

## PROPOSITIONS

Attached to the thesis

### BELTWAYS OF AGENCY: DRIVERS, MODALITIES AND OUTCOMES OF CHINESE ENGAGEMENT IN ETHIOPIAN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

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1. Contrary to popular perception, the Chinese presence in the African infrastructure sector does not necessarily entail the development of enclave-like infrastructure projects. The Ethiopia case points to a more balanced perspective, where Chinese firms are often in part integrated with the local economy. *This thesis.*
2. The drivers of Chinese firms' internationalisation into the Ethiopian infrastructure sector are not always equivalent to the geopolitical interests of the Chinese state. *This thesis.*
3. Against the idea of a highly coordinated strategy, the Ethiopian case demonstrates that the engagement of Chinese firms in the infrastructure sector is increasingly diverse and diffuse. *This thesis.*
4. Ethiopian state and non-state actors are able to pursue their interests before, during and after the implementation of Chinese financed and built infrastructure projects, albeit with differences in the immediate effectiveness of their actions. *This thesis.*
5. In the case of infrastructural financing and construction by Chinese actors, the Ethiopian regulatory and political environment, the local industry makeup, and the characteristics of Chinese firms can all condition the formation of development linkages. *This thesis.*
6. Foreign financed and built infrastructure are not distinctively local phenomena. They are the outcome of simultaneous economic and political phenomena both at the transnational level and within countries.
7. At the empirical level, equating *agency as rejection* reiterates a partial and outdated account of Sino-African relations. Agency does not necessarily always imply resistance or adversarial relations.
8. Sino-Africa relations should not be considered as a dichotomy, but as a complex set of relationships with sometimes contradictory effects.
9. While the analysis of inter-state relations has taken central stage in China-Africa scholarship, the role and agency of African actors both within and outside formal state-based arenas has gone underexplored.
10. Any understanding of how Chinese interests play out in the African context has to begin from the perspective of African actors, the contexts in which they are embedded, and their relational connections.
11. 'Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.' Zora Neale Hurston.