

COLLOQUIUM

Non-Suffering Work: China's Medical Interventions in Post-conflict South Sudan

Dr. Yidong Gong – UC President's Postdoctoral Fellow at UC Irvine



China has long been invested in giving medical aid to African countries. But unlike its counterparts in Europe and the US—whose aid is driven by “compassion” and discourses of “suffering”—or its own earlier Mao-era aid of “revolutionary humanitarianism,” China today

Thurs Jan. 30, 2020
3:30-5:00pm SBSG 1321

sees its medical interventions on the continent as “international humanitarianism.” Based on fieldwork and archival research from 2013 to 2018, this talk will give an overview of China’s medical programs in South Sudan from the 1970s to the present. I will use Juba Teaching Hospital as a case study to show how Chinese doctors mediate their professional and social space. In particular, I will discuss what I call “non-suffering work” that suggests implications for humanity in post-conflict settings.

Yidong Gong is a University of California President’s Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Anthropology, UC Irvine. He works at the intersection of medical anthropology, global health, African



studies, and China studies. His research is based in South Sudan, East Africa and China. In 2019, he received his Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University. He had previously worked at Xinhua News Agency, holding roles ranging from bilingual feature writer to Pyongyang-based foreign correspondent. He also served as China Regional News Editor for SciDev.Net, a leading source of news, views and analysis about science and technology for global development.

