

AFRICAAM 267: Africa & China: Pasts and Presents

Stanford University
Spring Quarter, 2024

Course Information

Primary Instructor:	Jodie Yuzhou Sun
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Units	3 for UG; 5 for PG
Meeting Time (PST) & Location	Tuesday 10:30-11:50 (GATES100) & Thursday 3:00-4:20 (ENCINAC464)

Course Description

China's engagement with Africa during the last decade has generated media attention that generally portrays China as either Africa's economic saviour or as its new imperial overlord. This course will both survey these analyses but also suggest that the China-Africa phenomenon needs to be understood as a series of engagements – economic, political, but also social and cultural – between a range of Chinese and African actors that have both potential benefits and costs for all those involved.

Interdisciplinary in nature, the course will explore the history of China's relationship with Africa and the continuities and breaks in this relationship. Instead of producing a monolithic picture for the whole African continent, the course will focus on various African countries such as Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Ethiopia, Congo, South Africa, Sudan, Ghana and Mali for more contextualised discussions. It will also problematise the idea of 'China' as solely representative of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

It will begin with an overview of the literature in order to familiarise the students with the historiography. Then it will run in a chronological order, first discussing China's ancient connections with the African continent before moving to the more crucial period of intense interactions in the mid-20th century. We will pay particular attention to questions such as socialist ideology, Afro-Asianism, economic competition, revolution, and liberation movements. The rest of the course will deal with China's political, economic and social activities on the African continent since early 2000 until today. The class will analyse economic relations in the form of mineral extraction, the extent and form of China's engagement with political change on the continent, and the ways in which Chinese migrants have interacted with African societies. It will also explore how Africans are seeking to shape their unequal relationship with Chinese influences and to negotiate advantages for themselves in both Chinese-influenced Africa and in China itself. The course will seek to locate China's recent engagement with Africa in the context of the continent's many centuries of interaction with global flows of goods, peoples, and ideas.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Through active engagement with and successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain and apply interdisciplinary theories in understanding the nature and significance of China's relations with various African countries in the context of African and global history.
- Critically examine and explain the most important and innovative methods historians, social scientists, cultural scholars past and present have used to study China's engagements with various African countries.
- Critically scrutinize several important case studies of China's relations with African countries, and thoughtfully debate the political, legal, ethical, and aesthetic implications and applications of these case studies.
- Select, research, and construct a detailed history of one particular aspect of China's relations with African countries.
- Acquire and practice skills in archival research and analysis, public debates, and presentations.

Attendance and Work Expectations

There is no requirement for pre-requisite courses, but students are expected to familiarise themselves with the essential reading materials listed below. Assessment of this course is composed of the following elements:

1) Class participation: 20%

Participation in discussion is absolutely critical to this class and will have a very significant impact on the final grade. Students should come prepared for each class by doing the assigned readings before class. Students should bring all primary source documents listed in the reading to class either in either paper or electronic form. Effective participation means not only attendance in class, however, but also willingness to contribute to class discussion and exchange ideas with fellow students.

2) Policy Memo (2 * 4 pages): 30%

In this seminar, each student will write two four-page policy memoranda based on the readings. In writing the memorandums, students will attempt to take on the roles of critical historical actors in the developments described in the readings. The memoranda should be to the point and cogently argued. They should make the case for pursuing a particular kind of policy by carefully analysing the assigned readings and the available primary source texts. Successful memoranda will demonstrate a thorough mastery of the readings and the issues involved and explain why particular choices need to be made. All of the memoranda topics can be found under the individual class sessions.

3) Final coursework (1 * 15 pages): 50%

The other major written requirement for this course is a final coursework of 15 pages (minimum 5,000 and maximum 7,000 words including footnotes and excluding bibliography) due at the end of the quarter. This is a quarter-long project and the final result should demonstrate a full quarter's effort. Students will therefore be required to turn in a prospectus (by Week 6) and a polished draft (by Week 8) before the final paper is due (by Week 10). Although the grade on the final draft will be weighted most heavily, the draft and prospectus will also be part of the final grade for the course. Students should narrow and refine their topics through consultation with the instructor. Evaluation of the papers will be based on: argumentation (do they have a clear thesis

and execute it), organization, depth of research (have a sufficient number of secondary sources been consulted), use of evidence, and style.

Course Schedule and Assignment / Assessment Deadlines

The readings marked with * are essential. Students are encouraged to read other listed materials or search for their own. For monographs or edited volumes, specific chapters are highlighted but students are always encouraged to read the whole ones. For the Chinese language sources, non-Chinese readers are not required to read them.

Week-by-Week Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction

Tuesday April 2: Syllabus Review & Overview

*Alden, Chris and Large, Daniel (eds.) *New Directions in Africa-China Studies*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2019, Introduction 'Studying Africa and China'.

*Adem, Sefuden (ed.) *China's Diplomacy in Eastern and Southern Africa*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2013, Chapter 1 by Ali A. Mazrui, 'The Yellow Man's Burden: Race and Revolution in Sino-African Relations'.

Shinn, David H. and Eisenman, Joshua. *China and Africa: A Century of Engagement*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, Introduction.

Seminar questions: How has the academic field developed in relation to the realities? What are the opportunities and constraints of studying Africa and China now?

Thursday April 4: Methodology, positionality and historiography

*Zheng, Weidi, Cheng, Ying and Coetzee, Carli (eds.) 'Thinking China from Africa: Encounter with the Other Other' special issue, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Volume 33, Issue 2 (2021): 119-237.

*Strauss, Julia C. "The past in the present: Historical and rhetorical lineages in China's relations with Africa," *The China Quarterly*, 199 (2009): 777-95.

Li, Anshan. 'African Studies in China in the Twentieth Century: A Historiographical Survey', *African Studies Review* 48, 1 (2005): 59-87.

Seminar questions: What is 'another "other"' and why it matters? Why does the past matter in understanding contemporary China-Africa relations?

Week 2: Africa's earlier connections with China

Tuesday April 9: Ancient China-Africa relations (i.e. eastern Africa)

*Duyvendak, J. J. L. *China's Discovery of Africa: Lectures Given at the University of London on January 22 and 23, 1947*. London: Arthur Probsthain, 1949 (only 35 pages).

*Li, Anshan. 'Contact between China and Africa before Vasco da Gama: Archaeology, Document and Historiography', *World History Studies* 2, 1 (2015): 34-59.

沈福伟：《中国与非洲：中非关系二千年》，北京：中华书局，1990。

[Shen Fuwei, *China and Africa: Sino-African Relations in Two Thousand Years*, Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1990.]

Seminar questions: What were the key features and primary motives that drove Africa's earlier connections with ancient China? What is the historical significance of Zheng He's expeditions and why?

Thursday April 11: Modern China and overseas Chinese in Africa prior to 1949 (i.e. South Africa)

* Karl, Rebecca E. *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. Durham and London: Duke University, 2002, Chapter 5 'Promoting the Ethnos: The Boer War and Discourses of the People'.

*Yap, Melanie and Man, Dianne Leong. *Colour, Confusion and Concessions: The History of the Chinese in South Africa*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1966, Chapter 4 'Under Boer Rule', Chapter 5 'On the Gold Mines', and Chapter 6 'Passive Resistance and the Chinese'.

李安山：《非洲华人社会经济史》，南京：江苏人民出版社，2019（三卷本）。

[Li Anshan, *Socio-Economic History of Chinese in Africa*, Nanjing: Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2019, 3 Volumes]

Seminar questions: How was the Boer War (1899-1903) viewed by the Chinese intellectuals at the time and why? Why did South Africa have to import Chinese labour to work the Witwatersrand gold mines? What were the political, economic and social consequences of this 'experiment'?

Week 3: Decolonisation, Afro-Asianism and the Cold War

Tuesday April 16: Decolonisation and PRC's relations with Africa

*Shinn, David H. and Eisenman, Joshua. *China and Africa: A Century of Engagement*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, Chapter 2 'A Historical Overview of China-Africa Relations'.

*Ogunsanwo, Alaba. *China's Policy in Africa, 1958-1971*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974, Chapter 2.

Snow, Philip. *The Star Raft: China's Encounter with Africa*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988.

Seminar questions: How were the living conditions of Chinese communities in Africa during the Republican era (1912-1949)? According to Shinn & Eisenman, what are the major 'exogenous developments' that affected PRC-Africa relations, and do you agree? Which part of the African continent received most attention from the PRC in late 1950s and why?

Thursday April 18: Third World and Afro-Asian solidarity (i.e. Mali)

*Sun, Jodie Yuzhou, Yuan, Mingqing and Zhang, Lifang. “Third World” Crossings: Afro-Asian Travelogues in the early 1960s’, *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 6 (2023): 846-863.

McMahon, Robert J. (ed.) *The Cold War in the Third World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, Chapter 6 ‘Africa’s Cold War’.

*Suri, Jeremi. ‘The Cold War, Decolonization, and Global Social Awakenings: Historical Intersections’, *Cold War History*, 6 (2006): 353–63.

Seminar questions: What and where was Afro in Afro-Asianism? How did Africa experience and shape the Cold War?

Assessment: Memo #1 (4 pages) due

Week 4: Ideology and economic development

Tuesday April 23: African Socialism and Maoism (i.e. Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia)

*Cook, Alexander (ed.) *Mao’s Little Red Book: A Global History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014, Chapter 6 by Priya Lal, ‘Maoism in Tanzania: Material Connections and Shared Imaginaries’.

*Sun, Jodie Yuzhou. ‘Historicizing African Socialisms: Kenyan African Socialism, Zambian Humanism, and Communist China’s Entanglements’, *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 52, 3 (2019): 349-374.

Friedman, Jeremy Scott. *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World*. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2015, Introduction ‘A Tale of Two Revolutions’.

Seminar questions: What do you think are the most important features of African Socialism? How did the Sino-Soviet split influence African Socialism?

Thursday April 25: Competitive Approaches to Economic Development (i.e. Kenya, Tanzania and Mali)

*Brazinsky, Gregg A. *Winning the Third World: Sino-American Rivalry during the Cold War*. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2017, Chapter 9 ‘The Economic Competition, 1962-1968’.

Sun, Jodie Yuzhou. “Now the cry was Communism’: The Cold War and Kenya’s relations with China, 1964–70”. *Cold War History* 20, 1 (2020): 39-58.

*Weinstein, Warren and Henriksen, Thomas H (eds.) *Soviet and Chinese Aid to African Nations* (New York: Praeger, 1980), Chapter 6 by George T. Yu, ‘The Tanzania-Zambia Railway: A Case Study in Chinese Economic Aid to Africa’.

Seminar questions: What are the main features of Chinese aid to Africa, and how successful it was?

Week 5: Revolution and liberation movements

Tuesday April 30: Insurgency and counterinsurgency (i.e. Congo)

*Cook, Alexander C. "Chinese Uhuru: Maoism and the Congo Crisis." *positions: asia critique* 27, 4 (2019): 569-595.

*Sun, Jodie Yuzhou. "'Cash and arms but unable to fight': Chinese support of Lumumbist insurgencies in the Congo Crisis (1959-65)", *Cold War History*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (2022): 459-478.

Namikas, Lise A. *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo 1960-65*. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013, Chapter 11 'Johnson's Distraction' & Chapter 12 "Carrying the Burden" in the Congo'.

Thursday May 2: Southern African liberation (i.e. Angola)

*Jackson, S.F. "China's Third World Foreign Policy: The Case of Angola and Mozambique, 1961-1993." *China Quarterly*, 142 (1995): 388-422.

*Sun, Jodie Yuzhou. "Viriato da Cruz and his Chinese exile: A biographical approach", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 5 (2020): 845-861.

Marcum, John A. *The Angolan Revolution, Vol. II, Exile Politics and Guerrilla Warfare, 1962-1976*. Cambridge, Mass. and London, The M.I.T. Press, 1978.

Assessment: Memo #2 (4 pages) due

Week 6: Investments, trade, and aid

Tuesday May 7: An overview of economic relations

Moyo, Dambisa. *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa*. London: Allen Lane, 2009.

*Brautigam, Deborah. *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, Chapter 4 'Eastern Promises: An Aid System with Chinese Characteristics' & Chapter 5 'Orient Express: How Does Chinese Aid and Engagement Work?'

Shinn, David H. and Eisenman, Joshua. *China and Africa: A Century of Engagement*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, Chapter 4 'Trade Relations' and Chapter 5 'Investment and Assistance'.

Thursday May 9: Infrastructure finance and the Belt and Road Initiative (e.g. Tanzania, Kenya)

Monson, Jamie. *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009, Chapter 3 'Building the People's Railway'.

*Taylor, Ian. 'Kenya's New Lunatic Express: The Standard Gauge Railway', *African Studies Quarterly* 19, 3-4 (2020): 29-52.

*Zajontz, Tim, Carmody, Pádraig, Bagwandeem, Mandira, and Leysens, Anthony (eds.) *Africa's Railway Renaissance: The Role and Impact of China*. London: Routledge, 2023, Chapter 2 by Tim Zajontz, 'The political economy of China's globalising railways – and their arrival in Africa' and Chapter 4 by Liu Haifang, 'The Freedom Railway now and then: The enduring relevance of the 'TAZARA spirit' for South-South cooperation'.

Assessment: Coursework Proposal (2-3 pages) due on Sunday 12:00

Week 7: Multifaceted engagements and labour relations

Tuesday May 14: Multifaceted engagements (i.e. Zambia, Ghana, Tanzania, Sudan)

*Hess, Steve and Aidoo, Richard. 'Charting the roots of anti-Chinese populism in Africa: A comparison of Zambia and Ghana', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 49, 2 (2014): 129-147.

*Large, Daniel. 'China and the Contradictions of 'Non-interference' in Sudan', *Review of African Political Economy* 35, 103 (2008): 93-106.

Mohan, Giles and Lampert, Ben. 'Negotiating China: Reinserting African Agency into China-Africa Relations', *African Affairs* 112, 446 (2013): 92-110.

Thursday May 16: Labour relations (i.e. Zambia, Ethiopia)

*Lee, Ching-Kwan. *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor, and Foreign Investment in Africa*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017, Chapter 4 'Managerial Ethos: Collective Asceticism versus Individual Careerism' & Chapter 5 'Contesting Capital: Aspiration and Capacity from Below'.

Driessen, Miriam, *Tales of Hope, Tastes of Bitterness: Chinese Road Builders in Ethiopia*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2019, Chapter 2 'Preserving Purity' & Chapter 6 'Entangled in Lawsuits'.

Week 8: Chinese in Africa/Africans in China

Tuesday May 21: Chinese in Africa (i.e. South Africa, Zambia)

*Hodzi, Obert (ed.) 'Chinese in Africa: 'Chineseness' and the complexities of identities' special issue, *Asian Ethnicity*, Volume 20, Issue 1 (2019): 1-129.

Mohan, Giles, Lampert, Ben, Tan-Mullins, May and Chang, Daphne. *Chinese Migrants and Africa's Development: New Imperialists or Agents of Change?* London: Zed Books, 2014.

*Park, Yoon Jung. 'Boundaries, borders and borderland constructions: Chinese in contemporary South Africa and the region', *African Studies*, 69, 3 (2010): 457-79.

Clip of *King Cobra and the Dragon* (2012): A documentary film produced by Al Jazeera – People and Power episode. Researcher Solange Chatelard and filmmaker Scott Corben explore China-Zambia relations in this short documentary for Al Jazeera.

Thursday May 23: Africans in China (i.e. Kenya, Cameroon, Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana and DRC)

Amoah, Padmore Adusei, Hodzi, Obert and Castillo, Roberto (eds.) 'Africans in China and Chinese in Africa: Identities, Inequalities and Well-Being' special issue, *Asian Ethnicity*, Volume 21, Issue 4 (2020): 457-590.

*Sullivan, Michael J. 'The 1988–89 Nanjing Anti-African Protests: Racial Nationalism or National Racism?' *The China Quarterly*, Volume 138 (1994): 438 – 457.

*Mathews, Gordon. 'African Logistics Agents and Middlemen as Cultural Brokers in Guangzhou', *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, Volume 44, Issue 4 (2015): 117–144.

Clips of *Guangzhou Dream Factory* (2016): A documentary film by Christiane Badgley and Erica Marcus. Featuring the stories of African migrants in Guangzhou from Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda, this documentary serves as a critique of global capitalism, available at: <http://stanford.kanopystreaming.com/node/339272>.

Assessment: Coursework first draft (minimum 8 or 10 pages) due on Sunday 12:00

Week 9: Literature and visual representation

Tuesday May 28: Literature (i.e. Ghana, Zambia)

*Yoon, Duncan. *China in Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century African Literature*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2023, Introduction & Chapter 2.

*Thornber, Karen Laura. 'Breaking discipline, integrating literature: Africa-China relationships reconsidered', *Comparative Literature Studies*, Volume 53, Issue 4 (2016): 694-721.

Shi, Flair Donglai. 'Out of the Yellow/Black Peril Discourse: Humanizing China–Africa Relations in Mukuka Chipanta's *A Casualty of Power*', *Comparative Literature Studies*, Volume 58, Number 3 (2021): 623-646.

Seminar questions: What does literature offer to the field and to what effect?

Thursday May 30: Visual representation (i.e. Kenya, Sierra Leone)

*Saavedra, Martha. 'Representations of Africa in a Hong Kong soap opera: The limits of enlightened humanitarianism in the last breakthrough', *The China Quarterly*, 199 (2009): 760-776.

*Ferme, Marianne and Schmitz, Cheryl. 'Writings on the Wall: Chinese material traces in an African Landscape', *Journal of Material Culture*, 19. 4 (2014): 375-399.

Clip of *战狼 2/Wolf Warrior 2* (2017): Action Movie directed by Wu Jing. This blockbuster action film—in which a heroic Chinese soldier protects medical aid workers and Chinese interests in a fictitious African country—was hugely successful in China. It also provoked a great deal of discussion and analysis abroad for its brash nationalism, and is the origin of the term "Wolf Warrior Diplomacy" (now regularly used to describe confrontational rhetoric from Chinese diplomats).

Online exhibition: Joan Kee and Serubiri Moses: Mao and Afro-Asia in Context

Available at: <https://www.e-flux.com/events/558946/joan-kee-and-serubiri-moses-mao-and-afro-asia-in-context/>.

Seminar question: What can we learn about China-Africa relations from visual forms?

Week 10: Towards the future

Tuesday June 4: Wrapping Up

Eisenman, Joshua and Shinn, David H. China's Relations with Africa: A New Era of Strategic Engagement. New York: Columbia University Press, 2023, Introduction.

Seminar question: Compare the introduction of the two edited volumes by Eisenman and Shinn in 2012 and 2023. What have been changed in the field over the last 11 years?

Assessment: Final coursework (10 or 15 pages) due on June 9 Sunday 12:00