

CALL FOR PAPERS: The 2014 CA/AC Conference

The third conference convened by the Chinese in Africa/Africans in China (CA/AC) Research Network will take place in Guangzhou, China, December 12-14, 2014. The event is co-hosted with Jinan University. The aim of the CA/AC conference is to bring together a small group of academic researchers from across the world who have been engaged in fieldwork and whose work focuses on the people-related aspect of China-Africa engagements. This is a working conference for participants to share knowledge, but also to receive constructive comments to further develop their studies.

The list of panels is now ready. The topics to be explored this year include the following:

1. The Role of the Broker in African-Chinese Commercial Relations;
2. Challenges, Discourses, and Complexities of Chinese Garments and Textiles in Africa;
3. Interpersonal Relations between Africans and Chinese in Guangzhou: Trust, Doubt and Betrayal in Business, Friendship, and Love;
4. Transnational Families between China and Africa;
5. Unpacking Skilled Mobilities: Knowledge Transfer and -Production via Human Mobilities between China and Africa;
6. Visual Imagining of the Chinese Presence in African Cities and Africans in Chinese cities;
7. Exploring Race in Trade and Migration Between China and Africa in Globalization: Intersections with Gender, Nation-state, Class, and/or Religion;
8. Place, Space and Translocality in the Context of CA/AC; and
9. Expression, Communication, Conversation. Reflections on everyday African-Chinese encounters

Details of the panel topics and chairs are provided below. We invite scholars who have done research among Chinese in Africa or Africans in China to submit paper abstracts under these panels. Each panel can accommodate up to four papers.

Early career scholars are highly encouraged to present at the conference, and we have set up a double panel especially for this purpose. There is also an option to submit a paper abstract for the open session if your research does not fit under any of the pre-defined panels. Due to space constraints, we can only accommodate one participant per paper.

Abstract proposals are due no later than April 10, 2014. They should be submitted on the form circulated along with this call and sent to CAACconference@gmail.com. You can also download the form from www.sv.uio.no/iss/english/people/aca/heidiha/paper.docx.

The conference organizing committee will select the papers for the conference in consultation with the panel chairs. The chairs could be contacted with queries about the thematic focus of the panel. For all other questions, please contact the conference organizers at CAACconference@gmail.com. Those whose abstracts have been accepted are expected to submit full papers to the panel chairs by November 10.

Practical information:

Jinan University will cover the costs of accommodation, meals, snacks, and a field trip for all panel chairs and presenters of the conference. We regret that we cannot cover travel costs. The local host will also issue letters of invitation to all participants for the purpose of applying for a visa.



Panels at the 3rd Conference on Chinese in Africa/Africans in China, Guangzhou, 12-14 Dec 2014

① New Research from Early Career Scholars

Professor Jamie Monson, Macalester College

This panel or set of panels will feature works-in-progress from scholars who are in the midst of carrying out dissertation fieldwork or writing up their research. The panels will provide an opportunity for the presentation of new research findings that may still be in the initial stages of development. Themes for panels are open and multi-disciplinary. Each panel will be chaired by a more established scholar in the field, who will provide comments on the papers and lead discussion.

② The Role of the Broker in African-Chinese Commercial Relations

Dr Ute Rösenthaller, Goethe University Frankfurt

The broker is a dazzling figure that plays an important role as a go-between, an intermediary, a translator and facilitator in a wide range of social activities. This panel intends to explore the role of brokers in Chinese-African relationships. It will investigate the different tasks that African and Chinese brokers or intermediaries perform in China as well as in African countries. We invite papers that provide dense descriptions of biographies of such brokers, of the tasks they carry out, the assets they control, and the properties or characteristics that make them play such a crucial and often powerful role in intercultural and intersocial ventures.

③ Challenges, Discourses, and Complexities of Chinese Garments and Textiles in Africa

Dr Yoon Jung Park, Rhodes University/Georgetown University

Flows of Chinese garments and textiles into Africa have been viewed with increasing concern and even fear, as threats to local industries as well as local actors. Often discussed in the context of Africa's de-industrialization, there is a long history of Chinese engagement in textiles and garment manufacture going back to the establishment of the URafiki Textile Mill (now called Tanzania-China Friendship Textile Mill) in Tanzania in 1968. This panel will explore the complexities of the importation of China-made clothing and textiles to various African countries as well as the shifting representations and discourses around the Chinese and African actors involved.

④ Interpersonal Relations between Africans and Chinese in Guangzhou: Trust, Doubt and Betrayal in Business, Friendship, and Love

Professor Gordon Mathews, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

This panel, based on its presenters' ethnographic research in Guangzhou, examines how Africans interact with Chinese in making their livings and lives. Its papers consider business dealings, friendship, and love relations between Chinese and Africans, and examine these in terms of China's economic, social, and cultural globalization. How can business be conducted when there is often no common language and little common trust? How do the Africans and Chinese in daily interaction comprehend each other? More broadly, will China ever see its own Barack Obama?

⑤ Transnational Families between China and Africa

Professor Valentina Mazzucato, Maastricht University

This panel seeks to explore how families operate transnationally between China and Africa. Transnational family studies have brought to light the increasing importance of long-distance relationships within extended families and how contexts of reception influence the way families operate. Yet studies have focused mainly on Global South to West migration flows. This panel invites papers investigating aspects of transnational family life ranging from long distance mixed couples such as African men in a relationship with Chinese women; African families in which at least one member has migrated to China; or vice-versa, Chinese families in which at least one member has migrated to Africa. How are relationships between spouses/partners, young children and/or elderly parents maintained? How are such arrangements organized? What issues do families face in organizing themselves transnationally and why do they live in transnational family configurations? How do Chinese political, legal and cultural contexts influence the way families organize transnationally? All papers are invited to reflect on whether their findings on Africa/China and China/Africa transnational families differ from those found in Africa-Europe or Africa-US transnational migration flows and how these may lead to new conceptual or theoretical insights.

⑥ Unpacking Skilled Mobilities: Knowledge Transfer and - Production via Human Mobilities between China and Africa

Dr Maggi W.H. Leung, Utrecht University

China and Africa are increasingly connected by, among other flows, diversifying forms of human mobilities. This session is aimed at extending our understanding of skilled/skilling (e.g. education) mobilities between China and Africa by making theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions. It provides a forum to discuss how knowledge, skills and/or technology are transferred and produced via human mobilities. We call for participation from researchers whose work advances our knowledge on issues surrounding conventionally-defined skilled mobilities (e.g. professional, businesses, education mobilities) and those whose research motivates a critical perspective on 'knowledge' and 'skills' that may redefine the studied populations, fields and processes.

⑦ Visual Imaging of the Chinese Presence in African Cities and Africans in Chinese cities

Professor Philip Harrison, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

This panel will explore the ways in which Chinese people and business in large African cities have been visually imaged in mediums including painting, photography and film, in both popular work and scholarly representation. It will show how imaging has shifted over time and how this change relates to changing social attitudes, political transformations, and discursive work. The panel deals with both historical and contemporary dimensions of visual imagining, and could include imaging of Chinese by other groups and imaging of Chinese by other Chinese. The panel also welcomes papers on the imaging of Africans in Chinese cities.

⑧ Exploring Race in Trade and Migration Between China and Africa in Globalization: Intersections with Gender, Nation-state, Class, and/or Religion

Dr Huamei Han, Simon Fraser University

From diverse theoretical orientations situated in contemporary literature, papers in this panel will explore issues of race/racialization/racism in trade and migration between China and Africa in globalization from above and from below. Each paper will examine how race intersects with other social construct(s), e.g. gender, nation-state, socio-economic class, and/or religion, in people's everyday work and lives in the global economic system. Historicized and nuanced analysis of all sources of data from emerging and established scholars are invited, and papers focusing on Africans and Chinese trading, working and living in China and/or Africa based on empirical data are particularly welcome.

⑨ Place, Space and Translocality in the Context of CA/AC

Dr Karsten Giese, GIGA Institute of Asian Studies

Compared to the wealth of empirical studies on Africans in China and Chinese in Africa, attempts to theorise the topic remain few. This panel attempts to advance structural understandings of the co-constitution of place and people in the context of Chinese-African encounters by situating migrants in the wider spatialised social processes they engage with. Based on their empirical findings on the presence and activities of Chinese actors in Africa and vice versa, presenters are expected to engage in theory-driven analyses of place, space and scale and/or contribute to the general literature on spatiality and translocality. We welcome perspectives from all disciplines.

⑩ Expression, Communication, Conversation. Reflections on everyday African-Chinese encounters

Solange Guo Chatelard, Sciences Po Paris

Behind the public image, rhetoric, and large scale projects which characterise China's growing engagement with Africa are ordinary everyday encounters between people, expectations, everyday practices, objects, ideas, perceptions, and cultures. This panel seeks to deepen our understanding of the nature and tensions of these encounters, real, virtual or imagined, by focusing on contextualised experiences of people's everyday interactions. We welcome papers which explore the theoretical, methodological and empirical underpinnings of these encounters, particularly those which seek to offer links between what is learned in intensive fieldwork and comparable social phenomena outside of it.