

**UNDERSTANDING THE CHINESE VIEWPOINT:  
A STUDY OF CHINESE MIGRANTS IN MOZAMBIQUE AND SOUTH  
AFRICA AND THEIR PERCEPTION OF LOCAL BLACK AFRICANS**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial  
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## **ABSTRACT**

China's influence in Africa, and its economic relationship with states throughout the African continent, has been analyzed and criticized by many scholars. However, the role migration plays in the relationship between China and Africa remains a relatively unexamined topic in comparison to economic relationships. Furthermore, while several scholars have studied the relationship between African locals and Chinese migrants from the African perspective, the Chinese immigrant's perspective of Africans has not been discussed at length. This project seeks to better understand how Chinese immigrants who migrate to South Africa and Mozambique perceive black Africans. It is grounded on 29 interviews conducted in Durban, South Africa and Maputo, Mozambique with Chinese immigrants. Interviewees included hospitality workers, construction workers and supervisors, and local shop owners. The interviews gave light to the various levels of prejudicial and negative attitudes Chinese immigrants possess about local black Africans, and the role Confucian thought plays in developing those viewpoints. Furthermore, this project delves deeper into discovering the construct of race from a Chinese lens and how that view impacts China's growing relationship with African states.



## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

“Why are you friends with black people”, I was calmly asked in Chinese by the native Chinese man as I stood on the train at 3 AM. I had travelled that morning to Nanjing on the *gaotie* (high-speed train) from Shanghai, and was exhausted from traipsing across the entire city. My friends and I decided to save money and buy standing tickets on the overnight train back to Shanghai. We were the only *waiguoren* (foreigners) on the train and most likely the first western, white people many of the Chinese natives aboard the train had ever seen. After nearly an hour of conversing to the best of our ability with a group of gentlemen from the rural areas of western China, I was bluntly asked this question about my friendship with black people. At first I was taken aback, but quickly realized that the question simply arose from a lack of understanding. The man went on, “they are all criminals, they have black teeth, and hurt society.”

At this point my interest was sparked. As a student of Chinese, and the son of a Zimbabwean, I have always held interest in China and Africa. I have read extensively about the political and economic relationship between China and many African nations. After spending nearly ten weeks studying in Shanghai and traveling to various regions throughout the country, the negative perception many Chinese peoples have of foreigners, especially those of African descent, became apparent. Yet, this interaction on the train brought a new question to mind: what are Chinese migrant’s perceptions

of blacks after they migrate to Africa, and how do they change, or not change, because of said migration? Answering such a question requires a close examination of what ethnicity is, what race is, how they are the same, how they are different, and how they play a role in molding immigrant's perceptions. It also requires an analysis of traditional Chinese thought, and how that tradition still shapes the worldview of many Chinese migrants. The importance of race and ethnicity is integral to the Chinese culture, and as hundreds of thousands of Chinese choose to migrate to Africa, they encounter a mostly homogenous culture where they are the minority. Moving from a relatively homogenous society where an individual appears as part of the majority, to a homogenous society where they are clearly a minority, can have a significant impact on how a person views themselves and the "other". Chinese migrants moving to Africa are facing this "self" and "other" identity challenge daily.

This project examines how immigrants from various parts of China who have moved to South Africa and Mozambique hold their perceptions of race. In other words, this project seeks to determine the Chinese migrants' racial perception of blacks after migrating to South Africa and Mozambique. This project serves as a critical avenue to determine how people's perceptions of race are impacted through migration and how people of different races accept and work with each other. Furthermore, it seeks to better understand how traditional Chinese thought continues to impact modern Chinese thought, and how a majority of Chinese migrants perceive China's involvement in Africa.

The study is broken into five chapters which seek to answer two questions. First, do immigrants from China perceive black Africans negatively. Second, is a certain aspect of Chinese culture or history, such as Confucianism, responsible for

creating a certain perception toward blacks? The literature review discusses the historical Chinese understanding of race and ethnicity, the importance of *suzhi*, and proceeds to define Confucianism in context of this study. Furthermore, I discuss the history of Chinese migration, the type of migrants, and the historical relationship between China and Africa. Following the contextual literature review, a short description and explanation of the 29 interviews conducted with Chinese immigrants in Mozambique and South Africa is given. The immigrants interviewed belonged to three different occupations: small businesses ownership, construction, and hospitality. A discussion of the data gathered from the interviews paints a picture of the importance Confucianism, and more specifically education and development, have in constructing Chinese perceptions of race. Finally, the major themes extrapolated from my research are analyzed and discussed. Due to the limited number of interviews, I am unable to make any generalized comments about overall perceptions Chinese migrants hold. However, the 29 interviews from this study does offer a better understanding of specific viewpoints which are not often told.

It is important to note that some language may be deemed racially insensitive from a western lens. In an effort to present the most realistic picture of Chinese-African race relations, local people of color in Africa are referred to as black Africans in accordance with how Chinese immigrants refer to them. This does not insinuate that Chinese people are racist, but rather ensures that an accurate depiction of their interviews is presented.

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW IN CONTEXT

The history of “race” and “ethnicity” in China extends back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE during the Spring and Autumn Period. Since that time, *zulei*, a term which has become “emblematic of sinocentrism”, has drawn delineations between Han Chinese, and the “other” (Chin, 2012). In fact, the old saying goes, “非我族类，其心必异” or rather, “If they are not of our *zulei* [race], they are sure to be of a different mind” (Chin, 2012). While this concept seems to communicate the divisiveness between Chinese ethnicities and race, the concept of Chinese unity and identity is not clearly defined. This literature review seeks to provide a background on ways in which many Chinese peoples have perceived race historically, and draw a connection between that historical perspective and today’s current outlook.

The review focuses specifically on two groups of literature. The first discusses the way Chinese peoples have historically viewed race and ethnicity; and the second details the history of relations with, and migration to, Africa from China. Both literatures are important to understanding why certain perspectives of race, or the “other”, have or have not developed in the minds of Chinese migrants moving to Africa. Generations of historical interaction continue to play a role in creating the modern perception of many migrants.

The chapter begins by drawing a distinction between western and Chinese perspectives of race and ethnicity. Following, I discuss the importance of *suzhi*, or “a person’s quality” and the role it plays in Chinese society’s concept of hierarchy. Attention is given to the impact of Confucian thought to later understand why and how

Confucianism continues to impact the worldview of modern Chinese migrants. The following sections further accounts for the history of Chinese migration within China, and then to Africa. Following, I address the types of Chinese migrants in Africa and discuss the working groups many of the migrants belong to such as construction or hospitality.

### **Ethnicity and Race**

While the modern term of “race” in China is quite new, the roots of race, however, are found deep in China’s antiquity. The understanding of ancient China’s Confucian definition of “race”, *zulei* in classical Chinese, seems to be contradictory. On one hand, it labeled those not of “Chinese ways” as barbarians, essentially defining them as the “other”. On the other hand, it taught that the barbarian, or other “race”, could be absorbed through a change in cultural self-identification. This process of self-identification, or “becoming Chinese” is known as sinicization. Debate exists about the truth behind sinicization meaning “becoming Chinese” since many would argue the Chinese had only recently been, sinicized (Crossley, 1990). Regardless of how long ago the Chinese became sinicized, history indicates that starting in at least the third century BCE, sinicization was utilized to create a unifying identity in China.

The Chinese drew a difference between the *waiyi* (outside barbarians) and the *neiyi* (inside barbarians) (Dikötter, 1992). It is the negative perception the Chinese held toward the *waiyi* which grew out of racial constructs; whereas, the perception of the *neiyi* resulted from ethnic constructs (Dikötter, 1992). In other words, the subhuman regard for outside barbarians was built on judgments of phenotypical traits, or what is often called “race”. The absorption of outside barbarians required

transformation, which insinuates becoming “un-barbarian.” As we look at the classics, specifically the historical usages of *zulei*, early evidence of racial prejudice becomes apparent. The name for China in Chinese is *zhongguo*, which literally translates to “center country”. The focus on being at the center gives a glimpse into where many Chinese people believed China stood on the global stage. Non-Chinese people outside of the central-system were viewed as inferior and expected to pay tribute to, and learn from, *zhongguo* (Link, 2015)

This form of racial discrimination where people are only accepted if they become more like the group who is expected to accept them appears bluntly in Chinese culture, as seen with *zuozhuan* (Chin, 2012). The *zuozhuan* played a fundamental role in establishing the original theory of Han-race lineage, as written by the philologist, Zhang Taiyan (Chin, 2012). The *zuozhuan* which Chin is referring to is the ancient saying, “If he is not of our *zulei* (race), his mind is sure to be different (*fei wo zulei, qi xin bi yi*) (Dikötter, 1992).

The Manchu period serves as a prime example of how race was used to create a perception of outsiders. Ranging from interpretations in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE to modern interpretations like Dikötter’s in 1992, we see that the Han view the “other”, in this case the Manchus, as of a different mind and actual “beasts” (Chin, 2012). In order to fuel a racial revolution, or “Glorious Restoration” against the Manchu’s, instead of using the textual authority used in the Spring and Autumn period, the *zuozhuan* was used in a similar manner to bring, “modern racial theories to bear on the Chinese classical tradition” (Chin, 2012).

As the conquering force, the Manchu’s understood the power of racial constructs, and in many ways, the continued formation of “Han” identity was a

specific social construction which served a political purpose. From the 1600s to the 1900s, the Manchu's labored to create a social construct which, "generated a strong sense of nationalistic-racial consciousness among Chinese" (Elliott, 2001). The Han connection goes far beyond cultural components, and was created with the influence of political and economic relations (Tapp, 2012).

Overtime, the idea of the "other" as a different race, and in some instances, sub-human has most likely inculcated racial prejudice within the subconscious of many Han peoples. The magnitude of differences between Han Chinese, and other Chinese minority groups, is interesting considering that many eastern traditions and races are often viewed as homogeneous in comparison to the West. In other words, the West often views Asia as a singular ethnic and racial group, and neglects the differences which Asian people groups often recognize amongst themselves. The US has been labeled the "melting pot", and on closer inspection, one could argue that the Han race is equally as much of a gathering of traditions, or "mixed blood" as the US (Teng, 2012). While Han people may be of the same race with all other Chinese according to western perspectives – based on the color of their skin – the Han people do not share common customs, culture, language, religion, or political ideology with the majority of other Chinese "races" (Teng, 2012). Within the Han themselves, a great diversity exists. When talking about the Chinese race, it is not a "race" only in the terms of color of skin, but an identity which has been fabricated to be superior based off a conglomeration of physiological features.

One must also give thought to the early influential role geography and race played in creating the identity of the Han people. Geography, and specifically place, played a significant role in how Chinese intellectuals defined "Hannes" (Chen, 2012).

The Chinese's, specifically "pure Han's", ability to expand to new geographic places, and furthermore adapt and migrate to these new places, is recognized not only within the Asian sphere, but internationally (Chen, 2012). It is read almost with the same attitude of the US's Manifest Destiny, and very well could explain some of the prejudice toward blacks (Chen, 2012). In other words, just as Americans viewed western migration as fulfilling their destiny to conquer unknown lands, the Han's history of migration throughout China, and now the world could be viewed as the Han people fulfilling their destiny to rule over any land they encounter.

The idea of one homogenous world stems from the Confucian Classical concept of *tianxia*, meaning "all under heaven" (Dikötter, 1992). China was viewed as one great community, and Chinese leadership decisions were oriented toward lands being unified, under heaven. Naturally, in the same way the US's concept of Manifest Destiny was an excuse to oppress minorities, some might view the Han's ability to expand geographically and conquer the "barbaric" lands as an attempt to prove their racial superiority.

Additionally, the perception of Chinese elites toward blacks aligns with the ancient perception regarding raw and cooked: an ancient idea of pure versus evil from Chinese tradition. Whenever blacks were fed cooked meat and subsequently endured diarrhea, they were said to undergo "changing the bowels" to become half-human (Mullaney, 2012). The emphasis placed on skin color dates to 221 BCE in China where black, white, and yellow skin denoted social classes and aesthetic values. The racial prejudice in China was not merely relegated to blacks. Dikötter's book opens westerner's eyes to the perception China had of, "the devils from the dark continent" and sets a firm foundation for understanding why the Chinese population often



discriminated not just against blacks, but any different color, geographical origin, and even religion (Dikötter, 1992).

The relationship between African states and China is extremely complex. In many ways, despite China's attempts to differentiate itself from colonial powers by empathizing with African states as a fellow nation who experienced poverty, China is criticized for exploiting Africa. Juxtaposing, many African leaders have turned to China for investment purposes and view them as a strong ally. Nevertheless, a tension often remains between Chinese and people of African origin. Underlying many of China's foreign developments is a strong desire for China to return to its place at the center of the world stage (Link, 2015). Link believes that "To be Chinese still means to be [believe that one is] a part of a civilization that has primacy in the world" (Link, 2015). This has led to a deep-seated racism at the center of modern Chinese society (Tuttle, 2015) and this has led to a racial prejudice against other "races", such as blacks in Africa.

As this study of racial perceptions is discussed, the issue of racial inequalities must be considered. Sigelman and Welch argue that when talking about racial inequality, not only is it manifested in the lives of minorities, but in the account of their history (Sigelman and Welch, 1994). In other words, racial inequality impacts the daily lives of minorities, but often history has failed in documenting how racial inequalities presented themselves because those who were marginalized have stories which are never told. While the discussion of racial inequality between blacks and whites is evident in South African colonial history, the relationship between Chinese migrants and local blacks is slightly more complex. Because of its history as a developing nation, China has created an empathizing common identity for the sake of

building relationships and trust with developing African states. Nevertheless, as this literature review claims, China also has a long history of viewing “the other” as racially unequal, which therefore, places black Africans in a position of inferiority. For the purpose of this study, it is important to keep in mind that the presence of racial inequality, and the fact that many victims of racial inequality fail to have their history and story told, creates a situation where prejudiced perceptions are fostered because of a lack in knowledge about “the other’s” history.

### **Importance of Suzhi**

As aforementioned, a key tenant of Confucianism is the familial and societal hierarchical structures. *Suzhi*, roughly translated as quality, remains a large component of determining where an individual sits in society’s hierarchy. Confucianism’s emphasis on education, and one’s ability to become educated, allows for mobility within the social structure. The more enlightened or educated a person becomes, the more they are capable of moving up society’s structural ladder, and thus increasing their *suzhi*. This also related to an outsider’s ability to increase their *suzhi* through sinicization (Kipnis, 2006). In many cases, all manners of human resource decisions can be made based solely on *suzhi* (Kipnis, 2006). This concept extends beyond what a person knows, but also includes their character, clothes, nutrition and a variety of other traits which collectively determine if a person is lacking or excelling in “quality”. In the Chinese language, other words exist to explain the quality of non-human entities, but *suzhi* is reserved specifically for discussing the quality of a person (Kipnis, 2006). This reserved usage highlights the value Chinese culture places on people’s quality.

*Suzhi* is important to this study for two reasons. First, *suzhi* plays a vital role in education. In 2000, when the use of *suzhi* in academia reached its peak, nearly one in every five academic articles published in China about education placed *suzhi* as the topic of discussion (Lin, 2009). Second, as Yan Fu argued, improving the people's *suzhi* is the foundation for saving a nation (Kipnis, 2006). Going further, improving *suzhi* not only offers hope to failing nations, but the key to international victory among nations. People are either included or excluded solely on how their level of *suzhi* is judged (Lin, 2009).

What is most important to grasp is the direct attachment between *suzhi*, education, development, and value of a human. In the past decade, the government adopted *suzhi jiaoyu* (quality education) (Lin, 2009). As the Shanghai Dictionary defines *suzhi* in terms of education, it is “cultivation that human beings develop through practice” (Ci Hai, 1999). This interpretation surpasses the West's definition of education. It is not merely about passing a class in school, but holistic development. In terms of development, *suzhi* is the primary foundation for it. Without *suzhi*, one will never be able to develop (Lin, 2009). Based off the emphasis of education and development, *suzhi*'s extreme importance becomes easily identifiable. An entire nation or person's Quality (capital Q) is judged on their *suzhi* (Kipnis, 2006). It is a person's overall ranking, their ability to progress, and essentially their identity (Kipnis, 2006). Therefore, if a person is ever to become sinicized – which is explained later – they must first start with attaining *suzhi* and work toward development and education.

### **Confucianism**

The study of Confucianism is vast and a comprehensive understanding is beyond the limitations of this paper. Nevertheless, several aspects of Confucianism are

integral to this study and Chinese immigrant's perceptions of black Africans. The Confucian values most pertinent to this study include education, development and social hierarchy. For over two millennia, Confucianism has played an integral role in the development of Chinese culture. As an individual, Confucius is held in the highest regard throughout Chinese society, but it is his work, more than him as an individual which remains influential. The Confucian school of thought is not merely limited to the works of Confucius, but rather an umbrella term applied to works untied around similar values. The Five Classics of Confucianism formed the core for the symbolic system of how China determines social groups (Dikötter, 1992). Today, the influence of Confucianism within Chinese society remains noticeable. Despite the lack of conscious practice of Confucianism, its ideals and views regarding morality still heavily influence modern day Chinese thought (Ni, 2002). Confucianism is not utilized as a religion, but an inherent aspect of Chinese culture which has influenced the development of Chinese thought and morality for centuries. As Chen and Chung state, Confucian hierarchy, family system, and emphasis on education continues to impact communication within society at-large today (Chen and Chung, 1994). More specifically, the Confucian mindset has molded the Chinese's modern perception of race and the new world order (Dikötter, 1992). With the exception of several decades where the government banned Confucianism, it has remained a central tenant to the Chinese way of thinking. For this study, I engage solely with the Confucian school of thought and not Confucius as an individual.

The Confucian understanding of education differs from the western perspective. Education is holistic, and goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge in a subject. As previously mentioned, education's goal is to raise one's *suzhi* through

consistent practice. The Chinese word for learning, *xue*, refers to inner-cultivation, which aligns with the Confucian focus on the responsibility of everyone to fulfill his or her role as a citizen of society (Ni, 2002). In many ways, this version of education can be perceived as development.

When applying the term of development to those outside of China, or “non-Chinese”, the only way in which they can become developed, or accepted, is through sinicization. The “outer” peoples, or “barbarians” are able to “become Chinese” by being culturally absorbed. In other words, they can “come and be transformed” through what was called *laihua* (Dikötter, 1992). This process is indicative of the Yin and Yang model, and is therefore inherently Confucian (Dikötter, 1992). As a person “becomes more Chinese” through education and development, they become less Yin and more Yang through a continual process. Also, mentioned previously, development can only occur with a foundational *suzhi*. One’s *suzhi* places them at a certain level within the Confucian hierarchical structure: the greater *suzhi* a person possess, the higher they are regarded among their family and community. In terms of Confucianism, one’s worth is always in context of their community. Because a person’s primary mission as a citizen should be the betterment of their community, it is that person’s community who determines a person’s value, or *suzhi*. Confucianism’s emphasis on societal hierarchy, in conjunction with Yin and Yang’s dualistic structure, is apparent in ancient China’s perception of race (Dikötter, 1992).

Dikötter clearly makes a strong argument for the influence Confucianism has in formulating the Chinese perception of race; my research attempts to legitimize his argument. The results below indicate the importance of education, development, and hierarchical structure and the unique aspect each plays in the way African blacks are

perceived by Chinese immigrants. It is important to note Dikötter's argument that reason exists to believe that Chinese's supposed racist perception of blacks in Africa stems from the hierarchical beliefs of Confucianism. Tuttle argues that traditional Chinese thought, or Confucianism is not inherently racist. Juxtaposing, Dikötter argues that inherent racism is present by translating the ancient phrase of *minzu zhuyi* literally as "racism" (Dikötter, 1992).

### **History of Chinese Migration**

Prior to international migration, Chinese people groups, specifically Han peoples migrated within what is now considered modern day China (Chen, 2012). Expanding beyond the small, traditional borders of their peoples was a sign of dominance and expansion. Melanie Yap argues that although limited, Chinese migration to Africa unofficially began nearly 2000 years ago during the Han dynasty (Yap, 1996). Government endorsed migration to Africa began in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, initiated by the Qing dynasty (Park, 2012; Ai 1989; Shen 1990; Li 2000). The first immigrants arrived in South Africa with the Dutch East India Company, and were followed by laborers and artisans in the 1850s during Britain's colonial rule in Africa (Park, 2012). However, the strong relationship between China and Africa did not begin until the 1950s, which will be discussed later.

According to Li, China-African relations since 1949 can be divided into three major periods: 1950-1978, 1978-1995, and 1995 to present (Li, 2005). 1950-1978 was characterized by the Chinese government winning African allies through the support of anticolonial movements (Li, 2005). 1978-1995 focused on competing with Taiwan for African state's support and coordinating African support with China's opening to the West (Li, 2013). Post 1995 moved further into the realm of economic support and

a stress on mutual benefits between Africa and China (Li, 2005). Park agrees with Li and argues that immigration trends are related to the 1970s economic reforms in China and the “liberalization of emigration legislation in 1985” (Park, 2012).

To gain a snapshot of the relationship between African states and China, we should first turn to the Forum on China-African Cooperation’s main website (FOCAC). FOCAC presents a glimpse into the extensive, more modern partnership between African states and China through daily articles. The current partnership, as previously mentioned, focuses more on economics than politics. China also currently looks to several African states not only as places that need development, but states capable of both giving and receiving assistance in a mutually beneficial manner (Li, 2007). The FOCAC classifies “Sin-African Relations” under four headings: China’s African policy, political exchange, economic and trade cooperation, and cultural exchange ([www.focac.org](http://www.focac.org)). As of 2009, it is estimated that nearly 800,000 Chinese live in Africa with the largest percentage abiding in South Africa (Park, 2009).

The primary motivation behind China’s relationship with Africa, according to Araujo and Cardenal is dually pronged: feeding the world’s largest population and extracting natural resources (Cardenal et al., 2013). Both of these reasons explain why many choose to migrate to Africa for employment and potentially a better life. Mozambique is a prime example of the oil and natural resource extraction from Africa (Kuang, 2008). The migration from China to Africa places immigrants in a population where they are the minority amongst a people which Chinese have historically held dislike and prejudices against.

### **Type of Chinese Migrants**

The topic of migration in China is historically, and also currently, brought up under the context of intranational migration from rural to urban areas, or civilized to barbaric lands (Chen, 2012). However, the economic and migratory relationship between China and many African nations is strong. A sign written in Mandarin Chinese placed above the Chinese built national stadium in Maputo, Mozambique which states, “The friendship between China and Mozambique will prevail like heaven and earth” portrays the magnitude of the relationship between China and Africa, and hints toward the migration associated with it (Cardenal et al., 2013). Understanding the motives behind emigrating from China to Africa is integral in comprehending Chinese immigrant’s perceptions of Africans, and better understanding how Chinese natives relate to African locals and vice versa.

According to Park, three types of immigrants make up the body of Chinese relocating to Africa: employees of Chinese-State owned Companies; independent, small-time, entrepreneur oriented migrants seeking economic opportunities; and transit migrants (Park, 2009). Different authors provide different definitions as to what type of migrants come from China. For example, Ma Mung claims three types of Chinese migrants arrive in Africa: temporary migrants linked to public works and infrastructure projects, an entrepreneurial migration flow made up of merchants, and a group of laborers using Africa as a pit-stop in hopes of migrating to Europe (Kuang, 2008). Migrants also include commercial supervisors, temporary agricultural workers, construction workers, shop sellers, and entrepreneurs, argues Cardenal. While the type of migrant might be debated, what is much less debatable is that each of these migrants are adaptable and able to find their niche in society. South Africa’s Chinese population resides in what is arguably the most race-conscious country in the world



(Yap, 1996). They are a population who, despite their minority status, have impacted the employment field and development overall (Yap, 1996). While Yap authored her book in 1996, Park notes that since then, the number of migrants from China to Africa has jumped significantly (Park, 2009). With this as the case, Yap's viewpoint becomes even more integral to understanding the Chinese perception of local black Africans.

### **Summary of Political and Economic Chinese-African Relationship**

As aforementioned, the relationship between China and Africa first reached its pinnacle in the 1950s and 1960s as African nations hoped for independence from colonial powers. During this time, future states such as Namibia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe began to organize movements for independence from Germany, Portugal, and England, respectively.

As these movements gained recognition on a world stage, Russia and China were in the midst of expanding as communistic powers. Both states understood the necessity of attaining support in the United Nations (Jinyuan, 1984). They also understood the importance of gaining support from soon to be independent African states (Jinyuan, 1984). As two states which had experienced significant poverty, yet also envisioned a future of sharing global hegemony, Russia and China crafted arguments which developing states, and liberation parties in Africa could relate to.

The importance of political ties with African states, from the Russian and Chinese perspectives, is best exemplified by Zimbabwe's history. As the Ndebele tribe in western Rhodesia built up the ZAPU independence party, Russia promised to support their cause with weapons, uniforms, and ammunition (Coltart, 2016). Simultaneously, China partnered with the Shona tribe in the east, and the ZANU party. In hopes the ZANU party would one day be the ruling party in an independent

Zimbabwe, China supported Mugabe's party with weapons, uniforms, and ammunition as well (Coltart, 2016). Russia and China crafted these strategic relationships in hopes of gaining the country's support following their independence and ultimately a partner vote in the United Nations General Assembly. Similar relationships were seen in Mozambique when the Renamo independence party and China worked to build a partnership of mutual support (Coltart, 2016).

While the crumbling of the official political partnerships due to the implosion of the USSR broke many of the strong ties between Russia and China and African states, a viewpoint of Africa and peoples had been inculcated within the Chinese mindset. The Chinese Government's perception of Africans was one which portrayed the Africans as pawns to be used to help China achieve its political objectives. The time between 1950 and 1978 explains how China and Russia's primary mission for supporting African state's independence was to hopefully attain their political allegiance (Li, 2007). Due to the historical negative perception of blacks, and the Chinese government political exploitation of many Africans, many members of the Chinese population most likely viewed Africans with a prejudiced, partially-racist mindset.

The example of Zimbabwe discussed above varies greatly from China's involvement in west African states. While the relationship between China and east African states dates back centuries, west African states did not establish consistent relationships with China until the 1980s (Tschakert, 2016). With relations spanning only forty years, a distrust and tension between blacks and Chinese is much more evident. As Tschakert points out, Chinese artisanal miners in Ghana were rounded up and criminalized for their small gold mining efforts (Tschakert, 2015). The Chinese

migrants are viewed by locals and the government as a danger and are often not welcome. The difference between west African and East African states' relationship with Chinese and their perception of Chinese migrants places this study in context and ensures that the two regions are not perceived as the same.

The relationship in the 20<sup>th</sup> century between China and various African states was, in many ways, a core manipulation of periphery states. While China did not yet stand as a fully core state, it stood decades ahead of most African states and played a relatable “periphery” card to establish relatability, only to secure support in the United Nations. As China’s relationship with African nations continues to develop in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a clear pivot has been made away from ideological partnerships and toward economic ones (Empire, 2014). Cumulatively, the literature regarding how the concept of race was constructed in China, and its past relationship with African states tells the story of a complex relationship between two regions whose partnership is growing in global importance and should continue to be examined through a variety of lenses.

## **Chapter 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

Attempting to answer whether a certain individual or culture systematically views another as inferior requires physical interaction and communication. Personal interviews provided the opportunity to allow individuals to express their opinions and views without the limitations of pre-designed surveys. This project collected data through interviews in Mozambique and South Africa and then organized the data on a ranking scale.

Based on the recommendation of several family friends from southern Africa who worked for the Mozambican government and USAID, I focused my research around Durban, South Africa and Maputo, Mozambique due to the heavy influence from Chinese migrants. All interviewees were recruited in person or through email and phone. Interviewees from the hospitality sector were recruited during my stay in local hotels which had a high rate of Chinese customers. To interview construction workers, I first started by walking onto construction sites. Eventually, I leveraged the help of several locals who served as Chinese translators to help me recruit interviewees from construction sites. Executives who I interviewed were first contacted by a local friend who has worked in the Mozambican national energy sector for twenty-five years. He engages daily with many of the Chinese companies who serve as his largest customers. He consistently meets with executives in business environments and more relaxed social environments. Following my first interview with an executive of the Chinese Harbour Engineering Company, Ltd, the Chief Executive Officer connected me with several other executives from fellow Chinese companies in the area. Further

connections at the executive level arose from various other Chinese executives in southern Africa.

Each interview lasted between twenty minutes and two hours and varied in setting. Several interviews took place over lunch, during a tour through construction sites, at company headquarters, in hotel lobbies, at shops in city malls, and at local offices throughout the city. A distinct effort was made to interview a diverse population of Chinese immigrants. While the construction sites and executive positions were male dominated, the hospitality sector made interviewing females much more feasible. An effort was also made to interview immigrants of different ages. Interviewees ranged in age from young twenties to upper sixties.

At the onset, several interviews were scheduled prior to my arrival in Africa; however, most interviews resulted from entering a shop, staying at a Chinese hotel, or walking through a construction site and asking if an individual had migrated from China and would they be willing to be interviewed for this project. Each participant was asked for consent to record their conversation. While many individuals authorized the recording of their interviews, eleven requested that their interview not be recorded. Apart from four participants, every interview was conducted individually. As for those interviewed in pairs, their comments were still ranked individually. While many interviews were conducted in a public setting, participant's comments appeared to be genuine and they did not seem to withhold comments due to any surrounding individuals potentially hearing their comments. The only exception, a supervisor at a construction site, was interviewed in the same room as two local Mozambicans serving as Chinese translators. Due to the change in his demeanor and comments made after we continued to speak outside of the room, the presence of locals who could

understand Chinese clearly altered how freely the participant felt with making comments about black Africans.

The final methods hinged on personal interviews; however, the research originally included the use of the Q-Method. During many the interviews, when asked to rank pictures of individuals for the Q-Method according to how dependable they appeared, participants believed that ranking people by simply observing their picture was not a fair or justified question. Due to the lack of participation with the Q-Method, it is not included in the following data.

In total, 29 individuals participated in interviews. Due to the aforementioned prevalence of Chinese migrants in South Africa and Mozambique, all interviews took place in these two nations, primarily in Maputo, Mozambique and Durban, South Africa. The impact of China, and the presence of Chinese migrants in Durban and Maputo is discussed below.

South Africa is home to over half of all Chinese migrants in Africa. Durban, South Africa along with Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth, host the largest populations of Chinese migrants throughout the country (Statistics South Africa). The first migrants from China bound for Durban arrived in 1904 as a “coolie”, or rather “Asian labor” (Liggett, 1932). This group of Asian Labor arrived at the bequest of Herbert Hoover when he was director of Chinese Engineering and Mining Corporation (Liggett, 1932). Since their first arrival, the number of Chinese migrants has consistently grown.

As of 2009, nearly 350,000 Chinese migrants resided in South Africa, and by 2011 that number rose to nearly 500,000 (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Over the past several decades, South Africa has witnessed a significant increase in Chinese

migrants; and while the majority live in Johannesburg, I chose to conduct my research in Durban due to safety reasons (Lin, 2014). Upon my arrival in South Africa, it was evident that many of the Chinese migrants to South Africa immigrated to work as small-time entrepreneurs (Lin, 2014). All but one interview conducted in Durban was with an individual who was not a shop owner or business owner. Due to the prevalence of small-time entrepreneurs in South Africa, most relationships between locals and migrants occur within the owner's shop. Furthermore, Durban is the home of China's Great Wall Motor distribution centers (Araujo, Cardenal, 2013). Durban is also home to a large amount of Chinese mineral refineries. (Araujo, Cardenal, 2013). Unlike Mozambique, official relations between South Africa and China did not exist as early on, nor did their relationship at the time influence that much of today's relationship.

Compared to other African states, South Africa is unique in terms of the large population of white settlers. As only 8.4 percent of the population, the settlers do make up a minority of; however, their presence does impact the way local blacks interact with immigrants and non-blacks (Statistics, 2015). This is important to note due to the role it could play in relationships between Chinese immigrants and blacks. For example, since blacks have lived with white migrants for generations in South Africa, they could either be more predisposed to fear immigrants from China, or more likely to hold a less skeptical perception of them because of their long history with other non-black immigrants.

China's relationship with Mozambique is unique in comparison with other African countries, as it is one clothed with caution and compromise (Roque, 2009). Throughout Africa, Mozambique is one of four states with Portuguese language and

culture (Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau represent the remaining other states) (Ilhéu, 2010). China's relationship with Mozambique reaches back to the time of Portugal's colonialism of Mozambique, when many Chinese migrants worked in the colony (Ilhéu, 2010). Mozambique has been targeted as a strategic partner by China, says Ilhéu, due to their ties to Portugal. Essentially, Mozambique served as China's direct tie to Europe via Portugal (Ilhéu, 2010). To this day, due to the continued use of Portuguese as a national language, Mozambique remains a corridor for China to reach Europe economically.

Mozambique's relationship with China, while it has expanded greatly over the past two decades, found more formal ties in the 1960s with China's support of the liberation front, Frelimo (Chichava, 2013). When Mozambique officially claimed independence, China was the first nation to recognize them as a sovereign state (Ilhéu, 2010). While communist USSR supported other fronts in various African states, China supplied Frelimo with economic, political, and military support (Chichava, 2013). China's support in African nations during the 1960s and 1970s was aimed at winning African recognition, and subsequently leading to China's seat in the United Nations and various other International Organizations (Yu, 1988). In 1975, China formed formal diplomatic ties with Mozambique following independence (Chichava, 2013). In 1977, despite support from China, Mozambique moved closer to the Soviet Union and declared itself a Marxist-Leninist state (Roque, 2009). Nevertheless, relations with China remained peaceful. During the 1990s, after moving away from its socialist policies, Mozambique became a model for co-operating with western states (Roque, 2009). As China increased its relationship with Mozambique, the participatory governmental structure highlighted its uniqueness in comparison with other African



states, such as Angola (Roque, 2009). China clearly focuses its impact in Mozambique on infrastructure and resources (Roque, 2009). While the level of involvement is not quite to China's liking, many Mozambicans hold China's relationship in high regard due to the lack of benefits reaped from European national partnerships over the past several generations (Roque, 2009).

Furthermore, despite the comparatively small amount of Chinese direct involvement in Mozambique when compared to other African states, it has consistently been considered one of the most popular countries in Africa for Chinese migration (Cardenal et al., 2013; Kuang, 2008). Chinese firms have also built significant infrastructure, as well as electricity grids, in Mozambique (Kuang, 2008). The most significant project for China includes the national stadium constructed just outside of Maputo (Cardenal et al., 2013). Furthermore, China has indicated its interest in building even stronger relations with Mozambique by forgiving a twenty million dollar US debt, announcing that Mozambique would be the first African country to receive one of Africa's 14 special agriculture technology demonstration centers, and building the new parliament building in Maputo (Ilhéu, 2010).

According to Park, in terms of migration numbers, Mozambique remains a relatively midsized destination for Chinese migrants in comparison to other African states. As of 2006, Mozambique was home to nearly 2,000 Chinese migrants, which is over double the amount present in 2001 (Park, 2009). Considering the continuous exponential rise of Chinese migrant numbers in Africa, and the increase in amount of Chinese spending in Africa, it is safe to assume that nearly 4000 migrants reside in Mozambique now.

### **Demographics of Participants**

29 interviews conducted include Chinese born natives who migrated from various cities to Africa for a multitude of reasons. Out of the 29, 22 were of direct Chinese origin while the remainder worked for or with the Chinese migrants. While participant's hometowns varied, a majority migrated from large cities such as Xi'an, Shanghai, and Beijing. The participants ranged in age from twenty to approximately sixty-five (See Appendix A). Participants were gathered from three sectors of the workforce: hospitality workers and management, construction supervisors and workers, and small business owners of bead or traditional Chinese medicine shops. The amount of time which they had lived in Africa varied from two years to nearly thirty, with 2-3 years as the average amount of time spent in numerous African states. The long-term migrants arrived in Africa with the intention of building a life, while the majority of Chinese workers never intended to migrate permanently to Africa. This majority agreed to temporarily move to Africa for the sake of increased salaries with the intention of returning to China after three or four years of work.

Out of the 29 participants, all possessed full Chinese heritage except for seven. Of these seven, each had lived in Mozambique or South Africa and worked in a variety of manners with Chinese migrants for a minimum of seven years. Each non-Chinese interviewee has worked extensively with the Chinese population, from serving as translators to head liaisons between the leading generator company in Mozambique and its Chinese investors. These seven could speak in an educated manner regarding how Chinese migrants interact with locals and offered a unique third-party perspective of how Chinese migrants perceive local, black Africans.

### **Structure of Interviews**

All interviews were conducted in a semi-structured interview format and lasted between twenty minutes and two and a half hours. The questions discussed with the migrants shed light on the trust they hold in black Africans; their personal experiences with fellow black co-workers, supervisors; and everyday interactions with local blacks not involved in their work. The main objectives discussed included: (1) where the migrant migrated from in China and their primary reason they came to Africa, (2) the primary differences Chinese see between Chinese and Africans, and (3) how the interviewees define race. Each interview discussed the primary reasons each individual chose to move to Africa, when they did so, and their initial perception of local blacks.

Furthermore, in order to better comprehend the source which creates racial perceptions, and the possible impact of historical, cultural beliefs, interviews addressed the impact of “traditional Chinese thought”. In an effort to not lead interviewees toward discussing Confucianism, questions were asked regarding their belief of how much “traditional Chinese thought” impacted their perception of blacks.” This was based off Link’s research referring to “traditional Chinese values” as Confucianism, and vice versa (Link, 2015). Because of its impact on Chinese tradition, and for the sake of this project, Confucianism will be considered the primary source of “traditional Chinese thought”. Those participating in interviews were asked if they would like to speak about anything else they believe relates to the perception of blacks, the definition of race or ethnicity, or the relationship between Chinese migrants and locals.

For the sake of this project, three aspects of Confucianism are analyzed in detail: hierarchical structures, the importance of education, and development. In his

book *On Confucius*, Ni summarizes the fundamental thoughts of Confucianism, three of which are hierarchy, education, and citizen development (Ni, 2002). Hierarchical structures are present within the family unit, and throughout society, garnering an appreciation and respect for ancestors and those with greater *suzhi* or quality. Education, Confucianism teaches, is both what a person should strive to achieve, but more importantly it serves as a validator of legitimacy within society. By passing the difficult exams, one could be considered as a master based on ancient Chinese thought. Finally, through hierarchical structures, and education, one would be able to achieve the status of ideal citizen.

### **Analytical Approach**

Upon completion of all interviews, data was coded to determine a relative scale of racial prejudices, or the lack thereof along several axes. The ranking system for the data includes ten sections: comments favoring blacks/comments against blacks (1-6), influence of traditional “Confucian” values on the perception of blacks (1-6), Africa’s perceived benefit from Chinese migration and investment, the birth city of interviewees, time spent in Africa, occupation, age range, highest education achieved, and other countries where one lived in Africa. The sections which rank participants on a scale of one to six were created from an objective scale in terms of prejudiced and/or non-prejudiced statements about black Africans. For example, in the category of “Comments prejudiced toward blacks”, interviews which included phrases such as “坏人” (bad person), “懒” (lazy), “小偷” (thief) and “罪犯” (criminal) received rankings of 4-6. Such rankings were all made in relation to one interview which was distinctly racially prejudiced in nature, which will be explained further on. In the same category, if the participant failed to make any seemingly prejudiced statements, they

received a rank of 1, and a rank of 3 if their statements talked about “cultural perceptions” against blacks, but did not claim such prejudiced beliefs as their own.

In order to ensure that a lack of prejudiced statements toward blacks, or the presence thereof did not factor in as a “pro-black” perspective, or vice versa, each interview was also ranked in terms of “Comments Favoring Blacks”. Statements such as “可靠” (dependable), “努力” (hard working), or “聪明” (smart) received a rank of 4-6. Indifferent comments received a rank of 1, and comments relating to the cultural ability of blacks, but not necessarily the personal opinion of the interviewee, received a rank of 3.

A third section relates to the impact of Confucianism on Chinese migrant’s worldviews. Confucianism has played an integral role in the development of Chinese, and despite a diminished practice of Confucianism, its ideals and views regarding morality still heavily influence modern day Chinese thought (Ni, 2002).

Furthermore, since sinicization and the accompanying hierarchical structure is inherently Confucian, it is fair to hypothesize that Chinese immigrant’s supposed racist perception of blacks in Africa stems from Confucian values (Dikötter, 1992). In hopes of not leading participants, interview questions refrained from using the term “Confucianism” or “Confucius” and instead used the term “Traditional Chinese thought” when asking participants about how they believe Chinese culture has influenced their views. Participants who directly related their beliefs to that of Confucianism received a ranking of 6, while those who stated they value the impact traditional thought has on their views received a rank of 3, and those who do not attribute their beliefs to traditional thought received a ranking of 1.

Finally, each participant's remarks regarding the benefit China brings to Africa was ranked from 1 to 6. Questions regarding the benefit reaped from China's investment and migration to Africa searched to determine if many Chinese migrants believe "helping" Africa and its residents is a moral obligation under the umbrella of moral Confucian citizenship, or is the benefit only a secondary effect from what China gains by investing in Africa? Participant's remarks which stated that China is invested in Africa for altruistic reasons and is helping the continent grow for its own good received a ranking of 6. Juxtaposing, comments which insinuated that Chinese persons only migrated to Africa to become financially invested for selfish reasons received a ranking of 1.

In addition to the researcher's rankings, a second individual, who is a speaker of Mandarin and employee of the US State Department, translated the interview data on his own and ranked the interviewee's comments in the same manner the researcher handled their data. The Second Listener ranked the comments from each recording on a scale of 1-6 and did not work in collaboration with the researcher. They were not present at the time the research was conducted, nor did they take part in designing or conducting the research.

While the difference of averages indicates a close similarity between the two-individual's interpretation of the interviews, it fails to account for a direct comparison between each specific ranking. A difference of averages also fails to determine if there is a significant difference between the two sets of rankings. Paired T-Tests were conducted to account for the direct comparisons and to ensure a significant difference does not exist.

Overall, the organization of data aims to quantify participant's beliefs to gain a more thorough understanding of their perceptions.

## **Chapter 4**

### **RESULTS AND QUANTATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DISCUSSION**

The following results are a product of 29 interviews conducted in Durban, South Africa and Maputo, Mozambique with hotels workers, construction workers and managers, small business owners, and local Africans, both black and white. Out of this cohort, 22 are of Chinese descent, four are locals who are non-black but have worked extensively with Chinese companies and workers for at least seven years in both the private and government sector, and three are local Africans who work as translators for a Chinese construction company.

#### **Quantitative Data**

The 21 participants of Chinese descent represented an eclectic group of workers with diverse backgrounds. Three worked as small-business entrepreneurs, either individually or with their families. Their businesses included traditional Chinese medicine shops, Craft and Bead shops, and restaurants. Interviewees in the hospitality sector, all lived in Maputo and worked at the newly constructed AFECC Gloria Hotel. The hotel, partly funded by the Chinese government, served locals and internationals traveling for leisure or work. The participants ranged from janitorial workers, masseuses, gymnasium managers, and hotel managers. Lastly, construction workers and supervisors worked for several construction companies. Participants labored as manual workers, supervisors, project managers, Chief Financial Officers, and even Chief Executive Officers. Construction workers were the only participants to speak English and Chinese; however, most of the interviews were conducted in Chinese. Some interviewees chose to speak English at various times throughout their interview;



however, when they needed to explain more complicated ideas, or personal thoughts, they chose to speak Chinese. Two interviews with construction executives were conducted completely in English. Although I informed the interviewees that they could either speak English or Chinese, based on their experience with westerners, they chose to speak English.

Other demographic attributes of participants ranged widely. As seen in Figure 1, the average

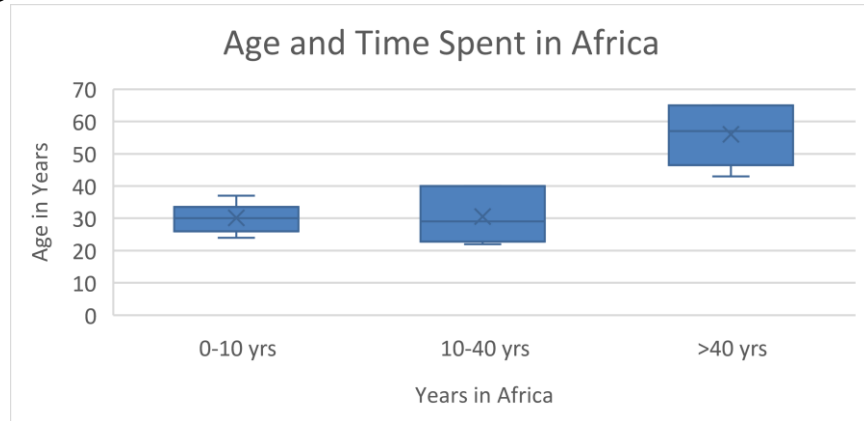


Figure 1 – Amount of time interviewees spent in Africa by year

participant's age was 32 and all interviewees spent an average of 3.78 years working in African states. On several occasions, workers spent time in various other African states such as Zimbabwe and Zambia. Interviewees migrated to China from various cities, as seen in the table below.

Table 1 – Cities from which interviewees migrated from in China

	Hefei	Beijing	Xian	Shanghai	Other Cities
Number of Migrants	2	2	5	5	15

Two moved from Hefei, two from Beijing, five from Xian, five from Shanghai, and the remainder from cities throughout China. The Chinese value of education, which will be discussed at length in the following chapter, is evident when

interviewee's educational experience is considered. Out of all 29 participants, regardless of vocation, only eight did not graduate from college.

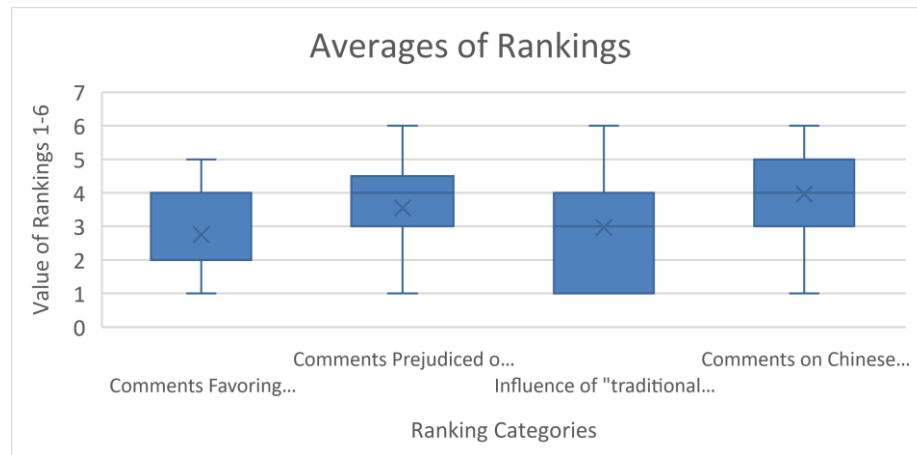


Figure 2 – Averages of rankings (scale of 1-6)

As described in the methods section, each interview was organized, and comments were ranked, relative to each other. In other words, the participant with the most clearly defined prejudiced statements toward blacks received a ranking of six, and each participant thereafter was ranked in relation to the aforementioned interviewee. Each interview underwent analysis and was filtered for specific comments relating to four separate categories: comments favoring blacks, prejudiced comments against blacks, participant's belief of how much they felt traditional Chinese thought influences their perception of blacks, and comments regarding how much China benefits Africa. As seen in Table 2, each box represents the overall, average perception of interviewees on a scale from one to six with six being the strongest. On average, interviewee's comments reflected a relatively prejudiced attitude toward blacks. Most participants made comments which negatively represented blacks or viewed them in an unequal light. It is important to note that simply because a participant made disparaging comments about local blacks does not,

by default, mean they did not also make comments favoring blacks, and vice-versa.

Figure 2 also depicts the average rankings of each category.

*Table 2 – Averages and Standard Deviation of Interview Rankings*

	<b>Comments Favoring Blacks (1-6)</b>	<b>Comments Prejudiced or anti-black (1-6)</b>	<b>Influence of "traditional values" (Confucianism) on personal opinion (1-6)</b>	<b>Comments on Chinese presence benefitting Africa (1-6)</b>
Averages	2.76	3.55	2.97	3.97
Standard Dev.	1.13	1.35	1.59	1.45

Participants were asked whether they felt “traditional Chinese thought” impacted their personal beliefs regarding blacks. To ensure interviewees were not led in questioning to attribute Confucianism as a significant player in developing their worldviews, the researcher never used the term Confucianism. Instead, only “traditional Chinese thought” was mentioned by the researcher, ensuring that any reference to Confucian thought, or Confucius’s teachings, was done solely by the interviewee. Over half of those from Chinese descent who were interviewed explicitly brought up Confucianism, or Confucian thought. The remainder, while they did not mention the name Confucius, mentioned his school of thought indirectly by referring to common Confucius beliefs or practices.

For further analysis, as seen in Figure 3 and Table 3, the interview rankings are broken down by occupation. The group which made the most comments favoring blacks works in the hospitality field. These employees engage with locals the least, compared with local shop owners and construction workers, both of which engage with locals for extended periods of time every day. Interestingly, hospitality workers were also the same people who made the most prejudiced comments about blacks. The least amount of engagement led to the most extreme comments on both ends of the spectrum. The people who engage with locals the least are the same group of people

who make the most prejudiced statements about local blacks. Alternatively, Small Business owners, the group which interacts with locals the most, made the least amount of prejudiced comments about blacks, which is indicated in Figure 3 below.

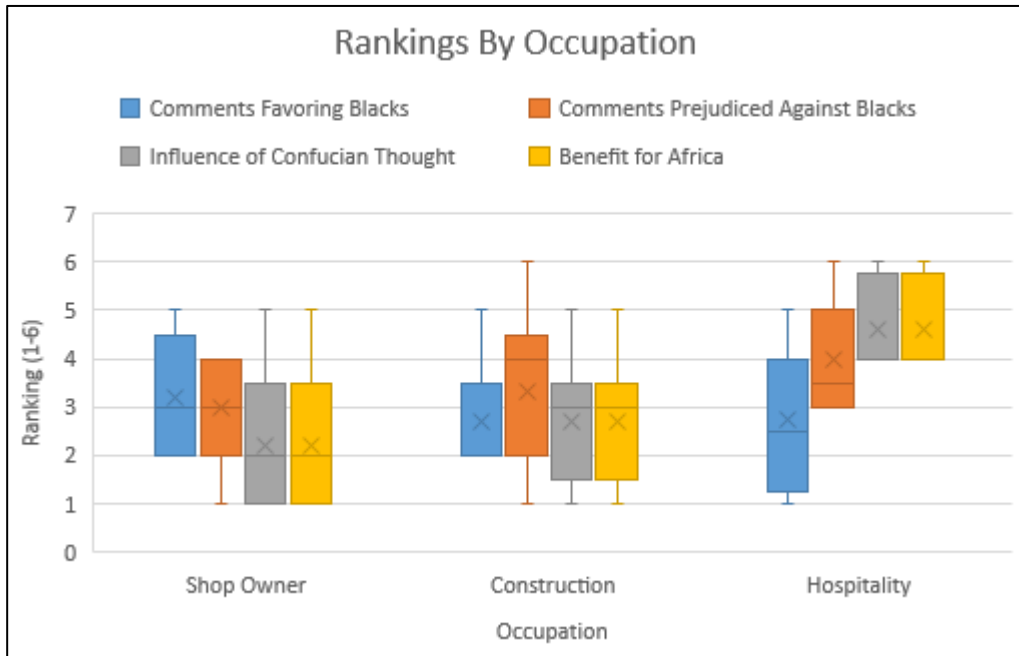


Figure 3 – Rankings by occupation

Their daily interaction with locals seems to suggest that more interaction creates stronger trust between different groups. Nevertheless, Business Owners also made a notable amount of prejudiced statements about blacks. This does not discredit the trust portrayed through positive comments. Essentially, their comments indicate that while a higher level of trust is present in relation to the other groups, that does not by default extinguish other prejudiced feelings or beliefs.

Hospitality workers also gave credit to Confucianism the most for influencing their opinion of blacks. Since hospitality workers, on average, spent the least amount of time in Africa compared to the other two groups, one might notice a connection between the influence of Confucianism, and the length of time an individual spends

outside of China. Essentially, those who spend the least amount of time outside of China are more likely to credit Confucianism for influencing their thoughts. However, this does not hold true since Small Business Owners, the group who spent the longest time in Africa, was not the group which considered the influence of Confucianism the least.

When analyzing which group of workers believed Chinese presence in Africa benefited Africans the most, construction workers largely concurred with the notion that Chinese involvement in Africa helped locals. This is most likely due to the tangible aspect of roads, bridges, and buildings which construction employees work on each day. Workers see how locals use new roads, bridges, and buildings and witness how construction benefits the daily lives of local Africans.

*Table 3 – Interview rankings by employment sector*

	<b>Comments Favoring Blacks (1-6)</b>	<b>Comments Prejudiced or anti-black (1-6)</b>	<b>Influence of "traditional values" (Confucianism) on personal opinion (1-6)</b>	<b>Comments on Chinese presence benefitting Africa (1-6)</b>
Small Business Owner	2.5	3.5	3.75	3.25
Hospitality	3.25	4	4	3.75
Construction	2.33	3.75	3.417	4.67

After ranking comments from each interview, the data was handled in several different manners including second verification of rankings, averages between the Second Listener's rankings based on their interpretation of interview recordings, and T-Tests between the researcher and Second Listener's rankings.

As seen in Table 4, the Second Listener's rankings were tallied and the average taken for each category. The averages were then subtracted from the averages of the original rankings determined by the researcher to determine the difference between the

two. The largest difference between the rankings arises in the last category, “Comments Prejudiced of Anti-Black” where the Researcher’s ranking averaged only 0.17 points higher than the Second Listener’s.

*Table 4 – Second listener’s averages*

	<b>Comments Favoring Blacks (1-6)</b>	<b>Comments Prejudiced or anti-black (1-6)</b>	<b>Influence of "traditional values" (Confucianism) on personal opinion (1-6)</b>	<b>Comments on Chinese presence benefitting Africa (1-6)</b>
Averages	2.83	3.38	2.93	3.90
Differences	-0.07	0.17	0.03	0.07

In order to account for a direct comparison between each specific ranking, a paired T-test was used. The T-Tests use two arrays – the Researcher’s ranking and the Second Listener’s ranking. As seen in Table 4, the values of the T-Tests are all p-values far higher than 0.05. For an N of 29, the critical value for a T-Test to show a significance difference at the 95% confidence level is 1.699. Because none of the values approach a value of 1.699, the hypothesis that grader 2 and myself evaluated statements differently can be dismissed. With all values higher than 0.05, both sets of rankings are not significantly different and it can be assumed that differences between the evaluators were not a source of bias and ranked fairly.

*Table 5 – T Test between second listener’s rankings and interviewer’s rankings*

	<b>Comments Favoring Blacks (1-6)</b>	<b>Comments Prejudiced or anti-black (1-6)</b>	<b>Influence of "traditional values" (Confucianism) on personal opinion (1-6)</b>	<b>Comments on Chinese presence benefitting Africa (1-6)</b>
T:Test	0.63	0.26	0.71	0.74

In conclusion, the aforementioned results paint a quantitative picture of immigrant’s racial opinions toward black Africans. The interviews provided a broad understanding of how Chinese workers perceive local blacks and what might cause individual’s perceptions.

## **Qualitative Data**

The intent of this research began with determining how Chinese migrants view local, black Africans through a racial lens. Questions within interviews focused on whether Chinese migrants perceived blacks as unequal and inferior, and viewed them from a racist perspective. The quantitative analysis presented in the previous section indicates the relationships between participant's comments and other factors such as their occupation, along with the validity of the ranking with a comparison between the Researcher and Second Listener's rankings. This section further analyzes participant's comments from a more qualitative perspective. This section breaks down the interviews into subsets based on occupation (hospitality workers, construction workers, and small business entrepreneurs). The following section focuses on interviews from locals about how they believe Chinese workers perceive them. Finally, the chapter will discuss overarching themes from the results and the importance of education and development within context of this project.

### **Small Business Owners**

Small business owners who were interviewed, all of whom migrated from China around 2009, came to Africa with the intention of permanently migrating; and they were the only group of workers which were interviewed who migrated to Africa with the intention of remaining in Africa permanently. Every business owner founded their own company and operates it by themselves or with their extended family.

The most interesting aspect of the business owner's perspective is their relatively low level of belief that China's presence benefits Africa. In contrast to hospitality and construction workers, each interviewee arrived in Africa with the intention of becoming part of the local economy. Nevertheless, in comparison with

other groups interviewed, business owners believed Chinese presence in Africa benefitted the African economy the least.

While they did not necessarily believe China's involvement helped African nations, they did seem to believe African culture helped their own lifestyles. Participant number two stated, "Chinese culture has a lot of pressure and stress. Here [Africa] is less complicated. If you like it quiet, you can enjoy it here" (Interview 2). Furthermore, in a separate interview, another participant stated, "In Africa today there is equality, and social harmony and contentedness" (Interview 1). Comments such as this produce a positive outlook on African culture and way of life instead of an outlook which viewed Africa as a place in need of desperate assistance. Participant number one even stated, "Our cultures are not the same. They [Africans] are comparatively more optimistic compared to people in my country. Chinese people are a little more conservative. Africans are happy every day. They dance and sing! In China, we don't do this" (Interview 1). These comments serve as an anomaly to the hierarchical superiority of China in comparison to Africa. Only interviewees who worked as small business owners made similar comments. This very well could be a result of their more flexible schedules and ability to engage with local Africans in a non-working, more relaxed environment.

Despite the positive outlook on African culture, Chinese small business owners made the least amount of positive comments about Africans in comparison to construction and hospitality employees. Some comments exemplified blunt, negative opinions about blacks, while others remained subtler. "I don't trust them because they are black", remarked Participant number three. He continued with his remarks stating, "Africans just came out of the jungle age" (Interview 3). Other business owners spoke



in a more educated manner about African history. “I have personally read some of their history; they have worked through a lot of struggle to achieve the power they have today” (Interview 1). They understood the history of farming in China and seemed to apply a higher *suzhi* to farmers. In fact, two thirds of business owners argued that farmers and poor people are the most trustworthy people in society.

It is important to reiterate that while small business owners made the least amount of positive comments, they did not, by default, make the most prejudiced comments regarding blacks. The fact that business owners made the least amount of positive comments coincides with their individualistic attitude of why they came to Africa in the first place. The small business owners each stated that they came to Africa to pursue their own interests and never intended on returning to China. Small business owners seemed to lack any loyalty to China, and did not feel the need to remain connected with China in many ways. For example, most shop owners migrated with their whole families, and left China without the intention of returning. In comparison, hospitality and construction employees moved to China as employees of larger Chinese businesses. They intend on returning to China after two to three years, and thus view themselves as part of the Chinese effort to improve Africa. Small business entrepreneurs moved to Africa for their own individual benefit and did not view themselves as part of China’s larger movement to improve relationships with Africa.

When asked directly about how blacks are perceived in China, a participant responded, “China doesn’t have racism. They have a balanced society (平衡的文化)” (Interview #2). He continued to compare the opinions of Chinese natives still living in China, with that of Chinese in Africa. “China does not have racial discrimination,” He

stated, "...but Chinese people in Africa have a little racism and this is a problem" (Interview 2). Contrasting, while he argued that racism does not exist in China, he followed his statements with, "Because of China's special culture, color is sensitive. Chinese people want to be white because it represents superiority and high class. They all want white skin" (Interview 2). The interesting aspect is that to many Chinese, lightening one's skin is not a wish, but a historical way of life. The Chinese culture has been altering this phenotypic trait for millennia. The "yearning for lightness" and purchasing of skin-lighteners is expansive across the global south (Glenn, 2008). The effort to lighten one's skin in China, and the blunt assignment of value or *suzhi* based on lightness dates to classical China (Glenn, 2008). For example, Yan Fu is quoted as stating, "Yellow and white are wise, red and black are stupid, yellow and white are rulers, red and black are slaves, yellow and white are united, red and black are scattered" (Dikötter, 1992). The desire for Chinese to lighten their skin, or view it as a normal practice, is not merely a fad but a deeply historical practice.

This line of thought based on skin tone does not hold across all business owners interviewed, as can be seen in the following comment: "I often encounter black and white customers. The cultures are not different between blacks and foreigners" (Interview 1). While the later comment contradicts the previous one regarding the "superiority" of whites, it does not address the comment about the apparent lack of racism in China. This opens discussion for whether racism is present in Chinese culture, or whether many Chinese natives are oblivious to its existence. The unifying comments regarding the trustworthiness, or higher *suzhi* for farmers and the elderly as opposed to businessmen, or elites, insinuates that Chinese culture is much more focused on social class, *suzhi*, and education than racial color. All small business

owners who were interviewed stated that farmers, and the elderly, on average, are the most trustworthy people. However, they also stressed, vividly, the importance of education. Each participant, in one way or another, stressed the need for education, specifically in Africa. The majority claimed that blacks were not trustworthy not because of their race, but because of their lack of education. The idea of education at hand is not merely a classroom acquisition of knowledge, but rather a journey toward inner cultivation.

While only half of the small business owners brought up Confucianism when discussing the role of traditional Chinese culture, their comments regarding the importance of education, and respect of the elderly indicate the influence of the Confucian hierarchical structure and value of learning. Confucius emphasized strongly the importance of hierarchy, especially in terms of age. In addition, one of the fundamental pillars of Confucian teachings is education and its role in creating good citizens. It can be concluded that small business owners emphasized hierarchy, and educational development over the presence of racial prejudice when asked about locals. While they differed on how much they trusted blacks, they remained united on the black's ability to become educated if given the opportunity.

### **Hospitality Workers**

As previously mentioned, all hospitality employees worked at the AFECC Gloria Hotel in Maputo. Their occupations ranged from Hotel Manager to Janitor and represented a wide variety of opinions. Out of the three different groups of workers interviewed, hospitality workers made the most prejudiced comments about blacks, made the most comments favoring blacks, and was the group which gave Confucianism the most credit for influencing their opinions today.

Employees throughout the hotel represented an eclectic range of opinions. For example, Interviewee 24 could not believe that anyone could ever think local blacks did not like Chinese people, and vice versa. “They love us and we like them,” he stated (Interview 24). However, the Hotel Manager bluntly stated, “Black people are very horrible people. They are cruel and callous” (Interview 16). The manager went further claiming, “I feel like they seduce people. They only like money and they steal. They want money but don’t want to work for it.” (Interview 16). Other workers expressed similar feelings in terms of prejudiced statements about blacks. “Locals are dangerous”, claimed another hotel employee, “They are thieves and dislike the Chinese. In Zimbabwe and Mozambique, blacks kidnap Chinese and all types of foreigners. It is a serious problem” (Interview 21). The inherent contradiction within these statements is apparent; however, they did not seem to be spoken in error by the interviewee. She consistently repeated her belief that “they love us and we like them...but they [blacks] are thieves and dangerous” (Interviewee 16). Many of these comments seem extreme; however, they are representative of how many employees perceive locals.

Regardless of the severity of prejudiced comments made, many of the same participants made neutral and positive comments about blacks. The gym manager of the hotel sat quite opposite of Interviewee 16 in terms of how she perceived local Africans. “They are nice people. I see no difference between me and them. The only negative comment I have is that at times, black males seem dominant” (Interview 17). The hotel manager even stated, “I know many blacks do not have work, and Chinese companies can at least employ them” (Interview 16). While she admitted she views blacks as thieves, she said many steal because they need money and because it is their

culture (Interview 16). She explained that such behavior cannot be solely blamed on the individual when their surrounding culture accepts such behavior. Interview 14 focused on the value of individual relationships with locals. He states, “I don’t just look at people’s faces [their race/color]. If people are friendly, I am friendly. However, if I get burned, I won’t forget it” (Interview 14).

Many viewed the blacks not as inferior, but simply as a group of people who could use help. This perception of inferiority falls in-line with the Confucian hierarchical construct: the Chinese migrants do not want to control the locals, but feel an innate desire to help them because of their supposed inferiority. For example, “They need jobs and money. We [China] can help them and supply both. We create jobs for them because they have none” (Interview 24). The more neutral comments portray a balanced, yet contradicting attitude about blacks. On one hand, interviewees spoke openly regarding their negative views about blacks. However, they also shed light on positive aspects about local black culture and behavior.

In addition to answering questions about the influence on Confucianism, many hospitality workers expounded on how Chinese natives in China view blacks, and the role China’s culture plays in creating racial perceptions. On the negative side, participants expounded on a difference between blacks in Africa and blacks in China. “Blacks in China do not go beyond their bounds. They know their place”, was one way the difference was explained (Interview 16). She continued to claim that Chinese natives who had not left China had not seen “African blacks”, and therefore would not know how “African blacks” act in comparison to “Chinese blacks”. “This is why many Chinese in China have a high opinion of blacks”, she remarked (Interview 16). Interview 17 brought another perspective into discussion by saying, “...It is not blacks

who I do not trust. I do not trust middle class Chinese businessmen” (Interview 17). She stated that in China, many middle class Chinese businessmen have created a reputation of being unfair and untrustworthy. Whether this is truly valid is quite debatable.

Like many small business owners, much of the hotel workers referred to the need for education and the significant benefit it provides to a community. Almost every employee at some point in their interview, expressed their hope that black Africans will have access to better education for the sake of improved culture and moral behavior. They also referred to Confucianism’s hierarchical structure, but in a different manner to small business owners. They viewed Africa as a whole, not simply black people, as lower in the hierarchy of cultures. Interviews 14, 17 and 21 focused heavily on how much China can and should help Africa because of its underdeveloped and slowly developing culture. Of course, these opinions could have arisen from a perception of cultural superiority, a true desire to help, a Confucian hierarchical influence, or a combination of each. Nevertheless, the opinion of blacks, while focused on race to some point, was also driven by the need for education and development.

### **Construction Workers**

The largest percentage of participants interviewed for this project worked in the construction field. They ranged from laborers at construction sites, to supervisors, project managers, CFOs, and even CEOs in various Chinese construction companies. Construction employee’s comments ranged from prejudiced to favorable; however, it was evident that their beliefs hinged on two specific beliefs: importance of education and the benefit Chinese investment brought to Africa. On average, construction

workers scored nearly one whole point higher than hospitality works and small business owners when asked about how much Chinese presence in Africa benefitted locals and the local economy.

Interviewee 19, an accountant from a Chinese construction company in Maputo, is a prime representative of the various comments from construction employees. He began by stating that Chinese companies, by law, must employ locals, specifically black locals (Interview 19). He followed that statement by saying, “Black, yellow, and white people are all the same for our company” (Interview 19). Nevertheless, statements such as, “Chinese people don’t like black people because they do outlaw things” stole credit from his previously mentioned statements (Interview 19). While this seems like a blanket statement, the interviewee specifically noted that determining a person’s dependability or trustworthiness must be decided individual by individual, not by categorizing a whole race or culture (Interview 19).

In terms of how much Chinese thought and culture affected the perception of local blacks, the accountant spoke quite abundantly. For the most part, he claimed that Chinese people are not racist, but rather just shy (Interview 19). Shyness can often be confused for rudeness, but as Interview 14 also stated, if people are friendly, most Chinese will also be friendly (Interview 14). Throughout his interview, he continuously gave reference to Confucian principles, until finally stating, “If you truly want to know the Chinese opinion, and how they think, you must learn about Kongzi (Confucius)” (Interview 19). As an educated individual, he spoke of Confucian principles in detail. While his comments regarding the importance of Confucianism were not rare, the detail in which he spoke about Confucianism stood out as an anomaly amongst the other interviews.

The Project Manager of a nearby construction company spoke with similar regard about Confucianism, and with an increased emphasis on why blacks suffer because of a lack of education. Whereas Participant 16 stated that blacks steal because it is their culture, the Project Manager believed that thievery resulted not from culture, but a lack of moral education (Interview 18). He claimed the lack of education was to blame for pilfering and a lack of trust between some Chinese and local blacks (Interview 18). His educated background would insinuate that he would be able to view the situation from a relatively objective point of view, mostly free from racial prejudice, which clearly was not the case.

The participant naturally drew a comparison between blacks in China and those he worked with and encountered in Africa. Instead of assuming local blacks were all untrustworthy, he observed how many blacks in China received high levels of education, and thus functioned in society with an increased moral compass (Interview 18). Their education, in conjunction with a strong economic foundation, allowed blacks in China to be viewed differently than those in Africa. Based on his understanding, “Some Africans have an education, but their families often do not have money to help them move out of the cycle of generational poverty” (Interview 18). Regardless of the balanced comments he made, the Project Manager also conceded that on average, most Chinese do not view blacks, whites, and Chinese the same (Interview 18). He did not specify if the difference insinuated inequality, or just a lack of similarity.

The remaining construction workers continuously emphasized similar beliefs. At the Catembe Bridge construction site, several men concurred with aforementioned statements about how it is not racism, but a lack of education and development which



causes many Chinese to view blacks in a negative light. “I came here [to Africa] two years ago”, stated one worker, “I work every day and only get five days off every year. I came because of the increase in pay. We pay the local blacks a fair wage to work, but they do not understand hard work. They expect to get weekends off, or to go home at five, but that is not how we work. It is not the Chinese work ethic (Interview 7). From a western perspective, where an average person works eight hours a day, and does not work on the weekends, his statement might seem harsh. But his friend explained further, “The local blacks here do not have a work ethic because they have not been taught how to have one. They will only learn through education. Look around, we taught them all the skills they need to work here. It is not that they cannot learn, they simply have not been taught” (Interview 8). As for who the responsibility of educating the local population falls on, “I am not sure. Hopefully the Chinese presence influences the local population and government to understand the value of education and hard work” (Interview 7). Every employee who was interviewed at the Catembe Bridge construction resonated with the importance of education, and the value it can bring to a culture and future development.

While most construction employees spoke bluntly about their opinions, and with no apparent filtering of thoughts, the CEO of one construction company clearly spoke like a polished politician, noticeably aware of things not to say. In other words, his business experience, knowledge of the English language, education, and time spent working with governments, allowed him to answer questions in a comparatively polished manner which represented the Chinese government and his company in the most positive light. Similar to his fellow construction oriented workers, he spoke about the value of helping Mozambique develop through infrastructure, and the value

of education. He also expounded on that importance of westerners understanding how many Chinese people perceive Africa, development, and racism. It was of great importance to him that I understand that many Chinese businesses and people want to work with the west, not against them; and, "...China does not view Africa as grounds to exploit, but rather develop through cooperation" (Interview 20). Observations of Chinese mineral exploitation in Africa is grounds to disregard the latter part of his comments; nevertheless, although he answered questions with what one might call a "textbook answer", he also spoke with a genuinely caring attitude.

Overall, as the part of the Chinese community which engages with local blacks the most, construction employee's comments focused heavily on education and development within the local community. From a western lens, it may seem as though they portrayed an attitude of racism and prejudice; however, their remarks displayed a belief that local blacks were disadvantage because of their lack of education, not simply the color of their skin. Their comments were harsh and discriminatory in nature, but most of the participants did not make prejudiced statements with the same dislike for local blacks as many previously mentioned hospitality workers. They provided caveats for the statements such as, "with an understanding of development and a base education, the locals will progress." Statements of this nature resonate with the Confucian principles of *suzhi*, and the need for *suzhi* to attain development which I discussed at the beginning of this thesis.

### **Local Africans – Black and White**

In addition to interviewing Chinese migrants, I also conducted interviews of seven locals. Each of these locals has worked with the Chinese extensively and four of them have done so in Africa and China. Three worked as translators between Chinese

and local workers at various construction sites and were students at the local Confucius institute. They were entering their fifth year of studying Chinese at the Confucius institute. One worked with Chinese importers, had travelled to China for extended periods of time – six months to one year – and worked with various Chinese companies importing goods into African states. They engaged with Chinese workers over the phone and in person. One other has directed the US Embassy’s cultural center for the past 23 years. He spoke in an educated manner about Chinese involvement in Mozambique and what that means for the local economy. The final two locals worked within the generator industry, one of which is the primary liaison between Chinese construction executives visiting Africa and the local government. He also oversaw a travel security company and was consistently able to see what Chinese companies brought in and out of Mozambique on flights. The locals contributed to the research in terms of confirming Chinese perceptions. They were asked how they believed Chinese perceived locals and the implications of Chinese involvement.

The translators worked at the Catembe bridge construction company and served as my primary contact into the construction site. As speakers of both Chinese and Portuguese, they remained empathetic to both local Africans and Chinese workers. “I understand that Chinese workers don’t like it in Mozambique, and that they take a lot of our resources,” states Interview number 3, “but without China, we do not have any jobs. Our economy will continue to die” (Interview 3). His two coworkers concurred with his thoughts. When asked specifically about racial tensions between Chinese migrants and locals, “I do not think it is an issue. At the end of the day, the Chinese companies are here to make money, and build infrastructure. Mozambicans benefit from the Chinese involvement because of how many jobs it creates” (Interview

3). The translators highest concern, interestingly, was wondering why America thinks China is harming Africa. “Why do so many Americans think China just wants to take from Africa,” asked Interviewee number 2. Their inquiry seemed to insinuate that many westerners were ignorant about the relationship between China and Mozambique.

The director of the US Embassy’s cultural center also did not believe individual Chinese workers viewed local blacks in a prejudiced manner; however, several of his comments resonated with the theme of education. “I know the Chinese infrastructure benefits the Mozambican economy in the short run, but what about when the Chinese leave?”, he noted (Interview 11). “China funds these projects, builds the infrastructure and locals are happy because they now have a road to drive on. But what about when the Chinese leave? They are not teaching locals the skills necessary for continued maintenance and this makes us have to depend on them” (Interview 11). His comments, along with many Chinese migrant’s, addressed the lack of education amongst locals. He believes that the eventual forced dependence on China will become a form of neocolonialism and keep Mozambique from developing on its own. Essentially, the local’s confirmed that most Chinese migrants do not perceive blacks negatively for the color of their skin, but their lack of education and significant independent development.

### **Overarching Themes**

The interview results give insight to many perspectives of Chinese culture and traditional thought. Four themes weaved throughout the final results: most participants came from large cities in China; participants consistently remarked that they are not migrants, but temporary workers; they believed blacks were not disadvantaged

because of color, but rather lack of education; and the more participants engaged with locals, the less they distrusted blacks.

All participants were asked during interviews, “Why did you migrate to Africa”? Before answering, nearly every person clarified that they were not migrants, but just workers who came to Africa to make more money and seek better opportunity. In the realm of migration, the way a person who moves to another country identifies themselves, for example, either as a migrant, seasonal worker, temporary worker, refugee, asylum seeker, etc., determines how they become immersed in the local economy and interact with native residents. Mark Miller (2013) speaks about the varying levels in which different types of immigrants immerse themselves into the new culture to which they immigrate. While he argues that, as one might assume, temporary workers interact with locals less than permanent migrants, that was not the case with Chinese in Mozambique and South Africa. Although the shop owners were permanent migrants, and employed local blacks and served them as customers, the construction workers spent more hours interacting with locals on a daily basis. The way in which migrants think about themselves is important to take note of when discussing the effects and implications of international migration. In this instance, the refusal to be classified as a migrant, even though many stayed in Africa for four or more years, portrays the division people from China drew between themselves and the local community.

Park wrote that most Chinese workers in Africa came from smaller coastal villages, “However, since the 1990s, migrants have also been arriving from new places of origin, including the great urban areas of Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai” (Park, 2009). As this data shows, he could not have been more correct. Nearly one-third of

everyone who was interviewed moved to China from larger cities such as Beijing, Xian, or Shanghai. While the shift in where people have moved from has occurred over the past decade, the reason for their migration has remained relatively stable. Most still choose to migrate for increased pay and are contracted by a large Chinese company invested in Africa.

The level of separation between Chinese workers and locals explains why most who were interviewed spoke about local blacks from an observer's perspective. They did not seem to include themselves in discussions regarding local blacks. It was always about, "them." "They" [the blacks] were uneducated and underdeveloped from the perspective of many who were interviewed. Unlike the Chinese construction workers, however, this group did not accept a sense of responsibility to educate locals as much as the construction workers. The workers did not explicitly state that they accept the responsibility, but that China's holistic involvement in Africa will help educate locals in the long run.

The emphasis on education brings to light the modern influence of Confucianism. Confucian thought and teaching stress education as one of the most valuable principles, because without it, one is unable to fulfill their duty as a citizen. Focusing on education, in many ways, represented a modern form of Sinicization. Education may be taught on the construction site through hard work, in the traditional Chinese medicine shop where locals learn the practice of Chinese medicine, or even in the classroom at the Confucius Institute. The importance of education and more importantly, the influence of Confucius, is quite visible simply by the presence of a Confucius Institute on college campuses throughout Africa. I witnessed the impact of the Confucius institute at the Catembe Construction site. The only reason I was able to

enter the construction site is because I asked two young, black college students walking into the site if they spoke English. They said no, but that they spoke Chinese. I later discovered they learned Chinese at the Confucius Institute at the nearby college. Their work as translators on the site between Chinese supervisors and black workers portrayed the impact of the Confucius Institute and ways in which China is bridging language and cultural barriers with locals.

Finally, as previously discussed, those who worked the most with local blacks gave statements which portrayed the least amount of distrust. While these comments did not indicate full trust of local blacks, they resonated with the chance for opportunity. The majority of construction participants spoke, once again, of education, and the necessity of education in order to develop. However, the time to develop will come slow (Interview 8). “Most of the blacks do not understand basic manual labor. Once they learn those skills, they can build from there. But, that will not happen immediately. It takes time to learn” (Interview 8).

Despite the majority of perceptions not resonating with racism, a trend amongst several interviews about violence cannot be ignored. Several participants, despite claiming that they like local blacks, were quick to claim that they do not trust them, that blacks are thieves, or that they pose a physical threat. This racially biased perspective of local black Africans by Chinese migrants is undeniable. Nevertheless, the remaining interviews did not reflect such prejudiced statements, and they must be considered as pertinent to understanding the concept of race as the hate driven interviews.

What began as a search to find underlying racial tones in the interaction between Chinese migrants and local blacks resulted in a better understanding of the

importance of Chinese culture in modern day thought, and more specifically, the roles education and development play in determining how many Chinese natives perceive other cultures and races.



## Chapter 5

### CONCLUSION

This project began with a desire to determine Chinese migrant's perception of race. This historical notion of valuing others based on *suzhi*, in conjunction with the impact Confucianism has had on constructing a large amount of traditional Chinese thought, has created an opportunity for many Chinese to build a racist opinion of other peoples. As China's relationship with African states evolved, so did the levels of interaction between Chinese migrants and local Africans. Over the past several decades, as the relationship between China and Africa became more economically focused, the number of daily interactions between Chinese migrants and African locals increased even more. The intertwined economies brought employees of large Chinese construction companies and small business entrepreneurs in constant contact with African locals.

As the results indicate, Chinese migrant's perception of locals varies based on occupation and level of interaction with black Africans. The more a Chinese migrant works with locals, the more likely they are to display an increased level of trust. This trust seems to directly relate to the value of *suzhi* a Chinese native "assigns" to a local black African. The greater the trust, the more valuable that local individual is in the eyes of a Chinese immigrant. Interaction seems to breakdown walls built by socially constructed differences. As previously mentioned, the results from qualitative interviews indicate that while some Chinese migrants hold relatively racist perception of locals, the majority of Chinese migrants do not. Rather, their perception of locals is not defined by race or ethnicity, but education and development.

The importance of education within Chinese culture dates to the Confucian traditional way of thought. In Confucian thought, learning is referred to as *xue* (学) (Ni, 2002). While *xue* is the modern Chinese term for learning, in Confucianism, it entails much more than studying for the sake of learning a subject. *Xue*, according to Confucian thought, is the “process of becoming and transforming” (Ni, 2002). Education leads to the development of what Confucian thought teaches is the ultimate authentic value of a person: their character (Ni, 2002). *Suzhi*, or the value of a person, is the Chinese manner of describing the importance of character. However, the emphasis on education and value should not completely overshadow the blunt racism portrayed by several interviewees. Scholar and journalist Howard French recounted interviews with Chinese migrants in Africa where he heard similar statements to the racism I encountered such as, “all blacks are thieves” (French, 2014). While some of my experiences mirrored his, the general direction of my results pointed toward the influence of Confucianism and *suzhi*.

The majority of interviewees did not refer to black Africans as unequal because of their skin, but because of their immoral actions, or their low *suzhi*. For example, nearly every participant stated they did not find blacks in Africa untrustworthy because of their skin, but because of their actions. They always valued black Africans because of their character in the same manner Confucianism teaches.

This value system was not limited to black Africans either, but rather all people. Understanding how many Chinese people judge the value of others is important to better understand China’s initiatives in Africa and how Chinese people relate to non-Chinese. The more educated an individual is in terms of moral character, the more valued they appear to many Chinese.

In addition to education, the development of society, or the lack thereof, determines the way many Chinese people perceive local Africans. This observation stands out as a significant result from my research. The word “development” suggests characteristics such as expanded infrastructure, stable government, and increased technology. However, these Eurocentric perspectives of development and modernization have elevated the contemporary ideal of a nation-state over ethnic and traditional values (Brass, 2005). As China has developed into the rising hegemon that it is, many of its people have come to view its development as the standard for other developing states. This was evident in comments from interviewees when they stressed that black Africans do not understand how to work hard for development or progress.

Their remarks about development did not resonate with importance until I travelled to Zimbabwe one week after completing interviews. As I visited the Khami ruins near Bulawayo, I witnessed the culture of the ancient African civilization. Interestingly, the timeline about the ruins seemed relatively stagnant from centuries BCE up until the twentieth century. The infrastructure, daily lifestyle, and culture remained the same while western cultures during that same period developed from subsistence farming to modern day infrastructure. I questioned whether the difference in development between the two regions was unequal, or different. Undoubtedly, the rough weather in places such as England and the northeast United States, population in close living quarters, and academic institutions drove western development. Most of Africa never experienced any of this. The residents of the Khami ruins had access to plenty of water, agriculture, excellent weather for profitable agriculture, high ground for protection, and did not face many of the challenges that the cultures which ignited

western development faced. This observation harkens back to Brass's statement about the west's concept of nation-state development overshadowing ethnic and traditional versions of development.

Many Chinese migrants viewed development through a western perspective. The "undeveloped" aspects of African society which many Chinese migrants encountered appeared unequal from their perspective. Many of the migrants viewed this inequality as an opportunity not to look down upon local blacks from a racist perspective, but rather from a position of cultural superiority which was there to help educate the locals in morality and development.

On a broader scale, scholars view the Chinese relationship with Africa as important to understanding the newly developing relationship between the United States and China. Some scholars view this in a negative light, and others in a positive. Tull argues that China is seeking to display its ability to altruistically help African states (Tull, 469). Kopiński states that China's involvement in Africa is just the beginning to China establishing its global hegemony (Kopinski, 131).

Fully answering the question about China's involvement in Africa is complicated, but my research on China's perception of race in Africa is one step closer to better understanding the relationship. Potentially, a deeper understanding of race and ways the Chinese might perceive black Africans could lead to an improvement in various state's engagement with both Africa and China. By comprehending how Chinese migrants perceive African locals, insight is given into how the Chinese population might view the "other." More importantly, witnessing the impact Confucian thought still has on many Chinese individuals portrays the impact it might still have at a macro-cultural and governmental level. In sum, this study allows

scholars to witness China-African relations through a unique lens and better understand the changing dynamic in the region.

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## Appendix A

### INTERVIEWEE DEMOGRAPHICS

<b>CODE</b>	<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Birth City</b>
Interview 1	25-30	Bead shop owner	Beijing
Interview 2	35-40	Traditional Medicine Shop owner	Beijing
Interview 3	40	Restaurant Owner	Taipei
Interview 4	23	Translator	Maputo
Interview 5	23	Translator	Maputo
Interview 6	22	Translator	Maputo
Interview 7	26	Construction Head Supervisor	Shanghai
Interview 8	30-35	Construction Supervisor	Unknown
Interview 9	30	Construction Supervisor	Unknown
Interview 10	30-35	Construction Supervisor	Xian
Interview 11	30-35	Construction Supervisor	Xian
Interview 12	25	Construction Supervisor	Unknown
Interview 13	40	Head of US Cultural Center, Maputo	Maputo
Interview 14	40-45	Generator Company Director	Maputo
Interview 15	50	House Service School Owner	Maputo
Interview 16	30	Generator Contraction and Translator	Hefei
Interview 17	25	Masseuse	Hefei
Interview 18	25-30	Hotel Manager	Shanghai
Interview 19	24	Hotel Gym Manager	Shanghai
Interview 20	35	Construction Manager	Shanghai
Interview 21	30	Accountant	Shanghai
Interview 22	35	Harbour Construction Company VP	Hangzhou

Interview 23	30-35	Construction Company Operations Director	Xian
Interview 24	35	Clothes Manufacturer	Maputo
Interview 25	55-60	Commercial Boat owner and retired	Maputo
Interview 26	65-70	Hotel Janitor	Bulawayo
Interview 27	65	Shop Owner	Maputo
Interview 28	30	Construction Representative	Xian
Interview 29	26	Construction Representative	Xian

## **Appendix B**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTION OUTLINE**

#### **General Information:**

- Where in China are you from?
- What is your current occupation?
- When did you come to Africa?
- Why did you choose to come to Africa? Have you talked to anyone else about your immigration experience? Do you get along with the locals?
- In what ways are the locals the same or different from you?

#### **Interview Goals:**

- Discuss where the migrant is from in China and their primary reason of coming to Africa
- Discuss differences between Chinese and Africans, from the Chinese perspective
- Discuss personal opinion of race
- Discuss ideas of how “Traditional Chinese thought” impacts their perceptions and life
- Allow participant to offer other information about their views on relations between Chinese and Africans and perceptions of Africans

**Appendix C**  
**IRB APPROVAL LETTER**



## RESEARCH OFFICE

210 HULLIHEN HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
NEWARK, DELAWARE 19716-1551  
Ph: 302/831-2136  
Fax: 302/831-2828

DATE: December 20, 2016

TO: Micah Petersen, MA00  
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1003574-1] Chinese Migration to South Africa and Mozambique: The Effect of Migration on Chinese Immigrant's Perceptions of Race

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED  
APPROVAL DATE: December 20, 2016  
EXPIRATION DATE: December 19, 2017  
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # (6,7)

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or [nicolefm@udel.edu](mailto:nicolefm@udel.edu). Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.