This discussion series examines the spatial, political, economic, and cultural parameters of China’s relationship with the African continent. The ideological origins of socialist China’s engagement with African countries derive from the rhetoric of Mao Zedong himself, who first coined the term “intermediate zone” in 1946 to spatialize the vast expanse of contested territories and undecided loyalties sandwiched between the ideological poles of the Soviet Union and the United States after World War II. Today, the scale of China-Africa relations has changed dramatically, making it one of the most important geopolitical bonds of the twenty-first century.

Lectures by scholars in fields ranging from landscape design to architectural design to history to cultural studies will help give shape and texture to the nature and dynamics of China’s engagement with African countries. Through these talks, we hope students and faculty will gain a deeper understanding of the complexities at work in the physical indices—buildings, infrastructure, as well as terrain—of Chinese-African engagement and exchange.

**Speakers**

**Roberto Castillo**
Lecturer in African Studies
School of Modern Languages and Cultures
University of Hong Kong

**Philip Harrison**
Professor & South African Research Chair in Spatial Analysis and City Planning
University of Witwatersrand

**Marie Huchzermeyer**
Professor
School of Architecture and Planning
University of Witwatersrand

**Justin Hui**
Architect and Independent Scholar

**Cole Roskam**
Associate Professor
Department of Architecture
University of Hong Kong

**Dorothy Tang**
Assistant Professor & Programme Director
Division of Landscape Architecture
University of Hong Kong

**Facil Tesfaye**
Assistant Professor & Programme Director of African Studies
School of Modern Languages and Cultures
University of Hong Kong

**Yan Yang**
Honorary Research Fellow
Wits City Institute
University of Witwatersrand

**Discussions**

**2 March**
12:45 — 13:45
Knowles 622/623

China-Africa: A Brief Architectural History
Cole Roskam

Gold Networks: Transnational Flows of Mining Technologies and Capital in Early Johannesburg
Dorothy Tang

**30 March**
12:45 — 13:45
Knowles 622/623

Urban Africa, Made in China
Justin Hui

**27 April**
12:45 — 13:45
Knowles 622/623

Chinese Soft Power and African Cosmopolitan Futures
Roberto Castillo with Facil Tesfaye

**23 May**
16:00 — 18:00
Knowles 419

BRICS Cities: What are We Comparing?
Philip Harrison with Yan Yang

A Decade of Densification in Nairobi’s Unauthorised Tenement Market: Is it possible to intervene in the case of Ngei, Huruma?
Marie Huchzermeyer

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