

LSE Global China PhD Working Group Seminar, MT 2022

Tuesdays, 5-6:30 pm via Zoom and in-person (CON 7.03)

This seminar is organized by LSE Global China PhD working group. It is for PhD students and early scholars at LSE working on China and global south related studies. It is a forum for discussions and questions on China in development contexts. Researchers from all theoretical backgrounds and methodological traditions are welcome. This seminar will be hosted in hybrid format, via Zoom and in-person at LSE.

If you would like to join the working group and/or attend the seminar, please email Yuezhou Yang (y.yang91@lse.ac.uk). She will send out a Zoom invite link ahead of each session. Regular members: Bruno Binetti (IR), Felix Brender (IR), Yuezhou Yang (ID), and Yunxiong (George) Li (GEOG).

This is an open-access research group. Please circulate this flyer in your networks to anyone who may be interested. Please contact us if you would like to present.

MT 2022

- Tue, 25 Oct **Xiaonan Wang**, Assistant Professor at the City University of New York
Chinese Versus US Investment and Influence among Citizens in Africa (with Margaret Pearson and John McCauley)
- Tue, 15 Nov **Hang Zhou**, postdoctoral researcher at Chr. Michelsen Institute, Norway
Western and Chinese Development Engagements in Uganda's roads sector: An Implicit Division of Labour
- Tue, 29 Nov **Lukas Fiala**, PhD candidate at Dept. of International Relation, LSE
'Go Out 2.0': Defence-Industrial Modernisation and State Transformation in post-Cold War China

Abstract

Tue, 25 Oct Xiaonan Wang, Assistant Professor at the City University of New York

Chinese Versus US Investment and Influence among Citizens in Africa (with Margaret Pearson and John McCauley)

Scholars anticipate that foreign direct investment (FDI) results in greater influence abroad, but the influence that local citizens assign to foreign powers as a result of those investments remains an understudied channel of influence. This study examines how a foreign power's FDI affects both its own resonance among local citizens and the influence those citizens assign to a competing power. Using a unique dataset of over 750 geolocated Chinese and US FDI projects in 23 countries in Africa and connecting those projects to survey responses from over 35,000 citizens, we demonstrate that citizen-assigned influence approximates a zero-sum game: in proximity to foreign investment

projects, residents extend greater influence to the FDI-sending country and less to its major competitor. The results are driven largely by service sector projects, suggesting a prominent role for the visible goods, services, and opportunities that citizens notice and experience around them. Importantly, however, the influence that countries derive from their firms' overseas investments in Africa cannot be likened to greater affinity: proximity to Chinese and US FDI projects decreases rather than increases citizens' preferences for the respective country's development approach, even as it increases their influence.

Tue, 15 Nov Hang Zhou, postdoctoral researcher at Chr. Michelsen Institute, Norway

Western and Chinese development engagements in Uganda's roads sector: An implicit division of labour

How has the process of institution and governance building in Africa, a domain traditionally subject to western development interventions, been changed by Chinese-led development? Taking Uganda's roads sector, and particularly its main implementing agency the Ugandan National Roads Authority as a case study, I argue that traditional donors' influence on sectorial institution building has not been replaced or dislodged by China's growing presence. This presence primarily took the form of Chinese construction companies operating as profit-driven contractors interested mainly in quick project turnaround rather than in systematically shaping sectorial governance in the host country. Moreover, not only did traditional donors' development financing remain dominant vis-à-vis China, but the ways in which their interventions were designed, exercised, and monitored in the post-conditionality regime characteristically differed from their Chinese counterparts, ensuring their embedded and enduring role in the reforming of sectorial state institutions. As such, a tacit division of labour took shape between Chinese and western engagements in Uganda's roads sector: China focused on 'hard' physical road construction whilst traditional donors on the 'soft' aspects of sectorial governance and policy.

Tue, 29 Nov Lukas Fiala, PhD candidate at Dept. of International Relation, LSE

'Go Out 2.0': Defence-Industrial Modernisation and State Transformation in post-Cold War China

The globalisation of China's party-state as a trading and manufacturing hub has coincided with the country's rise to become a major military power. Approximately 25 years after the 'Go Out' strategy (zouchuqu zhanlüe 走出去战略) incentivised state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to venture into emerging markets, Chinese defence firms have become major producers of military equipment. In 2017, China's defence budget amounted to an estimated 228 billion \$US and, in 2019, Chinese defence companies accounted for the second largest share of global arms sales. What explains the internationalisation of China's defence industry? This article uses process tracing to study the co-constitutive processes of state transformation and defence-industrial modernisation in China during the post-Cold War period to offer a new perspective on China's military-industrial system. By drawing on a nested case study of China Electronics Technology Group Corporation (CETC), the following argues that China has developed a specific military-industrial-party-system in the post-Cold War period, which has interacted with the decentralisation, fragmentation and internationalisation of the Chinese state. China's military-industrial-party-system contrasts with the US- and Eurocentric military-industrial-complex in that it is based on state-owned corporations (SEOs) and operates in a party-army environment. In this system, defence-industrial, military and civilian actors coalesce around the common goal of transforming China into a more capable military power, while retaining autonomy in certain contexts to pursue corporate and/or personal interests. This institutional framework, in turn, explains the internationalisation of China's defence-industrial base.