

謀求中國綠卡 Hunting for Chinese Green Card

黑非洲人 在廣州的生活和未來 The Living and the Future of Black Africans in Guangzhou

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Text & Photography

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二千年前後，越來越多的非洲人來到南中國的廣州做買賣，尤其是來自撒哈拉沙漠以南地區的黑非洲人。他們不斷往返於中國和他們的非洲母國之間，重複著採購、銷售的動作，賺取差價……

Around year 2000, the number of Africans who came to Guangzhou in South China to do business surged, particularly Black Africans from Sub-Saharan Africa. Without a break they traveled back and forth between China and their homeland, purchasing and selling time after time, pocketing the difference...

在這些非洲人當中，後來逐漸有部分人留在廣州，從事起中間商的工作，為不能來中國的非洲夥伴採購，也為不熟悉中國的來華者提供導購、訂房訂機票等服務。然而，隨著來華人數日漸增大，許多問題逐漸出現，包括非洲人與中國人之間跨文化交流的障礙和誤解、對非洲人來說社會適應的問題、對中國人來說行政管理上的問題等等。廣州本地媒體對城內的非洲人的報導越來越多，並且傾向負面，有意無意地將非洲人與過期逗留、販毒、強姦、偷搶等關鍵詞聯繫起來。衝突隨著兩宗尼日利亞人在廣州死亡的事件達到高峰。然而，這絲毫沒有阻擋大量非洲人湧入廣州的趨勢。兩年前，我開始關注這個現象，並將非洲人作為國際移民、旅居者來研究，了解他們來華的過程、在廣州的生活、以及與中國人的交往。下文，我先截取三個場景，勾畫非洲人在廣州生活的圖景。

Among these Africans some began to stay in Guangzhou and make a living as brokers, purchasing for fellow Africans that couldn't make it to China, or offering services like shopper's guides, room and flight reservations for whom not familiar with the country. Nevertheless, what accompanied the ever-increasing migrant numbers to China are countless problems that gradually emerged: hurdles and misunderstandings in cross-cultural communications between Africans and the Chinese, social adaptation troubles of the Africans, administrative management difficulties for the Chinese etc. Guangzhou media increasingly reported about Africans within their city and most tend to be negative, connecting these people with keywords such as overstaying, drug trafficking, rape and robbery by accident or design. Conflicts peaked as two Nigerians passed away in the city, though this had zero influence on the continuous influx of countless Africans. I started to notice such phenomenon two years ago, therefore focused my research on Africans as international migrants and sojourners, understanding their process of entering China, lives in Guangzhou and interactions with the Chinese. Here I captured three scenes that sketch the life of Africans in Guangzhou.

場景 Scene 1

機場 The Airport

「你有『公斤』嗎？」 “Do you have ‘kilo’?”

夜晚九點，廣州白雲機場離境大廳。這裡燈火通明，熱鬧非凡，乍看卻像一個大型的倉庫。在埃及航空、埃塞俄比亞航空、阿聯酋航空的櫃位前，幾乎清一色是非洲人，人人手上推著一箱、兩箱的行李，再背一個大包，正在排隊等候辦理登機，準備返回非洲。往非洲方向的航班一般在午夜起飛。在他們旁邊，還有許多來送機、送貨的非洲同伴。這些人中，鮮少有旅行者，絕大部分都是來中國做生意、採購的商人，以及隨行的家屬。在這些排隊的非洲人的臉上，卻少見將要歸家的喜悅；反而，空氣中似乎瀰漫著一股焦慮的情緒。事實上，這是因為很多人手中的行李都超重了，少則超重一兩斤、多則十幾二十斤，他們擔心被拒絕登機或被要求加錢購買額外的重量。這些行李都是他們採購的貨物，常見的有紡織品、飾品和電子設備。他們祈求超重的貨物能蒙混過關，省去購買額外重量的開支；或者，他們希望遇到還有額外行李限額的「好心人」，幫忙帶一些貨物。因此，在機場大廳裡，你會不斷碰到有非洲人走近問你：「去哪兒？你還有『公斤』嗎？」這種場景每天晚上都在上演，甚至有非洲人專門蹲守在白雲機場，買賣「公斤」，賺取小費。每天，大量中國製造的貨物通過非洲人的行李箱，被運回非洲售賣。每天，大量的非洲人又抵達廣州，開展新一輪的採購旅程。

It is 9pm at the Guangzhou Baiyun Airport departure hall. Brightly lit and bustling with crowds, it looks strangely like a huge warehouse. At the counter of EgyptAir, Ethiopian Airlines and Emirates stand almost exclusively Africans, all pushing bags of luggage with huge backpacks on their shoulders, waiting in line for check in and their flight home. Flights for Africa commonly take off at midnight. Around them gathered companions who have come to see them off or deliver commodities. Few are travelers; the majority is businessmen who came alone or with their families along to China for business and procurement. Instead of the joy of going home on their faces, the air seems to be teeming with anxiety. In fact, a lot of their luggage is overweight, from a few to over twenty pounds. They are indeed worrying if they would be denied boarding or requested extra baggage fees. Their bags contain purchased commodities, often textiles, accessories and electronic devices. Now they are either wishing their overweight cargo could muddle through to save extra expenses, or hoping to meet good souls who still have additional luggage quota to help bringing their goods. This is exactly why you would always get approached by Africans at the airport lobby who ask “Where are you going? Do you have ‘kilo’?” It happens here every night; some Africans even stand guard at the Airport trading “kilo” for profits. Each day, via the luggage of these Africans, huge quantities of “Made in China” products are airlifted to Africa for sale; while in return great numbers of Africans arrive at Guangzhou to embark on their new journey of procurement.

晚上的廣州白雲機場

Guangzhou Baiyun Airport in the evening



非洲加納的路邊攤售賣從
中國採購的袋子
How bags bought in China
are sold in Ghana

場景
Scene 2宗教生活
Religious Lives隱蔽的教會與萬人清真寺
Hidden churches and the largest mosque

週日禮拜結束後的聖心大教堂 (石室)
Sacred Heart Cathedral Guangzhou
after Sunday church service



一個非洲教會
An African church in Guangzhou



開齋節時的先賢清真寺
Mosque Xianxian in Eid Mubarak



正在舉行主日崇拜的非洲人教會
An African church in Sunday service

星期天的廣州城，似乎還沉醉在假日的慵懶氣氛中。殊不知，這邊廂廣州人在嘆著一盅兩件的同時，那邊廂，也許就在酒樓樓上的酒店房間裡，非洲人已經開動喇叭，播放著強勁的非洲音樂，開始了教會禮拜日的祈禱活動。廣州大大小小的酒店裡隱藏著許多非洲教會，各自都有自己的樂隊、唱詩班、牧師、信徒。按說教的語言，主要有英語教會、法語教會；按牧師的國籍，則有尼日利亞教會、剛果民主共和國教會、坦桑尼亞教會等等。參與者大部分都是非洲的基督徒，另外還有一些非洲人的中國妻兒。廣州著名的「石室」——聖心大教堂裡，每個禮拜日下午都有以英語進行的禮拜活動，吸引許多非洲籍天主教徒參加。

Guangzhou on Sunday appears to be still in its lazy holiday mood. As citizens are enjoying dim sum, Africans, probably in the hotel rooms above the restaurant, have tuned up funky native beats for Sunday prayers. There are loads of African churches hidden within Guangzhou hotels large and small, all with their own bands, choirs, pastors and believers. The churches can be labeled according to spoken languages into mostly English and French, or according to pastors' nationalities into Nigerian, (Republic of the) Congolese and Tanzanian etc. Most who participate are African Christians; some also bring their Chinese wives and kids. The famous "Stone Chamber" - Sacred Heart Cathedral holds English worships every Sunday afternoon, attracting many African Catholics.

與此同時，每個星期五的伊斯蘭主麻日，廣州最大的清真寺——先賢寺裡，都會出現許多非洲穆斯林。他們與中國穆斯林、印巴穆斯林、中東穆斯林一起，在清真寺裡的中國阿訇帶領下，以阿拉伯語做禮拜。在重要的伊斯蘭節日，譬如開齋節、宰牲節裡，許多非洲穆斯林都會隆而重之，穿上印有非洲圖案的傳統長袍，參加聚禮。彼時進入廣州的清真寺，仿如進入了異域的阿拉伯世界。

At the same time, every Friday on the Islam Jum'ah, African Muslims flood into the largest mosque in Guangzhou - Mosque Xianxian. Together with Chinese, Indonesian, Pakistani and Middle-East Muslims, they worship in Arabian under the lead of Chinese Imams. During important Islam festivals like Eid Mubarak (Feast of Breaking the Fast) and Eid al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice), they would solemnly put on traditional robes with African patterns and attend prayers. If you ever visit any Guangzhou mosque then, it would be like stepping foot in an exotic Arabian world.

場景
Scene 3商場
The Marketplace廣園西路上的商城
Malls in Guangyuanxi Lu俯瞰小北——下塘西
Xiaobei - Xiatangxi深宵的晚餐
Midnight dinner

下午五點半，廣州廣園西路迦南商貿城的鐵閘緩緩落下，許多非洲店主和他們的中國工人在收鋪，另一些非洲人則提著一袋袋的採購品，陸續從商場的側門走出，轉戰下一個未關門的商場。許多銷往非洲的牛仔衣褲、牛仔布料，都是從這裡出來，由這些零散的非洲商人買回去分銷。沿著廣園西路，像迦南這樣的批發商場林立，非洲人則是這裡的主角，無論是作為店主還是顧客。廣園西的商場逐漸關門以後，許多非洲人會回到四五公里之外的小北路，或繼續採購、或吃飯聚會。事實上，「Guangyuan Shi Lu」（廣園西路）、「Shaubei Lu」（小北路）無非洲人不知，這也許是他們說得最熟練的中文。這兩個地標，可以說是非洲人在廣州的「根據地」：一個位於廣州火車站的北邊；一個於其東邊，離火車站一個地鐵站之遙。

廣園西主要是批發商場區，是廣州有名的皮革、服裝、鐘錶批發商場集散地，離城中心更近的小北則是商貿與住宅的綜合地帶。小北的商場普遍到晚上十點半以後才關門。夜晚十點的小北，刺耳的封箱膠紙聲、討價還價聲、吵鬧聲仍然不絕於耳。商場關門之後，許多非洲人會去附近的非洲餐廳吃飯、聚會，開啟夜生活模式。午夜時分吃晚飯，對許多在廣州的非洲人來說是再正常不過的事，因為他們要跟遠在非洲的客戶溝通，確認訂單、打包貨物，所以即使他們人在廣州，過的卻是非洲時間。

Doreen 在非洲的店子，賣的都是從廣州購入的東西
Doreen's shop in Africa - things sold in the shop were all bought in Guangzhou

5pm, the Canaan Trade Mall along Guangyuanxi Lu (West Guangyuan Road) gradually shuts its gates. African shop owners and their Chinese workers are closing their stores, while other Africans file out of the side entrance carrying bags of purchased items, ready to head for the next arcade that is still open. This is how most of the denim wear and fabrics are brought to Africa - distributed by these individual African merchants. Along the road, malls like Canaan stand in huge numbers, and Africans are the leading characters here, no matter the owner or the customer. As the malls close one after another, most of these people would return to Xiaobei Lu (Road) four to five kilometres away, continue shopping, or gather for meals. As a matter of fact, every African can

pronounce “Guangyuan Shi Lu” and “Shaubei Lu”, probably the Chinese phrases they speak most fluently. These two landmarks can be called the “African bases” in Guangzhou; one north to the Guangzhou Railway Station, the other to the east and only one station away. Guangyuanxi majors in wholesale malls and is a famous distribution centre for leather, clothes and watches, whereas Xiaobei, even closer to the city centre, is a mixed commercial and residential zone. Most arcades in Xiaobei close after 10:30pm, which is why you would still hear strident sounds of packing tape, bargaining voices and rattles before this hour. When the malls finally close, many Africans switch on their nightlife mode and gather at nearby African restaurants. Having dinner at midnight is only common for these people since they constantly communicate with clients in Africa, confirm orders and pack goods - they are still living as per African time even in Guangzhou.



非洲穆斯林和我在中國的清真餐館吃飯
African Muslims and I eating in a Chinese Muslim

未來在哪裡？ Where does their future lie?

與情景一相對的場面，是一批批的非洲人每天下午隨白雲機場的抵達航班而來。這些人當中，許多是被中國眾多的商機吸引過來的，也有一些是為探索和增加閱歷而來，有的糊裡糊塗地隨大流而來，有的甚至是被騙來的。不少沒來過中國的非洲人都把中國想像成一片遙遠的荒蠻之地，他們說是「叢林」(jungle)；然而來到以後，卻很驚訝地發現中國的城市比他們想像中的好，甚至不比他們熟悉的迪拜差。比起非洲國家，中國社會安定、經濟穩定、治安有保障、基礎設施好。於是越來越多的非洲人希望留在中國更長時間做買賣，甚至長居於此。中國曾經僅僅被視為一個跳板，是非洲移民進入歐美國家的中轉站——先在中國積累財富，再移民歐美。因為相比歐美，來中國的成本低，中國的入境政策又相對寬鬆。但如今，在兩年的調查中，我聽到越來越多的非洲人說希望中國能夠成為他們跨國移動的終點站，希望拿到一張「中國綠卡」。

In contrast to Scene 1, flocks of Africans arrive at Guangzhou Baiyun Airport every afternoon. Among them, many are drawn by the numerous business opportunities in China, others for exploring and gaining experience, some simply followed the flow confused, a few even deceived into coming. Most imagine China as a barbarous distant land, what they call a “jungle”; yet as they arrive they find cities in the country surprisingly better than their imagination, even not worse than their familiar Dubai. Compared with African countries, China has relatively stable society and economy with better security and infrastructure. As a result more and more Africans wish to stay for longer time doing business, even becoming long-term residents. Once considered as a mere springboard, China has been the transit point for African migrants to enter Europe and America, which means they first accumulate wealth in China then emigrate to western countries, obviously due to the lower costs and more lenient immigration policies of the former. But now during my two years of research, I heard a rising number of Africans wishing China to be their final stop of odyssey - they wish to get a “Chinese green card”.



小北路上，非籍穆斯林正在從新疆人手中購入羊隻，為開齋節作準備
African Muslim buying a sheep for Eid al-Adha from Xinjiang people in Xiaobei

但是，至少在目前看來，困難重重：中國的簽證政策時時變，如今正在收緊。續期簽證不再像以前那麼容易，獲得「綠卡」更是無望，中國也不支持雙重公民身份。再者，許多非洲人都經歷過因為黑色皮膚帶來的不愉快經歷，他們抱怨中國人愚昧無知，卻難以在短期內改變中國人普遍的對黑色皮膚的偏見。

Unfortunately, at least for now, this is no easy task: China's visa policy constantly changes, and currently, it is being tightened. Visa renewal is not as easy as before, not to mention a permanent ID card. China is also no fan of dual-citizenship. Besides, many Africans have had unpleasant experiences in China owing to their skin colour. While grumbling about the ignorance of Chinese, they have no luck changing the common prejudice Chinese people hold towards the black in the near term.



傍晚的小北一角
Xiaobei Lu at the dusk

然而，每次在上文場景二描述的清真寺里，看到各外國穆斯林與中國人、以及他們的混血孩子聚集在一起的場面，看到「石室」裡各種膚色的天主教徒一起祈禱的場面，還有看到中非混血小孩在小北街頭、商場裡玩耍的場面，我都對廣州的多文化未來、對人的多重身份認同充滿信心。經過一年的田野調查，我樂觀地認為廣州正變得越來越開放，對外來文化也越來越包容。✧

Nonetheless, every time when I see foreign Muslims, Chinese and their mixed children interact in mosques as described in Scene 2, and Catholics of various skin colours pray in unison inside "Stone Chamber", or Afro-Asian kids playing in malls and streets of Xiaobei, I become confident in the multicultural future of Guangzhou and people's recognition of "multiple identities". Following a year of field investigation, I optimistically believe Guangzhou is opening up to foreign cultures. ✧



5折起



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