



ON CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC EXCHANGES BETWEEN CHINA AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

Cooperation between China and African countries has often been portrayed as an economic one. Despite multiple exchanges in the area of culture and knowledge production, not much is written about Chinese culture in Africa or knowledge production interaction between both China and African countries. Just to give an example, each African major town has Chinese restaurants and Africans like Chinese food. But food is seen as an economic asset, not a cultural one. Chinese cuisine is not enough taken as scientific knowledge, but as professional economic skills. I want to argue that economics is not divorced from culture and academia. I further want to understand how culture and academia have also united Chinese and Africans for many centuries. African universities consume more Western knowledge than Chinese one, despite the fact that China offers a lot in this regard as well. I want to show how African countries also offer a lot to China in terms of knowledge production. I will choose few countries of Africa and examine how this cultural and academic exchange happens with China. My data are mainly from documentary research where I use content analysis. I seek to answer the following research questions: In what ways did the academic and cultural cooperation between China and African countries evolve? What can be done in order to make it more beneficial on both sides?

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Keywords: China-African countries, Academic cooperation, Cultural exchange, African international relations, Chinese international relations, Diplomacy and academia, Diplomacy and culture.

Contribution/ Originality

This paper contributes in the existing literature on China-African countries relations by emphasizing the importance of academic and cultural cooperation. It argues that both formal, official cooperation, but also everyday life experiences of Chinese and African populations are key in order to strengthen other areas of cooperation so far documented.

1. INTRODUCTION

The protocols on cultural and educational cooperation between China and several African countries had been signed since long ago. Cultural and academic exchanges have a long history now between China and several African countries. Although these exchanges have achieved a lot on both sides, the existing literature seems to emphasize more economic cooperation. This paper revisits this academic and cultural cooperation, looking both at the content of agreements, achievements in Africa and in China, and unforeseen areas that need to be documented more and more. Concerning academic exchanges, this paper advocates for more Chinese studies in Africa, for the promotion of a culture of using academic works of China by African scholars and teachers, and therefore for more knowledge of China by Africans. On cultural cooperation, the paper suggests that everyday life of Chinese and Africans in their migrant experiences and in their encounters needs to be uncovered. This should help us understand cultural experiences beyond the realm of cultural performances that have been so far at the forefront of cultural cooperation.

Part of the argument of this paper is that the more Africans understand the Chinese and vice versa, the more mutual benefits in all aspects of the cooperation will be reached by both sides. China's cooperation enables African countries to diversify their sources of material wealth, but also of knowledge acquisition. Academic and cultural cooperation do not have to be separated from other protocols of cooperation. Instead, they have to be seen as part and parcel of the overall interests that are pursued by both sides. Therefore, this paper addresses the following research questions: In what ways did the academic and cultural cooperation between China and African countries evolve? What can be done in order to make it more beneficial on both sides?

2. METHODOLOGY

The content of this paper relied entirely on written documents, both primary sources and secondary sources. The primary sources include mostly reports, most of which are available online. Secondary materials include books as well as scientific journal articles (For a distinction between primary and secondary sources see [McCulloch, 2004](#)). I used the documentary research method. This method is about "the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon we wish to study." [Mogalakwe \(2006\)](#) I used content analysis of written documents, both primary and secondary materials. I resorted to thematic analysis by coding the data in key themes of the paper (For more details about content analysis, see [Crano William and Marilyn, 2002](#)).

The comparative method was also very useful to this paper, since it compares achievements and challenges of China and African countries in their cultural and academic cooperation.

Azarian argues that "comparison is a mode of scientific analysis that sets out to investigate systematically two or more entities with respect to their similarities and differences, in order to arrive at understanding, explanation and further conclusions. So defined comparative works are marked off from those considering only one entity or phenomenon as well as those that seek to acquire knowledge about the mutual influences and the interplay between two or more units of investigation." [Azarian \(2011\)](#) The historical method is also presented in the paper, especially where some chronology of events and activities can be traced and arranged.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

While researching about this paper, I was guided by a number of theories found in international relations. There is a theory of international regimes that entails that states while interacting with other states make calculations in order to gain more benefits. In this regard, they are seen as rational actors pursuing utilitarian ends (Hasenclever, 2004). This theory is closely linked to another one called realism in international relations. Realism is pessimistic as far as cooperation is concerned:

“Realism ignores the relevance of the human needs for community as well as morality. As a consequence, its judgments of the possibilities for inter-human identification, empathy, sympathy, and cooperation, as well as for human learning and social progress, are extremely pessimistic. This pessimism is so strong that it appears at times even incompatible with other elements of realist thought. For example, realists generally fail to take note of the fact that noncooperative behavior is often in the long run self-defeating and thus ill-compatible with the assumption of rationality. This is because individuals and states are bound to interact with others not only once and never again but often on a continuing basis, which requires them to cultivate a reputation for being acceptable “players.” Inasmuch as nation-states in today’s world are interdependent, at least economically, the motive of achievement could actually be expected to encourage states to value their “reputations” more highly. Thus it does not have to operate in the dysfunctionally competitive ways predicted by realism.” Freyberg-Inan (2004)

Therefore in this paper China-African countries cooperation, I adopt what I call an optimistic realism, where it is possible to find both states’ calculations for their interests, but also their acceptance of cooperation. This optimistic approach is very close to the liberal approach in international relations: “The liberal institutionalists want to show realists that cooperation is possible. But they accept a framework where state identities and interests are exogeneous to the process, whereas a model where identities and interests are shaped and reshaped in interaction will be able much more convincingly to present the possibility of co-operation.” Neumann Iver and Ole (2005)

4. RESULTS

4.1. Academic Cooperation

The existing cooperation between China and African countries includes academic exchange. And this has been there since long ago. Academic exchange is very important because those who cooperate need to know each other, understand each other’s histories, cultures, ways of life, needs and even tastes. Scholars who have worked on this Sino-African collaboration have emphasized the need for more research on both sides in order to reach the goal of mutual benefits in all areas of cooperation.

On the China’s part, the endeavor to document Africa in its multiple facets – political, social, economic and even cultural – dates back to as early as the 1930s. Li Anshan who has documented this development calculated that by 1936 a first book on Africa written by Chinese scholars was produced. From then on, the number of books and scientific journals on Africa as written by Chinese kept on increasing. The areas of research also kept on being diversified as the years went

on. The number of publications on Africa as produced by Chinese scholars increased or decreased depending on the political changes of China and the evolution of the interest towards Africa by China. Particularly, publications and translations of books on Africa increased significantly since the 1970s. And this trend went on up to the beginning of this twenty first century. From Anshan's research we learn how two things developed significantly in China concerning academic research on African countries. The first is the promotion of research by Chinese leaders and stakeholders on Africa since early times. To this we add the translation of books on Africa. The second is the institutional development: creation of Institutes and Centres for African Studies in several Chinese universities. [Anshan \(2005\)](#)

A more recent inventory by Carayannis and Olin explains how the Chinese institutions in charge of research on Africa are both government agencies and universities and Chinese research on Africa is increasing thanks to the job of these institutions. These include: The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), the Policy Planning Department and Africa Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the West Asian and African Affairs Department of the Ministry of Commerce, the China Institute for Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), the African Studies Center of Zhejiang Normal University, and many more centres from other Chinese universities ([Carayannis and Olin, 2012](#)). Another report by UNESCO notes that 10 Chinese universities have got Institutes of African Studies ([UNESCO, 2011](#)).

When it comes to the African situation, scholars talk about structural and conjunctural problems that African universities and research centres face on an everyday basis that impede their capacity to produce sound research on China. These include: the insufficient numbers of researchers in all fields and on Chinese studies, financial shortages, and very limited numbers of African research institutions working on China. Initially, only Stellenbosch University of South Africa had a Centre for Chinese Studies (CCS). Two more CCS have opened at the University of Zimbabwe and Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Nigeria. They offer to African leaders and traders some information on China's activities ([Zezeza, 2008](#); [Carayannis and Olin, 2012](#)). These are not enough for African countries to understand more about China.

In order to empower African universities and research centres, China has offered training opportunities to a number of African researchers and scholars. While human resource development and training has been targeting several African employees and students, a particular emphasis is put on the training of researchers. Inter-university cooperation has been set up in order to fulfill this aim. It included the exchange of staff for studies and training purposes, the organization of seminars and conferences, provision of equipment and laboratories, and many other activities. Scholarships of China to African students studying in China kept on increasing. By 2010 more than 5,000 students got these scholarships, and 40 percent of them were in postgraduate studies. They studied various subjects ([Anshan, 2006](#); [King, 2006](#); [Xue, 2010](#); [UNESCO, 2011](#); [Ferdjani, 2012](#)). The number of Africans trained by Chinese in Africa or sent to China for studies kept on increasing from the 1950s up to now ([Eisenman, 2012](#)).

More importantly, the Centre for China-Africa research was launched in Beijing in 2010. This centre is expected to "cover domestic and international seminars on China-Africa cooperation, joint

monographic studies and research, and the publication of works on China-Africa relations. A board of government officials and scholars is expected to head the implementation of the program.” [Xianzhi \(2010\)](#) A follow up conference was held in Nairobi in March 2011. It focused on:

“Understanding China-Africa Relations, with the overall objectives of: Discussing current developments in China and Africa pertaining to the Research Cooperation and Academic Exchange Programme and existing modalities for African research institutions, think tanks and researchers engagement; identifying research priorities, activities and programmes, policy dialogue and advocacy issues related to Africa – China relations; setting up an African network or forum of research institutions and think-tanks working on China-Africa relations.” [CODESRIA. \(2011\)](#)

Perhaps, this is where the African hope lies. If this centre operates effectively, and if the Centres for Chinese Studies keep on increasing in other parts of Africa, then a true research culture about China by Africans can be expected to grow. This is what Zeleza has captured in his plea some few years ago: “For its own sake, China needs to learn more about Africa, as Africa needs to learn more about China, as their political and business leaders celebrate the incredible growth in economic relations between the peoples of these two remarkable lands.” [Zeleza \(2008\)](#)

Finally, one area of training that enhances Africans’ knowledge of China and reduces cultural barriers between African countries and China is the learning of Chinese language both for intellectual exchange, social interaction and business. By 2010, Hanban (China’s Office of Chinese Language Council International) has opened Confucius Institutes in 19 African countries including Rwanda. South Africa, Kenya, Egypt and Nigeria are leading as these language institutes are available to more than one university in those countries. More than a 100 Chinese teachers had been sent to Africa to teach Chinese language and some hundreds of thousands of books have been sent to African countries. [UNESCO \(2011\)](#) Each institute receives between 100,000 and 150,000 US Dollars of aid to run its major activities. The Confucius Institutes “provide Chinese-language programs, train Chinese teachers, administer Chinese exams and tutoring services, and organize Chinese language competitions. Some offer services for African students interested in studying in China and provide commercial and cultural information regarding China. [...] [T]hese activities are conducted to fulfill three primary objectives: teach Chinese, promote cultural exchange, and promote business.”([King, 2006; Eisenman, 2012](#))

These institutes are among academic activities that provide visibility of China in African countries. They give the impression that academic cooperation is on the rise. This is true, but if we consider the fact that in other faculty teaching activities, the learning about China remains very limited, then we have to agree that much needs to be done in this regard. Not only Africans need to learn Chinese languages and cultures, but they also need to learn Chinese histories, Chinese geography and Chinese economic performance and politics. Given the volume of financial and economic cooperation that exists between the two partners, it would be more appropriate to see African academic actors resort more and more to Chinese academic production. There are books and scientific journals written by Chinese scholars in all disciplines that need to be translated into languages accessible to Africans, languages that are global (English, French, Portuguese) but also local though widely used (Swahili, Afrikaans, and many more). These would enable a proper

understanding of China by African stakeholders and facilitate a more beneficial exchange between China and African countries.

Academic programmes taught in African universities are still influenced by Western programmes, contain more subjects from Europe and America than China and elsewhere and use teaching materials that are widely written by western academics. This is the time to diversify sources of academic references. China would offer a valuable alternative in this regard. Not just Confucius Institutes or Centres for Chinese Studies, but also the increase of modules studying China's life are needed. In the Department of History and Political Science at the University of Rwanda for instance, there are only three modules that teach Chinese civilization and foreign policy out of nearly seventy modules for other subjects. If this example is generalized throughout the whole country and continent, then in order to know more about China, the latter must enter the African curriculum in a significant manner.

Part of the reason why this knowledge of each other is needed is that since the 1950s the cooperation between China and Africa has been growing and is becoming even more prominent now than ever. China is going to work with African countries for a long time from now, at least from the way we see the Chinese and African countries commitments and willingness in the bilateral agreements and in other diplomatic declarations. There are so many hopes, promises and expectations about mutual benefits, win-win situations and improvements of lives on both sides thanks to business and technological exchanges. Part of my argument is that academic exchange will facilitate these economic and material exchanges. China has shown enough interest in learning about Africa, in investing in research about Africa and producing more academic works about Africa. African countries also need to do this and to do it quickly.

4.2. Cultural Exchange

Just as power is everywhere, so is culture. It is in oil, natural resources, infrastructure building and commercial exchanges. It must not be divorced from other Chinese activities in Africa or African activities in China. The history of diplomatic relations between China and Africa separates protocols on political cooperation with the ones in economic cooperation or academic and cultural cooperation. But experiences of globalization have shown that culture goes hand in hand with all other contacts. It may be planned in formal decisions, but it also often appears in informal or unforeseen situations. In order to clarify this point, I want discuss cultural exchange between China and African countries by looking at three historical and social phenomena: migration, the culture of hard work and cultural performances.

A short history of China-African countries' cultural exchange tells us that already by 1955 China had signed a cultural agreement with Egypt and that this trend continued from then on with several other African countries. The cooperation became a two-way process even before several African countries became independent:

“In 1958, twenty Chinese cultural delegations visited Africa, forty-five African delegations visited China, and China established cultural exchanges with Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria, Somaliland, Uganda, and Angola. The next year, ten Chinese cultural delegations visited Africa and fifty African delegations went to China. These delegations, as they do today, included a variety

of people such as acrobats, sports teams, youth delegations, and theater groups. In the 1950s and 1960s African delegations often attended rallies with thousands of Chinese to celebrate such occasions as “Algeria Day” and “Congo Week.” Eisenman (2012)

As we shall show later, this trend continued up to today. The sections on migration and culture of hard work tell us how cultural exchange went beyond this planned and formal cultural exchange between countries, between artistic groups and between people.

4.2.1. Migration

Many occasions enabled the contact between Chinese and Africans. Diplomatic relations led to the exchange of diplomats between China and African people. As a result, diplomats started to live in both areas. The contact was initiated, although it was so limited. Another occasion was provided by the education cooperation. This led thousands of African students go to China, live there, study there, come back to their home country once the training programme was completed, but some of them remained in China to seek new opportunities. The number of Africans trained in China kept on increasing as the research by Ferdjani tells us:

“The migration influx of students from Africa in cities like Beijing, Guangzhou, Wuhan and Shenyang suggests the birth of a whole new generation of qualified professionals, having learned from the “savoir-faire”, language, culture and ways of the Middle Kingdom. The growing influx of African students in China, which is set to become an increasingly important destination for African youth, allows one to assume that it will play an important part in the deepening of Sino-African relations in the future. [...] Our basic assumption here is that this current generation of students is likely to perpetuate the partnership between both parties as it is made of qualified ‘ambassadors’, mastering the language requirements and the cultural knowledge to engage with the Chinese in different areas.” Ferdjani (2012). See also King (2006)

After listing several areas in which Africans go to seek training in China and fields in which Chinese technicians come to serve in Africa, Sautman and Yan mentioned the reasons why some Africans decide to remain in China after training: “Despite difficulties presented by widespread racism, a few Africans remain in the PRC after graduation, some engaging in China–Africa business.” Sautman and Yan (2007) These authors further describe various jobs done by Chinese in African countries, ranging from small business up to more skilled jobs that include technical jobs and even farming in several African countries.

Another research by Haugen describes the complexity of the migration of Africans to China and their everyday life as Christians there. In a fieldwork study on Africans who live in the town of Guangzhou as Christians, this author shows how their life is made of complicated experiences, the Chinese city or the their church becoming at the same time a place of absence, where African Christians are obliged to pray in a clandestine church; a place of insecurity and hiding, where some Christians who are illegal residents are themselves obliged to hide; but also a place of hope because of the consoling tone of the gospel. Coupled with the fact that these Africans are far away from their kin family members and face racism from the Chinese population, life becomes difficult for many of them, but not unbearable (Haugen, 2013).

Racism is emphasized by several authors as one of the major problems both Chinese and Africans face during these migratory movements. So going beyond racial stereotypes becomes an everyday challenge for Chinese and Africans to live and interact together both in China and Africa (Monson and Rupp, 2013).

Moreover, the issue of migration is seen in the way mutual interests must be regulated: “The influx of Chinese migrants in Africa needs to be closely watched. Chinese firms will not contribute to economic development in Africa by using labor imported from their home country.” Edoho (2011) Some other authors point to difficult coexistence between the Chinese and Africans either at workplace or in everyday life, where the difference of cultures and behaviours result in conflicts. They give examples of such problems in several countries. In doing so, they tend to show how the cooperation between China and African countries is not always about ‘mutual benefits’ (Michel, 2008; Carayannis and Olin, 2012; Eisenman, 2012).

But beyond these difficulties, some of which are verifiable and some of which are exaggerated, everyday life coexistence between the Chinese and the Africans either in China or in African countries has created a number of shared cultures. Nowadays, frequent mention of Chinese culture or ways of life is increasing in the public sphere. To take some examples in the popular culture or in the entertainment industry of some few countries, in the Republic Democratic of Congo, a number of musicians sing about the Chinese. The famous singer Koffi Olomide sang about “Vieux Chinois” (My fellow Chinese) in his 2012 album. The singer Fally also mentioned the Chinese language in one of his songs of 2013. The Kenyan comedian Eric Omondi made jokes about eating behaviours of Chinese in one Comedy show in Kigali in 2013.

This propels us to see culture beyond what is formally considered as ‘cultural.’ The Chinese who are seen in the social landscape of African countries are surely connected to their professional activities, but in the process of interacting with their peer Africans at work or at home, everyday life creates some other avenues of collaboration, perceptions, judgments and choices of imitation or rejection. Just to take one example of service delivery and culture, let us consider the widespread phenomenon of ‘Chinese restaurants’. It is indeed difficult to trace the time when Chinese restaurants started to spread across the world, and in Africa. It is a relatively new culture in African cities where middle class citizens enjoy going out at Chinese restaurants. These restaurants are owned by Chinese, by Africans working with Chinese specialists of Chinese cuisine, and sometimes of Africans who have worked with the Chinese and then open their own businesses. I want to argue that restaurants are as much products of economics but also of culture since they are about everyday life and taste.

If we scrutinize the everyday life of both Africans in China and Chinese in African countries, it is possible to find so many interesting social trends that might be useful to rethink the ‘win-win’ or ‘mutual benefit’ goals. We might find avenues that are conducive to reducing conflicts or transforming conflicts into opportunities. If the cooperation between China and African countries keeps on strengthening, then the migratory movements of their people will also continue. While material benefits are at the forefront of this exchange, surely the understanding of cultural interaction will help understand the place of material assets in everyday life of people.

4.2.2. Learning the Culture of Hard Work from the Chinese

The interaction between the Chinese and Africans at workplace has revealed the extraordinary culture of hard work on the side of the Chinese. The first comparison was made between the Chinese with other European or American expatriates, the first working hand in hand with Africans, living in modest conditions just like Africans despite their hierarchical distinctions, and the second and the third keeping prestigious at work due to their superior level of training and higher wages. This low profile and hard work of the Chinese has impressed so many people that several researchers working on China-African countries cooperation never missed the opportunity of recording it (Sautman and Yan, 2007).

A second comparison was made between the Chinese workers in all their ranks at work with the Africans. Here again the Chinese demarcated themselves. Their zeal, diligence at work, and capacity of working for more hours than African workers was recorded. One example of this encounter is the TAZARA railway project that built a railway linking the Zambian copperbelt to the Indian Ocean on the side of Tanzania from 1968 to 1975. This was one of the impressive achievements of China-African countries cooperation at an early stage. 30,000 to 40,000 Chinese workers and the double of that number of African workers had participated in the construction activities. Zambian and Tanzanian workers praise the theoretical and practical training received from China. Some of them argue that it is even superior to formal training. This training at workplace included skills for work, hard work culture but also discipline:

“The memory of Chinese workers’ willingness to join in with Africans in every task—from ditch digging to blasting tunnels—remains one of the most powerful images from TAZARA’s construction. A Zambian worker remembers, ‘We were expecting what we used to see with the Europeans from England or Germany, where someone is the manager: a white manager just sitting in the office.... But they themselves [the Chinese] were engaged in the actual labor work. If it was digging they were there, if you were supposed to dig a foundation for a certain building they were also involved in that. So because of that, the Zambians were happy. They said, these guys, they can even do this kind of work, and there was no difference [among different levels of workers].’ The Chinese dedication to performing manual labor during railway construction was closely connected to the pedagogical focus of the project. The lessons that they hoped to impart to their African “friends” included not only technical know-how but also the ‘all-around skills’ of work discipline and character building. Working hard under “bitter conditions” would therefore be the best form of education for the African youth recruits. [...] The new African ‘industrial men’ that TAZARA’s founders envisioned would therefore be shaped through labor practice: they would gain technical know-how, work discipline, and other skills of modern citizenship from their Chinese mentors. The Chinese technicians in turn would serve as role models for emulation; in revolutionary China, ‘to be a model meant not only fulfilling one’s own duty well but also helping others by example.’ ”
Monson (2013)

African workers learned these technical skills. Some of them who had spent more time with the Chinese were even able to learn their language. It would be likewise interesting to know whether the Chinese workers also learned Swahili language or any other African language in the process of working in Africa. Again the picture would be more complete if we obtained the

perceptions that the Chinese had about their fellow African colleagues both at the beginning and the end of the project.

Three other research works on Tanzania, Mauritius and Algeria emphasize hard work culture, the extra hour work of Chinese and how this amazed the local populations (Michel, 2008; Jansson, 2009; Monson and Rupp, 2013). While this culture of hard work is being hailed, recommended, and praised, it must be interrogated. First, several African communities also have a culture of discipline and hard work, though this is not yet extensively documented as far as comparison with China is concerned. Secondly, the culture of hard work has to be put in its social and geographical context in order to be properly understood. However, both Chinese and Africans can teach each other these best practices of hard work culture. This is one area where 'mutual benefits' of the China-Africa cooperation in cultural matters would be reached.

4.2.3. Cultural Performances

Cultural exchange between China and African countries meant also the holding of cultural performances in both areas. These can be dated and documented because they have been recorded on both sides of China and African countries. What transpires is that they are numerous from the time they started in 1955 up to now. They have also taken place in nearly each African country and more than once. Again cultural delegations were from official cultural groups but also from independent artists. Some cultural performances were mobilized for the remembrance of major political events, but many more were done for simply educative or entertainment purposes. Certain cultural agreements were signed even at decentralized levels in addition to the ones signed among states at bilateral levels. Certain Chinese cultural troupes organized performances in several African countries before going back home, just as some African troupes also performed in more than one town of China. Again, not just dancers and singers are the ones concerned. We see also the participation of painters and graphic artists in various art exhibitions (Cultural Exchange between China and Africa, 2003; Eisenman, 2012).

More importantly, everyday life experiences shared by both Chinese and African individuals and groups in their professional, economic and financial liaisons happen to produce even richer venues for cultural exchange. Monson and Rupp give an extensive account of the use of language, social networks and kinship in these interactions. Languages for instance appear as useful tools for communication and bargain. Certain African immigrants in China play the role of intermediaries for their fellow nationals who want operate between their countries and China. Again several Africans who meet in China's cities create social networks in order to be more empowered and secure, some of them collaborate with Chinese stakeholders in their various activities. The same happens in Africa between Chinese businessmen with their fellow and with the Africans. These interactions, even though hard to quantify, are certainly more significant factors of cementing the China-African countries cooperation (Monson and Rupp, 2013).

5. CONCLUSION

Authors and stakeholders who think that China and African countries cooperation merely is about the exchange of oil, raw materials and services in return to infrastructure building have a

narrow image of this cooperation. This is what is visible, but it is not the only one achievement of this cooperation. The academic and cultural part of the cooperation, if sufficiently promoted, may help reveal other benefits of the encounter between China and African countries.

While the China-Africa think tanks celebrate the achievements of this cooperation, they also need to devise strategies to make academic exchange between African universities and research centres and their Chinese counterparts go beyond its current situation. The cultural cooperation must also be supplemented with enough research about everyday life experiences of both Chinese and Africans, in their interactions at workplace but also at home.

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