

## China's global state capitalism from the ground-up

Call for papers and workshop

8 June 2023, Ljubljana

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Following over a decade of intensive outbound investment by Chinese state-owned and private enterprises that occurred preceding the Covid-19 pandemic, Chinese firms have found themselves managing complex transnational business entities. This global assemblage of people, institutions, ways of doing things, unions, migration flows, laws and illicit practices cannot be seen as a uniquely Chinese phenomenon divorced from the practices of transnational capitalism at large (Franceschini and Loubere, 2022). Yet Chinese companies, particularly state-owned enterprises (SOEs), do have distinct sets of goals that encompass both profit-seeking and political priorities (Lee, 2017).

While China's outward FDI and the effects on firm structures and preferences have been studied extensively in business studies literature (starting with the seminal work of Buckley et al., 2007), the effects of 'China's globalization' are widely acknowledged to unfold outside the confines of the firm as well. We combine this starting point with our assertion that Chinese multinationals are constantly adapting to both the host *and* home environments in their economic *and* political decisions. This approach guides our research agenda and calls for a multidisciplinary study of Global China.

Given the triple winds of geopolitical tension, domestic authoritarian retrenchment and pandemic management divergences between China and the rest of the world, it has however become more difficult to accurately study and understand how Chinese SOEs and private multinationals manage their relatively new and sprawling networks of subsidiaries, acquisitions, joint ventures, contracted sites and other forms of investment. In this new reality for China studies as a field, we must rethink our research strategies and renew our commitment to fieldwork and primary data collection.

**To study the complex assemblage that makes up China's new globalized state capitalism around the world, we propose an intensive workshop that will include the following thematic blocks:**

1. Transference/translation/localization of **managerial practices** and its effect on extant labour-capital relations
2. Multi-layered **migration flows** encompassing high-skilled managers, blue-collar workers and temporary and posted workers, both from China and elsewhere
3. Interplay between **local institutions and Chinese firms**, to explore how host state and societal actors, alongside Chinese firms, navigate the challenges of embedding Chinese state capital into local contexts

The goal of the workshop is to collect a group of contributors that will work towards a special issue (SI) on the topic. We are interested in cases from around the world, as long as your work fits into one of the thematic blocks.

We would therefore ask interested parties to submit **a 300-word abstract**, outlining your research and plans for publication. Following acceptance, we will expect people to submit **draft papers** before the workshop in June 2023, so that we may use valuable in-person time productively and come up with a strong SI proposal for a leading open-access journal.

Please submit your abstract to: [martina.bofulin@zrc-sazu.si](mailto:martina.bofulin@zrc-sazu.si) by 1 March 2023, indicating which of the three thematic blocks you are submitting to.

We aim to get back to you in early March 2023 with our decision. The organizers will be able to fund travel within Europe and two nights' accommodation in Ljubljana.

This workshop is co-organized by [COST Action CA18215 China in Europe Research Network \(CHERN\) Working group 5 – Labour and migration](#) and [ZRC SAZU – Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts](#).