Chinese agricultural aid in Tanzania: reproduction of Chinese agricultural regime

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In recent years, China is undergoing important transformation from a recipient country to a new donor, attracting a growing research interest in China’s aid. Chinese agricultural aid to Africa is growing rapidly and having increasingly important impact on African agricultural development and poverty reduction. Chinese agricultural technology demonstration center is one of the main forms of Chinese agricultural aid after the third Forum on China-Africa Cooperation FOCAC in 2006, proving a good case for understanding realities and nature of Chinese aid. Ethnographic methodologies are employed in my three-months field research in Chinese agricultural technology demonstration center in Tanzania. Participatory observation, interviews and documents study are used for information collecting. The purpose of this paper is to provide a picture of how Chinese experts do agricultural aid in African land. Specifically, it focuses on the Chinese agricultural technology demonstration center’s values, dynamics, internal relationships, structures and interactions between Chinese technicians and local people. The paper argued that Chinese agricultural aid in Tanzania is a process of reproduction of Chinese agricultural regime. Firstly, agricultural technologies and knowledge, demonstrated in the Chinese agricultural technology demonstration center center in Tanzania, is exactly Chinese agricultural production regime, increasing production by high biological yield. Secondly, the center’s management structure and operation mode show that Chinese state-market relationship is the underlying principle of Chinese aid program. The government allows companies to engage in aid program to ensure sustainability based on multi-functional goals. Thirdly, interactions between Chinese aid and local reality brought up reflections of Chinese aid. All of these above show that Chinese agricultural aid is deeply shaped by China’s own agricultural regime, which is the basic political and cultural character of Chinese aid.