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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Lost in transfer – tracing policy diffusion and norm-shaping in Tanzania-China relations

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## Abstract

This article examines the complexities of policy transfer between China and Tanzania, focussing on the influence of linguistic and cultural discrepancies. It explores how African governments, particularly Tanzania, interpret and adapt Chinese policy concepts to align with their domestic priorities. The study employs a multi-method approach, including interviews, document analysis and literature review, to investigate the dynamics of Sino-Tanzanian relations. Findings reveal that while China's development and security discourses resonate with African policymakers, the semantic nuances and historical contexts of Chinese terms often lead to divergent interpretations. Despite several initiatives from China to infuse policy concepts into Tanzanian discourse, including projects such as a party leadership school and party-to-party dialogues, there are to date no successful adaptations or transfers of Chinese macro-policy concepts to Tanzania. The research highlights the critical role of language and cultural context in policy transfer processes, challenging the traditional view of passive policy reception in the Global South. It contributes to the broader understanding of policy transfer, emphasising the need to recognise the dynamic interplay of language, culture and political agency in the process. The study concludes with recommendations for recognising and addressing the interpretive challenges in international policy transfers to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation.

## 1 | SETTING THE STAGE: CHINA'S INFLUENCE IN AFRICA AND THE COMPLEXITIES OF POLICY TRANSFER

China's influence in shaping norms and policies in Africa has been a topic of increasing interest (Cissé et al., 2023). Despite the massive impact COVID-19 had on China's presence in Africa and the palpable decrease in financial and technical cooperation in recent years, in the field of policy dissemination China is regarded as one of the most influential external actors on the continent (Chen et al., 2024; Nantulya, 2023a). According to the literature, various concepts and ideas from China, such as its developmental model, one-party rule, party-army relationship and China's interpretation of the development–security nexus, have

found their way into the domestic discourse of several African states and also influenced the regional level (Carrozza & Benabdallah, 2022; Green et al., 2020: 9; Lammich, 2023). The seemingly ambiguous nature of many concepts promoted by Beijing, at least when viewed from an external standpoint, provides ample room for interpretation. African governments, capitalising on this interpretative flexibility, adapt these concepts to align with their own priorities and agendas. However, it is important to note that the implications and outcomes drawn from Chinese policies may not necessarily mirror the evolution of China's approach towards Africa. Concepts such as the development–security nexus, South–South cooperation (SSC) or the China model are not solely shaped by Beijing; African actors also play a significant role by selectively incorporating, and sometimes relying on, fragmented or outdated

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aspects of these concepts in their policy formulation (Hodzi, 2020). This article traces China's attempts as a norm provider to Tanzania and highlights the challenges China faces to successfully transfer its policies to an African context and explores Tanzania's interpretation of China's foreign policy discourse, shedding light on the potential disparities and divergent understandings that emerge during the transfer of policy ideas. Drawing on the dynamic relationship between China and Tanzania, the study explores the complexities of cross-cultural interpretation and the implications for policy transfer. By examining how Tanzania perceives, internalises or rejects China's foreign policy messaging, this research aims to deepen our understanding of the nuances involved in policy transfer processes.

## 2 | POLICY TRANSFER IN SINO-AFRICAN COOPERATION

Policy transfer, which emerged within political science in the mid-1990s, introduced a novel perspective on how nation states share policies (Benson & Jordan, 2011:366). David Dolowitz and David Marsh (1996, p. 344) broadened the scope of the 'lesson drawing' approach by coining the term 'policy transfer' to include both 'voluntary' and 'coercive' practices. They noted that coercive practices could involve one government or a supra-national institution pushing or forcing another to adopt new policy innovations (Benson & Jordan, 2011: 367). This evolution of the concept addressed the different variations of policy export and more practical issues, moving beyond mere lesson drawing. In 2000, Dolowitz and Marsh further refined this concept by developing a framework composed of seven questions that investigate who is involved in policy transfer, why they participate, what is transferred, from where, to where and the process involved. Additionally, the development of policy transfer was influenced by criticisms of policy diffusion, particularly for its failure to thoroughly address the complex processes involved in the propagation of policies (Benson & Jordan, 2011; Marsh & Sharman, 2009). Today, policy transfer is broadly understood to encompass the processes that facilitate the exchange of knowledge about institutions, policies or delivery systems across different sectors or levels of governance (Stone et al., 2020). Policy transfer has become a crucial element of international relations, facilitating the exchange and adaptation of policy ideas to meet common challenges. Although not a new concept – as noted by Evans (2004), Aristotle emphasised the value of learning from the administrative successes and failures of other regions as early as 315 BCE – the practice has grown more common due to increased globalisation and the internationalisation of policy areas, which limit the ability of states to focus solely on national strategies.

### Policy Implications

- **Enhance Capacity for Policy Analysis and Adaptation:** Policymakers should thoroughly explore the underlying meanings of policy notions emerging from China, considering the complexities of its policy discourse. Building local expertise in policy analysis and adaptation is crucial. Expanding language programmes and cultural training can facilitate more accurate interpretations of Chinese policy ideas and intents, aiding in making informed decisions about collaborations and agreements.
- **Encourage Open Dialogue and Transparency:** It is vital to promote open dialogue and transparency in international collaborations, especially with China. This includes clearly communicating Tanzania's own policy positions, expectations and boundaries while actively seeking to understand China's policy language and underlying intentions. Additionally, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation between all international partners can enhance policy outcomes.
- **Evaluate Long-Term Impacts of Policy Decisions:** Regularly evaluate the impacts of adopted foreign policies. This should include assessments of economic, social and political outcomes to ensure that these policies align with Tanzania's developmental goals and its own foreign policy agenda. Comparative evaluations with policies influenced by all international partners can provide a balanced perspective.
- **Realistic Assessment of Policy Influence:** Recognise that both Western and Chinese influences shape the political discourse in Tanzania. While China's attempts to contribute to this discourse should be acknowledged, Western countries also play a significant role in promoting norms and ideas. Rather than demonising any specific set of concepts, it is important to critically assess all influences, focussing on how they can collectively contribute to democracy, good governance and sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa.

This paper acknowledges various terms like diffusion, dissemination and mobility, identified by Minkman and van Buuren et al. (Minkman et al., 2018: 223), which reflect distinct aspects of policy change and propagation, and includes them under the broad concept of

policy transfer. Additionally, the paper incorporates mimicry – also known as emulation or socialisation – within this category. Marsh and Sherman (Marsh & Sharman, 2009: 272) describe mimicry as the adoption of foreign models driven more by symbolic or normative factors than by technical or rational considerations of functional efficiency. Focussing on the deliberate adaptation of policies, the term ‘transfer’ is defined as a process where information about policies, administrative ideas, interests and institutional frameworks from one context influences their counterparts in another. This process underscores the critical role of agency in disseminating and adapting policy ideas, as highlighted by Marsh and Sharman (2009) and Stone et al. (2020). A decade ago, scholarly focus on policy transfer was predominantly centred around the interactions of states within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and their influence as policy originators for the global South. However, the southward shift in economic power, coupled with changes in governance and policies such as embracing fiscal conservatism or austerity, scaling back state intervention, overhauling the welfare system, decentralising authority and amplifying public participation, has intensified the supply and demand for a diverse portfolio of policy expertise and insights (Si et al., 2020: 410). Recent academic contributions have thus shed light on the emerging phenomenon of non-Western policy transfer, broadening our perspective on policy sources originating from the global South (Stone et al., 2020: 2) and China (Porto de Oliveira & Romano, 2023; Si et al., 2020). Besides the directionalities of policy transfer, which now include non-OECD countries, the focus of policy transfer has also significantly expanded over the years. While initially it was a field dominated by public policy scholars concentrating on national bureaucracies and domestic policies or modest reforms in specific sectors (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000; Evans, 2004), the literature has since extended to encompass a wide variety of governance institutions and actors. Today, it addresses multiple levels and sectors of governance, from the local to the international scale (Evans, 2019).

This shift in focus towards these novel sources and areas of policy creation holds significant implications for sub-Saharan African states, especially considering the mixed results of policy transfers from the global North and their political and social repercussions (Alou, 2009).

Rather than contributing to the already dense array of theoretical frameworks surrounding policy transfer, this article focusses on the practical challenges faced in Sino-African policy transfer, with a particular emphasis on the linguistic and cultural aspects involved. Language barriers as inhibiting factors have often been ignored in the study of international policy transfer often assuming that the increasing dominance of English and the wide availability of English translations have bridged

most language gaps (Wolman, 2009: 12). Looking at policy transfer between China and Tanzania, the vast differences of political culture and values should also be taken into account, factors which are often neglected in traditional policy research that focusses on transfer between Western countries or to systems that have traditionally been heavily influenced by Western norms. Looking especially at foreign policy the transfer from Chinese conceptualisations of the international system and world order to other countries is also impeded by the peculiarities of China's discourse. China faces in the field of foreign policy transfer to Africa. Amidst a burgeoning corpus of research on Sino-African relations and China's normative influence in African policies, there has been a pronounced focus on China's motives and the effects of its presence, often overshadowing the role of African states (Hodzi, 2020; Otele, 2016:75). Yet, it remains unclear whether China's role is simply that of an additional policy source, reinforcing Africa's reliance on external actors, or whether China's unique approach is reshaping the influence of African governments and policymakers. The current debate around China's ideational influence in Africa presents two divergent views: some see China as fostering a South–South cooperation narrative among African leaders (Carrozza, 2019: 145), while others suggest that China is adapting to the regional frameworks preferred by African leaders (Hodzi, 2020: 891).

Several studies have already looked at the way African elites and governments adapt policies originating from China in their own policy spaces. Some aspects relevant to policy transfer have been recently examined by studies concerned with China's impact on African development and security (Benabdallah, 2016; Carrozza, 2019). Several scholars also bring in the aspect of African Agency (Alden et al., 2020; Corkin, 2013; Fourie, 2015) to the debate even if there is an ongoing discussion about where this agency is located (Otele, 2016: 84; Alden & Otele, 2022). As Hodzi (2020) and Lammich (2023) have pointed out African political elites often adopt rather unspecific bits and pieces of ideas associated with China such as the China model, it is discourse on sovereignty and non-interference or development using it often to defend their political decisions against Western critique and to assert their autonomy. Hodzi (2020) further elaborates that African elites selectively incorporate certain policy aspects that align with their interests, enabling them to manoeuvre strategically in their dealings with both China and the West. This approach helps them to not only renegotiate their engagement with Western nations but also expand their own policy spaces and refine their development strategies, drawing on China's experience to challenge the prescriptions of international institutions. This selective adoption and adaptation across the African continent reveals an often pragmatic, transactional engagement with Chinese policies, aimed at



enhancing their sovereign decision-making capabilities and maintaining political stability. These studies, however, leave the determinants of successful policy adoption from China in Africa largely unexplored. This article enhances the emerging discourse on African state roles and agency in interactions with China, as explored by Otele (2016: 97) and Alden et al. (2020: 11), while also contributing to the recent literature on new directionalities of policy transfers in the global South. It achieves this by analysing the linguistic and normative challenges involved in these processes.

The methodology of this study employs a multifaceted approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of China's impact on Tanzania's policymaking. First, we conducted a series of semi-structured interviews over a three-month period in the spring of 2023 with Tanzanian policymakers, scholars and experts on Sino-African relations. This sampling procedure was chosen to gather a range of perspectives on how China's foreign policy is perceived and internalised within Tanzania. In total, 79 persons from government institutions, the ruling party Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the opposition parties Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA) and CUF/ACT, think-tanks, international multiparty organisations, media and academia, the Chinese embassy, and Xinhua Tanzania were contacted for an interview. 36 interviews were conducted in total. The initial contacts were chosen through an online search, recommendations from local partners and snowballing from previous interviews, targeting those most likely to have insights into the bilateral relationship dynamics between China and Tanzania and the policymaking process. Second, we undertook a thorough document analysis, which included an examination of official documents, policy statements and speeches from both Chinese and Tanzanian sources. The Chinese documents included a range of materials outlining China's Africa policy and the Global Development Initiative (GDI), as well as FOCAC declarations, action plans and follow-up actions. For Tanzania, a total of 112 national policy documents spanning from 2005 to 2023 were identified via several online repositories and the websites of various ministries.<sup>1</sup> Documents that were only available in Swahili were not considered. The analysis also included 32 speeches from Magufuli, Hassan and various Tanzanian ministers and ambassadors that were available as English transcripts on the ministries' websites or distributed via the Tanzanian embassies at the UN and in China. While all policies and transcripts were searched for specific Chinese catchphrases using MAXQDA, documents related to foreign policy, development and security were also manually scrutinised for phrases indicative of Chinese policy impact.<sup>2</sup> The phrases were deduced from the last four political reports to the Chinese National Congress and key policy documents such as China's Africa policy. Examples of such phrases include 'community of common/shared

destiny', 'Chinese/African Dream', 'intra-party democracy (党内民主)' or the 'scientific view of development (科学发展观)'. Finally, an extensive literature review was conducted to contextualise our findings within the broader academic discourse on policy transfer, international relations and the evolving dynamics of China–Africa relations. This literature review not only helped to frame our findings within existing theoretical frameworks but also allowed us to identify gaps in the current understanding of the topic. By combining these data sources, we aim to capture the range of interpretations and perspectives regarding China's foreign policy discourse within Tanzania. China–Tanzania relations are emblematic of China's deepening engagement in Africa. Established in the 1960s, these relations have evolved from solidarity-based cooperation during the Cold War to a more complex dynamic encompassing trade, investment, aid and diplomatic collaboration in the contemporary era.

The following section looks first at the peculiarities of China's development and foreign policy discourse, followed by an examination of Sino-Tanzanian relations. The latter portion of the study focusses on the influence exerted by China's diverse policy concepts and initiatives on Tanzania's political landscape and further evaluates the agency within Tanzania's political sphere.

### 3 | CHINA'S STRIVE FOR DISCOURSE POWER (IN AFRICA)

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is actively working to enhance its 'discourse power' (国际话语权), a crucial concept reflecting the state's ambition to influence global public opinion. Some initial academic works in China on 'international discourse power' originated in the early 2000s; however, the subject became increasingly prominent after 2008, coinciding with China's adoption of a more assertive foreign policy stance (Thibaut, 2022: 7). President Xi Jinping has emphasised the importance of effectively communicating China's narrative, insisting on portraying a positive image of China globally and reducing criticism (Drinhausen et al., 2023). This approach includes encouraging government officials, media personnel, researchers and citizens to 'tell China's story well'.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Chinese leaders believe that narrative control, similar to what they perceive as prevalent in Western countries, particularly the United States, is essential for establishing global influence. This narrative control involves shaping global governance, values and norms to support and justify the expression of state power (Thibaut, 2022).

Concerns in China regarding the prevailing influence of Western 'universal values' were highlighted in an internal CCP document from April 2013, recognised as 'Document No. 9' or more officially 'Communiqué on

the Current State of the Ideological Sphere' (*guānyú dāngqián yìshí xíngtài lǐngyù qíngkuàng de tōngbào* 关于当前意识形态领域情况的通报). The document depicted the purported threat of universal values to the legitimacy of the CCP.<sup>4</sup> The document contends that 'the West's values are the prevailing norm for all human civilization' [...] and expresses concerns that international audiences might perceive Western concepts of freedom, democracy and human rights as universal and enduring, leading to a misrepresentation of Chinese values. To counter the potentially detrimental impact of the predominance of Western concepts, the document calls for China's foreign policy to be more proactive in shaping international discourse. According to some Chinese scholars, the strive for international discourse power is also a reaction to theories and phrases such as 'China Threat', 'China Arrogance', 'Thucydides Trap' and 'Kindleberger Trap', used by Western media and academics that were perceived as polarising and stereotypical (Hu, 2019).<sup>5</sup> For the CCP, gaining discourse power translates into an ability to increase China's geopolitical power by creating consensus around an alternative, China-led international order – one that privileges state sovereignty over civil liberties and that subordinates human rights to state security. China has identified both the digital realm and the geographic regions of the Global South as arenas of opportunity in advancing its goals and gaining a discourse power advantage over the United States. The Global South, and particularly the African continent, serves as a critical stage where, according to Xi, the acquisition of discourse power is of paramount importance (Thibaut, 2022:11). In his address at the Forum for China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) on November 29, 2021, Xi interlinked his vision of a 'community with a shared future for mankind' in Africa to China's pursuit of discourse power.<sup>6</sup> He asserted that the collaboration between China and African nations would not depend on Western interpretations of 'so-called human rights', which violate the sovereign rights of countries to manage their 'internal affairs'. Xi emphasised that both China and Africa advocate for development paths that align with their respective national conditions and resist interference in domestic affairs, racial discrimination and unilateral sanctions (Lammich, 2023). China's leadership has identified regions within the Global South as pivotal for amplifying its 'power to be heard'. The Global South is regarded as a crucial region for the propagation of China's narrative frameworks and governance models. It also represents a profitable market for China's infrastructure initiatives, like those encompassed in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). To counteract the prevailing discourse of Western strength and Chinese weakness, China is strategically identifying 'entry points' for its narratives (Thibaut, 2022: 12). These entry points encompass international platforms such as the United Nations, as well as discussions in

the Global South related to human rights and China's developmental achievements. Notably, development is seen as a crucial focus for swiftly enhancing China's international influence. The Chinese interpretation of the development–security nexus, which posits development as a precursor to the realisation of concepts such as Good Governance and Democracy, is one of the few Chinese concepts that have found resonance with African policymakers (Lammich, 2023).

## 4 | CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY DISCOURSE

Understanding China's normative impact on African policies and politics requires a comprehensive analysis of the distinct dynamics of discourses and practices in both Chinese and African settings. The interplay between these two contexts shapes the ways in which China's norms, values and ideas are received, interpreted and incorporated into African policy processes. Thanks to the work of scholars like Benabdallah (2016), Carozza (2019), Alden and Large (2019) and many others, we have now a better understanding how China has restructured its African policy over the years and much attention has been spent on deciphering China's rhetoric adjustments reflecting a more viable approach towards the realities in Africa. That does not always mean African agents have also reacted to these changes or even took note of them. Several factors inhibit the contemporaneous adaptation of China's policy turns by African governments. In some cases, these factors are intrinsic, based on domestic priorities of African policy makers that have arranged themselves with a certain interpretation of China's role on the continent and see no benefit in adjusting their policies. In other cases, the discrepancy stems from the complexity of the discourse itself. The character of China's foreign policy with layered discourses and encapsulated meanings underpinned by figurative and symbolic semantics complicates the literal but also ideational translation of concepts emerging in China to monosomic terms (Semenov & Tsvyk, 2021: 565; Zhang, 2015). China's writing system, based on characters that represent ideas or concepts rather than individual sounds, shapes the way in which foreign policy discourses are articulated and conveyed. This system allows for rich layers of meaning and nuanced expressions that are deeply rooted in Chinese culture, history and philosophy. The use of figurative language, idioms and symbolic imagery adds depth and complexity to many of China's policy concepts, making it difficult to directly translate into other languages or convey in a concise manner (Qiu, 2023: 146). Chinese diplomatic language also often incorporates concepts from ancient philosophies such as Confucianism, Daoism and Legalism. These philosophies contain a lot of specific

terminology and cultural nuances that are lost in translation. Policy terms well understood by Chinese academics and politicians can thus change their character and meaning when transferred to a different language. Despite the translational challenges arising from linguistic and cultural discrepancies, there is also a more strategic connotation to official translations provided by China often overlooked by scholars dealing with China's foreign policy.

As Mokry (2022) shows China often distinguishes between internal and external messaging in its official foreign policy statements. Chinese policy statements targeting domestic audiences tend to signal ambitions that are more inconsistent with the existing norms and rules of the international system than their official English translations, which are meant for an international audience. Sometimes, the translations provided by China are also intentionally ambiguous to provide China with greater flexibility to interpret its own foreign policy statements in different ways depending on the situation. While these strategic aspects of China's official translations are not always obvious, they are crucial to understanding China's foreign policy and its approach to international diplomacy. Scholars and analysts need to read between the lines and consider these underlying strategic considerations when interpreting Chinese diplomatic language (Semenov & Tsvyk, 2021).

One prominent example of these slight but nevertheless noteworthy mistranslations is for example the term '*gòng yíng*' (共赢) commonly translated as win-win cooperation. The concept of a 'win-win' scenario is a well-established idea in game theory, a field of study popular among Western economic and social science scholars that models strategic interaction between rational decision-makers (Nagel, 2002).

Win-win cooperation thus carries a certain mercantilistic undertone, implying a transactional nature in relationships. It refers to situations where both parties gain equally from a deal or agreement. This interpretation aligns with the Western notion of fairness, which is underpinned by a more individualistic culture. In such cultures, transactions between parties are often viewed as zero-sum, with advantages being carefully balanced. In contrast, the Chinese term '*gongying*' conveys a more collaborative and collective connotation, literally meaning 'winning in common' or 'winning together', as Strauss (2020: 37) notes. The translation also does not fully encapsulate the richness and complexity of the original term as understood within the Chinese cultural and sociopolitical context. '*Gongying*' embodies a deeper philosophy of mutual benefit and collaborative success that is rooted in traditional Chinese thought, encompassing an idea of collective progress rather than just reciprocal advantage. It is about achieving collective growth and development, not just for the immediate parties involved, but also for

the larger community or system they are part of. The ethos of '*gongying*' extends to long-term relationships, peaceful coexistence and shared prosperity.

Though win-win cooperation has now become one of the most prominent tag words of Chinese foreign policy, the original meaning of '*gongying*' has been lost to the international audience. Addressing these nuances is however critical for a comprehensive understanding of China's foreign policy discourse, as the principle of '*gongying*' cooperation is central to its diplomatic engagements and initiatives, like the Belt and Road Initiative.

To soften the commercial language of win-win cooperation, the term '*gòngtóng fāzhǎn*' (共同发展) that translates as 'common-development' has been added to China's official rhetoric on development cooperation and values like friendship, equality and complementary have been highlighted to further underscore the perspective. Friendship signifies the importance of maintaining positive and harmonious relations between nations, free of hegemonic control (Strauss, 2020: 39). Equality is a reflection of China's non-interventionist stance, respecting the sovereignty of other nations and rejecting the kind of power dynamics often associated with Western models of development assistance. Complementarity, on the other hand, emphasises the idea that different nations, each with their unique strengths and capabilities, can work together in a manner that benefits all.

Many of the policy documents analysed in this article bear numerous references to a whole array of policy concepts that not only describe the evolution of China's foreign policy but also indicate the political and economic motivations for Chinese projects on the continent.

With the spirit of sincere friendship, mutual respect, equality and attaining reciprocal results and common development and under the banner of 'peace, development, cooperation and win-win', we need to continue following the road of mutually beneficial cooperation and common development, seize the historic opportunity, deepen the practical cooperation and work for furthering the friendship between China and Africa so as to let the idea of a China-Africa community of shared destinies take root in the heart of our people, be part of our blood, and be carried on and carried forward by forthcoming generations.

(Declaration of Proposals on China-Africa People-to-People Exchanges and Cooperation 2015)

This sentence from one of several documents that were part of the preparations for the 2015 FOCAC

summit in South Africa shows the difficulties in deciphering the complex phrasing and slogans of China's foreign policy discourse. To the reader not familiar with Chinese paraphrasing, this passage might read as a somewhat lengthy statement about the good relationships between China and Africa shrouded in a 'meaningless lexicon of diplomatic jargon' (Mardell, 2017). For connoisseurs of Chinese foreign policy rhetoric, several key phrases immediately stand out. Apart from the above-mentioned 'common-development', other expressions are also referencing established or new concepts of Beijing's foreign policy that add a lot of content to this passage. 'Mutual Respect and Equality' reflects China's non-interference policy, and it is insistence on respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity as key norms of international relations. 'Mutually Beneficial Cooperation' reflects China's preference for economic and trade cooperation as the main avenue of engagement with other countries. 'Forthcoming Generations' also indicates a long-term perspective in China's foreign policy.

The most controversial phrase being the 'community of shared destiny' a concept in China's diplomacy that has been increasingly been used on international occasions (Zhang, 2018: 196). The phrase is closely linked to Xi's notion of a 'New Era' and aims to supersede an 'outdated' model associated with the West including perspectives on political partnership, security, economic development, cultural exchanges and environment (Zhang, 2018: 196). Some observers also see the concept of shared destinies connected to a departure from the nation-oriented approach of China's foreign policy that reflects a desire to play a more active role in global governance (Poh & Li, 2017). While this concept aims at sustaining a favourable external environment for China's economic development, it can also be seen as an attack on the current multilateral order of international organisations, alliances and shared sovereignty (Hayton, 2020: 37).

The example of 'shared destiny' is just one of many references to an underlying wealth of theory and ideology often not aligning to Western worldviews that frequently appears in China's African policy documents.

It is important to note that such slogans or catchphrases called '*tífǎ*' (提法) are always used deliberately, never profligately, and can be understood as political signposts that play an important role for policy implementation (Qian, 2012). The introduction of new phrases, subtle changes to the wording or the disappearance of certain terms can reflect the outcome of new power constellations in China's foreign policy and indicate changes to the prevailing course of Beijing's engagement in Africa. While many of these phrases are rather aimed at a domestic audience, one should not underestimate the significance of vocabularies in the context of Chinese policy making.

Chinese diplomats and scholars are aware of the fact that the peculiarities of China's international communication make it more difficult for the international community to always grasp the exact meaning but also view a distinguishable Chinese diplomatic terminology as an element of cultural sovereignty (Su, 2015). Some scholars have argued that while China's broad, philosophical narratives might align with its holistic cultural thinking, they might be too abstract for international observers. Therefore, these overarching narratives should be supported by specific policy explanations to better express their intended assertions (Zhang, 2015). Despite the awareness that many aspects of China's policy discourse are not very accessible or convincing to the global community, the trend of actively promoting Chinese concepts and terms in international politics has intensified under the leadership of Xi Jinping.

Several policy formulas emerging from China have found their way into the international discourse and at least from Beijing's viewpoint challenge the hegemony of Western concepts. 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence' (*Héping gòngchǔ wǔ xiàng yuánzé*, 和平共处五项原则), the 'Belt and Road Initiative', 'representative democracy' (*Xiéshāng mínzhǔ*, 协商民主) and 'peaceful development' (*Héping fāzhǎn*, 和平发展) are only a few of the terminologies that have been frequently used in the official Sino-African discourse.

## 5 | TANZANIA–CHINA RELATIONS

Tanzania's relationship with China is among the strongest and longest-running on the continent. Under founding President Julius Nyerere, Tanganyika, which unified with Zanzibar in 1964 to form Tanzania, had already accepted material aid, training and weapons from China (Meservey, 2020: 9). After the unification, Tanzania also developed close links with Mao Zedong's China, which, apart from providing ideational support for the liberation movement and nascent political system, also offered concrete financial assistance, military support and large-scale infrastructure projects such as the iconic TAZARA Railway. The railway spans approximately 1860 kilometres (1160 miles) and was built to provide landlocked Zambia with an alternative route for the export and import of goods, reducing its dependence on routes through apartheid-era South Africa and white-minority-ruled Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). China's support of about ¥988 million (the equivalent of US\$2.71 billion today) for the construction of the 'Freedom Railway' – known as 'Reli ya Uhuru' in Swahili – in the 1970s was imbued with an anti-imperialist discourse (Zajontz, 2023: 117).

This narrative emphasised Sino-African solidarity, anchored in a mutual history of colonial subordination and anti-imperial resistance, and led to Tanzania



becoming 'China's closest friend in Africa' during the 1970s (Bailey, 1975: 41). Despite ties with China, he kept close associations with Britain, Tanzania's former colonial power and other Western countries (Pallotti, 2020: 432). This approach led to a non-aligned stance, allowing Tanzania to engage with diverse nations during the Cold War. After Nyerere stepped down as president in 1985 and Deng Xiaoping steered China towards a market-oriented economy, the Sino-Tanzanian relationship lost its momentum and ideological underpinning, with China becoming one partner among many. An economic crisis in the 1980s forced Tanzania to shift from socialism to IMF and World Bank-led structural adjustments. China also reduced international aid during its own reform period and focussed more on global market integration than supporting its former African allies (Pallotti, 2020: 432).

Although not anti-Chinese, Nyerere's successors, Ali Hassan Mwinyi (1985–1995) and Benjamin Mkapa (1995–2005), pushed for political democratisation and economic liberalisation in Tanzania during the 1990s. These efforts strengthened Tanzania's relations with the West, while loosening its traditional ties with the former Soviet Union and China (Cabestan & Chaponnière, 2016: 36). Only when China again increased its interest and investment in Africa in the early 2000s did Sino-Tanzanian relations revive (Palotti, 2020: 432).

In the mid-2000s, China shifted its strategy in Tanzania, concentrating on building personal relationships with heads of state instead of engaging broadly with the wider political elite, who might face uncertain political changes. A clear manifestation of this strategy was visible during the late 2000s under the stewardship of then-Chinese President, Hu Jintao. His administration found an active and willing ally in former Tanzanian President, Jayaka Kikwete, who successfully lobbied Beijing to finance or co-finance various of his ambitious projects aimed at amplifying Tanzania's infrastructural framework (White, 2023).

The close relationship extended into the tenure of Xi Jinping, significantly influenced by Kikwete's judicious understanding of the domestic dividends rendered by China's investments. Following a state visit by President Xi to Tanzania in 2013, the Chinese government pledged to finance Kikwete's Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project, estimated at \$4.2 billion, based on a build–operate–transfer model. This arrangement was designed to permit Chinese enterprises to amass funds for the railway's construction and reclaim their investments by transiently operating it upon completion. In another large-scale investment, China Merchants Securities Ltd floated \$10 billion in corporate bonds to underpin the construction of a new port in Kikwete's home region, Bagamoyo.<sup>7</sup>

Following John Pombe Joseph Magufuli's rise to power after Kikwete's tenure in 2015, there was a significant transformation in the dynamics of Sino-Tanzanian

relations reflecting the changes in leadership styles, priorities and political philosophy of the two regimes. 'So he [Magufuli] gets into office and before he came into office the government had already an agreement with the Chinese to build the SGR railway, he stopped the agreement and then he ordered that the project will be retendered and that's where we got a Turkish company. And I think that was a huge statement for the Chinese. And there were also allegations of corruption like how they got the deal in the first place' (ACT/CUF politician).

During Magufuli's tenure, Tanzania experienced a strategic shift towards resource nationalism, embodying an autocratic developmental state approach (Harris, 2021). This shift towards autocratic developmentalism markedly altered the political landscape for Chinese corporations and infrastructure investments. Shortly after assuming office, President Magufuli accused the Chinese Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) of corruption, subsequently denying them a contract signed with the previous administration for constructing the SGR. Furthermore, Chinese contractors were subsequently excluded from the new tender, which ultimately was awarded to a Turkish–Portuguese consortium (Gentry, 2023:16). A further notable action taken under the Magufuli administration was the abrupt suspension of the Bagamoyo port's construction. This project held a prominent position within China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), serving as a flagship endeavour symbolising China's significant investment in Africa's infrastructure (Shangwe, 2021:16).<sup>8</sup> While the expulsion of Chinese investors under President Magufuli's regime is frequently viewed as indicative of anti-Chinese sentiment, there were, according to various sources closely associated with the president, several other contributing factors. The Bagamoyo port project, for instance, was located in the home region of Magufuli's predecessor, Kikwete. The project, along with other substantial infrastructure deals, was perceived as predominantly advantageous to a faction within the ruling CCM party that was largely opposed to Magufuli's ascent to power. Concurrently, the principal opposition party, CHADEMA, was quite vocal in expressing their concerns over an impending Chinese 'takeover' and the perceived sell-out of crucial Tanzanian infrastructure to Chinese investors by the CCM. As Shangwe (2021) notes, in their 2015 election manifesto, CHADEMA brought up China in relation to illegal logging and ivory trade. Conversely, the ruling party's manifesto discussed China in terms of the prospects it offered and the positive collaboration that Tanzania had experienced with it. In the 2015 elections, Magufuli, who garnered just 58% of the popular vote, built his political identity on a firm position against corruption and exploitation by foreign investors. Therefore, he was compelled to demonstrate to the Tanzanian populace that he was indeed meeting these expectations.

This political signalling extended also to other major international partnerships, re-shaping the direction and nature of foreign investments during his tenure. As Lammich (2019) and other scholars have pointed out, there is a tendency to view China as a monolithic actor, while Western companies are perceived as independent entities loosely connected to their home countries. Despite Magufuli's government adopting a similar stance against Canadian and Australian mining companies – accusing them of misconduct and revoking their licenses – its actions against Chinese companies were frequently seen as an expression of an explicit anti-China sentiment.

Even amid these decisions that seemingly undermined Chinese interests, financial and technical support from China continued and considerable political engagement persisted. In 2018, Magufuli opened a new \$30 million training center for the TPDF in Bagamoyo District, built with the help of China's PLA.<sup>9</sup> The Chinese government also built the Tanzania Military Academy (TMA), and the Shanghai Construction Group has been contracted by the Tanzanian Ministry of Defense and National Service to build 12,000 housing units, financed by a \$550 million loan from the Exim Bank of China.<sup>10</sup> The demise of Magufuli while in office in March 2021, amid conjectures linking his death to COVID-19, led to a shift in leadership, with his Vice President, Samia Suluhu Hassan, taking over the helm. Hassan's tenure has marked a tentative reversion to the cordial diplomacy that was a hallmark of Kikwete's presidency. During a state visit to China in November 2022, coinciding with the commencement of Chinese President Xi's third term, the two leaders oversaw the signing of 15 agreements about trade and investment. These included the refurbishment of the Tanzania–Zambia, or Tazara, railway – a landmark foreign aid project initially financed by China five decades prior. In addition to this, Tanzania received a debt forgiveness commitment from China along with a promise of duty-free entry for Tanzanian products into the Chinese market.<sup>11</sup> The two heads of state also concurred on upgrading Sino-Tanzanian relations to the status of a comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership. Although China has over 40 such partnerships around the globe, it indicates China's interests and its closeness to these countries. This is an elevation for Tanzania, which was not previously a member of China's more or less exclusive club of strategic partnerships with a second and third attribute.<sup>12</sup> These defined partnerships may not always provide preferential treatment to these countries, but they still indicate China's strategic priorities and its perceptions of different nations. A comprehensive partnership, considered one of the highest levels of relationship China has with other countries, entails a commitment to fostering cooperation and promoting mutual development.<sup>13</sup> As Benabdallah (2020:100)

notes, the status of relations also impacts the frequency of party-to-party ties and strengthens elite exchange programmes. These indicators hint at a potential revival of the amiable Sino-Tanzanian relations that characterised the early part of the previous decade (White, 2023). However, as one interviewee noted, there is still some scepticism in the Tanzanian government about the revival of Sino-Tanzanian relationships: 'And there is a lot of Magufulis even as I speak today, in the public service. In the civil service there is a lot of Magufuli thinking that China comes to Tanzania to steal' (Government advisor).

## 6 | CHINA'S INFLUENCE ON TANZANIA'S POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

No, no. I don't think that China has any serious influence in terms of our thinking, of our policies.

(CCM politician)

In a recent survey from Afrobarometer and REPOA, a substantial majority of respondents, three-fourths (75%), perceive China's economic and political influence on Tanzania as either 'somewhat positive' or 'very positive', positioning China above the United States (63%), Great Britain (52%) and Russia (36%) in terms of favourable perceptions. Tanzanians also express overwhelmingly positive assessments of the influences of the East African Community (EAC) (77%), United Nations agencies (76%), the African Union (75%) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (67%).<sup>14</sup> These data illustrate a prevailing sentiment of approval or optimism towards a range of international actors, with China enjoying a particularly favourable standing among them. Instances of alignment in policies between Tanzania and China, particularly concerning governance models, censorship and human rights, have sparked discussions and concerns both within Tanzania and internationally.

In November 2022, the diplomatic relationship between China and Tanzania achieved a new designation, termed a Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership, amid the official visit of Tanzania's president, Hassan, to Beijing. This enhancement in partnership status was lauded by Chinese media sources as a notable advancement in Sino-Tanzanian relations, indicative of strengthened ties and mutual cooperation.<sup>15</sup> However, a number of Tanzanian interviewees perceived this development as somewhat nominal. They posited that it represented a standard procedural effort on the part of President Hassan to revitalise Tanzania's international relations following the comparatively isolationist trajectory pursued during Magufuli's tenure.

Looking at the joint statement announcing the new partnership, the outlined areas of cooperation between China and Tanzania span political, economic, industrial, cultural and security domains. Politically, the emphasis is on bolstering mutual trust, strategic coordination and high-level interactions. Economically, the focus is on expanding two-way trade, with China offering increased market access to Tanzanian goods and fostering investment in various infrastructure projects. The partnership aims to advance industrial and production capacity cooperation, particularly in energy, mineral development and the digital economy, supporting Tanzania's industrialisation ambitions. Culturally, there is a mutual commitment to enhance exchanges and cooperation in culture, tourism, education and public health. In terms of security, both nations aim to collaborate to combat transnational crimes and ensure the protection of each other's citizens and institutions. Notably, Tanzania affirmed its commitment to the one-China principle and expressed opposition to any actions or remarks undermining China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In paragraph IX of the document, it is stated:

The two sides undertook to strengthen coordination and cooperation in international affairs and multilateral institutions, jointly uphold true multilateralism, safeguard the international system with the United Nations at its core and the international order underpinned by international law, and promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

(MOFA, 2022)

Despite referencing the 'community with a shared future', a concept that this article has previously detailed, another notion diverging from Western interpretations, emerges within this discourse. The term 'true multilateralism' has become increasingly prominent in Beijing's recent foreign policy narratives, contrasting with what is deemed 'fake' or 'pseudo-multilateralism'. Beijing employs 'true multilateralism' (Zhēnzhèng de duōbiān zhǔyì 真正的多边主义) as a tool to critique US global politics, alleging that by portraying the order as multilateral and rules-based, the US is simply camouflaging its unique power interests (Noesselt, 2022: 4). According to Caffarena (2022), Beijing perceives 'fake multilateralism' as a pretext to 'form exclusive blocks' or 'to divide the world along ideological lines'. In contrast, 'true multilateralism' is perceived as inclusive, non-ideological and non-selective, as it posits that diversity within the international community 'will unlock the immense potential of multilateralism'. Beijing's interpretation of multilateralism de-emphasises the role of binding rules. Instead, it stresses practices such as consultation and accommodation to preserve sovereignty, arguably presenting an alternative model of governance to the

established rules-based order. From Beijing's perspective, political trust does not derive from accountability; rather, it is conceived as an outcome of 'strategic communication'. While the Western notion of qualitative multilateralism is intrinsically transformational, China's more conservative conception leans towards coordination (Caffarena, 2022: 5). While the principles of non-alignment and self-sufficiency prominently feature in Tanzanian politics, there is no evidence to suggest that the more critical stance on the current international system, as proposed by China, has found a foothold in Tanzania. In 2023, President Hassan emphasised Tanzania's staunch belief in a rule-based multilateral system, and under her leadership, relations with the U.S. and other Western partners have substantially improved. The term 'true multilateralism' has not appeared in any official Tanzanian documents, apart from the joint statement with China. Moreover, none of the Tanzanian politicians interviewed during this research indicated familiarity with the phrase.

## 7 | PARTY TO PARTY RELATIONSHIPS AND THE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Even after the abrupt termination of the Bagamoyo port project by the late President Magufuli, and a subsequent worsening of the Tanzanian climate for external investors – with China being one of them – China succeeded in preserving its influence through the cooperative efforts between its Communist Party of China (CCP) and Tanzania's ruling party, CCM (Alfred, 2022). Some observers posit that Magufuli and his CCM drew substantial inspiration from the Chinese Communist Party in shaping Tanzania's ruling party (Oleander, 2021), and several Chinese sources have established a direct link between China and the party reforms under Magufuli; however, the extent of this influence remains a subject of debate.<sup>16</sup> While all interviewees concur that President John Magufuli's reforms within CCM were enacted with the intent of consolidating power, controlling dissent and streamlining decision-making within the party, these moves are widely perceived as manifestations of Magufuli's authoritarian tendencies and 'big man' attitude rather than attempts to emulate China's policy model. 'He [Magufuli] went straight trying to consolidate his power by first trying to introduce a number of reforms within the party, because he knew he did not have a strong base of people who were loyal to him. So, he wanted to change that and he introduced a number of other reforms, partly because he was trying to cut down on the cost of running the party by reducing the number of party members to various meetings' (CCM politician). Officially, Magufuli asserted that the reforms were anchored in the ideals of the party's founding chairman, Dr Julius Nyerere. The reformation process started in

2015 significantly reconfigured the party's upper echelons, notably reducing the members of the National Executive Council (NEC) and the Central Committee to 158 and 24, from 388 and 34, respectively. Additionally, by precluding members of parliament from participating in the powerful National Executive Committee (NEC), Magufuli severed established networks, primarily loyal to former president Kikwete or Edward Lowassa, another influential figure in Tanzania's political landscape.

While the centralisation of power and the establishment of clandestine circles loyal to the president are indeed hallmarks of the CCP, these traits are not unique to China and pervade authoritarian regimes globally. Other reforms instigated by Magufuli, such as appointing military officers to political roles, diverged significantly from trends in China, where the bifurcation between the party-army elite has steadily intensified, thereby diminishing the inter-penetration between the two entities (Lim, 2022: 267). This divergence underscores the substantive variations in the political paradigms between the CCM and CCP, emphasising their contrasting approaches to party-military relations. Given the general refutation of Chinese influence on CCM reforms during the interviews, the apparent broad alignments in party organisations and a shift in other areas such as party-military relations, a direct influence of the CCP on Tanzanian party politics seems at least questionable.

When examining the recent debate concerning China's influence on Tanzanian politics, the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Leadership School undoubtedly becomes a focal point. This topic has solidified the perspective among many Western observers that China holds substantial sway over Tanzanian politics. Initiated in 2018 during Magufuli's tenure and opened in 2022 near Dar Es Salaam in Kibaha, the Academy is officially a collaborative venture involving six parties rooted in the Liberation movement across Southern Africa (Nantulya, 2023b). It was financed by the International Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the CCP's Central Party School, which educates China's eminent party officials, and constructed by a Chinese company. As previously described, a longstanding tradition of party-to-party diplomacy exists between China and Tanzania. Some view the Academy, funded by a \$40 million donation from China, as a new phase in China's endeavours to propagate its party and governance model to Africa (Eisenman, 2023: 2455). The academy purports to strengthen party construction and augment the governance capabilities of the involved parties, including Tanzania's CCM and the governing parties of South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Despite being multiparty democracies, all six nations share a common characteristic: enduring rule by one party. Educators, affiliated with party schools in China, teach an array of subjects, including Xi Jinping Thought

and poverty alleviation. African staff is teaching topics like Pan-Africanism and public-sector enterprise management. Part of the curriculum is also the exchange of insights from their parties' revolutionary histories. A recent report from Axios (2023) stated that Chinese educators from Beijing instruct African leaders in the supremacy of the ruling party over government and courts and advocate stringent internal discipline to ensure adherence to party ideology.<sup>17</sup> The authors perceived it as a new strategy to cultivate an authoritarian-friendly political bloc through the leadership academy. A participant of one of the training programmes at the school however gave a different impression of the school's purpose: 'I think it is not necessarily about learning. It's more like a symbol what it represents. And it fits with the Chinese propaganda [...] like we build the school. Maybe it is too early to assess its impact but I believe it is more about symbolism'.

Despite the school's penchant for secrecy and the scant availability of public information, the concept of training African party officials is not novel to China's approach on the continent. Numerous Tanzanian CCM members and other influential figures in Tanzanian politics, such as journalists and academics, have received invitations to China. China has also granted scholarships to students and initiated collaborative workshops and lectures at Tanzanian universities. The novelty of the leadership academy lies not in China's instructional approach but in its location. Given the consistent visits of CCM members and other political elites to China, it is debatable whether the Academy represents a substantial shift in China's engagement with Tanzania's or Southern Africa's political landscape. Many Tanzanian officials, during interviews, regarded China as merely one among many countries offering funded visits, with the decisive factor being the benefits received for traveling, rather than the political intent behind the invitation. Several interviewees found their visit to China intriguing but prioritised Western destinations for future trips, deeming them more desirable.

Several interviewees commented on the minimal influence that ideological concepts have on the CCM, suggesting that varying ideological perspectives presented to the party tend to have negligible impact. Observing the contemporary developments under President Hassan, it appears challenging to discern any ideological convergence towards China. Although it is premature to definitively assess whether a multiparty democracy and free, fair elections will manifest during her tenure, for the time being, she has embarked on a path that is less authoritarian than her predecessor, Magufuli. One interviewee, who is working closely with the president, even stated that China's state-centric politics are the antithesis to president Hassan, who is supportive of private-sector development and pro-Western. '[The China model is...] more state engineered growth than private sector, but I feel that it is



anthesis to Samia. Samia seems to be more private sector oriented and more West. She seems to enjoy the West more than China. And I think because of the Zanzibar experience, because Zanzibaris are more pro-West' (CCM politician). Hassan has received commendation from US Vice President Harris for her initiatives in expanding political space and implementing pivotal democratic reforms.<sup>18</sup> Hassan has rescinded a prohibition on political gatherings, a policy instituted in 2016 by her predecessor. This prohibition had led to the recurrent detentions of opposition politicians and confrontations between their adherents and law enforcement. In January 2023, CHADEMA, Tanzania's principal opposition party, conducted its first rally in 6 years and welcomed one of its foremost leaders, Tundu Lissu, back from effective exile.

## 8 | CONCLUSION

As shown China has started to change its role from norm interpreter to norm provider especially targeting countries in the global south. Despite China's substantial advancements in cultivating and refining its tools of discourse power and policy transfer, it remains in a position of 'transfer-deficit' when compared to Western nations, particularly the United States. The current comprehension of policy transfer through discourse power by the CCP remains largely aspirational. Looking at Tanzania the success of China's diplomatic offensive had little effect on the adoption of Chinese discourses so far. As the analysis of the national policy documents has shown, although we find some Chinese catchphrases in official bilateral documents, the Chinese terms (or their translations) have not penetrated the general political sphere in Tanzania. The same pattern is found in speeches from Tanzanian politicians, which only reference Chinese concepts when the occasion of the speech is linked to China. While Western narratives of democracy, human rights and other concepts are widely utilised, all interviewees see China's impact more in the economic sphere than in the political sphere, and they often state that China is making no attempts to posit its own political concepts at all 'In terms of shaping ideology, in terms of shaping the political thinking, in terms of even intellectual wise, I don't think that China has much to do in terms of influencing those things. I see very little, if at all, any influence from China in terms of that' (CCM party member).

This research contributes to the broader understanding of policy transfer by highlighting the crucial role of language and cultural context in the transmission of policy ideas. The linguistic complexities and nuances of China's policy discourse, deeply rooted in its cultural and philosophical traditions, present

significant challenges in cross-cultural policy transfer. Terms and concepts that are well-understood within the Chinese context often lose their richness and intended meaning when translated, leading to misunderstandings or superficial adoption in other contexts. This linguistic barrier not only hinders the effective transfer of policies but also reflects the strategic ambiguity often employed by China in its international communications.

Moreover, the research underlines the importance of considering the receiving country's perspective in policy transfer studies. The case of Tanzania demonstrates that the recipient country's interpretation, domestic priorities and political culture significantly influence the outcome of policy transfer. As such, the study challenges the notion of passive recipient countries in the Global South, highlighting their active role in interpreting, adapting or rejecting external policy ideas.

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## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Most policy archives, such as the one from UDSM (<https://www.udsm.ac.tz/web/index.php/institutes/library/national-policies>) or the Tanzanian Online Gateway (<http://www.tzonline.org/policies.asp>), are outdated but provide a good overview of the range of available policies that might have been updated in the meantime.

<sup>2</sup> At the national level, policies are categorised into macro- or cross-cutting policies, sector policies and sub-sector policies. Macro- or cross-cutting policies are those that require the involvement of multiple ministries or span across various sectors. Key frameworks like the Tanzania National Vision 2025, the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) and various other economic policies guide the development and execution of other (sector) policies. The creation of these policies is typically the responsibility of major governmental bodies such as the President's Office, the Vice President's Office, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Ministries of Finance, and Planning, Economy and Empowerment (OECD, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Xinhua (2017). "西强我弱"国际话语格局怎样改变 (How to Change the International Discourse Structure of 'The West is Strong and

- We Are Weak).’ [http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-02/15/c\\_1120468174.html](http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-02/15/c_1120468174.html)
- <sup>4</sup>Mingjing Monthly Exclusively Publishes the Full Text of CCP’s Document No. 9: 明鏡月刊》獨家全文刊發中共9號文件 09/08/2013 <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/chinese/345627.html>
- <sup>5</sup>*Xīn shídài zhōngguó guójì huànyǔ quán jiàngòu de xiànzhuàng yǔ jìn lù* 新时代中国国际话语权建构的现状与进路 [https://theory.gmw.cn/2022-02/09/content\\_35504942.htm](https://theory.gmw.cn/2022-02/09/content_35504942.htm)
- <sup>6</sup>Full Text: ‘Keynote Speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping at Opening Ceremony of 8th FOCAC Ministerial Conference’, Xinhua, December 2, 2021, <https://archive.fo/ODK6H>.
- <sup>7</sup><https://www.cmhk.com/en/ac/history/History/index.shtml>
- <sup>8</sup>Some experts also speculate that Bagamoyo, located about 75 km south of Tanzania’s main port of Dar es Salaam, is also a candidate for China’s second military base after Djibouti. [https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/01/30/chinas\\_new\\_network\\_of\\_indian\\_ocean\\_bases\\_112980.html](https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/01/30/chinas_new_network_of_indian_ocean_bases_112980.html)
- <sup>9</sup><https://theafricancriminologyjournal.wordpress.com/2022/04/04/strategic-ties-china-tanzania-military-relations/>
- <sup>10</sup>‘New Chinese-Built Training Center for Tanzanian Army’, Army Recognition, February 23, 2018, [https://www.armyrecognition.com/february\\_2018\\_global\\_defense\\_security\\_army\\_news\\_industry/new\\_chinese-built\\_training\\_center\\_for\\_tanzanian\\_army.html?utm\\_content=cmp-true](https://www.armyrecognition.com/february_2018_global_defense_security_army_news_industry/new_chinese-built_training_center_for_tanzanian_army.html?utm_content=cmp-true)
- <sup>11</sup>China–Tanzania ties sealed with 15 agreements during presidential visit <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3198405/china-tanzania-ties-sealed-15-agreements-during-presidential-visit>
- <sup>12</sup>Partnerships established by China are wide-ranging and diverse, with more than 20 types. In addition to being labeled with first-level attributes such as ‘strategic’, ‘cooperative’ and ‘friendly’, they can also be further labeled with second-level attributes such as ‘comprehensive’, ‘all-round’, ‘all-weather’, ‘new type’ and ‘innovative’ (Xiang 2023)
- <sup>13</sup>Joint Statement on Establishing a Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership Between the People’s Republic of China and the United Republic of Tanzania [http://se.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/zgxw\\_0/202211/t20221103\\_10800022.htm](http://se.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/zgxw_0/202211/t20221103_10800022.htm)
- <sup>14</sup>REPOA release 2021: [https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/news\\_release\\_in\\_tanzania\\_china\\_outranks\\_u.s.\\_as\\_positive\\_influence\\_and\\_development\\_model-afrobarometer-25nov21\\_1.pdf](https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/news_release_in_tanzania_china_outranks_u.s._as_positive_influence_and_development_model-afrobarometer-25nov21_1.pdf)
- <sup>15</sup>CGTN: China–Tanzania: 60 years developing together and sharing joy and sorrow, <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2024-04-26/China-Tanzania-60-years-developing-together-sharing-joy-and-sorrow-1t6VX0aPirC/p.html>
- <sup>16</sup>For instance, the Chinese embassy in Tanzania published an article that drew a clear line between the CCP’s organisational structure and the CCM’s party reforms: [http://tz.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/ddbd/201703/t20170323\\_6095537.htm](http://tz.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/ddbd/201703/t20170323_6095537.htm)
- <sup>17</sup>The report was titled: ‘In Tanzania, Beijing is running a training school for authoritarianism’ <https://www.axios.com/2023/08/21/chinese-communist-party-training-school-africa>
- <sup>18</sup>Readout of Vice President Kamala Harris’s Meeting with President Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/03/30/readout-of-vice-president-kamala-harris-meeting-with-president-samia-suluhu-hassan-of-tanzania/>
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