

# Acknowledgements

This project started in 2012 as an enquiry into China–Africa relations. I would like to thank Professor Joachim Kurtz of Heidelberg University for accompanying me from Chinese revolutionaries in Malaya to Chinese mining companies in Zambia. I also thank Professor Mamadou Diawara and Professor Hans-Peter Hahn of the University of Frankfurt for encouraging me to conduct ethnographic fieldwork and seek a new disciplinary home in social anthropology.

In June 2014, I joined the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale. I would like to thank Professor Günther Schlee for his unbroken support during the ensuing four years. I also thank Professor Nina Glick Schiller for introducing me to the work of Max Gluckman and the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute; and Professor Robert Home at Anglia Ruskin University for giving me advice on colonial town planning in southern Africa after I returned from fieldwork in October 2016.

At the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, I would like to thank Viktoria Giehler-Zeng, Anett Kirchhof, Bettina Mann, Anja Neuner, Kathrin Niehuus, Manuela Pusch, Cornelia Schnepel, Ingrid Schüler, Viola Stanisch and Nadine Wagenbrett for their support before, during and after my fieldwork. Together, they created a unique research environment for me that took account of personal issues related to my family. I also thank the following for their advice on how best to turn my data into a written ethnography: Sandra Calkins, Brian Campbell, James Carrier, Brian Donahoe, John Eidson, Pamila Gupta, Patience Mususa, Tabea Scharrer and Lyn Schumaker.

In July 2015, my family and I arrived in Zambia; I would like to thank Jessica Achberger for giving us such a good start. I also thank the Southern African Institute for Policy and Research, particularly Marja Hinfelaar, for institutional and personal support during our fifteen months in Zambia. Many people helped us settle down and feel at home, including Fröschl and Uta, Lea and Lebo, Mike and the extended Fisher family, Martha, Priscilla, Edna and Joseph, Alison and Matthew, and Ntiusya and Debbie. I also thank Juliet and Felix, Boniface, Samuel, Lilian and Mathews, and Mercy and Humphrey for their support and friendship and for accepting me into their lives.

Our time in Zambia was full of challenges that we would not have been able to overcome without the support of our family and friends. I would like to thank the readers of our private blog who commented on it and accompanied us through internet calls. I thank all those who visited us in Zambia, particularly my parents, parents-in-law, maternal aunt, uncle and cousins, and Katja and Tilman. I would like to thank Erik for virtually following my footsteps in Mpatamatu and turning the GPS data into such a wonderful township map. Thank you, Franz, for being with me since we first landed in Beijing on a September morning thirteen years ago.

I thank my children for keeping me grounded over these past seven years. My last words belong to Nora. We have tried to find our way in Zambia, manoeuvring through all sorts of situations, moments of excitement, disillusion, joy, frustration, encouragement and giving up. Thank you for your love and company!