

Call for papers Special Issue

Multiple Perspectives on the Representations of “the Other” in Contemporary African and Chinese Literature

I. Rationale

Socio-economic, political and cultural engagements between Africa and China continue to grow today, attracting increasing attention from scholars around the world. While much of this attention is focused on the socio-political terrain of China-Africa relations, some studies have tended to focus on the literary dimension of these relations. The ongoing engagement between China and Africa has produced literary works that explore the experiences of people on both sides of the divide: Africans in China and Chinese in Africa, with political and literary movements in both regions also playing an inspirational role. This process has led to the conception of literary works produced by African authors navigating their experiences with China, or by Chinese authors exploring their experiences in Africa. Contemporary examples include *Congo Inc.: le testament de Bismarck* (2014) by Congolese author In Koli Jean Bofane, and South African poet Dennis Brutus's collection *China Poems* (1975), in which he expresses his admiration for Maoist China and classical Chinese poetic forms (Yoon, 2022). This favour is returned in Jidi Majia's *Paroles de feu* (2018), in which a Chinese poet shows reverence for Black African writers. In addition, contemporary African and Chinese literature also covers writers of African descent living in China and those of Chinese descent living in Africa. The latter is best illustrated by *Paper Sons and Daughters: Growing up Chinese in South Africa* (2011), a memoir by Ufrieda Ho, a South African of Chinese descent, while the former is illustrated by numerous African writers who have written about their experiences in China, a particular example being Emmanuel John Hevi's memoir, *An African Student in China* (1963).

Following the rise of contemporary African and Chinese literature, existing studies have mainly focused on the representation of China in African literature, due to the increase in China-Africa encounters on the continent. Literary scholars such as Yoon (2023) stand out in particular with works such as *China in Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century African Literature* that focus on imaginaries of China in African literature. Several other scholars have written powerful commentaries on the literary engagements of African authors with Chinese experiences (Ling, 2022; Elliott, 1976; Lindfors, 1976). Similarly, a number of studies have been devoted to the representation of Africa in Chinese literature (Mang, 2014; Mair, 2012).

Despite the existence of these studies, the link between African and Chinese literature remains largely unexplored. This is particularly highlighted by the paucity of literature that exclusively addresses representations from both African and Chinese perspectives. As some of the cited studies show, the Sino-African literary link is also largely addressed from the Western perspective. This gap makes it necessary to broaden the perspectives, especially on the part of African and Chinese scholars. However, this does not imply the exclusion of Northern scholars willing to join this endeavour. These academics remain essential

as we embark on a reimagining of existing perspectives on the representation of the other in the literatures of the two regions.

2. Themes

For its special issue, the Journal of Sino-African Studies (JSAS) is therefore calling for articles that examine the representation of China in African literature and Africa in Chinese literature from all possible angles. The aim is to build on existing studies that have attempted to explore the link between African and Chinese literature from different perspectives. Contributions from scholars, writers and any other literary enthusiasts interested in these literatures are welcome for this special issue of JSAS. Below is a non-exhaustive list of possible areas of concentration for contributors.:

- a) **Literary representations of China and Africa:** We invite papers that explore representations of China in African literature and Africa in Chinese literature, and how these representations shape perceptions and attitudes towards each other.
- b) **Themes in contemporary African and Chinese literature:** What are the most common themes in contemporary African and Chinese literature? How do writers explore issues of globalisation, development, migration, poverty, corruption and culture?
- c) **Literary exchanges, culture and identity:** We are interested in articles that explore literary exchanges between Africa and China, how contemporary African and Chinese literature reflect cultural exchanges and identity construction in the context of China-Africa relations.
- d) **Comparative perspectives:** We are also interested in articles that compare contemporary Chinese and African literature.
- e) **Reception of African literature in China and Chinese literature in Africa:** How is African literature received in China? How is Chinese literature received in Africa? How do writers and readers perceive each other's literature?
- f) **Cultural influences in contemporary African and Chinese literature:** How do Chinese and African writers influence each other? How does their literature reflect cultural and social changes in both regions?

3. Submission

We invite contributions in the form of articles of 3500 words to 7000 words (including a list of references). Articles may be written in English, French or Chinese and their structure should follow the guidelines for submission of manuscripts to the Journal of Sino-African Studies (JSAS) as indicated here: <https://sino-africanstudies.com/en/manuscripts-submission/>. Complete manuscripts should be sent to the following e-mail addresses: editor@sino-africanstudies.com / apesa@sino-africanstudies.com

4. Important dates

- Publication of the call for papers: **15 May, 2023**
- Deadline for submission of articles: **15 August, 2023**

- Notification of article acceptance or rejection: **15 September, 2023**
- Submission of revised manuscripts: **15 October, 2023**
- Submission of final versions of manuscripts: **30 October, 2023**
- Tentative publication date : **30 November, 2023**

5. Guest Editors

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NB :

1. Articles should be sent by email to the following addresses:
apesa@sino-africanstudies.com / editor@sino-africanstudies.com
2. Published articles are free and immediately available online on the journal's website.

For all accepted articles, the publication fee is 25,000 FCFA/330 yuan/50 dollars. As the journal is not sponsored, a publication fee is required from authors to cover the costs of managing the journal (various online services) and maintaining the website.

Index



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