

# CHINA AND AFRICA: GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS IN HISTORY AND PRESENT

## Course syllabus

Peking University Summer School 2019

Course Title: *China and Africa: Global Encounters in History and Present*

Course Instructors: Liang Xu (许亮) and Ying Cheng (程莹)

Level: Upper level undergraduate/graduate students

Contact details: [liangxu@pku.edu.cn](mailto:liangxu@pku.edu.cn), [cyl@pku.edu.cn](mailto:cyl@pku.edu.cn)

### Course Description:

The twenty-first century has witnessed unprecedented growth of economic cooperation between African countries and China. Achille Mbembe, a prominent African political philosopher, once proclaims that Africa-China will become the most important “material relations” in global capitalism. Over the last two decades, China’s accelerating influence on the African continent has raised a host of questions. Is Africa China’s second continent? How do African states and African people respond to opportunities and challenges posed by China’s presence? Is China a development model for Africa? Are Chinese people racist? How much soft power does China have in Africa? How do China and Africa portray each other in arts and literature?

To address these questions, our course focuses on both the material and nonmaterial dimensions of this fast-developing relationship. On the one hand, we will challenge the often-skewed treatment of China in Africa as a unitary presence by looking closely at three different levels of engagement: the state and the state-owned enterprises, medium and small sized private companies, and the grassroots adventurers and migrants. On the other hand, we will examine China-Africa relations through the lenses of popular media, moving images, contemporary arts, and literary texts. It is our firm belief that the representation and construction of identity and otherness is an essential component of everyday life that fundamentally shapes our experience, perception, and even prejudice in cross-cultural communications and encounters. In this course we will explore:

- The history and the present state of China-Africa relations,
- key myths and rumours about China’s involvement in Africa,
- preliminary development impacts of China’s presence on the continent,
- the role of migration and migrants in China-Africa engagement,
- and the relevance of media, film, arts, and literature in contemporary China-Africa relations.

By thinking critically about China-Africa engagement, we hope that our students each will become a better observer of our shared and increasingly globalized world. It is our contention that China-Africa is by no means an Afroasian story only; more profoundly, it is a story of global encounters. Though we use academic, journalistic, and various visual evidence to study China-Africa as a substantive field, we encourage and help students to interrogate and gain deeper understanding of key themes such as state and development, race and gender, culture and capitalism, and diaspora and globalization. Ultimately, we believe that students will apply such concepts not only to the study of other subjects but also to their lives beyond school.

### Course Requirements:

The class will meet five days a week, either in class or on field trips. Student participants are expected to have read some of the assigned readings before coming to class and engage in class discussions. In addition to readings suggested in the syllabus, students are encouraged to find additional outside readings and resources. All students will be expected to write two field trip essays during the program. There will be a final exam on the last day of the course.

- Final Exam: 30%
- Field Trip Essays: 40% (two essays, 20% each)
- Class Participation: 30%

## Session 1 Study China-Africa: Why and How?

### Required reading:

Deborah Brautigam (2009), *The Dragon's Gift. The Real Story of China in Africa*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, Chapter 11 ("Rogue Donor? Myths and Realities"), 273-306.

Jamie Monson and Stephanie Rupp (2013), "Africa and China: New Engagements, New Research," *African Studies Review*, 56 (1): 21-44.

### Further reading:

Chris Alden (2006), *China in Africa*, London: Zed Books, 8-36.

Emmanuel Akyeampong and Liang Xu (2015), "The Three Phases/Faces of China in Independent Africa: Re-conceptualizing China-Africa Engagement." In Celestin Monga and Justin Yifu Lin eds., *Oxford Handbook of Africa and Economics Volume II: Policies and Practices*, 762-779. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Maria Heimer & Stig Thøgersen eds. (2006). *Doing Fieldwork in China*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press. Read chapters by Elin Sæther and Dorothy J. Solinger.

Xiang Biao (2013), "Multi-scalar Ethnography: An Approach for Critical Engagement with Migration and Social Change," *Ethnography* 14(3): 282-299; or, Xiang Biao and Mika Toyota (2013). "Ethnographic Experiments in Transnational Mobility Studies," *Ethnography* 14(3): 277-281.

Keguro Macharia. "Visiting Africa: A Short Guide for Researchers." <https://thenewinquiry.com/blog/visiting-africa-a-short-guide-for-researchers/>

Binyavanga Wainaina. "How to Write about Africa." <https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/>

## Session 2 Place China-Africa in Context: Does History Matter?

### Required reading:

Philip Snow (1988), *The Star Raft: China's Encounter with Africa*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. Read chapters "The Chinese as Missionaries" and "Poor Help the Poor."

Christopher Lee (2010), *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives*. Athens: Ohio University Press. Read "Introduction" and "Working Ahead of Time"(Chapter 7).

### Further reading:

Anshan Li (2012), *A History of Overseas Chinese in Africa to 1911*. New York: Diasporic Africa Press. "The Development of Early Sino-African Relations" (Chapter 1), 17-54.

Jamie Monson (2009), *Africa's Freedom Railway*. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. Chapters 3 and 4.

Julia C. Strauss (2009), "The Past in the Present: Historical and Rhetorical Lineages in China's Relations with Africa," *The China Quarterly* (199): 777-795.

Priyal Lal (2014), "Maoism in Tanzania: Material Connections and Shared Imaginaries," in Alexander Cook ed., *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History*, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

## Session 3 Agricultural Cooperation: From Dazhai to New Paradigms in International Development

### Required reading:

Deborah Brautigam (2014), *Will Africa Feed China?* New York: Oxford University Press. Read "Long March" and "The Mountains Are High and the Emperor is Far Away."

Solange Chatelard and Jessica Chu, "Chinese Agricultural Engagements in Zambia," SAIS Policy Brief, 2015.

### Further reading:

L. Buckley, "Chinese Land-Based Interventions in Senegal," *Development and Change*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (2013): 429-450

Yan Hairong and Barry Sautman (2010), "Chinese Farms in Zambia: From Socialist to 'Agro-Imperialist' Engagement?" *African and Asian Studies* 9: 307-333.

蒋华杰: 《农技援非(1971-1983): 中国援非模式与成效的个案研究》, 《外交评论》, 2013

年第1期。English Translation.  
李小云等：《新发展的示范：中国援非农业技术示范中心的微观叙事》，北京：社会科学文献出版社，2017年，第99-133页。English Translation/Abstracts.

#### **Session 4 China-Africa Industrial Cooperation: Bulldozer or Locomotive?**

##### **Required reading:**

Justin Yifu Lin (2015), "China's Rise and Structural Transformation in Africa: Ideas and Opportunities," in *The Oxford Handbook of Africa and Economics, Volume II: Policies and Practices*, edited by Celestin Monga and Justin Yifu Lin, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.  
Irene Yuan Sun, "The World's Next Great Manufacturing Center," *Harvard Business Review*, May-June 2017.

##### **Further reading:**

Peter Hessler, "Learning to Speak Lingerie: Chinese Merchants and the Inroads of Globalization," *New Yorker*, August 10-17, 2015.  
Raphael Kaplinsky, "What Does the Rise of China Do for Industrialization in Sub-Saharan Africa?," *Review of African Political Economy* (2008) 35: 115, 7-22.  
Tang Xiaoyang, "Bulldozer or Locomotive? The Impact of Chinese Enterprises on Local Employment in Angola and the DRC," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 45,3 (2010): 350-368.  
Irene Sun et al. (2017), *Dance of the Lions and Dragons*, McKinsey report.  
Liang Xu, "Factory, Family, and Industrial Frontier" (forthcoming)

#### **Session 5 Barefoot Doctors, Medical Teams, and the Future of China-Africa Cooperation in Public Health**

##### **Required reading:**

Anshan Li (2011), "Chinese Medical Cooperation in Africa," Discussion Paper No. 52, Nordiska Afrika Institutet, Uppsala.  
Xixiao Jiang (2017), "Chinese Medical Teams in the DRC: A Comparative Case Study," Policy Brief, No. 21, SAIS-CARI.

##### **Further reading:**

邱泽奇：《朋友在先：中国对乌干达卫生发展援助案例研究》，北京：社会科学出版社。Read Chapter 6.  
WTO (2017), *Together on the Road to Universal Health Coverage: A Call to Action*. Geneva: World Health Organization.  
Dambisa Moyo (2009), *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There Is A Better Way Forward for Africa*, London, UK: Allen Lane. Chapter 7 ("The Chinese Are Our Friends"), 98-113, and Chapter 8 ("Let's Trade"), 114-125.

#### **Session 6 "How Much Soft Power Does China Have in Africa?" The Voice of China in Africa and China-Africa Media Interactions**

##### **Required reading:**

Fei Jiang, Shubo Li, Helge Rønning & Elling Tjønneland (2016), "The Voice of China in Africa: Media, Communication Technologies and Image-building," *Chinese Journal of Communication* 9(1): 1-7.  
Anbin Shi (2015), "Re-orienting the 'Charm Offensive' to the 'Charm Defensive': A Critical Review of Chinese Media Development in Africa," *African Journalism Studies* 36(1): 135-140.

##### **For further reading:**

Gagliardone, I. (2013), "China as a Persuader: CCTV Africa's First Steps in the African Mediasphere," *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies* 34(3): 25-40.  
Alessandro Jedlowski & Ute Rösenthaler (2017), "China-Africa media interactions: media and popular culture between business and state intervention," *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 29(1): 1-10.

- Rønning, H. (2016). "How Much Soft Power Does China Have in Africa?", in *China's Media and Soft Power in Africa*, 65-78. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shubo Li (2017), "Covering Ebola: a comparative analysis of CCTV Africa's *Talk Africa* and Al Jazeera English's *Inside Story*," *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 29(1): 114-130.
- Zhang, X., Wasserman, H., & Mano, W. (Eds.). (2016). *China's Media and Soft Power in Africa: Promotion and Perceptions*. Springer. Selected Chapters.

### Session 7 Field Trip I: China-Africa Media Interactions

Visit Startimes Beijing Head Office

### Session 8 A Silent Invasion? From Coolie Trade to New Waves of Chinese Migration in Africa

#### Required reading:

- Yoon Jung Park (2009), "Chinese Migration in Africa," Occasional Paper No. 24, South African Institute for International Affairs. Johannesburg: SAIIA.
- Anshan Li (2012), *A History of Overseas Chinese in Africa to 1911*. New York: Diasporic Africa Press. Select chapters.

#### Further reading:

- Melanie Yap and Dianne Leong Man (1996), *Colour, Confusion and Concessions: The History of the Chinese in South Africa*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. Chapter 5.
- Lisa Yun, *The Coolie Speaks: Chinese Indentured Laborers and African Slaves in Cuba*, Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2009. Select chapters.
- Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, and Hawaii 1900-1936*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009. Introduction.
- Peter Richardson (1982), *Chinese Mine Labour in the Transvaal*, London, UK: Macmillan Press. Select chapters; or Rachel Bright, *Chinese Labor in South Africa, 1902-10: Race, Violence, and Global Spectacle*, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Select chapters
- Tu Huynh, "From Demand for Asiatic Labor to Importation of Indentured Chinese Labor: Race Identity in the Recruitment of Unskilled Labor for South Africa's Gold Mining Industry, 1903-1910," *Journal of Chinese Overseas*, 4, 1 (2008): 51-68; Tu Huynh, "We Are Not a Docile People: Chinese Resistance and Exclusion in the Re-imagining of Whiteness in South Africa, 1903-1910," *Journal of Chinese Overseas*, 9, 3 (2010): 207-12.
- L. M. van der Watt and W. P. Visser (2008), "Made in South Africa: A Social History of the Chinese in Bloemfontein, Free State Province, South Africa, ca. 1980-2005," *Journal for Contemporary History* 33: 121-142.
- Philip Harrison, Khangelani Moyo & Yan Yang (2013). "Strategy and Tactics: Chinese Immigrants and Diasporic Spaces in Johannesburg, South Africa," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 38 (4): 899-925.

### Session 9 "Chocolate Cities": Dreams and Realities of Africans in China

#### Required reading:

- Adams Bodomo (2012), *Africans in China: A Sociocultural Study and Its Implications on Africa-China Relations*, Cambria Press. Chapter 1 & select from chapters 2-5.
- Heidi Østbø Haugen (2013), "African Pentecostal Migrants in China: Marginalization and the Alternative Geography of a Mission Theology," *African Studies Review* 56 (1): 81-102.

#### Further reading:

- Shanshan Lan (2015), "State Regulation of Undocumented African Migrants in China: A Multi-Scalar Analysis," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 50 (3): 289-304.
- Zhigang Li, Laurence J. C. Ma, and Desheng Xue (2009), "An African Enclave in China: The Making of a New Transnational Urban Space," *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 50 (6): 699-719.
- Heidi Østbø Haugen (2012), "China's Recruitment of African University Students: Policy Efficacy and Unintended Outcomes," *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 11 (3): 315-334.

Philip Snow (1988), *The Star Raft*, Read “Bridging the Chasm.”

### **Session 10 From “Kongfu Film” to “Nollywood” and “Quaishou Video”: Understanding Otherness through Popular Moving Images**

#### **Required reading:**

Cobus van Staden (2017), “Watching Hong Kong Martial Arts Film under Apartheid”, *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 29(11): 46-62.

Alessandro Jedlowski & Michael W. Thomas (2017), “Representing ‘Otherness’ in African Popular Media: Chinese Characters in Ethiopian Video-films,” *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 29(1): 63-80.

Film Screening: Nollywood Film (2016) *Receive Your China Visa*.

#### **Further reading:**

Alessandro Jedlowski (2018), “The Afterlife of Kung Fu Films in Abidjan” (Forthcoming publication)

Roberto Castillo. “Of ‘blackfaces’ and SinoAfrican modernities”

<https://africansinchina.net/2018/03/07/opinion-blackface-and-sinoafrican-modernities/>

Abderrahmane Sissako (2002), *Waiting for Happiness* (Original title: Heremakono) (Excerpt)

Wu Jing (2016), *Wolf Warriors* (《战狼》) (Excerpt)

Selected Quaishou Video materials

### **Session 11 Film Screening (Three Films)**

*Guangzhou Factory Dream* (60 minutes)

*China Remix* (29 minutes)

*Chinese in South Africa* (select clips)

### **Session 12 “The Agency of Arts”: Interrogating “Chinafrica” ( “中非” ) in Contemporary African Arts**

#### **Required reading:**

Ruth Simbao (2018), “When ‘African Art’ Meets ‘China-Africa’: Space-Time Imaginaries and a Pursuit for New Scripts.” Keynote Speech at International Workshop on “Rethinking Third World”, Hangzhou, China.

William Kentridge (2015), “Peripheral Thinking.” In *William Kentridge: Notes towards a Model Opera*, edited by Karen Marta, 81-152. Beijing: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art; London: Koenig Books.

Exhibition Catalogue (2012), “Making Way: Contemporary Art from South Africa & China”

Video Screening: William Kentridge (2015) *Notes Toward a Model Opera*

#### **Further reading:**

Cheng Ying (2018), “‘The Bag is My Home’: Recycling China Bags in Contemporary African Arts,” *African Arts* 51(2):18-31

Olu Oguibe. 2015. “Samuel Fosso: Emperor of Africa”

<https://aperture.org/blog/samuel-fosso-emperor-africa/>

Mary Pettas (2016), “A ‘Natural’ Alliance Between Kenyan And Chinese Artists Flourishes In Venice” <https://theculturetrip.com/africa/kenya/articles/a-natural-alliance-between-kenyan-and-chinese-artists-flourishes-in-venice/>

Abdi Latif Dahir (2018), “A Kenyan painter’s art questions China’s deepening reach in Africa” <https://qz.com/africa/1343155/michael-soi-china-loves-africa-paintings-question-chinas-influence-in-africa/>

### **Session 13 Writing Against/ Beyond “Imperial Rhetoric”? Tracing Africa-China in Literary Representations and Movements**

#### **Required reading:**

- NoViolet Bulawayo (2013). *We Need New Names*. Selected Pages.
- In Koli Jean Bofane (2014), *Congo Inc. Bismarck's Testament*. Selected Pages.
- Film Screening: Africa's Asian Options (AFRASO) *Afrasian Memories in East Africa* (Excerpt)
- Fredric Jameson (1986), "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism," *Social Text* (15): 65-88.
- Karen L. Thornber (2016), "Breaking Discipline, Integrating Literature: Africa–China Relationships Reconsidered." *Comparative Literature Studies* 53(4): 694-721.
- Further reading:**
- Liu He/刘禾 (2017), "An Asian-African Literary Translation Movement in the Cold War Barrier"/《冷战壁垒中的一场亚非文学翻译运动》.  
[https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail\\_forward\\_1747749](https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1747749) (English translation to be provided)
- Sarah Van Beurden (2018), "The Zairian Avant-garde: Modes of African Modernism," *Radical History Review* (131): 151–158.
- Cheng, Ying. "History, Imperial Eyes, and the 'Mutual Gaze': Narratives of African-Chinese Encounters in Recent Literary Works" in *Routledge Handbook of African Literature* (Edited by Moradewun Adejunmobi and Carli Coetzee, Routledge). (forthcoming)

### Session 14 Field Trip II: "Being an African in Beijing"

- Guided Tour in Beijing  
Useful sites about Black Community in China.  
<https://africansinchina.net/>  
<https://blacklivesinchina.wordpress.com/>  
<http://blacklivitychina.com/>

### Session 15 Are Chinese Racist? Rethinking Race, Gender, and Culture

- Required reading:**
- Joseph Goldstein, "Kenyans Say Chinese Investment Brings Racism and Discrimination," *New York Times* (October 15, 2018). Link:  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/15/world/africa/kenya-china-racism.html>.
- Frank Dikötter (1992), *The Discourse of Race in Modern China*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. Chapters 4, 5 & 7.
- Further reading:**
- Barry Sautman (1994), "Anti-Black Racism in Post-Mao China," *The China Quarterly*, 138: 413-437.
- Michael J. Sullivan (1994), "The 1988-89 Nanjing Anti-African Protests: Racial Nationalism or National Racism?" *The China Quarterly*, 138: 438-457.
- Frank Dikötter (1994), "Racial Identities in China: Context and Meaning," *The China Quarterly*, 138: 404-412
- Jamie Monson (2012), "Three-Way Race: Whiteness and the Construction of Race Identity in China-Africa Relations," paper presented at the Center for African Studies Fiftieth Anniversary Conference, University of Edinburgh, June 6-8.
- Pal Nyiri (2006), "The Yellow Man's Burden: Chinese Migration on A Civilizing Mission," *The China Journal* 56: 83-106.
- Joshua Berlinger and James Griffiths (2016), "Chinese Firm Apologizes After Racist Detergent Ad," CNN. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/05/29/asia/chinese-racist-detergent-ad-apology/index.html>.
- Barry Sautman and Yan Hairong (2016), "The Discourse of Racialization of Labor and Chinese Enterprise in Africa," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39 (12): 2149-2168.

### Session 16 An Open Conclusion: Third World, Global South, and Beyond

- Required reading:**
- Julia C. Strauss (2013), "China and Africa Rebooted: Globalization(s), Simplification(s), and Cross-cutting Dynamics in 'South–South' Relations," *African Studies Review*, 56(1): 155-170.

Gordon Matthews (2011), *Ghetto at the Center of the World: Chungking Mansion, Hong Kong*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Introduction and select chapters.

James Ferguson (2006), *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Chapters 1, 4 & 8

**Further reading:**

Ching Kwan Lee (2017), *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor, and Foreign Investment in Africa*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 152-166.

Giles Mohan, "Beyond the Enclave: Towards a Critical Political Economy of China and Africa," *Development and Change* 44, 6 (2013): 1255-72.

Gordon Matthews (2017), *The World in Guangzhou*, University of Chicago Press, Chapters 3 & 8.

\*Final Exam (90 minutes)\*