

***The African Diaspora in China: The Case of Hong Kong and Guangzhou***

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Secondary Discipline:

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Project Objective:

African-Asian communities belong to some of the least researched among African communities in the Diaspora. Even though there is a growing amount of interest on the historical, cultural, and linguistic linkages between Africa and Asia (Rashidi and van Sertima 1995, Hotz 1998, Cooper 1999, Griffith 2001, Bodomo 2001), the situation cannot be compared to the vast amount of literature that exists on African-American, African-Caribbean and African-European communities. This project seeks to fill this vacuum by focusing on two emerging African communities in China: one is the Chungking Mansions in Hong Kong, and

the other is Tianxiu Building in Guangzhou. This case study aims to compare the linguistic and cultural aspects of these two emerging communities in Hong Kong and Guangzhou. It also seeks to answer the following sets of research questions: 1) Background Information: In what sense are they 'communities'? What is the composition of each of these two communities? How do people get to know about these buildings? What networks are available in these communities? What African and Asian countries do people at these two buildings represent? What are their reasons and goals for visiting or staying in China? 2) Comparative study of Language and Culture in Chungking and Tianxiu: How does communication take place in these communities? What languages are represented and how do people from different linguistic backgrounds understand each other? What are the educational and literacy levels of the participants in these communities? What cultural exchanges and understanding exist in these two communities?