined with illegal online gambling, telecoms fraud, money-laundering, and other criminal activities (Turton 2021). Recent analyses of the Chinese presence in Cambodia have at times conflated these illicit activities with other types of investment (Goldberg et al. 2021). At the same time, a complex geopolitical landscape has shadowed narratives of Chinese investment in Cambodia, with the United States especially scrambling to push back against what it sees as an expansion of China's diplomatic, economic, and military influence in the region (Nachemson 2021). As a result, attention is often drawn away from the multifaceted push and pull factors that steer the BRI, obscuring what is in fact a nuanced landscape of multiple (and sometimes competing) interests and agendas.

To suggest an alternative, more grounded approach to studying the BRI and, more broadly, Chinese engagements overseas, this essay takes a deeper dive into the case of the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ), a landmark BRI project where both Chinese and Cambodian state development objectives align. Strong state backing from China has enabled Chinese commercial actors to realise the project, supported by top-level political backing from Cambodia and well-positioned local elites. This comes in the context of host-country development strategies that have prioritised the pursuit of an export-oriented development model that has long been promoted by a range of actors, including Cambodia's multilateral, Western development partners. Chinese investment and development projects in Cambodia are extremely diverse and each tells its own story, but by focusing on the SSEZ, we seek to illustrate how deeper dives can cut through the competing narratives around the BRI, to reveal how China's global interactions often build on existing initiatives and development models, and show how they are able to align with, adapt to, and support prevailing local and global dynamics.

Archaeology of a Showcase BRI Project

China is now by far Cambodia's top investor, but this is just one aspect of the countries' bilateral ties (IDI 2021a). China is also the number one trading partner—with bilateral trade surpassing US$11 million in 2021 (Xinhua 2020)—and the largest source of development aid, according to Cambodia's own tally (CDC 2020). At the same time, Chinese contractors have become a mainstay of the Cambodian construction industry, making infrastructure projects possible and facilitating the property boom Cambodia was experiencing before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic—generating significant revenues for China's state-owned firms in the process. Private capital from China also dominates the manufacturing sector, which is largely focused on garments and footwear (IDI 2020). Military cooperation has also increased in recent years, with China's ambassador referring to bilateral military ties in 2021 as a key pillar of the two countries' 'steel friendship' (钢铁友谊) (PRC Embassy 2021).

High-level bilateral meetings between Cambodia and China are often followed by joint statements identifying priority cooperation areas and projects. Communiqués over the past few years have made specific reference to the SSEZ, as well as other key projects such as the Phnom Penh–Sihanoukville Expressway and the Angkor International Airport in Siem Reap (Kingdom of Cambodia and PRC 2019). These projects are routinely referred to as priority BRI projects in statements from Cambodian and Chinese officials, but the scope of the two countries' development cooperation extends far beyond them. China is Cambodia's top source of concessional finance, which flows to transport, energy, and irrigation projects, among others, and in 2019 alone came close to US$500 million (CDC 2020). Commercial finance from Chinese state-owned banks has also supported extensive infrastructure developments, and private investment from China now eclipses that of other nations (IDI 2021b).

As one of the earliest cooperation projects launched under the post-2000 phase of China–Cambodia relations, the SSEZ is a useful case study, showing how a plurality of diverse stakeholders is helping to realise both Chinese and Cambodian state objectives via what has become a landmark BRI project. One of Cambodia's largest special economic zones, the SSEZ covers more than 11 square kilometres. When fully developed, it will accommodate 300 factories and, according to the developer, will employ 80,000 to 100,000 industrial workers (SSEZ n.d.). Its initial phase focused on textiles and apparel, luggage, leather goods, and wood products, with the second phase broadening this to

The SSEZ Expands

Sihanoukville SEZ, October 2021. Source: Google Earth.

machinery, equipment, building materials, and other industries (SSEZ n.d.). By the end of 2021, more than 170 factories had been established within the zone, the majority of which were Chinese, reportedly employing 30,000 people (Zhang 2022). Satellite images of the SSEZ indicate about 50 per cent of the zone had been developed by October 2021.

The project is a joint venture between Jiangsu Taihu Cambodia International Economic Cooperation Zone Investment Company Limited and Cambodia International Investment Development Group Company Limited (CIIDG). Jiangsu Taihu is owned by four Chinese companies, with Hongdou Group holding the largest stake. Hongdou is a major private company from Wuxi, Jiangsu Province (CCPIT n.d.). CIIDG is owned by family members of an influential Cambodian tycoon and senator (IDI 2021a).

Founded back in the late 1950s, Hongdou has traversed complex political and economic waters throughout its existence. Soon after the patriarch of the Zhou family established a small cotton-processing operation in 1957 in Wuxi, party officials ordered that it merge with several local collective enterprises. In 1983, when Deng Xiaoping's reform and opening-up strategy was well under way, Zhou Yaoting, the patriarch's son, took over the business, which was still ostensibly state-owned. By 1992, the Zhous and other private individuals had gained a 50 per cent share in the company. They then spent the next decade increasing their shareholding and purchasing government-held shares until 2004, when the Chinese Government sold its remaining stake in the company, which along the way had picked up the name 'Hongdou'. Today, Hongdou remains a family enterprise, with the third generation Zhou Haijiang at the helm and various family members holding senior management positions (Flannery 2005). In the past two decades, the company has also developed its activities overseas. As production and salary costs increased in China during the 2000s, like many other Chinese apparel producers, the company began to feel the pinch. In a *Forbes* interview from 2015, the chairman put the company's continued success during these 'changing times' down to diversification into new areas domestically and overseas (Flannery 2015).

The Cambodian partner CIIDG also navigated an evolving domestic landscape and its owners emerged from Cambodia's post–civil war settlement among the top players in Cambodia's business community. The company was founded by Senator Lau Meng Khin in the late 1990s, when he made his fortune through logging and other ventures (Diepart and Schoenberger 2016: 161). CIIDG is now chaired by his wife, Choeung Sopheap, with directorships held by their children (MOC n.d.). The family has been described as a 'magnet for capital from China' and, through CIIDG, they have secured multiple lucrative joint ventures with Chinese investors in real estate, agriculture, mining, and energy (Bahree 2014).

The SSEZ has been a joint priority of the two governments since 2006, when it was designated one of a handful of pilot 'foreign economic trade cooperation zones' by China's Ministry of Commerce (Hang et al. 2017). These pilot zones received subsidies from China's Ministry of Commerce to support their establishment (Bräutigam and Tang 2012), and the SSEZ received financing from the Export–Import Bank of China (Eximbank of China 2019) and insurance from the state policy insurance provider, Sinosure (n.d.). Chinese state-owned commercial banks have also expressed support for the development and financed specific parts of its infrastructure (Xinhua 2018). When the project experienced delays early on, as it 'ran into difficulties with the Cambodian partner', China's Ministry of Commerce brought the Chinese parties together, along with representatives of Wuxi Municipality, to seek a solution. This resulted in the restructuring of the joint-venture (Bräutigam and Tang 2012: 811). The high-level intervention from both the commerce ministry and the Wuxi Government illustrates the lengths the Chinese Government is willing to go to support these kinds of overseas pilot projects.

Although pre-dating the BRI by seven years, the SSEZ is now fully absorbed into Belt and Road rhetoric, with the zone often referred to as 'a landmark project' of the initiative. It enjoys high-level support from both governments and, in 2019, China's state media quoted Cambodia's then deputy prime minister Hor Namhong referring to the project as 'the biological child of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Chinese

Government' (Mao and Nguon 2019). As mentioned above, the SSEZ is explicitly labelled a priority project in numerous joint statements from the two governments, including joint communiqués from 2015, 2016, and 2019.

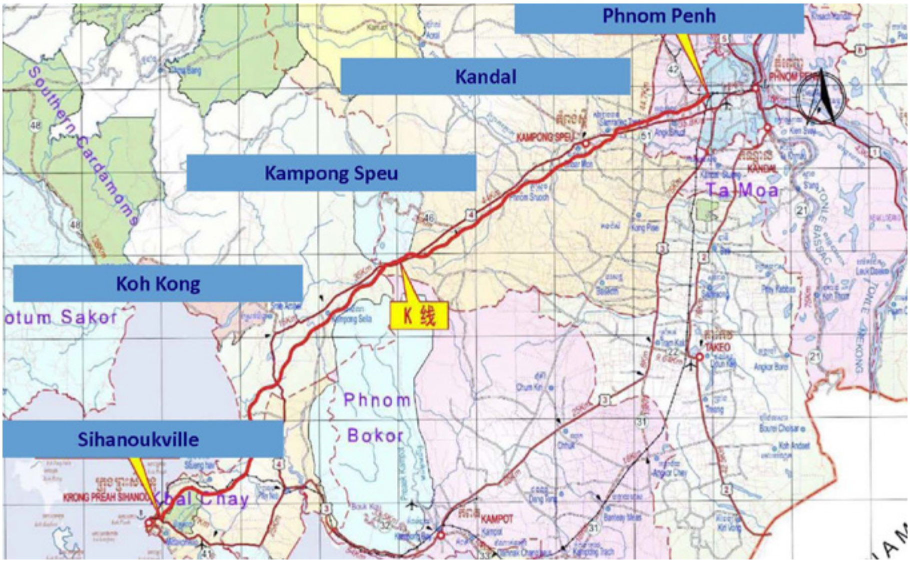
Cambodia has demonstrated its high-level support for the project throughout its life, committing to ensure its smooth development and guaranteeing its stability. For instance, in 2014, amid national labour unrest following the 2013 elections, a division of Cambodia's counterterror unit under the leadership of the Prime Minister's son visited the SSEZ. Its deputy commander stated that one of their most important tasks was 'to take responsibility for the stability and harmony of all the SEZs in Cambodia for counter-terrorism special operations … and to eliminate signs of unrest initiatives' (SSEZ 2014b). This was published in the news section of the SSEZ's website in English and Chinese. The same year, after a meeting with the incoming Preah Sihanouk Governor, the general manager of the zone said the provincial government was a 'powerful supporter' of the SSEZ, ready to help resolve difficulties, 'including illegal worker strike[s]' (SSEZ 2014a). These strong public statements from senior officials indicate the high priority the government attaches to the success of the project.

Overlapping Agendas

While a major project in its own right, the SSEZ fits into broader Cambodian and Chinese development strategies, with Cambodia seeking to attract industrial investors and China supporting its investors to 'go out'. This also aligns with regional economic models that have been promoted by other international and multilateral actors for the past three decades. While the SSEZ has come to represent a 'model' BRI project, it is important to note that this sits within policy and regulatory frameworks that emerged from the overlapping agendas of a range of stakeholders—Chinese, Cambodian, and international—rather than simply the exportation of Chinese industrial capacity.

One of the key objectives of the overseas industrial zone model was to support Chinese companies to 'go global in groups' (Bräutigam and Tang 2014: 79). The SSEZ is a strong example of this, with Chinese companies representing more than 85 per cent of the zone's tenants as of 2018. For inexperienced companies, investing in foreign countries is an intimidating prospect, but within the safety of a zone that is Chinese-managed, has state backing, and provides the infrastructure necessary to support industry, the prospect is likely much more attractive. In addition to creating overseas bases for these companies and expanding Hongdou's production empire, the SSEZ has generated business opportunities for a host of Chinese contractors who have provided construction services and built telecommunications and energy infrastructure within the zone.

The SSEZ also illustrates how Chinese state-backed capital and private commercial interests intertwine overseas. The state seeks to support Chinese enterprises to go global and access new markets, while also offshoring excess capacity. In the manufacturing



Building Connectivity

Route of the Phnom Penh–Sihanoukville Expressway currently under construction. Source: Cambodia Constructors Association 2020.

sector, this relies heavily on Chinese private sector actors who develop local connections, integrate with local business communities, and establish and operate factories and production lines. In addition to providing subsidies and mobilising capital, other state-backed infrastructure projects link the zone to the transport, telecommunications, and energy networks needed to make such industrial projects possible. For example, the soon to be opened Phnom Penh–Sihanoukville Expressway passes by the zone, and Sihanoukville hosts three Chinese-financed and built coal plants that connect to the provincial grid and beyond. The development of this infrastructure seeks to support Cambodia's industrialisation, makes Chinese commercial investments viable, and generates further contracts for state-backed construction and engineering firms (Grimsditch 2019).

The SSEZ showcases the interaction not only between Cambodian and Chinese development priorities, but also of other international and multilateral actors and, crucially, linkages to global value chains. Cambodian factories mostly feed Western export markets, and the United States has now become Cambodia's top market, with exports exceeding US$9 billion in 2021 (Hin 2022a). A major pull factor for Chinese companies establishing manufacturing bases in Cambodia has been the access to preferential trade terms with Europe and the United

States—described on the SSEZ website as Cambodia's 'favourable trade status' (SSEZ 2012). Even where factories are wholly Chinese-owned and utilise materials produced in China, they can benefit from relaxed tax regimes and quotas when exporting certain products to Europe and the United States, provided their products are assembled in Cambodia.

When looking at the broader set of agendas at play in Cambodia's industrial sector, it is also important to take a step back and consider the evolution of the SEZ model, which is the result of years of interventions from a range of development partners. The current phase of the Cambodia–China relationship initially developed against a backdrop in which Cambodia remained heavily dependent on foreign aid from the West and Japan, along with finance from multilateral institutions including the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB). While these actors provided financing for infrastructure and state capacity-building, they also encouraged market reforms, economic liberalisation, development of export-oriented industries, and enhanced physical connectivity within Cambodia and with the region.

This is illustrated well in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Cooperation Program, which was established in 1992 by the ADB and includes the Mekong countries plus Yunnan and Guangxi provinces in China (Raymond 2021). The GMS program is structured around 'economic corridors' that traverse the region. Along with energy and transport infrastructure, SEZs play an important role in these corridors. As the GMS action plan for 2018–22 states: 'The development of SEZs, especially in border areas along economic corridors, should be given special focus. SEZs will play an increasingly important role as investment locations that offer a competitive environment to support global supply chains' (ADB 2018). Rather than replacing or subverting prevailing development models, the BRI in many respects integrates with the existing direction of travel. The BRI's 'vision and actions' document discusses building 'key economic industrial parks as cooperation platforms' to 'promote industrial cluster development' and explicitly refers to the GMS program as an existing mechanism of which the BRI should 'make full use' (NDRC et al. 2015).

China's efforts to offshore excess capacity and lower-end manufacturing pre-date the BRI but have now been absorbed by the initiative. Likewise, SEZ development was a priority for Cambodia for years before the ascent of Chinese capital in the country but is now a central feature of the two countries' cooperation. Nonetheless, the SSEZ provides a useful snapshot of how the two countries' economic and policy objectives have aligned, building on a host-country development model that was heavily influenced in its formulation by Western, Japanese, and multilateral development actors promoting an export-oriented development model as part of a push towards economic liberalisation in the post-socialist, post-conflict nation.

Assessments of the SSEZ

Cambodia's Gateway to Global Markets

Sihanoukville is currently home to Cambodia's only deep-water port. Source: Dmitry Makeev (CC).

Assessments of the BRI in Cambodia can be highly polarised. Unsurprisingly, evaluations from Chinese state media are uniformly positive, including a recent report from *Xinhua* under the headline: 'China's BRI Projects Greatly Benefit Cambodian Economy, People: Officials, Experts' (Xinhua 2022). Such reports are often republished by local media and boosted on Cambodian Government websites and social media accounts (MPWT 2022). These often unnuanced takes are matched by equally sweeping critical assessments of the BRI, sometimes based on an incomplete understanding of what is occurring on the ground, with many of these reports revolving around the SSEZ.

One recent example of this is a report from the US research organisation C4ADS, evaluating 'economic development zones' in the Mekong (Goldberg et al. 2021). As noted above, since the mid 2010s, Sihanoukville has become a base for organised crime, dominated by mainland Chinese actors as well as groups from Hong Kong and Taiwan (Turton and Huang 2021). The C4ADS report conflates this with the SSEZ, and the report's deep dive into Chinese investment in Sihanoukville concludes:

> Belt and Road Initiative investments, including Sihanoukville SEZ, ostensibly espouse the goal of progress for local communities and countries. However, in this case, that progress greatly harmed the local populations with increasing crime rates, higher rents, overwhelmed infrastructure, suppression of the local culture, with locals cut out of the profits. (Goldberg et al. 2021: 35)

While it is entirely legitimate to raise concerns about the troubling recent developments in the city of Sihanoukville, the SSEZ is a self-contained zone outside the city, predating the shift in the city's development by almost a decade, and is a manufacturing and export hub with no links to gambling or urban real estate investment. Despite the economic downturn that hit the city after a ban on online gambling and the onset of the pandemic, the SSEZ has continued to report strong production and export figures (Hin 2022b).

The reality is that, among Cambodia's SEZs, the Sihanoukville zone is one of the most successful. This is certainly not to say that there are not concerns worthy of attention. Several companies based in the zone have been investigated for transhipping products via the zone to side-step US import tariffs (Prak 2019). The zone will soon bring online its own coal power plant, which will increase Cambodia's national carbon emissions and potentially push away global buyers who are conscious of their supply chains' exposure to carbon emissions (Ham 2021). Furthermore, the expansion of the zone and likely move up the industrial value chain potentially mean more energy and pollution-intensive industries will locate there, which will put strain on the Cambodian Government's rudimentary environmental regulation and enforcement agencies.

The closed nature of SEZs in general makes study of working conditions extremely challenging and, even though the SSEZ has been operating for more than a decade, no comprehensive assessments of labour practices among zone tenants have been published. The limited literature available indicates that union activity in the zone is limited, with a 2018 report finding only 12 government unions were active in six of the 100 factories operating at the time, with no independent unions (Khuon 2018). Workers interviewed for that report said their factories had no unions and, although some had workers' representatives, in cases of severe labour violations, they 'could not help'. In 2014, a Chinese-owned factory reportedly fired 10 union leaders and activists, who then struggled to find work in other factories within the zone due to their activities (CCIM 2018). Interviews compiled by an academic researcher in 2017 also included testimony from people who claimed they were fired and then blacklisted across the zone for their union activities (Thame 2017). A labour ministry official responded to criticism by saying the SSEZ had a committee of representatives from government agencies and complaints could 'be put in a mailbox' (Niem 2018).

However, it is important to note that similar issues exist across Cambodia's industrial sector and have also been observed in SEZs across the region. As Thame (2017: 4) notes in a regional study of SEZs, limited transparency, displacement, labour violations, and selective enforcement of environmental regulations are common. While these issues exist in both Chinese and non–Chinese-owned zones and factories, Chinese companies have an outsized presence in Cambodia's manufacturing sector and more frequently appear in critical reporting, especially concerning labour issues. It therefore follows that Chinese policymakers face a greater imperative and a clear responsibility to take action to raise the standards of companies operating in overseas industry.

There are signals that policymakers in China are increasingly cognisant of the reputational issues Chinese companies face around the world, as evidenced by the now common references to developing 'high-quality' infrastructure and building a 'green' BRI (Xi 2021). Regulations and guidelines related to Chinese overseas investment and finance continue to evolve and are becoming more detailed. Although most provide guidance rather than mandated rules, they increasingly urge Chinese firms to ensure compliance with local regulation or, where they fall short, to apply Chinese or international best-practice standards (MOFCOM and MEE 2021). In this regard, many Chinese companies have a long way to go, with most still content to rely on simply satisfying local norms and regulatory standards, regardless of their adequacy. As the SSEZ continues to expand, and if it does draw in more projects with greater ecological footprints, scrutiny will increase if appropriate standards are not upheld within the zone.

What Next for the BRI in Cambodia?

While Chinese investment in Cambodia has made important contributions to improving infrastructure and generating employment in manufacturing, it has also enriched already powerful economic elites, who are frequently a gateway for Chinese capital. These business actors often enjoy close relationships with the ruling party, which in turn has proved itself to be adept at associating itself with development projects to boost its performance legitimacy (Loughlin and Milne 2020). During a 2016 event marking the opening of the one-hundredth business at the Sihanoukville SEZ, the Prime Minister asked: '[W]ere there no actions taken by Hun Sen, would there be any factories/enterprises in the whole country?' (Hun 2016). Many Chinese companies have proven capable of navigating both the formal and the informal political dynamics of the country, effectively harnessing the influence of local elite business interests. Before the rise of Chinese investment and aid in the country, the ruling party attempted to draw performance legitimacy from development interventions by other international actors, and business elites were courted by investors from other countries in the region who previously played a more dominant role in Cambodia's investment landscape. While this dynamic pre-dates the arrival of Chinese investment and the BRI, the huge influx of capital from China has supercharged it.

Chinese aid has reduced Cambodia's reliance on its traditional donors, and increased investment will potentially reduce the need for aid in the long term. It could be argued that in the near term this will bolster the position of Cambodia's ruling party and reduce its susceptibility to external pressure for political reform, but there are also challenges associated with such a shift (Loughlin 2021). Simply generating jobs in manufacturing is not enough to satisfy the needs of a population that is increasingly aspirational. Although there have been modest increases in the minimum wage of garment workers in recent years, they do not meet the increased cost of living brought about by the very economic development their labour has helped fuel. In a survey of garment workers in three Phnom Penh factories in 2016, Franceschini (2020) found the minimum wage covered just over 40 per cent of respondents' perceived monthly financial needs. Chinese investment will have to bring with it industrial upgrading and capacity-building for workers, and quality of life improvements commensurate with the role those workers play in making these developments possible. Furthermore, if Cambodian industry seeks to maintain and expand its links to global supply chains, the country and its investors will be subject to the demands of buyers—including requirements around the environment and human rights.

A More Grounded Approach?

As stated at the outset of this essay, critiques of the BRI and of specific BRI projects are often based on sweeping assessments and assumptions that obfuscate the often complex and multifaceted push and pull factors that drive projects forward. As a flagship cooperation project between Cambodia and China, the SSEZ has often been drawn into these oversimplified debates, and as such this essay represents an attempt at a deeper dive to reframe the project and capture the more nuanced story of its inception and development. This method of excavating the historical roots of projects and contextualising them locally can be applied to all sorts of developments, generating a much richer picture, which is essential if concerned stakeholders are to better understand their drivers and impacts and, ultimately, respond effectively when concerns emerge.

The SSEZ is a useful case study for such an exercise as it demonstrates a complex alignment of multiple agendas and drivers. These include high-level Chinese and host-country development strategies, local political and elite interests, and the benefits (and burdens) this can create for local people. It showcases the interaction of Chinese state and commercial priorities, how they overlap with pre-existing development agendas that China was not necessarily involved in crafting, and how this ultimately feeds into the demand of global supply chains for affordable products for largely Western consumer markets.

China's ascension to Cambodia's top economic and political partner has been rapid and, as is the case in many other countries, critical attention is often polarised and does not always facilitate improved understanding of China's developing role in the world. As noted earlier, all projects tell a different story and, to tell that story, it is essential to explore the historical and contemporary contexts, as well as the multiple drivers and interests in play.

Processing Ore

Artisanal mines near Letpadaung Mountain. Source: Wikimedia Commons (CC).

Civil Society's Multifaceted Response to China's Belt and Road Initiative

Shawn SHIEH

Chinese companies and investors have faced increasing pushback from communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) against their businesses in Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) partner countries. This essay examines some of the common themes related to Chinese overseas investment that emerge from this pushback, exploring and categorising the wide range of civil society responses. It also discusses the recent statements and initiatives coming from Chinese policymakers, industry groups, and companies who are slowly beginning to pay attention to the grievances of local communities and CSOs, and delves into the opportunities and risks for civil society when seeking to hold these stakeholders accountable.

Three years before the official christening of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013, a Chinese-financed copper mine in Myanmar provided a cautionary tale of the risks Chinese companies face in their overseas investments and the role civil society can play in pushing back (Yu 2021a).[1] The Chinese company in question was Myanmar Wanbao Mining Copper Limited (Wanbao), a subsidiary of China North Industries Corporation (Norinco), a large state-owned conglomerate mainly engaged in the defence industry. In 2010, Wanbao signed a contract to invest US$997 million in the Letpadaung Copper Mine, receiving the rights to operate the mine for 60 years and becoming a 49 per cent shareholder in the mine with Myanmar Economic Holdings (MEHL), a conglomerate owned by the Myanmar military, as the majority shareholder (Chan and Pun 2021).[2]

1 I use civil society and civil society organisations (CSOs) throughout this article to refer to a wide range of groups, including communities, informal associations, indigenous groups, social movements, as well as formally registered nongovernmental organisations (NGOs).

2 The current production-sharing contract, modified after protests in 2012, gives 51 per cent of the profits to the Government of Myanmar—represented by the state-owned company Mining Enterprise 1. Wanbao Mining's share of profits was cut to 30 per cent and MEHL's to 19 per cent (Win Ko Ko Latt and Soe Than Lynn 2013). The mine was previously owned by Canadian company Ivanhoe, and has a controversial history punctuated by conflict with local people (Yu 2021a).

In what is often standard procedure for Chinese investors, Wanbao relied on government authorities to smooth the way for its takeover of the project. At the time, Myanmar was under military rule and civil society had limited influence, while China was Myanmar's leading international investor. In this political environment, Wanbao had little incentive to consult with villagers. This situation changed when village heads began confiscating land for the mine, providing little compensation to villagers in the process. In response, villagers began to complain and protest. They became more emboldened with the dissolution of the military regime and the transition to a quasi-civilian government in March 2011 and the election of Aung San Suu Kyi and other National League for Democracy members to the still military-dominated parliament. By late 2012, thousands of villagers were participating in protests and, together with activists, community leaders, students, and even Buddhist monks, they occupied the project site. The response by Wanbao and the Chinese Embassy was clumsy and defensive. Wanbao blamed the protests on outside activists and the Chinese Embassy told journalists the mine was intended to benefit Myanmar's development (Chan and Pun 2021: 11).

In December 2012, the new military-backed civilian government decided to halt the project and, with the military's approval, set up a parliamentary commission headed by Aung Sang Suu Kyi to lead a review. The commission's findings and recommendations led Wanbao to implement some corrective measures starting in 2013. In addition to a revised profit-sharing agreement, these included agreeing to provide villagers with job opportunities, supporting vocational and small business training, pledging 2 per cent of the mine's profits to corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, setting up a community social development team to consult with villagers, and commissioning a consulting company to carry out another environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) (Cai et al. 2017; Chan and Pun 2021). According to Chinese researchers who conducted interviews with the villagers several years later, a significant gap still remained between Wanbao's promises and the demands of the villagers, many of whom were not receptive to other solutions and simply wanted the project to stop (Personal communication with author, March 2021).

Recurring Themes from the Letpadaung Case

The Letpadaung Copper Mine is not an isolated case and is illustrative of the problems Chinese companies have faced elsewhere by failing to consult with local communities and civil society over land resettlement and compensation, ESIAs, and other related issues. Cai and Zhou (2018), who conducted interviews with 12 Chinese companies with large-scale investment projects in Myanmar, found only three were operating according to plan. Three other projects—the Myanmar–China Oil and Gas Pipelines (Yu 2021b), the Tagaung Taung nickel mine project, and the Letpadaung Copper Mine—had come under pressure from local stakeholders, while the Myitsone hydropower project was suspended due to domestic opposition (Yu 2021c). The Letpadaung case, however, is particularly valuable in providing a high-profile and well-documented example that foreshadows several themes related to Chinese overseas investment that reappear in other cases (Cai et al. 2017; Cai and Zhou 2018).

One such theme is Chinese companies partnering with local companies with ties to corrupt or autocratic governments with little transparency or accountability. In the Letpadaung case, Wanbao partnered with a very powerful company owned by the Myanmar military. Chinese companies may see these partnerships as providing investment security and political protection from legal and social risks, but in engaging in such collaborations, they tend to rely on host country partners to smooth the way and as a result take little responsibility for their own actions. They also reinforce public perceptions of collusion and rent-seeking between host-country elites and Chinese companies—a theme that aligns with findings from a study of Chinese investment in three conflict-affected BRI partner countries: Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, and Uganda (Swaine et al. 2021: iii).

A second, and related, theme is that Chinese companies often find themselves operating in countries where the political situation is unstable, and they are frequently unable to adapt to rapid change. Wanbao entered Myanmar when the military government was in power and the voice of civil society was much more restricted. The company was content to operate within this status quo, making few gestures to communities and allowing local elites to deal with complicated land compensation and relocation issues. When the situation changed in the following year, Wanbao was slow to respond to escalating protests and took corrective actions only after recommendations made by the parliamentary commission.

A third theme is the way the Chinese Government and company representatives took a top-down, defensive, and even hostile approach to dealing with civil society organisations (CSOs) and communities. When protests gathered steam in the autumn of 2012, Wanbao and other Chinese companies in Myanmar sought to brand the protests as illegitimate, accusing outside activists of manipulating villagers. The Chinese Embassy also made a tone-deaf effort to defend the Chinese investment in the mine as socially responsible by saying it was intended to help the country's industrialisation, adding that China would not back a project that did not support local people (Chan and Pun 2021: 12).

A final motif is the preference of Chinese companies to promote the economic benefits of their projects, emphasising how they support skills-building and job creation and expand market opportunities for village entrepreneurs, while often failing to deal with more difficult issues such as relocation and compensation demands, and creating long-term community consultation and grievance mechanisms.

The Diversity of Civil Society Responses

In a recent report, the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC) provided an account of the wide range of human rights violations linked to Chinese overseas investments it has documented. Of the 679 allegations BRHHC documented between 2013 and 2020, 31 per cent involved inadequate disclosure of environmental impact assessments (EIAs), 29 per cent involved land rights violations, 28 per cent loss of livelihoods, 19 per cent labour issues, and 18 per cent pollution and health (BHRRC 2021: 17–19; 2022). Community protests, like those in the Wanbao case, may be the

High Above Letpadaung

Satellite view of the area of the Letpadaung Copper Mine. Source: Openstreetmap (CC).

most common image many people have when they think about civil society pushback against such violations. The reality is that responses have taken a wide range of pathways and strategies. One way to categorise these diverse responses is to group them into actions at the local, national, and international levels.

At the international level, some CSOs and communities have used international treaties and norms such as the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and grievance mechanisms associated with international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC) to hold Chinese companies accountable. Communities in Cambodia sought to use international human rights mechanisms to hold the Chinese sugar company Hengfu and its subsidiaries accountable for lost land and livelihood opportunities (Mackenzie et al. 2022). UN officials have written to the Chinese Government on the communities' behalf and are awaiting a response (BHRRC 2021: 27). Similarly, in the past few years, international and local CSOs in Indonesia have worked together on an international media campaign and to file a complaint through the IFC's accountability mechanism, the Compliance Advisory Ombudsman, about the dangers posed to nearby villages of a mine whose majority owner is a Chinese SOE and whose parent company received loans from a Chinese bank that was a client of the IFC (Inclusive Development International 2021a; Learning Spaces 2021a). In another instance, in April 2020, 260 civil society groups from across the world issued a joint letter calling on the Chinese Government to ensure that Covid-19–related financial relief for struggling BRI projects was not used to bail out projects mired in social, environmental, and financial risks (Inclusive Development International 2020).

At the local and national levels, CSOs, lawyers, and trade unions across the Global South have used environmental and labour laws to file complaints and lawsuits against Chinese investment projects, pushing Chinese companies to improve wages and working conditions, as well as environmental compliance. In the field of labour rights, for instance, mine worker unions in Zambia's Copperbelt Province have fought to have Chinese-owned mines recognise and collectively bargain with them as required by Zambian labour laws (Learning Spaces 2021a). In 2020, the Chinese-invested Lamu coal plant project in Kenya had its environmental licence revoked following petitions by local communities and a complaint to the National Environment Tribunal over the project's defective ESIA and insufficient public participation (BHRRC 2021: 15). The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) pulled its financing from the project soon after the tribunal revoked the project's environmental licence (Kinney 2022). In 2021, soon after reports of a drastic decline in worker safety at Chinese-operated cobalt mines in Democratic Republic of Congo, a local worker injured at one of the mines was awarded damages by that country's High Court (RAID 2021; Searcey et al. 2021).

These efforts often rest on the difficult, often unrecognised work done at the grassroots level by affected communities, workers, and CSOs in documenting project impacts, communicating with local regulators and policymakers, and carrying out protests, strikes, and campaigns seeking to raise concerns with Chinese companies and decision-makers. The Lamu case was the result of a coordinated campaign involving local communities and local and international CSOs (UNEP 2019). A strong local network of community, environmental, and social groups developed and linked up with global legal experts, environmental specialists, and campaigners, to build a persuasive message. In the US territory of Saipan, Chinese construction workers building casinos and hotels on the island took to the streets in 2017 to draw attention to poor working conditions and unpaid wages. Their efforts eventually led the Chinese companies for which they worked to negotiate settlements with the US Department of Labor in 2018–19 to pay nearly US$14 million in owed wages to 2,400 Chinese workers. In 2021, a US federal court awarded another US$5.4 million in compensation to the workers (Halegua 2020a, 2020b; Learning Spaces 2021c). In Ecuador, indigenous communities, with the help of anti-mining and environmental activists, organised protests in 2018–19 against the Rio Blanco mine jointly owned and operated by Chinese and Hong Kong companies for not engaging in consultation with the communities as required by the country's constitution and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Latinoamérica Sustentable 2020). The judge, citing a past precedent, ruled in favour of the communities and ordered a temporary halt to mining activities (Hui 2019). In some cases, unaddressed community concerns have led to violence, such as in Kyrgyzstan, where locals attacked and burned down a Chinese-financed gold-processing factory in 2018 due to concerns about environmental impacts such as water contamination, mercury pollution, and findings that the company did not have the necessary construction permits and ESIA. According to the Oxus Society's protest tracker, covering protests between January 2018 and December 2020, there were 42 rallies and protests in Kyrgyzstan that were in some way related to Chinese policy or investments (Swaine et al. 2021: 9).

The above examples have the following in common: they involve local and/or international civil society working outside China to call for redress for the human rights and environmental impacts of projects connected to Chinese companies operating overseas. There is another subset of civil society responses, however, that involves global civil society working in collaboration with Chinese stakeholders.

Insider versus Outsider Advocacy

Another way to think about civil society responses to Chinese overseas investment is to group them into 'insider' versus 'outsider' advocacy approaches (Learning Spaces 2021b). The insider–outsider framework borrows from the literature on lobbying (Kernell et al. 2017: Ch.13). *Insider* lobbying involves seeking direct, personal access to policymakers to influence policy outcomes, whereas *outsider* lobbying seeks to influence policy through grassroots campaigns that change public attitudes and mobilise the public. Similarly, insider advocacy in the context of Chinese overseas investment involves gaining access to Chinese decision-makers to raise their awareness about international environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards, and build their capacity to incorporate those standards into policies and guidelines to improve outcomes. Outsider advocacy involves mobilising local and international groups to raise public awareness, raise concerns to Chinese decision-makers, and in the process apply pressure to encourage them to address

ESG impacts. Viewed from this perspective, examples of insider advocacy with Chinese stakeholders are often overlooked. While the civil society responses cited earlier largely fall in the 'outsider' advocacy category, there are several CSOs that have chosen to explore opportunities to collaborate with Chinese stakeholders on these issues. Some of these are international CSOs, while others are Chinese CSOs and consulting companies.

These CSOs see the problem as stemming not simply from a lack of willingness on the part of Chinese stakeholders, but also from a lack of capacity. As a researcher formerly with Syntao, a Chinese CSR consulting company, told the author in November 2020, Chinese companies often face challenges dealing with affected communities and CSOs but lack the experience, knowhow, or resources to effectively communicate with those communities and address their concerns. In 2018, Syntao partnered with the Asia Foundation and the China International Contractors Association, a large industry group whose members include most of the major SOEs, to develop a community engagement handbook and used it to carry out three training sessions in China for more than 100 high-level SOE managers and frontline personnel (Syntao 2021). Syntao intended to carry out more training in overseas project sites in Southeast Asia but had to cancel those plans due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Personal communication with Syntao and Asia Foundation staff overseeing the development of the handbook, November 2020). Similarly, the international NGO Global Witness has partnered with another Chinese industry group, the China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals, and Chemicals Importers & Exporters, to develop guidelines on socially responsible mining and human rights due-diligence guidelines for its members (Learning Spaces 2021b).

Insider advocacy is an important channel for providing awareness-raising and skill-building for Chinese stakeholders who generally have very little experience dealing with communities and carrying out social and environmental due diligence and are wary of collaborating with civil society. The cases of Global Witness and Syntao indicate there is willingness among some Chinese stakeholders to work with CSOs they trust, particularly Chinese ones and those with a formal presence in China. Insider advocacy in China, however, has become more difficult in recent years given the rapidly shrinking civil society space there. Working to change the mindset and behaviour of stakeholders in China's top-down, highly bureaucratic system is also a slow process. Chinese stakeholders may issue improved ESG policies and guidelines, but so far have been unlikely to invest more staff and resources to carry out better community consultation or address immediate grievances in projects on the ground.

Given the limitations of insider advocacy, outsider advocacy plays an important role in holding Chinese (and host-country) stakeholders accountable and pressuring them to act more quickly to address grievances, and it is often the only channel available to groups that lack access to Chinese decision-makers. Ideally, insider and outsider advocacy approaches would be complementary, each working through different channels to hold government and corporate stakeholders accountable. However, this would require the insider and outsider groups to share information with one another and collaborate closely on strategy—something that has not happened much to date, even though it is worth noting that some international CSOs such as Global Witness do engage in both types of advocacy.

Chinese Stakeholders Are Responding … Slowly

Since 2013, when President Xi Jinping first announced the BRI, there has been increased focus on Chinese overseas investment and finance. In many developing countries, Chinese capital has the potential to make a significant contribution to their infrastructure needs. The critical question is whether it will contribute to sustainable, inclusive development that will benefit not only government and corporate elites but also communities and more vulnerable groups that often have little voice or influence in these investment decisions. For that to happen, host-country governments and Chinese state and corporate actors need to make a much greater commitment to social and environmental standards in principle and hold themselves accountable to those standards in practice.

The demonstrated growing commitment of Chinese stakeholders to social and environmental responsibility over the past few years suggests that pushback by communities and civil society has had an impact. Government guidelines, policies, and regulations, as well as public statements from Chinese stakeholders, have increasingly mentioned the need for companies to ensure environmental protection, respect the laws and cultures of host countries, and follow international best practices for sustainability. Signalling this shift, a few years after the crackdown on the Letpadaung Copper Mine protests in 2012—and perhaps cognisant of the negative reaction received on that occasion—Chinese officials changed tone. When clashes occurred again in 2014, after Myanmar police fired on protesters, killing one and injuring at least 20 others, China's foreign affairs spokesperson stated: 'We express concern and regret at the reports of casualties. We call for the relevant parties to appropriately deal with those victims' cases' (Reuters 2014).

The most high-profile commitment came from President Xi in a speech at the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in April 2019, when he spoke of the need for a clean and green, high-quality BRI:

> We have agreed to act on the principles of high-standard, people-centred and sustainable development, align our cooperation with universally accepted international rules and standards, follow the philosophy of people-centred development, and pursue coordinated progress in economic, social and environmental dimensions. (Belt and Road Forum 2019)

The language of 'high-standard' overseas infrastructure development is now present in all major official speeches.

Soon after Xi's speech, on 26 June 2019, Kenya's National Environment Tribunal announced it was cancelling the licence issued for the construction of the Lamu Coal Power Plant, and the Chinese state-owned ICBC announced it was withdrawing from the project (Kinney 2022). Two days later, the Chinese Embassy opened its doors to the Save Lamu civil society coalition and China's Ambassador to Kenya, Wu Peng, reassured the CSOs that 'whether a coal power plant is built or not should always be and will in the future be the decision only people in Kenya can make' (BHRRC 2021: 15).

In January 2021, the Chinese Government released a White Paper on international development cooperation that announced China's intention to significantly step up its development cooperation with the Global South and listed the BRI as a major platform for doing so (SCIO 2021). The White Paper calls for the establishment of 'a new model of international relations based on mutual respect, equity, justice and win-win cooperation, and build[ing] an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world'. It devotes several sections to supporting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as poverty reduction, protection of vulnerable groups, food security, health care, education, gender equality, and environmental protection.

More recently, in July 2021 and January 2022, China's Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Environment and Ecology released a set of voluntary 'Working Guidelines for Green Development in Overseas Investment and Cooperation' and 'Guidelines for Ecological Environmental Protection of Foreign Investment Cooperation and Construction Projects', respectively. Unlike past regulations and guidelines that largely focused on the importance of respecting host-country laws and culture, CSR, and communicating with affected communities, these go further in emphasising the importance of companies following international rules and best practice for environmental protection, improving their internal environmental management systems and personnel, and integrating environmental considerations into the entire lifecycle of a project (Nedopil et al. 2021; Wang 2022). In host countries where environmental governance is weak or insufficient, these guidelines recommend Chinese companies adopt the standards prevailing in international organisations or multilateral institutions, or China's stricter domestic standards for investment and cooperation activities. Around the same time, following up on his earlier call for a green, clean BRI, President Xi announced at the seventy-sixth session of the UN General Assembly in September 2021 that China would no longer build new coal-fired power projects overseas and would focus on supporting the development of green and low-carbon energy in developing countries (UN Affairs 2021).

Looking Forward: Opportunities and Risks

These developments reflect progress in Chinese commitments *in principle* to adhering to social and environmental standards at the national and international levels. While they may seem incremental, they represent a welcome change from the originally clumsy, defensive, and even hostile responses of Chinese company and government representatives in the Letpadaung Copper Mine case nearly a decade ago. They also show that Chinese leaders and stakeholders are aware of, and sensitive to, the pushback they have encountered from civil society in the Global South. More importantly, given the Chinese responses have mostly been in the form of verbal and written commitments rather than actions, they provide an important opportunity for civil society groups to hold Chinese stakeholders accountable *in practice* by reminding them of their commitments and exerting pressure on their own governments and judicial institutions to enforce domestic human rights, labour, and environmental laws.

At the same time, civil society efforts to hold powerful government and corporate actors accountable are by no means risk-free. Reports of environmental and human rights activists in the Global South being harassed, detained, and even killed by host-country actors are all too common (Coalition for Human Rights in Development 2019). While the Save Lamu campaign was ultimately successful, a UN Environment Programme (UNEP 2019) blogpost noted that campaigners 'encountered misinformation (sometimes deliberate), arrests, branding as terrorists, raided offices and further forms of harassment and intimidation'. In 2021, media reports emerged about the arrest of staff of an Ugandan CSO who had been working with communities affected by the proposed East African Crude Oil Pipeline being developed by the French company Total and the Chinese company CNOOC (Gyuse 2021; Inclusive Development International 2021b).

Civil society also faces risks from dealing with Chinese stakeholders who often hold unfriendly attitudes towards nongovernmental actors. One study's interviews with Chinese companies in Myanmar found they had little understanding of and even suspicion about the motives of local and international CSOs (Cai and Zhou 2018). In the Letpadaung case, Chinese companies such as Wanbao viewed CSOs as outside instigators coming in to stir up community protests. Local and international CSOs are at times also wary of working with Chinese civil society groups on these issues given the Chinese Government's increasingly draconian cooptation of, and restrictions on, those groups inside China (Tower 2020).

In this complex environment, civil society groups working to address the human rights impacts of Chinese overseas investment should be aware of the risks they face and put in place mitigation measures to protect themselves. They can do so, however, with the knowledge they will play a critical role in ensuring the realisation of the 'open, inclusive, clean, and beautiful world' promised in Chinese Government speeches and white papers. ●

High-level Infrastructures

Construction site of the Morodok Techo National Stadium in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, completed in 2021. Source: skypixel.com (CC).

High-Profile Infrastructure and China's Global Influence Gamble

Austin STRANGE

Policymakers, pundits, and scholars often assert that China's state-led global infrastructure drive is an important avenue for enhancing its international influence. However, the first decade of the Belt and Road Initiative has demonstrated that links between infrastructure projects and influence are more complex than existing popular and academic accounts suggest. Infrastructure has always created underappreciated economic risks, and China's high-profile overseas infrastructure is not immune to this phenomenon. In this essay, I argue that these projects also inject significant risk into China's pursuit of international influence by providing unique forms of political capital for different actors beyond China's control.

Observers frequently contend that China's international influence is growing in lockstep with its economic rise. This includes the US Department of State, which recently suggested that after four decades of rapid growth, China's 'global reach and international influence have expanded accordingly' (Office of the Secretary of State 2020: 40). While scholars in international relations and other fields have been more cautious, policy and popular debates have shed nuance in favour of a linear narrative that pegs China's influence to its global investments (Goh 2016; Kastner and Pearson 2021).

Within this narrative, grandiose infrastructure projects along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)—introduced in 2013 to promote connectivity across an overland 'belt' through Eurasia and a maritime 'road' through the Indo-Pacific—are important sites for Chinese influence generation. In 2018, US vice-president Mike Pence declared that China is 'offering hundreds of billions of dollars in infrastructure loans to governments from Asia to Africa to Europe and even Latin America', of which 'the benefits invariably flow overwhelmingly to Beijing' (Pence 2018). The first part of Pence's statement is accurate. As Figure 1 shows, since 2000, the Chinese Government has committed tens of billions of dollars annually to infrastructure projects in developing countries. More than two-thirds of China's development finance—which includes aid and less-concessional, debt-based financing—has funded transportation, energy, and industrial projects.

But mounting evidence from the first decade of the BRI raises doubts about the second part of Pence's statement, and the extent to which overseas infrastructure projects amplify China's influence. China's policy banks and state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are not the only actors which benefit from BRI infrastructure projects. While these projects produce economic, social, political, and environmental risks, they also deliver

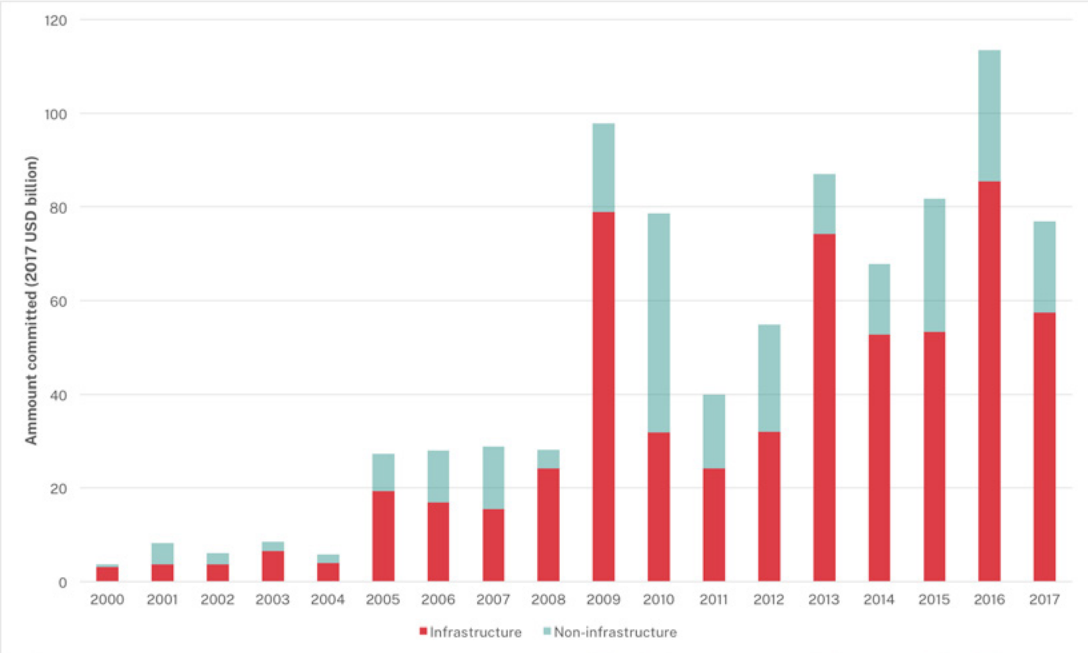


Figure 1: China's Global Development Finance Commitments, 2000–2017

Notes: 'Infrastructure' includes projects in the 'transport and storage', 'industry, mining, construction', and 'energy' sectors. This is a proxy measure for gauging overall infrastructure finance and does not capture certain projects, like government buildings, in other sectors.
Source: Data are from Custer et al. (2021) and Dreher et al. (2022).

clear economic benefits to host countries (Dreher et al. 2022). Moreover, though certain individual projects have encountered challenges and attracted the bulk of international publicity (Bräutigam 2019), many of China's overseas infrastructure projects have been successfully implemented on time or even ahead of schedule and have helped relieve infrastructure bottlenecks in host countries (Bluhm et al. 2020; Malik et al. 2021).

Recent evidence along the BRI also raises doubts about whether and how much influence the Chinese Government is gaining from high-profile overseas infrastructure. Influence is often defined in political science as an actor's ability to change another actor's behaviour in ways congruent with the interests of the influence-seeker (see, for instance, Dahl 1984). However, as discussed below, the BRI exposes the limits of narrow definitions of influence that assume straightforward intentions and results but neglect the importance of host-country environments. Mounting evidence from a diverse set of BRI countries—such as Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, and Zambia—

demonstrates significant local, national, and even international pushback against Chinese-financed infrastructure that has created real foreign policy consequences for the Chinese Government. Common grievances about Chinese-financed infrastructure include opaque lending terms and debt sustainability risks, environmental degradation, socioeconomic disruption, and unequal benefits across the communities that host projects. Researchers have repeatedly emphasised the role of host agency—the ability of state and nonstate actors in host countries to influence project selection, negotiation, implementation, and reception on completion—in modulating whether projects are successful and whether China can gain influence by financing them (see, for instance, Wong 2021; Wang 2022). In aggregate, at least so far, the BRI does not appear to have significantly boosted China's international position or reputation.

Instead, an uncomfortable outcome for Beijing has emerged. Its high-profile infrastructure projects have complicated rather than enhanced China's global influence and have weakened the ability of the Chinese Government to control its net influence abroad. Large infrastructure has always been economically risky given its ambition, scale, and complexity. The same features that make high-profile infrastructure attractive make its planners prone to miscalculation of economic risk. BRI projects are not immune to this general tendency. But in addition to economic risks, the BRI—as a massive, state-led global infrastructure drive—has demonstrated that overseas infrastructure can also introduce unintended volatility for states' net international influence, even if influence-seeking is not the primary objective.

China's global infrastructure financing over the past two decades is remarkable when viewed in this light. During the same period, China's stability-oriented government has tightened its political control at home and has made substantial public diplomacy investments abroad to shore up its global reputation and 'tell China's story well' (Caixin 2015). Like other rising powers, China's government has sought to translate its growing material capabilities into greater influence at home and abroad. But in financing high-profile overseas infrastructure at scale, it has injected major unpredictability into this broader pursuit.

This essay draws on the author's recently published and forthcoming work and makes three observations about China's global infrastructure–influence nexus. First, national economic priorities have driven contemporary Chinese global infrastructure investments, but these projects are not merely products of the recent 'Going Out' strategy or the BRI. Chinese authorities financed hundreds of infrastructure projects abroad between 1949 and 1999, motivated in part by the overlapping political interests of the Chinese Government and host-country politicians. Second, their political and economic motivations make China and host governments vulnerable to a common infrastructure trap—that is, the tendency to oversimplify and miscalculate the economic risks posed by high-profile projects. China's state-led approach to financing global infrastructure is not immune to this tendency and may even exacerbate it.

Third, in addition to economic uncertainty, overseas infrastructure projects create a variety of 'influence externalities' beyond China's control that are not well understood by project planners. High-profile infrastructure is uniquely visible and politically salient and these features make it a valuable but risky source of national political capital. One example of an influence externality occurs when state and nonstate actors in host countries or elsewhere craft and distribute their own narratives about infrastructure projects. Another is when host-country actors accidentally or purposefully misattribute credit or blame to the Chinese Government due to the complex set of state, quasi-state, and nonstate Chinese actors involved or located near Chinese-financed infrastructure projects. Either of these related processes can affect China's foreign policy interests at high or low levels of politics and are largely beyond the control of the Chinese authorities. In short, high-profile infrastructure possesses distinct features that initially make it economically and politically attractive to the Chinese Government and host-country leaders; but these features also inject major political volatility for China's foreign policy interests.

China's Tenacious Global Infrastructure Projects

National economic goals have stimulated China's overseas infrastructure financing since the 1990s. Towards the end of the decade, the government's Going Out strategy urged Chinese companies to internationalise to achieve several macroeconomic objectives, such as offloading excess capacity and foreign exchange reserves, creating national champion firms in strategic industries, and increasing China's energy security. It also mandated China's major policy banks, the Export–Import Bank of China and the China Development Bank, rapidly scale up overseas lending to developing countries. Much of this lending has funded large-scale infrastructure for which Chinese SOEs serve as contractors (Zhang 2020). The BRI, in addition to its diplomatic and political elements, is similarly designed to address these domestic economic objectives by financing large-scale infrastructure that directs Chinese state-led capital abroad (Ye 2020).

However, decades earlier and long before these economic goals were formulated, the Chinese Government had already begun financing and building high-profile infrastructure in Africa and Asia (Bräutigam 2009). My forthcoming research comprehensively analyses China's global high-profile development projects—a broad class of high-visibility, politically salient infrastructure including transportation projects, other economic 'megaprojects', and 'prestige projects' such as government buildings, sports stadiums, conference centres, and high-tech projects—since 1949. While these projects differ substantially in their motives and features, they share two qualities that make them uniquely valuable for host-country leaders. First, they are highly visible in terms of their physical presence and degree of publicity. Second, and relatedly, they are politically salient within host countries. Host-country leaders acquire externally financed infrastructure projects and brand them as national and political achievements, allowing them to claim credit and pursue higher support among domestic audiences by appealing to individuals' sense of national pride or desire for status, particularly during politically important periods.

During the past two years, my research team constructed a dataset of more than 4,000 global development projects committed to developing countries by the Chinese Government between 1949 and 1999 (Strange forthcoming). The dataset complements recent efforts to track China's contemporary global development projects and reveals that the Chinese Government provided several hundred high-profile infrastructure projects worldwide before 2000 (Custer et al. 2021; Dreher et al. 2022). This includes more than 200 transportation infrastructure projects and more than 200 prestige projects such as government buildings, stadiums, conference centres, and entertainment venues. While China's prestige projects have usually been financed using grants or other concessional foreign aid, other high-profile infrastructure—such as big-ticket transportation, energy, and construction projects—has mostly been financed by loans with varying levels of concessionality from Chinese policy or commercial banks.

My research suggests that high-profile infrastructure has served as a unique form of political capital for China's government as well as host-country governments throughout different periods of China's history as a donor and lender. The tenacity of these projects is explained in part by the alignment of host-country and Chinese Government political incentives. For example, developing-country leaders have consistently looked to China to finance and build conference centres, sporting facilities, and other large public venues—often to hold major regional and international events. Cambodia offers an illustration of how this phenomenon has continued to the present day. In the mid 1960s, the Chinese Government financed and built the National Sports Complex in Phnom Penh, which featured a 50,000-seat stadium, during the leadup to the second Games of the New Emerging Forces (GANEFO) to be held in 1966. Cambodian ruler Norodom Sihanouk had directly requested the project from China's leaders. In December 2021, more than five decades later, the Chinese Government provided another stadium for Cambodia. Prime Minister Hun Sen—an important regional partner—requested the project in 2014 in anticipation of hosting the 2023 Southeast Asian Games. The Chinese authorities obliged and funded a US$169-million facility known as Morodok Techo National Stadium, which was built by the China State Construction Engineering Corporation. Both stadiums reflect China's use of high-profile infrastructure to cement high-level ties with the Cambodian Government (Burgos and Ear 2010).

Cambodia is a non-democratic regional partner, but my research shows that China's high-profile infrastructure does not favour any type of political regime or geographic region. Instead, host-country governments around the world have often shaped the allocation of these projects. For instance, I find that governments of smaller, less-developed states who are otherwise unable to finance high-profile infrastructure at scale are more likely to request prestige projects from China (Strange 2022).

Exporting Solidarity

Tanzania–Zambia Railway station in Dar es Salaam. The TAZARA railway was a landmark Chinese aid project in the 1970s. Source: David Brossard (CC), Flickr.com.

Donor governments also benefit from these projects, at least in the short run. China has consistently used high-profile infrastructure to cultivate and strengthen ties with foreign governments. Compared with other aid, prestige projects send relatively clear signals of political support to recipient governments and generate higher expectations of reciprocity because individuals perceive these projects as supporting the interests of host-country governments (Strange 2022). China has provided hundreds of prestige projects since 2000 to reap high-level influence outcomes such as support in the United Nations General Assembly (Dreher et al. 2018). These projects are also frequently deployed as part of larger assistance packages committed to governments following their announcements of breaking diplomatic ties with Taiwan. But again, prestige and other high-profile infrastructure are not new fixtures in China's foreign aid, and the Chinese Government has consistently recognised their potential to generate influence. Its most famous historical aid project, the Tanzania–Zambia Railway (TAZARA), was endorsed by premier Zhou Enlai, who believed the project would generate substantially greater influence than would using the money to build small and medium-sized projects in other

countries (Editorial Board 2008: 322; Monson 2021). Though TAZARA—and many other high-profile, Chinese-financed projects—was also heavily motivated by other economic and political objectives, the Chinese Government perceived the project as important for China's pursuit of international influence.

Political synergy between China and host-country governments is part of a broader discussion about the politics of infrastructure. Scholars have long demonstrated that roads, railways, dams, stadiums, and other high-visibility infrastructure create unique forms of political capital. Governments deploy infrastructure for a variety of strategic goals such as consolidating power over territory, forging national identity, and winning popular support among constituents (see, for instance, Herbst 2000: 42; van der Westhuizen 2007). For governments unable to finance high-profile infrastructure internally, capital from foreign donors and creditors offers an alternative. Earlier political science research shows how recipient politicians utilise aid, especially visible projects, to pursue higher levels of political support (Cruz and Schneider 2017; Dietrich et al. 2018). Beyond China, the Soviet Union, Israel, Japan, and the United Kingdom all financed high-profile infrastructure projects during the twentieth century and India, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have begun to do so across the Middle East in recent years (Strange 2022).

The Influence Risks of Overseas Infrastructure

While high-profile infrastructure offers unique sources of short-term political capital, it introduces substantial political risk over time. Some of China's most visible global infrastructure projects have encountered stiff local, national, and international criticism in recent years. On the one hand, 'BRI backlash' is likely related to features of China's development finance approach such as opaque lending terms, inadequate pre-project evaluations and safeguards, and direct negotiations with national-level host politicians that can sideline critical voices and foster corruption or other negative externalities. Political science research suggests that politicians in developing countries often have incentives to manipulate foreign aid and other 'unearned income' to their political advantage (Smith 2008). China's longstanding non-interference principle prescribes a generally hands-off approach that enables host-country leaders to request, allocate, and brand projects to their own political advantage, implicitly compromising the ability of other local actors to scrutinise projects and hold leaders accountable (Dreher et al. 2022).

On the other hand, all large-scale infrastructure—Chinese or otherwise—possesses distinct features that make it appealing initially but introduce major economic, social, and political risks over time. Indeed, for scholars of infrastructure, critical reactions to China's global infrastructure projects could hardly have been surprising. In their study of 'megaprojects'—defined as multibillion-dollar infrastructure projects—Flyvbjerg et al. (2003: 5) note that 'project promoters often avoid and violate established practices of good governance, transparency and participation in political and administrative decision making'. Zealous project promoters denounce the 'cost–benefit analyses, financial analyses, and environmental and social impact statements' usually carried out before bankrolling projects and exclude outside voices that would make implementers more accountable. As a result, large-scale infrastructure projects around the world have repeatedly encountered long delays, over-budget expenses, widespread corruption, and highly uncertain popular reactions. Viewed in this broader context, BRI infrastructure projects are hardly exceptional. Neither the commercial nor the political motives behind China's global infrastructure projects suggest their planners should be better at avoiding these classic traps. If anything, the opaqueness that often characterises Chinese project negotiations and implementation may intensify the above tendencies.

But while its economic risks may not be distinctive, the sheer scale of China's state-led global infrastructure drive has uniquely demonstrated that beyond *economic* uncertainty, high-profile infrastructure also injects *political* risks, particularly regarding China's pursuit of international influence. Earlier analyses of China's influence along the BRI often fail to appreciate the unique visibility and political salience of high-profile infrastructure that make these projects attractive but risky ventures. In an insightful article, Ho (2020) argues that Chinese overseas infrastructure generates both structural power—positional power over other states because of asymmetric advantages—and discursive power, or power generated using discourse to constitute identities and interests. In general, however, scholars have conceptualised China's infrastructure influence in direct, simplistic terms in which China, the influence-seeker, exercises different forms of influence over host countries.

My research instead moves beyond deliberate influence and argues that high-profile infrastructure creates outsized 'influence externalities' for China, which I define as changes to a state's international influence that occur unintentionally and independently of the state's objectives due to changes in behaviour or perceptions by foreign state or nonstate actors (Strange forthcoming). Political scientists have long suggested that certain kinds of power and influence are unintentional rather than deliberate (see, for instance, Lukes 2005; Barnett and Duvall 2005). In examining China's global infrastructure projects, I illustrate two channels through which high-profile infrastructure can generate unintended influence consequences for the Chinese Government.

First, high visibility and political salience make China's overseas infrastructure projects unique sites for narrative building at scale and beyond the control of the Chinese Government. Narratives shape actors' choices and affect outcomes. They 'limit what political actors inside and outside the halls of power can publicly justify' (Krebs 2015: 3). When deployed effectively, narratives can create consequences for China's foreign policy interests. For example, in Zambia, both workers and civil society organisations have found success in shaping their country's foreign relations with China from the bottom up by carefully framing their objections to high-visibility Chinese projects as national grievances (Leslie 2016).

Alternatively, while host-country leaders can initially craft and propagate high-profile infrastructure narratives, opposition politicians or other elites can later capitalise on negative public sentiment towards Chinese infrastructure. In some cases, this can jeopardise China's influence, particularly if it enables other governments to achieve bargaining advantages that diminish China's position. For instance, in Indonesia, debates over Chinese-financed infrastructure projects, including the Jakarta–Bandung High-Speed Rail (Wijaya 2021), have permeated popular and elite political discourse. Indonesian politicians have successfully wielded general anti-China sentiment in recent years—stemming in part from social media coverage of labour issues related to Chinese-involved projects such as the Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park (Ginting and Moore 2021)—to increase their bargaining leverage in negotiations for future Chinese-financed projects (Tritto 2020; Camba 2020). In Malaysia, negative public sentiment has also destabilised China's foreign economic policy interests. In 2018, Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad cancelled projects worth more than US$20 billion signed by his predecessor, Najib Razak. This occurred as the projects became entangled in highly public corruption allegations and as Malaysia's public debt owed to China was increasing. High-profile infrastructure—such as the East Coast Rail Link and Bandar Malaysia, a mixed-development housing project in Kuala Lumpur—featured prominently in both public and elite discussions about engagement with the BRI (Liu and Lim 2019).

The ability of political actors in host countries to create, contest, modify, and disseminate narratives around high-profile projects through both bottom-up and top-down channels is a challenge for China. Once narratives gain a foothold, they are difficult for Beijing to control. Sometimes infrastructure narratives are contained locally or regionally. Sometimes they instead spread far and wide, amplifying the influence consequences for China regarding a specific issue or even spilling into other policy domains that affect China's international interests. During the first decade of the BRI, the Chinese Government found neither it nor host-country governments could exercise a monopoly over popular narratives about high-profile infrastructure (Bräutigam 2020). China's state-centric approach to financing and building infrastructure is clearly not immune to popular or elite contestation beyond its borders.

High-profile infrastructure can also generate unintended influence consequences through a second, related process. Most infrastructure projects are financially and operationally complex, and observers in host countries often possess highly imperfect information about the identities and interests of different project stakeholders, the details of project financing and contractual arrangements, and the facts of project implementation on the ground. Host-country actors—from ordinary citizens to high-level officials—can accidentally or purposefully misunderstand the nature of China's behaviour or misattribute credit or blame to the Chinese Government when learning of project successes or failures (Baldwin and Winters 2020; Bräutigam et al. 2022). These informational problems are not unique but may be particularly acute for China's state-led global infrastructure projects given the integration of China's domestic and international development strategies and the increasingly complex set of Chinese state, quasi-state, and nonstate commercial actors operating in developing countries around the world. In financing infrastructure and other development projects, the Chinese Government delegates responsibility to quasi-state or nonstate agents that behave in part in their own interests (see, for instance, Norris 2016). In many cases, local observers may be unable to distinguish which actors, preferences, and behaviours belong to the Chinese Government. For example, one recent survey-based study finds that Peruvians often perceive both private and state-owned Chinese mining companies operating in Peru as being linked to China's Government regardless of the company's actual identity (Ratigan 2021). Beijing's lack of transparency and disclosure regarding its overseas development finance projects may further exacerbate this issue. As with infrastructure project narratives, the Chinese Government appears to have limited capacity for demystifying the complexity of its global infrastructure financing to diverse audiences in other countries. Misattribution or other informational deficiencies that arise from this dynamic can feed into the local or national narratives about China's global infrastructure projects discussed above.

Infrastructure and Influence in Global Development

High-profile infrastructure breeds economic and political risks that its ambitious planners often fail to appreciate. China's state-driven approach to financing overseas infrastructure, which follows an 'encompassing accumulation' logic aimed at commercial and political objectives, could amplify these uncertainties (Lee 2017: 31–32). This does not mean China's overseas infrastructure projects will categorically reduce its aggregate global influence; more time is needed to assess their economic and political results. But financing high-profile infrastructure at scale creates 'influence externalities' that significantly limit the Chinese Government's ability to control its net influence outcomes abroad.

While such dynamics are not unique to Chinese-financed projects, the sheer scale of China's global infrastructure push makes it distinct within the contemporary global development landscape. Western development agencies have drastically curtailed infrastructure investments in recent decades in hopes that the private sector will fill the infrastructure financing gap and because of concerns about corruption (Dollar 2008). While recent multilateral responses to the BRI such as Build Back Better World (B3W) suggest 'traditional' donors and creditors may re-join the infrastructure game, such initiatives face serious questions about scale and coordination (Lu and Myxter-lino 2021).

The tenacity of China's overseas infrastructure provision is also noteworthy. Strong political synergy between China and host-country governments has made high-profile infrastructure resilient to changes in China's approach and to outside criticism. Earlier high-profile infrastructure financed by China faced both elite and popular contestation in developing countries (for example, Monson 2009: 148). In 2018, following international criticism that China was building 'white elephant' infrastructure projects in developing countries, President Xi Jinping stated that China's development cooperation with African countries needed to avoid 'vanity projects' (Reuters Staff 2018)—presumably, referring to many prestige projects discussed above with questionable benefits for host-country populations. More recently, the Chinese Government has advocated for 'high-quality development' (高质量发展) projects along the BRI (Xinhua 2021). Yet, their underlying political and economic incentives suggest China's high-profile infrastructure projects are here to stay for the foreseeable future, even as China recalibrates the focus of the BRI.

More generally, volatile reactions to China's high-profile infrastructure along the BRI warrant a more inclusive approach to studying influence conceptually and empirically (Fung et al. forthcoming). In international relations, it is well established that bilateral donors and lenders use development finance to purchase elite influence such as policy concessions. They also deploy development projects to enhance their public image overseas. The Chinese Government similarly aims to generate elite and popular influence by financing infrastructure in other countries (Wellner et al. 2022). But these projects' distinct features create unintended consequences beyond China's control, which existing theories do not adequately explain but which nonetheless affect China's overall level of international influence.

The author thanks the *Global China Pulse* editorial team for helpful suggestions. The University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Research Grants Council, and the Wilson Center provided generous support.

View inside Dragon City

Launched in 2000, this is among the more successful Chinese-run malls and is one of the primary entry points to buy affordable products in bulk. Initially reserved exclusively for those making wholesale purchases, the mall has bowed to heightened competition and partial market saturation to accept retail sales. In parallel, a growing number of non-Chinese tenants also feature more prominently inside the mall, reflecting some of these changes Source: Mark Lewis, 2019.

Pragmatic Living in Motion: Two Chinese 'Migrants' and their Meanderings in the 'City of Gold'

Romain DITTGEN

This essay unpacks the personal stories and experiences of two Chinese individuals who have lived in Johannesburg for a considerable time. It offers contextualised glimpses about ageing and living in a city in which inequality, excess, violence, and the mundane coexist in a complicated tension. By using 'pragmatic living' as a lens for social inquiry, the essay pursues two aims. One is to challenge more compartmentalised ways of examining such lives, which often transcend migrant, diasporic, transnational, and localised characteristics; the other is to find ways to discard or cut across rigid analytical binaries.

Johannesburg is often portrayed as rough and unsafe, with deep-rooted inequalities visibly entrenched in the urban landscape (Murray 2011). Its partial identity as both a trading hub and an arrival city resonates with images of hustling, cut-throat competition, and the cash economy (Zack and Govender 2019). It is within this context that many Chinese migrant-entrepreneurs have sought to take advantage of existing (or new) business opportunities and explore possibilities for a better life. As a symbol of late capitalism, the advent and proliferation of Chinese-run shopping malls—largely concentrated along the southern edge of the inner city—have come to embody the high level of Chinese involvement in wholesale trade during the first decade of the twenty-first century (Lin 2014; Huang 2021).

At the same time, the Chinese presence in South Africa is complex, sparking much scholarly interest over the years. There have been several waves of Chinese migration, raising questions about identity, forms of attachment, and belonging (Huynh et al. 2010). The Chinese presence includes 'local' Chinese—those born in South Africa—many of whom grew up during the Apartheid years and were subjected to racial discrimination (Park 2008). Their grandparents or even great-grandparents were attracted by the goldrush towards the end of the nineteenth century but were not allowed to work in the mines due to racially exclusionary laws. Instead, they opened grocery stores, restaurants, or gambling dens (Yap and Man 1996; Accone 2004). During the 1970s, the Apartheid regime—which rendered the government isolated internationally and desperate for foreign investment—granted Taiwanese industrialists preferential treatment (tax incentives and status as 'honorary whites'), convincing some to set up factories near the former so-called homelands (Hart 2002). After decades of controlled mobility (both domestically and internationally), the People's Republic of China (PRC) undertook economic reforms and began opening-up from the late 1970s, while the issuing of passports was liberalised in 1986; both made it possible for mainland Chinese to migrate overseas on their own initiative (Nyíri 2020: 43). Mainland Chinese started arriving in South Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the gradual demise of Apartheid generated new possibilities, especially due to the dearth of affordable manufactured goods. Owing to China's emergence as a global manufacturer, many of these early pioneers and adventurers made a fortune through the importation of textiles and other everyday products. The prospect of quick economic gains—achieved largely through bulk sales—acted as an attractive pull factor. While until this point the Chinese presence remained limited, with a considerable proportion of the local Chinese and Taiwanese even deciding to leave South Africa during the 1990s, the influx of new migrant-entrepreneurs in the early 2000s quickly brought numbers to somewhere between 350,000 and 500,000 people (based on rough estimations; see Park 2012).

Today, Johannesburg appears far less attractive than a decade ago. Initial stories of success and rapidly made fortunes have gradually morphed into a reality of reduced profit margins and (a somewhat self-induced) market saturation. Due to factors ranging from a prolonged economic slump, unfavourable exchange rates, and a partially hollowed-out state to persistently high crime rates and recurrent anti-foreigner sentiments, many Chinese seem to be reconsidering whether staying in South Africa is a viable option. Meanwhile, personal circumstances and living conditions vary significantly. Whereas earlier migrants (including local Chinese, Taiwanese, and early mainlanders) are generally better off and tend to live in upmarket suburbs, the bulk of the newcomers have less capital, fewer networks, and lower education levels. This is also reflected in their occupations—from those active in the corporate world, others running businesses, to the ones working in shops inside the Chinese-run malls. How their relationship to the country, city, and neighbourhood unfolds is contingent on a combination of all these criteria. Moreover, the way they navigate Johannesburg's urban landscape is shaped by a series of shifting 'strategies and tactics', which manifest in varying forms of (in)visibility (Harrison et al. 2012).

In my research on Johannesburg, starting in 2009, I studied the ways in which different Chinese spaces—or at least those perceived as such—have materialised, changed, and become entangled with the underlying realities of the city (see, for instance, Dittgen 2017; Dittgen et al. 2019). Over the course of my fieldwork (both individually and in collaboration with others—for example, with photographer Mark Lewis, whose photos accompany this essay), I met several key individuals who were often gatekeepers and who, throughout the years, offered me access to the different layers of these 'spaces'. I kept in touch with a few of them, observing how some of their initial thoughts, habits, ideals, or goals changed, were dismissed, or became more firmly entrenched. Simultaneously, these periodic conversations allowed me to gain a more nuanced sense of how these people reflected on some of their life decisions, roads not taken, as well as everyday doings, alongside hearing about their joys, concerns, hopes, and frustrations. Many of the thoughts expressed during these exchanges resonated closely with a certain idea of pragmatism in which navigating everyday life requires 'learning to expect and manage uncertainty' (Wills and Lake 2020: 3). To link pragmatist thinking with ways of living, this essay explores the notion of 'pragmatic living' from a particular perspective and as unfolding within a specific context.

First, it is necessary to provide a few preliminary remarks on what I mean by 'pragmatic living', which requires diving into the scholarly literature on pragmatism. For 'first-generation' pragmatists such as John Dewey, *experience*—referring both to the experiencing subject and to the object of experience—plays a crucial role in the pragmatic maxim (despite subsequent debates about its conceptual validity). It is 'a process through which we transact with our surroundings and meet our needs' while being also 'shaped by our habits of expectation' (Legg and Hookway 2021). As such, experience actively mediates between ideas and outcomes. Depending on circumstances or the 'provocations of life', these ideas can evolve, pushing people 'to inquire into new ways of thinking and acting' (Wills and Lake 2020: 11), especially in a setting in which 'visions of urban futurity cede ground to tentative experiments in managing what cannot be confidently foreseen' (Zeiderman et al. 2015: 283). If this dynamic interplay can, in ideal scenarios, be tied to personal preferences or desires, in most cases, pragmatic living requires compromise and experimentation. Furthermore, it also speaks to 'a willingness to bracket prior expectations and foundational assumptions, [as much as] an openness to and tolerance of multiple perspectives' (Wills and Lake 2020: 16). If an elaborate unpacking of the concept itself exceeds the limits of this essay, it is nevertheless worth stressing that pragmatic living is deeply entangled with both modalities of power—understood here 'as a relational effect of social interaction' (Allen 2003; 2008: 1614)—and a dynamic space–time dialectic (Massey 2005). Ultimately, 'the possibility for the unexpected' (Wills and Lake 2020: 4) becomes an integral part of pragmatic living. As such, using pragmatic living as a lens for social inquiry challenges more compartmentalised and often rigid ways of examining these lives, which transcend migrant, diasporic, transnational, as well as localised characteristics. In what follows, some of these underlying elements are explored primarily through the personal stories and experiences of two Chinese individuals who have lived in Johannesburg for a considerable time, offering some contextualised glimpses into ageing and living in motion.

Spatial Geographies of the City Reconsidered

Mei, originally from a major city in central China, and Haoyu, from China's southern coast, have been based in Johannesburg since the mid and early 1990s, respectively, witnessing first hand the political transition at that time [Both are pseudonyms and, to the best of my knowledge, they do not know each other]. I met Mei in 2010, when

Shifting Urban Realities and Perceptions

View towards Hillbrow (in the background), one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods in Johannesburg. Celebrated as the centre of cosmopolitan life between the 1960s and 1980s—albeit officially restricted to white people during Apartheid—Hillbrow from the 1990s has become largely associated with crime, overpopulation, a lack of municipal services, and a sizeable concentration of foreign nationals from different parts of the continent. Source: Mark Lewis, 2016.

conducting research on Chinese shopping malls and wholesale activities, and Haoyu in 2016, when focusing more specifically on the dynamics of change along Derrick Avenue, the main street of Johannesburg's primary Chinatown. Now aged in their mid to late fifties, both chose distinct paths (one is a businesswoman, the other an architect/designer) and priorities, while at the same time entertaining a shifting relationship with the (so-called) Chinese spaces and the city as a whole.

In contrast to many of the more recently arrived Chinese migrants, both are financially stable and hold South African ID (while also keeping their Chinese passports). Mei thrived financially after establishing a successful logistics company focusing on imports and exports between China and South Africa. Her initial decision to come to Johannesburg, aged 27, was to join her mother and sister. Following the death of her father, a professional singer whom she often accompanied to concerts throughout China, and her first marriage ending in a divorce, Mei had no reason to stay in China. At first, Mei lived with her family in Johannesburg but soon married a white South African to legally stay in the country. As part of this marriage of convenience, as she refers to it, she moved to an upmarket neighbourhood, and substantially improved her English during that time. This marriage did not last, but soon after, she married a US citizen, her current husband. Originally from a poor background, Mei repeatedly mentioned how driven and eager she was to become rich and be part of the upper class. Johannesburg's complicated dialectic between race and class—still manifest in the spatial make-up of the city—raises questions about where Chinese people (especially when successful) situate themselves in South African society. Back in 2010, during one of our first conversations, Mei shared some general thoughts about this:

> People, they look at you because you're a foreigner. But they're very nice to you, at least to me. Chinese people, however, have a common problem that they don't treat black people equally. In China, there is less difference, so when Chinese people come to South Africa, they automatically fit themselves into the white category, instead of associating themselves to people of colour. Often, they're not friendly to black people, and it creates a lot of misunderstandings. (Interview, November 2010)

Over the years, Mei regularly invited me to her house either to share a meal or to play cards with her and some of her friends, many of whom were part of a Chinese women's business association. Successful and mainly involved in wholesale trading, they all followed a similar upward class trajectory, which was mirrored by their lifestyles and spatial practices in the city. Comparable with many in the middle and upper classes (and irrespective of racial background), Mei's guests all shared an aversion to or at least strong discomfort about specific neighbourhoods in Johannesburg that were considered unsafe and largely inhabited by poor black people. At the same time, quite a few of those who arrived in the city in the early 1990s started from rather humble beginnings, often hawking in the same neighbourhoods they now avoid.

Chinese New Year

Before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Chinese New Year celebrations in Chinatown attracted visitors from all over Johannesburg, to eat and to follow the festivities (dragon dances and fireworks). The buildings in the background preceded the arrival of the Chinese, but the flats were gradually subdivided into smaller units to accommodate the until recently significant demand from Chinese migrants. Most of these tenants work in the Chinese-run malls and are looking to stay in a place of relative familiarity. Source: Mark Lewis, 2018.

While proudly Chinese, Mei's strong attachment to 'Chineseness' gradually took on a more clearly discernible class dimension as, over time, her mental map of no-go areas expanded from downtown Johannesburg and surrounds to several so-called Chinese spaces, including Derrick Avenue in Cyrildene:

> I don't go there anymore. I don't feel safe … [P]eople will follow you. And, I have everything I need in Rivonia: groceries and restaurants, and you see far more corporate Chinese going there as well. Along Derrick, the Chinese are rude and they have no manners. (Interview, March 2022)

Johannesburg has two Chinatowns: one close to downtown, in decline, and linked to an earlier wave of migration going back to the turn of the nineteenth century; the other in the eastern suburb of Cyrildene, which only began developing from the 1990s. About 10 years ago, several Chinese restaurants and shops also started to cluster along Rivonia Boulevard near Sandton, the city's main financial district, and several upmarket northern suburbs. The partial split in terms of clientele between Derrick Avenue and Rivonia Boulevard points to a growing class differentiation between mainland Chinese migrants who live in South Africa. This echoes Goodman's (2014: 189–90) argument about class considerations in China being increasingly tied to lifestyle concerns and housing preferences, and subsequently reinforcing forms of class identity. Initially, though, I would frequently meet Mei in Chinatown in Cyrildene, where she was a regular at dinner functions and events organised by various Chinese associations and was often asked to deliver a song. While not a professional singer, Mei gathered fame among the Chinese in Johannesburg (especially for her repertoire of traditional songs) and told me many times she had performed on stage during former president Jacob Zuma's third wedding.

Haoyu, on the other hand, has continuously lived in Chinatown near the main activity strip, in the same freestanding house he bought in 1991. On a day-to-day basis, his engagement with the street is limited; he mostly stays inside (preparing food, checking on his 13-year-old son's study progress) or spends time elsewhere. His engagement with Chinatown materialises in a more structural way. For example, on request by one of the richest Chinese businessmen in Johannesburg and as someone who is deeply involved in community matters, Haoyu agreed to design the archways now standing at each end of Derrick Avenue. He refused to charge for the work, with the gates primarily financed through community donations, and told me this was his contribution to the shaping of an attractive Chinatown. In parallel, property prices within Chinatown and its immediate surrounds had soared, triggered by the high demand from Chinese newcomers (at least until a few years ago) looking for a place of (transient) attachment and familiarity:

> It's difficult for white people to accept this kind of lifestyle. Only Chinese can accept this. It's too noisy, crowded and things just work differently … Over the years, I received many offers to sell my house. The neighbours wanted to pay 4 million [ZAR] to tear down the house and build a block of flats. My wife didn't want to sell, so we kept the house. Today we wouldn't get 4 million anymore, maybe 2 million [ZAR, or roughly €125,000]. There is much less demand now. (Conversation with Haoyu, October 2021)

The gradual transformation of the built environment along Derrick Avenue generated continued objections from adjacent residents who feared that Chinatown—perceived as dirty and chaotic—would spread and disrupt the largely residential suburb. The main concern was the street and its immediate surroundings negatively impacting on the area's property values. At the same time, the high demand among Chinese to either rent or buy property pushed prices up, even if in a spatially confined manner. With Cyrildene not high on the city administration's list of priorities, eventually, the Planning Department agreed to develop a precinct plan, trying to find a balance between the altered urban fabric and demands to limit Chinatown's expansion. As a long-term resident of the area, Haoyu disagreed with the city's vision and form of engagement, stressing the need to consider a far more pragmatic approach to urban change:

> [T]o develop the area, attention needs to be paid to the economic base. So far, it has developed organically without any plans in place … The main thing to note is that this area has slowly been changing and even if it looks the way it does, this should be seen as positive and can be used as a foundation to develop it to be better, in a holistic and sustainable way. Whatever plans the city has, they are not communicated effectively with the Chinese community and not much effort seems to be made to understand our needs. There is also a disconnection about the way development should proceed between CoJ [City of Johannesburg] and the Chinese community. For them, there must be a plan before the area can be developed, and since it is not a priority area, nothing happens and we have this organic form of development, which looks chaotic. If this area is not a priority for CoJ, why don't they then support community efforts? Cyrildene has faced ups and downs; no-one can control that. (Interview, August 2019)

Street Scene in Chinatown

An informal waste collector pulls his trolley along Derrick Avenue, which has undergone the most visible transformations in the built environment. Often reduced to the representation as an ethnic enclave, partially informed through its prevalent spatial markers and demographics, the street's composition is far more diverse and connects to the city in manifold ways. Source: Mark Lewis, 2017.

While staying in Cyrildene, Haoyu also designed and built a house in an upmarket gated estate halfway between Johannesburg and Pretoria. Finalising the project has taken much longer than expected as he aimed to import some of the material from China (partly to save on costs), which has been delayed due to the pandemic. While construction was stalled, he received a monthly fine from the estate's management without being able to establish a direct channel of communication with the body corporate to explain himself. While Haoyu generally tends to resonate more in terms of class than racial dynamics, in this instance, he was adamant that being Chinese had triggered this treatment. While he envisaged this new estate as his eventual place of retirement, these challenges have dampened his eagerness to move there.

If pragmatic living, through the lens of experience, is about meeting needs and expectations, in practice, this can result in deciding what spaces to engage with. Alternatively, it can also mean that some options simply appear outside the sphere of what is deemed possible or acceptable. For the Chinese newcomers who work inside the Chinese-owned malls and whose capital and networks are scant, spatial and

Trading in Context

Outside view of one of the many Chinese-run malls situated in the Crown Mines area, to the south of Johannesburg's inner city. Security is a prominent feature with, in this case, vehicles controlled upon entering and exiting the premises and the presence of a nearby watchtower. In more recent years, some of these malls have tried to attract tenants through a combined live-work(-play) offer, advertised here as a 'Chinese celebrities apartment' (华人名人公寓). Source: Mark Lewis, 2017.

residential dynamics are largely informed by the goal to save money and limit risks and expenses. As a result, many resort to sharing accommodation in Chinatown or within the premises of those malls that offer residential possibilities. In Mei's and Haoyu's cases, because of their upward economic mobility, pragmatic living is closely entangled with shifting class dynamics and becomes, to some extent, a question of convenience and personal preference. If Mei's evolving engagement with the city could be reduced to opportunism, within a pragmatist mindset, these different stages of her residential journey can be 'understood as [an] active mediation between ideas and outcomes' (Wills and Lake 2020: 11).

Work, Ageing, and (Long-Term) Possibilities

One day, Haoyu and I drove through the inner city on our way to visit some of the Chinese-run malls in the mining belt. Stuck in traffic, he pointed to the adjacent street and casually mentioned that many years ago he was mugged in that spot. I asked him whether this incident had sown doubt about his decision to stay in South Africa, to which he replied:

> This was in 1991 when I arrived in South Africa. China was still very poor then and only opened up recently; it was still very difficult to get out or to come in. So, no one can really know what the world outside is like. My uncle from Hong Kong, a businessman, told us that he travelled to many places in the world and South Africa is the best option: the weather is nice, houses are big and very cheap, highways are good, electricity, everything is cheap … I didn't know how fast China was going to change. I was still working in China, so never felt I can't go back, but I could not go to Europe or the US. Lots of people applied for SA [South African] passports; this helped to get a visa for the US, Europe, or Australia. I didn't need it as my work was in China. (Interview, September 2020)

His uncle, who had invested a sizeable sum in South Africa, was granted 19 immigration permits, which he offered to his extended family. Haoyu's wife decided to accept and migrated to start her own business in Johannesburg. Haoyu, aged 28 at the time, was not particularly drawn to South Africa as he had a job in China and did not want to give it up. However, since the couple wanted to start a family, he eventually joined her. Over the years, while based in Johannesburg, he continued to primarily work on projects in China, periodically flying back to design and oversee the construction of developments (mainly towers and commercial spaces). Because his studies had coincided with the

Tiananmen protests, he never received his final diploma and struggled to have his degree officially recognised in South Africa. Occasionally, Chinese businesspeople in Johannesburg and beyond do hire his services to design projects, mainly for commercial purposes, but he has not managed to work for a South African firm.

In contrast, Mei, as an entrepreneur, thought it was less complicated to set up a business in South Africa than in China. At various points, she imported high-end furniture, ran a tourist agency, a logistics company, and explored possibilities in relation to solar energy, while acknowledging that some of this ease, at least at an early stage, was linked to her husband being white. More importantly, though, singing put her in contact with a lot of Chinese businesspeople, opening doors and widening her pool of potential customers. Eventually, she acted as the secretary-general of a well-connected Chinese businesswomen's association, with about 100 members in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, and even Mozambique, and largely involved in charity work targeted at local initiatives. It was through this that she met former president Zuma's third wife, as well as other political leaders. In business, she often combined the two networks, trying to team up with those having access to government projects (and ticking the right affirmative action conditionalities) while making use of her Chinese connections to gain information about certain industries or contacts at specific factories back in China. A few years ago, she had a car accident that continues to affect her health, putting a lot of her decisions and priorities into perspective. For some time, she had been thinking about moving to the United States, where her mother, sister and her eldest son (from her first marriage) all live and where her two sons from her current marriage recently enrolled in a private high school:

> You know I always tell you that I love money. But I actually don't need all the things I have, all these bags, clothes, the big property. It doesn't matter really … Our plan is to sell the house and the farm, scale down and then move to Florida. There is no one left here besides the two of us [referring to her husband]. I cannot retire yet, there are a lot of expenses, so I want to buy a small place here, keep a link. Try to do some business between South Africa and the US. [Because of Covid-19, she let go of her travel agency and is now solely focusing on her logistics company.] I have spent half my life here; South Africa is all I know workwise. And, no, to answer your question, I don't want to go back to China; there's nothing left for me there. (Interview with Mei, March 2022)

For both Mei and Haoyu, looking ahead is still less about the specifics of retirement (even if this has increasingly come up in conversations) and more about adapting to changing circumstances, in both practical and emotional terms. For example, due to the pandemic and stringent quarantine rules in China, Haoyu has not managed to

Textured Neighbourhood Experiences

Elderly couple selling vegetables in Derrick Avenue. A walk along the street reveals a complex reality in terms of gender, age, and family dynamics—beyond the area's reputation as merely host to transient migrants working in the numerous Chinese-run malls in the southern parts of the city. Source: Mark Lewis, 2017.

travel back to work. After decades of being focused on China for work prospects, he half-heartedly started working part-time for a locally based Chinese investment company. He said it was odd that both he and his wife now worked for others—'something which we have never done before' (Conversation with Haoyu, March 2022).

Some time ago, his wife had returned to China so their son could attend primary school and receive a Chinese education. As a result, Haoyu's wife had to give up her own business. On returning to South Africa, and with their son now enrolled in a private high school in Johannesburg, she felt it was 'easier' to work for someone else rather than start afresh. She manages a friend's shop in one of the Chinese-run malls, working seven days a week.

Becoming gradually more open to new options, Haoyu recently travelled to Zambia to design a project for a Chinese friend—his first visit to a country other than China or South Africa. Besides spending a few days in Lusaka, he drove to the Copperbelt in the country's north, seeing lots of work opportunities and even pondering whether he should buy a property and stay a few years in Zambia. He will probably end up retiring in South Africa, as he often mentions that his wife feels comfortable there. Meanwhile, he is concerned about his son's level of English proficiency, wondering whether he will manage to enrol in university or find employment in an environment dominated by English. Despite having resigned himself to remaining in South Africa, Haoyu still feels restless:

> It is not always easy in South Africa. Work is easier than life; I still often compare China with South Africa. But, whatever, we live here now. I accept it, I just need to find more company and keep busy. (Conversation via WeChat with Haoyu, April 2022)

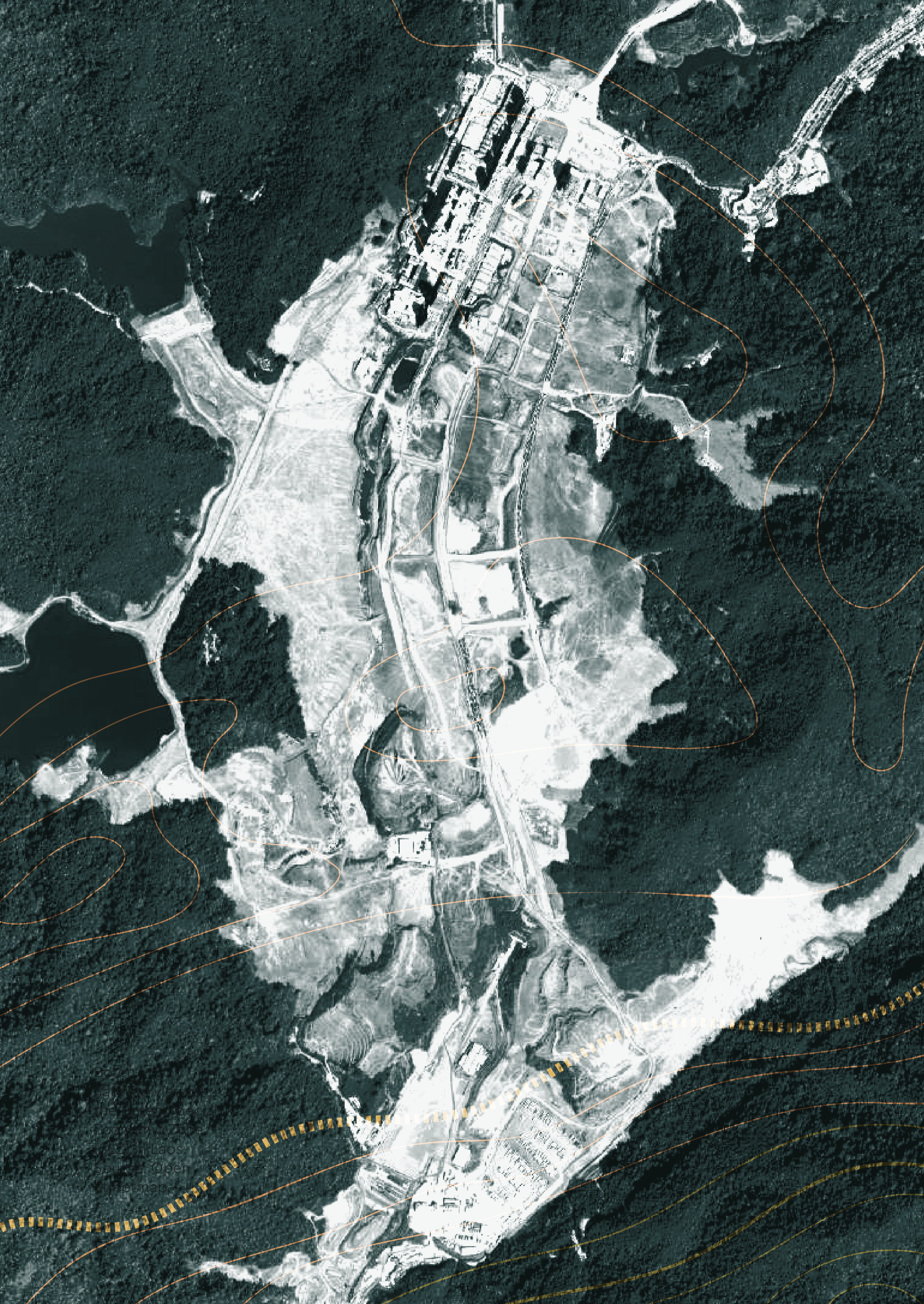
Overall, these two accounts point to a form of pragmatism that is characterised by an intricate time–space dimension, with Mei generally pleased about living in South Africa yet planning to leave, and Haoyu, although somewhat disgruntled, ready to stay put. In these two instances, aspirations of moving to an upmarket gated estate or pursuing an upper-class lifestyle point to the idea of what Lauren Berlant (2011) called 'cruel optimism' where desires become obstacles to personal (and social) flourishing. The pair's evolving spatial footprint in Johannesburg mirrors a more general upward class mobility, comparable with the emerging black middle-class (Southall 2016); other spatially informed dynamics, of relocation or (reluctant) immobility, are closely tied to family matters. If ageing as well as shifting priorities can affect levels of mobility, in Mei's and Haoyu's cases, the latter is also shaped by more tangible factors such as travel restrictions linked to the Covid-19 pandemic and health-related issues.

Pragmatic Living as Method of Inquiry

One could argue that living in general is imbued with a fair amount of pragmatism. This includes striving for sufficient financial stability, finding the right work–life balance, as well as bringing risk factors to an acceptable level. As such, 'pragmatic living' materialises in different and malleable ways, not only influenced by power dynamics and contextual and temporal circumstances, but also contingent on aspects such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender, citizenship, and duration of stay. The narration of Mei's and Haoyu's reflections and experiences is by no means meant to be representative of a wider reality of Chinese migrant lives in Johannesburg, but rather, an attempt to open a discussion about how pragmatic living, from a conceptual standpoint, can serve as a productive way to broaden the analytical lens.

Having met both Mei and Haoyu in connection with specific research interests, I at times inadvertently also ended up associating them with specific activities or locations. As obvious as it seems that people are irreducible, carry complex and layered personalities, can change their habits, ideas, and at times even their outlook on life, in scholarly work, we often tend to stubbornly stick to rigid frames and categories of analysis. Moreover, within the academic literature, exploring the interplay between migration and the life course, migrant lives tend to be studied through a causality perspective based on combined readings of trajectories, transitions, sequences, and turning points (see, for instance, Wingens et al. 2011). While useful in building a sequential and time-sensitive portrait, migrants and migrant practices continue to be viewed through a separate analytical framework and, as a result, are 'conceived of as categorically different from the practices and dynamics of non-migrants' (Çağlar and Glick Schiller 2018: 22).

To approach migrants as complete social actors poses the combined challenge of 'discard[ing] the binary between migrants and non-migrants [while] keep[ing] in focus the migration experience' (Çağlar and Glick Schiller 2018: 5). As argued by Barnett (2020: 277) when reflecting on pragmatism, it is therefore 'not simply a matter of arriving at an agreed set of criteria against which one might judge the value (not utility, surely) of knowledge claims[, but] a matter of slowing down and thinking about how criteria work'. This comment is also relevant to scholarly interest in Chinese mobilities and migration to the African continent (or elsewhere), with research focused on temporalities and forms of attachment to a specific context often tied to analytical categories, from 'sojourners', 'settlers', or 'drifters' to the notion of 'in-betweenness' or 'liminality' (for example, Park 2010, 2022; Giese and Thiel 2014; Wang and Zhan 2019; Driessen 2020). Using pragmatic living as a method of social inquiry can potentially unearth and cut across different perspectives, imaginations, and forms of experimentation, 'in which the extension of interactions across time and space enhances the collective capacity to address a wider web of issues' (Barnett 2020: 279–80).



Boten

Satellite view of the Boten Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Laos. Source: Open Streetmap.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Boten Special Economic Zone

Laos

The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) was established in 1975 by the communist Pathet Lao movement and has remained under its authoritarian rule since. In the decades since, Vientiane has largely enjoyed a friendly relationship with China through their shared political ideology and, from the 1990s, business ties.

Find out more about this project, visit *The People's Map of Global China* website:

- Country Profile: Lao People's Democratic Republic
  Written by Wanjing (Kelly) Chen and Juliet Lu

- Project Profile: Boten Special Economic Zone
  Written by Jessica DiCarlo

Boten: From Dawn till Dusk

Text by Jessica DICARLO
Photos by Nicholas BOSONI

Travellers crossing the Boten–Mohan border from China into Laos pass through the 'Belt and Road Lane' before descending concrete steps to a paved road lined with Chinese flags, palm trees, and flowering shrubs. Walking towards Boten, Laos, the road turns to dirt and a golden stupa that marks the Lao border station appears (see Images 1 and 2). Beyond it, a billboard greets visitors: 'Boten: The first international hub and new city of the Trans-Asian Railway in Laos' (磨丁:泛亚铁路老挝首站国际化的枢纽新城). The Boten Special Economic Zone (SEZ) is considered the 'first stop' in Southeast Asia on the Laos–China Economic Corridor and Laos's largest project to date in terms of capital investment.

However, Boten has undergone dramatic changes over the past two decades. Far from a flourishing city, the story of this border-town SEZ is a case of boom to bust—and perhaps boom again. It evolved from a remote border crossing (before 2000) to a booming casino town (2007–11). However, the zone developed a reputation as lawless and violent, rife with crime, prostitution, gambling, smuggling, and rumours of murder. After a notorious period as a casino outpost, Boten was shut and much of the population left the zone (2011–15). It is now an active construction site and city-in-the-making (2016 – present). With the Belt and Road Initiative and the construction of the Laos–China Railway, Boten's strategic location has been seized on as an investment opportunity. Under Haicheng, the new Chinese developer, the SEZ is being refashioned into an urban and tourism centre, as well as a trade and logistics hub. Today, it is a highly speculative space, envisioned and marketed as an international city that will host high-rise apartments and as many as 300,000 to 350,000 residents by 2035. Labourers on the ground enact the zone through cycles of mundane, long work hours interspersed with lively performances of a city yet-to-come when VIPs or investors are in town. The following photo essay and short article take us to the streets of Boten to share the rhythms, pace, and experiences of city-making at the Laos–China border.

Visualising the Symphony of Construction

Rhythm in Boten: a low vibration hangs over the city day and night, acting as the bass on which the cacophony of steady and repeated patterns of sound, movement, and experience are built. If one stands, eyes closed, in the middle of the zone, a symphony rises. Tractor engines chug and sputter, moving massive mounds of red earth. The occasional jackhammer jolts the senses away from deeper tones and throaty sounds of tractors. Cement mixers turn, mimicking the drone of a didgeridoo. Increasing in pitch, metal on metal creates a chorus, shrill and distinct. Saws on rebar rise and fall in timbre. The frenetic sounds of drills and hammers hasten the tempo. One can feel the weight of sledgehammers as they rise and fall, at times slowing the tempo to something akin to *adagio*. Rhythms also entail more than sound. The crisp morning air, not yet filled with the dust that hangs in the afternoon heat, carries smells of noodle soup and *baozi*. In the evening, the chorus of construction machinery dampens, yielding to clinking glasses and muffled music from KTV bars. On one backstreet, tables are piled with barbecue and bottles of *pijiu* of both the Lao and the Chinese varieties. As the sun sets, construction dust gives way to cigarette smoke and the boisterous voices of workers gathering for dinner.

Repetition makes these rhythms and sensual experiences especially apparent. At times, it becomes challenging to differentiate one day from the next. This sentiment extends to the lived experiences of people in the zone, as the following essay details. The narrative arcs of both the photos and the essay on Boten that we publish in the following pages trace a journey through the construction-site–city, from early morning through to the night, showing a snapshot of the zone and the people living and working in it. On one level, the photos convey a sense of limbo and suspension across the vast grayscale construction site. It exists as an expanse of land levelled for visions of a global city. However, on the city streets, where the music of construction echoes, photos offer snapshots of the lives that support Boten's revival. From the wider landscape, Nicholas Bosoni zooms in to make portraits of the people whose labour and hopes are the very foundation of the zone.

The Future Boten

(Previous page) The construction of Boten train station two kilometers south of Boten, in Laos's Luang Namtha Province, in February 2021. (Above) A miniature replica of the future Boten on display at the JingLan Hotel in Boten. Source: All photos in these pages were taken by Nicholas Bosoni.

Construction Sites

Trucks transporting raw products out of Laos approaching the border check post in Boten. November 2020.

Eventuality and Rhythms of Life in a City Yet-to-Come

Text by Jessica DICARLO
Photos by Nicholas BOSONI

Between 6 am and 7 am every weekday, Boten's few short streets come to life. People navigate the four-block area in which they live and work; the three main streets are lined with shops, restaurants, bars, massage parlours, and lodgings. The remainder of the soon-to-be-city is under construction. To one side of the main highway that runs from the Chinese border and across northern Laos is the 'old' Boten, which took shape during the casino boom of the late 2000s. Its windowless structures are made of corrugated metal. Garage-like doors seal these small boxes each night. To the west of the highway lies 'new' Boten. Here, the streets are lined with tall concrete buildings, most of which are either vacant and under construction or serve as worker housing. The first floors of these buildings are shops of various sorts where many people in Boten work. Throughout the course of a day, these few streets are where lives weave between work and personal time, intersecting in some instances and separating in others. Tourists on tour buses or road trips, typically from China, stop for, at most, a night.

One morning in 2019, I situated myself at a small restaurant in the new area, slowly sipping my tea and nodding to the increasingly familiar faces who passed on their way to work. The parade of people began early, with construction workers and day labourers. They were up with the sun, which pierced through the already dusty air as the hum of trucks resumed. Their pants were thick, baggy, and covered in red earth. The smell of *baozi* rose in the air and people stopped by the steaming pot of *cha jidan* or tea eggs by my side, sharing brief exchanges with the shop owner before walking to their respective worksites with tiny plastic-bagged breakfasts. Diagonally opposite my seat, a group of workers stood idly, waiting to see whether their labour would be called on that day. It was common knowledge that this corner was where informal labour arrangements could be made on a day-to-day basis. Often it was young Lao men, primarily from Luang Namtha Province, who waited each day. The young men had already eaten *khao piak* (a local rice-noodle soup) that morning in their often-shared dorm rooms, and now waited on this corner. The security detail was also out walking the streets. Their gaze was not unlike mine that morning, and we noted the various passers-by and their movements, while also keeping a watchful eye on one another despite our many previous exchanges of hellos and informal conversations.

By about 8.30 am, the appearance of the people walking to work began to change. Those on the street were now smartly dressed in suit jackets and blouses; some women wore low heels and skirts. They were the young, twenty-something Chinese employees of Haicheng, the Yunnan-based developer, who had to be at the office by 9 am. Traces of dirt covered their office attire despite attempts to dust it off at the end of each day—a reminder of the construction site in which they lived and worked. After the younger employees had disappeared into their offices, bosses meandered out for a late breakfast. They often appeared to be in meetings at the streetside restaurants, busily chatting. Indeed, all my meetings with officials and leaders in the zone took place not in an office, but either at the company's 'luxury' hotel or at large round tables with lazy susans covered in food.

Throughout the day, I walked the city-in-the-making—at times an observer and at others with the many workers who moved there from China. Everyone living in the SEZ was involved in its construction and development: Haicheng employees, casual labourers, shopkeepers, restaurateurs, hoteliers, and the staff

Clear and Develop

(Previous page, top) Land has been cleared and water wells are drilled in a new area soon to be developed in Boten. (Bottom) A view of the Chinese developments in Boten. (Below) A street in the Lao quarter of Boten that will soon be torn down to make space for new hotels and residential buildings All photos were taken in November 2020.

of karaoke bars and massage parlours. Many of the Chinese workers employed by Haicheng came to Laos with a vision of what their life and work would be here. Their views were rooted in the spectacular and grandiose images of Boten presented to them in job advertisements and marketing materials.

Haicheng's advertisements crafted a spectacle for investors and tourists alike. In contrast to the mundane reality of workers preparing for each day, billboards advertising the emergence of a global city—the likes of Shenzhen—lined the main highway from the Chinese border. Haicheng's design team visited Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Chiang Mai, and Luang Prabang for design inspiration to craft Boten as a modern megacity offering an idyllic Southeast Asian culture (DiCarlo 2020). This vision manifested in miniature models and marketing materials across Boten. For example, a 7.6-square-metre model of Boten SEZ sprawled across Haicheng's main sales hall. In the background, a video boomed on an enormous screen, showing animations of wide, clean streets with children walking to school and people arriving to work at high-rise office buildings.

This essay focuses on global city-making as experienced in the everyday lives and embodied experiences of Chinese company workers. It is primarily based on conversations, interviews, and participant observation with young Chinese professionals who came to Boten for work, as well as interviews with Lao officials, labourers, hotel and shop owners, potential investors, and tourists between 2017 and 2020. Through ethnographic accounts centred on the main streets of Boten, this essay attends to the ways people make sense of, experience, and produce the zone. Throughout this essay, I detail some of the lives entangled with Boten's construction and how people navigate the space as, simultaneously, a future global city and a material project that structures their expectations and everyday life.

Expectations and Experiences of Urban Becoming

I returned to the 1 square kilometre (if not less) of Boten over multiple visits between 2017 and 2020 and walked with the people who inhabited its few blocks. With each visit, the streets took on new life and momentum. My first trip was not unlike anthropologist Alessandro Rippa's (2021) description of Boten in 2016 as being in a state of ruin and suspension for those working in the zone as they waited for development. However, with subsequent visits, the construction site morphed into a small city and lived-in space. The evenings were increasingly lively and late, as I spent time circulating between the 'old' and 'new' Botens for dinner, drinks, games, or karaoke with various company employees. These workers are the current faces of Boten, as significant capital and state support are redefining the border space as a global city (for more details, see DiCarlo 2022). Many of these workers came to Laos with a vision of what their life and work would look like. In one sense, their views were rooted in the bird's-eye view of what Boten

The Butcher

A butcher shop in Boten, February 2021

could be—notions of the ideal city defined by the developer. However, the ways they experienced and, in turn, created Boten often looked quite different to what the company advertised.

Chen arrived in Boten with high hopes, never having been to Laos (or out of China for that matter). In contrast to other workers' sense that Boten was too urban and lacked any sign of Lao culture, she moved here precisely because it *will* be a global city. Her trendy shoes, clothes, and jewellery pointed to her desired cosmopolitan life, yet stood in contrast to the dusty construction-site street on which she lived. And yet, she hoped to be a part of making urban Boten a reality. Before coming to the SEZ, Chen worked in cosmetics and fashion sales in Kunming. When I met her, she was in her mid-thirties—a bit older than the usual twenty-something Haicheng employees—and had been hired to lead an import/export team for the zone's duty-free shop (in a building that was a nightclub in the days of Boten Golden City). 'My favourite part of my job is shopping for all the beauty products from Australia and Thailand,' Chen told me. 'Most of my orders come from Thailand.' She hesitated, with a look of disappointment, 'Right now we do not get many customers, but I still have to sell everything and that is very difficult.' During

my time in Boten, Chen showed me the tedious process she undertook with junior members of her sales team; to meet sales quotas, she used online platforms in China. She and her team would then carry the products across the border in backpacks to ship to individual buyers. Because Boten was not yet the bustling city she envisioned, Chen was trying to work part-time from her home in Kunming and part-time in the SEZ while she held out hope for the place.

Unlike Chen, Yongwen more openly 'hate[d] working in Boten' and reminded me of it each time we were together. When we first met in 2018, he had worked in the SEZ for only three months, having moved there for the money (US$750 per month). In his mid-twenties, he wore thick, round glasses and had a lanky, tall frame that led him to hunch when he talked with people. He often complained that the stiff shirts he had to wear each day were uncomfortable and that it was impossible to keep them clean in his small, dingy room and on a construction site. One afternoon we went to the old hotel, a decrepit building with mould-covered walls, broken furniture, and remnants of past zone lives. Yongwen seemed to use the hotel and the fact that some employees lived in the old rooms to demonstrate his disdain for his work. And yet, he said, he planned to stay for at least one year.

As we walked one afternoon, he narrated his arrival in Boten, reflecting on why and how he ended up there. After what he described as an idyllic childhood in the tourist area of Dali, Yunnan Province, he moved to Chengdu for university. As he studied (loosely in his description), he opened a bar and spent much of his time playing bass guitar in a band and arranging concerts. With hair hanging down his tattooed back, he saw himself as more rebellious and adventurous than most of his peers. His experience putting on shows and running the bar was how, he explained, he landed his job on Haicheng's tourism team. He decided to come to Boten because he wanted to live abroad in an exotic location where he could continue to do the work he enjoyed. He also saw Boten as a chance to escape the big city of Chengdu and return to nature. He expected Laos to be rural and his job to offer him time to explore. He also hoped to experience Lao traditions and life in Southeast Asia. To Yongwen's disappointment, 'Boten is like any Chinese city … There is only Chinese language, mostly Chinese food, and we stay with our work teams all day. I only know a few Lao people [and they] can

Construction Worker

(Previous page) A Lao construction worker in Boten, November 2020.

speak Chinese.' He noted the irony of wanting to escape large Chinese cities only to move to Laos to build one. In his telling, rather than living more freely, he had become a disciplined subject, following dress codes, and cutting his hair. He was constantly on call and felt he was at the mercy of his work and bosses.

While many employees were young and had never spent time outside China, a handful had lived in Laos, often for school, and were hired as translators. Meilin, for example, worked as a translator and salesperson for Haicheng. She had envisioned her job in Laos as a way to gain a professional edge. In her words: 'I think working overseas will get you a much better experience than in China because you meet more people and learn how to work and deal with things in ways that are different than in China.' She viewed her time in Boten as a difficult but worthy investment in her future and career. When I first met her in 2019, she had worked in the zone for one year. Unlike many of her colleagues, she had lived in Laos two years previously, in the capital of Vientiane, to study Lao language. 'I would have never known about Boten if I did not study here. Every time I travelled from China to Vientiane by road, I stayed in Luang Namtha Province and saw that the place was developing quickly.' She was from Jinhong (about three hours north of Boten in China) and wanted to find a job in Laos that was closer to her home than Vientiane, so eventually she decided to apply for a job with Haicheng. Because she already held a bachelor's degree and spoke Lao, it was not long before she landed the position in Boten. She insisted that 'Boten will

help Laos develop' and repeated what many of the employees and Chinese visitors I spoke with said: 'This place [Boten] and the [Laos–China] railway will help Laos develop and grow like China did in the past.'

During working hours as I walked, ate lunch, or visited the office with Meilin, she focused on development—either for herself professionally or for Laos economically. However, in the evenings, I noticed a shift in our conversations. As the sun set and the din of construction faded into muffled KTV songs, her language moved away from the promise of development. Perhaps because the buzz of the day had subsided and she missed 'Vientiane and home in China', she instead conveyed a sense of precarity about her Boten life. She had no official work contract and thus was technically working in Laos illegally without a permit—as was the case with many lower-level employees who crossed the border as tourists. She also had no insurance because, as she told me, of the 'in-between' location of the project. Meilin said she felt 'like a temporary worker', even though, based on the job advertisement, she thought she would have a stable income and time to take a vacation to travel in Southeast Asia. However,

Workers

(Previous page) A Lao construction worker walking to a construction site in Boten. (Above) Lao construction workers walking to a construction site in Boten, with their Chinese supervisors, November 2020.

Across the Border

A border checkpoint between Laos and China in Boten, November 2020.

like other employees, she described her work schedule as erratic, leaving her feeling completely exhausted one week and utterly bored another. 'Today, I don't have anything to do, and this place is so boring. But tomorrow maybe we will work 12 or more hours in one day.' Yet this inconsistency, she complained, was not reflected in her salary. She continued: 'So I get paid by the day when I'm needed … [I]f they don't need me, I don't get paid, and if they do [need me] then I get paid for a day, but the day can be as long as they decide.' Yongwen had similar complaints: he was hired as a full-time employee but was treated like a provisional worker.

Rhythms of Repetition and Eventuality

The experiences of Haicheng employees—what they thought they had come to do, how they experienced Boten, and what they ended up doing—illuminate a gap between the lofty visions of the city and the mundane grounded experience. Yet, labourers like Yongwen continued to create the mirage of Boten that was sold to them. As part of the tourism team, his work included assisting with marketing, physically building scenic areas, planning for infrastructure needs, and arranging shows and dinners when the company hosted important guests or meetings. During one week-long meeting, the 2019 Laos–China Tourism Year Cross-Border Exchange Conference (2019老中旅游年一跨境交流推介大会), Yongwen worked 16 to 18 hours a day. He had dark circles under his eyes and smoked more cigarettes than usual. 'It is nonstop when VIPs or important guests are here,' he told me, exasperated. He had to be available all day and well into the night to ensure the guests were entertained—in his words, 'babysitting'.

VIP events were (and still are) centred on the JingLan Hotel (景兰大酒店, 磨丁) in the heart of Boten. According to Tsing (2005), investment depends on creating a performance of possibilities and prosperity, and labourers like Yongwen regularly perform when VIPs are in town. The zone roars to life with the flick of a switch. That week, I often saw him head down and cigarette in hand, briskly walking from one event to the next. Or, if he was with guests, he charmingly ushered them around. However, once the guests left town, the mirage of a lively city faded. The next day, the coffee stand in the hotel lobby was gone and when I asked employees about it, they looked at me as though it had never existed. Gone, too, was the open-air hotel restaurant preparing steak, imported seafood, and roasted vegetables. The large patio that had been filled with clinking glasses and raised voices was now cordoned off and dark. Haicheng employees returned to quietly eating cafeteria food at tables, often alone and exhausted. The feeling of a hangover (if not actual hangovers) blanketed the hotel after the event. Many workers live in this rhythm and repetition, snapping between hypercharged and monotonous. The hype, lulls, and hangovers reveal the iterative cycle of labour that goes into producing the zone.

Even as some find dissatisfaction, or exasperation, in the repetitive production of spectacle, the promise of Boten has captured their hopes and imaginations. The possible futures of this place continue to affect long-time zone-dwellers. A Chinese woman who had lived in Boten for 10 years running a small roadside shop told me stories of the casino boom and subsequent bust. In the post-bust period, Boten was practically vacant, and her store stayed open only because it was one of the few on the Lao side of the border. When I met her in 2019, her business had picked up substantially, yet she remained sceptical that the developer's latest plans would come to fruition. Even with her doubts, however, she had no intention of leaving; the promise of Boten held her captive. Her resolution to stay highlighted the cycles of spectacle on which Boten is being built. Boten's promises are layered: from material to imaginative, in the offices, streets, and shops, and even on the bodies and in the minds of the workers. At the same time, several interrelated themes emerge and illuminate the gap between visions of the city and practices on the ground: tensions between purpose and precarity, anticipation and disappointment, development and discipline, as well as cycles of boredom and exhaustion.


黄金大酒店

More than a rhythm of repetition, Boten is built on a notion of eventuality. The lives of Haicheng employees illuminate temporal experiences as people wait for what they believe will arrive. Workers and long-time residents repeat and stake their time on a mantra that 'eventually Boten will work out'. Ellis (2021: 96) writes that 'contemporary work on infrastructure trades on its analyses of enchanting hopes as well as of mundane technical operations'. It is precisely on the eventuality of infrastructure that some sense of viability—of the project and daily life—is built. The eventuality of Boten, then, makes repetition, monotony, and dashed hopes bearable. It also contrasts with promises of 'China speed' as days bleed into each other. This focus on workers opens analytical possibilities that are often overlooked when examining SEZs, as their experiences and perspectives elaborate what Boten is at certain moments. The zone is beholden not to one image of what it will become, but to an amalgamation of various visions that change throughout the rhythms of the day.

As I stepped out of my nondescript guesthouse on a winter evening in 2020, I was confronted with the same heterogeneous beats, tempos, and cadences of construction that I had chronicled

For Chinese Only

(Previous page, top) A Chinese hotel dating to the early 2000s in Boten, November 2020. (Bottom) A Chinese men having a break in Boten, February 2021. (Below) A gambling room inside a Chinese-owned hotel in Boten, November 2020.

years before. I watched familiar movements, if not the same people, concluding a long day with beers at sidewalk tables. My early unease in Boten had faded into the comfort that comes with familiarity and repetition. The sun set on another day and, at dinner that night, I again toasted and played dice with workers. The next day, they would wake to repeat the cycle, not knowing whether to expect the frenetic or the monotonous. Even as they wavered between feelings of anticipation and precarity, they persisted—mediating urban development—through a vision that is not quite their own and only possible through the eventuality of infrastructure.

Nightlife

(Below) A Vietnamese migrant worker employed at a karaoke bar in Boten. (Next page, top)The outside of a nightclub in Boten. (Bottom) The city of Boten lights up every evening from 7pm to 10pm.

VOICES FROM THE GROUND

Engaging with China in Latin America: A Conversation with Paulina Garzón

Mark BO
Paulina GARZÓN

Paulina Garzón is the Director of Latinoamérica Sustentable (LAS), a nongovernmental organisation (NGO) based in Ecuador that focuses on Latin America. Paulina is an Ecuadorian with 25 years of experience working on issues related to the environment, human rights, and international finance. Until 2012, much of Paulina's work focused on the impacts of projects supported by Western multilateral banks, but with the expanding role of Chinese finance in the region, her focus switched, and she began to explore the drivers, practices, and regulation of Chinese projects. With few organisations working exclusively on Chinese projects and finance from community and environmental perspectives, LAS plays a unique role in documenting trends and project impacts, supporting local civil society groups to enhance their understanding of Chinese investment, and seeking to build lines of communication with Chinese companies, banks, and policymakers. In this conversation, we discuss with Paulina how she came to work on these issues and what motivated the establishment of LAS, the trends and impacts of Chinese investment in Latin America, as well as how she thinks the environmental and social performance of Chinese projects can be improved in the future.

Mark Bo: Can you introduce yourself and tell us a bit about how you came to be interested in issues related to Chinese engagements in Latin America?

Paulina Garzón: I started working on issues related to the environment and community rights in Ecuador (where I am from) in the early 1990s. For 10 years, I was fortunate to be part of Accion Ecologica, one of the first ecofeminist groups in Latin America, before becoming the cofounder of a new NGO in Ecuador, the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CDES). Later, I moved to the United States. Before I started working on Chinese investments in Latin America, I was program director for the Latin America and the Caribbean Program at the Bank Information Center (BIC), an NGO based in Washington, DC. During all these years working, campaigning, and travelling extensively in many Latin American countries, I witnessed how vast and precious natural territories were being severely damaged by large extractive and infrastructure projects, many of which would never have seen the light if they were subjected to appropriate environmental and social risk evaluation or could at least have significantly reduced their impacts if appropriate standards, supervision, and mechanisms for public participation were put in place. It was especially hard to see how because of these projects, local communities were deprived of their lands, livelihoods, culture, and sometimes even their dignity.

Before 2012, my work mostly focused on helping local communities to address challenges caused by specific projects and trying to influence national governments and Western multilateral development banks to improve their regulatory frameworks and their implementation. Nevertheless, at that very moment, other important players were emerging in Latin America—in particular, the Chinese banks. As I observed them extending their activities in the region, I realised we knew very little about them. Watching Chinese financing grow rapidly in volume and importance, I was motivated to understand where these banks stood on issues related to the environment, community rights, public participation, and accountability. With these questions in mind, I began conducting research on the policies and guidelines that apply to Chinese banks and companies when operating overseas.

I found that, in fact, there are many significant commitments made by Chinese entities, regulators, and business associations to protect the environment and the communities that are impacted by the activities of Chinese financial institutions and state-owned companies—for example, the banking regulator's Green Credit Guidelines, which aim to improve banks' due diligence, client compliance review, and project assessment with respect to environmental and social issues. Unfortunately, these guidelines, at least at that point, had not yet made an impact in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). The idea of making these commitments and guidelines known and implemented in LAC was an important goal for me when I started to do advocacy work related to Chinese investments in the region.

MB: You recently established Latinoamérica Sustentable (LAS), a new organisation that focuses on finance and investment and the impact it has on the environment and human rights in the region. Can you tell us more about your organisation, what motivated you to set it up, and how you think it can contribute to promoting more sustainable development?

PG: We 'officially' established Latinoamérica Sustentable as an NGO in Ecuador in 2021. Since 2014 and before becoming LAS, we were known as the China–Latin America Sustainable Investments Initiative (CLASII), hosted by BIC. Therefore, although LAS is a new Ecuadorian NGO, it already had a longstanding commitment to these issues and a well-established portfolio of work.

Our mission is to support the protection of the environment and local communities within the context of Chinese investments in LAC. To achieve this, we share information and meticulous analysis with a broad audience in Latin America and in China, produce advocacy tools, work independently and with other civil society organisations (CSOs) in the region to conduct research, and produce materials to inform Chinese entities about the environmental and social conflicts related to projects with Chinese participation. We do all of this with the hope that the Chinese institutions involved in the approval, supervision, and implementation of Chinese overseas investments will be better prepared to address negative impacts on certain projects, but also to improve their environmental and social risk evaluations and management during the whole investment cycle.

There are many CSOs monitoring global Chinese investment and finance. However, LAS is the only NGO in Latin America fully dedicated to work on Chinese investments with a focus on the environment and community rights. Although there are many reasons to have a broader approach when focusing on international investors, our organisation is still small, while

Coca Codo Sinclair Dam

Considered China's gateway to power infrastructure in Latin America, the Coca Codo Sinclair Dam in Ecuador has caused significant environmental harm and quality problems have been reported. Source: coalicionregional.net.

Chinese investments are often complex, large-scale, and increasingly relevant for the region. We hope that, with time, we will be able to expand our work to include more international banks and companies.

MB: How would you describe the current situation in terms of Chinese investment in Latin America? Which countries are major destinations for Chinese investment and finance, and which sectors are receiving most attention? How has this changed in the past two decades? What are some of the issues in Latin America that may be unique compared with other regions and require special attention?

PG: LAC countries borrowed heavily from China between 2007 and 2017, peaking in 2015 (The Dialogue n.d.). In fact, according to our calculations, 35 per cent of the regional public debt during those years was linked to Chinese banks, and concentrated in Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, and Ecuador. The largest Chinese lender in the area is the China Development Bank (CDB), which in just a few years managed to build a loan portfolio larger than that of the major multilateral financial institutions combined. However, this is no longer the situation.

During the past two years, Chinese finance has decreased dramatically in comparison with the previous decade. In 2018 and 2019, China lent US$3.2 billion to Latin America and the Caribbean compared with the US$125.8 billion it lent to LAC over the prior decade (see The Dialogue n.d., but the figure has been slightly adjusted based on our own research). However, this does not necessarily translate into a reduced Chinese presence in the region and, in 2019, while Chinese direct investment fell globally, Chinese direct investment in LAC increased lightly compared with the two prior years, reaching roughly 8 per cent of total foreign investment in the region. These data suggest the relationship between China and LAC could be moving from a financing to an investment axis. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has become increasingly important in the region, with 21 countries signing memorandums of understanding (MoUs) to cooperate with the initiative—most recently, Argentina.

The core of the China–LAC relationship centres primarily on infrastructure and extractive projects and this will not change any time soon. Most governments in South America are announcing new programs to build infrastructure—such as the 'Pro-Brazil' plan (a US$43 billion plan to build transport infrastructure and part of the Brazilian Government's pandemic recovery plan)—and to increase the extraction of natural resources, such as mining in Ecuador and Peru. Argentina has also named China as a 'key partner' and, in February, its President, Alberto Fernández, confirmed his government had officially signed a BRI cooperation agreement (making it the twenty-first BRI member in Latin America) and declared his country will receive around US$23 billion in new investments. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

(AIIB) is also steadily positioning itself in the region. Currently, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, and Peru are AIIB members, and Ecuador and Brazil have already received financing from it.

There is little doubt that China will continue to be a vital trade partner for most LAC countries. In fact, new and 'upgraded' free-trade agreements with China have been announced in Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru, among others. For many countries, the ability of the region to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic will be closely tied to additional financing from China, in the form of not only loans, but also public–private partnerships, joint ventures, and mergers and acquisitions.

All of this is happening based on strong and diverse cooperation frameworks between China and Latin American countries. Hundreds of bilateral agreements and declarations have been signed, but they say very little about the efforts that China and governments in the region will be willing to make to ensure that such cooperation not only prevents harm to the environment but also enhances protection for sensitive areas, such as forests of global importance in the Amazon region and the indigenous people who inhabit and protect them.

MB: What kinds of impacts are you seeing from these projects? How do you think Chinese financiers and developers can make a positive impact in the region, and what do they need to do better?

PG: Many civil society organisations are deeply concerned about Chinese banks and companies consistently choosing environmentally highly biodiverse and socially sensitive areas in which to invest, and the lack of proper environmental and social risk assessment. There is also much concern about the lack of information disclosure, high-quality standards, and means of accountability related to Chinese investments. These limitations have created social and environmental conflicts. A number of cases have been documented in a report titled *Third Cycle of the Universal Periodic Revision of the People's Republic of China Contributions of the Civil Society: Case Studies from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Peru* (CICDHA 2019). This was a 'shadow report' presented by 21 CSOs for the Third Cycle of the China Universal Periodic Review in 2018—the UN member states' peer review of their human rights record. The report documented 18 projects with participation of at least eight Chinese banks and no less than 14 Chinese companies. Fifteen of these projects affected environmentally protected areas, and a large number have not fulfilled the obligations of Chinese state-owned actors to respect international covenants related to participation and consultation rights, environmental protection, and labour rights, such as International Labour Organization Convention 169.

Nevertheless, there are also reasons for hope. Increasingly, Chinese leaders are making commitments in China and globally to address climate change and to protect the environment. This could potentially translate into fewer projects related to fossil fuels, harmful hydropower, and large-scale extraction of raw materials; and more projects supporting truly green energy and sustainable development. At the same time, Chinese entities have promulgated a number of voluntary guidelines aimed at avoiding and mitigating environmental and social impacts in overseas operations. For example, in 2021, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China issued the 'Working Guidelines for Green Development in Overseas Investment and Cooperation', which include several interesting advances. One very significant inclusion is that these guidelines promote the notion that Chinese overseas investments should go beyond 'host-country rules' in environmental protection standards when local regulations are lacking and adopt Chinese standards or international best practice. This marks a shift from the traditional approach of Chinese stakeholders to defer to host-country standards.

Very significantly, the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission, which regulates and supervises China's financial institutions, is in the process of developing a mechanism for processing complaints related to overseas projects financed by Chinese banks. The China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals, and Chemicals Importers and Exporters (CCCMC) is also working towards establishing a compliance mechanism for Chinese overseas mining projects. There is little public information on how these mechanisms will work, how communities around the world will be able to access them, or when they will be operational, but we consider these developments are important stepping-stones towards establishing effective, accessible, and predictable mechanisms that could potentially result in improved accountability, transparency, and engagement in the context of Chinese overseas investments.

MB: What challenges do communities and CSOs experience when trying to respond to the social and environmental impacts of Chinese projects? How responsive are Chinese stakeholders to community and civil society concerns?

PG: In our experience, it is an enormous challenge to build relationships with Chinese stakeholders both in China and in the host country. While we understand that geography, language, and culture are practical and formidable obstacles, Chinese institutions could do much more by just taking some small steps to be more transparent. For example, providing information on their websites about departments and employees that are in charge of certain geographical areas or business sectors, providing contact information and institutional addresses would create channels for communication with communities and civil society groups.

It sounds incredible that in a world that is highly interconnected in almost every way, it is almost impossible to get basic contact information for institutions that have approval and/or supervision powers over Chinese banks and companies. For example, the National Development and Reform Commission and Ministry of Commerce, which play a role in approving or recording overseas projects, are both near-impossible to access, as is the State-Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council. Other ministries, such as foreign affairs, finance, and ecology and environment are also challenging to access. The banking regulator and even the more progressive business associations that have promulgated environmental and social guidelines are also difficult to engage and often non-responsive.

Moreover, many times when, after much effort, an appropriate contact has been identified and civil society groups have been able to successfully send letters and documentation, there is no response from the Chinese recipient. This has been a common experience for us. For instance, in 2021, we worked on a report titled *Understanding the China Development Bank: Financing, Governance and Socio-Environmental Challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean*. We wrote letters to CDB offices in Beijing, Anhui, and Río de Janeiro to request information for the research and, later, to ask for reviews and observations of the draft report. We did not receive any answers. The same occurred last December when we sent the published report to these offices. It is relevant to remember that the CDB has made more than 85 per cent of the Chinese loans to Latin America and it is not only a relatively unknown bank to most people in the region, but also an inaccessible one.

In any case, there are signs that the contents of our communications are read, which is why we believe it is critical to continue sending them to keep Chinese stakeholders appraised of concerns on the ground and create a sense of urgency among decision-makers and regulators to take action. We have heard from partners that while they rarely receive direct responses to their letters, some have seen improvements on the ground after they have raised concerns. Many NGOs from LAC have also tried to establish contact with Chinese embassies and specifically with the economic and commercial counsellors, but so far these efforts have not been fruitful in a meaningful way. In some cases, the NGOs have received a kind acknowledgement of the receipt of the letter, but not much beyond that.

It is worth noting that it in previous years, at least the CDB, the Industrial Commercial Bank of China, and the Export–Import Bank of China have occasionally responded to the letters of LAC NGOs. Unfortunately, this small window of openness did not last. One important exception is the CCCMC, which so far is the only Chinese business association that appears to be genuinely interested in learning about the experiences of local communities with Chinese overseas mining operations and is actively trying to make its guidelines implementable, seeking to provide technical advice and establish pilot projects to train companies.

We are afraid that conflicts are likely to grow in the coming decades, given the fact that references to the environmental and social implications of Chinese financing have been virtually absent from the cooperation agenda with Latin America, and that CSOs and local communities have limited information, tools, and expertise to effectively influence Chinese entities.

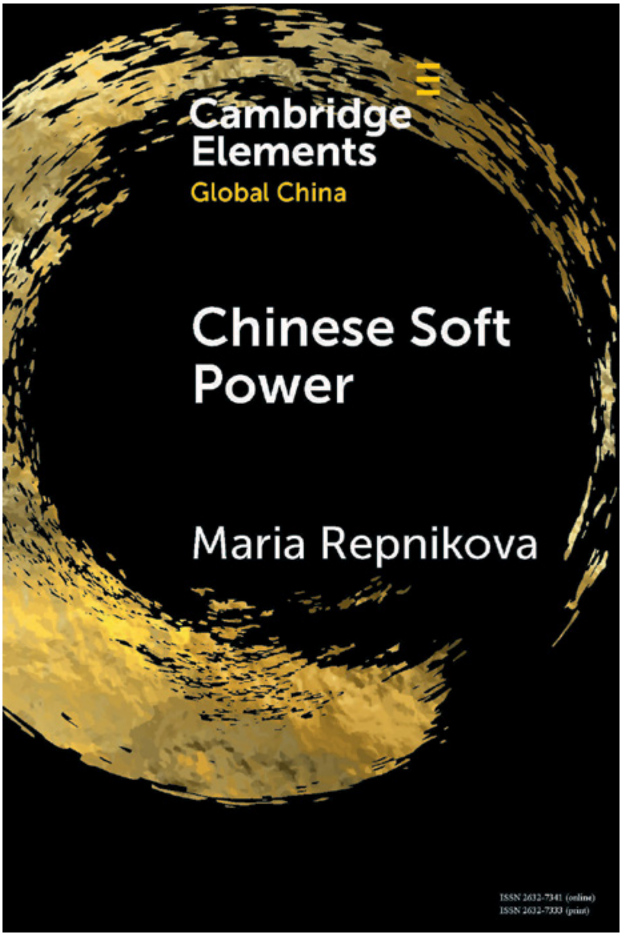
MB: Looking back on the years you have been active in this field, how would you describe the strength of civil society actions regarding the impacts of Chinese engagements in Latin America? What do you think could be done to help this field grow?

PG: During the 1990s and early 2000s, we became used to seeing Chinese companies as subcontractors for Latin American state-owned companies, especially in the oil and infrastructure sectors. Their environmental and social practices were notably weaker but, at that time, most CSOs were focusing on the companies that bore responsibility for the projects, rather than on the subcontractors themselves. In Ecuador, it was common for public officials and foreign companies to ask local activists that were opposing their projects to think twice about their demands because if these international companies left the projects, the Chinese would take them over. For the most part in the past decade, the general assumption was the Chinese companies did not care about the environment, while the Chinese companies claimed they followed national regulations and showed limited interest in building their own reputation as environmentally and socially responsible entities.

Still, there were some opportunities to see Chinese companies 'in action' in the 1990s and 2000s, when they became the main operators and contractors of large infrastructure and extractive projects. In these cases, local communities and NGOs were not prepared to engage and influence them. There are obvious barriers like geographical distance, language, and culture that make it very difficult 'to get to know each other'. Moreover, the lack of information and desire to engage from the Chinese side have created an environment in which conflicts and frustration have grown.

LAS has been working to better understand Chinese stakeholders and to build a bridge between both shores by finding and taking advantage of opportunities for bringing Chinese and Latin American stakeholders closer together. We highly appreciate the work and experience of other NGOs and communities in Asia and Africa, their learnings, and their generosity to share them with us in Latin America. While we certainly benefit much from them, we also know that 'learning by doing' is necessary when advocating with Chinese entities, and we continue to develop approaches that will hopefully bring about a paradigm shift and more responsible approaches to investment and financing in our region.

BOOKS


Cambridge
Elements
Global China
Chinese Soft
Power
Maria Repnikova
ISSN 2632-7341 (online)
ISSN 2632-7333 (print)

Chinese Soft Power: A Conversation with Maria Repnikova

Nicholas LOUBERE
Maria REPNIKOVA

Maria Repnikova's new book, *Chinese Soft Power* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), examines China's visions and practices of soft power. Repnikova starts by analysing Chinese academic writing and official speeches about soft power to grasp whether and how this concept has been transformed in the Chinese context. She then examines its practical implementation by focusing on key channels of China's public diplomacy, including Confucius Institutes and Classrooms, global media expansion, education and training, and public diplomacy spectacles. In engaging with each of these soft-power mechanisms, Repnikova traces the official motivations behind them, as well as how they operate across global contexts. In particular, she argues that soft power carries different meanings in China, and further suggests that its application should not be seen through a binary lens of success or failure. Instead, we should treat Chinese initiatives as at once ambitious in scale and adaptive to local contexts, but also as contested or perceived with mixed credibility by global audiences.

Nicholas Loubere: Let's start with the basics. What is soft power, where did it come from, and what is it about this arguably US-centric concept that has proven so attractive—or at least intriguing—to Chinese scholars and policymakers?

Maria Repnikova: Soft power is a concept originally coined by Joseph Nye, a Harvard professor and political scientist. He came up with it at the tail end of the Cold War as a way of reimagining the United States' power in the international system. Unlike some scholars who argued at the time that the United States' dominance in the international system was depleted during the Cold War, Nye called attention to what he saw as an untapped facet of American power—that of attractiveness rather than of military coercion or economic prowess. The resources of this 'attractiveness' that Nye articulated in his later work include foreign policy, values, and culture.

While the idea of soft power has gone through its ups and downs in the Washington establishment, it became associated with persisting US hegemony by its competitors, including Russia, Turkey, Iran, and of course, China. Most of these countries have also incorporated some version of soft power into their foreign policy strategy. China, I would argue, has been one of the most enthusiastic adopters. Over the past two decades, over

7,000 articles have been published on this topic in Chinese academic and policy journals, and the concept—along with its many Chinese variations like 'discourse power'(话语权), 'big power image' (大国形象), and 'cultural soft power' (文化软实力)—is frequently invoked by the top Chinese leadership, including President Xi Jinping himself. This idea has been intriguing to Chinese scholars and policymakers for several reasons. First, soft power is associated with great-power status. A number of Chinese writings I have analysed for this book emphasise that, without soft power, China cannot fully realise its rise as a great power. Other than seeing it as intrinsic to reaching its global status and competing with the United States, soft power is seen as conducive to expanding China's economic power—by softening the edge of its economic expansion or making it more palatable to global publics.

NL: How have Chinese thinkers adapted soft power for their own context and purposes? Can you give an example or two of how soft power has been operationalised in Chinese foreign policy?

MR: Chinese thinkers adapted or reinvented the concept of soft power in terms of the motivations or target audiences and the sources deployed in improving China's image. First, unlike Nye's original concept that primarily focuses on repairing and bolstering the United States' image globally, and especially in specific regions where it has been hampered by US-led wars and military operations, in the Chinese context, soft power is aimed at both external and domestic audiences. Other than shaping a more favourable image of China, soft power is meant to facilitate cultural cohesiveness and pride within the country. Some Chinese writings invoke Xi Jinping's term 'cultural security' (文化安全) in arguing that the Chinese public needs more protection or immunity from Western cultural influences. By witnessing China attain respect and admiration internationally, it is thought that the Chinese public will rally around Chinese culture and values, and thereby also inadvertently support the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The second important distinction in how soft power is interpreted in China versus the West concerns the understanding of resources or the process of soft-power implementation. In Nye's conceptual framing, as noted earlier, soft power is strictly distinguished from hard power or economic and military resources. Chinese thinkers, in contrast, critique the notion of strict boundaries between hard and soft power, and generally tend to see soft power as encompassing a wider range of instruments, including China's traditional culture, values, and ideology, but also China's governance model, political capacity, technological innovation, and more. Though the cultural soft-power school is dominant in Chinese academic literature, even the concept of culture is quite fluid, implicitly invoking politics or China's political system.

NL: Through the lens of soft power, how do you think high-level Chinese policymakers perceive the inherently bottom-up and chaotic nature—or at least outside direct state control—of so much of China's engagements with the world? For instance, irregular migration to Africa for resource extraction or entrepreneurialism that sometimes creates clashes with local populations.

MR: Ironically, Chinese scholars and officials often blame these irregular movements and actors for inhibiting China's soft-power potential or for hurting China's image. When asked why Chinese soft power faces pushback in certain countries in Africa and more broadly in the Global South, the responsibility is often attributed to nonstate actors who are behaving in an opportunistic manner and who are difficult to control. How Chinese embassies engage with nonstate actors and activities on the ground is a fertile area for future research. In my experience, I found that there was a sentiment of mutual suspicion between them whereby private companies (and individuals) would also distance themselves from the embassy, shying away from what they see as unnecessary and at times unhelpful attention from Chinese officials.

NL: How do we understand Chinese soft-power efforts that are seemingly ineffective or even counterproductive—such as the Confucius Institutes that have been involved in numerous scandals? What is the internal logic of these kinds of initiatives and who are the main targets of their attempt to garner soft power?

MR: With regard to Confucius Institute scandals, part of the problem is less to do with China … and more to do with pre-existing deep-seated suspicions of China and CCP-sponsored education initiatives in the West. Hubbert (2019) writes about this convincingly in her book: the fact that even apolitical narratives in Confucius Institutes in America would be seen as political or as forms of self-censorship by American students, or as China attempting to hide something. We see more China-inflicted soft-power scandals in the domain of assertive digital diplomacy—now commonly referred to as 'wolf warrior' diplomacy. Chinese diplomats, including spokespeople for the Foreign Ministry, increasingly make brazen remarks about the West, at times spreading disinformation, as in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine. Chinese officials like Zhao Lijian, for instance, spread Russia-invoked theories about American biolabs in Ukraine and cast doubt on the widely documented massacre carried out by Russian forces in Bucha. When it comes to these offensive statements, they appear to target primarily domestic audiences: the leaders within the bureaucratic system, but also the larger public that often gets access to these statements through translated posts disseminated on Weibo (often via state media outlets like the *Global Times*). Offensive digital diplomacy, in my view, best encapsulates the friction between the dual audiences

Learning with Confucius

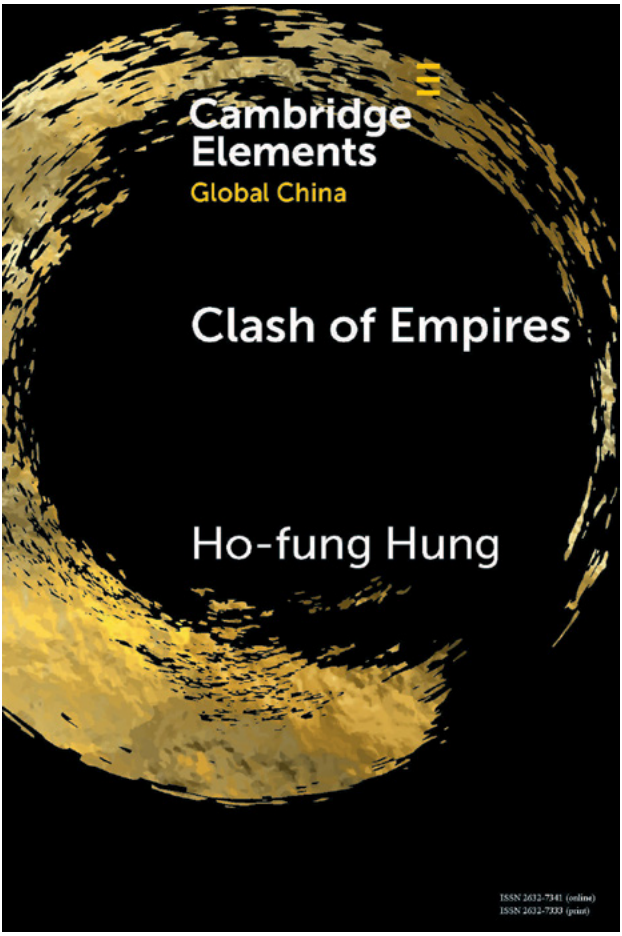
Calligraphy excercises at the Confucius Institute, University of Iowa. Source: University of Iowa (CC), Flickr.com.

of Chinese soft power: as the Chinese officials appear to speak to domestic audiences via global communication platforms, they are also alienating international publics, especially in Western countries.

NL: You highlight the way that 'the spectacle' of high-profile events plays a key role in China's attempts to construct its national image. How is spectacle conceived of in the Chinese context and what can we learn from the most recent spectacle of the Winter Olympics?

MR: The spectacle in the Chinese context in some ways is conceived of as a grand, state-orchestrated, and meticulously implemented event that is meant to boost the image of China and the CCP internationally and domestically. In observing large-scale events like the Olympics, but also smaller-scale trade fares and Global South forums, it is notable how these spectacles tend to blur China's cultural and material power. They at once showcase China's traditional culture and ancient civilisation, while also highlighting China's modernity, as well as economic and technological prowess. The audiences of these spectacles are as much global as local. It was fascinating to visit the China–Africa Trade Forum in Hunan Province in 2019—the first forum of this kind to take place in China and an event that was widely advertised by Hunan officials during their visit to Ethiopia in spring 2019. The event was promoted to Africans as an opportunity to explore China's market and as China's attempt at equalising trade flows between China and Africa. In attending the trade forum, I found African national booths placed alongside China's provincial booths largely frequented by Changsha residents. The provincial booths advertised China's economic development projects, as well as provincial cultural heritage. In the context of the Winter Olympics, the biggest audience was also that of Chinese nationals, even though the event was broadcast around the world.

Though these major spectacles, especially on the scale of the Olympics, require major investments from the Chinese Government, their implications for China's international image are ambiguous. After the 2008 Olympics, for instance, the favourability of China in major industrialised democracies has declined. I don't expect major spikes in China's popularity after these recent Games. If anything, the Olympics now feel far away in the context of Russia's brutal war in Ukraine—a war in which China is criticised for being on the 'wrong side of history'.



Cambridge
Elements
Global China
Clash of Empires
Ho-fung Hung
ISSN 2632-7341 (online)
ISSN 2632-7333 (print)

Clash of Empires: A Conversation with Ho-fung Hung

Hong ZHANG
Ho-fung HUNG

The rise of 'Global China' is the result of sustained economic globalisation in the past decades, undergirded by a generally positive relationship between China and the United States. Since the watershed moment of China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, the Chinese and US economies have become increasingly interdependent, which used to be a reason for optimism in managing the various conflicts that arose between the two countries. This, however, has been called into question following the tumultuous years of the Trump administration seeking to redress the trade imbalance with China, as well as the Covid-19 pandemic, the disruption of which to the global order is yet to be fully revealed.

In his newly published book, *Clash of Empires: From 'Chimerica' to the 'New Cold War'* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), Ho-fung Hung offers an analysis of the changing US–China relationship and a critique of the global political economy. Challenging ideological arguments, Hung contends that the United States' facilitation of China's integration into the global economy in the 1990s and 2000s was primarily driven by its own corporate interests seeking to benefit from access to the Chinese market and cheap labour. These interests ultimately turned away when they were harmed by China's policies since the late 2000s of promoting indigenous industries. China's integration into the global economy fuelled uneven development in both China and the United States, creating deep structural interdependence between the two economies. As both capitalist economies encountered a crisis of overaccumulation, their 'inter-imperial' rivalry in the world economy overtook the interdependence of their relationship.

With the two economic constituencies being driven apart, the geopolitical rivalry between the countries also became more difficult to conciliate. In this view, the fundamental source of the 'New Cold War' is the 'intercapitalist competition' between China and the United States, rather than ideological differences. While Hung's Marxian approach to US foreign policy is likely to receive pushback from those looking through different analytical lenses, his dissection of the global political economy calls for a radical rethinking of what kind of global economic order could help prevent future conflicts.

Hong Zhang: Your book provides great insights into the changing relations between the US and Chinese corporate sectors, which you argue underlie the changing political relations between the two states. What motivated you to develop this analysis and what received wisdom do you seek to challenge?

Ho-fung Hung: Many popular accounts of the deteriorating US–China relationship attribute the deterioration to ideological differences between democratic and authoritarian systems. These accounts are convenient justifications for politicians' actions and policies. But we, as scholars, have the responsibility to look deeper beyond this obviously flawed account. If it is really only about the clash between democracy and authoritarianism, why were democratic America and authoritarian China in such a harmonious relationship in the 1990s and 2000s? Some would say Xi Jinping is much more dictatorial than his predecessors Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin, so the difference has become more pronounced now. But is he? Deng Xiaoping mobilised the army to shoot protesting citizens and kept the Chinese Communist Party in power with tanks. Yet, the United States and the democratic world at large did not see Deng as too dictatorial to do business with. Throughout history, capitalist democratic countries have never shied away from doing business with and allying with dictators. The difference between democracy and authoritarianism never stands in the way. Why does this difference suddenly matter in US–China relations? Something deeper must be going on. My research and the book look for an answer to this question. To explore the plausible scenarios of US–China relations and look at what can be done to prevent the deteriorating relationship from becoming a catastrophe, we first need to figure out the underlying forces that bring us to the current state of affairs.

HZ: You made the point that the clash between the United States and China is one between two 'empires' and it is an 'inter-imperial rivalry'. How do you understand the nature of the two 'empires'? Given that China was a critical enabler of US empire-making while it also grew under the US-led system, as your analysis makes clear, how far can China go in its challenge to the US empire? Or, are they locked in a symbiotic relationship? Can decoupling happen?

HH: As I define in the book, 'empire' refers to any state with the ambition and capability to project its political and military power beyond its sovereign space. The United States as an established empire is mostly an 'informal empire' without as many formal colonies as the old British and French empires had. China is a junior, informal empire on the rise, and its official intellectuals have been ever more open in manifesting their imperial ambitions—using 'empire' as a positive word.

Socioeconomic integration between two empires would not prevent inter-imperial rivalry from happening and escalating. For this, a comparison with the UK–German rivalry in the early twentieth century is useful. In June 1914, a British economist made a keynote speech at the Royal Statistical Society, saying all the economic statistics suggested the British and German empires were intertwined in trade, investment, and everything else (Crammond 1914). He predicted that the United Kingdom and Germany would maintain this reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship, with Germany as a junior, up-and-coming partner, and that the two countries would not be embroiled in conflict. And we all know what happened just a few months later. In fact, the integration between the United Kingdom and Germany at that time was much deeper than the US–China integration today. The ruling elites of the two countries intermarried. The royal family of the British Empire, the House of Windsor (House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha before World War I), was half-German. The mother of the monarch of the German Empire, Wilhelm II, was British and was the eldest child of Queen Victoria. So, the ruling classes of the two countries on the eve of World War I were as integrated as if, say, a son of [US President Joe] Biden or [former president Donald] Trump was married to the daughter of Xi Jinping. Great Britain was also the biggest destination and source of German exports and imports on the eve of the Great War. But that level of integration did not prevent the two empires from going to war. The crushing weight of the imperatives of geopolitics and capital accumulation is simply too strong.

But there is a reason for optimism. Compared with turn-of-twentieth-century Germany, China today, though increasingly militarised and aggressive, is still far less militaristic than Germany back then (and less than Russia today, for that matter). Unlike nineteenth and early twentieth-century Germany, which had been frequently at war, China has not mobilised its army for a serious military conflict since its war with Vietnam in 1979. The last serious military mobilisation was 1989, when the People's Liberation Army was used to quell domestic unrest. If the Party-State elite is rational (an increasingly big if, though), they should be very cautious in avoiding any serious military conflict with the United States. This becomes all the more obvious as Beijing watches Moscow's military adventure in Ukraine devolving into a disaster for Russia. So, I stay optimistic that though the US–China rivalry is set to deteriorate, there is a fairly good chance it could be channeled to competition in global governing institutions, such as the World Health Organization, WTO, United Nations, etcetera, instead of a direct military conflict.

HZ: I notice that you approached the Chinese and US states differently. On the Chinese side, you have given the Party-State significant autonomy, as seen in your analysis of its cooptation of US corporate interests in the 1990s and its industrial policies and pursuit of a geopolitical agenda in the 2010s, which alienated US corporate actors. On the US side, however, you place the primary agency on the corporate actors; it is the aggregated preference of the corporate sector that ultimately determines US foreign policy orientation, while those forces based on geopolitical or ideological considerations are secondary in this picture. In a way, your portrait of the Chinese state is more Weberian and that of the US state more Marxian. Why such asymmetry?

HH: Yes. Every state has components that are more autonomous vis-a-vis corporations and components that are influenced or even captured by corporations or other dominant social groups. The relative prevalence of the two components varies from state to state.

Theda Skocpol (1985), in her introduction to the classic *Bringing the State Back In* (a book that brings the Weberian perspective of the state to North American social sciences), points out it was not an accident that the Weberian state-centric approach developed in Germany. It has something to do with the strong hand of the centralised state in Germany's state formation, war-making, and industrial development process since Bismarck's time. In contrast, the society-centric approach to the state—including the Marxian approach emphasising class and the pluralist approach (à la Robert Dahl) emphasising interest groups—has been dominant in the UK and US academia because the political systems there provide many access points for social groups to shape policy. The dominance of the society-centered approach in the United States and United Kingdom leads scholars to forget that certain key components of the state are highly autonomous and function along with a Weberian logic. The foreign policy apparatus is one such component of the state in the case of the United States, according to Skocpol.

The differences in the US and Chinese political systems resemble those in the US/UK–Germany contexts. The analysis of US–Chinese policy formation in *Clash of Empires* is not exactly Marxian, but Marxian–Weberian to be more precise. Following the Weberian imperative of sustaining US global power and prestige, the US foreign policy elite have set their sights on China as a geopolitical rival since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s. But the other parts of the state that are central to the formation of economic policy—including the Treasury, the National Economic Council, and Congress—are more open to the influences of big corporations. In the 1990s and 2000s, US corporations influenced those components of the state to keep the confrontation tendency in the foreign policy establishment at bay. Only in the 2010s, when the corporate and geopolitical interests of the state aligned in favour of a confrontational posture toward China, did the United States' China policy shift fully to confrontation.

In contrast, in China's Party-State capitalist system, the economic and foreign policymaking process is highly centralised in the top echelon of the Party-State elite. Economic growth and profitability of enterprises are among the many considerations of the Party-State elite in their policymaking, but these considerations are all subjugated under the imperative of maintaining and expanding the power of the Party-State in China and in the world. Corporations, however well-connected politically, are at the disposal of the Party-State. Nothing is more illustrative of this than the development of China's big-tech companies. The state cultivated them and helped them monopolise the Chinese market. But when the state feels they are a threat, it cracks down on them relentlessly. Corporate autonomous leverage on the state in China is simply incomparable with US corporate power vis-a-vis the state. This feature of the Chinese political economy, in which all imperatives are subjugated to the grand strategy of the

Party-State, is meticulously analysed in Rush Doshi's *The Long Game* (2021). But I did not have a chance to read the book until after I finished *The Clash of Empires*; otherwise, it would have been included in the references.

HZ: While your analysis has focused on corporate interests and other structural explanations, you seem to try to avoid structural determinism, as you allow room for political manoeuvres and circumstantial contingencies. Looking back on the past three decades, could you imagine an alternative history of US–China relations? In hindsight, were there better policy choices that could have been made?

HH: In my view, President Bill Clinton's reversal of the policy that linked Chinese goods' low tariff access to the US market to China's human rights condition in 1994 was a mistake. It was not inevitable. As documented in the book, the Clinton administration was split on the issue, with the State Department and many congressional Democrats vowing to maintain the link, while the head of the newly created National Economic Council, Robert Rubin from Wall Street, was committed to severing the link. Also documented in the book is that major corporations in the United States at that time did not see China as a huge market yet. When the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect in 1994, globalisation at the time was much more about growing NAFTA into an all-American free-trade arrangement. It was the corporations mobilised by Beijing that lobbied keenly for the delinking. And Beijing won. Suppose the linkage had been maintained throughout the 1990s. In that case, it could have created larger pressure for Beijing to adopt more liberal changes at a time when there was a more liberal-leaning elite within the party and Beijing felt more vulnerable and was more open to outside influences. The opening of China, and hence US outsourcing to China, would have been more gradual, and China's impact on the American working class would have been moderated. It is the path not taken.

The recent *Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act*, which bans all goods made in the Xinjiang region unless the exporters can prove no forced labour is used, is going back to the principle of Clinton's China trade policy in 1993—that is, to link Chinese goods' access to the US market to China's human rights condition. But it is too late to create significant pressure to change China's direction. Its most likely outcome will be an accelerating division of the world economy into two competing blocks—a process that many people call decoupling.

HZ: In the book you also express doubt about the 'constructive engagement' argument presented by the Clinton administration when it decided not to link the most-favoured nation status to China's human rights conditions, arguing that by integrating China into the global trade system, it could also lead to the liberalisation

of China's political system. This has, of course, turned out to be a false hope, but do you think it was not even a genuine aspiration, but rather a cover for the policy driven by corporate interests?

HH: The idea that participation in the global trade system could automatically lead to political liberalisation is perhaps the most disingenuous pretext in modern political discourse. Throughout postwar history, so many dictatorships have thrived under the regime's participation in global trade. From Pinochet's Chile to Saudi Arabia, market capitalism never eroded the authoritarian system but helped sustain it. Market capitalism is perfectly adaptable to, if not favourable to, authoritarianism. The idea that economic engagement with China could promote political liberalisation is no more than a transparent attempt to cover for the Clinton administration's 180-degree shift in its China policy in 1993–94 that *Clash of Empires* details (and mentioned above). In Clinton's first year, the administration linked low tariff access of Chinese goods to the US market to China's human rights conditions. After intense business lobbying, Clinton dropped the policy in 1994. Then the theory about the causal relation between free trade and political liberalisation was hastily cooked up to justify this drastic shift. The theory aims to make the shift look less like surrendering to corporate blackmail and more like a well-thought-out policy for the world's good.

Most ironically, we did see this kind of 'constructive engagement' argument before, during the American Civil War. Many free-trade advocates and big businesses in the United Kingdom sympathised with the rebellious South and wanted to have continuous access to cheap cotton from the slave labour there. Their intellectual representatives of the time, including *The Economist* magazine and many liberal thinkers, devised the argument that if the UK supported the South and fought Abraham Lincoln—portrayed by many in the United Kingdom as a dictatorial anti–free-trade monster—then the United Kingdom would be able to persuade the independent Confederacy to abolish slavery gradually and peacefully. In retrospect, we all know that the argument was just a hypocritical cover for those British interests' demand for cheap products from slave labour. It is a nineteenth-century version of the 'constructive engagement' theory.

HZ: While you believe the US–China rivalry will intensify in the years to come, at the end of the book, you still place hopes for averting a fatal conflict on the mediating role of global governing institutions and on the rebalancing of the Chinese and US economies. Are you hopeful that such rebalancing can happen? In China, we do start to hear more about redistribution or even 'third distribution', which might have been sidelined by mid 2022 as the urgent matter becomes maintaining growth in China's economy, which has been crippled by Covid-19 lockdowns. In the United States, we also see the urge to bring back manufacturing jobs and to invest more in infrastructure, welfare, and the green economy. Do you think there are self-corrective mechanisms in each of the countries, and are they strong enough?

HH: As I discussed above, the fact that China has been much less militaristic than Germany a century ago is a reason for optimism. It is possible that intensifying US–China rivalry could be constricted to competition between the two countries in global governing institutions. But I am less optimistic about the internal rebalancing part. The Chinese Government has been talking about rebalancing the economy by boosting domestic household consumption through redistribution since at least the late 1990s. Zhu Rongji (Prime Minister from 1998 to 2003) talked about it in the aftermath of the 1997–98 Asian Financial Crisis, and Wen Jiabao (Prime Minister from 2003 to 2013) talked about it after the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. The pattern is that whenever the economy runs into a global economic headwind, Beijing has tried to initiate a redistributive response and boost domestic household consumption. But redistribution did not happen each time, and the government eventually relied on the old trick of stimulating investment with more loans to prop up economic growth, as is happening now. This path wards off a temporary economic downturn but aggravates inequality and the imbalance of the economy in the long run. The recurrent stillbirth of redistributive policy is a result of the lack of institutional representation of workers and peasants in the policymaking process in China. Over the past two decades, one big developing country that achieved significant redistributive reform is Brazil under the presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–11), under the internationally acclaimed Bolsa Familia direct cash transfer program. It was instituted by a government elected by and representing the poor. Once in place, the program was so popular that even Jair Bolsonaro, who became President of Brazil in 2019, could not undo it. Compared with the political process in Brazil, you could not see many reasons why the Chinese Party-State elite, who were more connected to state-owned enterprises or politically well-connected private enterprises addicted to the borrow-and-invest model of expansion, would pursue any genuine redistributive reform seriously.

I am equally pessimistic about the rebalancing in the United States through the reshoring of industries. Manufacturing in the United States has enjoyed outsized profits by relying on foreign cheap labour for decades. With the trade war and Washington's call for decoupling from China—and the decoupling is certainly going to accelerate after foreign enterprises experience China's zero-Covid policy—will motivate US enterprises to reduce exposure to China. Most of them are not likely to come back to the United States. There may be some exceptions in the sectors deemed strategically so important that Washington would be willing to subsidise their coming back. Microchips and rare-earth mining could be two examples. But for the majority of the enterprises, decoupling from China would only mean relocation to other low-wage countries in Southeast and South Asia or other places in the developing world. So, as the imbalances in both the United States and China are not likely to subside, the urge to export capital and the intercapitalist competition between the two will only rise, resulting in the inevitable intensification of geopolitical rivalry in the years to come. ●

CONTRIBUTORS

Mark BO is the China Global Programme Director at Inclusive Development International. He works globally with local civil society partners to monitor and advocate for improved environmental and social practices in Chinese overseas projects. He has published extensively on the trends, impacts, and regulation of China's global finance and investment, particularly with respect to land and natural resource rights and the environment.

Nicholas BOSONI is an Italian documentary photographer based in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic. With a background in social sciences, his work touches upon themes related to modernisation, urbanisation, traditional livelihoods, and natural resources. He collaborates with various international nongovernmental organisations and development projects in Laos. Nicholas is currently committed to documenting the economic transition ongoing in Laos, a long term work that will eventually result in a photo book.

Jessica DICARLO is a geographer and the Chevalier Postdoctoral Research Fellow of Transportation and Development in China at the University of British Columbia's Institute of Asian Research and School of Public Policy and Global Affairs. She studies global China in Asia from an ethnographic perspective and has worked in Tibet, Nepal, Laos, and India. Her research has been published in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *Geoforum*, *Ecology and Society*, *Area*, and *Ambio*, and she co-edited *The Rise of the Infrastructure State* (Bristol University Press, 2022).

Romain DITTGEN is a human geographer by training. He is interested in questions of urban change, both through the lens of materiality and forms of living together, as well as in the interplay between city-making and migration in Southern Africa. He works as an assistant professor at Utrecht University in the department of human geography and spatial planning. He is also affiliated with the African Centre for Migration & Society (University of the Witwatersrand) and the International Institute for Asian Studies (Leiden University).

Paulina GARZÓN is the Director of Latin America Sustentable, an Ecuadorian NGO with a focus in Latin America. She is an Ecuadorian with 25 years of experience working on issues related to the environment, human rights and international finance. Lately, Paulina has focused her work on Chinese investments in Latin America, with particular attention on Chinese environmental and social guidelines for overseas investments.

Charlotte GOODBURN is Senior Lecturer in Chinese Politics and Development at the Lau China Institute, King's College London. She researches rural–urban migration and comparative rural and urban development in China and India, with a particular focus on labour migration, household dynamics, welfare and other institutions, and identity registration systems.

Ho-fung HUNG is the Henry M. and Elizabeth P. Wiesenfeld Professor in Political Economy in the Department of Sociology and the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at the Johns Hopkins University. He researches global political economy, protest, nation-state formation, and East Asian development, with a recent focus on money, politics, and empires. He is the author of *Protest with Chinese Characteristics* (Columbia University Press, 2011), *The China Boom* (Columbia University Press, 2015), *City on the Edge: Hong Kong under Chinese Rule* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), and *Clash of Empires: From 'Chimerica' to the 'New Cold War'* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

Arthur KAUFMAN is an editorial assistant for the *Made in China Journal* and *Global China Pulse Journal*. He graduated from the dual master's degree program between Sciences Po and Peking University, where he studied human rights and international relations. Previously, he was a Writing and Speaking Fellow at NYU Shanghai.

Jan KNOERICH is Senior Lecturer in the Economy of China at the Lau China Institute, King's College London. His research examines the business, political economy, and development dimensions of China's financial internationalisation, including outward foreign direct investment, the internationalisation of the *renminbi*, and China's creation of international institutions.

Latinoamérica Sustentable (LAS) conducts research, raises awareness, develops advocacy tools, and promotes collaboration among NGOs in Latin America, China and other parts of the world. LAS is legally established as an Ecuadorian organization and works to protect the environment and local communities within the context of Chinese development finance in Latin America.

Ching Kwan LEE is a Professor of Sociology at UCLA. Her award-winning monographs on China's turn to capitalism through the lens of labour include *Gender and the South China Miracle: Two Worlds of Factory Women* (1998), *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt* (2007), and *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor and Foreign Investment in Africa* (2017). Her recent co-edited volumes include *The Social Question in the 21st Century: a Global View* (2019) and *Take Back Our Future: an Eventful Political Sociology of the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement* (2019).

Danqing LI is Senior Strategist for the Sunrise Project's China Program, which focuses on decarbonising China's overseas energy finance and accelerating green investment. With a master's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering, Danqing has expertise in power market analysis, economic assessment, as well as environmental modelling, including of air pollution and water stress, in China, Southeast Asia and South Asia.

Siman LI is Program Associate for the Sunrise Project's China Program. Siman previously worked for four years in corporate social responsibility consulting and project management. Siman holds an MA in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science from Lund University and a bachelor's degree in Finance Accounting and Management from the University of Nottingham.

Nicholas LOUBERE is an Associate Professor in the Study of Modern China at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University. His research examines socioeconomic development in rural China, with a particular focus on microcredit and migration. He co-edits the *Made in China Journal*.

Neil LOUGHLIN is a Lecturer in Comparative Politics at City, University of London. His main research interests include authoritarian politics and the political economy of development. Most of Neil's work has focused on Southeast Asia, where he previously worked for several local and international nongovernmental organisations as a human rights worker and development professional.

Vida MACIKENAITE is Assistant Professor at the International University of Japan. She holds graduate degrees from Keio University in Japan and Fudan University in China. While her major research interest centres on China's foreign relations, recently she has been looking into perceptions of China in Europe. She is also interested in authoritarian regimes and state capacity in comparative perspective.

Ryan Martínez MITCHELL is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. He holds a PhD in Law and Archaia Qualification in the Study of Ancient and Premodern Societies from Yale University (2017), a JD from Harvard Law School (2012), and a BA from The New School (2007). His monograph *Recentering the World: China and the Transformation of International Law*, which explores modern China's entry into the international legal order, is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.

Maria REPNIKOVA is an expert on Chinese political communication, and an Associate Professor in Global Communication at Georgia State University. She has written widely on China's media politics, including propaganda, critical journalism, digital nationalism, and soft power. Maria is the author of the award-winning book, *Media Politics in China: Improvising Power Under Authoritarianism* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), as well as the recent, *Chinese Soft Power* (Cambridge Global China Element Series, 2022).

Shawn SHIEH is the founder of Social Innovations Advisory, a consultancy dedicated to building a resilient civil society in the Global South. He is a Research Associate at the Overseas Development Institute and a Research Fellow at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He previously worked at China Labour Bulletin, and China Development Brief. Shawn received his PhD in political science from Columbia University, has published extensively on Chinese overseas investment and civil society, and blogs about NGOs in China.

Austin STRANGE is Assistant Professor in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at the University of Hong Kong. His research examines China's contemporary and historical roles in the world economy and global development. He is the co-author of *Banking on Beijing: The Aims and Impacts of China's Overseas Development Program* (Cambridge University Press, 2022) and has recently published articles in *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, and *Journal of Contemporary China*.

Pei-hua YU is a journalist covering energy transition and Chinese investment and infrastructure projects in Southeast Asia. She is currently based in Taiwan and writes for publications around the world. She was previously based in Beijing, Hong Kong, and Yangon.

Hong ZHANG is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the China-Africa Research Initiative at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, and fellow at the Columbia-Harvard China and the World Program in 2021–22. From late 2022, she will be a China Public Policy fellow at Harvard University's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation. Her research interests include China's political economy, international development cooperation and foreign aid, and the global expansion of Chinese state-owned enterprises.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

What is Global China? (CHING KWAN LEE)

Bräutigam, Deborah. 2009. *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Bräutigam, Deborah. 2015. *Will Africa Feed China?* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Bräutigam, Deborah. 2020. 'A Critical Look at Chinese "Debt-Trap Diplomacy": The Rise of a Meme.' *Area Development and Policy* 5(1): 1–14.

Byler, Darren. 2021. *In the Camps: China's High-Tech Penal Colony*. New York, NY: Columbia Global Reports.

Calhoun, Craig. 2008. 'The Cultural Revolution: A Global Phenomenon.' In *Art and China's Revolution: A Guide to the Exhibition*, edited by Melissa Chu and Zheng Shengtian. New York, NY: Asia Society Museum.

Chen, Wanjing (Kelly). Forthcoming. 'Harden the Hardline, Soften the Softline: Unravelling China's Qiaoling (侨领)–centred Diaspora Governance in Laos.' *The China Quarterly*.

Cody, Stephen. 2021. 'Dark Law: Legalistic Autocrats, Judicial Deference and the Global Transformation of National Security.' *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Law and Public Affairs* 6(4): 643–86.

Evans, James G. 2021. 'Maoism, Anti-Imperialism, and the Third World: The Case of China and the Black Panthers.' *Made in China Journal* 6(2): 139–46.

Franceschini, Ivan and Nicholas Loubere. Forthcoming. *Global China as Method*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Gao, Yunxiang. 2021. *Arise Africa, Roar China: Black and Chinese Citizens of the World in the Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Human Rights Watch (HRW). 2012. *In the Name of Security: Counterterrorism Laws Worldwide since September 11*. Report, 29 June. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch. www.hrw.org/report/2012/06/29/name-security/counterterrorism-laws-worldwide-september-11.

Hung, Ho-fung. 2020. 'The Periphery in the Making of Globalization: The China Lobby and the Reversal of Clinton's China Trade Policy, 1993–1994.' *Review of International Political Economy* 28(4): 1004–27.

Jones, Lee and Jinghan Zeng. 2019. 'Understanding China's "Belt and Road Initiative": Beyond "Grand Strategy" to a State Transformation Analysis.' *Third World Quarterly* 40(8): 1415–39.

Kelly, Jason M. 2021. *Market Maoists: The Communist Origin of China's Capitalist Ascent*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lanza, Fabio. 2017. *The End of Concern: Maoist China, Activism, and Asian Studies*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Lee, Ching Kwan. 2017. *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor and Foreign Investment in Africa.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lee, Ching Kwan. Forthcoming. 'Global China at 20: Why, How and So What?' *The China Quarterly*.

Lovell, Julia. 2019. *Maoism: A Global History*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Lu, Juliet. Forthcoming. 'For Profit or Patriotism? Balancing Chinese State, Host Country, and Firm Interests in the Lao Rubber Sector.' *The China Quarterly*.

Monson, Jamie. 2021. 'Learning by Heart: Training for Self-Reliance on the TAZARA Railway, 1968–1976.' *Made in China Journal* 6(2): 95–103.

Repnikova, Maria. Forthcoming. 'Rethinking China's Soft Power: "Pragmatic Enticement" of Confucius Institutes in Ethiopia.' *The China Quarterly*.

Repnikova, Maria. 2022. *Chinese Soft Power*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Rudyak, Marina. 2021. 'The Past in the Present of Chinese International Development Cooperation.' *Made in China Journal* 6(2): 80–86.

Sheridan, Derek. Forthcoming. '"We Are Now the Same": Chinese Wholesalers and the Politics of Trade Hierarchies in Tanzania.' *The China Quarterly*.

Snow, Philip. 1989. *The Star Raft: China's Encounter with Africa*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Strauss, Julia. 2019. 'Of Silk Roads and Global Transformation: China's Rise and its Impact on the Developing World.' *The China Quarterly* 239: 804–12.

Wilcox, Emily. 2019. *Revolutionary Bodies: Chinese Dance and the Socialist Legacy*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Xu, Liang. Forthcoming. 'Engendering China–Africa Encounters: Chinese Family Firms, Black Women Workers, and the Gendered Politics of Production in South Africa.' *The China Quarterly*.

Zhang, Hong. 2021. 'Builders from China: From Third World Solidarity to Globalised State Capitalism.' *Made in China Journal* 6(2): 87–94.

Understanding the China Development Bank in Latin America (LATINOAMÉRICA SUSTENTABLE)

China Development Bank (CDB). 2021. '开发银行与绿色气候基金签署合作备忘录 [China Development Bank and Green Climate Fund Sign Memorandums of Cooperation].' China Development Bank website, 18 October. www.cdb.com.cn/English/xwzx_715/khdt/202112/t20211203_9390.html.

Collective on Chinese Financing and Investment, Human Rights, and Environment (CICDHA). 2022. *Human Rights and Chinese Business Activities in Latin American. Midterm Report on the Universal Periodic Review of the People's Republic of China*. Collective on Chinese Financing and Investment, Human Rights, and Environment website. chinaambienteyderechos.lat/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Informe-reporte-medio-termino-1.pdf.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). 2021. *The Impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous Peoples in Latin America (Abya Yala): Between Invisibility and Collective Resistance*. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Digital Repository. repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/46698/1/S2000893_en.pdf.

Garzón, Paulina, Siran Huang, Stephanie Jensen-Cormier, and Marco Gandarillas. 2021. *Banco de Desarrollo de China: Financiamiento, gobernanza y desafíos socio-ambientales para América Latina y el Caribe* [*Understanding the China Development Bank Financing, Governance, and Socio-Environmental Challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean*]. Latinoamérica Sustentable website. latsustentable.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Informe-Banco-de-Desarrollo-de-China-LAS.pdf.

Gallagher, Kevin P. and Margaret Myers (2022) "China-Latin America Finance Database," Washington: Inter-American Dialogue. https://www.thedialogue.org/map_list/

Gelpern, Anna, Sebastian Horn, Scott Morris, Brad Parks and Christoph Trebesch, C. (2021). *How China Lends: A Rare Look into 100 Debt Contracts with Foreign Governments*. Center for Global Development, Working Paper 573. https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/how-china-lends-rare-look-100-debt-contracts-foreign-governments.pdf

Inclusive Development International (IDI). 2020. '265 Civil Society Groups Call on Chinese Authorities to Ensure that COVID-19 Financial Relief Does Not Bail Out Harmful Projects.' Inclusive Development International website, 30 April. www.inclusivedevelopment.net/belt-and-road/265-civil-society-groups-call-on-chinese-authorities-to-ensurethat-covid-19-financial-relief-does-not-bail-out-harmful-projects.

Latinoamérica Sustentable (LAS). 2020. 'Mirador Mining Project.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 3 November. thepeoplesmap.net/project/mirador-mining-project.

Latinoamérica Sustentable (LAS). 2022. 'Santa Cruz River Hydroelectric Complex.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 26 April. thepeoplesmap.net/project/santa-cruz-river-hydroelectric-complex.

Larrea, Carlos and Jesus Ramos. 2021. 'Propuesta para un canje de deuda por Naturaleza con China (Versión preliminar) [Proposal for a Debt Swap for Nature with China (Preliminary Version)].' Quito, Ecuador: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar. repositorio.uasb.edu.ec/bitstream/10644/7839/1/Larrea%20C-Ramos%20J-CON-032-Propuesta%20canje%20deuda.pdf.

Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (MOFCOM) and China Development Bank (CDB). 2020. 'Work Notice on Supporting the High Quality and Cooperative Building of "One Belt One Road".' *PKULaw database*, 28 February. www.pkulaw.cn/fulltext_form.aspx?Db=chl&Gid=340060.

Myers, Margaret and Rebecca Ray. 2022. 'What Role for China's Policy Banks in LAC?' *China–Latin America Report*, March. Washington, DC, & Boston, MA: Inter-American Dialogue & Boston University Global Development Policy Center.

National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). 2022. 十四五现代能源体系规划 [*14th Five-Year Plan for the Energy Sector*]. Beijing: National Development and Reform Commission. www.ndrc.gov.cn/xxgk/zcfb/ghwb/202203/P020220322582066837126.pdf.

Song, Xiaoyu. 2019. 'Financing of China's Policy Banks in Latin America and the Caribbean (2000–2018).' In *Chinese Financing in Latin America and the Caribbean*, edited by Enrique Dussel Peters, 65–84. Ciudad Universitaria, México: Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México.

Soutar, Robert and Fermín Koop. 2021. 'Explainer: What Are Debt-for-Nature Swaps?' *Diálogo Chino*, 2 November. dialogochino.net/en/trade-investment/47862-explainer-what-is-debt-for-nature-swap.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). 2017. 'Indigenous People and Nature: A Tradition of Conservation.' *News*, 26 April. Nairobi: United Nations Environment Programme. www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/indigenous-people-and-nature-tradition-conservation.

What's Behind the Diplomatic Spat between China and Lithuania? (VIDA MACIKENAITE)

Adomėnas, Mantas and Gabrielius Landsbergis. 2020. 'Lithuania: It's Time for Choosing.' *15min.lt*, 11 June. www.15min.lt/en/article/opinion/lithuania-it-s-time-for-choosing-530-1331612.

Ammann, Janos. 2022. 'Lithuanian Businesses Grind on under Chinese Pressure.' *Euractiv.com*, 18 January. www.euractiv.com/section/economy-jobs/news/lithuanian-businesses-grind-on-under-chinese-pressure.

Aušra, Mindaugas. 2019a. 'Chinese Demonstration in Vilnius Unmasks Beijing's Reach into Lithuania—LRT Investigation.' *LRT English*, 9 October. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1104874/chinese-demonstration-in-vilnius-unmasks-beijing-s-reach-into-lithuania-lrt-investigation.

Aušra, Mindaugas. 2019b. 'Chinese Money Connects Lithuania to Belarus' Nuclear Plant—LRT Investigation.' *LRT English*, 17 December. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1125801/chinese-money-connects-lithuania-to-belarus-nuclear-plant-lrt-investigation.

Barkin, Noah. 2022. 'Watching China in Europe—January 2022.' The German Marshall Fund of the United States website. sites-gmf.vuturevx.com/61/6509/january-2022/watching-china-in-europe-with-noah-barkin.asp?sid=5cd43f13-e902-40fe-81b7-f6849ef073f1.

BNS. 2019. 'Two Chinese Citizens Fined for Scuffle at Hong Kong Support Rally in Vilnius.' *LRT English*, 29 August. www.lrt.lt/naujienos/news-in-english/19/1092343/two-chinese-citizens-fined-for-scuffle-at-hong-kong-support-rally-in-vilnius.

BNS. 2021. 'Lithuania Opens Embassy in South Korea.' *LRT English*, 26 October. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1529202/lithuania-opens-embassy-in-south-korea.

BNS. 2022a. 'Allowing Taiwan to Open Office under its Name was a Mistake—Lithuanian President.' *LRT English*, 4 January. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1580082/allowing-taiwan-to-open-office-under-its-name-was-a-mistake-lithuanian-president.

BNS. 2022b. 'Lithuanian Opposition Party Leader Offers to Negotiate with China to Mend Ties.' *LRT English*, 17 February. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1617849/lithuanian-opposition-party-leader-offers-to-negotiate-with-china-to-mend-ties.

Bounds, Andy. 2021. 'Lithuania Complains of Trade "Sanctions" by China after Taiwan Dispute.' *Financial Times*, 3 December. www.ft.com/content/0ebaa7c7-761d-445e-b3e4-f5d2c9b4768f.

Bounds, Andy, Richard Milne, and Kathrin Hille. 2022. 'Brussels Challenges China at WTO over Block on Lithuania Imports.' *Financial Times*, 27 January. www.ft.com/content/cb036c80-5f8e-4c44-86c4-e800975a26e0.

Brunalas, Benas. 2022. 'Karbauskio šešėlinis kabinetas ketina pasiųsti žinutę Kinijai: gavę valdžią sprendimą dėl atstovybės pavadinimo atšauktume [Shadow Cabinet of Karbauskis Intends to Send a Message to China: If We Come to Power, We Would Withdraw the Decision Regarding the Name of the Representative Office].' *LRT*, 6 January. www.lrt.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje/2/1582679/karbauskio-seselinis-kabinetas-ketina-pasiusti-zinute-kinijai-gave-valdzia-sprendima-del-atstovybes-pavadinimo-atsauktume.

Deveikis, Jonas. 2020. 'Russia and China Seek Foothold in Lithuania via Gas and Tech.' *LRT English*, 4 February. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1139530/russia-and-china-seek-foothold-in-lithuania-via-gas-and-tech-report.

European Commission (EC). 2021a. *Trade Policy Review—An Open, Sustainable and Assertive Trade Policy*. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, 18 February. Brussels: EC. trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2021/february/tradoc_159438.pdf.

European Commission (EC). 2021b. *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Protection of the Union and its Member States from Economic Coercion by Third Countries*. COM(2021) 775 final, 2021/0406 (COD), 8 December. Brussels: EC. trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2021/december/tradoc_159958.pdf.

European Law Department at the Parliament under the Government of Lithuania. 2000. *Išvada Seimo rezoliucijos Dėl ryšių su Kinijos Respublika (Taivanu) projektui* [*Report on the Parliamentary Resolution Regarding Relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan)*].' Database of the Parliament of Lithuania, 30 May. e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAK/TAIS.102388?positionInSearchResults=2&searchModelUUID=bede689c-345d-4cba-b671-9b6ed05c0f76.

European Parliament. 2021. 'MEPs Refuse Any Agreement with China Whilst Sanctions are in Place.' Press release, 20 May, Brussels. www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210517IPR04123/meps-refuse-any-agreement-with-china-whilst-sanctions-are-in-place.

Jakučionis, Saulius. 2019. 'Chinese Investment into Klaipėda Port a "Concern" for National Security, President Says.' *LRT English*, 29 July. www.lrt.lt/naujienos/news-in-english/19/1083021/chinese-investment-into-klaipeda-port-a-concern-for-national-security-president-says.

Keohane, Robert O. and Joseph S. Nye. 2012. *Power and Interdependence.* Harlow, UK: Longman.

Lau, Stuart. 2021. 'Lithuania Pulls out of China's "17+1" Bloc in Eastern Europe.' *Politico*, 21 May. www.politico.eu/article/lithuania-pulls-out-china-17-1-bloc-eastern-central-europe-foreign-minister-gabrielius-landsbergis.

Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas (LRS) [Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania]. 2000. *Rezoliucija dėl ryšių su Taivanu* [*Resolution Regarding Relations with Taiwan*]. Database of the Parliament of Lithuania, Registration no. P-2522(2), adopted 20 June. e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAP/TAIS.102625?jfwid=kjtir0lhx.

Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas (LRS) [Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania]. 2020. *Resolution No. XIV-72 on the Programme of the Eighteenth Government of the Republic of Lithuania*. 11 December. lrv.lt/uploads/main/documents/files/programme of the eighteenth government of the republic of lithuania.pdf.

LRT. 2019a. 'Hong Kong Solidarity Rally in Vilnius Met with Chinese Counter-Protesters—Photos.' *LRT English*, 23 August. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1090902/hong-kong-solidarity-rally-in-vilnius-met-with-chinese-counter-protesters-photos.

LRT. 2019b. 'China's Push for Lithuanian Port Poses Risk to NATO.' *LRT English*, 26 November. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1119707/china-s-push-for-lithuanian-port-poses-risk-to-nato.

LRT. 2020. 'Lithuanian President Doesn't Back Taiwan's WHO Membership—Aide.' *LRT English*, 22 April. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1166291/lithuanian-president-doesn-t-back-taiwan-s-who-membership-aide.

LRT. 2022. 'Most Lithuanians Critical of Vilnius' China Policy—Survey.' *LRT English*, 11 January. www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1586875/most-lithuanians-critical-of-vilnius-china-policy-survey.

Macikenaite, Vida. 2021. 'China Pulls the Economic Coercion Card against Lithuania.' *China Observers*, 20 December. chinaobservers.eu/china-pulls-the-economic-coercion-card-against-lithuania.

Macikenaite, Vida. 2022a. 'Lithuania's Unforeseen Asymmetrical Interdependence Trap with China.' *Prospects & Perspectives* 10(22 February). www.pf.org.tw/article-pfen-2089-7898.

Macikenaite, Vida. 2022b. 'Lithuania Country Profile.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 18 April. thepeoplesmap.net/country/lithuania.

Members of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania. 2020. *Rezoliucijos dėl paramos Taivanui projektas* [*Draft of a Resolution Regarding Support for Taiwan*]. Database of the Parliament of Lithuania, Registration no. XIIIP-4761, 28 March. e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAP/940b88e0895911eaa51db668f0092944?positionInSearchResults=2&searchModelUUID=cfae17ba-bc74-4c44-bc77-ef24b17cff36.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). 2016. 'China's Giant China Merchants Group Confirms its Plans to Invest in Lithuania.' *News*, 22 March. Vilnius: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. cn.mfa.lt/cn/en/news/chinas-giant-china-merchants-group-confirms-its-plans-to-invest-in-lithuania.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). 2018. 'Fundamental Problems of the Astravets Nuclear Power Plant under Construction in Belarus.' *News*, 13 April. Vilnius: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. www.urm.lt/default/en/news/fundamental-problems-of-the-astravets-nuclear-power-plant-under-construction-in-belarus-.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). 2019. 'Lithuania Handed a Note to the Chinese Ambassador.' *News*, 2 September. Vilnius: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania. mfa.lt/default/en/news/lithuania-handed-a-note-to-the-chinese-ambassador.

Ministry of Transport and Communication (MTC). 2015. 'Lithuania and China Seal Accord to Set Up a Joint Venture Providing Forwarding and Logistics Services.' *News*, 23 November. Vilnius: Ministry of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Lithuania. sumin.lrv.lt/en/news/lithuania-and-china-seal-accord-to-set-up-a-joint-venture-providing-forwarding-and-logistics-services.

Parliamentary Group for Relations with Taiwan. 2000. *Rezoliucijos dėl ryšių su Kinijos Respublika (Taivanu) projektas* [*Draft Resolution Regarding Relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan)*]. Database of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Registration no. P-2522, 15 May. e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAP/TAIS.100649?positionInSearchResults=4&searchModelUUID=cfae17ba-bc74-4c44-bc77-ef24b17cff36.

Samoškaitė, Eglė. 2022. 'Nevieša išpažintis apie santykius su Kinija: jei reiktų pakartoti—nekartotume, bet dabar atsitraukti neišeina [Non-Public Confession about Relations with China: If We Had to Repeat It, We Would Not, but There Is No Way to Step Back Now].' *tv3.lt*, 1 January. www.tv3.lt/naujiena/lietuva/neviesa-ispazintis-apie-santykius-su-kinija-jei-reiktu-pakartoti-nekartotume-bet-dabar-atsitraukti-neiseina-n1131704.

Shattuck, Thomas J. 2020. 'The Race to Zero? China's Poaching of Taiwan's Diplomatic Allies.' *Orbis* 64(2): 334–52.

State Security Department and Second Investigation Department under the Ministry of National Defence. 2018. *National Threat Assessment 2018*. Vilnius: State Security Department of the Republic of Lithuania. www.vsd.lt/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ENG.pdf.

State Security Department and Second Investigation Department under the Ministry of National Defence. 2020. *National Threat Assessment 2020*. Vilnius: State Security Department of the Republic of Lithuania. www.vsd.lt/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2020-Gresmes-En.pdf.

Sytas, Andrius. 2020. 'Lithuania to Support "Those Fighting for Freedom" in Taiwan.' *Reuters*, 9 November. www.reuters.com/article/us-lithuania-china-idUSKBN27P1PQ.

Sytas, Andrius. 2022. 'Lithuania Considers Modifying Taiwan Representation Name to Defuse Row with China.' *Reuters*, 26 January. www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/lithuania-considers-modifying-taiwan-representation-name-defuse-row-with-china-2022-01-25.

Zheng, Sarah. 2019. 'Re-Elect President Tsai Ing-wen in 2020 and Taiwan Will Lose All Its Allies, Beijing Warns.' *South China Morning Post*, [Hong Kong], 17 September. www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3027673/re-elect-president-tsai-ing-wen-2020-and-taiwan-will-lose-all.

How Global Capitalism Became Humanity's 'Fate' in Xi Jinping's New Era (RYAN MARTÍNEZ MITCHELL)

Bauer, Otto. 1907. *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* [*The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*]. Vienna: Verlag der Wiener Volksbuchhandlung Ignaz Brand.

CCTV.com. 2007. '胡锦涛称两岸同胞是命运共同体要加强交往 [Hu Jintao States that Countrymen on Both Sides of the Strait Are a Community of Fate and Should Increase Exchanges].' *CCTV.com*, 15 October. news.cctv.com/taiwan/20071015/103757.shtml.

Cerny, Philip G. 2016. 'In the Shadow of Ordoliberalism: The Paradox of Neoliberalism in the 21st Century.' *European Review of International Studies* 3(1): 78–91.

Chen, Liangyu 陈良宇.1996. '充分发挥党在国有企业中的政治优势 [Make Full Use of the Political Advantages of the Communist Party in State-Owned Enterprises].' 党政论坛 [*Party & Government Forum*] 7: 4–7.

Chengdu Party School Research Office 成都市委党校科研处. 1992. '论社会主义企业命运共同体一书出版 [Newly Published Book: *On Socialist Corporate Communities of Fate*].' 党校科研信息 [*Party School Research News*] 4: 6.

Doshi, Rush. 2021. *The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Ewing-Chow, Michael and Junianto James Losari. 2020. 'The RCEP Investment Chapter: A State-to-State WTO Style System for Now.' *Kluwer Arbitration Blog*, 8 December. arbitrationblog.kluwerarbitration.com/2020/12/08/the-rcep-investment-chapter-a-state-to-state-wto-style-system-for-now.

Forgey, Quint and Phelim Kine. 2022. 'Blinken Calls China "Most Serious Long-Term" Threat to World Order.' *Politico*, 26 May. www.politico.com/news/2022/05/26/blinken-biden-china-policy-speech-00035385.

Gelpern, Anna, Sebastian Horn, Scott Morris, Brad Parks, and Christoph Trebesch. 2021. *How China Lends: A Rare Look into 100 Debt Contracts with Foreign Governments*. London: CEPR Press.

Gewirtz, Julian. 2017. *Unlikely Partners: Chinese Reformers, Western Economists, and the Making of Global China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

He, Yin 和音. 2021. '携手守护全人类共同价值 [Understanding the Great Trend of Economic Globalisation and Expanding Opening Up on All Fronts].' 求是 [*Qiushi*], 18 March. www.qstheory.cn/qshyjx/2021-01/15/c_1126984541.htm.

Hentschel, Volker. 1996. *Ludwig Erhard: ein Politikerleben* [*Ludwig Erhard: A Politician's Life*]. Munich: Olzog.

Hu, Jintao 胡锦涛. 2012. '胡锦涛在中国共产党第十八次全国代表大会上的报告 [Hu Jintao's Address at the Eighteenth Party Congress].' 新华社 [*Xinhua*], 17 November. www.xinhuanet.com//18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_113711665.htm.

Huang, Jingxu 黄景旭. 1985. '日本企业如何调动职工的积极性? [How Do Japanese Enterprises Make Workers Proactive?].' 学习与研究 [*Study and Research*] 7: 41–44.

Itō, Hajime 伊藤 肇. 1973. 社長の人間学 [*The Anthropology of a CEO*]. Tokyo: Hakuba Shuppan.

Kundnani, Hans. 2018. 'Lost in Translation: Communities of Fate.' *Berlin Policy Journal*, 23 October. berlinpolicyjournal.com/lost-in-translation-communities-of-fate.

Lind, Michael. 2020. 'The China Question.' *Tablet*, 19 May. www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/china-strategy-trade-lind.

Ma, Hong 马洪. 1979. '日本工业企业管理考察报告 [Report of the Investigation of Japanese Industrial Enterprise Management].' 世界经济 [*The Journal of World Economy*] 3: 4–13, 69.

Ma, Hong 马洪. 1981. '关于经济管理体制改革的几个问题 [Some Issues in the Reform of Economic Management].' 经济研究 [*Economic Research Journal*] 7: 11–24.

Oriental Morning Post. 2007. '温家宝提东亚合作框架互建"新型命运共同体" [Wen Jiaobao Suggests a Framework for East Asian Cooperation and Mutually Establishing a "New Type of Community of Fate"].' 东方早报 [*Oriental Morning Post*], 16 January.

People's Daily. 1989. '企业命运共同体 [Enterprises: Communities of Fate].' 人民日报 [*People's Daily*], 9 May.

PHP Interface. 2022. 'PHP Ideals.' *PHP Interface*, 10 May. www.php.co.jp/en.

Qian, Gang. 2019. 'The Birth of a Foreign Policy Catchphrase.' *Echowall*, 18 July. www.echo-wall.eu/china-and-world/off/birth-foreign-policy-catchphrase.

Renan, Ernest. 2012. *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* [*What Is a Nation?*] Paris: République des Lettres.

Research Team on Community of Shared Future for Mankind and International Law 人类命运共同体与国际法课题组. 2019. '人类命运共同体的国际法构建 [Building a Community of Shared Future for Mankind via International Law].' 武大国际法评论 [*Wuhan University International Law Review*] 1: 1–28.

Shaffer, Gregory and Henry Gao. 2020. 'A New Chinese Economic Order?' *Journal of International Economic Law* 23(3): 607–35.

Shanghai Branch of the Chinese Federation of the East Asian League. 1942. 东亚联盟论文选集 [*Selected Essays on the East Asian League*]. Shanghai: Dongya Lianmeng Zhongguo Zonghui Shanghai Fenhui.

Sina.com. 2012. '温家宝: 中国支持欧方应对债务问题的意愿是坚定的 [Wen Jiabao: China's Will is Resolute in Supporting Europe as it Confronts its Debt Crisis].' 新浪网 [*Sina.com*], 14 February. finance.sina.com.cn/china/20120214/220911377364.shtml.

Slobodian, Quinn. 2018. *Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

The Economist. 2021. 'Seeking World Domination.' *The Economist*, 31 July. www.economist.com/books-and-arts/2021/07/31/china-aims-to-eclipse-america-by-2049-a-biden-official-writes.

Tooze, Adam. 2021. 'How China Avoided a Soviet-Style Collapse.' *Noema*, 16 September. https://www.noemamag.com/how-china-avoided-soviet-style-collapse.

Vogel, Ezra F. 2011. *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wang, Yi. 2021. 'Harnessing Strengths of CICA Cooperation and Building an Asian Community with a Shared Future.' Remarks by H.E. Wang Yi, State Councillor and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China at the Sixth CICA Ministerial Meeting, 12 October. www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/cohk//eng/Topics/gjfz/t1914054.htm.

Weber, Isabella M. 2021. *How China Escaped Shock Therapy: The Market Reform Debate*. London: Routledge.

Weber, Max. 1991 [1946]. 'Structures of Power.' In *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, edited by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 159–79. London: Routledge.

West, John. 2020. 'The China-Japan Economic Relationship Is Getting Stronger.' *Asian Century Institute*, 22 January. asiancenturyinstitute.com/international/1574-the-china-japan-economic-relationship-is-getting-stronger.

Wu, Jinglian 吴敬琏. 2021. '吴敬琏: 80年代经济改革的回忆与反思 [Wu Jinglian: Memories and Reflections of the 1980s Economic Reforms].' 爱思想 [*Aisixiang*], 9 February. m.aisixiang.com/data/125053.html.

Xi, Jinping. 2013. 'Full Text of Xi Jinping's Speech at Opening Ceremony of Boao Forum.' *China.org.cn*, 10 April. www.china.org.cn/business/Boao_Forum_2013/2013-04/10/content_28501562.htm.

Zhang, Yifan 张一帆. 1985. '企业应真正成为相对独立的经济实体 [Enterprises Should Genuinely Become Relatively Autonomous Economic Entities].' 甘肃理论学刊 [*Gansu Theory Research*] 2: 31–38.

China's Overseas Energy Investments after the 'No Coal' Pledge: An Assessment (DANQING LI, SIMAN LI, AND MARK BO)

Adler, Kevin. 2021. 'Vietnam's Draft Power Plan Backs Coal Cancellations, Commitments to Gas, Renewables.' *Clean Energy News*, 27 April. cleanenergynews.ihsmarkit.com/research-analysis/vietnams-draft-power-plan-backs-coal-cancellations-commitments.html.

Arai, Juntaro. 2021. 'Tokyo Vows at G-7 to Cut Off Overseas Coal Financing this Year.' *Nikkei Asia*, 15 June. https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Environment/Climate-Change/Tokyo-vows-at-G-7-to-cut-off-overseas-coal-financing-this-year.

Bank of China (BOC). 2021. '中国银行制定《中国银行服务"碳达峰、碳中和"目标行动计划》 [The Bank of China has Formulated the Action Plan to Serve the Targets of "Peak Carbon and Carbon Neutrality"].' *Bank of China News*, 24 September. Beijing: BOC. www.boc.cn/aboutboc/bi1/202109/t20210924_20085963.html.

Baxter, Tom. 2021. '"No New Coal Power Abroad": What Has Xi's Announcement Changed?' *Panda Paw Dragon Claw*, 1 October. pandapawdragonclaw.blog/2021/10/01/no-new-coal-power-abroad-what-has-xis-announcement-changed.

BRproject. 2022. '中国能建中标印度尼西亚4×380兆瓦动力岛项目 [Energy China Won the Bid for Indonesia's 4 x 380 MW Power Island Project].' BRproject WeChat channel, 14 February. mp.weixin.qq.com/s/qOl_g_AeH8cSIxYR_vaPWA.

Carbon Brief Staff. 2022. '14FYP Energy Plan; More Plans on Energy Storage and Hydrogen; China's Emissions Analysis.' *China Briefing*, 24 March. London: Carbon Brief. www.carbonbrief.org/china-briefing-24-march-2022-14fyp-energy-plan-more-plans-on-energy-storage-and-hydrogen-chinas-emissions-analysis.

Carbon Tracker. 2020. *How to Waste over Half a Trillion Dollars: The Economic Implications of Deflationary Renewable Energy for Coal Power Investments*. Report, 12 March. London: Carbon Tracker. carbontracker.org/reports/how-to-waste-over-half-a-trillion-dollars.

Chavez, Leilani. 2020. 'Philippines Declares No New Coal Plants—But Lets Approved Projects Through.' *Mongabay*, 5 November. news.mongabay.com/2020/11/philippines-declares-no-new-coal-plants-but-lets-approved-projects-through.

Chen, Xiaodong. 2021. 'Letter to South Africa Ambassador.' 9 November. Cape Town: Fossil Free South Africa. fossilfreesa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FFSA-correspondence-China-MMSEZ.pdf.

China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products (CCCME). 2022. 'Ranking of Chinese Enterprises by Overseas Signed Power Projects in 2021.' CCCME Official WeChat channel, 26 January. mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Kq6xe9GvVcGn-RN1NuBTog.

China News Network. 2022. 'Supporting the Green Development Financing Needs of Countries along the "Belt and Road".' 10 March. Beijing: Export–Import Bank of China. www.eximbank.gov.cn/info/circus/202203/t20220315_38375.html.

Cronje, Jan. 2022. 'Coal Feet: Limpopo Industrial Park Backed by China Ditches Plans to Build Power Station.' *News 24*, 2 March. www.news24.com/fin24/companies/coal-feet-limpopo-industrial-park-backed-by-china-ditches-plans-to-build-power-station-20220302.

Ginting, Pius and Ellen Moore. 2021. 'Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park (IMIP).' *The People's Map of Global China*, 24 November. thepeoplesmap.net/project/indonesia-morowali-industrial-park-imip.

Global Development Policy Center. 2022. *Outlier or New Normal? Trends in China's Global Energy Finance*. 11 March. Boston, MA: Global Development Policy Center, Boston University. www.bu.edu/gdp/2022/03/11/outlier-or-new-normal-trends-in-chinas-global-energy-finance-2.

Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA). 2020. *IEEFA Report: New Coal Power Plants Locking Pakistan into Too Much Supply and Unsustainable Capacity Payments*. 26 June. Lakeland, OH: IEEFA. ieefa.org/articles/ieefa-report-new-coal-power-plants-locking-pakistan-too-much-supply-and-unsustainable.

International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). 2022. *2021 Renewable Capacity Highlights*. 11 April. Abu Dhabi: IRENA. www.irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2022/Apr/IRENA_-RE_Capacity_Highlights_2022.pdf.

Jong, Hans. 2021. 'Indonesia Says No New Coal Plants from 2023.' *Mongabay*, 12 May. news.mongabay.com/2021/05/indonesia-says-no-new-coal-plants-from-2023-after-the-next-100-or-so.

Karim, Naimul. 2021. 'Bangladesh Scraps Plans to Build 10 Coal-Fired Power Plants.' *Reuters*, 28 June. www.reuters.com/article/us-bangladesh-energy-climate-change-coal-idUSKCN2E410H.

Kinney, Sasha. 2022. 'Lamu Coal Power Plant.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 22 January. thepeoplesmap.net/project/lamu-coal-power-plant.

Li, Danqing. 2019. 'China's Export Insurance Giant is Taking a Risk on Coal.' *Medium*, 2 April. medium.com/resource-china/chinas-export-insurance-giant-is-taking-a-risk-on-coal-fbc7b5c81238.

Liu, Shuang, Wang Ye, and Wang Yan. 2021. 'South Korea and Japan Will End Overseas Coal Financing: Will China Catch Up?' *Insights*, 14 June. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute. www.wri.org/insights/south-korea-and-japan-will-end-overseas-coal-financing-will-china-catch.

Ma, Xinyue and Kevin Gallagher. 2021. Who funds overseas coal plants? The need for transparency and accountability. Global Development Policy Center Policy Brief No. 7/2012. Boston, MA: Global Development Policy Center, Boston University. www.bu.edu/gdp/files/2021/07/GCI_PB_008_FIN-1.pdf.

National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Ecology and Environment, and Ministry of Commerce. 2022. '国家发展改革委等部门关于推进共建"一带一路"绿色发展的意见 [Opinions on the Joint Implementation of Green Development in the Belt and Road Initiative].' 3 March. Beijing: Ministry of Ecology and Environment. www.mee.gov.cn/xxgk2018/xxgk/xxgk10/202203/t20220329_972898.html.

National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and National Energy Administration (NEA). 2022. '关于印发《"十四五"现代能源体系规划》的通知 [Notice about the 14th Five-Year Plan on Modern Energy Systems].' 29 January. Beijing: NDRC. www.ndrc.gov.cn/xxgk/zcfb/ghwb/202203/t20220322_1320016.html.

Ping An Group. 2021. *Ping An Bank Statement on Coal-Related Business*. Shenzhen: Ping An Group. group.pingan.com/resource/pingan/ESG/Sustainable-Business-Integration/ping-an-group-coal-lending-statement-2021.pdf.

Rana, Shahbaz. 2022. 'Pakistan Moves to Address China's Gwadar Concerns.' *The Express Tribune*, 5 February. tribune.com.pk/story/2342079/pakistan-moves-to-address-chinas-gwadar-concerns.

Reboredo, Ricardo. 2021. 'South African Energy Metallurgical Special Economic Zone.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 12 May. thepeoplesmap.net/project/south-african-energy-metallurgical-special-economic-zone.

Reuters. 2021 'S. Korea's Moon Vows to End New Funding for Overseas Coal Projects.' *Reuters*, 22 April. www.reuters.com/article/global-climate-summit-southkorea/s-koreas-moon-vows-to-end-new-funding-for-overseas-coal-projects-idUSL4N2MF3R2.

Shepherd, Christian. 2021 'China Turns its Back on Bangladesh BRI Coal Projects.' *Financial Times*, 10 March. www.ft.com/content/30840645-58d2-4da5-be05-f476623677d2.

Suarez, Isabella. 2021. '4.5 Times as Much Overseas Coal Capacity Linked to China Cancelled or Shelved than Constructed.' *CREA Briefing*, 15 June. Helsinki: Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air. energyandcleanair.org/more-chinese-overseas-projects-cancelled.

Suarez, Isabella. 2022. '12.8 GW of Chinese Overseas Coal Project Cancelled, but 57 GW Could Still Go Ahead.' *CREA Briefing*, 22 April. Helsinki: Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air. energyandcleanair.org/2022-chinese-overseas-coal.

Sunningwell International. 2022. 'Sunningwell Response to Business & Human Rights Resource Center.' 28 December. London: Business & Human Rights Resource Center. media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/Sunningwell_response_to_BHRRC_ASia_reg_Ugljevik_power_plant_project_rB8wF1Q.pdf.

Tsingshan Industry. 2021. '青山承诺不再新建境外煤电项目 [Tsingshan Commits to No New Coal Power Plants Overseas].' 22 September. Shanghai: Tsingshan Holding Group. www.tssgroup.com.cn/青山承诺不再新建境.

Vietnam Energy. 2022. 'The Conclusion of Deputy Prime Minister Le Van Thanh on Finalizing PDP VIII.' *Vietnam Energy Online*, 28 February. Hanoi: Vietnam Energy. vietnamenergy.vn/the-conclusion-of-deputy-prime-minister-le-van-thanh-on-finalizing-pdp-viii-28341.html.

Wang, Christoph Nedopil. 2021. 'Coal Phase-Out in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): An Analysis of Chinese-Backed Coal Power from 2014–2020.' *Green Finance & Development Center Brief*, 16 June. Shanghai: Fanhai International School of Finance at Fudan University. greenfdc.org/coal-phase-out-in-the-belt-and-road-initiative-bri-an-analysis-of-chinese-backed-coal-power-from-2014-2020.

Wang, Christoph Nedopil. 2022. 'China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Investment Report 2021.' *Green Finance & Development Center Brief*, 2 February. Shanghai: Fanhai International School of Finance at Fudan University. greenfdc.org/brief-china-belt-and-road-initiative-bri-investment-report-2021.

World Resources Institute (WRI). 2022. 'WRI Co-Hosts International Roundtable on Green Development Guidance for BRI Projects.' Media release, 21 April. Washington, DC: WRI. wri.org.cn/en/news/wri-co-hosts-international-roundtable-green-development-guidance-bri-projects.

Xi, Jinping. 2021. 'Bolstering Confidence and Jointly Overcoming Difficulties to Build a Better World: Statement by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China at the General Debate of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.' *China Daily*, 22 September. www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202109/22/WS614a8126a310cdd39bc6a935.html.

Yapp, Civi. 2022. 'AIIB Out, Others in on Thai Gas-Fired Plant.' *IJGlobal*, 11 February. www.ijglobal.com/articles/161951/aiib-out-others-in-on-thai-gas-fired.

Translating China's Special Economic Zone 'Model' into Rural Southern India: Impacts on Urban Development (CHARLOTTE GOODBURN AND JAN KNOERICH)

Aggarwal, Aradhna. 2010. *Economic impacts of SEZs: Theoretical approaches and analysis of newly notified SEZs in India.* MPRA Paper 20902. Munich Personal RePEc Archive. mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/20902.

Bach, Jonathan. 2017. 'Shenzhen: From Exception to Rule.' In *Learning from Shenzhen*, edited by Mary Ann O'Donnell, Winnie Wong, and Jonathan Bach, 23–38. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bedi, Heather P. 2013. 'Special Economic Zones: National Land Challenges, Localized Protest.' *Contemporary South Asia* 21(1): 38–51.

Benson, David and Andrew Jordan. 2011. 'What Have We Learned from Policy Transfer Research? Dolowitz and Marsh Revisited.' *Political Studies Review* 9(3): 366–78.

Cross, Jamie. 2014. *Dream Zones: Anticipating Capitalism and Development in India*. London: Pluto Press.

Fan, Cindy C. 2007. *China on the Move: Migration, the State, and the Household*. London: Routledge.

Goodburn, Charlotte. 2015. 'Migrant Girls in Shenzhen: Gender, Education and the Urbanization of Aspiration.' *The China Quarterly* 222: 320–38.

Goodburn, Charlotte. 2020a. 'Changing Patterns of Household Decision-Making and the Education of Rural Migrant Children: Comparing Shenzhen and Mumbai.' *Migration Studies* 8(4): 589–611.

Goodburn, Charlotte. 2020b. 'Growing Up In (and Out of) Shenzhen: The Longer-Term Impacts of Rural–Urban Migration on Education and Labor Market Entry.' *The China Journal* 83(1): 129–47.

Klasen, Stephan and Janneke Pieters. 2015. *What explains the stagnation of female labor force participation in urban India?* Policy Research Working Papers, 28 May. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-7222.

Knoerich, Jan, Liliane Chantal Mouan, and Charlotte Goodburn. 2021. 'Is China's Model of SEZ-Led Development Viable? A Call for Smart Replication.' *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 50(2). doi.org/10.1177/1868102621993487.

Kothari, Bejene, Vijay Kishore, Vaddiparti Raghavaswamy, and Galab Shaik. 2010. Special economic zones and the emergent rural–urban dynamics. Presented to Dynamics of Rural Transformation in Emerging Economies Conference, Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi, 14 April.

Liu, Yuting, Shenjing He, Fulong Wu, and Chris Webster. 2010. 'Urban Villages under China's Rapid Urbanization: Unregulated Assets and Transitional Neighbourhoods.' *Habitat International* 34(2): 135–44.

McCann, Eugene and Kevin Ward. 2012. 'Policy Assemblages, Mobilities and Mutations: Toward a Multidisciplinary Conversation.' *Political Studies Review* 10(3): 325–32.

McFarlane, Colin. 2011. 'Assemblage and Critical Urbanism.' *City* 15(2): 204–24.

Menon, S. Narayan and Soumya Kanti Mitra. 2009. 'Special Economic Zones: The Rationale.' In *Special Economic Zones: Promise, Performance and Pending Issues*, edited by Partha Mukhopadhyay, Kanhu Charan Pradhan, and K.C. Sivaramakrishnan, 3–44. New Delhi: Centre for Policy Research.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry. 2005. *Special Economic Zones Act, 2005*. New Delhi: Government of India. commerce.gov.in/writereaddata/aboutus/actspdfs/SEZAct,2005.pdf.

O'Donnell, Mary Ann. 2021. 'The End of an Era? Two Decades of Shenzhen Urban Villages.' *Made in China* 6(2): 56–65.

Ong, Aihwa. 2011. 'Introduction: Worlding Cities, or the Art of Being Global.' In *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*, edited by Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong, 1–28. London: Blackwell.

Palit, Amitendu and Subhomoy Bhattacharjee. 2008. *Special Economic Zones in India: Myths and Realities*. London: Anthem Press.

Parliament of India. 2007. *Department Related Standing Committee on Commerce: Eighty-Third Report on the Functioning of Special Economic Zones*. August. New Delhi. 164.100.47.5/newcommittee/reports/EnglishCommittees/Committee%20 on% 20Commerce/Report%20SEZ1.htm.

Peck, Jamie and Nik Theodore. 2012. 'Follow the Policy: A Distended Case Approach.' *Environment and Planning A* 44(1): 21–30.

Robinson, Jennifer. 2002. 'Global and World Cities: A View from Off the Map.' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26(3): 531–54.

Roy, Ananya. 2016. 'When Is Asia?' *The Professional Geographer* 68(2): 313–21.

Sampat, Preeti. 2010. 'Special Economic Zones in India: Reconfiguring Displacement in a Neoliberal Order?' *City & Society* 22(2): 166–82.

Shin, Hyun Bang. 2019. 'Asian Urbanism.' In *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Urban and Regional Studies*, edited by Anthony Orum, 1–10. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell.

Shin, Hyun Bang, Yimin Zhao, and Sin Yee Koh. 2020. 'Whither Progressive Urban Futures? Critical Reflections on the Politics of Temporality in Asia.' *City* 24(1): 1–11.

Sklair, Leslie. 1991. 'Problems of Socialist Development: The Significance of Shenzhen Special Economic Zone for China's Open Door Development Strategy.' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 15(2): 197–215.

Smith, Chris and Ngai Pun. 2006. 'The Dormitory Labour Regime in China as a Site for Control and Resistance.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 17(8): 1456–70.

Sood, Ashima and Lorraine Kennedy. 2020. 'Neoliberal Exception to Liberal Democracy? Entrepreneurial Territorial Governance in India.' *Territory, Politics, Governance* 8(1): 23–42.

Srinivasulu, Karli. 2014. 'Andhra Pradesh.' In *Power, Policy, and Protest: The Politics of India's Special Economic Zones*, edited by Rob Jenkins, Loraine Kennedy, and Partha Mukhopadhyay, 72–107. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Wong, Kwan-Yiu. 1987. 'China's Special Economic Zone Experiment: An Appraisal.' *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 69(1): 27–40.

World Bank. 2015. 'China's Special Economic Zones: Experience Gained.' World Bank Investing in Africa Forum. www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/Event/Africa/Investing%20in%20Africa%20Forum/2015/investing-in-africa-forum-chinas-special-economic-zone.pdf.

Overlapping Agendas on the Belt and Road: The Case of the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (MARK BO AND NEIL LOUGHLIN)

Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2018. *The Ha Noi Action Plan 2018–2022*. Manila: Asian Development Bank. www.greatermekong.org/sites/default/files/SERD The Ha Noi Action Plan 2018-2022_WEB - 15March2018.pdf.

Associated Press (AP). 2006. 'China Pledges $600 Million to Cambodia.' *China Daily*, 9 April. www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2006-04/09/content_563496.htm.

Bahree, Megha. 2014. 'In Cambodia, a Close Friendship with the PM Leads to Vast Wealth for One Power Couple.' *Forbes*, 24 September. www.forbes.com/sites/meghabahree/2014/09/24/who-you-know-inc-in-cambodia-a-close-friendship-with-the-pm-leads-to-vast-wealth-for-one-power-couple.

Bräutigam, Deborah and Xiaoyang Tang. 2012. 'Economic Statecraft in China's New Overseas Special Economic Zones: Soft Power, Business or Resource Security?' *International Affairs* 88(4): 799–816.

Bräutigam, Deborah and Xiaoyang Tang. 2014. '"Going Global in Groups": Structural Transformation and China's Special Economic Zones Overseas.' *World Development* 63: 78–91.

Cambodia Center for Independent Media (CCIM). 2018. 'Independent Union Does Not Exist to Protect Rights and Working Conditions of Workers in Sihanoukville Special Economic Zones.' CCIM website, 19 November. ccimcambodia.org/?p=1289.

China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT). n.d. '西哈努克港经济特区 [Sihanoukville Economic Zone].' CCPIT website. oip.ccpit.org/ent/parks-introduces/46.

Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC). 2020. *Development Cooperation and Partnerships Report*. March. Phnom Penh: Council for the Development of Cambodia. cdc-crdb.gov.kh/en/officials-docs/documents/DCPR-2018-English.pdf.

Diepart, Jean-Christophe and Laura Schoenberger. 2016. 'Concessions in Cambodia: Governing Profits, Extending State Power and Enclosing Resources from the Colonial Era to the Present.' In *The Handbook of Contemporary Cambodia*, edited by Katherine Brickell and Simon Springer, 157–68. London: Routledge.

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Kingdom of Cambodia (PRC Embassy). 2021. '驻柬埔寨大使王文天同柬副首相兼国防大臣迪班共同出席中国国防部援建柬东盟军用枪射击比赛场和宪兵训练馆项目开工仪式 [Ambassador to Cambodia Wang Wentian and Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Tea Banh Jointly Attended the Groundbreaking Ceremony of the Project of China's Ministry of National Defence to Build the Cambodia–ASEAN Military Firing Range and Military Police Training Centre].' Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Kingdom of Cambodia website, 20 December. kh.china-embassy.gov.cn/dssghd/202112/t20211220_10471776.htm.

Export–Import Bank of China (Eximbank of China). 2019. '金融时报: 促进互利共赢 架起"梦想之桥" 进出口银行助力"一带一路"建设' [Financial Times: Promote Mutual Benefit and Win-Win Construction Building a "Bridge of Dreams". Export–Import Bank Helps the Construction of the "Belt and Road"].' 24 April. Beijing: Export–Import Bank of China. www.eximbank.gov.cn/info/circus/201905/t20190529_9206.html.

Flannery, Russel. 2005. 'Letting Out the Seam.' *Forbes*, 28 February. www.forbes.com/forbes/2005/0228/094.html.

Flannery, Russel. 2015. 'China's Currency Won't Ease Pressure on Industry to Upgrade.' *Forbes*, 19 August. www.forbes.com/sites/russellflannery/2015/08/19/chinas-currency-slide-wont-ease-pressure-on-industry-to-upgrade/?sh=17f7c1a86eba.

Franceschini, Ivan. 2020. 'At the Roots of Labour Activism: Chinese and Cambodian Garment Workers in Comparative Perspective.' *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 50(1): 144–67.

Goldberg, Coby, Max Kearns, Henry Peyronnin, Ben Spevack, and Sofia Vargas. 2021. *Zoned Out: A Comprehensive Impact Evaluation of Mekong Economic Development Zones*. Washington, DC: C4ADS.

Grimsditch, Mark. 2019. 'The Cambodia Conundrum: The Belt and Road, Private Capital and China's "Non-Interference" Policy.' *Panda Paw Dragon Claw*, 25 June. pandapawdragonclaw.blog/2019/06/25/the-cambodia-conundrum-the-belt-and-road-private-capital-and-chinas-non-interference-policy.

Ham, Oudom. 2021. 'Project Profile: Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone Coal Power Plant.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 18 October. thepeoplesmap.net/project/sihanoukville-special-economic-zone-coal-power-plant.

Hang, Sokhuntea, Erchi Zhang, Qi Zhang, and Sijia Li. 2017. 'Sino-Cambodian Factory Zone Sets Pace for Belt and Road.' *Caixin Global*, 12 May. www.caixinglobal.com/2017-05-12/sino-cambodian-factory-zone-sets-pace-for-belt-and-road-101089824.html.

Hin, Pisei. 2022a. 'Cambodia–US Trade Tops $9.1b in 2021: USCB.' *The Phnom Penh Post*, 10 February. phnompenhpost.com/business/cambodia-us-trade-tops-91b-2021-uscb.

Hin, Pisei. 2022b. 'SSEZ's Q1 Imports, Exports Rise 51%.' *The Phnom Penh Post*, 25 April. www.phnompenhpost.com/business/ssezs-q1-imports-exports-rise-51.

Hun, Sen. 2016. 'Selected Impromptu Comments at the Inauguration of the 100th Factory Presence in the Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone.' *Cambodia New Vision*, 6 July. http://cnv.org.kh/selected-impromptu-comments-inauguration-100th-factory-presence-sihanoukville-special-economic-zone.

Inclusive Development International (IDI). 2020. *Reassessing China's Investment Footprint in Cambodia.* Phnom Penh: Inclusive Development International. www.inclusivedevelopment.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020_IDI_Briefing-on-Chinas-Footprint-in-Cambodia-Update.pdf.

Inclusive Development International (IDI). 2021a. 'Project Profile: Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 31 March. thepeoplesmap.net/project/sihanoukville-special-economic-zone.

Inclusive Development International (IDI). 2021b. 'Country Profile: Cambodia.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 25 November. thepeoplesmap.net/country/cambodia.

Kingdom of Cambodia and People's Republic of China (PRC). 2019. 'Joint Communiqué between the Kingdom of Cambodia and the People's Republic of China.' 23 January, Beijing. cnv.org.kh/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Joint-Communique-Between-The-Kingdom-of-Cambodia-and-the-People's-Republic-of-China-23012019.pdf.

Khuon, Narim. 2018. 'Group Notes Lack of Sihanoukville SEZ Unions.' *Khmer Times*, 28 November. www.khmertimeskh.com/553684/group-notes-lack-of-sihanoukville-sez-unions.

Layton, Peter. 2017. 'As China's Sphere of Influence Expands, Australia Has a Choice.' *War on the Rocks*, 6 June. warontherocks.com/2017/06/as-chinas-sphere-of-influence-expands-australia-has-a-choice.

Loughlin, Neil. 2021. 'Chinese Linkage, Leverage, and Cambodia's Transition to Hegemonic Authoritarianism.' *Democratization* 28(4): 840–57.

Loughlin, Neil and Mark Grimsditch. 2021. 'How Local Political Economy Dynamics are Shaping the Belt and Road Initiative.' *Third World Quarterly* 42(10): 2334–52.

Loughlin, Neil and Sarah Milne. 2020. 'After the Grab: Land Control and Regime Survival in Cambodia Since 2012.' *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 51(3): 375–97.

Mao, Pengfei and Sovan Nguon. 2019. 'Chinese-Invested Sihanoukville SEZ is Model for SEZ Development in Cambodia: Cambodian Deputy PM.' *Belt and Road Portal*, 31 May. eng.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/ghsl/wksl/92451.htm.

Ministry of Commerce (MOC). n.d. *Business Registration*. Phnom Penh: Ministry of Commerce of the Kingdom of Cambodia. www.businessregistration.moc.gov.kh.

Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT). 2022. '*Khmer Times*: Cambodia Benefits Immensely from China's BRI Projects.' Press release, 7 May. Phnom Penh: Ministry of Public Works and Transport of the Kingdom of Cambodia. www.mpwt.gov.kh/en/press/24018.

Nachemson, Andrew. 2021. 'US Tightens Curbs as Cambodia Moves Closer into China's Embrace.' *Al Jazeera*, 10 December. www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/10/as-cambodia-moves-closer-into-chinas-orbit-us-tightens-curbs.

National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce. 2015. 'Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road.' March. Beijing: NDRC.

Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) and Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE). 2021. *Guidelines for Green Development in Overseas Investment and Cooperation*. Beijing: BRI Green Development Coalition (pp. 5–6). en.brigc.net/Media_Center/BRI_Green_Review/2021/202107/P020210729465376906569.pdf.

Niem, Chheng. 2018. 'Report Decries Lack of Union Representatives.' *The Phnom Penh Post*, 28 November. www.phnompenhpost.com/national/report-decries-lack-union-representatives.

Prak, Chan Thul. 2019. 'U.S. Urges Cambodia to Probe China-Owned Economic Zone on Tariff Dodging.' *Reuters*, 28 June. www.reuters.com/article/uk-usa-trade-china-cambodia-idUKKCN1TT0F1.

Raymond, Gregory. 2021. 'From Neoliberalism to Geoeconomics: The Greater Mekong Subregion and the Archaeology of the Belt and Road Initiative in Mainland Southeast Asia.' *Made in China Journal* 6(2): 152–57.

Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ). n.d. 'Brief Introduction.' SSEZ website. www.ssez.com/en/company.asp?Ione=3.

Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ). 2012. 'Investment Advantage.' SSEZ website, 30 August. www.ssez.com/en/touzi.asp?nlt=58&none=17&ntwo=0.

Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ). 2014a. 'The General Manager of the SSEZ Company Made an Official Visit to the New Governor of Sihanouk Province.' SSEZ website, 9 June. www.ssez.com/en/news.asp?nlt=106&none=3&ntwo=0.

Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone (SSEZ). 2014b. 'Cambodian Anti-Terrorism GOE Will Fully Maintain the Stability of SSEZ.' SSEZ website, 15 August. www.ssez.com/en/news.asp?nlt=108&none=3&ntwo=0.

Sinosure. n.d. '柬埔寨西哈努克港经济特区项目 [Cambodia Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone Project].' Sinosure website. www.sinosure.com.cn/xwzx/cbxm/hwtzbx/2016/11/182390.shtml.

Sukumaran, Tashny. 2019. 'Cambodia "Playing with Fire" by Cosying Up to China, Says Opposition Figure Sam Rainsy.' *South China Morning Post*, 12 November. www.scmp.com/week-asia/people/article/3037414/cambodias-close-ties-china-undermines-fight-democracy-says-sam.

Thame, Charlie. 2017. *SEZs and Value Extraction from the Mekong: A Case Study on the Control and Exploitation of Land and Labour in Cambodia and Myanmar's Special Economic Zones*. Bangkok: Focus on the Global South. earthrights.org/wp-content/uploads/sezs_and_value_extraction_in_the_mekong_english.pdf.

Turton, Shaun. 2021. 'Cyber Slavery: Inside Cambodia's Online Scam Gangs.' *Nikkei Asia*, 1 September. asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/The-Big-Story/Cyber-slavery-inside-Cambodia-s-online-scam-gangs.

Turton, Shaun and Yan Huang. 2021. 'China Grapples with Cambodia's Failure to Curb Crime Gangs.' *Nikkei Asia*, 17 December. asia.nikkei.com/Business/Business-Spotlight/China-grapples-with-Cambodia-s-failure-to-curb-crime-gangs.

Xi, Jinping. 2021. 'Speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Special Summit to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of China–ASEAN Dialogue Relations.' *Xinhua*, 22 November. www.news.cn/english/2021-11/22/c_1310325511.htm.

Xinhua. 2017. 'Cambodia, China Draft Plans for Cooperation under Belt and Road Initiative.' *Xinhuanet*, 22 February. www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-02/22/c_136077019.htm.

Xinhua. 2018. '中国银行(香港)金边分行代表团称赞特区发展空间大 [The Delegation of Bank of China (Hong Kong) Phnom Penh Branch Praised the Development of the SEZ].' 新华丝路 [*Xinhua Silk Road*], 9 November. www.imsilkroad.com/news/p/110362.html.

Xinhua. 2020. 'Cambodia–China Trade Volume Tops 11b USD in 2021,Up 37 pct.' *Xinhuanet*, 28 January. english.news.cn/asiapacific/20220128/54b02521fc9e4afc9c5363257e18a8ce/c.html.

Xinhua. 2022. 'China's BRI Projects Greatly Benefit Cambodian Economy, People: Officials, Experts.' *China Daily*, 6 May. global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202205/06/WS6274bc7ba310fd2b29e5b118.html.

Zhang, Bao 张保. 2022. '西港特区成中企赴柬投资热土 [Sihanoukville Special Economic Zone Becomes Hotspot for Chinese Companies to Invest in Cambodia].' 经济日报 [*Economic Daily*], 12 February. www.ce.cn/xwzx/gnsz/gdxw/202202/12/t20220212_37323674.shtml.

Civil Society's Multifaceted Response to China's Belt and Road Initiative (SHAWN SHIEH)

Belt and Road Forum. 2019. 'Xi Jinping Attends the Opening Ceremony of the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) and Delivers a Keynote Speech.' Belt and Road Forum website, 27 April. www.beltandroadforum.org/english/n100/2019/0429/c22-1391.html.

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC). 2021. '"Going Out Responsibly": The Human Rights Impact of China's Global Investments.' *Briefing*, August. London: BHRRC. www.bhrrc.org/en/from-us/briefings/going-out-responsibly-the-human-rights-impact-of-chinas-global-investments.

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC). 2022. 'Going Out Responsibly: Time to Take Human Rights Seriously in Chinese Overseas Business Operations.' *Global China Pulse*, 12 January. thepeoplesmap.net/2022/01/12/going-out-responsibly-time-to-take-human-rights-seriously-in-chinese-overseas-business-operations.

Cai, Feifei, Jinfei Yue, Jialin Zhang, and Jiyan Chen. 2017. *The social responsibility of China's OFDI and NGOs' engagement: Taking the Myanmar Letpadaung copper mining project as an example*. SRI Paper, July. Beijing: Social Resources Institute. media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/files/documents/SRI_The_Social_Responsibility_of_Chinas_OFDI_and_NGOs_Engagement.pdf.

Cai, Feifei and Jinsan Zhou. 2018. *Research on community relations management of Chinese companies in Myanmar*. SRI Paper. Beijing: Social Resources Institute. www.academia.edu/37881664/Research_on_Community_Relations_Management_of_Chinese_Companies_in_Myanmar_Social_Resources_Institute_SRI.

Chan, Debby Sze Wan and Ngai Pun. 2021. 'Reactive to Domestic Constraints: Dynamic Operations of a China-Backed Copper Mine in Myanmar, 2011–21.' *Eurasian Geography and Economics*. doi.org/10.1080/15387216.2021.1955721.

Coalition for Human Rights in Development. 2019. *Uncalculated Risks: Threats and Attacks against Human Rights Defenders and the Role of Development Financiers*. Report, May. Coalition for Human Rights Development. rightsindevelopment.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Uncalculated-Risks-Full-report-cmpr-h.pdf.

Gyuse, Terna. 2021. 'Ugandan Activists' Arrest Slammed as Threat to Space for Rights Defenders.' *Mongabay*, [San Francisco, CA], 28 October. news.mongabay.com/2021/10/ugandan-activists-arrest-slammed-as-threat-to-space-for-rights-defenders.

Halegua, Aaron. 2020a. 'From Africa to Saipan: What Happens When Chinese Construction Firms "Go Global"?' *Made in China Journal* 5(1): 160–63.

Halegua, Aaron. 2020b. 'Where is the Belt and Road Initiative Taking International Labour Rights? An Examination of Worker Abuse by Chinese Firms in Saipan.' In *The Belt and Road Initiative and Global Governance*, edited by Maria Adele Carrai and Jan Wouters, 225–57. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Hui, Ning. 2019. 'How Local Communities Halted a Chinese-Owned Gold Mine in Ecuador.' *China Dialogue*, 5 July. chinadialogue.net/en/business/11358-how-locals-halted-a-chinese-owned-gold-mine-in-ecuador.

Inclusive Development International. 2020. 'Supporting "High Quality" Construction on the Belt and Road: How Chinese Entities Can Protect People and the Environment in a COVID-19 World.' Open letter, 29 April. Asheville, NC: Inclusive Development International. www.inclusivedevelopment.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CSO-Statement_April-2020_Final_English-STATEMENTAPPENDIX-1.pdf.

Inclusive Development International. 2021a. 'Dairi Prima Mineral Zinc Mine.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 29 March. thepeoplesmap.net/project/dairi-prima-mineral-zinc-mine.

Inclusive Development International. 2021b. 'East African Crude Oil Pipeline.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 30 March. thepeoplesmap.net/project/east-africa-crude-oil-pipeline.

Kernell, Samuel, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, and Lynn Vavreck. 2017. *The Logic of American Politics*. 8th edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kinney, Sasha. 2022. 'Lamu Coal Power Plant.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 22 January. thepeoplesmap.net/project/lamu-coal-power-plant.

Latinoamérica Sustentable. 2020. 'Rio Blanco Mining Project.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 3 November. thepeoplesmap.net/project/rio-blanco-mining-project.

Learning Spaces. 2021a. *Cases of civil society advocacy on China's Belt and Road Initiative: Key takeaways and resources*. Learning Spaces Brief 3. drive.google.com/drive/folders/1acfyUuD3zZJnZ0DqIPVn0Nyg92OVGViE?usp=sharing.

Learning Spaces. 2021b. *Civil society advocacy on China's Belt and Road Initiative: Key takeaways and resources*. Learning Spaces Brief 2. drive.google.com/file/d/1NaCeoYhtGg2US0U2DJDe3t2fQW_297QO/view.

Learning Spaces. 2021c. *Legal advocacy on China's Belt and Road: Key takeaways and resources*. Learning Spaces Brief 4. drive.google.com/file/d/1uZMuiZM_62ZtmYkmGm_K_uGXEsOYzDvK/view.

Lipton, Eric and Dionne Searcy. 2021. 'Chinese Company Removed as Operator of Cobalt Mine in Congo.' *The New York Times*, 28 February. www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/world/congo-cobalt-mining-china.html.

Mackenzie, Ellis, Sarah Milne, Lorrae van Kerkhoff, and Bunthin Ray. 2022. 'Development or Dispossession? Exploring the Consequences of a Major Chinese Investment in Rural Cambodia.' *The Journal of Peasant Studies*. doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2022.2026929.

Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Environment and Ecology. 2021. 'Guidelines for Green Development in Foreign Investment and Cooperation.' Translated in *Green BRI Review*, July, pp. 5–6. en.brigc.net/Media_Center/BRI_Green_Review/2021/202107/P020210729465376906569.pdf.

Nedopil, Christoph, Dmitry De Boer, Danting Fan, and Yingzhi Tang. 2021. 'What China's New Guidelines on "Green Development" Mean for the Belt and Road.' *China Dialogue*, 18 August. chinadialogue.net/en/business/what-chinas-new-guidelines-on-green-development-mean-for-the-belt-and-road.

Reuters. 2014. 'China Expresses Concern after Protests at Myanmar Mine.' *Reuters*, 24 December. www.reuters.com/article/china-myanmar/china-expresses-concern-after-protests-at-myanmar-mine-idUSL3N0U82DR20141224.

Rights and Accountability in Development (RAID). 2021. *The Road to Ruin? Electric Vehicles and Workers' Rights Abuses at DR Congo's Industrial Cobalt Mines*. Report, November. London: RAID UK. www.raid-uk.org/sites/default/files/report_road_to_ruin_evs_cobalt_workers_nov_2021.pdf.

Searcey, Dionne, Michael Forsythe, and Eric Lipton. 2021. 'A Power Struggle over Cobalt Rattles the Clean Energy Revolution.' *The New York Times*, 20 November. www.nytimes.com/2021/11/20/world/china-congo-cobalt.html.

State Council Information Office (SCIO). 2021. *China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era*. White Paper, 10 January. Beijing: Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. english.www.gov.cn/archive/whitepaper/202101/10/content_WS5ffa6bbbc6d0f72576943922.html.

Swaine, Robert, Bernardo Mariani, and Ilya Jones. 2021. *Public Perceptions of the Belt and Road Initiative: Guiding 'Win-Wins' for People, Business and Policy Makers*. Report, August. London: Saferworld. www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1358-public-perceptions-of-the-belt-and-road-initiative-guiding-awin-winsa-for-people-business-and-policy-makers.

Syntao. 2021. *Community Engagement Handbook for Chinese International Contractors (2021 Edition)*. 26 August. Syntao website. www.syntao.com/newsinfo/1850630.html.

Tower, Jason. 2020. 'Conflict Dynamics and the Belt and Road Initiative: Ignoring Conflict on the "Road to Peace".' *Analysis 97*. Berlin: Brot Für die Welt [Bread for the World]. www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/fileadmin/mediapool/blogs/Kruckow_Caroline/Analyse97-en-v08-Web.pdf.

UN Affairs. 2021. 'China Headed towards Carbon Neutrality by 2060; President Xi Jinping Vows to Halt New Coal Plants Abroad.' *UN News*, 21 September. news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1100642.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). 2019. 'Lamu Coal Plant Case Reveals Tips for Other Community-Led Campaigns.' *News*, 22 August. Nairobi: UNEP. www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/lamu-coal-plant-case-reveals-tips-other-community-led-campaigns.

Wang, Christoph Nedopil. 2022. *Interpretation of the 2022 'Guidelines for Ecological Environmental Protection of Foreign Investment Cooperation and Construction Projects'*. 18 January. Shanghai: Green Finance & Development Center. greenfdc.org/interpretation-2022-guidelines-ecological-environmental-protection-of-foreign-investment-cooperation-and-construction-projects/.

Win Ko Ko Latt and Soe Than Lynn. 2013. 'Copper Project to Resume in September after New Contract Signed.' *Myanmar Times*, 29 July. www.mmtimes.com/national-news/7644-copper-project-to-resume-in-september-after-new-contract-signed.html.

Yu, Pei-hua. 2021a. 'Letpadaung Copper Mine.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 23 March. thepeoplesmap.net/project/letpadaung-copper-mine.

Yu, Pei-hua. 2021b. 'Myanmar–China Oil and Gas Pipelines.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 23 March. thepeoplesmap.net/project/myanmar-china-oil-and-gas-pipelines.

Yu, Pei-hua. 2021c. 'Myitsone Hydropower Dam.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 23 March. thepeoplesmap.net/project/myitsone-hydropower-dam.

High-Profile Infrastructure and China's Global Influence Gamble (AUSTIN STRANGE)

Baldwin, Kate and Matthew S. Winters. 2020. 'How Do Different Forms of Foreign Aid Affect Government Legitimacy? Evidence from an Informational Experiment in Uganda.' *Studies in Comparative International Development* 55(2): 160–83.

Barnett, Michael and Raymond Duvall. 2005. 'Power in International Politics.' *International Organization* 59(1): 39–75.

Bluhm, Richard, Axel Dreher, Andreas Fuchs, Bradley Parks, Austin Strange, and Michael J. Tierney. 2020. *Connective financing: Chinese infrastructure projects and the diffusion of economic activity in developing countries*. CESifo Working Paper 8344. Munich: Center for Economic Studies.

Bräutigam, Deborah. 2009. *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Bräutigam, Deborah. 2019. 'Misdiagnosing the Chinese Infrastructure Push.' *The American Interest*, 4 April. www.the-american-interest.com/2019/04/04/misdiagnosing-the-chinese-infrastructure-push.

Bräutigam, Deborah. 2020. 'A Critical Look at Chinese "Debt-Trap Diplomacy": The Rise of a Meme.' *Area Development and Policy* 5(1): 1–14.

Bräutigam, Deborah, Vijay Bhalaki, Laure Deron, and Yinxuan Wang. 2022. *How Africa Borrows from China: And Why Mombasa Port Is Not Collateral for Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway*. China–Africa Research Initiative Working Paper No. 52. Washington, DC: Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

Burgos, Sigfrido and Sophal Ear. 2010. 'China's Strategic Interests in Cambodia: Influence and Resources.' *Asian Survey* 50(3): 615–39.

Caixin. 2015. '习近平讲述"中国故事" 诠释官方外交语言新"温度" [Xi Jinping Tells "China Stories", Illustrating New "Warmth" in Official Diplomatic Discourse].' 财新 [*Caixin*], 23 April. www.caixin.com/2015-04-23/100802893.html.

Camba, Alvin. 2020. *Derailing Development: China's Railway Projects and Financing Coalitions in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines*. GCI Working Paper 008. Boston, MA: Global Development Policy Center, Boston University. www.bu.edu/gdp/files/2020/02/WP8-Camba-Derailing-Development.pdf.

Cruz, Cesi and Christina J. Schneider. 2017. 'Foreign Aid and Undeserved Credit Claiming.' *American Journal of Political Science* 61(2): 396–408.

Custer, Samantha, Axel Dreher, Thai-Binh Elston, Andreas Fuchs, Siddharta Ghose, Joyce Jiahui Lin, Ammar A. Malik, Bradley C. Parks, Brooke Russell, Kyra Solomon, Austin Strange, Michael J. Tierney, Katherine Walsh, Lincoln Zaleski, and Sheng Zhang. 2021. *Tracking Chinese Development Finance: An Application of AidData's TUFF 2.0 Methodology*. Williamsburg, VA: AidData at William & Mary.

Dahl, Robert. 1984. *Modern Political Analysis*. 4th edn. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Dietrich, Simone, Minhaj Mahmud, and Matthew S. Winters. 2018. 'Foreign Aid, Foreign Policy, and Domestic Government Legitimacy: Experimental Evidence from Bangladesh.' *The Journal of Politics* 80(1): 133–48.

Dollar, David. 2008. 'Supply Meets Demand: Chinese Infrastructure Financing in Africa.' *World Bank Blog*, 10 July. Washington, DC: The World Bank. blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/supply-meets-demand-chinese-infrastructure-financing-in-africa.

Dreher, Axel, Andreas Fuchs, Brad Parks, Austin M. Strange, and Michael J. Tierney. 2018. 'Apples and Dragon Fruits: The Determinants of Aid and Other Forms of State Financing from China to Africa.' *International Studies Quarterly* 62(1): 182–94.

Dreher, Axel, Andreas Fuchs, Bradley Parks, Austin Strange, and Michael Tierney. 2022. *Banking on Beijing: The Aims and Impacts of China's Overseas Development Program*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Editorial Board. 2008. 方毅传 [*Biography of Fang Yi*]. Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe.

Flyvbjerg, Bent, Nils Bruzelius, and Werner Rothengatter. 2003. *Megaprojects and Risk: An Anatomy of Ambition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Fung, Courtney, Enze Han, Kai Quek, and Austin Strange. Forthcoming. 'Conditioning China's Influence: Intentionality, Intermediaries, and Institutions.' *Journal of Contemporary China*.

Ginting, Pius and Ellen Moore. 2021. 'Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park (IMIP).' *The People's Map of Global China*, 24 November. thepeoplesmap.net/project/indonesia-morowali-industrial-park-imip.

Goh, Evelyn (ed.). 2016. *Rising China's Influence in Developing Asia*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Herbst, Jeffrey. 2000. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ho, Selina. 2020. 'Infrastructure and Chinese Power.' *International Affairs* 96(6): 1461–85.

Kastner, Scott L. and Margaret M. Pearson. 2021. 'Exploring the Parameters of China's Economic Influence.' *Studies in Comparative International Development* 56(1): 18–44.

Krebs, Ronald R. 2015. *Narrative and the Making of US National Security*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Lee, Ching Kwan. 2017. *The Specter of Global China*: *Politics, Labor, and Foreign Investment in Africa*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Leslie, Agnes Ngoma. 2016. 'Zambia and China: Workers' Protest, Civil Society and the Role of Opposition Politics in Elevating State Engagement.' *African Studies Quarterly* 16(3): 89–106.

Liu, Hong and Guanie Lim. 2019. 'The Political Economy of a Rising China in Southeast Asia: Malaysia's Response to the Belt and Road Initiative.' *Journal of Contemporary China* 28(116): 216–31.

Lu, Juliet and Erik Myxter-lino. 2021. *Beyond Competition: Why the BRI and the B3W Can't and Shouldn't Be Considered Rivals*. New York, NY: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung. rosalux.nyc/belt-and-road-initiative-build-back-better-world.

Lukes, Steven. 2005. *Power: A Radical View*. 2nd edn. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Malik, Ammar A., Bradley Parks, Brooke Russell, Joyce Jiahui Lin, Katherine Walsh, Kyra Solomon, Sheng Zhang, Thai-Binh Elston, and Seth Goodman. 2021. *Banking on the Belt and Road: Insights from a New Global Dataset of 13,427 Chinese Development Projects*. Williamsburg, VA: AidData at William & Mary.

Monson, Jamie. 2009. *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Monson, Jamie. 2021. 'Learning by Heart: Training for Self-Reliance on the TAZARA Railway, 1968–1976.' *Made in China Journal* 6(2): 95–103.

Norris, William J. 2016. *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Office of the Secretary of State. 2020. *The Elements of the China Challenge*. Washington, DC: The Policy Planning Staff, Office of the Secretary of State.

Pence, Mike. 2018. 'Remarks by Vice President Pence on the Administration's Policy Toward China.' The Hudson Institute, Washington, DC, 4 October.

Ratigan, Kerry. 2021. 'Are Peruvians Enticed by the "China Model"? Chinese Investment and Public Opinion in Peru.' *Studies in Comparative International Development* 56(1): 87–111.

Reuters Staff. 2018. 'China's Xi Says Funds for Africa Not for "Vanity Projects".' *Reuters*, 3 September. www.reuters.com/article/china-africa-idUSL3N1VO018.

Smith, Alastair. 2008. 'The Perils of Unearned Income.' *The Journal of Politics* 70(3): 780–93.

Strange, Austin. 2022. *Who Pursues Prestige Projects, and Why? Evidence from Chinese Development Finance*. Working Paper.

Strange, Austin. Forthcoming. *China's Global Development Projects*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press (Elements in Global China).

Tritto, Angela. 2020. 'Contentious Embeddedness: Chinese State Capital and the Belt and Road Initiative in Indonesia.' *Made in China Journal* 5(1): 182–87.

van der Westhuizen, Janis. 2007. 'Glitz, Glamour and the Gautrain: Mega-Projects as Political Symbols.' *Politikon* 34(3): 333–51.

Wang, Yuan. 2022. 'Executive Agency and State Capacity in Development: Comparing Sino-African Railways in Kenya and Ethiopia.' *Comparative Politics* 54(2): 349–77.

Wellner, Lukas, Axel Dreher, Andreas Fuchs, Brad Parks, and Austin Strange. 2022. *Can Aid Buy Foreign Public Support? Evidence from Chinese Development Finance*. CESifo Working Paper 9646. Munich: Center for Economic Studies.

Wijaya, Trissia. 2021. 'Jakarta–Bandung High-Speed Railway.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 4 August. thepeoplesmap.net/project/jakarta-bandung-high-speed-railway.

Wong, Audrye. 2021. 'How Not to Win Allies and Influence Geopolitics: China's Self-Defeating Economic Statecraft.' *Foreign Affairs* 100: 44–53.

Xinhua. 2021. '坚定不移推动共建"一带一路"高质量发展—习近平总书记在第三次"一带一路"建设座谈会上的重要讲话引发与会人员热烈反响 [Resolutely Promoting the Co-Construction of "Belt and Road" High-Quality Development—Important Speech by General Secretary Xi Jinping in the Third "Belt and Road" Conference Stimulates Enthusiastic Responses].' Chinese Government website, 20 November. www.gov.cn/xinwen/2021-11/20/content_5652108.htm.

Ye, Min. 2020. *The Belt Road and Beyond: State-Mobilized Globalization in China: 1998–2018*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Zhang, Hong. 2020. 'The Aid–Contracting Nexus: The Role of the International Contracting Industry in China's Overseas Development Engagements.' *China Perspectives* 4(2020): 17–27.

Pragmatic Living in Motion: Two Chinese 'Migrants' and their Meanderings in the 'City of Gold' (ROMAIN DITTGEN)

Accone, Darryl. 2004. *All Under Heaven: The Story of a Chinese Family in South Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers.

Allen, John. 2003. *Lost Geographies of Power*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.

Allen, John. 2008. 'Pragmatism and Power, or the Power to Make a Difference in a Radically Contingent World.' *Geoforum* 39: 1613–24.

Barnett, Clive. 2020. 'Who's Afraid of Pragmatism?' In *The Power of Pragmatism: Knowledge Production and Social Inquiry*, edited by Jane Wills and Robert W. Lake, 275–82. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Berlant, Lauren. 2011. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Çağlar, Ayşe and Nina Glick Schiller. 2018. *Migrants and City-Making: Dispossession, Displacement and Urban Regeneration*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Dittgen, Romain. 2017. 'Features of Modernity, Development and "Orientalism": Reading Johannesburg through its "Chinese" Urban Spaces.' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 43(5): 979–96.

Dittgen, Romain, Lewis Mark, and Gerald Chungu. 2019. 'Of Spatial and Temporal Entanglements: Narrating a (Chinese) Street in Suburban Johannesburg.' *China Perspectives* 4(2019): 37–43.

Driessen, Miriam. 2020. 'Africa Drifters.' *Made in China Journal*, 5(3): 48–51.

Giese, Karsten and Alena Thiel. 2014. 'The Vulnerable Other: Distorted Equity in Chinese–Ghanaian Employment Relations.' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37(6): 1101–20.

Goodman, David, S.G. 2014. *Class in Contemporary China*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Harrison, Philip, Moyo Khangelani, and Yan Yang. 2012. 'Strategy and Tactics: Chinese Immigrants and Diasporic Spaces in Johannesburg, South Africa.' *Journal of Southern African Studies* 38(4): 899–925.

Hart, Gillian. 2002. *Disabling Globalization: Places of Power in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Huang, Mingwei. 2021. 'The Chinese Century and the City of Gold: Rethinking Race and Capitalism.' *Public Culture* 33(2): 193–217.

Huynh, Tu T., Yoon J. Park, and Anna Y. Chen. 2010. 'Faces of China: New Chinese Migrants in South Africa, 1980s to Present.' *Journal of African and Asian Studies* 9(3): 286–306.

Legg, Catherine and Christopher Hookway. 2021. 'Pragmatism.' In *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/pragmatism.

Lin, Edwin. 2014. '"Big Fish in a Small Pond": Chinese Migrant Shopkeepers in South Africa.' *International Migration Review* 48(1): 181–215.

Massey, Doreen. 2005. *For Space*. London: Sage Publications.

Murray, Martin J. 2011. *City of Extremes: The Spatial Politics of Johannesburg*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Nyíri, Pál. 2020. 'Migration and the Globalisation of Chinese Capital.' *Made in China Journal* 5(3): 42–47.

Park, Yoon Jung. 2008. *A Matter of Honour: Being Chinese in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.

Park, Yoon Jung. 2010. 'Boundaries, Borders and Borderland Constructions: Chinese in Contemporary South Africa and the Region.' *African Studies* 69(3): 457–79.

Park, Yoon Jung. 2012. 'Living in Between: The Chinese in South Africa.' *Migration Information Source*, 4 January. www.migrationpolicy.org/article/living-between-chinese-south-africa.

Park, Yoon Jung. 2022. 'Forever Foreign? Is There a Future for Chinese People in Africa?' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 48(4): 894–912.

Southall, Roger. 2016. *The New Black Middle Class in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.

Wang, Jinpu and Ning Zhan. 2019. 'Nationalism, Overseas Chinese State and the Construction of "Chineseness" among Chinese Migrant Entrepreneurs in Ghana.' *Asian Ethnicity* 20(1): 8–29.

Wills, Jane and Robert W. Lake. 2020. 'Introduction: The Power of Pragmatism.' In *The Power of Pragmatism: Knowledge Production and Social Inquiry*, edited by Jane Wills and Robert W. Lake, 3–52. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Wingens, Matthias, Michael Windzio, Helga de Valk, and Can Aybek (eds). 2011. *A Life-Course Perspective on Migration and Integration*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Yap, Melanie and Dianne Man. 1996. *Colour, Confusion and Concessions: The History of the Chinese in South Africa*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Zack, Tanya and Thireshen Govender. 2019. 'Architectures of Visibility and Invisibility: A Reflection on the Secret Affinities of Johannesburg's Cross-Border Shopping Hub.' *Anthropology Southern Africa* 42(1): 29–45.

Zeiderman, Austin, Sobia A. Kaker, Jonathan Silver, and Astrid Wood. 2015. 'Uncertainty and Urban Life.' *Public Culture* 27(2): 281–304.

Eventuality and Rhythms of Life in a City Yet-to-Come (JESSICA DICARLO)

DiCarlo, Jessica. 2020. 'Development as Palimpsest: Infrastructures Revived in Boten's Architecture.' *Roadsides* (004). doi.org/10.26034/roadsides-202000403.

DiCarlo, Jessica. 2022. 'Boten Special Economic Zone/Boten Beautiful Land.' *The People's Map of Global China*, 1 April. thepeoplesmap.net/project/boten-special-economic-zone-boten-beautiful-land.

Ellis, Isaiah. 2021. 'Infrastructure between Anthropology, Geography, and Religious Studies.' In *The Routledge Handbook of Religion and Cities*, edited by Katie Day and Elise M. Edwards, 94–104. London: Routledge.

Rippa, Alessandro. 2021. 'From Boom to Bust–to Boom Again? Infrastructural Suspension and the Making of a Development Zone at the China-Laos Borderlands.' In *Development Zones in Asian Borderlands*, edited by Mona Chettri and Michael Eilenberg, 231–52. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2005. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Engaging with China in Latin America: A Conversation with Paulina Garzón (MARK BO)

Colectivo sobre Financiamiento e Inversiones Chinas, Derechos Humanos y Ambiente [Collective on Chinese Financing and Investments, Human Rights and Environment] (CICDHA). 2019. *Third Cycle of the Universal Periodic Revision of the People's Republic of China Contributions of the Civil Society: Case Studies from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru*. Coalition for Human Rights in Development website. rightsindevelopment.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Informe-China_ENG.pdf.

Latinoamérica Sustentable (LAS). 2021. *Understanding the China Development Bank: Financing, Governance and Socio-Environmental Challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean*. Latinoamérica Sustentable website. latsustentable.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/LAS-BDC-Report-English.pdf.

Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Ecology and Environment. 2021. 'Notice of the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Ecology and Environment on Issuing the *Working Guidelines for Green Development in Overseas Investment and Cooperation*.' Unofficial translation available on the *Following the Money to Justice* website. www.followingthemoney.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021_MOFCOMMEE_Green-Development-Guidelines-for-Overseas-Investment-and-Cooperation_E.pdf.

The Dialogue. n.d. 'China–Latin America Finance Database.' *The Dialogue* website. www.thedialogue.org/map_list.

Chinese Soft Power: A Conversation with Maria Repnikova (NICHOLAS LOUBERE)

Hubbert, Jennifer. 2019. *China in the World: An Anthropology of Confucius Institutes, Soft Power, and Globalization*. Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press.

Clash of Empires: A Conversation with Ho-fung Hung (HONG ZHANG)

Crammond, Edgar. 1914. 'The Economic Relations of the British and German Empires.' *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 77(8): 777–824.

Doshi, Rush. 2021. *The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Skocpol, Theda. 1985. 'Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research.' In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, 3–38. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Global China pulse