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A comparative study on China and the EU's foreign aid to Africa

Abstract:

For a long period, China's aid to Africa has been repeatedly questioned in the western media. This thesis tries to conduct a comprehensive comparative research of China and the EU's aid to Africa, by examining three indicators—the motives, methods and effects of both China and EU's aid, to figure out the differences and similarities of both aid practices, and to restore the true picture of China's foreign aid.

Through comparison, we could find that there lie four distinct differences between China and the EU's aid to Africa, respectively, the “no strings attached” vs. “conditionality”, the “hardware” vs. “software”, the “aid for trade” vs. “aid for development” and the “South-South Cooperation” vs. “the North-South Cooperation”. The differences in motives, aid methods as well as effects could attribute to the different approach adopted by both parties, and could be explained by two different theories, the liberalism and the neoliberalism. In addition, this thesis also tries to clarify several misunderstandings about China's aid, respectively “the neo-colonialism”, “the debt trap diplomacy”, and “the lack of transparency”.

In the conclusion part, the thesis will provide some policy suggestions for both parties, in order to maximize the effects of aid in Africa, and to foster further growth momentum for this promising continent.

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This thesis is done during a very difficult and complicated stage of time; I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my family, friends and classmates for going through this extraordinary experience together.

Zusammenfassung

Chinas Entwicklungshilfe für Afrika sorgt seit längerem für Diskussionsstoff. Diese Masterarbeit unternimmt einen Vergleich zwischen der Entwicklungshilfe der EU und China an Afrika. Drei Indikatoren werden bei dieser Forschungsarbeit genauer untersucht: die Motivation, die Methoden und die Auswirkungen. Diese Indikatoren sollen Aufschlüsse zu den grundlegenden Unterschieden und dessen Hintergründe liefern. Im Vergleich konnten wir feststellen, dass es vier deutliche Unterschiede zwischen China und der EU-Hilfe für Afrika gibt. Diese Studie soll dazu dienen richtungsweisende Politikberatung and innovative Vorschläge an die betroffenen Entwicklungsgeber, EU und China, zu liefern. Ziel soll die Maximierung der Zweckmäßigkeit für alle Betroffenen sein und die Beibehaltung des positiven Trends für Afrikas Entwicklung.

Pledge of Honesty

On my honor as a student of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it.

Yingzhuan Yan

12-06-2020

Acronyms

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

ODA: Official Development Assistance

FOCAC: Forum on China-African Co-operation

DAC: Development Assistance Committee

ACP: African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries

AU: African Union

EDF: European Development Fund

JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency

KOICA: Korea International Cooperation Agency

CICDA: China International Development Cooperation Agency

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

TICAD: Tokyo International Conference on African Development

LDCs: Least Developed Countries

1 Introduction

Foreign aid is an important political and economic practice with a long history, which could date back to the beginning of international relations. For donors, it is a significant tool for implementing its foreign policy, and for recipients, it is a source to reduce poverty and enhance development. However, the realities are far more complicated.

As the biggest developing country, China participates actively in conducting foreign aid to other developing countries. Africa is the main recipient region for China's foreign aid. The earliest Chinese aid practice towards African countries could date back to the year 1956 when China provided 20 million Swiss francs in cash and also dispatched medical teams to Egypt during the Suez Crisis.¹

EU is the largest donor of aid in the world and provides over 50 billion euros a year to recipient countries in fighting poverty and promoting development.² Amongst the many recipients, African countries comprise the largest portion of the EU's aid budget and efforts. Correspondingly, the EU's first aid towards Africa could attribute to the year 1957, when the "Treaty of Rome" has established the European Development Fund (EDF) to provide cooperation and aid to ACP countries (African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries).

Although China's aid to Africa has existed for nearly 70 years, it has only been in recent years that this topic has attracted great attention from the international community. China's motives of "no strings attached" and the aid model that followed the motives are significantly different from the western practice, where OECD-ODA³ model is the mainstream model. The Chinese model of aid has caused widespread controversy and criticism in the West, e.g., "new colonialism", "debt-trap diplomacy" and so on. The aim of this thesis is to unveil these differences through comparative research on the two seemingly contrasting

model, China and the EU's aid towards African countries, and to find reasonable explanations behind these differences, thereby trying to restore the true picture of China's foreign aid and put forward suggestions and projections on China and the EU's future foreign aid practices.

During the past 70 years of aid practices, both China and the EU have experienced tremendous evolution in terms of aid principles and policies. In order to narrow down the scope and content of the article, the time frame of comparison would be confined as the first two decades of the 21st century, which is 2000-2019. The time frame is chosen to serve for a fair and reasonable comparison.

From the maps below (Map 1), we could get a general view of the geopolitical status of China, Europe, and Africa. Occupying the western side of the giant Eurasia continent, Europe and Africa are adjacent to each other, with the Mediterranean in between, and a land route connecting Morocco and Spain. China and Africa do not share land borders, and the vast Indian Ocean set apart the Asian and African continents. The geographic distance from China to Africa is quite large, even the shortest flight duration from China to Djibouti accounts for 8 hours.



(Map 1, World Maps—Europe, Asia, and Africa)⁴

1.1 Research Question:

In recent years, the motive and method of China's aid to Africa has been in great disputes. There are doubts on whether China is colonizing Africa, or it is indeed as "unconditional" as China proclaimed. There are also doubts on whether China is providing aids to Africa or doing business with Africa. Meanwhile, the western aid approach also encountered certain setbacks in past practices, as there are concerns on the "conditionality", and the effectiveness of EU's aid as a whole.

Although China and the EU's aid to Africa differs largely in an array of factors, e.g., the motives, the institution settings, the way of financing, the characteristics, the recipients, the outcomes, etc., in this thesis, three indicators—motives, methods, and effects, are chosen as the most relevant factors to be examined in the case of China and the case of the EU.

I would use both qualitative and quantitative methods in measuring the indicators and draw conclusions in an objective manner.

Entity\Indicator	Motives	Methods	Effects
EU			
China			

Through the comparison, I will try to answer the following research questions, **“What are the differences between the motives of China and EU’s aid to Africa”, “What are the differences between the methods of China and EU’s aid to Africa”**. As when it comes to effects, it is hard to evaluate with different political system and standards, I would leave the question unanswered yet trying to give certain explanation in the session of suggestion and prospects.

1.2 Significances of study:

Comparative research on China and the EU’s aid to African countries is of great significance. The comparison would enable us to better understand what African people need most and to figure out what China and the EU want to achieve through aid, also to better evaluate the effects.

A clear and sound comparison between China and EU’s aid could benefit both parties, not only in providing guidance to their practice, promoting mutual understanding between China and EU but also in creating opportunities for cooperation in order to maximize the effects of aid.

1.3 Structure arrangements:

The thesis is structured as follows. The first chapter is a general introduction to the background and objective of the thesis, with identification of the research questions and significance.

The second chapter deals with literature review of mainstream studies on China and EU’s aid, and it is followed by the theoretical basis of aid. Many existing

theories could have done a good job of explaining why China and the EU conduct aid in African countries, e.g., the theory of liberalism and the theory of neoliberalism. Chapter four will provide a review of methodologies used in this thesis, including deductive approach, comparative approach and quantitative analysis.

From Chapter five to Chapter seven, the three Chapters will deal with the research and analysis section. After explaining both parties' practices separately, the main comparison session is followed, in which the outcome of the comparison will be revealed and the analytical arguments on why China and EU's aid differs are provided.

The next section would look at some disputed issues that are in the center of discussion. The final part is the conclusion with policy suggestions.

The two disciplines covered in this thesis are **international relations** and **political economy**.

2 Literature review

In this chapter, I will give a general introduction about the literature used in this article; my primary source is open publications, which include papers and books written by scholars, documents released by governments and organizations, figures from official authorities and academic institutions, as well as media reports covered by journalists.

The sources would be multi-lingual since some of the sources are exclusively in Chinese, e.g., some reports about China's aid policy and relevant figures, and some Chinese literature offered a more intact perspective about China's aid.

2.1 English literature

Regarding the EU and its member states' aid practices, we could find countless official documents and academic literature. EU's motives, methods of aid are introduced thoroughly in EU's files and OECD reports. The most controversial part of the EU's aid approach is the political conditionality adopted by the EU and its member states, as well as other OECD member countries.

In a report from the German Development Institute, the idea of "political conditionality" was reexamined carefully, in which it argued, political conditionality is necessary, both from the donor's perspective and the recipient's perspective. However, the effectiveness of political conditionality confronts with demanding challenges. There is a high possibility that it will fail to serve its purposes.⁵

Although China's presence in Africa has started as early as the 1950s, China's aid and engagement in Africa came into global attention only until the late 1990s, or more exactly, after the 2006 FOCAC Beijing Summit. Since then, more and more publications have noticed China's rising presence in Africa, however, most of them kept a skeptic or judgmental attitude towards China's aid. They consider China's aid as "new colonialism" and "resource exploitation", which would lead Africa into the huge "debt trap", rather than development and prosperity.⁶

As a turning threshold, In 2010, Deborah Brautigam's book "The dragon's gift: the real story of China in Africa" has offered a brand new perspective from the west to explain China's aid with "Chinese characteristics", in which she rebutted four prevalent stereotypes of China's aid, including aid without strings, tied aid, the problem of employing locals and capacity building.⁷

Even before the book, there are reports trying to define the characteristics of China's aid in an objective manner. The World Bank has published a 172-page report in 2009, focusing on China's infrastructure performances in sub-Saharan

areas, in which it considered that China had played an active role in promoting African economic growth.⁸

Axel Dreher et al. find that “much of the controversy about Chinese ‘aid’ stems from a failure to distinguish between China’s ODA and more commercially-oriented state financing”.⁹

In the meantime, there has been a wave of reflection on the effectiveness of Western aid. Dambisa Moyo has taken the lead of this wave. In her book “Dead Aid”, she argued that, official aid has fostered corruption and distorted economies, creating a culture of dependency and economic laziness in African countries. It does not only fail to work but also compounded Africa's problems.¹⁰ She regarded China and India as role models for African countries and believed that the best way to reduce poverty and promote development is through investment and export.¹¹

With more and more literature trying to depict different narratives of EU and China’s aid, there are also some attempts in comparing the two different models. Brookings Institute’s report, “Competing in Africa: China, the European Union, and the United States” has assessed all three parties’ impact of aid in Africa.¹² There have also been observations that China’s involvement in Africa has influenced traditional donors. Sven Grimm and Christian Hackenesch argued that the EU has reformed its development policy several times to make it more coherent and effective, as Chinese engagement in Africa poses challenges for the EU’s development policy.¹³ Aid data team also published a policy paper comparing China with the Western Donors, in which they argued that, Beijing’s motives might not be substantially different from those shaping the allocation of Western official finance.¹⁴

2.2 Chinese Literature

In China, there are many literature and publications introducing China's and EU's aid motives, methods, and effects.

The two white papers reveal for the first time an official narrative of China's foreign aid, in terms of the principles, types, and aid statistics (State Council, 2011; 2014). In 2006 and 2015, China has released its first and second Africa policy paper, clarifying the positioning and policy priorities of China-Africa relations in the new century (FOCAC, 2006; 2015).

When it comes to China's aid mode to Africa, Wenping He gave a full coverage of Chinese aid in Africa's history, characteristics, and challenges. (Wenping He, 2010)

Ailan Liu's article "Neocolonialism in China's Aid to Africa? Empirical Evidence from Trade Effects of China and EU Aid to Africa" refuted the criticism of "Neocolonialism" by looking into empirical evidence of trade figures from 2003 to 2013 of both China and EU, and concluded that the trade effects of China and EU's aid to Africa are not fundamentally different.¹⁵

Jin Ling has also noticed that, in recent years, the EU's Africa policy has undergone a new round of pragmatic adjustments, gradually shifting from seeking a comprehensive strategy for Africa to a crisis management policy driven by short-term interests.¹⁶

In terms of comparison, there are a few works of literature trying to conduct an effective comparison on both sides. Wing-lok Hung, a scholar in the Chinese University of Hong Kong has made a comparison of China and Western aid approach in motives, mechanisms and trends, arguing that China and Western aid differ in interest and obligations. ¹⁷

However, a comprehensive, and objective comparison between China and the

EU's aid approach is still missing from the literature. The reasons contributing to this are multifold. For example, the different connotations and system of aid, the lack of transparency in Chinese official aid, lack of understanding of the Chinese political system, as well as the different aid implementation institutions and evaluation system, are all factors concerned.

Those factors give me the impetus to make a fair and just comparison of both systems and to explain the reasons hidden behind.

3 Theoretical approach

There are many international theories explaining foreign aid, including foreign aid theory raised by Hans Morgenthau under the context of realism, development theory of Walt Whitman Rostow's five economic stages, structural realism of Kenneth Waltz, as well as welfare states theory of Gunnar Myrdal.

This chapter will try to identify the different theories in explaining the different aid motives and practices of China and the EU, as we believe that motives affect the methods, and methods lead to the outcomes. In terms of China's aid, the theory of neoliberalism would play a role in providing explanations to China's aid practices; and in terms of EU's aid, I would draw the theory of liberalism to explain the EU's "conditionality" and moral obligations.

3.1 Neoliberalism

In my opinion, neoliberalism could do well to explain China's aid motives and practices in Africa. First raised by the Chicago School, neoliberalism has been the most prevalent theories in economic and political life in the past 3 decades. Although originated from liberalism, as a theory of economic and political practices, neoliberal scholars tend to embed the term with new meanings and

understandings, making it different from traditional liberalism.

In terms of economic practices, neoliberalism advocates free market, free trade, tax cuts, and private property rights protection, as explained by David Harvey, “human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade.”¹⁸ The government should guarantee the institutional framework, and the proper function of the markets.¹⁹

As Dag Einar Thorsen and Amund Lie believe that, neoliberalism disregard of political regimes and ideology. Harvey (2005) suggests that policies inspired by neoliberalism could be implemented under the auspices of autocrats as well as in liberal democracies.²⁰ Jane Duckett also believed that “neoliberalism with Chinese characteristics” best describes China’s particular kind of market economy that increasingly incorporates neoliberal elements inter digitized with authoritarian centralized control.²¹ A famous saying of Deng Xiaoping could be the best footnote of this concept, “Be it a black cat or a white cat, a cat that can catch mice is a good cat.”

The most important factors of Chinese aid, “no strings attached” and “no interference”, represent a certain level of the ideas of neoliberalism in terms of economic development and political self-determination. As in real practices, China did not attach strings such as human rights, democracy or good governance when providing aid, and China did not interfere in the Africa country’s internal politics regardless of their political regimes and rule of law.

On the other hand, China’s aid in Africa followed a more realistic way. Through its own development path, China believes that, the only way to develop is not through providing one-way aid to the poor countries, but to introduce a market economy and to stimulate its own growth momentum. In other words, China

regards the African countries as partners rather than recipients, and providing aid is a tool to enhance cooperation in finding “Win-Win” solutions.²² That’s also why China advocates for the framework “South-South Cooperation”. This notion could be explained by a traditional Chinese saying, “If you give a man a fish you feed him for a day, if you teach him how to fish you feed him for a lifetime.”

3.2 Liberalism

Amongst the traditional IR theories, liberalism serves the best to explain why the EU conducts foreign aid. Comparing with realism, liberalism also acknowledges the factors of states, interests, however, the major differences are that, liberalism puts individual at its center, and attaches importance to international institutions.

Jeffrey W. Meiser believed that, liberalism emphasizes the wellbeing of the individual as the fundamental building block of a just political system.²³ Unaccountable power is dangerous and a threat to the liberty of individuals, thus, it is important to construct institutions that protect individual freedom by limiting and checking political power.²⁴

In international relations, from a general belief of liberalism, states who are linked by trade, membership in international organizations, and shared democratic government will tend to become increasingly peaceful and cooperative.²⁵

Moreover, as a “supranational” institution, the EU itself as an international organization is one of the best practices of liberalism.²⁶ The process of EU integration prevented the war-torn continent to fall into war again, and the growing cooperation of countries in trade led to a common market and a

common currency.²⁷ The integration sets a good example for other regional integrations in the world, and AU, as one of them, is craving to follow suit.

The above-mentioned understandings constitute EU's guidelines towards engagement in Africa, which were explicitly expressed in different kinds of EU's policy papers, laws and regulations, as well as multilateral agreements.

Another significant reason for EU to provide aid to Africa and other developing countries is that, EU and its member states also feel the moral obligation of "corrective justice" toward African countries especially where EU and its major member states, e.g., France, UK, Germany, as well as Italy and Spain, were colonial powers with a history of exploitation, as argued by Brian Opeskin.²⁸

To conclude, with these theoretic backups, EU has developed a strong belief that providing aid in a liberalism pattern could bring African countries democracy and development.

4 Methodology

The two main methodologies this article adopts are the deductive approach and the comparative approach. In addition to the two main approaches, I will also use **quantitative analysis** to do some research on China and the EU's aid and trade figures where it is necessary to make comparisons.

4.1 Deductive approach

The deductive approach is the process from the more general to the more specific.²⁹ Through the deductive approach, I would try to borrow some existing theories, and make the hypothesis out of the theories. Through the different level of analysis, I will try to testify the hypothesis during my research, and get a specific conclusion in the end. In this thesis, the two theories used to explain the

EU and China's aid, are liberalism and neoliberalism. The two theories, as well as its hypothesis, would help us understand why China and the EU differ in providing aid to African countries.

4.2 Comparative approach

Besides the deductive approach, this thesis also tries to use a comparative approach, to disclose the similarities and differences between China and the EU's aid. As a methodology in the sphere of political science, the comparative approach is frequently used in the study of political systems, institutions, or processes.³⁰ During the process, patterns, similarities, and differences are examined to assess the relationships of variants among the two or more separate systems.³¹ China and the EU's aid differ largely in terms of definition, motives, method, and managing systems. In this case, through the comparative approach, we could make a comparison of three indicators (motives, methods, and effects), and find the reasons behind the differences/similarities, which may not only help us better understand our research objective, but also provide us with suggestions, projections that would benefit the future practices.

5 China's aid motive, method and impact

China's approach to providing foreign aid differs from current Official Development Assistance (ODA) standards set by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in many ways.

Although the methods differ, the purpose is to improve the economic efficiency and social welfare system of developing countries, and it is also in the national interest of donor countries.³²

The first idea, which should be made clear, is China's definition of aid. When conducting foreign aid, China did not fully follow the OECD standards, but stick to its own principles and practices.

China released its definition of foreign aid in 2014 for the first time. In the instruction, **“Foreign aid” refers to the use of “government funds for foreign aid” to provide economic, technical, material, personnel, management and other support to aid recipients.** The recipients include developing countries that have established diplomatic relationships with China, as well as international or regional organizations mainly based in developing countries.³³

The mechanism of cooperation between China and Africa is the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) founded in 2000; this multilateral forum has served as the main platform for high-level consultations and cooperation evaluations.

Aid to African countries consists of a large portion of China's total foreign aid. According to the white paper, from 2010 to 2012, China provided aid to 51 countries in Africa, accounting for 51.8% of the total foreign aid.³⁴

5.1 Motives of China's aid

The motives behind China's aid to Africa are multi-folded. According to China's Foreign Aid white paper 2014, there are five basic principles, which are mutual respect, equality, keeping promises, mutual benefits and win-win.

The most important message is that, China adheres to the principles of not imposing any political conditions, not interfering in the internal affairs of the recipient countries and fully respecting their right to independently choosing their own paths and models of development.³⁵

The principals could date back to the year 1964 when Premier Zhou Enlai proposed the 8 principles of foreign aid during his visit to 14 Asian and African countries.³⁶ From then on, these principles became the guideline of China's approach to foreign aid.

As the most important manifesto, "no strings attached" has been claimed by Chinese leaders in all kinds of speeches and publications. At the recent Beijing Summit of FOCAC, President Xi Jinping announced in his keynote speech that, China followed a "five-no" approach in relations with Africa, and no attachment of political strings to assistance to Africa is one of them.³⁷

The notion of "no strings attached" could be understood in a historical context. Both China and African countries have suffered from colonial aggression and domination by the great powers in history, and have carried out liberation struggles against imperialism and colonialism and for national independence. The common history of colonization and struggling for independence made China feel the same about what happened to Africa, and generate a strong obligation to respect the sovereignty and state dignity of African countries.

Not only with a similar fate, but China also sees a common mission with Africa. China and African countries are all faced with the mutual demands of deep participation in globalization and the promotion of sustainable economic development; they consider each other as a backup force and companion in this process. The common history and a shared vision had endowed China the moral obligation of providing aid to "African brothers".

This notion could also be understood from a neoliberalism context. As we already argued, neoliberalism disregard of ideology and political regime, they believe that free trade and market economy could be promoted in any society, and economic development would make the people better off. So, when it comes

to the aid with African countries, China did not impose any restrictions in terms of their political regime and democratic index, as China believes that economic development could be achieved under any political regimes.

However, the idea of “no strings attached” is not the whole picture. In international relations, there is no way to believe that a country is like a messiah, offering a helping hand for nothing. China does have certain motivations, as Brautigam argued, all donors give aid for a variety of political, commercial, and moral reasons, and China is not an exception³⁸.

In addition to the moral obligation discussed above, there are 3 motives I could identify from the neoliberalism context.

Firstly, aid could act as leverage of diplomatic war between China and Taiwan. “One China” policy has been China’s cornerstone in diplomatic relations, and any country wishes to set up its diplomatic relationship with China should adhere to this policy. This principle became battling leverage between China and Taiwan in striving for diplomatic ties with African countries. During the past years, many African countries changed course and switched to Mainland China, abandoning their former diplomatic ties with Taiwan. Both sides have accused each other of using “checkbook diplomacy” to lure away their African allies.

It is unclear how big impact aid could play in this regard. In fact, China only provides aid to those countries that have diplomatic relations with China and recognize the “One China” policy. E.g., from 2010 to 2012, China provided assistance to 51 countries in Africa.³⁹ There are 54 countries in Africa since South Sudan pronounced independence on 2011, the 3 countries missing are Gambia, Burkina Faso, and Eswatini respectively, and all of them are non-aligned with China.

Secondly, aid could help China win support from Africa countries on global issues, such as political campaigns, global decision-making, and international elections. As an imperative part of China's Africa diplomacy, China's aid to Africa countries helped enhance the bilateral relationship, and strengthened political ties between Chinese and African leaders, who welcomed China's unconditional aid. There are 54 countries in Africa, making it a huge ticket warehouse, which shows a great advantage in terms of voting and advocating on international affairs. This multiplying effect could see on many occasions. China has always emphasized that it was "the African brothers who carried us into the United Nations". With the help of African countries, the UN General Assembly decided to restore the legal seat of China in the UN in 1971.

Thirdly, aid could act as a link to advance economic cooperation and cultural exchange. Aid, as a tool of foreign policy, could promote the bilateral relationship, thus bring more investment opportunities and explore a larger market. China and Africa are economically complementary; China is the "world factory", an important center of global industrial manufacturing, longing for resources and market; African countries are rich in natural resources and human capital, as well as in growing demand for commodities and infrastructure.

The supply and demand made a perfect match in the global industrial value chain. Under this context, trade and cooperation would be a "win-win" choice according to China's wording. Figures have shown that, China and Africa's bilateral imports and exports have increased largely.

In 2000, President Hu Jintao announced eight measures of cooperation between China and Africa in the Beijing Declaration, which is a mixture package of aid and

economic cooperation, including measures encouraging Chinese companies to invest in Africa and measures to expand the economic and trade cooperation.⁴⁰

With more trade and international cooperation, aid could also increase people-to-people exchange between China and African countries, thus enhance the cultural exchange between both parties.

To conclude, although claimed as “no strings attached”, we could still find the motives of aid in terms of political, economic and cultural concerns.

5.2 Methods of China’s aid

With an understanding that China’s aid is a tool to serve for political and economic cause originated from the theory of neoliberalism, it would not be difficult to understand the method that China has adopted, is in accordance with the above-mentioned motives.

In total, China provides eight forms of foreign aid: complete projects, goods and materials, technical cooperation, human resource development cooperation, medical assistance, volunteer programs, emergency humanitarian aid, and debt relief.⁴¹ Amongst them, complete projects and goods and materials are the main forms of foreign aid.

These aid forms are financed through 3 types, grant (aid gratis), interest-free loan and concessional loan. Take the year 2010-12 for example, according to the official figures, Grant and interest-free loans make up 44.3% of total foreign aid, and concessional loans constitute 55.7% of total. As already explained by many western scholars, grant and interest-free loans are considered to be under the standards of ODA, while the concessional loans are different in many terms.

In alignment with China’s aid practices in the past 20 years, there are four characteristics worth noticing.

Firstly, China's aid is mainly conducted through bilateral aid rather than multilateral aid. On one hand, this model came with a historical context. China has started its aid practices long before China was admitted into the major global institutions—China has joined the UN until 1971, and joined the WTO until 2001, as a latecomer in the international multilateral arena, China explored its own way of aid through bilateral relations.⁴² On the other hand, in real practice, bilateral aid would better serve China's political aid motives to crowd out Taiwan and gain global influences. It is easy to understand that, bilateral aid would help with promotion of bilateral relationship, and better bilateral relationship leads to more political trust and global cooperation.

In terms of diplomatic war with Taiwan, from the graph below, we could see that, from the year 2000 on, 8 African countries established diplomatic relations with Beijing. Excepting South Sudan as a newly established country, the other 7 countries ended their formal relations with Taiwan, and changed diplomatic status. Some countries used to switch back and forth between China and Taiwan, and it would be understandable if aid was a bargaining chip in these political deals.

Table 1: African countries established diplomatic relations with China since 2000

Country	Year of recognition	Period of recognition
Liberia	12 Oct 2003	1977--1989, 1993--1997, 2003--
Senegal	25 Oct 2005	1971--1996, 2005--
Chad	6 Aug 2006	1972--1997, 2006--
Malawi	28 Dec 2007	2007--
South Sudan	9 July 2011	2011--

Gambia	17 Mar 2016	1974--2013, 2016--
São Tomé and Príncipe	16 Dec 2016	1975--1997, 2016--
Burkina Faso	26 May 2018	1973--1994, 2018--

(Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China)

Right now, the last African country that maintains diplomatic relationship with Taiwan is Eswatini. On the occasion of resuming the diplomatic ties with Burkina Faso, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi openly invited Eswatini to come over to China and return to “the family of China-Africa friendship”.⁴³

In terms of global influences, in recent years, African countries supported China in global affairs during times of disputes. In 2016, when an international tribunal in Hague ruled against China over the South China Sea dispute with the Philippines, China rejected the ruling, and sought global support on this issue. As claimed by the spokesperson of foreign ministry, more than 30 African countries vowed support to China’s stance on the South China Sea.⁴⁴

What’s more, African countries’ support played a vital role in China’s global leadership campaign. A recent example is the newly elected FAO Director-General, Qu Dongyu of China, who received 108 votes out of 191 casts during the FAO conference, defeating the other two candidates.⁴⁵ Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi expressed thanks especially to African countries during the Beijing Summit of FOCAC, saying that the success should attribute to the staunch support from Africa.⁴⁶

These examples have shown that, with Africa’s strong support, China gained larger power in global affairs, which could be beneficial to China’s rise as a global power. As vowed in China’s second African policy paper,” There is a need to increase the representation and voice of developing countries including China

and African nations in international affairs.”⁴⁷

Bilateral aid is also regarded as more efficient from a Chinese perspective. Since China's aid to Africa is usually carried out in the form of project assistance rather than cash assistance, project assistance can be implemented as soon as possible after the signing of relevant bilateral agreements.

Secondly, China's aid focuses more on infrastructure than other fields.

This model is considered the model with “Chinese characteristics”, since China believes that infrastructure is the key element to advance economic development and attract foreign investment. As claimed in China's second Africa policy paper, “China's comparative advantages in development experience, applied technology, funds and market can help Africa overcome the two major bottlenecks constraining its development—backward infrastructure and inadequate professional and skilled personnel.”⁴⁸

China has always regarded infrastructure construction as a priority area in cooperation with African countries, especially for promoting capacity building of African countries and enhancing capabilities of self-reliant development.

Although it looks like a stereotype, the fact is that, infrastructure constitutes a huge bulk of China's aid. Figures have shown that, according to the Aid Data's dataset, which tracks 2,647 development finance activities of China in Africa from 2000 to 2013, there are 601 activities relating to infrastructure projects, ranging from energy generation and supply, industry, mining and construction, transport and storage, water supply and sanitation, as well as other social infrastructure and services.⁴⁹

A report from China's Ministry of Commerce also reveals that, by the end of 2009, China has assisted more than 500 infrastructure projects for Africa, including

2,233 kilometers of railways, 3,391 kilometers of highways, 52 stadiums, 11 bridges, as well as docks, ports, water conservancy projects, power stations, airports, and telecommunication facilities.⁵⁰ Senegal's former President Abdoulaye Wade noted that "China has helped African nations build infrastructure projects in record time," referring to the Chinese penchant for quick results.⁵¹

A World Bank report in 2009 has focused on China's infrastructure construction in sub-Saharan Africa, which reveals that China has invested and built a large number of bridges, railways and highways in where natural conditions are difficult. In many fields of infrastructure construction, the construction of hydropower stations and railways are the two major focuses of Chinese investment.⁵²

The African Union Conference Center and Office Complex built in 2012 is the biggest infrastructure aid project of China to Africa in the past 20 years, which cost about 200 million USD.

While infrastructure is the prioritized field in China's aid finance allocation, China also paid attention to the development of other fields, such as agriculture, education, health, and technology transfer. As President Hu Jintao announced in 2012 that, from 2006 to 2012, China has built over 100 schools, 30 hospitals, 30 anti-malaria centers and 20 agricultural technology demonstration centers in Africa.⁵³

Thirdly, China's aid is more about cooperation rather than "one-way aid".

As we already discussed before, complying with the neoliberalism approach, China followed a more realistic way of conducting aid to African countries, as China always believe that, aid is not the best way to reduce poverty and advance

development, the only way to reduce poverty is through self-reliance development. That's also why China considered its aid to fall into the scope and framework of "South-South cooperation", which is the cooperation between developing countries; it is a mode of "poor help poor", rather than a mode of one-way aid.

Before emerging as an aid provider, China has been a recipient country for a long time, and the experience of receiving aid from the Soviet Union has constituted China's current philosophy of development. After the Sino-Soviet relationship broke up in the early 60s, the Soviet Union recalled all its technicians and withdrew most of aid resources, which caught China in a difficult position. China strived its way out during this process, and learned the lesson of independence and self-reliance.

The double identity as a recipient and a donor country, has bestowed China with a different understanding of foreign aid. The idea of not "exporting development path" is also a part of China's aid doctrine, as China believed that every country should explore its own path of development through practices, and there is no fixed model for all countries, since every country varies in national conditions and development stages.

An interesting phenomenon is that, in China's official statement, China considers itself a partner to African countries rather than a donor. The official files used phrases such as "cooperation", "mutual benefit" rather than donor or aid. In China's 2006 African policy paper, China announced that its main Africa policy is to set up a new type of China-Africa strategic partnership featuring political equality and mutual trust, economic win-win cooperation, and cultural exchange.⁵⁴ In 2016's second paper, the strategic partnership upgraded to a Comprehensive Strategic and Cooperative China-Africa Partnership.⁵⁵ Within

China's diplomatic strategy, this partnership represents a superior level of diplomatic relations, ranks only second to the partnership between China and Russia.

The relationship of cooperation, rather than the "donor-recipient" hierarchy, has set up a different work model between China and African countries—the Request-based Model. African partners usually take the initiative to propose a list of required projects, while China selects projects based on project feasibility, funding requirements, and whether it can promote the development of China's domestic industry. A cooperation agreement will be signed after the bilateral consensus is established.

This strategic position was also reflected in China's aid allocations. It could also be seen from an examination of the figures. Pure donations to Africa countries, be it in grants, goods and materials, or emergent humanitarian aid is quite small, most of the aids are in the form of different kinds of cooperation. Take agriculture cooperation for example, China's main practices include building agricultural demonstration centers, dispatching expert teams and training local technicians and farmers.

Vocational training is also a priority in Africa's capacity building. As announced by Hu Jintao, by 2012, China has trained close to 40,000 African personnel in various sectors and provided over 20,000 government scholarships to African countries.⁵⁶

Fourthly, China's aid is a combination of aid and business. If following China's aid approaches closely, it will not be surprised that China adopted an approach of combining aid and business together. This idea is in line with China's strategic policy change in Africa, as claimed by Tang Xiaoyang, a Chinese scholar,

since the late 1990s, China's aid approach has transformed from ideological-based political assistance to an economic diplomacy stage centered on promoting win-win cooperation in the market economy.⁵⁷

The change could be explained by the historical background. 2001 marked the year of China joining the WTO, and it represented a process of China trying to integrate into the global market. What's more, since 1999, China has started the new policy of "Going Global". The "Going Global" strategy is a package of incentive plans for Chinese outbound investors. It not only supports Chinese companies in expanding overseas businesses, but also supports potential Chinese companies in building global brands. For Chinese companies eager to "go out", Africa is the perfect destination, where there lied lower barriers for foreign investment to enter, and greater opportunities to explore as this continent is in a process of fast developing.

These historical changes laid the foundation for China's aid practices, when China adopted the approach of combining aid with business, which is also in accordance with China's neoliberalism approach in Africa. The combination of business and aid is particularly prominent in the field of infrastructure construction, such as China's railway projects in Angola and Kenya, and light rail projects in Ethiopia.

One of the important cases of "aid plus business" is the "Angola model", which is, China provides infrastructure construction for Angola, and Angola uses oil as a guarantee for commercial loans. After obtaining loans, Angola invested funds in the construction of hospitals, schools and transportation facilities, and became one of the fastest growing countries in Africa.⁵⁸

The Angola model has been a landmark of China's involvement in Africa, which represents an important change in China's African policy in the last decade, and

some scholars have argued that, its impact on Africa 's development is more efficient and positive in the global economy industrial chain.⁵⁹

However, Western countries have criticized this model heavily, as they accuse China of “grabbing resources” from Africa, which will lead African countries into the “debt trap”.

5.3 Effects of China's aid to Africa

In terms of effects, I would examine whether China has achieved its own goal of aid. In China's connotation, China's main aim for foreign aid is to reduce poverty and improve the livelihood of people.

According to China's official statement, aid to Africa has been very successful, not only helped with Africa's economic development, but also increased African people's livelihood.

Through the evaluation, we could also find that, not only Africa has benefited from the aid, China itself is also a winner in delivering the aid, which seems to be in line with China's “win-win” approach.

1, China's aid has a positive effect on the economic growth of African countries. The topic of whether aid could promote economic growth or not is a disputed question, and there is no fixed answer for that. Arguments for or against this idea both own a lot of supporters.

A study by Chinese scholars has revealed that, based on data from 2001-2013, China 's steady and continuous aid, including infrastructure assistance and fiscal aid, has significantly promoted economic growth in the African region, especially in sub-Saharan African countries.⁶⁰

In a World Bank report of 2009, through an in-depth analysis of China's infrastructure construction in Africa, researchers yield an objective and positive assessment of China's role in Africa's economic growth. In which, it claimed that, Africa has benefited from increasing investment, and the continent's GDP has kept a growth of 5%-6% for a decade. This promising phenomenon could partly attribute to the rise of China and India, whose strong demand for petrol and commodities has fueled the global market.⁶¹

Aid Data team also published a paper, through analyzing the satellite images of the global distribution of night lights, they have concluded that, China's infrastructure projects in Africa have "lightened up" the places they are located, thus greatly boosted economic growth in recipient countries.⁶² What's more, China's "connective infrastructure" projects, such as roads and bridges, have reduced economic inequality in the provinces and regions.⁶³

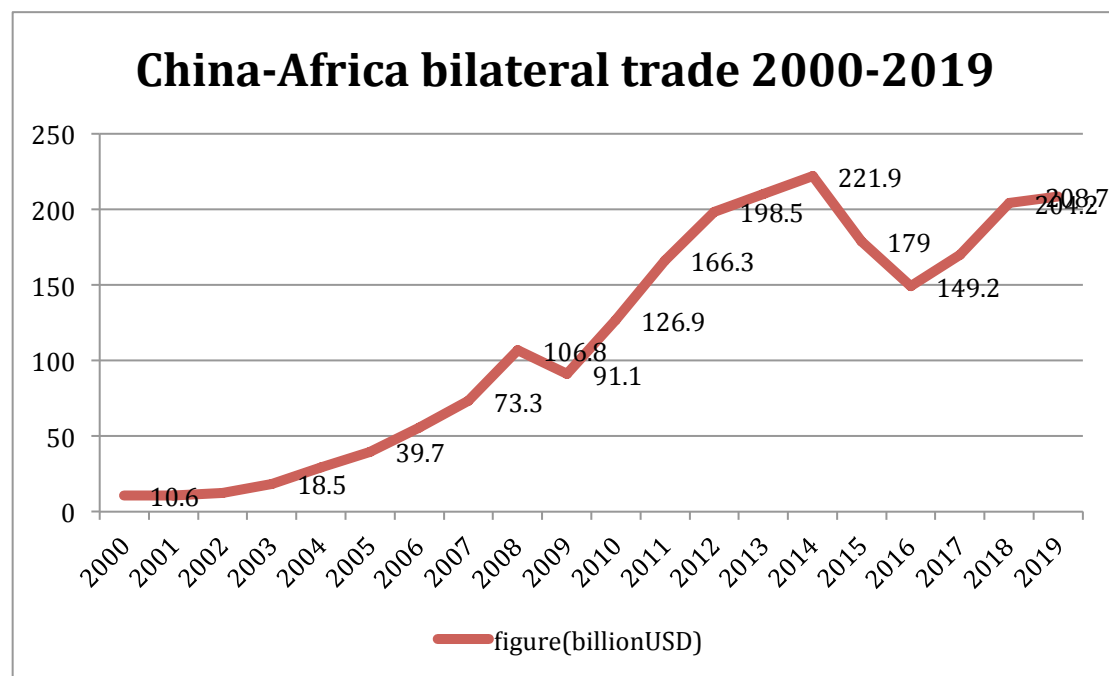
A Brookings report also indicates that, China has provided funding for more than 3,000 important infrastructure projects in Africa, bringing a large number of jobs, skills training and new technologies.⁶⁴

2, China's aid has contributed to bilateral investment and trade. Along with the aid, the economic cooperation between China and Africa has grown at a fast speed. Aid for trade has long been a disputed topic in the discussion about foreign aid; however, researchers have also found that, aid could have positive effects on trade promotion.

The research of Matthias Busse et al. shows that measures of aid for trade reduce trade costs and thus promote trade.⁶⁵ In the case of China and Africa's trade, we could also see this trend during the past 20 years. In 2000, the bilateral trade between China and Africa was only 10.5 billion USD, and China was Africa's third

largest trade partner. In 2011, the figure has soared up to 166.3 billion USD, tripled the figure in 2006. China became Africa's largest trading partner since 2009, and this trend lasts until now.⁶⁶ The latest figure has shown that, in 2019, the bilateral trade has reached 208.7 billion USD.

From the graph below, we could see a surge in China-Africa's bilateral trade from 2000 to 2014; however, the figures went through a fluctuation since 2015, and bounced back in 2019. Estimation shows that, by 2025 bilateral trade between China and Africa could reach 400 billion USD.⁶⁷



(Graph 1: China-Africa bilateral trade 2000-2019, source: Ministry of Commerce of China)

3, China's aid has increased both China and Africa's global influence. As we discussed before, one of China's motive is to use the aid as a leverage to increase China's influences as a global player, and this motive has also been achieved according to scholar's evaluation.

The World Bank report found that, China's fresh approach is popular among African leadership, since China's aid does not interfere in their domestic affairs, stresses partnership and solidarity among developing nations, and offers "an alternative development model" which puts the African states in a more central role.⁶⁸

In 2006, the FOCAC Beijing Summit welcomed all African leaders in Beijing, which made global headlines, and raised "the Africa Hype" globally. The next year, the EU launched the second "EU-Africa" summit, and then followed by the 4th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) held by Japan. These summits are beneficial to improve Africa's development environment, and increase Africa's global influences.

During the process, China's global influences and soft power has also been enhanced. A report has estimated that, by 2018, there were almost 2 million Chinese working and residing in Africa, and Chinese corporations had set up 3254 companies in Africa by the end of 2016.⁶⁹ The cultural exchange is also booming. by 2018, 54 Confucius Institutes have been established in 41 African countries, and Chinese is becoming increasingly popular as more and more exchange students and diplomats started to learn Chinese.

6 EU's aid to Africa: motives, measures and effects

In the EU, the definition of ODA is in accordance with the OECD standards. ODA is the government aid designed to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries. The aid includes grants, "soft" loans and the provision of technical assistance. Loans and credits for military purposes are not included.⁷⁰

The EU and its member states remains the largest donor of ODA.⁷¹ According to the official figures from the EU's website, in 2019, the EU and its member states

offered 75.2 billion in official development aid, representing 55.2% of global aid.⁷²

In this thesis, we define the EU's aid as aid managed by the EU institutions. Under the scheme of the EU, ODA is provided from two sources—the general budget of the EU and the European Development Fund (EDF).

6.1 Motives of EU's aid: 20 years' retrospect of The Cotonou Agreement

EU's aid toward Africa countries also experienced a transition during the past 60 years. As a traditional donor, the EU's aid towards Africa started as early as the 1950s. The original motivation for the EU countries to provide aid to Africa was to maintain their traditional links with their former colonies and spheres of influence.

Since the late 80s of the 20th century, facing the collapse of the Soviet Union and the drastic change in Eastern Europe, the EU changed its strategy towards Africa. Instead of reciprocal economic cooperation, the EEC has introduced additional economic and political conditions for aid, and the purpose is to use aid to "promote" and "push" recipient countries to go westernization. The idea is to bring liberal democratic reforms in African countries, and to converge Africa into the liberal world order in terms of systems, concepts and methods.

In June 2000, the EU and 77 ACP countries signed the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (also known as The Cotonou Agreement). As a continuation of the Lomé Convention, this agreement marked the 5th generation of agreements between the EU and ACP countries.⁷³ The EU-ACP cooperation is also considered the biggest North-South Cooperation framework.

According to the agreement, the objective of the partnership is to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty in ACP countries, and to integrate the ACP countries

into the world economy.⁷⁴ The three main pillars of this partnership include the political dimension, economic and trade cooperation, and development cooperation.

Unlike the situation that China claimed its motives “no strings attached”, the EU’s aid is attached to strict preconditions, which are explicitly expressed in the Cotonou Agreement. In article 9, the treaty gives a special rise to the importance of elements including human rights, democratic principles, rule of law, and good governance, which are in accordance with the fundamental value of the EU.⁷⁵

These ideas have been concluded as “political conditionality”, and repeatedly confirmed in all kinds of EU publications and speeches of EU’s leaders. As one report argued, “Support to democracy, good governance and human rights is a central component of EU cooperation with Africa, and of EU development aid to the continent.”⁷⁶

The conditionality made a distinct contrast with China’s “no strings attached”. However, there lie certain motives behind the conditionality. As we already discussed, aid, as a tool of foreign policy, is provided for certain political, commercial, and moral reasons. There are three reasons that I could identify as the motives behind the EU’s aid and conditionality.

Firstly, aid to Africa reflects the moral obligation of the EU and its member states. This notion could be understood from both humanitarian perspective and historical perspective.

Viewing from a humanitarian perspective, rich countries feel the moral obligation to help poor countries, as it is morally the right thing to do. In 2019, the GDP per capita in the EU is 35,623 USD, while the average GDP per capita of African countries is only 1,878 USD, with more than 47 countries ranked lower

than 100 all over the world; the former is 19 times of the latter.⁷⁷ The six countries with the lowest GDP per capita in the world are from Africa, and South Sudan ranked at the bottom with a GDP per capita of 275 USD.⁷⁸ The big gap in GDP level has bestowed the rich European countries a natural obligation to help the poor countries.

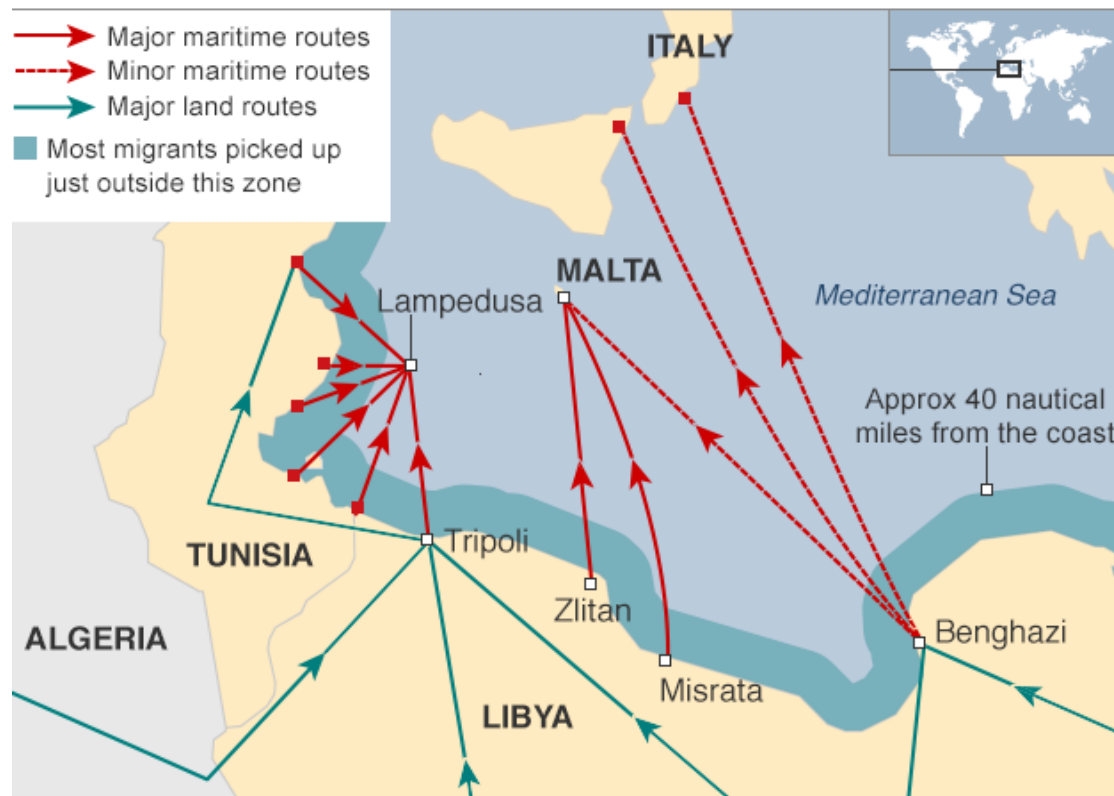
From a historical point of view, EU states are the traditional suzerain states of African countries; there lie special links and interests between the colonial power and their colonies. Brian Opeskin's book "The Moral Foundations of Foreign Aid", had expressed the liberalism notion behind the EU's foreign aid.⁷⁹ In which he argued that, the principle behind the conduct of foreign aid is the principle of justice. Developed countries might feel the obligations of "corrective justice" towards the developing countries, especially when they used to be colonial powers, and they accumulated their wealth through exploitation and colonization.⁸⁰ Guided by this moral sense, European states started the association system as early as the founding of the EEC. In 1957, the treaty of Rome established the European Development Fund, aiming at providing technical and financial assistance to the African countries with special historical links.⁸¹

Secondly, democracy and good governance in African countries are in accordance with EU's interest. Whether from geopolitical factors, internal political factors and recipient factors, a democratic and politically stable Africa is in accordance with the EU's interest.

In terms of geographical consideration, African countries are adjacent to the EU, and there are several land routes and sea routes connecting the two continents, which made the EU the most popular destination for migration from African

countries. (See Map 2) The most prevalent theory of liberalism theory is that democratic countries do not go to war. A stable and democratic Africa could be considered as a valuable asset for the EU, not only in cracking the illegal migration, but also in keeping the regional peace and stability.

Key migration routes from North Africa



Source: i-Map, Frontex

(Map 2: Key migration route from North Africa to Europe. source: EU news letter)⁸²

From an internal political view, the EU itself is the largest democratic institution in the world, and all EU member states are democratic countries. The liberalism ideas are the common code inside EU and its member states. The public would be surprised or even feel betrayed if the EU does not follow the same moral standard in its external practices, such as foreign policy and aid.

From the perspective of recipients, the EU believed that development aid could help strengthen democracy through a basket of measures, such as supporting civil society and election process, building the capacity of institutions, etc. These measures would lead Africa towards a more develop-friendly environment, thus promoting its development and increasing its economic vitality.⁸³

Thirdly, aid to Africa could act as a tool for EU's role as a global leader.

With the historical connections and aid practices, EU has always regarded Africa as its traditional sphere of influence, and when it comes to the 21 century, EU has changed its strategy on Africa, not only through the introduction of Cotonou Agreement, but also through the establishment of the new relationship—Africa-EU partnership. As one report revealed, “The African continent has become a test bed to assess the EU's ambitions as a global player.”⁸⁴

Since 2000, The EU and Africa have established the Africa-EU partnership at the first African Union (AU)-EU Summit in Cairo.⁸⁵ In 2007, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy was adopted as the guideline of the Africa-EU partnership. In which it addressed that, “the two partners are determined to work together on a strategic, long-term footing to develop a shared vision for EU-Africa relations in a globalized world.”

The change marked EU's transition of development policy, as well as its global positioning. A rising Africa is an important force in the world landscape; the support from Africa on an array of global issues is imperative for the EU. Providing aid and strengthening friendly relations with African countries and regional institutions would win the support of African countries, thus enable the EU to play a more important role in international affairs.

6.2 EU's methods in conducting foreign aid

The EU's aid is mainly made available through projects, grants, and contracts but also through sector and budget support.

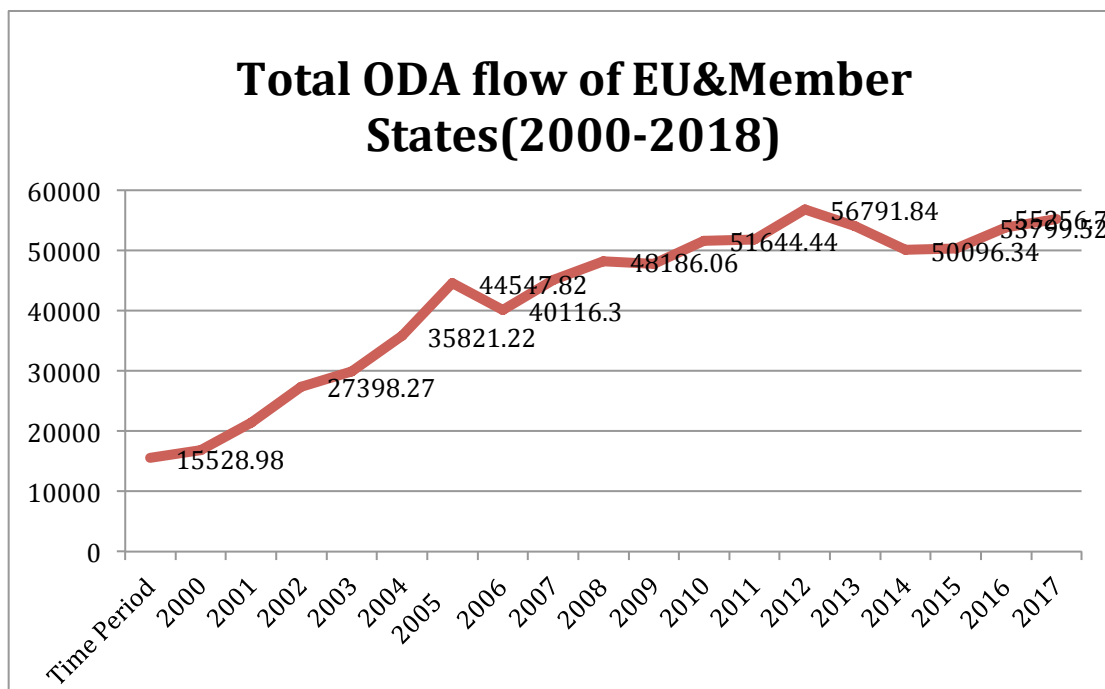
The EDF is the main mechanism in the EU for delivering ODA in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is usually run in a 6-year circle, and the EU is meeting the ending phase of the 11th EDF (2014-2020) now. A report during the 2010-2012 period has revealed that 80% of the EDF goes to African Countries.⁸⁶

There are three characteristics I could observe in terms of the EU's aid practices in Africa.

1, EU and its member states are the largest contributors of ODA to Africa.

EU's aid toward Africa has lasted for more than 60 years, and the EU has gradually increased its development aid during the past 20 years. As the largest provider of development aid in the world, figures have shown that about 20 billion euros of ODA are spent in Africa through programmes at all levels by the EU and its member states.⁸⁷

From the graph below we could find the total ODA flow of the EU and its member states from 2000 to 2018, where we could find that the ODA kept a steady increase during the past 2 decades, excepting a few bumps.



(Graph 2: Total ODA flow of EU & Member states (2000-2018) Source: OECD website)

The EU itself is also one of the largest donors of ODA. Figures have shown that, in 2010, the EU ranked third of ODA contribution amongst DAC members.⁸⁸ Last year, EU remained the fourth largest DAC donor, and Africa remains one of the biggest recipients of EU's ODA.⁸⁹

The EU's ODA to Africa has a strong preferential to bilateral aid. According to figures from OECD, bilateral aid accounts for more than 90% of the EU's aid to Africa, and multilateral aid consists only of a small portion.⁹⁰

2, Conditionality became the main characteristic in EU's development aid practices to African countries. Since the late 1990s, conditionality has become the special label of EU's development aid, and evolved into the most distinct characteristic. According to a report of the German aid Agency, political conditionality is the top concern of the EU and several member states in delivering ODA to Africa.⁹¹ They support democracy and good governance

through both direct and indirect measures, not only by funding programmes and projects with this motive, but also by using conditionality as leverage in budget support.⁹²

Besides regular fund and budget support, the EU would also provide additional rewards to those countries that have reformed to meet the EU's requirements on democracy and good governance. E.g., since 2011, the EU has doubled its financial contribution to Tunisia for the latter's democratic transition after the Jasmine Revolution.⁹³

The EU has also provided funds for election observation and campaign in Africa countries, measures include providing capacity building and training, improving election observation tools, and providing funding to the AU to deploy long-term observation missions.⁹⁴ Figures have shown that, from 2013 to 2017, the EU has supported 38 elections where the electoral process is perceived by independent observers as free and fair.⁹⁵

In terms of human rights, there are also programmes dedicated to this objective. For example, in 2015, the EU launched a 10 million euros programme "strengthening the African Human rights system", trying to strengthen the capacity building of African human rights organs, in order to improve the environment of human rights and rule of law in the African Governance Architecture.⁹⁶

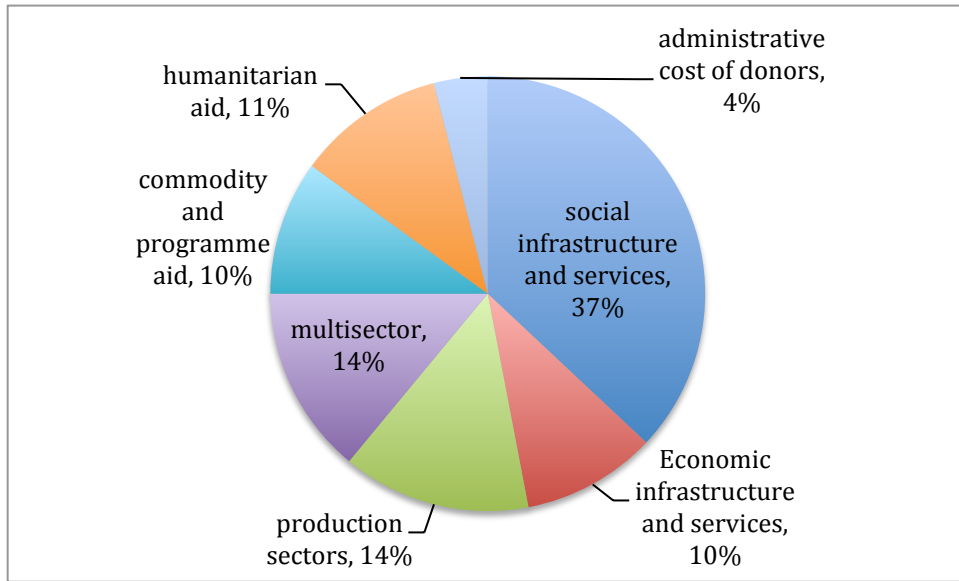
The EU does not only use conditionality as a reward, but also use the conditionality as a punitive measure. According to the article 96/97 of Cotonou agreement, the EU retained the right to take "appropriate measures" if the other party fails to fulfill an obligation stemming from respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, as well as in cases of corruption.⁹⁷ The measures could include suspension of funds, stopping cooperation in certain

projects, or suspending the whole agreement. In the EU's aid practices, the clauses have been triggered many times. Karen Del Biondo from Ghent University has identified 15 cases of the invocation of Article 96 by the EU from 2000 to 2009, among them, 11 cases happened in Africa countries when there was a coup d'état or flawed elections.⁹⁸ For example, in the year 2009, the EU imposed a sanction when a coup d'état happened in Guinea.⁹⁹

3, EU's aid focused more on "software", rather than "hardware". As we mentioned earlier, under the guidance of conditionality, the EU's aid showed a strong tendency to the sectors of governance, civil society and institutional building. Those are all social fields, as we called as "software areas".

In terms of providing aid to African countries, the EU's sector allocation represents its priorities. Take the period 2009-10 for example, social infrastructure and services account for 37% of total aid, occupying the largest share. Amongst the subcategories, "Government and civil society" is the most important area under this category; education, health, population and reproductive health, water supply and sanitation are also areas under this category. Economic infrastructure and services account for 10% of the total aid, lower than production sectors (14%) and humanitarian aid (11%).¹⁰⁰

From the graph below we could find the sector allocation of the bilateral ODA of EU in the period 2009-10:



(Graph 3: Bilateral ODA of the EU by sectors (2009-2010) Source: OECD peer review)¹⁰¹

A conclusion could be reached from the graph that, the social sector remains the top priority of EU's development aid. This is a strong contrast to China's presence in Africa as a "hardware" supplier. In 2000-07, under the 9th EDF, the first Water Facility initiative has financed 174 projects with a 500 million euros budget, aiming at improving the drinking water access to 17.8 million people.¹⁰² The EU has also adopted "country compacts" to make tailored cooperation plans with some specific countries. The EU-Kenya cooperation is one of the examples. In 2014, the EU and Kenya have signed an agreement focusing on cooperation in the 2014-2020 period. In which it states that, an amount of 435 million euros is foreseen for projects during the period, and there are 3 focal sectors, respectively food security and resilience to climate shocks, sustainable infrastructure, and accountability of public institutions. ¹⁰³ These measures also showcased the EU's priority on "software" rather than "hardware".

6.3 Effects of EU's aid

1. Effects on democracy and good governance

In terms of the effects of the EU's development aid on democracy and good governance, even the EU admits that, the effectiveness of the EU's conditionality is a controversial question.

It is hard to evaluate the effects of development aid in democracy promotion or good governance. Although one fact should not be ignored is that, right now, 52 African countries have been "democratized", where they have a multi-party system and regularly elect the country's top leaders, with only two exceptions—Eswatini and Eritrea.¹⁰⁴ Eswatini is a monarchy and Eritrea has a one-party system. To some extent, most African countries have reached the basic requirements of democracy, namely the "electoral democracy".

A report reveals that, in general, leaders and officials from the African Union hold a positive view of the EU's efforts in democracy promotion in Africa.¹⁰⁵ However, it remained unclear how much effort the EU's development aid has made during the process, and there is no strong correlation between the development aid and African countries' democratic performances.

Some reports acknowledge the effects of aid on democracy, while under certain premises. According to a study by the European Parliament, "democracy aid can have positive effects on political reforms if well targeted to local needs and consistently applied."¹⁰⁶

However, scholars also find that, aid conditionality is inconsistent in the EU's practices, and sometimes biased or distorted. Klaus Brummer reveals that, sanctions are only imposed on weaker countries where the EU has limited or no security or economic interest.¹⁰⁷ For example, the EU ignored Kenya's presidential election crisis during 2007-08, and turned a blind eye to Ethiopia's

flawed election and a mass crackdown on protests in 2005.¹⁰⁸

On the other hand, the political conditionality, as a tied clause under the agreement, is also in contradiction with the EU's other principles in the Africa-EU partnership, such as the principle of ownership. How could the donor fully respect the recipient's need when the latter has so many criteria to follow, and so many reforms to make? Brautigam used to describe this contradiction in her book, "ownership does not fit well with donors' continued reliance on conditionality – the promise that we will help you, if you first do x, y, and z." ¹⁰⁹

2, Effects on poverty reduction and economic growth

Poverty reduction is the top priority of the EU's development aid, which is also in line with the UN's 2030 agenda.

Whether the EU's development aid has reached its goal in poverty reduction, is a question under disputes since the last century. ODA has long been regarded as an important tool to help promote the socio-economic development of developing countries and LDCs. Since 1960, through some bilateral and international multilateral institutions, approximately 3.2 billion USD of aid funds have flowed from rich countries to poor countries.¹¹⁰

For a long time, western scholars have questioned the effectiveness of ODA conducted by OECD countries. William Easterly argued that, "Well-meaning compassion" brings almost no benefits to the world's poor".¹¹¹

Dambisa Moyo also raised even bolder criticism about development aid. She considered the aid to have accelerated the poverty rate, and hampered Africa's growth. "Between 1970 and 1998, when aid flows to Africa were at their peak, poverty in Africa rose from 11 percent to a staggering 66 percent."¹¹²

She believed that, aid has made the poor people even poorer, and aid is useless in

alleviating systemic poverty. In her opinion, the only things aid promoted are corruption in the African government, and reliance on more aid from the people.¹¹³

Needless to say, the EU's development aid, especially humanitarian aid, has made a contribution in providing the African people with basic or urgent needs of livelihood. Research from Bond, the UK's network for development showed that, the development aid has stopped 24 million from going hungry during a 10-year period from 2003-12. However, there is no exact figure of how much population in Africa has been raising out of poverty due to the EU's development aid.¹¹⁴

A more concerning fact is that, the process of poverty eradication in Africa is not going as promising as expected, and the 2030 agenda may be an impossible mission to achieve. A report from World Bank has revealed that, during the past 3 decades, although the poverty rate has decreased from 54% in 1990 to 41% in 2015, the population living in poverty has increased to 422 million as of today. If the trend continues, by 2030, the poverty rate in Africa would still be 24%.¹¹⁵

In recent years, the EU has also raised awareness in enhancing aid efficiencies. In 2005, the EU made 5 partnership commitments in the Paris Declaration, including Ownership, Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability towards a more effective aid.¹¹⁶

3, Effects on the EU's position as a global player

As the biggest North-South Cooperation framework, the EU and Africa has consolidated relationship through all kinds of cooperation mechanisms, including partnership, summits and dialogues.

The Africa-EU partnership has become the most important cooperation scheme between the EU and African countries.

Since the establishment of the African Union in 2002, the AU has accelerated the integration process of Africa, and is increasingly become an important and influential political force in the world landscape. In terms of institutional building, good governance, and capacity building, there are many areas for the AU and EU to cooperate.

Through the agreements and partnership, the EU has strengthened friendly relations with African countries and regional institutions, as well as won the support of African countries, thus help the EU play a more important role in international affairs. Needless to say, the development aid and cooperation schemes have provided the EU with more influence in Africa.

In recent years, apart from the traditional appeal regarding cooperation, new concerns and new challenges have come up to become the EU's new priority. The revision of the Cotonou treaty in 2010 has added new challenges, such as climate change, food security, regional integration, state fragility and aid effectiveness.¹¹⁷

7 Comparing with China and EU's aid

It is also worth mentioning that, comparing with the EU and its member states, China's foreign aid to Africa is relevantly small.

According to the official figure of 2014 white paper, from 2010 to 2012, China provides 89.34 billion Yuan (13.82 billion USD) in total of foreign aid to all recipient countries. Since aid to Africa accounts for 51.18% of China's total foreign aid, it is not difficult to find out that China's annual aid to Africa during the period of 2010-12 was about 15.42 billion Yuan (2.41 billion USD).¹¹⁸ This fact is in accordance with Brautigam's estimation. She estimated that during the period 2006 to 2008, China's annual aid to Africa was about 1.9 billion USD, and the total amount of this period is about 6 billion USD.¹¹⁹

While in the meantime, in 2013, 56.5 billion euros of ODA were offered by the EU and its member states, which make up 52 % of the total global ODA.¹²⁰ As the annual aid to Africa accounts for 45% in total DAC countries, we could get a rough estimation that the ODA to Africa from EU and its member states in 2013 is about 25 billion euros (28 billion USD), which is almost 12 times of China's aid. Owing to the different aid systems and financing methods, China's foreign aid differs largely from the ODA of OECD countries, which makes the comparison more complicated. China is not a member of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OCED, and the Chinese government did not disclose China's aid figures annually. Hence, there are estimates made by foreign institutions on China's foreign aid as a proxy for ODA defined by the DAC of OECD countries. According to a research conducted by the "Aid Data" team, from 2000 to 2014, China provided financial support accounts for more than 140 billion USD to 140 countries around the world, of which 21.6% are in line with DAC's definition criteria for development assistance.¹²¹

In recent years, China has increased the volume of aid. A report from JICA has revealed that, China's net foreign aid ranked seven during 2015-16 periods, compared with net ODA flows of DAC member countries.¹²²

7.1 Differences

There are certain similarities between China and the EU's aid practices. For example, both sides put poverty reduction as the priority in conducting aid; bilateral aid is the common form in terms of aid, and both sides have provided aid to African countries for over 60 years consecutively.

In terms of comparison, it is hard to tell which is more beneficial to the local people, a 10 million euros programme "strengthening the human rights system"

or a road that costs 10 million USD? However, the differences between China and the EU's aid could be identified from the following four aspects.

“No strings attached” VS “political conditionality”

“No strings attached” and “conditionality” are the major difference in motives of China and the EU's aid to Africa.

As we discussed already, China's aid is not “no strings attached” as it claimed, on the contrary, there are several hidden motives behind China's aid, including, acknowledging “one China policy” and abandoning diplomatic ties with Taiwan, supporting China in global campaigns or disputed global issues, however, these rules are not in treaties or agreements, they are more like “political deals” behind the curtain.

The EU's conditionality is more explicit, which requires the recipient country to follow principles such as democracy and good governance, respect human rights and rule of law. The conditionality is used as a premise to the EU's aid. All these rules are contracted in the agreements, announcements and other official files.

The differences could be understood from their different theoretical approaches. For China, as a follower of neoliberalism, the pursuit of national interest is a strong incentive behind aid. Since “one China policy” is the most important national interest of China, it is natural for China to put this in the first place.

For the EU, as a practitioner of liberalism conditionality is of idealistic and realistic significance. It not only reflects the EU's core value and principle, but also addresses to geopolitical concern and internal political demand of the EU.

However, China's conditionality only applied to China's own politics, with regard to political system and development path of the recipient country, China's stance is “no interference”, in which China believes that every country has their own

freedom in choosing development path, and there is no fixed model for all countries to follow. This idea is also a reflection of neoliberalism in terms of economic development, which is an attitude close to “laissez-faire”; while the EU tried to influence the recipient countries’ development path through reforming their political systems, based on the belief that democracy and good governance would optimize the country’s environment for development.

Both motivations of aid have caused disputes. For the Western donors, they consider China’s “no interference” as irresponsible, especially during times of humanitarian crisis; while for China, the EU’s conditionality is another type of “pointing fingers”, which showed no respect to the recipient’s will and need.

One Ethiopian scholar used to comment that, “Westerners gave us democracy, and Chinese help us build a road, however, democracy does not feed you, and we need the road.”¹²³

“Hardware” VS “software”

In terms of aid measures, there are also different priorities between China and the EU’s aid, as China focuses more on “hardware” fields, such as economic infrastructure, and EU focuses more on “software” fields, such as social infrastructure sectors.

China’s focus on “hardware” is partly because that, China believes infrastructure is essential to the economic development of the recipient countries, and their development cooperation is naturally more embodied in “hardware” fields such as infrastructure construction, education and other sectors, which are “visible” and “touchable”, where China believes that could directly benefit local people.

While for the EU, the focus on “software” fields reflects a different value and guidelines, where Western countries believe that “welfare services”, such as food,

education, sanitation, and civil society, are the basic needs of the large population under poverty lines.

In this regard, the focus on “hardware” and “software” reflects two different notions of development. For China, economic infrastructure is the best way to advance development; while for the EU, basic needs and good social governance are essential to development.

In fact, both parties are giving full play to their comparative advantage. China’s advantage in low-cost, high-efficiency infrastructure construction has gained great popularity in many Africa countries, and this advantage should attribute to the reform and open-up process in China during the past 40 years; The EU’s advantage in social sectors is also rooted in their own development path, where they have developed this approach through building a welfare society in most European countries for the past 30 years after the economic takeoff.

China’s involvement in infrastructure has attracted criticism from western countries, as many of China’s infrastructure projects in Africa are mainly financed by the government and led by big state-owned companies, which is different from the western model, where private companies are the main actors in the markets.

There are also doubts about whether some of China’s infrastructure is beneficial to the local people or is simply for the wishes of politicians. As revealed in the white paper, China funded infrastructures such as stadiums in Gabon and national theaters in Senegal. Some may also wonder whether the 40,000-seat stadium or a 20,000 square-meter national theater are useful in Africa, and how could the government finance it.

The focus on “hardware” or “software” is not a fixed model for both parties. The EU used to attach more importance to infrastructures, as the economic

infrastructure used to be the top priority during the second and third Lomé Convention period. Right now, economic infrastructure still ranked second in the EDF's development aid budget.

China also paid attention to “software” sectors. A UNDP report indicates that, since 2000, China has been a top five humanitarian aid provider among non-DAC countries. The forms of China's aid include relief materials, food aid, cash, and dispatching of rescue and medical teams. E.g., China has provided 750 million RMB (123 million USD) in coping with the Ebola outbreak, sending out medical teams and building treatment centers in several African countries.¹²⁴

Aid for trade VS aid for development

“Aid for trade” approach has also been one of China's characteristics in providing foreign aid, and this approach has been largely in disputes.

In reality, aid for trade is a common practice in both China and the EU's aid. Ailan Liu et al. has examined empirical evidence of trade figures from 2003 to 2013 of both China and the EU, and concluded that the trade effects of China and EU's aid to Africa are not fundamentally different.¹²⁵

Figures have shown that, ACP-EU trade flows have more than doubled in the period 2000-2014, the exports increased from 1.5% in 2000 to 5% of total EU exports in 2014, and the imports increased from 1.8% to 5.4% during the same time.¹²⁶

In addition to the aim of pursuing economic interests, aid for trade is also a reflection of China's notion of foreign aid, when China believed that African countries cannot rely on aid for long-term development, and their endogenous development capacity will be a very important factor in determining future development potential and development prospects.

On the contrary, pure aid may not be the best way for Africa to develop, as it will cause reliance in African countries and weaken the positive process of industrialization and modernization. Moyo regarded China and India as role models for African countries and believed that the best way to reduce poverty and promote development is through investment and export.¹²⁷

In 2002, the then Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade said: "I've never seen a country develop itself through aid or credit. Countries that have developed—in Europe, America, Japan, Asian countries like Korea and Singapore—have all believed in free markets. There is no mystery there. Africa took the wrong road after independence."¹²⁸

In 2015, Xi Jinping announced at the Opening Ceremony of the Johannesburg Summit of FOCAC that, China would carry out 50 aid-for-trade programs to improve Africa's capacity, both "software" and "hardware," for conducting internal and external trade and investment.¹²⁹ This shows that, China will continue to proceed with the "aid for trade" strategy in the foreseeable future.

"South- South Cooperation" VS "North-South Cooperation"

As we mentioned before, the EU's aid practice with ACP countries is the largest "North-South Cooperation" programme, and China's aid towards Africa is the largest "South-South Cooperation" programme.

However, the donor-recipient relationship in the two cases differs. As a Chinese scholar argued, comparing with traditional donors, China did not consider itself as a donor; instead, aid to Africa is regarded as a kind of mutual help and cooperation among developing countries. It is a model of "poor help poor".¹³⁰ In other words, South-South Cooperation reflects a more equal and cooperative relationship; while in the discourse of North-South Cooperation, western

countries find it difficult to abandon the “donor” position, and it showcases a more unequal, sometimes condescending relationship.

China’s aid is more practical and to the recipient’s needs. “What they want to help you with, is what you have identified as your need, while other countries, they identify your need,” former Foreign Minister Alhaji Momodu Koroma of Senegal commented on the difference between China’s aid and OECD aids, he gave an example, with a 12.5 million euros assistance from Germany, the president wanted to use it for rural electrification, while the German aid agency said it would be used for their human security project.¹³¹

China also kept its promises. At the FOCAC Beijing Summit in 2006, China pledged to increase the size of aid loans to Africa from 5 billion USD to 10 billion USD from 2007 to 2009. In 2008, when the financial crisis swept the world, many Western countries have reduced aid to Africa; however, China kept its promise and over fulfilled the target. The final statistics showed that China provided a total of 15 billion USD in concessional loans to Africa from 2007 to 2009, a two-fold increase from 2006.¹³²

7.2 Some disputed issues:

Lack of transparency

One of the reasons that China’s aid practice is in disputes could attribute to the managing system of aid, which is complex and fragmented.

In China, the mechanism of conducting foreign aid to Africa is quite complicated, since there did not exist a uniform institution as JICA in Japan or KOICA in South Korea, but rather a competing mechanism among ministries. The Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education, National Health Commission, Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Human

Resources and Social Security, etc., more or less, are involved, and competing for dominance.¹³³ Amongst all the ministries, the Ministry of Commerce is taking “multiple responsibilities”, not only in charge of the grant for aid, but also running the funds for business loans. Owing to the lack of transparency of its foreign aid, there are always misunderstandings about China’s aid mechanism as well as the conduct.

This problem has been finally reached a solution in 2018 as China announced the establishment of a new institution called China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), a reform to restructure the current management system of foreign aid, as well as to act as a central coordinator.

In addition to the fragmentation of the aid system, foreign countries also raised criticism on China’s aid model since they rarely see China disclose the official figures of aid. Right now, China only issued two white papers on foreign aid, which is far behind the usual global practice.

“Neo-colonialism”?

“Neo-colonialism” is the most popular criticism for China’s aid practices, as Western countries consider China’s economic activities as taking advantage of African countries, plundering resources and seizing local markets.

As we already explained before, aid could have certain effects on trade promotion, and this is a common approach of both China and the EU’s aid.

When it comes to economic activities, both China and the EU are heavily dependent on Africa’s resources. Take oil imports for example, In 2001, China imported 13.54 million tons of crude oil from Africa, accounting for 22.48% of China's total crude oil imports; while in 2018, China imported 87.47 million tons of crude oil from Africa, accounted for 18.93% of China's total world crude oil

imports.¹³⁴ China's oil imports from Africa kept a steady share during the past 20 years.

In the case of the EU, oil and gas imports from Africa also account largely in EU's imports. In the first semester 2019, Africa remains one of the most important partners in providing natural gas and petroleum oils to the EU, where 16.5% of natural gas is imported from Africa, and 19.9% of petroleum oil imports are from five African countries, Nigeria, Libya, Algeria, Egypt and Angola.¹³⁵

From both sides' practices, can we reach the conclusion that only China is conducting "neo-colonialism" in Africa countries? In my opinion, the misconception about neo-colonialism could attribute more to the situation that China's aid activities and interest-driven business are not clearly delineated. In terms of business activities, pursuing economic interest is one of the main concerns of China's presence in Africa. China is actively investing in African countries rather than exploiting, for example, Chinese investment in Africa grew from USD 210 million in 2000 to 3.17 billion in 2011.¹³⁶

"Debt trap diplomacy"

"Debt trap diplomacy" refers mainly to China's "Angola model", where western countries believe that China's policy would lead African countries into a debt trap, and make them fall into China's control.

However, rather than considering it a "debt trap", this model could also be explained as a different financing method.

As Braugti argued that, China's "Angola model" is just a copy of the experience that China has learned from Japan, where Japan used to adopt in China, using very large credits, at competitive market rates, tied to Chinese machinery,

equipment, and construction services, with repayment in oil or other resources.

This practice is the essence of the “win-win” approach.¹³⁷

In the meantime, China has also offered debt relief to many African countries.

According to the figures from the Ministry of Commerce, from 2000 to 2006, China has offered debt relief to 31 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and heavily indebted poor countries, with the total amount of 10.9 billion Yuan (1.32 billion USD).¹³⁸

In global practices, providing financial support to countries that are longing for development is a common practice, China used to be a beneficiary of the global financial support during its development. However, China’s strategy in Angola and other countries has been in disputes are mainly due to the fact that, China is confusing aid and investment to some extent, as the Exit bank of China played the role of both providing concessional loans, interest-free loan and commercial loans.

Be that as it may, it should also be noted that, putting too much emphasis on the economic benefits of foreign aid would confuse national interests with corporate interests, which are not conducive to the establishment of China’s global image to a certain extent, and may even affect the role of aid as an important means to realize national interests.

8 Implication and prospects

8.1 Suggestions on China’s aid towards Africa

1. China’s aid practice should be more transparent. Transparency should be reflected in all aspects of aid practices, including issue the annual report on volumes of aid, sector allocations as well as project plans. There should also be follow-up reports and evaluation papers on the projects after a certain period.

It is also important that, before initiating a project, China should not only listen to opinions from local governments, but also consult more with local citizens, press, NGOs, civil society and even opposition parties. The more information is gathered, the wiser the decisions would be. When a plan is laid, the decision-maker should take into consideration the situation of local circumstances, including labor protection, the local religions, as well as the environmental factors.

2. China should give play to the newly established International Development Cooperation Agency. As we already discussed, it is quite obvious that the traditional mechanism of conducting foreign aid in China is quite complex and opaque, with overlapping management and competing ministries. The existing mechanism not only tarnished China's reputation for foreign aid, but also caused bureaucracy and corruption in some cases. The newly founded China International Development Cooperation Agency is a recent attempt by the Chinese government to reform the aid system, and to converge the different aid departments in the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A joint command will coordinate between competing ministries, and manage all the aid projects through a unified platform. This move would draw a clear distinction between aid and business-related activities, thus improve the reputation of China's foreign aid.

It is also worth noting that, more and more new forms of financial institutions have been established by the Chinese government to cope with the ever-flourish cooperation in line with the "Belt and Road Initiative", e.g., the AIIB and Silk Road Fund, which could also help with delineate the different financing tools.

3. Instead of "keeping silent", China should make good publicity. For a long time, the Chinese philosophy in foreign aid is "working hard and keeping silent",

which is deeply rooted in the Chinese culture. However, this strategy goes against the common global practices, and it is also bad for China to build a good global image and enhance soft power. Confronting with numerous criticism and disputes, the best way should be to respond, communicate and make publicity proactively. A contrasting fact is that, although China has been an aid donor to Africa since 1950s, it was until the late 1990s that the Western countries have noticed China's aid patterns. This fact reflects the urgent need of good publicity of China's efforts in aid to Africa. In recent years, China is also cooperating with OECD to disclose its aid figures and practices, however, the public impression towards China's aid is still non-transparent and "neo-colonialism".

In order to rebuild China's global image in foreign aid, good publicity should not only be led by China's government authorities and state media, but also be covered in all kinds of communication approaches, for example, website, social networks, civil societies, and local media outlets in Africa.

8.2 Potential cooperation between China and the EU

A fact we should admit is that, China's aid has caused the "Catfish Effect" in the playground where traditional donors used to predominate, made the latter feel threatened, and seek the change to their traditional route.

In 2008, a document issued by the European Parliament on China's policy resolution on Africa pointed out: "African sustainable development will be significantly promoted or influenced by emerging countries such as China". The report admitted that, China's aid posed challenge for the EU's conditional aid path to African countries.¹³⁹

On the one hand, the double-identity as an aid recipient and donor has bestowed China with different experiences and approaches comparing with western

donors, hence this unique advantage should be channeled by China to Western partners through dialogue and communication, in order to exchange ideas and share experiences.

On the other hand, Western aid agencies should also change their innate perspectives and understand China's aid model from China's history and system background, hence, they could better understand what the African people really need, and how to deal with the relationship with recipient countries.

It is gratifying that the aid models of China and the EU are affecting each other. China is paying more and more attention to people's livelihood, capacity building and humanitarian assistance; the EU is also focusing more on aid effectiveness and the subjective wishes of recipient countries.

In terms of cooperation, a trilateral cooperation platform among Africa, China and the EU would be beneficial for the three parties, which is also in accordance with the principle of “alignment”. China could learn from the EU's experiences in institutional building and aid management, trying to show more transparency and involvement in the OECD system, and the EU could also draw lessons from China in delivering aid and promoting development effectively. Through this trilateral form, Africa's demands and needs would be listened carefully and respected adequately, thus enabling the donors to find solutions for their own problems and improve the effectiveness of aid.

There lies a large space for China and the EU to cooperate in areas of training and education, peace and security, humanitarian assistance, public health and sanitation, agricultural cooperation as well as environmental security.

9 Summary

To sum up, due to different history, development stages and political systems, China and the EU differ largely in terms of aid motives, methods, and aid effects. There are many differences between the two different aid systems. In terms of motivation, China's aid is "no strings attached" and "non-interference"; EU's aid has strings such as democracy and good governance. However, both China and the EU have hidden motivations for foreign aid. For China, aid could play the role of leverage of diplomatic war between China and Taiwan, a way to win support from Africa countries on global issues, and a tool to advance trade. For the EU, aid is not only a moral obligation, but also of geopolitical and strategic significance for EU's role as a global player.

In terms of methods, China adopts a bilateral model, focusing more on big projects and infrastructures, as traditionally conceived the "hardware" areas. While the EU, as one of the largest donor of ODA, followed strictly the OECD rules, and paid more attention to social infrastructure service sectors and capacity building projects, which are considered as "software" areas.¹⁴⁰ Concerning "donor-recipient relationships", China has developed a more equal and cooperative relation, while the EU's aid fell short in respecting the recipient's "ownership".

The reason that there exist so many differences in terms of motives and approaches between China and the EU could attribute to the different theoretic paths the two parties followed. The different paths also stem from the different development stages of China and the EU, and their different perceptions of relations with African countries.

From the neoliberalism path that China followed, "the neoliberalism with Chinese characteristics" has derived the aid model with "Chinese characteristics", as Brautigam puts it.¹⁴¹ On the one hand, aid represents China's notion of

self-reliance and mutual help, on the other hand, aid also undertakes the role as the engine for trade and investment. The double missions have led China's aid into a controversial state, which has caused a series of misunderstandings, such as "debt-trap diplomacy" and "neo-colonialism".

From the liberalism path that EU followed, the liberalism tradition made EU a strong believer and defender of liberal world order, which has reflected in EU's aid practices such as imposing political conditionality when providing aid, and focusing more on security, migration and other issues relating to regional peace and security.

In terms of effects, it is the most difficult part of the comparison. China's aid has been perceived as positive to Africa's economic development, while the EU's aid contributed to democracy and good governance of African countries. China's aid is considered to be more effective in advancing trade, while the EU's aid is more caring for humanitarian needs.

However, the contrasting result of China and western aid has caused the global reflection on the aid effectiveness of development aid, and the great discussion on what is the best way for Africa to fight poverty.

In fact, China and the EU's aid model both have transformation and adjustment during the past decades, and they have also developed different characteristics accordingly. For example, China has paid more attention to the livelihood projects and humanitarian areas, like sending medical teams and agricultural experts to Africa countries, providing capacity training courses to Africa governors and local workers; EU has integrated its aid management system, innovated the way of financing, and also putting more emphasis on sustainable development goals in accordance with UN's 2030 agenda.

10 Conclusion

In recent years, China's aid approach has posed challenges to the traditional Western donors, and raised discussions on aid effectiveness and development paths. It is foreseeable that, the debate on which aid model is more effective, and which path is better for Africa's development, would be a continuous global hotspot topic.

However, we should also realize that, China and the EU's aid models are not "zero-sum game", and these differences should not be exaggerated. Both China and the EU's aid approaches have their own advantages and disadvantages, and there is no need to affirm one model and deny the other. Both "South-South Cooperation" and "North-South Cooperation" are imperative to Africa's development.

Right now, there are still 422 million Africans living under poverty line, which is the biggest concern of the 2030 agenda. In this regard, either traditional donor or emerging donor failed to accomplish its missions, and the only way to address this challenge is through global joint efforts. To this extent, there lie large spaces for China and the EU to learn from each other, and find common ground for cooperation. The two models are more complementary rather than competing, especially in aid sectors, patterns and institutional buildings.

We should also expect that, cooperation between the two large donors could help better serve the African people's need, and improve the effectiveness of aid to Africa, in order to realize the goal of poverty eradication in Africa and foster further growth momentum for this promising continent.

11 Bibliography

11.1 Annotated bibliography

1, The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto

Source: Rostow, Walt Whitman. *The Stages of Economic Growth, a Non-Communist Manifesto*. Cambridge, Inglaterra: Cambridge University, 1960.

This book is a thorough introduction of Rostow's five economic stages theory. In which Rostow raised his best-known modernization theory--the five stages to a developed society, respectively the traditional society; the preconditions for takeoff; the takeoff; the drive to maturity; the age of high mass consumption. As stated in the title, Rostow held a strong stance against communism, he believed that all countries should follow this western path in terms of development, and he advocated this model to be part of the US's foreign policy in fighting against communism influences of the Soviet Union.

2, The Moral Foundations of Foreign Aid

Source: Opeskin, Brian R. *The Moral Foundations of Foreign Aid*. World Development 24, no. 1 (1996): 21–44. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750x\(95\)00118-v](https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750x(95)00118-v).

This book provided a liberalism perspective in studying foreign aid. The author believes that developed countries should provide assistance to developing countries for two main reasons: one is developed countries have a moral obligation to compensate for their past mistakes committed in the colonial period; the other is that rich countries are rich and able to provide assistance, so they have a humanitarian obligations in providing aid to help poor countries.

3, Dead Aid “Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa”

Source: Moyo, Dambisa, and Niall Ferguson. *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and*

How There Is a Better Way for Africa. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2010.

In this book, Dambisa Moyo expressed the idea that Western aid to Africa for a long time has been portrayed as an effective tool to reduce poverty and increase growth; however, the aid has nothing to do with this “myth”. In reality, poverty levels continue to escalate and growth rates have steadily declined, and the only things aid promoted are corruption in the African government, and reliance on more aid from the people.

She suggested that African countries should learn from Asia, especially China if they want to gain rapid development. The best way to reduce poverty and accelerate development is not through aid, but by investment and exports to promote economic development.

4, Aid and Reform in Africa: Lessons from Ten Case Studies

Source: Devarajan, Shantayanan, David R. Dollar, and Torgny Holmgren. *Aid and Reform in Africa: Lessons from Ten Case Studies*. Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2002.

This research is conducted by the World Bank. Through analysis of the ten African countries including Ivory Coast, Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, the world bank found out that aid has either succeeded or failed in these countries. The results of success or failure are closely related to the interaction between donors and recipient countries, and the domestic political environment of recipient countries.

5, Does China’s Aid in Africa Affect Traditional Donors?

Source: Deyassa, Kassaye. *Does China’s Aid in Africa Affect Traditional Donors?* International Studies. Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal 23, no. 1 (2019):

199–215. <https://doi.org/10.18778/1641-4233.23.13>.

This article examines whether China, as an emerging donor, will affect traditional western countries in terms of different aid concepts and approaches. The Chinese welfare and social plan demonstrated a different notion with traditional western notions in providing aid. The result shows that China and Western countries perform through different approaches in Africa. China's aid has more strong links with economic development in Africa than western countries, and this new way has distinct impact on traditional donors.

6, The Dragon's Gift: the real story of China in Africa

Source: Deborah Brautigam. *The Dragon's Gift: the real story of China in Africa*. Oxford University Press (New York: 2011), 416 pages. ISBN 978–0–19–955022–7

This book provided a different perspective on China's aid in Africa, as commented by a Chinese scholar Wenping He, the book "restored the real picture of China-Africa relations that has been seriously distorted by some western media during the past 10 years"¹⁴². In this book, Deborah Brautigam defined China's aid as an aid system with Chinese characteristics, and she rebutted four prevalent stereotypes of western perspectives on China's aid, which includes, obtaining raw materials, maintaining good relations with African countries, quickly increasing China's exports to Africa and crowding out Taiwan's embassies.

7, Aid Data, a research lab at William & Mary

Source: *AidData — A Research Lab at William & Mary*. AIDDATA. Accessed March 6, 2020. <https://www.aiddata.org/>.

<https://www.aiddata.org/data/aiddatas-chinese-official-finance-to-africa-dataset-2000-2013-version-1-2>

This database is a useful tool, which has tracked all financial activities and recorded aid figures disclosed by all public channels. For example, although the Chinese did not release official figures of annual aid to Africa, they have tracks 2,647 development finance activities in Africa, and released the report, “Aid Data’s Chinese Official Finance to Africa Dataset, 2000-2013,” which is a strong complementary source for studying Chinese aid data.

8, China’s Aid to Africa: Development Feature, Functions and Challenges

source: He, Wenping. *China’s Aid to Africa: Development Feature, Functions and Challenge*. West Asia and Africa, no. 7 (2010): 12–19. ISSN: 1002-7122

This paper is written by Wenping He, one of the most prominent scholars on African studies in China. In this paper, she argues that China's aid to Africa is characteristic of "no strings attached" and "non-interference", paying more attention to bilateral aid instead of the multi-lateral, focusing on the "hardware projects" of especially the infrastructures rather than “software projects" like researches and capacity building.

9, Africa-China Relations: Neocolonialism or Strategic Partnership: Ethiopia as a case analysis

Source: Michael, Fantahun H. *Africa-China Relations: Neocolonialism or Strategic Partnership?: Ethiopia as a Case Analysis*. Beijing: Shi jie zhi shi chu ban she, 2018.

As a seasoned diplomats and AU project official, Fantahun’s work enabled him to closely watch the cooperation between China and Africa, and to understand the two emerging powers. This book uses Ethiopia as a case to explore Africa-China relations and examine the dynamic development of Africa-China relations. It helps to explain concerns relating to Africa-China relations, which is, rather than the accusation of neocolonialism, Africa-China relations are strategic partnerships that are conducive to

the common development of both sides.

10, how do “Emerging” Donors differ from “Traditional” Donors?

Source: Sato, Jin, Hiroaki Shiga, Takaaki Kobayashi, and Hisahiro Kondoh. *How Do ‘Emerging’ Donors Differ from ‘Traditional’ Donors?* Accessed January 7, 2020. https://www.jica.go.jp/jica-ri/publication/workingpaper/how_do_emerging_donors_differ_from_traditional_donors.html.

This paper examines the impact of four emerging donors — China, India, the Republic of Korea (hereinafter referred to as “Korea”), and Thailand — on Cambodia’s development, with a specific focus on the processes of aid provision by these new donors. By discussing the implications of emerging donor activities for the institutional landscape of foreign aid, this paper raised new findings, which challenged conventional notions of aid dominated by traditional donors.

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¹ Cheng, Zhangxi, and Ian Taylor. “China’s Aid to Africa: Does Friendship Really Matter?, 1st Edition (Hardback) - Routledge.” Routledge.com. Routledge, May 15, 2017. <https://www.routledge.com/Chinas-Aid-to-Africa-Does-Friendship-Really-Matter-1st-Edition/Cheng-Taylor/p/book/9781138630390>.

² “Recipients and Results of EU Aid.” European Commission - European Commission, August 1, 2018. https://ec.europa.eu/info/aid-development-cooperation-fundamental-rights/recipients-and-results-eu-aid_en.

³ “Official Development Assistance – Definition and Coverage,” 2019. <http://www.oecd.org/development/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm>.

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China always bases itself on the principle of equality and mutual benefit in providing aid to other nations; China never attaches any conditions or asks for any privileges. China helps lighten the burden of recipient countries as much as possible. China aims at helping recipient countries to gradually achieve self-reliance and independent development. China strives to develop aid projects that require

less investment but yield quicker results. China provides the best-quality equipment and materials of its own manufacture. In providing technical assistance, China shall see to it that the personnel of the recipient country fully master such techniques. The Chinese experts are not allowed to make any special demands or enjoy any special amenities.

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