



CONCOURS CENTRALE•SUPÉLEC

# Anglais

MP, PC, PSI

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4 heures

Calculatrices interdites

*L'usage de tout système électronique ou informatique est interdit dans cette épreuve.*

*Rédiger en anglais et en 500 mots une synthèse des documents proposés, qui devra obligatoirement comporter un titre. Indiquer avec précision, à la fin du travail, le nombre de mots utilisés (titre inclus), un écart de 10% en plus ou en moins sera accepté.*

Ce sujet propose les 4 documents suivants :

- une toile de Keith Haring ;
- une œuvre de fiction de Mukoma Wa Ngugi publiée dans *African Writing Online* ;
- un article du *Financial Times* de Lamido Sanusi ;
- un article d'Andrew Moody paru dans *China Daily*.

*L'ordre dans lequel se présentent les documents est aléatoire.*

## Michael Stewart – USA for Africa

by KEITH HARING, 1985



Acrylic and oil on canvas, 116 x 145 inches, Keith Haring Foundation, New York

Keith Haring (1958-1990), American street artist.

Haring's popular response to the fatal police beating in 1983 of graffiti artist Michael Stewart, in New York, is entitled "Michael Stewart – USA for Africa".

On the world map, New York and Johannesburg are marked by a red cross indicating that these are the two cities in which Keith Haring considered racism was at its worst. This painting demonstrates the efficiency of his technique, rooted in graffiti art, in conveying his ideas.

# Walking the Wok

When my friend Daniel Chan confided in me that Jennifer was leaving him because he was washing his Wok with soap, I laughed till I started to wheeze. [...]

It was not just Jennifer, he explained, his fellow Chinese students were no longer talking to him, and African students were eyeing him with suspicion, sometimes jeeringly and sometimes sucking air between the teeth to voice the jeer. The more I thought about it, the more it seemed improbable — that in a culinary school in a small town in Kenya called Limuru, a soap-washed but clean-rinsed wok could come between two lovers from China, and leave the man ostracized from both his community and his adopted society. [...]

With the wave of nationalization and renaming that came with independence, or still-in-dependence as the witty amongst the natives called it, Mpishi Msanii College was born. The three month course in cooking pancakes, fried sausages, eggs and chips and broiled rabbit grew wings, becoming an intensive two year program that produced not cooks, but cosmopolitan chefs well-versed in local and global cuisines. [...] Students of each nationality naturally coalesced into gangs, and Mpishi Msanii College was home to drunken midnight cooking competitions that often ended in violence, with singed hair and burns from boiling water and hot oil. [...]

Chan was a much better chef than I — he had an imagination that allowed him to combine disparate spices or foods, as if he could mix and taste them in his head before adding them to his pan. [...] His advanced skills as a chef, combined with gang loyalty — he belonged to the Chinese gang and I to the Kenyan gang (which further sub-divided along ethnic lines unless facing the foreigners) — made our friendship improbable. But after we ran into each other a few times at a den where the potent, illicit brew *Changaa* was sold, we became fast friends. [...]

Our Master Chef, an old Kenyan man who it was rumored had been Lord Baring's chef, instructed us through a mixture of invectives and wise sayings like "Do not play God," "Humility comes before the knife and fork," and his favorite, "To cook is to travel through cultures." So in our cooking lab and white aprons we had traveled to France, Turkey, Japan and Western Africa. [...] But it was while in mainland China that the troubles started. There were three commandments that had to be followed at all costs, Master Chef declared. "Love your Wok. Never wash your wok with soap. And oil your wok after each use." [...]

Then at the end of the week it happened — and I understood what Master Chef meant when he said that the Wok, like language is also a keeper of culture. We prepared a simple broccoli-based meal, yet it contained hints of past meals, rich enough to be noticed, but calm so as not to overwhelm the present taste. It was the old giving way to the new, or rather the new recognizing its past, the original sauce still

present like an active ghost in the new sauce I had just made. Later that evening while at Madame's, [— the proprietor of the den —] it occurred to me that that if we could cook history, it would have to be with a wok.

I remember seeing Chan's Wok in class — oil sizzling in a bottom so discolored that it was metallic, the edges a thin light blue that got darker closer to the top, the dark brown wooden handle split from overuse. It was utterly unlike my wok, which had a spongy, even sooty inner surface. Chan was clearly washing his wok in soapy water and, what's more, scrubbing it clean with steel wool. Master Chef was pacing up and down, agitated, shouting "The Past is Prologue," "To love your wok is to let culture grow," "It must have history" as he tried to correct Chan by reprimanding the whole class.

Still, I didn't foresee Chan's actions would later tear the whole school apart.

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When school reopened after the fire and we returned to a brand new dormitory courtesy of the Chinese Consulate in Nairobi, the first person I sought out was Chan's ex-girlfriend. Jennifer, though Chinese, spoke English with a British accent. [...]

"The wok changed Chan," she said when I asked her why they had broken up.

"The wok changed Chan?" I repeated in surprise.

"When he started cleaning it, he started forgetting his culture. And I loved him because he was home for me," she answered in a tone that suggested I understood what she meant. I did not.

"You really left him because of a wok?" I thought I might as well get to the bottom of it.

"How can a Chinese woman be with a man who washes his wok?" She asked with a self-conscious smile. [...]

I was starting to understand. A wok in Kenya was no longer just a wok; it was about finding mojo in a place where you were different. Chan was just not being reflexive and defensive enough. In his ability to synthesize and create, in his fluidity, he was unbalancing everyone else. [...]

When I told Chan that Jennifer would take him back if he stopped washing his wok, his reply was to suggest we celebrate our return to school by visiting Madame.

After we were nicely drunk and he lay peacefully on a wooden bench, I asked him why he washed his wok, and with soap, when all his troubles could end simply by wiping it clean. He did not say anything; he just lay on that bench rubbing his belly like it was a genie bottle. Then he abruptly ordered me to follow him to the cooking lab.

"This, this will be something nobody has ever tasted before, not even I" he said as he threw fat salmon skin into his wok which he let fry until there was a nice ring of oil at the bottom. [...] On my animated tongue the food was a galaxy of tastes, each

distinct and without the heaviness of the past that infused the food we had been cooking. Put simply, it was as god, or perhaps the devil, intended food to taste, naked and in the present. As we ate, or rather as I listened to what I was eating and Chan the artist observed his audience of one, he tried explaining. “The soil in which things grow, that is the real wok.” [...]

I understood. My eyes were open and I was feeling

lighter already. I too wanted to make dishes that were not prisoners of the past. Right was on Chan’s side — and like in a revolution, we would win more and more people to our side — one liberated mouth at a time. And if we failed and were kicked out of the school, so be it.

We had tasted the future. [...]

MUKOMA WA NGUGI

*Ngugi is the author of Nairobi Heat (Penguin SA, 2009), and Hurling Words at Consciousness (AWP, 2006) and a political columnist for the BBC Focus on Africa Magazine.*

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## Africa Must Get Real About Chinese Ties

by LAMIDO SANUSI, GOVERNOR OF THE CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA,  
*Financial Times*, London, March 11, 2013

Nigeria, a country with a large domestic market of more than 160m people, spends huge resources importing consumer goods from China that should be produced locally. We buy textiles, fabric, leather goods, tomato paste, starch, furniture, electronics, building materials and plastic goods. I could go on.

The Chinese, on the other hand, buy Nigeria’s crude oil. In much of Africa, they have set up huge mining operations. They have also built infrastructure. But, with exceptions, they have done so using equipment and labour imported from home, without transferring skills to local communities.

So China takes our primary goods and sells us manufactured ones. This was also the essence of colonialism. The British went to Africa and India to secure raw materials and markets. Africa is now willingly opening itself up to a new form of imperialism.

The days of the Non-Aligned Movement that united us after colonialism are gone. China is no longer a fellow under-developed economy — it is the world’s second-biggest, capable of the same forms of exploitation as the west. It is a significant contributor to Africa’s deindustrialisation and underdevelopment.

My father was Nigeria’s ambassador to Beijing in the early 1970s. He adored Chairman Mao Zedong’s China, which for him was one in which the black African — seen everywhere else at the time as inferior — was worthy of respect.

His experience was not unique. A romantic view of China is quite common among African imaginations — including mine. Before his sojourn in Beijing, he was the typical Europhile, committed to a vision of African “progress” defined by replicating western ways of doing things. Afterwards, when he became permanent secretary in the external affairs ministry, the influence of China’s anti-colonial stance was written all over the foreign policy he crafted,

backing liberation movements in Portuguese colonies and challenging South Africa’s apartheid regime.

This African love of China is founded on a vision of the country as a saviour, a partner, a model. But working as governor of Nigeria’s central bank has given me pause for thought. We cannot blame the Chinese, or any other foreign power, for our country’s problems. We must blame ourselves for our fuel subsidy scams, for oil theft in the Niger Delta, for our neglect of agriculture and education, and for our limitless tolerance of incompetence. That said, it is a critical precondition for development in Nigeria and the rest of Africa that we remove the rose-tinted glasses through which we view China. [...]

For Africa to realise its economic potential, we need to build first-class infrastructure. This should service an afro-centric vision of economic policies. African nations will not develop by selling commodities to Europe, America and China. We may not be able to compete immediately in selling manufactured goods to Europe. But in the short term, with the right infrastructure, we have a huge domestic market. Here, we must see China for what it is: a competitor. [...]

Africa must recognise that China — like the US, Russia, Britain, Brazil and the rest — is in Africa not for African interests but its own. The romance must be replaced by hard-nosed economic thinking. Engagement must be on terms that allow the Chinese to make money while developing the continent, such as incentives to set up manufacturing on African soil and policies to ensure employment of Africans.

Being my father’s son, I cannot recommend a divorce. However, a review of the exploitative elements in this marital contract is long overdue. Every romance begins with partners blind to each other’s flaws before the scales fall away and we see the partner, warts and all. We may remain together — but at least there are no illusions.

by ANDREW MOODY

South African academic sees China's involvement in the continent as benign



*Ross Anthony says that China gets unfairly criticized for its role in Africa*

Ross Anthony believes accusations in the West that China is a new colonial power in Africa are a form of racism. The 36-year-old South African academic insists it is “hilarious” that the actions of Chinese corporations and businesses are conflated into some “grand state strategy”. “If BP does something dodgy in Nigeria, nobody says that is 10 Downing Street’s fault and David Cameron organized it all. But they do that with China. It is actually a form of racism. People actually want an enemy and China fits the bill. It is not rocket science to see that.” [...]

The South African academic, who partly specializes in global security issues including threats to the environment, does not, however, regard China’s economic involvement in Africa as completely benign. “The reason why China is here is because they have joined the global economy. They pull stuff out of the ground, manufacture it in southern China and ship it globally, particularly to

America, and then it is sold on the shelves of Wal-Marts,” he says. “This global consumption capitalist lifestyle is putting pressure on global resources and causing environmental problems, which are becoming a greater issue. So my take on this is that anxieties about China and Africa just obscure what the real problem is.” [...]

Anthony’s doctorate focused on how political events since the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) had impacted on the urban space of Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang. “I was looking at the interface between politics and urban development and how the various political regimes since the Qing Dynasty had affected the social organization of the city.” Urbanization remains one of Anthony’s strong research interests at Stellenbosch and he believes the Chinese are different to many Africans in seeing city living as some form of ideal lifestyle. “If there is a vision of contemporary China, what you might call a collective fantasy, it is urban. It is unlike Africa. We are constantly moving from the countryside to the city and back. The exception in China might be Uyghurs<sup>1</sup>. When they retire, they too want to move back to a nice house in the countryside.”

Anthony says the Chinese are beginning to export some of their urban planning ideas to Africa, particularly in such areas as the Chinese Eastern Industrial Zone near Addis Ababa, where a number of Chinese companies are based. “As soon as you enter these zones it is like entering a slice of modern China from the way the flower beds are organized and all these slogans put up on the walls.” Anthony does not think these Chinese zones will prove successful in the long run. [...]

Anthony believes that generally China gets unfairly criticized, for its role in Africa. “I think China has got a ridiculously bad rap in term of its presence in Africa. It is shameful the way the West covers this, especially the left-leaning newspapers.” He believes that the Africa market might be more open to China because it doesn’t have the colonial baggage some Western countries have. “They came in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and they didn’t do anything. They left and took just a few giraffes. They didn’t colonize, although they did take African slaves to Guangzhou.” He insists that while China’s role in Africa is not a colonial one, the economic relationship has an inevitable imbalance. “I think colonial encounters involve taking more than giving and I think it is just the same with China. You almost have to take more than give, otherwise it is not a sustainable relationship,” he says. [...]

Anthony says there is very little difference between China’s involvement in Africa and that of the West and it is in large part just about the spread of global capitalism. “I think anxieties about this (China’s involvement in Africa) are misguided,” he says. “China is sometimes presented as some enemy but actually it is a country very much integrated into the global economic system. As such any differentiation between China’s engagement in Africa and that of the West is a false one.”

<sup>1</sup> Uyghurs form one of the 56 officially recognized ethnic groups in China.