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## DIARY

### FIELD SCHOOL "ASIA-AFRICA CONNECTIONS" CAPE TOWN, SEPTEMBER 29 TO OCTOBER 8, 2017

- 25th Sept** | **Arrival in Chinatown JoBurg**  
Janna and Maria started their SA travel in Johannesburg, JoBurg. They visited the old and new China Town and got to talk to several Chinese shop owners and listened to their stories. Later during our workshop days we learned about their personal reflections on three historical instances of Chinese and their contemporary effects.
- 26th Sept** | **Arrival in Cape Town**  
Carola arrived in Cape Town as her first stop in South Africa. Tian Chen, one of our partners offered to host her in his airBnB. This allowed for first brainstorming sessions face-to-face on a daily basis. We got to know each other quite well over morning coffees and evening curries. We discussed program details and more options to fit in the schedule and people to meet. Tian is a very ambitious, inspiring, and positive person; everybody fell in love with his puppy, Confucius 😊
- 27th Sept** | **Arrival in Durban**  
Svea, Lena, Teresa, and Carola all met in Durban, South Africa's Indian capital. Here we had the chance to meet with Prof. Goolam Vahed who worked on indentured labor on a global scale, not only focusing on Indian indentured labor but transcending the notion of nation-states and considering different countries involved (inter alia Malaysia, China, and Japan). We used the opportunity to hear his opinion on controversial issues such as the usage of the term *coolie* or *coolitude*, also talking about the book 'The Coolie Woman'. It was an open and inspiring student-professor discussion over lunch also tackling issues that apply particularly to the South African context such as ethnic tension.  
We used the afternoon to just walk around the city, its market squares, and historical sites. We smelled Indian spices, saw a lot of Indian Gods such as Ganesha, and noticed many Indian shop owners in market squares selling not only imported goods from India but also typical South African souvenirs for tourists like cutlery or jewelry. We also heard many different languages in these places that sounded like Indian or Bengali. We talked to one shop owner where we bought some souvenirs: He owns the shop together with his wife and the two have been in South Africa for over 20 years. Durban definitely has a different vibe than JoBurg and Cape Town; the Indian atmosphere can be felt ubiquitously.
- 28th Sept** | **Making our way to Cape Town**  
Many individual stories on the road to Cape Town: It was very beneficial for each of us to see different parts of the country, to be confronted with contrasting life styles and realities. It helped us to appreciate cultural and natural diversity and to understand what 'Rainbow Nation' actually means.
- 29th Sept** | **Reunion with the group in CT: City Tour and Eastern Food Bazar**  
Today we are all arriving in Cape Town from different ends. Meeting point was our new home for the coming days, Scalabrini Hostel. After a first meet and greet in the communal kitchen and exchanging travel stories, we started to our first group



activity, i.e. a city walking tour of Cape Town. The tour was led by a South African Afrikaaner who moved to Cape Town to study history. To facilitate his studies financially, he started offering guided tours. We learned a lot about the history of the city, its colonial past, its heritage, and its current challenges. Highlights of the tour included Company's Garden, The Parliament, Green Market Square, The Castle of Good Hope, The Slave Lodge and its adjoining Slave Memorial. The tour touched upon many historical facts that we addressed in our preparatory seminar – actually walking along sites of history made it vivid in our minds.

After the tour we decided to get dinner at the Eastern Food Bazar, a very lively place with various food options from the Global East. So we shared different foods and tasted a lot, and were surprised how it actually resembled Indian food options that we would also get in European countries.

It was a great first day to get a feeling for the city whilst walking and ending it with Asian food literally gave it a nice taste, since Africa-Asia shall be our focus for the coming days.

### 30th Sept

#### **Bellville with Ala Al Hourani, Café stop in Observatory, and T-House evening**

After our breakfast at the Scalabrini Guesthouse, the researcher Dr. Ala Alhourani talked to us about his fieldwork in Bellville and explained the situation of the Somali in Cape Town. We met with Florence, who studies at UWC and did her research in Bellville. She will be at University of Cologne in November and participated in most of our activities during this summer school. We drove to Bellville where we met with her colleague Tinashe who studies at UWC as well. Together with Dr. Alhourani we walked three hours around the main bus station in Belleville and visited different markets, shops and a guesthouse where a lot of migrants are staying when they arrive in Cape Town. During Lunch at a Somali restaurant on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the guesthouse we met with the owner who was excited to meet us and took several pictures with us. The rooftop of the guesthouse offered a great view on the surrounding streets and Dr. Alhourani gave us more information about the different areas. Florence, who is originally from Zimbabwe, showed us a part of the market where male migrants from Zimbabwe work as hair dressers and introduced us to her cousin who works there. We also met the Imam of the Sunnah Mosque who invited us to the library, talked to us and gave us translations of the Koran as well as information brochures about Islam.

In the afternoon we drove to the district Observatory where we walked through a very colourful area with lots of bars, restaurants and shops for students. After a coffee break with Dr. Alhourani we walked to the house of Chen Tian, the B&B called T-House. Tian and his business partner Lowee organised a welcome party for us and introduced us to some of their friends. Marc, a student from India and former guest of Tian accompanied the evening with guitar music and talked to us about his experiences in Cape Town. He is doing a research project about Indian music in South Africa. Iain Manley and Claire von den Heever founded the audio guide App 'VoiceMap' and gave us a short presentation about the development of their business and how they moved to Cape Town. After Prof. Pelican and Dr. Tappe presented their personal research field and work, Carola gave some information about the summer school and all students introduced themselves to the other

guests. Two Chinese friends of Tian talked to us about their reasons to move to Cape Town and their experiences here. We were all invited to Sushi, spring rolls and various finger food and continued talking until around eleven.

-Lena-

### 1st Oct

#### **China-Town Mall with Tian Chen, Chinese Restaurant, Beach**

Tian showed us one of Cape Town's Chinese Malls called „Chinatown“. Opened in 2009, it is a place of consumption and business. A huge number of shops offer clothing, electronics, giftware, furniture (like curtains and blankets), jewelry and auto parts. We had the possibility to meet three shop owners (all of Chinese origin) with very different biographies and talk about their business and lives in South Africa. The first shop owners were a couple from Shanghai. They lived in Cape Town for 20 years and were very positive about the business opportunity in Cape Town (they import curtains and blankets from China) and about the general life in Cape Town. They see Cape Town as their home although the husband mentioned to miss Shanghai. They were very open to talk to us. When they heard that we will have a workshop at UWC they called their son who is studying there so that we could meet him. Another shop owner was a 70 year old lady who came to South Africa six years ago to supervise the shop for her sister. She mentioned problems with employees which could be explained due to language and cultural barriers and her lack of experience as a shopkeeper. She also mentioned the plan to return to China (then her nephew will take over all businesses of her sister).

After visiting the China Mall we went to the “Hot and Spicy China Restaurant“ which was introduced to us as having „better food than in China“. It was the first time for most of us eating authentic Chinese food. The owner of the restaurant had worked in hotels and for catering services in China, and it is very popular among the Chinese living in Cape Town. Interestingly the restaurant was hidden from the outside (the sign on the door was for a fish restaurant and had no „visible“ connection to China) because of the owners great fear of robbery. They had been robbed in the past because of the assumption that Chinese restaurant have a lot cash money.

-Maria-

### 2nd Oct

#### **Workshop Day I**

Prof. Pelican started the workshop with a brief introduction about our previous seminar during the summer semester in Cologne. She introduced herself and stated her main research interests and gave a brief overview of her prior research on South-South migration. Then all the participants introduced themselves and told the group about their interest and connection to the topic of the summer school, to be more precise about their interest in China-Africa connections.

The first presentation was given by Svea about ‘indentured labor’ and the controversies that arise when talking about former indentured labourers. This was followed by a discussion on the use of the term *coolie*, its meanings and possible offensive potential. In the next presentation, Maria and Jana talked about their experiences in the China Town of Johannesburg which they illustrated with pictures. The subsequent conversation covered the experiences of the other participants in other China Towns and our recent observations in the China Town of Cape Town the previous day.



The final presentation by Teresa and Lena dealt with a controversial advertisement of the Chinese detergent company Xiaobi. In this last unit of our first workshop we were lucky to be joined by the son of a shop owner we met in Chinatown the day before. While most of the participants understood the advertisement of the Chinese manufacturer to be offensive and racist, the son of the shop owner did not fully comprehend our reaction and found it amusing. The question was discussed if racism is a concept from the west and therefore could not be applied to the Chinese context. An emotional debate on the message of the commercial evolved and different possible meanings were determined. In conclusion, all of the participants managed to extend their understanding about the different perspectives and assumptions. Our discussion was delightfully enriched by the diverse perceptions and lively discussion by all those present.

-Svea-

### 3rd Oct

#### **District 6 Museum, New York Bagels, Vietnamese Labor Discussion at UWC**

The fifth day of our Field School in Cape Town was structured along two main thematic topics. Our morning program took place in the District Six Museum where we dealt with the history of apartheid and the past of District Six where the museum is placed. In the afternoon our group gathered in the History Department of UWC to participate in a seminar where Dr. Tappe gave a presentation on Vietnamese indentured labor under French colonial rule.

Our day started at 9 am at the District Six Museum, which is just a five-minute walk away from our guesthouse. Inside the museum our guide Joe Schaffer was already waiting for us to start with the tour. Joe is a former resident of District Six who was forced to move from the area after it was declared 'for whites only'. Now he is an education officer in the District Six Museum, where he has worked for 20 years. He introduced us briefly to the history and exhibition of the memorial museum which contains maps, photographs and other reminders of this old and vibrant neighborhood. In 1966 the apartheid government declared District Six a whites-only area under the Group Areas Act. More than 60.000 people were forcibly removed and relocated to townships and informal settlements far from the CBD, aptly known as the Cape Flats. The District Six Museum, established in 1994, works with the memories of the District Six experience as well as of forced removals more generally. But the museum is not just about forced removal; it is also about reconstitution and how we can turn things around. And that is what Joe sees also as his mission in the museum – to work on people's mindsets and maybe change them. The museum also arranges walks of remembrance to commemorate the spirit of the area. Abubaker Brown was our guide who gave us such a walking tour beyond the confines of the walls of the District Six museum past the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and its campus in District Six. Abubaker walked around with us through the streets and talked about what was used to be there before. It is important to understand the context of the space where one is studying, living, walking, eating etc. It is an area that is highly historical. With understanding the history of the area, he told, one could be able to relate better to one's own identity as a South African or even as a visitor and foreigner. Abubaker has happy memories from growing up in the area but however, he as a former resident is still hurt by what happened in the past. He lived in District Six for more than 20 years



of his life, until he and his family were forced from their homes during apartheid. Part of Abubaker's family was originally from Scotland and settled in Cape Town, where he met and married a Malaysian woman. Under apartheid Abubaker and his family was classified as colored and were not allowed to live in the area anymore. Most of the land nowadays had become a construction site (especially to be used for CPUT student accommodation). From a tourism and heritage perspective, the land definitely had meaning. Abubaker said, the best the museum could hope for was that the construction would be stopped and the area restored as a memorial site. The site reflected the experiences of generations of people. But most of the land is now owned by the CPUT and they will not stop building in District Six, despite strenuous objections from the Museum. In this regard we were asked to sign the current petition for getting District Six declared as a national heritage site. A successful outcome of this initiative would regulate the building permissions in this area. We not just supported the Museum by signing the petition, but also bought 'Food & Memory cookbooks', then we thanked our guides and said goodbye. After the museum, at around 12 am, we had a short break for lunch in the 'Bagelshop – New York Bagels' and then headed further for the History Department of the UWC.

Dr. Tappe got an invitation from Prof. Ciraj Rassool to present a session on Vietnamese coolies. Rassool is professor of history and director of the African Program in Museum and Heritage Studies (i.e. District Six expert) at the University of Western Cape and is a long-standing partner of the University of Cologne. Basis for discussion was Dr. Tappe's paper 'Historical Trajectories of Vietnamese Labor Mobility' which was circulated a week before amongst the participants. The debate was focused on mobility in the Global South, comparison between coolies in those days and non-free work today. Keywords were: History of global capitalism, coolitude, translocality, voluntary migration or new slavery, labor migration, place of work and family/living. The style of the presentation and debate was quite a surprise to us. It was organized in a pretty fruitful way especially for Oliver Tappe. The main participants were sitting in a circle around a table in the center (12 people) while in the room 18 more people were present as listeners. As Dr. Tappe had circulated the paper before, some of participants and the discussant were well prepared, contributing critical issues and questions for the group to discuss. The following aspects were discussed: The concept of 'coolitude' (KhalTorabully) and the question of 'How to use this concept?'. In this context the legacy of coolie labor and the experience of uprootedness or solidarity with diaspora community was also interesting. Moreover we discussed the role of female migrants in the system or women in general (for instance the relatives of workers) and the relationship between workers and locals. We merged into the issue of changing continuity and the question of the possible capacity of migrant labor to marry and have a family at all. Especially in the context of history of indentured labor or migrant labor and colonialism till the nowadays as well as in regard to the African continent and to economic conditions.

The meeting ran from 1.30 to 3.30 pm. While coffee and snacks were enjoyed afterwards, we had the opportunity to engage in personal small talks with the attendees. The rest of the day remained free for our own leisure.

- Teresa -



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4th Oct

### Lwandle, Vineyard, Stellenbosch: Center for Chinese Studies

On this day we got to travel a little bit further together with our fellow students from Kenya, South Africa, and Zimbabwe: We went by privat bus to Llwandle which was a nice opportunity to chat some more, and to learn some click words in the local Xhosa language.

Our first stop was the Lwandle Migrant Labor Museum. The museum commemorates the migrant labor system that used to be the core of South Africa's mines, factories, and farms for almost 150 years. The history of the labor system as well as personal accounts of workers are collected and displayed in the museum. Lwandle as a hotspot for migrant labor was created in 1977: Hostels were built for South African migrant workers who usually came from the Eastern Cape Province and left their homes and families to work on farms, in construction, mines or factories where they would receive a work passport. The hostel system represented a harsh reality for the workers: After their shifts, workers were locked in their hostels, guarded and fenced to prevent defection and theft of diamonds. Hostels were made out of wood and iron with mud floors like shacks, around 40 workers shared a small compartment where police was in place for control and wake up (system of discipline and control). Family members were not allowed to visit; when the wives came to see their husbands they did so secretly and had to hide in cupboards. Workers used the water tower, Lwandle's "Eiffel Tower" as a spying spot to warn others of the police, shouting "it's red" in Xhosa (*kubonfo*) so that the ones without passes could hide. Many entered the system voluntarily to support their families but were forced to stay longer due to increasing taxes and land dispossession. Workers sometimes organized in unions to protest for higher wages. The museum, much like District Six museum, succeeds in combining historical facts with personal accounts and many photographs. What we also highly appreciated was the fact that texts displayed were always in English and in isiXhosa, which is more than appropriate for the local context. We also got to visit a former migrant hostel and the surrounding township: The usage of the hostel for reasons of museum's display was highly controversial among the local population since they were in need of housing and demanded to use that same hostel for their own livelihood purposes since they did not have proper housing; some posters from the protests are shown in the hostel. These truths are important for us to realize local realities and to remain reflectively critical with regards to museum ideologies and policies.

After a short stop at a South African vineyard on the way to Stellenbosch, we had lunch at Taste Bud, a small café on the campus of Stellenbosch University and met the emeritus professor Kees van der Waal (social and cultural anthropology): Standing outside the Jewish Center, Kees shared his own story as an immigrant child of Dutch parents in South Africa who arrived in the 1940s. He grew up having internalized the Afrikaaner mentality and also racist viewpoints but changed these when joining the Marxist Society. His research focused on social transformation, identification processes, ethnicity and music in particular regarding the Afrikaaner identity and the Buer people; he stressed the importance of linking anthropology with history.



Our third stop that day was the Center of Chinese Studies (CCS) at the University of Stellenbosch, where we met with Ross Anthony, director of the CCS who took his office in 2014. The Center offers teaching programs on China-Africa relations for African students, and also Mandarin classes, history and culture classes; soon, a MA program on Chinese Studies will be launched. Ross explained to us that colonial influences on education are felt in South Africa but expertise with China is lacking; Western interest in China-Africa relations is “peculiar” in his words as longstanding colonial relationships are being challenged – this is the reason why there are always three voices in China-Africa(-West) relations. The new duality challenges dominant power relations. Chinese rhetoric of socialist solidarity as victims of colonialism legitimizes Chinese presence which produces a new kind of polarity. The ‘Yellow Peril’ discourse fits the fact that Western media are more critical towards Chinese engagement than black media. Fear is prevalent with white people while black people tend to be the consumers of Chinese goods that usually have a biased reputation of cheap prices and bad quality (*Fong Kong, Chine Toq*). China’s presence is not only economic but also educational (Confucius Institutes which tend to spread stereotypical stories of Chinese culture) also with regards to scholarships to enhance business (generate a body of student ambassadors knowing languages and cultures of both sides). China’s role in globalization processes is also ambivalent: Their fear of insecurity and need for internal stability makes them forbid international means of communication and information (Google, Facebook, etc.).

Lastly we met with Prof. Scarlett Cornelissen who conducts research on Japan – South Africa relations and thus adds an interesting new perspective to our discussion that focused on Indonesia historically and on China contemporarily. Prof. Cornelissen is a political scientist and focuses on Japanese diplomacy, aid, and industry on the African continent (how the Japanese entered the market, connect to the global market and shape the African consumer taste). To contextualize these relations we looked at history, key stories and the economic/aid footprint: Deeper economic interest started in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and was institutionalized with the foundation of the Japanese Council; unilateral trade, mainly cotton and textiles, increased from Japan to African countries, i.e. Congo, Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia. This phenomenon enhanced the Yellow Peril discourse as it triggered economic fears among the British that Indian trade might undercut British trade (frictions). Apart from that, trade also led to one of the key stories in Japan – South Africa relations: As the Japanese government collaborated with the apartheid regime, it received significant international criticism from Western as well as from African governments (the South Africa question, Morikawa Jun, Japanese as ‘honorary whites’). This engagement also demanded for ‘dual Africa policies’, i.e. different policies were needed for ‘white Africa’ and ‘black Africa’. These were also present in the last point we addressed, i.e. Japanese economic and aid footprint: The dominant development philosophy was based on South-South cooperation and focused mainly on infrastructure development but was further diversified with regards to manufacturing, telecommunications, transport, power generation, services, and mining.

-Carola-



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**5th Oct**

## **Workshop Day II: Introduction to Scalabrini Hostel, exchange of research ideas**

In the morning, the manager of the Scalabrini center Amanda offered us a tour through the center's facilities, which includes the following: Assistance with job search for documented migrants (helping them to put together their application documents, CV, searching for job ads etc.); advanced skill trainings, e.g. organizing your life and personality; training and scholarship programs (e.g. for professional education); section for welfare (e.g. child support money); section for paralegal support and lobby work (e.g. registration procedure for Congolese refugees/asylum seekers); section for women's work (training of trainers); educational sector (workshops in schools to mitigate xenophobia and racism, nurturing of communication and mutual acceptance). On the upper floor, they have three labs for language teaching (English) and computer skills workshops. They also offer the possibility to migrants to use the computers to check the internet and register for the extension of their permits with the assistance of facilitators. The Scalabrini Center has existed since 1998 and officially registered in 2003. The Scalabrini fathers bought the building and after fundraising for four years, renovated it and started their activities. At the beginning, they gave out food parcels to foreigners and did some language teaching, but gradually they added their programs and now are among the few organizations for foreign nationals that provide different, complimentary services. The Scalabrini Center tries to stay within the limits of the legal, they do not want to get into trouble with the law, being suspected of aiding and abetting illegal migration. At the same time, they make sure to lobby for the rights of their clients, challenging court decisions. The Scalabrini Center sees some 2000 clients on a monthly basis; e.g. every week they have some 400 people passing through their job seeking assistance program. They try to provide person-to-person service and to make sure to safeguard their reputation as a genuine service provider vis-à-vis their clientele as well as the South African government. Their funding comes from the Catholic church, some trusts and the lottery fund in South Africa, revenue from the guest house and from renting out meeting rooms in their premises. They have regular staff and generally have 4-5 volunteers on a 3- to 9-month basis. They are very open and willing to accommodate the needs of their clients and workers as much as they can. Internships allow meaningful involvement and support to asylum seekers and refugees in South Africa.

- Michaela -

After the Scalabrini tour, we transferred to UWC where we had the opportunity to present and discuss our own research ideas together with the South African students. We formed three groups of 4-5 people to have in-depth discussions and enough time to provide comments or advice to each other's projects. Themes ranged from anthropology to geology to sociology. We were fascinated by research successes and ideas by our friends from Zimbabwe for instance: Tinashe worked on urban agriculture and Florence with Rwandan refugees in Cape Town – these topics illustrate the immense diversity of themes discussed. Finally, we needed more time than expected because the exchange went naturally and fruitfully thanks to critical questions and progress. We were quite surprised of how deep our discussions went. We helped each other with regards to methodology and theoretic

approaches and also practically for instance regarding gate openers to a certain field.

### 6th Oct

#### **UCT Day: Chinese traders in SA and Fallist Movements**

Today was a great day. We went to the University of Cape Town, where we got to know Prof. Ana Deumert and Dr. Sibonile Mpendukana who gave us an interesting lecture on Chinese entrepreneurs in South Africa's rural areas and on the Fallist movement on the UCT campus. We could get an insight into their work and have interesting discussions. Above all, the subjects of student protests and of being black on the campus were discussed. We ate lunch at the University and could then take a walk over the impressive grounds of UCT, which reminded us very much of Hogwarts.

After the final discussion with Prof. Deumert and Dr. Mpendukana we drove to a Taiwanese tea house. We were allowed to taste a lot of delicious teas, although the owners had already left the house for a party. Luckily Tian knew the owners and we were allowed to stay. From the teahouse, we made our way to our wrap-up dinner in an Ethiopian restaurant, to which also some other friends of the summerschool accompanied us. The tables were packed with colorful mixed plates, which we shared. Finally, we got chocolate cake and ice cream. Everybody had a great last evening and we are looking forward to see each other again.

-Janna-

### 7th Oct

#### **Wrap Up Morning at Biscuit Mall**

On this morning we took the last opportunity to catch breakfast outside, not a self-made scrambled eggs and avocado mix, but some SA variation. Our colleagues, Dr. Alhourani and Tian Chen had recommended visiting Biscuit Mall where various food stands are combined with crafts and art collections. In this artsy atmosphere, we took some quiet time with organic coffee and different international food options to recapitulate our experiences and program days:

We very much enjoyed the fact that our program was all-encompassing and full to profit from days to the fullest – even though it would have been nice also to have one day or half a day without program to explore CT on our own. We also realized that most museums or shops closed early in the afternoon, so shifting our programs to the evening would offer us even more opportunities.

What was a real treat and benefit was the exchange with the UWC students and with Chinese locals and students. To hear their views first hand was priceless and enriched discussions immensely. It generated the so wished-for international and intercultural debates. Also, we are all looking forward to meeting and hosting our new friends next month, in November 2017, when they come to Cologne for an academic training with GSSC.

### 8th Oct

#### **Excursion to Robben Island**