Mining for Coal and Souls: Modes of Relationality in Emerging Chinese-Zambian Worlds

By

JUSTIN LEE HARUYAMA
DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Anthropology

in the

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

of the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DAVIS

Approved:

James H. Smith, Chair

Donald L. Donham

James Ferguson

Smriti Srinivas

Li Zhang

Committee in Charge

2022

*For Laura*

A crew and Chinese shift boss prepare to descend underground to mine coal. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2015.

## *Mining for Coal and Souls: Modes of Relationality in Emerging Chinese-Zambian Worlds*

***By***
***Justin Lee Haruyama***
***Department of Anthropology***
***University of California, Davis***

*Mining for Coal and Souls: Modes of Relationality in Emerging Chinese-Zambian Worlds*

## Contents

# LIST OF FIGURES AND PHOTOGRAPHS

**(All photographs were taken by the author and all figures were drawn by the author)**

**Figures**



**Photographs**

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the controversial presence of Chinese migrants and investors in Zambia today. It brings together the study of racialized conflict and labor migration, neocolonialism and resource extraction, Christianity and new religious movements, and emerging transformations in global capitalism. Throughout, the dissertation explores the diverse forms of relationality enabled by Chinese-African encounters, ranging from intimacy and fellowship, to exclusion, to mutual dependence and obligation. Drawing upon over two years of multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork in both Zambia and China, the dissertation examines relations at Chinese-operated coal mines in Zambia as well as in the hometowns of their miners in both countries. The dissertation focuses especially on these relations as they manifest in two different domains. The first domain is that of religion, through a Jehovah's Witness congregation that, though overwhelmingly composed of local Zambian congregants, nevertheless conducts its meetings exclusively in Mandarin Chinese in order to better evangelize Chinese expatriates. The second domain is that of labor, through a Chinese-operated coal mine in Zambia which has engendered not only violence but also new linguistic and familial formations that put the very categories of "Zambian" and "Chinese" into variation. Taking issue with simplistic narratives that have too frequently painted Chinese companies and individuals in Africa as either neocolonial exploiters or South-South, "win-win" development partners, the dissertation brings these two domains together to demonstrate that concrete encounters between Chinese and Zambians in a contact zone are far more ambivalent and open-ended than is often portrayed by contemporary rhetoric about "China in Africa."

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As is true of perhaps most ethnographic scholarship, the name that appears on the title page of this dissertation can be somewhat deceptive. While I may have set the words of this dissertation to page, the ideas within it germinated and grew in collaboration with a great many thinkers across several years and three continents.

Foremost among these fellow thinkers are all the many people in Zambia, China, and the spaces in between who welcomed me into their lives, shared some of their most pressing and intimate challenges and joys with me, and patiently explained so much that I could not have grasped otherwise. All of the analysis in this dissertation is ultimately the result of the way my preconceived notions became challenged and transformed through conversations and interactions with these friends and interlocutors. There are far too many people to thank here, but some individuals to whom I owe a particularly great debt include: Tom, Han Xuesong, Letina, Purity, Chris Chow, Amos, Arthur, Lai Longxu, Fridah, Naomi, James Wong, Moddy, Paul, Feng Chen, Miyanda, Jessica, Pori, Victor, Li Lu, Lala, Aggie, Choolwe, Moffat, Lü Jianguo, Chikopa, Naomi, Nyambe, Steven, Wang Chaoming, Michelle, Gad, Lawrence, Susan, Saida, Elvis, and all the members of the Kombela Central Mandarin Congregation. My deep gratitude and thanks go to those who welcomed me into their homes and treated me like family throughout my stay, including Auntie Chibwe, the entire Simapuyo family, Talent, Benson, Gideon, Feng Chen, Victor, and Collin. *Twalumba kapati*. 我非常感谢您们. *Twatotela*. *Zikomo kwambiri*. My greatest hope is that in these pages I have done justice to all the richness you shared with me.

At the University of California, Davis, profound thanks go to my wonderful advisor and mentor, Jim Smith, to whom I am deeply indebted. From my very first days as an uncertain and nervous graduate student Jim always offered me his unflagging guidance, support, and advice. I

could not have written this dissertation without the many benefits of Jim's incisive feedback, infinite curiosity, and invigorating conversation over these past several years. I am extremely grateful as well for the many lessons Jim taught me along the way, including the values of broad knowledge and a commitment to serious fieldwork. My deep thanks also go to the other members of my dissertation committee, each of whom provided strong mentorship, insightful suggestions, and tireless support: Li Zhang, Don Donham, and Smriti Srinivas, at UC Davis, and James Ferguson at Stanford. Li's keen eye for proposal development was critical to the shaping of this project while Don's close reading of the final draft was a generous intellectual gift. Smriti created spaces for congenial and collaborative co-thinking and James Ferguson kindly shared time, encouragement, and innumerable insights and ideas.

Bettina Ng'weno, though not officially on my dissertation committee, was also a close mentor who helped me greatly on my journey through the Ph.D. program. All of these mentors gave very generously of their time and intellectual wisdom, reading many, many versions of my work and with their constant feedback helped to push my writing to be the best that it could be. I also thank Marisol de la Cadena, Cristiana Giordano, Suad Joseph, Jeffrey Kahn, Alan Klima, Suzana Sawyer, Naomi Janowitz, Laura Grindstaff, John Marx, Evan Watkins, and Scott Shershow who each contributed significantly to my training in anthropological and critical theory, ethnographic research methods, and the craft of writing. Prior to UC Davis, I was inspired by the scholars who first kindled my love for anthropology: Monica DeHart, who mentored me during my undergraduate years at the University of Puget Sound, as well as Clive Bruzas and the late John Daniel at the School for International Training, who oversaw my undergraduate study abroad in South Africa.

A formative intellectual home for me during my time as a Ph.D. student was the Reimagining Indian Ocean Worlds Mellon Research Initiative at UC Davis, co-organized by Bettina Ng'weno and Smriti Srinivas with the assistance of Neelima Jeychandran. This group of scholars was extremely generative for me to think with as my dissertation project developed. The Initiative's generous financial support allowed me to conduct additional fieldwork and to spend much more time focused on writing than otherwise would have been possible. Thank you especially to Bettina Ng'weno, Smriti Srinivas, Neelima Jeychandran, and Nicole Ranganath, who formed the intellectual heart and soul of this research group. I also offer warm thanks to my fellow graduate student participants who helped to workshop much of my dissertation: Maya Costa-Pinto, Christian Doll, Gillian Irwin, Ayanda Boy-Boy Manqoyi, Laura Meek, Christopher Miller, Ishani Saraf, Eveleen Sidana, Bidita Jawher Tithi, Anuj Vaidya, and May Ee Wong.

Frank Shulze-Engler, Ruth Achenbach, and Rirhandu Mageza-Barthel at the Africa's Asian Options (AFRASO) project at Goethe University in Frankfurt and Jerry Won Lee at UC Irvine assisted with revisions and feedback that greatly improved upon an earlier version of Chapter 2. Jamie Monson at Michigan State University, David Palmer at the Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and Andrew Kipnis and Gordon Mathews at the Chinese University of Hong Kong offered generative feedback on an earlier version of Chapter 4. And I am indebted to Teresa Kuan at the Chinese University of Hong Kong for her insightful and supportive comments on an earlier draft of Chapter 5.

I would also like to especially acknowledge the many other students and scholars in both California and Hong Kong who read various parts of this dissertation, helped me to think through the big and small challenges as it developed, and provided solidarity and support during the times when those big challenges seemed insurmountable. These individuals include Christian

Doll, Jane Saffitz, Laura Meek, Matthew Nesvet, Ayanda Boy-Boy Manqoyi, Jack Greatrex, Mei-chun Lee, Alexander Robins, Ignatius Suglo, Nathan Lane, Johanna von Pezold, Justin Malachowski, Yang Xi, Mehmet Fatih Tatari, Robert Deakin, Adam Liebman, Sofia Rivera Sotolo, Kyohei Itakura, Taylor Bell, Muneeza Rizvi, Kristi Onzik, Mariel Garcia Llorens, Adrien Yen, Caroline McKusick, Yi Dayton, D Dayton, Shaheen Amirebrahimi, Ari Conterato, Marie McDonald, Rebecca Jones, Jacob Culbertson, Benjamin Bean, Tory Brykalski, Morganne Blais-Mcpherson, Mercedes P. Villalba, Jessica Rudnick, Liberty Gavin, Robert McMurry, Correy Kushnick, Kori Lay, and all the members of the Hong Kong China-Africa Reading Group.

In Zambia, a number of institutions and individuals were extremely important in helping me to situate my fieldwork process, become affiliated with the University of Zambia (UNZA), and obtain research ethics approval from the university. These individuals include Marja Hinfelaar and Jessica Achberger at the Southern African Institute for Policy and Research (SAIPAR) and Jason Mwanza, Mazuba Muchindu, and Patrick Chanda in the Department of Social Work and Sociology at the University of Zambia. This research was made possible by the generous support of the University of Zambia's Department of Social Development Studies and the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies.

Preliminary fieldwork for this dissertation project in 2015 and 2016 was supported by grants from the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program, the UC Davis Department of Anthropology, and the Reimagining Indian Ocean Worlds Mellon Research Initiative. The 2017-2019 fieldwork period upon which most of this dissertation is based was funded by a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, a Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant, a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Abroad Fellowship, and the Reimagining Indian Ocean Worlds Mellon Research Initiative Dissertation

Fieldwork Grant. Funding during the writing phase of this dissertation was provided by the UC Davis Provost's Dissertation Year Award and the Reimagining Indian Ocean Worlds Mellon Research Initiative's Dissertation Writing Fellowship.

Writing a dissertation can be an arduous, isolating, and anxiety-inducing process. It certainly was during many periods for me. There are a number of individuals who provided profound emotional support, joy, and laughter throughout this process and, in so doing, gave me the strength to see it through. These include my loving parents, Andrew and Cynthia, who have been there for me through all of life's ups and downs (and who helped proofread this dissertation), and my always-amazing siblings Dorothy and Stuart, who I can always rely on to remind me of what is most important. Galen Wetterling and I may not have been born into the same family, but I consider him family now and treasure his perspective and wise words on all of life's problems.

Finally, my deepest gratitude to Laura, my shining light and my one true love. She is simultaneously my greatest inspiration and also the rock of support upon which all my dreams are built. Laura keeps me going when I am down and is the source of my greatest joys when things are good. When I am filled with apprehension and self-doubt, she is always there to remind me that not all who wander are lost, and to give me the patient encouragement I need to find my way again. I could not have done this without her.

Thank you, all, so much. I will forever be grateful.

Justin Lee Meek Haruyama

Hong Kong, May 2022

# INTRODUCTION

Lying asleep in my bed at the Chinese living quarters of Summers Coal Mine, I was awakened suddenly in the early morning hours by the sound of 200 angry Zambian miners shouting and banging violently on the gates. It was the first scheduled payday at the mine after over two years of closure enforced by the Zambian government, and the miners' pay was late. Part of the government-imposed conditions for the reopening of the mine had been to hire a Zambian management team to supplement the existing Chinese management staff, and so this morning the Zambian human resources manager stepped out to placate the mob of frustrated miners. Afterwards, she told me that it was only her promise that the money would arrive by the end of the day that convinced the miners to abandon their plan to rush the gates and extract their pay, physically, from the Chinese managers. As Summers mine has a history of miners murdering Chinese supervisors during labor disputes, I did not doubt that she was right.

Standing together in the kitchen of the residential compound where we stayed, my Chinese host Lin Jun and I chatted about his life in Zambia while he fretted over a bubbling black soup of traditional Chinese medicine. Lin Jun complained to me of the prejudice and discrimination he experienced as a Chinese migrant in Zambia, telling me of how Zambians sometimes referred to him and his Chinese colleagues as "cockroaches" or "rats." But he had some Zambian friends. Lin Jun took night classes at the local university in addition to his job with the Chinese gambling machine company, and one of his Zambian classmates, Gideon, had come down with a nasty cold. Lin Jun had spent hours preparing a concoction of Chinese herbs to cure Gideon's sore throat. But he worried that the medicine would be too bitter for Gideon's taste. Late that night Lin Jun and I finally traveled to Gideon's home to deliver the medicine to him—and indeed Gideon did find it

quite bitter. Nevertheless, he drank the entire bowl of medicine. And when I saw him a few days later Gideon remarked to me how surprised he was that the sore throat had healed so quickly.

Sitting together in the cramped space of her tiny one-room home, my Zambian friend Prisca swiped across the screen of her phone, showing me photos of her boyfriend's wife and 9-year-old daughter back in China. Prisca's boyfriend, the father of the child now growing in her womb, had until recently been one of the many Chinese expatriates employed at the coal mine nearby. But now Prisca's boyfriend had been reassigned by the Chinese state-owned enterprise (SOE) he was employed by back to China, and Prisca had not seen him since he left several months ago. I asked Prisca how other Zambians felt about her having dated a Chinese man. "At first, my mother beat me, because she didn't like me dating a Chinese. But she accepted it once he started sponsoring me." Prisca continued, "now, though, no Zambian man will marry me. They think that if they have sex with me, they will catch the Chinese disease." Part STD, part Chinese witchcraft, the most horrifying symptom of the Chinese disease is the tiny fish that emerge from one's urine. Despite it all, I asked Prisca if she still loved her boyfriend, now returned to China. "Yes," she said, "we talk on the phone every day. I tell him I love him and miss him, but I don't think he will ever come back."

**Dissertation Overview**

This study examines the controversial presence of Chinese migrants and investors in Zambia today. As the preceding ethnographic vignettes suggest, it brings together the study of racialized conflict and labor migration, neocolonialism and resource extraction, Christianity and new religious movements, and emerging transformations in global capitalism. Throughout I explore the diverse forms of relationality enabled by Chinese-African encounters, ranging from intimacy and fellowship, to exclusion, to mutual dependence and obligation. Drawing upon over two years of

multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork in both Zambia and China, I examine relations at Chinese-operated coal mines in Zambia as well as in the hometowns of their miners in both countries. The study examines these relations as they manifest in two different domains. The first domain is that of religion, through a Jehovah's Witness congregation that, though overwhelmingly composed of local Zambian congregants, nevertheless conducts its meetings exclusively in Mandarin Chinese in order to better evangelize Chinese expatriates. The second domain is that of labor, through a Chinese-operated coal mine in Zambia which has engendered not only violence but also new linguistic and familial formations that put the very categories of "Zambian" and "Chinese" into variation. Taking issue with simplistic narratives that have too frequently painted Chinese companies and individuals in Africa as either neocolonial exploiters or South-South, "win-win" development partners, I bring these two domains together to demonstrate that concrete encounters between Chinese and Zambians in a contact zone (Pratt 2008) are far more ambivalent and open-ended than is often portrayed by contemporary rhetoric about "China in Africa."

In recent years, the politics of migration as well as anti-immigrant sentiment and xenophobia in the developed nations of Europe and North America have been the focus of intense popular and scholarly attention. By contrast, the arrival of well over a million and counting Chinese migrants to the African continent has received far less focus, as if the transformative impacts of this wave of investment and migration and the unease and anxieties it has produced are unworthy of great attention; thereby relegating Africa to a familiar place of "shadow" in imaginaries of globalization (Ferguson 2006). What scholarly work that does exist on the prodigious influx of Chinese migrants to Zambia has usually been macro-level in scope, tracking large flows of money and people; meanwhile most ethnographic studies adopt an explicitly political-economic orientation, comparing forms of capital or labor practices across Chinese and other foreign-owned enterprises (for example Li 2017; Sautman and Yan 2012; Yan and Sautman 2013; but compare Wu

2021, discussed later). While acknowledging the xenophobic violence that is increasingly directed against Chinese migrants and seeking to dispel the myth of Chinese as worse than other foreign actors in Africa, this existing scholarship fails to address the specific social practices of both Chinese and Africans that contributes to this violence. This study demonstrates the significance of these social practices, which engender a whole range of different modes of relationality, including sometimes racialized violence but at other times intimacy, conviviality, and humor. Without an adequate analysis of how the "China in Africa" phenomenon is constructed from the ground up by individual Africans and Chinese, we risk taking for granted the inevitability of anti-Chinese racism and xenophobia in Africa rather than understanding how such racism and xenophobia are actively promoted or mitigated through the everyday social practices of Africans and Chinese migrants themselves.

Arranged around six modes—encounter, separation, dependence, obligation, connection, and exploitation—this dissertation examines how not only capitalist wage labor but also language, cosmopolitan aspiration, intimacy, and divine revelation become fundamentally constitutive of relationality in emerging Chinese-Zambian worlds. Thinking through these modes of relationality as each offering their own regime of veridiction (Foucault 2008) and felicity conditions (Latour 2013), I demonstrate how they enable diverse forms of sociality from conviviality and kinship to hostility and violence. Taking cue from Yanagisako (2002) that culturally-mediated and individually-felt sentiments can be as central to (capitalist) production as are tools, land, or human labor, this study thus develops an intricate account of how a set of contemporary transnational "South-South" capitalist relations and postcolonial imaginaries are complexly constituted through the concrete and everyday forms of relationality between and among their participants.

**Background**

The widespread presence of Chinese nationals in Zambia is a fairly recent phenomenon. After the completion of the Chinese-constructed TAZARA railway linking Zambia to Tanzania in 1975 (Monson 2009) and the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 there was an abrupt withdrawal of significant Chinese involvement in Zambia, and Chinese people were almost completely absent from the country until migration and investment from China to Zambia began to rapidly pick up in the early 2000s. This more recent phase of Chinese involvement in Zambia has departed significantly from earlier ideologies of internationalist proletarian solidarity characteristic of the Maoist period (Hsu 2012; Slawecki 1963; Zhan 2009) and has instead been characterized by intensive capitalist investment in almost every sector and at every scale of the Zambian economy, a history I describe more in Chapter 1. The substantial capitalist investments by the Chinese state and Chinese private enterprises in Zambia in recent years have proved controversial, however, and Western media sources have been particularly prone to decrying them as brutal examples of Chinese neocolonialism or neoimperialism (cf. Cheng 2013; French 2015; Lucas 2007; Wonacott 2012).

My mining fieldsites, Summers and Hhaala coal mines, have been particularly conducive to these critiques as they have experienced periodic episodes of intense violence between Chinese management and Zambian workers, including mass shootings and murder. Moving beyond critique of the simplistic, reifying, and dualistic assumptions implicit in many charges of Chinese neocolonialism, I diverge from other scholarly work on the topic (e.g. Lee 2017; Sautman and Yan 2012) that has refuted these charges by demonstrating the commonalities between Chinese capitalist practices and those of other foreign nationals. Instead, I provide a close ethnographic account of how the very categories of "Chinese" and "Zambian," and the complex modes of relationality between them, are constructed anew through everyday labor practices.

**Forms of Capital**

As noted, in Zambia specifically most of the existing ethnographic scholarship on Chinese migration and investment has generally focused on debating whether Chinese "capitalism" or "capital" is or is not different than other foreign-owned capital in the region (but see Wu 2021). On the one hand, relying on survey and documentary evidence, Yan and Sautman (2012, 2013; Sautman 2013) have argued that in terms of, for example, labor practices or sexual relationships with local women, there is in fact little difference between the behaviors of Chinese expatriates and the numerous other expatriates of other nationalities in the Zambian mining industry. By contrast, relying on more long-term and embedded ethnography Lee (2017) argues that, in terms of management ethos, communally-oriented living style, and willingness to 吃苦/*chi ku* ("eat bitterness"), Chinese employees of Chinese state-owned enterprises in Zambia differ profoundly in their practices from expatriates of other nationalities.

Nevertheless, Lee confines her attention to only one kind of Chinese capital (that of state-owned enterprises), and she stops short of a sustained ethnographic analysis of how the specificities in the practices of Chinese expatriates in Zambia then inform and shape their everyday encounters with Zambian people. From the vantage point thus gained, Lee lays out a clear explication of some of the most important varieties of foreign capital operating in Zambia today, including Chinese state-owned capital (such as the flagship NFCA Chambishi mine and its subsidiaries as well as smaller subcontractors such as the one I studied at Hhaala Mine) and global private capital. But in addition to her different ethnographic vantage point, the research questions Lee addresses are quite different than those raised in this study. Lee's focus is primarily on capital, understood in a Marxian sense as "a relational process, value in motion that appears in different forms (as money and as commodities)" (2017: 11; compare Marx 1990: 255-56).

One major point of departure of this study from Lee's work is thinking with the concept of capital not only in Marx's original sense which highlights its economic or financial form but also in the Bourdieusian, which brings a consideration of a number of different forms of capital, not all of them economic in an immediately obvious sense. For Bourdieu, if, following Marx, money can be understood as a kind of materially-congealed social power (a material token to convince others to do or to give as one wishes), then capital more broadly is that which "enables [agents] to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor" (1986: 241). But then it is clear that not only money or commodities (or even direct political influence) can appropriate social power in this way. There are other forms of social value, what Bourdieu calls distinction (2010), that are often misrecognized as being non-economic and non-commodifiable in nature but which in fact are used to appropriate social energy and labor and are, moreover, at least partially interconvertible with money and commodities (economic capital).

In Lee's categorization, global private capital in Zambia is focused on "profit-maximization" (what in a Bourdieusian sense we could see as a maximalist accumulation of economic capital) while Chinese state-owned capital is focused on "profit-optimization" including both financial profit and other political utilities (in a Bourdieusian lens, as a twinned accumulation of both economic and political capital). As a result, in Lee's analysis, Zambians have more agency through their state to influence the practices of Chinese state-owned capital (because part of the objective of this capital is to maintain stable relations with the Zambian state and stable access to its mineral resources) than they do with respect to global private capital (because this kind of capital is concerned not with stability but with short-term profits, and faced with forceful Zambian demands can simply relocate elsewhere to achieve those profits).

In this study, by considering forms of capital beyond the political and economic to consider as well linguistic, symbolic, and cultural forms, I reveal how different patterns of both Zambian and

Chinese agency and mutual interaction emerge. In Chapter 2, for example, I show how differentiated valuations of various languages and dialects (what sociolinguists refer to more generally as linguistic codes) such as (Standard) English, ciTonga, Mandarin Chinese, and a pidgin language known as "Shortcut English," valuations which result from colonial histories, postcolonial nation-building projects, and global symbolic markets, result in a form of raciolinguistic racialization of Chinese migrants by Zambians. Different in some key respects from racializing ideologies commonly employed in the West, this racialization contributes to a more forcefully and coherently articulated set of economic claims being made by Zambians against Chinese owners of capital relative to other foreigners, but it also contributes to increased precarity for Chinese migrants and sometimes racialized violence.

Though a Bourdieusian analysis appears prominently in Chapter 2, in Chapter 4 I shift to a conceptualization of spiritual capital as I examine a congregation of Zambian Jehovah's Witnesses who conduct their meetings exclusively in Mandarin Chinese. Though spiritual capital might at first seem to be only one more form of capital that has been enumerated by a long list of theorists following Bourdieu, as a concept spiritual capital actually forces a reconsideration of the entire Bourdieusian project (Palmer and Wong 2013). One reading of Bourdieu (e.g. Bourdieu 1977) is to see society as essentially like a game, in which individuals and groups are in a constant process of seeking to increase their own capital as sources of power over others: indeed, at times Bourdieu explicitly refers to capital and power as amounting to the same thing (1986: 242). Bourdieu of course mocked the—very typically bourgeoisie—idea that highly class-coded cultural dispositions such as "high art" or "pure theory" were ever disinterestedly pursued for themselves, as opposed to all too-interestedly maintained as a profit of distinction legitimating class hierarchies. What is provocative about the concept of spiritual capital, however, is precisely the apparent misfit between, on the one hand, the economistic metaphor of capital—which, following Marx and

Bourdieu, is usually seen as achieving functional ends of social power—and, on the other, the idea of the spiritual, which seems to suggest an entirely different set of intrinsic ends. Mandarin-speaking Zambian Witnesses in many ways abstain from the "game" of capitalist modernity as they gradually spend away their savings, downsize their homes, and refuse lucrative employment they could obtain with their Mandarin-language proficiency as they seek instead to accumulate their spiritual capital with Jehovah God, capital that will be essential in ensuring their place in the great human flourishing that will take place in the world to come. As Palmer and Wong note, "not all capital is functional, available to be used simply as a means to an economic or social end. Seen in this way, the concept of spiritual capital leads to an interrogation on values that are desirable in and of themselves, while considering how such values are nurtured and reinforced, how they generate individual and collective capacity, and how they influence social, economic, and political relations. Such a conceptualization of spiritual capital opens the question of the links between the transcendent and material dimensions of human life" (2013: 11; cf. Laidlaw 2014). In sum, this study explores how multiple forms of capital beyond the political and economic, including forms of cultural, linguistic, and spiritual capital, oriented towards both functional and intrinsic ends, shapes the various modes of relationality that emerge in contemporary Zambian-Chinese relations.

**Resource Extraction and Mining in Southern Africa**

Previous studies have powerfully demonstrated how mines and mining communities have long been viewed in southern Africa as symbols and promises of modernity (Ferguson 1999) and as microcosms of the nation as a whole (Donham 2011). Mostly conducted within the context of highly racially-stratified societies under British colonialism and Apartheid South Africa, this historical scholarship focused overwhelmingly on the experiences of black migrant workers from across the region. Important work was done on how mining communities became drivers of social

transformation as they brought together diverse populations and peoples, and how these communities eventually became loci for political mobilization and resistance against colonial and neocolonial rule (van Onselen 1976; Von Holdt 2003). Thus, rather than places of abjection or lack, numerous studies have showed how mining communities in Africa have been highly generative spaces: engendering for example new forms of marriage and sexuality (Moodie 1994), new forms of sovereignty (Reno 1998), and new temporalities (Hoffman 2011). Similarly, seminal early work in the rapidly industrializing Zambian Copperbelt demonstrated that, contrary to the expectations of modernization theory, Africans did not discard tribal and ethnic identities when they moved to the cities, but instead continued to deploy them in highly intentional and strategic ways (Epstein 1958). Sometimes these deployments manifested in amiable competition, as in the Kalela Dance described by Mitchell (1957), and sometimes, as in South Africa (Donham 2011), they resulted in communal violence.

Most of these historical studies took as their object mining contexts that were sharply segregated between white and black, and as a result they tended to emphasize a two-way dialectical or dialogic encounter between racial groups. They also analyzed mines at a particular historical conjuncture in which power relationships between white and Black actors—while contested—were also extremely lopsided, with white actors dominating almost all positions of formal authority both in the mines themselves and in the wider society. This dissertation's analysis of contemporary social situations at Summers and Hhaala mines departs from these earlier studies in two important ways. Firstly, it examines how projects of extractive capitalism become transformed in a global context that no longer has one center (Europe and whiteness), but rather multiple competing poles of physical and symbolic power. Secondly, the analysis here builds on earlier studies by investigating the effects that the intervening experiences of history—for example of colonialism, national independence, and structural adjustment in Zambia and of semi-colonialism, Marxist

socialism, and neoliberally-inflected postsocialism in China—have on contemporary capitalist and labor relations at mines in Zambia.

**Chinese Forms of Capitalism**

While for much of the twentieth century popular and academic understandings of capitalism implicitly assumed its fundamentally Western origins and nature, the rise in recent decades of increasingly important capitalist actors from the global South have provoked vigorous scholarly debates regarding the character of these new "capitalisms." Inspired by Weber's (2011) thesis locating the origins of capitalism in the values and norms of seventeenth and eighteenth-century European protestant men, some scholars (e.g. Chan and Chiang 1994; Chen and Kao 2009; Redding 1990; Redding and Witt 2007) postulated analogous "Confucian," "Buddhist," or other ethics from which divergent non-Western forms of capitalism might have derived their natures. Other theorists (e.g. Dirlik 1997; Greenhalgh 1994; Ong 1998) have sharply criticized these depictions, arguing that the apparently distinctive features of Asian capitalist modalities are not the result of traditional "Asian" cultural values but instead strategic and instrumentalist adaptations to current conditions of neoliberal capitalism and flexible accumulation. Meanwhile Yanagisako (2002) has taken issue with both these approaches, arguing that culture is neither a static determinant of capitalism's character nor a mere instrumental resource that can be deployed or discarded at will. Instead, she argued that through the medium of culturally-mediated but individually-felt sentiments, culture is *both* a product of individual action *as well as* a force that serves to incite and constrain that action in specific ways.

What these debates regarding the fundamental alterity or sameness of "Asian," and in particular "Chinese," capitalism often fail to adequately explore are the *historical* and *structural* features of Chinese economic action that are now in some ways being exported globally. Far from

being a monolithic, unitary phenomenon, "Chinese capitalism" in Zambia for example is in fact highly fractured in ways that mirror domestic cleavages in China's own domestic coal mining economy. Since 改革开放/*gaige kaifang* ("Reform and Opening") a fundamental structural conflict has developed in the domestic Chinese coal industry between state-owned enterprises (SOEs), legacies of the socialist era, and the township and village mines (TVMs) which pursue much more flexible forms of accumulation (Wright 2012). Summers and Hhaala mines in Zambia are similarly divided by the Chinese "varieties of capital" (Lee 2017) present at each site, with one being privately owned by a group of brothers from Southeast China and the other featuring a Chinese SOE from Northeast China as a major subcontractor (tasked during the period of my fieldwork with constructing a thermal power plant). Analogous with the differences between SOE and TVM mines in China, the Chinese operators in Zambia at Hhaala Summer mines similarly pursued quite different practices of labor management and capital accumulation, a point I will return to in more detail in Chapters 1 and 2.

**Colonialism, Postcolonialism, Neocolonialism**

Though Western media accounts of Chinese activities in Africa generally and Zambia specifically frequently portray Chinese as monolithic actors simply repeating the exploitative practices of European colonialists, the differences between European colonialism and the contemporary Chinese operation of Summers and Hhaala mines are clearly as important as the similarities. Nevertheless, prior experiences of colonial encounter are relevant as Zambians and Chinese migrants at these two mines also constantly compare and contrast each other's practices with earlier practices of European colonialism, in ways both critical and nostalgic. Thus, present social relations become filtered through the lenses of the past, in ways not unlike how colonial encounters have become complexly remembered, embodied, and forgotten in many other places in

postcolonial Africa (cf. Argenti 2007; Cole 2001). This is not surprising since colonial encounters everywhere involved profound transformations of consciousness for both colonized subjects and European colonizers alike (Faier and Rofel 2014). Thus, in different locales across the globe encounters with European colonialism involved transformations in understandings of the body through medicine (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992) and personal hygiene (Burke 1996), of sexual and domestic intimacy (Stoler 2002), and of race (Dikötter 2015). They were also highly productive of new uses (Liu 1995) and kinds of languages (Palmié 2006; Ansaldo 2009), as well as radically transformed instantiations of capitalism itself (Sahlins 2005).

While extremely insightful, these studies have often presented colonialism as a singular experience, marking a radical disjuncture in the historical trajectories of the subjects brought under its purview and divorced from previous experiences of domination and exploitation. But the actions taken and discourses articulated by Zambians and Chinese migrants today suggest that contemporary encounters cannot be divorced from history so easily, and that the frequently traumatic experiences of colonialism, post-colonialism, and capitalism are layered in such a way that memories of previous exploitation continue to shape the present. As shifts in international capitalism increasingly lead to reconfigurations of global power hierarchies, this study provides a detailed ethnographic analysis of how contemporary migratory, religious, and capitalist labor relations in Zambia are being transformed through their participants' layered experiences of history.

**Intersecting Inequalities**

One dynamic that these transformations particularly reflect are the increasingly dense interlinkages of global capitalism that have continued to emerge over the last two decades, linkages that have now left relatively few parts of the globe untouched (but see Gibson-Graham 2006). Of course, Zambian societies have long been linked with a wider world through long-distance trade

routes and other connections that long preceded the advent of European colonialism (Roberts 1976). As in many parts of the world, however, in southern Zambia where the bulk of this study took place the twentieth century led to a massive foreshortening of people's experiences of time and space, as transportation linkages made far-flung circulations of people, goods, and ideas easier than ever before (Colson 2006). At the same time, the colonial period resulted in the erection of explicitly racialized inequalities, as Africans were systematically excluded from the material goods that were now being imported into the colony for use by white settlers in exchange for the mineral resources that were being extracted from it. Some urban Zambians responded to this context of rigidly racialized hierarchies by adopting a range of cultural forms and attitudes associated with European "modernity:" adoptions whose significance motivated a major debate in social scientific circles (Epstein 1958; Ferguson 1999; Magubane 1971). The promise of national independence in 1964 was that the vast natural resource wealth of Zambia would be used not to line the pockets of foreign corporations but instead be used to develop Zambia itself for the benefit of ordinary Zambians. For various reasons, however, including the ex-colony's dependence on a single primary commodity (copper) and an indifferent global economic system in which it had no effective voice, the delivery of this promise has in the decades since independence slipped farther, rather than closer, from the grasp of most Zambians. The reliance of the national Zambian economy on copper has resulted in a series of extreme boom and bust cycles over the decades, leading at times to widespread experiences of abjection (Ferguson 1999) and at others to hopefulness (Haynes 2017). But despite the lack of civil war or other similar political calamities that have afflicted some of its neighbors, Zambia has during the post-independence period nevertheless slid from the status of a middle-income country on par with South Korea, Brazil, and Turkey, to one of the poorest nations in the world, a specific history that I discuss at greater length in Chapter 1 and again in the Conclusion.

Today, with widespread consumption of global media and consumer goods produced by companies associated with the global North, most ordinary Zambians are far more cognizant of what living conditions are like in more prosperous parts of the world than, for example, ordinary Americans are aware of what life is like in Zambia. As a result most of the Zambians I met during my fieldwork were harshly aware of their position at the very bottom rung of global racialized and classed hierarchies, even as their country contributes a great share of the mineral wealth necessary for the functioning of the global capitalist economy. This resulted in a whole class of dark humor, often expressed to me with more than a little bitterness, that commented on the global ordering of inequality. One joke commonly told to me by my Zambian friends and interlocutors in Gwembe South, for example, was that, as Zambians, they did not need to see Hell to fear it since, residing in Zambia, they were well acquainted with its living conditions and practically already living there. I grapple with the theological and cosmological responses, as well as articulations of shared kinship, that some of my Zambian interlocutors expressed in response to these global racialized hierarchies in Chapter 5.

With respect to these extreme race and class inequalities, themselves powerfully codified and rigidified during the colonial period, China was once a strong ideological ally of ordinary Zambians. There was a time not so many decades ago that China explicitly aligned itself with Zambian peasants and workers against Western capitalist (and neocolonial) exploitation. These relations of solidarity and mutualistic cooperation, premised upon shared experiences of victimhood under European colonial aggression, continue to have afterlives particularly at the level of discourse articulated by Chinese and some Zambian state elites. But, at least at the fieldsites I studied in Zambia, they no longer have much bearing on contemporary interactions between Zambians and Chinese migrants. In a historic transition that I discuss at greater length in Chapter 1, if once Chinese engagement with Zambia was premised on shared opposition to capitalist exploitation and

neocolonial resource extraction, now Chinese companies, both state-owned and private, participate eagerly in precisely these processes: a dynamic that I return to in the conclusion of this dissertation. Detailed work has been produced by scholars demonstrating that contemporary Chinese capitalist investments and business in Zambia are not significantly worse in their treatment of Zambian workers than are the companies from many other foreign countries which dominate Zambia's formal economy (Sautman and Yan 2012; Yan and Sautman 2013), but the implicit acknowledgement of this work is that Chinese companies are hardly better, either. Instead, at best, Chinese state-owned enterprises offer Zambian workers a bargain of stable exploitation (secure employment but low wages) as opposed to the more footloose approach of transnational private capital, which offers them flexible exclusion (precarious employment but higher wages) (Lee 2017: 78). At worst, in resembling the highly exploitative approach to mining pursued by township and villages mines (TVMs) in China itself (Wright 2012), the labor practices of private Chinese-operated businesses in Zambia can be considerably worse than even the norm of stable exploitation described by Lee (Sautman and Yan 2014).

One major line of inequality that runs through the encounters and interactions described in this ethnography, then, is class. The Zambian middle and upper classes are very small compared to the overall population and almost entirely confined to Zambia's handful of small cities. Meanwhile as I discuss in greater detail in Chapter 1, Chinese migrants to Zambia are almost all either private entrepreneurs and owners of petty capital or managers and supervisors at larger Chinese-owned companies. As a result, in pretty much all of Zambia but much more glaringly so in the rural locales and small townships where Summers and Hhaala mines are located and the Safari company installs its gambling machines, even the poorest Chinese migrant tends to have much more access to ready wealth and economic opportunity than the vast majority of Zambians around him. Of course, this kind of inequality is not specific or exclusive to Chinese migrants: as mentioned almost all of the

dominant companies in Zambia's formal economy, particularly in its leading mining sector, are owned by foreigners, and many of these companies bring in expatriates management teams. As a result long after the end of formal colonialism and its legally-enforced racial segregation, there remains in Zambia a kind of basic, racialized class inequality that shapes relations between the great majority of ordinary Zambians at my fieldsites and the different kinds, both European and Asian, of *bamakuwa*/*abasungu*/ "whites[1]" whom they interacted with.

These globalized economic hierarchies in which Zambia as well as all other sub-Saharan African societies (with the possible exception of South Africa) are very much at the periphery (Wallerstein 2004) of the world capitalist system engender then a de facto racialized stratification within Zambia itself, in which ordinary Zambians at my fieldsites recognize not only Chinese but also other "whites" (including myself as an ethnographer of European and Asian ancestry) as invariably much wealthier than themselves. Given the highly precarious financial circumstances that many Zambians inhabit, this results in frequent practices of various kinds of "declarations of dependence" (Ferguson 2013; cf. Schmitz 2020) or "begging" (Sheridan 2018) on the part of Zambians towards whites, and also on the part of Chinese migrants a kind of ubiquitous suspicion of the motives behind any Zambian who wishes to interact with them (Wu 2021). I grapple in greater depth with some of the more extreme forms that these "declarations of dependence" sometimes take in Chapter 5.

This racialized and classed inequality between most Zambians and Chinese migrants as well as other "whites" is a basic fact of the social structure of majority of fieldsites I discuss in this

[1] Analogous to the way that words such as *mukuwa*, *musungu*, or *mzungu* are used in Zambian languages such as ciTonga, CiBemba, or Nyanja, the Zambian English term "white (person)" can be ambiguous but at its widest extent encompasses all people who phenotypically are not recognizable as of sub-Saharan African ancestry. In Zambian usage these terms thus encompass not only people of European ancestry but also those of Asian and Middle Eastern descent as well. I discuss the complicated semiotics of these cognate terms and their ambivalent relation to prevalent Euro-American practices of racialization at greater length in Chapter 2.

ethnography. A partial exception to this is the Kombela Central Jehovah's Witnesses Mandarin Congregation, which I describe in greater detail in Chapters 1 and 4, given the Zambian members of this congregation' more middle-class economic position. But other kinds of intersecting inequalities run throughout the text as well. As I discuss at greater length in Chapter 1, Chinese migrants in Zambia themselves often come from relatively marginalized class backgrounds in China, and must often endure a great deal of 吃苦/*chi ku* "eating bitterness" as part of their migratory endeavors in Zambia, a harshness of living conditions that of course contributes to the capitalist profitability of the companies they work for (and therefore is also form of labor exploitation in the Marxian sense). Even Zambians who are jealous of the much greater incomes and access to wealth that Chinese and other whites in their country enjoy still often express shock at the austerity of the living conditions of Chinese migrants, an austerity that does indeed tend to set them apart from "white" expatriates from other countries.

Another line of inequality that runs through this dissertation is what could be termed symbolic, in reference to Bourdieu's (1991) discussion of symbolic power, and represents the uneven valuations that are granted by differently positioned actors to various cultural forms. This form of inequality appears prominently in Chapters 2 and 5 and to a lesser extent in Chapter 4, as the symbolic power of English, whiteness, and Christianity are used to denigrate individuals who do not conform to these normative forms. A central argument of Chapter 2, for example, is that Zambian hostility to Chinese operation of Summers Mine, as well as to their relative acceptance of the operation of other mines throughout Zambia by non-Chinese whites, is related to Chinese managers' inability to express themselves in Standard English. Though I present a number of different explanatory strategies for understanding the Biblical discourses articulated by my Zambian interlocutors in Chapter 5, a central theme of the chapter is a meditation of the moral

valences of whiteness in Zambia, which as Monson (2013) notes is crucial for understanding contemporary African-Chinese relations.

Another major throughline of inequality that runs through this dissertation is that of gender. There are many highly patriarchal cultural forms that shape and constrain the lives and everyday interactions of the people who fill these pages. This includes the patriarchal occupational structure of mines in Zambia, which reserves not only all manual labor but also almost all other jobs (with a few clearly-delimited exceptions) for men, a structure which is a direct legacy of how these mines were organized from the outset under the British colonial administration. It also includes the avowedly and explicitly patriarchal structure of Jehovah's Witness religious meetings and Jehovah's Witness families, where in both cases women are expected to take a completely subservient (though still valued) role. This patriarchal form is mandated by the biblical interpretations of the global Jehovah's Witnesses leadership, headquartered in the United States. Patriarchal forms also include the more or less "traditional" kinship structures among both Zambians of various ethnicities as well as among (Han) Chinese families, which admit for example the possibility of polygyny but not polyandry, and which emphasize men's roles as transnational migrant breadwinners but tend to exclude women from these kinds of economic opportunities (cf. Chen and Lasker 1978, Colson 1960, Ong 1999). I analyze these kinds of gendered and patriarchal inequalities in contemporary African-Chinese relations especially in Chapter 3.

**Methodology**

Primary research for this project consisted of two years of ethnographic fieldwork from 2016 to 2018 in the southern, central, and Copperbelt (central northwest) regions of Zambia, as well as another four months in the provinces of Jiangxi, Hubei, and Guangdong in central and southeast China in 2019. During this time, I investigated a number of contemporary sites of Chinese-Zambian

interactions. These fieldsites include two coal mines in southern Zambia, one privately owned by five brothers from Jiangxi and the other featuring a major Chinese state-owned enterprise (SOE) subcontractor from Shandong; a Chinese-operated machine gambling company operating in the Copperbelt; and a congregation of Zambian Jehovah's Witnesses in central Zambia who conduct their meetings entirely in Mandarin Chinese. All these fieldsites are described in more detail in Chapter 1. In China, my research involved visiting the migrants I had come to know in Zambia at their worksites, family homes, and businesses, some of which I describe more of in Chapter 3. For many months of this fieldwork, I lived on-site at the Summers and Hhaala coal mines and the Safari machine gambling company with the Chinese management staff, eating all my meals with them and conducting participant observation into their experiences as expatriates living in Zambia. For another period of about six months, I lived with a mineworker at Summers Mine and his family, which included his four wives and children (as well as a couple of grandchildren), whose residential compound was just a stone's throw away from the mine premises. Every weekend while in Zambia I would attend at least one Christian religious service, usually either an all-day meeting with Seventh-day Adventists on a Saturday or a Sunday meeting in a Mandarin-language Jehovah's Witness congregation, though I sometimes attended other congregations in these communities as well. Over the course of this research, I conducted hundreds of interviews with Chinese migrants and Zambians alike, from a multitude of different backgrounds and positions in contemporary Zambian-Chinese encounters. These encounters often occurred in overlapping terrains that included, for example, labor and labor supervision, joking and play, intimacy and kinship-formation, and religious proselytization. My approach as an ethnographer and theorist led me to trace the complex valences of the varied modes of relationality that emerged in these social domains, analyzing them against the backdrop of wider discourses and counter-discourses about contemporary Chinese "neocolonialism" in Africa.

As in any ethnographic project, interrelated issues of both access (who was willing to talk with me and reveal the mundane aspects of their everyday lives to me through participant observation) and my own positionality as a researcher loom large. The complicated way these issues played out, as well as the diverging research questions we entered the field with, is a useful starting place for situating this study in the context of the work of two other scholars who have published book-length treatments of "Chinese-Zambian relations" since I began my fieldwork in Zambia: namely Lee (2017) and Wu (2021).

Lee's (2017) study is also mainly about mining in Zambia (though she also more briefly addresses Chinese-operated construction companies). Her research is an excellent example of "studying up" with the major foreign-invested copper mines on the Copperbelt, which she describes as the "elite players in the universe of powerful corporations. Like gated kingdoms, they [project] a menacing physical presence, greeting visitors with layers of security checks and warnings of proprietary claims on everything from company statistics to pebbles on the ground" (26). Lee's experience largely accords with my own when I partnered with a Zambian Ph.D. student from Copperbelt University to visit the Chinese SOE-operated NFCA Chambishi Copper Mine on a preliminary field visit to Zambia in 2015. Through some mutual acquaintances at the human resources office, we were allowed to enter the mine to visit the HR office and struck up some friendly conversations with the young Chinese staff members there, whom we agreed to meet up to play basketball and hang out with later. At the time, these junior Chinese staff members seemed enthusiastic about spending time with us again and we freely exchanged phone numbers. The next day the Chinese staff members we had befriended texted us with deep apologies, saying that they had been instructed by their supervisors not to speak with foreign or Zambian researchers and that they would not be able to see us or play basketball together after all. My research partner and I were not invited to the mine again. As she recounts, Lee encountered similar kinds of obstacles in

achieving ethnographic access to the interior workings of these mines until she befriended an opposition politician who became vice president after his party, the Patriotic Front, won national elections in 2011, and was able to use his new connections to negotiate her access.

Di Wu's (2021) work focuses on the role of emotion and affect in the different ways Chinese migrants interact among one another and with Zambians in everyday encounters. In his text Wu develops an explicit emphasis on the "Chinese perspective" in Chinese-Zambian relations. Wu notes that Chinese migrants in Zambia can be hesitant around foreign researchers and "shy away" from being interviewed; especially given the history of negative media reports about Chinese involvement in Africa. Moreover, they may resort to speaking in 官腔/*guanqiang*, a "bureaucratic style," or 套话/*taohua*, "prepared package-talk" (22). Finally, "gatekeepers" at Chinese organizations may make it difficult for an ethnographer to obtain research access. Wu describes how his own positionality as a Chinese researcher helped ease some of these obstacles, being more easily accepted by Chinese gatekeepers and into Chinese organizations.

Like Wu, I found the contours of my own research to be guided by my positionality as an ethnographer, and as a result this study examines some similar themes to those Wu analyzes but from a different perspective. Arriving in Zambia as a multiracial (American and Japanese) but Mandarin-speaking Ph.D. student during my first field visit in 2015, I initially had more connections with Chinese migrants than I did with Zambians. I had never been to Zambia before (though I had lived in South Africa previously) and did not speak any Zambian language besides English, but I did speak Mandarin Chinese and had just recently finished a three-year stint as a volunteer teacher in a small town in Gansu Province (itself famous for its mining industry), in northwest China. I began the project with high hopes that I would be able to conduct a balanced ethnography, conducting equal amounts of participant observation with both Zambians and Chinese migrants. But over time I found this endeavor difficult to maintain. For various reasons including

stark structural disparities which I discuss more in Chapter 5, I found most Zambians to be eager to form connections with me and to share what they knew for my research. As Wu suggests, I found some though not all of the Chinese migrants I met to be more suspicious of my motives: at my main mining fieldsite at Summers Mine, for example, many among the Chinese staff believed that I was there to record labor management malpractices so that I could persuade the Zambian government to revoke the mining license and purchase the mine for myself. My attempts to persuade them that as a Ph.D. student I had neither the desire nor the financial resources to take over the mine often fell on deaf ears. In addition, my Japanese heritage (which the Summers mine director, who spoke Japanese, recognized as soon as he saw my last name) did me no favors, as the WWII-era war crimes perpetrated by Imperial Japan against Chinese civilians are still keenly remembered by many in China, and became one more reason (some) Chinese migrants gave for not fully trusting my motives.

As a result, this study is not the perfectly balanced ethnography that I, somewhat naively, thought at first that I might be able to achieve at the outset of my fieldwork. But, of course, this is in fact a feature and not a bug. Though because of my own racialized and national positionality there were many Chinese migrants in Zambia who were not willing to totally trust or be open with me, there were several who were, including for example my friends Lu Qiang and Lin Jun, described in Chapter 2, Kong Wei, described in Chapter 3, and Mr. Cheng, described in Chapter 4. More fundamentally, this ethnography is driven by the close relationships I formed with many people during my time in Zambia, people who are distinguished not only by their national origin but by gender, class, ethnicity, religion, age, and many other dimensions that contributed to the complexity of their lived experiences and the richness of the stories they shared with me. The following chapters are dedicated to these stories and what they can teach us about wider modes of relationality in emerging “Chinese-Zambian” worlds.

**Chapter Outline**

In Chapter 1— "Encounter" —I trace the varied histories of mining, missionization, and migration that have come to shape contemporary relations between Chinese and locals on the African continent, and particularly in Zambia. Though the massive influx of Chinese investment and migration to Zambia is of relatively recent vintage—only beginning in earnest about two decades ago and picking up rapidly in the years since then—the long durée of these histories means that contemporary encounters between Chinese and Zambians are powerfully caught up in pre-existing struggles and social agendas. Some of these have to do with the profound economic and social transformations that have taken place amidst the haunting presence and continued afterlives of European colonialism and utopian socialism (of both African and Chinese varieties). But these histories also have great cosmological stakes, as Zambian Christians, and not a few Chinese Christians as well, recognize that secular political and economic relations between disparate social actors are not anterior to spiritual relations; rather, the spiritual disposition of societies and individuals is what gives political and economic relations their importance (or lack thereof). As Monson (2013) suggests, it is exactly these historical traces that must be attended to, since Chinese and Africans do not, as is sometimes implied in popular literature, "encounter" each other in a historical vacuum: their "encounter" is neither ex nihilo nor totally sui generis. Instead, these histories contribute to precisely the uneven terrain of inequalities and the working mis/understandings (Cole 2014) that allow, shape, and constrain African-Chinese encounters today.

In the latter part of this chapter, I turn to each of the major fieldsites that appear in the later chapters. I demonstrate the way in which broader histories have shaped particular circumstances and projects at each of these fieldsites, and how each one offers a different picture and a different way of understanding contemporary Zambian-Chinese relations. It is each of these fieldsites that

give substance to the analytical and conceptual interventions that will be developed in the later chapters.

In Chapter 2— "Separation" —I introduce a pidgin language known as "Shortcut English," which is spoken at Summers and Hhaala mines between their Zambian and Chinese employees[2]. I demonstrate how the structure of the pidgin stems from the wider social valences that English has in Zambia, particularly its role as the preeminent language of education and social prestige. I diverge from twentieth-century theories which argued that the valorization of colonizing languages by colonized or otherwise marginalized peoples is the result of psychosocial pathology (Fanon 2008) or symbolic domination (Bourdieu 1991). Instead, I maintain that the prestigious status of English in Zambia is less about a colonization of consciousness and more about its ability to facilitate the forging of global connections and bridging of ethnic divides. Though in many colonial contexts pidgin languages were used to talk down to or demean colonized subjects (Holm 2000; Winford 2003), the symbolic valences of Shortcut English favor Zambian laborers over Chinese mine managers and owners. Though in the past Zambians at the mine categorized Chinese as *bamakuwa* ("whites"), the dynamics of Shortcut English increasingly result in Chinese being figured as *ma chainizi*, a denigrated subcategory of whites whom Zambians see as unfit to run the mine, contributing to sometimes violent resistance against mine management.

In Chapter 3— "Dependency" —I examine diverse familial and intimate relations fashioned between Chinese migrant men and their intimate partners in both Zambia and China. Many Chinese men at Summers and Hhaala mines maintain simultaneous relationships with both legally-

[2] For an audio example of spoken Shortcut English, please see attached .mp3 files "Media 1" and "Media 2." In these short audio clips a Chinese man is speaking Shortcut English to two Zambian men (with a TV news program playing in the background). The two Zambian men are recent arrivals to Summers Mine from the Copperbelt, and the phrasing of their replies is closer to Standard Zambian English than to Shortcut English. In "Media 1" the Chinese man comments on the (English) news program the three men are watching together. He discusses current Zambian politics, including the recent imprisonment of the main opposition leader and corruption in the Zambian government. In "Media 2" the Chinese man discusses nutrition and healthy eating practices. Note that *saladi* is a ciTonga loan word in Shortcut English, meaning maize (corn) oil.

recognized wives in China and "second wives" in Zambia. In revealing the crucial roles such relationships play in the everyday operations of the mine, I build upon a long line of feminist scholarship (e.g. Benston 1989; Hochschild 2003; Kwon 2015; Stoler 2002; Vogel 2000) to reveal how "South-South" extractive capitalism at these mines depends upon the extraction not only of coal but also of women's affective and reproductive labor in both countries. The labor of these women is also crucial to maintaining and reaffirming the otherwise precarious class-coded masculinities of working-class Chinese men at the mines. The chapter examines how Chinese constructions of hegemonic masculinity become transformed in the Zambian context through encounters with alternative conceptions of manhood, sexuality, and cosmopolitan aspirations. Drawing upon the four months of research I conducted in China with the wives and families of the Chinese migrants I met in Zambia, I reveal how strained and overburdened kin relations in China contribute to these migratory, capitalist endeavors. This chapter provides a decolonial and feminist analysis of emerging intimate and kinship relations between Chinese and Zambians. It is explicitly concerned with examining the unequal distributions of power, precarity, and constrained agency among different participants in these relationships, and how these facilitate larger processes of "South-South" resource extraction and labor exploitation.

In Chapter 4— "Obligation" —I tell the story of a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses which is overwhelmingly composed of Zambians, but which nevertheless conducts its meetings exclusively in Mandarin Chinese. Over the last decade, Mandarin-language Jehovah's Witness congregations have proliferated across Zambia. These congregations are almost exclusively composed of local Zambians who have learned Mandarin as a second language but count few to no ethnic Chinese congregants. Though they find little success in converting Chinese migrants, these Witnesses transgress common Zambian social norms by befriending Chinese migrants, eating Chinese food, and expressing appreciation for Chinese culture. Explaining their actions, Witnesses

invoke and elide history in ways that erase national and racialized differences between themselves and Chinese migrants. They instead act upon a temporal horizon in which Biblical truths must be quickly spread before the rapidly approaching dissolution of the current system of things. In doing so, I argue that they enact a diffracted (Barad 2014) modernity that appropriates modernity's totalizing tropes while challenging the secular liberalism of the nation-state, as they anticipate the world entering its final years before Jehovah God vanquishes all human-governed polities.

In the interlude between Chapters 4 and 5, I experiment with creative, nonfiction narrative prose to tell of the conversation I had with Francis[3], a Zambian miner, union secretary, and church leader who became my friend and challenging intellectual interlocutor over two years of ethnographic fieldwork in southern Zambia. This conversation is arranged around Francis's rendering of the biblical Curse of Ham—for him actual history—which tells of how Noah cursed his sons and so destined Africans to be servants to whites for all time. Francis explained this history as we discussed the relative merits of European and Chinese whites in Zambia, and he used it to comment on the responsibilities of care and tutelage white people owe Africans. Once used as European justification for slavery, Francis's rearticulation of the Curse of Ham story profoundly challenged me. Refusing to posit that Francis's history is merely the result of false consciousness, internalized racism, or a pragmatic attempt to extract resources from me—that he did not understand or did not mean the history he told—in this interlude I dwell in the exploratory space of taking seriously his challenge without explaining it away. I do so first through story.

In his original telling, Francis made nimble use of pronouns, shifting between first, second, and third-person and interpolating both of us into the history of Noah and his sons. Building from Francis's narrative invitation to artfully rearrange time and show how we are Noah's sons as much

[3] All specific names of individuals, organizations, and precise locations in this study have been altered to protect the anonymity of my interlocutors.

as they are us, in this interlude I move back and forth between the now of Francis and I and the now of Noah's family. I also move back and forth between the perspective of Japheth, who is blessed, and Ham, who is cursed. The result is not fiction, nor is it nonfiction. It is not the story of the Bible, nor is it fully Francis's story. It is both and neither. It is my attempt to reciprocate Francis's hand reached out across difference, to grapple with the serious ethical challenges Francis's history presents, and to acknowledge the continuing moral obligations I owe to Francis, my brother.

In Chapter 5— "Connection" —I bring together my analyses of the various forms of relationality examined in previous chapters to analyze the contemporary use and retellings to provide a more conventional anthropological analysis of the Curse of Ham narrative. My Zambian friends and interlocutors such as Francis used this account to explain to me why it was that "white men," including me, came to Africa seeking to help Africans, while Chinese seemed to refuse this kind of social connection. I use Verran's (2001, 2013; see also Law and Lin 2010) concept of disconcertment to consider the seemingly irreconcilable ethical difference between my Zambian interlocutors' articulation of the Curse of Ham story and my own views as a liberal anthropologist. Doing so, I interpret this story as a challenge to the liberal fetishes of egalitarianism insofar as in a radically unequal world these fetishes amount to, or at least facilitate, separation and alienation between persons. Instead, I argue for an interpretation of contemporary Zambians' tellings of the Curse of Ham story as a call for connection and relationship, connections that are otherwise ignored and precluded by the territorializing logics of the liberal nation-state form.

In the conclusion, entitled "Exploitation," I take a step back to examine wider political, journalistic, and scholarly discourses that seek to affirm or refute characterizations of contemporary Chinese involvement in Zambia as "neocolonial." This conclusion analyzes the discursive labor performed by these antagonistic narratives and the way they both miss the mark by, on the one hand, eliding the continuities between Chinese and Western investments in Zambia and, on the

other, by neglecting the ways in which contemporary control of the Zambian economy by foreign corporations from many countries, including China, is neocolonial in nature. I suggest that Western narratives of Chinese "neocolonialism" which ignore Western neocolonialism might operate to dismiss Chinese practices as belonging to the past and as illegitimate in the present moment of World History.

Drawing from Fabian (2014), I stress the allochronic assumptions and denial of coevalness that attributions of Chinese neocolonialism in Africa participate in, serving in effect to emphasize that Chinese practices belong in the past and are illegitimate in the present moment of World History. By doing so, they engage in broader late liberal technologies of governing that Povinelli (2006; 2011) has termed the governance of the prior. Painting China and Chinese people as a genealogical society, stuck in retrograde and obsolete practices vis-a-vis the West, serves to highlight Westerners' own roles as autological subjects capable of appropriately guiding the future progress of developing nations. Like attributions of Asian "feudalism" in an earlier political moment (Davis 2008), contemporary narratives of Chinese neocolonialism in Africa easily serve to reinforce justifications for the ideological hegemony of Western institutions throughout Africa and elsewhere in the global South. By doing so they thereby reduce Chinese practices and discourses from, to borrow Rancière's (1999) terminology, the order of logos or meaningful action to the order of phonos—mere noise.

In the conclusion's closing pages I also turn to a critical consideration of scholarly counternarratives that have too-quickly dismissed the "Chinese neocolonialism" thesis. Instead, I demonstrate how Chinese companies have eagerly joined a broader takeover of the Zambian economy by foreign corporations from many different countries, a situation dramatically echoing the warning laid forth in Kwame Nkrumah's classic 1966 exposition, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*.

Though accounts of a "new Chinese world empire" (cf. Cheng 2013; Lucas 2008; Walsh 2006; Watts 2006) in places like Zambia can be overly generalizing and misleading, they rightly suggest that a global change is underway. In recent years a once obvious global order of things has increasingly been turned on its head as nations and people once considered emblematic of the global South—such as those of China, India, Brazil, and South Africa—now come to occupy positions at the leading edge of global capitalist transformations, and also in many places become the most visible faces of capitalist exploitation. As these global transformations are remaking societies and economies in Africa and as the threat of racialized violence between Africans and Chinese migrants becomes more pressing, this study aims to offer a nuanced and ethnographically-grounded account of how the future of Africa-China relations is being determined by the everyday, concrete practices of their participants.

# 1

# ENCOUNTER

## Histories and Settings

In this chapter I trace the varied histories of mining, missionization, and migration that have come to shape contemporary relations between Chinese and locals on the African continent, and particularly in Zambia. Though the massive influx of Chinese investment and migration to Zambia is of relatively recent vintage—only beginning in earnest about two decades ago and picking up rapidly in the years since then—the long durée of these histories means that contemporary encounters between Chinese and Zambians are powerfully caught up in pre-existing struggles and social agendas. Some of these have to do with the profound economic and social transformations that have taken place amidst the haunting presence and continued afterlives of European colonialism and utopian socialism (of both African and Chinese varieties). But these histories also have great cosmological stakes, as Zambian Christians, and not a few Chinese Christians as well, recognize that secular political and economic relations between disparate social actors are not anterior to spiritual relations; rather, the spiritual disposition of societies and individuals is what gives political and economic relations their importance (or lack thereof). As Monson (2014) suggests, it is exactly these historical traces that must be attended to, since Chinese and Africans do not, as is sometimes implied, "encounter" each other in a historical vacuum: their "encounter" is neither ex nihilo nor totally sui generis. Instead, these histories contribute to precisely the uneven terrain of inequalities and the working mis/understandings (Cole 2014) that allow, shape, and constrain African-Chinese encounters today.

In the latter part of this chapter, I turn to each of the major fieldsites that appear in the later chapters. I demonstrate the way in which broader histories have shaped particular circumstances and projects at each of these fieldsites, and how each one offers a different picture and a different way of understanding contemporary Zambian-Chinese relations. It is each of these fieldsites that give substance to the analytical and conceptual interventions that will be developed in later chapters.

## Histories of Mining and Missionization

### *Mining*

The territories that now comprise the nation-state of Zambia have been an important nexus for mining and transregional trade in minerals for many centuries, long before the advent of European colonialism. Copper, for example, though often strongly associated with the arrival of the British colonial regime and the rapid processes of European-style industrialization and urbanization that it oversaw, was already being heavily exploited by Zambian societies in the Copperbelt and throughout northwestern and central Zambia for at least a millennium before the first arrival of European colonizers. Inhabitants of what is now Zambia have been producing copper since the early iron age: at Kansanshi in Northwestern Province it was already being mined by about the fifth century C.E. The copper mines at Bwana Mkubwa, near Ndola in Copperbelt Province, are also ancient (Mutale 2004) and there is evidence that copper has been mined there since at least the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Phillipson 1977). By the time the first European visitors arrived, the largest mine at Bwana Mkubwa was already nearly a kilometer long and up to 48.5 meters deep. There were many other copper mines in pre-colonial Zambia throughout what are now Northwestern, Copperbelt, Central, and Lusaka Provinces in Zambia. So much copper production had taken place in Zambia prior to the arrival of Europeans that J.A. Bancroft, the European

geologist who led European exploration of Zambia's copper reserves, wrote of existing Zambian mining activities: "I can testify to their thoroughness; there are very few outcrops containing copper minerals that they did not find and test for the possible production of malachite [copper carbonate]" (Cited in Roberts 1977: 105). In the precolonial period local copper demand in Zambia itself does not seem to have been that great, and it is possible that this intensive copper production was part of long-distance trade networks.

Further south, just across the Zambezi river from Zambia's southern province in what is now Zimbabwe, gold was produced by African miners and exported to Arabs on the Indian Ocean coast since at least the tenth century. This gold production and export played an important part in the trade routes running along the western Indian Ocean and contributed to the rise of urbanized settlements on the East African coast.

The earliest European prospectors, working for the British South Africa Company (BSAC) and Northern Territories Exploration Company, both owned by Cecil Rhodes, began "discovering" these existing African mining sites in the 1890s and, as at Bwana Mkubwa, the first European mine in Zambia, simply appropriated and began exploiting them further. The BSAC formed agreements with the Anglo-American Corporation (founded in South Africa) and the Rhodesian Selection Trust—two companies that would dominate the Zambian mining industry through the rest of the colonial period—to operate the new mines. The territory that is now Zambia was first organized under the name Northern Rhodesia (named after Cecil Rhodes) as a BSAC company-owned territory in 1911 and then as a British crown colony in 1924. Even after Northern Rhodesia became a crown colony in 1924, the BSAC continued to own all mineral rights in the territory (Fraser 2010).

The intensive European mining projects triggered a massive wave of industrialization, urbanization, and associated social changes on the Zambian Copperbelt. Rhodes-Livingstone

scholars, mostly coming from the Manchester School, described what was taking place on the Copperbelt in the first half of the twentieth century as an "African Industrial Revolution." Even in its earliest periods, however, the industry operated under a major boom and bust cycle: a cycle that would come to haunt the post-independence Zambian nation-state in the decades to come. After drilling began at Luanshya in 1926, for example, employment quickly swelled to 30,000 men within four years due to rising copper prices. Then with a major drop in prices triggered by the Great Depression, within just two years most of the new mines were closed and the workforce shrank to 7,500 by 1932 (Epstein 1958).

When copper prices began to rise again in the 1940s and 1950s, first white and then black trade unions were formed, and labor agitation at the mines became more militant. Thus were Zambia's famously powerful miner's unions born. The black miner's unions proved instrumental in opposing the Central African Federation, formed in union with Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (now Malawi). This Central African Union was organized by white settlers to safeguard white minority rule. However, the political and labor agitation by powerful black unions on the Copperbelt helped push through a program of negotiated decolonization and majority rule in Northern Rhodesia (in stark contrast to how events played out to the south).

Zambia's relatively early industrialization compared to other African countries and the strength of its mining industry meant that by 1969, just five years after independence, it was categorized as a middle-income country, with a GDP higher than that of Brazil, Malaysia, South Korea, or Turkey (Ferguson 1999). But in the following decades the Zambian mining industry, and as a result the economy as a whole, was to have a troubled history. I discuss this specific history at greater length in the conclusion. One dynamic that drove both the development of coal mines in southern Zambia which constitute some of the primary fieldsites for this project, and also the first period of close cooperation between the Zambian and Chinese states, was Zambia's alignment with

emerging movements of national liberation that were waging struggles for majority rule in many of Zambia's continuing white minority-ruled neighbors. As Zambia's first president, Kenneth Kaunda, aligned himself more and more with ongoing movements of national liberation, neighboring white-majority regimes in Rhodesia, South Africa, Mozambique, and Angola made economic conditions difficult for the newly-independent Zambian state.

Historically, for example, Zambian copper mines and smelters had been fueled by coal mined in Rhodesia. As Ian Smith's white minority regime in Rhodesia began to restrict these supplies, the Zambian government began to press for the development of coal mines in the southern Gwembe valley. It is in this context that the mines at Summers and then at Hhaala began to be developed (after initial development the mine at Summers was abandoned due to flooding until the Hu brothers purchased the mining concession there in 2000). These same political pressures as white minority regimes surrounding Zambia on its western, southern, and eastern sides sought to close-off crucial import-export routes also led to the strong Zambian and Chinese (and Tanzanian) partnership that resulted in the construction of the famed TAZARA railway (Monson 2009). This set the stage for Zambia to become one of China's most important political partners in African and most favored destination for investment and migration in the coming decades (Wu 2021), which set the stage for the massive influx of Chinese investment and migration to Zambia which took place after 2000 and which is the subject of this ethnography.

*Missionization*

The territories that now comprise Zambia have also played an important part of European (especially British) missionization efforts since the very beginning of European colonization in southern Africa. David Livingstone passed through Zambia several times during his journeys through the African interior. For a time, he worked strenuously to establish a British government-

supported religious colony on the Batoka Plateau, just above the Gwembe Valley. Later, Livingstone died at Chitambo, in what is now Zambia's Central Province, and his heart is still buried there. Livingstone's example provided great inspiration to other European missionaries, and in the following years missionaries from the Church of Scotland, the dissident Scottish Free Church, the London Missionary Society (LMS), the Paris Missionary Society, and the Jesuits all made inroads in the territories in and around contemporary Zambia.

All of these initial missionary forays into Zambia worked closely with the also advancing secular colonial administration. There was a notable exception, however. This was the increasing circulation of pamphlets produced by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (WBTS), the publishing arm of the global Jehovah's Witnesses organization which had been founded by Charles Taze Russell in the United States at about the same time as Europeans were first "discovering" copper in Zambia. Official members of the global Jehovah's Witnesses organization oversaw the distribution of these pamphlets in South Africa in a way that made them extremely inexpensive and widely available, but from there the pamphlets circulated widely along migrant labor networks under no supervision by any European missionary. These texts were taken up by local African religious leaders and prophets and used to fuel a religious movement that explicitly rejected the political legitimacy of European colonial rule. Foremost among these first prophets of the emerging Watchtower movement was Elliot Kenan Kamwana, a man from a lakeside Tonga community in northern Nyasaland (now Malawi) who had been on the honor roll of the Livingstonia mission schools (Fields 1985: 105). Kamwana modified Russell's *Studies in the Scriptures* into a message of millennial salvation for Africans and Black Americans from oppressive white rule (Cross 1977: 84). This new Watchtower message foretold that the end of the world was at hand, and that when it came, salvation would be for Africans alone, while Europeans would go to hell or at the very least be sent back to their own countries (Roberts 1977: 199). Watchtower messages quickly spread

through independent African preachers carrying their pamphlets throughout northern and southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, and the Congo. Watchtower messages and religious practices were most avidly taken up in the three mining belts of south-central Africa: in the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt, in the Southern Rhodesian goldfields and coal mines, and in the mines of the southeastern Belgian Congo (Cross 1977: 86).

The Watchtower teachings made the white colonial regime extremely nervous. Major labor "disturbances" or strikes throughout the region were attributed by colonial authorities to the pernicious influence of the Watchtower movement upon the supposedly susceptible minds of uneducated African laborers. At the Shamva goldmine in 1927 and numerous times at the major Wankie colliery throughout the 1920s and 1930s strikes took place that authorities casually blamed, with little evidence, upon the Watchtower movement (ibid: 85). Things became even more serious during the riots that took place in 1935 all along the Copperbelt, which this time resulted in an official commission of inquiry by the authorities which definitely assigned responsibility to the Watchtower movement as the "proximate cause" of the riots (Kirsch 2008: 40).

Up until this point the colonial authorities had been more or less equally hostile to the representatives and literature of the global Jehovah's Witnesses organization as to the local Watchtower congregations under African leadership that this literature had given rise to. To suppress the independent Watchtower churches, the colonial regime had attempted to prevent all importation of Jehovah's Witnesses literature. But the very decentralized and independent nature of the Watchtower movement in the Rhodesias made this an all but impossible task. As a result, by 1936 the colonial regime was attempting to actively repair relations with the global Jehovah's Witness church in the hope that that organization's (white) representatives might finally bring the independent Watchtower congregations to heel. The Watchtower movement in the south-central African colonies was already to a certain degree divided between a more bureaucratic and orthodox

movement in the emerging urban areas and more charismatic, heterodox, and independent movements in the rural villages. Accordingly, as the first white Jehovah's Witnesses were allowed to enter Northern Rhodesia, they found a more receptive audience for their project of bringing local congregations under the purview and control of the global church among urban Watchtower members.

This ambiguous situation, of some Watchtower congregations becoming enfolded within the global organization and others remaining fiercely independent under local African leadership, persisted at least until the 1970s when there were still some independent Watchtower communities and villages in the border areas of Zambia, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Tanzania. Nevertheless, by this period the independent Watchtower church was already in steep decline. Thus, even in relatively remote regions of Zambia such as Luapula in the north (Poewe 1978) or the Gwembe Valley in the south (Kirsch 2008), a form of Jehovah's Witness practice was taking root that emphasized quite different values than had the earlier independent Watchtower movement. Still focused on an urgently impending millenarianism, this new religious impetus emphasized uniformity and homogeneity with global Jehovah's Witness doctrine rather than fierce independence, and non-cooperative political quiescence rather than active resistance to existing political regimes.

A different kind of politics was at work in these practices. As I found during my own fieldwork with the Kombela Central congregation, flows of knowledge and authority in these congregations are extremely hierarchical and unidirectional. As with the first instantiation of the Watchtower movement, written texts, in the form of pamphlets produced by the WBTS and particularly the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, are central. But religious meetings, as well as the texts themselves, are carefully structured in such a way that all interpretive activity is left to the higher institutional body (headquartered in the United States): all that is left for local congregation

members to do is to properly absorb the Biblical interpretations that are provided to them and to share this message of the Truth with their non-Witness neighbors. Compared to more energetic, even spontaneous outbursts of religious fervor that take place for example in many Zambian Pentecostal churches, Jehovah's Witness meetings are sedate and intensely studious affairs, perhaps resembling more than anything else a classroom (cf. Kirsch 2008: 159-160). At each meeting a scheduled text is drawn, not directly from the Bible (though texts always reference specific Biblical passages) but rather from the literature that the headquarters of the global organization has produced. This text is always accompanied by pre-written comprehension questions. In between a few brief songs and prayers, very calmly delivered compared to a Pentecostal service, the bulk of a Jehovah's Witnesses meeting is taken up by a question-and-answer session in which a leader guides the congregation carefully one-by-one through each numbered question associated with that day's text. The leader only moves on to the next question when the last has been satisfactorily answered. At least at Kombelo Central, questions outside this prepared list are not asked nor are they answered. Congregation members are encouraged to look in their Bibles at many points through the meeting, but always to look up specified passages that have been cited in the relevant article chosen for that day and which buttress its interpretive argument. Since at the Kombela Central Mandarin congregation almost all of the congregation members, including myself, participated in this question-and-answer format in a language that was not our first language, we would spend many hours during the week carefully studying the text and accompanying questions and sometimes preparing or even rehearsing our answers to these questions in advance.

This then is a very centralized model of knowledge: where all true Biblical interpretation and understanding (the most important kind of knowledge there is, in the view of Witnesses) is determined at the headquarters of the organization and flows outward from there. But if the Witnesses at Kombela Central placed great value on obedience and respect for the authoritative

knowledge that flowed from their organization's headquarters, Witnesses' lack of total obedience to the political state even after the end of British colonialism has proved anathema to political leaders at least during some periods of Zambian history. Much in the way that Nkrumah singled out and criticized Witnesses for their refusal to salute the flags of the newly-independent nation states of which they were declared citizens, so the modern Zambian state has also at times chosen to persecute Jehovah's Witnesses (as have other post-independence African governments in Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, the DRC, and Mozambique) (Cross 1977: 84). Though it is no longer the explicit policy of the Zambian state to persecute Jehovah's Witnesses, there continue to be repeated calls by some in the Zambian political establishment to ban the religion due to Witnesses' refusal to participate in political and national rituals such as voting. Despite these crackdowns, even after the independent African Watchtower movement faded, the orthodox Jehovah's Witness church has continued to enjoy very strong appeal in Zambia. Indeed, excepting some very small island nations with under half a million residents, Zambia has, per capita, the highest number of baptized Witnesses of any country in the world. In the last decade Witness Mandarin language congregations in Zambia specifically have been very rapidly expanding, though with still uncertain outcomes with respect to widespread evangelization of Chinese migrants. I discuss the specific politics of Zambian Witnesses' attempts to learn Mandarin Chinese and to befriend and evangelize Chinese migrants at greater length in Chapter 4.

*Migration*

Connections between China and Africa have a very long history, and though unlike in many parts of the world (cf. Ong 1999; Pieke 2004) most African countries do not yet have settled Chinese diasporic communities, Chinese nationals have long been coming to Africa for various purposes: as have, more recently, Africans been going to China (Cheng 2011; Mathews 2017;

Sautman 1994). This includes the crews of the famous Ming treasure voyages under Zheng He in the fifteenth century (Dreyer 2006; Levathes 1994) and the community of Chinese indentured laborers who were recruited to work in South Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century, only to be deported *en masse* when (white) anti-Chinese xenophobia reached a boiling point (Yap ad Man 1996). More recently, a great number of agricultural, railway, and medical workers were sent to Africa during the Mao era, particularly to Zambia during the presidency of Kenneth Kaunda and to Tanzania under the presidency of Julius Nyerere (Hsu 2012; Monson 2009; Slawecki 1963; Yan and Sautman 2010; Zhan 2009). These major aid projects of the Kaunda/Nyerere/Mao years, most famously the building of the TAZARA "freedom" railway, were bound up with visions of an internationalist proletarian world, and the values of proletarian solidarity were an important part of work relationships on these projects even when structurally they consisted of Chinese technicians supervising African laborers (2013). These ideological and discursive elements mitigated against relations of suspicion and distrust that have come to characterize many contemporary interactions between Africans and Chinese migrants (Wu 2021). Even many years later members of these Chinese aid teams as well as the Africans of various countries who interacted with them tend to have quite fond memories of their encounters (Monson 2009; Zhan 2009), though of course a certain patina of time or "rose-tinted glasses" when remembering events decades past might also contribute to this effect.

Regardless, after the death of Mao there was an abrupt withdrawal of major Chinese involvement, in terms of people and investment, on the African continent. In countries like Zambia, few to none of the many Chinese who had arrived on large construction projects like the TAZARA railway stayed in Africa (Wu 2021), and for almost two decades the Chinese community there was negligible in size. During this period China itself was undergoing tectonic economic and social changes from socialism to neoliberally-inflected postsocialism (Day 2013; Harvey 2005; Ong and

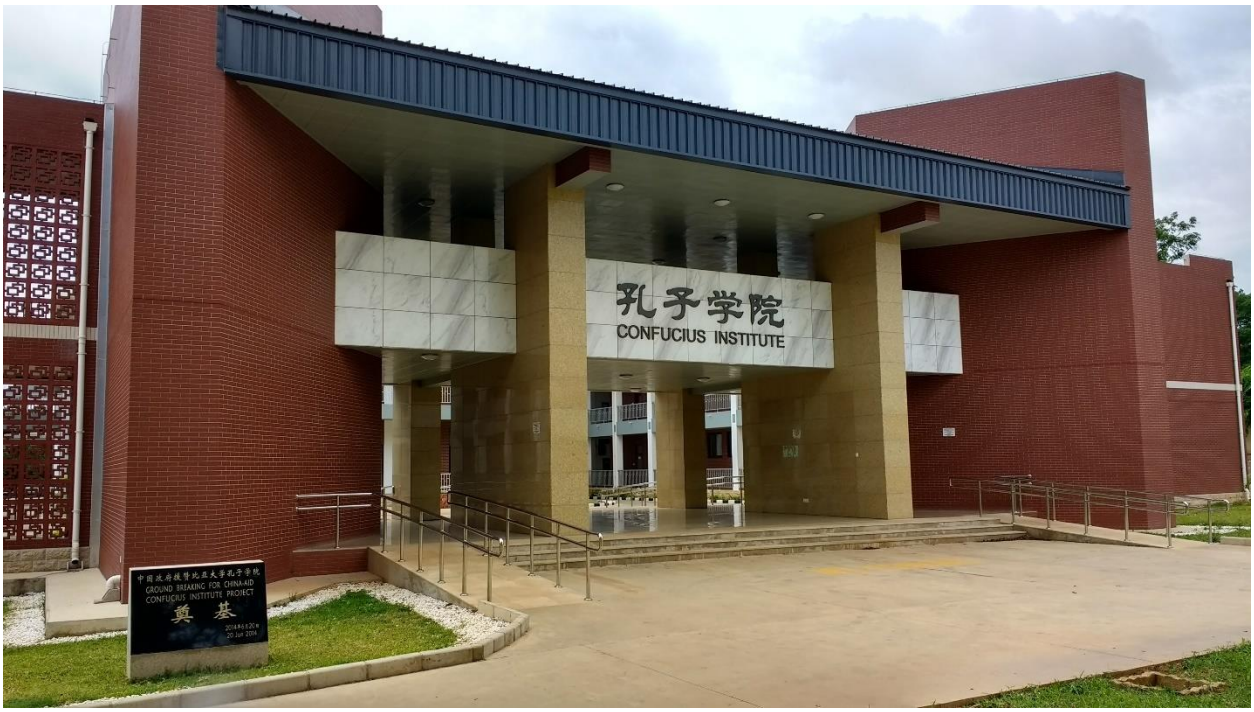
Zhang 2008; Wu 2019) under the slogan of 改革开放/*gaige kaifang* "reform and opening." At first, these processes were largely internal to China and had little effect in Africa, except, for example, the devasting effect that cheap Chinese textile imports had on existing African textile industries when African countries were pressured in the 1980s and 1990s by the IMF and World Bank to lower trade barriers in the guise of "structural adjustment." But as China's particular model of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" became increasingly to resemble "capitalism with Chinese characteristics" the Chinese central government initiated a policy shift that would have major ramifications for Africa when it initiated the 走出去战略/*zouchuqu zhanlüe* "go out" initiative. This program effectively encouraged Chinese state-owned enterprises, at both the national and provincial levels, to solve profit crises in their participation in the domestic economy by seeking new avenues of capital accumulation abroad.

Though state and elite-level discourses of political cooperation persisted, the new wave of Chinese involvement that arrived in Zambia and, a few years later, in most other African countries beginning in the 1990s differed markedly from that of the Mao/Kaunda/Nyerere period in the 1960s and 1970s or even the indentured labor in South Africa of the beginning of the twentieth century. This new involvement was characterized by intensive capitalist investment in almost every sector and at every scale of the Zambian economy, first primarily by Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and later increasingly by private Chinese companies and individual investors as well. These capitalist investments brought large numbers of technical, administrative, managerial, and supervisory staffs from China to oversee the new businesses, often overseeing local African workers (Sautman and Yan 2016). It is the Chinese staff members who arrived at various stages of these capitalist investments that appear in this ethnographic study.

Chinese migration to Zambia in the last two decades is of course only one small current within much larger patterns of Chinese out-migration that have taken place both on a timescale of

centuries (Chen and Lasker 1978) and in more recent decades (Chu 2010; Ong 1999; Pieke 2004). Compared to other flows of Chinese migration in recent decades, the kinds of Chinese migrants who come to Zambia are often of less privileged economic class, usually working class, backgrounds in China. Because of its low position within the global economic hierarchy, Zambia is not a very favored destination for Chinese migrants. It does not tend to attract the kinds of economically privileged Chinese migrants that Ong (1999) describes as flexible citizens, for example, with their bank accounts, university educations, and second homes located in many different countries. There are some young, upwardly-mobile Chinese migrants who work for example at Bank of China or other financial institution branches in Zambia's few cities, and some others who have done well through private business in Zambia and managed to accumulate significant assets, but both groups are a small proportion of the overall Chinese migrant community. On the other hand, because Zambia's economy is also severely under-capitalized with a very small formal sector compared to its population, it also offers few opportunities at the other end of the economic spectrum for Chinese labor migrants such as those that Chu (2010) describes, who make use of 蛇头/*shetou* "snake head" human smugglers and travel illegally to cities such as New York or London and work in low-wage service sector jobs. As a result, the class background of Chinese migrants in Zambia tends to run along a fairly narrow band, generally ranging from highly-skilled working class to vocational or university-trained lower middle-class backgrounds. Chinese migrants in these contexts are also quite homogenous in terms of gender, being overwhelmingly men. In larger Zambian cities such as Lusaka, Kitwe, and Kombela, the Chinese migrant community tends to be somewhat more diverse, though not greatly. In these cities (as a rough estimate, based on my ethnographic encounters) perhaps as much as five or even ten percent of the Chinese community may be women, as opposed to less than one percent at Summers and Hhaala mines. Moreover, in Zambian cities, there is also a subset of the Chinese expatriate

community from more clearly white-collar, university-educated middle or upper-middle class backgrounds, generally fluent in British, American, or Australian Standard English, and employed at places like local Bank of China branches or at university 孔子学院 (*kongzi xueyuan*/Confucius Institute) Mandarin-language training programs (see photograph 1).




Photograph 1: The University of Zambia's newly-constructed 孔子学院 (*kongzi xueyuan*/Confucius Institute) building. Lusaka, Lusaka Province, Zambia. May 2018.

At my fieldsites in Zambia in the period 2015-2018, I found Chinese migrants to be quite self-conscious about their place within economic hierarchies, though they also tended to be relatively optimistic about their ability to climb them: an opportunity which working in Zambia seemed just to provide. For many Chinese migrants I spoke with, coming to Zambia is an escape from relentless financial pressures and competition that they experience back in China, pressures that they find completely exhausting. The currency exchange rate between the Chinese renminbi and the Zambian kwacha strongly favors the renminbi, and as a result living costs for Chinese migrants in Zambia are for the most part far lower than what they would be for similar conditions in

China. Consequently many Chinese migrants I knew in Zambia stay in Zambia long after the expiry of their initial contracts or projects precisely because they are able to live lives of relative affluence and comfort that they would be unlikely to be able to achieve in China. In this respect they are not so different from white colonial settlers of an earlier era, who were similarly able to achieve a different class position and lives of comparative affluence than they would have been likely to in the European metropoles.

As mentioned, the roles that these Chinese migrants take on in Zambia also tend to fall into fairly well-defined categories, with almost all working either as private entrepreneurs operating their own businesses (in many different industries, including construction, agriculture, and small-scale commercial trading) or as administrative, managerial, or supervisory staff in larger Chinese-owned companies. Almost no Chinese in Zambia work for companies that are not owned by the Chinese state or by other Chinese migrants (Wu 2021), and Chinese businesses tend to hire Zambian laborers rather than recruiting laborers from China. These factors result in a specific racialized dynamic at the vast majority of businesses I encountered during my time in Zambia in which Chinese migrants worked: namely, an implicit but very real color bar, reminiscent of that enforced by whites during the colonial period, under which no Zambian ever exercises workplace authority over any Chinese (cf. Burawoy 1972, 2014).

Summers Mine is a good example of this dynamic, as I discuss further in Chapter 2. For the first thirteen years of the mine's operation, this implicit Chinese-Zambian "color-bar" was a formal reality in the mine's occupational hierarchy. There was a clear cut-off between the position of shift boss, above which was only occupied by Chinese migrants, and the position of foreman (at Summers Mine a position that in practice was closer to "cultural translator and mediator to the Chinese shift boss"), below which was only occupied by Zambians. After the mine was reopened in 2015 the Zambian government-imposed conditions under which the Chinese mine owners were

compelled to hire a university-educated Zambian management staff, including an executive director and general mining director who technically outranked all Chinese managers at the mine. Much as in cases discussed by Burawoy decades earlier (1972), government-mandated "Zambianization" of the Summers management staff was neutralized by some administrative restructuring by the Chinese mine owners that ended up reproducing, rather than abolishing, the implicit color bar. In the case of Summers Mine, this meant going through the motions of creating a managerial hierarchy on paper that left Zambian managers at the top but making sure that all of the workers' pay continued to flow exclusively through the Chinese managers. Chinese managers thus continued to compel obedience from workers because they could simply withhold a worker's pay at the next payday for non-compliance. Zambian managers, more or less completely ignored by their Chinese colleagues and later by the Zambian workers they ostensibly managed, became little more than figureheads and, as they well-recognized, scapegoats-in-waiting should anything go wrong at the mine.

## Ethnographic Settings

The fieldwork research upon which this study is based was multi-sited, tracing important arenas of Chinese-Zambian interactions across a number of locations and ethnographic contexts in both Zambia and in China. A few of the most important sites that provide the ethnographic material for the chapters that follow are described below.

### *Summers Coal Mine and Hhaala Collieries*

Zambia has long been famed for its copper industry and to the early processes of urbanization and industrialization that took place on the Zambian Copperbelt (Burawoy 2014; Ferguson 1999; Fraser and Larmer 2010) and has as a result been the main focus of discussions of

contemporary China-Zambia relations, critical or otherwise (e.g. Lee 2017; Yan and Sautman 2013). In the most thorough scholarly study of Chinese involvement in the Zambian copper mining industry, Lee (2017) points out that, from the Chinese state's perspective, copper is a strategic resource: crucial for the continued expansion of the Chinese economy but also vulnerable to embargo if, for example, geopolitical hostilities with the United States were to escalate. Less studied but almost equally important to Zambia's copper export industry, however, are the coal mines such as Summers and Hhaala collieries in the south which provide the fuel that powers the copper smelters in the Zambian Copperbelt. Here Chinese companies are highly active as well, though their connection with direct Chinese state interests is perhaps more tenuous. Summers Mine, the smaller of the two coal mines I conducted research with in southern Zambia, is privately owned and operated by five brothers from southeast China. Hhaala mine, by contrast, dwarfs Summers Mine in size and is publicly owned by a transnational corporation based in Singapore; this corporation subcontracts much of the operation of the mine, including the building of a coal-powered thermal energy plant to a Chinese provincial state-owned enterprise (SOE) during the time of my fieldwork.

Summers and Hhaala coal mines are located about two hours away from each other by car in the Gwembe South region of Zambia's Southern Province (Cliggett 2002; Scudder and Colson 1978, 2002). Though very different in terms of size, ownership and management structure, and community environment, both mines employ significant numbers of Chinese expatriate staff and both contribute large quantities of coal that is used, among other things, to fuel the smelters that power Zambia's copper export industry, of which China is a major consumer.

*Summers Coal Mine (SCM)*

Of these two mines, Summers Mine is much the smaller, featuring a total workforce of only around 500 and a (more dangerous) closed-shaft style of coal mining. Summers Mine was first developed in 1965 just after independence, but due to technical problems and the flooding of the main mine pit, operations were quickly moved to Hhaala. The mining license remained unused until the five Hu brothers, from China's Jiangxi Province, purchased it in 2000 and renewed mining operations. Unlike at Hhaala and other mining townships in Zambia's Copperbelt, the very small size of Summers Mine meant that relatively little infrastructure was built besides the mine shafts themselves, though a paved asphalt road was constructed connecting the mine with the larger government-maintained branch road running through the Lower Gwembe region and nearby Dolopa township. Remnants of this original paved asphalt road, constructed in the 1960s, still remain, but for the most part it has deteriorated, leaving the road leading to Summers Mine and the rural Mugoda village (ciTonga: *mumunzi*) which surrounds it as now unpaved dirt track, which nevertheless is navigated every day by many large lorries (trucks) bearing coal away from the mine.

To operate their new mine, the five Hu brothers recruited a management and mine survey staff of about 50 members from their extended affinal and kin networks in southern China. The general workforce of the mine, about 500 miners and above-ground workers, was drawn (as it is today) from the rural Mugoda village that surrounds the mine.

Like many villages in the Gwembe Valley of southern Zambia, Mugoda village would not initially appear to an unfamiliar observer as a single, concentrated settlement. Homesteads and fields are scattered and interspersed across a very wide area with uncultivated bush and wooded areas lying in between. Altogether it takes about two hours to cross from one end of the village to the other on foot along the narrow footpaths that snake up and down gullies and connect the various homesteads and scattered fields. Besides Summers Mine the only other large structure in the village

is the Mugoda Primary School, a concrete-block building with an adjacent sports field and a small boarding house for female students. The four currently-operated and two formerly-operated shafts of Summers Mine are set near the center of Mugoda village, immediately adjacent to many homesteads, a situation not technically permitted by Zambian regulatory law. Because of the creation of these shafts a number of Mugoda residents' homes in recent years have begun sinking into the earth, and in the yards next to many homes there are prominently posted signs warning not to enter because of the danger of sinkholes.

For most of the history of Summers Mine under the ownership of the five Hu brothers, an explicit color bar existed in which all management and supervisory roles were exclusively occupied by expatriate Chinese managers, while the general workforce was exclusively Zambian. Under this system, the highest rank a Zambian employee could attain was that of foreman. Each designated foreman was subordinate to a Chinese shift boss. Unlike at other mines in Zambia, at Summers Mine the position of foreman was (and is) less of a genuine supervisory role with independent responsibilities, and more one of personal assistant to and cultural mediator/translator for the Chinese shift boss. Summers Mine employs no translators or interpreters, and communication between Chinese and Zambian employees takes place exclusively through the medium of the "Shortcut English" pidgin, which I describe in more detail in Chapter 2. Since proficiency in this pidgin varies among both Zambian and Chinese staff, especially among more recent arrivals to the mine, the key responsibility of the Zambian foremen is to translate and interface between Chinese manager and Zambian workers. As a result, among all Zambian employees of the mine, the foremen at each shaft tend to be the ones who have worked at the mine the longest and who have the greatest competency in the Shortcut English pidgin.

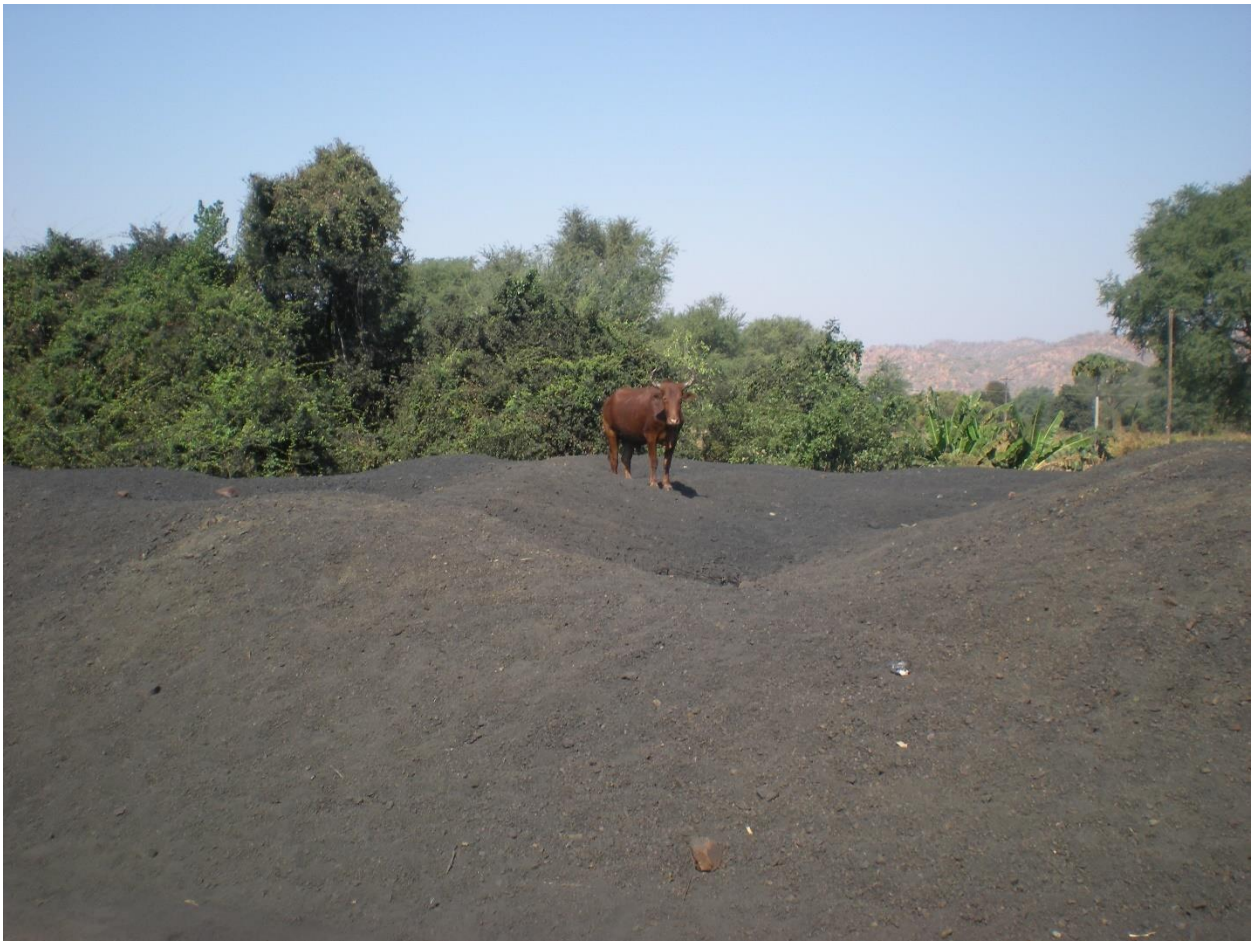
The history of Summers Mine under the ownership of the Hu brothers until I arrived at the mine in 2015 was tumultuous, with violent events at the small mine sometimes appearing in global

news stories such as in the New York Times and the British Broadcasting Company (BBC). Workers conducted labor strikes over labor conditions in 2006 and 2008, and outbreak of cholera swept through the mine workforce in 2009, and in February 2010 a Chinese employee was murdered by a Zambian worker at the farm outside Lusaka which supplies the Chinese mine management staff with fresh vegetables (Zambian staff are expected to provide their own food). Perhaps given this memory of the recent murder, when in October 2010 another major labor protest took place at Summers and a crowd of protesting workers approached the gate of the walled living compound occupied by the Chinese staff, Chinese employees used shotguns to fire into the crowd, injuring 13. Two of the Chinese staff were initially charged in Zambian courts for these shootings, but in April of 2011 prosecutors dropped the charges against them. Unconfirmed rumors at Summers circulated that the Chinese embassy in Lusaka had intervened in the case. The next year, in August 2012, another labor protest took place at the mine and this time the Chinese staff were victims of violence. Three Chinese staff members, caught outside the walled Chinese residential compound, fled down one of the mining shafts to hide. Protesting workers unhooked one of the mining "buckets," a huge trolley on a wheeled track weighing over two tons, and sent it careening uncontrolled down the narrow shaft into which the three Chinese staff members had fled. When it struck them, one of the Chinese staff was killed and the two others were injured. Altogether twelve of the Zambian staff were convicted and served prison time charges of murder, rioting, or theft following this incident.

Six months later, in February 2013, the Zambian government under President Michael Sata intervened and closed the mine, promising to find an alternative buyer to replace the Hu brothers as owner. In its official report listing poor conditions that justified the closing of the mine, the Zambian government cited a lack of access to clean drinking water, contamination of surrounding streams, poor ventilation system in the underground shafts, lack of personal protective equipment

(PPE) provided to workers, use of “unsafe mining methods” and failure to prevent recurrence of fatal mine accidents, and hazardous chemical exposures to the surrounding communities (see photographs 2-5). For over two years the mine was operated only by a skeleton crew assigned to care and maintenance, to prevent the mine from falling into disrepair and losing value for a prospective sale, with no production of coal taking place during this two-year period.

Photograph 2: The landscape just outside one of the mining shafts. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2016.



Photograph 3: A cow wanders over huge drifts of coal dust. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2016.


Photograph 4: A sign warns that water is used for industrial purposes and should not be used for bathing. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2015.

Photograph 5: A small stream polluted with mine run-off. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2015.

In October 2014 Zambian President Michael Sata, who had famously promoted a hostile, at times even xenophobic, political platform with regards to Chinese investment during some of his early presidential campaigns, passed away, and was replaced in January 2015 by his successor, Edgar Lungu. Just two months later, in March 2015, President Lungu met with President Xi Jinping of China in Beijing, and within weeks the Zambian government administration announced that,

despite previous promises to the contrary, ownership and full control of Summers Mine was returned to the Hu brothers. It was in this period, after the April 2015 resumption of ownership and control of Summers Mine by the Hu brothers and the return to production, that I began my ethnographic fieldwork research there (beginning in August of 2015).

Though ownership of Summers Mine had been returned to the Hu brothers, the Zambian government insisted on a number of restructuring requirements in order to bring the mine into closer (though, up until the time I completed my research, never complete) compliance with Zambian regulatory law. The most important of these changes was that the Hu brothers were to remove themselves from day-to-day supervision of mine operations, instead constituting themselves as a board of directors whose relationship with everyday mine operation would be mediated through the new positions, to be filled by qualified Zambians, of executive director (based, with the Hu brothers, at the mine's marketing office in Lusaka) and general mining director (based at the mine itself). Reporting to the executive director and general mining director, the Hu brothers were instructed to hire a whole new team of university-trained Zambian mine management staff to complement the existing Chinese management staff which the Hu brothers chose to rehire.

When I first arrived at Summers Mine in August 2018, what I found was that the Zambian government's directives had in effect created a dual management structure for the mine, one Zambian and one Chinese, one of which had final authority at the mine on paper and the other of which continued to monopolize all authority over workers in practice. The new Zambian management staff, having been recruited from other areas of the country, especially in the Copperbelt region of northwest Zambia, arrived as complete outsiders to existing mine dynamics that were rapidly being reestablished by local (ciTonga and Shortcut English speaking) Zambian foremen and workers and Chinese shift bosses. In the absence of translators or interpreters, the arriving Zambian management staff found it difficult to even communicate with their new Chinese

colleagues and, in any event, shared radically divergent views on how mine operations should be conducted. Since the new post of general mining director, on paper the highest position of authority at the mine, was also occupied by a Zambian, in theory at least this new management staff should have been able to use their formal authority to organize mine production. This is not how it worked out in practice.

The new Zambian mine management staff received their salaries directly from the mine owners, the Hu brothers, but the cash that was used to pay wages for all other workers at the mine continued to be distributed through the Chinese management staff. This crucial fact meant that Zambian managers and workers alike soon realized that the Zambian managers' authority extended almost nowhere beyond their role on paper. At any time, a Chinese supervisor could threaten to dock the pay or fire a worker for noncompliance with one of their instructions, and no matter how much even a (on paper) superior Zambian manager attempted to countermand these instructions, the Chinese management staff could enforce the decision de facto by simply refusing to pay the worker on the next scheduled payday. Given contradictory instructions from Chinese and Zambian supervisors, then, workers would almost invariably choose to follow the instructions of the former. For their part, the Zambian management staff soon came to accept their position as basically an advisory one: they would attempt to beseech their Chinese colleagues to behave in this or that way in their operation of the mine but had no practical authority with which to actually enforce any of their decisions. As a result, though Zambian managers at the mine saw their responsibility as improving mine safety, regularizing worker contracts, etc. which on the whole should have been good for worker labor conditions, actual relations between Zambian managers and workers tended to be ambiguous or difficult. On the one hand, the Zambian management staff tended to be seen (accurately) by workers as mostly ineffectual, taking up space on paper at the mine but otherwise having little real significance, despite their promises. On the other hand, since the vast majority of

the Zambian managers came not from the region around Summers Mine but rather from the Copperbelt, in Zambia's Northwest, they tended to come from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds (generally CiBemba-speaking) than ordinary workers who came from the immediate areas around the mine (and who were almost all ciTonga-speakers).

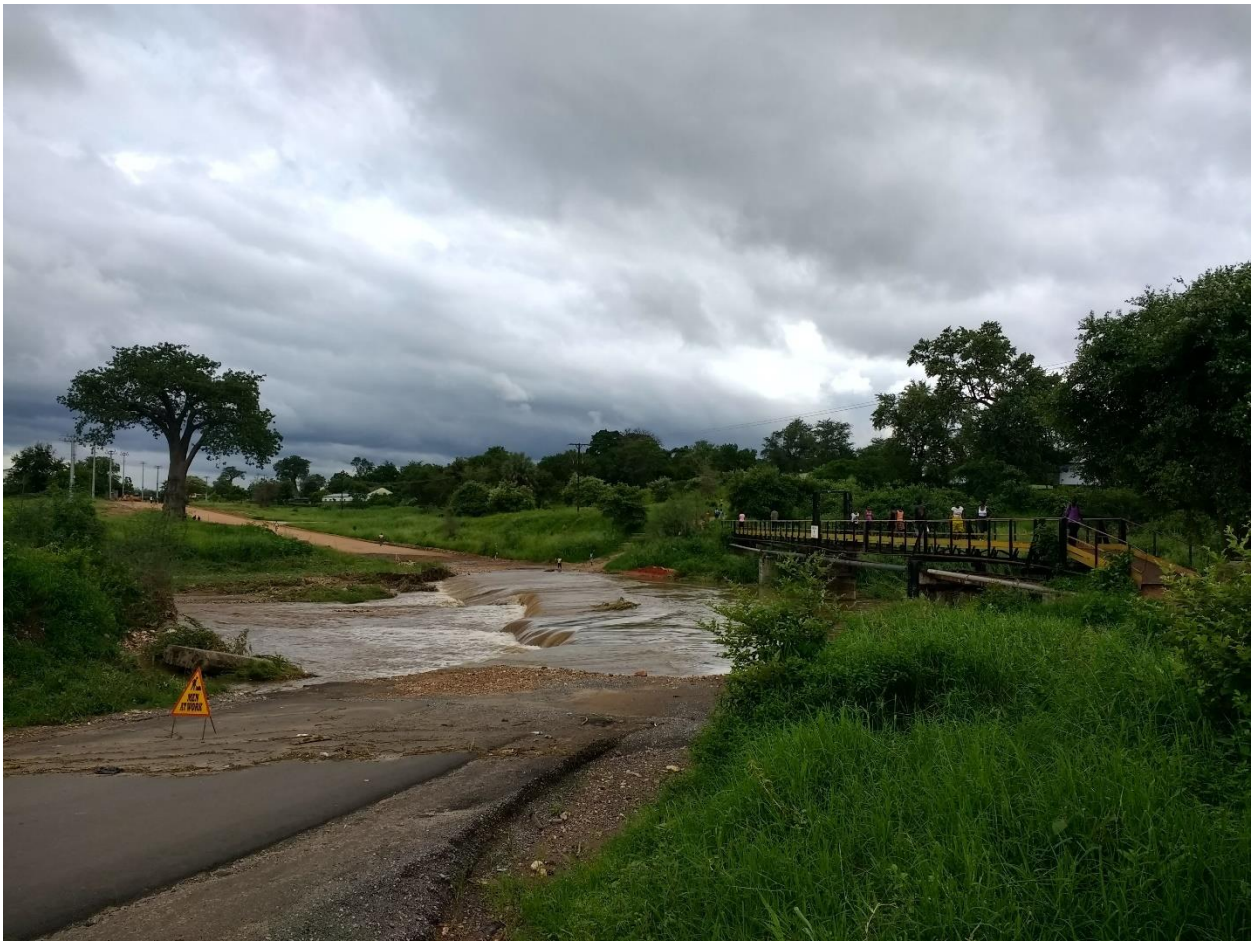
At the time of my fieldwork 2015-2018 especially, these differences were exacerbated by a growing ethnicization of Zambian politics which for the most part pitted Zambian managers and workers at Summers not only in different political camps but also in different coalitions of tribal "cousins" (featuring, at the time, the ruling Patriotic Front party supported mainly by CiBemba and Nyanja speakers on one side and the opposition United Party for National Development supported mainly by ciTonga and Lozi speakers on the other). These dynamics resulted in a generally tripartite structure of social divisions at the mine, in which Chinese and Zambians alike tended to recognize a primary (often racialized) difference between each other, a difference that linguistically was only ever bridged through the medium of the Shortcut English pidgin, while Zambians additionally recognized an important (often ethnicized) secondary difference among each other, between ciTonga-speakers and Zambians who hailed from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds from other parts of the country (ciTonga-speakers recognized a theoretical kinship with some other Zambian ethnic groups, such as Lozi, as tribal cousins, but since there were almost no people at Summers who identified as Lozi this recognition of social kinship rarely came into play). This major secondary social cleavage among Zambians themselves was, depending on the linguistical competencies of individual speakers, sometimes also bridged through the medium of Shortcut English, but also just as often bridged through the means of Standard Zambian English or Nyanja. More about these linguistic dynamics and how they shaped racialized and ethnicized relations at Summers Mine will be discussed in Chapter 2.

*Hhaala Collieries, Limited (HCL)*

Hhaala Collieries is, in terms of employed workforce and mining footprint, about ten times the size of Summers Coal Mine, and unlike Summers has operated continuously under its current mining title since 1970. Its mode of production is also quite different from Summers, utilizing an open cast rather than closed shaft method of coal mining. Altogether the Hhaala mining license encompasses approximately 7,900 hectares in Gwembe South, with estimated coal reserves of 103 million tons of high-grade coal and 70 million tons of low-grade coal.

Hhaala Collieries was incorporated in 1971 under the ownership of the Republic of Zambia through the Zambia Industrial and Mining Corporation (ZIMCO). In 2010, Hhaala Collieries was purchased from the Zambian government by a Singaporean corporation. Like other major Zambian mines on the Copperbelt but unlike the much smaller operation at Summers, Hhaala Collieries Limited (HCL) subcontracts a great degree of its operations to different companies. During the period of my fieldwork research in 2015 and 2016, for example, Hhaala Collieries was involved in the construction of a 300 MW coal-fired thermal power plant, eventually to be expanded to 600 MW capacity, which upon completion would account for 10% of Zambia's overall electricity generation. Demand for such a power plant had grown since the increasing frequency of droughts, themselves a result of global patterns of climate change (Colson 2006), had transformed Zambia's previous major surplus of hydroelectric generated electricity from the nearby Kariba dam into a major deficit. Previously Zambia had been 96% reliant on hydropower for its electricity grid, and at times had such a surplus of hydroelectric power that it was able to export electricity to neighboring countries. A provincial state-owned enterprise (SOE) from China's northeast Shandong province was subcontracted to construct this thermal power plant. As a result, during the entire first two years of my fieldwork there were about four hundred Chinese employees of the Shandong SOE living and working at Hhaala.

Due to the much greater size of its workforce and infrastructure, over the decades a significant township has grown up around Hhaala Collieries in contrast to the continuing rural surrounds of Mugoda Village around Summers Mine. With a population of about 13,000, Hhaala township includes not only a primary and secondary school but also a hospital, post office, and a number of guesthouses, shops, bars, and restaurants. Though it is a considerably larger settlement and has much more developed infrastructure than nearby Summers Mine and Mugoda Village, Hhaala Township is still quite remote by Zambian standards. Unlike at Summers and Mugoda, for example, Hhaala has paved asphalt roads but few vehicle bridges. As a result, its roads are still prone to overflooding during the rainy season (see photograph 6).



Photograph 6: A flooded vehicle road with adjacent pedestrian bridge. Hhaala Collieries, Southern Province, Zambia. May 2018.

*Jehovah's Witnesses Kombela Central Mandarin Congregation*

Kombela is a medium-sized city in central Zambia. Jehovah's Witnesses first organized a Mandarin-language congregation there in 2009 to meet what they perceived as a growing demand for evangelization among the city's rapidly expanding Chinese migrant population. The Mandarin congregation has about 50 regular congregants, and though they conduct their religious meetings exclusively in Mandarin Chinese only two of the congregants during the time of my fieldwork were ethnically Chinese or native Chinese speakers. All of the other congregants were born and grew up in Zambia in families that had no ethnic Chinese background. Jehovah's Witnesses first organized the Kombela Mandarin-language congregation in 2009 to meet what they perceived as a growing demand for evangelization among the city's rapidly growing Chinese migrant population. The first congregants volunteered to leave their other congregations, mostly English speaking, and to begin the arduous task of learning Mandarin from scratch. To instruct the members of this fledgling congregation, the global Jehovah's Witnesses organization sent several Korean and Japanese Witnesses, whom formerly had undertaken (undercover) evangelization in mainland China. By the time I first started attending the Kombela Central Congregation in 2017, these Japanese and Korean witnesses had already moved on to other places (two of them were assisting with the expansion of Mandarin-language congregations in the Copperbelt), and it was by then exclusively Zambians instructing other Zambians in Mandarin Chinese.

Though as volunteers who had joined the Mandarin-language congregation from other congregations which conducted meetings in languages they were already proficient in, the members of Kombela Central Mandarin Congregation were uniformly extremely dedicated in their Mandarin studies. However, actual proficiency in Mandarin varied across the congregation. A couple of members had worked in China and also pursued their own (undercover) evangelization activities there, and these members had some of the strongest proficiency, as did younger members in the

teens and twenties who had been part of the congregation for a long time and had some other exposure to Mandarin either through work or through programming at the University of Zambia's Confucius Institute. Older members of the congregation, who ranged up to their sixties, often found Mandarin study harder.

Following the teachings of the global Jehovah's Witnesses organization, the gender ideology espoused by members of the Kombela Central congregation was explicitly patriarchal, and this patriarchal social structure was most evident during periods of formal worship, both at the Kingdom Hall where the congregation met and at home during family worship sessions. During these formal times of religious worship adult men almost always assumed all leading roles, from delivering religious talks to passing microphones among the audience so that audience members (which included men, women, and unbaptized children) could give answers during question-and-answer sessions. The recognized elders of the congregation, as well as the circuit overseer who oversaw Kombela Central as well as many nearby Witness congregations, were also exclusively men. In the rare times when I saw women speak at the front of the congregation during a time of formal worship, such as when for example a during an annual convention when a female member of the congregation provided a live translation of the convention speaker's speech from English into Mandarin Chinese, the woman also wore a scarf covering her head, something that men never did. Witnesses at Kombela Central explained these explicit patriarchal practices in terms of biblical passages, especially from Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians and his first epistle to Timothy, which together emphasize that women should not teach Christian congregations and that, just as Jesus Christ should be the head of every man, a man is the head of every woman.

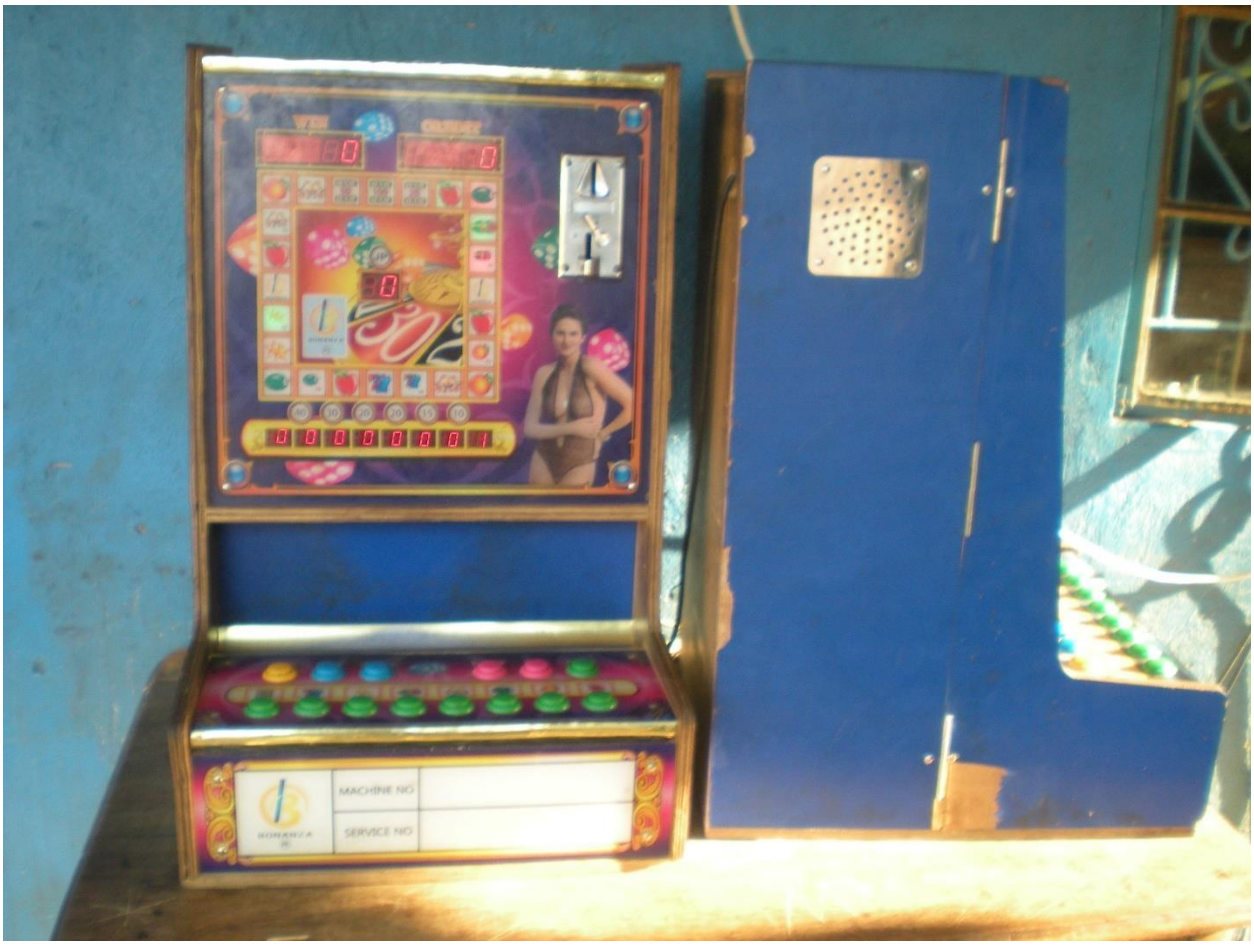
Despite the quite strict and explicitly patriarchal structure of formal worship practices in the congregation, however, in many less formal contexts women often played very active and even leading roles. This was especially evident in evangelization activities, both in terms of the mock

rehearsals and skits that were performed during regular Kingdom Hall meetings or in terms of interaction with Chinese migrants themselves. In these activities it was often women who took on the most vocal and active roles. In addition, despite the very clear imperative articulated by congregants at Kombela Central that men should be the heads of their families and that women should occupy the roles of subservient "helpers," I often observed relations between (always heterosexual) married congregants to be more amicable and even equitable than with many other married couples I knew in Zambia. In significant part this was because heavy, frequent alcohol consumption and marital infidelity, practices which many non-Witness Zambian men I knew described with significant pride and their female partners expressed great concern over, were not things that I ever heard of men of the Kombela Central congregation ever participating in, or of their wives complaining about. As a result, two of the most frequent causes of marital discord in urban Zambia was simply not an issue for any of the couples I knew in the congregation.

*Safari Gambling Machine Company*

Located in Kitwe, in the northwest part of Zambia, Safari is a Chinese company which delivers gambling machines to bars, clubs, and small trading stores in mining townships throughout the Copperbelt. These machines, similar to for example slot machines familiar in North America or pachinko machines in Japan, are brightly decorated and feature many flashing lights, video displays, and electronic sounds that provide positive feedback when a gambler plays (see Photograph 7). The machines are coin operated, and when the Chinese staff members of the company come to collect the proceeds of the machines each week, they leave with huge burlap sacks stuffed with coins. There is often great speculation among pub regulars at establishments where these machines are installed about China's apparently great need for metal coins, and what all these coins are used for when they ultimately arrive in China. Owners (almost always Zambian)

of the establishments where the machines are installed are given a negotiated percentage share of the proceeds. As in other parts of the world, these gambling machines tend to be marketed to and installed at locations where they are often used by some of the poorest members of township communities (cf. Schüll 2012).




Photograph 7: Two Safari gambling machines installed outside of a bar. Mufulira, Copperbelt Province, Zambia. September 2015.

During the period of my fieldwork, the Safari company was staffed by three Chinese employees and two Zambian drivers, all men and all in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties. One of the three Chinese employees was fluent in English and handled interactions with government officials and the like, as well as overseeing the overall operation. The other two Chinese employees spoke rudimentary to intermediate English (though of a noticeably more standard variety than the

Shortcut English spoken by Chinese staff at Summers and Hhaala mines) and handled the collection runs and the counting and tallying of the financial proceeds back at the house that served as the company's local Copperbelt headquarters. On instructions from their company superiors in mainland China, the three Chinese men attempted to keep as low a profile as possible, since dealing with so much visible cash, they felt, made them vulnerable to theft or extortion from petty government officials. They did not keep a regular place of business but instead did all their work out of the expansive house in which they all lived in dormitory-style rooms. Previously there had been up to eight Chinese staff all living in this house at the same time. As is the case with many houses in more affluent urban Zambian neighborhoods, the yard of the house was surrounded by high walls topped with barbed wire and a large iron gate leading to the house driveway and garage. Blending in with the walls of adjacent properties in the neighborhood this made the house quite inconspicuous from the outside. Despite their attempt to maintain a low profile, however, the Chinese staff felt compelled to change residences twice during the period of my fieldwork, each time because they felt that they had become too visible, and therefore vulnerable, within the community.

# 2

# SEPARATION

## Shortcut English: Pidgin Language, "Racialization," and Symbolic Economies

On a bright Saturday afternoon in August 2016, I lounged with half a dozen elders of the Mugoda Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) church as we took our midday break from our worship. Located in an isolated and relatively impoverished village in southern Zambia, the Mugoda SDA congregation lacked the resources to construct a church building, so instead we held our sunrise to sunset Saturday worship services under the shade of a large acacia tree, sometimes under blistering sun and sometimes under pouring rains. On this (thankfully dry) afternoon, the elders and I discussed the labor problems afflicting the nearby Summers Coal Mine (SCM), where several of the elders were employed. Summers Mine is privately owned by five brothers from China's Jiangxi Province and features a general workforce that is recruited exclusively from the area around Mugoda, as well as a management staff that is drawn both from other parts of Zambia as well as from China. Francis, who was employed as a general miner at Summers and who was also an active leader in the local miners' union, began expressing to us how dissatisfied he was with the Chinese owners of the mine. He complained bitterly of how obstinate, in his view, the owners had been in refusing to grant any increase in miners' wages or extension of contract length during recent contract negotiations with the union. David, whose senior position in the management staff at Summers both excluded him from membership in the miners' union and made his contract and salary unaffected by the contract negotiations, vociferously agreed that the owners' behavior had been inappropriate. "The problem with these guys, the stakeholders [i.e. the owners]," David explained, "is that they have money but no schooling. They aren't educated. I've worked for Swiss

guys and Indian guys, and they care about safety, about wages. But these Chinese, it's like they were all farmers back in China. And then suddenly they were lifted out of the field and raised into managers. They don't even know what to do with themselves now." Francis nodded vehemently in agreement and announced that the only thing that could improve conditions for miners at Summers was for there to be a complete change in mine ownership.

Several days later, as I sat visiting David in his quarters at the management residential compound at Summers, I asked him how he knew that his employers from China did not have any schooling. In reply, David told me: "From their language of course. The way they speak or write, or even counting, they cannot count the way we count. They count in Chinese. It means they cannot reason properly."

This discussion between David and Francis was striking for several reasons. For one, despite their shared religious affiliation the two men occupied very different positions at the mine, with David a university-educated senior safety officer and Francis an ordinary miner and leader in the miner's union. The two men also differed in terms of ethnic and linguistic background: Francis was a ciTonga speaker who had grown up in the rural area immediately surrounding Summers Mine while David was an CiBemba speaker from the Zambian Copperbelt on the other side of the country. In this conversation however these differences were backgrounded by both men as they agreed, while speaking English with each other, that the inadequate linguistic competencies of their Chinese employers and colleagues made them fundamentally unfit to operate the mine. These comments were all the more striking since Summers Mine has experienced a history of intense labor violence between its Chinese and Zambian employees, which has at times resulted in mass shootings and underground murder.

The violence at Summers has been used as fodder to feed journalistic and political narratives, in both Zambia and the West, of Chinese neocolonialism in Africa. Careful analyses by

Lee (2017) and Sautman and Yan (2012, 2014) have demonstrated that this "Chinese neocolonialism" thesis is misleading insofar as it singles out Chinese investment in the Zambian mining industry (which in fact is controlled by foreign corporations from many countries, not only China) and presents differences in labor regimes as a result of the different national origins of mine owners rather than the varied structural interests of different forms of capital. This work has left unanswered the question of how Asian whites[4] (from China and also India) come to be perceived by Zambians as differing from whites from other countries, and why despite commonalities across the Zambian mining industry violence by workers is episodically directed towards some white managers and not others. In a brief survey Sautman and Yan (2016) have suggested that racialization of Asians in Zambia is due to incendiary political campaigns by the recent ruling party, the Patriotic Front. However, this explanation is problematic in the case of Summers Mine, despite the fact that Summers has experienced some of the most extreme outbreaks of anti-Chinese violence in recent Zambian history. The Patriotic Front, to whose political soundbites Sautman and Yan attribute the growing racialization of Chinese migrants, is a political party whose leaders and messages most at Summers, and almost all ordinary workers, are deeply hostile to. Therefore, in this chapter I demonstrate a different dynamic: the way in which Zambians at Summers mark Chinese whiteness not in the terms of political soundbites, but rather through evaluations of the language use and proficiencies of Chinese at the mine: in particular their use of a pidgin known locally as Shortcut English.

[4] I should note here of course that a characterization of people of Asian (e.g. Chinese or Indian ancestry) as "white" runs counter to long histories of Euro-American racializing projects. In this chapter I use the term "white" as an emic category in the way that it is used in Zambian English, namely as equivalent to words in other Zambian languages such as "mukuwa" (ciTonga), "musungu" (CiBemba), or "mzungu" (Nyanja). At their broadest extent Zambians use all of these terms to refer to anyone whose phenotypical appearance suggests an ancestry from outside of sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, in Zambian English, the term "white" encompasses people not only of European ancestry but also of for example Asian or Middle Eastern ancestry as well. As I will discuss later in this chapter, however, these categorizations are malleable and fluid, and Chinese, Indians, (or, for that matter, Germans) may be classified by Zambians as "whites" but not as "real whites" if their embodied dispositions do not conform to Zambian expectations of normative whiteness, for example command of Standard English.

Prevalent linguistic ideologies at Summers tend to iconically map the distinction between Shortcut versus Standard English onto the distinction between their stereotyped speakers, European versus Chinese whites, indexically associating evaluations of the languages with these speakers. (Standard) English has long been associated in Zambia with values of modernity, inclusivity, and sophistication (Kroskrity 1998; cf. Rosa 2019) while Shortcut English at Summers is viewed as corrupt, haphazard, and unsystematic. These semiotic dynamics have led to a widespread perception among Zambians at Summers of Chinese as an inferior subcategory of whites who are dangerously unfit to run the mine, contributing to sometimes violent resistance among workers against Chinese mine managers. The sociolinguistic processes through which this happens are similar to but not identical with practices of raciolinguistic (Alim et al. 2016) racialization familiar in the West, since discursive categorizations in southern Zambia of people as either *bantu basiya* (glossed in Zambian English as "Blacks") and *bamakuwa* (glossed as "whites") are neither identical with nor reducible to the Euro-American racial categories of the same name.

**A Context of Violence**

As mentioned, Summers Mine is privately owned by five brothers from Jiangxi Province in southeast China. From 2000 when it was founded until 2015 the management staff at the mine was exclusively drawn from the owners' extended kin and affinal network in southern China, while the workforce was entirely recruited from the Zambian villages surrounding the mine itself (see photograph 8). This early history of the mine was tumultuous, with serious mining accidents, a cholera outbreak among the workers, and a series of violent labor disputes between protesting Zambian workers and the Chinese staff. In 2010 these events culminated in an incident in which Chinese staff members fired shotguns on a crowd of protesting miners, injuring thirteen, and a second incident two years later in which a group of protesting workers chased three members of the

Chinese staff into one of the mine's underground shafts and proceeded to murder one and critically injure the other two. These events were in part noteworthy because though Chinese expatriates in Zambia are sometimes singled out as targets of collective violence, expatriates of other nationalities who operate mines in Zambia almost never are (Yan and Sautman 2014). In response to this violence, the Zambian government closed Summers Mine for two years, initially promising to find an alternative buyer but eventually returning the mining license to the original five owners, under condition that they bring labor and environmental practices at the mine into accordance with Zambian regulatory law. One of the requirements imposed by the Zambian government was that the mine hire a qualified staff of Zambian mine managers drawn from Zambia's established mining region on the Copperbelt to supplement the existing staff of Chinese managers and surveyors. David, one of the SDA congregants described at the beginning of this essay, was just one of these newly hired, university-trained Zambian managers from the Copperbelt.


Photograph 8: Chinese managers look on as Zambian employees line up to receive their monthly wage. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2015.

Ferguson (2006) describes how over the course of three decades there was a major shift in the Zambian mining industry from what he calls socially thick to socially thin mining capitalism: once mines in Zambia had been engaged in not only mineral extraction but also long-term social investments such as the provision of housing, schools, and hospitals to their workers, who also received relatively high wages and other material benefits. These social provisions started to be abandoned across the Zambian mining industry in the 1990s, in the same period as widespread Chinese and other foreign investment entered the country, and Yan and Sautman (2012, 2014) note that by the 2010s Chinese mine operators had a reputation as particularly bad employers. Yan and Sautman refute this characterization by demonstrating the deep continuities between "Chinese"

labor practices and those of other foreign mine operators in Zambia, while Lee (2017) similarly argues that what differentiates labor regimes at different enterprises across Zambia is not the national origin of the ownership but rather by the diverging interests of different kinds of capital: such as state capital vs global private capital. But by refuting the idea of distinctively "Chinese" labor practices in Zambia, these analyses fail to elucidate the currents of symbolic, linguistic, and racial power that nevertheless result in Chinese being perceived as the worst employers. Looking at the role of language is crucial to understanding these dynamics.

**The Symbolic Status of English**

On my first field visit to Zambia, before I had ever heard of Summers Mine, I spent a summer living with a group of men from southern China who operated a gambling machine company in the Zambian Copperbelt. The three men would franchise slot machines known as Safari to local bars and dance clubs throughout the mining townships of the Copperbelt. These gambling machines were extremely popular, and each week the men I stayed with would come to collect the proceeds in huge cloth bags that would soon become stuffed with cash. While staying with the men in their house in one of the upscale suburban areas of Kitwe, the largest city on the Copperbelt, I shared bunks in a bedroom with a young man named Lu Qiang. Lu Qiang was in his early 20s, and Zambia was the first foreign country he had ever visited. As an illustration of how unused he was to seeing people who were not Chinese before he came to Zambia, Lu Qiang explained to me how, on his very first flight to Zambia on Ethiopian Airlines he had naively been afraid to eat the food, since he was worried that the Blackness of the flight attendants' hands might rub off on his food. He laughed at this and said that now he knew his worries had been ridiculous, and that now he was making a concerted effort to make friends amongst the people he met in Zambia. Soon after I began staying with Lu Qiang and his colleagues, I asked him if I could accompany him on one of his

collections runs to the surrounding townships, and Lu Qiang readily agreed. We set off early that morning in a van with darkened windows, Lu Qiang and I sitting in back as Kelvin, one of the Zambian drivers employed by the company, drove in front. At the very first bar we stopped at, Kelvin and I walked into the front bar room as Lu Qiang immediately set off down a side corridor towards where the slot machines were located in the back room of the bar. As Kelvin and I walked into the front bar room, a large man whom I took to be the owner turned to us and gave us a serious, appraising look. "Muli shani, tata," I greeted him in CiBemba, "good morning, sir." "FINALLY," the man exclaimed by way of reply, "finally in their wisdom Safari decides to send us someone who can speak English. Our friends the Chinese can't speak a word of English. Before you the only one I could talk to was the driver [he motioned towards Kelvin], can you believe that? The Chinese come here and all they say is '*ching chong, ching chong*[5]' [here he made a clownish face]. They're like rats, clogging up all our rivers." Taken aback by the vehemence of the man's comments, I quickly tried to explain that I was not, in fact, a representative of the Safari company, but rather just an anthropology PhD student who was accompanying Lu Qiang as part of my fieldwork research. The man, whom I later learned was indeed the owner of the bar, seemed displeased with my answer, but by the time Lu Qiang entered the room to confirm the proceeds that would be split between the Safari company and the bar owner, the man was all business again.

As we climbed back into the van and Lu Qiang began recording in his notebooks the precise sums collected from each slot machine, I asked him how he felt his relations were with the people he had come to know in Zambia. Lu Qiang reiterated that he wanted to make friends in Zambia besides the two Chinese colleagues he lived with, who were both much older than him. He said he

[5] *Ching-chong* is a formulaic expression that many Zambians make when humorously or pejoratively imitating the sounds of Chinese languages. By itself this expression conveys no specific meaning for the Zambians who use it, but nevertheless has strong connotations of gibberish or incomprehensibility. It is not a direct reproduction of any expression in a Chinese language that I am aware of.

found Zambian women quite beautiful and would like to find a girlfriend to date. But communication was a difficulty. Lu Qiang was active on some WeChat forums full of Chinese speakers throughout the world who like him wished to improve their English, and he had a daily set of English exercises that another user on one of these forums had shared with him. I asked him if he ever considered asking a Zambian to be his conversation partner to practice his English. Lu Qiang answered negatively, firmly stating that though many Zambians knew English, the English they spoke was not 标准/*biaozhun*: "standard." He would rather practice his English with other Chinese learners through WeChat, many of whom were located in Europe or North America and were learning to speak UK or US English. This was the English he wanted to learn, Lu Qiang said, and once he had mastered it better through the chat rooms on WeChat, he would feel more comfortable conversing with people in Zambia. Later in the conversation Lu Qiang's colleague Lin Jun came to join us. Like Lu Qiang, Lin Jun was quite interested in improving his English, as he felt it would give him better job opportunities beyond Zambia. But, he said, he felt that the expectation that many Zambians had that he and his colleagues would be competent in English was really racist.

In the following months and years of conducting ethnographic fieldwork research in Zambia, as I moved from living with the Chinese men operating the Safari machine gambling company in the Zambian Copperbelt to Summers Coal Mine in southern Zambia, I found that precisely contestations such as this over the symbolic value and legitimacy of English was central to how many Zambians and Chinese articulated their relations with each other. At Summers, for example, I found that many workers complained more frequently and more vehemently about their Chinese managers non-standard use of English than they did about other workplace conditions such as wages, safety, or job security. The comments of David, Francis, Lu Qiang, Lin Jun, and the bartender (whose name I never caught) all highlight the way that English, as both a (post)colonial language in Zambia and a language of global prestige, indexes a range of values that then operate to

differently evaluate various groups of people. Of course, much of this importance of English in Zambia is a result of the powerful continuing legacies of British colonialism, which many people at Summers express great ambivalence towards. English has been constitutionally mandated as Zambia's only official, national language since independence, and through the force of both law and social norm is the only language legitimately employed in government, post-primary education, daily newspapers, the vast majority of TV and radio broadcasts, and international communication (Kula 2006).

A number of twentieth-century theorists in the late colonial and early postcolonial period were sharply critical of the ways in which formerly colonizing languages were coming to assume great prestige in the newly independent colonies. Pennycook (1998), for example, argued that the idea of English as a "global language" was a deliberate construction of the British Empire, and that to speak of the language in this way reinforces colonialist dichotomies. More forcefully, scholars such as Fanon (2008), Magubane (1971), Phillipson (1992), and wa Thiong'o (1994) argued that the valorization of a colonial language by colonized subjects was the result variously of collective psychosocial pathology, mental subjugation, or continuing neocolonialist oppression, in short, a kind of "colonization of consciousness" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). Bourdieu (1991) too, described how the valorization of elite language forms by marginalized subjects was the precisely the result of those subjects' misrecognition of the very symbolic and ideological bases of their own subjugation. Other scholars, from Achebe (1965) down to Canagarajah (2013), Jenks and Lee (2016), and Smith and Mwadime (2014) have taken issue with these critiques, arguing for the ways in which colonial languages can be (re)appropriated by postcolonial subjects, and for the power as well as the transgressive potentials that such appropriations bring for those who practice them.

Within Zambia specifically, English has been important as a unifying force in nation-building projects and as an antidote to what Zambians refer to as "tribalism" (and which I refer to

as ethnic chauvinism). Unlike languages such as Kiswahili in Tanzania and Kenya, Chichewa in Malawi, or Setswana in Botswana which developed into national languages aided by colonial or postcolonial state policies, in Zambia there is no single language in which more than 50% of the population is proficient in, and furthermore no language which is spoken as a *first* language by more than 20% of the population (Kashoki 1978; Kula 2006). Thus, the main languages in Zambia besides English, such as CiBemba, Nyanja, ciTonga, and Lozi, tend to be highly marked by Zambians as properly belonging to specific ethnic groups or "tribes." By contrast, after independence there was almost a complete withdrawal of the European white settler population, and as a result there is no significant ethnic community within Zambia with which English can be associated. This has resulted in a common, though not necessarily monolithic (Jenks and Lee 2016), language ideology which operates through a scheme of binary oppositions, in which English is figured as cosmopolitan, inclusive, and neutral while non-English languages spoken in Zambia are regarded as ethnic, exclusive, and biased (Spitulnik 1998). At Summers Mine, for example, Mary, one of the ciTonga-speaking employees, described to me how she would converse with the Zambian managers drawn from other parts of the country in Nyanja, but bitterly resented being forced to do so when both she and they were fully proficient in English. In the midst of a heated and controversial presidential campaign which was frequently cast by Zambians around Summers Mine in ethic terms, Mary found it particularly offensive that these managers who identified with an opposing political coalition would converse and even flirt with her in Nyanja.

These symbolic valances, both global and national, of English were illustrated to me in a different way at Summers as one afternoon I was sharing a lunch of *nsima* and *offals* with Henry Jere and Burrell Kachamba, two police-officers from Lusaka who had been stationed at Summers to protect the mine. As we chatted, Henry and Burrell asked me if their names were common in

America. I replied that both Henry and Jerry[6] were extremely common names in America, but that before coming to Zambia I had never heard the names Burrell or Kachamba before. The response of the two men to my statements could not have been more different. While Burrell appeared quite disappointed, Henry's face broke out into a delighted grin as he announced that "yeah, I have nice names, not like these Nyanja names." Taken aback, I asked Henry why Nyanja names are not as good as English names, and Henry replied that "no one can see the meanings of those Nyanja names like English names. All you have to do is open a dictionary and you can see the meaning of English names." Finding this surprising since other Zambians I had met had often explained to me the meaning of their names, I asked if in a Nyanja dictionary it would be possible to find the meanings of Nyanja names as well. Acknowledging that the meanings of such names might indeed be found in a Nyanja dictionary, Henry and Burrell both strongly averred that this was beside the point, since, as Burrell remarked: "in America, people do not even know languages like Nyanja or Tonga. Zambia is just a small country, so English is better because everyone can understand it. When you go to China or Japan, even there you can speak English and people will get you."

The comments made here by Henry and Burrell neatly encapsulate several of the issues at stake in the implicit and explicit comparisons my Zambian interlocutors at Summers Mine often made between English and other languages. For Henry and Burrell, even with respect to a linguistic sign as seemingly arbitrary as a personal name, it made all the difference in the world what language that name was drawn from and whether it would be recognizable, indeed *visible*, as a name to people outside Zambia. Not only that, but Henry's example of the dictionary also

[6] Actually, my comments in this conversation were partially based on a misunderstanding on my part. I thought I had heard Henry tell me that his surname was the English name "Jerry," but I learned months later from him that in fact his actual surname is the Nyanja name "Jere." Coincidentally, the pronunciations of the English name "Jerry" and the Nyanja name "Jere" are extremely close. Despite my misunderstanding, I think that Henry's evident satisfaction at the time that I was confusing his Nyanja name "Jere" for the English name "Jerry" only reinforces the point I am making here, namely that for both Henry and Burrell widely-recognized English names are clearly superior to their less recognized Nyanja counterparts.

associated English names with values of transparency, of objectivity, and of being equally open and visible to all. Moreover, Burrell's final comments made broader, and quite pragmatic, points about the vast applicability of English across the world that indigenous Zambian languages simply do not have. For all these reasons, then, English holds a special place in both the pragmatic and symbolic valuations of many Zambians that is not only or even primarily due to a collective pathology as a result of the history of British colonialism in the country.

**The Creation of a New Language**

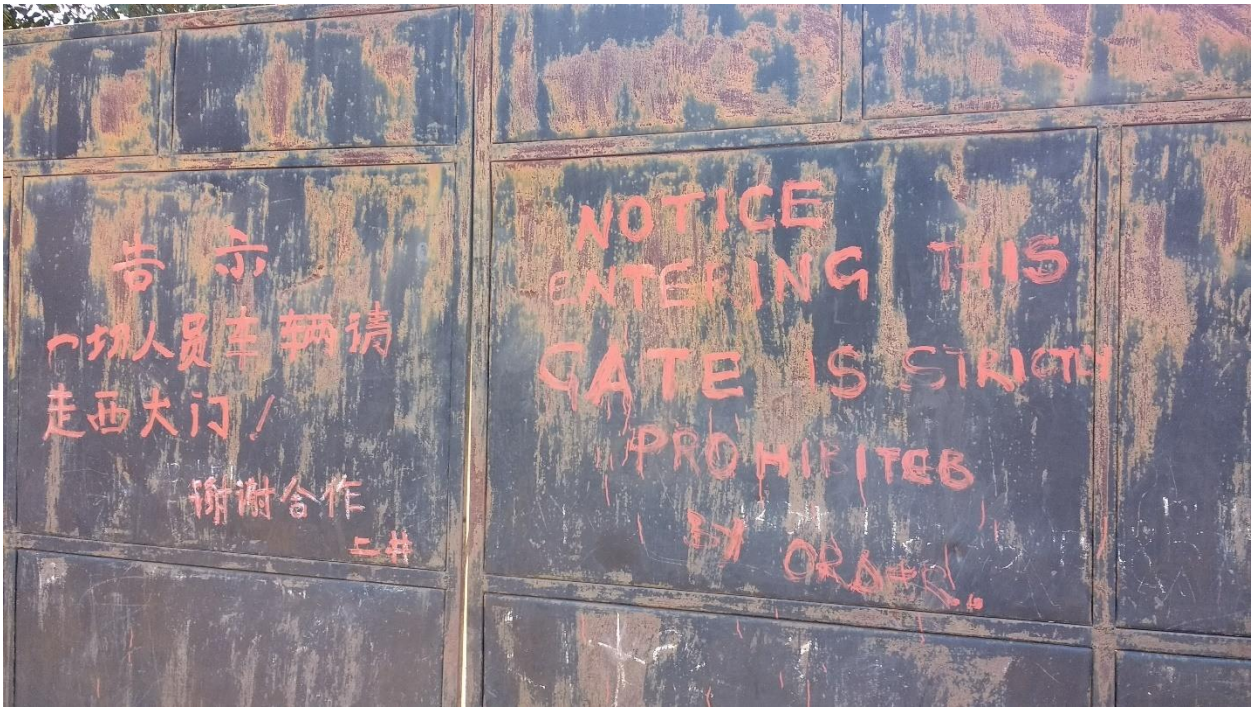
Mines and mining communities have historically played a large role in bringing people of diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds together in Zambia, and so it should come as no surprise that these symbolic dynamics of Zambian languages (including English) should be overlaid upon a quite complicated terrain of actual linguistic practice at Summers Mine. Located in a quite remote, rural part of southern Zambia, the almost exclusive language of everyday use in the communities around Summers Mine is (the Valley dialect of) ciTonga, which is the predominant language throughout Southern Province. English remains a language of great prestige and symbolic value in these communities, but proficiency in it as well as Nyanja tends to encompass a spectrum where younger people, men, and residents who are formally educated tend to be bilingual or even trilingual speakers more or less proficient in English and Nyanja while women, the elderly, and those without access to formal education tend to be monolingual ciTonga speakers. It is from these communities that the general workforce of Summers Mine, both above and underground, is overwhelmingly drawn.

The mine has also brought many residents from other locales however, not only from China but from other parts of Zambia, as well. After the violence that took place at Summers in 2011 and 2013, the mine was closed for two years by order of the Zambian government, and part of the

conditions imposed by the Zambian government for the reopening of the mine was the integration of a qualified Zambian management team to supplement the existing Chinese management staff. These Zambian managers identify with different ethnic affiliations, but all were recruited from the more established mining areas in the Copperbelt region of northwest Zambia and all are either first or second language speakers of CiBemba as well as fluent speakers of English. Most of these Zambian managers are also proficient speakers of Nyanja. There is also a force of Zambian police officers stationed by the Zambian government at the mine to forestall future outbreaks of violence. Again, though identifying with different ethnic affiliations, these police officers were all living in Lusaka before their deployment to Summers Mine and are either first or second language speakers of Nyanja as well as fluent English speakers.

Finally, the Chinese expatriate staff at Summers are almost all compatriots (老乡/*laoxiang*) from Jiangxi Province in southeast China, and most often speak Gan Chinese (江西话/*jiangxihua*) amongst themselves as well as a heavily-inflected Mandarin with other Chinese speakers. There are also a few members of the Chinese expatriate staff who hail from China's Sichuan province and who exclusively speak (the Sichuanese dialect of) Mandarin Chinese. Notably, not a single member of the Chinese expatriate staff at the mine is able to speak any standard form of English, ciTonga, CiBemba, or Nyanja. Equally, there are no Zambian employees or community members at the mine who are able to speak any variant of Chinese. In short, though the social groupings of Chinese and Zambians at the mine are within themselves highly segmented in complex ways, the linguistic divide between these two groups is a central aspect of everyday life and work at the mine since under normal circumstances there is not a single translator or interpreter there able to fully cross it. In this respect my social role at the mine as an ethnographer was highly anomalous, since I was the only one who would regularly interact and converse with individuals on both sides of this linguistic divide without recourse to the Shortcut English pidgin, discussed below. My own proficiencies in

the various languages prevalent at Summers Mine were varied. I am a native speaker of American English and have advanced proficiency in Mandarin Chinese and ciTonga, with rudimentary proficiency in CiBemba. As a result, I was sometimes asked by employees of the mine to help with small tasks of translation or interpretation (see photograph 9). Before arriving at Summers Mine, however, I had no familiarity with either Shortcut English or Gan Chinese, which made even my stumbling attempts at interpretation often far from perfect.




Photograph 9: A sign written in both Chinese and English. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. October 2017.

Despite this rather conspicuous lack of a fully shared language, Zambian and Chinese individuals at Summers *do* work together—and play together, joke together, and have long-term romantic and intimate relationships together—on an everyday basis (see photograph 10). Thus, Shortcut English is not merely a restricted jargon which only deals with the immediate practicalities of mining: it is also a linguistic medium which is used to convey a wide range of other social

interactions and purposes, as well.[7] In the highly patriarchal and racialized social organization of work at the mine, teams of Zambian male miners sent underground are always led by a male Chinese shift boss (see photograph 11), while in the kitchen of the management living compound a Chinese *madame*[8] leads a group of Zambian women in preparing three meals a day for the Chinese management staff[9] (see photograph 12). As indicated above, even though many of the Chinese and Zambian employees at Summers have been working at the mine continuously since it first began operations in 2000, over the almost two decades since then not a single Chinese staff member has gained proficiency in a language spoken by the Zambian community or vice versa: an indication of just how sharp the prevailing social divisions are at the mine, a point I will return to later.

[7] At Summers Mine, there are romantic partnerships between Chinese men and Zambian women which have lasted as long as seven years and which are exclusively carried out in Shortcut English. Despite tensions at the mine there is also quite a bit of amicable joking and play, of both sexually flirtatious and platonic varieties, that takes place in Shortcut English.

[8] This is a Shortcut English pidgin term that refers to a woman, emphasizing especially her mature social status within the community or her position of authority. The other Shortcut English pidgin terms commonly used to refer to a woman are: *maria*, which tends to emphasize a woman's romantic or intimate relationship with a man, and *musimbi* which has connotations of a young woman or girl. In practice all of these terms frequently overlap however, and individual speakers of Shortcut English tend to use one of these terms in preference to the others.

[9] Though the Zambian managers and police officers employed at the mine live in the same residential compounds as the Chinese staff, they are categorically excluded from the kitchen and dining areas of these compounds and do not share their meals with the Chinese employees. Instead, the Zambian staff prepare their own meals using simple camp stoves that they have installed in their bedrooms.

Photograph 10: A Chinese shift boss and a Zambian lorry (truck) driver strike a pose together. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2015.

Photograph 11: A crew at Summers Mine prepare to descend underground, overseen by their Chinese shift boss.

Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2015.

Photograph 12: A Chinese madame and the three Zambian women under her supervision. Summers Coal Mine, Southern Province, Zambia. August 2016.

Nevertheless in the course of their everyday labor (and other) interactions together the different language communities at Summers have been involved in the creation or replication of something new: namely a pidgin language that in its broad outlines resembles the pidgin spoken between Zambian and Chinese individuals throughout Zambia, known locally to residents and workers at Summers Mine as *Shortcut English* (from the idea of taking a "shortcut" to communicate one's meaning) or *Broken English*. This pidgin draws its vocabulary almost exclusively from Zambian English, though the pronunciation of these vocabulary items can vary considerably from Standard Zambian English; it also includes a smattering of ciTonga, CiBemba, and Nyanja vocabulary items as well. There are some lexical items in the pidgin that are of unclear provenance, but none that I can clearly identify as originating from any variety of Chinese[10]. Nevertheless, the

[10] For an audio example of spoken Shortcut English, please see attached .mp3 files "Media 1" and "Media 2." In these short audio clips a Chinese man is speaking Shortcut English to two Zambian men (with a TV news program playing in the background). The two Zambian men are recent arrivals to Summers Mine from the Copperbelt, and the phrasing of their replies is closer to Standard Zambian English than to Shortcut English. In "Media 1" the Chinese man comments

language does strongly exhibit some apparent grammatical influences from one or more varieties of Chinese[11]. For example, in the absence of any lexical question markers such as the ciTonga *sena*/*hena* or the Mandarin 吗/*ma,* the basic way to grammatically form a question in Shortcut English is through the verb-negation-verb structure, a structure which is almost completely absent in ciTonga or English but extremely typically of Chinese languages. For example:

(1) *Understand no understand?*[12]

"Do you understand?"

Analogous to Mandarin: 懂不懂/*dongbudong*

(2) *You go no go?*

"Will you go?"

Analogous to Mandarin: 你去不去/*niqubuqu*

(3) *Gooduh no gooduh?*

"Is it alright/fine/OK?"

Analogous to Mandarin: 好不好/*haobuhao*

on the (English) news program the three men are watching together. He discusses current Zambian politics, including the recent imprisonment of the main opposition leader and corruption in the Zambian government. In "Media 2" the Chinese man discusses nutrition and healthy eating practices. Note that *saladi* is a ciTonga loan word in Shortcut English, meaning maize (corn) oil.

[11] Monson (2009) alludes to what was possibly an early form of Shortcut English when she describes how, during the construction of the TAZARA Railway, communication between Chinese and African workers most often took the form of "sign language combined with elements of both Chinese and Kiswahili" (61). Driessen (2020) also describes an Amharic-lexified pidgin spoken on Chinese-run road construction sites in Ethiopia. Though each of these pidgins as well as Shortcut English have been lexified by different source languages, the sociolinguistic ecologies (Ansaldo 2011; Mufwene 2008) in which they have developed are similar. It is possible that individual, separate pidgins are springing up at far-flung Chinese-operated labor sites across Africa, but it is also possible that this is a single base pidgin that is being repeatedly relexified by different languages as it is carried by at least some Chinese expatriates circulating between different African countries. I am not aware of any other scholar work that has been done on this pidgin(s), and further comparative work would be needed to determine if this is the case. With respect to Shortcut English's relation to the earlier pidgin in used in European-operated mines throughout southern Africa, known in different locales as Cilapalapa or Fanakalo, Zambian miners familiar with both Cilapalapa and Shortcut English tend to deny that there is any syntactic or lexical similarities between the languages.

[12] I have chosen for the most part to adopt Standard English orthography for the examples here so as to more clearly contrast their grammatical structure with Standard English, except with respect to words such as "gooduh" that depart very substantially from the Standard English pronunciation.

Interestingly, the Chinese surveying and management staff at Summers are not the only actors at the mine who pursue proficiency in in the Shortcut English pidgin rather than Standard Zambian English. Amongst the ciTonga-speaking Zambian women employed as cooks and housekeepers for the management staff at the mine there are many who can express themselves quite adroitly in Shortcut English, with its English-derived lexicon, but cannot communicate at all in Standard Zambian English. These women are thus able to use the pidgin to communicate with at least two distinct groups of language users who lack proficiency in ciTonga: both speakers of Chinese languages *as well as* speakers of CiBemba, Nyanja, or English. This pattern recalls Whinnom's (1971) tertiary hybridization hypothesis, in which he postulates that the stabilization of a pidgin depends on it being used by at least three distinct language groups without alternative means of inter-group communication. Nevertheless, Whinnom's tertiary hybridization hypothesis involves a substrate/superstrate theoretical framework for language contact that, as I will demonstrate, is problematic when applied to the case of the Shortcut English pidgin spoken at Summers Mine.

**Social power and its Influence on Pidgin Language Formation**

Historically, the vast majority of pidgins and creoles—collectively known as contact languages—have developed under conditions of severe power disparities between different speech communities, most famously under plantation slavery and colonialism. Indeed, these power disparities seem to be a necessary component for pidginization and creolization to occur at all since very powerful social forces are needed to overcome more usual processes of language transmission (Holm 2004, 69). To account for these disparities, creolists have conventionally classified the source languages that contribute to an emerging pidgin as either *substrate* or *superstrate*, where *substrate* refers to the source language(s) spoken by those with comparatively less power and

*superstrate* to the source language spoken by those with more[13]. The standard view is that contact languages are *lexified by* (i.e. derive their vocabulary from) the superstrate (Byrne and Holm 2003, 3; Kouwenberg and Singler 2008, 11; Plag 2006, 306) while deriving some or all of their grammar and structural features from the substrate (Holm 2004, 5; Romaine 2006, 600).

Fanon's (2008) discussion is important again here, as he analyzed the key social role that pidgin languages played in the colonial setting: especially, and crucially, in reinforcing colonial power relations and race hierarchies. Fanon points out that in the colonial context pidgins were never simply neutral means of communication: rather they were also centrally a means for the colonizer to talk down to the colonized. Thus, the pidgin could be deployed whenever the more powerful colonizer wished to assert his or her symbolic domination over a colonial subject—whether that subject was proficient in the metropolitan superstrate language or not. On this point Fanon cuttingly remarks "to talk pidgin-nigger [sic] is to express this thought: 'You'd better keep your place'" (2008: 21). By contrast, however, the dynamics of social use of Shortcut English at Summers Mine indicate that it is a pidgin language of a very different kind.

**A Pidgin Turned on its Head: A Reversal of Symbolic Power Relations**

Sitting under a tree by mine Shaft #7 of Summers Mine, I shared lunch with two of the local, ciTonga-speaking women who were employed by the mine as cooks and housekeepers for its Chinese staff: Mary and Ruth. As we sat on the ground chatting, Mary and Ruth laughed at the sight of Hu Xiuying, their Chinese madame, or supervisor, scribbling furiously in her notebook as she tried to write down the words being spoken to her by one of the Zambian miners. "Look at

[13] The Atlantic creoles of the Caribbean and West Africa are the most famous example of this superstrate/substrate framework, but in fact this dynamic is a feature of almost all pidgins: pidgins like Russenorsk that developed under conditions of comparative power equality are quite rare. Even in these cases the exception tends to prove the rule, as these uncommon pidgins are usually lexified in equal proportion by each of their source languages, unlike other pidgins which are overwhelmingly lexified by the superstrate (Holm 2004, 69; Romaine 2006, 601; Versteegh 2008, 165).

Madame, she's so cute! She can't speak, but she wants to learn," Mary laughed, "she wants to learn English. But she is only learning Shortcut English. That's all!"

The interaction here between Hu Xiuying, Mary, and Ruth—though apparently humorous and lighthearted—suggests a very different kind of symbolic dynamic at play here than that which took place in the classic examples of language contact described earlier. On the one hand, in terms of control over economic capital and formal authority at the mine, the Chinese expatriates certainly seem to be the dominant actors: Hu Xiuying is the boss after all, and she has the (informal, but very real) authority to fire or even to physically beat the employees who fall directly under her supervision should she wish. Like other Chinese supervisors at the mine, Hu Xiuying also earns five to six times as much money as Zambian employees do for similar kinds of work, and if things turn chaotic, she can generally count on a strong diplomatic approach from her home country that can lend her a substantial degree of political and legal cover within Zambia. In these respects, the position of Hu Xiuying and other Chinese supervisors at Summers is not so different from that of expatriates from other relatively wealthier countries working in Zambia.

But if the economic and political structures place Hu Xiuying and the other Chinese expatriate staff members in a position of dominance at Summers, the linguistic and symbolic dynamics present at the mine seem to be tending in a very different direction. After all, it is not Mary and Ruth who are targeting their language on Hu Xiuying's, but rather Hu Xiuying that is targeting her language on *theirs*. And, boss or no, Mary and Ruth are extremely mocking of her efforts to do so. Fanon once described how a colonial master might use pidgin to address a Black colonial subject as he would a child: by smirking, whispering, patronizing, and cozening (2008: 19). But overwhelmingly at Summers it is structurally less powerful Zambians who use Shortcut English to patronize, cozen, and smirk to their Chinese bosses. This suggests that language at Summers, and the Shortcut English specifically, constitute a symbolically countervailing force to

Chinese economic and political dominance at the mine. In the terminology of sociolinguistics, despite the seemingly dominant position Chinese actors enjoy at Summers Mine, linguistically speaking their language variety (Chinese) operates as a subordinated substrate rather than a dominating superstrate.

At other mines in Zambia, which are owned in the main by transnational corporations from Canada, the UK, South Africa, Australia, India, or Switzerland—the expatriate staffs are usually native or at least proficient speakers of English, and the pidgin Fanakalo/Cilapalapa once used in these mines during the colonial era is largely disappearing. Thus, one of the major features that distinguishes the Chinese owners, managers, and surveyors at Summers from most other foreign investors in Zambia is that they do not speak English, the overriding language of symbolic legitimacy in the eyes of most Zambians and are forced to use the pidgin Shortcut English to communicate. Moreover, what the ethnographic evidence at Summers demonstrates is that this difference in linguistic competencies between Chinese and other expatriates presents not *merely* a practical, communicational problem for the Chinese operators. It also presents a very severe symbolic one, insofar as English is seen as the symbolically legitimate language by the Zambian workforce these Chinese investors rely upon. As Bourdieu (1991) has pointed out, social domination will not be quietly accepted by those it subjugates unless it becomes recognized (that is to say, *misrecognized*) as legitimate and non-arbitrary. Even if the harsh labor conditions of socially-thin capitalism are felt keenly at mines across Zambia, I suggest that Chinese operators' lack of English proficiency *exacerbates* just these feelings of abjection since it highlights, in Zambians' eyes, the illegitimacy of the Chinese as managers.

**"Not real whites"**

The way in which Chinese expatriates are figured in these sociolinguistic and language ideology (Irvine and Gal 2000) dynamics is, in some senses, analogous to processes of racialization as recognized in the Euro-American West, processes that Sautman and Yan (2016) argue have taken place with regards to Chinese migrants throughout Africa. But there are significant differences as well. Of course, the touchstones of racial thinking in the West have long been "the grosser physical differences of color, hair and bone" (Du Bois 1970: 75-76): most especially skin color (Omi and Winant 2015, Miles and Brown 2003) or what Fanon (2008) refers to as the *epidermal* character of race: "the inscription of racial difference on the skin" (Hall 2017: 62). Zambians at Summers almost always differentiate people along the lines of skin color in much the same way, though they tend to recognize only two basic categories as opposed to the more numerous categorizations in Euro-American racializing discourses. At Summers Mine, these two categories are described in ciTonga as *bantu basiya* (cognate to CiBemba *abantu abafita* and glossed in Zambian English as "Blacks") and *bamakuwa* (cognate to CiBemba *abasungu* and glossed in Zambian English as "whites"). As with Euro-American racializing discourses, this basic categorization of human difference by Zambians at Summers can be a slippery one when applied to any given individual, though it slips and slides in somewhat different ways than it does in the West. Zambians at Summers recognize different "tribes" or subgroups within the basic categorizations of *bantu basiya* and *bamakuwa*, but not all of these subgroupings are equally held to "really" belong to the broader category. Some people are more "really white" or "really black" than others. For example, Zambians at Summers often express in ciTonga sentiments such as "*ma chainizi mbakuwa, pele ma chainizi tabali bakuwa nchobeni*," "the Chinese are white, but they are not *real* (or true) whites." Depending on context in conversation Zambians similarly sometimes steadfastly

affirm Chinese whiteness and at others contrast Chinese practices with the norms of "real" whiteness.

This results in an implicit scale in which there are some people whose membership in the category of *bamakuwa*/*abasungu*/ "whites" is undisputed and applies in any social context: English-speakers from the UK or USA who are marked phenotypically (in this racializing discourse) by their very long noses. But other kinds of people, including Germans (who operate a development NGO just a couple hour's walk from Summers Mine) and Chinese (who operate the mine itself) are much more ambiguous: depending on context they are sometimes described as white *tout court* and sometimes as some other more marginal, marked-off subcategory of whiteness. A few more highly educated and fluent English-speaking Zambians at Summers are aware of the categorization schemas of Euro-American race "science" and can name, in English, categories such as "negroid," "caucasoid," "mongoloid," and the like. Otherwise, however, Zambians at Summers almost never articulate any additional supercategories or color terms (such as an Asian "yellow" race) beyond the basic categories of Black and white, and there is no equivalent term for "mongoloid" (or even "Asian person") in the ciTonga spoken in the area. Though they recognize that there are small variations in the skin pigmentation of different whites with whom they are familiar, such as people from the UK, Germany, China, India, Lebanon, or Peru, Zambians at Summers tend to regard all these types of white skin as "equally white" in appearance: even if some who possess this skin are *bamakuwa nchobeni*/ "real whites" (*abasungu ba chishinka* in CiBemba) and others are not. This is not to say that, in theory at least, they do not rely at all on visibly-apparent phenotype to distinguish *bamakuwa nchobeni*/ "real whites" from those who are not as "truly" white: the exceptionally long noses of "real whites" being the prime example. In practice, however, whether ambiguous subjects such as German or Chinese foreigners are classified as whites (much less "real" whites) or not in any given context is almost always based on the social position and language use of the individual

in question. In a conversational context where their role as owners and operators of a mine who hail from a non-African country is being foregrounded, for example, Chinese are almost universally recognized at Summers as *bamakuwa*/ "whites." But in reference to their use of Chinese and Shortcut English rather than any variety of Standard English, Zambians at Summers tend to downplay or even outright deny Chinese whiteness, marking them as a highly differentiated subcategory they refer to as *ma chainizi*. Moreover, as in racist ideologies originating in the West that have long viewed external physical features such as skin tone as a sliding signifier (Hall 2017) that is highly or even invariably correlated with inner traits of personality and intelligence, Zambians at Summers similarly view the status of Chinese as "not real whites" as having significant implications for their inner character and fitness to operate the mine. This racialization is not, on the whole, flattering. Though *ma chainizi* are recognized for their diligence and hard work ethic, they are also stereotyped as heartless (or even soulless), mean-spirited, cheap, dishonest, and corrupt(ing). This racialization fuels Zambian resentments of Chinese ownership/operation of Summers, contributing to the violence that has at times broken out between Zambian and Chinese employees.

**Conclusion**

In a context of post-structural adjustment, profound neoliberalization of the Zambian economy, in which state-owned mines that once provided secure and well-compensated employment have now all been privatized and sold to foreign investors, mineworkers and their families have in the last quarter-century experienced a dramatic decline in work and living conditions. Describing this as a shift from socially thick to socially thin mining capitalism (2006), Ferguson notes that for many residents of Zambian mining communities this had resulted in a feeling of abjection: a sense of humiliating expulsion from a globalized world and its promises of

modernity and prosperity. Thus, like many societies in the global South (Loomba 2015), Zambia is locked in a situation that is both postcolonial (with regards to British colonialism) and neocolonial (with regards to the overwhelmingly dominant role that foreigners continue to play in the Zambian economy). The English language plays an ambivalent role with respect to this abjection; on the one hand, as scholars such as Fanon and wa Thiong'o have long pointed out, as a colonial language English has very often been used to exclude and demean all those who do not have perfect mastery of its standard versions. But for a long time now English has also been employed by many Zambians as a tool to stake a claim to a certain kind of modernist aspiration and cosmopolitan identity and also to background and therefore overcome ethnic and linguistic divisions with Zambia as a contemporary nation-state (Simpson 2003; Spitulnik 1998).

Chinese owners and managers are thus figured as "not real whites" through a set of sociolinguistic practices that are similar to, but not identical with, raciolinguistic and racialization processes as understood in western countries such as the USA and Europe. These practices are themselves the result of complex postcolonial legacies. As in the situation described by Woolard (1989) in late-Franco Catalonia in which the positive values indexed by Catalonian served to undermine the authority of a dominant Castilian-language political and legal regime, the continuing symbolic power of English in Zambia works to undermine the otherwise dominant authority of Chinese managers within the confines of Summers Mine. But it also does more than that. Because the Chinese expatriates can only communicate with their employees and other community members in Shortcut English, which sounds to many like just a broken, bastardized form of Standard English, the use of this linguistic code also differentiates its Chinese speakers from other foreign operators of Zambian mines (both past and present), figuring unflatteringly as a subcategory of whites less deserving of authority at the mine.

Thus, in a period of new pervasive foreign control of the Zambian mining industry and other important sectors of the Zambian economy, by actors from China as well as other foreign countries, at Summers mine the exclusionary logics of English have been repurposed as they are used to contest the authority of Chinese operation of the mine and to challenge a labor regime that has contributed to the abjection of Zambian workers (Ferguson 1999). As global geopolitical power structures shift and new powers such as China and to a lesser extent India become new economic superpowers, these sociolinguistic dynamics at Summers may well transform in the coming decades. There may come a time in not so many years when Chinese languages such as Mandarin seriously complete with English within the marketplaces of linguistic and symbolic capital in anglophone postcolonial societies such as Zambia. But at Summers Mine, at least, that time is still a far way off. There, as elsewhere in Zambia, the symbolic power of English—itself the result of the racist and exclusionary logics of colonialism—remains a powerful tool to contest contemporary relations of neocolonialist abjection.

# 3

# DEPENDENCY

## The Dependence of Capital on Women's Affective Labor in China-Africa Relations

While hanging out by the gate to the living quarters of Shaft 2 of Summers Coal Mine, David, Mary, Ruth and I sat around laughing and chatting. David, in his late twenties, was one of the few Zambian shift bosses employed by the mine and was soon to be married to his girlfriend who lived across the country in Copperbelt Province. Mary and Ruth were both young women from the local area around Summers Mine, each in their mid-twenties, and employed as housekeepers and cooks for the Chinese staff of the mine. As we chatted, Tao Jianguo, one of the Chinese miners, approached us with his usual broad and somewhat mischievous grin. Tao Jianguo, an older miner in his 50s with a balding head, had been on the mine longer than most of the other Chinese and as a result had a somewhat larger English vocabulary than many. His English pronunciation was extremely difficult to understand, however, so he would always keep a piece of brightly colored chalk on hand so he could write his words on any available nearby surface and thereby make his word clearer to his audience. As soon as Tao Jianguo arrived, he began jubilantly joking around with our small group, and consequently the conversation shifted from standard English to the Shortcut English pidgin[14] to accommodate him. Pulling out his chalk, he wrote in big letters on the ground in English: "David likes to talk to Mary." In response, David wrote just below Tao Jianguo's sentence the words "Tau likes to touch Mary."

[14] "Shortcut English" is a pidgin language employing English vocabulary and Chinese grammatical features that has developed at Summers Mine in the last two decades (see Chapter 2).

After this Tao Jianguo began to focus more of his teasing on Mary and Ruth, and his joking gained a physical quality as he would often reach out to touch the women, and especially to pull on and somewhat twist Ruth's arm. Mary responded in kind by pointing out that a bit of Tao Jianguo's underwear was visible above his belt line, and then repeatedly grabbing at his crotch area in an ostensible attempt to fix it. Tao Jianguo successfully evaded her grabbing, and at a later point he chased her across the compound yard as she ran away shrieking and laughing.

As this physical play continued the four also engaged in rapid-fire jovial repartee in Shortcut English about who was going to be paired up with whom. Mary offered to help Tao Jianguo find a local madame, but Tao Jianguo demurred saying that he already had a wife in China, and instead insisted that David liked Mary and wanted to marry her. To make his point clearer, Tao Jianguo took out his chalk again and wrote on the shaft entrance gate in Chinese characters: "大卫想娶玛丽" (*dawei xiang qu mali*/David would like to make Mary his wife) and "做爱" (*zuo ai*/make love). Underneath this he wrote the English words "wife," "to do," and, in huge capital letters, "SEX." David, Mary, and Ruth asked me about the Chinese characters Tao Jianguo had written on the gate, and when I told them what the characters meant they became extremely interested. David took some of the chalk and attempted to copy the characters (大卫) used by Tao Jianguo to render David's name in Chinese. Mary expressed more interest in the characters for "make love" and copied "做爱" (*zuo ai*). After this she asked me to teach her how to write "I love you" and "I need you" in Chinese characters, so I wrote the corresponding phrases "我爱你" (*wo ai ni*) and "我需要你" (*wo xuyao ni*) in Chinese characters on the gate. Picking up the chalk for herself, Mary then began to eagerly copy the characters I had written. Eventually two of the other Chinese miners, Zhou Lei and Xiong Jie, came to join us. David walked over to Zhou Lei with a smile and grabbed Zhou Lei's wide-brimmed straw hat away from him. Zhou Lei did not protest,

but he did appear to be vaguely annoyed. When I looked at David quizzically, he explained to me that a few days earlier Zhou Lei had stolen his hat in a similar manner, so in David's view stealing Zhou Lei's hat in return was all part of a long-running joke between Zhou Lei and himself. David also said that Zhou Lei spoke the best ciTonga[15] of all the Chinese miners and understood the most about Zambian culture. David explained this in light of the semi-open secret that Zhou Lei had been romantically involved for six years now with an older, widowed Zambian housekeeper at Summers, Trina. David confided that Zhou Lei had even paid for the construction of a house for Trina, and now provided for her four children from her previous marriage, paying for their school fees, etc. At this point in the conversation the lunch hour was drawing to a close, and as we all had work responsibilities that afternoon, we said our goodbyes and then went our respective ways.

This encounter between Mary, David, Ruth, Tao Jianguo, Zhou Lei, and Xiong Jie is an example of the quotidian interactions that took place between Zambians and Chinese at Summers every day as they lived and worked together. Played out in a context of significant racialized and gendered power disparities between the different participants, on the face of it this kind of play might seem like an example of more egalitarian, even democratic, relationality and socializing. But these kinds of interactions and their participants' views of them also represented attempts to contest and subvert structures of authority and power at the mine.

**Affect and Gendered Labor**

While discussions of contemporary Chinese involvement in Africa have focused on extraction (of natural resources) and exploitation (of waged, usually male, labor) as primary analytics, much less attention has been paid to how gendered subjectivities and relations between men and are also crucial determinants, as well as effects, of the profitability of these transnational

[15] The predominant location spoken in southern Zambia, where Summers Mine is located.

capitalist ventures. In this chapter I foreground the experiences and subjectivities of variously gendered actors as they contribute to the extractive projects that currently fuel instantiations of what Chinese officials and state-owned enterprise (SOE) managers are fond of referring to as 南南合作 /*nannan hezuo* or 合作共赢/*hezuo gongying*: "South-South" or "win-win" cooperation and development. The racialized, gendered, sexed, and classed hierarchies that result generate different kinds of emotional and physical precarities for both women and men in these ventures, though the distribution of these precarities is extremely unequal and both precarity as well as extraction fall more heavily on some individuals than others. In the process, new forms of "South-South" capitalist extractive patriarchy are invented, maintained, reinforced, and contested.

To a significant degree, these gendered and patriarchal forms draw upon older cultural understandings and moral economies that existed in both China and Zambia (and Africa more generally) before the advent in the last two decades of widespread Chinese migration and development. As such, the intimate relations between Chinese and Zambians in these contexts resemble in many ways a range of related practices throughout Africa and China (cf. Hunter 2010; Uretsky 2016; Xiao 2011). But because Chinese and Zambian participants do not necessarily share a common understanding of such scripts, such relationships are negotiated, and contested, to a greater degree than they are in more culturally homogenous contexts. Moreover, dyadic relations between individual Zambian women and Chinese men are contextualized by Zambians as part of a wider understanding of the recently, and rapidly expanding, Chinese presence in their country. As part of wider processes of racialization that are also related to, for example, linguistic competencies and productions, Chinese migrants through these processes are being progressively differentiated in everyday Zambian discourse from a broader category of *bamakuwa*/whites to a denigrated subcategory of whiteness referred to as *ma chainizi* (see Chapter 2). Cultural and gendered expectations of polygyny must also be worked out between Chinese men and women in both

Zambia and China, as multiple participants in these transnational family units are generally aware of each other and must negotiate how these de facto polygynous relations will play in practice.

Though often touted by Chinese officialdom as examples of "win-win" cooperation and development, Chinese-operated mining projects in southern Zambia, such as at the Summers and Hhaala coal mines described here, exacerbate these inequalities by replicating patriarchal forms of mine structure and employment that systematically exclude women from almost all sources of formal employment and regular cash income. Both Summers and Hhaala coal mines are located in the lower Gwembe Valley, a rural and relatively underdeveloped region of southern Zambia. In both Zambian communities in which these mines are located, the mines or related workplaces (such as the small Hhaala hospital built by the mine to serve the miners) are the only formal employers of any significant size. Apart from employment in the mines, local Zambian residents rely on subsistence agriculture to sustain themselves, though this is an increasingly impossible task due to the long-terms impacts of climate-induced drought and overcrowding caused by the flooding of the Gwembe Valley and massive population displacements associated with construction of the nearby Kariba dam (Colson 1971; 2006). As has long been the case in southern Africa (Moodie 1994; Donham 2011), mining at Summers and Hhaala mines continues to be an overwhelmingly male affair, with the vast majority of jobs reserved exclusively for men. This is true not only of hard physical, manual labor positions but also of almost all supervisory, managerial, and administrative positions as well[16]. Chinese companies at Summers and at Hhaala have wholeheartedly adopted these patriarchal employment structures, which are themselves not that different from employment

[16] There are a few small exceptions. The mine's human resources departments are somewhat more open to the hiring of college-educated Zambian women. A few other positions which used to be coded as masculine and exclusively performed by men, such as the laundering of miners' clothes (James Ferguson, personal communication), are now generally performed by women. Other positions which were also exclusively performed by men historically, such as security guard positions at the mine entrance boom gates, are in a period of transition with more women being hired. On the whole, however, all of these positions even partially open to women represent a tiny fraction of the total employment opportunities offered by the mines.

norms in many industries in China. As the combined effects of underdevelopment and underinvestment, climate change, drought, rising population, and overcrowding due to the long-term effects of population displacement continue to make alternative forms of economic subsistence precarious or even impossible in Gwembe Valleys communities impossible, however, women's systematic exclusion from most employment opportunities at the mines, the only large employers in the region, foreclose possibilities of egalitarian relationships between Zambian women and Chinese (or Zambian men) even while the intimate and affective implications of these relationships continue to flourish.

Existing scholarship on such intimate relations under conditions of significant power disparities in both Africa and in China has tended to focus on either one or the other of two primary analytical approaches. The first approach has tended to emphasize the structural power relations, thus highlighting the ways that such relationships can be characterized by exploitation or domination of (at least some of) their participants. The other main tack has been to emphasize the subjectivities and agency of participants in these relationships, showing how even under conditions of unequal power relations even less powerful participants can shape the terms of the relationship. In this chapter, by contrast, I demonstrate how multiple forms of inequality intersect to produce subjectivities and (relational) abilities that are simultaneously both agent-ful and constrained. In other words, I show how unequally situated participants do shape the terms of the intimate relationships they engage in and do contest relations of inequality, but also the way that structural disparities make these attempts partial, uneven, and only sometimes successful.

While feminist scholars (e.g. Benston 1989; Vogel 2000) long ago demonstrated the fundamental necessity of (usually women's) reproductive labor to processes of capital accumulation, more recent work has developed increasingly nuanced analysis of how these often intimate and familial labors operate within labor migration contexts specifically. Ong (1999) for

example, has criticized the "romance" of diasporic Chinese family capitalism as papering over severe degrees of exploitation *within* these families. Chu (2010) has emphasized the temporal dislocations and sense of immobilization experienced by family members left behind in these transnational ventures, while Kwon (2015) has suggested that waiting for a spouse's return is in itself an act of affective labor fundamental to the financial success of the migratory endeavor. Similarly, with respect to host societies, Stoler (2002) has described how colonial capitalist enterprises encouraged the speedy selection of a local housekeeper/sexual partner to maintain the productive powers of European men arriving in the colonies, while Hochschild (2003) has similarly emphasized that love and care have become resources to be extracted from third world societies as much as gold, ivory, or rubber.

By investigating the intimate linkages between familial relations and capital accumulation in contemporary Chinese capitalistic processes in Zambia, this chapter builds on this literature in two important ways. First, while women's experiences as gendered subjects in processes of international migration have received considerable attention, men's own gendered experiences have often remained unmarked, as they have been treated as rational enterprising subjects instrumentally pursuing economic advancement for themselves and their families. In this chapter, by contrast, I pay close attention to the masculine gendered sentiments and culturally meaningful desires that incite men at my fieldsites to pursue specific kinds of capitalist and familial projects and not others. In a contrasting but complementary vein, I depart from classic accounts of polygamous "dual family" transnational family networks in the Chinese diaspora (e.g. Chen and Lasker 1978) by decentering men as pivotal subjects and instead also exploring the affective and material ways that women in these transnational family networks relate *to each other*.

**Power and Constrained Agency**

Sitting together in the cramped space of her tiny one-room home, my Zambian friend Prisca swiped across the screen of her phone, showing me photos of her boyfriend's wife and nine-year-old daughter back in China. Prisca's boyfriend, the father of the child now growing in her womb, had until recently been one of the many Chinese expatriates employed at the coal mine nearby. But now Prisca's boyfriend had been reassigned by the Chinese SOE he was employed by back to China, and Prisca had not seen him since he left several months ago. I asked Prisca how other Zambians felt about her having dated a Chinese man. "At first, my mother beat me, because she didn't like me dating a Chinese. But she accepted it once he started sponsoring me." Prisca continued, "now, though, no Zambian man will marry me. They think that if they have sex with me, they will catch the Chinese disease." Part STD, part Chinese witchcraft, the most horrifying symptom of the Chinese disease is the tiny fish that emerge from one's urine. Despite it all, I asked Prisca if she still loved her boyfriend, now returned to China. "Yes," she said, "we talk on the phone every day. I tell him I love him and miss him, but I don't think he will ever come back."

Mercy is a young mother, in her early 20s. Mercy's young daughter, Haya, is named after her father, whom Mercy refers to affectionately as Father Haya[17]. Baby Haya is now three years old, and Father Haya has not been in Zambia since the week that Haya was born. He was with Mercy at the hospital when she gave birth but was almost immediately reassigned by his company after the baby was born. When he departed from Zambia, he left a large lump sum of money--about 20,000 kwacha, or $2,000 US dollars—to Mercy to help raise their new daughter. Mercy used this money to construct a small two room house with a corrugated iron roof to raise her daughter Haya in but has only had intermittent employment since Haya was born.

[17] Teknonymic naming practices—referring to a parent through the name of the child—as Mercy does with Father Haya is common among Tonga-speakers in southern Zambia.

Mercy and Father Haya first met when she was in Grade 11. As Mercy describes their first meeting, Father Haya saw her passing on the road and came to speak with her, chatting and striking up an early friendship. Father Haya told Mercy that he was already married and had a wife and two daughters back in China, his two daughters being only a few years younger than Mercy herself. At first, as Mercy describes it, her relationship with Father Haya was more like a friendship and did not initially include an explicit physical element. After several weeks Father Haya came to visit Mercy where she stayed at her mother's home, and it was at this time that he formally proposed to Mercy's mother to "sponsor" Mercy through the end of her school studies. As part of the arrangement, Father Haya took over the paying of Mercy's school fees as well as paying her 300 kwacha (about $30 USD) and her mother 200 kwacha (20 $USD) per month. Still wanting to finish school before the possibility of having a child, Mercy did not have sex for the first time with Father Haya for another six months.

With the assistance of Father Haya's sponsorship, Mercy finished her classes for the 11th and 12th grade, though by the time I met her several years later she still had not accumulated the money to pay for the completion exams that would allow her to graduate with a secondary school certificate. For the first year after the birth of their daughter and Father Haya's reassignment by his company back to mainland China, a fellow Chinese friend of his who also worked at the mine would come periodically to give her money on Father Haya's behalf. During this time Mercy would also speak with Father Haya every few weeks over the phone. Slowly, however, the payments became less frequent and eventually Father Haya stopped calling altogether. After Mercy's phone broke and she lost the number for Father Haya's friend at the mine, she found that she was unable to reach Father Haya at all anymore. For a while, Mercy supported herself by selling ice blocks along the road. She would sell these blocks for 50 ngwee (about 5 US cents) each, but because of little demand on most days would only make around 4-5 kwacha (40-50 US cents) over the course

of an entire day. Later she traveled to Lusaka to live with her uncle and to work as a housekeeper. But things were still difficult enough there that she almost gave up Haya to one of the orphanages in Lusaka, feeling that she did not have enough resources to care for her young daughter. Eventually Mercy returned to Hhaala to live in the small house she had constructed near her mother's equally modest residence, continuing to make ends meet by doing a number of part-time jobs such as working as a security guard at the mine.

Despite it all Mercy, who was a devout member of a Pentecostal congregation in Hhaala township, felt keenly aware that many in the community were bitterly jealous of her and her daughter, and as a result sent many attacks of witchcraft at her. Mercy described how many of her neighbors saw her as overly proud since she had a "Chinese-baby" (a view that I did, on occasion, hear some other members of community express about Mercy when she was not present) and that their envy of her baby and the sponsorship she had received from Father Haya had turned to hate. Since the object of this jealousy was baby Haya, Mercy was also all too aware that Haya would be the first target of attacks against her, and so was fiercely protective of her daughter's health.

For example, Mercy described a dream in which she was outside in the yard of her and her mother's extended living compound. People from the community, mostly elderly women but others also, had dug a deep pit in the center of the compound yard. The had brought cows down to the bottom of the pit, and even a giraffe. The pit was just as deep as the giraffe was tall, so that the giraffe's head rested upon the lip of the pit edge at the top. At last, they brought Mercy's daughter Haya down to the bottom of the pit, and began to work a ritual upon her, "tying" (that is to say, foreclosing or constraining) her destiny.

Mercy gave a testimony regarding this witchcraft attack at her local church. Her pastor advised her to keep her head down and keep secret from her attackers, whom she had recognized as members of the community, that she knew they were undertaking this witchcraft against her. In

consultation with her pastor, Mercy deduced that these witchcraft attacks were the reason that Father Haya had stopped sending her money to support their daughter, and that her attackers had diverted the money she should and would have received from Father Haya to instead support "their own businesses." Summing up her troubles with her neighbors, Mercy noted that it was all about jealousy. Her neighbors were jealous not only of her "Chinese baby" but the Chinese man she once had, since a "Chinese man can give everything," including sponsorship to build a house.

Fortunately for Mercy, the special prayers and hymns that her pastor at the Pentecostal church taught her helped ward off these witchcraft attacks. Though Father Haya did not start sending her money again, Baby Haya at least remained healthy, and Mercy felt that her own destiny had been reopened to her.

Despite their differences, the experiences of both Prisca and Mercy suggest that there is a certain cultural (as well as institutional/bureaucratic) script when it comes to romantic and intimate encounters between male Chinese migrants and Zambian women in southern Zambia. One is a semi-formalized system of "sponsorship" which is not only a relation between individuals but also between wider kin networks: a Chinese man who takes up a relationship with a Zambian woman is expected to financially sponsor not only his partner but also older female kin as well, most especially his partner's mother. Considered in light of marital bride price payments that are such an important part of various ethnic cultures in southern Zambia as well as historically in China, this established cultural script looks less (blatantly) transactional than it does conjugal. As in Mercy's case, this cultural script also includes an explicit period of courtship and wooing, a period in which intimate physical contact is proscribed. Though Mercy did not describe herself explicitly as a second wife of Father Haya, she nevertheless went to great lengths to emphasize the way that her relationship was formalized and blessed by her senior female kin, granting her relationship legitimacy as well as an expectation of stability and durability.

But if in their beginnings such relationships are well agreed-upon by their Zambian and Chinese participants, in their endings it is clear that the expected cultural scripts diverge quite drastically, and it is here that the structural power hierarchies immanent in these relationships are most bitterly commented upon by Zambian, and even some Chinese, observers. Wishing to avoid durable (kinship) entanglements between their staff and local community members, Chinese companies such as at Hhaala mine generally transfer employees back to China if and when such an employee fathers a child in Zambia. By doing so, these companies facilitate and perpetuate a model of extraction and exploitation of women's affects and reproductive labor, not to mention the life chances of their employees' children, which mirrors the processes of material extraction and exploitation of (waged) labor taking place at the mine. Unlike at the beginning of such relationships, which are marked by well-agreed upon rituals of courtship practices and sponsorship, the departure of male Chinese employees after they have fathered a baby is a dramatic violation of the expectations of both Zambian partners and their wider kin networks. This violation is, of course, only to an extent abetted by the institutional policies of the Chinese companies at these mines. It is also centrally perpetrated by Chinese fathers themselves, who violate their partner's expectations by gradually ceasing to send financial assistance or even remaining in phone contact after a certain length of time. While conducting research at these mines I only encountered one case of a relationship between a Chinese migrant and a Zambian woman that did not end in this way: namely the relationship between Trina and Zhou Lei, described at the beginning of this chapter. In this long-standing relationship Trina, who was about 15 years older than Prisca and Mercy, already had four children from a previous marriage to a Zambian man, and despite having been involved with Zhou Lei for about six years had never borne a child with him.

There is a continuing open question in the anthropological literature about how to portray relationships such as those of Prisca and Mercy with their Chinese partners, with similar

relationships elsewhere in African being described as the "sugar daddy" phenomenon, "transactional sex," or, more broadly, as part of the "sexual economy." One line of thinking (e.g. Chapman 2004; Nyamnjoh 2005) has been to focus on an economistic analysis of these relationships, which, given the transfer of money involved, has led scholars to consider these relationships as involving a commodification of women's bodies or even a commodification of intimacy itself (cf. Zelizer 2009). Other scholars (e.g. Arnfred 2004, 2011; Groes-Green 2013; Mustafa 2006; Tamale 2006, 2011) have, employing analytics of African and postcolonial feminism, taken a different tack. These scholars have been more likely to emphasize women's agency and indeed powers in the realms of intimate and sexual relationships, showing how women are able to use these powers to (at least partially) set the terms of relationships they may be in with older or wealthier partners. Constable (2009), by contrast, argues that there are risks and benefits associated with both of these analytic approaches. She argues that with regards to the commodification of intimate affects, "the agent-victim binary has proven to be a dead end" (57) and that "this notion [of the commodification of intimacy] both offers a way to illuminate power relations inherent in a variety of intimate relations but also can overdetermine the political-economic frame, thus masking the multiplicity of power and the potentially liberating and transformative aspects of intimate subjectivities" (59). Constable also notes the importance of moving beyond overly simplistic binaries of for, example, intimate versus impersonal, material versus emotional, or love versus money.

The one-way transfer of financial resources from (male) Chinese partner to (female) Zambian partner in the relationships Prisca, Mercy, Trina, and women like them could of course be seen as an example of transactional intimacy (or even, more crudely, as transactional sex) or as the commodification of intimacy. But, as I have already noted, given long histories of cultural scripts of bride wealth payments in both Zambia and China, these one-way transfers of wealth could also be

seen as fundamentally conjugal in nature, or at least as being conjugal-adjacent in a way that suggests relationships more of kinship than of crude transnationalism. Nor, besides being racialized differently, were Chinese men particularly exceptional in the way that they approached these relationships. As in the cases of Dar es Salaam described by Lewinson (2006) or Dakar described by Nyamnjoh (2005), in Zambia it is very common for men with sufficient financial resources to support one or more girlfriends in addition to their (first) wife.

What considerations of the cultural and social legibility of the relationships between older Chinese men and younger Zambian women leave aside, of course, is an analysis of the agency and power of women in these relationships, especially since many of them end with the Zambian partner left to care for a shared child by herself in what are already very precarious economic circumstances. Existing scholarship that has focused on women's active participation in similar such intimate relationships in Africa and elsewhere have tended to focus either on how women initiate the relationships and set their terms in the opening stages (e.g. Groes-Green 2013; Johnson-Hanks 2007) or how the relationships develop as they become a stable dyad that is at least minimally-acceptable to both partners (Cole 2014; compare Faier 2009 for the case of Filipina wives in Japan).

Groes-Green (2013), for example, masterfully demonstrates women's power in shaping the terms on which relationships with older, wealthier (primarily foreign) men are initiated and maintained, leading him to emphasize women's agency and control in the context of transactional relationships. This is a laudable corrective to too-frequent depictions of women as passive victims. However, a full consideration of women's agency must also take into account how such relationships end. It is in its discussion of this other side of the temporal coin that Goes-Green's otherwise incisive account is all too brief, though he does note that some foreign "sponsors" (an emic term shared by women in Zambia) "told stories about women who [sic] they believed became

pregnant on purpose" and who afterwards "would blackmail [the foreign sponsor] by threatening...that they would keep the child so they could make a claim for child support." Groes-Green further notes that in at least some of these cases (one wonders how many) the foreign sponsor "refused to support the child." Surprisingly, given that otherwise almost all of all his ethnographic material in this article comes from discussions with women *curtidoras* about how they work to "put men in a bottle," Groes-Green does not provide in this piece a contrasting perspective from women themselves about how they feel about relationships in which a woman becomes pregnant and their foreign sponsor refuses to support the child. This lacuna in the context of an article that otherwise strongly emphasizes women's agency and power over older foreign men they form relationships with, especially in these relationships' opening stages, risks inadvertently reaffirming the foreign sponsors' own claims of lack of agency, and therefore moral obligation, when their *curtidora* partners "become pregnant on purpose."

This lacuna is more widely shared in the existing literature which, as I have noted, tends to focus either on relationships at their beginnings or on relationships that are at least minimally stable and durable over time. But by looking at relationships that prove not to be durable over time (as the vast majority of relationships between Zambian women and Chinese men in southern Zambia are not) and at their endings rather than their beginnings a rather different picture of women's agency emerges. This vantage point from the end of such relationships draws from my own ethnographic engagement with women who were caring for children fathered by Chinese men after their relationships with these men had already ended. Partially this is a result of ethnographic access: Chinese men at mines in southern Zambia are officially prohibited by their companies from engaging in intimate relationships with local Zambians, and among Zambians seeking a Chinese partner is not highly socially-legitimated. For this reason, I found both sets of partners in these kinds of relationships to be generally quite wary of speaking with me while such relationships were

being formed or were ongoing. After such relationships had ended and the Chinese partner had left the country, however, the remaining Zambian partners were generally very open to discussing the details of their (former) relationships. My focus on endings is also driven by my analytic engagement with the question of how women themselves might feel very differently about their agency after such a relationship has ended rather than when it begins.

Mercy, for example, became pregnant and made a claim for child support from Father Haya, but in her telling of events (which I privilege here because by the time I met Mercy Father Haya had already permanently departed Zambia and was no longer replying to Mercy's phone calls), she certainly did not become pregnant "on purpose." Rather Mercy became pregnant because Father Haya wished to father a child with her and because, as her sponsor, Mercy felt that she should accommodate his wishes. She did not describe this fact rancorously. For her, it was natural that as long as he was sponsoring her Father Haya should have a say in what form their relationship should take, including whether their relationship should include a shared child or not. What Mercy felt rancorous about, instead, was precisely how the relationship ended: that when Father Haya eventually returned to China to be with his (legal) wife and two older daughters there, that he should cease to contact or to provide sponsorship for either Mercy herself or for Baby Haya.

Though these relationships often unravel in ways that are ultimately extractive, exploitative, and even deceitful, Zambian women who participate in them are of course not merely passive victims in their creation, instead playing an active role in fashioning such relationships from the outset. But their agency is, nonetheless, constrained (Farmer 1996) by the stark inequalities of power, wealth, and opportunity between themselves and their partners. Whether it is a need for sufficient money to finish school, for example, or to have stable housing or an opportunity of starting a business (in rural Zambia, this is one of the few ways that people are able to make money); in each case, the sponsorship that a Chinese partner provided, indeed the fact that a

Chinese man "can sponsor everything," was something that addressed a real glaring need in these women's lives.

Thus, despite the positive spins that are sometimes put on conceptions of "South-South capitalism" and related terms promoted by the Chinese government, such as "win-win development," it is clear that gendered and classed hierarchies between even working-class Chinese men and rural Zambian women are anything but equal or egalitarian. Zambian women and their female kin (especially mothers) are able to exercise a considerable amount of agency in shaping the terms of these relationships are their beginnings, including for example obtaining from a Chinese partner financial sponsorship to finish secondary school, build a house, or start a business. But in the way that these relationships end, often with a shared child which the father does not provide continuing support (or sponsorship) for, the extractive and exploitative aspect of these relationships becomes more apparent.

Zambians contest these relations of intimate (and physical) extraction and exploitation in different ways. One prominent way is through various forms of negative racialization of Chinese actors. Mary, for example, derogatorily mocked the adult masculinity of her Chinese employers by describing them as "like childrens" with respect to their inability to stop touching her or Ruth, even when she or Ruth had "quarreled" with these men to demonstrate to them that they did not want to be touched in this way. Exasperated, she also at times sought to turn the tables on these men, grabbing at their crotches when they did not wish to be touched in this way.

For their part Zambian men also articulate highly racializing discourses that implicitly condemn intimate relationships between Chinese men and Zambian women. The "Chinese disease," described by Prisca earlier in this chapter, is a disease that is most frequently discussed and commented upon by Zambian men.

**Recuperation of Class-Coded Masculinity Through the Affects of Women**

Arriving at the Huangcheng train station in eastern Hubei in the early evening, I filed out of the train station in a wide river of other disembarking passengers, dutifully showing the security attendant my ticket stub as I exited the train station gates. It was already dark and, emerging into the cold mid-February Hubei air in the small square in front of the station, I could see my breath. I wandered around for several minutes, heavy pack on my back, before I found Kong Wei. As soon as he caught sight of me Kong Wei began calling "Luyang! Luyang! [my Chinese name]" as he came up to me with a very wide grin on his face and clapped both of his hands on my shoulders. A woman, whom I had not met before, followed him through the cold night air, and Kong Wei, beaming, introduced her to me as his wife.

Kong Wei and I had met several years previously at the large Hhaala coal mine, in southern Zambia, while he was on assignment there with a Shandong-based state-owned enterprise (SOE) that was constructing a new geothermal power station for the mine. Kong Wei had lived a bachelor's life then, staying in a dormitory with six other of the senior administrators of the project, among large barracks of about 500 Chinese expatriates who were part of the construction project. At the time, Kong Wei had not taken up an intimate relationship with a local Zambian woman in the area, though he knew of many other employees of his company that did.

After welcoming me at the train station with his wife, Kong Wei ushered me to a vehicle, an old beat-up pickup truck, and the three of us drove to a small hot pot restaurant in Huangcheng town. Fortunately, though it had already grown late, the restaurant was still open. After ordering a prodigious amount of ingredients off of the menu to add to our hot pot, Kong Wei offered me a cigarette, which I declined, and we order a round of cold lager beers. Kong Wei and I chatted about our lives when we lived together in Zambia, and his wife, named Zhang Xiulan, asked us excitedly about what conditions had been like when we were there. Kong Wei described the kindness and

generosity that he had found among many Zambians, especially poor ones, who in an expression of hospitality would offer him beef if he happened to visit one of their homes, even if in their regular lives all they had to eat was tomatoes and onions. Xiulan was astonished by this, asking if it was really the case that people in Zambia were so poor that it was difficult for them to acquire beef. Kong Wei assured her that it was.

Since I had not seen Kong Wei for a few years, and wanting to know more about his family life with Xiulan, I asked if their children whom he had told me so much about when we lived together in Zambia were staying here in Huangcheng, Hubei Province, or were they at home several provinces away in Shandong Province. I also asked if Xiulan stayed all the time with Kong Wei at this remote work site in Huangcheng, or if she also spent some of her time with the kids in Shandong. And if they were in Shandong, who was caring for the kids right now while Kong Wei and Xiulan were in Huangcheng?

A palpable awkwardness entered the conversation after I broached this subject, though it was difficult for me to identify exactly what had caused it. In response to my questions about Shandong, Xiulan explained that her home was actually in Liaoning Province. I was not quite clear about her meaning at this point, since in Mandarin referring to one's "home" is equally likely to refer to one's (patrilineal) ancestral birthplace as it is to the place one usually lives in the present. As a result, I was not clear if she meant that she originally hailed from Liaoning Province, or if her home was there now (and not Shandong province, where Kong Wei assured me, the kids were located). Before I had a chance to clarify, however, Kong Wei quickly changed the topic of conversation back to our reminiscing of Zambia. Feeling that I had provoked some awkwardness in the conversation but not understanding how, I did not bring up the topic of their children or home in Shandong Province again that evening. Soon the apparent awkwardness passed and the three of us were chatting excitedly and laughing again, filling ourselves up on the large amount of hot pot food

and ordering another round of lager beers. After we had finished late that evening, Kong Wei and Xiulan drove me to a small hotel where Kong Wei had booked a room for me to stay while visiting Huangcheng.

The next morning Kong Wei, this time by himself, picked me up at 8 AM from my hotel room and drove me to a 牛肉面 *niuroumian*/beef noodle soup shop where we had a hearty breakfast, and then to a local barber where we both got our haircut. Both noodle restaurant and barber were simple businesses with no central heating despite the February cold. At the barber as we got our haircut the staff pulled up charcoal braziers near us and layered blankets on our shoulders to keep us warm. Later, Kong Wei took me to his work desk, in the bullpen of a cavernous, prefabricated building at the construction site of another power plant, the prefab building reminding me almost exactly of the one that had been erected for the Chinese staff at Hhaala mine in Zambia. As Kong Wei moved between his different work tasks for the day we chatted together during his breaks, continuing some of our conversations from the previous evening. It was at this point that Kong Wei volunteered to me, with a somewhat bashful seeming look on his face, that Xiulan, the woman we had eaten hot pot with the evening before was his wife but also not his wife. His legally recognized wife, he explained to me, was in Shandong Province with his two children. Xiulan was not strictly his wife but rather his 湖北老婆/*hubeilaopo* or "Hubei wife." I asked, did this mean she was like his 女朋友/*nvpengyou*, his girlfriend? Kong Wei replied that yes, she was like his girlfriend, but also much more than that. She was his 红颜知己/*hongyanzhiji*. *Hongyanzhiji* (lit. "red confidante") is a gendered term which means something akin to a soulmate, trusted confidante, or bosom friend in English, specifically describing a woman who plays this role in a man's life. Possibly but not necessarily referring to a romantic partner and connoting something very different than physical intimacy, the term *hongyanzhiji* suggests a

woman whom a man feels close enough to that he can trust her implicitly, and whom he can reveal his inner feelings and secrets to. The equivalent term that a woman might use for a trusted male intimate is 蓝颜知己/*lanyanzhiji* (lit. "blue confidant," substituting the symbolism of the color blue for red). Kong Wei explained that Xiulan, his *hongyanzhiji*, was also married and had one child: both her husband and child were in Liaoning Province. Kong Wei explained to me that he and Xiulan both "really understood each other" and that just as he would never ask her to divorce her husband, she would never ask him to divorce his wife. Kong Wei suggested, however, that his emotional bond with Xiulan here in Huangcheng was much more powerful, at least for now, than the one he shared with his wife in Shandong.

In their discussions of 包二奶/*bao ernai* and 小老婆/*xiao laopo* (having a "second" or "minor" wife) practices in China, Xiao (2011) and Uretsky (2016) both emphasize how these practices are, for men, central to reaffirming and maintaining different kinds of class-coded masculinity. On the one hand, for elite men, having a beautiful, younger second wife can be a central aspect of performing eliteness to other men. Thus, a great part of the expected social role of second wives partnered with these kinds of elite men is to accompany them to public events in order to reaffirm her partner's wealth in status in being able to have such a second wife. For working class men such as my friend Kong Wei and his partner Xiulan, however, the relationship between a husband and his second wife is usually more private and more domestic. In contemporary Chinese society in which masculinity and manhood is highly bound up with the ability to make money, working class men's precarious position within this system of cultural value is often something that can be soothed by the affective labors of women who, unlike many first wives, are from an even less economically advantaged background (as is the case with working class Hong Kong men maintaining second wife relationships with migrant women from the interior Chinese provinces, for example). Working-class men unable to earn and provide an amount of

money that would meet class expectations might face a great deal of criticism at home with a first family and first wife, but by being able to provide for and support a second wife (normally from a lower-class background) are able to reconstruct a sense of legitimated and validated masculinity. In this way, both Xiao and Uretsky in different ways argue for the importance of understanding gender as not only or even primarily individual but rather as relational and as deeply imbricated with performances and recognition of class status.

Kong Wei's relationship with Xiulan, whom he variously described at times as his *hubei laopo* "Hubei wife" or his *hongyanzhiji* "red confidante" has provocative parallels, as well as discontinuities, with the kinds of relationships that Mercy, Prisca, and Trina had in Zambia with their Chinese partners. As noted, it also relates to a range of anthropological literature in both China and in Africa on a relationships that tend to share certain kinds of structural characteristics, such as Xiao Suowei's (2011) work on *bao ernai* "keeping a second wife" and Uretsky's (2016) description of *xiao laopo* "minor wives" in China, as well as Lewinson's (2006) analysis of "little houses" in urban Tanzania. These kinds of relationships tend to fall somewhat awkwardly into analytic and ethnographic gray areas, as "matter out of place" (Douglas 2005). On the one hand they can be understood both etically and oftentimes emically as what Lewinson terms informal or de facto polygyny. As noted earlier in the chapter in the case of Mercy with Father Haya, for example, such relationships often partake of some of the forms of formal, socially-legitimated marriage. This might include, for example, transfers of financial resources that are analogous to bridge price payments, or explicit recognition and validation from wider kin (Lewinson 2006) or social and professional (Xiao 2011) networks. On the other hand, a common feature of such relationships is that they lack formal recognition and legitimation from the state, sharply separating the legalistic basis of these relationships from state-sanctioned marriage. As Xiao points out, even within a given social context there might not be clear consensus about the state of de facto polygyny: in her study,

while members of the wider social setting might refer to the relationships she analyzes as *bao ernai* "keeping a second wife," Xiao notes that participants in these relationships themselves are less likely to use such polygynous language, instead using terms such as 女朋友/*nvpengyou* "girlfriend," 情人/*qingren* "lover," or (for male participants referring to their partner) just as 女人/*nvren* "my woman" (compare Kong Wei's alternation between the term *hubei laopo* "Hubei wife" and *hongyanzhiji* "red confidante").

At the other end of the analytic spectrum, given the one-way flow of material and financial resources that also characterize these relationships, they are also sometimes fit under the rubrics such as the purchase of intimacy (Zelizer 2009) or, especially when they end up being of shorter duration, as "transactional sex" (Verheijen 2011). These two approaches each suggest somewhat different perspective on the positions of women in these particular classes of implicitly heteronormative relationships. These divergent perspectives can also take on moral(izing) valences as well. Analytic approaches leaning into a marriage perspective tend to emphasize women's agency and strategy for developing such relationships, and how they can fit into women's continuing attempts at self and life-fashioning over a life course (cf. Johnson-Hanks 2007), particularly within a wider kin network (Groes-Green 2013). On the other hand, the purchase of intimacy or "transactional sex" models (cf. also Hochschild 2004) tend by necessity to treat women, their affects, and/or their bodies as objectified commodities: precisely something that can be purchased or transacted in exchange for money, thus relating to a wider literature (e.g. Hardt 1999) on affective labor under capitalism.

By closely attending to not only how such relationships begin and are maintained, but also how they end as in the cases of Mercy and Prisca, we can see that there are dangers in adopting either pole on this spectrum of analytic perspectives to the exclusion of the other. Though young and relatively economically marginalized, neither Mercy nor Prisca were at all passive victims in

the formation of their relationships with their older male Chinese partners, even if these relationships did not end on precisely the terms that Mercy or Prisca might have wished. As Mercy related, she was extremely pleased with the "sponsorship" she had received from Father Haya and this sponsorship had been substantial and generous enough to her and her mother to make them widely envied within the wider Hhaala community. Through this sponsorship, Mercy had been able to acquire educational and cultural capital (completing her grade 12 and commanding a flawless proficiency in English) that considerably outstripped the average in her community. This cultural and educational capital was enough that Mercy was able to, when times were good, find part-time temporary work as a security guard at the nearby Hhaala mine, which at least offered a regular paycheck. Indeed, Mercy's sponsorship from Father Haya caused her to recognize that there was serious danger of highly destructive witchcraft being directed at her or her young daughter from their neighbors out of jealous spite, in a way that might "tie up" their destiny. Indeed, their destinies already had been tied up to the extent that Father Haya had stopped contacting Mercy and her sponsorship for her and Baby Haya had ceased, despite the continuing substantial costs of feeding, clothing, and, especially, educating their daughter (in rural Zambia, where many families produce their own food and purchase discarded second-hand clothing imported from the global North, the non-negotiable fixed cost of children's school fees is one of the hardest expenses to meet).

Despite the education and cultural capital that Mercy had been able to attain as the result of her sponsorship, however, when Father Haya departed Zambia at his company's behest just as their daughter was born and his sponsorship for his newly enlarged Zambian family first slowed to a trickle and then ceased entirely, it left Mercy herself in quite precarious economic circumstances. In addition to her contact with Father Haya, in this initial period after Baby Haya was born Mercy was also in contact with Father Haya's wife and two older daughters (themselves only a few years younger than Mercy) in China. Through these other female kin of the (what Lewinson would term

de facto) polygynous family unit Mercy received some care packages full of clothes, diapers, bottles, and other items necessary for raising a baby that Mercy would have been hard-pressed to be able to afford herself in Zambia. But when this support stopped Mercy was in difficult enough economic circumstances that she considered leaving Baby Haya, whom she otherwise doted on almost constantly, at an orphanage in Lusaka which she felt might have the resources to care for her baby daughter better. Given the quite limited resources and overcrowded conditions of many orphanages in Zambia, this was not an easy decision for her to even contemplate, even though in the end she decided against it and chose to keep caring for her daughter. Prisca, a few years older than Mercy, was generally in even more precarious economic circumstances, especially as she had never finished secondary school, though she was able at times to rent out one of the rooms of the house she had built with her Chinese partner's sponsorship, which provided her some amount of income.

In this way, the wider structural inequalities that characterize the Zambian economy and its place in global economic systems comes to rest in a particularly hard way on women such as Mercy and Prisca. In this dynamic, even low-ranked Chinese workers, who come from working-class backgrounds in China (which might be seen as a semi-periphery and increasingly core nation in Wallerstein's [2004] terms) nevertheless possess financial security and resources far outstripping that of most residents in the Zambian communities in which they come to work. These (foreign-owned) mines possess almost a complete monopoly on formal employment at rural communities such as Hhaala. The gendered and patriarchal structure of these companies reserves the vast majority of jobs (whether manual, administrative, or supervisory) for men and only a few quite peripheral jobs for women such as working as a security guard at a boom gate (thus being responsible for the tedious task of logging each vehicle that passed through the gate, as Mercy was sometimes hired to do). This gendered and patriarchal structure ensures that women are even

further excluded and marginalized from already scarce sources of formal employment, regular pay, and economic security in these communities. Sponsorship from an older and wealthier male Chinese partner can help mitigate and even change this economic precarity, but only so long as it lasts: and in most cases that I learned about at Summers and Hhaala mines, it lasted for at most only a few years.

The way that inequality and material precarity is distributed then through overlapping economic and social frameworks of neocolonialism, neoliberal, post-Fordist capitalism, and patriarchy all mean as a result that women such as Mercy and Prisca are able to act through a mode of constrained (Farmer 1996) agency. It is not the case that they are passive victims, but neither is it the case that they are able to meet their male Chinese partners on terms of equal structural power and agency. The Chinese government, and many of the higher-level Chinese managers at the Hhaala thermal power plant construction project, like to present the infrastructure development activities of Chinese state-owned enterprises such as the one at Hhaala as glowing examples of 南南合作/*nannan hezuo* or 合作共赢/*hezuo gongying* ("South-South" or "win-win" cooperation). But these Chinese enterprises also contribute to and exacerbate global inequalities by explicitly discouraging the formation and maintenance of ongoing relations of kinship between their Chinese employees and local Zambians. They do this by, for example, transferring Chinese staff members back to China when they father a child in Zambia instead of compelling or incentivizing those Chinese staff members to stay and care for their children, or even to continue providing material support after the child's birth. In this way these transnational capitalist enterprises (not alone among foreign firms in Zambia) contribute to forms of "South-South" patriarchal extraction and exploitation of women's affects and precarity that parallel their South-South development through economic investment.

# 4

# OBLIGATION

## History Written in Advance: Christian Prophecy, Chinese-Zambian Relations, and Diffracted Modernity

Over the course of 2018 and 2019 in Kombela, a town in southern Zambia, I met each week at one of the outside tables of the town's "Chinese market" with a man named Jonah to study the Bible together. I had first met Jonah through the Jehovah's Witnesses congregation which we both attended: a congregation that, though overwhelmingly composed of Zambian congregants, nevertheless conducts its meetings exclusively in Mandarin Chinese. At the time, I had already been conducting ethnographic fieldwork research in Zambia for a little over one year, on the broad topic of Chinese migrant workers and entrepreneurs in the country and on their relations with local Zambians. Up to this point I had focused my research on labor relations, specifically on labor relations that pertained at Summers Mine, a Chinese-owned and operated coal mine located to the south and east of Kombela. Over the course of this research I had been connected through mutual acquaintances with members of Jonah's congregation, and I was intrigued by the congregation members' deep commitment to the study of Mandarin Chinese and evangelization efforts with Chinese migrants in Zambia.

Part of my interest in the Jehovah's Witnesses stemmed from the way in which their commitment to learning Mandarin and evangelizing Chinese migrants differed so profoundly from the practices of members of other Christian denominations in Zambia. Since the 1990s Zambia has been a constitutionally-declared Christian nation, a fact which many Zambians in my experience cited often and proudly, and Christian practice plays a profound role in the personal lives of almost

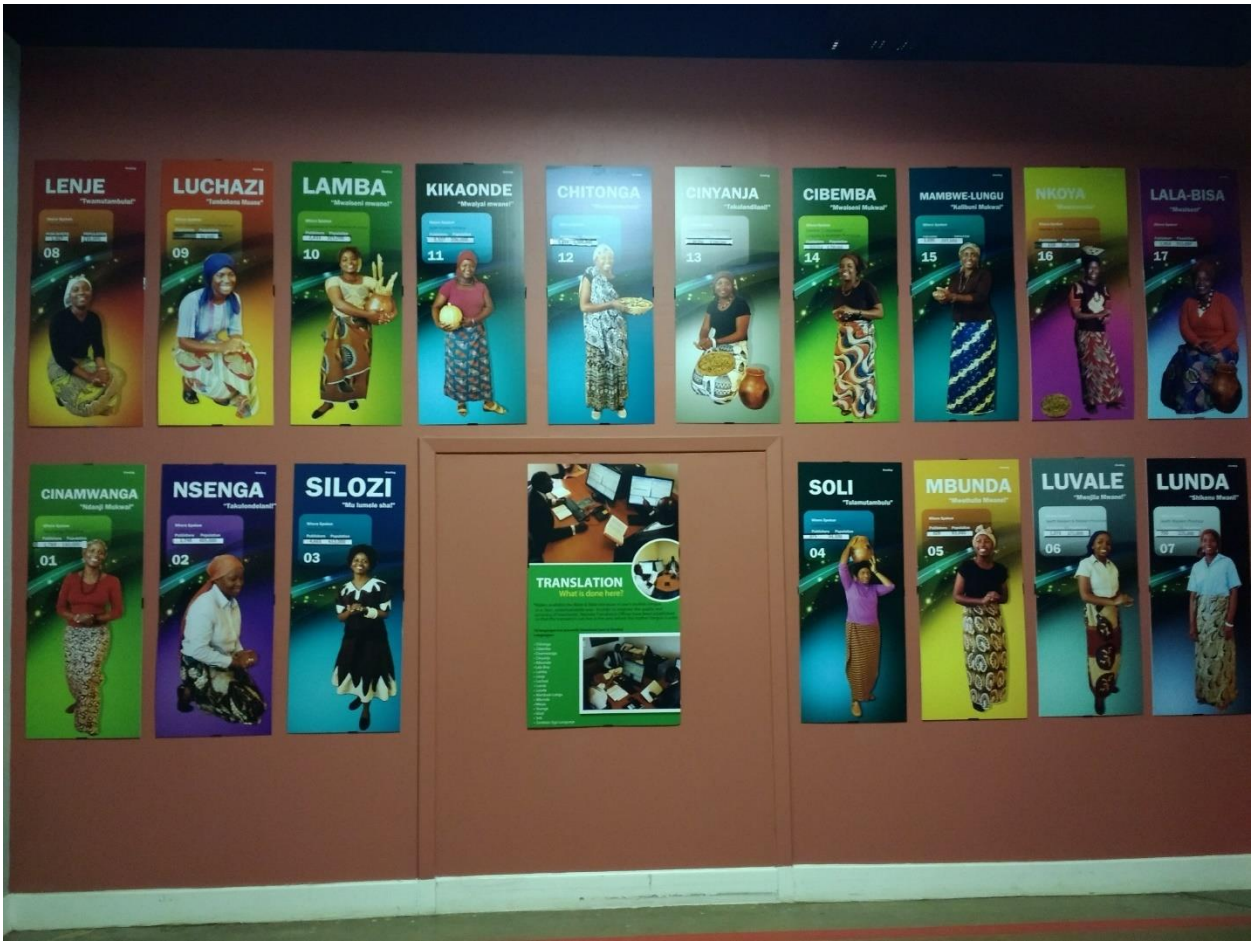
every Zambian I met over the course of my fieldwork. Despite the great emphasis that many Zambians, both Witnesses and non-Witnesses, place on convincing others of the truth of their version of Christianity, besides the members of Jonah's congregation and other similar Witness congregations, I never encountered any Zambians who expressed interest in evangelizing Chinese migrants. In over a year of conducting research on social relations between Zambians and Chinese migrant workers before I encountered Jonah's congregation, excepting a few students at the University of Zambia's 孔子学院 (*kongzi xueyuan*/Confucius Institute), I had also never before encountered Zambians who could speak any variety of Chinese. Nor among the other Zambian Christian congregations I spent time with, including Pentecostals and Seventh-day Adventists, had I ever met Christians in Zambia who sought to actively proselytize the Chinese migrant community. I was deeply impressed, therefore, not only by the willingness and interest members of Jonah's congregation had in learning Mandarin Chinese, but also by the intense commitment and dedication with which they pursued their mastery of the language. On at least several occasions, for example, I had watched with a mixture of admiration and not a small amount of jealousy as Jonah provided spontaneous, simultaneous translations of English sermons into Mandarin Chinese, demonstrating a fluency in the language that I felt exceeded mine even though Jonah had never been to China while I had formerly lived there for over three years as a volunteer teacher.

At Summers Mine, the site at which I had conducted most of my ethnographic fieldwork up that point, relations between Zambians and Chinese migrants had often been tense, occasionally even violent or murderous. The Jehovah's Witnesses in Jonah's congregation in Kombela, by contrast, actively pursued strategies of not only Mandarin language mastery but also amicability and social connection with Chinese migrants in their community. Intrigued, by 2018 I began spending more and more time with Jonah's Witness congregation, attending their twice-weekly meetings (conducted exclusively in Mandarin Chinese) and eventually formally approaching them

to ask if they would be willing to be part of my ongoing ethnographic research. The members of the congregation agreed on one condition: that in return I also commit to learning more about the Bible with them. Since I also viewed this as an excellent opportunity to engage in participant observation with the congregation, I readily agreed.

**Learning the Bible**

To be my leader through my weekly one-on-one Bible study sessions, the leaders of the congregation paired me with Jonah. Jonah was a young member of the congregation, in his mid-twenties at the time and several years younger than me, but he was also recognized by other congregation members as one of the most diligent and devoted among their number in terms of his study of Mandarin Chinese and his witnessing to Chinese migrants. Both of Jonah's parents were also Witnesses, and he had begun learning Mandarin six years previously as a teenager when his whole family had moved from an English-language Jehovah's Witness congregation to a Mandarin-language one in their hometown of Kitwe, a city on the Zambian Copperbelt in the northwest of Zambia. I learned from older members of Jonah's congregation in Kombela that there had been tremendous growth in the number of Witnesses in Zambia since the 1990s, and during the period of my fieldwork in the late 2010s there were an increasing number of Witnesses referred to as "foreign-language congregations" in most of Zambia's main urban centers: some Mandarin-language ones such as the one Jonah and I attended in Kombela and the one his family attended in Kitwe, but also other Witness congregations that conducted their meetings exclusively in, Gujarati, French, or sign language. In addition to these "foreign-language congregations" there were also congregations that catered to speakers of Zambia's many languages besides English (see photograph 13).




Photograph 13: A poster board advertising the many Zambian languages that Jehovah's Witnesses preach in. Lusaka, Lusaka Province, Zambia. May 2018.

Like the Mandarin-language congregation that Jonah and I attended, these other foreign-language congregations were overwhelmingly composed of Zambian congregants who had no previous background in these languages, and who had moved to these congregations out of a voluntaristic desire to develop their abilities to evangelize to groups of people in Zambia (e.g. Chinese and Indian labor migrants and entrepreneurs, Congolese refugees, deaf member of any of Zambia's ethnic communities) who otherwise were not proficient in spoken English or another Zambian language. Like Mandarin, proficiency in some of these languages such as Gujarati was otherwise exceedingly rare among Zambians who were not themselves members of the relevant diasporic communities.

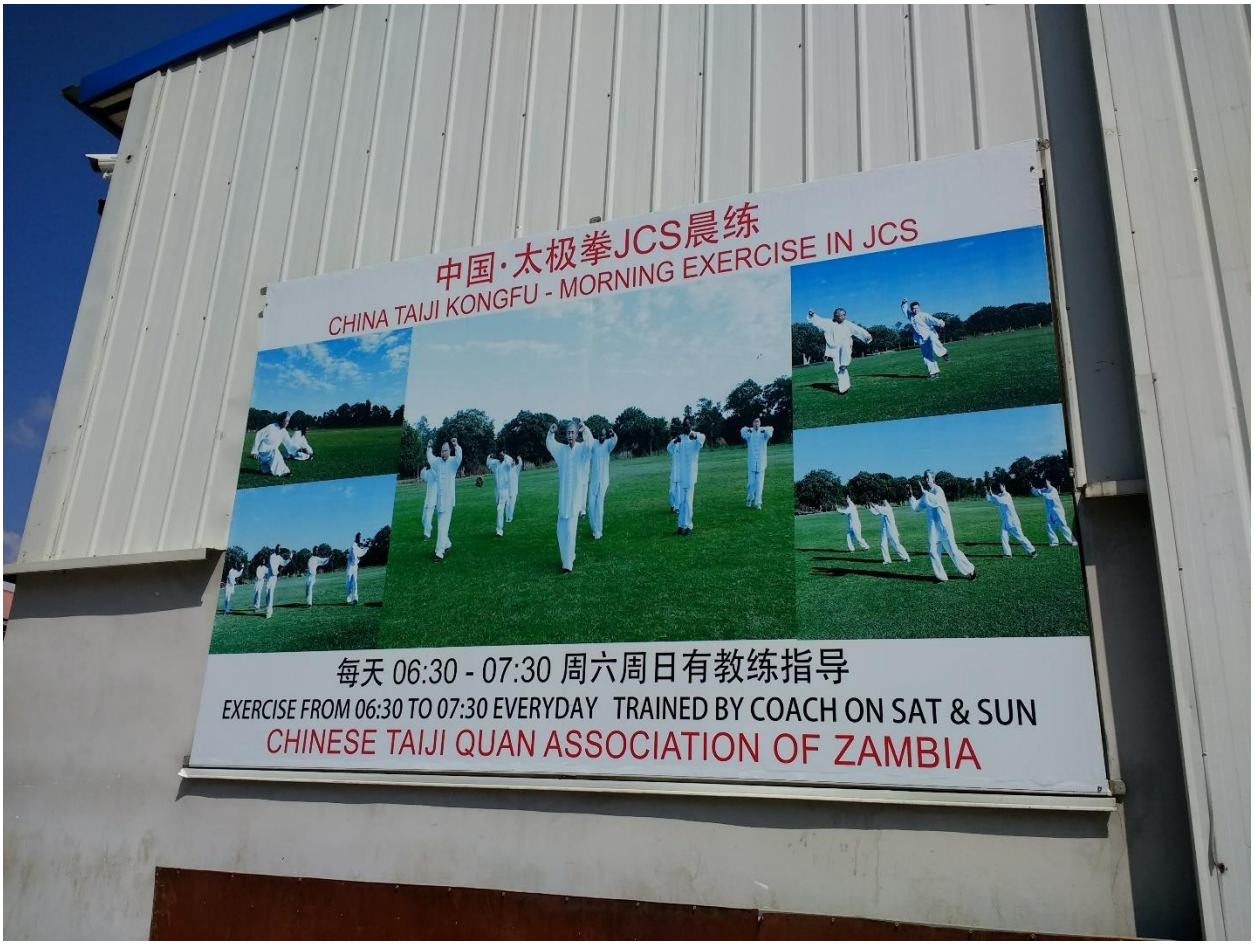
Jonah himself had moved from Kitwe, the largest city on the Zambian Copperbelt, to Kombela several years previously because, he told me, he wanted to use his Mandarin to reach Chinese people whom he otherwise worried would not be receiving the truth of the Bible. Jonah spent a minimum of 70 hours each month witnessing to Chinese migrants in Kombela, a number that he like other members of his congregation kept meticulous track of because it qualified him to identify as a Jehovah's Witness "pioneer:" a status indicating Jonah's embracing of Jesus's admonishment to his disciples to follow Jesus's example and spread the word of God to all people everywhere. Within the Mandarin-language congregation which Jonah and I attended, all adult and teenage members were pioneers.

For the secular work that provided the income he used to pay his living expenses, Jonah worked as a part-time IT consultant for various businesses around Kombela. Jonah had in the past combined his expertise in IT with his proficiency in Mandarin to obtain paid employment with a few small Chinese-operated businesses around Kombela. However, about a year before I met him Jonah had ceased all secular work with Chinese-operated businesses because, he informed me, his employers at these companies frequently asked them to assist with tasks he felt were unethical, such as helping them to lie on official government forms or provide bribes to Zambian government officials.

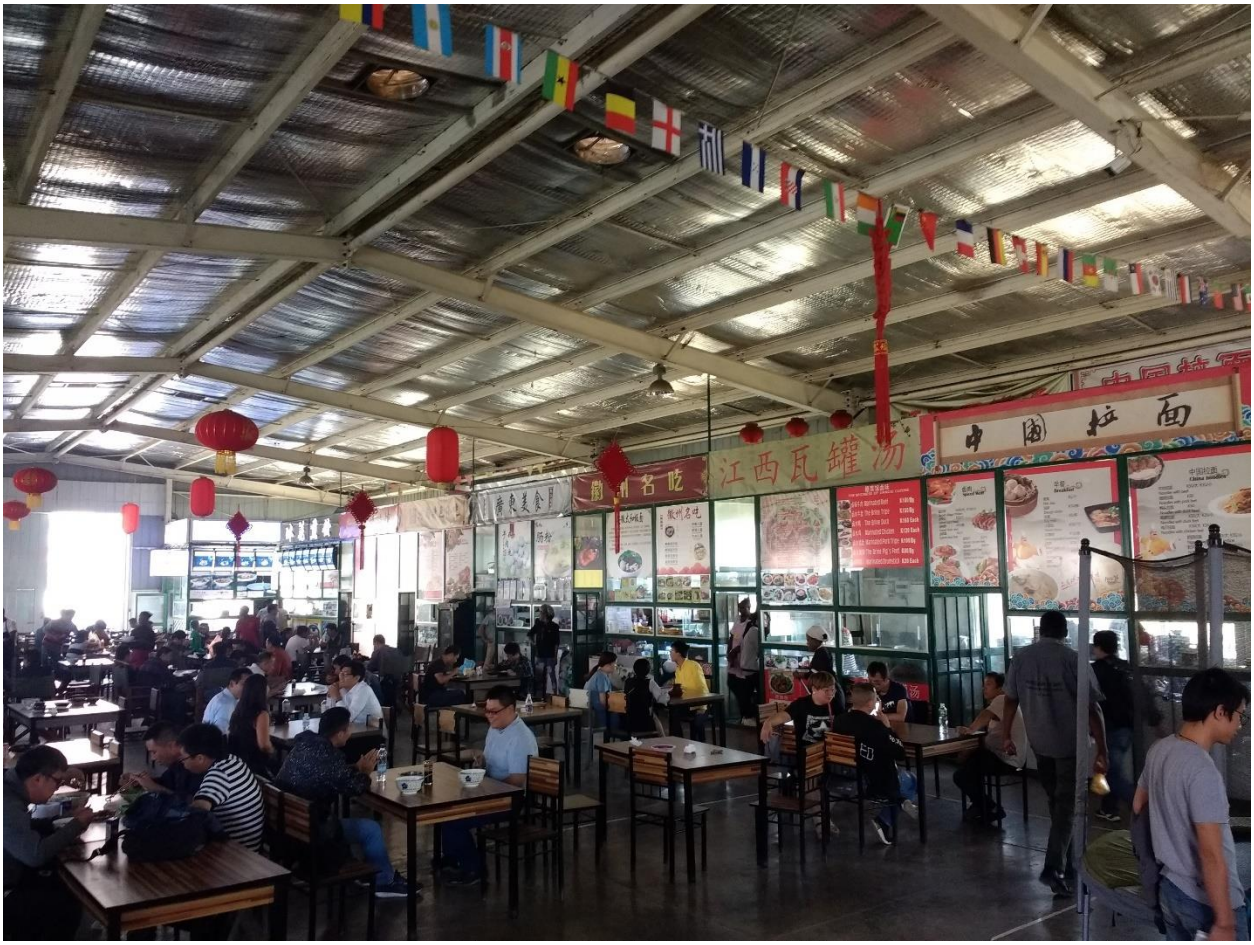
I learned much of Jonah's life history this way during our long and wide-ranging weekly Bible study conversations, which often lasted the better part of an afternoon and took place each week at Kombela's "Chinese Market" (see photographs 14-15). The "Chinese Market" had originally been a site for numerous produce stalls owned by Chinese migrants, a function it still continued at the time of my fieldwork, but had also grown substantially to include an expansive food court full of small food stalls selling authentic Chinese foods originating from a number of different regional cuisines across China (see photographs 16-17). Though the produce stalls, the

original center of the market, were popular among Zambians as well as Chinese and other foreign migrants alike, besides Jonah and I the patrons of the food court offering prepared Chinese dishes were almost always all Chinese.

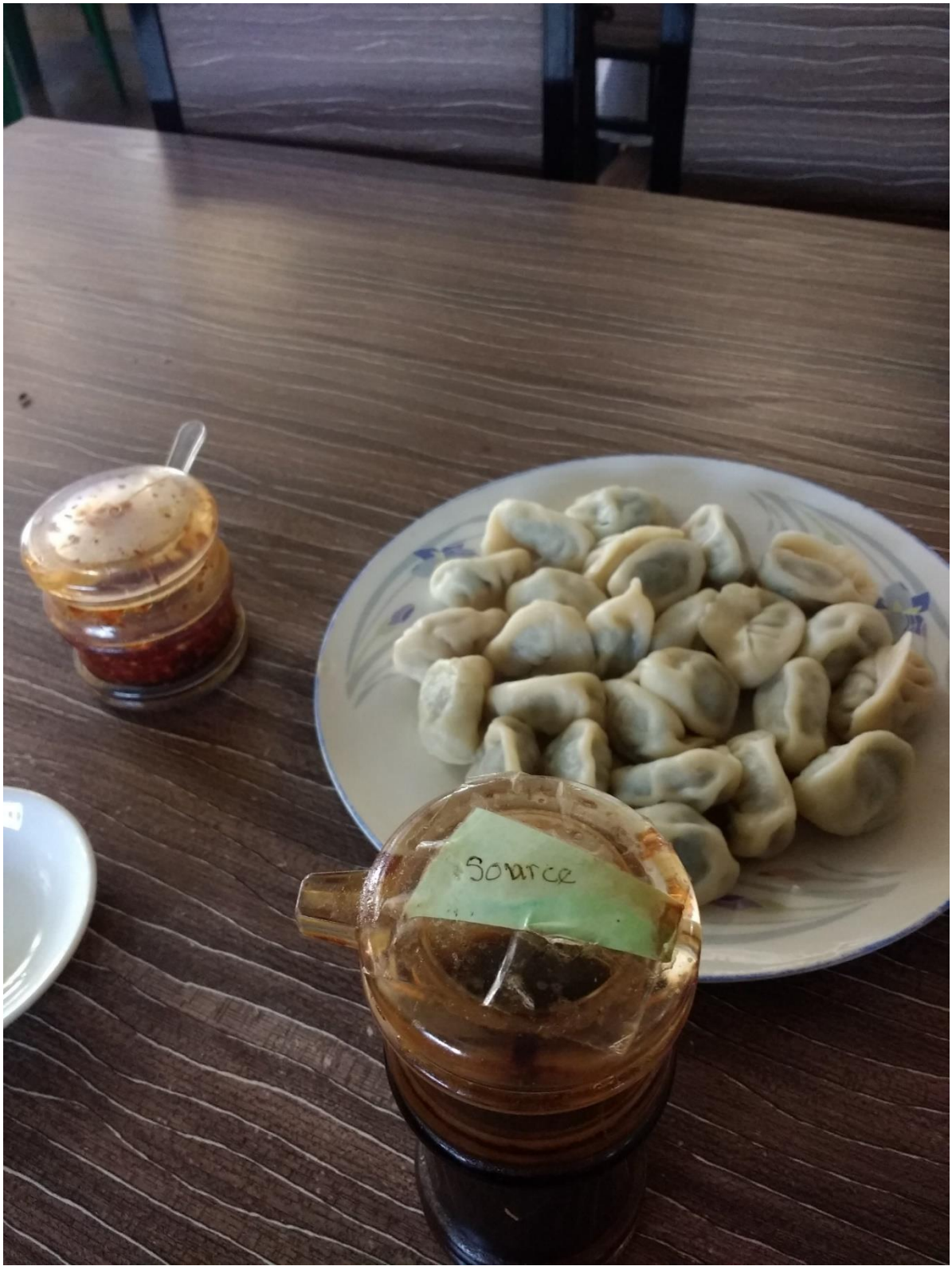

Photograph 14: The entrance to the Chinese Market. Kombela, Central Zambia. November 2018.




Photograph 15: Advertisement for 太极拳 “tai chi” group activities at the Chinese Market. Kombela, Central Zambia. November 2018.




Photograph 16: Food court of regional Chinese food stalls at the Chinese Market. Kombela, Central Zambia. November 2018.




Photograph 17: 水饺 *shuijiao*/boiled dumplings served at the Chinese Market food court. Kombela, Central Zambia. November 2018.

Each week Jonah and I would study together at this food court, laboriously working our way paragraph by paragraph through a small, fifteen-chapter booklet entitled "What Does the Bible Teach Us?" To help aid my understanding of this booklet, we also cross-referenced the main ideas there with numerous passages from the New World English Translation of the Bible. The subject matter of the chapters Jonah and I studied together ranged from topics such as "Who is God?" and "How Can You Become God's Friend?" to "Is the End of the World Near?" and "The Truth About the Angels." Each chapter was around 5-10 pages long. Sometimes Jonah and I would cover an entire chapter together over the course of an afternoon studying together. More often, due to my frequent questions and lack of understanding on many points, we would only cover a few pages or even just a single page of the booklet over the course of an entire afternoon.

**History of Past Events and History Written in Advance**

One topic that in our previous study sessions I had gotten repeatedly stuck on was that of history and prophecy and the relation between the two. Prior to beginning my Bible study with Jonah, I had thought of myself as relatively familiar with (what I understood to be) the main themes of the Christian Bible. I had studied many passages of the Bible in the liberal Episcopalian (Anglican) church I grew up in, and also analyzed the Bible as a literary text in my (secular) high school English classes. Studying with Jonah, however, I rapidly discovered just how deep my ignorance of huge stretches of the Bible really ran. Take for example the Book of Daniel. Jonah explained that this book was one of the most important sources of Biblical prophecy. But my previous encounters with the Book of Daniel, grounded in either liberal Christian or secularist assumptions, had completely ignored these prophecies in favor of the stories of Daniel in the lions' den and his companions in the fiery furnace, used as allegories for faith in the face of adversity, and perhaps also a bit about Nebuchadnezzar's madness as an allegory of the dangers of hubris. Jonah

acknowledged that as historical accounts, the narratives of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel, and Daniel's companions were crucial for providing models of both right and wrong action among human beings today: though he framed these examples as literal role models rather than as spiritual allegory, as I had learned them previously. Even more importantly, Jonah pointed out that all of these historical narratives I already knew from the Book of Daniel, and which demonstrated proper models of true faith, were contained only in the Book's first six chapters. But the Book of Daniel has another six chapters, of which I knew nothing, but which Jonah taught me contained information that was just as, if not more important than that contained in the first six. Jonah explained that these remaining six chapters of the Book of Daniel were also, like the first, a completely true and accurate history. But they were a history of a quite different kind. These latter six chapters were primarily filled with prophecy which, as Jonah explained, is nothing more or less than history written in advance. To dispel my continuing confusions on this subject, at this point Jonah pulled his laptop computer out of his backpack and after booting it up opened two PDF documents, both several dozens of pages long, which he had downloaded directly from the online library on the main website of the global Jehovah's Witnesses organization. These two PDF documents were entitled, respectively, "Chronology" and "Detailed History Written in Advance."

As Jonah and I moved carefully sentence by sentence through these two articles—Jonah pausing frequently to answer my many questions—he explained that there are two basic kinds of history. The first is history written regarding past events, which can be either secular or biblical in nature. The second kind of history, which is only truly found in the Bible, is history written in advance. Jonah pointed out how the Hebrew scriptures provide an extremely detailed and meticulously documented history of past events beginning with God's genesis of the world and moving through the creation of Adam (4026 B.C.E.), the global Flood (2369 B.C.E.), down through the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and the foundation and later travails of the Kingdom of

Israel, and then again of Jesus's ministry and that of his earliest followers. But Jonah acknowledged that even during this biblical period, there was at least one large temporal gap in which the Bible seemed to provide no history at all of past events. This temporal gap, about four hundred years long, began with the governorship of Israel by Nehemiah under Artaxerxes I of Persia in the fifth century B.C.E., corresponding with the end of the history described by the Hebrew Scriptures, and it closed with the birth of Jesus in the year 2 B.C.E., corresponding with the beginning of the history described by the Christian Greek ones (see figure 1).

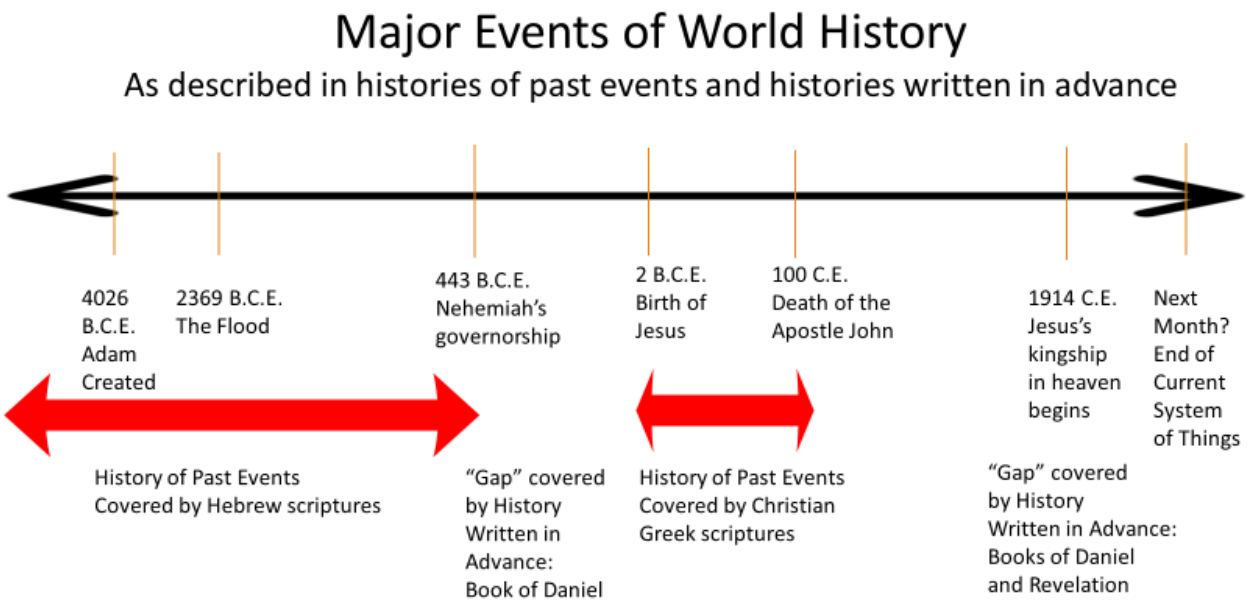



Figure 1: A timeline of major world historical events as described by Jonah, and the different sources of biblical history that describe them (note: this chart is not to scale and only shows the relative position of events).

Far from being silent on the history of this roughly 400-year period, however, Jonah explained how the Bible provided a different kind of history, no less detailed or accurate than the history written of past events: namely the history written in advance contained within the book of Daniel. Jonah taught me how Daniel, who was a captive in Babylon around the sixth century B.C.E., nevertheless recorded a completely accurate history of the major political events that were

to take place in southwest Asia and the eastern Mediterranean in the following centuries, and indeed far beyond as well. Point by meticulous point, Jonah demonstrated how the history written in advance provided by the Book of Daniel specifically described the conquest of Babylon by the Medo-Persian Empire and that empire's own subsequent conquest by Alexander the Great, the fall of the Phoenician city-state of Tyre, the later division of Alexander's empire among his generals (the Diadochi) into among four smaller empires and of the struggles between them, the beginnings and ends of Jesus's ministry as the Messiah, as well as the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans after Jesus's death. In fact, Jonah pointed out, the history written in advance contained within the book of Daniel extended far beyond even the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. and the completion of the Christian Greek scriptures by the apostle John and his death at Ephesus in 100 C.E.

This history extended all the way through the year 1914 C.E., the year that WWI began and also the year that Jehovah cast out Satan and appointed Jesus King of God's Kingdom in Heaven, thus initiating the last days of the current system of things on Earth. This history continues to inform events of the present day as well, as the history written in advance contained in the book of Daniel (and elsewhere in the Bible, such as the book of Revelation) describes events of the current world as well as the events we are rapidly approaching such as the war of Armageddon in which God's Kingdom will destroy all secular human governments on Earth in order to return the world to Jehovah's rule. Thus, what at first appeared to be large gaps in the Bible's historical record of past or even current events, Jonah explained, were in fact not gaps at all since the history written in advance provided in the book of Daniel and elsewhere in the Bible described all of the important events of these periods: "leaving," as Jonah phrased it quite succinctly, "nothing out."

**The Temporal Politics of Historiopraxy**

Of course, millenarianism and an emphasis on prophecy has been of great import, to varying degrees in different times and places, to many Christian groups for many centuries (Engelke 2007; Haynes 2017; Kirsch 2011; Premawardhana 2018). Many of the most popular forms of Christianity in Zambia (itself an overwhelmingly Christian country) today are explicitly millenarian or eschatological in orientation, and Zambians of many different Christian denominations casually speak of a coming end of the world that will take place very soon. A focus on a rapidly approaching end to the world, therefore, is not unique to Jehovah's Witnesses in Zambia, nor is their deployment of biblical prophecy to anticipate it. What is quite unique about the practices of Jonah and members of his congregation, not shared widely among other Zambian Christians, is the Witnesses' intense focus and close study of the ancient histories of Mesopotamia and the Levant, and on their use of these histories to calculate precise dates for the unfolding of biblical prophecy. The PDF documents that Jonah shared with me during our Bible study together, for example, were each many dozens of pages long and contained within them in exacting detail the dates assigned to the reigns of different Persian rulers, for example, or long discussions of the "short" versus "long" chronology in study of the ancient Near East.

Here, I focus on this use of history, the conclusions Witnesses are able to draw from it that we are soon coming to the end of the current system of things, and the significance this has from Zambian-Chinese relations. As Luehrmann (2015) demonstrated how much could be learned about religion in the USSR by reading explicitly atheist Soviet archives, so I suggest we can learn a great deal about the too-easy assumptions of liberal secular modernity by examining the archive of the Bible and Zambian Witnesses' exposition of it. Particularly, Witnesses understanding of theocentric history can help us reexamine the territorializing, and therefore often racializing, logics of the political nation-state form that dominates our world today, and also the some of the overly self-

confident humanistic assumptions of modernity. In an era of increasingly catastrophic human-wrought calamities, the archive of the Bible might give us reason to reconsider, for example, the great humanist and modernist confidence in the ability of homo sapiens to wisely govern our shared more-than-human worlds through the operation of human reason and rationality alone. The Soviet bureaucrats and archivists Luehrmann describes recognized an optimistic historiography in which soon all peoples would be joined in egalitarianism, harmony, and human flourishing through the inevitable laws of history, and recognized religion as an inverted world consciousness in response to an inverted world of social alienation engendered by capitalism. Witnesses similarly recognize an optimistic teleology that will soon lead to human flourishing, through the inevitable workings of divinely provident history, but they recognize we must revert our focus to its proper form by arguing that it is the rule of Jehovah God, not socialism, which can right the wrongs of the world. Witnesses thus orient their practices towards what we might view as an accumulation of spiritual capital, which Palmer and Wong (2013) note is radically disjunctive with classic Marxian or Bourdieusian categories of capital which ultimately involve amassing social power over others. Instead, Witnesses at Kombela Central largely disdain political and economic struggles over social power in the secular realm, and instead focus their lives on fulfilling their obligations to Jehovah God by evangelizing others, regardless of whether these evangelization efforts come to any success or not.

In their use of history, Jonah and his fellow Witnesses engage closely in practices that Coleman (2011) terms historiopraxy: the simultaneous invocation and creation of history through mimetic replication, or re-living, of past events. But Jonah and his fellow witnesses also engaged in more than just the invocation and mimetic replication of history. Their practices also included centrally the elision of certain kinds of history. The assertion Jonah made and that was repeated to me many times in different Witness contexts, that the history written in advance in the Bible left

nothing out, is an interesting one of course because, from other perspectives (both secular and non-secular) there are many other accounts of history that are, precisely, "left out" of biblical history.

Recalling Povinelli's (2011) distinction in her discussion of the eschatological discourses of late liberalism between event and quasi-event, Jonah also articulated a history in which it was clear what kinds of occurrences were fully event-ful and which others were not-quite. Much of the eventful history Jonah taught me was global in scope, especially in the earlier stages of World History in which Adam was created and Noah survived the Flood with his family, for example, or more recent events such as the world transformations that have taken place since 1914 C.E. But in the intervening period between the global Flood in 2369 B.C.E. and 1914 C.E., the year in which Jesus began his rulership in Heaven and Satan was cast down to the Earth, there have been long millennia in which either very little event-ful took place at all or in which fully event-ful occurrences were confined to a small region of the globe. From the time that Nim'rod and his followers built the tower at Bab'el (Babylon) sometime after 2239 B.C.E. until the death of the apostle John at Ephesus in around 100 C.E., for example, all fully world-shaping and History-making events took place almost exclusively in southwest Asia or the eastern Mediterranean. God's design in confining world-shaping and event-ful occurrences to this rather confined geographical region for more than two millennia was, Jonah explained, a direct result of His selection of the Israelites as His chosen people who would keep alive His true teachings and faith until the coming of the Messiah, Jesus, among the Israelites in 2 B.C.E. and the beginning of Jesus's ministry in 29 C.E. After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. and the close, in about 100 C.E., of the apostolic age with the death of John the Apostle, even this localized nexus of world-historical events would trickle-off. In contrast to their intense study of historical events leading up to 100 C.E. and once again on events from 1914 C.E. onwards, the almost two millennia from 100 to the turn of the

nineteenth century was a period in which Jonah and his fellow congregation members gave little attention to and rarely ever discussed.

It is certainly not the case that Jonah or his fellow congregation members ever denied the actuality of occurrences taking place outside of southwest Asia and the eastern Mediterranean before 100 C.E., or anywhere in the world thereafter until 1914 C.E. They recognized many kinds of historical accounts that described myriad happenings all over the world. Jonah himself was an avid reader and keen student of what he termed "secular history:" the kinds of historical accounts that came from sources other than the Bible. But Jonah's main interest in secular history was the ways in which it confirmed, for all to recognize, the divinely-sanctioned History described in the Bible. Jonah was able to cite a wide range of precise dates and figures that had been ascertained by secular archaeologists and historians and which corresponded to the exact History laid out in the Bible. But for those periods and regions of the world on which the Bible was mostly silent, such as almost all regions outside southwest Asia and the Mediterranean basin and the entire period from 100 to the late nineteenth century C.E., Jonah pointed out that only the broadest generalizations were of interest. Mostly this was the important conclusion that could be inferred from all these regions and periods, including for example Zambia's own history before and during British imperialism, that human beings are not capable of wisely or justly governing ourselves and only a theocratic society (i.e. one ruled by Jehovah God) will make possible true human flourishing.

In this way Jonah explicitly relegated occurrences recorded in secular history but had no confirming or validating correspondence with biblical history to the realm of what Povinelli (2011) terms quasi-events: happenings that do not participate in the ongoing sweep of event-ful History and therefore lack a certain kind of substantiality. It is not exactly the case that quasi -events can be said not to have happened. It is rather than in the grand scheme of History they fade so far into the

background of unimportance that their occurrence or non-occurrence is neither significant nor relevant.

By dividing accounts of the past (and future) in this way between the divinely-sanctioned event-ful Histories of the Bible, on the one hand, and the mere quasi-events of secular historical reckonings, on the other, Jonah and the members of his congregation implicitly inverted a power dynamic more often seen in ostensibly globally hegemonic accounts of secular history. From the subaltern histories described by Chakrabarty (2008) to Taussig's analysis of cosmological enactments (1984) and Povinelli's theorization of the postcolonial archive (2011), it is precisely the time of the more-than-human, more-than-natural, the time of God(s), angels, and spirits, the time that lies outside the secular that is often relegated (discursively) to the insubstantial realm of the quasi-event or worse, of non-event. In a somewhat similar vein, de la Cadena (2015) makes a distinction between the claims of a hegemonic history versus the counter-hegemonic, subaltern voices of what she calls ahistory. In de la Cadena's account, history as such appears as a kind of master narrative, necessarily grounded in Western, secular assumptions about what kinds of things constitute fact and evidence and which do not, thereby excluding other kinds of storytelling (which she notes in both English and Spanish share common etymological roots with the word history) about the past. De la Cadena posits ahistory as a counter to this hegemonic practice of history, arguing forcefully for the eventfulness (in Povinelli's terms) despite the fact that ahistory lacks the kinds of facts and evidence that could allow it to be included as a part of "History" tout court. Though de la Cadena works hard to recover and rehabilitate the event-ful character of ahistory, nevertheless there seems to be a kind of ambiguity in her ethnographic descriptions. It is not always clear that her ethnographic interlocutors themselves always view the ahistory which they record as being truly eventful. In one memorable moment they begin to burn a major ahistorical archive as fire kindling: making ambiguous whether this really is an archive or not. For Jonah and his

congregation members, the history which they recount is no less a challenge to secular time (Chakrabarty 2008) than the ahistory de la Cadena describes. But there is also no doubt for Jonah and his fellow Witnesses that the history they describe is, indeed, extremely event-ful history, indeed far more eventful than that described in secular accounts precisely because the history the Witnesses understand recognizes the grand, unfolding plan that humanity is caught up in. Unlike secular histories, which merely see many trees, the history the Witnesses recognize can take in the forest.

Writing from the perspective of a postcolonial, explicitly decolonizing space, all of these theorists work in different but related ways to rehabilitate non-secular forms of temporality and history that they feel are being (in a quite colonial way) excluded from mainstream discourses of hegemonic, secular History. All of them do this by marking the non-secular forms of history that come to matter in the spaces from which they think, linguistically setting them off from secular History with a capital H in different ways, not as history tout court or as such, but rather as "subaltern," "postcolonial," or simply "a-" history.

Like the ethnographic and historical examples these theorists have described so richly, the history-invoking practices of Jonah and his fellow Witnesses also challenge the domineering assumptions of a secular time that is empty, homogenous, and linear, into which the natural events of the material world can be slotted but not the supernatural events of the divine. But they do so in a quite different kind of way. Povinelli, for example, argues that "if 'archive' is the name we give to the power to make and command what took place here or there, in this or that place, and thus what has an authoritative place in the contemporary organization of social life," this means then that the postcolonial archive cannot be "merely a collection of…artifacts reflecting a different, subjugated history. Instead, the postcolonial archive must directly address the problem of endurance of the otherwise within—or distinct from—this form of power" (2011, cited in de la Cadena 2015). Thus,

the postcolonial archive takes on a decolonizing role as it subverts and undermines, from the enduring place of the otherwise, the power of the (here unmarked, except with quotation marks) archive tout court to authoritatively and definitively "make and command what took place here or there, in this or that place." In this decolonizing project we can see a challenge to the totalizing agendas of (secular) modernity, which make claim to a monopoly on "knowledge" and "the truth"—which by definition can only be natural truths about the material world, properly documented according to standards of academic history—from a place that self-consciously casts itself as the "otherwise," a kind of shadow of modernity. But, despite also departing just as substantially from the hegemonic assumptions of secular history, the biblically-authorized histories articulated by Jonah and his fellow congregation members were not couched in terms of being an "otherwise," and they made no claim to subvert the totalizing power of the archive to "make and command what took place here or there, in this or that place." Rather, they laid claim to that exact power for the only true archive that could ever provide absolute certainty of historical events (because provided by a truthful God), which is to say the archive of the Bible.

**A Theocratic Modernity**

In this way, we can see a certain process of diffraction (Barad 2014) of modernity at play. By appropriating modernity's claims to the truth ("the Truth" being the precise term Jonah and his fellow Witnesses used to describe their religious teachings), Jehovah's Witnesses in Zambia cast themselves not as an otherwise, or a shadow to modernity, but rather as modernity's true representative, as the true interpreters of properly academic scientific and historical knowledge, since it is only with knowledge of the Bible that the errors that academic science and history have made can be recognized. The true, corrected modernity these Witnesses lay claim to through their historical knowledge is not the modernity traced for example by Wynter (2003) in her critical

analysis of the progressive articulation in the European West of $Man_1$ and $Man_2$. Jonah often pointed out, for example, that the teachings of Witnesses are in complete accord with mainstream secular science, excepting where that science had made a few errors concerning for example its postulation of an evolutionary theory of species development. Jonah thus rejected the evolutionary and biocentric assumptions regarding human beings (or indeed any other species) that Wynter identifies as constitutive of the genre of $Man_2$. Even more fundamentally, however, Jonah and his fellow Witnesses stridently rejected the humanistic assumptions constitutive of the earlier genre of $Man_1$. Such humanistic assumptions, of Man being freely able on his own volition to be able to employ his faculties of reason, and thus to govern himself in a prudent and rational manner were the very antithesis of the theocentric and theocratic Truth that the Witnesses sought so earnestly to share with others. This antithesis was well illustrated in a conversation I had with Esther, another member of the Kombela Mandarin Language Congregation.

Esther, like Jonah, was born and raised in Zambia, and had learned to speak Mandarin shortly after the first Mandarin-language Witness congregations had been formed in 2009. Unlike Jonah, who had spent his entire life in Zambia, Esther had used the Mandarin-language proficiency she had developed to travel to mainland China to undertake undercover evangelization on behalf of the Witnesses while pretending to be a teacher. Esther had just returned to Zambia about the time I began participating in the congregation, and thanks in part to our shared experiences of living in China we formed a friendship. Over a series of conversations that took place over several months, I discussed with Esther whether direct political action or activism, activities I had learned that Witnesses generally oppose, could ever be a helpful response to the ills of the world. In one long conversation in Mandarin while sipping on freshly-blended fruit smoothies at a Kombela mall, for example, I asked Esther if the political abolitionist movement in the nineteenth-century USA was a helpful response to the evils of slavery. Esther was sympathetic to my attempts to articulate forms

of human-led political action that could contribute to just outcomes in the world, but she explained that my framing of the problem was wrong. She illustrated my mistake by way of an analogy. Esther pointed out that if a patient arrived at a hospital with a debilitating, life-threatening disease, and if all the doctors did was to temporarily alleviate the symptoms of that disease, instead of treating its underlying causes, this could not really be regarded as a successful medical intervention. In a similar manner, Esther said, the racist discrimination and violence that continued to pervade US society, including the necessity for a Black Lives Matter movement which I had just been discussing with her earlier in the conversation, demonstrated that the abolitionists of the nineteenth century had merely dealt with the symptoms of the problem, not its underlying causes. The underlying problem, Esther explained, was that without proper guidance human beings would continue to be greedy, self-interested, and cruel, which meant that precisely problems such as racism could never go away through human action alone. Instead, the only thing that could permanently treat all of the social ills I described was the total (re-)submission of human beings to God's infinitely just and benevolent rule; in other words the establishment of what Esther described in Mandarin as 耶和华王国 (*yehehua wangguo*): the Kingdom of Jehovah.

The diffracted form of modernity articulated by Jonah and Esther is not then the evolutionist and bio-centric genre of the human that Wynter glosses as $Man_2$, nor is it the humanistic valorization of man's capacity for reasoned thought and organization into political states that she glosses as $Man_1$. But the genre of the human described by Jonah and Esther nevertheless bears a genealogical relationship with articulations of the ethnoclass Man explicated by Wynter. Like Wynter's conceptualization of the ethnoclass Man, the human described by Jonah and Esther also draws from an understanding of the world informed by the Great Chain of Being, the medieval and renaissance European conception in which humans are fallen from the heights of perfect being represented by God and the angels, yet nevertheless far above (and ontologically distinct from) all

other animals and non-human beings in both importance and nature. They also share the totalizing and universalistic aspirations of modernism (themselves genealogically related with the universalizing discourses of earlier forms of Christianity).

By articulating a vision of (soon to be ended) modernity that is explicitly opposed to both conventional politics and the nation-state as political form (all contemporary nation-states being under the power of Satan), these Witnesses are also involved in creating a realm of everyday practices of relationality quite different from others in Zambia. By doing so they envision and so help to create a different kind of political order, a theocentric and theocratic one that in refusing the rituals and pageantry of the nation-state erases national divides. This is especially apparent when the practices of temporal politics and articulation of eschatological modernity by Jehovah's Witnesses are juxtaposed with those of other Christians groups with whom I conducted fieldwork in Zambia. The overwhelming majority of Zambians (95.5%) identify as Christian, and like the Witnesses most of the other most prominent Christian communities in Zambia are extremely focused on evangelization before a widely-understood rapid approach of Armageddon. Unlike Witnesses, however, most other Zambian Christians that I encountered in my fieldwork are deeply committed to the identity of the Zambian state as a (since 1994) constitutionally-declared "Christian nation," a national identification which many Zambians express with pride, but which Jonah and Esther found ridiculous. For many non-Witness Zambians, however, this proud identification as a Christian nation sat uneasily with the widespread arrival of Chinese migrants and investors whom many Zambians described as worshipping the god of money rather than the Christian God and who, with their ill-gotten money, were "buying up" (as one popular radio program put it) the country. As a result, whereas Jonah, Esther, and the other members of their congregation were deeply invested in learning Mandarin Chinese, eating Chinese foods, participating in Chinese culture, all in an attempt to form close friendships with Chinese migrants and bring them to the Truth before the

great peril of the coming end of the current system of things, no other Christian community that I encountered in Zambia was willing to engage with Chinese migrants in this way.

**An Ontological Difference**

The Mandarin-language Witness congregation that Jonah and Esther belonged to was not the only religious congregation I participated in while conducting research in Zambia. Another was the Mugoda congregation of Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) who held their weekly church services directly adjacent to a large Chinese-owned and operated coal mine, known as Summers Coal Mine. Despite their proximity to a large number of Chinese expatriates working at Summers, this congregation of Seventh-day Adventists did not, like the Witness congregation Jonah and Esther belonged to, engage in practices of learning Chinese or attempting to evangelize Chinese migrants. Indeed, for members of this congregation, the moral, spiritual, and even ontological gulf that separated them from their Chinese neighbors and colleagues made evangelizing to these neighbors unthinkable. One Saturday, for example, I was sitting with a group of the SDA elders (the elders were of varying ages but exclusively male) as we shared a meal during the noontime break in our all-day Saturday worship service. Several of the elders began complaining bitterly of how, echoing the mantra of some recent popular radio broadcasts, Chinese people were "buying up" Zambia. As an example, they pointed to the nearby mine, which continued to be owned and managed by a family hailing from Jiangxi Province in the southeast of China even after repeated scandals and revelations that the mine ownership flouted Zambian labor and environmental laws. The elders further noted that the Chinese owners of the mine were extremely obstinate in refusing to grant even the smallest of wage increases to their workers, even as inflation was hitting the Zambian economy hard and the value of the kwacha was dropping, and how the Chinese managers would

even on occasion resort to firing shotguns to disperse crowds of protesting workers demanding better working conditions. The elders' bitter comments slowly transitioned from complaints about the very worldly, here-and-now growing presence of Chinese migrants and investments in Zambia to somber reflections on the ontological divide that separated Chinese and Zambian people. The elders noted that, when we are all brought up to Heaven at the time of Christs' impending Second Coming (the elders explicitly included me in this "we" that would be in Heaven), we would find and meet many interesting people there from all historical eras stretching back to the biblical era, but there would certainly be no Chinese people there. I asked the elders how it could be that Heaven would be filled with so many different groups and yet certainly no Chinese people. The elders explained that this was the case because, fundamentally, Chinese people had no heart or souls (*moyo* in ciTonga).

The contrast between on the one hand these elders of the Seventh-day Adventist church, who averred the total impossibility of Chinese people being brought to Heaven because of their lack of souls, and on the other hand the Witnesses of Jonah and Esther's congregation, who learned Mandarin and spent upwards of seventy hours a month witnessing to Chinese migrants precisely so that they might be saved as part of God's chosen people, was great. Both simultaneously relied upon and engendered quite different historiopractical genres of the human. For the elders of the SDA congregation, this genre was explicitly exclusive: it might include people of African, European, or even Japanese ancestry, but—partially informed by the political relations between nation states today and how these relations played out in political-economic relations at Summers Mine—could not conceivably also include Chinese people. Jonah, by contrast, certainly had negative impressions of specific Chinese individuals that he had worked with or otherwise come into contact with in both Kitwe and Kombela: after all, he had decided that it was no longer appropriate for him to work for Chinese since he felt that they often asked him to do things that he

felt were unethical and which violated the dictates of his religion. But when I asked him about the prevalent narrative in Zambia at that time that Chinese were "buying up" the country—expressed not only by the elders at the SDA church but also for example on some popular radio talk programs—Jonah averred strongly that all of this was really beside the point. Jonah pointed out that very, very soon there would be neither a Zambia to buy up nor a China to buy it, in fact all nations would be destroyed in the coming Great Tribulation that, he felt, was likely to be taking place as early as next month. In these end of times circumstances, the only thing that really mattered was to follow Jesus's example and take up his call to "go...and make disciples of people of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19) before the opportunity to bring additional people to the Truth was lost forever.

This quite general difference in practice and affect between Witnesses and other Christians in Zambia, described by believers themselves as related to doctrinal imperatives, has been remarked upon by ethnographers of Zambian Christianity for several decades now. Poewe (1978), for example, writes of Witnesses in Luapula Province, in northern Zambia, that: "members almost imperceptibly restructure their lives and thus, indirectly, their communities for the purpose of becoming full participants in the coming kingdom of God. Their efforts to behave responsibly, to act in accordance with doctrine, to cope with members' problems, and to screen one another's behavior carefully is intended to insure future participation in this theocracy… This implied separatism, and, in combination with the attitude that all secular governments are of the devil and doomed, makes for a precarious relationship with the rest of society. When converts join the Society they are taught to accept persecution and to be strong, that is, to remain different" (309). As Cross (1977) notes, this implied political separatism of African Witnesses, even in the period after the Watchtower movement had been (re)enfolded within the global Witness movement headquartered in the U.S.A., meant that "modern African governments in Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zaire and Zambia (and recently Mozambique) have followed the colonial example of

outlawing and seeking to eradicate this movement, usually with more bloody effect" (84). Nkrumah (1966) justifies this persecution by singling out Witnesses, the only specific Christian sect he mentions in his text, and noting how, in his words, they engaged in "one of the most insidious methods" of neo-colonialism and "created trouble in certain developing countries by busily teaching their citizens not to salute the new national flags. 'Religion' was too thin to smother the outcry that arose against this activity…" (247). Poewe explicitly contrasts these Witness practices with regards to the politics of the nation-state against that of other Christian groups in Zambia such as Seventh-day Adventists, of whom she writes: "they are at ease with the government, for while they believe in the coming of the millennium, they do not systematically analyze the world political situation in terms of a biblical framework. Locally at least, they concentrate on fortifying the individual to cope with the everyday world as a righteous human being, whether as politician, trader, or 'villager'" (1978: 309).

Thus, the process of historiopraxy pursued by Jonah and the other members of his congregation involves a certain kind of temporal politics, which nevertheless presents itself as being avowedly apolitical (cf. Pettier 2022), that like in Coleman's (2011) analysis requires both the invocation as well as the making of history: as Witnesses explicitly try to pattern the structure of their lives and conduct on the example of Jesus and his earlier followers while also participating directly in the rapidly unfolding events that are about to conclude with the ending of the current system of things. But a crucial element in this process of historiopraxy beyond the invocation and making of history is, for these Witnesses, the elision of history. Whereas for the elders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, who also expressed a firmly-felt belief in a rapidly approaching worldwide transformation that would accompany the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the transformation of Zambia specifically as it started to be influenced more and more by Chinese migrants and investment was still very much an eventful occurrence: so much so that it directly

corresponded to or at least illustrated greater historical patterns that would be replicated once the righteous had been brought up to Heaven. Given the tight linking for these elders between contemporary events in Zambia and wider theological and ontological concerns about the very nature of Chinese people themselves, it is not surprising that members of this congregation, or indeed of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Zambia generally, made no substantial effort to evangelize to the growing Chinese expatriate community, and certainly not to learn Mandarin in order to do so. Some of these elders of the Seventh-day Adventist church worked with Chinese colleagues on an everyday basis, and yet despite these everyday interactions they still seemed quite sure that a spiritual gulf separated them from these Chinese colleagues: a gulf too wide to bridge. For the Witnesses of the Mandarin-language congregation in Kombela, it was very much the opposite. Related to or perhaps because of their conviction that any Chinese activities in Zambia were extra-scriptural with respect to the biblical histories written in advance and therefore largely irrelevant, these Witnesses saw only practical and perhaps cultural, but certainly not ontological, barriers to converting Chinese expatriates. Like many members of the Seventh-day Adventist congregation, some of these Witnesses such as Jonah had experienced strained or frustrating work relations with Chinese in the past, but if for example Jonah felt that this was evidence of an unbridgeable spiritual gap, he gave no sign of it.

**Other Histories**

But the collapsing of eventful history to that which is contained within biblical histories—including both those regarding past events and those written in advance—is not without its difficulties. As I have already described, there is much in secular history, such as recent transformations in Zambia with the increasingly obvious presence of Chinese investors and migrants, that figure in the discourses of Witnesses such as Jonah as not quite fully event-ful. But

this applies to events far in the past, as well, especially to events described by secular or other non-biblical histories that did not take place in the ancient Near East. For example Mr. Cheng, a Chinese man in about his mid-40s who had been working in Zambia for about five years in a Chinese-operated construction company, told me that while he was very interested in printed pamphlets and teachings brought to him by members of Jonah's congregation, he nevertheless was doubtful of the veracity of all the historical biblical accounts they related to him, for precisely the reason that they seemingly failed to include any mention of events that took place in China. Mr. Cheng pointed out that China had its own very ancient history, perhaps, in his view, even more ancient than most of the events described in the Bible, and he found the lack of mention of any of the events of Chinese history in the biblical text to be quite puzzling. Though he had attended a few of the gatherings of the Jehovah's Witnesses, this lack of correlation between Chinese history and biblical history was one of the main reasons that he did not wish to fully accept the teachings of the Witnesses or to become a member of their congregation.

Here again there was creative tension in the practices of both eliding history and invoking it pursued by Jonah and his fellow Witnesses. It is not exactly the case that Jonah or other members of his congregation totally denied the eventfulness of the Chinese history to which Mr. Cheng was alluding to. But they tended to recast this history in terms of the ways that it might intersect with the histories, both of past events and written in advance, that were contained within the Bible. One evening, for example, Jonah and I went to the home of two other congregation member named Robin and Miriam and their two daughters to participate in a family worship session. After we had concluded the family worship service and eaten some dinner, Jonah helped Robin to print out some flashcards of 汉字 (*hanzi*), the logographic characters of the Chinese writing system. As we sat together waiting for the cards to print, Jonah explained to me and Robin how many of the ways in which hanzi are meaningfully constructed from smaller constituent parts are in fact direct

references to biblical accounts. He often used this fact as evidence when he was witnessing to Chinese expatriates such as Mr. Cheng, he said, that ancient Chinese people had knowledge of important biblical events such as the experiences of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Even and the global Flood.

Jonah gave me a few examples of the way in which the composition and structure of hanzi demonstrate the awareness that ancient Chinese peoples had of biblical events. For example, he explained, the Chinese character 想 (in Mandarin, pronounced *xiang*), which has a number of meanings but one of the main ones of which is "to desire," is composed of the elements 木 (*mu*/tree), 目 (*mu*/eye), and 心 (*xin*/heart). Jonah pointed out that this was a direct reference to the story of Eve desiring the forbidden fruit in Genesis 3:6[18], which reads: "Consequently, the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was something desirable to the eyes, yes, the tree was pleasing to look at. So she began taking of its fruit and eating it." Similarly, Jonah pointed out how the Chinese character 船 (*chuan*), meaning "ship," is composed of the elements 舟 (*zhou*/boat), 八 (*ba*/eight), and 口 (*kou*/usually "mouth," but can also operate as a 量词/measure word that refers to the number of people in a family, similarly to how "head" in English can be used as a measure word, as in the phrase "eight head of cattle"). Jonah demonstrated how this character is a reference to the story of Noah and his family, cited in 1 Peter 3:20 which reads, in part: "in Noah's day, while the ark was being constructed, in which a few people, that is, eight souls, were carried safely through the water." As a final demonstration, Jonah showed me the character 狂 (*kuang*), meaning "crazy," which he pointed out was composed of two components, that of 犭 (*quan*), which I

[18] All Bible passages are drawn from the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (2013 Revision), a translation which is published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, the publishing arm of the Jehovah's Witness organization. Jonah and the other members of his congregation explained to me that this translation is the most accurate and comprehensive translation of the holy scriptures into English in existence today.

recognized as "dog," but Jonah told me meant "beast," and 王 (*wang*), which we agreed means "king." Jonah told me that this character was a reference to the madness that overtook King Nebuchadnezzar II late in his reign, as recounted in Daniel 4:31-33:

> While the word was yet in the king's mouth, a voice came down from the heavens: "To you it is being said, O King Neb·u·chad·nez′zar, 'The kingdom has gone away from you, and from mankind you are being driven away. With the beasts of the field your dwelling will be, and you will be given vegetation to eat just like bulls, and seven times will pass over you, until you know that the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind and that he grants it to whomever he wants.'" At that moment the word was fulfilled on Neb·u·chad·nez′zar. He was driven away from mankind, and he began to eat vegetation just like bulls, and his body became wet with the dew of the heavens, until his hair grew long just like eagles' feathers and his nails were like birds' claws.

When I asked Jonah how Chinese people usually reacted when he provided these demonstrations of the biblical origins of Chinese written characters, Jonah told me:

> Most Chinese are fascinated. Actually, they didn't know that these characters have a reference to the Bible. They think maybe their culture has nothing to do with the Bible. They're fascinated to see that they have some background of the Bible in their culture…All cultures have similar stories about the Bible. All these stories were actually handed down orally before the Bible was written.

**Conclusion**

By demonstrating the deep interlinkages of Chinese and biblical history, indeed the great awareness that ancient Chinese people have of the most important events of the Bible, Jonah discursively erased a national division of histories that might otherwise be used, for example, to differently mark off racialized or ethnicized categories "Chinese" and "Zambian." In Jonah's articulation of history, neither historical Zambians nor Chinese were God's chosen people: this role being assigned to the Israelites. But in the aftermath of Jesus and his disciples' spreading of the word of Jehovah God, all human beings now have the opportunity to come to the Truth and to become Jehovah God's *new* chosen people. Thus, for Jonah and Esther and the other members of their congregation, all political

attachments to the nation-state are (Satan-orchestrated) distractions from this fundamental truth: that we could all be one people, Jehovah God's chosen people, through our humble obedience to his will. The Witnesses took this admonition seriously. As with many Zambians, for example, most members of the Witness congregation loved watching professional football (soccer). While Jonah and I were watching a televised football match one evening with Robin and Miriam and their daughters, however, Robin explained very seriously that despite the intense excitement of the match, it was important never to root for the Zambian team over any other national team, even silently in one's heart. This was a temptation of Satan: to allow the (God-intended) unity of human beings through the legitimate joy of a sporting contest to be divided by national(ist) sentiment.

As I have already noted, this earnest commitment of Witnesses to the definite potential (if not actuality) of all human beings to become equal members of Jehovah God's chosen people was not only a discursive one. In a myriad of practical ways, the Witnesses of Jonah's congregation regularly transgressed social boundaries that otherwise tend to dominate social encounters between Chinese migrants and Zambians in other contexts. As an example of these social boundaries, at Summers Mine, where members of the Mugoda SDA congregation and the Chinese management staff had lived directly adjacent to each other, literally just a few feet away, for many years, Zambian and Chinese staff would eat communally freely among themselves but never with the other group. Zambian staff, despite some of them participating in the preparation of the Chinese staff's food, expressed disgust that any Chinese meat dish might be full of dog meat: though none of them had personally witnessed a dog being slaughtered in this way. For their part, Chinese staff members tended to be completely disgusted by the Zambian practices of eating with the hand, and generally refused to eat any food that had not been thoroughly cooked since being touched by a Zambian. At one point they even resorted to publicly dumping out in the communal yard some foods that had been left in the communal refrigerator by Zambian employees. By contrast, Jonah,

Esther, and most of the members of their congregation had come to greatly appreciate Chinese cuisine, often congregating at Chinese restaurants in Kombela that are otherwise almost exclusive frequented by Chinese expatriates. They eagerly sought (as part of their efforts to bring people to the Truth) to form amicable friendships with Chinese migrants, and often invited Chinese migrants to their homes for large communal dinners and socializing.

Though highly cosmopolitan in terms of their practical rejection of national, racialized, or ethicized divisions, however, Witnesses in Zambia are not similarly open to other religious practices or understandings of history. My friend David, a Zambian man who belongs to an SDA congregation, once commented ruefully on how he had no objection to accompanying Witness friends to their religious meetings, but that it was unthinkable for them to reciprocate and accompany him to an SDA meeting. The way that Jonah encompassed Chinese history within biblical history through his analysis of hanzi had a similar tenor. For Jonah, the potential for the Truth perceived by the Witnesses in the Bible to accept and include all people everywhere was capacious, but only on the terms of the Jehovah's Witness religion itself. Any alternative conception of Chinese history, as indeed also of Zambian history, which did not correlate with the histories of past events or histories written in advance contained in the Bible was not truly event-ful. To Jonah, these non-biblical secular histories were mere quasi-event: possibly having occurred, but simply not significant or substantial in the grand sweep of History. This totalizing discourse, of course, shares strong genealogical and discursive links with long traditions in Christianity that have contributed to the development of modernity as it is self-understood in the West (Bialecki, Haynes, and Robbins 2008; Sahlins 1996, Weber 2012). But there are other elements of the (admittedly heterogeneous) self-understandings of modernity that Witnesses directly challenge. Insofar as "purification" (Latour 1993, 2013) of human from other-than-human and teleological, humanistic emphasis on expanding individual freedom through the uniquely human capacity for reason and

rational self-rule have also been elements of secular narratives of modernity (Keane 2007; Meyer 1999), Witnesses in Zambia make a distinctively different kind of claim. Rejecting the basis of rational human self-rule in the political state that has been progressively articulated since the discursive formation of what Wynter (2003) identifies as $Man_1$, Jonah and his fellow Witnesses instead point to the extreme damage human-governed nation-states have wrought in the world. They argue that now, of all times, with the ruins of human-wrought disasters that have taken place since 1914 all around us, all humans everywhere should with the help of the holy spirit submit themselves totally to the rule of Jehovah God and His representative Jesus, and to the guidance in Biblical interpretation provided by Jehovah's "faithful and discreet slave," which is to say the Governing Body of the global Jehovah's Witnesses organization based in Warwick, New York. Witnesses argue that, in stark contrast to all human-ruled polities, it is only Jehovah God and Jesus who can rule humans in a wise, just, and benevolent way. Embracing a cosmopolitan vision of a world without nations while simultaneously rejecting the spiritual and religious pluralism of the liberal state as unsound, Witnesses forcefully lay claim to a theocratic and theocentric modernity that, in their historical understanding, will soon with the help of Jehovah God replace the flawed teleologies of secular modernity.

## INTERLUDE

## The Curse of Ham

***Japheth***

Ash in my mouth. Why did he laugh at Father like that? Always joking. But look at what he's gotten us into now.

It would have been fine if we had just covered Father up in the *chitenge*. Laughed about it ourselves later. Far from earshot. But now Ham has provoked the power of an elder. An elder who is close to GOD. He shouldn't have done that.

Father too. He'll regret it soon as his hangover clears in the morning. Through the throbbing headache, he'll see. By then it will be too late.

Some things cannot be undone.

There is power in old men's words. Too much power. And too much power in young men's joking. I never asked for this.

One day my descendants will say that it is good and just, that GOD intended this to happen, that they can rape and plunder and steal and my brother's laughter makes it just. But Ham is my brother. And now he is my servant, forever will be. His children too. And their children.

Sand stings in my eyes. I turn away in shame.

Four and a half millennia later, I sit down with my friend Francis, whom I call "brother," and share a meal of *nsima*, offals, and *impwa* he has prepared for my visit. The *nsima,* fresh from the pot, burns us as we dig into it with our fingers. But inside it is warm, soft, pillowy. Like eating soft clouds.

Francis works 10 hours a day at the mine. Sometimes at daytime. Sometimes at night. Deep in the pit, it makes little difference.

Even so, Francis prepares an ample lunch when I come to visit. What women in Zambia refer to teasingly as "bachelors' cooking." Still delicious.

I've been away most of the week, visiting other research sites in Zambia, and I'm happy to see Francis. Sated, we lounge in our chairs in his small one-room home, legs splayed wide, hands on our bellies. Laugh about old times. Outside, the sound of children playing. Their half day of school over.

Francis turns serious, shifts to face me. Grumbles about the stubborn shareholders of the mine. As union secretary, he traveled to Lusaka with the rest of the leadership to negotiate new contracts with the owners. But, Francis spits on the ground, the owners refused to grant even a single percentage point wage increase. The mineworkers here are too poor to even buy boots. They go down into the

pit wearing nothing but tropicals, sandals. Francis spits again. These owners, the Chinese, they are not good whites.

Remembering our church service together last Saturday, all gathered together under the acacia tree with the hot sun beating down on us, I ask Francis: Something bothered me. The elders of our church, the Mugoda Seventh-day Adventist congregation, said there would be no Chinese in Heaven. But you and the other mineworkers work next to Chinese managers every day. None of those Chinese will be in Heaven?

They have no *moyo,* Francis says. Not like you and me. (But that is a later story.) Do you know how all these people came to be, he asks me.

I shake my head. Francis points to the picture on his wall, above the TV, pride of place in the small room, his home. A man in long flowing white robes, tresses of brown hair falling to his shoulders. A woman next to him. Blond hair, blue dress. Jesus and Mary, I ask? No, Francis says, Adam and Eve. Look, they are white.

Yes, they are white. Glaringly so. Maybe the person who drew this painting was white, just wanted to draw people that look like him? I ask. No, Francis says. Let me tell you the story of our beginnings, you and me.

***Japheth***

Our father, Noah, he is a GOD-ly man. He walks with GOD. When GOD judged all the world in sin, only Father was deemed blameless. And Mother too, of course. But no one ever talks about her.

One hundred and fifty days we were on that boat before we saw the dove. I liked the rain before. The smell of it.

Not anymore. I'll never forget the screams of the drowning.

In my heart, I doubted. I thought GOD was toying with us, that soon he would throw us all over to join our former neighbors, deep beneath the waves. I thought I would do GOD one better and jump myself. My time, not GOD's time.

It was Ham's laughter and jokes that kept me this side of the water. Not Father's righteous sermons. Those never could reach me half so well as my brother's jokes.

"Tell me the one again about the waterbuck," I say. "How he got that big white ring around his butt." Gets me every time.

When we landed at last, we planted new fields. It seemed good for a while. But Mother has been dead a long time now, and Father discovered the pleasures of the grapes of the vine. Not

fresh. Fermented. Sometimes he takes a little too much pleasure. Sometimes I doubt. Is this a righteous man?

Father likes those grapes. But he can't abide my brother's jokes. Too serious all the time. Expects us to help him even when he can't stand himself. Even when his legs are reeking with piss, his chest with vomit. And always we have to be respectful, oh so respectful. Ham never is.

I wasn't surprised when Ham came running today. "Brothers!" he calls to me and Seth "Come you see what Father has done." A wide grin on his face. This should be fun.

I see Father's naked shoulder and arm, twitching in sleep, lying on the ground. Protruding from the dark entrance to the tent. My stomach begins to churn. Are those drawings on his arm?

Ham is laughing. Uproariously.

Of course Father is passed out naked. Seth and I grab a *chitenge* from the chest of Mother's old clothing. Blue. Yellow floral pattern. Geometric shapes.

We walk backwards to cover Father's nakedness. Avert our eyes. Better not to see his nakedness. Never know how angry he'll be when he wakes up.

Completely enraged, of course. Didn't take well to Ham's jokes. Still slurring his words. But not enough to prevent him making pronouncements.

"I curse you." Father shouts these words, and we freeze. Me, Seth, Ham. Hearts stop beating. There's power in old men's curses. Power that can't be contained within the bounds of human ethics. And the power of a curse laid by a man who walks with GOD? The power of that kind of curse knows no limits.

"Japheth, you are blessed, for covering me in my nakedness. You and all your descendants shall never know want. You shall never suffer much."

"Seth, you and your descendants also shall not suffer. But Japheth will be your boss. I have seen your *moyo*, and I know you only did that out of the example of Japheth, your elder."

"Then *you*." Father's face spitting rage now. Can't even say Ham's name. "You who have laughed at me instead of helping me. From your third grandchild, by the name of Canaan." No. Stop. Something reaches up and begins strangling my chest. "All your clan will be servants to Seth and Japheth."

I shake. There is the power of GOD in those words. Too much to undo.

A harsh wind blows up around us. Sand stings the eyes.

I turn away in shame.

Another four and a half thousand years pass. Violence, war, slavery. Things Francis doesn't say. But hang heavy in the hot, still air of his room.

We breathe sighs. Francis, from a story well told. Me, from existential panic.

Francis lowers his hands. I try to keep my voice level.

It wavers.

"Is that story true?"

Francis, calm: "very true."

"Who are you descended from? Which brother?"

"The third, who laughed at Father. Japheth, the first-born: that is where you fall, the real white mens. Seth, the second brother: the Chinese and Indians fall to him."

Disbelieving. "That's the way God meant it to be?"

“Yes. God said: ‘you, you shall be servants.’” Francis points at his chest. “That means us: we shall be servants.”

Try to argue. “What about rich Black people? Blacks who hire whites or Asians?”

“No matter what. They’ll be servants. Blacks who are rich, they’re proud. The proudness God doesn’t want. Riches are nothing to a Blacks, because they won’t help poor people. But you whites, you help. Generously.”

Protesting. “Black people help. You welcome me to your home, feed me. Isn’t that generosity?”

“Very generous.”

“But?”

“You whites, you don’t just help with tangible things. Clothes, eating, these minor things. You help with the future. The help of GOD.”

***Ham***

Japheth looks away in shame. Glances at me sidelong. I can see the ash falling from his mouth. The loathing in his eyes.

Loathing for himself, for Father, for GOD. For me too, for I am the source of his shame. Anything he can loathe, so long as it soothes his guilty conscience.

I am angry at my brother. Not for the reasons he thinks. Not for all the reasons he hopes to loathe himself and his privilege. He thinks he doesn't deserve it. But against GOD's will, there is no deserving. Just ask my nephew Job.

In a thousand generations of this life, it was never going to be different than this. We were never going to stand equal, feet dug deep in the same wet earth. The flood didn't wipe the sins of our forefathers clean. GOD didn't make that kind of world.

My brother turns away, walks to the west. Refuses to understand. He rejects the curse, as if rejecting it could undo it. Some things are dictated by GOD. They are not to be undone.

My brother walks to the west, and he thinks by keeping himself there, far from me, he will escape the curse. But the only curse he ever had is the guilt his own heart lays upon him.

But I will not outrun my curse. GOD laid it upon me, not to be undone. I walk south, and for a thousand generations my family will suffer at the hands of my two brothers. Japheth turns his face away in shame, in guilt, but that does not change what is to come, what was always going to come, what has already come and passed.

Slaves, his people will call us. But no, not slaves. Servants. And if we serve, they must teach. If we obey, they must provide. If we submit, they should give generously. That is the meaning of the curse, not the equality that my brother pretends to himself he dreams of. GOD did not make us equal, and he did not make an equal world.

In the south I will find the future GOD has chosen for me, and I will suffer at the hands of my brothers, Japheth and Seth. As they say in Aramaic, Japheth is פתה and quite extensive. He will never be able to confine himself within his own lands. Their people Japheth and Seth, they will come to me with ships and weapons of iron, and they will call us slaves. But we are not slaves. We are servants. We are not to be ashamed of that, for it is not us that did the violence.

But at the last, after he has left my people beaten and bloodied, poor, their greatness and riches stripped from them, Japheth will remember again his shame and his guilt, his self-loathing. He will turn his face away in shame, go back to the west whence he came. He will admit no responsibility for what passed between us, him and I, no connection. He will claim his right to develop in his own lands, me in mine. As if those lands are equal.

The true curse, the one that cuts deepest, is not the one pronounced by Father. GOD never intended us to be equal, after all. The true curse is my brother's claims that he and I are equal. He with all GOD blessed him with. Me with what little was left over. And after all that, we are equal? My brother would rather tear me by force and make me a slave than admit connection with me. At least, any kind of connection that is not "equal." The words "master," "servant" make my brother turn away in shame. And forget the obligations he owes me.

I reach out my hand for connection. But my brother turns away in shame.

Francis sees now my disbelief, my distress. He explains things simply. “Look, Justin. Africa is the only continent which has got Blacks, compared to Europe and Asia. It’s obvious the curse is there: Africa was told to be a servant to these two, Europe and Asia. I’ve seen these things, and so have you. Think: have you seen an NGO funded by a Black person, an African?”

“What about Oprah?” Desperate. “She has all those NGOs.”

Simple explanations. “Yes, she’s Black. But where did she come from? You’ll find among her forefathers a white person in front. She’s not 100% Black. Talk of Obama. One of the parents of Obama was a white person also. So, Obama can have an NGO supporting Africa, because of that color in him. Because of that blood in him.”

I plead. “But Noah *cursed* his son and descendants, right? Is that the act of a loving father?”

Francis speaks slowly now, so I can follow. I can’t hear the sound of children playing outside anymore. Not over the ringing in my ears. “Noah didn’t just curse them. He gave them instructions. When you start sponsoring me to school in your country, you have to put regulations on me. That will guide me. If I go outside your conditions, I’ve done wrong. So, you have to keep me within limits. And that is God direct. That is the work of God. Noah cursed Ham so he wouldn’t do it again. Through the cursings all people know, even you, that if I kill, I will be punished. If I covet

the wife of a friend, I'll be punished. Have you seen these guidelines of God? God doesn't want people sinning. He wants us always to be together. Like me and you, connected."

Sponsorship to school. I know Francis means college. A German NGO nearby has sponsored some students to study in Europe. Francis isn't the first person to make such a request of me. Many others have before him. Some of whom I am closer with. Some less.

On a US Ph.D. fellowship, I earn twice in a month what Francis makes in a year. But that money doesn't stretch as far in the US as it does here. How could I support everyone I've become close to here in Zambia?

That would be true equality. True-er, at least. Empty bank account. Income eaten up every month. Same as Francis. Same as most people here. Equal, and hard to stomach.

Try to shift the focus of conversation. It's a racist world, whites are evil. Have done evil in Zambia. Implicit corollary: don't get too close to us, stay separated. Suppressed emotion: let me keep what is mine. Don't make me examine my claims of equality too closely.

Try the tack of colonialism. "What about the British colonialists in Zambia? Doesn't that show that whites weren't helping Zambians?"

"You know Queen Elizabeth. She's the one who's been educating Africa. Teaching us various things."

“Also exploiting Africa?”

“No, she didn’t do that. With her, we say ‘thank you’ because we’ve received a lot of things. Like English. Where would I get English, if not for you whites? Nothing. Talk of Bantus. Bantu-speaking people, they were like the Chinese. Speaking among themselves, no one else can get it. But you whites taught us up to the extent of other people getting us. You got us from our languages to English. English led to the coming of the whole world together. That’s what God wants. How are you and I going to be friends if you can’t get what I’m talking about?”

“So, when whites came and colonized Zambia, that wasn’t a bad thing?”

“Of course, the whites did some bad things. They came here for resources, but doing so they taught us many things. Always, as it was stated, we shall be servants to you whites. Just the way we are: we work for the Chinese, our fathers worked for the Europeans. When it comes to farming even, we learned about farming from you guys.”

“But what about the bad things the whites did?”

“The worst thing you white mens did, you were segregationist. Fine, you come to manage our country for the resources. But you didn’t want to have relations with us. You always wanted to be separate.”

***Ham***

I reach out my hand for connection, and my brother turns his face away in shame.

He cannot comprehend, cannot even imagine, how I might embrace Father's curse rather than reject it.

"It isn't fair to you." He snivels. "No two people, by right of birth alone, should be assigned one as master and one as servant."

My brother's obstinate blindness is worse than any curse ever laid down upon me. He in the West, I in Africa. How can he refuse to see that there is no equality between us, cannot be, cannot ever in any of our lifetimes be? And if it is so, then it must be just.

Connection, relationship, is what my brother owes me. Hollow, empty words of equality is what he gives instead.

Let me be a servant in his tent. Better than to be left out here, in the cold. My tent has already been taken from me. By Father's curse. By my brothers' violence. Words of equality will not give me my tent back.

The desert night is cold. And it is growing colder.

Now 2022, I have failed to fulfill what my brother asked of me. I have not invited him to be a servant in my tent, nor have I sponsored him for education in America and given him guidelines about how he should behave. We chat over Facebook messenger about once a month. But Francis once asked for connection, dependency even. Instead, our two lives are separate. Francis continues his life in southern Zambia. I continue mine in the global North. I'm not sure when, or if, I will see him again.

I owe Francis, of course. I owe him as I owe all the people in Zambia who generously gave of their time and words, in ways that now benefit my professional career. Some more, some less. But it is not that debt, the debt I know, that Francis called upon. Continues to call upon.

The debt he calls upon is the debt of Japheth and Ham, the debt of master and servant, the debt of hierarchy and dependence. It is not a call I know immediately how to answer.

# 5

# CONNECTION

## African Critiques of Liberalism: The Curse of Ham, Biblical Kinship, and Hierarchy in and Beyond Zambia

Francis and I are almost exactly the same age: at the time I met him he was 29 and I was 30. We came to know each other through a local Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Christian congregation which, for lack of a physical church building, met every Saturday in the shade of a large acacia tree amid the small, irrigated fields of rural Mugoda District, in southern Zambia. The acacia tree under which the congregation met was located a half hour's walk from Summers Mine, a Chinese-owned and operated coal mine where I was conducting ethnographic research on relations between Chinese migrants and local Zambians. Though he was young, Francis's employment as a general worker at Summers Mine meant he was counted as one of the congregation's leading elders. Indeed, Francis's regular cash income from employment at the mine, about $100 USD per month, made him one of the congregation's wealthiest members. At the time I met Francis he was also secretary in the miners' union at Summers and was thus part of a group of workers attempting to negotiate, albeit unsuccessfully, with the Chinese owners for pay increases. Within the SDA congregation, Francis was the leader of the Pathfinders, the church youth organization. I first came to know Francis when I joined him and the Pathfinder youth an all-day hike through the hills surrounding Mugoda village (see photograph 18).

Photograph 18: The SDA Pathfinder youth take a day hike through the hills. Outskirts of Mugoda Village, Southern Province, Zambia. September 2015.

Over the following months and years of my fieldwork at Summers Mine, Francis and I would often spend time together, at church and elsewhere. Sometimes Francis would invite me to his home on the outskirts of the nearby town to share a meal together, an expression of hospitality and generosity I was always grateful for. On these occasions, I would often spend the better part of an afternoon with Francis, reclining on small chairs in his small 2-room home talking and laughing together.

On one such long afternoon, after Francis had generously shared with me a meal of *nsima* (Zambian polenta) and a relish of sauteed green vegetables and *impwa* (bitter baby eggplant), we started discussing religious questions. At one point, Francis motioned towards an illustration of

Adam and Eve hanging on his wall and told me: "I think you must know, Justin, that God didn't create a Black person. Our ancestors, Adam and Eve, they were white." I asked Francis how he knew this, since to my knowledge the Bible did not describe the race or skin tone of the first humans. By way of evidence Francis motioned to the illustration again. He pointed out, and I agreed, that the physical features of the man and woman in the painting clearly resembled those of people of European ancestry. But, I asked, perhaps Adam and Eve were depicted as white because the illustrator was himself white? Francis rejected this and instead began to tell me a story, which he explained was the historical account of how Black people came to be in the world. In the generations succeeding Adam and Noah there eventually came Noah, and after the Flood that drowned all other humans, it was Noah's three sons and their wives who repopulated the Earth. The eldest two sons, Francis told me, were named Japheth and Seth, but Francis did not name of the youngest son. Noah's wife had died by this time, so it was up to his sons to take care of him. One day Noah got obscenely drunk and passed out unconscious while naked. Francis described:

> So, he was drunk up to an extent whereby the third-born child, when he saw that the father was naked due to drunkenness, he started laughing at him. He went back, on his way laughing he had gone to those two brothers, and said: "Come, let's go see what our father has done." Then the brothers asked: "Why? What have you seen?" The younger brother said: "At his nakedness, he's so drunk, he can't even control himself." So, what Japheth did, he took a *chitenge* [a kind of Zambian garment, usually worn by women] with that other one Seth. Then, Seth that side, Japheth, instead of looking directly first this direction [at this point Francis stood up and physically demonstrated how the two older brothers walked backwards with their faces averted to lay the chitenge upon the body of their sleeping father without looking upon him]. They wrapped the father. Then the father, he realized that the first-born was the one with those intentions of doing that, not wanting to see the nakedness of the father. That is where the blessings come from. He said: "Japheth, as the first-born, you are so much blessed, and your clan will never, ever suffer. And you, Seth, you shall not suffer. But Japheth will be your boss. Why? I have seen your *moyo*, and I know you only did that out of the example of Japheth, your elder. Then you, you have laughed at me instead of helping me. From your third grandchild, by the name of

> Canaan, all your clan will be servants to Seth and Japheth, and their skin color will change. That is where the affliction has started from.

Fearing where this story was going, I asked Francis how, in his view, this story related to people in the present day. Francis explained, "we Africans, we are from the youngest brother. According to the Bible, Japheth, that is where you fall Justin, the firstborn: the real white mens fall to this clan. Seth: the Chinese and Indians fall to him. We are all cousins, all from Noah." And I asked Francis, since he had told me before that Noah was a godly man, was the curse that Noah laid upon his sons a perversion of God's will, or was it the way that God had intended for things to be? Francis averred that this was a manifestation of God's will, switching nimbly from the second to the first-person: "Yes, He [God/Noah] said: 'you, you will be servants.' Us [here Francis pointed to himself], we will be servants." I tried to raise objections. What about rich Black people who might hire whites or Asians in their companies? Francis replied:

> No matter what, they'll be servants. Why? Black people, when they become so rich, they are proud of themselves. And that is the proudness that God doesn't want. Have you seen? Even though a Black person becomes so rich, the riches are nothing to Blacks, because they can't help poor people. Have you ever heard of a Zambian who is very rich and starts sponsoring someone who is in America? Nothing, there's nothing like that. But you, with you whites, you do help each other.[19]

But what about Africans helping each other, I asked. Wasn't it, for example, extremely generous of Francis himself to invite me into his home and to share his food with me? Francis replied:

> Very generous. But what I am trying to put across is that the whites, they don't just help tangible things like clothes, like eating, these minor things, no. You when you help, I can't even say the way you help, because

[19] Francis's explicit comparison of the relative moral qualities of Black and white people here is of course in direct contradiction of other discourses prevalent in many African countries, including Zambia, of for example *ubuntu* (in South Africa) or African socialism. Contrary to Francis's account, these alternative discourses tend to valorize the moral qualities of African over individualistic and materialistic western culture, emphasizing Africans' willingness to assist one another and to work towards common goals. I suggest that the aftermath of experiences of abjection (Ferguson 1999) and disillusionment with a relatively ineffectual and increasingly ethnicized Zambian state, unable to adequately contest the neoliberalization of the Zambian mining industry, may contribute to Zambians' more frequent contemporary emphasis on the moral failings of Africans rather than the more hopeful narratives of ubuntu and African socialism that prevailed in an earlier era.

> you help with the future. The help of God. Do you know what God has done? In the first place, our Adam and Eve had sinned. But God helped them. He helped them.

Francis's close association in these comments between the help of white people and the help of God reminded me, uncomfortably, of a semi-serious word play joke I had often heard Nyanja-speakers in Zambia tell in my presence (Nyanja is the second-most widely spoken language in Zambia): that when white people first came to Zambia, locals named them *mzungu* because the whites reminded them so much of God (in Nyanja, the word for God is *mulungu*[20]).

Francis and I continued conversing for several hours after this point, and I continued raising questions regarding the ostensibly good character of whites that Francis felt made them so appropriate as masters: for example, the history (in my view) of brutal racial segregation and economic exploitation in Zambia under British imperialism. Francis did not deny the accuracy of these examples, but rather explained them as aberrations and exceptions that worked against the general pattern of whites coming to Zambia for the purpose of helping Zambians by managing their education and economy.

The more we talked, the more disconcerted I became by Francis's comments. This disconcertment, however, was rather different than that experienced by Verran (2001) in her encounter with Yoruba practices of quantification. Verran describes her disconcertment as a tightrope between clear delight and confused misery, which for her manifested as a belly laugh but could, nonetheless, have easily turned into a visceral groan. In my own disconcertment at Francis's words, I experienced no feeling of delight, no belly laugh or joy at the disparity between our views.

[20] The word *mzungu*, which Nyanja and Chichewa also share with Kiswahili, is cognate to similar terms in many Bantu languages throughout eastern and southern Africa, including for example *musungu* in CiBemba, *muRungu* in chiShona and *mlungu* in isiZulu, isiXhosa, and siSwati. All these terms are usually glossed in English as "white (person)" and are perhaps all descended from a common proto-Bantu form *mòjóngò*. Nevertheless, varying stories about these words are told in different parts of Africa, connecting them in different ways to the contemporary Bantu languages spoken in those regions. As noted, Nyanja/Chichewa speakers in Zambia often connect the word *mzungu* to *mulungu* (God), but in east Africa people connect it with the Kiswahili word *kuzunguka*, "to wander," and in South Africa the word *mlungu* is connected with the abeLungu clan, descended from whites shipwrecked on the Pondoland coast circa 1700 (Tshabe et. al 2006).

Instead, Francis's telling of history, and his assertion that I was born to be a master and him my servant, provoked in me a profound sorrow. Verran (2001; 2013) and those who have taken up her example (e.g. Law and Lin 2010) have suggested that dwelling in this kind of ethnographic disconcertment is an important starting place for doing difference together. On the other hand, Simpson (2018; 2020) has cautioned that sympathy and sorrowful sentiment alone can constitute a powerful move towards colonialist apologetics and recuperation. Here I move beyond the deep sorrow Francis's words provoked in me to fulfill one of the obligations I feel I owe him, which is to take seriously his words not only as a comment on our individual relationship together but also as a wider comment on the relations of kinship and connection that ought to pertain between people in a decolonized world. I suggest that these relations, which assume and legitimate racialized social inequality through connections that take a master-servant or patron-client form, profoundly challenge liberal ideals of egalitarianism and equality that subtend the discipline of anthropology.

Taking up persistent calls to decolonize the discipline (e.g. Gupta and Stoolman 2022; Harrison 1997), I propose that Francis's words demonstrate that as anthropologists we cannot know in advance what decolonization means in any given social context, absent an ethnographic engagement with those whom we wish to decolonize our relations with. Like many in the discipline, I have of course long been committed to valuing epistemic (Law and Lin 2010; Verran 2001; 2013) and ontological (Kohn 2015) difference. What made Francis's account so disconcerting, however, was not its epistemic or ontological challenges (though those were quite real) but its *ethical* one. Francis asserted not only that the manifest inequalities of the world made obvious that I was born to be a master and he a servant, but that this was a just and right state of affairs. This was an ethical vision of the world that, to my liberal ways of thinking, was deeply repugnant (Harding 1991). In the following pages I build a number of connections across difference to take seriously the ethical account Francis and other Zambian interlocutors articulated to me. I

conclude using the work of Wynter (2003) to think through how *both* Francis's history of the biblical curse laid down by Noah upon us his descendants *and* my liberal sentiments of egalitarianism fail to live up to a decolonizing project in a radically unequal world. What Francis's account calls attention to, among other things, is the need for a truly decolonial project to abolish the liberal nation-state form that keeps people apart across territorialized boundaries. It also demands a new politics of distribution (cf. Ferguson 2015) and the abolishment of the division between great material production in the global South and consumption in the global North engendered by the circulations of global capitalism. Though they saw it in terms of master-servant, patron-client relationships with which I do not fully or even mostly agree, Francis and others in Zambia who tell the history of Noah articulate an ethical imperative of shared kinship that demands the abandonment of liberal fig-leaves that have for too long excused massive inequalities in the world. In place of liberal fetishes of egalitarianism and equality, this ethical vision calls for the coming together from across seemingly separate continents of all the descendants of Noah in relations of mutual connection and care even, perhaps, if those relations take an inegalitarian master-servant form.

Of course, there are possible outs: various methods, semantic and otherwise, of understanding Francis's words in a way that neuters their challenge to liberal egalitarianism. I do not discount these methods, but I do not think they are sufficient, either. I consider some of these methods first, each as a partial connection across our ethical difference, before turning to what I see as the full force of Francis's critique.

**First Connection: A Wink or a Blink?**

Perhaps the easiest and most comforting of all ways to understand what Francis said in our conversation together is to call on Bayart's (1993, 2000; cf. Ferguson 2013) notion of extraversion

to posit that, despite my very best attempts to read his tone and affect and my interpretation of his comments as genuine, perhaps Francis may not after all have been truly sincere or forthright with me. Of course, even a passing consideration of linguistic pragmatics would remind us that all speech acts are made in a given social context and for a specific purpose. In the case of the conversation with Francis, this social context included extreme disparities of wealth and of professional, travel, and educational opportunities between us. It also involved a relationship in which Francis would often engage in significant acts of generosity towards me, such as inviting me to his home to share his food with him, and in which he would also make requests of me, both large and small, that were outside of his financial means: such as buying him a bicycle or one day, after I had completed my own education and become a university professor, sponsoring him for higher education in the United States. Undoubtedly, this context of our relationship, and of Francis's long-term desires for me to help him with certain things which were financially beyond his means, had a great influence on why he chose to make the comments that he did at that time and that place, and to frame them in the way that he did. But it is also possible to go a step further than this, to posit that not only did Francis's comments obviously have a pragmatic element to them, but that they were purely pragmatic or functional, that they were not in fact (sincere) representations of a worldview that Francis may have actually possessed, but rather a purely strategic attempt to flatter me and to butter me up, so to speak. On this accounting, to repurpose Geertz's (2000) metaphor, perhaps I as the ethnographer had failed to discern the difference between a wink and a blink: perhaps Francis really was winking at me the entire time. I say that this would be comforting even though it would be devastating for my sense of my open friendship with Francis. I was of course well-aware of Francis's requests for things that I could help him with financially, requests that I received from a very, very great number of people I knew in Zambia, both friends and acquaintances, and I chose to assist with many but not all of his requests. That was a shadow that

was always hanging over our friendship, and which I told myself was an inevitable result of the truly vast disparities in wealth and life opportunities that, by contingent chance, Francis and I had each been born into: he in Zambia and I in the United States. If I thought that, even in what I interpreted to be our most relaxed, unguarded moments of chatting together for hours on end at his home, Francis was in fact telling me things that were not at all honest or sincere but rather purely a pragmatic attempt to extract further financial resources from me: that would hurt my sense of our friendship, but it would also save me the ethical pain of confronting the fact that maybe Francis really did consider himself my servant and me his master.

It speaks to the great ethical turmoil that Francis's comments produced in me that nevertheless, this is still the interpretation that strikes me as most comforting. It does so because it represents a plausible and, personal consequences notwithstanding, relatively easy escape route out of ethical disconcertment. It forecloses the necessity of considering that perhaps Francis really did think that he was born to be a servant and I to be his master, that he really did think the color of his skin was a literal curse of Biblical origins. Well aware of this possible interpretation of Francis's comments, in the weeks following our conversation I tried to confirm the historical account he had told me with other Zambians including, quite deliberately, friends and acquaintances I had who were more secure financially and who never made requests of financial assistance from me. Many people I spoke with confirmed Francis's account as literally-true and biblically-justified history and confirmed that this history did have direct relevance for the relationships between Africans and people from other continents today. Some of the Zambian friends and acquaintances said that they did not really know what had occurred and that Francis's account might be true, and it might not be. No one I spoke with ever told me that they thought the story was definitely made-up or a misrepresentation. Indeed, some of the other friends I spoke with expanded considerably on the

implications Francis had described. Here for example is a typical exchange I had on the subject with another one of my Zambian friends:

> David: Africa is the only continent which has got mostly Black people, compared to these two, Europe and Asia. Then Africa we can say is the one who was told to be a slave to these two, Europe and Asia, and for sure these things me myself I've seen them. All the NGOs, the groups, I haven't seen an NGO funded by a Black person or an African.
>
> Justin: What about Oprah Winfrey? She has all those NGOs.
>
> David: Yeah, she's Black, but find out where she came from. You'll find that, amongst the forefathers, she must have a white person in front there. She can't be 100% Black. Let's talk of Obama. One of the parents of Obama was a white person also. So, Obama can have an NGO supporting Africa, because of that color in him. Because of that blood in him.

Now again a consideration of pragmatics here is important. Even if the friends and acquaintances I spoke to in these further occasions were more financially secure than was Francis, and even if they had no desire to one day make a request of financial assistance from me, nevertheless the social context of me, as someone almost universally perceived in Zambia as *mukuwa*[21] (though I myself identify as multiracial), asking Zambians to confirm a historical account which presented Africans as servants and white people as masters is highly salient. Perhaps, in these further conversations, my interlocutors were shocked that I would bring up such a historically racist narrative; perhaps they were simply too polite to tell me that the story I was repeating in an apparently self-serving manner was ridiculous, or patently false, or obviously bigoted. Spread over so many conversations, and with my very best attempts to read the affect and manner of those I repeated Francis's account to, I do not think this is the case. But the possibility remains that despite the literal content of what Francis and others told me regarding the story of Noah and his sons, their words may not have been intended to be taken as literally true. And of course, it is not really a

[21] *Mukuwa* is a word in ciTonga, the most prevalent language in southern Zambia. It is cognate to *mzungu* in Nyanja and *musungu* in CiBemba, all glossed in Zambian English as "white."

binary (intended as literally true vs pragmatically performative) but rather a spectrum. The greater the degree that I view the comments of Francis and others regarding this story as pragmatically and functionally-oriented, the less consuming the ethical challenge their words present. So, this remains one point of connection. Fortunately or unfortunately, however, my very best read on the ethnographic situation was that Francis was being sincere and genuine in the representation of his views; he may have chosen to tell me that particular account in that particular situation because of the ongoing context of our relationship, but I do not think that he was making up or repeating an account that he himself did not really believe to be literally true.

**Second Connection: The Repugnancy of False Consciousness**

Another potentially comforting way to escape from the ethical challenge of Francis's account is to posit that Francis only expressed the views that he did because he was trapped under the mystifying spell of internalized racism, false consciousness, mental colonialism, or the like. Such a way of understanding Francis's comments would be to follow in a long line of thinkers, such as Fanon (2008), who have explored in detail the corrosive effects that colonial and racist encounters have for their victims, not only in a physical sense but in mental and psychological ones as well. As Bourdieu (1991) demonstrated, it is the greatest trick of the powerful to convince the powerless that their condition of oppression is in fact normal, natural, legitimate, and justified. As a response to the ethical disconcertment that I experienced in my conversation with Francis, however, this maneuver of seeing his comments as nothing more than a manifestation of internalized racism leaves much to be desired. In Verran's sense, it is perhaps the ultimate example of what she critiques as a reframing device, since it engages seriously with the content of what Francis is saying (unlike in the first connection, above) but only insofar as to dismiss this content as the delusions of a tragically misguided mind. There is nothing about my (as an individual anthropologist) or our (as

an anthropological discipline committed to a decolonizing and anti-racist project) beliefs, world view, or practices that need to be challenged by this encounter. Understanding the comments of Francis, or David, or others in Zambia who tell the history of Noah and his sons as the result of internalized racism or false consciousness places all of the pathology on them, and none on myself or upon my secular, humanist, ostensibly anti-racist way of understanding the world. It also casts Francis as a hapless, passive victim of toxic ideologies over which he seems to have no control. It denies him the agency, and indeed seemingly the intelligence and awareness, to come to well-considered and thought-through conclusions about the world, and to articulate them in a way that challenged my own.

As I throw this rope of connection, I do not wish to cut it entirely. Processes long ago described by Bourdieu (1991), Fanon (2008), Gramsci (1971), Magubane (1971), Marx and Engels (1998), and wa Thiong'o (1994), which could popularly be glossed as internalized racism or false consciousness, of course complicated considerably the encounter between Francis and I that hot afternoon in his home. But on a basic, ethnographic level, it simply is not plausible to think that Francis was mere passive victim rather than active and agent-ful participant in the worldview he espoused: it is not remotely the case, for example, as some might think, that Francis was trapped in a kind of information vacuum in which he was left with nothing but the old discarded racist ideologies of colonialism. Like the Christians Thomas Kirsch (2011) did research with in a community located only a few hours away from Francis's home, Francis read and absorbed a huge range of texts, from various different periods and from various different Christian denominations, often in disagreement with each other on a wide array of theological points. The stance of the Seventh-day Adventist church which Francis is so actively involved with is to officially reject the racialized and racist implications for our own time of the story of Noah and his sons in the Bible (found in Genesis Chapter 9). Moreover, Francis was surrounded by and often engaged in secular

discourses as well as religious ones. Francis would often articulate nationalist discourses vis-a-vis his Chinese employers, for example, and the great festivities of Zambian Independence Day each October gave us an opportunity to reflect on the history of Zambian national liberation together. Like the American fundamentalists described by Susan Harding (1991) whose worldview may seem so repugnant by the standards of secular liberals, Francis is not merely a backward relic, a person whose beliefs will be swept away by a rising tide of knowledge and enlightenment. Rather, Francis's comments represent such a challenge precisely because they cannot be relegated to the time of the other (Fabian 2014). More importantly, they are both a carefully-considered and a forceful response to the contemporary now he and I shared: a call for a different kind of relations in our present moment. It is that challenge and that call that I (and, I argue, a decolonizing anthropology more generally) can only ignore at our ethical peril. I consider this challenge in the following sections.

**Third Connection: Cultural Repertoires of Kinship and Relationality**

The historical account that Francis explained of how the major contemporary races of human beings and their various statuses within a global hierarchy came to be closely resembles the story of Noah and his sons told in Genesis Chapter 9, though Francis's account did differ in some of its precise details from the story told in the Bible. But the intense family drama of Noah and his sons which I discussed so vigorously with Francis is, of course, quite removed in some ways from either his or my cultural contexts. The book of Genesis was written almost three millennia ago and describes a social and cultural context of the ancient Israelites that differed profoundly from the lives Francis and I lead in the twenty-first century. The actions of Noah towards his sons no doubt fit within a schematic of cultural sense for the ancient Israelites, but by necessity Francis and I had to draw upon our own cultural repertoires to make sense of the history of Noah and his sons. Then

too there is an issue of language: the original words of this account were written in ancient Hebrew, but since neither Francis nor I were versed in ancient Hebrew, we could only understand this story through the medium of its various English translations (in my case) or both its ciTonga and English translations (in Francis's). Another rope of connection to throw across the ethical difference expressed in my conversation with Francis, then, is to consider the ways in which, refracted through our own languages, personal experiences, and cultural prisms, we simply understood this story very differently.

Consider for example Francis's careful choice of words. In our conversation, Francis emphasized that Noah had cursed the descendants of Canaan to be the *servants* of the descendants of Japheth and Seth. But in Genesis Chapter 9, the words that Noah uses to pronounce his curse are considerably more extreme: in the original Hebrew *'eved 'avadim* (Goldenberg 2017), usually rendered in English as *lowest of* servants, *servants of* servants, or most commonly, slaves. Even as Francis was telling me this historical account, then, our understandings of its significance and import were starting to diverge. Even before my conversation with Francis I was broadly aware that for centuries Europeans had used such the story of the Curse of Ham to justify their enslavement of Africans. As Francis related the history of Noah and his sons, then, the associations that came to my mind were of the transatlantic slave trade, the Middle Passage, and plantation-style chattel slavery in the Americas. It was these associations that significantly exacerbated my disconcertment in my conversation with Francis. But insofar as I was associating the relationships between Black people and whites that Francis was describing with chattel slavery, it is also clear that I was not listening to exactly what Francis was saying. Because in his own historical account, which ran almost exactly parallel to but was not identical with the account in Genesis, Francis did not suggest that Blacks should be the slaves of whites, much less that they should be treated like chattel: he suggested

merely that they should be servants, and that even this master-servant relationship should be understood within the context of direct kinship.

Moreover, the specific master-servant relationship that Francis went on to elaborate as the conversation progressed was of a very specific form. When I asked Francis what it meant that Blacks should be the servants of whites, Francis spent little time describing the actual labor of service. He did note that it was appropriate that first the British and now the Chinese owned and operated Summers mine, since the British and Chinese were both groups of white people who were descended from the brothers (Japheth and Seth, respectively) to whom the Black descendants of Canaan owed their service. And Francis also noted the appropriateness of similar kinds of labor that Zambians were compelled to perform for whites during the colonial period, which in his estimation were frequently unduly harsh but nevertheless taught Zambians how to farm properly and how to "stand on their own" (his words). Far more prominent in Francis's description of the relationship that ought to pertain between whites and Blacks, however, was a dynamic of discipline and education. When I asked Francis what the purpose was of Noah's curse on his grandson Canaan and Canaan's descendants, Francis gave me a reply that nimbly moved through different pronouns, sometimes speaking in the third person about God, Noah, his sons, even the Zambian government, and sometimes in the first and second person in a way that seemed to draw Francis and me ourselves into the narrative:

> Noah didn't just curse them. He gave them instructions. Of course, when you start sponsoring me to school, for me to do the right thing you have to put certain regulations, which will guide me. Because when I go outside of your conditions, then it means I've started doing the other business. So, I have to be within limits. And that is God direct. That is the work of God. For those people not to do it again, he cursed them. By the cursings, all people now, even you, know that if I kill, the government will arrest me. If I covet the wife of a friend, I'll be punished. Have you seen the guidelines of God? God doesn't want to see people sinning. Why? He is love. He wants people always to be together.

On the obverse side of this discipline, Francis described how in his view education was the most important element of the colonial dynamic between Blacks and whites:

> Africans found that there was nothing they knew at that particular time. The Africans were relying much on the whites, because they did not know anything. Knowledge, they had no knowledge of anything. The whites had teachings... There were three kings. The Bemba, the Tonga, and the Lozis. After the colonization, the white man brought some examples of things. He brought a cob of maize; he brought a spear. He brought a spear and these other things. He said each one has to choose. Our chief chose what? A cob of maize. That is the reason we are farmers in Zambia, particularly Tongas. So, the white man has to teach each one according to his selection.

Though certainly not the relationship of equality that I attempted to defend in this conversation, the model of relationality that Francis expressed in these comments is also very distant from that of chattel slavery. In fact, it bears more resemblance to patron-client and kinship relationships that have long been a feature of many African societies than it does to the typical American imagination of a master-servant, much less a master-slave, relationship. Slavery was, for example, practiced historically among the Tonga, the ethnic group with which Francis identified. But those taken captive or purchased as slaves were absorbed into the *mazubo* (clans) of their captors and owners, thus over the course of only a generation or two becoming fully integrated within the kinship networks of their ostensible masters. Over time, in fact, the descendants of adopted slaves frequently become the headmen or even chiefs of their *luzubo*[22] (Colson 1960, 2006). In this sense, my explicit refusal to acknowledge Francis's claim to being my servant was also an explicit refusal to recognize him as my kin or grant him any hope of being absorbed into my own much wealthier and more privileged clan and lineage in the United States, a point I will return to in the next section.

Here again Bayart's (1993, 2000; cf. Ferguson 2013) concept of extraversion is important, because it reminds us that African societies and people have often exploited relations of seeming

[22] *Luzubo* ("clan") is the singular in ciTonga of *mazubo* ("clans")

subservience or clientage in order to advance their own ends, often by employing such relationships as a resource through which to resist the influence of dominating actors closer to home. In this way, the contemporary political economic situation in Zambia could be seen in some ways as structurally similar to that existed at the very outset of the colonial period in southern Africa, in which distant Euro-American patrons are perhaps less threatening than the immediate domination of local Zambian (and, more recently, Chinese) elites and are thus a resource to be enlisted even if that enlistment involves subservience. As a potential patron who was close enough to be able to offer real material resources but distant enough that I had no financial stake in processes of labor exploitation and capital accumulation at Summers Mine, I might have fit into Francis's attempt to expand his wealth in people (Guyer and Belinga 1995), slotting into his composition of connections that could assist him in times of need.

But there are ways as well in which Francis's account sharply clashes with cultural idioms and practices that have long been prevalent in Zambia and among the Tonga specifically. Francis's biblically-inspired account of how descent groups from several men in the Bible are and forever will be radically stratified in terms of wealth and privilege bears little resemblance to historical Tonga cultural patterns, which were matrilineal, extremely egalitarian, and neither ranked clans and other descent groups nor recognized any intergenerational disparities in their status (Colson 1960, 2006). Francis's history, then, is a reflection not just on typically African practices of generating wealth in people through extraversion and composition, nor is it even totally a reflection on the cultural presuppositions of the biblical story itself. His history is also a forceful commentary on global patterns of inequality in the twenty-first century.

**Fourth Connection: An Ethical Provocation**

A fourth way of understanding, and engaging with, Francis's comments is as an implicit critique and criticism of my own loud articulation of liberal principles of egalitarianism and equality, principles that I defended both in this conversation and in many others that I had with Francis. After he had told me the historical account of Noah and his sons, for example, and explained that this really did mean that contemporary Africans are born to be servants and Europeans and Asians are born to be masters, I protested strongly that in my view all human beings really are equal in some fundamental sense. If nothing else, I asked, current global inequalities notwithstanding, was it at least conceptually possible in the far future that we could all be equal? But Francis scoffed at me. He reminded me that though he and I were almost exactly the same age, I had completed secondary (high) school about fifteen years previously while he had only just completed a year or two before, and that I had already completed a master's degree and was well on my way to completing my doctorate. By contrast, he pointed out:

> But I haven't yet gone to college. Why? Because my parents can't afford to take me to one of the colleges in the country. But look at you. You have passed the college, you have passed the university, you are done with the diploma, you are done with the degree, you have a masters, soon you will be a professor. Now tell me, how are we going to be equal, me and you? How?

Caught in my building disconcertment, I had no good answer for Francis. He was right: every material circumstance of our lives suggested a radical inequality between him and I. My liberal, secular, humanist belief in the fundamental equality of all human beings was as much an article of faith for me as were any of Francis's comments born from his religious understanding; I had little evidence to provide in the face of Francis's assertion of the obvious inequality between us because my belief in equality was not truly evidence-based. I took it on blind faith that all human beings are born equal and had trouble articulating a counter-narrative to Francis's equally strong assertion that the material circumstances of the world demonstrate that all human beings obviously

are not equal. But Francis's comments presented a more profound challenge to my liberal sentiments of equality and egalitarianism than simply pointing out that they were not borne out by the existing relations of structural inequality between him and I, and between Zambians and Americans (for example) more generally. I could agree with Francis that the structures of human global societies as they currently exist are ones of extreme, at times seemingly insurmountable, inequality. But Francis's assertion, using a story almost identical to old narratives that were used by Europeans to justify enslaving Africans, that this manifest inequality in the world meant that Africans are truly born to be servants and Europeans and Asians born to be masters? That seemed to demolish every liberal principle I clung to. The fundamental discrepancy in our views here however was not so much ontological, a dimension which anthropologists have already treated at length, but ethical: a point I will return to later.

One thing that Francis's and my inability to come to agreement in this conversation exposes is precisely the different kinds of inequality that we both found acceptable and tolerable: that is to say, ethical. Francis, in his moral account, articulated a certain kind of biblically-sanctioned inequality, an inequality based on nothing but birth and skin color, that was ethically anathema to me. But what I failed to appreciate at the time was that the reverse was also true. I may not have liked the brutal structural inequalities of the global economic system that left Francis and I with such profound differences in our material circumstances and life prospects, but however much I may not have liked them, I accepted them as the way things were, for the present at least. I accepted and assumed that I would remain on precisely the life track that Francis had pointed out for me: that I would continue my PhD studies and complete my degree as soon as possible, and thereafter pursue a career as a university professor or a similar white-collar job which in America would probably qualify as middle class but which, I knew, would earn monetary renumeration of such proportions as to be almost unimaginable for most people I knew in Zambia, including Francis. And

though I did not like it, I also accepted the fact that Francis would continue along basically the same life-track that he was on when I met him: that he would in all likelihood continue working for the mine, perhaps in time because of his considerable aptitude and diligence becoming a foreman or the chair of the miner's union, maybe the overall leader of his SDA church congregation as well. I will admit that when he first broached the subject, I was not exactly thrilled at Francis's suggestion that, after graduating with my own PhD, I should pay for his university education in the United States. I was less than thrilled precisely because for me the material inequality that existed between Francis and I, however distasteful and however much the result of long colonialist histories I was firmly opposed to, was nevertheless basically tolerable: an unpleasant but inevitable result of the way things are in the world, however much I might tell myself that I wish they were different. By reminding me, as he did later in this conversation, that I should pay for his university education in the USA, and by justifying this in terms of the fact that because of our ancestry I was born to be a master and Francis was born to be my servant, Francis was indeed articulating a kind of inequality that I experienced, in a quite corporeal, bodily way, as profoundly, utterly repugnant and unacceptable. But Francis was also simultaneously refusing to accept, indeed totally rejecting, a kind of material inequality between him and I that I had already accepted as inevitable and normal. In that conversation I also was articulating an ethical worldview mired in its own repugnancy.

Though Francis felt that the history of Noah and his sons did demonstrate a fundamental inequality between white and Black people, he had no truck with European enslavement of Africans and was sharply critical of racial segregation during the British colonial period in Zambia. The problem during colonialism, Francis explained, was not that the British had come to Zambia and imposed a system of colonial governance: on the contrary, he described this as an extremely positive process for Zambia. Rather, Francis was sharply critical of practices of racial segregation within that colonial system, for precisely the reason that those practices sought to keep Africans and

Europeans separate and apart. Where I saw racial segregation as an essential and inherent part of the colonial project, Francis saw that same segregation as a moral flaw that marred an otherwise benign system and perversely counteracted that system's main purpose: which, in his view, was the bringing of Europeans and Africans together. As he described:

> Francis: You know Queen Elizabeth is the one who has been organizing Africa. Teaching us various things.
>
> Justin: And also exploiting Africa?
>
> Francis: No, as the queen, she did not do that. Of course, maybe she was doing it by instructions, but no with her, we say "thank you" because we have seen a lot of things that we haven't, that we couldn't even maybe see. Things like English. Where would I get English, if not for Britain? Nothing. Talk of Bantu speaking people. Bantu speaking people, they were like the Chinese. The thing which they were speaking amongst themselves, no one else can get it. But the whites could teach those people up to the extent of other people getting them, the whites got those people from their languages to English. And English led to the spread of almost the whole world together. How are we going to be friends if I don't get what you are talking about? The only bad thing the whites used to do: they were segregasive[23]. The segregation that was there was like the white mans, they came to know that OK, the Blacks could not provide for the whites. The Blacks had nothing to provide for them. Always, as it was stated we shall be servants of you people. Just like the way we are: we are workers to the Chinese, and our fathers were workers to the whites in Kalomo. When it comes to farming, we learned about farming through you guys.

Here, the critique Francis articulated of British colonialism was exactly the reverse of my own. I saw British colonialism in Zambia as about altogether too much connection, since I understood colonialist forms of connection to be fundamentally grounded in racism, exploitation, and domination: from my perspective, it would have been better if the British had left Zambian societies well enough alone. But for Francis, the reverse was true: for him the problem was not that there was too much connection but that there was too little. Francis was angry that British

[23] "Segregasive" is a common word in Zambian English used to express a concept that in American English would usually be rendered as "segregationist."

colonialists had come to Zambia to rule but then, through racial segregation, refused to acknowledge their social relatedness and kinship with Zambian people themselves. As Francis pointed out, the relation between master and servant is not only a relation of inequality. It is, like the shared kinship between us that Francis also emphasized, a relation that is also a relationship: a relation that requires and perpetuates social connection. True, that relation totally excludes the liberal bromides of formal egalitarianism, of a level playing field upon which all are free to compete equally. But it is also, in Francis's framing, exclusive of the liberal ordering of nation states which connects for example Americans and Zambians through the sinews of global capitalism while obfuscating (or, in Marx's terms, mystifying) their actual social relatedness to one another. The biblical model of a master-servant relationship, by contrast, is an intensely domestic and familial one that requires ongoing relationality through mutual dependence and obligation. Servants might owe their master subservience, but a biblical patriarch is also obligated to provide for his servants, both materially and spiritually. Servants, in other words, might occupy lowly positions within the patriarchal tent, but at least they are in the tent. Understood this way, my rejection of Francis's account of hereditary inequality was also a rejection of his right, and of Zambians more generally, to enter the tent, even as literal or figurative servants, of first world prosperity.

**Termites Eating at the Granary**

Understanding Francis's comments as a critique of liberal bromides of formal equality starts to build a connection across our difference. But difficulties remain. This way of understanding Francis still secularizes what for him was a profoundly religious narrative, and it fails to engage with the way in which Francis told his story not (only) as a descriptive comment on inequality as the way things are in the world, but also as a normative one as the way things *should be*. Francis

was explicit that Noah pronouncements were those of a pious and godly man, and that the enduring equality they decreed was just.

Like Evans-Pritchard (1937) who can see that termites eating at the granary have caused it to collapse but cannot perceive what the Zande understand that an active and intelligent force caused the termites to destroy that particular granary at that particular time, I can see in a purely secular way the extreme global inequality Francis points to and the ethical relations of connection that inequality necessitates, but I cannot comprehend the divine agency that Francis recognizes behind these global inequalities. In fact, my predicament is worse than Evans-Pritchard's, because at least in Evans-Prichard's case the discrepancy was only (onto-)epistemic, rather than ethical. True, Evans-Pritchard and his Zande interlocutors could not agree about the reality of witchcraft in the world, but at least they could agree that the granary collapsing, and the people it injured, was a (normatively) negative occurrence. Similarly Verran, when confronted with incommensurable (onto-)epistemic difference innocent of any normative or ethical implications, such as radically different ways of quantifying or categorizing plants, responded with a belly laugh.

But the difference Francis and I confronted went far beyond the onto-epistemic, implicated as it was in fundamental questions of ethical value. As a liberal anthropologist, I saw the global inequalities and marginalization of Black people Francis pointed to as an unjust, even evil, state of affairs: the result of long centuries of brutally unjust enslavement, colonial exploitation, and racist discrimination. But for Francis, this state of affairs that I saw as so evil was not unjust at all. It was, rather, the just design of an infinitely loving and benevolent God, carried out by Noah, one of history's most righteous and godly men.

**Genres of the Human/Genres of Man**

Perhaps Francis and I both were trapped in powerful discursive genres that we could not escape: neither of them sufficient ethical answers to the inequalities of the world today. My naive liberalism fails because it blithely tolerates an ethical separation between prosperity concentrated in the global North and economic precarity concentrated in the south, an ethical separation which Francis's words damningly critiqued. Francis's critiques also fail, because though they address the ethical demands structural inequities necessitate, his words fail to imagine possible futures in which this inequality is not such.

One way of seeing this problem is using Wynter's (2003) work to recognize that both Francis and I were both articulating quite limited genres of the human, both indeed related to the ideological construct that Wynter identifies as the ethnoclass Man. As explicated by Wynter, the kind of liberal articulation of justice I espoused is directly descended from Malthusian and Social Darwinian conceptions of social ordering. Following the logic of this genre of the human, privilege and prosperity should be hoarded among those who have it precisely because they have earned it through their greater ability, hard work, etc. Meanwhile those excluded from material abundance, such as Francis, David, and my other friends and interlocutors in Zambia, should be left to their own (according to this ideology, maladaptive) fates. Or, in other words, left to die (Foucault 1990). One might say that I tacitly accepted my place in a privileged ethnoclass (what Wynter identifies as Man2) and, despite my protestations to the contrary, equally accepted Francis's place in an underclass whose position, I felt, I was unable as an individual to alter. But Francis's recounting of the Curse of Ham is also central to this narrative. Wynter points out that, since the Middle Ages, the Curse of Ham story was the originary discursive pillar on which to justify centuries of brutal anti-Black violence and exploitation. Of course, as the ethnoclass of Man has been progressively articulated by Europeans and their descendants it no longer explicitly references the Curse of Ham:

we might say the memory of this originary ideological justification for European humanism and liberalism has been repressed. But the story lives on through its racialized after-effects which serve to "verify" (Wynter's term) the anti-Blackness that leaves nations of Africa and the African diaspora (such as Haiti) at the bottom of the global hierarchies (Mbembe 2003; Pierre 2012; Robinson 2020; Trouillot 1992) and Black minorities in multiracial states at the bottom of domestic hierarchies (Gilroy 2002; Twine 1998). Thus, my experience of disconcertment (in Verran's sense) at Francis's words was also an experience of the uncanny (in Freud's [2003]): it was a profoundly uncomfortable encounter with a trope of anti-Blackness that was historically constitutive in the ideological formation of the liberal ethnoclass of Man, but which has since been repressed. It is a horrifying reminder of the foundation upon which the global capitalist system and liberal ordering of nation states is based, even if that basis is no longer acknowledged today.

**Conclusion**

As a "perplexing particular" (Mattingly 2019), Francis's words echo in a way that challenge settled (or sedimented) liberal conceptions of justice. Wynter (2003), following Césaire (1982), provocatively suggests that what the continuing political struggles for justice need now is a science of the word that will allow us to think beyond the adaptive truths-for that have for so long buttressed the welfare of the narrow ethnoclass of Man at the expense of all others. Francis and David's accounts provide an opening by demonstrating that true justice will require abandoning attachments to the nation-state, the "invisible hand" of the free market, and the neo-Social Darwinism implicit in popular conceptions of meritocracy as justifiable bases for distribution of material welfare and privilege in our world. It will require recognition of the historical contingency of the seemingly "verified" (and therefore natural, inevitable) hierarchies in our world today, and a fuller imagination of new, interconnected social worlds which are not tied to such narrow and

parochial genres of the human. Most of all it will require recognition of our shared kinship across continents, all of us the descendants of Noah, and of the mutual relations of connection, care, and provision these relations of kinship necessitate. This is the challenge that Francis's words call us to.

# CONCLUSION

# EXPLOITATION

## The Time of the Other: Or, What is at Stake in in Attributions of Chinese Colonialism?

On the cover of its Mach 15, 2008 issue the *Economist* magazine (Lucas 2008), one of the most influential and widely read news publications in the English-speaking world, read the huge, bolded words "The New Colonialists." Beneath the gigantic headline was an image of a group of Chinese mounted on camel back, being led through the Sahara Desert by local guides. The Chinese man at the front of the caravan is photoshopped to appear as if he is wearing the classic safari suit and pith helmet, so emblematic of European colonizers of an earlier age, and in his hands, he wields a large flag of the People's Republic of China. Beneath the huge headline is a subtitle that reads "A 14-Page Special Report on China's Thirst for Resources."

The *Economist* is far from the only major Western publication to have drawn an explicit comparison between contemporary Chinese practices in Africa (as well as the rest of the developing world) and earlier practices of European colonialism. For the last decade or more, narratives in the Western media that have outlined China's "scramble" (The Independent, November 4, 2006; Ward and Hackett 2005) to become the "new colonial power" (Walsh 2006) and to extend its "empire" (Watts 2006) in Africa have been almost ubiquitous. As in the Economist "special report" mentioned above, these narratives frequently decry the fact that "in its drive to secure reliable supplies of raw materials…China is coddling dictators, despoiling poor countries and undermining Western efforts to spread democracy and prosperity." Within this context, it is often asserted that America and Europe are "losing" Africa and Latin America.

My mining fieldsites, Summers and Hhaala coal mines, have been especially conducive to these narratives as they have experienced periodic episodes of intense violence between Chinese management staff and Zambian workers, including mass shootings and murder. A number of academics have critiqued this thesis of Chinese neocolonialism in Africa, describing it for example as "intellectually unproductive" (Lee 2017) or as empirically false insofar as it presents Chinese actors as acting fundamentally worse in Africa than Western ones (Yan and Sautman 2013). Rupp goes so far as to assert that: "Fundamentally, relations between China and Africa are neither colonial nor neocolonial" (2008: 79). There are risks in both sides of this lopsided and rather polemicized debate, however, of missing the forest for the trees and of eliding the actual position of Zambian miners, and Zambian society more generally, within a global economic system that exists in the shadow of the legacy of formal colonialism that ended not so many decades ago (Wallerstein 2004). To be sure, accusations of Chinese (neo)colonialism in Africa by Western media or politicians can sometimes be tinged with language that is hyperbolic or paranoid, even at times replicating certain tropes associated with older "Yellow Peril" discourses. They can also be quite hypocritical as they criticize Chinese actors for precisely the kinds of activities that were long practiced by Western nations in Africa, both historically and presently.

In this conclusion I depart from other scholars who have addressed the "Chinese neocolonialism" thesis in that I do not seek to refute this thesis as empirically misleading (as has already exhaustively been done by Sautman and Yan in a long series of articles, see: Sautman and Yan 2012, 2013, 2014; Yan and Sautman 2013). Rather than show it to be empirically false, I instead adopt a Foucauldian approach to think through the "Chinese neocolonialism" thesis as discourse: that is to say, regardless of the (debatable) accuracy or inaccuracy of its representational claims, what productive effects does this discourse have in the world? What work does it achieve for those who articulate it? Of course, it is partly a way to characterize the Chinese state and

Chinese companies as "rogue actors." But what is the power of the specific charge of "colonialism" among all the many accusations of misbehavior so powerful and emotive, for those on both sides of the debate? I analyze the power of this discourse in terms of its temporal politics, the way in which it places Chinese companies and individuals in another time, rendering their actions and behaviors (discursively) inappropriate for our present moment of World History.

But it is also possible to go too far in the other direction, and to simplistically dismiss the neocoloniality of relations in Zambia today by merely showing the hypocritical assumptions of the way this charge is framed in Western media. A charge can be both true and hypocritical, after all. In the second part of this conclusion then I return to the history, first presented in Chapter 1, in which the 1990s witnessed two inter-related shifts in Zambia: one was the arrival for the first time of significant Chinese capitalist investment and entrepreneurship, and the other is the return after two decades of nationalization of all the largest elements of the formal Zambian economy to foreign ownership. Turning to a reconsideration of Kwame Nkrumah's (1966) original framing of neo-colonialism, I suggest that after an optimistic, if problematic, period of at least discursive moves towards economic sovereignty and Zambianization (Burawoy 1972), since the advent of neoliberal structural adjustment and the purchase of virtually all Zambian mines by foreign capital the country has indeed returned to a status that could aptly be characterized as neocolonial.

Though for a brief historical moment which coincided temporally with the advent of political independence and "Zambianization" Zambia occupied a place in the semi-periphery (to use Wallerstein's [2004] conceptual language) of the world economy, in which Zambians could plausibly engage in expectations of modernity (Ferguson 1999) and economic sovereignty, since neoliberal structural adjustment it is now clear that Zambia will occupy a place in the exploited, neo-colonized, primary commodity-producing global economic periphery for the foreseeable future. Though they did not innovate them, the Chinese state and Chinese companies have nevertheless

participated in these broader global shifts quite eagerly. At Summers mine this current, neo-colonial state of affairs is aptly summed up by the aphorism frequently repeated by Zambian workers that "*swebo tuli babelesi ba ma chainizi, ba ma tata besu bakali babelesi ba bamakuwa*": "now we labor for the Chinese, just as our fathers labored for the whites."

Thus, I suggest that the various forms of inequality that run throughout this dissertation, and which manifest most glaringly perhaps in Chapters 3 and 5, are symptomatic of a wider neo-coloniality of relations in Zambia today. But, despite the way that this charge is framed (and debated) around *Chinese* neo-colonialism, as indicated in Chapter 5 these inequalities relate more widely to the place of Zambia in the global economic system. This system involves (in Nkrumah's terms) neo-colonial exploitation of Zambian natural resources and Zambian labor by capitalist actors from many different countries, not only China. As discussed in Chapter 3, these exploitative, neo-colonial inequalities filter through various other structures such as patriarchy in such a way that their harmful and ability-constraining effects fall more heavily upon some individuals than others.

But if in political or economic terms Chinese companies and the Chinese state may not occupy a position that is particularly more or less neocolonial than that of their competitors from other countries, it could be reasonably asked why I have focused in this dissertation on Chinese migration and investment specifically. The answer, to return to my discussion in the introduction, is that China's growing economic and political power on the world stage precisely throws settled neocolonialist states of affairs into variation. For a number of decades the Zambian context paralleled that suggested by Nkrumah in his classic text in that neocolonialist influences could only reasonably be expected to come from one direction: Euro-America or "the West." In this sense, the neocolonizing forces that threatened Zambia's economic sovereignty tended to be racially, linguistically, and religiously akin to the colonial officials and settles who had occupied the country under the formal period of British colonialism. Now, the Chinese state and Chinese companies may

participate eagerly in exactly the same economic processes that other foreign actors do, and which may aptly be termed neocolonial, but in other respects these Chinese actors only ambivalently resemble British colonialists of old. Given the ambivalent perspective on colonialist histories that many of my Zambian interlocutors shared (discussed in Chapter 5), this results in a complex layering of racialized colonial, postcolonial, and neocolonial histories: a palimpsest (cf. Alexander 2005) that complicates but does not negate the neocolonial role of the Chinese state and Chinese companies in Zambia today. As I discuss in Chapter 3 and especially Chapter 2, the way that these processes work out through linguistic and semiotic dynamics leads to Zambian racializations of Chinese migrants as "whites" but not as "*real* whites" that is on the whole unflattering and sometimes contributes to xenophobic hostility or even violence.

In the following pages of this conclusion, then, I take a step back from the ethnographic encounters described in the earlier chapters of this dissertation. I consider the discursive labor performed and the obfuscating pitfalls of *both* discourses that exceptionalize Chinese involvement in Zambia today as "neocolonial" (while disregarding the neocolonialist conduct of other foreign actors) *and* counter-discourses that reject any charge of Chinese neocolonialism (and thereby elide the wider power dynamics at work in Chinese investments today).

## Coevalness Denied: China's Present and Europe's Colonial Past

### *The Political Cosmology of Allochronism*

In his classic work *Time and the Other*, Fabian (2014) points out that there is a fundamental disjunction in the way that most anthropology is carried out. When conducting ethnographic fieldwork, the anthropologist cannot help but acknowledge that she and her research subjects occupy the same time and temporality. How could they not? The very process of dialogue and conversation—processes which ethnography absolutely depends on—require that both

anthropologist and interlocutor be experiencing the same present. But, Fabian argues, when the anthropologist returns to her home country to begin writing up her fieldwork—a process that will eventually result in published articles and books—suddenly the research subject is placed in another time altogether. A number of concurrent processes happen here. One is that, even though the ethnographic informant is most often a singular—an individual or a few individuals from whom the anthropologist acquires important information—the subject in the later published materials suddenly becomes plural: a "society." Concurrently, the dynamic interlocutor of the ethnographic process becomes static, frozen in a certain slice of time and all too frequently portrayed as if that particular slice of time was indistinguishable from all the times that had come before it and all the times that had come after it. Finally, and this is the most important, this particular static moment of time that the other is assigned to is frequently a point in the Western anthropologist's own timeline—but it is not the anthropologist's present. Instead, difference between the Western anthropologist and the non-Western other is implicitly understood to be temporal distance such that the non-Western other occupies a place on the Western timeline some time (perhaps a very, very long time) before the present. This is made explicit when certain cultural practices are described as "archaic" or "Neolithic," when living societies are said to be practicing "stone age economics," or when certain styles are thought of as "savage" or "primitive." As anthropology has attempted to move away from the evolutionist paradigms of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries these kinds of comparisons have often become less explicit, but Fabian argues that implicitly they remain absolutely essential to anthropological thinking: so much so that they constitute anthropology's distinctive "political cosmology." Fabian sums up this point by writing that:

> beneath their bewildering variety, the distancing devices that we can identify produce a global result. I will call it *denial of coevalness*. By that I mean *a persistent and systematic*

> *tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse*. (2014: 31)

This strategy of the denial of coevalness—place those who are talked about in a time other than of the one who talks—results in a discourse that Fabian terms *allochronic*.

Povinelli (2011) revisits Fabian's discussion of allochrony and the denial of coevalness in a couple of important ways. Firstly, she draws attention to the central importance of tense in late liberal technologies of understanding and argues that the types of allochronic discourses that Fabian describes assign different cultures not only to different times but actually to different tenses. More crucially for my purposes here, Povinelli points out that allochronic discourse and the denial of coevalness are not a uniquely anthropological phenomenon. Instead, she writes that:

> we should be wary…of wallowing too long in a self-lacerating version of anthropological exceptionalism. After all, narrative maneuvers of time and the other—or what should be more precisely called tense and the other—within the political cosmology of anthropology are located within the broader social tenses of late liberalism. (2011)

What Povinelli in effect suggests is that, far from being a uniquely anthropological practice, the denial of coevalness is in fact endemic to a wide array of late liberal technologies of knowing the other. This might well include, for example, Western media representations of Chinese others in the *Economist* and other publications.

Before proceeding further, I should make a note here about Povinelli's term *late liberalism*, which I have used here in addition to terms such as *neoliberal*. Povinelli emphasizes that by *late* she does not mean near the end of its life, but rather late in the sense of *belated*—a belated response on the part of the defenders of liberalism to the challenges of cultural difference, new social movements, and—most relevantly for the purposes of this paper—the emergence of market counterhegemons such as China, India and Russia. These counterhegemons, whose political forms

resist or outright reject the assumed conjunction of market capitalism and liberal democracy, threaten liberal epistemologies and technologies of governing in ways that proponents of liberalism have only belatedly reacted to. This is the sense in which the term *late liberalism* will be used in this chapter.

*Periodization, Teleology, and the Politics of Time*

Related to the critique Fabian developed in the 1980s of anthropology's tendency to deny the coevalness of its ethnographic subjects is Davis's (2008) discussion of the political uses the periodization of history can be put to. In this book Davis argues that feudal*ism*, and terms like it such as *the middle ages*, were conceptual categories that arose not out of the periods in which they allegedly occurred or even immediately after (i.e. the Renaissance) but in fact were constructed through legal and juridical discourses starting in the in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These categories operated as foils essential in the emerging European sense of itself as occupying "modernity" and in the new theories of sovereignty that were occurring with it. But as European nations began to expand their borders spatially, this conception that was originally used to construct an image of the modern European "self" in opposition to pre-modern history increasingly began to be used as a means of constructing that self in opposition to the temporalized others that Europeans encountered in other regions of the globe. Thus, in analyzing land holding systems in India, for example, European colonizers came to view the Indian system as an almost exact analogue of the feudalism that had occurred in their own pasts—thereby displacing the radical "otherness" of Indian social systems into mere temporal difference. This recognition of feudalism in indigenous Indian social systems then justified a range of European interventions into those social systems—interventions which became constitutive of the colonial experience.

But as Davis points out, it was not only in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when they were first beginning their colonial projects that Europeans adopted conceptual postures that allowed them to see a temporally-displaced feudalism in the spatially remote regions of the globe. Indeed, this is a propensity that has marked Western discourses up to the present day. She notes that in 2007, for example, National Public Radio aired an extensive segment characterizing Pakistan, "a key U.S. ally in the war on terror," as feudal. She remarks in response to this segment that

> "feudalism," apparently, is a story with more work to do…These negative characteristics are precisely those that the United States would prefer to associate with "developing" nations that it monitors and aids, or that it invades and occupies, and to keep safely distant from reports of its own problems with political and economic corruption, "religious extremism," and presidential behavior. No mere slur in this context, "feudalism" solves the problem by putting temporal distance between modern democracy and rogue nation behavior. (2008:132)

From this paradigm, the required course that Pakistan must take (and it is assumed that action is required) is in "getting over" its own retrograde behaviors and bringing itself in line with modernity. Davis writes further that under this paradigm:

> Pakistan must successfully overcome this "ancient" past by making the transition from feudalism, "a system where money and muscle matters," to democracy, "a presidential system like that in the United States." There seems to be no irony intended. (2008: 133)

I would like to argue that Davis's discussion of the West's presentation of itself in opposition to Pakistani feudalism is just as apt with respect to its opposition to Chinese colonialism. A substitution of a few key words in Davis's text will perhaps demonstrate what I mean. In addition to Davis's above statement about Pakistan, we could also write that "China must successfully overcome this 'retrograde' past by making the transition from colonialism, 'a system where money

and muscle matters,' to Western-style neoliberalism, 'a foreign policy system like that of the United States." No irony indeed.

This Western emphasis on the distinctness between its modern self and its temporal and spatial others seems central to a certain Western teleology that posits itself as the prime mover of history. As Susan Sontag notes,

> modern thought is pledged to a kind of applied Hegelianism: seeking its Self in the Other. Europe seeks itself in the exotic . . . among preliterate peoples . . . The 'other' is experienced as a harsh purification of 'self '. (Hayes and Hayes 1970: 185)

This Western teleology of the self—which through belief in the universality of the Western experience becomes the teleology of the world—involves an inexorable advancement towards greater and greater degrees of freedom, liberalism, and "human rights." Returning to Davis's discussion of Pakistani "feudalism," Davis notes that:

> "feudalism"—the story of a past that kept "millions and millions of the peasantry enslaved," a story written as a means of placing slavery in Europe's past and elsewhere so that Europe's, and then America's, story of rising political freedom and democracy could unfold as antithetical to that slavery and subjugation, even though the history of this democracy has developed hand in hand with the enslavement and economic oppression of millions and millions of people—continues to do its job. (2008: 133)

Discussing Michel Foucault's (2003) discussion of the "inversion of the temporal axis of the [political] demand," Povinelli also comments on this need for the non-Western other to complete the Western teleology of becoming. She writes that:

> the temporal inversion Foucault diagnosed was not merely a transformation of Europe in relation to itself. The "inversion of the temporal axis of the demand" had a dual address. It constituted a division of tense within Europe (what it had been and what it was now

> becoming) and a division between Europe and non-Europe (what Europeans were becoming and what non-Europeans were). (2011: 27)

Thus Chinese "colonialism," every bit as much as Pakistani "feudalism" or Middle Eastern "religious extremism" seems an essential part of how the West can understand its relationships with its own past and future. It is precisely because all of these societies can be made to occupy various places on the Western teleological timeline that this timeline can be made to seem both universal and necessary—the timeline that all societies, no matter how spatially removed from the West, must pass through. And it is because the West is always at the forefront of this teleological, world historical change, showing the way to the other societies of the world, that it can manage those societies politically through what Elizabeth Povinelli has called the *governance of the prior*.

Central to the idea of the governance of the prior is the twofold division that Povinelli first presents in her book *The Empire of Love* (2006): the division between the autological subject and the genealogical society. The autological subject, a product of Western thinking on freedom and progress, is autonomous and self-determining, oriented towards the future and able to shape that future and his relation to it. The genealogical society, by contrast, is oriented towards the past—bound by social constraint, determination, and the heavy inheritances of history, the society lacks both distinct individuals capable of acting on their own as well as the ability to change or evolve its practices. As Povinelli notes, this implicit division in Western thinking between the autological subject and the genealogical society is fundamentally animated by a civilizational tense: one is oriented towards the future, the other towards the past. This division and the civilizational tense that it posits, in turn, become central to the Western teleology of unfolding that other societies must follow. Europe and America, composed of free and individual autological subjects, is the only society competent to *make history*—in the sense of driving history forward along the world historical teleology towards greater and greater liberalism and freedom. When societies like China

attempt practices that at first seem to challenge the teleology of Western hegemony—by contesting Western economic and political dominance in Africa for example—this challenge can be managed conceptually by imagining the Chinese as only *repeating* practices that the West long ago abandoned. Worse, the Chinese—a genealogical society unable to properly invent their own world historical practices—are stuck repeating Western practices (i.e. colonialism) at a time when the teleology of world history has moved on, and those practices are no longer *appropriate*. Now is the time for a neoliberal governance of Africa by the powerful countries of the world—a governance that stresses human rights, liberalism, and market capitalism. In this context, China's contemporary practices on the continent—out of sync with the current moment in the teleology of world history—are simply unacceptable. This is an issue which I will examine in more detail in the following section.

*The Colonial Event*

In *Economies of Abandonment*, Elizabeth Povinelli argues that though they are central to late liberal technologies of governing the other, teleological and eschatological paradigms are not the only tense-laden discourses at hand for the liberal project. Another is that of the *liberal constitutional event*. Drawing from Benjamin Lee's (1997) writing on the temporal performative dynamic of modern democratic constitutionality, as well as Walter Benjamin's (1986) distinction between constituted and constituting violence, Povinelli writes that:

> constitutions can be said to presuppose and project into social space a division of tense, that is, the before and after the event of the constitution. Constitutionality divides national time between the liberal state of exception (the foundational violence of the constitutional event) and liberal exceptionalism (the exclusion of further foundational violence that the constitution guarantees). (Povinelli 2011: 13)

In a similar sense, I argue, we can understand the "colonial event" as a certain moment in the Western teleology of becoming discussed above. Like the liberal constitutional event described by Povinelli, the colonial event is foundational—its occurrence was essential in shaping the liberal world order that exists today. Also like the constitutional event, the colonial event constitutes a fundamental division in time and in world history. During and before this colonial event there existed a state of exception—even though liberal ideologies were already well-articulated in European thought by the time the imperial project in Africa began, it was never imagined at the time that it would be necessary to apply these liberal precepts and practices to the governance of African natives. Instead, the colonial system (except, perhaps, for its very last formulations) was defined by both extreme violence and extreme illiberality. By contrast, the current moment of (neoliberal) exceptionalism, in which discourses such as those of human rights and market capitalism reign paramount, totally excludes the legitimacy of any practices that are deemed "colonial." In these discourses colonialism as it was practiced by Europeans in an earlier era is rarely directly criticized. After all, it was a necessary process in creating the world we know today—a world that is dominated by neoliberal discourses of governing and seems to be progressing well along the Western telos of history. But it is understood that, *now that we have reached this moment* (e.g. of neoliberalism and "human rights"), colonialism is no longer an acceptable part of the world system. Thus, when the Chinese are, through the governance of the prior, placed in the period of "colonialism" this becomes, *ipso facto*, cause to reject Chinese practices vis a vs Africa and the rest of the developing world as illegitimate and inappropriate. This then suggests more the ways in which discourses of Chinese colonialism can be used as a method of political control, a topic to which I will turn more explicitly in the next section.

*Chinese Colonialism as Phonos*

In *Disagreement,* Rancière (1999) develops a conceptual distinction between *phonos* and *logos*. This distinction, drawn from Aristotle, renders logos as that set of things that are visible and sayable, while phonos is nothing more than noise. This distinction is then crucial in understanding a second opposition that Rancière describes: namely, that of the act of *policing* versus that of *politics*. Rancière argues that the police, contrary to their usual identification with the power of the truncheon and more in line with the way in which Michel Foucault uses the term, are a set of practices that allow certain rearrangements *within* the orders of phonos and logos but which seek to prevent any transference between the two—that is, seek to prevent any mere noise from entering the realm of the visible and the sayable. Thus, he writes:

> the police is, essentially, the law, generally implicit, that defines a party's share or lack of it. But to define this, you must first define the configuration of the perceptible in which one or the other is inscribed. The police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise. (1999: 29)

The term *politics*, on the other hand, Rancière reserves for those radical transformations in the system that allow new discourses and new practices to become both visible and sayable, thereby changing the old order. Thus,

> political activity is whatever shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a place's destination. It makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise; it makes understood as discourse what was once only heard as noise. (1999: 29)

Furthermore, for Rancière "politics exists because those who have no right to be counted as speaking beings make themselves of some account" (1999: 27). Rancière demonstrates his opposition between policing and politics with a number of examples drawn from history, including those of a plebeian uprising in ancient Rome and black, female, and homosexual claims on public rationality. What unites all these cases, for Rancière, is the sudden ability of a certain segment of society to suddenly and unambiguously make themselves heard *as speakers of an intelligible discourse* where they were never heard before, and thereby to make their being and practices newly visible and sayable.

Elizabeth Povinelli argues that the management of the opposition between policing and politics constitutes one of the dominant technologies for the governance of difference in late liberalism. Similarly, I want to argue here that the characterization of Chinese practices in Africa as colonial, in addition to the temporal displacement it performs as described above, also constitutes an act of policing in Rancière's sense. Contemporary Chinese activities in Africa could be seen as challenging—and threatening—a Western physical and ideological hegemony that has existed on the continent for the last few centuries. This hegemony, intimately bound up with Western ideas of its own teleology, of liberalism, and of freedom, could conceivably crumble if Chinese practices were acknowledged as logos—i.e. as visible and sayable *as a separate discourse* neither of nor existing inside Western teleologies. What would it mean for the liberal/neoliberal world order, itself born out of colonialism, if Chinese practices whose concrete reality is increasingly hard to ignore were conceptualized as neither conforming to the liberal order nor as characterized by temporally pre-liberal vestiges of colonialism? What would it mean for the universalizing Western teleology of itself and the world if the Chinese were recognized, not as a genealogical society, but as *autological subjects*, whose practices might shape the future in ways contrary to Western liberalism? It is exactly these consequences, I argue, that the reduction of Chinese activities in Africa to colonialism

seeks to deny. If the Chinese presence on the continent is merely a pre-modern and pre-liberal vestige of the colonial mentality, a mere mistaken recurrence of an already completed stage of the Western teleology, then it is also mere *phonos*, or noise. It does not present a challenge to either Western liberalism or to Western teleology because, as a backward-looking practice, it cannot shape the future. It is reduced to a mere temporal aberration—the Chinese seemingly confused about which world historical epoch they are in—which will naturally right itself as the world progresses on its march along the Western teleology towards greater and greater "freedom." Thereby, the threat to Western ideological hegemony is contained. Change has indeed occurred—for Rancière even acts of policing allow for a reshuffling of roles—but no fundamental challenge to the liberal world order is generated because Chinese activities do not have the logos—the ability to be articulated as a forward-looking discourse *separate from that of liberalism*. "Your misfortune is not to be" one of the patricians tells the revolting plebeians in the account Rancière draws from, "and this misfortune is inescapable" (1999: 27). Of course, it is not the case that the plebeians in this case are *literally* "not to be"—they are physically present, after all. But as possessors only of phonos and not logos, their presence cannot be significant—their discourses can neither be visible nor sayable in competition to the official discourse. I argue that the attribution of colonialism to Chinese practice in Africa has a similar effect of excluding those practices from the order of the visible and sayable. It renders those practices *not to be*.

Thus, these kinds of characterizations continue a long trend in Western epistemologies, anthropological and otherwise, that place the non-Western "other" in a different time than the Western self and which ascribe to this other a historical periodization drawn from the West's own past. In addition to merely repeating a certain pattern of epistemological mistakes, however, this denial of coevalness has specific ideological and political effects. For one, the portrayal of Chinese practices as unfree and illiberal historical vestiges of a bygone era helps buttress a Western-led and

Western-dominated teleology towards greater and greater degrees of freedom and liberality worldwide. By displacing attention on to a non-conforming other, this discourse helps paper over the many and myriad ways that Western nations, corporations, and individuals themselves so frequently fail to behave in liberal or freedom-enhancing ways, thereby safeguarding these Western actors from external criticism or even self-doubt. Moreover, the attribution of Chinese "colonialism" reduces Chinese activities from the order of logos to the order of phonos—from the order of things that have the potential to challenge the contemporary world system and alter the future to the order of things which, as mere noise, cannot have any transformative effects whatsoever. By doing so, these discourses of Chinese colonialism in Africa ensure that, in the Western mind at least, the hegemony of neoliberal technologies of governing—of "human rights," market capitalism, and electoral democracy—remain hard to dispute.

**Not One (Neo)-Colonizer, But Many**

In contrast with the temporal politics implicit in many attributions of "Chinese neocolonialism" by Western politicians or journalists (and which seem to be tacitly accepted by those academics who seek to refute these attributions), the temporal framing of Nkrumah's (1966) original conceptualization of the term neo-colonialism was both more subtle and more nuanced. For Nkrumah, neo-colonialism is not necessarily a kind of relation which follows after formal, political colonialism (though of course it might be, and in many cases is). For Nkrumah, rather, neo-colonialism might also very well be a relation between states that precedes formal colonization. This for example, is how he describes the position of Egypt vis a vis Great Britain in the nineteenth century: as a neocolonial relation of economic domination and control that would only later be followed by the outright political and military control of formal colonialism. Thus, rather than a specific framing of unilinear, periodized successionality (where neo-colonialism is necessarily a

relation that follows after colonialism, for example), Nkrumah's analysis subtly draws our attention to the ways in which neo-colonialism is really more about global capitalism than it is about relations between nation states per se.

Thus, when Lee (2017) writes that "there is no military occupation by China in Africa, no chartered companies with exclusive or sovereign trading rights, no religious proselytizing [though there is, in fact Chinese state-backed religious proselytizing in Africa]" in order to refute the idea that China capital occupies a neo-colonial role vis a vis African economies, she risks eliding the very real ways in which Chinese capital participate in global dynamics that leave countries such as Zambia very much in a neo-colonized position. Within the British colonial system, Zambia was structured to provide a single primary commodity: copper. Almost all of the formal economy of Zambia during the colonial period was developed so as to promote the production of copper, which was mined from the large copper reserves in the northwest part of the country. Coal mines such as at Summers and Hhaala, in southern Zambia, provided coal that was used in copper smelters and other secondary industries in the northwest. This mining industry was entirely controlled by people of white European descent, most notably the Anglo-American corporation, originating from South Africa. Employment at the mines was organized according to an explicit "color bar:" in which no white would ever have a Black Zambian as a boss. Thus, all supervisory and managerial positions at the mines were reserved for whites, while the actual labor of production was performed overwhelmingly by Blacks.

Without major sources of capital to develop other industries, copper mining has remained to this day the foremost element of Zambian economy, generating the lion's share of formal employment as well as foreign exchange earnings and tax revenue for the Zambian government. Not surprisingly, then, part of the nationalist program of Kenneth Kaunda's United Independence Party (UNIP) when Zambia achieved independence in 1964 was to achieve not only political but

economic sovereignty by effecting a "Zambianization" of the mining industry. This involved partly a nationalization of the mines, by which their control was transferred from private corporations such as Anglo-American to the Zambian state. It also involved a deliberate program of gradually placing more and more (Black) Zambians throughout the ranks of the mine management hierarchies, a process well documented by Burawoy (1972). As Fraser notes, however, the timing of this process was (for Zambia, at least) quite unlucky. Relying overwhelming on the export of a single primary commodity, copper, the Zambian economy (and the revenues of the Zambian government) were extremely susceptible to fluctuations in the price of that commodity in global capitalist markets. Over the decades of the Zambian mining industry the price of copper has seen quite dramatic price fluctuations, and after a major world oil shock in 1979 copper prices entered a period of long decline that left the nationalized mining industry and developmentalist Zambian state increasingly low on revenue. This collapse in the price of Zambia's main export commodity had broader impacts throughout society. Whereas at independence Zambia was classed as a middle-income country (semi-periphery, in Wallerstein's terms) with a higher per capita GDP than South Korea, Turkey, Brazil, or Malaysia, between 1974 and 1994 per capita income declined by 50%, leaving Zambia the 25th-poorest country in the world (Fraser 2010).

As Zambia borrowed ever more heavily to support the range of social benefits it had begun offering miners and their families in the urban areas of the Copperbelt, the government soon found itself in a major debt crisis. This crisis resulted in a period of IMF and World Bank-supervised structural adjustment in the late 1980s and 1990s that saw the privatization of the Zambian mining industry, with formerly nationalized mines sold at very low prices to private investors. Since there was not enough capital in the Zambian private sector to purchase and operate these mines, the eventual ownership of these mines, the crown jewels of the Zambian formal economy, came to be entirely foreign.

The largest and most valuable of the mines (KCM) even went to the former colonial operator, Anglo-American, though within a few years' time Anglo-American had sold the mine on to another foreign firm: Vedanta, a company which had been founded by an Indian CEO but was traded on the London Stock Exchange. Within a few years, of the structural adjustment-induced mass selloff of Zambian mines, the price of copper began to rapidly shoot up again, and the new, foreign, operators of the Zambian copper mines saw massive windfall profits. Because of detailed Development Agreements (DAs) that had been signed with the Zambian government when these firms had purchased the mines during structural adjustment, however, the mines were exempt from much of Zambian regulatory and tax law, and the effective tax rate for most of the mines was 0%. As a result, the massive windfall profits the copper mines were now producing were repatriated out of Zambia, even as they engaged in a continued casualization of the Zambian workforce, contributing to increasing economic precarity in the lives of miners and their families. Where the Zambian government once provided a cradle to grave welfare system for its mining workforce that included not only quite literally subsidized diapers and funerals but also schools, hospitals, recreation facilities, etc., the new owners of the Zambian mines increasingly disregarded these responsibilities as the approach to mining on the Copperbelt became "socially-thin" (Ferguson 2006). As Lee notes very succinctly: "in sum, when Chinese companies, together with other foreign investors, arrived in Zambia in the late 1990s, they found a political economy that had been put in place by forces and agents not of their making, but of which they took advantage" (2017: 64; see also Kragelund 2009).

All of this seems to quite clearly resemble the situation explicated by Nkrumah in his (1966) classic exposition on neo-colonialism, in terms of the ways in which control of all the main levers of the Zambian economy have shifted out of the hands of Zambian actors themselves (whether those actors are the Zambian state, corporations, or individuals) and come to completely reside in

the hands of foreigners. As a result, the profits and revenue from Zambia's very great wealth in mineral resources is also repatriated outside of Zambia, to the steady impoverishment of the Zambian state and people.

But where Nkrumah's analysis of neo-colonialism as well as later developments such as Wallerstein's (2004) world-systems analysis fail to fully account for contemporary developments is in their vision of a world system of nation states clearly separable among those who might take on roles as the neocolonizer and those that are vulnerable to being neocolonized: in other words states that would conform to the core and periphery distinctions in Wallerstein's analysis or, in more contemporary parlance, the global North and the Global South. But in Zambia today, the mining industry is dominated by corporations hailing from countries that either are or once were clearly of the global South (including India, Brazil, South Africa, and China) as well as the global North (Canada, Australia, Switzerland) (Lee 2017). It is not the case then, as a very narrow reading of Nkrumah might suggest, that a small coterie of former European and North American colonizers continue to dominate neocolonial relations with formerly colonized states. Rather, state-owned and private capital emerging from nations that were themselves very much the victims of European colonialism (e.g. India) or semi-colonialism (e.g. China) has now joined the ranks of multinational capital emerging from the global North to engage in the extraction of primary commodities and the exploitation of commodity-producing labor in countries such as Zambia.

What all of this goes to demonstrate is very much not that Zambia is not, structurally, in a position that it might be neocolonized by the interests and agendas of foreign capital. Nor does it show that Chinese (or Indian, for that matter) companies, rather private or state-owned, are not actively participating in this process. What it does reveal is that a once-seemingly global order of things is increasingly being turned on its head. Where once countries such as Brazil, South Africa, India, and China were emblematic of the global South, increasingly these countries are at the

leading edge of global (neoliberal) capitalist transformations, and in many places such as Zambia becoming some of the most visible faces of capitalist exploitation.

But though Nkrumah suggested that neo-colonialism was a phase that could either precede or follow more overt forms of political colonialism, the temporalities at play in the bare fact that this current period of neocolonialism in Zambia follows an earlier period of British colonization has a great impact on how these colonialist dynamics play out today. At no time have Zambians themselves ever been passive participants in these processes. Instead, since the colonial period, the actions and agency of Zambian themselves has been central in shaping and constraining how colonial dynamics played out in practice. (Black) Zambian miners' unions for example, were a powerful force in winning increasing welfare for miners during the British colonial period against the interests of white settlers and the colonial administrative regime (Larmer 2010). The resistance of Black Zambians was also central in dooming the Rhodesian federation, which had joined Zambia's predecessor territory of North-West Rhodesia to its southern neighbor (now Zimbabwe) in what Africans rightly saw as an attempt by white settlers to foreclose the possibilities of national independence with majority, democratic rule. Similarly today, in a wide range of ways Zambians work to constrain, subvert, reappropriate, or redeploy the colonialist logics that have influenced their country in different periods for the last hundred odd years. Not all of this takes place purely in the realm of the obviously political-economic. Rather, Zambians employ language ideology in a way that subverts the authority of their Chinese mining supervisors, for example, or Jehovah's Witnesses employ their spiritual capital (Palmer 2013) to convert Chinese migrants and language teachers to a religious ideology that is avowedly anti-state and anti-Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

In this way the layered histories of different kinds of colonial and neocolonial foreign influences in Zambia, and Zambians' diverse responses to these influences, contribute to a layering

of histories that operate as a kind of palimpsest (cf. Alexander 2005). Chinese investors may, along with investors from many other foreign countries, be acting as a neocolonial force in Zambia. They may even, as Fraser (2010) provocatively suggests, be acting in a way that is more self-confident and assured, and which may outlast investors from other, especially Western, countries. Be that as it may, different symbolic economies that have already come into circulation through previous moments of encounter with colonialism in Zambia, including for example symbolic valuations of English or Christianity, and as in many previous moments of colonialism (e.g. Simpson 2003; Comaroff 1985) Zambians have appropriated these symbolic systems in ways that often work to challenge or constrain the agency of colonizing foreign capitalist ventures.

**Bibliography**

Adendorff, Ralph D. 1993. “Ethnographic Evidence of the Social Meaning of Fanakalo in South Africa.” *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 8 (1): 1-27.

Alden, Chris, and Daniel Large, eds. 2019. *New Directions in Africa-China Studies*. London: Routledge.

Alden, Chris. 2007. *China in Africa*. London: Zed Books.

Alexander, M. Jacqui. 2005. *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Alim, Samy H., John R. Rickford, and Arnetha F. Ball, eds. 2016. *Raciolinguistics: How Language Shapes Our Ideas about Race*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ansaldo, Umberto. 2011. *Contact Languages: Ecology and Evolution in Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Apte, Mahadev L. 1985. *Humor and Laughter: An Anthropological Approach*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Argenti, Nicolas. 2007. *The Intestines of the State: Youth, Violence, and Belated Histories in the Cameroon Grassfields*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Arnfred, Signe. 2004. *Re-Thinking Sexualities in Africa*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute.

Arnfred, Signe. 2011. “Sex, Food and Female Power.” In *Sexuality and Gender Politics in Mozambique: Rethinking Gender in Africa*, edited by Signe Arnfred, 165–87. Woodbridge, UK: James Currey.

Barad, Karen. 2014. “Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart.” *Parallax* 20 (3): 168–87.

Bayar, Nasan. 2014. “Nation-building, Ethnicity and Natural Resources.” *Inner Asia* 16 (2):377-91.

Bayart, Jean-François. 1993. *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. Translated by Mary Harper, Christopher Harrison, and Elizabeth Harrison. London: Longman.

Bayart, Jean-François. 2000. “Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion.” Translated by Stephen Ellis. *African Affairs* 99, no. 395 (April): 217-67.

Bear, Laura, Karen Ho, Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, and Sylvia Yanagisako. 2015. “Gens: A Feminist Manifesto for the Study of Capitalism.” Theorizing the Contemporary, *Fieldsights, Society for Cultural Anthropology* website, March 30. Accessed March 12, 2022. https://culanth.org/fieldsights/gens-a-feminist-manifesto-for-the-study-of-capitalism.

Benjamin, Walter. 2019. *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*. Edited by Peter Demetz. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Boston: Mariner Books.

Benston, Margaret. 1989. “The Political Economy of Women’s Liberation.” *Monthly Review* 41 (7): 31-44.

Bialecki, Jon, Naomi Haynes, and Joel Robbins. 2008. “The Anthropology of Christianity.” *Religion Compass* 2 (6): 1139-58.

Bissell, William Cunningham. 2005. “Engaging Colonial Nostalgia.” *Cultural Anthropology* 20 (2) :215-48.

Bocast, Brooke. 2017. “Declarations of Promiscuity: ‘Housing,’ Autonomy, and Urban Female Friendship in Uganda.” *City & Society* 29 (3): 370–92.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. “The Forms of Capital.” Translated by Richard Nice. In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by John Richardson, 241-58. Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1991. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Edited by John B. Thompson. Translated by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 2010. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Translated by Richard Nice. London: Routledge. With a new introduction by Tony Bennet. First published 1984.

Breckenridge, Keith. 1998. "The Allure of Violence: Men, Race and Masculinity on the South African Goldmines, 1900–1950." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24 (4): 669-93.

Brown, David. 1988. "The Basements of Babylon: Language and Literacy on the South African Gold Mines." *Social Dynamics* 14 (1): 46-56.

Burawoy, Michael. 1972. *The Colour of Class on the Copper Mines: From African Advancement to Zambianization*. Manchester: Manchester University Press for the University of Zambia.

Burawoy, Michael. 2014. "The Colour of Class Revisited: Four Decades of Postcolonialism in Zambia." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40 (5): 961-79.

Burke, Timothy. 1996. *Lifebuoy Men, Lux Women: Commodification, Consumption, and Cleanliness in Modern Zimbabwe*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Byrne, Francis, and John Holm. 1993. "Introduction: Perspectives on the Atlantic and Pacific … and Beyond." In *Atlantic Meets Pacific: A Global View of Pidginization and Creolization (Selected Papers from the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics*, edited by Francis Byrne and John Holm, 1-22. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Castillo, Roberto. "'Race' and 'Racism' in Contemporary Africa-China Relations Research: Approaches, Controversies, and Reflections." *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 21 (3): 310-36.

Césaire, Aimé. 1982. "Poetry and Knowledge." Translated by A. James Arnold. *Sulfur* 5: 17-32.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2008. *Provincializing Europe*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Chan, Kwok-Bun, and Claire Chiang. 1994. *Stepping Out: The Making of Chinese Entrepreneurs*. Singapore: National University of Singapore.

Chapman, Rachel R. 2004. “A Nova Vida: The Commoditization of Reproduction in Central Mozambique.” *Medical Anthropology* 23: 229–61.

Chen, Da, and Bruno Lasker. 1978. *Emigrant Communities in South China: A Study of Overseas Migration and Its Influence on Standards of Living and Social Change*. New York: AMS Press.

Chen, Hao-Yi, and Henry Shang-Ren Kao. 2009. “Chinese Paternalistic Leadership and Non-Chinese Subordinates’ Psychological Health.” *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 20 (12): 2533-46.

Cheng, Jennifer. 2013. “Six Chinese Megaprojects Across the Globe.” In *Time Magazine*. July 16.

Chu, Julie Y. 2010. *Cosmologies of Credit: Transnational Mobility and the Politics of Destination in China*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Cliggett, Lisa. 2002. “Multigenerations and Multidisciplines: Inheriting Fifty Years of Gwembe Tonga Research.” In *Chronicling Culture*, edited by Robert V. Kemper and Anya Peterson Royce, 239-51. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press.

Cole, Jennifer. 2001. *Forget Colonialism?: Sacrifice and the Art of Memory in Madagascar*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cole, Jennifer. 2014. “Working Mis/Understandings: The Tangled Relationship between Kinship, Franco-Malagasy Binational Marriages, and the French State.” *Cultural Anthropology* 29 (3): 527-51.

Coleman, Simon. 2011. “‘Right Now!’ Historiopraxy and the Embodiment of Charismatic Temporalities.” *Ethnos* 76 (4): 426-47.

Colson, Elizabeth. 1960. *Social Organization of the Gwembe Tonga*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Colson, Elizabeth. 1971. *The Social Consequences of Resettlement: The Impact of the Kariba Resettlement Upon the Gwembe Tonga.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Colson, Elizabeth. 2006. *Tonga Religious Life in the Twentieth Century*. Lusaka: Bookworld Publishers.

Comaroff, Jean, and John Comaroff. 1991. *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*. 2 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, Jean. 1985. *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African People*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, John, and Jean Comaroff. 1992. *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Constable, Nicole. 2009. "The Commodification of Intimacy: Marriage, Sex, and Reproductive Labor." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 38: 49-64.

Cross, Sholto. "The Watch Tower Movement in South Central Africa, 1980–1945." PhD diss., Oxford University, 1973. Oxford University Research Archive.

Cross, Sholto. 1977. "Social History and Millennial Movements: The Watch Tower in South Central Africa." *Social Compass* 24, (1): 83-95.

Crush, J. S., Alan Jeeves, and David Yudelman. 1991. *South Africa's Labor Empire: A History of Black Migrancy to the Gold Mines*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Davis, Kathleen. 2008. *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Day, Alexander F. 2013. *The Peasant in Postsocialist China: History, Politics, and Capitalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

De la Cadena, Marisol. 2015. *Earth Beings: Ecologies of Practice Across Andean Worlds*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Dikötter, Frank. 2015. *The Discourse of Race in Modern China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dirlik, Arif. 1997. "Critical Reflections on 'Chinese Capitalism' as Paradigm." *Identities* 3 (3): 303-30.

Donham, Donald L. 2011. *Violence in a Time of Liberation: Murder and Ethnicity at a South African Gold Mine, 1994*. With photographs by Santu Mofokeng. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Douglas, Mary. 2002. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge. With a new preface by the author. First published 1966.

Dreyer, Edward L. 2006. *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty, 1405-1433*. New York: Pearson Longman.

Driessen, Miriam. "Pidgin-Play: Linguistic Subversion on Chinese-run Construction Sites in Ethiopia." *African Affairs* 119, no. 476 (July): 432-51.

Du Bois, W. E. B. 1970. "The Conservation of Races." In *W. E. B. Du Bois Speaks: Speeches and Addresses, 1890–1919*, edited by Phillip S. Foner, 73–85. New York: Pathfinder.

Dunk, Thomas W. 2003. *It's a Working Man's Town: Male Working-Class Culture*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Engelke, Mathew. 2007. *A Problem of Presence: Beyond Scripture in an African Church*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Epstein, A. L. 1958. *Politics in an Urban African Community*. Manchester: Published on behalf of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute by Manchester University Press.

Erwiza, Erman. “Miners, Managers and the State: A Socio-political History of the Ombilin Coal-mines, West Sumatra, 1892-1996.” PhD diss., University Amsterdam, 1999. UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository).

Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1937. *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Fabian, Johannes. 2014. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Faier, Lieba, and Lisa Rofel. 2014. “Ethnographies of Encounter.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 43 (1): 363-77.

Faier, Lieba. 2009. *Intimate Encounters: Filipina Women and the Remaking of Rural Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fanon, Frantz. 2008. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. London: Pluto.

Farmer, Paul. 1996. “On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below.” *Daedalus* 125, no. 1 (winter): 261-83.

Ferguson, James. 1999. *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ferguson, James. 2006. *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Ferguson, James. 2013. “Declarations of Dependence: Labour, Personhood, And Welfare in Southern Africa.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 19, no. 2 (June): 223-42.

Ferguson, James. 2015. *Give a Man a Fish: Reflections on the New Politics of Distribution*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fields, Karen E. 1985. *Revival and Rebellion in Colonial Central Africa*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1990. *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, Michel. 2003. *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*. Translated by David Macey. New York: Picador.

Foucault, Michel. 2008. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-79*. Translated by Graham Burchell. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fraser, Alastair. 2010. "Introduction." In *Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism: Boom and Bust on the Globalized Copperbelt*, edited by Alastair Fraser and Miles Larmer, 1-30. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

French, Howard W. 2014. *China's Second Continent: How a Million Migrants are Building a New Empire in Africa*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Freud, Sigmund. 2003. "The Uncanny." In *The Uncanny*. Translated by David McLintock. With an introduction by Hugh Haughton. London: Penguin Books.

Geertz, Clifford. 2000. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books. With a new preface by the author. First published 1973.

Gibson-Graham, J.K. 2006. *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Gilroy, Paul. 2002. *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. London: Routledge. First published 1987.

Goldenberg, David M. 2017. *Black and Slave: The Origins and History of the Curse of Ham*. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Gramsci, Antonio. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. New York: International Publishers.

Greenhalgh, Susan. 1994. "De-Orientalizing the Chinese Family Firm." *American Ethnologist* 21 (4): 746-75.

Groes-Green, Christian. 2013. "'To Put Men in a Bottle': Eroticism, Kinship, Female Power, and Transactional Sex in Maputo, Mozambique." *American Ethnologist* 40 (1): 102-17.

Gupta, Akhil and Jessie Stoolman. 2022. "Decolonizing U.S. Anthropology." *American Anthropologist*, forthcoming.

Guyer, Jane I. and Samuel Eno Belinga. 1995. "Wealth in People as Wealth in Knowledge: Accumulation and Composition in Equatorial Africa." *The Journal of African History* 36 (1): 91-120.

Hall, Stuart. 2017. *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation*. Edited by Kobena Mercer. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Harding, Susan. 1991. "Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of the Repugnant Cultural Other." *Social Research* 58, no. 2 (summer): 373-393.

Hardt, Michael. 1999. "Affective Labor." *Boundary 2* 26, no. 2 (summer): 89-100.

Harrison, Faye V. 1997. *Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further toward an Anthropology for Liberation*. 2nd ed. Arlington, V.A.: Association of Black Anthropologists. First published 1991.

Harvey, David. 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hayes, E. Nelson and Tanya Hayes. 1970. *Claude Levi-Strauss: The Anthropologist as Hero*. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press.

Haynes, Naomi. 2017. *Moving by the Spirit: Pentecostal Social Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2004. “Love and Gold.” In *Global Women: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*, edited by Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild, 13-21. New York: Owl Books.

Hoffman, Daniel. 2011. “Violence, Just in Time: War and Work in Contemporary West Africa.” *Cultural Anthropology* 26 (1): 34-57.

Holm, John A. 2004. *An Introduction to Pidgins and Creoles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hsu, Elisabeth. 2012. “Mobility and Connectedness: Chinese Medical Doctors in Kenya.” In *Medicine, Mobility, and Power in Global Africa: Transnational Health and Healing*, edited by Hansjörg Dilger, Abdoulaye Kane, and Stacey A. Langwick, 295-315. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Hunter, Mark. 2010. *Love in the Time of AIDS: Inequality, Gender, and Rights in South Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Irvine, J.T. and Gal, S. 2000. “Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation.” In *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader*, edited by Alessandro Duranti. Malden: Blackwell

James, Wilmot G. 1992. “The Erosion of Paternalism on South African Gold Mines.” *Industrial Relations Journal of South Africa* 12: 1-16.

Johnson-Hanks, Jennifer. 2007. “Women on the Market: Marriage, Consumption, and the Internet in Urban Cameroon.” *American Ethnologist* 34 (4): 642-58.

Kashoki, Mubanga E. 1978. “The Language Situation in Zambia.” In *Language in Zambia*, edited by Sirarpi Ohannessian and Mubanga E. Kashoki, 9-46. London: International African Institute.

Keane, Webb. 2007. *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kirsch, Thomas G. 2011. *Spirits and Letters: Reading, Writing and Charisma in African Christianity*. New York: Berghahn.

Kohn, Eduardo. 2015. "Anthropology of Ontologies." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44: 311-27.

Kouwenberg, Silvia and John Victor Singler. 2008. "Introduction." In *The Handbook of Pidgin and Creole Studies*, edited by Silvia Kouwenberg and John Victor Singler, 1-16. Malden: Blackwell.

Kragelund, Peter. 2009. "Knocking on a Wide-open Door: Chinese Investments in Africa." *Review of African Political Economy* 36 (12): 479-97.

Kroskrity, Paul V. 2004. "Language Ideologies." In *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*, edited by Alessandro Duranti, 496-517. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Kula, Nancy C. 2006. "Zambia: Language Situation." In *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, edited by Keith Brown, 744-45. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Kwon, June Hee. 2015. "The Work of Waiting: Love and Money in Korean Chinese Transnational Migration." *Cultural Anthropology* 30 (3): 477-500.

Laidlaw, James. 2014. *The Subject of Virtue. An Anthropology of Ethics and Freedom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lan, Shanshan. 2016. "The Shifting Meanings of Race in China: A Case Study of the African Diaspora Communities in Guangzhou." *City & Society* 28, no. 3 (December): 298-318.

Large, Daniel. 2008. "Beyond 'Dragon in the Bush:' the Study of China-Africa Relations." *African Affairs* 107 (46): 45-61.

Larmer, Miles. 2010. "Historical Perspectives on Zambia's Mining Booms and Busts." In *Zambia, Mining, and Neoliberalism: Boom and Bust on the Globalized Copperbelt*, edited by Alastair Fraser and Miles Larmer, 31-58. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Latour, Bruno. 1993. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Translated by Catherine Porter. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Latour, Bruno. 2013. *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Law, John and Wen-yuan Lin. 2010. "Cultivating Disconcertment." *The Sociological Review* 58 (2): 135-53.

Lee, Benjamin. 1997. *Talking Heads: Language, Metalanguage, and the Semiotics of Subjectivity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Lee, Ching Kwan. 2009. "Raw Encounters: Chinese Managers, African Workers and the Politics of Casualization in Africa's Chinese Enclaves." *The China Quarterly* 199 (September): 647-66.

Lee, Ching Kwan. 2014. "The Spectre of Global China." *New Left Review* 89: 28-65.

Lee, Ching Kwan. 2017. *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor, and Foreign Investment in Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Leslie, Agnes Ngoma, ed. "China-Africa Relations: Political and Economic Engagement and Media Strategies." Special Issue, *African Studies Quarterly* 16, no. 3-4 (December 2016).

Levathes, Louise. 1994. *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Fleet of the Dragon Throne, 1405-1433*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Lewinson, Anne. 2006. "Love in the City: Navigating Multiple Relationships in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania." *City & Society* 18 (1): 90-115.

Liu, Lydia. 1995. *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900-1937*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Loomba, Ania. 2015. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. 3rd ed. Abingdon: Routledge.

Lucas, Mary Dell. 2008. "The New Colonialists." In *The Economist*. March 13.

Luehrmann, Sonja. 2015. *Religion in Secular Archives: Soviet Atheism and Historical Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Magubane, Bernard. 1971. "A Critical Look at Indices Used in the Study of Social Change in Colonial Africa." *Current Anthropology* 12, no. 4/5 (October-December): 419-45.

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. 1998. *The German Ideology: Including Theses on Feuerbach and Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

Marx, Karl. 1990. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Volume One*. Translated by Ben Fowkes. London: Penguin Books. With an Introduction by Ernest Mandel. First published 1976.

Mattingly, Cheryl. 2019. "Defrosting Concepts, Destabilizing Doxa: Critical Phenomenology and the Perplexing Particular." *Anthropological Theory* 19 (4): 415-39.

Mbembe, Achille. 2017. *Critique of Black Reason*. Translated by Laurent DuBois. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Mesthrie, Rajend. 1989. "The Origins of Fanagalo." *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 4 (2): 211-40.

Meyer, Birgit. 1999. *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Miles, Robert and Malcolm Brown. 2003. *Racism*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Miller, Daniel and Don Slater. 2000. *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*. Oxford: Berg.

Mitchell, J. Clyde. 1956. *The Kalela Dance: Aspects of Social Relationships among Urban Africans in Northern Rhodesia*. Manchester: Published on behalf of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute by the Manchester University Press.

Monson, Jamie and Stephanie Rupp. "ASR Forum on African and China." Special Issue, *African Studies Review* 56, no. 1 (April 2013).

Monson, Jamie. 2009. *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Monson, Jamie. 2013. "Historicizing Difference: Construction of Race Identity in China-Africa Relations." Paper presented at Making Sense of the China-Africa Relationship: Theoretical Approaches and the Politics of Knowledge, a Conference Held at Yale University, New Haven, 18–19 November.

Monson, Jamie. 2020. "Futures in the Past of China-Africa Engagement." In *Afrasian Transformations: Transregional Perspectives on Development Cooperation, Social Mobility, and Cultural Change*, edited by Ruth Achenbach, Jan Beek, John Njenga Karugia, Rirhandu Mageza-Barthel, and Frank Shulze-Engler, 21-43. Leiden: Brill.

Moodie, T. Dunbar. 1994. *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration*. With Vivienne Ndatshe. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mufwene, Salikoko S. 2008. *Language Evolution: Contact, Competition and Change*. New York: Continuum.

Mustafa, Hudita Nura. 2006. "Eros, Beauty and Crisis: Notes from Senegal." *Feminist Africa* 6: 20-32.

Mutale, Emmanuel. 2004. *The Management of Urban Development in Zambia*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Negi, Rohit. 2008. "Beyond the 'Chinese Scramble:' The Political Economy of Anti-China Sentiment in Zambia." *African Geographical Review* 27: 41-63.

Nkrumah, Kwame. 1966. *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. New York: International Publishers.

Nyamnjoh, Francis B. 2005. "Fishing in Troubled Waters: *Disquettes* and *Thiofs* in Dakaar." *Africa* 75, no. 3 (August): 295-324.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 2015. *Racial Formation in the United States*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.

Ong, Aihwa, Virginia R. Dominguez, Jonathan Friedman, Nina Glick Schiller, Verena Stolcke, David Y. H. Wu, and Hu Ying. 1996. "Cultural Citizenship as Subject-Making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the United States [and Comments and Reply]." *Current Anthropology* 37 (5): 737-62.

Ong, Aihwa. 1999. *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Palmer, David A. and Michele Wong. "Clarifying the Concept of Spiritual Capital." Paper presented at the Conference on the Social Scientific Study of Religion. Hong Kong, July 2013. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340077226_Clarifying_the_Concept_of_Spiritual_Capital.

Palmié, Stephan. 2006. "Creolization and Its Discontents." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35: 433-56.

Peirce, Charles S. 1992. *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*. 2 vols. Edited by Nathan Houser and Christian J.W. Kloesel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Pettier, Jean-Baptiste. 2022. "The Paradoxical Agora: The Social and the Political in between the People in the Marriage Corners of China." *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Anthropology* 66 (1): 21-43.

Philips, Susan U. 1998. "Language Ideologies in Institutions of Power: A Commentary." In *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, edited by Bambi B. Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity, 211-28. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Phillipson, D. W. 1977. *The Later Prehistory of Eastern and Southern Africa*. Bloomington: Africana Publishing Company.

Phillipson, Robert. 1992. *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pieke, Frank N. 2004. *Transnational Chinese: Fujianese Migrants in Europe*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Pierre, Jemima. 2013. *The Predicament of Blackness: Postcolonial Ghana and the Politics of Race*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Plag, I. 2006. "Morphology in Pidgins and Creoles." In *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, edited by Keith Brown, 304-08. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Poewe, Karla O. 1978. "Religion, Matriliny, and Change: Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-Day Adventists in Luapula, Zambia." *American Ethnologist* 5, no. 2 (May): 303-21.

Povinelli, Elizabeth A. 2001. "Radical Worlds: The Anthropology of Incommensurability and Inconceivability." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30:319–34.

Povinelli, Elizabeth A. 2011a. *Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Povinelli, Elizabeth A. 2011b. "The Woman on the Other Side of the Wall: Archiving the Otherwise in Postcolonial Digital Archives." *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 22 (1): 146-71.

Pratt, Mary Louise. 2008. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge.

Premawardhana, Devaka. 2018. *Faith in Flux: Pentecostalism and Mobility in Rural Mozambique*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. 1940. "On Joking Relationships." *Africa* 13, no. 3 (July): 195-210.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. 1949. "A Further Note on Joking Relationships." *Africa* 19, no. 2 (April): 133-40.

Rancière, Jacques. 1999. *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Redding, Gordon and Michael Witt. 2007. *The Future of Chinese Capitalism: Choices and Chances*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Redding, S. Gordon. 1990. *The Spirit of Chinese Capitalism*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Reno, William. 1998. *Warlord Politics and African States*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Robbins, Joel. 2004. *Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Moral Torment in a Papua New Guinea Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Roberts, Andrew. 1976. *A History of Zambia*. London: Heinemann.

Robinson, Cedric. 2020. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. 3rd ed. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. First published 1983.

Rofel, Lisa and Sylvia J. Yanagisako. 2019. *Fabricating Transnational Capitalism: A Collaborative Ethnography of Italian-Chinese Global Fashion*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Romaine, S. 2006. "Pidgins and Creoles: Overview." In *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, edited by Keith Brown, 600-06. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Rosa, Jonathan. 2019. *Looking like a Language, Sounding like a Race: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and the Learning of Latinidad*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rupp, Stephanie. 2008. "Africa and China: Engaging Postcolonial Interdependencies." In *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*, edited by Robert I. Rotberg, 65-86. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Sahlins, Marshall. 1996. "The Sadness of Sweetness: The Native Anthropology of Western Cosmology." *Current Anthropology* 37, no. 3 (June): 395-428.

Sahlins, Marshall. 2005. *Culture in Practice: Selected Essays*. Princeton, NJ: Zone Books.

Sautman, Barry and Yan Hairong. 2012. *The Chinese are the Worst?: Human Rights and Labor Practices in Zambian Mining*. Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Law.

Sautman, Barry and Yan Hairong. 2014. "Bashing 'the Chinese': Contextualizing Zambia's Collum Coal Mine Shooting." *Journal of Contemporary China* 23 (90): 1073-92.

Sautman, Barry and Yan Hairong. 2016. "The Discourse of Racialization of Labour and Chinese Enterprises in Africa." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39 (12): 2149-68.

Sautman, Barry. 2013. "Chinese Defilement Case: Racial Profiling in an African Model of Democracy." *Rutgers Race & the Law Review* 14.

Schmitz, Cheryl M. 2020. "*Kufala!* Translating Witchcraft in an Angolan–Chinese Labor Dispute." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 10 (2): 473–86.

Schüll, Natasha Dow. 2012. *Addiction by Design: Machine Gambling in Las Vegas*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Scott, James C. 1976. *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Scudder, Thayer, and Colson, Elizabeth. "Long-Term Field Research in Gwembe Valley, Zambia." In *Chronicling Cultures: Long-Term Field Research in Anthropology*, edited by Robert Van Kemper and Anya Peterson Royce, 197-238. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press.

Scudder, Thayer, and Colson, Elizabeth. 1978. "Long-Term Field Research in Gwembe Valley, Zambia." In *Long-Term Field Research in Social Anthropology*, edited by George Foster, Thayer Scudder, Elizabeth Colson, and Robert Van Kemper, 227-54. New York: Academic Press.

Sheridan, Derek. 2018. "'If You Greet Them, They Ignore You': Chinese Migrants, (Refused) Greetings, and the Interpersonal Ethics of Global Inequality in Tanzania" *Anthropological Quarterly* 91 (1): 237-66.

Sheridan, Derek. 2019. “Weak Passports and Bad Behavior: Chinese Migrants and the Moral Politics of Petty Corruption in Tanzania.” *American Ethnologist* 46 (2): 137-49.

Silverstein, Michael. 1998. “The Uses and Utility of Ideology: A Commentary.” In *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, edited by Bambi B. Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity, 123-48. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Simpson, Anthony. 2003. ‘*Half London’ in Zambia: Contested Identities in a Catholic Mission School*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Simpson, Audra. 2018. “Sovereignty, Sympathy, and Indigeneity.” In *Ethnographies of U.S. Empire*, edited by Carole McGranahan and John F. Collins, 72-89. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Simpson, Audra. 2020. “Empire of Feeling.” *General Anthropology* 27, no. 1 (Spring): 1-8.

Slawecki, Leon M. S. “The Two Chinas in Africa.” *Foreign Affairs* 41, no. 2 (January): 398-409.

Smith, James H. and Ngeti Mwadime. 2014. *Email from Ngeti: An Ethnography of Sorcery, Redemption, and Friendship in Global Africa*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Spitulnik, Debra. 1998. “Mediating Unity and Diversity: The Production of Language Ideologies in Zambian Broadcasting.” In *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, edited by Bambi B. Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity, 163-88. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stoler, Ann Laura. 2002. *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tamale, Sylvia, ed. 2011. *African Sexualities: A Reader*. Cape Town: Pambazuka Press.

Tamale, Sylvia. 2006. “Eroticism, Sensuality and ‘Women’s Secrets’ Among the Baganda.” *IDS Bulletin* 37, no. 5 (October): 89-97.

Taussig, Michael T. 2010. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. Originally published 1980.

*The Independent*, November 4, 2006. "China's Scramble for Africa." Available from [http://www.independent.co.uk/], accessed May 11, 2019.

Thompson, Edward P. 1971 "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century." *Past & Present* 50: 76-136.

Thompson, Edward P. 1974. "Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture." *Journal of Social History* 7 (4): 382-405.

Thompson, Edward P. 1978. "Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class?" *Social History* 3 (2): 133-65.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1992. "The Caribbean Region: An Open Frontier in Anthropological Theory." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21: 19–42.

Tshabe, Sonwabo Lungile, F. M. Shoba, Buyiswa Mavis Mini, H. W. Pahl, A. M. Pienaar, and T. A. Ndungane. 2006. *The Greater Dictionary of IsiXhosa*. Alice: University of Fort Hare.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2005. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Twine, France Winddance. 1998. *Racism in a Racial Democracy: The Maintenance of White Supremacy in Brazil*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Uretsky, Elanah. 2016. *Occupational Hazards: Sex, Business, and HIV in Post-Mao China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Van Onselen, Charles. 1976. *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933*. London: Pluto Press.

Van Onselen, Charles. 1990. “Race and Class in the South African Countryside: Cultural Osmosis and Social Relations in the Sharecropping Economy of the South Western Transvaal, 1900-1950.” *The American Historical Review* 95 (1): 99-123.

Van Onselen, Charles. 1992. “The Social and Economic Underpinning of Paternalism and Violence on the Maize Farms of the South-Western Transvaal, 1900–1950.” Journal of Historical Sociology 5 (2): 127-60.

Verheijen, Janneke. 2011. “Complexities of the ‘Transactional Sex’ Model: Non-Providing Men, Self-Providing Women, and HIV Risk in Rural Malawi.” *Annals of Anthropological Practice* 35: 116-31.

Verran, Helen. 2001. *Science and an African Logic*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Verran, Helen. 2013. “Engagements between disparate knowledge traditions: Toward doing difference generatively and in good faith.” In *Contested Ecologies: Dialogues in the South on Nature and Knowledge*, edited by Lesley Green, 141-61. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Versteegh, Kees. 2008. “Non-Indo-European Pidgins and Creoles.” In *The Handbook of Pidgin and Creole Studies*, edited by Silvia Kouwenberg and John Victor Singler, 158-86. Malden: Blackwell.

Vogel, Lise. 2000. “Domestic Labor Revisited.” *Science & Society* 64, no. 2 (summer): 151-70.

Von Holdt, K. 2003. *Transition from Below: Forging Trade Unionism and Workplace Change in South Africa*. Pietermartizburg: University of Natal Press.

wa Thiong’o, Ngugi. 1994. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House. First published 1987.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 2004. *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Walsh, C. “Is China the New Colonial Power in Africa?” *The Observer*, November 1, 2006.

Ward, Adam and James Hackett, eds. 2005. “China’s Scramble for Africa: Growing Strategic Engagement.” *IISS Strategic Comments* 11, no. 2 (March): 1-2.

Watts, J. “The Savannah Comes to Beijing as China Hosts its New Empire.” *The Guardian*, November 4, 2006.

Weber, Max. 2012. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Translated by Stephen Kalberg. New York: Routledge. First published 2001.

Whinnom, Keith. 1974. “Linguistic Hybridization and the ‘Special Case’ of Pidgins and Creoles.” In *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, April, 1968*, edited by Dell Hymes, 91-116. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Winford, Donald. 2003. *An Introduction to Contact Linguistics. Language in Society*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Wonacott, Peter. 2012. “China Investment Brings Jobs, Conflict to Zambia Mines.” *The Wall Street Journal*, September 5.

Wright, Tim. 2012. *The Political Economy of the Chinese Coal Industry: Black Gold and Blood-stained Coal*. London: Routledge.

Wu, Di. 2021. *Affective Encounters: Everyday Life among Chinese Migrants in Zambia*. London: Routledge.

Wu, Xiaogang. 2019. “Inequality and Social Stratification in Postsocialist China.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 45: 363–82.

Wynter, Sylvia. 2003. “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument.” *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (Fall): 257-337.

Xiao, Suowei. 2011. “The ‘Second-Wife’ Phenomenon and the Relational Construction of Class-Coded Masculinities in Contemporary China.” *Men and Masculinities* 14 (5): 607-27.

Yan, Hairong, and Barry Sautman. 2010. “Chinese Farms in Zambia: From Socialist to ‘Agro-Imperialist’ Engagement?.” *African and Asian Studies* 9 (3): 307-33.

Yan, Hairong, and Barry Sautman. 2013. “‘The Beginning of a World Empire’? Contesting the Discourse of Chinese Copper Mining in Zambia.” *Modern China* 39 (2):131-64.

Yanagisako, Sylvia Junko. 2002. *Producing Culture and Capital: Family Firms in Italy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Yap, Melanie, and Dianne Leong Man. 1996. *Colour, Confusion and Concessions: The History of the Chinese in South Africa*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Zelizer, Viviana A. *The Purchase of Intimacy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Zhan, Mei. 2009. *Other-worldly: Making Chinese Medicine through Transnational Frames*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Zhang, Li and Aihwa Ong, eds. 2008. *Privatizing China: Socialism from Afar*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.