

**Department of Sociology
Rhodes University**

**Honours Course: China in Africa
Second Semester, Third Term 2013**

Course presenters:
Dr Yoon Jung Park
Prof Herman Wasserman
Dr Doreen Bekker
Mr Harrie Esterhuyse

Time: Tuesdays 11:00-1:00, Thursdays 11:30-1:00
Venue: Chris Hani Seminar Room, Sociology

China in Africa

Lecturers:

- Weeks 1-3: Dr Yoon Jung PARK, Senior Research Associate, Sociology, Rhodes University; Convener/Coordinator, Chinese in Africa/Africans in China Research Network
E-mail: yoony1@verizon.net
- Week 4: Dr Doreen BEKKER, Senior Lecturer, Economics, Rhodes University
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- Week 5: Prof Herman WASSERMAN, Journalism & Media Studies, Rhodes University)
Email: h.wasserman@ru.ac.za
- Week 6: Mr Harrie ESTERHUYSE, Research Analyst, Centre for Chinese Studies, University of Stellenbosch
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Module Description:

In the past, Africa has often been cast as poor, underdeveloped, and in need of the West's assistance. Headlines used to scream of Africa's pathetic state. In the past couple of years, this has changed; today, Africa is often touted as *the* place for investment and innovation. Economic growth in many African countries has superseded growth in most European countries and foreign investors are flocking to Africa. China leads this charge and can largely be credited with the change in attitude toward the continent – from basket case to miracle zone. At the same time, China is accused of being predatory and neo-colonial, in search of mineral resources to fuel its own growth; markets to dump its excess, cheap manufactured products, and land to grow food for its growing population. Chinese migrants are accused of poor labour practices when they employ locals, but also told that they are not creating enough jobs; they are also accused of out-competing Africans and putting them out of business. Other global factors also contribute to the nuances of the China/Africa debate. The China/Africa partnership is growing within the era of global warming, a time when the world has been made critically aware of the finite nature of our planet – and the anthropogenic processes destroying it. Questions remain about lasting development impacts.

This module is designed to examine the links between China and Africa from the beginning of their historical relationship through to present times. The main purpose of the module is to explore in detail the following:

- The key myths and rumours about China's engagement in Africa;
- The role of migration and migrants in Africa's development;
- Preliminary impacts of Chinese engagement in African countries;
- African responses to Chinese people and activities on the continent;
- Chinese investment and trade relations with Africa with a specific emphasis on South Africa;

- The role of the media in China-Africa relationships; and
- China's role as world environmental bad boy or international renewable energy leader, and current environmental impacts in/on Africa

The module aims to provide students the opportunity to critically discuss and analyze China-Africa (or Africa-China) socio-economic relations and their implications for future relations between the country and the continent. It also aims to allow students the opportunity to examine a number of inter-related topics that shed light on China's (possible) influences and impacts on the economies, politics, and societies of individual African countries.

Module Requirements:

Given the short length of this module, attendance at seminars is **compulsory**. Student participants are expected to have read all the compulsory readings prior to coming to class. Each session topic is listed below together with required and recommended readings; most of these should be available online; those that are not will be provided electronically. Students may be selected at random to provide summaries of readings at the beginning of each class to ensure that everyone keeps up with all the required readings. Each presentation should be under five minutes and will be marked as part of your participation grade.

There will be THREE written assignments for this course (each worth 10% of your final grade). Each of the four lecturers will give a written assignment; students will SELECT three of the four to complete. A FINAL EXAM (worth 70% of your mark) will include material from each of the sections. Specifics for each of these are spelled out below.

Papers will be marked based on your ability to critically engage with the class discussions, readings and video clips; develop and defend your own argument/s; and provide evidence from the readings & lecture materials. We will also be looking for clarity of writing style, clear referencing, as well as spelling and grammatical errors. We want engaging discussion, elaboration of your points, explanation of various perspectives, and comparisons, where applicable. In the "real world" you will often be judged on your ability to explain different views and articulate your own point/s clearly, succinctly and convincingly, both verbally and in writing; we are hopeful that these assignments will help you hone some of these skills.

PLEASE NOTE: Plagiarism of any sort will not be tolerated. Any ideas or quotations you use from readings MUST be acknowledged in a footnote, endnote and/or the references.

WEEK ONE: Myths & Rumours, historical ties between China and Africa (Dr Yoon Jung PARK)

Session 1: Introduction

Why are China-Africa linkages relevant? What are the key myths & rumours surrounding China's engagements in Africa?

(Tuesday 23 July)

To watch during class:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2012/01/20121484624797945.html>

Required reading

Deborah Brautigam, “Rogue Donor? Myths and Realities” (Chapter 11), pp. 273-306, in Brautigam (2009), *The Dragon’s Gift. The Real Story of China in Africa*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press. (PDF to be provided)

Recommended reading

Barry Sautman and Yan Hairong, “Friends and Interests: China’s Distinctive Links with Africa,” *African Studies Review*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (Dec., 2007), pp. 75-114.

Chris Alden, Dan Large, and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, “China Returns to Africa: Anatomy of an Expansive Engagement,” Real Instituto Elcano, Working Paper 51/2008.

Sarah Raine, “Contextualising Today’s Sino-African Relations” (Chapter 1), pp. 13-58, in Raine (2009) *China’s African Challenges*, Oxford, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Dominik Kopiński, Andrzej Polus & Ian Taylor, “Contextualising Chinese Engagement in Africa,” *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* (2011) 29: 2, 129-136.

Garth Shelton, Afro-Chinese Relations in an Era of Globalization, In *Afro-Chinese Relations: Past, Present and Future*, Edited by Kwesi Kwaa Prah (Cape Town: Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society, 2007).

Baohui Zhang, “Chinese Foreign Policy in Transition: Trends and Implications,” *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* (2010) 39: 2, 39-68.

Session 2: China-Africa relations in historical context

(Thursday 25 July)

Required reading

Jamie Monson, “Introduction”, (Chapter 1), pp. 1-14 and “Conclusion” (Chapter 7), pp. 147-156 in Monson (2009) *Africa’s Freedom Railway. How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania*. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. (PDF to be provided)

Recommended reading

Snow, Philip. *The Star Raft: China’s encounter with Africa*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989.

Larkin, Bruce D. *China and Africa, 1949-1970: The Foreign Policy of the People’s Republic of China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

Chris Alden & Ana Cristina Alves, “History & Identity in the Construction of China’s Africa Policy,” *Review of African Political Economy* (2008) 35: 115, 43-58.

M. M. M. Bolaane, "China's Relations with Botswana: An Historical Perspective," In *Afro-Chinese Relations: Past, Present and Future*, Edited by Kwesi Kwaa Prah (Cape Town: Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society, 2007).

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

WEEK TWO: Chinese in Africa and Africans in China (Dr Yoon Jung PARK)

Session 3: Chinese migrants in Africa (Tuesday 30 July)

Required reading

Park, YJ. January 2009. "Chinese Migration in Africa" Occasional Paper No. 24, China in Africa Programme, South African Institute for International Affairs. Johannesburg: SAIIA. Available on: <http://www.saiia.org.za/occasional-papers/chinese-migration-in-africa>

McNamee, Terence (with others). March 2013. "Africa in Their Words. A Study of Chinese Traders in South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia and Angola. Discussion Paper. The Brenthurst Foundation. <http://www.thebrenthurstfoundation.org/thought-leadership-2012-china-in-africa.htm>

Recommended reading

Tu T. Huynh, Yoon Jung Park, and Anna Ying Chen, "Faces of China: New Chinese Migrants in South Africa, 1980s to Present," *African and Asian Studies* (2010) 9, 286-306. (PDF available upon request)

Park, YJ. Jan 2012 "Living In-Between: The Chinese in South Africa" in Migration Information Source, will be available online at <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?id=875>

Dittgen, Romain. March 2010. "From Isolation to Integration? A Study of Chinese Retailers in Dakar," South Africa Institute of International Affairs. Available on: http://www.saiia.org.za/images/stories/pubs/occasional_papers/saia_sop_57_dittgen_20100326.pdf

Philip Harrison , Khangelani Moyo & Yan Yang (2012). "Strategy and Tactics: Chinese Immigrants and Diasporic Spaces in Johannesburg, South Africa," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 38:4, 899-925. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03057070.2012.741013>

Session 4: Africans in China (Thursday 1 August)

Required reading

Yang Yang, April 2011. "A New Silk Road: African Traders in South China" (pp 4-7) in *The China Monitor*, Issue 61. <http://www.ccs.org.za/?p=3883>

Namvula Rennie. 2010. "Africans in China. Sweet and Sour in Guangzhou", *The Africa Report*. No. 21. February-March. (PDF to be provided)

Recommended reading

Heidi Østbø Haugen, 2012. "Nigerians in China: A Second State of Immobility" in *International Migration*.

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, No. 6, pp. 699–719.

WEEK THREE: Preliminary Impacts and African Responses to China/Chinese presence on the continent (Dr Yoon Jung PARK)

Session 5: Preliminary Impacts of Chinese engagement in Africa (focus on South Africa) (Tuesday 6 August)

Required Reading

Park, YJ and Chris Alden. 2013. "'Upstairs' and 'Downstairs' Dimensions of China and the Chinese in South Africa" in *State of the Nation 2012: Tackling Poverty and Inequality*. Pretoria: HSRC Press. (PDF to be provided)

Recommended reading:

Kweku Ampiah & Sanusha Naidu, "The Sino-African Relationship: Towards an Evolving Partnership?" (Chapter 18), pp. 329-340 in Kweku Ampiah and Sanusha Naidu (Eds.) 2008. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon? Africa and China*. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Percyslage Chigora and Taderera Hebert Chisi, "The Eight Years of Interaction: Lessons from Zimbabwe's Look East Policy and the Future of African Countries and Asia-Pacific Region," *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* (2009) 10: 4, 147-161.

Session 6: From Africa's perspective: African policy alternatives, African perceptions of China and the Chinese (Thursday 8 August)

Required reading

The Chinese in Africa. Trying to pull together. Africans are asking whether China is making their lunch or eating it." Apr 20th 2011 | NAIROBI | from the print edition found on <http://www.economist.com/node/18586448>

Vera Songwe and Nelipher Moyo. 2012. "China–Africa Relations: Defining New Terms of Engagement." The Brookings Institution, Africa Growth Initiative. http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2012/01/priorities-foresight-africa/china_africa_relations_songwe_moyo

Max Rebol, "Public Perceptions and Reactions: Gauging African Views of China in Africa" in *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, 9 (4): 149-186, Winter 2010 (PDF to be provided)

Karen L. Harris, "Anti-Sinicism: Roots in Pre-industrial Colonial Southern Africa," *African and Asian Studies* (2010) 9, 213-231. (PDF to be provided)

For further reading:

Park, YJ. 2013. "Perceptions of Chinese in Southern Africa. Constructions of the 'Other' and the Role of Memory" *African Studies Review*. 56 (01): 131-153.

http://journals.cambridge.org/repo_A89TGqkz

Barry Sautman and Yan Hairong, "African Perspectives on China-Africa Links," *The China Quarterly* (Sep., 2009) 199, 728-759.

Mario Esteban, "A Silent Invasion? African Views on the Growing Chinese Presence in Africa: The Case of Equatorial Guinea," *African and Asian Studies* (2010) 9, 232-251.

Assignment for Dr PARK:

Select an African country and write a brief (4 to 5-page) paper discussing the primary modes of Chinese engagement in/with that country, preliminary impacts of this engagement, and local perceptions of the Chinese migrants and/or Chinese economic presence. Draw your own conclusions (positive? negative? mixed?) about Chinese engagement in 'your' country and ensure that you provide evidence for these. NB: This paper must be submitted on Thursday 8 August in class as I will be leaving Grahamstown on the following day.

WEEK FOUR: A look at Chinese investment and trade relations with Africa with a specific emphasis on South Africa (Dr Doreen BEKKER)

(12 - 16 August)

Although the topic cannot be dealt with in any great detail, students will be expected to consider why China is investing in Africa, and to think about whether both parties (Africa and China) are benefiting from this investment. For example, one of the reasons why China invests in Africa is to access natural resources. In this regard, South Africa will be considered as a special case because Chinese investment in South Africa is a bit different to other countries on the African continent.

Trade issues are different to investment issues. Nevertheless, we need to also briefly explore the fact that various trade barriers are sometimes used to block Chinese exports to other countries. It has been argued that by investing and manufacturing in developing countries, China may be able to circumvent some of these trade barriers. In other words, this could be another reason why China is investing in some developing countries.

A number of readings will be prescribed and number of recommended readings will also be provided (see list below) to enable the students to engage with the above topics. Students will also be expected to access a few websites to get more up-to-date information and data (for example the WTO website and a few newspaper or magazine

articles). These websites and/or links will be provided during the seminar periods. Students will also be expected to complete and submit an assignment, details of which will be provided at a later stage. This will comprise of a short essay plus some research – for example looking up some data on FDI and looking at some up-to-date information in newspapers (or other websites).

Prescribed readings:

Doriye E. 2010. The next stage of sovereign wealth investment: China buys Africa. *Journal of Financial Regulation and Compliance*, 18 (1):23-31.

Brautigam D. 2011. China in Africa: Seven myths (ARI). Analysis of the Real Instituto Elcano. (The Elcano Royal institute).
http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/uploads/content/bible_in_transmission/files/2012_winter/BiT_Winter_2012_Brautigam.pdf

Crul F. 2013. China and South Africa on their way to sustainable trade relations. Tralac working paper, S131P02/2013.

Zafar A. 2007. The growing relationship between China and Sub-Saharan Africa: macroeconomic, trade, investment and aid links, *The World Bank Research Observer*, 22(1): 103-128.

Recommended readings:

Centre for Chinese Studies. 2007. Standard Bank and ICBC: The start of bigger things to come. *The China Monitor*, Issue 24, November 2007.

Dreier T. 2013. China's African FDI Safari: opportunistic exploitation or mutually beneficial to all participants? Thesis in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Commerce in Financial Markets, Rhodes University, Grahamstown. Chapters 3 and 4. (On Rhodes University's theses repository, use link.)
<http://contentpro.seals.ac.za/iii/cpro/DigitalItemViewPage.external?lang=eng&sp=1001455&sp=T&sp=Pal%2CRu1000001%40%2CQdreier&suite=def>

Assignment for Dr Bekker forthcoming.

**WEEK FIVE: What role is the media playing in China-Africa relationships? (Prof Hermann WASSERMAN)
(19-23 August)**

China's economic involvement in Africa has grown steeply in recent years. The growth of this economic engagement has become so significant that China is now the continent's largest trade partner. This growth in Sino-African relations has not been without controversy. Critics have asked whether China's interest in Africa should be seen as a benign boost for the continent's economies, or as a threat to local industries. Questions also extend to the political realm – how will China's economic involvement impact on policy-making and democratic culture in African countries? These are complex questions, not least because Africa is a diverse continent, with a diverse range of political cultures, social histories and economic policies. Unfortunately these

complexities are often lost in popular media discourses that portray Sino-African relations in panicked tones and in simplistic oppositions (China as ‘friend or foe’, ‘partner or predator’).

The engagement between China and South Africa will increasingly be a mediated one. Joseph Nye’s notion of ‘soft power’ has been applied to China’s involvement on the continent, and specifically its media interests in Africa. The notion of ‘soft power’ refers to the achievement of desired political outcomes by using influence and persuasion to attract and co-opt other countries rather than coercing them with force. Some observers have noted that China’s increased investment in Africa may be seen as a way to influence opinions on the continent and present a positive image of China to counteract negative stereotyping and fear-mongering in African media.

Examples of China’s media presence on the continent include the launch of the state broadcaster, China Central Television (CCTV), African head office operation in Nairobi (Kenya) in 2010. This presence makes it possible for CCTV news reports to be broadcast across the continent. The state news agency Xinhua has been present on the continent since the 1980s, but in 2011 also launched a mobile application that makes its news service available to the continent’s millions of mobile phone users. Xinhua’s English channel CNC World is now also being broadcast to subscribers to the digital satellite television platform DStv, after the South Africa-based company MIH agreed to carry it on its African networks. On the print news front, the opening of bureaux in Johannesburg and Nairobi of the newspaper China Daily has extended the publication’s reach to English-language readers in these major African centres, as well as online. Exchange programmes for media groups and journalists to visit China and vice versa have also been seen as a way to further extend its cultural influence. The South African media company Naspers is also benefiting greatly from its investment in the media platform Tencent in China. Media are therefore part and parcel of the flow and counterflow of capital between Africa and China.

During this week of the course, we will briefly explore some theoretical frameworks that may help us understand media representations of China’s involvement in Africa and China’s own investment in media platforms, as part of media globalization. We will also look at specific examples of media coverage of China in Africa to discuss as case studies. The central questions to be addressed are:

- What role is the media playing in China’s strategies of engagement in Africa?
- How is China’s involvement in Africa represented in media discourses?

A number of readings will be prescribed and number of recommended readings will also be provided (see list below) to enable the students to engage with the above topics. Students will also be expected to do independent reading and explore internet resources to complete an assignment, which will entail the discussion of media coverage of a particular aspect or controversy around China’s involvement in Africa.

Prescribed readings:

Nederveen Pieterse, J. 2009. Representing the rise of the rest as threat: Media and global divides. *Global Media and Communication*. 5(2): 221-237

Special Issue of African East-African Affairs Issue 1 March 2013: ‘Electric Shadows’: Media in East Asian/African Relations. Downloadable from: <http://www.ccs.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/AEAA-Issue1-2013.pdf>

Thussu, D. 2010. ‘Chindia’ and global communication [Editorial]. *Global Media and Communication*, 6(3), 243–245.

Wasserman, H. 2012. China in South Africa: media responses to a developing relationship. *Chinese Journal of Communication* 5(3): 336-354.

Recommended readings:

Kurlantzick, J. 2007. *Charm Offensive*. Yale: Yale University Press (chapter IV, Tools of Culture)

Scotton, J.F. & Hachten, W.A. 2010. *New Media for a New China*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell

Shirk, S.L. 2011. *Changing Media, Changing China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Assignment:

A journalist working on a story about China’s involvement in Africa has contacted you as an expert on China-Africa relations to provide an expert opinion. During your discussion, you realize that the journalist is likely to reproduce stereotypes about China’s role in Africa, and will be drawing on common misconceptions.

What advice will you give them to ensure that they will write a balanced and well-informed article? Write a briefing note to the journalist, of no more than 4 pages, in which you:

1. Summarise the issue at hand (you can identify any topic relating to China-Africa relations that has recently been covered in the media)
2. Identify common factual misconceptions as well as stereotypical representations in media discourses on this topic (you can draw on actual published articles or broadcasts)
3. Provide guidelines and information to the journalist to assist them in writing a balanced and well-informed article that includes a critique and appraisal of China-African relations.

WEEK SIX: China, environment concerns, renewal energy, and Africa (Mr Harrie ESTERHUYSE)

Session 11: Contrasting China: world environmental bad boy and international renewable energy leader (Tuesday 27 August)

This class will give an overview of China in the international climate change context, exploring how it is that China is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases but also the clear world leader in renewable energy. The focus will then shift to China/Africa engagement and potential in renewable energy.

Questions to be asked:

- How bad is China really for the environment?
- Has China become environmentally conscious and if not what is driving its green energy development?
- What is the potential for Chinese engagement with Africa on renewable energy?

Required reading:

Flannery, T., Hueston, G. & Beale, R. (Climate Commission). 2013. The Critical Decade: Global Action Building on Climate Change [Online]. Available: <http://climatecommission.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/The-Critical-Decade-Global-Action-Building-on-Climate-Change-web2May.pdf> [2013, May 02]. (Read page 4-19)

PEW Charitable Trusts. 2013. 2012 Who's winning the clean energy race? [Online]. Available: <http://www.pewenvironment.org/uploadedFiles/PEG/Publications/Report/-clenG20-Report-2012-Digital.pdf> [2013, May 01] (Read page 4-21)

International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). 2011. Scenarios and Strategies for Africa. Delivered at the IRENA-Africa High-Level Consultations. 8-9 July. Abu Dhabi. (Download here:

<http://www.irena.org/menu/index.aspx?mnu=Subcat&PriMenuID=36&CatID=141&SubcatID=246>)

Recommended reading

Liu, J. & Goldstein, D. 2013. Understanding China's renewable energy technology exports. *Energy Policy*, 52: 417-428.

WWF US. 2011. Towards an Energizing Partnership? Exploring China's role as catalyst of renewable energy development in Africa [Online]. Available:

http://www.climatefocus.com/documents/files/towards_an_energizing_partnership.pdf [2013, May 23] (Of main interest: page 17-34)

**Session 12: China's impact on environmental sustainability in Africa
(Thursday 29 August)**

People's reaction to China in Africa, especially in South Africa, is often one of distrust, be it due to the perception that China is environmentally destructive or especially due to the association of China and rhino (elephant) poaching. This class will explore the nuances of this perception and the surrounding debate with special focus to China in Africa in the resource extraction industries.

Questions to be asked:

- What do we know about Chinese environmental impact?
- Where are areas of co-operation and where are contested issues?
- What changes have we seen in Chinese foreign FDI policy in an African context? (looking at EXIM Bank and other policies that try and govern Chinese FDI and their environmental and social impact)
- China and the illicit trade- gold, ivory, abalone and wood

Required reading:

CCS Policy Briefing 1: Rhino poaching and East Asian policies: Facts and debates
http://www.ccs.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/MB-rhino-poaching-policy-briefing_FINAL.pdf

CCS Policy Briefing 2: FOCAC: Addressing joint environmental challenges?
http://www.ccs.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/FOCAC_Policy-Briefing_Enviro_final.pdf

SARW. 2012. Win-win partnership: China, Southern Africa and the extractive industries (eds.) Shelton, G. & Kabemba, C. Johannesburg: SARW. (Read summary, pages 17-25)

Recommended reading

Geeraerts, G., Gorus, J., Holslag, J. & Smis, S. 2007. China's resources and energy policy in sub-Saharan Africa [Online]. Available:
[http://www.vub.ac.be/biccs/site/assets/files/apapers/Policy%20papers/Holslag%20et%20al%20\(2007\),%20China%20Africa.pdf](http://www.vub.ac.be/biccs/site/assets/files/apapers/Policy%20papers/Holslag%20et%20al%20(2007),%20China%20Africa.pdf) [2013, June 11] (pick and read one chapter)

EIA. 2012. Appetite for destruction: China's trade in illegal timber. London: EIA.

Assignment for the Week:

You are a government advisor working in either renewable energy, farming or forestry (select one). Making use of the knowledge you have incorporated in this course, write a brief paper of no more than 4 pages, in which you firstly explore the positive and secondly the negative aspects of your selected industry with regard to the China/Africa partnership. In what ways does China contribute and in what ways does it worsen the situation in Africa. Conclude your paper by providing policy advice on how your government can proceed in its relationship with China. (If you feel up to a larger challenge make your advice country-specific. In this case please remember to clearly state the name of the country)