UNEQUAL EQUALS: ANGOLA AND CHINA

This article examines the relationship between Angola—one of Africa's largest oil producers and China—Asia's greatest power, to test the veracity of the realist and legalist models. It finds that in a fast-changing world where countries from the Global South are rising and Western powers are stagnating or declining, neither realist models of exploitation nor constructivist models of legalism stand empirical scrutiny. In the process of discussing Angola–China relations from 1957 to 2008, the article provides theoretical rigour to the counter-hegemonic model and combines it with the gender-based societal model to form a coherent explanatory framework that is superior to realism and legalism. The conclusion advocates a shift of attention by international relations theorists to South–South and gender analysis, increasingly relevant in the "post-American world".

HORACE CAMPBELL AND SREERAM CHAULIA

NEW THEORIES FOR A WORLD IN FLUX

Although Angola's decades-long internal and regional war was officially declared over in 2002, the country is now the main site of contest in Africa between the United States of America (USA) and China. It is the continent's fastest growing economy, producing large quantities of oil and natural gas that have made gigantic multinational corporations like ExxonMobil and ChevronTexaco stakeholders in its political future. Diamonds and other strategic mineral resources turn Angola into a polestar of the Southern African region for global players. Angola is touted as being "at the crossroads of today's energy geopolitics and the latest stage in a global rivalry playing out among Western, Russian and Chinese oil companies" (Jad Mouawad, "Nowadays, Angola is Oil's Topic A", *The New York Times*, March

20, 2007). The notion that Angola is the new battleground for global competition is captured by comments like "US companies have been caught flat-footed by the Chinese financial strikes (there)" (John Donnelly, "China Scooping up Deals in Africa as US Firms Hesitate", *The Boston Globe*, December 24, 2005). European Union (EU) officials too have sounded alarm bells that they "risk being overtaken by China" in Angola and other select African countries ("EU Told to Change Tack in Africa or Lose to China", *Reuters*, November 30, 2007).

No other country has greater interest and involvement in Angola today than China, as it imports most of its oil from there. In December 2006, Angola replaced Saudi Arabia as China's main source of oil, accounting for more than 16 per cent of its crude imports ("Angola, China's Biggest Oil Supplier", *China Daily*, December 21, 2006). To sustain its extraordinary economic growth in the future, Beijing is laying emphasis on energy security as the cornerstone of its foreign policy not only in Central Asia but also in the Middle East and Africa. Angola is a lynchpin of China's ventures in Africa, as shown by the fact that Luanda receives the most foreign aid for reconstruction from Beijing. In 2006, China overtook Portugal, Russia and Brazil as Angola's top aid donor ("China and Angola Strengthen Bilateral Relationship", *Power and Interest News Report*, June 23, 2006). Angola also tops the list of African countries in terms of volume of trade with the PRC, ahead of South Africa, Sudan and Congo–Brazzaville (Table I).

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By virtue of its importance for global power dynamics, the Angola–China bilateral relationship presents an interesting canvas for breaking new ground in international relations theory. This article examines South–South relations in a tri-polar world comprising China–Russia, the EU and the USA as the centres of power. Parag Khanna (*The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order*, New York: Random House, 2008) argues that the distribution of power has fundamentally altered in the last decade and "America's dominant moment has been suddenly replaced by a geopolitical marketplace wherein the European Union and China compete with the United States to shape world order on their own

Table 1: Top Ten African Trade Partners with China, 2004 (by imports)

Country of origin	Value (US$ million)	Per cent of Sino-African Trade
Angola	3,422.63	27.4
South Africa	2,567.96	20.6
Sudan	1,678.60	13.4
Congo-Brazzaville	1,224.74	9.8
Equatorial Guinea	787.96	6.3
Gabon	415.39	3.3
Nigeria	372.91	3.0
Algeria	216.11	1.7
Morocco	208.69	1.7
Chad	148.73	1.2
Total	11,043.72	88.4

Source: International Monetary Fund, *Direction of trade statistics* (Washington DC: IMF, 2005).

terms". Since we are arguably living in a "post-American world" (Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, New York: W W Norton, 2008), the old certainties of international relations theory need to be challenged and reordered.

Theories follow empirics and call for corrections when they no longer match the realities of world politics. Hans Rosling ("Third-World Myths Debunked by Data", Lecture, Technology, Entertainment, Design, June 2006) demonstrates through hard statistical evidence that old theories about the "Third World" are shop-worn due to a rapidly changing international context, in which some former so-called basket cases and weaklings of the developing world are fast catching up with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries on a number of key indices. In the context of a resurgent developing world exemplified by the rise of China, India, Brazil, Mexico and South Korea as against a declining USA, there is merit in reconsidering the insights offered by South–South cooperation as a theoretical model for the type of relationship that exists between Angola and China today. South–South cooperation has greater explanatory power than structural realist and legalist theories in deciphering the multiple dimensions of that relationship. This article provides theoretical rigour to the South–South cooperation model by showing that it can be combined with a

people-centric perspective to give a more realistic explanation of the latest phase of Angola–China relations. It also throws light on the value of taking a compatible gender approach to these relations with regard to societal impact on foreign policies. Without factoring in gender relations and the insights from feminist scholars, the counter-hegemonic South–South model is an incomplete framework that does not break fresh ground.

MODELS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS

Exploitative

Structural realism views bilateral relationships in terms of the relative power capabilities of the parties. Angola, a small state with a much weaker military and economy than China, would be viewed as being engaged in an asymmetric relationship in which the stronger party has the upper hand. Structural realism would be less concerned about the Angolan side of the relationship and would concentrate on the interests and behaviour of the great power—China. John Mearsheimer (*The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: W W Norton, 2001) avers that great powers have a natural propensity to throw their weight around in search of territorial gain, economic benefit and political influence. They are aggressive and seek increasing power to maximise their odds of survival against competing great powers.

In 2006, Angola replaced Saudi Arabia as China's main source of oil, accounting for more than 16 per cent of its crude imports and China overtook Portugal, Russia and Brazil as Angola's top aid donor. Angola also tops the list of African countries in terms of volume of trade with the PRC.

Two strategies towards this end bring great powers into contact with small states. Firstly, great powers enter into alliances of convenience with strategically located weak states to sustain them as bulwarks against rival great powers eyeing hegemony in the region. In such settings, weak states are dependent on the security and economic umbrellas of great powers and act as pawns in great power rivalries. Thus, Angola would be seen as serving China's geopolitical competition with the

USA in return for military and economic subventions. Secondly, great powers use blackmail or gunboat diplomacy to get their pound of flesh from minor powers if umbrella-type concessions are not relevant. Great powers squeeze out concessions from weak states through pressure tactics, including the threat of using force. This method of gaining leverage works when small states have no option but to give in to intimidation due to their lack of muscle (*ibid*, pp 152–3). Here, structural realists rephrase Thucydides of ancient Greece who stated, "The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must" (*History of the Peloponnesian War*, London: H G Bohn, 1853). Structural realism leaves little scope for weak states to assert themselves in asymmetric dyads and predicts that "bandwagoning" is their only salvation. They have to side with strong states even though it implies conceding a disproportionate share of the benefits of the relationships to the "big brothers".

Theories of economic hegemony retain the realist presumption that the more powerful states control and extract the maximum benefits from weaker states in bilateral relationships. Like the realists, they envisage two distinct forms of great powers–weak states relations—coercive and consensual. Either way, exploitation and short-changing are destined for weak states. Earl Conteh-Morgan ("International Intervention: Conflict, Economic Dislocation and the Hegemonic Role of Dominant Actors", *International Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol 6, No 2, 2001) describes the dual logic thus:

> "Strong states exercise leadership over weak states by gaining their perennial consent. To a large extent, the use of force is obviated to the point that the developing state submits to the prevailing power relations. Continuous submission is enhanced by the fact that the dominant states are willing to make concessions, implement policy adjustments, that from time to time help to alleviate the politico-economic burdens of the weak states".

Michael Dolan, *et al* ("Foreign Policies of African States in Asymmetrical Dyads", *International Studies Quarterly,* Vol 24, No 3, 1980) apply this rationale to African international relations and postulate,

> "Subordinate states expect that an increase in relations within the asymmetrical dyad, either in the scope or magnitude of exchanges and agreements, will result in increased economic well-being and decreased political autonomy".

However attractive the anticipated economic benefits may be, increased relations within asymmetrical dyads are likely to erode the capacities of weak states for autonomous decision-making. This concern springs from the vulnerability created through interaction with super-ordinate states. As long as weak states need the magnanimity of strong states, they will have to live with a loss of autonomy in the relationships. The deduction from this model, therefore, is that Angola has few alternatives but to put up with China's exploitation and dominance since the latter's infrastructural investments for the former's post-war reconstruction are imperative.

Legal

Constructivism looks at bilateral relationships through the prism of prevailing international norms and customs rather than relative capabilities. It sees in "international society" shared standards of behaviour that are upheld by states, most of the time. Constructivism proposes that the type of relationship between any two given states is determined by the international normative environment, which sets constitutive limits on mutually appropriate kinds of behaviour. Constructivism is an ontology that asserts the importance of "social facts" (rules, norms, beliefs and identities) in determining interests and actions. It does not take an empirical position on which rules matter in a particular problem area. However, a number of constructivist scholars have taken an empirical stand on the specific types of rules and norms that govern international relations. In the context of great powers' relations with Africa, they de-emphasise exploitation, subjugation or unequal exchange as the norms and instead harp on respect for international laws and customs. As theorists, constructivists are usually on the side of legalism, particularly the norm of sovereignty, as an explanatory tool for bilateral or multilateral relationships.

Post-colonial African states survived, despite lacking the minimum attributes of statehood, because of a supportive international normative environment epitomised by the United Nations' Charter's guarantee of non-aggression on member states.

According to Robert Jackson (*Quasi–States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), the customary legal doctrines of non-intervention and abolition of the right of conquest became central normative features of world politics in the second half of the twentieth century. Respect for these norms gave "categorical legal protection" to post-colonial "quasi-states" in Africa and Asia. Rulers of even internally chaotic or "failed states" enjoyed this underwriting of external security, "constructed by international courtesy" and not repudiated by great powers. This argument leads to the deduction that Angola is free from great powers' interference and that China, the USA and the EU respect its sovereignty. Martha Finnemore (*The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p 21, 2004) seconds this line of thought by claiming that self-determination norms were so strong in the post-World War Two era that great powers hesitated to intervene and directly impose their will on weak states. She contends that the great powers' understanding of sovereignty as non-intervention in the developing world "may have peaked in world politics with the Cold War". Furthermore, only since the 1990s, have "human rights' claims trumped sovereignty and legitimised intervention in ways not previously accepted" (*ibid*). In other words, African states like Angola have been long-time beneficiaries of the restraint and belief of great powers that meddling and dictation of terms would be considered illegitimate and morally wrong.

If Angola's sovereign autonomy has been threatened at all, it is due to recent post-Cold War global norms favouring human rights, democracy and neoliberal economic management.

The case for juridical sovereignty of small states being protected by benign attitudes of great powers is made by Christopher Clapham (*Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p 44, 1996). According to him, post-colonial African states survived, despite lacking the minimum attributes of statehood, because of a supportive international normative environment epitomised by the United Nations' (UN) Charter's guarantee of non-aggression on member states. Independent African states were so weak in terms of control over their population and territory that

they were bound to depend on external recognition. In the Cold War era, "the global power structure was much more a source of support than a threat to weak and newly emergent states". Further, superpowers did not consider Africa a vital region and were "state-supporting much more than state-subverting" (*ibid*, p 131). Like Finnemore, Clapham maintains that weak African states enjoyed a solid spell of autonomy from great powers' interference, which melted only in the 1990s due to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) structural adjustment programmes and the rise of international non-governmental organisations-administered foreign aid. Thus, the legalist depiction of Angola's relationship with China and other great powers is one based on non-intervention and post-colonial state capacity building norms enshrined in the UN agenda. If Angola's sovereign autonomy has been threatened at all, it is due to recent post-Cold War global norms favouring human rights, democracy and neoliberal economic management. China, whose domestic norms do not fully match these new international norms, would be expected to act on Westphalian "juridical sovereignty" principles toward Angola.

The South–South cooperation model rests on the triple bedrock of struggle, common interests and transformation, all of which are directed towards challenging Northern domination of the iniquitous world order.

Counter-Hegemonic

Excepting scholars hailing from the Global South, South–South cooperation has not been adequately theorised in the literature of international relations. This despite the fact that it had a profound impact on relations among Southern countries both during and after the Cold War. In 1975, Jon Rosenbaum and William Tyler ("South–South Relations: The Economic and Political Content of Interactions among Southern Countries", *International Organisation*, Vol 29, No 1, p 251 and p 272, 1975) wrote, "concern with the hegemonic colonial and neo-colonial powers has traditionally dominated the foreign relations of the LDCs (less developed countries). … A major cause of the growth of South–South relations has been the discovery by the LDCs that they confront common problems in their relations

with the North". The South–South cooperation model rests on the triple bedrock of struggle, common interests and transformation, all of which are directed towards challenging Northern domination of the iniquitous world order.

The first underpinning of the model comes from shared historical memory of the national liberation and anti-imperialist struggle against colonial rule. As late arrivals in international politics, most Southern countries have a deep sense of being used as playthings of the West for hundreds of years. Though this feeling might be intangible, it informs many arenas of policymaking in Southern countries. The project of self-determination did not end with formal proclamations of independence but continued to motivate a quest for independent domestic and foreign policies in the post-colonial era, as was visible in the close synchronisation of foreign policies by all Southern countries against apartheid in South Africa. Julius Nyerere, a leading practitioner-cum-scholar of South–South cooperation ("North–South Dialogue", *Third World*, Vol 6, No 4, p 819, 1984) described why the spirit of struggle is central to the model.

The formation of the G-77 at the UN and its call for a new international economic order were meant to coordinate joint interests of Southern countries for restructuring the world trading system. Most of the agenda was not implemented, in part because it challenged the interests of Western powers.

> "We are now dealing with a new kind of empire and when you face an empire like that you struggle against it. That is how it will change, through struggle … When you deal with power, you must have the countervailing power to deal with it. You must confront power with power. Otherwise there will be no change".

Common interests constitute the second leg of the model. South–South cooperation was initially propounded at the 1955 Afro–Asian Conference at Bandung, Indonesia, which underscored the need for Southern countries to loosen their economic dependence on industrialised states through technical assistance to one another (Richard Wright, *The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference*, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1955). In the 1960s and 70s, this theme was carried forward by the underdevelopment school of Latin America

and the Caribbean, which argued that the Global South was being deliberately impoverished in order to enrich the North (Enrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969 and Norman Girvan, "Expropriation and Compensation from a Third World Perspective" in Richard B Lillich (Ed), *The Valuation of Nationalized Property in International Law*, Vol III, Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 1975). The formation of the G-77 at the UN and its call for a new international economic order (NIEO) were inspired by the underdevelopment school and were meant to coordinate joint interests of Southern countries for restructuring the world trading system. Most of the NIEO's agenda was not implemented, in part because it challenged the interests of Western powers, which thought the demands were "unrealistic" (Sandra Blanco, "The 1960s and 1970s: The World Bank Attacks Poverty; Southern Countries Attack the IMF" in Enrique R Carrasco, "The E-Book on International Finance and Development", *Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems*, Vol 9, No 1, 1999).

Common interests continued to inform the South–South model's evolution in the 1980s, when the South Commission was established to promote practical cooperation among Southern countries. Its work was financed by contributions from Southern countries, which subscribed to the view that they could gain strength and bargaining power *vis-à-vis* the North through intra-South cooperation in the fields of trade, finance and technology (Julius Nyerere, *The Challenge to the South: The Report of the South Commission*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). In the 1990s, the commission transmuted into the permanent intergovernmental organisation—the South Centre. The centre, with 51 member states including Angola and China, is mandated to contribute to "South-wide collaboration in promoting common interests" in "global economic, political and strategic issues" (The South Centre, "A South IGO", available at, http://www.southcentre.org).

In the new millennium, amidst significant shifts in global power configurations, the material basis of common Southern interests has grown healthier. The UN's High Level Committee on South–South Cooperation noted that there was a "dramatically explosive growth in trade and investments among the world's developing nations", led by "the outstanding economic performance of Brazil, China and India, as well as a number of pivotal Southern countries, including Chile,

Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa and Thailand" (The United Nations, "South–South Cooperation for Development", New York, p 4, 2007). The sea change in global power dynamics is reflected in the fact that Southern countries' share of world exports is now 43 per cent compared to 20 per cent in 1970. South–South trade is currently growing at 11 per cent per annum and South–South investment has quadrupled since 1995 (Thalif Deen, "South–South Trade Boom Reshapes Global Order", *Inter Press Service*, December 25, 2006).

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The ability of the 130-member G-77 to stonewall the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Doha Round, as long as it does not address Southern countries' interests, is a testimony to the *chutzpah* of the South. Scholars have qualified the defiance of Southern countries at the WTO on the issues of intellectual property rights, agricultural subsidies and access to US and EU markets as an explosive development.

> "Many countries of the South were no longer prepared to accept the proposals negotiated by the world's most powerful states. The world's poorest countries, grouped together in the G-77, acted with astounding self-confidence" (Nelson Delgado and Adriano Soares, "The G-20: Its Origin, Meaning, Evolution and Prospects", Berlin: Henrich Boll Stiftung, p 5, 2005).

The flourishing Angola–China economic partnership can thus be located within the parameters of the common interests of the South–South model. These interests are essentially collective and equity-seeking and come from formerly oppressed forces, rather than individualistic and aggrandising interests of great powers, that the exploitative structural realist model prescribes. Jonathan Haslam (*No Virtue Like Necessity: Realist Thought in International Relations Since Machiavelli*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002) elucidates the "awkward" and "uncomfortable"

relationship between the realist theory and aggrandising foreign policies that justify aggression and genocide in the name of maximising security or power.

The third pillar of the South–South model is the counter-hegemonic transformation of the world order through alternative international institutions. Isabel Ortiz of the UN ("New Developments in South–South Cooperation: China ODA, Alternative Regionalisms, Banco del Sur", New Delhi: International Development Economics Associates, 2007) observes that "alternative regionalism" to reduce dependence on the Global North is picking up momentum, as evidenced by the ability of the *Mercado Común del Sur* (Mercosur—the Southern Common Market) to grow in stature since 1991 and spoil US-sponsored initiatives like the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Mercosur's motto, tellingly, is "Our North is the South". The Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) was created in 2006 to address the "social debt" of Latin America as an alternative to the neoliberal FTAA. Its purpose of "standing against the orthodoxy of Northern powers and using policies of regional solidarity to pursue social transformations at both national and regional level(s)" (*ibid*) has already attracted five full member states and the support of social movements for justice in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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In December 2007, seven Mercosur and ALBA member countries came together to found the Bank of the South as part of a more humane mode of organising socio-economic transformation and "an economic war with the more advanced nations of the North that is also social and ideological" ("South America Launches Rival to the IMF, World Bank", *Agence France Presse*, December 9, 2008). ALBA, which has a one country–one vote system and emphasises improving national productive capacities of members, is intended as a democratic alternative to the international financial institutions (IFIs) that are disproportionately controlled by OECD states. In May 2008, at the meeting of the heads of states of Latin America,

a constitutive treaty was signed to establish the Union of South American Nations. As a supranational and intergovernmental union, it united the two existing customs unions—Mercosur and the Andean Community. Along with the Bank of the South, now located in Caracas, Venezuela, a South American Parliament located in Bolivia, is to be established.

East Asian countries have also been making strides towards an autonomous Asian Monetary Fund (AMF) because of "the widespread sentiment in Asian financial circles that the IMF—which is perceived to be dominated by US and European interests—did not respond appropriately during the 1997 financial crisis" ("New Momentum for an Asian Monetary Fund", *Asia Pacific Bulletin*, May 13, 2005). The US Government has tried its utmost to abort the AMF, as it would deprive Washington "of its traditional monopoly in dictating conditionality principles and loan amounts through the intermediary of the IMF" (*ibid*). The IMF's deputy managing director bluntly criticised the prospect by saying, "An Asian Monetary Fund would be a threat to the authority and the effectiveness of the IMF" (Ramasamy Saravanan, "Long Road to Asian Monetary Union", *The Edge*, available at, http://www.freewebs.com). Despite US-induced hurdles, the AMF project is inching closer to reality under the aegis of ASEAN+3 (including China). Scholars reckon that participant countries of the Chiang Mai Initiative (a milestone on the road to AMF) are "in the long run, likely to wean themselves from their reliance on the IMF" (Chul Park Yung, "Beyond the Chiang Mai Initiative: Prospects for Regional Financial and Monetary Integration in East Asia", Technical Group Meeting of the G-24, p 9, September 27, 2004).

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Angola–China relations fit into this larger framework of consolidating South–South transformative projects. Regional institutions like the China–Africa Cooperation Forum—founded in 2000 by 45 African countries and China to strive for "a new international political and economic order and strengthening cooperation in trade between China and Africa" ("Creation of the Forum", available

at, http://china.org.cn)—buttress Angola–China bilateralism within a thick tissue of multilateral synergy. The extremely successful China–Africa Summit in Beijing in 2006, attended *inter alia* by the President of Angola, stood in sharp contrast to the EU–Africa Summit in Lisbon in 2007, where African leaders refused to buckle under European conditional trade agreements (Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem, "Yet Another Pact Between Cats and Mice", *Pambazuka News*, December 11, 2007 and Stephen Castle, "Harmony Out of Reach at EU–Africa Summit", *International Herald Tribune*, December 9, 2007). The South–South model expects closer bonds among Southern countries and tensions in South–North interactions. The facts bear out these predictions.

Samir Amin, one the principal theoreticians of the South–South model (*The Liberal Virus: Permanent War and the Americanisation of the World*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2004) prioritises transformation through "internationalism that serves the interests of regions that are currently divided against each other" as the next frontier. The fact that Angola's politics and economics were for a long time tied vertically with former colonial master Portugal rather than horizontally with China, illustrates previous divisions. African states' forcible integration into Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone spheres during the Cold War, has given way to a Chinese alliance of a different tune with institutions of a different bent. Angola is also a leading player of the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone, an interregional initiative of South American and African countries to prevent acts of aggression and subversion against member states. Angola is currently advocating greater unity within the zone "to spare it from the germs of a possible (new) arms race between the United States and Russia" ("Angola: Foreign Minister Calls for Cohesion within South Atlantic Peace Zone", *Angola Press Agency*, June 8, 2007).

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For clarification, the transformative institutions of the South–South model vary from those championed by neoliberal institutionalist theories. For the latter, states enter into institutional arrangements for pure self-interest, to solve the "cheating problem" and fear of being backstabbed by partners (Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Transformative institutions of the South–South model are based not on mutual suspicion of "defections" but on high levels of trust among Southern countries that precede the formation of institutions due to a shared history of exploitation by the North. South–South institutionalism is, in theory, the antithesis of neoliberal institutionalism.

Societal

The gender approach to bilateral relationships goes beyond the state-centric lenses of the previous three models and delves into the domestic social forces within each country that influence interstate relations. Feminist theorists of international relations refuse to accept state defined "national security" as the agenda of foreign policy and place the well-being of women and men at the centre stage of bilateral endeavours. Ann Tickner (*Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, p 20, 1992) contends that feminist theories offer new insights on the behaviour of states and individuals on the peripheries of the international system, topics that are avoided by theories besotted with great powers. Complimenting the South–South model, she states that with 80 per cent of the world's population living in the Global South, "we can no longer privilege a tradition of scholarship that focuses on the concerns and ambitions of the great powers". The basic unit of analysis is the individual, but unlike the rational economic man, this is a connected, interdependent individual whose actions include production of things and wealth and reproduction of life. Socially grounded women

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and men who have a capacity for empathy and preserving nature are seen to be capable of ensuring that states build community in relationships instead of playing "high politics" of war and competition (*ibid*).

To Cynthia Enloe (*Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, London: Pandora Press, 1990), "the conduct of international politics has depended on men's control of women" rather than on egalitarian sexual relations. Suffusion of patriarchy in both domestic and international relations is the main cause of violence and colonialism that have taken a toll on the Global South in general and its women in particular. While the exploitative and counter-hegemonic models do theorise on exploitation and subjugation in bilateral relationships, they fail to see the domination that exists within the domestic order of states. Anti-colonial nationalism, which informs the motivational structure of the counter-hegemonic model, "typically springs from masculinised memory, masculinised humiliation and masculinised hope" (*ibid*, p 45).

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Despite their counter-hegemonic stance, advocates of South–South cooperation brush under the carpet the progressive marginalisation and weakening of women's status within Southern countries. The linear discourses of development and modernisation that inspired organisers of South–South cooperation tend to work against women's interests. The gender model views capitalist industrialisation, the route of development preferred by most Southern states, as inherently disadvantageous to women. The rapid socio-economic strides made by "Southern" countries like South Korea, Malaysia, Vietnam, Cuba, China, India and Brazil to alter global power equations have come at the high cost of weakening the position of women within these societies (Kyung-Sup Chang, "Gender and Abortive Capitalist Social Transformation: Semi-Proletarianisation of South Korean Women", *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, Vol 36, 1995; Anita Doraisami, "The Gender Implications of Macroeconomic Policy and Performance in Malaysia", Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 2005; Jayne

Werner and Daniele Belanger, *Gender, Household, State: Doi Moi in Viet Nam*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002; Ruth Pearson, "Renegotiating the Reproductive Bargain: Gender Analysis of Economic Transition in Cuba in the 1990s", *Development and Change*, Vol 28, No 4, 1997; Kartik Roy, *Economic Reform in China and India: Development Experiences in a Comparative Perspective*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2006 and Rose-Marie Avin, "Engendering Development: A Critique" in Edith Kuiper and Drucilla Barker (Eds), *Feminist Economics and the World Bank: History, Theory and Policy*, London: Routledge, 2005). "Third world feminists" call for struggles not only against Northern neo-imperialism but also against home-grown patriarchy and chauvinism.

The African Feminist Forum, which convened in 2006, echoed this dual struggle track by "asserting the long and rich tradition of African women's resistance to patriarchy within Africa itself … (and) … the heroic liberation struggles against neo-colonialism and globalisation" in which women fought alongside men as equals (Muthoni Wanyeki, "The African Feminist Forum: Beginnings", Manila: Isis International, 2007). Ifi Amadiume (*Daughters of the Goddess, Daughters of Imperialism: African Women, Culture, Power and Democracy*, New York: Zed Books, 2000) shows how African women are trying to take charge of their own lives and fates in the face of patriarchal politics at home and in the rest of the world. James Petras ("US Offensive in Latin America: Coups, Retreats and Radicalisation", *Monthly Review*, Vol 54, No 1, 2002) documents how Latin American societies radicalised and mobilised in response to US neo-imperialism through the vehicles of "advancing social movements and popular insurgency" and gave rise to new forms of states that reversed centuries of American domination of the region. African feminists seek inspiration from this precedent.

The gender model views capitalist industrialisation, the route of development preferred by most Southern states, as inherently disadvantageous to women. The rapid socio-economic strides made by Southern countries to alter global power equations have come at the high cost of weakening the position of women within these societies.

Thus, the gender approach suggests that the societal energies and aspirations of Angolan women and men require the utilisation of their human and natural endowments not to replace or run counter to the priorities of health, education, housing and water. This is a mass popular force that will resist any possibilities of China trampling over Angola, even if it wished to do so. Tens of thousands of Chinese workers are now coming to Angola to work on reconstruction projects, establishing direct society-to-society relations between the two countries. The gender model expects that the feminist struggle will direct this relationship into humane and non-exploitative channels.

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Thus, there are complementarities between the South–South and the gender models, although the latter goes further in its emancipatory vision. It must be clarified here that the feminist society-to-society imprint on foreign policy varies distinctly from that of liberal theory, where the social forces that define national interests of states belong to dominant economic lobbies. Arthur Stein (*Why Nations Cooperate: Circumstance and Choice in International Relations*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990) reveals the elitism of the liberal theory with the admission that "every government represents some individuals and groups more fully than others" and that powerful domestic coalitions define the contours of bilateral cooperation. Feminist social coalitions and linkages are grassroots based and not soldered on individual self-interest.

PHASES OF ANGOLA–CHINA RELATIONS

This section has been divided into three distinct phases—1957–79, 1980–2002 and 2002–8. For Angola, the first phase witnessed the struggle for independence from Portuguese colonial rule and attempts by the US and South Africa to roll it back. For China, this phase represented a period of military involvement in Angola

that ended in embarrassment. For Angola, the second phase was one of consolidation of independence and rise as a regional military power. For China, this was a phase of rebuilding relations and overcoming the mistrust of the past. For Angola, the third phase stands for the end of war and the politics of reconstruction. For China, this phase connects it to Angola in a new *avatar*—as a partner for post-war rebuilding.

1957–1979

Sub-Phase I (1957–63)

In the 1950s, Angolans lived under Portuguese colonial rule, which was particularly oppressive as the leadership in Portugal was fascist. The atrocities of the Portuguese in Angola probably inspired the genocidal Belgian colonialists ruling neighbouring Congo (Americo Boavida, *Angola: Five Centuries of Portuguese Exploitation*, Richmond: LSM Information Centre, 1967 and Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, Boston: Mariner Books, p 280, 1999). By 1956, the forms of protest inside Angolan society against Portuguese rule had taken the concrete shape of organised liberation forces. From 1957, China aided both the Angolan liberation organisations—the Movement for Popular Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the Union of the Populations of Angola (UPA), later renamed the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA). China's ideological commitment to liberation struggles in the South was the basis of its involvement in Angola's fight for freedom. This was evident from Beijing's interest in helping the MPLA and the UPA forge a "united front" to stand up against the colonialism of Portugal (*Beijing Review*, July 7, 1961). The Afro–Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) was the counter-hegemonic platform through which Chinese military and diplomatic aid flowed to the two Angolan organisations. AAPSO acted as an anti-imperialist institutional mechanism through which China "followed patterns set by perceived African opinion" instead of trying to dictate terms to Africans by playing divide-and-rule tactics with the varied currents of Angolan resistance (Steven Jackson, "China's Third World Foreign Policy: The Case of Angola and Mozambique, 1961–1993", *The China Quarterly*, No 142, p 394, June 1995).

In the early 1960s, following the assassination of Patrice Lumumba by the Belgians in the Congo, there was a concerted attempt by European colonial powers and the US Government to liquidate African liberation movements. In Angola, the FNLA thrived under the patronage of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the dictator of Zaire (formerly Congo), Mobutu Sese Seko. When the Organization of African Unity (OAU) recognised the FNLA as one of the Angolan liberation organisations in 1963, it influenced China to take a greater interest in supporting it. However, Beijing did not cut off relations with the MPLA, showing that it had "no strong preferences among the various organisations" (*ibid*).

China's ideological commitment to liberation struggles in the South was the basis of its involvement in Angola's fight for freedom. The Afro–Asian People's Solidarity Organisation was the counter-hegemonic platform through which Chinese military and diplomatic aid flowed.

These empirical trends indicate that the South–South model is a better explanation for Angola–China relations in the early years than the exploitation model. From 1957 to 1963, China did not behave like a great power trying to exploit the liberation struggle for its own selfish interests. The overriding aim was to unify the liberation forces and respect African wishes not to indulge in great powers rivalries or proxy wars. China also did not pay heed to the norm of non-interference in the internal affairs of Angola, thus defying legalist expectations. The AAPSO's mission was to interfere in the internal affairs of European colonial territories to bring about self-determination of long-suffering people. Unfortunately, no constructivist scholar on Africa has taken an empirical stand on this sub-phase to argue that intervention and subversion were the norms guiding great powers relations with Africa.

Sub-Phase II (1964–79)

Once the Sino–Soviet split deepened in late 1963, Beijing reversed course and began aiding only those African liberation movements that espoused Maoist peasant

struggle models as opposed to those subscribing to "Soviet social imperialism" (*Long Live the Great Solidarity of the Asian–African People Against Imperialism*, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1964). Jonas Savimbi, the self-styled "liberation fighter" who formed the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in 1966, declared that he was wedded to Maoist ideology and "people's war" doctrines. The US Government later cleared Savimbi of being an ideological Maoist, but continued to propagate the claim that he was a Maoist in war tactics (Wanda Nesbitt, "Jonas Savimbi and UNITA's Struggle for Independence: An Application of Mao's Theory of Warfare?", Washington DC: US National War College, 1997). He effusively praised Chairman Mao Zedong and condemned the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Portugal and the USA for their "sinister" roles in Angola. China picked up the cue and exclusively promoted UNITA as a major force, offering it training, arms and media publicity (John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution: Exile Politics and Guerrilla Warfare*, Cambridge: MIT Press, pp 233–4, 1978). The rise of UNITA as the perceived Chinese party in Angola's liberation space paralleled the MPLA's promotion by the Soviet Union as "its" preferred player. The irony of China backing UNITA was that the latter was also "collaborating with Portuguese military intelligence to harass MPLA forces until 1974" (George Wright, *The Destruction of a Nation: United States' Policy Towards Angola Since 1945*, London: Pluto Press, p 11, 1997). So bitter was Beijing's rift with Moscow that it failed to realise the deleterious impact China's involvement was having on the Angolan people in their struggle for independence.

The rise of UNITA as the perceived Chinese party in Angola's liberation space paralleled the MPLA's promotion by the Soviet Union as "its" preferred player.

In the early 1970s, China moved towards aiding the FNLA as the counter to the MPLA as a result of the improving relations between Beijing and Washington. The FNLA received covert CIA aid from 1961 onwards on the grounds that it "represented a pro-Western stance in the resistance movement" (Stephen Weissman, "CIA Covert Action in Zaire and Angola: Patterns and Consequences", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol 94, No 2, p 278, 1979). At the same time, Washington also

pumped in enormous military material to the Portuguese colonialists who happened to be important North Atlantic Treaty Organization partners. In 1971, the OAU withdrew recognition of the FNLA due to its elitism and reliance on the West, but this did not deter China from colluding with the US and beefing up the FNLA with weapons and military instructors. The onus of Chinese policy on the eve of Angola's independence was, with American blessing, to prevent the Soviet-backed MPLA from triumphing. China attempted to supply armaments to the FNLA and UNITA by disregarding the opinion of respected OAU leaders like Tanzania's Nyerere (Martin James, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola, 1974–1990*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, p 144, 1992).

Apartheid South Africa's intervention in the summer of 1975 on the side of the FNLA and UNITA embarrassed Beijing and dented its prestige in the eyes of Africans and the wider Global South. Flying in the face of its counter-hegemonic rhetoric, "China was caught out on the side of apartheid" (*ibid*, p 70). Undeterred, top Chinese leaders conferred regularly with the Americans on the situation and synchronised their destabilisation efforts on the eve of Angolan independence. For instance, George H Bush, head of the US mission in Beijing, met high ranking Chinese officials in July 1975 and agreed to "coordinate their activities" in Angola (Ian Taylor, "Mainland China–Angola Relations: Moving From Debacle to Détente", *Issues and Studies*, Vol 33, No 9, p 69, 1997). By the end of October 1975, it was only the military, political and diplomatic defeat of South Africa's proxies—the FNLA and UNITA—that induced the Chinese to publicly terminate assistance to the two groups and pull out Chinese advisers from their bases in Zaire (John Stockwell, *In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story*, New York: W W Norton, 1978).

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In December 1975, when US President Gerald Ford hailed South Africa's "admirable intervention" and pleaded for continuation of Chinese aid to the FNLA and UNITA, Mao promised to "make a try" through Zaire ("Memorandum of

Conversation, Beijing, December 2, 1975", Reproduced by the National Security Archive, George Washington University, available at, http://www.gwu.edu) Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping added that despite the non-cooperation of Tanzania and Zambia in acting as conduits for Chinese supplies to the FNLA and UNITA, China would have no objections if the Americans went ahead and supported the South African proxies. Still displaying the sharp antagonism towards the MPLA and the USSR, Deng urged the Americans that "it is worth spending more money on that problem" ("Memorandum of Conversation, Beijing, December 3, 1975", *ibid*).

The Sino–American alliance and the Sino–Soviet competition trumped South–South *camaraderie* principles of "no compromise" with apartheid. China sacrificed Angola's liberation struggle to its larger geopolitical priorities.

In 1978, UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 435 called for the withdrawal of South African forces from Namibia. Yet, in spite of the resolution and the repudiation of Beijing's negative role by Frontline pan-African states like Tanzania, Zambia and Mozambique, hundreds of tonnes of covert Chinese military aid was channelled to UNITA in 1979 via Namibia, which was under South African control, with American connivance (Fred Bridgland, *Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa*, New York: Paragon House, 1987 and Ian Taylor, *China and Africa: Engagement and Compromise*, London: Routledge, 2006). In essence, the Sino–American alliance and the Sino–Soviet competition trumped South–South *camaraderie* principles of "no compromise" with apartheid. China sacrificed Angola's liberation struggle to its larger geopolitical priorities.

Thus, from 1964 to 1979, even though China claimed to be operating in the spirit of Bandung and Afro–Asian solidarity, it was a purely rhetorical commitment. China's geopolitical competition with the USSR and status as a junior partner of the USA were the driving forces for its aid to the FNLA and UNITA, which sowed the seeds of a "civil war" in Angola. China paid lip service to South–South cooperation but played a divisive role by solidifying splits in the ranks of the resistance, attesting to the superior explanatory power of the exploitation model for this sub-phase of Angola–China relations. As to the legal model, China continued

to disregard the norm of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Angola and showed scant concern for Angola's "sovereignty" even after it became an independent country, as was shown by Beijing's 1979 arms delivery to UNITA for destabilising an MPLA Government that was officially recognised by the OAU. Oblivious of this ground reality, no constructivist scholar has conceded that exploitation was the norm governing great powers relations with African countries like Angola in this sub-phase.

To sum up, the Sino–Soviet split was not the main framework of Angola–China relations throughout the 1957–79 phase. Counter-hegemony and self-determination for the Angolan people were the cornerstones of bilateral relations between 1957 and 1963. In this sub-phase, China could not ignore the will of the African masses by imposing unacceptable scenarii on them. In the second sub-phase between 1964 and 1979, China did behave as a "utilitarian and pragmatically realist" power (Taylor, *China and Africa*, *ibid*, p 14) that extracted maximum benefits by exploiting Angola's internal differences.

1980–2002

Sub-Phase I (1980–94)

When US President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher forged an alliance to roll back Communism in Africa in 1981, the people of Angola were caught in the midst of the Cold War conservatism of the West and its renewed support for the apartheid regime in South Africa. The US termed this alliance "constructive engagement", but the levels of destruction across the region led scholars and leaders of governments to label it as "destructive engagement" (Phyllis Johnson and David Martin, *Destructive Engagement: Southern Africa at War*, Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1986 and Wright, *ibid*). By the end of the eighties, it was estimated that Western intervention in favour of apartheid had cost more than two million lives and over US$ 80 billion in damages to the region of Southern Africa (Victoria Brittain, *Hidden Lives, Hidden Deaths: South Africa's Crippling of a Continent*, London: Faber and Faber, 1990 and Reginald Green, "Killing the Dream: The Political and Human Economy of War in sub–

Saharan Africa", Discussion Paper No 238, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, 1987). Angola faced the brunt of this military destabilisation as the South African military launched major assaults (called operations) against the MPLA Government. From *Operation Protea* in 1981 to *Operation Modular Hooper* in 1987–8, Angolan society was caught in the midst of the global struggles against apartheid. This struggle took political, religious, moral, intellectual, cultural, diplomatic and military forms in the decade before the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990.

Following the intense efforts of Frontline States to counter the apartheid war machine, China moved to normalise relations with the Angolan Government. Beijing assiduously courted the MPLA Government and tried to convince the latter that it would not repeat the opportunistic behaviour of the 1964–79 period. During *Operation Askari*, the biggest military operation of the South African Defence Force in Angola, Beijing announced that the two countries would recognise each other in October 1983. Characteristically, the culmination of diplomatic efforts took place in October 1988, with the visit of the Angolan President to China when the MPLA was flush with confidence after the victory of Cuito Cuanavale. This battle was one of the most decisive elements in the regional struggle, which saw the Angolan army (FAPLA) and Cuban forces conclusively defeat the apartheid military (Horace Campbell, "The Military Defeat of the South Africans in Angola", *Monthly Review*, April 1989; US version of the defeat – Chester Crocker, *High Noon in Southern Africa: Keeping Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood*, New York: W W Norton, 1992; South African version of the battle – Fred Bridgland, *The War for Africa*, Cape Town: Ashanti, Publishing, 1990 and Helmoed-Romer Heitman, *War in Angola: The Final South African Phase*, Cape Town: Ashanti Publishing, 1990). The battle raised the Angolan Government's confidence that it could withstand conventionally superior military foes and handle great powers like China on an equal footing and on mutually beneficial rather than exploitative terms. President Jose Dos Santos'

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Beijing visit moved bilateral relations in a new direction, but it is instructive that the visit took place five years after the normalisation of relations. In the interregnum, China coaxed and cajoled Luanda by completely distancing itself from its former ally, UNITA (*Beijing Review*, Vol 31, No 20, 1988). Interestingly, China's frantic exertions for a *rapprochement* with the MPLA Government occurred at a time when it was preoccupied with internal economic development. Beijing's efforts to stay committed to the anti-apartheid agenda in Angola and its neighbourhood despite perceptions that it was "ignoring the Third World" due to internal priorities reveals the explanatory power of the South–South model (Y Chang, "On Current Chinese Communist Relations with the Third World", *Issues and Studies*, Vol 18, No 11, pp 71–2, 1982).

China's relations with Angola in the 1980s were guided by international mobilisations against apartheid and intense diplomatic and political campaigns to isolate the apartheid regime. Chinese allies in the region, especially Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, were leaders in the Frontline struggles to support the people of Angola. It was this leadership of Africans, which led the international effort to expose the alliance between the USA and apartheid forces. China, as a permanent member of the UNSC was caught at the forefront of the diplomatic struggles over apartheid. Non-intervention norms favoured by the legal model had no relevance in this sub-phase, as the thrust of China and the entire Global South was to intervene, albeit in a different mode, to liberate the Southern African region. Even more tellingly, Western great powers were also intervening, but on the side of apartheid forces. Constructivist scholars contend that anti-apartheid norms became global in the 1980s and were successful in positively influencing US foreign policy (Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), but they fail to explain why this supposedly "global" norm was brazenly flouted by the Reagan Administration in the name of "constructive engagement" (J E Davies, *Constructive Engagement? Chester Crocker*

China's relations with Angola in the 1980s were guided by international mobilisations against apartheid and intense diplomatic and political campaigns to isolate the apartheid regime.

and American Policy in South Africa, Namibia and Angola 1981–8, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007). Had constructivists dwelt upon the power of South–South solidarity, they would have found that the norm of anti-apartheid was universal only within the Global South.

Realists sought to frame self-determination processes within Southern Africa in the fulcrum of the Cold War, the Sino–Soviet rift and *rapprochement* (National Security Study "The Kissinger Study of Southern Africa", Memorandum 39, Westport: Lawrence Hill and Co, 1976 and Chester Crocker, "South Africa: Strategy for Change", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 59, 1980). However, even after the end of the Sino–Soviet split and the fall of the USSR in 1991, the issues of decolonisation continued to dominate the politics of Southern Africa. China's strategic competition with the USSR took second place in the 1980s, as the former lined up with the South–South *bloc* to seek implementation of UNSC resolutions in relation to Namibia and Angola. To the extent that improving Sino–Soviet ties from 1982 onwards helped normalise Angola–China relations (George Yu, "Africa in Chinese Foreign Policy", *Issues and Studies*, Vol 28, No 8, p 857, 1988), it may be conceded that a shift in realist power structures did play a part in changing the nature of the bilateral relationship. However, South–South calculations, especially African opinions about the role China should play, were uppermost in determining the nature of the bilateral relationship. Nyerere's resignation in 1985 as President of Tanzania to devote his activities to the South Commission was an important development that guided China's relations with Africa in this sub-phase (Nyerere, *The Challenge to the South*, *ibid*).

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Sub-Phase II (1995–2002)

Cuito Cuanavale changed the history of Africa but did not end the militarisation of Angolan society. UNITA continued military-political struggles even after

Angolans rejected Savimbi's bid to become president in the elections of 1992. Savimbi intensified his conventional military campaigns, leading to one of the most brutal periods in the history of Angola. City sieges by UNITA military forces left more than 300,000 people dead and Angolan society was ripped by the intensity of the war. This war between 1992–8, led to the intense militarisation of the nation to the point where, by 1998, Angolan military forces were deployed to fight UNITA in Zaire and in the regional conflict of Congo–Brazzaville.

After successfully participating in the regional war to overthrow the Sese Seko dictatorship from Zaire in 1997, the Angolan Government was able to control most of its sovereign territory. By 2000, UNITA was routed as a conventional military force. Savimbi sought to reorganise UNITA as a guerrilla force, but the international political and economic situation had changed to the point where Savimbi was branded a terrorist and war criminal by the Southern African Development Community. Savimbi was isolated, hunted down and killed in February 2002. Angolan society found peace for the first time in 500 years.

China's relations with Angola in the nineties were largely a continuation of the momentum generated from 1983, with gradual increases in bilateral trade and consistent criticism of UNITA for spoiling the chances of peace. This decade also witnessed Beijing's first foray into the post-war rebuilding of Angola, when it seemed briefly in 1992 and 1994 that a peace agreement might end UNITA's obstructionism. The economic cooperation that China built with the MPLA Government in the 1990s was far smaller than what it became in the new millennium, but it was underpinned by Chinese dedication to the development of the Global South as the only guarantee against neo-imperialism and Western hegemonism. This was reflected in the PRC's Foreign Minister's comment to his Angolan counterpart in 1994 that "if big powers really care about Africa, they should not write out a prescription and force Africa to accept it" (Taylor, *China and Africa*, *ibid*, p 89).

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Although Chinese foreign policy statements of this sub-phase repeatedly stressed "non-intervention" in Angola's internal affairs, Beijing did aid the Luanda Government non-militarily. Chinese contributions to Angolan state-building at a time when the state was warding off UNITA's threat cannot be overlooked. The legal model fails to explain this phase because China was "interfering", that too in the decade of the nineties when Western militaristic-humanitarian interventions in Somalia and Kosovo were becoming a counter-norm. China acted not in concordance with fluctuating global norms, but in accord with the struggles phase of the South–South model that dictated a different type of intervention than used by the Western great powers in Somalia and Kosovo. The Clinton era humanitarian interventions of the West were used as pretexts for strategic military gains (Jules Lobel and Michael Ratner, "Humanitarian Military Intervention", *Foreign Policy in Focus*, Vol 5, No 1, 2000).

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Although the counter-hegemonic South–South model figured prominently as an explanation for Angola–China ties in this sub-phase, the gender-based societal model offered additional insights into events. By the middle of the nineties, the emergence of Angola as a regional military power brought to the fore new questions in relation to the welfare and well-being of Angolan citizens. Strikes by teachers and other workers raised the question of the use of Angolan resources for war. During the city sieges, women crossed military lines to support families and the tenacity and resistance of Angolan women in this period proved to be a decisive factor in breaking the military campaign of Savimbi (Horace Campbell, "Militarism, Warfare and the Search for Peace in Angola: The Contribution of Angolan Women", Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, 2000). The mass discontent caused by the horrors of war gave birth to grassroots social movements in Angola that strove

for peace and reconstruction, tasks for which China would appear as an ally in the new millennium.

2002–2008

By the time of Savimbi's death and the peace accords of 2002, Angolan society had endured three decades of intensive war to secure self-determination. It is estimated that over a million Angolans were killed in war, more than 4.1 million were internally displaced and more that 400,000 citizens were dispersed to neighbouring countries of Congo–Brazzaville, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia and Zambia (The United Nations, "Consolidated Interagency Appeal 2002: Angola", New York, 2001). Apart from the massive loss of life and dislocation of humans, the entire infrastructure of Angola was in shambles. Landmines littered the countryside, hampering the recovery of agricultural production while hospitals, health clinics and schools were destroyed. Angolan society was in desperate need of social reconstruction, but multilateral aid agencies focused on the recreation of conditions for the accumulation of capital (J Zoë Wilson, "Wishful Thinking, Wilful Blindness and Artful Amnesia: The UN and the Promotion of Good Governance, Democracy and Human Rights in Africa", PhD Thesis, Dalhousie University, Halifax, 2004 and Gerald Bender, "The Role of the Private Sector", 2006, available at, http://www.angonet.org). The domestic leadership moved to support the extraction of mineral and petroleum resources while health conditions deteriorated with cholera outbreaks across the country.

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An Ebola epidemic in one region compounded the deteriorating social conditions that ranked Angolan society as one of the lowest in terms of the Human Development Index. According to most sources, the average life expectancy is 41 years and more than 60 per cent of the population live below the poverty line (United Nations Development Programme, *"Human Development Report 2007–*

8", New York, 2007). These conditions mean that, today, the majority of Angolan women live in conditions of super exploitation with few services. Nearly 50 per cent of children suffer from chronic malnutrition. At 250 per 1,000 live births, the under-five-years mortality rate is one of the highest in the world. Of the almost eight million Angolans who are poor, more than four million depend on some form of international humanitarian assistance to cover their most basic requirements. Unemployment and underemployment have driven many women into the so-called "informal sector" and one of the areas of growth has been in women selling their bodies as sex workers. This situation was so dire that there were cases of children as young as 11 being forced into prostitution (*catorzinhas*) (Jenny Clover, "Angola's Children Bearing the Greatest Cost of War", *African Security Review*, Vol 11, No 3, 2002). Feminist scholarship on economic transformations suggests that the rapid entry of multinational corporations and foreign investment into a country undergoing "developmental processes" goes hand in hand with the rise of indignities suffered by local women. As Angola embarks on "modernisation" by inviting foreign (Chinese) oil and reconstruction companies, the consequences for women appear ominous.

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Despite these wretched conditions, ordinary Angolans display remarkable self-confidence, manifest in areas of culture, arts, music and sports. Angola's national basketball team has consistently been the best team in Africa. One author noted that this self-confidence,

> "has affected the national psyche. Although their country has been virtually destroyed by war and its human development indicators are among the worst in the world, many Angolans believe that oil has made their country one that is respected, solicited by and listened to in the wider world, or at least one that cannot be bullied and knocked around like other, poorer African countries" (Tony Hodges, *Angola: Anatomy of an Oil State*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p 143, 2004).

The assertiveness of Angolan society was also reflected in its leadership's approach to negotiating with IFIs. This self-assurance led to long-drawn-out negotiations for a post-war reconstruction loan from the IMF up to 2004. After two years of endless to-and-fro between the Angolans and the "donor community", the Chinese Government offered a two billion dollar oil-backed loan from Exim Bank—its export credit agency. This loan came without the neoliberal conditionalities of "good governance". Luanda hailed the Chinese deal as "a practical means of mutually advantageous cooperation" compared to the "humiliating conditions imposed on the Angolan Government by developed countries" (Angolan Embassy in the United Kingdom, "Angola–China: An Example of South–South Cooperation", Press Release, March 26, 2004). This new engagement with Beijing added to the Angolan Government's confidence level in dealing with Western multinational oil majors that were thereafter required to respect The nation's customs, taxation, foreign exchange and waste management laws (Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *Angola Country Report*, London, March 2005). China's state oil company Sinopec also took over a key offshore Angolan oil drilling block from the French company Total-Elf by coming in as a replacement to solve the problems created by "political differences between Angola and France" (EIU, *ibid*, September, 2005).

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The bitterly frustrated IMF, World Bank and their Western patrons, whose traditional influence in sub-Saharan Africa was threatened, unleashed a barrage of criticism of China's role in the region for allegedly creating a debt trap (Rowan Callick, "Wolfowitz Holds Beijing to Account over Africa", *The Australian*, October 25, 2006 and Michael Phillips, "G-7 to Warn China over Costly Loans to Poor Countries", *The Wall Street Journal*, September 15, 2006) and exacerbating "governance problems" (Joshua Eisenman and Joshua Kurlantzick, "China's Africa Strategy", *Current History*, May 2006). That China boosted Angola's ability to hold off Western interests was again demonstrated in March 2007, when Luanda

unilaterally repaid US$ 2.3 billion to the Paris Club of international creditors for debts incurred between 1989 and 2006. The decision to repay the entire debt, rather than negotiate a debt write-off under the auspices of another IMF monitored programme, was "a clear indication of the government's intention to pursue economic policy free from the constraints of the IMF or the World Bank" (EIU, *ibid*, June 2007). Angola's defiance of Western interests in post-war reconstruction emanates not only from its oil industry boom but also from the availability of Chinese economic, military and technical assistance. By the end of 2007, Beijing's "potential financing on offer" to help Angola offset Western pressures was estimated at around $ 11 billion (EIU, *ibid*, October 2007). Lamenting the dramatic upswing of Angola–China relations that hurt European chances, a Portuguese diplomat said, "Across the vast African savannas, the wind from the East is blowing stronger than the wind from the West" (*Power and Interest News Report*, *ibid*).

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Angola–China trade burgeoned in this phase, registering impressive annual gains (Table II). While Angolan oil was the prime item in the bilateral trade profile, a range of Chinese manufactured goods from sewing machines to water filters also flooded Angolan markets (Benoit Faucon, "China Makes Headway in Angola with Multiple Trade Ties", *Dow Jones Newswires*, December 29, 2006 and Lucy Corkin, "China's Interest in Angola's Construction and Infrastructure Sectors" in Dorothy Grace Guerrero and Firoze Manji (Eds), *China's New Role in Africa and the South: A Search for a New Perspective*, Oxford: Fahamu Books 2008).

Chinese companies lead Angola's road building, housing and railway construction projects. The vast majority of Chinese companies operating in Angola are state-owned or state-invested firms, attesting to the direct foreign policy dynamics of their involvement. This is in sharp contrast to Indian companies investing in Africa, which mostly strike out on their own without Chinese-style state shepherding (Kirtiman Awasthi, "Will Indian Generosity Help Africa?", *Down to*

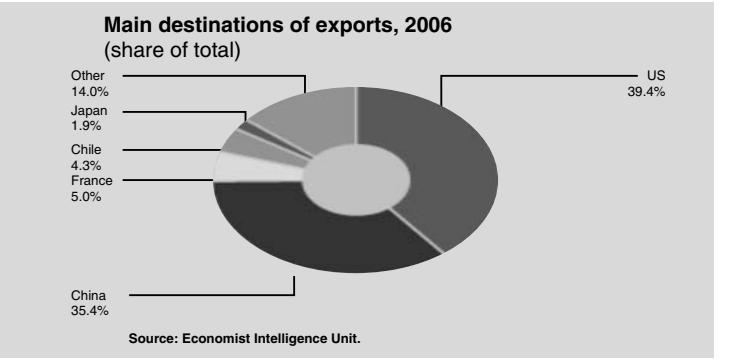
Table II: Angola–China Trade, 2002–6

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Chinese Exports to Angola (US$ millions)	61	146	194	373	894
Chinese Imports from Angola (US$ millions)	1087	2206	4717	6581	10931
Increase in Chinese Exports to Angola over Previous Year (per cent)	32	139	32	92	139
Increase in Chinese Imports from Angola over Previous Year (per cent)	50	102	113	39	66

Source: IMF, Direction of Trade Statistics, Washington DC, 2002–7

Earth, Vol 16, No 24, 2008). The massive foreign exchange accruing to the Angolan Government from exporting to China (Figure I) is, at least in theory, a big boost to its financial freedom to rebuild the war-recovering society on its own terms. In sharp contrast to occupied Iraq, where Washington's "dogmatic neoliberal approach" licensed American companies to have an open sway over the post-war reconstruction agenda, Angola has a chance to stake out a more independent post-war future with Chinese help (Robert Looney, "Neoliberalism and Iraqi Economic Reconstruction", *Strategic Insights*, Vol 2, No 8, 2003).

Figure I: Angolan Exports by Country



It is important to acknowledge the contribution of South–South cooperation in extricating Angola from the clutches of neoliberal economic rules and regimes. While initiatives like the Bank of the South in Latin America are challenging neoliberal hegemony at a regional level, the Angola–China partnership in the new millennium has a distinct anti-neoliberal tone at the bilateral level. A combination of the decline in global US hegemony, the rise of new power centres and the growing self-assuredness of Angolans to determine their own destinies is ensuring that Luanda

cannot be dictated to by any great power, be it a Western state or China. Angola is able to thwart the US Government, the IMF and the World Bank now more than in previous phases as it can reap greater returns from South–South cooperation against Western hegemony. "Afro-pessimism", a belief that the continent is mired in chaos, failed states, greedy rulers and incorrigible tribal hatred, is the yarn through which the Western press and donor circles have spun the interventionist doctrine of "good governance" (Deborah Bryceson, "Of Criminals and Clients: African Culture and Afro-Pessimism in a Globalised World", *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol 34, No 2, p 417, 2000). Western warnings of Chinese "neo-colonialism" in Angola and the rest of the continent betray the same underestimation of Africa's core strength to resist hegemonic impositions.

That China boosted Angola's ability to hold off Western interests was again demonstrated in March 2007, when Luanda unilaterally repaid US$ 2.3 billion to the Paris Club of international creditors for debts incurred between 1989 and 2006.

The exploitation model fails to find resonance in this phase because of its fallacy in assuming that weak states are bound to go under the thumb of great powers. As the evidence demonstrates in this case, the power differential between Angola and China has had little bearing on the type of bilateral relationship built since 2002. Adherents of the legal model like Clapham and Jackson are pessimistic about the viability and endurance of Southern states and assume that they survive only through the adherence to international laws by great powers. However, the current experience shows that Angola is able to hold its own against great powers despite their attempts to meddle and gain informal control over its post-war reconstruction process.

The introduction proposed that bilateral relations between Southern countries are changing in the context of the post-Cold War rise of states like Brazil, India, China, Malaysia and South Korea. What is clear from the tremendous economic churnings in these societies is that not all ordinary citizens have benefited from stellar productive growth. This same reasoning is true for Angola where, despite the country recording one of the most impressive growth rates in the world, there have not been significant improvements in the quality of the lives of the common

people. It is evident that high growth rates in trade and investment between Angola and China and large-scale Chinese infrastructure projects have generated very little local employment. Press reports on the complaints from local entrepreneurs on the quality of Chinese goods and the quality of the work (EIU, *ibid*, September 2006) minimise the reality that it is only the strengthening of democratic traditions among the working peoples of Angola that can hold Chinese companies accountable.

At the time of Angola's independence in 1975, the ruling party was called the MPLA-PT, meaning the party of labour. It was the support from urban workers, especially in Sambizanga, that allowed the MPLA to withstand the wars launched by the FLNA in 1975 and Savimbi's October 1992 *putsch* in Luanda. However, when the IFIs started pressuring the MPLA to liberalise the economy in the early nineties, the party went back on its traditional support for the rights of workers and women. The National Union of Angolan Workers and the Organisation of Angolan Women had been the cornerstones of the self-determination project against apartheid and US subversion. Within Angolan society, there had been an explicit link between national liberation and women's emancipation, a connection that is being neglected instead of being nurtured by the current political elite of the country.

By the end of 2007, Beijing's "potential financing on offer" to help Angola offset Western pressures was estimated at around $ 11 billion.

The rulers of the MPLA have been eager to stand up to the IMF when it comes to their class interests, but they forsook women and workers on issues relating to health, safety and the environment when the country was opened up to the West at the end of the Cold War. The same leadership that resisted IMF conditionalities on questions of "governance" continues to ignore the call for strengthening trade unions, cooperatives, teachers' societies, farmers' organisations, traders' associations and writers' groups. The ways in which petroleum is currently being extracted by Chinese and Western companies in Angola's offshore locations are hazardous to the water and air consumed by the mass of poor citizens. Transformations within Angola require democracy to open up the liberalisation process to empower workers for collective bargaining on better standards of health

and safety. Only such democratisation can provide the bulwark against possible negative repercussions of the Chinese presence.

As the deteriorating indices of employment, environment, health and safety of workers and sexual relations suggest, not all facets of Chinese involvement in Angola since 2002 have been beneficial. Given the historical record of the 1964–79 sub-phase, there is a potential for Beijing to attempt exploitation, despite its verbal adherence to "non-interference" in the country's internal affairs. The Angolan Government is aware of China's past track record and is diversifying its credit lines and infrastructure agreements with other Southern countries like Brazil and India to avoid complete dependence on China (EIU , *ibid*, November, 2007).

In sharp contrast to occupied Iraq, where Washington's "dogmatic neoliberal approach" licensed American companies to have an open sway over the post-war reconstruction agenda, Angola has a chance to stake out a more independent post-war future with Chinese help.

Moreover, the increased relevance of the social forces for peace and demilitarisation in post-war Angola, acting in conjunction with the worldwide solidification of South–South cooperation, are bulwarks against possible Chinese attempts to exploit the local society and resources. Women's movements in particular, emerge in peacetime rather than during wars that masculinise the social space. The long war had blocked the potential for feminist causes to be brought to the fore, but the post-Savimbi era is opening up spaces for the articulation of women's voices about the future direction of the country, including its relations with China. Unlike the legal and exploitative models, the South–South and societal models have the theoretical strength of not dismissing Angola's will and tenacity in its relationship with the PRC.

UNEQUAL EQUALS

This article opens new vistas in international relation theories by combining the state-centric South–South cooperation model with the people-centric societal approach. Through a historical examination of Angola–China relations, it

demonstrates the compatibility of the counter-hegemonic South–South model and the gender-based societal model. The main finding of this article is that the realist exploitation model is not a satisfactory explanation of Angola–China relations, except in one sub-phase (1964–79), when the Cold War in Africa was at its peak. The "asymmetry theory" has already exposed the limitations of realist predictions of the stronger player in a bilateral relationship swamping the weaker side and exploiting it. According to this theory, a weaker state can play its trump cards with skilful diplomacy and stave off domination by the stronger side, especially by appealing to mutual interests (Brantly Womack, *China and Vietnam: The Politics of Asymmetry*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). However, the combination of the South–South and societal model offers a different view from the asymmetric theory. The former suggests that even among asymmetric bilateral pairs, depending on the type of dyad (South–South or South–North), the relationship will be different not merely due to mutual interests but due to the ideals, pressures and exertions of the Global South as a community of states and institutions as well as to the influence of social forces and movements in Southern countries.

The findings of this article are applicable to other asymmetric dyads of the Global South (paired relationships between two Southern states in which one side is far superior to another in military and economic power resources). For instance, India is strengthening economic and technical cooperation with Africa. Indian diplomats are wary of the West's modes of intervention that conform to the exploitative model and have reiterated, "We don't want our approach tainted by the Western one. We should not be seen as exploiters in Africa. We want to be partners in the genuine sense of the word" (Sandeep Dikshit, "India to Shun Partnership with West in Africa", *The Hindu*, February 13, 2008). This article is also relevant to theorise the remarkable increase in outward investment from economies of Southern countries as distinct from the foreign direct investment (FDI) practices of Western multinationals. The value of outward FDI stock from

Despite the country recording one of the most impressive growth rates in the world, there have not been significant improvements in the quality of the lives of the common people.

developing countries has increased 11 times since 1985 and is an ever growing phenomenon (Peter Gammeltoft, "Emerging Multinationals: Outward FDI from BRIC Countries", *International Journal of Technology and Globalisation,* Vol 4, No 1, 2008), with implications for dyads like Angola and China. The combined South–South and societal models lead us to expect that corporations from Brazil, India, China, *et al* will behave differently compared to Western corporations in Africa and Latin America.

As to the legal model based on norms of sovereignty and non-intervention, this article has exposed its empirical biases and weakness. Stephen Krasner *Sovereignty: Organised Hypocrisy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) has already shown that throughout history, sovereignty has been a shallow charade behind which great powers have regularly intervened and tried to extract their pound of flesh from small states, either directly or indirectly. Maja Zehfuss' critique of constructivism (*Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) substantiates the tendency of this approach to turn a blind eye to exploitative tendencies and injustices in international relations. Great powers have so profoundly underdeveloped and structurally sabotaged Southern countries (Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Dar es Salaam: Tanzanian Publishing House, 1983) that the legal model propounded by Jackson, Finnemore and Clapham amounts to whitewashing the crimes of the West in Southern states before and after their formal independence. Even more fatally flawed is the legal model's Afro-pessimism that belittles the viability of African states and perpetuates the myth that they survive on the supposed charity and legality of the Global North. To discredit the legal model, it is enough to point out that none of the phases in the empirical narrative of this article conform to its theoretical expectations.

Transformations within Angola require democracy to open up the liberalisation process to empower workers for collective bargaining on better standards of health and safety.

Nyerere, the pan-African leader and former President of Tanzania, characterised the links between his country and China as a "friendship of most unequal equals" (Parbati Sircar, "The Great Uhuru (Freedom) Railway: China's Link to Africa",

China Report, Vol 14, No 2, 1978). He was sensitive to the structural inequality between the Asian giant and the small African state, but in the same vein was also confident that Africans had the spirit and unity to determine their own destinies without becoming satellites of great powers. The fundamental drawback of the exploitative and legal models is to undervalue Southern lives and social energies that compel asymmetric dyads to organise more just and equal exchanges. The 2008 strike by South African dock workers that turned back a Chinese arms shipment heading for Zimbabwe (Philippe Naughton and Jane Macartney, "Dockers Refuse to Unload China Arms Shipment for Zimbabwe", *The Times*, April 18, 2008) is just one example of how the gender-based societal model would be decisive in ordering relations between Africa and the great powers. As the power and confidence of the Global South come of age (Kishore Mahbubani, *The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East*, New York: Public Affairs Books, 2008) in step with the unshackling of popular social forces, international relations theorists will need to open their windows to the South–South and gender models.

The long war had blocked the potential for feminist causes to be brought to the fore, but the post-Savimbi era is opening up spaces for the articulation of women's voices about the future direction of the country, including its relations with China.