

Dear Reader,

This issue of *African East-Asian Affairs* | *The China Monitor* examines two topics which, at first glance, have little to do with current Africa. They bring excursions to Papua New Guinea in the Pacific – and to foregone times of the early 20th century. At the same time, however, they ring intriguingly familiar for those who look at contemporary Chinese engagement on the African continent.

In the first article, Australian scholar Graeme Smith from the China Studies Centre at the University of Sydney Business School examines Chinese investment and activity in the Pacific state of Papua New Guinea. More often than not, the relationship is portrayed as one of Chinese traders and entrepreneurs abusing the local industries and inhabitants, beyond the so-called control of Beijing. Smith's piece unpacks the actually complex and fragile relationship China and Chinese entrepreneurs undertake with Papua New Guinea – which, like many African countries, is sorely in need of investment and development.

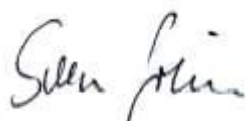
The second piece, from Jean-Raphaël Chaponnière of the Asia Centre in Paris, takes a step back in time, looking at another East-Asian power, Japan, which has a long and complex history with the African continent. Chaponnière offers fascinating historical parallels between Japan in Africa then, and China and Africa now, particularly from the perspective of competitive foreign trade powers, and frustrated local industries. The historical parallel should, as the author points out, not be overstretched. Each country and each time has its own dynamics and limitations. Yet, some reminders of past cases might ease make current events sound less unique, even if scope and magnitude differ.

We're on the cusp of some big changes at the CCS. This very publication, after some changes that have already been implemented, is set to undergo another transformation shortly, from this monthly edition to a larger, more academically dense quarterly edition. In other words, we are taking yet another step towards a proper scholarly journal.

Likewise, our long-awaited move to new offices on the top floor of the Wilcocks building on the corner of Ryneveld and Victoria streets in Stellenbosch is now upon us. The new premises – right next door to our previous ones and thus still at the heart of Stellenbosch Campus – will offer not only new perspectives, but also some more space and conducive work environments for us, our visiting scholars and our guests! And work, we still have plenty!

We hope you enjoy the read!

Your sincerely,



Director
Centre for Chinese Studies
Stellenbosch University



Dr Sven Grimm
Director

