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CHINESE MULTILATERAL REGIONAL INITIATIVES IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Palacký University
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**Sinophone Borderlands – Interaction
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Excellent research**

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Chinese multilateral regional initiatives in the developing world

There are two intellectual starting points of this research initiative. First, Chinese foreign policy attention towards the developing world has been increasing in recent years, and it might even be at the expense of the attention it pays towards the developed world. Second, the Chinese efforts in the developing world are conducted with different sets of approaches than in the developed world. To be concrete, China utilizes newly created quasi multilateral regional initiatives as umbrella organizations under which it wants to develop comprehensive relations with these countries, such as the FOCAC, China-CELAC, China-Arab forum, or the China-CEE 17+1 platform. Moreover, the Belt and Road Initiative is yet another stage of this process as it seems to be sharing many features with the other projects while expanding it to the (very) broad level.

The suggested research initiative wants to discuss relevant questions related to Chinese regional multilateral initiatives in the developing world from various perspectives, including international relations, political science, comparative politics, international political economy, sociology, foreign policy analysis, social anthropology and others. We encourage authors to consider diverse theoretical and methodological approaches in addressing the issue in hand. Papers can discuss a single case as well as adopt comparative studies of more initiatives. We expect papers to have relevance for the study of Chinese foreign policy and China in international relations.

Managing Cultural Diversity as a Tool for Development: The Case of the China-CEE 17+1 Initiative

Jelena Gledić (University of Belgrade)

The analyses of China's global connectivity agenda, the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as its other newly created quasi multilateral regional initiatives, that have been conducted in recent years, have shown the need to reassess traditional and mainstream methodological frameworks in the field of international relations (IR). New approaches have emerged, attempting to overcome the apparent Anglo-European-centrism in IR, but also to embrace the complexity of China's holistic foreign policy approach. This paper aims to contribute to these efforts by applying the theory on cultural diversity in the analysis of the China-CEE 17+1 Initiative.

The theory on cultural diversity developed by Christian Reus-Smit challenges the mainstream view that international order always emerges in homogenous cultural contexts and that diversity undermines order. This approach postulates that culture cannot be neutralized by institutions, while, on the other hand, when it is embraced and institutionalized, there is a danger of mistaking its incorporated form for a coherent, natural reality. Reus-Smit instead proposes that managing diversity was a key imperative of order building in many cases, giving – among others – the example of the Qing dynasty in China. Here, institutions do not attempt to neutralize, nor to anchor culture, but they rather actively organize it. Taking this theoretical framework as its departure point, this research proposes that a key aspect of China's foreign policy, that is evident in its regional initiatives, is active top-down governance of cultural diversity. A better understanding of how cultural cooperation is linked with economic cooperation and development, as well as the different ways that cultural diversity can be managed, can help resolve some seeming paradoxes (e.g. the differences in response to Chinese investments on the side of national governments and general populations; several countries within regions being China's "key partner"). Equally importantly, it can serve as a basis for shaping relevant policies that would facilitate intercultural dialogue, which is a cornerstone of maintaining international relations and promoting development.

Biography:

Jelena Gledić is Senior Instructor at the University of Belgrade Faculty of Philology, where she has been teaching a range of courses on Chinese language and culture. Her research has mainly focused on the role of culture in different aspects of society, research, education and international relations. Her 2020 forthcoming publications include *The Development of Sino-Serbian Relations under the BRI: Forging the "Iron Friendship"* in the quarterly journal of the University of Warsaw *International Relations* and *Formal vs. Informal Chinese Presence: The Underbelly of Hope in the Western Balkans* in the edited monograph *Shadow Economies across the New Silk Road*, ed. Eva Hung & Tak-wing Ngo, Amsterdam University Press.

AIIB and China's international norm entrepreneurship

David Morris

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is one of a suite of Chinese initiatives to address the deficit in financing for infrastructure in the developing world. It generated a geopolitical backlash from the United States (US), which leads the Bretton Woods financial institutions, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. The new multilateral institution challenges a number of norms, including replacing the disproportionate power of the US and the advanced economies in the multilateral system with a more proportionate role for China and other developing countries, a new focus on infrastructure-led development which is built on Chinese confidence in the East Asian development model, and a shift away from the Bretton Woods practices of using financing conditions to drive liberal democratic and neo-liberal economic reforms. In its operations, the AIIB has incorporated best practice multilateralism, recruiting skilled staff from other Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), co-financing projects and therefore implementing aligned practices with other MDBs, and a commitment to environmental and financial sustainability for member states. The AIIB is representative of the normative challenge of the rise of China which is likely to be characterised in the US as a risk, while as a new institution spreading and managing risks with other institutions to meet a demonstrated need, the AIIB is likely to strengthen regionalism and multilateralism in addressing economic and cooperative security in Asia.

Biography:

David Morris has represented governments, businesses and non-government organisations in Australia and the Pacific; East Asia including China; and Europe, including Hungary and Ireland. He recently served for four years as Pacific Trade and Investment Commissioner in China.

His current corporate clients include globalizing businesses in Australia, Austria, China, Hungary and Thailand.

David Morris graduated from the University of Sydney with BA (Honours) and Henley Business School, University of Reading with an MBA. He is

currently completing a PhD with Corvinus University of Budapest and undertaking research in partnership with the Centre for Oceania Studies at Sun Yat Sen University.

Pushing for Nuclear Export? China's Strategic Use of the 17+1 Platform, FOCAC and China-CELAC Forum

Biao Zhang

Recent years have witnessed China's increasing use of regional multilateral initiatives to push for 'cooperation' in nuclear energy with local countries. In the 16+1 (now 17+1) platform, China has listed nuclear energy as a key issue of 'cooperation' from the Bucharest Guideline (2013) through the Belgrade Guideline (2014) to the Mid-Term Agenda for Cooperation between China and the CEECs (2015). In the FOCAC, The Johannesburg Action Plan (2016-2018) declares that China and its African counterparts "encourage and support the participation of Chinese businesses in investment, construction and operation of power projects in Africa" through "expanded cooperation...in nuclear power". Finally, there are signs that China starts to use the China-CELAC forum to push for nuclear export to the Latin America and Caribbean countries. While the China-CELAC Cooperation Plan (2015) and the CELAC and China Joint Plan of Action (2019) only pledge to promote 'renewable energy cooperation', China has intended to build Argentina's Atucha project into a "demonstration project" and issued a Policy Paper on Latin America and the Caribbean to declare its aim to "actively explore the expansion of its cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries in high-tech fields" such as "civil nuclear energy" (China-CELAC 2015, 2016, 2019).

This article seeks to understand the role(s) played by these regional multilateral initiatives in promoting China's engagement with local countries in the terrain of civil nuclear energy. This article is divided into five sections. The first section serves as introduction, laying down the analytical framework of international political economy of energy (RIPE, special sec, 2019). The second section examines the role played by the 17+1 platform in China's push for its involvement in Romania's Cernavoda project and Czech's Temelin and Dukovany projects. The third section examines how China uses FOCAC to market Chinese nuclear technology to countries such as South Africa and Kenya, while keeps importing uranium from Namibia. The fourth section examines China's attempted use of the China-CELAC forum to push for further export, using the Atucha project as an example. The fifth section compares the three sets of example,

reporting several main findings such as (a) all three regional multilateral initiatives, while seemingly dominated by the Chinese government, are designated to be a platform that promotes China's commercial actors' interests; (b) in the case of nuclear energy, the effectiveness of the China-led regional multilateral initiatives seems to be depended ultimately on two bilateral factors – China's political relations with, and Chinese commercial actors' business interest in, the local country (measured by state visit; leaders' visit; market percentage; rate of return, etc). The article concludes by drawing out several implications of this article on the study of China's foreign policy.

Biography:

Biao Zhang was educated in the universities of Beijing, Warwick and Exeter, and is currently an associate professor in international politics at China University of Political Science and Law. His research interests are China-Europe Relations and International Relations Theory. His recent publications include "State Transformation Goes Nuclear: Chinese National Nuclear Companies' Expansion into Europe", *Third World Quarterly*, 2019, 40 (8): 1459-78; "The Perils of Hubris? A Tragic Reading of 'Thucydides' Trap'", *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 2019, 24 (1): 129-44; and "Nuclear Infrastructure Investment: China's New Tool of Economic Statecraft?", in Y.E. Yang and W. Liang eds., *Challenges to China's Economic Statecraft: A Global Perspective*, Lexington/Rowan Littlefield, 2019, pp.183-98. He also writes short book reviews for *International Affairs*, where two most recent examples are the reviews of Xiaoyu Pu's *Rebranding China* and Florian Schneider's *China's Digital Nationalism*, in *International Affairs*, 2019, 95 (5): 1994-5 and in-press respectively.

Financing Behavior of China for Multilateral Regional Initiatives under the Belt & Road Initiative

Alex He

The Chinese government's financing for China-led multilateral regional Initiatives has increased significantly since President Xi's proposed his signature foreign policy, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013. Many funds have been established or reinforced to support these Chinese multilateral regional initiatives since then. They received more capital from Chinese state-owned banks under the umbrella initiative of the BRI, which partly reflected the focus of China's foreign policy shifting more toward developing countries, particularly neighboring ones in the past few years.

The study will examine the connection between Chinese multilateral regional Initiatives in the developing world and the BRI through the lens of financing. Cherishing the role of multilateral regional Initiatives in justifying its foreign policy to coordinate relations with other countries, China treats multilateral regional initiatives as an important component of its foreign policy toward the developing world and has put more effort into them in recent years. However, they are certainly not the priorities for China's foreign policy.

The proposed paper hypothesizes that the financing behavior of China for multilateral regional Initiatives after the BRI's inception is centered on serving the goal of promoting the BRI, with these Chinese multilateral regional Initiatives playing a supporting role under the framework of BRI, and that the financing behavior of China for multilateral regional Initiatives is rooted in the long existing domestic financing model dominated by Chinese state-owned banks to support priorities agenda for China's foreign policy.

Employing a case study (the China-CEE 17+1, the FOCAC) approach, the paper will illustrate the financing behavior of China for these Chinese multilateral regional Initiatives under the framework of the BRI and explore the implications of the findings for the understanding of China's evolving foreign policy.

Biography:

Xingqiang (Alex) He is a CIGI research fellow. Before joining CIGI in 2014, he was a senior fellow and associate professor at the Institute of American Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). At CIGI, he is focusing on China and the G20, China and global economic governance, and domestic politics in China and their roles in China's foreign economic policy making, Canada-China economic relations.

In 2009-2010, funded by the Ford Foundation, he was a visiting scholar at the Paul. H Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University in Washington D.C. In 2008-2009, he had been a guest research fellow at the Research Center for Development Strategies of Macau. In 2008, he participated in a short-term study program at the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC) at the University of California at San Diego, which was sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. In 2004, he was a visiting Ph.D. Student at Centre of American Studies at University of Hong Kong.

He has published the book *The Dragon's Footprints: China in the Global Economic Governance System under the G20 Framework* in 2016(both in English and Chinese) and coauthored the book *A History of China-U.S. Relations* in 2009. He has published dozens of academic papers and book chapters both in Chinese and English, and periodically writes reviews and commentaries for magazines and newspapers on international affairs. Currently he is working on a new book on China's economic policy-making process under President Xi Jinping.

He has a Ph.D. in international politics from the Graduate School of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Before beginning his Ph.D., he taught international relations at Yuxi Normal University in Yunnan Province, China

Building by Buildings: China's Infrastructure Politics in Promoting

Dr. MAO Weizhun

Infrastructure has been highly underlined in China's official documents concerning its intercontinental and regional initiatives, such as BRI, FOCAC, China- CELAC, China-Arab forum, China-CEE '17+1' platform and China-Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum, etc.

Then, what roles could infrastructural factors play, both in designing aspect and in practical dimension, in sustaining these diverse multilateral regional initiatives with typical Chinese characteristics? To what extent can infrastructure improve the multi- bilateral comprehensive relations between China and other countries within different regional initiatives? By what ways can Chinese infrastructure shape the regional order through infrastructure projects?

On the basis of China's official documents, international practices and expert interviews, this proposal tries to solve these questions and explore China's strategic logics in referring the infrastructure instrument as one kind of statecrafts when designing and promoting the interactive behaviors both among states and at regional levels.

It assumes that infrastructure projects and investment financed by China can affect the development of multilateral regional initiatives and shape the regional order via signaling, leverage, sticking and dividing mechanisms, which depicts a comprehensive picture about China's infrastructure politics in manipulating its relations with developing countries.

However, all politics are conditional. It also finds that the effects of infrastructure in building multilateral regional initiatives and shaping a different regional order are constrained by a series of variables, such as the degree of great-power infrastructure competition, the infrastructure dependence of regional countries, the autonomy of regional targeting countries, and the existing institutional arrangements in the given region, and so on. As a result, the findings have profound policy implicati-

ons in evaluating China's 'infrastructural push' in its different regional initiatives.

Patterns in the Chinese multilateral approach to the developing world. A comparison of China - Arab States Cooperation Forum and China – CEE cooperation (17+1)

Marcin Przychodniak

The paper is about to analyze China's motives, ideas and interests behind its commitment to multilateral initiatives in the developing world. It is about to be presented through a comparison of two initiatives: China Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF) and China - CEE cooperation (a "17+1" initiative). In both cases China was an initiator and remains a core and driving force in relations with participating countries. The hypothesis is that - despite the differences at first glance - both initiatives are manifestations of a similar trend within the Chinese political ideology, and serve the same China's political and economy interests in its relations with developing world.

Main idea of the paper is to use comparative method to analyze similarities and differences within the initiatives, identify the Chinese ideology behind (a South-South cooperation, the role of BRI), tools and mechanism of the cooperation as well as China's interests. Methods include an analysis of different sets of data. First, official documents signed during the meetings, both multilateral and bilateral (between China and participating countries). Second, structures of the initiatives (e. g. participants, levels of cooperation, exchanges of visits and meetings, dedicated institutions like "secretariats" or "national coordinators"). Third, the actual levels of cooperation (e. g. trade with China, Chinese investment in participating countries, projects developed). The analysis will also include a decisive method in order to review China's foreign policy towards US and EU and its influence on both initiatives.

The final part will include perspectives for China's relations with CASCF and "17+1" based on the current situation as well as possible changes of China's attitude coming from the current international environment (with US-China rivalry as one of the main examples). attempted use of the China-CELAC forum to push for further export,

Interpreting China-led Multilateralism

Dragan Pavličević, Xi'an Jiaotong (Liverpool University)

Since the turn of the century, China has established at least half a dozen regional multilateral platforms, including in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and Oceania. This trend has recently taken new turn, with the establishment of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (2015), and the first steps toward institutionalization of the “Belt and Road Initiative” (2017, 2019). These developments reveal a new focus on establishing cross-regional multilateral frameworks bringing together countries from more than one continent within a China-dominated institutional and policy-making environment. However, the existing academic studies have predominantly focused on the individual China-led multilateral platforms, and their “supply” side – China’s motivations and objectives. Only few studies investigated these initiatives in a comparative perspective. In all those cases and regardless of theoretical frameworks applied, China-led multilateral initiatives are understood as manifestations of China’s strategy to alter fundamental structures, norms and power relations of global governance. To supplement this nascent body of literature, this study explores the changing and evolving role of multilateral platform in China’s foreign policy and the global governance while accounting for their “demand” side – the motivations and objectives of participating countries and the impact of their agency on the development of China-led multilateral platforms.

Biography:

Dragan Pavličević is Associate Professor at the Department of China Studies, Xi'an Jiaotong – Liverpool University whose research interests span both China’s domestic and international politics. He is particularly interested in China-Europe relations, the politics of China’s infrastructure projects abroad (especially high-speed railways), China’s multilateral initiatives, China’s overseas industrial parks and development zones, and issues related to local-level and participatory governance in China.

Untangling International Production Capacity Cooperation and the Belt and Road Initiative

Christopher Chagnon (University of Helsinki)

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and International Production Capacity Cooperation (IPCC) are two of the hallmarks of Chinese international and development policy under President Xi Jinping. The two are often mentioned together by Chinese sources and are inherently interconnected, however the relationship has remained largely tangled and nebulous, especially in the African context. Kenderdine and Ling (2017) attempted to clarify the issue, claiming that IPCC was inherently technical/non-political and BRI was political. However, their overly broad approach failed to look at how IPCC is discussed and implemented, which is frequently political (at least in the African context). This paper aims to better clarify the nebulous relationship between IPCC and BRI, focusing in on the context of FOCAC. It looks at the relationship between IPCC and the UN Center for Trade and Development's policy recommendations around "Productive Capacity Development". It also compares the discourse around IPCC and BRI, their funding and implementation mechanisms, and how projects of each are rolled out on the ground. By looking at the influences on the policies, their technical relationships, how they are discussed, and how they are implemented, there is a clearer picture on where IPCC and BRI overlap and what distinguishes them.

Biography:

Christopher Chagnon is a PhD researcher in Development Studies at the University of Helsinki, where his work focuses on Chinese investment policy in Africa as related to certain FOCAC commitments. He has over 12 years of work experience in academia, international development, business, and journalism in 6 countries, including 5 years working in China. He holds an MSc in Emerging Economies and International Development from King's College London, where he graduated with distinction and was given the award for best dissertation for his research into the accuracy of perceptions about Chinese vs. OECD-DAC development finance in Africa. He is a board member of the Finnish Society for Development Research (FSDR) and hosts a monthly podcast for the FSDR and another for the

University of Helsinki Extractivisms and Alternatives (EXALT) Initiative.

The new weiqi game for global influence: Chinese regional multilateral initiatives in the developing world

Richard Q. Turcsanyi (Palacky University Olomouc)

This paper deals with the growing China's efforts in the developing world since the beginning of the 2000s which has been conducted in a unique institutional way. More specifically, the puzzle is why China has utilized newly created self-designed multilateral regional institutions as the umbrella under which virtually all of Chinese activities towards the developing countries have been gathered. Not only the established theories of international relations do

not offer a solid explanation for this feature of Chinese foreign policy, but the academic literature has so far not approached it in a systemic way. This paper offers an innovative interpretation of what growing Chinese activity in the developing world regions may mean and why it has been conducted with the use of the (sort of) multilateralism. The logic of traditional Chinese strategic game of weiqi is used as the main conceptual framework. It is suggested that the weiqi logic can explain why China has started to focus significant efforts in Africa, Latin America and other regions outside of "the West" and why it has utilized the specific form of multilateralism. In line with the neo-Gramscian theory of hegemony, institutions can be regarded as constituting marginal areas of the international order where China can, following the weiqi logic, build up its presence and influence. It is not argued that China has an explicit strategy to establish a global hegemony, yet it is claimed that growing Chinese multilateral efforts in the developing world fit well with what weiqi logic hold how to increase one's influence.

Biography:

Richard Q. Turcsányi is a Key Researcher at Palacky University Olomouc, Assistant Professor at Mendel University in Brno, and Program Director at the Central European Institute of Asian Studies (CEIAS.eu). He holds a Ph.D. in International Relations and further degrees in economy and political science. In past, he conducted long-term research stays at the University of Toronto, Peking University, National Chengchi University in

Taipei, and the European Institute for Asian Studies in Brussels. He is an author of "Chinese Assertiveness in the South China Sea" and has published a number of academic articles and opinion pieces on Chinese foreign policy and relations between China and (Central and Eastern) Europe. He is a member of various networks focusing on contemporary China and EU-China relations, including European Think Tank Network on China (ETNC), China in Europe Research Network (CHERN), or Chinese Observers in Central Europe (CHOICE).



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