
Defying classification: The new Chinese in Africa

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Abstract (in French and English)

Scholars of migration have always striven to conceptualize their research subjects in terms of different forms of spatial mobility. Permanent and temporary migrants, commuters, sojourners and the celebrated transnationals of late are reflecting changing perspectives within this field. The large numbers of Chinese citizens who over the last decade and a half have made their presence across the African continent are probably not exceptional, but studying their varying states of inbetweenness exemplifies the difficulty to grasp this phenomenon in conceptual terms of spatial mobility. How can we satisfy our scholarly desire for classification and at the same time do justice to their social realities if their subjectivities defy established categories?

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