

China in Algeria

Global economy and local development

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International Conference organized by

The Faculty of Economics and Management, University of Constantine 2
LABECOM, Faculty of Economics and Management, University of Constantine 2

New city Ali Mendjeli

with the participation of

Research Center on Modern and Contemporary China (EHESS / CNRS)

Cresppa (CNRS / Universities of Paris 8 & Paris 10)

CALL FOR PAPERS

A workshop on the Chinese presence in Algeria was organized in February 2013 in Paris¹. Then, a book on that topic was published the following year². This led to identify the multiple aspects of China's presence in Algeria and to initiate a comparison with similar experiments in Africa. It also helped to highlight some problems faced by researchers about data, their sources, their reliability, their heterogeneity. This work led to some preliminary conclusions:

- The relations between the two countries convey the overall dynamics of the Chinese economic expansion in Africa and show the same main features. China enters the African market through its ability to meet the urgent needs of these countries and through its capacity to contribute to GDP growth. Conversely, in Algeria, as in Africa, China is attracted by a regional market – the Maghreb – with some 150 million consumers and is looking for suppliers of raw materials (crude oil, mining products...).
- The Chinese strategy in Algeria, as in the Maghreb, could be to invest in countries or sectors purportedly shunned by Western firms because of low profitability, insecurity, poor business climate and geopolitical conflicts. The financial crisis, by shrinking the direct investment flows from the North, could have accentuated this trend whilst the Chinese presence could be a factor of resilience.
- Algeria wants to keep a balanced attitude vis-à-vis China. It seems that the Algerian policy-makers swing between two strategies. On the one hand, they tend to confine the Chinese presence in areas not competing against their traditional partners as the construction

¹ *La présence chinoise en Algérie : perspectives maghrébines et africaines*, MSH Paris-Nord, février 2013.

² Th. Pairault et F. Talahite (éds.), *Chine-Algérie : une relation singulière en Afrique*, Paris, Riveneuve, 2014.

sector and to curb imports of cheap and low-end Chinese goods primarily intended for popular consumption. So doing they would not waive Chinese competition but could increase their bargaining power with their other partners. On the other hand, they could be tempted relying on China's economic performance to boost Algeria's economic growth, to open the market for more technologically advanced products and cooperation by engaging in Sino-Algerian joint projects.

This conference should be an opportunity to continue this debate by examining in particular the effects of the Chinese presence on local development. To what extent the numerous very big Chinese enterprises (especially public capital, more or less controlled by the Chinese government) or smaller ones (privately owned, operated by a diaspora of petty entrepreneurs) today in Algeria in the construction, commerce, industry, services sectors, fosters a new growth dynamic based on a joint local / global economy?

The papers should describe experiences related to the Chinese presence in Algeria focusing on its effects on the territories, and analyze them in comparison to other experiences in Algeria, Africa and the world. Emphasis will be placed on both the empirical and theoretical aspects. Different approaches (economics, sociology, anthropology, law, geography, political science, demography) could be used to study the environmental issue, to capture the relationship between business and territories and to implement tools and methods associated with these theoretical frameworks in order to achieve a socio-economic diagnosis of territories.

Proposals for papers should present original content, empirical (case study, monograph, survey) and / or theoretical (analysis or theoretical modeling with application or testing including data on Algeria).

Proposed topics:

- Chinese enterprises activities in Algeria (commercial, legal, institutional and cultural aspects, statistics...). What kind of cooperation or partnership with Algerian companies, public or private? Legal forms (property rights, land and property markets) ;
- Local and global economy and the integration of Algerian territories in the regional and global economy. Comparison with other Chinese (Maghreb, Mediterranean, Arab world, Africa) or non-Chinese (in Algeria or elsewhere) experiences. Special Economic Zones Model (SEZs) that existed since the 1960s in Taiwan, taken over and generalized by China in its own territory and exported to Africa in particular;
- Industrial and environmental aspect: industrial location, territories reconversion, deindustrialization (effects of oil revenues), environmental impact and sustainable development;
- Human aspect: effects on populations in terms of employment, unemployment, quality of life, transportation and infrastructure; relations between Chinese and Algerians (migration, demography, social, culture, languages ...)

- Sino-Algerian networks of informal trade and their effects on the local economy: commercial, monetary, financial and human flows; international ("New Silk Road") and local networks, "globalization from below".
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AGENDA

- **December 15th 2014:** deadline for sending paper proposals (argued summary outlining the methodology, with a bibliography), two pages maximum.
- **January 15th 2015:** list of proposals selected by the review committee.
- **March 15th 2015:** deadline for sending papers.
- **March 30th 2015:** final list of participants issued by the review committee.

Send proposals to algeriechine2015@gmail.com.

SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

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STEERING COMMITTEE

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- In France: Fatiha Talahite and Thierry Pairault.