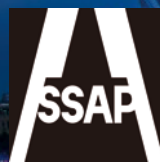




CHINA AND GLOBALIZATION 2.0

Chinese Agricultural Technology Aid in Africa

Xiaoyun Li · Lixia Tang
Jixia Lu · Xiuli Xu
Yue Zhang · Gubo Qi
Chuanhong Zhang



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China and Globalization 2.0

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CONTENTS

1	History of China's Agricultural Aid to Africa: Why and How	1
2	Agricultural Development through Science and Technology: The Extraterritorial Travel of Agricultural Technocratic Rationality	37
3	Closing-Gap Experience Sharing in Foreign Aid: A Learning Process Based on Construction and Embedding	67
4	Writing Prescriptions while Selling Medicine: Development of a Mechanism with Blurred Boundaries	109
5	Institutional Learning: Innovation in Mutual Adaptation	149
6	Inspiration and Aspiration: National Interest and Profit Motive	183
7	Representing the Country: Assistance Provider and Boundary Construction	215
	References	245

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	FOCAC follow-up action plan—methods of agricultural aid	15
Table 1.2	Agricultural demonstration centers in Africa	24
Table 1.3	ATDCs' crops, animal breeds and technical services	29
Table 1.4	Services by Chinese experts dispatched under FAO framework	31
Table 2.1	Basic information of the two ATDCs	50
Table 4.1	Dual functions of the ATDC	127
Table 4.2	A glimpse of the staff in a demonstration center	134
Table 7.1	Plan for the dispatch of agrotechnology teams 2014–2018	230

INTRODUCTION¹

This book provides a summary of our study of Chinese aid to foreign countries over the past few years. One important reason we have chosen to conduct our field studies in Africa is that the continent has been a key recipient of Western aid and a region that faces huge colonial and postcolonial development challenges. Another reason is that Africa, a focal point for Chinese aid, is where a number of oppressed peoples have achieved national independence; it is also a key region for mutually beneficial cooperation and has been at the center of the debate on the so-called “neo-colonialism” in recent years. Focusing on a region like this helps us see different historical events as forming a continuum by placing them within either the colonial paradigm or the development framework. The former relies on such labels as “colonial”, “post-colonial” and “neo-colonial” while the latter treats history as an on-going process that moves from pre-development, development, post-development and then to the neo-development stage. We have chosen for our case study China-financed demonstration centers for agricultural technology in Africa primarily because agricultural technology has always been a priority for Chinese aid to the region. Furthermore, such words as “agriculture”, “technology”, “demonstration center” provide a clue to the exciting development story happening in China. This, together with the European solutions—from colonial farming in the early years to the assistance in the form of Green Revolution, agricultural

¹Published in *Beijing Cultural Review*, 2017 (2).

research and dissemination and integrated agricultural development—and African countries’ own strategies for food security, agricultural development and economic growth, provides three distinct perspectives for one to understand aid to the continent. We have chosen to title this book “China’s Agricultural Technology Demonstration Centers in Africa: An Example of New Models of Development” to illustrate new development models through the programs launched by the centers. Further, we regard “demonstration” a culture opposite to that of “intervention”. By providing an overview of China’s foreign aid over the years, this book will help readers better understand changes taking place in China and its unique path to modernity.

We visited China’s agricultural technology demonstration centers (ATDCs) in the countries of T, E, Z and M, where we discussed China’s foreign aid with the Chinese aid workers and observed how they managed the centers. Our first-hand experience led to the finding that the practice at these ATDCs was quite different from the Western development assistance we know. The executive secretary of Ethiopia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, responsible for the management of development assistance, also told us about the difference. According to him, the Western aid workers were more interested in helping them in designing development plans and policies, and often discussed with them how to convene coordination meetings among government departments whereas their Chinese counterparts rarely did this, and they were more like entrepreneurs, busy looking for market and partners and approaching government officials to address specific problems in various projects. Chinese aid workers in Africa seemed to prefer to stay with their own people while Westerners would like to spend more time with locals. Evidently African friends feel the difference in development aid between China and the West. While Western aid workers tend to see the Chinese aid workers as acting in a businesslike manner, they are the real assistance providers in the eyes of Chinese aid workers in Africa. In fact, even among the Western countries, the UK, the US and Germany for example, the way of foreign aid provision differs. Therefore, we need to refrain from rushing into any conclusion about what does the difference in foreign aid between China and the West denote exactly? But as DeHart noted, global development is no longer under the control of Western countries. China and India have totally different aid history and framework from the West. As China provides an increasing amount of aid for foreign countries in diversified ways, it is imperative for us to thoroughly explore this issue. First of all, China’s foreign aid has undergone a series of changes since the 1950s. The

launch of the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, in particular, marks the transformation of China's development assistance from bilateral behavior to multilateral institutional arrangements. China is now experiencing a great change, from being dragged into the global development strategies to playing a more active role in the strategies. Secondly, such a shift represents not merely a change in the contest for greater say in international affairs, but also marks China's economic integration into the world under the new development framework which is achieved through the Belt and Road Initiative. While we could not say these two multilateral mechanisms ensure China's leading position in international development affairs, at least China has made a serious attempt to better understand the West and the world and worked towards playing a leading role. If this new role is a repetition of the past dominant role of the capitalist countries, it would be unsustainable and unwelcome. As China is on the way to become a new leading country, it is imperative for Chinese social scientists to inform development policy making, and more importantly, they also shoulder the moral obligation to produce public knowledge for the world. This requires Chinese social scientists, who had long played second fiddle to the social science community in the West, to effect a changing role from the "objects" and "targets" to active researchers who seek to better understand China and the world. If a systematic, constructive and critical research is not yet possible, we should at least realize the importance of systematic data collection and our own experience, and of understanding and explaining what we did outside of China.

Hoselitz published *Non-economic Barriers to Economic Development* in 1952, which clearly pointed out that the economic development and especially industrialization not only concern the change of production technology, but also the revolution of social structure and cultural values (Hoselitz 1952: 8–21). His view against economic determinism is not entirely unjustifiable, representing the then prevalent modernization theory that economic development must be based on the fundamental reform of the political, economic and social systems. In fact, this view has always been theoretically underpinning Western foreign aid. Surely China's rapid transformation has also brought about great changes in political, economic and social systems, but Fukuyama's question about whether China can sustain rapid development reveals the differences in development paths adopted by China and the West (Fukuyama 2014: 472). Liberal politicians seldom look at China and the West separately as they are more

in favor of the view about the end of history whereas nationalists and politicians tend to emphasize the differences between China and the West. It is meaningful to interpret such differences from a depoliticized or cultural perspective. Actually, the crux about the dispute on the development paths of China and the West mainly lies in “the government with limited power as compared with the government with relatively great power”. The UK political tradition is shaped by the economic and political activities of the monarch under constraints and all natural people whose power seems unlimited while the Chinese historical political practice is totally different. Differing from the West in political practice, China enjoys economic prosperity comparable to that of the West, which is the exact basis for us to approach the differences between China and the West. Behind the Western countries’ interest in China’s foreign aid is the assumption that China’s development model is naturally reflected in China’s foreign aid. Because the Western development assistance embodies the Western political logic, and China’s assistance naturally reflects the political and social logic of China’s development. As implied by *Difference and Indifference* we published on *IDS Bulletin*, China’s foreign aid has always been an overseas extension of China’s domestic development mode (Li et al. 2013). In fact, many scholars at home and abroad have also noticed this, but none of them discusses the connotations of this logic.

If, according to the hypothesis of many scholars, the presence of China in Africa is somehow fundamentally different from that of the West, it may be misleading to use the book title “An Example of New Models of Development”. Because, in the strict academic sense, although development means growth, progress, extension and expansion (Petit Robert 1987, quoted from Gilbert Risk 2010: 8), in development research, development refers to the process in which non-European countries and regions change according to the historical experience of Europe and the resulting social model. That is what we call the expansion of Euro-centrism. Even if there appear different modes of change, it is just pluralistic modernity. Therefore, if we make China’s demonstration centers in Africa show how development is achieved, it naturally means that China is showing how to develop by following the Western development model. Nevertheless, although a lot of Western scholars think that many of the things that China does now are not much different from those of the West in the 1950s–1960s (Bond and Garcia 2015), the similarity at the technological level does not mean that the political and social logic behind is the same. The difference is reflected to some extent in the above-mentioned African government

official's impression about the Chinese and Western aid. China's development is to a large extent "new development" and China's modernity differs from that of the West marked by Enlightenment. Although this point is not a consensus, it enjoys strong empirical support. In this logic, China's agricultural demonstration centers in Africa demonstrate not only agricultural technology, but also a non-standard transformation experience. This point is borne out by the following chapters of this book. In the research, we find that the demonstration centers present a new subject-object relationship and a way to build this relationship. In the demonstration centers, we see the interaction between Chinese experts and local farmers, and between local government officials and China's domestic organizations is quite different from the way that Western aid experts establish social relations in Africa. Therefore, we entitle this book "An Example of New Models of Development".

There has always been controversy between classical development research and critical development research (Li et al. 2014). The former emphasizes the process that the cultural model dominated by industrial capitalism gradually spreads from the West to the world; this cultural model champions the strength of human rationality, and advocates leveraging natural science to understand and transform the world and establishing a political and economic system fitting industrialization in developing countries (Preston 2010: 14). The reason why the West boasts a dynamic capitalist economy is that it has fostered a modern political system integrating a strong country, the rule of law and accountability (Fukuyama 2014: 472). The core of Western development assistance is to establish and practice such a political and economic system in developing countries while the theoretical framework of development assistance combining new liberalism and new institutionalism is a contemporary embodiment of this theory. This theoretical framework emphasizes that global poverty and violence are caused by the poor political governance system, and a strong system should be put in place to change this situation and serve the poor (Craig and Porter 2006: 4–5). Ever since the emergence of industrial capitalism, the world has gone through the initial stage of the industrial capitalist culture deepened in Europe and expanded beyond Europe, as well as the stage of global expansion of the culture as this cultural model gradually invades into non-European societies and causes large-scale changes in the local culture of non-European countries. It seems that amid today's globalization, it is hard to say which corner of the world has not been impacted by industrial capitalism which has evolved

into global capitalism, and such cultural expansion is consolidated through international development assistance. With frequent communication going on between different cultures and especially under today's highly developed transportation and communication conditions, the material conditions and cultural lifestyles exert growing mutual influence. Ostensibly, the industrialized cultural form is ubiquitous in the world. But we should see that the point may not be whether there is the expansion of industrialized culture, but how to look at the reaction of non-European countries to the impact of industrialized culture. That is what we call "cultural encounter". First of all, industrial capitalism, coupled with religions, has invaded into various places around the world and changed the local culture of those areas, such as Africa. Because the Western social sciences hold that society evolves from a low level to a high level, and the evolution is irreversible; and that the change from agricultural feudalism to industrial capitalism is inevitable. This is the historical logic of classical development theory, which well defends Western colonialism. In the nineteenth century, the West believed that colonialism was bringing barbarian society into civilized society, and this logic further safeguarded the legitimacy of the Western development assistance known as "modern colonialism". Secondly, unlike Africa, the rest of the world saw industrial capitalism and its cultural forms have different destinies. China is a typical case. China has not been completely colonized like Africa (the culture of industrial capitalism has not completely changed China's local culture), nor has it been able to completely avoid the impact of industrial capitalism. Therefore, there are two dimensions in the academic thinking about China's changes. First, from the evolutionary perspective rooted in Euro-centrism, when capitalism is almost close to the peak of historical development, China is naturally placed at the bottom of historical development. Therefore, the only way for China's economic development is to say goodbye to the past and learn from the West. This view is rooted in the Hegelian thought of evolutionary romanticism and the tradition of positivism (T. Brook and G. Blue 2005: 5). There is a thought implied here. Because the Chinese culture has not been completely changed by the West, the Western Social Sciences assume that the Western industrial capitalism and China are cultural entities opposite to each other. If China can transform on the track of Western industrial capitalism, it fully proves the universality of Western development path. On the contrary, if China cannot succeed under the condition of industrial capitalism, it will show the absoluteness of Western civilization again when China is relatively backward. The second

dimension is based on the fact that China is an independent civilization. Although China's continuous changes have been subject to the cultural impact of Western industrial capitalism, its cultural mode has been following its own logic. The theory of Euro-centrism sees the world in a vertical process of civilization evolution while the anti-evolutionist view holds that world has diversified civilizations which are parallel, with mutual influences upon each other. Industrial capitalism and global capitalism do affect the development course of Western civilization, but non-Western civilization has its own rationality. This dimension shows the particularity and independence of China's development path. China's presence abroad provides us with another field of research into China's changes.

Our research into China's assistance to and investment in Africa, and China and global governance is intended to gain a clear understanding about the characteristics of China's social changes based on China's presence abroad. Here is an empirical presupposition: a dominant cultural model should be consistent at home and abroad. We find that Japan and ROK, and especially Japan, a westernized country, not only experienced deepening industrialization similar to that in Europe, but also continued the Western countries' process of colonial invasion and expansion through industrial products. Although Japan has also created the experience of East Asia, its development model is not essentially different from that of the West, which is reflected not only in Japan's domestic political practice, but also in Japan's foreign aid. Japan's foreign aid is quite westernized, but is very complicated in social and cultural fronts. Recently, Japan proposed to set up a \$100 billion Asian infrastructure fund, aiming to "dominate" international affairs, but such dominance is not about money in the main. The case with ROK is similar. Japan and ROK, like the West, emphasize gender and development, and participatory development. Still, Japan and ROK on one side and China on the other share a lot in common in terms of foreign aid, such as emphasizing non-interference in internal affairs and economic cooperation, and being less altruistic. The scholars from Japan and ROK call such convergence the East Asian Development Cooperation Model (Shimomura and Ping 2015). Many Western scholars find that the West had been offering foreign aid since a time much earlier than that of Japan and China and the West had ever gone through the same stage as Japan and China (Shimomura and Ping 2015), but they still ignore some essential differences. A senior official of Japan International Cooperation Agency once said, Japan would like China to participate in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD; and Japan's foreign aid is

different from that of the West. In this organization, Japan is lonely as it has no common language with other members. After ROK's accession to the OECD Development Assistance Committee, it faces the same situation as that of Japan. The inconsistency between "social cultural value" and "political cultural value" is the main reason why Japan cannot dominate the world in peacetime. Amid globalization, China's internal changes have much in common with those of Europe in major aspects, such as industrialization, urbanization, the flow of farmers to industries and cities. However, these changes clearly show China's particularity and independence. In terms of foreign aid, China and the West also have a lot in common. However, China's "non-interference in internal affairs" is different from the Western way of establishing a system in line with industrial capitalism in developing countries through development assistance. As Premier Zhou Enlai said, our foreign aid is not only Marxist, but more importantly a part of our tradition (Wang 2010; Zhang 2013). Based on these issues, we hope to look into the significance of China's changes through research into China's foreign aid practice and see whether such changes are consistent in the internal deepening reform and external manifestation. Obviously, it is difficult to answer this question. Only through systematic field research can we get the answer. The Western modernization follows the logic of liberalism in both internal transformation and external expansion while China's internal change and external presentation are not entirely in the logic of free market economy. Therefore, if a relatively independent civilization (obviously China's civilization has been impacted, but has not been interrupted so far) shows the characteristics of industrialization and capitalization, but its own political, economic and social structure has not been completely transformed into the Western industrialized system, how should we look at such social transformation? Can we take the transformation as the ground for another type of "new development"? The Western Social Sciences sum up the modernization of different cultural forms as the so-called modernity of selection (Ziegmont Bauman 2002), as is the case of the World Bank which regards China's transformation as the result of market reform. However, what does the transformation of China show? Is it a different case about development? The research in the dimension of foreign aid at least provides us a new approach to this issue.

The above is our basic thinking in the process of studying China's foreign aid. We believe that to understand the essence of Chinese social change, it is not enough to study the internal changes of Chinese society.

In the process of rapid development and transformation, China's existence has far exceeded its border, extending its presence around the world. Amid globalization, the encounter between China and the world is totally different from that between China and the West in the primary stage of industrial capitalism. What's more, the encounter between China and Africa is different from that between the West and Africa. More importantly, the encounter between China and Africa today is different from that after the independence of African countries in the twentieth century. First of all, today's multi-center global structure is different from the previous binary or unipolar world. The power relationship between development and underdevelopment is far more complicated than the global relationship before. The single center-margin relationship no longer exists. "The third world" concept in the postcolonial knowledge system is no longer convincing (Chatterjee 2011: 208–234). China and India, which used to be marginal countries, are rising and forming a new center-margin relationship with other developing countries to some extent. Secondly, emerging countries are still dependent on developed countries for capital and technology. The emerging countries have dual identities as center and margin between traditional underdeveloped countries and developed countries. Finally, unlike in the traditional historical economic pattern, the flow of capital and technology is no longer one-way as emerging countries make growing investment in developed countries. China's investment in the 37 US states increased from \$1 billion in 2008 to \$5 billion in 2010 (Rosen and Hanemann 2012). Obviously, according to the Western and Non-western structuralism theory of traditional development research, we cannot accurately grasp the significance of the new encounter between China and Africa in the new era. The growth of China as a provider of development assistance challenges the Western post-colonial development theory based on the center-margin historical framework of colonialism. All of these provide us with a strong impetus to study China's foreign aid.

International studies on China's foreign aid mainly focus on international relations and international political economy. The general view holds that China's foreign aid in the initial stage is distinctively characterized with a lot of ideological output. After the start of reform and opening up, China's foreign aid gradually becomes pragmatic and serves its own economic development. The limited field studies are mostly political narratives which respond to whether China practices "neocolonialism" from the perspective of international political economy, like the study by

Bräutigam. The study by Buckley (2013) research is a rare field research from the perspective of developmental anthropology. She focuses on the life narrative of Chinese aid workers abroad and China's agricultural governance in Africa. However, there are few foreign reports on the field research of China's foreign aid system. Since 2013, we have been carrying out field research on China's agricultural assistance demonstration centers and agricultural experts in the countries of T, E, Z and M. We avoid the role of "effect evaluators" and short-term interview-based research in those agricultural demonstration centers. We lived with them, observed their life and work and communicated with them, to see how they worked in Africa, and even offered them training and gave them ideas. At least we hoped to be a team with them at that time. As we are teachers of Agricultural University, we built rapport with them very soon. In this process we accumulated some ethnographic materials, and found it was appropriate to digest our field data from the perspective of anthropology and development.

Anthropology originated in the Western colonial era. Ever since its budding, the European capitalist system has experienced changes in the two dimensions of horizontal expansion and vertical reinforcement over the past 400-plus years. The horizontal expansion of Western capitalism relies on a large number of individuals and groups acting as media, including businessmen, soldiers, missionaries and immigrants, who become agents of capitalism (Preston 2010: 132). They engaged in various activities in the non-Western world according to their own expectations and ideas, and developed a set of understandings and views about the non-Western world. Their understandings and views have gradually turned into institutions, conventions and even disciplines, as most notably represented by anthropology. The contribution of anthropology to development research can be summed up as the framework of "anthropology and development". This framework holds a two-dimensional perspective. One is the critical perspective of deconstructionism, as typically represented by the deconstruction thought of Foucault in Escobar (1995), and the criticism of development under the framework of dualizing development knowledge into "world knowledge and local knowledge" (Hobart 1993). Deconstructionism uses Marxist structuralism and the postmodern analytical framework, and regards development as the hegemonic extension of capitalism and a process for the West to maintain its hegemony with knowledge and discourse. Leaving aside the critical development framework of duality, a group of European anthropologists including Long

(2001), Bierschenk et al. (2002) and Mosse (2005), adopted a perspective that avoided political economy and structuralism and the external-internal, global-local and other dual analytical frameworks often used in development research. Under the influence of the Manchester school of humanity, they brought the concepts of interactionism and actors into the study of development. They used the concepts of actors, knowledge, interfaces, agency, agents and translation to study the formation and dissemination of Western development knowledge, the operation and implementation process of development projects, and other development-related micro issues from a micro perspective, so as to present the micro practice of aid agencies and foreign aid experts abroad as well as the daily living scenes of these agencies and experts, and thus to obtain the real logic of development assistance operation in the daily life practice. The research from this perspective is a jumble. First of all, development projects concern cultural diversity, and people from different countries encounter each other in the same field; second, even if they come from the same culture, different actors meet in the same field; third, even if they are all local experts, they have different expertise which will interact in the same field. The anthropologists who focus on development take the development projects, development organizations and experts as research objects; take the policies, knowledge, management and technology as research contents, and in particular regard the policy makers, agents and target groups as a system. At the same time, we realize there are some problems in referring to this framework. First, the tradition of Manchester anthropology of interaction provides the framework of British special individualism, which is based on the relationship between the initiative of a highly free natural person and the structure. Long (2001) regards social construction as the result of interaction between individuals, believing that individual initiative can impact the so-called structure. Bierschenk applied Latour's concept of translation to the framework of interactionism and developed the so-called "development agent" theory. They think that the foundation of "man and institution" is the initiative of a natural man and the technocratic structure of Weber doctrine. They regard development organizations as depoliticized technical institutions, assuming that they all have independent interests and pursuits as well as corresponding structural culture, which gives rise to their interaction with political and local mechanisms. The development experts in these institutions, as individuals, are motivated by their own initiative to translate policies in light of their own interests and experience, and ultimately change the policies, shaping the culture of the

organizations. By referring to this framework, we observe the Chinese agricultural demonstration centers in Africa. Although we can go beyond the framework of realism, observe more of the interaction between “people and institutions” and see the integration of the state and institutions, politics and technology, and actors, we also realize the quite different social and political characteristics of China and the UK. China’s foreign aid personnel and organizations are not natural persons independent of politics or independent institutions, but are embedded in the Chinese government and society. The motivation behind their behavior is complex and comprehensive, leading to unique interfaces and interaction. All these will be elaborated in this book.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of China’s agricultural assistance to African countries over the years, which shows how China’s assistance to the continent mirrored China’s development practices during the same period. From the end of the 1950s to the end of the 1970s, China was eager to phase in agricultural cooperatives and large-scale farming and accelerate industrialization through the transformation of traditional agriculture. Developing state-owned farms was an important measure taken to develop agriculture outside farming zones. In the 1960s and 1970s, agricultural cooperatives and state-owned farms became the main forms of China’s agricultural aid to Africa. In the late 1970s, the institutional barriers brought by the large number of agricultural cooperatives and collectives led to China’s agricultural predicament. The household contract responsibility system aimed at mobilizing the enthusiasm of individuals became a new choice for China’s agriculture. In 1985, China sent agricultural experts to help transform the three rice cultivation areas that had been built in Burkina Faso with China’s aid. Drawing on the experience in China, these cultivation areas decided that while the farmland was still owned by the state, it was distributed among farmers who would operate it and keep the harvest for themselves. This associated the farmers’ income with their activities on farmland. In the 1990s, thanks to China’s ongoing economic restructuring, the market, rather than the government, gradually played a fundamental role in resource allocation. The market-oriented reform included transforming state-owned enterprises to separate government functions from enterprise management. Apart from that, China actively absorbed foreign direct investments in the forms of wholly foreign-owned enterprises, equity joint ventures and contractual joint ventures, and foreign investment became the main driving force of China’s

economic growth. China's experience about joint ventures and the agricultural technology extension system have been applied to China's agricultural assistance projects in Africa. As we moved into the twenty-first century, technology began to feature prominently in China's agricultural aid to Africa, and agricultural demonstration centers and technical training have become the main forms of such aid programs.

Chapter 2 identifies technological rationality as the core pillar for China's agricultural development, and analyzes its three characteristics. Specifically, we rely on modern science and technology, put productivity gains in the first place, attach importance to the leading role of the state, and use the means of commercialization against the background of market-oriented reform, so as to improve the sustainability of development. It is believed that technological rationality being gradually made a part of China's aid program in Africa in the past 50 years reflects the Chinese people's understanding of the African agricultural development traps and opportunities. The emergence of ATDC indicates, in a more sophisticated way, the spread of technological rationality from China to Africa. The ATDCs themselves are a product of innovation and practical consideration based on the established practice. This chapter reviews the background against which the ATDCs have emerged, depicts in detail what the demonstration centers in the two countries of T and E have encountered in the transfer of knowledge, and analyzes how Chinese and African entities understand the three sets of concepts differently, namely, "agriculture and science and technology", "demonstration and extension" and "assistance and development" and how such understanding shapes China's foreign aid practice. This reveals several internal relations with regard to ATDCs, the innovative form of China-Africa agricultural cooperation that has attracted much attention in the new era: First, the disconnection between the overall design of aid policy and the daily practice; second, the interaction between knowledge and politics; third, the possibilities for the demonstration centers to provide alternative development assistance. Whether in form or in the values they uphold, China's foreign aid practice epitomized by the demonstration centers differs from the existing international development practice dominated by the West. These differences manifest the "non-interference" principle of China's foreign aid programs. In other words, these programs share development experiences with others on an equal footing and in a non-constructivist manner. Behind this processes open public learning space and many possible forms of development cooperation between various stakeholders. The formation of such a new field

heralds the start of a new process of development knowledge generation which is different from the traditional international development knowledge framework.

Chapter 3 shows how China's development experience flows to Africa in a parallel framework. Western aid programs tend to bring the Western culture to the recipient countries, as strings attached to the programs, as implementation principles, or in the name of knowledge development. They are thus regarded as one of the important ways to expand Western culture. For example, the US agricultural assistance program implemented in the same small African village as a Chinese agricultural assistance program directly imposes cultural factors on the assisted farmers. The American program stipulates that a certain number of farmers shall be selected as aid recipients from among all the villagers in the principle that an equal number of men and women will be selected and all villagers will join in the voting. This way of cultural expansion is also imposed on the recipient country.

China's aid differs from Western aid as its cultural influence takes a non-compulsory form of experience embedding. The experience attending China's aid is embedded in the system and knowledge of China, with no mandatory requirement for the recipient country. Of course, in practice, in the interaction between Chinese experts and the personnel of recipient countries, the experience from different cultures and objective environments will inevitably collide and blend. China's aid practice is a process of cross-border reproduction and localization of China's development experience. In view of their own political and economic interests, relevant entities of China and recipient countries jointly shape the reproduction and localization of China's development experience through interaction. In the process of China's development experience entering the recipient countries, it is impossible to maintain the original cultural form in entirety. China's development experience has been constantly modified by local culture and knowledge, and finally exists in the recipient country in the form of transformed variants. The agricultural technology project conducted with China's aid is an aid land, which is a product under specific historical conditions, a carrier of culture and a space of practice. In this aid land, historical conditions, culture and practice converge. The implementation of aid projects is a dynamic process. Many actors (institutions) from China and recipient countries operate various economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital in this aid land and use various strategies to interact for their own interests.

Chapter 4 shows the operation of China's agricultural demonstration centers in Africa. These centers are a perfect example of clarity and fuzziness that paradoxically define the boundary of any organization. Internationally, the framework of "actor" and "broker" is often used to discuss the behavior and function of international development assistance agencies. The framework of actor analysis emphasizes how actors use "agency" to facilitate the negotiation among such interfaces as social life, knowledge and power, and stresses the interaction of different actors at the micro level. The agent analysis framework focuses more on how the development intervention institution connects providers and beneficiaries of aid through the "broker" and "translation". This framework is based on the clarity of the boundaries of various actors. The management structure comprising the Ministry of Commerce of China, relevant government departments of recipient countries and Chinese domestic companies formed under the framework of China's ATDC in Africa has actually made the demonstration center no longer a pure actor or agent due to the fuzzy boundaries in identity and function. In other words, the demonstration center both provides and receives aid; and it is a public service department and an enterprise at the same time. Judging by the operation of the demonstration center, although the intervention management of the three parties often makes it difficult for the demonstration center to "choose", the confrontation among the three parties makes it difficult for the action of the demonstration center to deviate from the interests of these parties. Almost all the actions of the demonstration center are carried out around the objectives of the three parties. The fuzzy boundary of the demonstration center is the product of careful coordination and negotiation among the Chinese government, the recipient government and the construction company in safeguarding their own core interests, and it is a strategic arrangement of social interaction construction. This is quite different from the deviation, compromise and agency seen in international development assistance when the identity and function are clearly defined. We deem these as what characterize neo-developmentalism.

Chapter 5 talks about the logic of cooperation after two cultures encounter. It analyzes the work implementation process of the demonstration center from the organizational and institutional perspectives, in order to explore the essential characteristics of China-Africa agricultural cooperation. Some researchers have analyzed the real China-Africa agricultural cooperation in specific operation; they not only consider whether certain projects or policies have succeeded, but more importantly follow the

implementation process. China's aid typically tends to avoid standard solutions, and often needs to respond to the specific requirements of the partner countries by showing its own development experience instead of building a systematic political or economic model (Nordtveit 2009). The process of agricultural cooperation between China and Africa does not necessarily follow the OECD-DAC norms for development assistance to developing countries (Li et al. 2014). As Durkheim (1901/1950) mentioned, the operation of the demonstration center is based on the systems of knowledge, belief and "collective emotion and collective concepts". These systems are the common product of human interaction, but they are shaped by individuals in an objective and "forced" way. In the fifth chapter, the case study reveals the organizations and regulations for promoting the transferred Chinese agricultural technology in the operation of the ATDCs in Africa, as well as the innovation on the foreign land through the Chinese way of adaptation.

Chapter 6 examines the incentives for aid project operators. In order to motivate the operators, China allocates the aid funds to the operation organizations (enterprises or scientific research institutes) which decide how to use the funds and select the personnel to implement the projects. It means the project implementation agencies and individuals can give play to their initiative. In the process of project implementation, the state, operation units and individuals compete for economic interests. The result is that the state's will is the most obvious in the form and demonstration of the project. The nature of the operation unit determines the daily operation mode of the project. If the project operator is an enterprise, the operation goal is naturally to minimize the operation cost, increase the project income, and encourage project workers to generate income and improve the earnings. Under the dual incentive model concerning both national mission and economic interests, the demonstration center has established a micro relationship of mutual dependence and mutual benefit with the recipient country. Despite the conflict and mistrust between the staff from both sides, all the problems will be resolved through compromise and concession of the Chinese side under the mutually beneficial relationship, so that the demonstration and exchange function of the demonstration center can be sustained. The demonstration prompts Africans to reflect on their own development. The pursuit of sustainable development also motivates the demonstration center to undertake what it is tasked with—encouraging Chinese enterprises to invest in African

agriculture and conduct extensive technological training and demonstration. As thus, African governments and people are encouraged to draw on the Chinese experience and explore their own path of agricultural development.

Chapter 7 focuses on Chinese aid providers. Aid experts from Western countries have been educated in their global mission of bringing the “progressive” thought in the Western culture to the recipient countries, like what early missionaries had done in Africa. However, that is not in the minds of Chinese experts who have come to the continent with a mixed feeling of worry, expectation and excitement. Some of them had only begun to learn about Africa before they set out for the continent. They do not have the sense of superiority that is often found in their Western counterparts. Instead, they regard Africans as “fellows” as they tend to see a cultural similarity between China and African countries, and very often, this mentality shaped their actions, roles and identities in the aid programs. China’s agricultural technology experts differ from independent Western development experts who are paid to work in Africa and the traditional missionaries who are there to disseminate the Western culture. They are ordinary individuals and social actors who, apart from a financial motivation, are attracted to the continent because of a sense of mission and responsibility to share the Chinese dream. Each of them is a part of the country and a friendly messenger between China and Africa. When conflicting with the interests of the country, their personal interests will be subordinate to the mission of the country. However, due to the lack of clarity in the assistance and business functions of the demonstration center, the identity of the experts in the demonstration center is ambiguously defined as well.

In this book, China’s agricultural demonstration center in Africa is regarded as an “aid land” where Chinese, African and Western cultures encounter, a “system” with relatively independent interests under the constraints of various interest objectives of the Chinese government, African government, aid implementation agencies and individuals. In this system, political strategies, knowledge and technologies are shared and disseminated, which gives rise to special political, social, cultural symbols and discourse. Through an analysis of the symbols and discourse, this book tries to shed light on how the new model of development flows from China to Africa, so as to construct a new narrative about the relationship between subject and object. This narrative is not about geopolitics, but

based on the micro presentation of the field study and our academic understanding of the new trend of globalization. Though this understanding is to be improved and we have yet to build a legitimate academic foundation between “justice” and “mind”, “rationality” and “irrationality”, we hope this book marks a useful attempt to launch this seemingly ambitious process.

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