

## LSE Global China Working Group Seminars, AT 2023

Wednesdays, 5-6:30 pm via Zoom and in-person (tbd)

This seminar is organized by LSE Global China working group. It is for PhD researchers and early career scholars at LSE and beyond working on China and global south related studies. It is a forum for discussions and questions on China in development contexts. Researchers from all theoretical backgrounds and methodological traditions are welcome. This seminar will be hosted in hybrid format, via Zoom <https://lse.zoom.us/j/82109719675> and in-person at LSE (tbd).

This is an open-access research group. Please circulate this flyer in your networks to anyone who may be interested. The seminars are open to researchers external to the LSE. If you would like to join the working group, attend the seminar, and/or present in the future, please email Yuezhou Yang ([y.yang91@lse.ac.uk](mailto:y.yang91@lse.ac.uk)).

Our AT 2023 seminars are funded by LSE-Fudan Global Public Policy Hub.

### AT 2023

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| Wed, 18 Oct | <b>Yuezhou Yang</b> , Research Fellow at LSE-Fudan Global Public Policy Hub<br><i>Expropriating land for rail: contested land governance and citizenship along China-led rail development in Kenya</i>              |
| Wed, 8 Nov  | <b>Obert Hodzi</b> , Senior Lecturer at University of Liverpool<br><i>The Development Dilemma: Geopolitical Contestation and its Impact on African Nations</i>  |
| Wed, 15 Nov | <b>Weiwei Chen</b> , Research Associate at Open University<br><i>Global China as Method? Excellent Idea! But How? — A Reflection on My 8-Year Ground-Based Research on Chinese Outward FDI in Africa and Europe</i> |

Abstract

Wed, 18 Oct

**Expropriating land for rail: contested land governance and citizenship along China-led rail development in Kenya**

Yuezhou Yang, Research Fellow at LSE-Fudan Global Public Policy Hub

China-led infrastructural projects are testing African states' authority and legitimacy in land governance and rapidly changing the social fabric of African countries. Kenya is experiencing a 're-enchantment with big infrastructure.' Yet we know little about the effects on Kenya's institutional development and state-society relations. This project takes the opportunity offered by the rapid construction of Kenya's standard gauge railway (SGR) between 2014-2019 to provide a systematic, comparative investigation of state strategies in land expropriations across subnational territories. I explore how the big infrastructure has put strain on property relations between the state and its citizens and become sites of contestation among different aspirations and visions of the nation's development, and who is included, excluded, or put on limbo in this promised future. This interdisciplinary study, bridging development studies, African land tenure and critical scholarship of infrastructure, advances the theorization of the rapid transformation of African landscape and contributes to the contemporary debate on infrastructure and citizenship.

Wed, 8 Nov

**The Development Dilemma: Geopolitical Contestation and its Impact on African Nations**

Obert Hodzi, Senior Lecturer at University of Liverpool

I will explore how the emergence of China as a formidable player in the development assistance is shifting dynamics of geopolitics making development the new frontier of geopolitical rivalry between China and the West (broadly defined). I will assess the impact of this contestation on the development trajectory of selected African countries and explore how political elites are exercising agency.

Wed, 15 Nov

**Global China as Method? Excellent Idea! But How? — A Reflection on My 8-Year Ground-Based Research on Chinese Outward FDI in Africa and Europe**

Weiwei Chen, Research Associate at Open University

Inspired by the concept of the 'Global China Method' from Ivan Franceschini and Nicholas Loubere, this workshop seeks to encourage an open dialogue about current methodologies and practices in researching China's role in Africa and Europe. Framed through an 8-year research journey, the workshop will incorporate findings from my PhD thesis, "The Dynamics of Chinese Private OFDI in Ethiopia: A Comparison of the Light Manufacturing Industry and the Construction Materials Industry." It will also include extensive data from the ESRC-funded project on "Industrial Development, Construction and Employment in Africa (IDCEA): A Comparative Analysis" (2015-2019; 2019-2021), my research diaries, and insights from the ongoing ERC-funded project "Re-orienting Development: The Dynamics and Effects of Chinese Infrastructure Investment in Europe (REDEFINE)" (2020-2025). The workshop aims to do more than merely present findings. We will critically assess existing methodologies, identify research gaps, and discuss the challenges of studying 'Global China.' Participants are invited to contribute solutions and propose new approaches for a more rigorous and enlightening study of Global China. The goal is to collaboratively build a roadmap for future research on China's global impact.