

2020 Richard S. Schultz '60 Symposium Fellowship



Nicole Navarro

How the People's Republic of China is Weaponizing Water Ports to Control Business, Politics, Perspective, and Trade in Tanzania.



Introduction / Abstract

In the 21st century, African countries such as Tanzania have gained an economic connection with rising global powers, which foreshadows military partnerships and expansionism, particularly with the People's Republic of China (PRC). This case study explores the relationship between Tanzania and the PRC in relation to the Maritime Silk Road, focusing on the strong presence the PRC had politically and economically with Tanzania in the past, as well as their current presence. Through literature review, data analysis, and interviews, the case study reveals the collateralization patterns the PRC made with underdeveloped countries and allows an in-depth understanding of these countries on a microlevel. Ultimately, the PRC uses infrastructure development and building shipping ports to gain effective control of Tanzania's territorial water, specifically the country's lack of access to deep water ports, which are used for commercial cargo. The result is negative political and economic impacts for Tanzania. U.S. intervention could relieve some negative impacts for Tanzania; therefore, U.S. Navy policy recommendations regarding sub-Saharan African maritime relations are included.

A Chinese worker looks on as a cargo ship is loaded at a port in Qingdao, China



Nicole Navarro



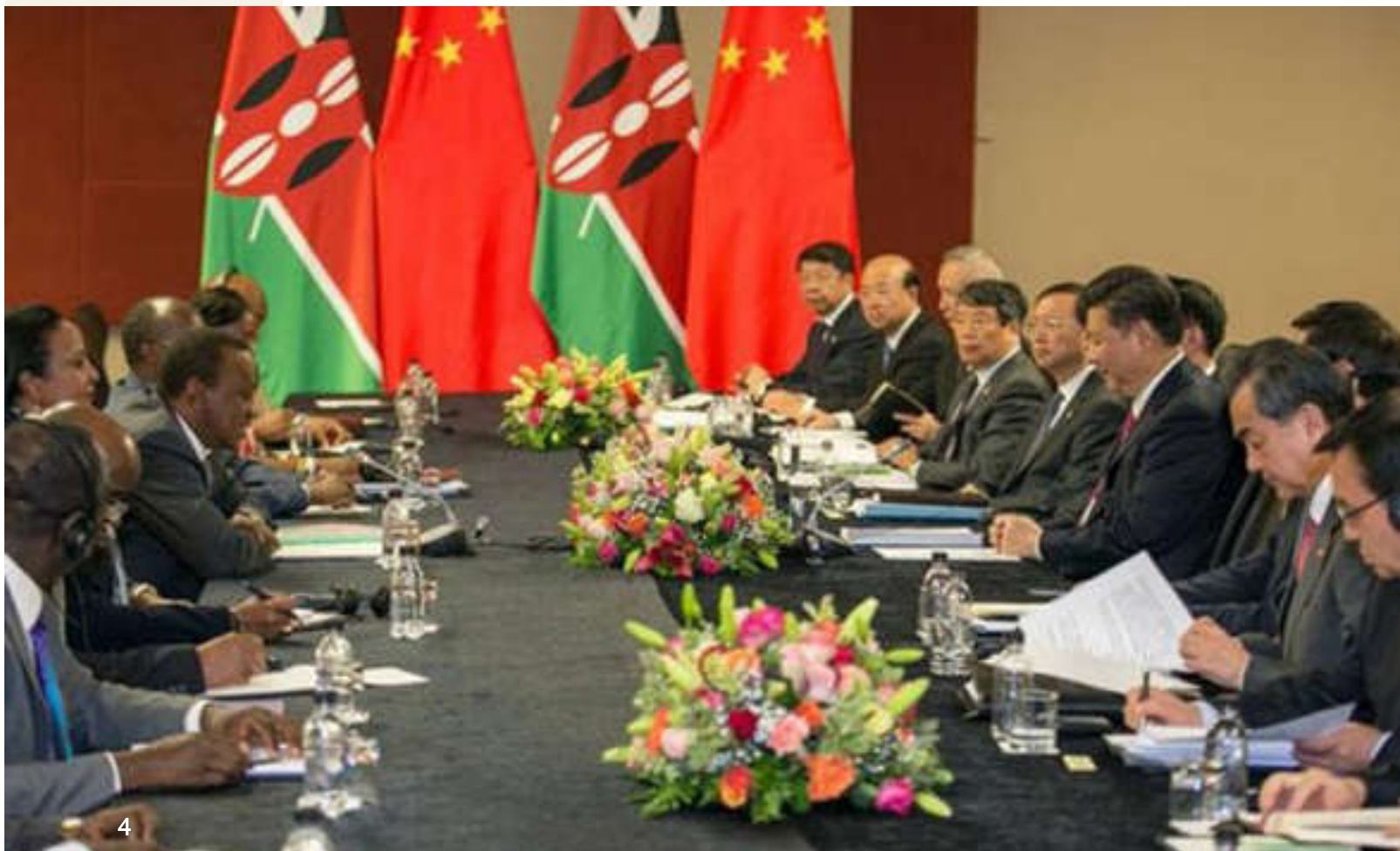
Research Overview

As the 2020 Richard S. Schultz '60 fellow, the purpose of my research project is to identify how economic and political factors pose a challenge to U.S. regional interests through the weaponization of infrastructural development projects. My focus is on the PRC and their partnership with Tanzania. While conducting this research, I had the opportunity to interview experts in my research field, including Dave Banschbach, Operations Center Training Officer at Naval Forces Europe-Africa/ USS 6th Fleet; West Africa Public Affairs/ Communication Synchronization Team at U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM); Jeffrey Becker, Research Program Director at the Center for Naval Analysis, a federally-funded nonprofit; Vince Mmoja, Tanzanian Community Development expert; Miri Kim, Professor of History at Norwich University; and Terry Hutson, Author of the Africa Ports & Ships Maritime News.



Itinerary

Date	Location	Activity
July 13-14	Virtual - Ongoing	Interview with Community Development Expert, Vincent Mwaja
July 20th	Virtual - via Zoom Meeting	Interview with Professor of History at Norwich University, Miri Kim
July 22nd	Virtual - via Email	Interview with Author of the Africa Ports & Ships Maritime News, Terry Hutson
July 27th	Virtual - via Phone call	Interview with Research Program Director at the Center for Naval Analysis, Jeffrey Becker
July 28th	Virtual - via Email	Interview email with Africa Public Affairs/ Communication Synchronization Team at U.S Africa Command (AFRICOM)
July 30th	Virtual - via Email	Interview with Operations Center Training Officer at Naval Forces Europe-Africa / U.S. 6th Fleet, Dave Banschbach
July 31st	Virtual - via Facebook	Interview with Community Development Expert Vincent Mwaja





Findings

Why Tanzania?

In recent years, the World Bank of Tanzania reports that the poverty rate in Africa continues to decline, citing the increase in “strong financial incentives.” Despite the fall of the Bagamoyo Port project, which would have been the biggest African port in the Indian sea, Tanzania has continued its partnership with China. Mr. Mmoja, a community development expert states, “Most Tanzanians believe that China’s economic and political influence on Tanzania is mostly positive. Many of us prefer China as a model for Tanzanian development.” Despite China collateralizing previous loans with African countries, the reality is that Africa’s economy is rapidly growing. Norwich University Professor, Miri Kim, posed the question, “Analytically, if China owns 80% of the port, what does that mean for the lives of everyday people?” While China is bringing resources to the local population of Tanzania, they are also bringing their workers instead of employing and paying local citizens to perform the work. Furthermore, they are dumping waste in the ports, which has implications for the population’s health and well-being. The political, economic, and environmental concerns in Tanzania warrant a study of the impacts China’s presence has on the nation.



Historical Investment

In 2006, the relationship between Africa and China developed through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. This initiative provided China with economic and political footholds in Africa. By 2009, China announced that it created eight new policies establishing financial investments to strengthen relations with African nations. In the following years, China granted Africa a credit line of \$20 billion for African countries to build new infrastructure. The West AFRICOM team explains, "China has tripled its loans to Africa since 2012, making Beijing a major debt-holder for multiple sub-Saharan African governments. China also has its key One Belt One Road Initiative (OBOR), in which it pledged a \$60B OBOR investment in 2018." This began the biggest investment in Africa's history, due to China issuing Africa \$143B in loans related to their involvement in 26 port projects in Africa. This relationship has created economic, political, and military footholds in Africa for many years to come, and it is clear Africa has been a passive beneficiary of Chinese interests. Countries like Tanzania have gained a stronger economic system; however, these benefits come at a great cost.

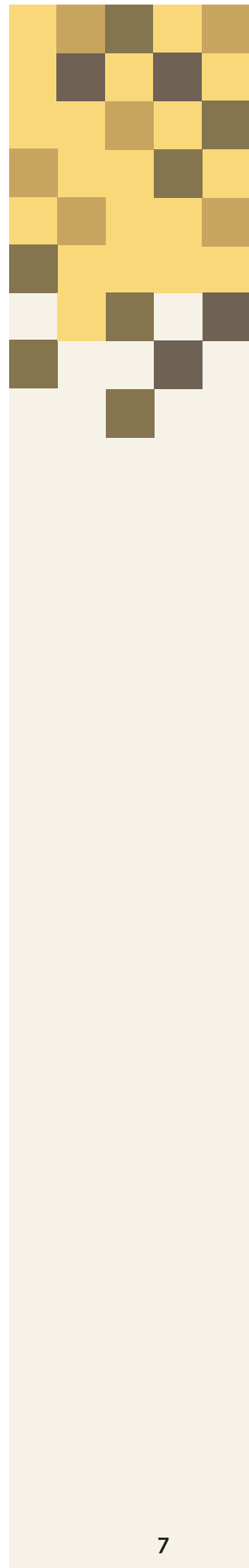


The Importance of Tanzania's Port Commerce



Ports are vital for Africa as they invigorate financial development, expand its economies, diminish the inflationary impacts of frail transport, and reduce poverty, functioning as gateways for 80% of global commerce. Currently, the PRC has constructed, financed, and now operates 11 out of the 46

African ports. Mr. Becker elaborated on how China strategically creates ports in an area that will be most beneficial for their economic position. For instance, Program Director at the Center for Naval Analysis, Mr. Becker, explained that Djibouti was in a “strategically important position next to the Bab el Mandeb, a critical maritime chokepoint.” This position allowed for an extension called the Doraleh Multipurpose Port to “add 9 million metric tons of annual service capacity to Djibouti’s port infrastructure, more than doubling the amount of cargo it can handle.” While these ports contribute to Africa’s economic growth, it also reinforces China’s image as a development partner, boosting its political influence. This allows China to strengthen its connectivity with key countries involved in its Belt and Road initiative. Ports also have a significant effect on the population when it comes to the ground transportation of goods from the ports to communities directly. Operations Center Training Officer, Dave Banschbach elaborates, “The cost of transportation is too high to move the food products (e.g., grain) around the world to those areas that are agriculture-poor. A lack of deep-water ports makes transporting food products more expensive than if there were deep-water ports to serve all populations.” One-third of the world’s population lives within 60 miles of an oceanic coast, and two-thirds of the world’s population lives within 500 miles of an oceanic coast but it is not commercially viable for agricultural nations to export food to more remote areas. AFRICOM Communication Synchronization Planner, Luis Bispo, shared an example from his time in the Democratic Republic of Congo: “Kinshasa is a 12-hour drive from the coastline even if you can drive 100 kilometers an hour. Trucks travel at 30 or 40 kilometers per hour, so it will take a few days for goods to arrive at the capital. Their imports come in by plane because the roads from the coastline are not in good condition due to heavy rain.” Logistical costs compound other human development challenges, isolating African communities from the global market and highlighting the importance of port commerce.





What Role Does the PRC Play in the Development of Under- Developed Countries like Tanzania?

The engagement between the PRC and Tanzania has helped fuel Africa's economic growth. For instance, the high commodity prices and investment flows in Africa account for 16 percent of the continent's foreign trade volume. Africa is key to China's expansion and provides them with leverage they would not otherwise have. Mr. Mmoja states, "China is a significant source of foreign direct investment in Africa." Chinese officials have successfully established a long-term planning capability with African cultures through the development of infrastructure. These investments directly impact African communities like Tanzania by creating not only economic and political ties, but also cultural ones. Additionally, through the Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic (DIME) model, of national power Mr. Banschbach explains, "China is wielding one of its instruments of national power (the E in DIME) that it has in much greater abundance than the U.S. has had with China." Because China is an authoritarian government, they can invest in international projects more than the U.S., which is another advantage they have and continue to utilize specifically in African country development projects.

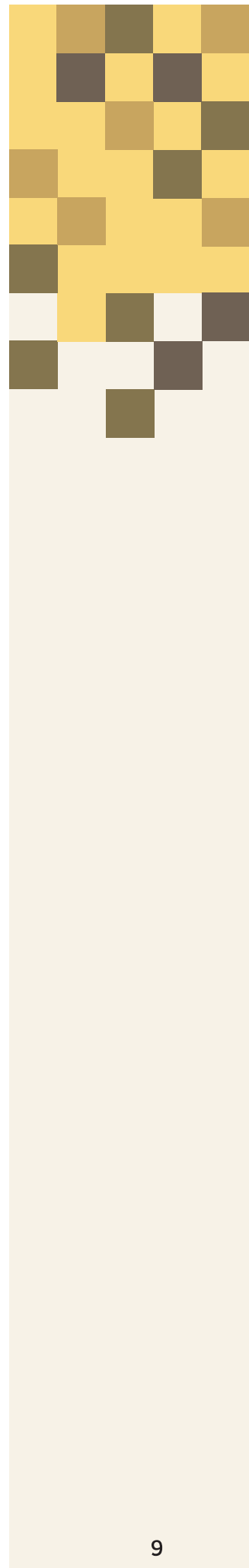
How will the PRC use Global Trade to Support Their Geopolitical Interests?

- African investment - China is excessively lending to underdeveloped countries, specifically the Tanzanian port financing between China Merchant Holding International and Oman's States Government Reserve Fund.
- Peoples Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) Tactic Involvement – The shift away from their original mission to protect the global commands and international free trade (which is a US objective) into just protecting their own economic and political interest. This poses one of the biggest challenges for U.S. regional interest. Mr. Banschbach offers the example of PLAN selectively protecting merchant ships in the Gulf of Aden and leaving other nations unprotected.

Recommended Policy: Ways to Ensure the Security of Ports

China has invested billions of dollars in Africa and has created political, economic, and military footholds. Due to these footholds, the U.S. is unable to compete economically with China in Africa. Mr. Banschbach emphasized this by stating, “We must appeal not to economic interests but personal interests. We must show that partnering with the U.S. instead of China is a better investment.” The U.S. understands its challenges with China-Africa relations and has subsequently created healthier relations with their partners by establishing governmental assistance to help African populations meet their basic needs through the USAID and Department of Security.

- Policy Recommendation #1: U.S. Navy participation in multi-national exercises with sub-Saharan nations, allowing for growing relationships with African governments.
- Policy Recommendation #2: Extension of the U.S. Naval War College's Combined Force Maritime Component Commander Course, which is currently offered only to U.S. and International Flag Officers (O7+), allowing this course to be offered to members that are involved in U.S. Maritime Operations, regardless of their rank.



Biographies



Nicole Navarro

Nicole Navarro is a senior from San Antonio, Texas. She chose to attend Norwich to obtain a commission as an officer in the US Navy. While pursuing a major in Political Science and a minor in History, she enjoys conducting research and learning about different governmental systems. After graduation, she plans to pursue a master's degree in National Security Affairs.

Through my research, I was able to identify how economic and political factors pose a challenge to USS regional interests through the weaponization of infrastructural development projects. The interviews I conducted engaged the expertise from a range of professions all around the world. This allowed me to understand a multitude of perspectives and gain more insight into what is happening behind these countries' from a political and economic stance. Although my fellowship was conducted 100% virtually, I could still grasp more than I could have imagined. Looking toward the future, as a Junior Officer in the US Navy, this fellowship has taught me what a citizen-soldier is and how bridging the gap between countries is the most efficient step in forging the future.

I want to thank the Richard S. Schultz '60 Symposium Fellowship and Mrs. Myrna Schultz, the Schultz family, and the fellowship supporters for granting me the privilege to be a part of this legacy. The \$2,500 grant allowed me to have the opportunity to conduct research and meet with notable scholars all around the world whom I would have never met otherwise. The topic of "Weaponizing Water: Ancient Tactic, New Implications" will forever be prevalent globally, and I am honored to gain the resources to research a national issue.

I want to acknowledge Professor Travis Morris for his guidance and granting me the opportunity to be 2020's fellow as well as Nicole DiDomenico for being my advisor and serving in an essential role in this fellowship.



Office of Public Affairs and
Communication Synchronization

Dave Banschbach



Jeffrey Becker



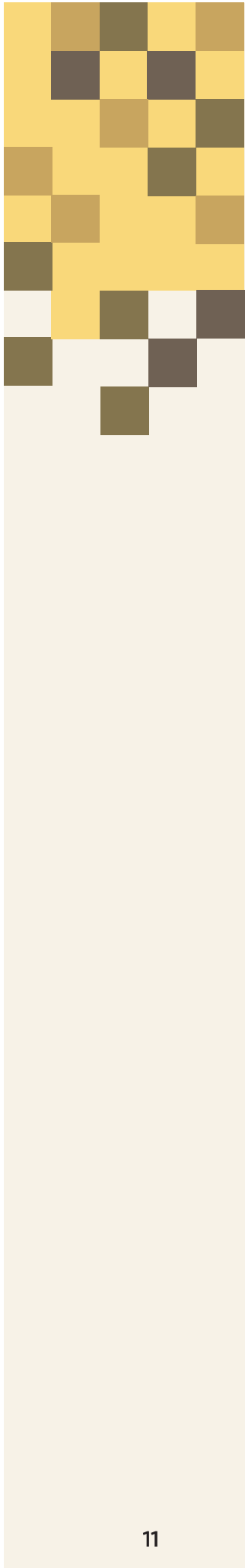
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