

LUISS 

Degree Program in

Course of International Relations

How Does Chinese Development Cooperation With Africa Prompt A Re-evaluation Of the EU Development Policies Towards The Continent?

Prof. Raffaele Marchetti

SUPERVISOR

101332 Emma Recoules

CANDIDATE

Academic Year 2023/2024

Index

List of Abbreviations	3
List of the Figures	4
Introduction to the race for the best development model	5
I. Literature Review and Problem Identification	8
1. Presentation and critical evaluation of the existing literature on the topic	8
2. Historical Contextualisation: The EU, China, Africa, and Development Policies	11
2.1. European consensus in Africa and its issues	12
2.1.1. From Rome to Maastricht: The EU development aid to Africa	12
2.1.2. The Cotonou Agreement and the European Consensus	15
2.1.3. The tensions around the JAES until the Samoa Negotiations	18
2.2. China and Africa: an old friendship from 1950s until Beijing consensus	21
Foreign aid for China	21
2.2.1. 1950-1990: Political and Economic ties with the new independent states	22
2.2.2. The regional cooperation: FOCAC	24
2.2.3. Towards a south south cooperation: the Chinese vision	25
3. Challenging Beijing and European Consensus: if Africa had to choose?	27
3.1. Challenging Beijing: The Critique from the EU	27
3.2. Challenging Brussels: If Africa had to choose one consensus?	30
3.3. Rationale and modeling hypothesis	32
II. Theories and methodology	34
1. Theoretical framework	34
1.1. Post-colonial and decolonial approach	34
1.1.1. The debate.	35
1.1. 2. Orientalism, Eurocentrism, Decolonization of the mind and Neo Colonialism	37
1.2. The Relational Theory	40
1.2.1. The Chinese inputs in the field International Relations	40
1.2.2. Qin's Assumptions and Implications	42
1.3. Defining the hypotheses	46
2. Methodology	48
3. Description of the data used in the analysis and choice of the data	50
3.1. Description of the empirics	50
3.2. The choice of the data	53
3.3. The subtopics	54

III. Analysis and Implications	56
I Two development models based on different narratives, tools and hierarchies	56
H1: History and narratives, how are they used? The relationship it shapes	56
H2: Defining the priorities on the agenda and the shared interests	60
H3: Bilateralism vs multilateralism	64
II. Normative diplomacy: Defining, promoting and justifying norms	66
H4.A. Democracy	67
H4.B. Human Rights	70
III. Chinese Development model vs. European development policies in a changing world landscape	75
H5. The risk of binding to too many conditions and too much	75
H6. The south-south cooperation goes towards the painting of new world order, shaping new identities	81
H7. Eurocentrism vs. Sino-centrism: harmonization and socialization	85
IV. Conclusion	88
Sources and bibliography	96
	96

List of Abbreviations

- ACP: Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (states)
- Art.: Article
- AU: African Union
- BRI: Belt and Road initiatives
- CACV35: China-Africa Cooperation Vision for 2035
- EEAS: European External Action Services
- EEC: European Economic Community
- EU-AU30: Joint Africa European Vision for 2030
- EU: European Union
- FOCAC: Forum on the Cooperation of Africa and China
- GCI: Global Citizens Initiative
- GDI: Global Development Initiative
- GSI: Global Security Initiatives
- H1 (2;3;...;7): Hypothesis 1 (2; 3; ...; 7)
- IMF: International Monetary Fund
- JAES: Joint Africa-Eu Strategic Partnership
- NDICI:Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
- NEPAD: New Partnership For Africa's Development
- OACPS: Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
- OAU: Organisation of African Unity
- WTO: World Trade Organisation

List of the Figures

- **Figure 1:** The perceptions of China's development model in Africa in 2014//2015 (Afrobarometer, 2016)
- **Figure 2:** Year of diplomatic recognition and first foreign aid project led by China, from (Rudyak (2022).
- **Figure 3:** The signatories states of the Samoa Agreement in May 2024. (EU, 2024)
- **Figure 4:** Support for Democratic norms and institutions by preference for China or US model (34 countries) (Afrobarometer, 2021)
- **Figure 5:** Support for democratic norms and institutions, by perceptions of China's influence (34 countries) (Afrobarometer, 202)

Introduction to the race for the best development model

In recent years, the global landscape has been marked by a race to offer the best development mode (Ashton, 2024). Different ideal types of development are defended and confronted by new and traditional donors in a rising number of visions for a shared future. The Washington, the European or the Beijing Consensus on development were dreamt in the hope of expanding their influence by attracting the emerging powers and finding support by developing countries (Economy, 2024). However, in recent times, the global market for development models has been entering an unprecedented competition met by a saturated offer and a lower demand. The bargaining power shifted from the “donors”, previously setting the standards and conditions for development aid, to “recipients”, now expressing their individual agency, wishes and aspirations for their own ideal type of development. Developing countries are increasingly becoming the architects of their development paths; and the judges of the consensus on aid, by having the new power to choose among the increasing number of Visions and Agendas drawn to construct their most desired future.

Since the early 2000s, the African continent has emerged as a crucial arena between European traditional donors and emerging powers such as China (Men & Barton, 2011). Clashing approaches to development are met with a rising rivalry for influence. Two deeply different visions of the world are constructed through the Beijing Consensus and the European Consensus, seeking the support of the only judge: Africa.

Even though the European Union is known for being the biggest donor in Africa, it is met by rising criticism from African leaders: “As a western, you need to change your approach, your attitude (...) leave arrogance, we (Africa) don't need paternalism anymore” expresses his excellence Professor Robert Dussey, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Togolese Republic (Global Security Forum, 2024). In this context, the traditional donor has to rethink its foreign policy approach to safeguards its relationship with the African continent, Robert Dussey underlines the need to “change the attitude” (Global Security Forum, 2024).

Meanwhile, development policies developed by Beijing are drastically different in both their narratives and framework, voluntarily breaking with the traditional aid models. Entering a “New-Era” in 2021, the Forum On Chinese and Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit in Beijing

led to the first mid-to-long-term vision shared by the two friends and the Dakar Action Plan for the years 2022-2024.

Regarding this, the Europeans played their card in Africa following the EU-AU summit of 2022 by drawing the Joint Africa-European Strategic vision for 2030. However, the EU proposal for long term development cooperation with Africa, the Samoa Agreement, has still not been signed by all African states after years of negotiations. Entering in effect in January 2024, the partnership agreement should lay down the framework for EU development policies with the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), but is met by various criticisms.

In this context, the African receptiveness to China's model remains a clear judge of the Beijing model's effectiveness. The rise of Chinese development cooperation with Africa, compared to the criticism attached to the EU development policies over the continent should therefore be analyzed. This paper questions: How does the Chinese development cooperation in Africa prompt a reevaluation of the EU development policies?

To better grasp the differences between the Beijing and the European Consensus, the historical context shall be firstly looked into, after a brief literature review on the topic . The first chapter critically reconstructs from the cooperation for development between the EEC and Africa in the 1950s to the EU with the AU and the OACPS in recent times. From the Friends to Partners, from Mao to Xi and Bandung to Dakar, the development of the Sino-African relationship is then introduced to mirror the EU traditional cooperation with Africa. The Chinese model is then challenged by the European fear of the Chinese model consequences in Africa, and is met with the current African level of satisfaction and criticism regarding the two superpowers' approaches. The historical context ends with the definition of differences between the two approaches, setting the limits of the scope for the EU development policies critical re-evaluation over the African continent. The history, the choice of the sectors, the different norms and values supported, and the construction of two different world visions are notably drawn.

The second chapter introduces the theoretical framework which offers the lens through which the analysis will be conducted. For the re-evaluation of the European development policies, the choice of theories is made to understand the former colonies' critical reading of the EU development policies. Taking place in the Fourth debate of International Relations, the critical approach of Post-colonialism is introduced, followed by the definition of Orientalism,

Eurocentrism, Neo-colonialism, and the Fanonian “Decolonization of the mind”. To better compare the two consensus, and take inspiration from the pros of the Beijing model the Chinese point of view should be understood. For the better analysis of the Chinese approach to the world and Africa, the Chinese theory of relationality is presented. Hypotheses are drawn from the methodology defined by the discourse analysis of the legal text drawing the recent cooperation of the parties. Consequently, the Joint Africa-Eu strategic vision for 2030 along with the Samoa agreement, are compared with the China-Africa vision of cooperation for 2035 and the Dakar Action Plan through a content analysis in the third chapter.

The main results come from the role of history and the way it is referred to. Indeed, the Chinese model has a strong emphasis on the narratives, therefore, in rethinking its own approach, the EU could redirect the terms and reference of history it reminds and forgets. The emphasis on Eurocentrism when defining the sectors of cooperation for development is also discussed. Notably through the imposition of the priorities and the hierarchies that result from them. In opposition, China emphasizes mutual interest and seems to carefully co-develop the choice of the sectors with Africa by notably emphasizing the trade side of their partnership for development. China and the EU are understood to differ in their emphasis on multilateralism and bilateralism, the advantages of China’s priority over the latter are addressed.

The discussion touches on the different emphasis of the EU and China on norms and principles such as Human Rights and Democracy, seeking the best adapted promotion defending EU interest and corresponding to Africa.

The findings leading to the conclusion that Chinese interpretation and tools to advertise and justify its view seem to better match with African prior demand.

The rivalry of the two development models are understood as going beyond aid but opposing two world visions. The EU promotion through binding conditions is compared to Chinese “no-strings”, which is found to be aid attached to imperatives of a different nature. While both development models invite Africa in a shared future, the European model is defined as working for the status quo of the so-called liberal world order, while the south-south cooperation promotion offers revisionist approach taking roots from the decolonization. This results in a particular focus on the social and cultural aspect of the cooperation.

In line with the EU, China is perceived as defending its own interests in its cooperation with Africa. The final difference resides in the promise of development through socialized multilateralism, and development of multipolar poles in a harmonized world.

Overall, the Chinese model is found as being highly similar to the EU in that it remains highly Sinocentric. However, it prompts a reevaluation of the EU development policies through the institutional framework, norms and narratives used to defend its development model and construct a shared future with Africa, which are found as being much more effective and adapted to African wishes of development.

I. Literature Review and Problem Identification

1. Presentation and critical evaluation of the existing literature on the topic

In the changing world order, the EU and China relations have been confronted to change. The European multifaceted relationship with China has been identified as getting increasingly closer to the vision of China as a “competitor” and a “systemic rival” than a “partner for cooperation” (Liu, 2011; EEAS, 2024; Zhou, 2024). In facing the Chinese “New Era”, the competition takes a new shape: beyond the traditional trading and security interests, development aid stands as a new arena for the two powers to confront themselves (Zhou, 2024).

In this regard, the rise of China has been searched notably through its promotion of South-South cooperation (Mawsdley, 2019), some have attempted to focus on the role of Xi Jinping (Sobolik, 2024), but it has been, and remains, a saturated area of research comparing China in its rivalry with the US (Economy, 2024) which deeply lacks of an the understanding from the Chinese perspective. Still, “Getting China right has never been more important than today”, Von der Leyen states in her speech for the EU China Conference in November 2023.

On the same token, the criticism of Chinese foreign policies often miss an understanding of China by using the European perspective of China, instead of using the Chinese perception of China (Qin, 2009; 2016; 2018). The neglect of Chinese point of view prevents previous studies from deeply comprehending China's vision of World Politics (Jiang, 2018; Rudyak, 2022). Instead, they contribute to a Eurocentrist vision, by attributing western characteristics to the Chinese state's behavior (Jiang, 2018).

When considering the Chinese engagement in Africa, the risks for both EU -through strategic interest (Tull, 2008), and for Africa - through the famous Chinese debt trap suspected as a result of rising investment flows (Esposito & Tse; 2015), have been deeply looked into and answered (Men & Barton, 2011; Liu, 2011; Qin, 2018; IMF, 2024). A further emphasis on Beijing breaking with the traditional model of development aid has been also raised up (Cooper Ramo, 2004; Manning 2006; Tan-Mullins et al, 2010 in Grimm & Hackenesch 2017), notably on its role in maintaining security in Africa (Walsh, 2019) and in supporting different norms and values (Liu, 2011; Garlick & Cho, 2018; Garlick & Qin, 2023). Still, few studies apply it to the rivalry of development models, or look at the recent African point of view regarding these

differences (Hanush, 2012). The reasons for the positive receptiveness with which Chinese efforts have been welcomed in Africa remains also under-covered (Afrobarometer, 2016).

When it comes to Africa's problems, most of the studies focus on the Western perspective, forgetting about African knowledge production (Marchetti, 2020). Moreover, even though the number of studies on the African continent rose in the last decades, the research tends to stay on a specific country through study cases but rarely take the continent as a unity (Mayaki, 2019; Marchetti 2020).

As regards Africa and the EU, content analysis of the EU and Africa aid relationship has been made (Gruhn, 1976). However, it remains on former agreements such as the Lomé or the Cotonou (Arts & Byron, 1982; Migani, 2020). Further research appears necessary for the recent Samoa Agreement having effect from January 2024.

The need for change from the EU approaches have been highlighted (Ashton, 2024). With the negotiation of the Post-cotonou Agreement touching to its end, the EU and Africa cooperation for development are changing the legal framework. It therefore seems necessary to look into the most recent agreements. Scholars such as Grimm and Hackenesh (2017) call for the study of different effects coming from the various donor's engagement in Africa, expressing an saturation of the treatment of the Chinese engagement and asking for further critical reading of the EU foreign aid. Therefore, instead of a critical reading of the Sino-African "Friendship" already documented (Epstein & McDermott, 2022; Zhou ,2024), this study will try to identify the processes that led to the development of strong ties between the continent and the state, and to learn from the pros of the Chinese approach how Beijing developed its ties on common development with Africa.

Besides acknowledging the similarities and differences between the "Beijing Consensus" (Cooper Ramo, 2004) and European Consensus, the paper tries to define the strengths of the Chinese engagement. In other words, it re-evaluates the recent development policies in the hope of improving the EU capacity to best correspond to the African wishes and interests for development. In this regard, while the FOCAC summits have been covered (Han, Mawdsley and Liu, 2022), Yun Sun (2021) called for the need to study the official text defining the cooperation with China and Africa. Consequently, the study analysis four documents: the Dakar Plan (2022-2024) and the China-Africa Vision Cooperation for 2035 (CACV35) are compared to the

Samoa Partnership Agreement (2023) and the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Vision for 2030 (EU-AU30).

In the field of International Relations (IR), some have tested the efficiency of western theories to explain the policy making process of the EU Foreign Policy (EUIFP). For example, Bas Hooijmaaijers (2018) uses neoliberalism, the Bureaucratic Politics Model and institutionalism to analyze EU-China-Africa Trilateral initiatives. The interconnections between the triangular relationship of China, Europe and Africa has been researched through the cost and benefits of the EU's and China's presence for Africa (Che and Bodomo, 2023).

Moreover, the increasing visibility on Postcolonial critical approaches (Elam, 2019; Hansen, 2019; Masood Raja, 2019; Meera Sebartam, 2022) have also contributed to the analysis of the EU actions on the international stage by critically addressing the EU Foreign Policy with Africa (Kemedjio & Lynch, 2024). However, where the EU and Africa relationship is often quoted, fewer studies identify the role of China in Africa through a Post-colonial lens.

Finally, the traditional schools of IR are still denounced as struggling in getting rid of the Eurocentric frame and accepting theories from different parts of the non-western world (Jang, 2018; Sebartam, 2022). To face the traditional Western school, an increasing amount of research raises awareness on the need to study the development of a Chinese School of International Relations and to recognize its theories (Wang, 2013; Hwang, 2021; Qin, 2010; 2016; 2020). Kavalski & Cho (2018) warn that neglecting Chinese theories would imply the potential loss of different cultural, political and economic points of view on World Politics, international norms and principles. Therefore, the theoretical framework used for the analysis will develop Qin's Relationality and Post colonial critical approaches of IR.

2. Historical Contextualisation: The EU, China, Africa, and Development Policies

The second point of this chapter firstly draws the historical context in which the European Development Policies towards Africa were developed. It puts an emphasis on the challenges met by the European member states in their relation to Africa. The historical development of the Sino-African relations is then defined for a better comparison. It defines the Chinese development policies in Africa by tracing back its different political and economic initiatives within the continent.

2.1. European consensus in Africa and its issues

2.1.1. From Rome to Maastricht: The EU development aid to Africa

The EEC and the ACP first conventions

The beginning of European development policies towards Africa can be traced back to May 1957, date of the first convention associated with the Rome Treaty. At the time, Development cooperation with African countries was defined in the context of the European Economic Community (EEC), notably through the creation of the European Development Bank. While developing its relations with the newly independent African states, the EEC tried to separate itself from the colonial baggage of its member states. In this regard, Men and Barton (2011) explain that from the Rome Treaty, the EU used its *sui generis* status to act as a separate entity from the previous colonizing member states. However, during the negotiations for the incoming agreement, the Strasbourg Plan of 1952 drafted by European powers led to the failure of this attempt (Gruhn, 1976). Indeed, the French and Belgium requested to manage with a full “exclusivity” the trade relations with Africa for the “benefit of the community”, develop Men and Barton (2011). This special treatment was institutionalized in 1965 in the Yaoundé Convention which entered into force in 1970. With the aim to foster the economic development of the African partners, the convention officially legalized a privileged access to a zone of liberalized trade, the Common Market, for African states (Men & Barton, 2011).

However several challenges were met during the negotiations in the 1970s. The oil crisis having affected the EEC member states, it resulted in a European decreasing interest in the

African case and more financial limits (Arts & Byron, 1997). Moreover, the major part of the African states were newly independent, and reluctant in cooperating with their former colonial powers (Migani, 2020). Through the 1970s, the bargaining powers of the two parties were therefore shifting (Arts & Byron, 1997). In this regard, Men and Berton (2011) underline a change in the European approach in 1975 with the introduction of the Lomé Convention, characterized by new parties and new policies. Indeed, the document was ratified by the EEC member states that were joined in 1973 by the United Kingdom, and the African partners regrouped in an organization: the African Caribbean Pacific group (ACP). Under the request of the British, the Commonwealth states had been invited to join the agreement (Men & Barton, 2011). Moreover, facing an increasing dissatisfaction from the African states (Gruhn, 1976), other adaptations were made. Perceived as too linked to the colonial past, the term “convention” was left. The financial aid was raised by the EEC, and industrial cooperation was introduced (Migani, 2020). Following a 5-years mandate, the agreement was renewed, until the Lomé convention IV in 1990 and the Lomé IV bis in 1995.

The introduction of standards and conditions

During the 1980s a neoliberal wave touched Europe, pushing the Community to rethink its economic relationship with the African Partners countries. A first change was brought with the introduction of conditions that the “recipient” or partner’s countries would have to fulfill to get access to the European funds (Migani, 2020). The beginning of a long “conditional relationship” was starting, with fixed “standards set by the donor” such as the respect of market liberalization, defined access to the African resources, and the fulfilling of good governance and democracy (Men & Barton, 2011). However, this European attempt of building a liberal economic development in Africa had disastrous consequences for the continent. Indeed, the 1980s marked the African continent with increasing indebtedness and several famines. The Bretton Woods Institutions failed in answering the African countries’ needs of the time (Tull, 2008).

The failure of the development policies kept on before the end of the cold war, as Africa was still not the major priority for the European Economic Community. Internal pressure from the economic crisis, and external pressure from new Asian and Latin American members of the ACP were challenging the Union. As a result, Tull (2008) explains that the majority of the development policies remained “weak and inconsistent”. In this context, the Lomé IV of 1989

was signed for a 10-years mandate with a new liberal rigidity in the conditions. It strengthened the emphasis on Human Rights and tied the development policies to the International Monetary Fund which was prioritizing poverty reduction (Migani, 2020). Still, the political and security objectives continued to fail in taking Africa out of its poverty throughout the 1990s (Men & Barton, 2011). In this regard, two factors played a strong role.

The legacy of the cold war and the European issue of coordination

First of all, the legacy of the cold war took away again the European interest out of Africa (Arts & Byron, 1997). During the 1990s, a growing attention for Asia and Eastern Europe reinforced European negligence for the African continent. In comparison to Africa, Asia appeared as a new economic opportunity and the new-born states from the former USSR represented a highly strategic priority for European countries (Liu, 2011). Besides shifting away the European focus from Africa, the Eastern new neighbors also increased the number of countries willing to receive the European development aids, resulting in the relative decreasing the distribution to African recipients countries (Men & Barton, 2011).

Secondly, the lack of coordination from the Union came from the absence of a strong legal framework. The failure of the development policies came from the fact that the Community as a whole lacked effective management of the development policies towards Africa. The absence of the EU Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP), resulted in the absence of a common African Policy. Moreover, the member states were lacking a defined African policy also independently from the EEC. The UK and France were following an increasing disengagement, and the Germans had their attention particularly focused on Eastern Europe (Tull, 2008). The noticeable disinterest from the European member states was further increased in light of no concrete visible result from the initiatives (Magini, 2020). To illustrate, the French devaluation of the hitherto french-backed Franc CFA in 1994 was interpreted as a “rupture from colonial power”, explains Tull (2008). When the African Franc saw its monetary value cut in half it indeed resulted in devastating economic consequences for more than a dozen of the French former colonies (Noble, 1973).

The European Union and the last Lomé

In 1992, the Maastricht Treaty developed a legal basis for the development policies, and defined development aid as part of the shared competencies (Men & Barton, 2011). Therefore, from Maastricht, member states were able to send funds to Africa both independently and through the Union. The set priorities remained “Poverty reduction, economic and social development or enhanced African integration into the global economy”, highlight Men and Barton (2011). However, liberal principles further became an essential conditional element to aid. Their non-respect resulted in the potential cut of the European aid (Magini, 2020). In this regard, in 1993 the commission drafted a proposal for the next negotiations with the ACP countries with the aim to keep for prior aim: “alleviating poverty” (Arts & Byron, 1997). Still, it further increased the conditionality by adding potential sanctions for “recipient” countries on the same standards of good governance, democracy, and respect of the rule of law (Men & Barton, 2011).

Consequently, when the Lomé IV had to be renewed, further challenges started to be raised, explain Men and Barton (2011). First, the European Union was starting the negotiation for the 12 new members from Eastern Europe. During the same period, to answer their new interest and request, the Union started the Barcelona Process (1995) institutionalizing its relationship with North African states (among others). Finally, the preferential agencement set with African countries was not respecting the WTO principles. Therefore, when the final Lomé Convention IV bis (2000) had to be updated, in a busy agenda for the EU.

The beginning of the century

In this context, up to the beginning of the 2000, the promotion of democracy and human rights appears to be the main effective policies concerning Africa, explains Tull (2008) Officially introduced from the 1970s, the trade relations faced rising issues resulting in the weakness of socio-economic development of the African continent (Tull, 2008). Men and Barton (2011) further highlight the constant asymmetry characterizing the development of EU policies during the XX century. They notably refer to the Common Agricultural Policy which was fully defined by the EU. As a result of the deterioration of the EU-African relations, an acceleration in the process of African receptiveness to other global powers was noticed. Among others, China slowly started to dethrone the EU from its traditional “leadership role” in Africa (Men & Barton, 2011).

2.1.2. The Cotonou Agreement and the European Consensus

The three pillars of the Cotonou agreement

The turning point of the EU relationship with Africa started at the beginning of the century. The negotiations to renew the Lomé IV agreement led to the signing of the Cotonou Agreement in 2000. It institutionalized the cooperation framework of the EU and the ACP countries for the next 20 years (European Parliament, 2023). The development policies were based on three pillars: economic and trade cooperation, development cooperation, and political dimension (European Council, 2024). The economic and trading aspects have notably resulted in the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). The pillar on development cooperation remained mainly driven by the Neighborhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI). Finally, the political dimension englobes notably the discussions on migrations, settled in article 13 of the Cotonou agreement. During these 20 years, an increasing need for change can be identified. Various criticisms were raised, coming from both within and outside the EU.

Economic and Trade: the EPAs

First of all, the economic and trading aspects brought by the Cotonou agreement were adapted to answer WTO's restriction on unilateral trade preferences (European Parliament, 2023). The agreement mainly redefined the unilateral preferences towards the ACP. From the non-reciprocal preference offered by the Lomé convention, the EU changed its agreement for a bilateral reciprocity. Under the regional Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), a duty free access to the EU was therefore introduced in exchange for a duty free access for the EU exports towards the ACP countries Market in 2002 (Liu, 2011).

Already in 2008, Tull was skeptical regarding the replacement of preferential trade deals with the ACP states; he feared “devastating consequences on African economies”. Indeed, a “considerable resistance from some African governments, local civil society representatives and trade unions” delayed the negotiation process (Men & Barton, 2011; EU Parliament, 2023). The reticence to sign was illustrated by the postponing of the signature of the EPAs. In the 2000s, instead of following the regional focus newly brought with the Cotonou agreement, various African states refused to sign during the 2007 EU-AU summit. Instead of entering in force in 2008, the EPAs were met by strong negotiations. Until 2010, willing countries signed unilaterally

“interim agreements”, but these would exclude the access to African state Market (EU Parliament, 2023). In recent times, EPAs have been signed by some countries such as Côte D’Ivoire, Ghana, Cameroon and Kenya. Overall, around half of the ACP countries are implementing the EPAs (EU Commission, 2024). However, two regions of Africa, West and East, have still to finalize their agreement.

Development

In 2017 (June 1st), the European Union adopted a new European consensus on development, shaping the vision for its development policies. In the context of the UN agenda for 2030, the reduction and potential eradication of poverty was still standing as the main goal (EU Commission, 2024). The objectives underlined by the EU Commission (2024) with this new development model was primarily to do “smarter and more targeted investments”. In this regard, the European External Action Services (EEAS) were defined to foster “development assistance, foreign, security and trade policies”.

In recent times, the European Union remains Africa’s biggest donor in terms of development aid. The Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI -Global Europe), established by the Regulation 2021/947, entered into force in June 2021 with an effect starting in January 2021 (“Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe [NDICI – Global Europe]” 2021).

However, the multiannual programmes for 2021-2027 deriving from the European Neighborhood policy still offer few joint strategies. A lack of bilateral strategic interest towards the African states is underlined by Grimm and Hackenesh (2017) in their evaluation of EU Development policies. Indeed, the NDICI covers bilaterally two African states from the “Southern Neighborhood ”: Algeria and Egypt. Even if the African continent is further covered through its “Regional South” programme, it only comprises three other African countries, namely, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia (“Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe [NDICI – Global Europe]” 2021). The development policies towards the continent are therefore unequally brought from one region to another, which hindered the EU role as a development actor in Africa (Grimm & Hackenesh, 2017).

In the 2010s, the EU was perceived as switching from a diplomacy of *aid through trade* to a *diplomacy of climate* (Wang, 2011). Indeed, the tensions around the EPAs followed by the

introduction of the UN Agenda for 2030 and its Sustainable development goals. The priorities of the programmes for development were increasingly drawn to support eco-development. For instance, the multiannual programme with Algeria and Egypt, have for primarily objective the “green and sustainable development” in the former (Programme Indicatif Multi-Annuel Union Européenne – Algérie, 2021), and the energy transition and climate actions in the latter (Multi-Annual Indicative Programme European Union – Egypt, 2021).

Politics

The third pillar of the Cotonou agreement drove the political cooperation between the ACP states and the EU. A novelty it brought was the new reference to “good governance” as a fundamental element. Even though motivated by “ethics, ideas and principles”, aid remained influenced by political and strategic interests (Liu, 2011). Liu (2011) further argues that foreign aid started to become a strong tool to chase loyalty and support from African countries.

Indeed, during the cold war development aid was negotiated, until a point when the strategic interest dropped during the 1990s. When new powers emerged in Africa in the 2000s, the EU development policies were characterized by a new special attention for Africa (Tull, 2008; Liu, 2011). In this regard, the Cotonou agreement is depicted as a “20 years socialization for African, Caribbean and Pacific States” translated in the so-called “Positive conditionality” attached to the partnership. Following Liu’s reading of the third pillar, this latter is understood as having a strong importance since it is perceived as a tool used to support liberal norms and values in exchange of financial aid.

2.1.3. The tensions around the JAES until the Samoa Negotiations

The warning of the Commission until the JAES

The second framework of cooperation for the EU-Africa relations was institutionalized through the first EU-AU summit in 2000. In the late 1995s, the EU attempt to set up the African Strategy was depicted as “abstract and not convincing” by Tull (2008). The scholar explains that no concrete initiative came out until 2005, when the European Commission issued a paper trying to lower the tensions with Africa. Indeed, the Cotonou agreement and then the first Joint Africa EU

Strategic vision were negotiated in a context of increasing tensions from the African continent, and rising interest from the EU, therefore trying to change its approach from the European Development model (Tull, 2008).

The commission was strongly advising a new EU-Africa strategy: “Towards a Euro-African pact to accelerate Africa’s development”. In its communication to the council, the EU Parliament and the EU Social and Economic Committee, the commission acknowledged the need to adapt to the changes in the EU-Africa relationship, notably by referring to the creation of the African Union (AU) and New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). Moreover, in light of the new powers' engagement in Africa, the commission pointed out the need to adapt to African increasing importance on the international stage. Qualifying the EU policies as “too fragmented”, it further asked for a “comprehensive, integrated and long-term framework” (European Commission, 2005).

The main goals were therefore to “move beyond donor-recipient cooperation” and strengthen political ties on the international stage. In his regard, the commission requested to expand areas of cooperation to common global challenges such as climate change and migrations, to support Africa trans-regional and continental response, and work towards a “people-centered” partnership by including African and European citizens (EU Parliament, 2023).

Two years later, the paper led the adoption of the first Joint Africa-EU strategy (JAES) or The Africa-EU strategic partnership at the Lisbon summit in 2007 (Men & Barton, 2011). From then, the JAES has been updated during each EU-AU summit, through “multiannual roadmaps and action plans” (EU Parliament, 2023). At the last EU-AU summit, held in 2022 in Brussels, the Joint Africa-EU Strategic vision for 2030 was signed. Based on six strategic points for the cooperation of the EU and the AU, the vision calls for co-actions in the area of “solidarity, security, peace, sustainable development and shared prosperity” (EU Parliament, 2023).

The first tensions around the JAES

The warnings of the commissions came in a particularly challenging context. Indeed, the JAES faced constant tensions during its negotiations. A first attempt for the EU-African summit failed in 2003. The African states blocked the strategic meeting to counter the European sanctions on Zimbabwe (Tull, 2008). Indeed, tensions came from the EU member states refusal to welcome

president Mugabe (Hooijmaaijers, 2018). Being the biggest donor didn't seem to be enough, the EU commissioner Louis Michel depicted the European response to global player (Brazil, India, and China) engagement in Africa as too "late" (Tull, 2008). Indeed, in 2006 China and Africa held a summit in Beijing, showing the world their strong ties. Seeing it as a game changer, one year later the EU pushed for the European-African Summit in Lisbon. Angela Merkel declared that the EU should have their summit with Africa too and Africa was added to the Agenda at the G8 summit in Germany (Tull, 2008).

The second failure from the European is underlined by Men and Barton (2011) when referring to the unsuccessful attempt to use the EU's *sui generis* position to adopt impartiality. They highlight the constant political and economic advantages for the EU in the relationship with Africa. Besides the fact that the partnership remained conditional, it hardly attempted to tackle the asymmetry favoring the EU in its relationship with Africa. Indeed, the European development policies towards Africa: Eradicating poverty, promoting democracy and Human rights and security, are depicted as contradictory (Tull, 2008) because drawn according to member states' interests. In this regard, Tull refers to the EU's "internal dynamics and international ambitions" (2008) rather than following Africa's demand and particular needs for development. For instance, Tull (2008) points out that from an African perspective, the migrations blocked through EU's border protections, has been far from answering poverty and security issues. Therefore, when the 2007 JAES was drafted and negotiated, the context was already full of early warnings within the EU, in the loss of its leadership role in Africa.

The Post-Cotonou and the internal criticism of the EU development model

In this context of a need for change, during the ECR summit in 2019, Syed Kamall sent a clear message pushing for modernization of the EU approach of 20 years old (Benakis, 2019). The EU-Africa relationship has to be negotiated to stop being "as one of providing development aid and financial support or based on the colonialism of the past", reports Benakis (2019). The Cotonou agreement, supposed to be renewed in 2020, has been instead in the process of being replaced.

The initial negotiations started in 2018, with the aim of concluding the Post-Cotonou agreement by 2021. Like the former agreement, it would keep the three regional foundations (Africa, Carribeans and Pacific) and underlying conditions for the funds such as Human rights

and Democracy (European Parliament, 2023). However, in April 2020, the Organisation of the ACP States (OACPS) was officially created, regrouping the ACP states (EU Parliament, 2023). In regard to negotiation with the EU, it introduced an internal conflict resolution framework as well as an independent financial system to manage funds and development financial aids (EU Parliament, 2023).

The process to reach an agreement was blocked in the council until 2023, to be finally agreed on in Samoa on November 15. The council wanted to “update” and “modernize” the agreement (European Parliament, 2023). The final six key priorities of the new agreement are: “Democracy and human rights, sustainable economic growth and development, climate change, human and social development, peace and security, migration and mobility” (EU Council, 2024).

Still, in recent times, different EU institutions one after the other, referred to the lack of consideration of African interests. Since the warning of 2005 did not lead to reasonable change, in March 2020, the Commission, with the EEAS, issued joint communication for the parliament and the council: “Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa” with the aim of improving and “intensifying cooperation” through five key areas (Eu Commission, 2020). One year later, the European journal published a resolution of 25 March 2021, “the New Eu-Africa strategy” a partnership for sustainable and inclusive development”. Still, the European Commission’s President Ursula Von der Leyen, in her State of the Union Speech in September 2023, highlighted the need to move towards a more “mutually beneficial partnership which focuses on common issues for Europe and Africa”.

In the European parliament, parliamentarians such as Assita Kanko also depict European approach towards the continent as “baby-siting” Africa (DW News 2022). Recalling that like any relationship, Africa and Europe should be based on mutual need. Kanko further questions a partnership of “equals” by stating that European aid “perpetuates African dependency. Pierette Herzberger-Fofana recalled it in 2022, describing Africa-Eu relationship as in need of bringing the “hot topics’ to the table”.

2.2. China and Africa: an old friendship from 1950s until Beijing consensus

Foreign aid for China

The concept of reciprocated aid appeared as early as the time of Republican China, explains Rudyak (2021). In 1919, the first president of the Republic of China and the League of Nations would exchange access to resources for capital and technical expertise in return. Rudyak (2022) highlights that in 1954, Mao Zedong asked for a mutually beneficial deal of resources for agricultural products. However, the US refusal led China to accept the soviet union concessional loans, becoming then the foundation of China's own tool when sending aid to other countries.

Indeed, China's reference to the concept of "Foreign aid" (对外援助) started in 1951 (Rudyak, 2021). In recent times, it remains composed of grants, zero-interest loans and concessions loans under China's Official development assistance (ODA) (China International Development Cooperation Agency, China Ministry of Foreign Affairs & China Ministry of Commerce, 2021). The particularity of Chinese "foreign aid" resides in its inclusion of commercial aid and support, implying that "to recipients, all Chinese flows may appear as 'aid' or simply 'China'" (Rudyak, 2022).

2.2.1. 1950-1990: Political and Economic ties with the new independent states

From political ties to economic cooperation

Although receiving particular western attention since 2005-6 (Hanush 2012; Grimm & Hackenesh, 2017), Chinese relations with African countries started back in the 1950s; Chinese aid towards the continent too (IMF, 2024). Using the rhetoric of the soviets, China began sending aid to developing countries such as North Korea and Vietnam in early 1950s, then expanded its network to new states gaining independence (Rudyak, 2022). Men and Barton (2011) refer to the Bandung Conference 1955 as the first modern diplomatic relations of the two continents. In this regard, China developing relations with Africa is described as an old process, since "china never left" (Brautigam, 2009; Rudyak, 2022). China and Egypt especially early developed increasing ties. In the 1950s, China was still one of the poorest states and most of the African countries were fighting for their independence. Naturally, from 1956, the Sino-African relationship was

built on the two pillars of Africa's fight for decolonization and the shared non-alignment *vis à vis* the capitalists and the socialists (Men & Barton, 2011).

At the end of the 1970s, Men and Barton (2011) point out China's role switching "from Africa's friend to being Africa's Partner". They describe a change from a strong political tie, with relatively weak financial aids sent towards the continent, to a strong economic relationship development, newly feasible in light of the Chinese growing economic capacities of the period. In this regard, between 1970-1975, China undertook its biggest infrastructure project at the time: the Tazara Railway linking Africa South and the Sahara (Che & Bodomomo, 2023).

In 1979, economic cooperation for development was further facilitated. Indeed, China underwent new domestic policies ending its isolation and opening the countries towards the world, which helped the acceleration of its rising economic development (Qin, 2010). As a consequence of its prosperity, China switched from an energy exporter to an energy importer country in the 1990s (Men & Berton, 2011). The "partnership" had then a new perfume: the increasing smell of strategic importance. Both sides had then an important *mutual benefit*, a wealthier China in need of raw material and a resource-rich Africa looking for economic development (Men & Berton, 2011).

Moreover, Rudyak (2022) explains that the West being focused on the end of the Cold War and their new neighbors, China was in the perfect timing to support neglected African needs. Introducing a different model of aid, namely the concessional loans with Chinese companies as the main implementing actors, China was therefore solidare to Africa when the Europeans withdrew.

The Chinese norms and principles

It is essential to highlight that besides the increasingly strategic importance of the economic partnership, Chinese engagement over the period 1970-1990 was still accompanied by deep diplomatic ties. As mentioned, by Men and Berton (2011), the late Chinese premier Zhou Enlai stated eight principles driving Chinese aid distribution and five principles specifically targeting Arab and African countries. Officially promoted in 1963-64, Zhou referred to the "respect for sovereignty and non-interference", and specified that "Experts dispatched by China will have the same standards of living as the experts of the recipient country" (Men & Barton, 2011).

In the same vein, the second Chinese premier to visit Africa, Zhao Ziyang, referred to four other principles. Interestingly, an emphasis was put on “equality and mutual benefits” and “common development” (Xinhua, 2004). Chinese narratives were underlining the absence of hierarchy in its relation with Africa. Besides increasing aid, China developed its trade relations with Africa by offering economic results and shorter construction cycles for quicker returns (Men & Berton, 2011). Indeed, Kuo (2015) highlights the cheap infrastructure programs offered by China, matched again with the African continent in need.

In both its political and economic relation with Africa, China maintained a strong emphasis on mutual benefit and common development. In 1993, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) inspired China in its relation with Africa. Chinese. Han et al., (2022) explains that the idea of doing a similar meeting for China-Africa grew. In 1996, Chinese president Jiang Zemin presented five proposals following “sincerity, friendship, equality, unity and cooperation, common development” in facing the “future regarding Sino-African relations” (Men & Barton, 2011), leading to the opening up of the negotiation for China-African forum in 1997 (Han et al., 2022).

2.2.2. The regional cooperation: FOCAC

The institutionalization of the Chinese and African cooperation

At the beginning of the century, the negotiations led China and Africa to institutionalize their economic and political cooperation, through the first Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). The first FOCAC was held in October 2000 and these summits remain to this day the principal institutional framework driving the Sino-African relationship (Hooijmaaijers, 2018). In light of Ziyang’s “common development”, the forum is held alternatively in Beijing and in an African country every three years for a non-hierarchy in the relation. The focus remains on assistance, economic development, trade, investment and political partnership (Men & Merton, 2011). The norms and values that China supports through the FOCAC are the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence referred firstly by Zhou Enlai, namely, “mutual respect for territory and sovereignty, mutual non aggression, mutual noninterference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence”(Ma & Thakur, 2004).

In addition to a new institutional framework, the start of the century marked the Sino-African relationship by increasing economic ties. After a decade of negotiations, China

officially joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 (Takeuchi, 2013). The rise of the Chinese economy along with its accession to WTO led to the development of Beijing's political and economic ties with Africa (IMF, 2024). An interesting comparison shows that while the Europeans had to cancel the EU-AU summit at the beginning of the century, an emphasis on a "more comprehensive cooperation" was underlined in the FOCAC action Plan (Chen et al., 2022). Indeed, Chinese Foreign Aid to Africa was qualified by "government-sponsored investment, concessional loans, grants and debt cancellation" (Men & Berton, 2011).

The first differences with the European Development Policies

Building upon, the year 2006 still appears as a strong marker in Sino-African relations (Grimm & Hackenesh 2017). The first novelty came in January through the Chinese government's white paper "China's Africa Policy", putting forward a strengthened economic and political cooperation with a reference to energy development (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, 2006). To counter the Western conditions, China offered to increase aid and loans, with "no strings attached" (Liu, 2011). Wang (2011) further explains that Chinese diplomacy characteristics match the African demands: no conditionality, non-interference, and absolute priority to development. The satisfaction of African states is illustrated by the 2006 FOCAC summit in Beijing with 1.700 african representatives among which 41 were heads of states, explain Men and Barton (2011). The number of officials attending the Forum characterized more generally the Sino-African relations, with a number of leaders visiting never reached by any other country (Men & Barton, 2011). Besides sending a strong signal on the satisfaction of the African countries in their relations with China, it fed the Eu's increasing fear of other global players in Africa.

In November 2009, the FOCAC was held in Egypt, where the Sharm El Sheikh Action Plan Declaration, established an action plan for 2010-2012, mainly increasing Chinese investment from US\$1 billion to US\$3 billion (Han et al., 2022). The following years were marked by an increasing attention to the social aspect of aid. Mesley (2019) points out the introduction to "people-to-people" development in the 2012 China-Africa White paper. Han, Mawdsley, and Liu (2022) refer to an increasing inclusion of a regional "poverty reduction" and "human development" during the FOCAC summit in 2015.

2.2.3. Towards a south south cooperation: the Chinese vision

The expansion of Chinese development policies

From the 2010s, China started increasing its development aid to the international scale. In 2013, President Xi released the Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) which was initially to answer developing countries' needs by taking advantage of Beijing's overcapacity in infrastructure building (Economy, 2024).

China used the failure of the European development model to better develop its cooperation with Africa. Firstly, an alternative to the European donors is shown by the close timing of the initiatives. Seven months after the EU issued its “New Eu-Africa Strategy”, China published a White paper in November 2021, depicting Sino-African corporations as entering a “New Area” (The State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China, 2021). At the core of the paper, a “community of shared future”, “strengthening mutual support” and “New grounds in the relations” came to complete the four pillars of the white paper. Moreover, Xinhua (2021) noticed that the “friendship”, in the paper, is now qualified as a “rock solid”. Xinhua (2021) further interprets the strong statement as a result of the successive FOCAC summits held in Johannesburg in 2015 and Beijing in 2018. During the strategic meeting with Africa, China indeed promised US\$15 billion in aid to Africa (IMF 2024), overall of US\$60 billion among which 10 would be financed by the Chinese companies (Brautigam, 2018). The deep ties allowed China to take the relations to a next level, and publicly push towards a stronger south south cooperation on the international stage. Playing its cards, it built a stronger “community” to oppose the “Union”.

The Chinese development model: an alternative to the West

China’s dissociation from the western model can be identified in its refusal to qualify itself as “donor” but rather “south-south partner” (IMF, 2024). Indeed, an important difference between China and EU aids towards Africa resides in the fact that China is not part of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) , explains the IMF report. Instead, China independently developed its own model. While its economy was rising, and loans increasing, China created in 2018 its first independent foreign aid agency: China International Development Cooperation Administration (CIDCA). Even though it marks an effort to coordinate with the

traditional mode, Rudyak (2022) highlights that it stays under Xi's vision of non conditionality, social ties and technology centered.

In this regard, Xi Jinping kept on introducing different programs during the 2020s: the Global Development Initiatives (GDI) in 2021, the Global Security Initiatives (GSI) in 2022, and the Global Citizen Initiative (GCI) in May 2023. Together with the BRI, it creates four pillars offering developing countries a different development model than the traditional liberal institutions (Rudyak, 2022; Economy, 2024).

Indeed, in recent times, the Belt and Road initiative lost its initial purpose; including around 150 countries (44 from Sub-Saharan Africa), it now serves to promote the Chinese development system, further allowing China to increase its military presence as well as promoting its currency, Economy states (2024). The GDI allows China to promote development on the world stage while being at the center and maintaining a hand on ongoing and new initiatives, she further argues. The GSI promotes China as a world peace keeper, and security insurance precondition for development. Finally, the GCI emphasizes the various political and economic models due to numerous civilizations. One of the outcomes is the treatment of Human Rights which, according to China, cannot be the same from one civilization to another. Therefore, in Economy's words (2024): " GCI's notion (is) that diversity of civilizations and development paths should be respected", coming in complete opposition to the EU norms.

3. Challenging Beijing and European Consensus: if Africa had to choose?

To conclude the chapter, the third point of the first chapter challenges the Beijing Consensus by developing the European critique of the Chinese development model. It then challenges the European influence by the African current situation vis à vis Europe to defend the thesis that the EU development model can find some inspiration from the Chinese model. The choice of China in particular is then defended by the time lapse between the EU and Chinese initiatives, showing a clear competition between the two. To conclude the chapter, the research question is defined and themes to develop in the analysis are derived from the historical context.

3.1. Challenging Beijing: The Critique from the EU

The European criticism of the Beijing Consensus

While European countries increasingly perceive China as a “systemic rival” (EU Parliament, 2020), the Chinese and its rise are perceived as a model for developing countries (Men & Barton, 2011). Good relations are maintained between emerging powers and Africa, while the EU struggles and rather faces a decline in its relations with its traditional partners such as African countries. Interpreted as one of the impacts of Chinese increasing engagement on the continent, some interpret Chinese success rather to its own characteristics, different from the West (Men & Barton, 2011). If the Chinese detain the key to developing peaceful relations, or their success in engaging with Africa appears as relatively better than the EU’s, it therefore seems relevant to understand its methods, and to reevaluate EU’s development approach in comparison.

However, instead of recognizing Chinese successes and trying to learn from it, the westerner’s have mainly drawn their narratives around the danger that remains China. According to Tull (2008), between 2000 and 2008 the European criticism of Chinese increasing engagement in Africa came from four main points outlined by the Union. First of all, the European aid is used by African recipient states to finance operations held by Chinese firms. As the Chinese offer is cheaper and more effective, the choice seems rational from an African perspective, but went against European interests, as Tull explains (2008).

A second wonder came from the fact that while China itself was a European aid recipient country, it was increasingly becoming a major donor in Africa. It raised paradoxical questions such as how can a country be both a recipient and a donor. The third point resided in the well documented fear for the African debt towards China. Tull (2008) underlines a growing “frustration”. Indeed, China was getting rich through loans partly financed by EU donations, while the EU was offering extensive debt relief. The argument was further followed by the fear of the potential negative impact of a “debts trap” on African development.

Lastly, the fourth critic came out of the European attempt to play a global role. Consequently, it has highly emphasized the importance of multilateralism, fostering cooperation through international institutions and or regional unions such as the AU or the NEPAD. With an opposite approach, China has built mainly bilateral relationships, using the FOCAC as a synthesis of these dualities more than a tool for multilateral cooperation (Men & Barton, 2011), making it impossible for the EU to access the discussions that remain highly intimate between the parties.

The deconstruction of the critique

The European criticism of Chinese engagement in Africa has been itself questioned and answered by China, African states and European scholars themselves (Tull, 2008; Men & Barton, 2011; Liu, 2011; Qin, 2018). Qualified as hypocritical in judging the African use of the aid budget, the EU condemned the management of financial aids which however have been spent following their prior goal: African development (Tull, 2008). The choice of spending remained rational in that the Chinese would offer much more interesting prices (Kuo, 2015). However, the reality lies in the fact that Chinese engagement in Africa harms Brussels’s trading interests in the continent (Liu, 2011).

In the same vein, the critiques regarding debts have been discussed. A recent IMF report (2024) further argues: “ the debt African governments owe to China remains a small fraction of their total public debt”. However, the western management of debt and debt relief has been judged as “paternalistic” (Tull, 2008). European Parliamentarians such as Assita Kanko further critique the EU in that European perpetuates African dependency (DW News, 2022).

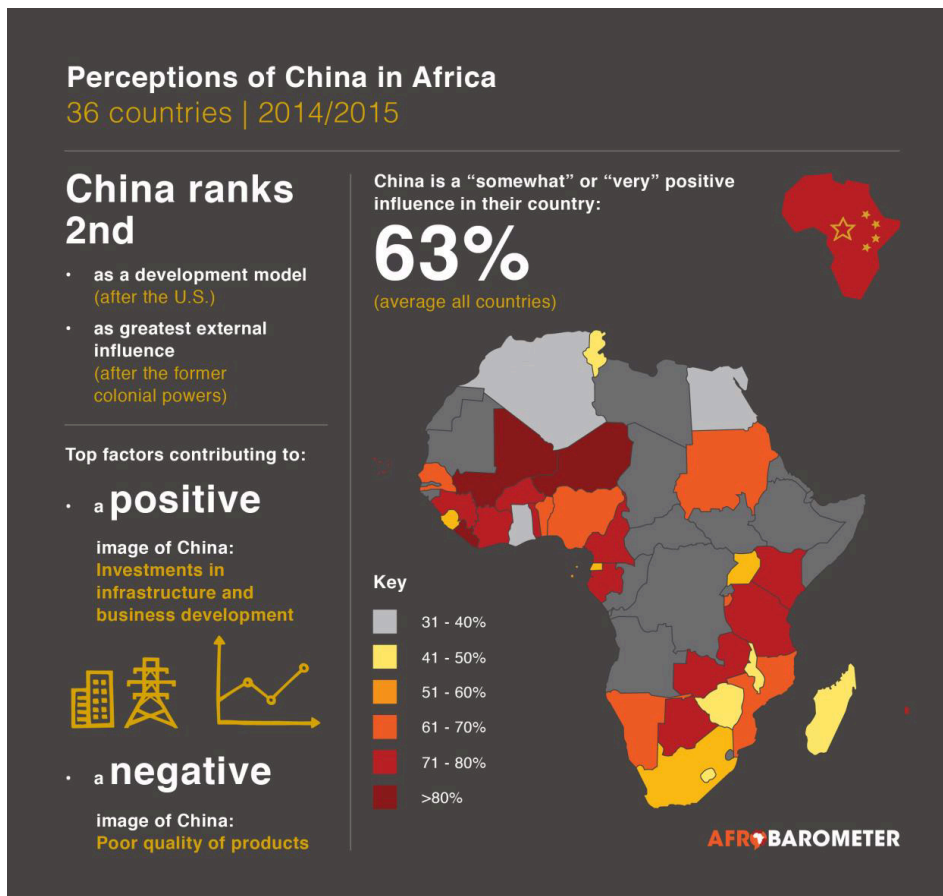
Chinese bilateralism appears threatening to the EU's “effective multilateralism” in that it prevents the EU from pursuing its hope of positioning itself as an international player. China

positions itself outside of the liberal institutional mainstream, and offers other countries to follow. The EU that considered itself as indispensable and a role model for the AU has been proven wrong and has struggled accepting it (Tull, 2008). Finally, the mining contracts and Chinese credits or exploitation resources remains far from in contradiction with EU norms or EU own behavior in Africa (Tull, 2008).

In recent times, the focus remained on the Chinese interest in African resources with no interest for their sustainable economic or political development (Hanush, 2012; Goldstein et al., 2008; Broadman, 2009) and the harm Chinese generates by employing Chinese workers in the building of infrastructures (Esposito & Tse, 2015), but again, it was answered by Braughtigam (2015) stating it stays a “myth”, or African themselves emphasizing that it remains their choice and autonomy to choose with whom and how they should conduct business (Mutua, 2023). The Chinese model is perceived as less “detrimental” for the African interests and more “rewarding”, concludes the Afrobarometer’s reports (2016) and the Chinese presence in Africa positively received when it touches on trade and FDI (Hanush, 2012).

3.2. Challenging Brussels: If Africa had to choose one consensus?

Figure 1: The perceptions of China's development model in Africa in 2014//2015 (source: Afrobarometer, 2016)



The European engagement from the African perspective

Looking at the current messages sent by African states to the EU, it appears that an increasing number of warnings show a potential preference for the Chinese model. The liberal norms tied to European aids are notably challenged (Tull, 2008; Men & Barton, 2011). Indeed, with six military coups in West Africa in the last six years, the democratic norms even though supported by african organizations appear to be rejected still for many states when looking at them individually. Expending to the Sahel, the succession of coup started from Mali in 2020 and its contrecoup nine months later, followed by Guinea, Chad and Sudan in 2021, Burkina Faso in

January and September 2022 and Niger in 2023, they send a strong and clear intention to detach from the European states, in this case France especially (AJLabs, 2023).

In 2023, the Niger coup on July 26 marked a turning point by assessing the failure of European socialization to democratic values (EUISS, 2024). Considering a country with a seen as a model for the region in term of democratic process, the recent Senegalese presidential elections have been followed closely by the western press and ECOWAS (Melly, 2024; Lones, 2024) concluding that “Democracy won” (Lones, 2024). However, the newly elected president Bassirou Diomaye Faye promises a “radical break from how the country has been governed in the last decades”. The new Prime Minister Ousmane Sonko further preaches “the end of the French-inherited currency (CFA franc) and more generally campaigned for the end of economic and political influence from France and other external actors” (Yabi & Holman, 2024). Overall, Europe in Africa seems to be increasingly rejected, be them through violence or democratic votes. As a consequence, the European development model goes in pairs, the African states that have still not ratified the Samoa agreements or the EPAs illustrate an increasing tension between the two continents.

The Chinese engagement from the African perspective

On the contrary, as underlined by the Afrobarometer’s survey of 2016, the Chinese presence in Africa has been perceived as a “largely positive popular review”, as also underlined by Che and Bodomo (2023). Its development model is perceived as the second best after the US model, despite the former colonial power ranked first for external intervention. The Chinese model appears to receive an increasing popularity in Africa. Therefore, this paper tries to understand how the EU could correct its posture by looking at the working sides offered by the Chinese development aid model.

The “Change in the global development pattern” (Zhang, 2022) brought in Africa by China (Liu, 2011) should push Europe to deeply question itself regarding the right policy approach to adopt during this key period characterized by new agreements, new visions, and an increasingly challenging Africa.

3.3. Rationale and modeling hypothesis

The Rationale of the paper

As shown by the historical context, the EU development policies towards Africa remain highly criticized by both the EU and Africa. In opposition, the Chinese development cooperation with Africa appears as effective and corresponding to African requests. Even though the EU remains the biggest donor, the political conditionality imposed on recipient countries undermines the measures' effectiveness and credibility (Men & Barton, 2011). Besides criticism from African voices, within the EU the debate on the right approach to adopt remains actual.

Taking inspiration from the Chinese model seems to be rational in this context. Indeed, the link between the EU policies and China engagement seem undeniable. From the simple rush coming for the EU-AU summit in 2007, right after the FOCAC summit in 2006, to the EU narratives which seem increasingly converging towards the Chinese "common development". Grimm and Hackenesh (2017) underline the interesting coincidence of a close timing between Chinese engagement in Africa and EU development policies towards Africa. Hooijmaaijers (2018) highlights how the EU was forced to redefine its approach to both China and Africa due to the Chinese growing presence on the continent.

The Chinese development model undeniably must offer special advantages since "many African nations see (investment and debts) as worth the risk, as the European model of investment is viewed as cumbersome, conditional and time consuming" (Kanko, 2020). Moreover, the EU Commission initiative of launching a trilateral cooperation between EU, China and Africa in 2008, proves that the EU knows the importance of listening and uses a Chinese perspective when collaborating with Africa. The EU has been increasingly forced to rethink its approach to both China and Africa.

By initiating this trilateral dialogue which did not lead to effective results (Liu, 2011), the EU has to face the reality of its situation: it does not possess enough leverage to submit China and Africa to its norms the way it had imposed them at the time of the enlargement with eastern neighbors. Both its soft and hard power are identified as too light to be coercive enough on the bargaining power table of negotiations (Liu, 2011).

The failing from the EU appears to come out of its “own development regime” affirm Sorensen (2020). Further supported by Grimm and Hackenesh (2017) explanation that the Chinese presence does not have an impact on the EU collective actions.

The change has to come from within. Therefore, the paper recalls the research question: How does the Chinese development cooperation with Africa prompt a reevaluation of EU development policies?

Comparison of the consensus and defining subtopics

The European model takes its path from the Washington consensus and is historically very influenced by the ties between former colonial power and colonies. It is characterized by a political and economic conditionality, starting as far as the relationship between the EU and new independent African states started. As a comparison, the Beijing development model takes its traces back from the slow building of strong economic and political ties between China and Africa. Therefore, the different attitudes and narratives linking the parties during history should be pointed out for a Reevaluation.

In its development, the European Consensus drew its development model following the challenges it faced across history, and putting different neighbors in priority over Africa. The Chinese and Africa, in their partnership building were met by a match in the choice of the sectors, e.g. resource and infrastructure. In this regard, the definition of the area of cooperation should be looked into.

Taking its mark in a liberal world, the economic approach to European development aid takes place mostly in a multilateralism context, linked notably through international financial organizations, such as the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO. In opposition, Beijing offers its own institutional framework. Through its four pillars it brings alternatives on the international, regional and bilateral scale. The attractiveness of the Beijing consensus should be further searched in its bilaterality promotion.

In supporting African development, the Chinese followed what Joshua Cooper Ramo calls the *Beijing Consensus* in 2004. Putting priority over the five principles, among which state sovereignty is at the foundation. From state sovereignty to democracy, human rights and good

governance, the European and the Chinese development model seem to put priority on different norms. In this regard, their understanding and justification of the priorities should be evaluated.

The access to development aid and trade is guaranteed under condition of the fulfillment and respect of these principles. In comparison, China based its partnership on mutual interest, notably by favorising trade over aid. The implications of these different offers should be covered.

The Beijing Consensus calls for a South-south cooperation, which seems to go far beyond the simple cooperation for development, by pushing for a revisionist approach of the world order. It questions the whole approach of the Union in Africa. The implication for the Eu development model, and the potential adaptation it should undergo should be researched.

II. Theories and methodology

1. Theoretical framework

The first point of the chapter defines the postcolonial approaches of International Relations after the introduction of the Fourth debate of the field. The Relational Theory of Qin Yaqing is then introduced as the second theoretical framework used for the analysis.

1.1. Post-colonial and decolonial approach

The history of Post-colonial thoughts

Bound by one of the oldest diplomatic relationships in international political history, Europe and Africa have developed strong trade and cultural exchange. Men and Barton (2011) explain these deep ties through “geographical proximity” and “colonial legacies”. The member states of the European Union being former colonial powers for many, it influences European policies. To analyze, explain, and foresee this side of the relationship, this study uses the critical Post-colonial and Decolonial approach of International Relations (IR). They should be understood not as a Theory of IR but as different arguments and lenses to adopt when looking at the world (Sebartam, 2022). Developed in order to rethink the mainstream theories, they interpret world politics through new inputs -described as fairer and less biased, that denounce the western denial of the legacy of Empires and Colonialism. At the center of various debates, the prefix “Post” should not be understood as “after-colonialism”, which would imply that colonialism does not exist anymore. However, Post-colonial theories do not defend a world in which colonialism has ended (Dr. Masood Raja, 2019; Elam, 2019).

In the field of International Relations, the introduction of discussions on the notions of race, colonialism, legacy and empire starts around the twentieth century, when IR itself is introduced as a field (Meera Sebartam, 2022). Daniel Elam (2019) explains: “Postcolonial theory is a body of thought primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social impact of European colonial rule around the world in the 18th through the 20th century.” Therefore, there is not one, two or three assumptions to study, but a variety of ideas and critiques, essays and books, authors and thoughts, to read and use for a critical lecture

of world politics, economic order, and cultural norms. A clear emphasis resides in an interpretation of current power dynamics, identities, and inequalities. As explained by Meer Sebartam (2022), it implies a wide variety of different ideas. The following points explain the critique of the Post-colonial approach, and select some of them which will be used in the content analysis.

1.1.1. The debate.

Taking part in the Fourth Debate of International Relations opposing positivists (or rationalists) to the post-positivists (or reflectivists), the post-colonial and decolonial approaches present a triple critic to the foundations of mainstream IR: ontologically, epistemologically, and normatively. Sørensen et al., (2020) refer to Robert Cox's descriptions of the divisions brought by critical approaches.

Ontologically, the classic knowledge developed by mainstream theories is rethought. Against liberals and realists theories, the Post-structuralists reconsider the very object of study in IR. Despite denouncing unavoidable subjectivity when looking at the external reality, the reflectivists further challenge the reproductive character of mainstream IR (Sørensen et al., 2020). Qualified as "A-historical", the rational state-centered analysis neglects the history of recently formed states, or the World Order dynamics before the Westphalian system. Moreover, the rational vision of a world system in "Anarchy", is rather read through hierarchies which have been set up during colonial times and leaves their legacy in the current political and economic world order (Meera Sebartam, 2022).

Sørensen et al. (2020) explain that the main challenge coming out of these two examples is their reproductive character: by neglecting the historical legacy of the WO, mainstream IR fails in tackling the issues which came out of it and keeps them active. By depicting a World Order in Anarchy and taking state as the object of study, it reproduces as well as defines the state as the unit of analysis. The World Order becomes anarchical by reproduction because it is studied as such. The critique therefore calls for a reconsideration of the traditional knowledge in IR.

In this regard, the Post-positivist therefore tries not to *explain* but to develop a weberian *understanding* (Hansen, 2019). Bourdieu and Foucault reconsider the subject/object distinction

by taking “theory as an object of analysis and not a tool of analysis” (Sørensen et al., 2020). Theorists are considered as *insiders* and not *outsiders* of the analytical study; they are perceived as not distinct from the world but as part of it. For instance, Sorensen et al., (2020) explain that for Foucault, the narratives, the language used, the dichotomies, and the choice of particular case already says something about the interest, perceptions and biases of the study. More than the Post-Colonial approaches, the Decolonial approaches strongly focus on the redefinition of the epistemological methods in their criticism of Positivist IR, explains Sebartam (2022). Indeed, they ask for the introduction of an understanding of the world as it is perceived from former colonized people. Sebartam (2022) highlights the request of introducing the viewpoints and knowledge systems (or epistemologies) of those marginalized or oppressed by imperial and racial hierarchies. Therefore, the traditional tools of analysis are left behind for discourse analysis and a peculiar focus on the narratives and dichotomies. In this regard, Hansen (2019) focuses on languages and deconstructs discourses by for instance defining the absence of an universal *right* way of acting.

Finally, the Normative rethinking denounces the modernists taking for granted the value-neutrality of social sciences. Sorensen et al. (2020) refer to Bourdieu and Foucault, who consider that knowledge is not value-free, neither morally nor politically or ideologically. In this regard, post-colonial and decolonial approaches study inequalities which are perpetuated in current world politics. Smith (2021) explains that knowledge is not ‘immune to the working power’, and is created and engendered by the global powers. In this perspective, post-colonialism tries to turn the focus away from the state and from the west. Meera Sebartam (2022) explains that the two approaches have slightly different critique: the post colonial approach emphasizes the “subaltern” perspective and focus on redefining the notion of power, while decolonial approaches considers the dichotomies “human/non-human” or “modernity/coloniality” and have a strong emphasis on the epistemological revision of IR.

1.1. 2. Orientalism, Eurocentrism, Decolonization of the mind and Neo Colonialism

Orientalism

The first idea that the study tries to identify comes from Edouard Said's *Orientalism* (1979). The term was constructed in a critique from a cultural and literal point of view, but was further then further use in political debates (Wang, 2015). Edouard Said states that westerners historically shaped perception, images and clichés of the "Orient" (the Middle East), as "orientalists" experts, but without knowing it. Said explains that the "Orient" is a "fabrication" of the West explains Sebartam (2022). It constructs a division in the dichotomies between the "Orient" and the "Occident" and introduces a distance between the two and an exclusion in the civilisation. Wang (2015) explains that it further builds an image of the Orient as understood by the Occident. The implication resides in the link between the knowledge production and power: the Occident instaures a "regime of truth" by imposing its perception and vision of the Orient. In International relation, it further implies that what is understood by the West as the "Orient", is in fact a construction of the Orient with Occidental standards.

Eurocentrism

Orientalism is close to the concept of "Eurocentrism". This latter gained in popularity this century, notably through critical thinkers associated with the dependency theory such as Samir Amin and Immanuel Wallerstein and Post-colonial historians such as Dipesh Chakrabarty (Sorensen et al., 2020; Smith, 2021). Eurocentric thinking refers to the tendency to point Europe as the central subject and reference point in "world history, civilization, and/or humanity" (Sebartam, 2022). By considering European history as universal (i.e. Hegel and Kant's "pinnacle of humanity"), Europe is used as the primary subject of all studies which results in the lack of historical accuracy (Sebartam, 2022). For instance, if defined as a model, European development is understood as the final stage of any developing civilization, and is considered as the only way to achieve evolution. As a result, if non-europeans are *failing* to reach European "universal" standards, they are considered as under-developped (Sebartam, 2022). However, this further implies the undermining of history, cultures and knowledge produced outside of the European debates in world affairs, because they are perceived as "stagnant and non-dynamic", explains Meera Sebartam (2022).

In the field of International Relations, the permanent focus on Europe as the only legitimate center of knowledge production, pushes western scholars to undermine the global south and former colonies' scholars' work and research (Sebartam, 2022). In this regard, Historical events are re-interpreted from non-western perspectives, such as the famous cold war depicted as the most peaceful times for the West, while Indochina, Vietnam, Afghanistan, China, Korea among other states, were under proliferation war opposing the capitalists and the socialists (Sorensen et al., 2020). Liberal tools such as International Law, are also interpreted as belongings from the west, explains Grovogui (1996).

Decolonization of the mind

Sebartam (2022) suggests that Franz Fanon together with Ashi Nandy, emphasize the psychological legacy of colonization. Often described as starting in the mid 20s, decolonization refers to the political independence and national self-determination of former colonies. However, Franz Fanon and Ashi Nandy also underline the need for an intellectual decolonization for the process of emancipation to be fully complete. Indeed, Fanon describes the colonialism system as of “total violence” because besides physically degrading, it neglects humanity by erasing the political and economic individual, therefore dehumanizing the local population through the destruction and cancellation of social and cultural norms and arts (Sebartam, 2022). For instance, through the imposition of a language, a whole cultural aspect from the local population disappears, having drastic psychological effects. In this regard, decolonization is not solely understood as the war for independence which globally started in the mid 20s, and in 1791 for Haiti. Instead, for the legacy of colonialism to be shadden and the decolonization to be fully achieved, Ashi Nandy and Franz Fanon ask for the recovery of social, cultural and scientific fields which lack African and more generally former colonies's inputs and knowledge production consideration (Meera Sebartam, 2022). They call for the “decolonization of the mind”.

Frantz Fanon, a psychiatrist and philosopher from the French former colonie Martinique, further added on the concept of decolonization. He observes the impact and repercussions of colonialism on both the colonized and the colonizer. A second thesis is defended by the “2nd” Fanon which is much more radical in his second book *The Wretched of the Earth* (1965) than the Fanon who wrote of *Black Skin and White Masks* (1954) explains Dr. Masood Raja (2020). Indeed, while joining the FLN in Algeria to fight against the French, Fanon took inspiration from

this experience. Besides understanding colonialism as a system of “(total) violence” and “dehumanizing”, based on the cancellation of humanity and rights, through the lenses of psychiatry, he further explains that this “alienation” is solvable only by expressing or imposing back one’s humanity, which implies fighting back through violence. It would be the only way to gain back equality and start again on the same bases, he states, and a necessary step to express their resistance and agency (Discourse Analyzer, 2024). In International Relations, this approach could therefore explain the various form violences and towards the former colonial power in the Sahel referred to in the first chapter.

Neo-colonialism

From the idea of decolonization, an interesting approach which should be identified is Neo-colonialism, together with Global Inequality. As stated, the “Post” does not imply the end of colonialism, the “Neo”, however, clearly implies its persistence. Persistence taking the shape of political, economic, and cultural domination, increasing and reproducing Global Inequality (Discourse Analyzer, 2024).

Defined by Kwame Nkrumah, an important figure in the fight for Ghana’s independence, the term “Neo-colonialism” appears in the early 1960s (Sebartam, 2022). In his book *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1965), he argues that even though theoretically independent states, former colonies still lack state sovereignty. Instead, they remain subject to “international sovereignty”. Taking example of former French colonies in Africa, he underlines the reality of the French external intervention in the domestic economic system and the political programs and policies. In this regard, Chapter 1 depicts the ties between the European former colonial power and their asymmetric agreement with the former colonies.

As Mayaki (2019) further explains, neocolonialism is generally understood through the presence of foreign military bases and the domination of foreign enterprises and firms in the domestic market of a state. Meera Sebartam (2022), unshading what implies “foreign actor”, refers to both “former colonial powers, but also often superpower interference”. Since the external forces have a hand on the domestic economy and political governance, the management of domestic (and international) affairs is done for their own advantages. This led to strong economic impoverishment and typically violent answers from the independent countries subject to neocolonialism.

Therefore, analyzing through a neocolonial lens implies unhidden narratives which keeps a legacy from colonial times. It implies a careful reading of economic, political, cultural domination notably through development aid (Discourse Analyzer, 2024).

In summary, postcolonial and decolonial theories take a critical look at the international institutions, international law, international trade, but also history, and current knowledge by considering the legacies of imperialism and colonialism.

1.2. The Relational Theory

1.2.1. The Chinese inputs in the field International Relations

“To counter China’s growing role in Africa the West must first understand it”, write Gay Epstein and John McDermott (2022). In this optique of decolonizing the field of IR and developing an *understanding* of colonial legacies such as the relative underconsideration of the Global South knowledge-production, the study will use a Chinese theory of IR to understand the Chinese development model in Africa. To avoid an Eurocentric perspective in the interpretation of Chinese development policies *vis a vis* Africa, the analysis and hypothesis will try to develop the Chinese perception of world politics, and in particular of African needs, interests and challenges, to answer the classic liberal criticism and skepticism. Consequently, a comparison with the European cooperative model with Africa can also be further developed, by not only comparing differences between the official development policies but between the whole process of foreign policy making before their implementations.

The Chinese development of theories to International Relations are said to have started around the late 80s-90s, explains Wang (2013), correlating with China's openness towards the international social world (Qin, 2011; Tze Ern Ho, 2019). They are mainly drawn from traditional Chinese thinkers, such as Confucius, and reinterpreted or readapted to the current social word (Rudyak, 2022). The existence of the Chinese school of IR is still debated in recent times, however many scholars push for its development and acknowledgement (Kavalski & Cho, 2018; Hwang, 2021). On the same token, many Chinese scholars further defend a Global IR where non-western theories are included (Qin, 2016). The analysis of Chinese thought would help reconnect with the lost historical and contemporary knowledge from the non-western world, defends Hwang (2021). In this regard, he identifies Yan Xuetong and his moral realism, Zhao

Tingyang and his conception of the Tianxia system, and Qin Yaqing and its relational theory of world politics as the main Chinese scholars in IR that had a strong impact over Chinese foreign policy.

Qin's critique

The relational theory of International Relations is drawn from the traditional Chinese intellectuals, notably from Confucius thinking. Developed by Yaqing Qin to counter the traditional IR, the Relational theory is defended in his book *Relational Theory of World Politics* (2016). Yaqing Qin has been accused of essentialism, but as the Chair Professor at Shandong University and former the President and professor of China Foreign Affairs University (Wikipedia contributors, 2023), he remains one of the most influential political science scholars in China. This implies that his way of explaining and understanding the world gives us an idea of the Chinese governmental approach (Tze Her Ho, 2019; Rudyak, 2022).

For Qin (2011; 2016), the role of culture is primordial in shaping theories. He defends that cultural ideas nurture the metaphysical component of a theory. To illustrate, against the rationality of agents in mainstream theories, relationality “may well be its counterpart in Confucian cultural communities”, he states. The background knowledge brought by non western communities represents another perspective of the world, since it implies another way of “thinking and doing”, he argues. In this regard, Qin’s Relationality has been inspired by social constructivism thinkers (Politi, 2023). He looks at the construction of social norms and ideas, and has a deep interest in the shaping of identities influenced by the research of scholars such as Alexander Wendt.

Moreover, Qin’s relationality differs from the classical theories which separates domestic and international politics. His understanding of a social world makes all (domestic and international) politics interconnected. In this regard, Qin denounces the democratic systems willing to share power in the domestic realms but greedy of it in international affairs (Tze Ern Ho, 2019). According to Qin (2018) The power is “artificially privatized in the international setting, justified by the anarchic nature of the international system and repeatedly reinforced by the survival theme”.

1.2.2. Qin's Assumptions and Implications

First Assumption: human relations as an object of study

While the realist would traditionally understand international relations through a state agency, in relationality, the world is primarily understood as made of human relations. Qin's (2016) first assumption stands that "the IR world is a universe of interrelatedness", which comes from the acknowledgment that social actors define the basic form of life in the social world. In other words, the relations (or *guanxi*) have the prior agency in his understanding since the social world could not exist without social bounds, instead it is made of them. This idea is also referred to as the principle of "coexistence or relational existence" by Rudyak (2022).

For Qin (2016), the entity of analysis, far from "substantial objects", differs from states or individuals which are defined (or "discrete") entities. Rather, the world is of "fluid" international relations, in constant evolution. Different relationships with various degrees are interlinked in the social world, binding objects and people "not as pieces of pie, but as ropes in a net", he quotes.

A second implication resides in the fact that the world is therefore highly contextual: "a context oriented society", defines Qin (2016). Indeed, the relationship is always shaped in a particular context made of the interactions of two unique social actors. Therefore, no actor (rational or not) could have a strong impact on the complexity of these interlinked "circles" of relations. Nevertheless, the addition of these complex "nets" of relations still remains a "whole", explains Qin (2016).

Second Assumption: "Actors-in-relations" as agents of IR

Keeping the first assumption in mind, the Agents in Relational theory "can only be 'actor-in-relations'" (Qin 2016). In this regard, the second assumption is often compared to the *weiqi* or *go*: while each of the unique pieces all possess predefined roles for the western chess game, their functions are shaped *in relation* to each other during the match for the *go*. Qin (2018) explains that there is no bishop or queen, but the construction of a role based on the other roles, mutually shaped in interconnection. As a whole, all the intershaped roles build and constitute the Confucian cosmos i.e., in a constant interconnection each of their defined final roles formed the "weiqi universe", explains Qin (2010). In other words, Rudyak (2022) further states that

identities of a social agent are shaped and redefined through its relation to others, called the “relational identity formation”.

As a second illustration, Qin (2016) explains in the Chinese language each character (*Hanzi*) acquires a meaning when put in relation with others in a specific context. In Chinese culture, identities are in this sense “multiple” because from a familial to a working context the self is defined differently. Indeed, the appellation that qualifies the “self” differs from a context to another, the context shapes the identity of the “self”. For Qin (2016), “actors-in-relations” implies that “the primary unit of analysis should be relations rather than actors per se”. The same way “人” (*ren*) is the radical for person or humane, putting it together with “他” (*ta*) it becomes “he”, while with “你” (*ni*) it then defines “you”. “人” role and meaning is therefore constantly reshaped depending on its relation with the other characters (*Hanzi*), drawing the context in which it is used.

Assumption 3: The interpretation of “process”

Provided that all actors are socially related, the third assumption of Qin’s relationality (2016) emphasizes on the importance of the “process” defined as “relations in motion”. In other words, since the agents have not predefinite roles, but rather a fluid function constantly evolving and adapting depending on the context, the ontological interpretation of “process” differs from the mainstream understanding. Actors, to be “in-relations”, have the constant need to be in a confrontation of the others to define the “self”, or for the “self” to exist. By the simple fact that can it only be defined in a fluid context, then actors-in-relations are “by definition an actor in process” (Qin, 2016).

This refutes the ontological acknowledgment of defined actors and fixed structures in international politics existing “by itself and for itself” (Qin, 2016; 2018). Rudyak (2022) further explains that instead of being “outcome oriented”, relationality is “process” oriented. For instance, considering cooperation, far from a static relation, it is instead a “process of co-changing and co-evolution” in a relationship between two parties, states Qin (2016). He further illustrates by underlining that the cooperation process should receive the attention of the researchers more than the tangible results of the process, which may result in a planned or surprising outcome.

Within the context of Chinese aid towards Africa, the process of developing foreign aid has been ongoing since the 1950s. It is the process of cooperating to reach development that has to be analyzed, not the fixed amount of financial aid sent towards the continent. Regarding this, relationality is long-term oriented. Rudyak (2022) stresses the need to understand Chinese aid towards the African continent as a long-term process, “on-going and uninterrupted since the 1950s”.

Assumption 4: The relational power

Out of these three ideas, comes the last assumption of “relational power”, touching upon the common IR debate on the very concept of power. Since “relations generate power” (Qin, 2009), relationality implies that “relations are the power resources” because an agent’s power comes out of their various relations (Tze Ern Ho, 2019). Indeed, the bargaining situation resulting from the relation, the access to different networks, and the mutual interests that can be defended in the relations shape a form of power. Consequently, Rudyak (2022) qualifies the relational power as “the ability to manage relations”. If an “actor-in-relation” knows how to get the advantage of the various “nets” it develops in the relational context, this actor is using its relational power. This consequently means that the ultimate goal, (or ultimate motive) is the “关系” *guanxi*, defined as a connection or a relationship (Qin, 2010; 2016).

The direct implication resides in the fact that power is sharable (Tze Ern Ho, 2019). Since it involves at least two agents in relation to each other, both can use the advantages coming out of their bond. Going deeper, losing the relationship would mean losing the power resource for both of the parties.

Regarding this, one can further understand that in relational theory, the Chinese approach is therefore “reciprocal” “mutual” and “common”. The two agents, by looking for the connection in itself, are very equal in that they can both benefit from the relationship or lose it.

The relational power also implies that its practice makes it stronger, “it increases by its use” explains Tze Her Ho (2019). The stronger is the connection and deeper is the attachment, the easier both parties can see the advantages of the relation, and therefore make good use of the relational power. Qin (2009) further explains that it makes the resource more reliable: because when trust is built, long-term access to the relational power is better assured.

Relationality to aid and cycle of giving

Applying Relationality to aid, Rudyak (2022) compares the western understanding of a gift to the relational concept of *Renqing* (2022). The process of giving naturally implies a change in the relation between a giver and a receiver, the latter feeling the need to give back. Rudyak (2022) refers to Mauss' "poisonous gift" because it develops in the receiver sentiment of a debt, or of being redevant *vis a vis* the giver. The action of offering a gift back i.e., to reciprocate is called the *bao* (Rudyak, 2022). Entering a friendship implies entering a process of mutual gesture in relational thinking; refusing to reciprocate means that the actors-in-relations closes the relationship while practicing *bao* is wanting to engage for future cooperation.

In this regard, China used its aid as an assurance of reciprocity. Since it comes from a "friend" and not a "partner", it can be given politically more than economically. Qin explains that by initiating the *Renqing* cycle at the Bandung conference, China turned "strangers" not into recipient countries, but into "friends". Which gave back their support, notably by blocking the west sanctions on China regarding the Tiananmen square protests of 1989. Furthermore, Rudyak (2022) points out a correlation between Chinese aid sent to new "friends" and the official diplomatic recognition of China by these countries practicing the *bao*.

When looking at the tab recording the first year of the diplomatic recognition of China and the year of the Chinese first aid project towards the state that made the diplomatic recognition, the correlation appears clear for the five first years following the Bandung conference, explains Rudyak (2022).

Figure 2: Year of diplomatic recognition and first foreign aid project led by China, from Source: Rudyak (2022).

TABLE 1 Year of diplomatic recognition and first foreign aid project

Country	Year of diplomatic recognition	Year of first aid project
Algeria	1958	1958
Cambodia	1956	1956
Ceylon (now Sri Lanka)	1957	1957
Egypt	1956	1956
Ghana	1960	1961
Guinea	1959	1959/1960
Laos	1961	1962
Mali	1960	1961
Nepal	1955	1956
North Yemen	1956	1958
Somalia	1960	1963
Syria	1956	1963

Source: Own figure with year of first project data from Lin (1993) and year of diplomatic recognition from Wikipedia (2022).

1.3. Defining the hypotheses

From the historical context, themes to further develop have been identified. The theoretical framework allows the research to draw seven hypotheses to answer: How does the Chinese development cooperation in Africa prompt a re-evaluation of the EU development policies ?

H1. History and narratives: The way history is referred to and used is highly different from one model to another. The EU interpretation of history is Eurocentric, while the Chinese vision of history is based on the long term construction of a relationship taking roots in the common struggle against colonialism.

H2. Defining the sectors for cooperation and the priorities of the agenda: Eurocentrism should push Europe to prioritize and European issues on the agenda and neocolonialism would further impose them. Orientalism would interpret a wrong agenda because of a created image of

African needs, while relationality would suggest that China offers a strong emphasis in the process of co-defining the common interests.

H3. Bilateralism and multilateralism: While looking for a friendship, China is more inclined to strengthen bilateral relationships which are the source of power, which makes stronger ties with individual independent countries more attractive.

H4. The normative differences and clash of norms

H4A. Democracy and state sovereignty: Orientalism would suggest that Europe doesn't trust Africa in solving Africa's problems and therefore binds Africa to adopt the democratization process. China, following a decolonial approach, would not interfere in the domestic governance of African states, resulting in a positive receptiveness from African governments.

H4B: Human Rights and State sovereignty: China by defining a relationship based on common fight for decolonization, would tend to prioritize state sovereignty over human rights. Neocolonialism would suggest that the EU would keep prioritizing over Human rights and liberal norms even if affecting state sovereignty.

H5. Conditionality: Neocolonialism can explain European interventions in African internal affairs as still actual through the binding character of the cooperation. The justification is made through an Eurocentric approach of the liberal world as an appropriate framework in which Africa can develop. Relationality can rather imply that African states *bao* (reciprocate) by choice after the Chinese *Renqing*, which makes governments more inclined to follow China.

H6: The promise of a Status quo versus a revisionist invitation: The ideal type of development is constructed based on the current world order for the EU. The imposition of this vision results in a Chinese revisionist promise of decolonization of the mind through south-south cooperation. The Chinese approach focuses on the process of cooperating towards an ideal type of a revised version development.

H7: multilateralism and multipolarity: In its promise of development, China, by emphasizing decolonization and common growth, promotes multipolarism. While the EU defends

multilateralism under the rules of the liberal institutions. China would therefore leave a space for Africa to grow as a unique independent pole, while neocolonialism would suggest that the former colonial powers would keep an influence over former colonies through its institutional framework.

2. Methodology

The second point of this chapter introduces the methodology followed to conduct the qualitative analysis.

To test and challenge the hypotheses, this paper follows a qualitative analysis through a discourse analysis. The data are generated from the narratives used in the empirics through thematic discussion which compare the differences, similarities, tensions and contradictions of the words, norms and concepts used in the empirics. The interdisciplinary approach of discourse analysis has been both developed in post colonial approach (Hansen, 2019) and relationality (Rudyak, 2022). As it has been shown that narratives present a highly important tool in Chinese Foreign, the method of discourse analysis appears best adapted to understand Beijing's approach. Moreover, it allows a deeper identification of how colonialism has been integrated in World Politics by identifying the remaining hierarchies, power dynamics and knowledge production readable through discourse. The languages and discourses betray one's internal habits and thoughts, this is why critical thoughts put a strong emphasis on the binaries and dichotomies such as "modernity/coloniality" (Sebartam, 2022). In other words "it enriches the analytical toolkit, allowing for a deeper understanding of how colonial legacies are perpetuated and contested through language and discourse", explains Discourse Analyzer (2024).

As stated before, in Chinese diplomacy, a strong emphasis is put on the narratives made to create bonds through friendship as an important tool for the *Renqing*. Indeed, going in pairs with critical thinking of the post-colonial approaches, Discourse Analysis helps recognize the construction of social power relations. "Languages as a site of power and resistance" (Discourse Analyzer, 2024), create an arena where opposite forces resulting from colonial dynamics, fights and resist, for and against power (Sebartam, 2022). Therefore, texts (literary works, media content, political speeches, etc.) should be critically analyzed, "within their broader historical, cultural and political context (Discourse Analyze, 2024) to understand what has been effective in

the Chinese development model that could reevaluate the EU development model. Because discourse creates, perpetuates, reproduces, and questions current dominations.

The analysis of content covers four empirics: the Joint EU-Africa Strategy for 2030 (EU-AU30), the China-Africa Cooperation Vision for 2035 (CACV35), the Dakar Action Plan for 2022-2024 (Dakar Plan) and the Samoa Partnership Agreement.

The analysis uses the EU-AU30 and the Samoa agreement as the expression of the ideal type of the Eu development policies towards Africa, or the European Consensus; it uses the CACV35 and the Dakar Plan as the ideal type of the Chinese development model in Africa or the Beijing Consensus. When referred to in the analysis, these terms are therefore interchangeable and understood as having the same meaning.

- Chapter 1 is used for the contextualisation and defines and divides the analysis through subtopics. The subtopics bring an individual input to the discussion of EU development policies re-evaluation, based on the Chinese development model.
- The theoretical framework introduced in Chapter 2 defines the lens through which the texts are analyzed by drawing hypotheses based on the Post-colonial approach of Eurocentrism, Neo colonialism, decolonization (of the mind) and the Theory of Relationality.
- Chapter 3 tests the hypothesis through the content analysis of the four legal texts defining Africa's cooperation for development with the EU and China.

These two documents appear relevant to compare as they serve as the most recent tools for the EU and Chinese development policies in Africa. Therefore, languages used in the articles and that text's narratives are compared to understand the creation of power structures and expression of different ideologies.

As a background, authors, ambassadors will be quoted to support the arguments, to better highlight and unshade the points made. Official discourse such as Xi Jinping discourse during the 5th FOCAC summit will foster the contextual understanding. Using official documents

issued by the partnership of the EU with AU, and by China with AU, this paper aims to compare the two approaches of development policies, understanding similarities and differences, and assessing which one corresponds the best to Africa.

After introducing these documents, the process of data collection is explained as well as the choice of the empirics. Finally, the sub-topics are introduced.

3. Description of the data used in the analysis and choice of the data

The third point of the chapter describes the empirics, justifies the choice of the data and defines the sub-topics to test the hypotheses.

3.1. Description of the empirics

China and Africa (through the FOCAC)

In the context of the aforementioned “New Era” of the “Partnership of Equals”, in November 2021, the 8th FOCAC summit was held in Dakar (Senegal), after which, with a weak delay, four resolutions were published in December (Sun, 2021). The first paper was the Declaration on China-Africa Cooperation on Combating Climate Change, underlining sustainability as a strong aspect of Sino-African relations. The Declaration of the Eighth Ministerial Conference of FOCAC, was the second publication and reported the summit. The last two documents are used by this paper to compare the EU and Chinese characteristics of development policies in Africa.

The first resolution used as an object of study is the “China-Africa Cooperation Vision 2035” from December 10th. Interestingly, it stands as the first mid long-term plan for Sino-African cooperation, defining a framework for collaborations lasting for around 15 years.

The vision, made of around 2000 words, is divided into 8 points, quoting them: 1. common development of China and Africa; 2. common interests 3. new development paradigm featuring transformation and growth to advance industries 4. new green growth model for common eco-development 5. improving people’s well-being featuring happiness for all 6. new chapter in people-to-people exchanges for common cultural prosperity 7. common security 8. new exemplars of international exchanges for open and win-win cooperation.

The coordination of policies are defined in the following areas defined by article 1(3): “trade and investment, industrial development, digital economy, green and low-carbon

development, people's well-being and health, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, peace and security and international affairs".

The last publication following the ministerial conference developed a FOCAC action plan for the years 2022-2024, also known as the Dakar Action Plan. The latter defines the preamble (1), political cooperation (2), Economic cooperation (3), Social Development Cooperation (4), the Cultural and People-to-people Exchanges (5), the Peace and Security Cooperation (6), the Green Development (7), and Experience Sharing on State Governance (8) and the FOCAC institutional Development (9).

It is based on the Long-Range Goals for 2035 of China, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations, and the Agenda 2063 of the African Union (1.5. preamble).

These two papers published in the context of the FOCAC summit are therefore addressed to China, 53 African states, as Eswatini is not part of the multilateral framework, and the African Union Commission.

The EU and Africa (AU and OACPS)

The Samoa Partnership agreement, comes in after a long succession of conventions and agreement as developed in the Chapter 1. In this regard, it is the succession of the Cotonou Agreement that drove the EU development policies towards ACP states for 20 years. Supposedly ending in 2020, it has been prolonged until 2021, when new negotiation started between the EU and the OACP for a Post-Cotonou agreement. Blocked three years in the European Council, the EU member states gave their approval for the agreement in July 2023, defining future cooperation for a length of 20 years. On November 15, the Samoa agreement was signed by the EU member states (European Parliament, 2023).

Institutionalizing the political, economic and development cooperation of the EU and OACPS, it underlines six areas to answer international current challenges, namely, "democracy, gender equality and human rights, economic growth and sustainable development, climate change, human and social development and peace and security" (EU Council, 2024). It further adds regional programs following three regions: Africa, the Carribeans and the Pacific.

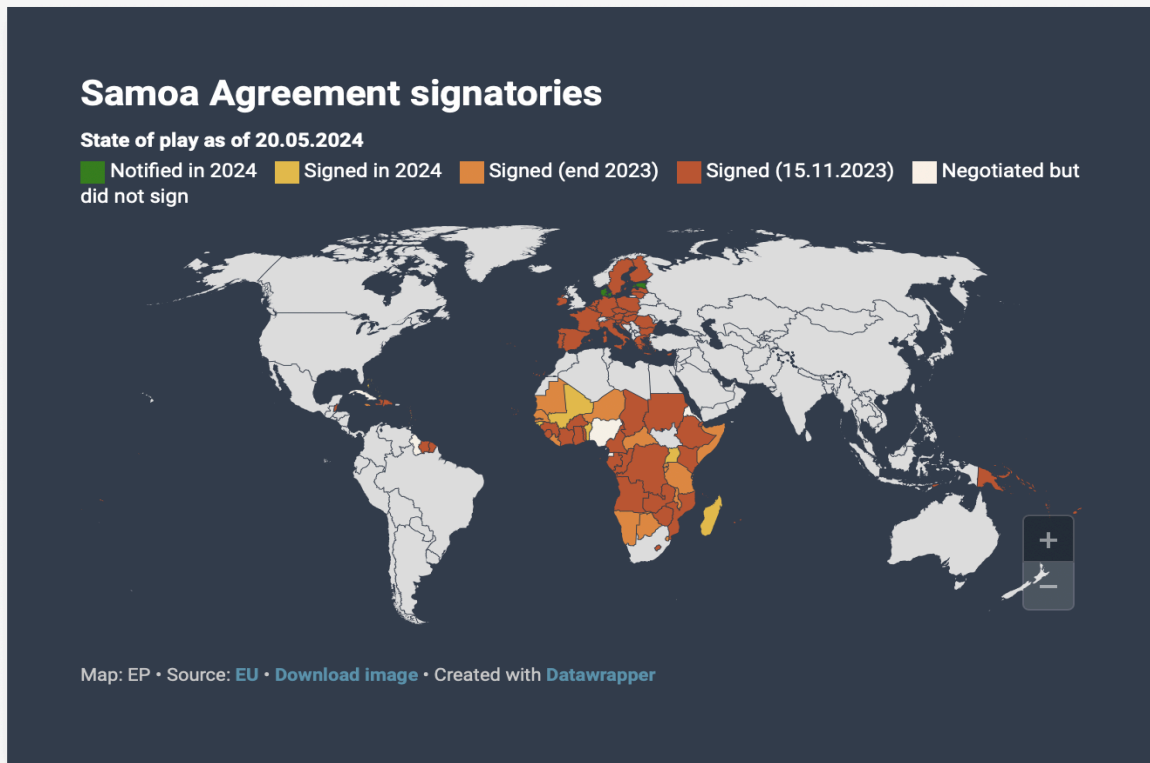
Entering in effect from 1st January 2024, the document is a binding agreement between the 27 European Member States representing 446.83 million people in 2022 (Eurostat, 2023), and the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). This latter is a

group of 79 countries: 47 from Africa, 16 from the Caribbean and 15 are from the Pacific, and the Republic of Maldives. Among the 54 countries in Africa, six have never joined OACPS. These countries are Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, South Sudan, and Libya.

The binding nature of the agreement enters into force when the European Parliament signs it and each ACP countries individually ratify it.

As of May 2024, three countries from Africa did not sign it in the context of the OACPS, the Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, and Nigeria as shown by the figure 3 (EU parliament, 2024).

Figure 3: The signatories states of the Samoa Agreement in May 2024. Source: EU



The last document is the Joint EU-Africa Strategic Partnership (EU-AU30). It takes place in the context of the EU-AU summits. The last one was held in Brussels in February 2022 and drew a Joint vision of cooperation for the two Unions envisioning 2030. The document is divided into 8 points over six pages, and is the renewal of the Joint vision adopted at the 5th AU-EU Summit held in Abidjan, in 2017. The EU Commission (2024b) underlines four priorities: the

rising up of investment through the Global Gateway Africa-EU Investment Package, peace and security, migration and mobility, restating the commitment to multilateralism “within the rule based on the international order, within the UN at its core”.

3.2. The choice of the data

Liu (2011) identifies two principal areas where the EU and China deeply differ in their policies, namely aid and security. The paper will focus on the narratives and ethical aspects of the policies, but it does not touch upon in detail the security aspect.

The development policies having, as mentioned before, different sides and aspects, the paper limits its quote of analysis within the subtopics. They are drawn to better grasp and compare the ideal types of the Beijing Consensus and the European Consensus on development aid, by taking as a study case Africa through the OACPS and AU. The sub-topics are defined to test the hypotheses.

The European development policies are usually understood as institutionalized through the former Cotonou agreement, and the recent Samoa Partnership agreement (EU Parliament, 2024). The Samoa Agreement offers a general focus of EU interaction in Africa states within the OACPS. The Joint EU-AU Vision for 2030 (EU-AU30) offers a framework of direct interaction between the EU and the African Union in development cooperation.

The NDICI as a European tool for development aids will not be used as a main object of study because this paper focuses on Africa as a unity and a continent, mainly through the African Union scope, or the African states part of the OACPS. In this regard, the NDICI would not cover the entirety of the development policies towards the continent. Moreover, the FOCAC documents are addressed to 53 states while the NDICI strategic programmes do not cover the whole continent (chapter 1).

3.3. The subtopics

From the hypotheses developed with the historical and theoretical framework, the definition of the subtopics is made, leading to sub-questions to test the hypotheses.

Two development models based on different narratives, tools and hierarchies

To test the first hypothesis (H1: history and narratives) the first subtopic tries to test the parts of history that are remembered and forgotten by looking at the general narratives used in the document. It tests the hypothesis by questioning which part of the history is used resulting in the construction of which type of relations ?

The second subtopic tries to test (H2: choice of the sectors and the setting of priorities in the agenda) looks at trade and migrations to analyze the knowledge production of what is defined as mutual interest, by questioning which sectors are defined as a priority and how are the agendas drawn?

The third hypothesis (H3: multilateralism over bilateralism) is discussed through the method of implementation offered by the two different development models. The hypothesis is tested by looking at which model corresponds the best for the revision of EU development policies?

Normative diplomacy: Defining, promoting and justifying norms

In the discussion of norms and values promotion (H4: different norms: the promotion of democracy), an emphasis on different norms and values supported by each agent (China, AU, OACPS, EU) While democracy is conditional with the EU, what does the Chinese approach offer a potential reevaluation? Should democracy be binding to be promoted? Is Democracy undermined by Chinese presence?

The ethical discussion of the subtopic testing the fourth hypothesis (H4b: different norms: the promotion of human rights over sovereignty) looks at the different words used to define and qualify Human Rights. As the hypothesis states that in the definition of norms, a clear distinction is perceivable between the promotion of human rights, which seem to be understood as differently prioritized since China further emphasizes state sovereignty. It questions whether the EU development policies towards Africa should prioritize Human Rights over state sovereignty?

Chinese Development model vs. European development model in a changing world landscape

The last part of the discussion comes as a result of the implication that rethinking the EU development model has to come in the context of its competition with China on the international stage.

It tests hypothesis (H5:) by looking at the binding nature of the Samoa agreement and the justification for its conditions. It further seeks behind Chinese concession whether China draws rules to join its race to development. The EU binds the parties to its agreement and the access to aid is negotiated in various binding requirements justified on the basis of international law, while China seems to stop at “mutual interest” and “justice”. Is the binding aspect to aid efficient? Are conditions more effective than concessions?

The promise of a different world over the promise of the liberal world (H6), is tested through the analysis of what China and the EU imply by “shared future”. How are the two visions constructed?

The development model invites both Africa beyond development, for a “shared future” and “common development”. What does it say for EU development policies?

The last discussion tests the last hypothesis (H7: multilateralism vs multipolarism) by questioning Chinese *Renqing*. While the EU is suspected of Eurocentrism, and of following its own interest, it questions how China perceives itself vis à vis the world. If China just makes concessions over conditions, in what way does the Chinese development model benefit China? To rethink EU development policies as still beneficial to the EU, it challenges how Beijing promotes its own interests?

III. Analysis and Implications

The Third Chapter is divided in three thematic discussions based on a content critical analysis made through discourse analysis. The findings and their implications are used to answer: how does the Chinese Chinese development cooperation with Africa prompt a reevaluation of the EU development policies?

I Two development models based on different narratives, tools and hierarchies

Testing H1. the role and the use of history; H2. the definition process of “mutual interest” and H3. bilateralism over multilateralism.

H1: History and narratives, how are they used? The relationship it shapes

China and Africa defined as an old friendship with common colonial past

The China-Africa Cooperation Vision for 2035 (CACV35) starts in its first paragraph with “Considering the development history, background and characteristics of both sides”. By comparison the Joint Vision for 2030 (EU-AU30) explains in Article 2 that the vision rests on “geography, acknowledgment of history (...)”. In the first lines of the partnership, both use history as a justification and explanation of the current cooperation with Africa. History is depicted as forming the foundation of the shared visions.

However, looking at the narratives that contextualize these two visions, the references to history are differently made. Indeed, Xi's speech for the opening ceremony of the FOCAC 8th ministerial conference, recalls the 65 years of the “fraternity in (...) struggle for imperialism and colonialism” (Xinhua, 2021). The historical references of China are using the open scars of colonialism endured by both Africa and China.

The speech, more than drawing a common concern, also refers to the “fraternity” aspect which is developed when Xi recalls the 50th anniversary of China having at the seat at the UN, and gratefully thanks the “friend who supported China back then”, referring to the African State who recognized China as an independent state (Chapter 2, figure 3). Using the discursive tools to

recall the common interest and common struggle that the two brothers have endured together. As pointed out by Sobolik (2024), “China thinks in centuries”.

In relational theory, the choice of the narratives is highly important, explains Rudyak (2022). To develop a friendly relation, China uses history to construct a justification of the actual bond based on a common scare. Sobolik (2024) explains that the violence of European power in China during the “century of humiliation” is often remembered by the Chinese Communist Party. This anti-colonial struggle is used as a common interest and a foundation basis for common ground of interest with Africa, and for south-south cooperation more generally (Mawdlsey, 2019). Effectively, this choice of remembering this part of history leads the document to define the relationship as a “traditional friendship” and to recognize “China’s historic achievements in eliminating absolute poverty” in the Dakar Action Plan article 4(4.1). This latter can be further understood as the long process of financial aid started by China in the 1950s (as seen in Chapter 1).

The EU “acknowledgment” of which history?

In comparison, the EU refers to history by linking it to “acknowledgment” in the second article of the EU-AU30. However, no other reference to history is made in the EU-AU30 and none are made in the Samoa Agreement. The discourse analysis pushes the reading to look at what is mentioned and what is avoided. The post-colonial approach leads the analysis to seek which parts of the history are chosen to be remembered, and which are chosen to be forgotten. A second reference to the past is made in article 6 of the EU-AU30: “The two continents have a long-standing cooperation premised on the principle of African solutions to African problems”. However, in post-colonial thoughts, the EU development policies are described as having a long past of state-interference over independent nations, keeping a tutelage and an external influence over state internal affairs (Men & Barton, 2011). Still, this “acknowledgement of history” in the EU-AU30 leads the EU and the AU to primarily define their relationship as “closest partners and neighbours” in article 1 of the EU-AU30.

Using “history” as the second main foundation of the partnership (after “geography”), is choosing to remember history from when the EU became partners. The part of the history the EU seems to highlight is when it became “the biggest donor”, since the European Development Fund

creation in 1957. In this regard, chapter 1 critically defined the historical development of the partnership relations between Africa (ACP and AU) and the EU.

However, this reading of history remains highly Eurocentric, or EU-centric. In Post-colonial understanding, geography did not play in favor of European and African relations. The historical interactions between the two continents happened because the geographical closeness led to the violence of colonialism and slavery.

“History” for the African parties

A post-colonial reading would push to reinterpret the acknowledgment of history through the African lens. As seen in Chapter 2, Eurocentrism implies the reading of history in global politics of Europe, and in this case the EU as a point of reference to consider history. However, the vision is for both the EU and the African Union and considering the creation of the AU implies a different acknowledgment of history. Taking its roots from OAU, which historically focused on the end of Apartheid and reaching political independence (“Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. | African Union,” au.int), the AU is geographically the closest partner to the EU but historically trying to free itself from it. In this regard, the scholars Che and Bodom (2023), further recall that the first interactions between the two continents started during the XV century at the Age of Discovery, when European powers were building trading posts in Africa. This period was followed by the Berlin Conference held over the years 1884-1885, during which African lands were divided among the Colonial powers without consultation.

On the same token, as seen in the first chapter, choosing a part of history to forget has started back at the EEC creation with the attempt to use its *sui generis* status to dissociate European states from the former colonial powers. In this context, referring to history as the foundation of a close partnership bond, implies the loss of the strong meaning attached to the word when linking African (or ACPs in general) and the EU member states.

Actors-in-relations

Interestingly, the way history is referred to, understood and used is therefore deeply interrelated in the two visions: the CACV35 and the Dakar Plan use the colonial period as a common struggle for China and Africa and the foundation of a friendship, while the Samoa and EU-AU35

tries to detach itself from it, by avoiding clear references to the past beyond the EU-era, and rather emphasizing the close geography of the partners.

The analysis through actors-in-relations implies that the power source is the relations, and therefore power comes from the ability to manage, use and benefit from them. In relational theory, the role of rhetoric is highly important: the term “friendship” was already used during the Bandung conference in the mid 1950s (as seen in Chapter 1), and is further highlighted in recent times. Consequently, Pye (as cited in Rudyak, 2022) states that: “the Chinese tend to see the manipulation of human relationships as the natural and normal approach for accomplishing most things in life for they see ‘society as a web of human relations and associations’”. Therefore, on the international stage, the Chinese tend to construct an idea of deep relationships and develop them through the construction of warm narratives i.e., “friendships”. By recalling the anti-colonial struggle, Beijing further dissociates from the European choice to avoid the topic. It positions itself as the historical friend against the historically colonial powers.

Implications and re-evaluation

At the end of the first article, the CACV35 has depicted a common goal of development in the context of a historical friendship based on anti-colonial struggle. While the EU-AU30 defined two neighboring partners taking into account history as a foundation of their partnership, history that a postcolonial lens would not define as the foundation for development policies. In this regard, China is challenging the European development model through its colonial past by creating narratives of its common development with Africa based on a historical anti-colonial struggle. The EU would gain by leaving a EU-centric reading of history as the foundation of the partnership. Confronting the African scares from colonial times through dialogue and fostered communication would also further weaken the confrontation of China.

H2: Defining the priorities on the agenda and the shared interests

Different and similar sectors of “mutual interest” between the EU and the Chinese development policies

Both agreements highlight the focus on “mutual and shared interests”. The Dakar Plan mentions 49 times “mutual” and “share” 29 times. Similarly, the Samoa agreement uses 66 times the term “mutual” and 44 times “common”. Still, in looking at the choice of the mutually cooperative sectors that would bring mutual, common or shared interest, the EU and China are perceived differently. In their agenda for development, they both recall the need to follow the UN Agenda for 2030 and the AU vision for 2063 (EU-AU30 art. 4, Dakar Action plan art. 3.8.11; introduction and art. 1.1. of CACV35). In this regard, both visions refer to the digital transition, and use a strong emphasis on the need for green cooperation (CACV35 Art. 4; Dakar plan art. 7; Samoa Title II; AU-EU30 art. 4). However they differ in their approach to culture (see H6) and a strong difference resides in the different priorities to education and migrations. China develops a special emphasis on the educational side of development (Wang, 2023) while the EU current debates and focus remains on migrations for the EU (Bertossi et al., 2021).

Unilaterally defining the agenda

Migration indeed holds a special place in the development cooperation between EU and Africa: the article 6 of the Joint Vision for 2030 is on migration and mobility, and the Samoa Agreement has its Title VI entirely dedicated to it. However, in defining priorities and goals of the agenda for 2063, the African Union underlines six points, with no reference to to migrations (namely, “1. Inclusive social and economic development, 2. continental and regional integration, 3. democratic governance 4. peace and security 5. other issues aimed at repositioning Africa to becoming a dominant player in the global arena”) (Goals & Priority Areas of Agenda 2063 | African Union, n.d.).

From a postcolonial reading, Bertossi et al., 2021, highlight that for the African Union, the agenda is far from being centered on migrations that are mainly regional, while the EU policies are qualified as “failing because not taking this specificity in account”. Zhou (2024) further, highlights the issue deriving from the process of defining cooperation sectors for development aid. He explains the monopoly in the debates of migrations, energy and trade, and

reports increasing suspicions among the African regarding whether the EU is “concerned with African Development”.

While migrations remain a number one topic, from a Eurocentric perspective, which primarily associate migrations with its security; migrations for Africa, especially North-South, are primarily identified as climate and economically related, explains Mayaki (2019). He qualifies brain drain as remaining a positive aspect for development because money is sent back to the home country through remittances, and graduated people often return to their country to build their own business, Mayaki states (2019).

The remittances should receive this special attention because they make a big part of the continent's revenue. The money sent back by the African diaspora is identified as a strong tool for development since directly targeting individuals (EUISS, 2023). They provide the necessary economic means for educating children, “get access to healthcare and build infrastructures”, reports EUISS (2023). Most importantly, remittances are counted as “exceeding the total amount of foreign direct investment and official development aid”. By focusing on migration, and adding a special attention to the security aspect, the EU defines a sector of cooperation, but does not seem to mutually shape it with African countries.

The priority of migrations on the agenda is different considering the prior goals of each party. It can be read through the lens of Eurocentrism which takes Europe as the point of reference to define the priorities. Orientalism can read the European alienation of the African diaspora, which qualifies it as in relation to the EU while mostly regional. A neo-colonial reading would further add that it independently chooses and imposes the sectors to put on the priority agenda. It underlines the hierarchies in the relationship, with the monopoly of the decisions making remaining in the European hands. Sebartam (2022) refers to the neo-colonial critique of hierarchies driving the “orientation of the policies and actions in these fields”.

A direct implication resides in the fact that putting the EU's interest in priority reduces the African receptiveness. Consequently, Rudyak (2022) underlines in reporting that for most of the African states, the biggest donor is China -even if it remains factually the EU, leading them to *bao* (reciprocate).

Common development and trade

Therefore in its call for equality in the partnership the EU is found to choose the priorities of “mutual interests” for development through an eurocentric orientalist and neo colonialist frame. Instead, Beijing over-emphasizes the need for an “absolute priority over development” (Wang, 2011). Development is described as a common growth for both parties: “common development” (CACV35, art.1; Dakar Action Plan art. 3.6.1). In this regard, the Dakar Plan uses 6 times “mutual learning” and the CACV35 refers to it art. 6.1. When defining the parties, the CACV35 calls China “ the largest developing country and the continent” and Africa “ the continent with the most developing countries in the world”. Moreover, following this goal of development, the Chinese vision puts a different emphasis on the trades than the EU.

In the trade agreement, the chinese concessional loans and aids are officially built up helping both African and Chinese firms and enterprises. The narratives created by the Dakar Plan and the CACV35 clearly state the gains for both parties. This leads China to increasingly shift its development model towards trade to leave aside the traditional aid-donors relationship (Sun, 2021; Che & Bodomo, 2023; IMF, 2024). In this regard, the economic cooperation of China and Africa has been defined as the main element shaping a positive perception of China by the African government (Hanush, 2012) notably because it builds a narrative around equality. Consequently, Beijing identified its common interests with Africa. Zhang (2022) further explained on the same token that 10 billion of US dollars will be raised for African exports to balance the Africa-China debt relation.

While depicting the trade agreements, the Samoa Partnership imposes the EPAs as the main trading tools in the article 49 (3) on Trade cooperation, and is recalled multiple times notably in article 50 on trade arrangement. As shown before in Chapter 1, the EPAs have been badly received by the majority of the African Parties, still, access to the EU development aid and the European Investment Bank implies joining the EPAs as a condition.

These agreements are moreover described as “asymmetric provisions” by the official EU Commission website (2024a), because “in favor of” the African (ACP) parties. Still, Assita Kanko (2020) underlines that “ European policies that concentrate on investment over aid and which create independent African wealth, is not just better for the people of Africa, it is better for Europe too”. While China clearly emphasizes that its development initiatives are mutually

beneficial, the EU adopts contradictory terms, by constructing “mutually beneficent” vision through “asymmetric” trade deals.

Analysis and Implication

In choosing the sectors of cooperation for development the EU and China are both looking for reciprocity. However, the EU is found to define the priorities of the agenda through an Eurocentric, Orientalist and neocolonial approach. China is seen as emphasizing the fact that both parties are benefiting notably in their gestion of aid through trade.

A Post colonial reading would perceive the creation of asymmetric deals through the Orientalism of Edouard Said. By creating narratives that imply the victimization of Africa, it fails to identify the continent as the “global powerhouse of the future” (“Agenda 2063”, au.int). Instead, it shapes a benevolent figure trying to help African countries qualified as “nanny diplomacy” and resulting in the “victimization” of African states (Kanko, 2022). The consequence is that it contradicts the quest for equality and mutual benefits.

Kemedjio and Lynch (2024) further underline that the benevolent attitude linked to aid shows the Eurocentric approach because it is denying from where are coming these privileges. They question the narratives of donor and benevolent attitude by reversing the lens and considering the EU’s welfare as a tool to repair the historical social, political, cultural and economic harm by former colonial powers in Africa.

In comparison, with an absolute priority for “common development”, the Chinese development model moves towards trading partnership which has the advantage that it positions both parties on equal positions, further supported by the construction of an image of common fight for development. From a relational perspective, the importance resides in whether the African governments *feel* like they are equals, not whether the deal is effectively in their favor, because only by feeling that they are equals can states be friends. What matters is not anymore how much is given but how it is given in-relation. The process of development aid is carefully defined, because the outcome depends on how African states perceive the gesture, and the gifter: as a friend, as a partner or as a benevolent gifter. The Prime minister of Botswana summarizes the findings when stating “I find that the Chinese treat us as equals. The West treats us as former subjects”, quotes Rudyak (2022).

Re-evaluation

The EU development policies are pushed to be rethought by the Chinese model in their definition of the priorities driving the agendas. Before the implementation, policies would gain in receptiveness both by not prioritizing EU interest and by adopting non-contradictory narratives that would all follow the same direction of “equality”. Indeed, the development policies would gain by focusing on the *process* of defining aid over the aid in itself because it draws the context in which actors cooperate, trade or receive aid and therefore influence the way actors perceive each other. Revisiting the agenda for cooperation could result in a better context for cooperation leading to more receptiveness from the African states.

H3: Bilateralism vs multilateralism

Priority to bilaterality leads to better relations

The Chinese and the European development model differ in their context of negotiation and implementation of development policies. While both China and the EU officially support multilateralism, bilateralism remains the stronger tool with which China draws its cooperation with African states. Indeed, the FOCAC is addressed to the African Union but policies and initiatives are bilaterally implemented by China and African states. Meanwhile, the EU primarily fosters multilateral frameworks. Having diplomatic relations with 53 African States (Wu, 2021), China contrasts with the EU who developed only one bilateral Joint Partnership vision in 2007 with South Africa (Council of the European Union, 2007) and calls for a strong engagement in multilateralism in the fourth point of the EU-AU30. The EU fosters cooperation mainly with international or regional organizations such as NEPAD and AU (Tull, 2008; Zhou, 2024). Herzberger-Fofana (2022) reminds that there is “one single embassy in the African continent for over 50 countries”, while the EU member states have strong bilateral relationships notably with Sub-saharan African countries, she states. Where the EU fosters development aid bilaterality through the NDICI, it remains focused on the neighboring countries as seen in Chapter 1 (“Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI – Global Europe)” 2021). However, bilateralism, supported by China, follows the logic

of its quest for a privileged relationship that it can individually develop, and then use in a multilateral framework.

The Post colonial approach suggests that the EU-centric interpretation of history leads it to take for granted its relationship with African states, forgetting the Colonial history attached to the parties. *Orientalism* added that the EU fails in changing its perception of Africa as 55 different independent states with their various interests and challenges for development. The Post-Colonial scholar Ashton (2024) further underlines the EU inability to “distinguish (...) different nations, their histories, economics and politics”. There is a need to foster dialogue, introduce better communication and address the scars left by colonialism. In this regard, Men and Barton (2011) recalled the need to regain the trust in the African elite, especially in the context of Pan-africanism and increasing denunciation of neo-colonialism. In this regard, favoring bilateral dialogue before multilateral discussion leaves the room for better dialogue and communication adapted to each individual state. In other words, addressing together all the former colonies means losing the various priorities specific and different to each different state. The relationship when primarily built through a multilateral framework is on the contrary less special: one amongst the others, implying that the other 55 African states (or 79 ACP states) all have the same need for development.

It appears that developing bilateral relations with African states would push in its favor, to better cooperate on a multilateralism framework. In relational theories, the stronger is the relationship, Qin (2016) reminds, the greater is the relational power for both parties. The priority is therefore to develop the ties of the actors-in-relations to each other, for then, benefit from the advantages it brings. Indeed, bilateralism does not prevent China from using the multilateralism character of its CACV35 (art. 8.2). However, it allows China to better adapt and show its acknowledgement of African initiatives thanks to strong bilateral ties. For instance, the CACV35, when referring to multilateralism for finance cooperation (art. 2.4), does not mention the mainstream framework of international institutions nor Chinese banks, but rather quotes African Institutions. Article 2(4) quotes five banks¹, all of which are African. Besides offering an alternative approach to traditional donors using the western institutions, it sends a message to African states that they are seen. Moreover, the CACV35 in its introduction, more than following

¹ African Development Bank, The African Export-Import Bank, Development Bank of the Central African States, the Eastern and Southern African Trade and Development Bank and West Africa for sustainable financing.

the African Union agenda for 2063 further quotes the African national programs that are also identified as characterizing the directive line of the vision, helping in giving the parties the same weight: the state of China, jointly drawing a vision to each state of the African continent, preventing them from losing their individuality and their agency. In post-colonial thought, it appears relevant since former colonies fought to gain back this agency.

Re-evaluation

To restore an effective communication and an efficient dialogue in the relationship, bilateral dialogue shows the consideration of the individual entities, and helps for a better adaptation.

In the choice of mutually beneficial sectors, EU development policies should focus on fostering bilateral understanding of what the African governments are asking for, which implies a strong work on the bilateral side of its relationship with African states. In this regard, Ashton (2024) recommends sending diplomats and missions to foster the ties. Kemedjio and Lynch (2024) explains that there is a need to “decolonize the mind” of westerners, who remain profoundly un-aware of African realities, and still refuse to take responsibilities in these biases. They further explain that the issue in the policy solutions comes from the imposition of cultural, economic, technical, political and religious solutions that do not respect African traditions but rather follow western norms.

Indeed, from a relational perspective, the Chinese priority over bilateralism has the advantage that the EU could get inspiration from to nourish its relation with Africa. The development of bilateralism brings relative gains over multilateralism by the fact that it helps build stronger ties and results in more effective multilateral actions.

II. Normative diplomacy: Defining, promoting and justifying norms

Testing H4: the normative differences and clash of norms; H4A: the promotion of democracy and state sovereignty; H4.B: Human Rights over State sovereignty.

H4.A. Democracy and state sovereignty

Democracy and state sovereignty

In the Samoa Agreement the article 67 addresses Democracy and defines it as a “universal principle”. The first paragraph (art. 67.1) defines democracy as “the separation of powers, promote political pluralism and strengthen transparency, participation and confidence in democratic processes as well as trust between political leaders and the people”. The next four paragraphs use 13 times “shall”, to give guidance or rules to ensure a democracy.

In comparison, the Dakar Action Plan refers one time to Democracy, only in the context of article 2(4.2) on political cooperation, which defines the values and principle of “humanity” that the Plan follows. “Democracy” is directly followed by “freedom”. The juxtaposition of these two principles underlines the Chinese interpretation of Democracy as linked to freedom. From a post-colonial understanding, Democracy goes in pair with the main principle upheld by Zhou Enlai in its relationship with Africa: noninterference in internal affairs.

Indeed, not mentioned in the CACV35, the stands of China regarding democracy seems to be an irrelevant and un-required aspect for the development cooperation. Where the EU depicts clear rules to follow, China understands democracy as an internal state free decision.

Should Democracy be imposed to be promoted?

One of the main questions in promoting democracy therefore is whether Democracy should be imposed to be promoted? Or whether China by being autocratic would not hinder the democratization process in Africa?

Indeed, the African Union agenda for 2063 depicts Democracy as the third prior goal. In this regard, recent research from the Afrobarometer (2021), Figure 4 and 5 show that increasing Chinese engagement in Africa does not impact the quest for better democratic governance over the continent. Indeed, the conclusion explains that when asking which type of governance is

preferred, the correlation with the favorite development model is null: among the countries favoring democracy, 35 % point out the US as a favorite development model and 23% refer to China (against 11% for the former colonial power’s development model). Mainly perceived as economic more than political, the presence of an autocratic China in Africa is defended as non-affecting the perception of democratic values. Therefore, even though playing by the rules and quoting the EU norms and principles, it sets different priorities when referring to them. Democracy does not seem to be a focus at all, but rather “freedom” linked to non-intervention in state internal affairs.

Figure 4: Support for Democratic norms and institutions by preference for China or US model (34 countries) (Afrobarometer 2019/2021)

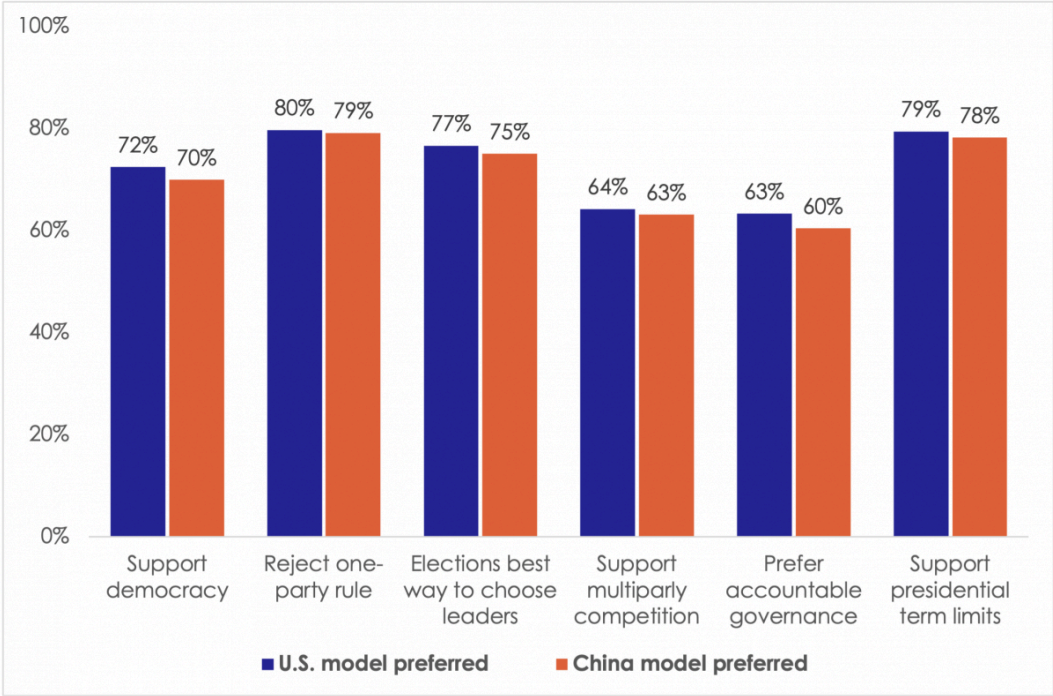
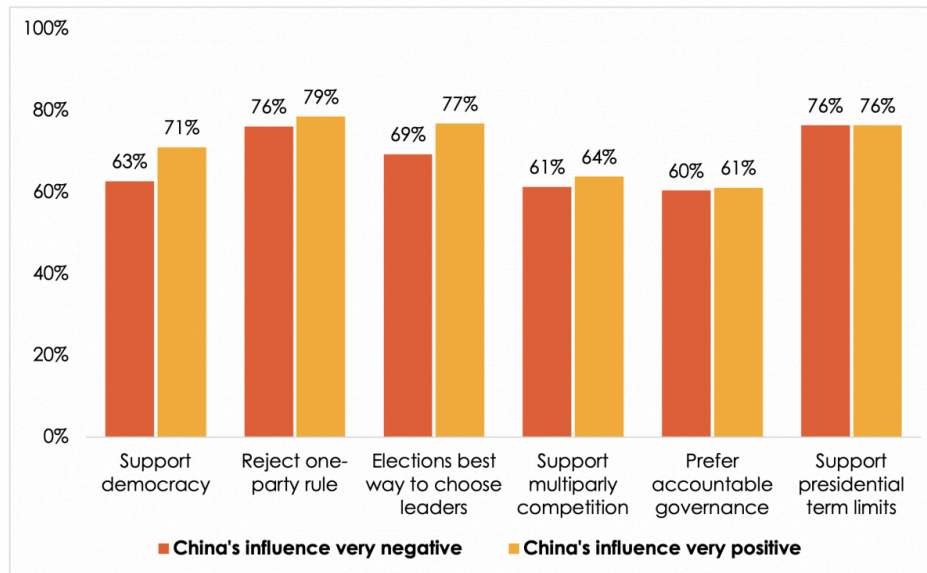


Figure 5: Support for democratic norms and institutions, by perceptions of China's influence (34 countries) (Afrobarometer 2019/2021)



Implications and re-evaluation

While the EU and China both support Democracy, their promotion of it for development is different. The EU imposes it with a clear definition and rules to follow, while China does not refer to it as any condition. Still, the African state seems to promote democracy, and to not be influenced by the Chinese autocratic system in their vision of it.

This implies that development policies do not have to be bound to democracy for its promotion. In rethinking the EU development model, linking and binding democracy to aid, does not seem to be effective. Instead, it is perceived as a “EU socialization” (Liu, 2011), or a form of neo-colonisation, since forcing it to comply with European norms and values. Moreover, in defining the biggest issues in African democracies, Mayaki (2019) in the chapter 10 of his book *Africa's critical Choices: A call for Pan African Roadmap*, identifies the non consultancy of the population. The former prime minister of Niger refers to the emptiness of the programs defended by the running candidates. Indeed, he explains that the policy plans are reduced to slogan sentences, or are set by experts not concerned by domestic issues. The citizens are forgotten in the process of EU's recommendations and its “specialist” drafting “appropriate solution” for

African democracies. Highlighting the loss of “ownership” in defining African issues, he calls for a re-appropriation of African problems, by offering African solutions.

The external actor persistence in defining a strong hold on political internal affairs is denounced by the Nkrumah’s post colonial approach of neocolonialism. In his quest for democratization, the EU development model could foster the consultancy of the African citizens. Imposing democracy and the way it should be reached, from a neo-colonial point of view, is an external intervention in state governance.

By offering a different type of help for a democratization process, which would focus on issues defined by African leaders, or helping in informing the citizens improving the network of media and press in local languages as recommended by Mayaki (2019) the EU could promote democracy more effectively.

H4.B. Human Rights

Development Policies in Africa: should Human rights get priority over state sovereignty?

While mentioned 118 times in the Samoa Agreement, “Human Rights” are only referred to 4 times in a single article on political cooperation in the Dakar Plan. Indeed, the paragraph 4 on International cooperation (2.4.3) “The two sides are committed to strengthening cooperation in the field of human rights, to jointly opposing politicization of human rights issues or interfering in others’ internal affairs as prescribed in the UN Charter, and to promoting the healthy development of the international cause of human rights”.

“Human Rights” are directly followed by the reference to state non-interference, and justified on the ground of the UN charter. Interestingly, it seems to directly answer western criticism on Chinese internal gestation of Human Rights, by using the state sovereignty principle of International Law. It clearly opposes the two normative priorities of EU and China in their promotions of their development policies.

As defined in chapter 1, in the FOCAC summits China defends the five principles of peaceful coexistence: “mutual respect for territory and sovereignty, mutual non aggression, mutual noninterference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence”. To answer this clash of priority in norms to defend, African statements should be looked into since the joint visions being drawn on the AU agenda for 2063. Interestingly, the African Union was historically founded in the roots of the fight for independence. As defined,

the Agenda 2063 is the genesis that corresponds to the continent redefined priorities. The vision for 2063 of the AU calls for “unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity” (“Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. | African Union,” n.d.). If the AU defines African prior interests as affirming Africa as an individual agent, free from external interference, it raises an ethical question for a policy re-evaluation: should the EU development model prioritize State sovereignty over Human Rights?

Historical context of State sovereignty

In 2011, Men and Barton tried to treat this ethical dilemma through a post-colonial approach. They defend that “*Sovereignty and territorial integrity sounds instinctively more adequate for African countries who fought for their independence*” (Men & Barton, 2011).

By tracing back the historical roots of state-sovereignty, they explain that the principle emerged from the creation of the Westphalian states. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648, defined territorial integrity and non intervention as two “basic norms” (Men & Barton, 2011). However, it remains the story of European states, and therefore a concept drawn upon a European perspective. In considering the anti-colonial struggle that African states had to conduct to access sovereignty, having the same interpretation of the concept would be a Eurocentric approach to the principle.

Considering the Chinese perspective, Men and Barton (2011) further argue that China discovered the western concept of sovereignty, as well as Human Rights, when colonial powers developed their “concession areas in the Chinese territory”. They defend that China had to adapt its foreign policy to these new western norms, which required time. After signing the ICESCR (1997) and the ICCPR (1998), the state officially followed the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle in early 2000s.

Human Rights before the Right of development?

Moreover, as explained by Men and Barton (2011), the *weberian state* -in itself perceived as a Eurocentric concept, encounters only one boundary in its legitimacy to exercise a weberian authority over its citizens: Human Rights. In the liberal idea of the state, the individuals are the basic unit, the state being the creation of the overall citizens, it should not overstep their basic

rights without falling apart. However, by externally imposing norms on African states, the EU reduces African states from exercising their authority.

By the same token, “Human Rights” are defined as civil and political or economic and social (Men and Barton 2011). However, African states reventate their economic and cultural rights such as the respect of their independence in choosing trade partners and an acknowledgment of colonialist tendencies of neglecting or ignoring their culture. Interestingly, the prior goal drawn by the Agenda for 2063 defines its prior goal as Inclusive social and economic development. The Post Colonial approach adds an emphasis on the neglection of the non innocent characters of the former colonial power regarding human rights. It further questions: What about the right of development?

In 1986 the General Assemblée of the United Nations published the Declaration on the Right to Development, defining it as “development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process” (OHCHR, 1986). However, imposing conditions and potential punitions by cutting funds or access to trade or development aid undermines the right to development in itself. Conditionality is perceived as *constraining* other’s rights. The Post colonial approach challenges the imposition of a priority to certain Human Rights over others. Refusing to deal with an unstable country and excluding it from the discussions for development of a shared future does not appear as an effective solution to protect Human Rights.

Implication and re-evaluation: Human Rights and trade

Beijing prompts a re-evaluation of the European development policies by paying peculiar attention to state sovereignty which follows the African request: independence. A decolonial approach would recommend “trust Africa in solving African problems” (Mayaki, 2019), as supported by both visions (CACV35 art.7; EU-AU30 art 5).

A potential rethinking of the EU development policies would be fostering Human Rights protection without linking and binding them to money and trade. In other words, it would imply the separation or the division of Human Rights promotion for Human Right promotions, to reduce the Eurocentric imposition of the priority to follow to reach development. For instance, by separating Human Rights to trade, the EU would foster financial aid and trade with Africa while opening dialogues on Human Rights issues. It implies agreeing to listen to African wonders, to better gain its trust back. Respect of state sovereignty does not have to be separated

from Human Rights as two alternatives, but as two complementary priorities. For instance, one of the biggest Chinese investment states in Africa is Sudan. In its Peacekeeping mission, China made sure that Sudanese authorities accepted its intervention before sending any troops (Men & Barton, 2011).

Implication and re-evaluation: Negotiation through bilateral dialogue for better adaptability

In addition, looking at the potential effectiveness, the gestion of the trade relationship would indeed gain by being more practical and concrete. As critically recalled by Assita Kanko in 2022 “The EU thinks that only money solves problems in Africa, but it is time to recognise that too often, money ends up in the wrong pockets”. The African states were reluctant in signing the EPAs notably because of the conditional aspect too. By setting where funds are sent by offering more specific development missions it could help the prevention of corruption.

An interesting example is China building infrastructures in exchange of oil: it brings the insurance that if the infrastructure is built, the road cannot be corrupted. In the Dakar Plan the article 4 (3.4) refers to offered scholarship programmes, an example of initiative which knows exactly where the money goes and avoids corrupt uses while supporting development. Moreover, Zhou (2024) highlights China increased the “technical and human resource development cooperation” taking for example 1951 training from 2010 to 2012. Indeed, by focusing on offering specific training, or peculiar defined programs instead of confusing general policies (Grimm & Christine Hackenesh, 2017), the European could better control the end-good, and outcome of the development aid and avoid corruption, and more efficiently support human rights.

The human rights aspect of development policies, more than separated to money, would gain in effectiveness if negotiated bilaterally, by reducing Eurocentrism and giving particular attention to the African party in the negotiation. As underlined by Wang (2011), the EU should work on its adaptability *vis à vis* Africa, which implies working on the EU’s failure in protecting cultural and economic rights in Africa and consider African countries as independent units. In this regard Zhou (2024) explains the failure of conditionality tied to liberal norms remains in that they do not always correspond to the realities to local context, history and culture, and therefore are read as illegitimate. For instance, in conducting their studies, scholars such as Hanush (2012)

for the Afrobarometer, looked at African states promoting Human Rights, and compared them to states prone to Human Rights violations. Hanush (2012) used two different variables “positive and negative attitudes towards human rights”, underlining the non-heterogenous vision on the topic, and therefore the need to consider the issue bilaterally.

If peace mediation and development aid go in pairs, linking the two under conditions appears to be an ineffective approach when coming to the AU. One example has been highlighted in the historical context (Chapter 1): the EU’s exclusion from the AU-EU summit of Zimbabwe for its domestic situation in the 2000s has been answered by the whole AU refusal to participate. If instead, the EU, through bilateral relations, had initiated a diplomatic process of negotiation with the state, the tensions would have potentially been kept in between these two parties. Taking its roots from OAU, which historically focused on the end of Apartheid and reaching political independence (“Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. | African Union,” au.int), the AU defines African interests as affirming Africa as an individual agent, free from external interference. The main priority seems to be the sovereign right.

State governance, the last principal conditions

Finally, the last condition often referred to is good governance. Its analysis goes in pairs with Democracy and Human Rights. When referring to “good governance”, the EU often further qualifies it as “democratic” governance, while China uses the term “state governance” in the programme number 8 of the Dakar Plan. For the EU, democratic governance implies transparency, fair elections, and in the EU-AU vision and goes in pair with “Rule of Law”. In contrast, Chinese “state governance” comes from the principle of state sovereignty in the sense of internal stability and non-interference. Indeed, the article 2.1.2 of political cooperation in the Dakar Plan explains that African states are supported in “independently exploring development paths”.

Re-evaluation

Therefore, the Chinese development model can inspire a division between financial and social development policies, or broadly between the development policies and the promotion of liberal norms, that appears as a solution that best corresponds to Africa. An emphasis on bilateralism could further help in fostering effective communication and dialogue for a better adaptation.

Interestingly, Rudyak (2022) shows Chinese effectiveness in promoting its interpretation of the norms of “sovereignty, international order, human rights, non-interference and democracy”, explaining that during the first decades of the millennium, many African states joined Chinese positions at the UN.

III. Chinese Development model vs. European development policies in a changing world landscape

Testing H5:Conditionality; H6: The promise of a Status quo versus a revisionist invitation; H7: multilateralism and multipolarity.

H5. The risk of binding to too many conditions and too much

The choice of the EU development model: Attaching the norms to an obligation

In the Samoa Agreement, The article 6 depicts the structure of the agreement, paragraph 2 explains its binding nature of all the Parts including annexes for ACP and EU parties. paragraph 3 includes the regional protocols as binding too. No article refers to reservation, nor to interpretation of the provisions. While the parliament answered that interpretation can be made, it however specified that the reservation needs to be accepted by all the parties (EU Parliament 2022c).

The following article (7), develops the norms and values “human rights, democracy, gender equality, peace and security, environmental protection, the fight against climate change, culture and youth”. The very position of the defining of these norms positioned right after the emphasis on the binding nature of the argument further highlights the “systematic account shall be taken of the following (...) to inform action in all areas of cooperation” (art. 7). Therefore, signing the Samoa Partnership implies “systematically” taking the other party aware of the initiatives, advances and weakness in order to better comply with the liberal norms.

From a neo-colonial perspective, it is a clear intervention in domestic affairs, governance and also touches on security. The choice of the EU to promote its norms and value, more than a condition, is an obligation to keep the EU informed about domestic affairs for the next 20 years following the agreement.

Priority to Samoa, and binding to liberal programs and institutions and agreements

The Samoa agreement also implies the priority over any other international or regional agreement: article 97 mentions that “No treaty, convention, agreement or arrangement of any kind between one or more Member States of the European Union and one or more OACPS Members shall impede the implementation of this Agreement”. The bond between EU and the OACPS is perceived as strong enough to take priority over regional agreement among ACP countries or EU member states.

A neo-colonial approach would however question the exclusive character of the agreement, which allows the EU to take decisions binding the 79 states, having as a common historical background of former colonies. The sovereignty of the ACP countries in the agreement is further questioned in that it refers to more than 70 initiatives, programmes or non-binding agreements. Its binding nature, however, implies a potential change in the conditions. By ratifying it, under International Law, it implies the rendering of these programs as turning their non-binding nature as potentially binding except if clear reservations, which have to be accepted by all the parties.

More than having absolute priority over other agreements, the justification comes from the fact that Samoa and the agreements it refers to are based on the “Rule of Law”, implying liberal institutions which both historically and in recent times marginalized Africa (Hanush, 2012; Mayaki, 2019). For instance, the article 19 (3) implies the use of the ICC as a means for justice, and “encourages the implementation of the Rome Statute of the ICC and related instruments”. Firstly, it does not define the implications, nor quotes which “instruments”. Moreover, the ICC is seen as accused of “distant justice” Clarke et al. (2017) and neocolonialism (Rigney, 2020).

Several references to the WTO (that is quoted 22 times) are also made, in trade arrangement, the article 50 (8) specifies: “active participation in the WTO as well as in other relevant international organizations by becoming members of those organizations and closely following their agenda and activities”.

The Nkrumah neo-colonial approach would interpret the supremacy of the agreement, which moreover implies joining other institutions and agreements accused of neocolonialism as putting the ACP states subject to the “international sovereignty” (Nkrumah, 1965). The binding effect pushes the ACP countries to cooperate with international institutions, having a direct

impact on the governance of the independent country which has to systematically inform the EU on initiatives (art. 7 of the Samoa Agreement). It can be read as an external interference by having a hold on economic governance of the ACP countries which have to join and support economic institutions (art. 50 of the Samoa Agreement).

Hierarchies in the negotiations to the conditions

Finally, the hierarchies draw an unequal foundation for negotiation. The article 101 of the Samoa Agreement states: “on “dispute settlement and fulfillment of obligation” refers to “appropriate measure” in paragraph 6 that can be taken “notifying party”. In other words, in case of dispute, the EU or ACP countries can convoque a meeting, which if does not have concrete outcomes, results in appropriate measures undefined in the agreement. The paragraph 7 of article 101 further underlines their “immediate effect without prior consultation” when it touches “essential elements”. The latter are defined in article 9 “human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law” and article 18 on the fight against Weapon of Mass destruction. Implying that EU norms have absolute priority in the agreement, and not following them results in an unknown binding sanction.

In the context of development aid, the EU imposes its norms with an absolute effect. The priority over EU norms in the context of development aid can be interpreted by the fact that for the Eurocentrism in development means that developing can only be through European standards. Development aid is drawn based on the ACP countries to resemble the EU member states, which are understood as the only way to reach development. By imposing its norms, the EU is perceived as forcing the socialization of the ACP to the European norms and values (Liu, 2011).

The Beijing stance

However, as recalled by Liu (2011), socialization is not “a process that can be imposed from without”. In the Dakar Plan, China refers to “Comprehensive” (CAVC35 art. 1) to substitute “conditions”. However, the Chinese put the condition in the sense that as long as Africa and Chinese relations remain “comprehensive” the agreement remains valid. What does comprehensive mean? According to Rudyak (2022), reciprocity in relational theory is expected

because practicing the *Renqing* leads to the *bao* as a social obligation. China does not bind officially, but pushes through social relevance the partner country to reciprocate.

It implies an international scene, creating a foundation and example for South-south political cooperation. In Article 2.4.2. China asks for support on its positions on the international stage notably at the UN. Rudyak (2022) explains that no support to China from an African state at the UN could cost its aid, and notes an increasing number of African states following the Chinese position on Human Rights at the UN. In this regard, relational theories understand it as a natural *bao*.

Indeed, a constant recall on the “comprehensive” ties of China and Africa, in the Dakar Plan, article 1.4 starts by reminding the Chinese ‘s *Renqing* : “The two sides acknowledge that China,(...) has achieved the goal of building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects (...)” . Article 1.4 then shows how African countries can reciprocate: “China and Africa are committed to further enhancing their comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership and building an even stronger China-Africa community”. The comprehension comes if Africa accepts China’s friendship in the future and therefore *bao*.

China does have attached “strings” by repeatedly practicing these discursive practices creating the *Renqing*, so that the African state can better mimic them and *bao*. The *bao* is naturally expected from China; therefore naturally the latter indeed closes the relationship and aid with states recognizing Taiwan, not following China in its UN votes, supporting Tibetan or Uighur independence, or interfering in any way in Chinese state affairs (Garlick & Chin, 2023).

Justification of the Chinese conditions

The justification of the terms for aid are based on “Justice” in the CACV35, and on the “International Law” for the EU. Which can be interpreted as the status quo and the revisionist approach regarding international institutional order. Indeed, the Samoa agreement mentioned 25 times “International Law” the Dakar Plan does not mention it, but instead refers to “International Fairness and Justice” (2.2.4; 2.4.1). Interestingly, the Dakar Plan further justifies the aforementioned article 2.4.2. by developing that the cooperation is in a vision of an : “international order toward greater equity and justice”. The Dakar Plan therefore acknowledges the current injustices and inequalities in the current “international order”.

The decolonial approach to the Dakar Plan can further unshades the sentence by understanding China and Africa as jointly fighting for the demarginalization on the international stage, resulting in a world order having a political and economic system needing decolonization for equal consideration and inclusion of former colonies. Indeed, Chinese IR explains that in rising, the relationship tends to focus on the common threats (Qin, 2011). In this case, the common threat is the current system of “international law” .

Findings, implications and re-evaluation:

To uphold these norms and principles, the EU and China differ in that the EU *imposes* them based on current international institutions and norms, while China *convinces* Africa of its best system. The finding resides in that both models bind to something but the justification and the tools are different. China doesn't bind but express the condition of following its vision on the international stage. Wishes that are supported by alternative institutional frameworks which are depicted as marginalizing Africa. Both China and the EU attached conditions or “strings” in their development model, however they are defended differently.

In relationality, the issue coming from the EU conditions to get access to the European Investment Bank, resides in that it leaves no place for a potential *bao*, which has to be independently and willingly gifted. The conditions paradoxically become the condition for reciprocity: because the agreement imposes a reciprocal gesture it prevents them from being intuitively made. Moreover, it is fixed in time, the conditions are binding as long as there is the agreement. In Keohane (1986) differentiation of *diffuse* and or *specific* reciprocity, the diffuse and long term one has the advantage and englobes the relations of the two states, not solely in the context of a specific and time-limited agreement. Instead of being constrained and forced through binding agreement to comply to receive aid, the slow construction and communication of different needs from both sides makes African parties *bao*, which is an independent and intended act of reciprocity. The point in relational theory, is when practicing the *Renqing*, there is not a legal guarantee of a reciprocal gesture, but rather a “social obligation”, explains Rudyak (2022).

While China can further defend its condition on the basis of an alternative system, notably economic and justice system, which would take Africa out of a potential marginalized

position, the EU further attaches the agreement to other institutions and agreements that however have been criticized by the African parties.

The binding nature of the agreement, therefore, fails both in legitimacy and effectiveness. By imposing too much agreement and compliance with other institutions, the EU risks losing the support from Africa, and the effectiveness of the binding nature. Liu (2011) underlines the low effectiveness of the binding condition to norms and values in Africa: by following the “EU homeworld” there is no “logic of appropriateness, some actors are still guided by the logic of consequences, namely, by cost-benefit calculations.”

H6. The south-south cooperation goes towards the painting of new world order, shaping new identities

A New Development Model

Both the Dakar Plan and the Samoa Agreement refer to cooperation on the international stage. The Article 4(5.10) of the Dakar plan specifically refers to the UN committee, and global governance. The Samoa Agreement further binds the parties in its article 79 to adopt “joint resolution, declarations and statements” to ensure enhanced presence and a stronger voice in international and regional organizations' forums. This would imply that to any vote at the UN General assembly, the 27 EU member states and 79 OACPS would align their vote. Indeed, Zhou (2024) recalls the strategic nature of aid in geopolitics and power interests. The development models are therefore used as an arena where opposing powers define their world visions. The two agreements are an invitation of development in the European or Chinese ideal type vision of it.

Keeping the latter argument in mind, The article 3 of the CACV35 refers to a “new development model” which implies a confrontation between different development models by “jointly promoting a new development paradigm”. In the CACV35, the Green development program is defined in the article 4, which refers generally to a “new green growth model”. The “new” emphasizes the existence of a different development approach, which tries to “diffuse Chinese norms” for some, in opposition to the “so-called Liberal World Order” (Garlick & Chin, 2023). More than an offer to cooperate in future, China emphasizes its difference from the west, and positions itself as against the traditional development model. Garlick & Chin (2023) instead

points out that since Chinese aid is more accessible than those of the IMF, it offers an interesting alternative for African states. Indeed, Beijing offers a whole different development cooperation, both discursively and practically: internationally through the BRI the GCI and the GDI, regionally through the FOCAC, and in its bilateral relations with African states. The three levels of Chinese south-south cooperation highlighted by Garlick and Chin (2023) can be further applied for the Chinese development model.

Shaping of a new identity through the development of education

The comparison between “Democracy”, “Human Rights” and “governance” shows the use of discursive practice to spread Chinese world vision in Africa. As highlighted by Garlick and Chin (2023) they create a ideational context of Chinese norms for cooperation between China and Africa, reshaping and re-interpreting the traditional principles and practices. They call it “normative diplomacy”, defined as the use of both discursive and material tools “traditional diplomacy, economic diplomacy, education, propaganda, and state media to transmit Chinese norms to partner countries”.

The diffusion of norms is indeed identifiable with a strong emphasis on education, which further shaped a new common identity for China and Africa. Indeed, the CACV35 refers notably to The “Future of Africa-a project for China-Africa cooperation for vocational education” that implies new facilities, training, and creating job opportunities by making direct connections between Chinese enterprise and african graduate students. By offering to “mutually learn between civilization and culture ” in the article 8 (4) of the Dakar Plan, China works on a “community with a shared future”.

Decolonization of the mind through development

While the Western scholars are accused of promoting Eurocentrist policies by Kemedjio and Lynch (2024), which impose norms and rules defined by EU. In contrast, China does not emphasize Chinese values, but focuses on the cultural aspect of development. The Samoa agreement in the article 52 offers a promotion of “people-to-people contact”, however it lacks credibility and legitimacy when it is bound to EU norms. In opposition, the cultural and people-to-people exchange program defined by article 6 of the vision Africa-China is the

meeting of two civilizations sharing their culture for “common prosperity”. Chinese and African arts, film festivals, and television programs are put on the stage to attract tourist groups.

Indeed, Kemedjio and Lynch (2024) denounces the lack of knowledge of Western scholars. According to them, experts are often aware of a country or a region, but ignoring African literature thinkers, as well as cinema, music, dance and languages, resulting in the dehumanization of African citizens seen as all the same.

Besides the cultural exchange between the two parties, the safeguarding of traditions and the sharing of their knowledge through “sinology and african studies" offers the “decolonization of the mind” of Frantz Fanon, by restoring the African and Chinese culture, undermined and lost during colonial times. By undergoing a process of re-appropriation, it also expands both soft powers by giving an international visibility on both African and Chinese traditional culture (“cultivation of language talents”) and knowledge production by a strong focus on education and universities

Stronger relation means more relational power

In supporting a strong African autonomous pole, in article 3.2 of the CACV35 China promises to help the branding of “Made in Africa ”. Besides representing a great economic opportunity, it also means defining an African marketing identity. Neoliberal would say Africa gets to design a soft power under the influence of Chinese guidance. Post-colonialists would argue that China is helping African reshaping an identity. Relationality, however, would interpret it differently.

In 2015, Kuo was already reminding the friendly approach of Chinese engagement in Africa contrasting with the former colonial powers. The friendly approach, which implies no condition and no binding agreement, shows that China rather focused on securing the trust in the relationship. By helping its “friend” to get more confidence on the international scene, the relational power for China gets stronger both because the ties are stronger, and the stronger is the relationship the more relational power you can get from it. Indeed, if followed by inspiration, the *bao* can be reciprocated. The second reason is that relational power is sharable. A stronger African pole means that China can use it. Indeed, as seen in Chapter 2, for Qin, the relation in itself is the source of power. Therefore, China secures a long term relationship with a friend, who besides being stronger, will willingly follow the Chinese development model.

Co-shaping identities: the south-south cooperation invitation

The first article of the CACV35 refers to the “comprehensive cooperation for common development” of the two parties. By emphasizing the Chinese acknowledgement, respect and support of ongoing African initiatives, the first paragraph (1.1.) of the CACV35 illustrates the first step for “comprehension” from the Chinese towards the African party. The second paragraph (1.2.) brings up “cooperation” since both parties recognize the importance of the FOCAC and the strengthening of the BRI. Like a shuttle, from African initiatives, the Chinese projects are referred to from the African Partie (1.3.).

Since relational theory takes actors-in-relations as objects of study, the first explanation is that to be recognized as a leader in the development model, China needs to be recognized in relations to others. Hence, the relationship is the end in itself, explains Kavalski and Cho (2018). Moreover, Qin’s relationality focuses on the process. China, in offering a “common development” (article 1 of the cooperation vision for 2035), offers the inter-shaping of new identities, leaving victimization and recipients for a stronger and richer pole. In the relational understanding, the evolution of the Chinese and African relation indeed shape new identities (“Made in Africa”) in relation to one another, and in relation to the world. The way the piece of the *weiqi* defines their role in relation to another.

The Chinese approach is further detailed by Sobolik (2024) who refers to the “strategic culture” made of “story, identity and policy” as the tool used by China to shape national identities. The normative diplomacy of China prioritizes the social aspect, building a community of shared normative rules. No actors have to leave behind its national identities, or lose sovereignty over its norms and principles, because the common norms are constantly reshaped through the dialogue, sharing and the very practice of the relationship. The Chinese built a common dream of a “In “shared community” for a “long-term” exchange of knowledge, technology, by using the shared history of anticolonial struggle and the common need of development. What China calls “south-south cooperation” (Mawdlsey, 2019), is an invitation to a non-predefined world that is still to shape in relation, or in other words, together with Africa. It starts from the common history, and opens up a future to be drawn, having as a priority the process of getting to development.

Implication and re-evaluation

The EU, by focusing on a Eurocentric vision of development, does not leave room for African states to draw the way they want to develop. By imposing norms, and undermining the social and cultural aspect of its relationship with Africa, it sends the message that development means getting to become like the EU; like the EU meaning: the way the EU sees it, the way the EU wants it, become the way the EU wants it to be. Orientalism would emphasize the need of accepting potential different cultures, and Fanon would develop the natural answer of decolonizing the mind by leaving space for another interpretation of what it means to reach development.

While the relational approach would recommend to leave more space for the respect of African norms, and focus on the process of sharing EU norms with African states more than the end goal. It would recommend to emphasize the construction of the partnership by not seeing both agents as fixed, or development as a static end goal, but rather the cooperation in itself. It would therefore require more concessions, and better adaptability with the “actor-in-relation”.

H7. Eurocentrism vs. Sino-centrism: harmonization and socialization

Sinocentrism

Wu (2021) underlines that in 2021, after taking the head of the Party in 2013, Xi already visited Africa four times, showing the strategic meaning of the continent for the Chinese foreign policy. The only state with which Chinese diplomatic relations are closed remains Estwaini, recognising officially Taiwan (Smith, 2021). The strong political nature of development policies can't be denied, as seen, common development is used as an important tool for soft power and influence on the international stage.

In the case of China, Sun (2021) notes that the CACV35 coincides with the new Chinese socialist modernization plan. Set up in a two-times frame, with the middle step target being 2035, the general secretary Xi Jinping described his willingness to launch a strategic plan to reach the socialist modernization in 2017 during the Communist Party of China's 19th National Congress, which took a concrete form during the fifth Plenary Congress in 2020 (Taylor, 2021). Xi recalled

the roots of the plan, which come from Deng Xiaoping's three-step approach to realize the modernization of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics. It was expected to be achieved by the mid-21st, hence Xi's vision for 2050 (Disciplinary Committee of the Central Committee of the People's Republic of China & Ministry of Supervision of the People's Republic of China, 2017).

To achieve this vision, two plans were drawn: the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development; and the Long-Range Objectives (2035). Indeed, in the Preamble of the Dakar Plan, the article 1(5) acknowledges the “creation of a synergy between the China-Africa Cooperation Vision 2035, the Long-Range Goals for 2035 of China”. The cooperation is taken on a broader level from the beginning, Africa is said to be willing to team-work with China to better achieve Chinese individual goals.

The article also refers to the UN vision for 2030 and the 2063 African Union Agenda, implying the cooperation is built for internal goals, on the international stage. The interpretation of China looking to Africa as a supporter of its “ Long-Range Goals” can further coincide with the publication of the White paper underlining the “New Era” (2021) in which both parties are entering. “Common development” appears to take a new step in African and Chinese development cooperation, that the paper understands as growing commonly as two (new) poles in the world, a deep revisionist approach to the world order.

Interestingly, the vision of China-Africa cooperation for 2035, is itself linked to the long standing goals of China for 2035. As underlined by Sun (2021), Chinese focus is becoming a “global leader in innovation and new forms of industrialization”, and a “global great power (by improving) international economic cooperation (...) and “ecological environment”. Looking at the eight programs for the Africa-China vision: the third point is on industrial cooperation, second point is on trade, and the fourth on green cooperation.

The Chinese approach to development cooperation is therefore highly Sinocentric, as much as the EU offers a Eurocentric development model to Africa. The Dakar Plan and the CACV35 indeed support the Chinese domestic plan and puts China at the center of development cooperation. This latter can be more clearly read when considering the four initiatives pillars defined by Economy (2024) and referred to in Chapter 1.

Why is Sinocentrism accepted while Eurocentrism is not ?

If China receives a positive, and aware answer from the African states while the EU does not, as underlined by Kanko (2020), it appears to confirm the success of the Chinese model, which allows China to develop its domestic vision, while building strong relations. Indeed, Qin's vision of a relational world makes all politics, domestic and international, interconnected. Differing from the classical theories which separates domestic and international politics, he denounces the democratic systems willing to share power in the domestic realms but greedy of it in international affairs (Tze Ern Ho, 2019).

Therefore, during the process of developing the relationship, shared interest in domestic politics too are looked for. Eisenman (2022) explains that hierarchies for China are understood under the Chinese concept of the *Tanxia* "天下": "perfect harmony of all under heaven between China and all those who accept it as the center". It literally means "under heaven", heaven being understood as the Chinese land, explains Yan Xuotong (2023). because this utopia ideally implies that states are willing to take China as an example, and as their center model, not constraint to it.

Therefore, as seen in the meaning of democracy as neutral to china, the emphasis on non interference in state affairs over human rights, the call for a global governance over a democratic governance, and the building of a shared identity, China does not use norms as the foundation of its development model, but rather offers what Kavalski and Cho, (2018) called "socialization game" which "harmonizes not socializes". Yan (2023) explains that the *Tanxia* implies the "inclusion of all" in their diversities.

The *Tanxia* does not imply the "projection of self-interest" on the international stage, but it is about "strategic receptivity" , explains Kavalski and Cho (2018). The legitimacy of the Chinese development model comes from the fact that it constructs different or inclusive "communities with shared future" and adapts because it redefines its identity constantly through its relations. Both parties are needed for the common good is therefore commonly defined in the context of the relations, opening space to the subjectivity of each identity, and of the different "actors-in-relations".

Multilateralism and multipolarity

Reopening the difference between bilateralism over multilateralism, Kavalsi et al. (2018) one could go further in comparing multilateralism to multipolarity. They state that in Chinese thinking, there is not a legitimate and illegitimate normative order. Indeed, the Chinese

interpretation suggests the coexistence of various relations constructed around interconnected poles, all legitimate under institutions not understood as governing but as working for harmony. Indeed, Chinese constructivism explains that two superpowers can construct “collective and shared identity by dealing with common threats” (Qin, 2011)

The interesting lesson from China is that its development model as much as its world vision gives hope: it shows that the poorest country can develop its relations until being one of the biggest world economies (Zhou, 2024) while keeping its sovereignty. The justification for Sinocentrism would argue that since the poles are in harmony, and multiple poles are welcomed in their differences, it does not prevent any actor-in-relation from growing the way it wants. The condition remains that China needs to stay at the center on a long term basis, to get states to willingly choose China.

Re-evaluation

The Re-evaluation resides in the finding that Sinocentrism is present as much as Eurocentrism. Which implies that the Eurocentric critique of the European development model cannot be the sole reason for its little receptiveness. The main difference brought is that sinocentrism offers “harmony”, by accepting multipolarity and therefore does not harm African interests (Kavalsi et al., 2018). Beijing questions the governance of international institutions that rather “socialize” in ruling. Taking example of China's success, to defend its eurocentric interests’ the EU policies should leave a space for the independent development of the African pole, by privileging multipolarity over multilateralism under a liberal ruling.

IV. Conclusion

Recalling the goal of the paper

The paper aimed at understanding the competition of the development model between the EU and China in Africa and re-evaluate the EU development model based on the Chinese development model's successes. The advantages of the Beijing Consensus for Africa have been looked into in order to better rethink European Development policies and increase their receptiveness.

The first chapter has traced back the development of the European and the Beijing Consensus from the 1950s to recent times. The historical context critically challenged the two consensus, and confronted the various criticisms coming from within the EU. It led to the assumption that the Chinese approach is met by a positive judgment from the African governments, while the EU and the norms it upholds are met by an increasing hate.

The second chapter introduces the theoretical framework of post colonial approaches and Qin's relationality driving the analysis, as well as the methodology of discourse analysis and the empirics.

The lesson from the chinese choice of tools, narratives to promote Beijing development aid

The first three hypotheses resulted in the finding of the different backgrounds, sectors and frameworks of the two models. The foundation of the two visions have been analyzed through the special connotation they attribute to history and the construction of the relationship between the two partners, neighbors, or friends depending on this interpretation. The chosen narratives have been found to be a confrontation of histories that are remembered and forgotten. China emphasizes its long term relationship with Africa starting at the Bandung conference and based on the anti-colonialism struggle. The EU tends to reduce its reference to history or limit them to the scope of EU history. However, addressing the vision to the African Union, created in a context of decolonization, the arena is well chosen by China to confront the two parties. The

EU-centrism reading of history is recommended to be left for the fostering of a dialogue to answer China's inquest. The colonial past of the former colonial power should be addressed not avoided, leading to better understanding and listening of the African parties. Indeed, it remains an on-going topic as shown by the post-colonial approach and Beijing's narratives.

In this regard, the test of the second hypothesis showed that the choice of the sector remains unilaterally made by the EU, with an agenda following its priorities. Edouard Said's Orientalism led to the analysis of a wrong knowledge production around the migrations, the Eurocentrism approach explain the EU taking its interests as universal interests, and the neo-colonialism pushed the analysis to find the imposition of the eu-agenda as binding the African states a external interference in domestic internal affairs. This implies that revisiting the agenda for cooperation could result in a better context for cooperation leading to more receptiveness from the African states. The EU, by focusing on a Eurocentric vision of development, does not leave room for African states to express their vision of development. By imposing norms, and undermining the social and cultural aspect of its relationship with Africa, it sends the message that development means getting to become like the EU; like the EU meaning: the way the EU sees it, the way the EU wants it, become the way the EU wants it to be. Orientalism would emphasize the need of accepting potential different cultures, and Fanon would develop the natural answer of decolonizing the mind by leaving space for another interpretation of what it means to reach development.

In a context of the need to repair the tensions deriving from the colonial legacies, restoring an effective communication and an efficient dialogue in the relationship appears crucial. The emphasis on bilateralism over multilateralism by China has been analyzed. Indeed, from a relational perspective, the Chinese priority over bilateralism has the advantage that the EU could get inspiration from to nourish its relation with Africa. The development of bilateralism brings relative gains over multilateralism by the fact that it helps build stronger ties and makes the management of the relational power. Fostering bilateral dialogue and communication have been found as the best way to reach a successful relationship by allowing the EU to better understand and adapt, know and discover the individuality, uniqueness and differences of interest among the 55 African states. To better answer the post-colonial criticism, the EU has been found in need to foster its relation with African states, which can be repaired only through effective communication and dialogue. Accurate problem assessment, co-shaping

of the policy making and effective policy implementation can be met by putting a stronger emphasis on bilateral initiatives for better efficiency in multilateral framework. In this regard, the negotiation table would leave more space for the understanding of the African states point of view, in the definition of the sectors and the prior goals, as well as for the negotiation of trade agreements, and the promotion of norms and values such as Human Rights and Democracy.

The clash of normative diplomacy and the different meaning attached behind Human Rights and Democracy.

The second thematic analysis emphasized the difference in the normative diplomacy promoting the two development models. The confrontation of the liberal norms and the Chinese Five principles for a peaceful coexistence have been made, with a special emphasis has been put on Democracy and human rights. Even though both the Samoa Agreement, and the Dakar plan both refer to democracy, governance and human rights, and both of the Vision further promote these norms, careful reading should come by the different meanings attributed behind what the EU calls “universal values” in the article. The finding that Chinese normative highlights the non consideration of democracy but does not affect the African perception of democratic governance implied that development policies do not have to be bound to democracy for its promotion. In rethinking the EU development model, conditioning aid to democracy does not seem to be effective. Indeed, the EU has been actually challenged in its attempt to impose democracy as deteriorating the population consultancy more than increasing it. By offering a different type of help for the development of a democratization process, which would focus on issues defined by African leaders, or helping in informing the citizens improving the network of media and press in local languages as recommended by Mayaki (2019) the EU could promote democracy more effectively.

On the same token, the Human Rights ethical dilemma has critically confronted the European tools for their promotion. For African developing countries, Human Rights as supported by Europe, emphasize a different priority over economic and cultural rights. This implies that a division should be made in their promotion. Through the post colonial approach, the Chinese priority on state sovereignty over human rights has been found as better adapted for states that fought for their independence, implying fostering the respect of state sovereignty for the EU development model.

Chinese Development model versus the EU development policies in a changing world landscape

The third major directive line of re-évaluation should come to better adapt to the changes brought by China, which more than a friendship seeks to reshape a multipolar world order for a *better ideal world*. The EU should carefully get aware and compare the tools used for the promotion of a new sino-centered pole that play with and by the conditional the rules and norms of the liberals

The difference in the norms and values has been then discussed through the concept of binding. In defining the rule of the games of their world visions, China and EU use different tools to ensure reciprocity: the EU builds legal rules based on the international law while China defines social conditions resulting in a tacit agreement of support on the international stage and non interference in state internal affairs. In this regard, the EU has been read through the critical lens of neo colonialism, implying a reconsideration of the binding effect of the agreements linked to migrations, human rights, and democracy. It has been further highlighted that to ensure the right to development, Instead the EU development policies are recommended to be divided in different areas, by notably dividing Human Rights promotion and not linking them to access to aid, which is understood as less effective.

The Chinese model more than an invitation to co-develop has been found as a global invitation of south-south cooperation in a revisionist approach to the current world order. Based on decolonization “of the mind” it offers a special focus on the cultural aspect of development. The Chinese model offers the opportunity to co-shape an identity in relation with Africa, in a shared future revising the colonial legacies and years of humiliation. In this context, more than being an alternative, it is a confrontation with the European development model which offers a vision of status quo. The eurocentric critical reading indeed analyzes the EU offer to development as an offer to develop to be like the EU, in the sense the way the EU sees and understands development. The relational theory brought the difference between the static and fixed goal drawn by the EU for Africa, and the special focus on the process followed by China, which emphasis the process cooperation (the relationship) as the main goal, resulting non a static end, but in a promise to draw a common dream of development together with africa. The implication resides in the fact that no national rules or norms have priority over another since

each vision comes to complete the actors-in-relations. The EU development policies would gain by focusing on the development of a vision which corresponds also to the African dream of development respecting their independent and unique perception of what it means to be a developed country.

The final discussion found the concept of sino-centrism to compare it with Eurocentrism. In the various critiques of Eurocentrism, the last question was how could the EU benefit as much from the development policies if losing the focus on the priority over its interests. The analysis brought the paper on the difference between multilateralism and multipolarity. Going in pairs with the status quo and revisionist approaches, justified on liberal institutions against the south south offer to build new ones, the result was the confrontation of socialization over harmonization. The Tanxia system brought us to read the Chinese promise of development as co-evolving independent poles, while the EU promise is evolution under a rule-based order. This promise offered by China, pushes the re-evaluation of the EU development model in that it introduces the need to adapt to the changing world order. If the EU does not want to be put on the side, it implies that it needs to adapt mainly by accepting Africa as an independent pole functioning in unity but with various and unique individual states.

Overall, the Post-colonial approach would recommend to leave more space for the respect of African norms, and cultures reconsider the binding effect of the Samoa agreement expanded to other programs and institutions. Relationality, would recommend to focus on the *process* of shaping the EU development model with African states more than defining an fixed goal to follow. It would recommend to emphasize the construction of the partnership by not seeing both agents as fixed, or development as a static end goal, but rather the cooperation in itself. It would therefore require more concessions, and better adaptability with the “actor-in-relation”.

The limits of the study

The main purpose of the paper is to identify how China's development model in Africa can inspire the EU for a potential reconsideration of its development approach to Africa. Therefore, it does not seek what are the cons in the Chinese development model, but looks at what is effective. The empirics are critically read through the lens of Chinese theory and critical theories of post colonialism.

Through the discourse analysis, the paper primarily focused on the normative aspect of the development models. However, further research on the different sectors and the effectiveness of the policies offered by China and Europe should be conducted for further evaluation. On the same token, the transparency and accessibility of Chinese data being difficult details on the implementation of its policies as well as the detail of the initiatives or the exact amount of grant and concessional loans towards Africa remained difficult to access both in this paper and for further research.

Furthermore, the limit of the study comes from the scale of its approach which remains at the level of institutions, two continents and one state. However, differences reside in the perceptions of the Chinese engagement in Africa between the government and locals (John Iliffe, 2007), further research on the actual receptiveness of the Chinese development model on a lower scale could be drawn. In this regard, Rudyak (2022) reported the heterogeneous character of the judgments on Chinese infrastructure plans. Ghana and the Republic of Congo were indeed reported as complaining regarding non-reached end goals.

Chinese theories such as Qin's relationality or Zhao's conception of the Tanxia system have been subject to various criticism (Hwang, 2021). For instance Rudyak (2022) pointed out that even if China would offer a Tanxia vision of the world order, it does not mean that African states with different world reading, understand and consider China as the center of the multipolar world order. As regard to various criticisms of the Chinese theories of IR, further research on their accuracy could be done. Rudyak (2022) further underlines that Qin's assumption that the world is primarily based on relationships is not a universal theory but has a local origin which is China. Therefore, the priority that China would invest in practicing the Renqing, waiting for a bao, is not per se followed by the African states.

Moreover, a careful reading of them as ideal types that inspire China's foreign policy is primordial. This paper acknowledges that their use is in the quest of comparing the ideal types of the European Consensus and the Beijing Consensus on development. In this regard, the ethical analysis on Human Rights does not assess that China is an example, but that the ideal type is drawn best corresponds to a post colonial reading of african interests.

Directions of future research

This study, especially through the historical context, highlights the division of the EU both between the member states, such as the Zimbabwe blockade, and between the various institutions, with a commission constantly warning the parliament and the council on the need to change the approach to Africa from the 1990s. Indeed, a directive line for further research could question: why the commission constantly warned the EU on the need to rethink EU strategy vis à vis Africa considering China's engagement for 30 years, with some support from the parliament, but very little from the council? Further research on the role of each institution, as well as better communication and unity within the EU appears to be necessary. The role of individual agents could be identified such as the function of the President of the European Commission, Ursula Von Der Leyen, in identifying and promoting the development policies.

Lastly, the paper discussed the reevaluation of the development policies vis à vis Africa by taking inspiration from the pros of the Chinese model. In this regard, it questions various ways to better create receptiveness from the African government. However, when seeking the best way to support Africa in its development, further research could be done on the decision making process of the African side. Even if African states end up bound to an agreement subject to criticism, the agreement has been signed by these same governments. The final choice remains in the hands of Africa. As highlighted by Professor Dussey Robert Dussey, “the solution has to be the African solutions”. Therefore, quoting Dr. Mutua (2023) this paper rationally leads to the questioning of the african choice and the possibility of a future African consensus on development:

“As long as the bulk of the AU funds comes from outside, we somehow find ourselves dancing to the music that is not of our own making. Therefore, we must address the issue of reforms that will enable us to find our programmes. Funding coming from friends will just be for support and not for our lifeline. This calls for a critical look at the architecture of the AU and the way we implement our decisions”.

Sources and bibliography

A general survey of development policy | Fact Sheets on the European Union | European Parliament. (n.d.-b).

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/163/a-general-survey-of-development-policy>

About us - OACPS. (2024, April 26). OACPS. <https://www.oacps.org/about-us/>

Africa | Fact sheets on the European Union | European Parliament. (n.d.).
<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/180/africa>

Africa-EU Partnership. (n.d.). International Partnerships. Retrieved June 2, 2024, from
https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/africa-eu-partnership_en

Afrobarometer: Logan, C., & Sanny, J. A.-N. (2021, November). China has invested deeply in Africa. We checked to see whether that is undermining democracy. Afrobarometer.
<https://www.afrobarometer.org/articles/china-has-invested-deeply-africa-we-checked-see-whether-undermining-democracy/>

Afrobarometer: Lekorwe, Mogopodi, Anyway Chingwete, Mina Okuru, and Romaric Samson. (2016). “AD122: China’s Growing Presence in Africa Wins Largely Positive Popular Reviews.” October 2016.
<https://www.afrobarometer.org/publication/ad122-chinas-growing-presence-africa-wins-largely-positive-popular-reviews/>.

AJLabs. (2023, August 31). Mapping Africa’s coups d’etat across the years. Al Jazeera.
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/30/mapping-africas-coups-detat-across-the-years>

Arts, K., & Byron, J. (1982). The Mid-Term Review of the Lomé IV Convention: Heralding the Future? on JSTOR. www.jstor.org. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3992902?seq=16>

Ashton, Baroness. 2024. “Stop taking the Global South for granted.” Chatham House, April,
<https://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/the-world-today/2024-02/stop-taking-global-south-granted>.

Ayres, C. (2020). The EU-China-Africa Partnership: Trilateral relations entering new waters.EIAS.<https://eias.org/publications/op-ed/the-eu-china-africa-partnership-trilateral-relationships-entering-new-waters/>

Benakis, Theodoros. (2019). “ECR Africa Summit: By Working Together We Can Make a Real Difference.” European Interest. January 9, 2019. <https://www.europeaninterest.eu/ecr-africa-summit-working-together-can-make-real-difference/>.

Brautigam, D. (2015). 5 myths about Chinese investment in Africa. Foreign Policy, 4 December 2015. Available at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/12/04/5-myths-about-chinese-investment-in-africa/>.

Brautigam, D. (2018). China’s FOCAC Financial Package for Africa 2018: Four facts. <http://www.chinaafricarealstory.com/2018/09/chinas-focac-financial-package-for.html>

Broadman, H. (2009) China–African trade and investment: the Vanguard of south–south commerce in the twenty-first century, in: R. I. Rotberg (Ed.) China into Africa: Trade, Aid and Influence(Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press), pp. 87 – 108

Chapter 11: Takin, Giving, repairing, and reversing: The constitutive nature of western ignorance and superiority

Che, D., & Bodomo, A. (2023). China and the European Union in Africa: win–win–lose or win–win–win? Asia Europe Journal, 21(2), 119–136. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10308-023-00656-y>

Chen, W., Fornino, M., & Rawlings, H. (2024). Navigating the evolving landscape of China and Africa’s economic engagements. In International Monetary Fund. IMF. https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/WP/2024/English/wpiea2024037-print-pdf.ashx?trk=public_post_comment-text

Cheng, H., Mawdsley, E., & Liu, W. (2022). Reading the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (2000–2021): geoeconomics, governance, and embedding ‘creative involvement.’ Area Development and Policy, 8(1), 60–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23792949.2022.2092018>

China and Africa in the New Era: A Partnership of Equals. (2021, November). http://www.focac.org/focacdakar/eng/hyqk_1/202112/t20211202_10461074.htm

Cooper Ramo, J. (2004). The Beijing consensus. In The Foreign Policy Centre. The Foreign Policy Centre. <https://fpc.org.uk/publications/the-beijing-consensus/>

Council of the European Union. (2007). The South Africa-European Union Strategic Partnership Joint Action Plan[Press release]. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST%209650%202007%20INIT/EN/pdf>

Disciplinary Committee of the Central Committee of the People's Republic of China & Ministry of Supervision of the People's Republic of China. (2017, December). Why was the goal of basic socialist modernisation brought forward by 15 years? Central Commission for Discipline Inspection Website.
https://www.ccdi.gov.cn/special/zmsjd/zm19da_zm19da/201711/t20171127_112567.html

Discourse Analyzer. 2024. "Introduction to Post-Colonial Theory in Discourse Analysis." Discourse Analyzer AI Toolkit. April 29, 2024.
<https://discourseanalyzer.com/introduction-to-post-colonial-theory-in-discourse-analysis/>.

Dr. Masood Raja. (2019). "What Is Postcolonialism? A Short Introduction."
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c99SbGYKrGw>.

DW News. 2022. "Africa in Focus: How 'equal' Is Africa's Relationship With the EU? | DW News." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l33xPUiow2o>.

Economy, E. (2024, April 23). China's alternative Order: And what America should learn from it. Foreign Affairs.
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/china/chinas-alternative-order-xi-jinping-elizabeth-economy>

Elam, J Daniel. 2019. "Postcolonial Theory." Oxford Bibliographies, January.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780190221911-0069>.

Esposito, M., & Tse, T. (2015). China's growing footprint in Africa is potentially damaging. Fortune Insiders commentary. Available at <http://fortune.com/2015/11/20/china-africa-damaging-ties/>.

European Commission. COM(2005)489. (2005). "EU Strategy for Africa - Towards a Euro-African Pact to Accelerate Africa's Development" - EU Monitor.
<https://www.eumonitor.eu/9353000/1/j9vvik7m1c3gyxp/vikqh371yoye>.

EU Commission. (2020). JOINT COMMUNICATION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL Towards a Comprehensive Strategy With Africa. EuR-Lex. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020JC0004>

EU Commission. (2024a). Africa-EU Partnership. Directorate-General for International Partnerships. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/africa-eu-partnership_en

EU commission. (2024a). Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). Commission Directorate General for Trade "DG TRADE."
<https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/content/economic-partnership-agreements-epas>

EU-China Relations factsheet. (2023.). EEAS.
https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eu-china-relations-factsheet_en

EUISS. (2024). Sahel reset: Time to reshape the EU's engagement. In European Union Institute for Security Studies.
https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief_2024-2_Sahel.pdf

EUISS. Faleg, De Haan, Dietrich. (2023). Africa Atlas: Mapping the future of AU-EU partnership. European Institute for Security Studies.

Europe in an Era of US-China Strategic Rivalry: Challenges and Opportunities from an Outside-in Perspective. Editor Sebastian Biba. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-48117-8>

European Commission. (2022). 6th European Union - African Union Summit: A Joint Vision for 2030. In European Commission. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.
https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/54412/final_declaration-en.pdf

European Commission. (2024). Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). European Union Access2Market. Retrieved June 2, 2024, from
<https://trade.ec.europa.eu/access-to-markets/en/content/economic-partnership-agreements-epas>

European Council. (2024, November). Post-Cotonou agreement. Official Website of the Council of the EU and the European Council.

European development policy. (n.d.). International Partnerships.
https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/european-development-policy_en

European Parliament. (2021). New EU-Africa Strategy European Parliament Resolution of 25 March 2021 on a New EU-Africa Strategy — A Partnership for Sustainable and Inclusive Development (2020/2041(INI)). Official Journal of the European Union,
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021IP0108> .

European Parliament. (2022). Parliamentary question | Answer for question P-000583/22 | P-000583/2022(ASW) | European Parliament. © European Union.
https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/P-9-2022-000583-ASW_EN.html

European Parliament. (2023). AFRICA. Fact Sheets on the European Union.
<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/180/africa>

Eurostat. (2023). Demography of Europe.
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/interactive-publications/demography-2023>

- Fanon, F. (2001 [1965], 1990, 1966), *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (London: Penguin; New York: Grove Press).
- Fanon, F. (2008 [1954]), *Black Skin, White Masks* (London: Pluto; Paris: Editions de Seuil).
- Garlick, J., & Qin, F. (2023). China's 'do-as-I-do' paradigm: practice-based normative diplomacy in the global South. *The Pacific Review*, 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2023.2290619>
- Global Security Forum. (2024, May 22). DISCUSSION: The current geopolitical landscape in Africa [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8beErhtHYIY>
- Goldstein, A., Pinaud, N. & Reisen, H. (2008) China's boom: what's in it for Africa? A trade perspective, in: C. Alden, D. Large & R. Soares de Oliveira (Eds) *China Returns to Africa: A Rising Power and a Continent Embrace* (London: Hurst & Company), pp. 27 – 50
- Grovogui, S. N. (1996), *Sovereigns, Quasi Sovereigns and Africans: Race and Self-Determination in International Law*(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).
- Gruhn, I. V. (1976). *The Lomé Convention: Inching towards interdependence* on JSTOR. [www.jstor.org. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2706258?seq=1](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2706258?seq=1) 1
- Han, Chi, Emma Mawdsley, and Weidong Liu. 2022. "Reading the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (2000-2021): Geoeconomics, Governance, and Embedding 'Creative Involvement.'" *Area Development and Policy* 8 (1): 60–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23792949.2022.2092018>.
- Hansen, L. (2019). 11. Poststructuralism. In Oxford University Press eBooks (pp. 177–191). <https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780198825548.003.0011>
- Hanusch, Marek. 2012. "African Perspectives on China–Africa: Modelling Popular Perceptions and Their Economic and Political Determinants." *Oxford Development Studies* 40 (4): 492–516. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600818.2012.728580> .
- Hobson, J. (2012), *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760–2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Hooijmaaijers, Bas. (2020). "The Rise of China in Africa and the Response of the EU: The EU-China-Africa Trilateral Dialogue and Cooperation Initiative." In Springer eBooks, 117–52. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-9367-3_5.

Hwang, Y. (2021). Reappraising the Chinese School of International Relations: A postcolonial perspective. *Review of International Studies*, 47(3), 311–330. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0260210521000152>

Iliffe, J. (2007). *Africans: The History of a Continent*.

Ioanes, E. (2024, April 4). Good news: Democracy won in Senegal. Here's why it matters. *Vox*.

<https://www.vox.com/world-politics/24120072/senegal-election-coup-bassirou-diome-faye-mack-y-sall-africa-democracy>

Jiang. (2018). *Qin Yaqing, A Relational Theory of World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kanko, Assita. 2020. "EU-Africa: A Relationship Built on Mutual Interests." *The Parliament Magazine*. June 29, 2020.

<https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/news/article/euafrica-a-relationship-built-on-mutual-interests>.

Kanko, Assita. 2022. "EU-Africa: Let's End EU's 'Nanny Diplomacy' and Commit to Building a Real Partnership With Africa, Argues Assita Kanko." *The Parliament Magazine*. February 25, 2022.

<https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/news/article/no-more-nanny-diplomacy>.

Kavalski, Emilian and Cho, Young Chul. (2018). Worlding the Study of Normative Power: Assessing European and Chinese Definitions of the "Normal", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 15, No. 57, 2018, pp. 49-65, DOI: 10.33458/uidergisi.518042

Kemedjio, Cilas, and Cecelia Lynch, eds. 2024. *Who Gives to Whom? Reframing Africa in the Humanitarian Imaginary*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-46553-6>.

Keohane, R. O. (1986). *Reciprocity in International Relations* on JSTOR. www.jstor.org. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2706740>

Kuo, S. (2015). China's investment in Africa: The African perspective. Available at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/riskmap/2015/07/08/chinas-investment-in-africa-the-african-perspective/#20d286af16e2>.

Liu, L. (2011). *The EU and China's engagement in Africa: the dilemma of socialisation*. European Institute for Security Studies (EUISS). <https://doi.org/10.2815/25062>

Ma, J., & Thakur, R. (2004). The Five Principles Of Peaceful Coexistence. World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues, JSTOR. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48504903?seq=2>

Marchetti, Raffaele. (2020). Africa-Europe Relationships: A Multistakeholder Perspective. Routledge.

Masood Raja. 2020. "Distinction Between Early and Later Fanon | Frantz Fanon | Postcolonial Theory." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqhs6haLjA4>.

Mayaki, Ibrahim Assane. (2019). Africa Critical Choices: A Call for Pan African Roadmap. Routledge.

Melly, P. (2024). Democracy in West Africa: Why Senegal's election crisis matters. Chatham House. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2024/03/democracy-west-africa-why-senegals-election-crisis-matters>

Men, J and Barton, B. (2011). China and the EU in Africa: Partners or Competitors?. College of Europe, Belgium. Routledge. Introduction: China and the EU in Africa: Changing concepts and changing policies

Migani, G. (2020). CEE/UE et l'aide au développement de Lomé à Cotonou (La). Encyclopédie D'histoire Numérique De L'Europe. <https://ehne.fr/fr/encyclopedie/th%C3%A9matiques/reactions-internationales/action-internationale-et-politiques-externes-de-l%20union-europ%C3%A9enne/la-ceeue-et-l%20aide-au-d%C3%A9veloppement-de-lom%C3%A9-cotonou>

Ministry of Commerce of China. (2021, December 10). China-Africa Cooperation Vision 2035 [Online Forum Post].FOCAC. https://www.focac.org/eng/zywx_1/zywj/202201/P020220124343720102793.pdf

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, China's African Policy, 12 January 2006. Available online at: <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t230615.htm>.

Multi-Annual Indicative Programme European Union – Egypt. (2021). Eu Commission, EEAS . Retrieved May 19, 2024, from https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/ea5cfab2-c4c8-4519-b0ec-154baed5f1d4_en

Mutua, Alfred N. (2023, July)Welcome Remarks by DR. Alfred N. Mutua, E.H.G., Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs During the Opening Ceremony of

the 43rd ordinary session of the Executive Council.. Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Foreign and
Diaspora Affairs' Website.
<https://mfa.go.ke/welcome-remarks-by-dr-alfred-n-mutua-e-g-h-cabinet-secretary-ministry-of-foreign-and-diaspora-affairs-during-the-opening-ceremony-of-the-43rd-ordinary-session-of-the-executive-council-13th-july/>

Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe
(NDICI – Global Europe). (2021, June 9). European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement
Negotiations (DG NEAR).
https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-technical-assistance/neighbourhood-development-and-international-cooperation-instrument-global-europe-ndici-global-europe_en

NISBETT, RICHARD E. 2003. *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently . . . and Why*. New York: Free Press.

Nkrumah, K. (1965), *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons).

Noble, K. B. (1973). *French Devaluation Of African Currency Brings Wide Unrest*. The
New YorkTimes.
<https://www.nytimes.com/1994/02/23/world/french-devaluation-of-african-currency-brings-wide-unrest.html>

OHCHR. (1986). *Declaration on the Right to Development*. In General Assembly
resolution 41/128 (Ed.), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United
Nation.
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-right-development>

Politi, A. (2023). THE PARADIGM-SHIFT IN EU-CHINA RELATIONS AND THE
LIMITS OF THE EU'S CURRENT STRATEGY TOWARDS CHINA: a RELATIONAL
PERSPECTIVE. *Asian Affairs*, 54(4), 670–693. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03068374.2023.2281164>

Programma - CodewayExpo. (2024, May 14). CodewayExpo.
<https://www.codewayexpo.com/programma-maggio/>

Programme Indicatif Multi-Annuel Union Européenne - Algérie. (2021). Eu Commission,
EEAS . Retrieved May 19, 2024, from
https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/ea5cfab2-c4c8-4519-b0ec-154baed5f1d4_en

PYE, LUCIAN. (1968). *The Spirit of Chinese Politics: A Psychological Study of the Authority Crisis in Political Development*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Qin, Y. (2011). Development of International Relations theory in China: progress through debates. *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, 11(2), 231–257. <https://doi.org/10.1093/irap/lcr003>

Qin, Yaqing. 2009. “Relationality and Processual Construction: Bringing Chinese ideas into International Relations Theory”. *Social Sciences in China* 30 (4): 5-20 .

Qin, Yaqing. 2016. “A Relational Theory of World Politics”. *International Studies Review* (18) 33-47. ResearchGate.

Qin, Yaqing. 2018. “A Multiverse of Knowledge: Cultures and IR Theories.” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 11 (4): 415–34. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poy015>.

Qin. 2010. “International Society as a Process: Institutions, Identities, and China’s Peaceful Rise.” *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 3 (2): 129–53. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poq007> .

Rudyak, Marina. 2022. “‘We Help Them, and They Help Us’: Reciprocity and Relationality in Chinese Aid to Africa.” *Journal of International Development* 35 (4): 583–99. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.3699> .

Sebartam, Meera. “The Globalization of World Politics.” 2022. Chapter 11: “Post Colonial and Decolonial Approaches”. In Oxford University Press eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hepl/9780192898142.001.000>

Smith, N. (2021, November 25). Where is the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation headed next? The Diplomat. <https://thediplomat.com/2021/11/where-is-the-forum-on-china-africa-cooperation-headed-next/>

Sobolik, M. (2024, April 30). Xi’s Imperial Ambitions Are Rooted in China’s History. *Foreign Policy*. https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/04/27/xi-imperial-ambitions-chinese-history-empire-dynasty/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Editors%27%20Picks%20-%2004292024&utm_term=editors_picks

Sørensen, G., Møller, J., & Jackson, R. (2020). *Introduction to international relations: Theories and Approaches*. Oxford University Press.

Sorensen, L. (2020, October 11). China and the EU in Africa: clash or convergence? EA WorldView. <https://eaworldview.com/2020/10/china-and-the-eu-in-africa-clash-or-convergence/>

Sun, Y. (2021, December 27). An examination of the 2035 Vision for China-Africa Cooperation. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/an-examination-of-the-2035-vision-for-china-africa-cooperation/>

Sven Grimm and Christine Hackenesh. 2017. “China in Africa: What challenges for a reforming European Union development policy? Illustrations from country cases”. Development Policy Review 35(4): 549-566.

Takeuchi, H. (2013). Political economy of trade protection: China in the 1990s. International Relations of the Asia-Pacific, 13(1), 1–32. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26155971>

Taylor, J. (2021). China 2035: Achieving socialist modernization basically. China Today. http://www.chinatoday.com.cn/ctenglish/2018/commentaries/202106/t20210625_800250626.html

The Economist. (2022, May 26). The Chinese-African relationship is important to both sides, but also unbalanced. The Economist. <https://www.economist.com/special-report/2022/05/20/the-chinese-african-relationship-is-important-to-both-sides-but-also-unbalanced>

The State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China. (2021, November). Full text: China and Africa in the New Era: A Partnership of Equals. CPC Central Committee Bimonthly. http://en.qstheory.cn/2021-11/29/c_685492.htm

Tull, Denis M. 2008. “China in Africa: European Perceptions and Responses to the Chinese Challenge.” Working Papers, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) The Johns Hopkins University. <https://sais.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/China-in-Africa-European-Perceptions-and-Responses-to-the-Chinese-Challenge.pdf>.

Tze Ern Ho. (2019). The Relational-Turn in International Relations Theory: Bringing Chinese Ideas into Mainstream International Relations Scholarship. American Journal of Chinese Studies, 26(2), 91–106. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45216266>

Von Der Leyen, U. (2023, November 16). Speech by President von der Leyen at the European China Conference 2023 organized by the European Council on Foreign Relations and

the Mercator Institute for China Studies. European Commission Official Website. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_23_5851

Wang, Hung-jen. 2013. *The Rise of China and Chinese International Relations Scholarship*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Wang, Xuejun. 2011. "La Politique Chinoise En Afrique Au Miroir De L'Union Européenne." Dans *L'Outre Mer*. <https://www.cairn.info/revue-outre-terre1-2011-4-page-315.htm>.

Wu Chuanhua: 赵满丰. (2021). Boosting China-Africa cooperation in the new era. *Chinadaily.com.cn*. <https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202111/29/WS61a4078fa310cdd39bc77f68.html>

Xinhua. (2021). China Issues White Paper on China-Africa Cooperation in the New Era. CPC Central Committee Bimonthly. http://en.qstheory.cn/2021-11/29/c_685481.htm

Xinhua. (2021a). Full text: China and Africa in the New Era: A Partnership of Equals. FOCAC. Xinhua. http://www.focac.org/focacdakar/eng/hyqk_1/202112/t20211202_10461074.htm

Xinhua. (2023). "Qin: China to commit to global human rights governance." *ChinaDaily*. February 2023.

Yabi, G., & Holman, S. (2024, April 1). Senegal: From constitutional crisis to democratic restoration. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/04/senegal-from-constitutional-crisis-to-democratic-restoration?lang=en>

Zhang, Yiming. 2022. "China-Africa Cooperation Enters a New Stage and Implements a New Plan." Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Namibia. January 21, 2022. http://na.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/dsxx/hdjh/202201/t20220121_10631816.htm.

[Zhao, Suisheng](#) (2023). *The Dragon Roars Back: Transformational Leaders and Dynamics of Chinese Foreign Policy*. Stanford University Press. ISBN 978-1-503-63088-8.

Zhou, T. (2024). Development and Aid in Africa: The Chinese Perspective on Europe. In: Biba, S. (eds) *Europe in an Era of US-China Strategic Rivalry. Global Power Shift*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-48117-8_11

Chapter 11 pp 223-239: "Development and Aid in Africa: The Chinese Perspective on Europe"

