

Chinese and African Perspectives on China in Africa



Edited by Axel Harneit-Sievers,
Stephen Marks and Sanusha Naidu

Li Anshan · Sanou Mbaye · Zeng Qiang · Nancy Dubosse
Hong Yonghong · Gedion Gamora · K. Mathews · Paul Kamau
Edwin Okhuoria · Claude Kabemba · Daniel Ribeiro · Elias Isaac
He Wenping · Desire Assogbavi · Francis Ikome · Xiao Yuhua
Antony Otieno Ong'ayo · Zhi Yingbiao · Bai Jie

D822.34
E2012

42

华人中心

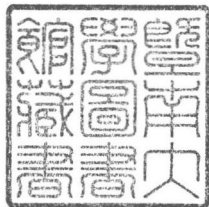
Chinese and African Perspectives on China in Africa



Edited by Axel Harneit-Sievers,
Stephen Marks and Sanusha Naidu



Pambazuka Press
An imprint of Fahamu Books



■■ HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG
EAST & HORN OF AFRICA

 **Fountain Publishers**
Kampala - Uganda

Published 2010 by Pambazuka Press, an imprint of Fahamu Books
Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi and Oxford
www.pambazukapress.org www.fahamubooks.org www.pambazuka.org
and Heinrich Böll Foundation, Regional Office for East & Horn of Africa
www.boell.or.ke

Fahamu, 2nd floor, 51 Cornmarket Street, Oxford OX1 3HA, UK
Fahamu Kenya, PO Box 47158, 00100 GPO, Nairobi, Kenya
Fahamu Senegal, 9 Cité Sonatel 2, POB 25021, Dakar-Fann, Dakar, Senegal
Fahamu South Africa, c/o 27A Esher St, Claremont, 7708,
Cape Town, South Africa

Heinrich Böll Foundation, Regional Office for East & Horn of Africa, Forest
Road, PO Box 10799-00100 GPO, Nairobi, Kenya

Published in Uganda in 2010 by Fountain Publishers Ltd
55 Nkrumah Road, PO Box 488, Kampala, Uganda

First published 2010

Copyright © Pambazuka Press 2010

All rights reserved. Redistribution of the material presented in this work
is encouraged by the publisher, provided that the original text is not altered,
that the original source is properly and fully acknowledged and that the
objective of the redistribution is not commercial gain. Please contact the
publisher if you wish to reproduce, redistribute or transmit, in any form
or by any means, this work or any portion thereof.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

UK ISBN: 978-1-906387-33-4 paperback

UK ISBN: 978-1-906387-34-1 ebook

Uganda ISBN: 978-9970-25-001-1

Printed by Gopsons Papers Ltd, India

**Chinese and
African Perspectives
on China in Africa**

Through the voices of the peoples of Africa and the global South, Pambazuka Press and Pambazuka News disseminate analysis and debate on the struggle for freedom and justice.

Pambazuka Press – www.pambazukapress.org



A Pan-African publisher of progressive books and DVDs on Africa and the global South that aim to stimulate discussion, analysis and engagement. Our publications address issues of human rights, social justice, advocacy, the politics of aid, development and international finance, women's rights, emerging powers and activism. They are primarily written by well-known African academics and activists. All books are available as ebooks.

Pambazuka News – www.pambazuka.org



The award-winning and influential electronic weekly newsletter providing a platform for progressive Pan-African perspectives on politics, development and global affairs. With more than 1,500 contributors across the continent and a readership of more than 500,000, Pambazuka News has become the indispensable source of authentic voices of Africa's social analysts and activists.

Heinrich Böll Foundation – www.boell.or.ke



The Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF) is a political foundation affiliated to The Greens political party in Germany, a green think tank and an international policy network (see www.boell.de). With offices in 28 different countries, HBF conducts and supports civic educational programmes in Germany and worldwide, promoting human rights, gender democracy, sustainable development and political dialogue. HBF's Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa is in Nairobi.

*Pambazuka Press and Pambazuka News are published by Fahamu
(www.fahamu.org)*

Acknowledgements

The 'China–African Civil Society Dialogue' conference, held in Nairobi in April 2008, has been a wonderful example of constructive cooperation between China and Africa.

First of all, we would like to thank all participants – from about 15 different countries on two continents – for their valuable input, much of which has been incorporated into the various contributions to this volume.

We also wish to thank Katrin Altmeyer and her team at the Beijing office of the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF) who provided decisive links between China and Africa in the preparation of the conference.

A special thank you is extended to Wanjiku Wakogi and Susan Ndung'u of HBF's Nairobi office, and to Hakima Abbas and her team at Fahamu in Nairobi, for organising the logistics and other arrangements that made the conference possible.

About the contributors

Desire Assogbavi is head of Oxfam International's liaison office with the Africa Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Bai Jie is with the Global Environmental Institute (GEI), Beijing, China.

Nancy Dubosse is head of research of the Economic Governance's Programme, based with the Institute for Democracy in Africa (IDASA) in Pretoria, South Africa.

Gedion Gamora completed his master's in political science and international relations in 2007 at Addis Ababa University. He is currently working as a consultant at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Axel Harneit-Sievers is a historian and political scientist specialising in African studies. He is director of the East Africa/Horn of Africa regional office of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, the German Green political foundation, based in Nairobi, Kenya.

He Wenping is professor and director of the African studies section of the Institute of West Asian and African Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China.

Hong Yonghong is director and professor of the Centre for African Laws and Society (CALs) at Xiangtan University, China.

Edwin Ikhuoria is head of communications and advocacy at the National Association of Nigerian Traders.

Francis Ikome works with the Institute for Global Dialogue, Midrand, South Africa.

Elias Isaac is country programme manager with the Open Society for Southern Africa (OSISA) in Luanda, Angola.

Claude Kabemba is the director of the Southern Africa Resource Watch (SARW), Johannesburg, South Africa.

Paul Kamau is a research fellow at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Nairobi.

Li Anshan is director of the Institute of Afro-Asian Studies at Peking University, Beijing, China.

Stephen Marks is coordinator and research associate of Fahamu's China in Africa programme, based in Oxford, UK.

K. Mathews is professor of international relations at Addis Ababa University.

Sanou Mbaye is a London-based Senegalese political and economic commentator and a former senior official at the African Development Bank.

Sanusha Naidu is the research director of Fahamu's China in Africa programme, based in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Antony Otieno Ong'ayo is a PhD fellow at the School of Governance, Maastricht University, as well as a research fellow at the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM). He is also an associate researcher with the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam.

Daniel Ribeiro is one of the founders of and programme officer at Justica Ambiental, an environmental and social justice NGO based in Mozambique.

Xiao Yuhua is an assistant researcher at the Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua Province, China.

Zeng Qiang is a professor at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, based in Beijing, China.

Zhi Yingbiao is with the Global Environmental Institute (GEI), Beijing, China.



Introduction

Axel Harneit-Sievers, Sanusha Naidu and Stephen Marks

Exchanges between Africa and China have grown tremendously in recent years, as has China's economic and political role in Africa. China has long-standing links with Africa, but the intensity and diversity of its recent engagement on the continent, driven by the search for resources and markets for its rapidly expanding economy, is historically unprecedented. The rest of the world is watching with much interest and, sometimes, amazement.

A rapidly increasing need for knowledge and contacts between both sides accompanies the new boom in China–Africa exchanges. Since 2006–07, numerous meetings and conferences have brought together political and economic actors from Africa and China, and this process is likely to continue and even expand in the future. The majority of these contacts take place at the government-to-government level, or within the business communities. Furthermore, Chinese experts on Africa – many of them in policy-consulting functions – often meet Africa's government officials or private sector leaders.

By contrast, until now there has been little dialogue between China – both on the policy and expert level – and civil society in Africa, that is, the broad spectrum of non-governmental institutions and organisations around the continent that play such a prominent role in African political and intellectual life today.

Civil society in Africa has expanded considerably since the 1990s, resulting from (and often helping to bring about) a return to democracy in many African countries. This has included independent media, university scholars and research centres, human rights and women's organisations, advocacy groups and numerous service-delivery NGOs (non-governmental organisations), all of whom play an important role today in Africa's political and social reality. They support Africa's political and social develop-

ment and often provide a counter-balance to sometimes weak government institutions and authoritarian political traditions. In many instances, African civil society provides the 'independent voice' of Africa. As yet, Chinese actors interested in Africa have done little in practice to acknowledge the relevance of Africa's civil society, and have made even less direct contact and interaction with African representatives. Meanwhile, most African civil society actors share the sense of amazement about the recent growth of China's role in Africa, but have little information and even fewer avenues for dialogue.

To be sure, there are some exceptions. The Centre for Chinese Studies at Stellenbosch University in South Africa provides a platform for research and dialogue.¹ It is largely, but not exclusively, oriented towards high-level exchanges around business and market-development issues.

Second, there is the 'Asian Drivers' project initiated by the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC),² headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, which focuses on country case studies on the impact of China's trade, investment and aid footprint in African economies.

Third, the South African Institute of International Affairs also has a 'China in Africa project', which essentially draws on a mix between China's economic and political engagements in Africa and the impact this broadly has for Africa's development prospects.

Finally, there are various individual African researchers who are currently undertaking projects with a China slant as it represents the new impetus for donors and hence funding opportunities.

What is interesting in all of these studies is that debate on China is defined through economic imperatives and led by the assumption that only political and economic elites from both sides are the main actors in this engagement.

Recognising that an African civil society organisation (CSO) perspective extends beyond the scholarship of academics and policy-makers, Fahamu³ – a pan-African social justice organisation based in Cape Town, South Africa; Dakar, Senegal; Nairobi, Kenya; and Oxford, UK – has sought to strengthen pan-African voices on China's engagement in Africa. Its prize-winning weekly newsletter, Pambazuka News,⁴ provides consistent coverage of a wide range of topics on social justice in Africa, including regular

analyses of China–Africa relationships published in its Emerging Powers in Africa Watch column.

The China–Africa programme draws on Fahamu’s 2007 publication *African Perspectives on China in Africa*,⁵ a valuable collection of essays that provides insights into the diversity of views held by civil society activists from a variety of African countries on China’s role on the continent and in their respective countries, along with the 2008 book *China’s New Role in Africa and the Global South*, which emerged as a result of the dialogue organised between African and Chinese civil society organisations during the African Development Bank’s annual meeting in Shanghai in May 2007.⁶ Both these publications shift the trajectory of the China–Africa debate to bring the CSO perspective into greater focus.

Although civil society organisations have represented very important actors in African politics since the 1990s, a non-governmental civil society sector is only emerging in China. Currently, there are relatively few actors in Chinese civil society interested in and knowledgeable about African affairs. Besides a small number of non-governmental organisations, the most prominent among these actors are academics based at Chinese universities and research institutions such as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

Against this background, Fahamu and the Heinrich Böll Foundation’s offices in Nairobi and Beijing developed the idea of a ‘China–African Civil Society Dialogue’, bringing together Chinese academic experts on Africa with representatives of African CSOs and African academics who are working in thematic areas with relevant Chinese engagement. Little exchange of this kind had taken place at this point, thus the programme provided a unique opportunity for dialogue and debate on issues of mutual concern, creating an entry point for future discussions and research on China–Africa relations.

The dialogue workshop took place in Nairobi, Kenya, on 21–22 April 2008, and was supplemented by a visitors’ programme and a number of more specialised meetings and forums.⁷ The dialogue workshop brought together 10 academics from China specialising in African studies and working in various universities or research and policy-consulting institutions in China with representatives of African CSOs and African academics from 15 different countries.

All of the latter work or specialise in areas where China's engagement in Africa plays an important role. But it was also about enabling a dialogue to ensure that each side would learn from the other.

The dialogue workshop was organised around five major thematic areas:

- Mutual perceptions between China and Africa
- Chinese trade and investment in Africa and their economic and environmental impacts
- Chinese aid and financial policies
- Trade, labour and immigration issues
- The role of civil society in Africa and China.

The papers presented and discussions at the plenary critically analysed and sought to understand the nature of China–Africa relations in the context of these broad themes, focusing on patterns and challenges posed by the relationship. In addition to the thematic panels, a number of country case studies focused on more specific dimensions – and their interaction – in the relationship between China and Africa. This volume contains papers presented at the dialogue workshop, as well as additional material that emerged in the course of the dialogue.

Part I of the book provides insights into mutual perceptions between China and Africa, and into their knowledge of each other. In a broad overview article, Li Anshan looks at the development of African studies as an academic discipline in China since the 1950s. He demonstrates how China's long-established interest in Africa has grown considerably, especially since the 1990s, as well as identifying main research trends, sketching possible future research agendas and providing a bibliography of important Chinese scholarly work about Africa.

Following on from this, Sanusha Naidu asks whether the debate on China's footprint in Africa is reaching maturity. She highlights that forging a new China–Africa consensus must incorporate more than a 'business as usual' approach. Instead she advises that a people-centred approach to development must accompany this engagement. Against the background of this differentiated picture, Sanou Mbaye outlines Africa's political

options for engagement with China and makes a plea for a common African approach.

Contributions in Part II analyse the macroeconomic dimension of contemporary Sino-African relations. Zeng Qiang provides an overview of the development of the political and commercial relations between China and Africa, discussing their enormous growth since the 1990s while identifying systemic problems such as trade imbalances and issues of the quality of manufactured goods. Nancy Dubosse presents the results of a study conducted by AFRODAD – a network of NGOs working on development finance and lobbying for debt relief – and shows the differences between China's financial engagement in Africa and that of the West, as well as evaluating how far China's role may qualify as 'aid'. Finally, as Sino-African commercial relations intensify and become more regularised, Hong Yonghong argues for greater systematic cooperation in the area of law and legal frameworks.

Part III comprises six country studies, focusing on different dimensions of China's engagement in Africa. Gedion Gamora and K. Mathews analyse China's relationship with Ethiopia, a political heavyweight and a country that plays a strategic role in China's African policy as a major importer of Chinese manufactured goods. In a case study of the Kenyan textile industry, Paul Kamau shows how Chinese investment forms an integral part of the global economic integration of East Africa while, at the same time, Chinese global textile exports endanger local manufacturing. For Nigeria, Edwin Ikhuoria takes the perspective of those who profit from China's export expansion – local traders and consumers able to access cheap products – while also pointing to widespread problems such as low product quality and 'fake products'.

Claude Kabemba appreciates China's large scale investments in infrastructure and mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo, while pointing to the high risk of severe environmental damage resulting from them. Daniel Ribeiro provides a case study, set in Mozambique, from a grassroots perspective, which describes the forest destruction resulting from illegal logging for the east Asian market. Examining Angola, Elias Isaac questions large-scale Chinese lending to the country's government for infrastructure development, to be paid back with future oil exports.

However, Isaac as well as Kabemba and Ribeiro do not hold

Chinese companies solely responsible if things go wrong. Instead they argue strongly that African governments often fail in their responsibility towards their own societies, lacking transparency in their use of public funds and failing to enforce the environmental standards they have set themselves. While Chinese companies take advantage of such deficiencies, the responsibility to effect improvements lies primarily within Africa itself. In this regard, African CSOs can play a major role in highlighting problems and advocating for change.

Part IV analyses China's growing role in peace and security on the African continent. He Wenping looks at China's role in Sudan and focuses on the Darfur crisis, arguably the single most controversial aspect of China's engagement on the continent. While defending the principle of 'non-interference' in the internal affairs of other countries as a traditional tenet of Chinese diplomacy, she also shows that China's policy has in fact been responsive to international criticism, having begun to exert pressure on the Sudanese government and providing support for the joint United Nations–African Union mission in Sudan.

Desire Assogbavi argues that Chinese foreign policy should not remain stuck on the principle of 'non-interference' in the affairs of other countries at a time when even the African Union has moved 'from non-interference to non-indifference' since 2000. Analysing Sino-African relations from an African Union perspective, Francis Ikhome notes a discrepancy between China's pan-African rhetoric on the one hand and the practice of primarily entering bilateral agreements with single African governments on the other. In order to strengthen Africa's negotiating position towards China, he argues for a concerted approach at the African Union level.

Part V explores the possibilities for an intensified engagement of civil society organisations from Africa with government institutions, companies and other actors from China. Xiao Yuhua shows how little is known in China about 'civil society', especially from Africa. He encourages African CSOs to interact more systematically with China, advising them to take proper notice of China's political and cultural specifics at the same time. Antony Otieno Ong'ayo takes up the challenge from an African civil society perspective, asking which typical modes of interaction of

African CSOs may also work with regard to China and discussing possibilities for joint action between CSOs from both areas.

Finally, taking the example of the Global Environmental Institute (GEI), Zhi Yingbiao and Bai Jie describe the mode of operation of a Chinese environmental non-governmental organisation working with Chinese government institutions to improve the environmental standards for Chinese logging companies operating internationally. They also invite African CSOs to cooperate in this field.

The concluding section of this volume emphasises that advancing China–Africa civil society dialogue is significant for monitoring and shaping the trajectory of the Sino–African relationship, especially on the back of the outcome of the most recent Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) meeting held in Cairo in November 2009. By pursuing joint efforts and developing mutual understanding, this volume marks the first attempt towards achieving a shared China–Africa civil society vision of responsibility that can be directed towards holding policy-makers from both sides accountable in achieving a sustainable development path in Africa that impacts positively on the livelihoods of ordinary African people.

Notes

1. <http://www.ccs.org.za/>, accessed 25 November 2009.
2. <http://www.aercafrica.org/>, accessed 25 November 2009.
3. <http://www.fahamu.org/>, accessed 25 November 2009.
4. <http://www.pambazuka.org/>, accessed 25 November 2009.
5. <http://fahamubooks.org/book/?GCOI=90638100636300>, accessed 25 November 2009.
6. <http://fahamubooks.org/book/?GCOI=90638100618100>, accessed 25 November 2009.
7. Besides the dialogue workshop on 21–22 April 2008, from which the majority of the contributions to this volume are derived, the wider dialogue programme between 19 and 26 April 2008 included a strategy meeting of African CSOs interested in interacting with China as well as a visitor's programme for the Chinese academic group. The latter included visits to Nairobi-based NGOs and a discussion about the crisis after the 27 December 2007 general elections in Kenya, a public lecture on 'China in Africa', a visit to the China Road and Bridge Co., a meeting with representatives of the Kenyan Foreign Ministry and a workshop on China's relationship with the African Union.

Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
About the contributors	viii
Introduction	x
<i>Axel Harneit-Sievers, Sanusha Naidu and Stephen Marks</i>	
Part I Ongoing debates	1
African studies in China: a historiographical survey	2
<i>Li Anshan</i>	
China in Africa: a maturing of the engagement?	25
<i>Sanusha Naidu</i>	
Matching China's activities with Africa's needs	39
<i>Sanou Mbaye</i>	
Part II Macroeconomic dimensions	55
China's strategic relations with Africa	56
<i>Zeng Qiang</i>	
Chinese development assistance to Africa: aid, trade and debt	70
<i>Nancy Dubosse</i>	
Trade, investment and legal cooperation between China and Africa	82
<i>Hong Yonghong</i>	
Part III Country case studies	91
Ethio-China relations: challenges and prospects	92
<i>Gedion Gamora and K. Mathews</i>	
China's impact on Kenya's clothing industry	108
<i>Paul Kamau</i>	
The impact of Chinese imports on Nigerian traders	128
<i>Edwin Ikhuoria</i>	
The dragon is not green enough: the potential environmental impact of Chinese investment in the DRC	139
<i>Claude Kabemba</i>	
Disappearing forests, disappearing hope: Mozambique	155
<i>Daniel Ribeiro</i>	
The West's retreat and China's advance in Angola	163
<i>Elias Isaac</i>	

Part IV China, the African Union and the quest for peace	175
The Darfur issue and China's role	176
<i>He Wenping</i>	
The role of China in peace and security in Africa	194
<i>Desire Assogbavi</i>	
The role and place of the African Union in the emerging China-Africa partnership	201
<i>Francis Ikome</i>	
Part V Perspectives for civil society participation	213
Chinese perceptions of African CSOs: how should African CSOs engage China?	214
<i>Xiao Yuhua</i>	
Sino-African relations: reflections on civil society engagement	224
<i>Antony Otieno Ong'ayo</i>	
The Global Environmental Institute: regulating the ecological impact of Chinese overseas enterprises	247
<i>Zhi Yingbiao and Bai Jie</i>	
Conclusion	255
China-African civil society dialogue in perspective	256
<i>Axel Harneit-Sievers, Li Anshan, Sanusha Naidu and Stephen Marks</i>	
Index	267