

Why has China been vilified by the west for its engagement in Darfur and to what extent is this justified?

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Abstract

Sino-Sudanese relations have become synonymous with the Darfur conflict. This paper will not exonerate China's actions but will argue other actors (Russia, Malaysia, India and South Africa) have been overlooked while China was seen as the sole villain, impeding peace in Darfur. The western vilification of China occurred because of the perception of Beijing as both the solution and the problem to the crisis, caused by its close links with Sudan through economic (primarily oil), military and diplomatic relations. Vilification also occurred because of Beijing's different approach to conflict resolution; focusing on quiet diplomacy, engagement, traditional peacekeeping and economic development. The leverage gained through the 'Genocide Olympics' campaign meant their vilification catalysed a change in China's engagement, from the view of Darfur as an internal affair towards active involvement. Darfur highlights the issue of China's Janus-identities of 'great power' and 'developing country', and how in Darfur they became untenable. International vilification and pressure drove Beijing to understand that being a great power involves responsibilities. This paper will argue that the western vilification of China can be justified as it has catalysed Beijing to change its engagement in Darfur.

Keywords: China; Darfur; identity; non-interference; vilification

Introduction

'The last two years have been little short of hell on earth for our fellow human beings in Darfur' UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan (2005)

Sudan has been embroiled in conflict since its independence in 1956 and Darfur, as the above quote illustrates, epitomises this violence and suffering, escalating into ferocious armed rebellion in 2003 with a staggering proportion of the population directly affected: 1.65 million internally displaced people, 627,000 conflict affected people, 200,000 refugees and an estimated 200,000-400,000 fatalities (Kasfir 2005). The Darfur conflict has complex origins, primarily caused by increased pressure on resources, militarisation spreading from neighbouring Chad and an absence of good governance and authority (Mamdani 2009).

This paper begins by analysing the complex background of Darfur to contextualise the subsequent analysis and help understand some of the potential causes of the vilification. The next section explores China's historical and current relationship with Africa, a relationship which has recently strengthened, in part due to China's booming economy needing resources, trade and political support to sustain itself. Criticism levelled against this relationship will be briefly examined, epitomised by China's relations with Sudan.

The next chapter analyses the three main strands of the Sino-Sudanese relationship: oil, military and international diplomacy. One of the main features of China's involvement in the oil industry is its status as a newcomer and this explains its attraction to underexplored African resources and markets. Military links between the two countries offer further clues to China's vilification, paradoxically China has reversed its attitude towards United Nations Peace Keeping Operations (UNPKOs) from absolute objection to support and participation; the reasons behind this U-turn will be examined. Finally, the complex political relationship will be evaluated, with a focus on the different approach taken by Beijing to solving conflicts, preferring 'quiet diplomacy', respect, equality and economic development.

The third chapter examines the vilification of China and the recent changes to Beijing's engagement in Sudan. In the case of Darfur this paper will argue that the historic vilification of China by the west has recurred for two main reasons: China is seen as both the problem and solution to Darfur, due to close Sino-Sudanese relations and Beijing's permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). A second, lesser reason is the increasing concern and fear expressed by the west in relation to China's developing engagement across

Africa, and the potential for a dangerous precedent to be set if Beijing refuses to play a positive role. NGOs had incredible success bringing Darfur to the world stage, and highlighting China's role in Darfur through the 'Genocide Olympics' campaign. Two distinct stages of China's evolutionary engagement in Sudan regarding Darfur emerged; starting with economic protection and non-interference, and leading to active persuasion (publically criticising and privately persuading). This paper contends that the global campaign against China undoubtedly influenced the direction of its Darfur policy. Finally, this chapter will examine other actors in Darfur whose presence and actions have been largely overlooked due to the continued and almost exclusive spotlight on China.

The last chapter develops the analysis of Beijing's foreign policy, analysing its two enduring and entrenched principles: non-interference and sovereignty, before finally exploring China's identity dilemma struggle. Beijing has used shrewd diplomacy to develop its identity, alternating according to the situation and audience, between great power and developing country. It has then been able to reap the diverse benefits of each identity. Beijing's continued engagement with Sudan and the consequent intense international pressure and criticism it has faced meant it became untenable to maintain both identities. The vilification it received from the west has compelled China to reassess its role and international responsibilities as a great power. Whether the vilification of China is rooted in reason and logic is debateable, if only because it ignores other actors' involvement, but it has pushed Beijing towards acting more responsibly, and thus can be justified for catalysing Beijing's acceptance of the responsibilities involved in being a great power in Darfur and beyond.

1. Sudan, China and Darfur

This paper employs a constructivist interpretation of international relations (IR) instead of the common realist perspective; the following brief overview will justify this choice. Realism is based according to Wohlforth (2008) on three core principles: egoism – self-interest being the ultimate driver of political behaviour; power-centrism – power being the ultimate attribute of politics, and groupism – that individuals face each other in groups and that the ultimate group is the nation-state. The belief in these three principles means that politics becomes conflictual, evident in the power transition theory that deduces dominant states (such as America) want to retain leadership, while lesser states (such as China) contest this as their strength increases (Wohlforth 2008). However, theorists critique realism and its assumptions

due to its inability to envisage the peaceful end to the Cold War and the current peaceful rise of China, and as a consequence believe realism is unable to predict major changes in IR. Realism's second major flaw is the belief that states' interests and motivations are universal and predictable (Phillips 2007). Constructivism challenges some of the assumptions of realism, it centres on the conviction that the world is socially constructed, therefore material capability only matters once it is given social context and interests and identities are socially constructed and disposed to change (Phillips 2007). Instead of realist assumptions about the pre-determined nature of national interests, constructivism emphasises the importance of identity as 'the basis of interests' and established by ideals, internalised norms and philosophies of social settings (Wendt 1992 cited in Rues-Smit 2005: 197). Constructivists thus give great weight to identity as it 'influences attitudes and policies alike, being the psychological foundation for the role and behaviour patterns of a country', hence 'identities both shape and generate interests' and are vital to IR (Scalapino 1993 cited Hu et al. 2000: 45). This paper will demonstrate the importance of identity in the case of China and its changing engagement with Sudan over the Darfur crisis.

1.1. Sudan and Darfur

Sudan is a large nation-state located in a region of Africa torn apart by conflict. Since independence from joint British and Egyptian rule in 1956 the country has been mired in conflict. Although a gross oversimplification, one of the causes of conflict was the enduring dominance of the centre at the expense and neglect of the peripheries, this is apparent from the fighting with Southern Sudan and many other marginalised regions, including Darfur (Foot 2006). Darfur is a western region of Sudan, the size of France, with a population of six million and a history of communal conflict. Unrest and violence marred Darfur early in 2003, quickly intensifying and turning into armed rebellion (Kasfir 2005). Mamdani (2009) argues that three main factors drove the conflict in Darfur: firstly the devastating Sahelian drought forced people South, increasing pressure on resources as they went. Secondly, an absence of authority was created by the failure of the GoS's attempts to reform the native administration and amend the colonial legacy, whereby some groups were given land while others were not. Finally, the conflict in Chad militarised Darfur through the spill over of weapons. While many posit the cause of the conflict to be climate change and the subsequent breakdown in access to resources, de Waal (2007 cited in Brosche 2008: 9) insightfully reasons that the central problem of Darfur is anarchy, caused initially by the ineffectual

government, and then, when the government reasserted its control over the region, Darfur was thrown into further violence and chaos.

The government was drawn into the conflict by two main rebel groups of the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army and the Justice and Equality Movement who staged a joint attack on a government military airport in April 2003, humiliating the government (Williams and Bellamy 2005). The government retaliated by bombing rebel held areas and also providing: 'arms and support to brutal 'Janjaweed militias', nomads that swept into villages, burnt families alive in huts, had women as sex slaves and displaced millions of innocents' (Brautigam 2009: 281).

The number of fatalities in Darfur is highly contested, 400,000 was one of the first figures produced and has often been the baseline used by the west, but Mamdani (2009) argues a more accurate figure is that given by CRED (a WHO affiliate) of 118,142 fatalities (from September 2003 to January 2005). The speed, scale and level of violent attacks by the GoS has led many to position it as the only villain in this conflict, and so the only actor preventing a solution, but with numerous rebel groups continuing to fight the GoS, to 'put blame on only one party makes no moral or political sense' (ChinaView 2008a). This attempt to apportion blame is most evident in the labelling of the conflict in Darfur as genocide.

Genocide is defined by the UN as 'acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group' (Fake and Funk 2009: 13). In April 2004 Darfur came to the world's attention when Kofi Annan (then UN Secretary-General), called for international intervention, however it wasn't until September that year that Colin Powell (then US Secretary of State) labelled the conflict genocide (Lee et al. 2012). Despite the American declaration, the responsibility to intervene rested solely with the UN; intervention becomes mandatory and legitimate only with the UN assertion of genocide. The 2005 UN Report refuted the definition and failed to find evidence of genocide, instead finding the government's intent was to drive groups off the land not destroy them; classing the violence as counterinsurgency (Flint and De Waal 2008).

There is a tendency for genocide to be universally acknowledged as the ultimate crime, amoral and evil. In pursuing a hierarchical typology, it diminishes other non-genocidal forms of violence; Mamdani (2009: 279) highlights how these other categories of violent conflict are increasingly being thought of as 'inevitable but regrettable'. Darfur is not genocide, but not meeting a fairly arbitrary definition does not make the violence that is occurring there any

less criminal, amoral or evil. China has become closely entwined with this violence and the resulting humanitarian intervention, originating from China's close involvement with the GoS and Africa. China's association with a situation that has purportedly been classed as genocidal has meant international passions have been inflamed and the level of opprobrium not always justifiable.

1.2. China and Africa

China's engagement with Africa has exploded in recent decades, leaving many to claim China is the continent's most important feature since the end of the Cold-War; attracting unparalleled attention amongst academics, politicians and the media (Clapham 2009). Sino-African relations are frequently analysed as a bilateral relationship, when in fact it is a relationship between one country and fifty-four, nonetheless, it is valuable to consider the relationship in this way to understand China's African policy. It must also be stressed China is not a new actor on the African continent and has been involved in Africa (to varying degrees) since its independence in 1949. China is not a monolithic force in Africa but the government is the principal actor. Mawdsley (2007) divides Beijing's involvement into three eras: the first era is the Mao years (1946-76) when the relationship with Africa was strengthened by Chinese aid and support for independence movements. The second period (1978-89) was marked by a shift from ideological engagement to a more economic and pragmatic one. Tiananmen Square symbolised the start of the third era (from 1989), when the resolutely negative western reaction prompted China to seek non-western allies and it found Africa to be a highly valuable source of support (Mawdsley 2007). Tiananmen Square was the catalyst for China's renewed interest in Africa, coinciding as it did with declining western engagement in Africa, but the 'enduring driver of change has been the demands of China's booming economy' (Mawdsley 2007: 415).

Economic ties between China and Africa have increased at unprecedented rates. In 1999 Sino-African trade stood at just US\$2 billion but by 2005 it was US\$39.7 billion, this staggering increase has made China Africa's second largest trading partner (Dent 2011). The persistent message from Chinese officials is that the relationship is mutually beneficial and is 'win-win cooperation'. While China gains new markets for its goods and services, African countries are very happy to welcome China to Africa (Tull 2009). Chan (2006 cited in Gu et al. 2007) identifies the advantages for Africa thus: 'it is an African scramble for China more

than the other way around' as African leaders are clearly keen to develop ties with what they see as the next superpower. China also seeks diplomatic dividends from its close relations with African countries, aligning itself with countries to gain their support and votes (Africa represents the single largest bloc of votes in multilateral settings) and by so doing protect and promote its national interests internationally (Alden 2007). It does this by linking China and Africa through their shared history, their united focus on economic development and their mutual status as developing countries.

China's involvement in Africa has resulted in a barrage of criticism and cynicism, mostly from the west but some African voices have recently joined the cacophony. Many have condemned China's engagement as neo-colonial but recent assessments have dropped this charge, with Wenping (2007) arguing China is neither capable nor inclined to take a neo-colonial path in Africa. Much of the criticism has focused on China's aid and loans being given without conditions and their willingness to deal with anyone (the recognition of Taiwan being the only glaring exception). China is accused of propping up African dictators and undermining western efforts to promote good governance, democracy and peace (Taylor 2008). This line of thought could be said to be both paternalistic, suggesting Africa needs western protection from China, and also western-centric, assuming that western standards and ideals, are superior. However there is clear evidence that China has supported numerous unsavoury authoritarian states in Africa, Sudan is perhaps the most infamous and 'troubling' part of China's Africa policy (Brookes 2007: 4). China's role in Darfur has been vilified by advocacy groups partly due to the overall concern with China's role in Africa, and also their apprehension that inaction by Beijing in Darfur could set a dangerous precedent for China's burgeoning interaction with Africa.

1.3. China and Sudan

China's history in Africa has been discussed, it also has a long history with Sudan, allowing Chinese and Sudanese officials to declare this 'long tradition of friendly relations' (Goodman 2004b: para 13) and celebrate their 'all weather friendship' (Large 2008b: 93). In reality, Beijing was insignificant in Sudan until the 1990s and so might be said to be a new actor in Sudan (Large 2009b). Panell (2008: 723) contends China and Sudan are 'natural partners with complementary needs and requirements that provide mutual benefits'. Sudan sought investment and international support and China wanted to capitalise on Sudan's untapped

resources and political isolation. Unlike the west which frequently perceived Sudan as a failed state, China saw an opportunity which led to it becoming Sudan's largest trading partner, with trade reaching US\$5.7 billion in 2007 (Shichor 2007). A significant proportion of this trade is oil but China is diversifying into a variety of businesses (Foster 2001). While China is vital to Sudan's trade and GDP, Sudan represents just 0.2% of China's total foreign trade in 2005, thus leading Panell (2008: 722) to claim the Sino-Sudanese economic relationship is 'dependent, if not colonial', this simplistic assessment overlooks the importance of Sudanese oil for China (as explored below). Politically, China has a close relationship with President al-Bashir's ruling party with Large (2009b) contending China has strengthened the political, economic and military base of their power. These three domains represent the three ways China's engagement with Sudan has influenced the crisis in Darfur, each will now be analysed in turn starting with oil, the catalyst for modern day relations.

2. China and Sudan: the three strands

2.1. China and Oil

China has quickly become the second largest consumer of oil worldwide due to its immense population and economic growth. China is alleged by the west to have an 'insatiable appetite' for oil, but as of 2006, America consumed three times, and imported four times more petroleum than China; America also purchased 33% of African oil exports compared to China's 9% (Brookes 2007: 2; Dent 2011). This desire for energy, along with China's newcomer status, has meant that China is attracted to Africa's comparatively underexplored and exploited oil, especially areas lacking western involvement. The result is that China is compelled to take risks in markets the west is unable or unwilling to engage with, frequently this is in 'pariah' regimes of which Sudan is the archetype (Brookes 2007).

Oil is a vital component of Sudan's politics and has played a crucial role in Sudan both before and after China's involvement in the industry. US firm Chevron was first to make inroads in advancing the oil industry, but political uncertainty and Washington's increasing disapproval of the GoS drove Chevron out in 1992 (Patey 2007). The largest oil producing bloc in Sudan, the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC) was incorporated in 1997, comprising the China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) purchasing 40%, Malaysian National Oil Company (NOC) Petronas 30% and the Sudanese NOC Sudapet 5% (Patey 2007). Canadian Talisman purchased the remaining 25% only to face intense and

damaging western public pressure, but it was only the threat of delisting that drove Talisman out (Alden 2005). The US proposed to bar companies engaged in Sudan from raising capital on the New York Stock Exchange, however this proposal was later dropped lest it set a precedent (highlighting America's own economic limits on human rights) (Alden 2005). Paradoxically, the forced departure of western companies from Sudan created a vacuum that state owned Asian corporations, less likely to be influenced by human rights issues, were able to fill. While human rights groups campaigned strongly against western companies, the real influence came from western governmental pressure, especially from control over the stock markets (Goodman 2004a).

Large (2009a) argues oil is at the heart of Sino-Sudanese relations, this oil based relationship has been mutually beneficial. China's investment has enabled Sudan to develop a thriving oil industry while Sudan has been a test ground and a stepping stone upon which CNPC can enter the global industry. Beijing's model of 'petro diplomacy', heavily investing in friendly relations with oil producing states and employing Kaplinsky's (2008 cited in Wissenbach 2011) three vectors of interaction: trade, aid and investment is being utilised in Sudan. Many experts believe Beijing's mercantilist strategy will eventually fail, the difference to the western market based approach is causing a high degree of anxiety and paranoia in the west, some of which also stems from the simple fact that China is a newcomer to the market and therefore must aggressively seek out opportunities while the west seeks to protect existing investments. Chan (2009: 340) highlights how this concern is future based; the US worst case scenario is of oil resources 'locked up' by China, thus there is 'no 'scramble' but a chess-game being played'. This strategic game playing raises many questions about China and America's involvement in Darfur and to what extent, they might be said to be pursuing their own self/oil interests. The corollary to this line of thought is of course to question how far the vilification of China in relation to Darfur is the result of envy, self-interest and political manoeuvring over oil.

As part of their strategy China made a calculated entrance to strengthen and secure Sudanese oil while it was still a pariah state. Estimates of China's investment in Sudan's oil industry range from between US\$5-15 billion (Holslag 2008; Zafar 2007). CNPC's involvement in Sudan is often criticised as lacking 'a moral agenda', although De Oliveira (2009: 83) reasonably argues that a moral dimension is equally absent from the western oil sector. To counter these accusations CNPC has donated more than US\$50 million to development projects in Sudan (CNPC 2010). Beijing's original belief in the 1990s was that Chinese

investment in the oil industry would spur economic development and ‘fundamentally address the countries chaos caused by war and unrest’ (President Jiang 1990 cited Srinivasan 2008: 74). Oil wealth has undoubtedly impacted upon Sudan resulting in consolidated wealth in the centre and so reinforcing historical patterns that led to the original conflict, rather than achieving a more equal distribution of wealth and broad based development that might contribute to peace. In a further blow to hopes of peaceful resolution, oil wealth has also led to a substantial upsurge in military purchases, a Sudanese finance minister claimed that 70% to 80% of oil ‘windfall’ was spent on weapons, this is analysed further below (Small Arms Survey 2007). China is not the only actor involved in creating Sudan’s oil wealth (as explored in chapter 3), but ultimately, only the GoS is responsible for how it spends its oil windfall.

2.2. China and the military

China’s policy of consolidating the military power of key oil producing allies such as Sudan to gain influence and secure resources has been internationally condemned. Beijing’s 2006 White Paper stresses China’s and the People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) responsibility to ‘take the initiative to prevent and defuse crises and deter conflicts and wars...and play an active part in maintaining global and regional peace and stability’ (Enuka 2010: 103). These statements are in direct opposition to Chinese and PLA actions on the ground; China has become Sudan’s largest supplier of arms, supplying a large assortment of weapons from small arms to tanks and fighter jets (BBC 2009). The most comprehensive source is UN Comtrade data which reports an increase in the Sino-Sudanese arms trade from US\$1 million in 2002 to US\$23 million in 2005 (Small Arms Survey 2007). Significantly however, many believe this figure to be grossly underestimated because the data relies on governments to report transactions. In reality these aren’t always reported, or, as Michel and Beuret (2009) assert, may not constitute a monetary transaction, but a trade swap, arms for oil for instance. The 2004 UN resolution 1556 imposed an arms embargo on Darfur stating that no one can militarily assist any parties involved. China has been accused of ‘flouting’ this embargo as UN analysis found evidence of Chinese weapons in Darfur (Enuka 2010). However, because Khartoum has proclaimed it is its sovereign right to transport weapons over its territory, and the embargo did not restrict sales to Khartoum, it is possible the embargo was not broken by China and weapons were in fact legally sold to Khartoum (Panell 2008). Despite Liu’s statement (2007 cited in Le 2007: para 4) that China ‘will do our best to prevent the weapons finding their way into the wrong hands’, and his obvious assertion that China is unable to

control their weapons once sold, it would be naïve to believe that China did not know where or how these weapons would be used.

The sale of arms is just one of three ways China is involved in supporting the GoS military, the other is through high level talks and cooperation between the two countries militaries which occurred during the heaviest periods of fighting in Darfur (Human Rights First 2008b). Zhai confirmed reports in 2007 when he stated: ‘with Sudan we have co-operation in many aspects, including military co-operation...in this we have nothing to hide’. This candidness belies the previously stated responsibility in the White Paper for China to ‘defuse’ and ‘deter’ conflicts, such military cooperation is unlikely to achieve such noble objectives. Finally, it is alleged by various sources that China assisted Sudan’s development of its own arms manufacturing industry through the building of three weapons factories, although the exact nature and extent of Chinese involvement is unclear (Brookes 2007).

Ironically, while China has been heavily involved with Sudan’s military that is bringing the violence to civilians, it has also had a growing role in peacekeeping designed to protect those same civilians, both in Darfur and more widely in Africa. Beijing’s position on peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention has undergone a 180 degree turn in the last forty years. Its policy in the 1970s was of non-participation and principled opposition, primarily driven by anxiety over intervention being used against China itself (for instance in Taiwan, Tibet or Xingjiang) (Houser and Levy 2008). In the 1980s, although its policy of non-participation continued, China began to offer support to UNPKOs (mostly financial), which UNPKOs understood pragmatically instead of in ideological terms (Holslag 2008). The 1990s signalled a change of policy with China supporting and participating in UNPKOs; today China confidently supports UNPKOs and has become the largest contributor (roughly 2,000 peacekeepers) of the five permanent UNSC members (Holslag 2008). The majority of China’s contributions have been to peacekeeping forces in Africa (77% in 2008), but Gill and Huang (2009) contend each intervention will continue to be reviewed on an individual basis, and that Beijing’s participation will be limited or non-existent if the host country’s consent is absent, or if the international community is divided over intervention.

Beijing’s transformed stance and increasing engagement with peacekeeping arises from various strategic drivers. The International Crisis Group (2009) takes a realist view, considering Beijing’s primary motivation to be economic, after all China’s growing investment in Africa would prosper in a peaceful and stable environment. For He (2007) this

economic rationale is only one of three strategic reasons, believing that Beijing's plan is to strengthen multilateral institutions such as the UN, and therefore lessen American hegemony. Finally, China's decision to engage with peacekeeping also improves and raises the profile of China's image as a responsible great power on the world stage and by so doing functions as part of the 'charm offensive' to allay fears of a 'China threat' (Suzuki 2011: 69). In Darfur China was frequently vilified and accused of foot-dragging, attempting to dilute UN resolutions and stall their implementation, however according to Contessi (2010) is inaccurate, instead China sought the re-emergence of traditional peacekeeping. Traditional peacekeeping is established only with the host's consent, a ceasefire agreement and an impartial operation that is unable to use force. Non-traditional peacekeeping represents the opposite of these four factors and has become progressively more common (Contessi 2010). In Contessi's (2010) view it is an infringement on Westphalian values (specifically the erosion of sovereignty and non-interference), and it is this that has resulted in China's unreceptive stance towards non-traditional peacekeeping. Consent is the primary way of ensuring such Westphalian principles remain and are reinforced, in the case of Darfur, consent became a major stumbling block as discussed below.

2.3. China and Politics

What might be termed China's original marriage of convenience with Sudan, was centred on business rather than politics, with China reaffirming publically that it was possible to separate the two, just as when the Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Zhou Wenzhong avowed 'business is business. We try to separate politics from business' (Brookes 2007: 5). One need only consider the western exit from the oil industry (discussed above) as evidence of the conjoined nature of business and politics to western sensibilities. In contrast, the ability of Chinese NOCs to remain in Sudan illustrates a much higher degree of separation than the west, partly due to the NOCs already being state owned and therefore already political, with politics and business sharing the same exclusive focus: economic development. Zhou Wenzhong also highlighted the other key pillar of Beijing's foreign policy and original stance, non-interference: the situation 'is an internal affair and we are not in a position to impose on them' (Brookes 2007: 11).

China's heavy involvement in Sudan made it into a 'key international patron' for the country, with Sudan expecting, and frequently gaining, protection from China for its actions at an

international level (Srinivasan 2008: 56). This is evident in China's opposition to economic sanctions. In 2004 China watered down UN resolution 1564 from several sanctions that would be automatically executed, to ones that would only be considered, with China further stating it would veto any attempts to include sanctions (Holslag 2008). There are three reasons for China's opposition to sanctions, firstly the much cited motive of protecting its economic interests; secondly Beijing itself is vulnerable from sanctions relating to human rights, and finally Beijing does not agree with the western 'carrot and stick' approach (Loke 2009). Beijing asserted 'that a resolution on Darfur must come from engagement and negotiations', 'recognising and respecting Khartoum as legitimate' demonstrating their positive position and preference for quiet diplomacy, contrary to the widely expressed western coerciveness and threats (Loke 2009: 209). Sanctions are a 'potent expression of moral outrage', but despite their popularity rarely prove effective, and many developing countries are against their use because of the belief that they enable the west to exert their supremacy (Brautigam 2009: 283). Beijing's emphasis on equality and respect is evident in the five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, values which since 1954 have guided Beijing's style and approach to its foreign policy: peaceful-coexistence, non-aggression, equality, non-interference and territorial integrity (Carmody and Taylor 2009).

Despite threats to the contrary, China has not used its power of veto regarding Darfur in the UNSC. In fact China has only ever vetoed four resolutions since joining the Council; in comparison America has vetoed 76 resolutions and Britain 24 (in the same time period between 1971-2006) (Houser and Levy 2008). However, the fact that China has the possibility of a veto and so is perceived to have insurmountable power has led to it becoming a target for advocacy groups. Fake and Funk (2009: 12) stress this is simply an 'excuse for inaction' and that a veto could be overcome by a decisive vote in the UN General Assembly. Instead of using its veto, China chooses to demonstrate its opposition through abstaining, preferring a more conciliatory approach and working behind the scenes to alter, dilute or discard resolutions (Fake and Funk 2009). Beijing claimed its abstentions over Darfur derived from 'disagreement on what is the most effective and appropriate approach to solve the problem' (Wu 2010: 83). Irrespective of western views alleging China to be weakening and repeatedly obstructing UNSC resolutions, there are fundamental distinctions between Western and Chinese ideas, methods and means to achieving a peaceful resolution in Darfur (Mawdsley 2008). While the solution is more important than the means, because China often

stands alone with its distinctive approach, it opens itself up to criticism, with it being easy to give China's protracted negotiations as the reason preventing a speedy resolution.

One often cited reason for the slow international response to Darfur was the need to gain Khartoum's consent for UN resolution 1706 – expanding the mandate of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) to Darfur and increasing the number of peacekeepers to 20,000 (Wu 2010). China obstinately (to western eyes) insisted on the GoS's consent being obtained, leaving NGOs to proclaim China was not only deliberately slowing the process, but was also opposed to UNMIS (Holslag 2008). A more considered analysis reveals that China only ever opposed UNMIS if it failed to gain Khartoum's consent; after all there were many reasons for China wanting UNMIS to succeed, perhaps more so than other actors. Economic interests have already been identified and clearly would be compromised by increased violence. In addition, ignoring the African Union's (AU) request to be replaced by a UN force could put its relationship with the AU in jeopardy; China's key role in Sudan could also be lost if a unilateral force were to intervene. Finally, regional stability has become increasingly important for China as ties with Chad have increased, and this stability could be damaged by continued unrest in Darfur (Holslag 2008). If China's decision is considered in the light of these factors, China's position and choice is easier to understand: China had only one option and that was to persuade Khartoum to consent to the UNPKO. For China consent was a mandatory pre-requisite, not just because of the foreign policy values of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (specifically non-intervention and sovereignty, two issues analysed further in chapter 4), but also to retain good relations with Khartoum.

Consent was also in the international communities' best interests, without consent access and logistics become problematic and the resources needed spiral at the same time as the risk and danger dramatically escalate. International support could easily be lost as the intervention becomes akin to a 'Trojan horse' for great powers to interfere (primarily a developing country view) (Badescu and Bergholm 2009). It seems clear that, when faced with an Iraq like situation (a similar scenario of intervention without consent or widespread support), China's desire for consent was both politically and strategically sound, and cannot simply be reduced to a desire to protect its economic interests. Consent enabled the intervention to be internationally legitimate.

Khartoum was able to reject the UNPKO as 'violating its sovereignty' and claimed such a force had 'colonial ambitions' (Srinivasan 2008: 70). Many observers felt that China enabled

Khartoum's rejection as it was the main country pushing for consent. These same observers then believed it to be China's responsibility to ensure consent was achieved. This was the first time China had sought to convince a government to accept peacekeepers and represented a test of their entrenched non-interference policy. Although the UNSC passed resolution 1706 it was never deployed because Khartoum's consent was never gained (Wu 2010). Through negotiations, UN resolution 1769 (similar to 1706 but with a UN-AU hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID)), was authorised and deployed with Khartoum's consent (Wu 2010). China's original position in Darfur resulted in considerable international pressure and vilification as explored next. It also led to a turning point for Beijing, leading to changes in its engagement in Darfur as evident from the different stages of China's foreign policy.

3. Vilification and reaction

3.1. Vilification

China has historically been denigrated by the west, branded as the 'yellow peril' and characterised as dishonest, deceitful and mysterious. China was also seen as an ideological threat to Africa when the continent gained independence (Mawdsley 2008). These old labels, many of which are rooted in racism or at best fear of the other, have been given a new impetus in recent years due to China's increased engagement with Africa; terms such as 'new scramble', 'new imperialism' and 'China threat' have become increasingly common (Large 2008a). Unsurprisingly this is particularly true of the western media whose coverage of Sino-African relations reveals both anxiety and alarm, as illustrated by this British headline from 2008: 'How China's taking over Africa and why the west should be VERY worried' (Malone 2008). America similarly struggles to view China objectively, with stereotypical images routine, and a 'strong tendency to simplify and even demonise China, demonstrated in the growing number of popular alarmist accounts...but also present within some foreign policy circles' (Mawdsley 2007: 416). These simplistic, apolitical and ahistorical accounts fail to give Africans any agency, often projecting them as victims or villains, their effect is to intensify hysteria and panic with all this aggrandising widening the gap between perception and reality. Interestingly (and unsurprisingly), China paints a media picture of Africa viewing China in an almost reverential light, in stark contrast to the negative portrayal of the relationship by the western media, media in China is almost exclusively positive (Carmody and Taylor 2009).

China has increasingly become ‘the villain in the drama’ of Darfur, predominantly due to the prevalent notion that China is simultaneously both the problem and the solution to the Darfur crisis (Evans and Steinberg 2007: para 1). De Waal (cited in Brautigam 2009) and Jakobson and Daojiong (2006) dispute this analysis and argue there has been exaggeration and overestimation of China’s ability to solve the crisis. Large (2008c: 37) similarly contends the belief that China offers the most likely way to end the violence is ‘abstract’. Activists however disagree, believing China to be the solution, and have taken to ‘global shaming’ aiming to embarrass leaders into action (Wachman 2001). In the past, attempts to shame China into acquiescence have rarely created lasting change, with NGOs’ endeavours frequently not only ‘ineffective in altering Beijing's behaviour, but also counterproductive’ with Beijing becoming irritated as a result (Wachman 2001: 258). In part this plays into the Chinese perception of a hostile international environment and the resulting distrust of anyone attempting to alter Beijing’s policy. This approach also enables China to highlight western hypocrisy, with the west lacking any moral high ground (especially in Africa where they have been responsible for the Slave Trade and colonialism). Hamilton (2011: 151) has concluded from this that the ‘traditional name and shame tactics of human rights advocacy do not work with China’, instead conventional wisdom dictates that ‘China is moved by quiet and tactful diplomacy’. However this view appears to get little credence from western media and NGOs and has not prevented them conceptualising China as a ‘virtual enemy’ through ‘indiscriminate China bashing’, in the case of Darfur this has reached fever pitch (Scott 2007: 121).

Numerous NGOs worked tirelessly to bring Darfur to the world’s attention with undoubted success. Ironically the international outcry over Darfur occurred when fatalities were steadily declining and remaining (comparatively) low, so that the UN no longer considered Darfur as an emergency in 2005 (Mamdani 2009). Human Rights groups argued China was ‘the principal impediment’ to swift and decisive action and identified it as indispensable to Sudan and as having significant important leverage over the GoS as a result (Houser and Levy 2008: 63). Many NGOs failed to comprehend China’s clear foreign policy position against interference in internal affairs. As a consequence they also did not understand that China would not flinch from requiring consent from the GoS before the deployment of a UNPKO (Qiang 2007). Even if China was willing to influence the GoS (which Abramowitz and Kolieb (2007) argue it would never do lest it be seen as a ‘bully’), it does not mean it is able to do so. Even if the GoS was able to be influenced, they are just one party involved in the

conflict; China has minimal influence over the rebels, some of whom believe China to be the ‘enemy’. The continued spotlight on China has meant America has largely escaped criticism and pressure to alter its policies. US advocacy groups have failed to push for the US to go beyond ‘ultimately meaningless rhetorical grandstanding to improve the situation on the ground’, for instance increased aid or more refugee support (Fake and Funk 2009: 115). Both the western media and NGOs frequently present simplistic, straightforward and highly dramatized views of the conflict in an attempt to gain and retain attention. Mamdani (2009: 6) summarises this succinctly stating that advocacy groups on Darfur have a ‘contemptuous attitude to knowledge’.

Dream for Darfur is perhaps the most vocal advocacy group in this arena, in large part thanks to American celebrity Mia Farrow who purportedly found the ‘lone point of leverage with a country that has otherwise been impervious to all criticism’: the Beijing Olympics (Farrow and Farrow 2007: para 5). Winning the Olympics was a dream for the Chinese government and its people, it was deemed to be China’s ‘global coming-out party’, an opportunity to showcase China’s rapid economic growth and newfound modernity (Carlson 2007: 252). The Olympic milestone was meant to be a global symbol of China’s new status and identity: ‘winning the host rights means winning the respect, trust and favour, of the international community’ (Wang Wei cited in Budabin 2011: 141). Spending an estimated US\$40 billion the Games clearly mattered deeply to Beijing, however few anticipated the deluge of political issues it would fuel: ‘Chinese leaders simply saw no relationship between the pageantry of the Olympics and...human rights concerns’ (Economy and Segal 2008: 50).

Mia Farrow coined the term ‘Genocide Olympics’ and it quickly became part of colloquial language. Three months after the term’s first use there was a 400% increase on the previous three months in the number of newspaper articles linking China to Darfur (Hamilton 2011). Despite much disagreement as to whether Darfur could be termed a genocide (as discussed in chapter 1), the rebranding of the Games sparked furore, grabbing America’s attention. This visibility was capitalised on by Dream for Darfur who hosted a torch relay of genocide sites, paid for full page adverts linking Darfur and China (Save Darfur 2007), hosted numerous rallies and exerted pressure on Steven Spielberg (the Beijing Games’ artistic adviser) to resign (Hamilton 2011). On the day Spielberg resigned, two letters were sent to Beijing both condemning China’s relationship with Sudan and expressing ‘grave concern’. The first was a joint letter from Nobel Laureates and Olympic athletes and the second was from the US Congress stating: ‘there are calls to boycott what is increasingly being called the ‘Genocide

Olympics’’ (Reeves 2007: para 39). It urged China to protect its ‘national image from being irredeemably tarnished’ and history from judging the government ‘as having bank-rolled a genocide’ (Reeves 2007: para 39). Carmody and Taylor (2009) believe this letter proved the ‘tipping point’ in China’s engagement with Sudan, a non-governmental movement was a lot easier to disregard than the US Congress.

The reason behind the vast amount of resources and effort that went into pressuring and vilifying China was the belief that to move Sudan you need ‘a credible stick, if for no other reason than that moves China’ (British Official 2009 cited Hamilton 2011: 143). As the below advertisement demonstrates, China was perceived to hold the ‘power’ to change the situation in Darfur due to its involvement in Sudanese oil, arms and diplomacy as analysed in chapter 2. The international event of the Olympics created the opportune moment for China to be vilified, presenting a unique moment of leverage against Beijing. Two lesser reasons behind China’s vilification also exist; firstly the different approach taken by China towards conflict resolution to the west (explored in chapter 2) enabled China to be singled out. Secondly, the presence of fear; from a realist standpoint, the west and particularly America will see China’s growing international presence as a challenge and threat to the current world order. However, due to global interconnectedness and specifically the interrelated economies of America and China, it is highly unlikely that China will want to disrupt the world order that has made its economic rise possible. Despite this, fear and concern remain, not just in Sudan but more widely across Africa (as discussed in chapter 1). Darfur was a unique situation that gained international attention enabling a variety of actors to pressurise China to change its stance, this gradual change is explored next.

3.2. China’s changing stance

China’s attitude and strategy towards Darfur evolved from its original position centred on economics and its policy of non-interference as discussed above. The vilification and exertion of pressure on the country, brought to a head over the Olympics, forced Beijing to realise the damaging cost of Sudan to its image; with attitudes also changing on the continent, China’s original stance became untenable (Huang 2007). China frequently depends on countries close to the conflict and particularly regional organisations to justify its own position, it therefore gave credence to the AU regarding the situation in Darfur. Many African countries originally held a similar position to China, arguing that Darfur was an internal affair and protecting

Khartoum in international organisations and opposing the International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment of Al-Bashir in 2010 (Nathan 2011). Sovereignty and non-interference are strongly held beliefs by Africa and China and these shared values strengthened their developing relationship, particularly as sovereignty has been eroded more in Africa than elsewhere (Taylor 2006). However as the situation in Darfur worsened, a tide of change swept across most of Africa (with the glaring exception of South Africa discussed below). Many African countries began joining western calls for more emphatic action; signalling a transition from non-interference to ‘non-indifference’ (Taylor 2006).

Non-interference was institutionalised within the Organisation of African Unity articles of faith; this tradition enabled a ‘culture of impunity’ for leaders committing atrocities’ (Williams 2007: 269). It was eventually overturned by the AU in 2000 who declared ‘Africans can no longer be ‘indifferent’ and therefore sovereignty should no longer offer protection and impunity (Mamdani 2009). The discourse of non-interference is slowly being undermined, and while the influence of regional organisations on China cannot be overestimated, without the AU it would be harder for China to back Khartoum with Beijing needing good relations with both. The AU demonstrates that historic policies (such as non-interference) do not need to be abandoned, but can be adapted and integrated into new principles (such as non-indifference).

Following on from the mainly economic focus of China’s initial relationship with Sudan, came a new phase of active involvement. This phase gradually evolved in August 2006 after renewed fighting and Khartoum’s rejection of UN resolution 1706 (Holslag 2008). Beijing was no longer able or willing to give Khartoum its unreserved backing and began to convey its disapproval and impatience with Khartoum’s intransigence more publicly. This new position was apparent in Ambassador Wang Guangya’s confirmation that: ‘we sent a message to them that we feel the UN taking over is a good idea’, although quickly adding ‘we are not imposing on them’ to emphasise China’s continued adherence to non-interference (Holslag 2008: 79). China does not usually send messages in this overtly public way typically preferring behind the scenes diplomacy. Efforts to persuade and criticise Khartoum were further accelerated by Premier Hu’s February 2007 visit to Sudan, to the extent that he openly outlined his own four recommendations for resolving the crisis while simultaneously exerting pressure privately (Large 2009a).

Beijing faced a difficult dilemma, how to influence without interfering. Ambassador Wang insisted that China ‘never twists arms’ but still guaranteed Sudan ‘got the message’ (Srinivasan 2008: 72). Beijing sought to persuade Khartoum without the use of ‘sticks’, instead of economic sanctions being threatened, trust was built, an attempt was made to build a consensus, furthering the notion of two equal powers, instead of the more traditional conceptualisation of a superpower dictating its views (Holslag 2008). Paradoxically, while the international community was calling for economic sanctions, China was pursuing a ‘dual track strategy’ of satisfying international concerns by loudly voicing pressure on Khartoum, while simultaneously developing its economic relations with Sudan (Large 2009b). During Premier Hu’s 2007 visit, seven economic and technological agreements were reached, affirming its stated position that investment in Sudan will lead to increased development which will increase the chance of peace (Holslag 2008).

There is a widespread belief in China that ‘mutually-beneficial cooperation is conducive to the solution of Darfur issue, as its root cause lies in poverty and the lack of development’ (Liu cited in Wen and Jiao 2008: para 4). While this conviction removes the historic and political elements of the conflict, economic marginalisation of the peripheries remains one cause of the violence across Sudan. The belief that poverty lies at the heart of Darfur’s problems, encourages, legitimises and even necessitates further involvement from China to create development opportunities that then become a vehicle for peace. This theory also has international credibility, with some unanimity between academics and policy makers who emphasise the link between conflict and underdevelopment, leading Sachs (2006) to conclude that ending conflict first requires ending poverty. The problem with this theory is that development is not always experienced broadly, this is evident in Sudan where cronyism and the historic convergence of wealth at the centre has resulted in ‘a rising tide’ failing to ‘lift all boats’ (Save Darfur 2008a: 3). As already discussed, the GoS’s decisions has meant oil income in particular has centralised wealth, sharpening the already divergent prosperities of the country and fuelling political grievances (as voiced by rebels) and conflict (Large 2011). Within this environment, on the ground development, for instance the provision of basic services appears to be a solution and one that China is supporting. China has given substantial humanitarian aid (US\$11 million to Darfur) (Wenping 2007). It has also contributed US\$3.5 million to UNAMID, although this amount is minimal compared to UNAMID’s estimated annual budget of US\$2 billion and of course China is not alone in giving vast sums of humanitarian assistance (Ayenagbo et al. 2012). However where China excels in

development terms is through concrete and measurable achievements on the ground in Darfur, for example the construction of: 46 wells, 54 primary schools, 6,250km of road, 20 small power stations and an improved water supply (ChinaView 2008a; Large 2011). China attaches great importance to the relationship between development and peace, but the possibility of development achieving peace in Darfur seems distant due to the reality of entrenched violence, a growing war economy and an unsatisfactory political settlement (Large 2011). Nonetheless China's humanitarian work will ease suffering in the short term and bring the possibility of peace in the long term while also helping restore China's image as well as symbolising Beijing's changing foreign policy.

It is debateable whether it was the 'Genocide Olympics' campaign and the surrounding vilification that pressured China into making incremental changes to its foreign policy strategy in Darfur. Within China, claims that the country was being persecuted were widespread and allowed the government to deflect responsibility, dismissing criticism as western hypocrisy or jealousy, a stance that became harder to justify once African commentators demanded China take more responsibility (Taylor 2006). In response to these discourses two extreme views surfaced inside China, the first voiced by the 'hardliners' who believed China should not bend to western pressure and who were suspicious over American non-humanitarian interests; the other voice was that of the 'progressives' who argued that the oil revenue was not worth the damage to China's image (Huang 2007). Some theorists such as Spiegel and Le Billon (2009) feel that China's changed diplomatic position was apparent even before the Olympics campaign; this view is disputed and this paper argues that the campaign did indeed prove a catalyst for change. Beijing's response is apparent in the clear 'diplomatic offensive' of Ambassador Liu Guijin's appointment as the first Special Envoy for African Affairs, with a specific responsibility for Darfur in May 2007. He had three objectives: restore China's image, publicly express and increase understanding of Beijing's foreign policy, and promote China's interests in Sudan and Africa as a whole (Srinivasan 2008: 75). The fact that this appointment was made just days after the letter hinting at a boycott of the Games from the US Congress was sent is no coincidence.

Beijing played down the impact of the campaign because it did not want to be seen to be succumbing to international, and specifically American, pressure, instead Beijing argues their change of position was due to the general will to increase stability in Africa (Budabin 2011). However, this will is not always evident in Beijing's actions, for instance a ship full of ammunition and arms was sent to Zimbabwe in 2008 when pre-election violence was

escalating (Spiegel and Le Billon 2009). In recent years however, Beijing appears more apprehensive about close Sino-Zimbabwean ties and the world's perception of China and its actions. Unlike in Darfur, when international pressure and access to oil led Beijing to become more positively involved, in Zimbabwe the same level of international interest was not present nor was there oil, enabling China to scale back its relations (Spiegel and Le Billon 2009). Scaling back is easier than changing to a more positive engagement, but both actions illustrate the importance to Beijing of identity, image and its desire to be seen to act responsibly.

The importance of this international attention is evident by the beginning of Ambassador Liu's speech in 2008: 'since 2007 when the Darfur issue began to heat up' (Raine 2009: 186). This reference is not supported by the facts, in fact, by 2007 mortality levels were declining and nowhere near the peak of the violence in 2003-04. Liu's comment instead illustrates Beijing's realisation of the need to counter the mounting international attention and pressure which exploded in 2007. International attention has focused so squarely on China that it would be easy to believe it was the only country with links to the GoS, this could not be further from the truth and the reality is explored below.

3.3. Other actors

China's actions in Sudan are not unique, either compared to China's actions elsewhere on the continent or compared to other actor's involvement in Sudan. China is not alone in selling military equipment to Sudan. According to Human Rights First (2008a), more than 30 countries are involved in the direct exportation of arms to Sudan or the manufacture of arms found in Darfur. Twelve countries can be classed as 'direct providers' voluntarily reporting their arms sales to Sudan, the largest of which, apart from China is Russia, who reportedly sold US\$150 million of military equipment to Sudan (Williams and Bellamy 2005). Since 2004 and therefore at the height of the Darfur crisis, Russia has sold over 33 military aircrafts and has reportedly also given training to the GoS and Russian pilots have been accused of flying missions over Darfur (World Tribune 2008). Russia has signalled that further arms contracts could follow, leaving de Waal (Fake and Funk 2009: 55) to class Russia as a more significant player in Sudan because it is an 'aggressive ally'. While the focus remained on China and it became the international scape goat, other actors have been overlooked. The reason could simply be because China is involved in three areas (military, economic and

diplomatic), while Russia is portrayed as only involved in the sale of arms. However, it would not be farfetched to suggest Russia is displaying a degree of diplomatic protection to Sudan and preserving its own economic advantage. It has abstained from 4 UN resolutions on Darfur (China abstained from 6) fearing economic sanctions would result in Sudan defaulting on its military payments to Russia (Wu 2010).

The unrelenting spotlight on China's involvement in Sudan has not only allowed other countries' participation to be largely ignored, but has also meant that the international communities' response to the Darfur crisis has received little international scrutiny. A lack of global leadership from the international community on Darfur has meant an inability to take decisive action. Despite the pressure placed upon China it was never likely to play a leadership role in Darfur (Evans and Steinberg 2007). This leadership could have come from America, after all it was the only country to declare Darfur a genocide, and as such Abramowitz and Kolieb (2007) argue the moral and legal responsibility should lie with the US. America was reluctant to act unilaterally after the disastrous consequences of Iraq and it was also unable to take a moral stance due to its own chequered history (Fake and Funk 2009: 115). The gap between American rhetoric and action was significant and caused by close intelligence sharing relations, specifically Sudanese cooperation with counterterrorism (Funk and Fake 2008). Sudan has thus become a highly valuable, if erratic, ally of the US and its War on Terror; as such America will be reluctant to place too much pressure on Khartoum. This lack of political will was evident across the west; quite simply they were unprepared to match the bold words and honourable concept of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) with action on the ground and resources. If political will was lacking in the west where these values and the commitment are arguably strongest, it is unsurprising that political resolve was also absent from China (Lee et al. 2012).

Oil remains at the forefront of Sudan's 'look east' foreign policy, of which China is just one element. Malaysia, as previously mentioned, became a key player when the NOC Petronas purchased a 30% stake in GNPOC, since then it has become a strong investor in the oil sector (Large and Patey 2011). India was tactically brought into the fold by Khartoum, to stop either CNPC or Petronas gaining a majority share, despite their desire to do so; India's ONGC Videsh (OVL) joined with a 25% stake (Large and Patey 2011). Despite the success of OVL's engagement, it originally faced tough opposition at home, with ethical concerns mounting; ironically it was Petronas and CNPC's strong interest that compelled OVL to let energy security trump ethics (Patey 2011). In 2009 90% of the total oil production in Sudan

came from Asia; China having 46%, Malaysia 34% and India 10% (Large and Patey 2011). Therefore Malaysia and India combined have almost the same share as China and would consequently be in a good position to influence Khartoum. These two countries may have been easier for advocacy groups to influence, as mentioned India had originally expressed concerns, however their role was all but ignored largely due to China's permanent seat on the UNSC and its perceived status and power through its ability to veto resolutions.

India and Malaysia promote their historic ties with Sudan in the same way as China, using them to stimulate and shield their relationship. Both India and Malaysia took identical positions to China in opposing sanctions and the ICC indictment of al-Bashir; although India remained less vocal about Sudan on the international stage, undoubtedly not wanting to bring attention to their burgeoning relationship (Large and Patey 2011). Malaysia on the other hand was more vocal, the rhetoric referred to historical ties and predominantly the Islamic connections between the two (Marchal 2011). This was particularly prevalent under Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad (1981-2003) whose anti-western declarations and those about western conspiracies against the developing world were frequent and the prominence of South-South Cooperation remained (Marchal 2011). Malaysia reacted to the limited criticism directed at them in exactly the same way as China, mirroring their initial stance. Firstly it argued that investment in oil could lead to development and improved infrastructure thereby reducing suffering, and secondly they appointed a Special Envoy to Darfur, who as late as 2009 claimed that Darfur was an internal affair for the GoS to resolve (Marchal 2011). Unlike Beijing, Malaysia retained its original stance and was able to do so because it did not face anywhere near the levels of China's vilification, nor did it possess Beijing's will to become a great power, hinting that without these two key factors Beijing's position may not have changed.

South Africa is one country that has not remained silent on the situation in Darfur. South Africa has become a 'formidable presence on the continent' with its investment highly significant because it spans Africa, with a diverse sectorial spread and substantial year-on-year growth (Daniel and Bhengu 2009: 163). Its influence was increased from 2007-08 when it was elected as one of ten temporary UNSC seats (with which it could negotiate, abstain but not veto resolutions), at the height of international attention on Darfur (Nathan 2011). South Africa and Sudan have a growing economic relationship but this is not significant enough to be a factor in South African foreign policy (Nathan 2011). South Africa was accused (although to a far lesser extent than China) of watering down UNSC efforts and of placating

Sudan, many saw this as counter to South Africa's own fight against oppression and the constitutional primacy given to human rights (Nathan 2011). Solidarity across Africa is resilient and further strengthened by western criticism. This has resulted in support for Khartoum, however as the extent of the crisis became apparent, this seeming unity unravelled, leaving South Africa as one of the few remaining staunch African supporters of Khartoum. South Africa echoed many of the same policies of China, favouring positive change instead of condemnation and coercion, with its own successful history of negotiation and quiet diplomacy instilling a belief in the process (Nathan 2011). The position of South Africa is important as it highlights how China was not a lone figure challenging the western approach to conflict resolution. The fact South Africa had little economic incentive to retain this position, and in fact harmed its international reputation by adopting the position it did, reinforces a strong belief in these foreign policies and highlights the possibility that China's foreign policy is also motivated by something other than economics. The next chapter will analyse China's foreign policy and will further attempt to determine the primary motivation behind China's changing position with regard to Darfur.

4. China's foreign policy

4.1. Sovereignty and non-interference

Modern sovereignty and non-interference policies originated from Europe in the 17th century and the concept of Westphalian sovereignty. Sovereignty and non-interference are seen as protection from intervention by powerful states and as a defence from inequity, for this reason they remain highly popular with the developing world (Foot 2001). Powerful countries become detached from these principles as they become strong enough to prevent or withstand outside interference on their own, thus it is paradoxical that these concepts remain deep-rooted in China as it increases in power (Chan 2009). China's staunch protection of non-interference and sovereignty is wedded to sensitivity surrounding outside involvement in what China perceives as strictly internal affairs (i.e. Tibet and Taiwan). Due to the reciprocity inherent in the principles, China is reluctant to set a precedent for interference in internal affairs (Carmody and Taylor 2009). Although, China's substantial global rise has meant it is now in all likelihood strong enough to withstand any interference, the sensitivity continues due to the depth the 'Century of Humiliation' cuts into the national psyche (Lee et al. 2012). China was profoundly humiliated by British and Japanese defeat and the subsequent

imperialism (roughly starting with the First Opium War in 1839 and ending in 1949 with the establishment of the People's Republic of China). This loss of sovereignty in relatively recent history has created hypersensitivity around non-interference and sovereignty (Lee et al. 2012). The victimisation of China during this century has predisposed China to imagine 'IR as a social Darwinian world where the strong prey on the weak' (Hu et al. 2000: 46). Today, when China is no longer weak, it continues to interpret these concepts from the perspective of a developing country rather than a great power, unable to leave its past behind and reframe itself for the 21st century.

Sovereignty and non-interference are vital pillars of China's statecraft and international relations, and their universality means they can and have been pragmatically adapted: as evident in Africa (Wissenbach 2011). These principles denote China's key difference from western engagement in Africa and 'encourages the impression that China is not imposing its political views, ideals or principles onto recipient nation-states' (Power and Mohan 2011: 55). Both accord well with African countries who, as previously stated, also prize non-interference and sovereignty highly, and they have been, and continue to be, the foundation for Sino-African relations. Africa and China also share the view that sovereignty is a precondition to human rights, this differs from the western interpretation that argues for the right to intervene when rights are not met (Mamdani 2009). Another key difference between the African and Chinese view stems from the different categories of human rights, unlike the west who give priority to political, individual and civil rights, China and Africa deem social and economic rights to be imperative (Nathan 1994). To them both, development and survival are the fundamental basic human rights and in this interpretation China becomes 'a leader, not a laggard' of human rights (Taylor 2008: 66). Again, China's understanding of human rights again could be said to be influenced more by its self-image as a developing country rather than an ascending great power.

The Chinese attitude to these principles has recently begun to change, to be tactically attuned, softened and more flexibly regarded (Ayenagbo et al. 2012). This change has meant Chinese thinking 'is less a static concept than an idea in flux' (Gill and Reilly 2000: 42), and they believe this has created confusion and a political dilemma in Beijing. The change has happened due to increased international interaction, communiqué and multilateralism but predominantly because of changing national interests due to growing security and economic interdependence and chiefly China's ascending great power status. There is a growing acceptance in China that sovereignty needs to be secondary to national interests, as Yan

Xuetong (1996 cited in Loke 2009) explains: ‘sovereignty is not synonymous with national interests anymore; rather it should be subject to overall national interests, not protected at all costs’. Thus new strategies and new labels are emerging, for instance Large (2009a) believes there should be ‘influence without interference’ while Pang (2009) argues for non-interference to be refashioned to ‘constructive intervention’. Whatever strategy develops and whatever it is called, it is clear that there is a measured non-interference and sovereignty revolution occurring to enable China’s foreign policy to keep pace with its changing identity. Identity is a complex issue for China and key to understanding the role it has played in Darfur and why it has attracted the vilification it has.

4.2. Identity

As established by constructivism, identity is essential to IR, altering via social interaction, identity ‘both describes and prescribes how the actor should think, feel, evaluate, and, ultimately, behave’ (Chafetz et al. 1998: 8). China is suffering from an ‘identity dilemma’ – falling between two extremes that of a developing country (*fazhanzhong guojia*) and a great power (*daguo*) (Gu et al. 2007). This dilemma is driven by its inability to keep pace with the unprecedented rapid growth of the country in the last 25 years. Ramo (2007: 16) claims the signs that China is ready for a ‘rebirth of its image’ are abundant. This dilemma is confirmed by two newspaper stories that broke on the same day in China. The first was an argument that China’s immense economic power should entitle her to be at the forefront of new worldwide governance mechanisms, underlining China’s desire to be seen as a global power influencing global decisions (Breslin 2010). The second article emphasised China’s second identity as a developing country, due to the millions of people in poverty and asserted that she should not be held to the same high standards as developed countries and should instead be permitted freedoms and lack of responsibility to develop (Breslin 2010). A cynical interpretation is that these articles illustrate how China pragmatically chooses its identity, utilising astute diplomacy to employ two opposing identities to its own advantage. The past helps to determine and understand the present, two collective memories are significant to China’s dual identity. The ‘Century of Humiliation’ has already been referenced and it created a deep connection with China and the developing world. Secondly, the contrasting memory is China as the ‘Middle Kingdom’ when she ‘stood up tall and towering over her region – culturally and politically dominating the region’, accordingly China wants to remerge as a great power regaining this ‘past grandeur’ (Scott 2007: 8).

In many respects China can be seen as a developing country, with 36% of its population living on less than US\$2 a day, ranked 101st on the Human Development Index, and 120th in terms of GDP per capita worldwide (Zhao 2012). This is the face presented to Africa, accentuating their shared interests and experiences, both commonly referred to in Chinese speeches. The image of colonial oppression is used to bind them closer together as in Minister Zhu's (2002 cited in Strauss 2009: 722) statement that 'a joint struggle [was] waged by Chinese and African peoples shoulder by shoulder'. The 'global South' school in China believes China's identity and therefore her responsibilities lie with the developing world (Shambaugh 2011). Its position on the UNSC and within other multilateral organisations is therefore important to gain equality for the developing world. In this interpretation China is a 'champion' of the developing world. The fundamental mission of developing countries is development, and this single-mindedness permits a relative lack of responsibility in other areas; for instance in the WTO developing countries are allowed to make fewer commitments because of their status (Shambaugh 2011). Consequently, there is truth behind Foster's (2001) acknowledgment that being a developing country is a powerful shield to hide behind. Paradoxically, China's concentration on economic development as its principal national interest means that due to increasing international economic interconnectedness, peaceful and stable environments have become vital for China to achieve the economic development it desires.

Identification as a great power can be based on various things, Lee (1997 cited in Foster 2001) focuses on capacity with four fundamental criterion, all of which China meets: economy, military, nuclear and a central location. Great powers are often assessed on their material capacity and on this basis (being the world's second largest economy) China can be thought to be one. However, the constructivist argument put forward by Hedley Bull (1977 cited Foot 2001: 3) is that a great power identity must go beyond capacity towards social acceptance, involving 'themselves in the provision of international order; indeed, they had special rights and duties when it came to maintaining order'. A great power must identify itself and be identified by others, this recognition by others is essential as 'to be perceived as a great power' is 'to be a great power' (Foster 2001: 160). China may already have the capabilities of a great power but it lacks international recognition as such due to its reluctance to take responsibility. A great power's national interests must to a degree come second to their fulfilment of international responsibilities as dictated by international consensus. However China's latecomer status meant consensus and responsibilities had primarily been

formulated by the western world (Loke 2009). Voltaire's famous statement that 'with great power comes great responsibility' applies to great powers in IR. Significantly the reverse is also true, if not more so, that with great responsibility comes great power, without acceptance of this responsibility a great power may face contestation and lack recognition.

The constructivist theory envisions identity as changeable and influenced by others' actions and attitudes. Consequently Wu (2010: 71) contends that the move away from global hostility towards China to a friendlier environment and attitude has enabled it to change its identity 'from a defensive power of bitterness and insecurity to a rising power aspiring to take more responsibility'. America has led western calls for China to become a 'responsible stakeholder' as pressured by Robert Zoellick (2005) then US Deputy Secretary of State. While some saw this as a positive acknowledgement of China's development, others labelled his comment 'patronising' and warned (with some acuity) that China would fail to be responsible as soon as it disagreed with US policy (Loke 2009).

Beijing has gravitated towards a great power identity and is now meticulously promoting and consolidating itself as a responsible power and thus must act in accordance with responsibility in the current international system (Wu 2010). Loke (2009: 196) argues that 'although China is undeniably aspiring to play a global role, such aspirations have yet to be translated into long-term strategies and policies', this is evident in its continuing commitment to non-interference, a policy that is relatively incompatible with being a great power. Nonetheless, Beijing's obvious desire to become a responsible great power means that its foreign policy has a degree of malleability as demonstrated by the changes underwent in Darfur.

China has in the past wanted the status that comes from being a great power without the responsibility. Suzuki (2008: 49) believes China to be a 'frustrated great power' who has been 'refused social equality with other 'legitimate great powers'' and is therefore using UNPKOs as a way to show it is fulfilling the responsibilities of a great power. Beijing's desire to be a great power is exemplified by its increasing role with UNPKO's, which are seen as something morally good and carry a veneer of legitimacy due to their multilateral and humanitarian nature.

China's active Janus-like projection of two identities has both come to the forefront and unravelled in its engagement with Darfur. Janus is a famous two-faced god of Roman mythology, who looks to the past and to the future, exactly as with China. China looks to the

past envisioning itself as a developing country, despite the evidence to the contrary, and to the future as a great power which it has not yet achieved. China has sought to project its developing country identity to African countries such as Sudan and has exploited this identity to further its own economic development without responsibility. It has often sought great power status, and been encouraged to do so by the west, enabling China to influence international society. These two identities came to the fore in Darfur due to the intensity of international attention and this has highlighted the unsustainable nature of its Janus-faced identity.

Conclusion

A realist explanation of China's strategy in Darfur would be that it was motivated by economic interests, specifically oil; oil being important for energy security (national interest) and associated with geostrategic competition with America (power politics) (Large 2009a). This paper has instead pursued a constructivist view that maintains international advocacy and the subsequent vilification of China catalysed the evolution of Beijing's foreign policy towards a more positive and constructive engagement and thus can be justified. This has been achieved in part due to the Janus-like nature of Chinese identity which enabled Beijing to be more easily influenced with more malleable policies because of the importance of identity to national interests.

Janus symbolises change fitting for China, whose identity is in flux. The foundation of China's relationship with Sudan (as with the rest of Africa) is a shared history of imperialism, a shared desire for development, and consequent shared interests and principles. Thus the relationship between the two countries is based on China's identity as a developing country. This identity was emphasised in China's original position on Darfur by protecting its economic interests above all, as demonstrated by the 'business is business' statement and arms deals. Developing countries see development as their principal goal; this is exemplified by their belief that socio-economic development is the leading human right. China's strong attachment to the policies of non-interference and sovereignty enabled this pursuit of economic gains to continue. It is important not to dismiss Beijing's ideals and its policies, such as non-interference simply as the views of a developing country; they are deeply rooted in Chinese philosophy, culture and ideology. South Africa's political diplomacy enabled

China's position to be reassessed as not automatically being an aggressor in pursuance of economic gain, but as a power capable of reasoned judgement.

China's conflict resolution approach has differed to that of the west, focusing on quiet diplomacy, engagement, traditional peacekeeping and encouraging economic development. This difference is one reason for the western vilification of China. Primarily, China was vilified over other countries due to its close relationship with the GoS economically, militarily and politically, and its perceived power over the GoS and therefore its ability to solve the Darfur crisis. The west was also concerned that if the policies of non-interference and economic supremacy continued, they could set a dangerous precedent for China's increasing engagement across Africa. Finally, the Beijing Olympics provided a pivotal moment for advocacy groups to highlight China's engagement in Darfur and further intensified the vilification of China.

The requirement of Beijing's deep-rooted non-interference policy to gain consent, paradoxically necessitated that China act as a responsible great power and influence the GoS. Although different strategies were used to those favoured by the west, the non-interference policy was flexed for the greater good, demonstrating China's capacity to put the concerns and demands of the international community above national interests, a key characteristic of a responsible great power. Although it can be argued that it was in China's best interests to gain a stable and peaceful environment to do business in, it had a lot to lose, for instance the opening up of the country to western investors potentially jeopardising its close relationship with the GoS. The increasing participation with UNPKO also illustrates China's attempts and desire to be seen internationally as a responsible great power and demonstrates China's growing involvement across the world. The changes to Beijing's engagement in Darfur occurred because the vilification of China helped Beijing realise it could no longer sustain its long-standing identification as a developing country and the benefits that accrue from such an identity, while simultaneously wishing to be seen as a great power. Western vilification led to a more positive, involved and responsible China in Darfur, and as such the vilification can be justified.

The international pressure heaped on China pushed Beijing towards its understanding that to be a great power it must act responsibly. Due to the vilification and intense international attention on Darfur, China could not avoid these responsibilities, however, this change must not be overstated; Beijing still cooperates militarily with the GoS. In Darfur vilification

meant Beijing became a more active and responsible player, but it is impossible to know the consequence of overlooking other actors; perhaps pressurising them would have led China to mirror their change. China's actions in Sudan have not been vastly different from other actors, but its higher involvement has led it to become a scapegoat for the international communities' inability to effectively and swiftly end the crisis in Darfur.

The Darfur crisis and Beijing's changing response due to international pressure must nonetheless be seen as exceptional. The change was dependent on the convergence of three important factors: China's increasing promotion of a positive image and great power identity, its changing role and foreign policy in Africa and the global event of the Beijing Olympics. While these three factors are unique, their impact will lead to repercussions beyond Darfur, with Beijing becoming a more involved, positive and responsible actor within Africa and the world. Adjustments to foreign policy will develop slowly and incrementally. Change is however already evident elsewhere on the continent, for instance Beijing's reduced relations with Zimbabwe were caused primarily by concern over its international image and reputation. Beijing's foreign policy will undoubtedly change as China moves to consolidate its great power identity. This is particularly apparent in Beijing's mounting concern with its perceived identity, the adaptation of its non-interference policy and the acceptance of global interests in stability and peace. China's Janus-faced identity was inevitably untenable, but the intense international pressure on Darfur and Beijing's position was necessary to compel Beijing to change. This pressure was based on the unfair singling out of China, self-interest, envy and political manoeuvring, western bias to alternative approaches to conflict resolution, and the historic fear of a rising power, China. Despite this, the vilification of China can be justified to the extent that it catalysed the change in Beijing's engagement with Darfur and to a degree beyond; a change that remains evolutionary not revolutionary.

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