Dependency theory and China’s increased involvement on the African continent
– The perception of foreign aid in Babati

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1. Abstract

The aim of the thesis is to discuss possible effects of an increase in African – Chinese relation above the historically more dominant Western – African dependency. There has recently both been an increase in trading between Africa and China and an increase in Chinese funded development on the African continent. But will Chinese aid over Western actually make that big a difference for Africa? African intellectuals see Chinese involvement as a way to break free from the neo-colonial ties to the West. A fair south-south relationship between Africa and China would indeed have that result but few indicators prove that that would be the case today. The trading interest from China is very similar to that from Western parties, a few valuable goods constitutes the major part of African nations export industry. A rapid growth in trading between China and Africa is not likely to bring African nations from the pattern they are historically used to having against western parties but to form a new trend of dependency towards Chinese interest. (Tull, 2006, s. 471)

To explain this relation between the African continent and both Western and Chinese interests dependency theory will be used. To fully explain dependency theory one will not only have to look at trading and exploitation of natural resources but also on a transference of social values and foreign involvement in African communities. To achieve this a series of interviews were conducted in Babati during the later parts of February and early March in 2010. This in coagency with an text analysis provides a foundation for discussion about the implications Chinese aid will have on the African dependency towards Western interests.

What can be extracted from this is that Chinese aid most likely will not lift Africa out of dependency in it’s current form. Trading interests from Chinese parties are to similar to the exploitative west to make a huge difference. African natural resources are traded against low-cost mass produced units and to small of an profit is made for the African parties to make the exchange fair. But with the rise of China and the fact that China today finances a big part of the United States government a global power shift will occur and the traditional hegemoninc power structure will most likely change into an multi polar world order. This change is important to study closer to understand what the effects might be for the African continent’s depenency towards foreign interests and specially the relation between China and USA is important though they are the biggests actors today in development work on the African continent.

Keywords: IMF, World Bank, Chinese development theory, western hegemony
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2. Introduction

The African continent has during a long time been the vocal point of foreign strategic interest. Starting out as an important place of colonization for countries looking to expand their internal markets the African continent is today a continent with important natural resources including oil which will be mentioned later in the study.

Traditionally Western parties have been the ones with most interests tied to the African continent. This has during the last decades started to change, a process that has intensified during the more recent years. China has become a prominent force in trading with Africa and can be seen as a major force of development for the continent. They have also increased their involvement in development work and poverty alleviation. This increase in development work from Chinese actors puts some pressure on the western counterpart. The leading development practitioners in Western countries such as the IMF and the World Bank has been accused for creating power imbalances and creating a state of dependency between the aid giver and the recipient. The question is; is the Chinese aid going to make a difference for the African continent or just create a new dependency towards China? The aid presented by China is given without political ties attached and with great respect for the states sovereignty but is this in the long run a good thing. As a comparison the previously mentioned western aid is often seen as synonyms with political ties from the donors. These ties are often focused on the development of human rights, democracy and economic growth that fits a western standard. Much of this is a good thing and by presenting an alternative that has not been historically available China gives African totalitarian regimes an opportunity to continue with bad governance.

It is because of these reasons important to look closer at the historical relationship between the African continent and the West and what impact an increase in aid from China will have on the traditional dependency and development of the African continent. In this context it is important to realize that the development of the African continent is not only done out of humanitarian concerns. Africa is still a continent rich with natural resources and an important strategic trading partner. The IMF and the World Bank is two organizations that have been heavily involved in different development projects in Africa and both of these are influenced by the United States political agenda. And the fact that China has a greater access to the recent discoveries of oil in Africa and by that presents a greater threat to the United States hegemony makes a discussion about the development of Africa even more interesting. To be able to discuss dependency and development Africa will in this thesis be referred to as a unit, something that is in part incorrect due to the fact that Africa consists of a multitude of countries with very different conditions. To not digress to far from the aim of this thesis this bluntness towards the different actors has to be made.

A side as important as the political in dependency theory is the social. Transference of western views onto African nations has been going on since the colonial era. Will an increase in Chinese relations have an impact on this and do local communities in Africa perceive this transfer.
3. Problem formulation

Development work executed toady bear small or no resemblance to the first strides in the field but some criticism remain the same. Jonathan Crush and Arturo Escobar both agree that development work is just a way for industrialized countries to impose their way of living onto less industrialized countries thus forcing a change in the identities of the ones who have been “benefitted” by western aid. It’s common for development practitioners to believe that development is a direct transfer of western values onto non western nations. The World Bank and USAID, big authorities in development work are seen to impose expertise and authority, silencing alternatives all the time keeping a blind eye to the power imbalances they create. (Barbanti, 2004)

China has recently presented an alternative to the western development discourse, the Xiaokang path, it is said to promote sustainability and quality of life above economic growth and trade. China offers it’s aid without political agendas and thus presents and attractive alternative for African nations. (Tull, 2006, s. 471) The Chinese aid in comparisson to Western aid is more direct, Chinese representatives claims that this targeted development is more effective than the aid traditionally implemented by western donors. (Lagerkvist, 2009, s. 17) But will the Chinese aid in the long run result in a break in the dependency towards western donors or create a new dependency towards China. (Tull, 2006, s. 471)

So the questions are; what impact will the Chinese presence in Africa have on the traditional dependence between the African continent and it’s supposedly western exploiters? And will a new dependency form towards Chinese interests?

3.1 The aim and limitations of the thesis

The aim of the study is to discuss two different development strategies implemented from a western and a Chinese perspective. Both of these are present in Babati district in Tanzania. A general discussion about the differences in development practice and the history of the theories will start out the study which will then be highlighted using empirical data from Babati. The study will conclude in a discussion about the implications of the different development strategies in the future. Will Chinese involvement lift Africa from the dependency that traditional western development work has formed between the continents? And is there some development that is more desirable than the other?

To complete the aim of the thesis a focus on IMF and the World Bank for the western donors and the Xiaokang path for the Chinese development practice is chosen. This limitation is motivated by the fact that other Western and Chinese development practitioners are heavily influenced by the standard set by these major development institutes. It is also because of this that in the thesis western donors and interest in Africa from western parties is referred to as West. By doing this a grouping of a multitude of different donors and practitioners is achieved but the aim of the thesis is not to discuss single donors motivation but an overall development strategy and the implications it might have in the future for Africa.
4. Method

The method used for this study is an empirical survey done in Babati district in Tanzania complemented by a text analysis and a discourse analysis. A couple of weeks in early February 2010 were spent in Babati, mainly for research purposes. A series of interviews were conducted, divided over three different development projects that had been or is active in the area. A total of eleven interviews were conducted. The interviews were based on the principles of semi structured interviews presented in “An introduction to rapid rural appraisal for agricultural development” (McCracken, Pretty, & Conway, s. 20) All informants where asked about anonomy and all persons outside an official position will be kept anomyus.

The first interview conducted was with a worker at the Thorn Tree Hotel, this was a test interview to see if my interview guide worked and what if any needed to be changed. Because he is a worker at the Thorn Tree hotel and not relevant for the development projects active in the area his answers will not be used in any of the empirical findings about the projects, some of the answers will however be used in the discussion section of the thesis.

The second interview and the first official where held with Anatoly Rwiza who is the District natural resource and environmental management officer and the interview took place at his office and lasted for about 50 minutes. This interview gave me confirmation that my interview guide gave satisfactory results. Following interview where with a mother of four she lived along the road project in the Magubu village. This and following interviews in Magubu village where connected to the perception of the Chinese workers and the benefits of the upgrading of the road. Further interviews in Magubu where held with two elderly farmers, one woman and one man. To get a higher perspective of the impact from the road on Magubu the village executive officer Leonce D Unbu where interviewed. And in an attempt to get some insight into how the Chinese workers conducted their business and how they treated their workers a group of local road constructers where interviewed.

To get similar results on what impact the LAMP project had on a community they had been involved in a smaller group interview were conducted in the village of Ajasanda. Participants were the village chairman Kwaslema Xwanthlay and Mr. Bombo the forest committee secretary. In regard for the Farm Africa project two interviews were conducted. The first was with Dr Sultan a project coordinator for the Farm Africa projects. And one interview was also held with a 44 years old woman farmer that had participated in the TOBRA project arranged by Farm Africa.

The three development projects that figured in the interviews are LAMP, Farm Africa and the Chinese road project. The road project is not a development project in the same sense of the word as LAMP and Farm Africa is development projects. But the interviews were focused on how the local communities experienced foreign influence and for that the Chinese road project was as good example
available in Babati on how Chinese development projects and interactions with local communities are done.

The interviews were decided in understanding with the local field assistant. This so I could decide what content I would gain from the interviews and so she could find suitable local informants and be a part of the study process. The division of the informants was as much as possible gender neutral. This was more difficult to maintain against senior personnel within the projects.

An involvement from the local assistance in the research work greatly helps the information gaining process. The interviews regarding perceptions of LAMP and Farm Africa were conducted in a certain order. First someone in charge or at a higher level of the projects was interviewed. This was done to gain a basic understanding of their objectives and what they wanted to achieve with the work done by the projects. After this first interview a couple more was done with people affected by the projects, to get comparable answers persons in areas where the projects have had some success were chosen. This order of things could not be maintained in the interviews regarding the road project, this due to the instable relations to the local Chinese personnel. To compensate a group of road workers and a village officer were interviewed. These two interviews gave some insight into how they treat local employers, how they conduct their business and what their goals for the area are.

Since the interviews conducted in field were directed at perception of foreign involvement and differences between the different projects a complement with more in depth facts about development theory were needed to be able achieve the aim of the study. These complements are best done by a text analysis. Selection of texts is based on relevance to the purpose of the study and by whom the author is. By whom the author is it is their relevance and credibility that is important.

4.1 Motivation and critics against the chosen method

This method of interviews in field and a complementary text analysis back in Sweden have a couple of merits. Due to a short period of time in field a lot of prioritizing was necessary to maximize the results from the interviews and a focus on how local communities perceived the development aid in the area did just that.

I conducted two interviews concerning Farm Africa; this is due to two facts. The two interviews conducted gave me enough insight into Farm Africa to be able to make a comparisons toward the other projects and due to a large group of students assigned to one field tutor a prioritizing had to be done towards the ones that hadn’t gotten enough results yet.

In the work done out of field more tools were available to do the in depth analysis of development theory and practice. Once again I stress the importance of focus in field and with the interviews. From the interviews the grass root level of dependency theory can be analyzed and a text analyze gives the grander scale of dependency theory. The division between interviews and text analysis provided a personal insight into the perception of transference and an understanding of what other researcher
have done in the field previously. The somewhat dual focus gives a better base for interpretation and discussion of the subject.

To direct some critic against the method a short empirical part of the study is the biggest drawback, this is however compensated with a more in-depth text and discourse analysis and focus in the interviews.

4.2 Theory

To answer the aim of this study the dependency theory is being used. This to highlight the historical relation between the western continent and the African continent and a possibility for a new dependency forming between Africa and China due to the increase in trading between those two parties. The section will begin with a brief summary of the concept of dependency, how the theory was conceived and some of the first solutions. Then the history of Western and Chinese aid will be analyzed and a discussion about the differences, if there are any, will conclude the section.

One important thing to note about the dependency theory is the transfer of moral values and principles onto the “less civilized” country. This is in my opinion as important as the economic side of dependency and thus important to study closer. This is done in the empirical part of the thesis where a set of interviews in Babati where conducted to find out what the local communities felt about foreign involvement.

4.2.1 Dependency theory.

The term first developed in the later part of 1950’s, this under the guidance if the director of the United Nations economic commission for Latin America, Raul Prebisch. What sparked the discussions about a possible dependency forming between developed and at the time underdeveloped countries were the fact that economic growth in the richer countries did not necessarily lead to economic growth in the poorer. Their studies actually went against popular neoclassical theories at the time which stated that economic growth were Pareto optimal and suggested that economic development in industrialized actually lead to economic problems in the poorer nations.

One of the first explanations presented were very straight forward, saying that the fact that poorer countries exported primary commodities to richer countries, who then manufactured products out of them, adding value greater than the benefit the export country gained from the trade preventing them from making any real benefit from the exchange.

The first solutions to the problem were as straight forward as the explanation had been. Import substitution would give the poorer countries the possibility to keep exporting goods but it would decrease the import cost, thus increasing the profit from trade.

A couple of problems prevented this solution from working as planned. The internal markets of the poorer countries were not up to scale to be able to compete against the richer countries market economics used to keep the prices low. Secondly there was a question of internal politics, if a change
from primary product producers actually were desirable. And finally there were questions revolving around if the poorer countries actually had enough control over their primary products, especially when it came to the export business to actually implement the changes necessary. These problems made other intellectuals think a bit broader at the dependency theory and the historical relationship between rich and poor countries.

Dependency theory was a way of explaining the persistent poverty of poorer countries. Contemporary neo classical theories said little or nothing on the matter. Their viewpoints were that the poorer countries just were late in their development of solid economic practices. Marxist theorists however argued that the clear poverty was a consequence of capitalist exploitation. (Ferraro 1996)

Early discussions about dependency and historical relations between rich and poor countries lead to the forming of some definitions of dependency theories. Among the more common ones is Osvaldo Sunkels explanations that states “dependency can be defined as an explanation of the economic development of a state in terms of external influences” Included in these were political, economic and cultural. (Sunkel, 1969, s. 23)

Theotonio Dos Santos went another route and put more emphasis on the historical aspects of dependency and it’s forming. His definition of dependency stated that it is a historical condition which helps to shape the relationship between countries. The world economy will be shaped in a way that helps certain countries and hinders the development of others. One group of countries economy is dependent on the development of another economy to which their own is subjected. (Santos, 1971, s. 226)

A comparison between these definitions gives some similarities. Dependency is between two sets of states, one dominant and the other submissive. The dominant states are the OECD, all with strong economies and industry. The states that are described as dependant are located in Latin America, Asia and Africa, the ones with low per capita GNP that is, some exceptions are present. The dependent states also rely heavily on one export product to bring in foreign value to the nation.

The second similarity is the external forces by which foreign states make their economic presence known and their importance to the state in which they operate. Included in these are multinational corporations and foreign assistance.

But one of the most important similarities in the definition of dependency is that the relationship between the two states not only reinforces but intensifies the unequal pattern. It also points to the fact that dependency is a historical process that is closely tied to the internationalization of capitalism and very much still an ongoing process. (Ferarro 1996)
5. Background

This section of the thesis will start out with a look at the history behind the development of a western and a Chinese development discourse. This is to get a background to more recent events regarding the development of the relations between the African continent - Western interests and the African continent – Chinese parties. The section will conclude in a discussion about the relationship between the United States and China today and a summary if there is any difference between the Western and Chinese development strategy being implemented on the African continent. This is done to get an understanding if the Chinese presence in Africa will have any impact on the traditional dependence toward the Western donors. And also to get an understanding about the power struggle between China and the United States which will, if unchecked, lead to a switch from a hegemonic power structure to a multi polar world order.

5.1 History of western and Chinese development practices

The post colonial era was in western development theory characterized by a civilization of “less” developed countries. After world war two a more stable development theory emerged. This period was influenced by a heavy transfer of moral values from a “civilized” west to a more rural peripheral area.

Early development practice implemented by western countries where heavily focused on growth of the nation’s economy in which the development program was active. A clear sign of this is that then as well as to some degree now development is measured in growth in GNP. According to Dennis Rondinelli, during the 1950s and 60s, development intervention assumed that "successful methods, techniques, and ways of solving problems and delivering services in the U.S. or other economically advanced countries would prove equally successful in the developing nations." This initial view of development as a universal solution made it inherent in development theory that direct transferability was a solution. But there are more sides to development aid than economics, politics is a solid corner stone exemplified by the directed aid from the U.S during the cold war when aid went to those nations that were or could come under soviet influence, this to prevent the soviet nation to get a to strong grip on world politics. (Barbanti, 2004)

Dominating how western based development plays out is the Bretton-Woods institutes among these are the IMF and the World Bank. These institutes have become models for many other bilateral development agencies. The World Bank and IMF are known for their poverty reductive measures and loan conditionality’s. By this they are also responsible in many cases for the loan taker’s economic developing path. These two institutes have been criticized for their propagation of a market based development approach. Their development theory is based in the Whasington consensus. The term describes a kind of development where unrestricted market exchanges are the driving force behind a sustainable development. Institutes implementing this development practice are critiqued for its negative effect on developing countries. It hits hardest on social services provided by the government and may result in a lower expenditure on health and education.
A second consensus was reached in 1968 in this consensus market failures where recognized as a problem and government interventions where approved as a solution. It is arguable if the shift from the Whasington consensus to the post-Whasington consensus is more than superficial. Development is still seen as marked based but governmental intervention in foreign states are seen as necessary to make sure that the correct development path is being followed. (Nordtveit, 2009, s. 157)

During the 1970’s a rapid growth in American and European multinational companies’ involvement in the developing world were seen. This increase in involvement brought with it two things, new import goods and predatory competition on indigenous industries. This behavior sparked debates that culminated in the forming of two theories. The dependency theory and the central periphery theory, the dependency theory stated that developing countries were trapped in a cycle of dependence on foreign investment and capital.

A severe financial crisis during the 1980’s forced many at the time underdeveloped countries to accept aid from Western donors e.g. The World Bank and IMF. The measures implemented by the World Bank and IMF were to help the countries pay their external debts. They were also supposed to create a more efficient and transparent state, what really transpired where a cut in state’s size and function, and little or no increase in either transparency or accountability.

During the 1990’s some advancements were made in the field of development aid, this done by the World Bank, IMF stuck to their structural adjustment plan. Several academics pointed to the influence of other factors that affect development within a nation, among these where transactions rights institutions and non market behavior. Combined with this new focus on development where a series of world summits, many with focus on development. Topics for some of these summits were environment and development in 1992, human rights in 1993 and gender and woman rights in 1995. (Barbanti, 2004)

5.2 America and China today

China has become more prominent on the global scale and today rivals Americas soft power. This is something that is visible in the relationship between China and the African continent. An increase in aid and trade as well as a heavier focus on debt cancelation for African parties along with a focus on availability of Oil for China has proven mutually advantageous for state elites in respective country. (Tull, 2006, s. 459 (Lagerkvist, 2009) Something that both the Chinese government and its African counterpart see as a positive is the lack of political strings connected to the aid given by China. This is opposite to the western aid which hinges on conditionality’s pertaining to specific political goals, i.e. human rights and democracy. (Tull, 2006, s. 463) By offering aid without preconditions China represents a very attractive alternative to the conditional, more traditional used western based aid programs. (Tull, 2006, s. 459) China sticks to its belief of the sovereignty of a state so closely that they will not attach any political agendas to their development assistance.
This is not reflected in the western aid programs. Western donors has according to Tull inadvertently undermined African states e.g. in the 1980’s with the structural adjustment programs –SAPs. And in the 1990’s western donors put demands on democratic reform on African governments, something that is not an attempt to undermine African governments but does nonetheless take away from the government’s independence. The grave contrast between western and Chinese aid in regard to the conditionality of the help given makes it understandable that African governments gladly accept help and involvement from China. (Tull, 2006, s. 466)

But will Chinese aid over Western actually make that big a difference for Africa? African intellectuals see Chinese involvement as a way to break free from the neo-colonial ties to the West. A fair south-south relationship between Africa and China would indeed have that result but few indicators prove that that would be the case today. The trading interest from China is very similar to that from Western parties, a few valuable goods constitutes the major part of African nations export industry. A rapid growth in trading between China and Africa is not likely to bring African nations from the pattern they are historically used to having against western parties. (Tull, 2006, s. 471)

Chinas increased involvement in the African continent is a clear contradiction to the idea of Africa as being internationally marginalized. Chinas interests in Africa are partially founded in their new multipolarity and non intervention international policy. (Tull, 2006, s. 459). A multipolarity concept is aimed at building flexible and adaptive alliances to contain every form of hegemony and to act as a foundation to a new and just world order. (Tull, 2006, s. 461) This focus on the possibility of a new world order not only brings with it economic but also political consequences. (Tull, 2006, s. 461). Both of these can be closely tied to the new discoveries of oil foundations that have been made on the continent. Angola and Nigeria, today Chinas largest oil producers are set to double their production within the decade. In many other African countries similar oil findings have been made. (Tull, 2006, s. 465)

It is not only a competition between China and America for the African oil that might in the long run result in a power shift. A recent economic crisis in America has left a big wake in its stride. The United States own budget deficit is predicted to be around 455 billion dollars in 2008 and has increased today to 10.608 billion dollars. When Barack Obamas relief package is included the budget deficit constitutes 70 % of the nation’s BNP. To finance this massive budget deficit and relief package the United States are dependent on foreign purchasers of American government bonds much of the funding origins from Asia. China, Taiwan and India among others help to finance the American deficit to keep the US dollar at a steady economic level.

One of the biggest lenders to USA is China. Their motivation for this is that China exports close to an equivalent to 25 % of their GNP to the United States and are thus dependent on a secure American economy to ensure that their own economic growth is unhindered. However China cannot do this indefinitely, they themselves face a similar economic crisis that they have to handle. But the fact that China today finances much of the American state (Habib 2009) and that the average income per
person in China rapidly catches up to and soon will overtake that of the average American indicates that the global shift is much further along than one first may think. (Gapminder 2010)

It is not only in the economic sense that a power shift is most likely to occur.

5.3 Is there a difference between Western and Chinese development practice?

Western development theory started out in the late 1980’s with the Washington consensus which highlighted reduced government spending, liberalization and privatization as means to achieve sustainable development and growth. But in the last decade more of an interventional development policy is being implemented stated the post-Washington consensus. This development path has during a long time been the one without competition but recently increased involvement in development work from the Chinese has formed an alternative. The Beijing consensus or the Xiaokang path are two Chinese development theories which are said to focus more on innovation and quality of life, not just economic growth.

A large part of current western development theory dates back to the period after the Second World War. President Harry Truman divided the world into two groups; developed and underdeveloped. He proposed that all underdeveloped nations should move along the same path as the United States to gain a higher level of development. By a better access to western technology and knowledge peace and development were to be propelled. Truman’s view on development was during a long time a big force in development practice. A concentration on increased levels of agriculture, industrial expansion and exploitation of natural resources dominated development practice. It was first in the 1970’s that leading donor agencies began to work poverty alleviation, education and gender issues into their programs. Even though much of the discourse from western donors shifted to a more poverty alleviating one the focus on economic growth never faded completely.

The idea that economic driven development where the ultimate goal is a society that mirrors the most developed ones in the western world have been questioned by several scholars. Justification for this economic based development is that a well executed economic growth also benefits the poorer in the nation. Critics against this development practice are that focusing on economic growth above human needs will not necessarily mean that a reduction of poverty will occur or a sustainable use of natural resources.

As a counterpart to the economic heavy western development strategy China offers different solutions the Beijing consensus or the Xiaokang path. The Beijing consensus path is according to the terms founder based on three pillars, innovation, knowledge and quality of life. This takes away from the clear focus on economic growth present in western development. Chinese scholars on the other hand are persistent in saying that there are no one Chinese path of development but several well tried out ones all with their own set of success rates and drawbacks. The answer to this ambivalence around the Beijing consensus is explained by Wu Shuqing a former president of the Beijing University. He says that the reason is the suddenness of the forming of the term, it came as a response to Chinas fast development and poverty alleviation and lacks so far universally recognized documents. Chinas
government officially denies the existence of a Beijing consensus and to date the official Chinese development theory is the *Xiaokang path* or plan. The Chinese government argues that the *Xiaokang plan* is one of sustainability and that it when implemented as a tool of development achieves the UN's millennium goals. The term Xiaokang has been used under a long time and was 1979 broadened by the national congress of the communist party of China to involve harmonious development in all aspects.

Because of this long time use and heavy focus and harmonious sustainable growth it is inherent in the term that economic growth needs to be balanced with social equality and environmental protection. The discourse around the *Xiaokang path* is thus very different from the economic heavy western discourse and the sustainable thought is closer to the core in the Chinese development discourse. This focus on sustainability in the focus around the *Xiaokang path* has led to the understanding that it can be used as the Chinese version of the millennium goals presented by the UN.

It is however at this juncture important to diverse fact from fiction. An increase in environmental degradation and inequity has all but muted the acclimation of the Chinese economic miracle. But to say that environmental degradation is solely a problem related to capitalist exploitation of natural resources is to error. But to say that they are disconnected from each other is also an incorrect statement. Privatization and economic development in a totalitarian setting has proven to be a bad mix and is in some degree responsible for the environmental problems China faces today. Policies' preventing further damages to the environment has been implemented; they had some success during the 1990's but that has mostly been reversed during the 2000's. In china clear connections between environmental degradation and increase poverty can be made. In the more peripheral rural areas land degradation affects more than 50 % of the country’s pastures and affects up to 400 million peoples. Soil erosion is an even bigger threat affecting about one third of the country’s population. (Nordtveit, 2009)

The increased development inside Chinas borders have received greater interests from abroad during recent years something that became abundantly clear during the forum on China-Africa Cooperation held in 2006. Many African leaders expressed an interest in the Chinese model for development as an alternative above the western development discourse. China has historically not offered integrated development aid in the same fashion as the one presented by IMF and the World Bank. Instead China offers infrastructural and one-off development projects. Further differences are that the aid given from China to Africa does not seem to adhere to a systematic discourse like the western that are clearly derived from the Washington consensus. This lack of a clear discourse and development practice makes it hard to evaluate if the aid given meets the standard set by the *Xiaokang path*. Characteristic of the Chinese aid is that it is direct, targeted and without conditionality. This has made African civil servants appreciate Chinese aid even more. China’s aid to Africa, while not disinterested, is not used as a political tool in the same way as aid from Western political actors in Africa’’ (Sautman and Yan, 2006, p. 16).But this non interventional aid strategy does not stop China from sharing development experience from its own history trough different medias.
A point can be made if there is an actual difference between the Chinese and Western aid. The none-interfering and direct aid is original to the Chinese-African exchange but the Chinese growth discourse seems from time to time to be borrowed from its western counterpart. Western scholars like to point out that Chinese aid often is tied to China's own economic development. China replies to this by calling the exchange between Africa and China an economic cooperation resulting in a win-win situation. This is underlined by a heavy increase in trade between the two parties. The trade between Africa and China is expected to reach 100 billion per year to 2010. The exchange is mainly between African natural resources and low-cost Chinese manufactured products; this is quite similar to the exchange that historically has taken place between European nations and the African continent. (Nordtveit, 2009, s. 163) And if Africa as a continent want's to brake a dependency towards western parties and in the future most likely to Chinese interests African nations need to band together and present unified demands on foreign interests. By doing this a chance to form a balanced internal market is created. (Lagerkvist, 2009, s. 23)

But this increase in trade combined with the non-interfering development theory that China practices has provoked some concern with western scholars. The criticism is focused on a couple of main points, included in these are that China in doing what they are doing is helping repressive governments that are not working in the best interest of the poor people living within their nations borders. The Chinese type of aid is also said to weaken the combat against corruption. (Nordtveit, 2009, s. 163) This is something that goes against what the informants for this study had to say against corruption.

According to them it was the western based projects LAMP that suffered from corruption and could take some pointers from the road project how to keep the corruption within an organization to a minimum. But one of the major concerns both from western and Africa is the role that China might pose as a new colonizer of the African continent. Among others South Africa's ex President Thabo Mbeki has presented concerns regarding this possibility of a new era of colonization. To subside these concerns Chinese interests needs to listen to African demands of a trade exchange on more equal terms. (Lagerkvist, 2009, s. 14)

Because of following things Chinese aid provides a bit of a predicament for western donors. Chinese aid is going to governments listed as implementing bad governance where they don’t pay enough attention to human rights and poverty alleviation according to western standards. And Chinese vetoes against UN involvement in e.g. Zimbabwe are just further proof of China's commitment to the non-interference policy. Further concern is directed against the difficulty of obtaining information about Chinese driven development project that is up to the OECD's development assistance committee's standard. But there are signs that Chinese aid is becoming a bit more westernized. A series of understandings between Chinese government and the World Bank on e.g. collaboration in the road and energy project in Uganda were met. And continuous problems in Darfur led to the removal of Sudan from the Chinese aid list. These things indicate a more western friendly development strategy from the Chinese government. And it also shows a dent in the rigid policy implementation that can be
utilized by recipient countries and organizations to shape Chinese intervention. (Nordtveit, 2009, s. 163)

Despite the differences in discourse similarities in execution exists between the western and Chinese aid programs. Both parties offers aid tied to beneficial trade deals. The difference is in the discourse around the aid package, where China promotes a win-win situation and non interference Western donors pushes the development of human rights and sustainable growth. But when the given aid promotes economic growth and development close to the western standard the question if it is sustainable is a given. This question of sustainability can be raised against the Chinese development strategy as well. (Nordtveit, 2009, s. 164)

6. Results of the field study

My focus in field was on three different development projects. Farm Africa, LAMP and the road project executed by Chinese workers. In this part of the study a short introduction to the different projects is presented followed by my empirical findings from the interviews as a conclusion for each project. The road project is not a development project in the same fashion as LAMP and Farm Africa. The construction of the road is being done by the Tanzanian government which employees Chinese workers from a Chinese company to execute the construction. Nevertheless the perception of transference of Chinese culture can be compared to the transfer of western influence through LAMP and Farm Africa. My focus in Babati were the perception of foreign involvement and not on why the involvement where present.

This focus on perception and transference of foreign values onto local communities is to get a more in depth analyze of the dependency theory concept.

Imbedded in a classic dependency is not only the exploitation of a nation’s economy and natural resources but also an element of transference of social values and what is considered as being civilized. This section is necessary to be able to discuss the concept of dependency and the future of the African Chinese relationship a focus on how local African communities perceive foreign involvement in their daily lives is required.

6.1 Farm Africa

Farm Africa started out as a project directed at helping widows and their children among nomadic pastoralists in Kenya. The help was given in form of goats. The goats were given on credit, one of the goat’s offspring should be returned to Farm Africa for distribution to another widow. The providing of animal healthcare and a goat meant that the family had access to nutritious milk which helps the survival rate of the children in the family. The success of this initial project prompted an expansion to both Kenya and Tanzania and finally in South Africa.

Today Farm Africa has a greater scope, trying to help farmers in Africa make an easier living. This is done by projects directed towards growing more food, keeping their livestock healthy and to manage
their natural resources in a sustainable way. Farm Africa is a registered charity organization with a small office in the UK. Farm Africa also got a regional office in Nairobi and a country office in Addis Ababa. A major part of Farm Africa employees are African, around 90%. Farm Africa strives toward a close connection to African communities.

A major success of Farm Africa is proving that given ample training and support many rural communities can implement correct solutions to given problems and work themselves out of poverty. Projects are chosen in coagency with local communities and local expertise is used to find the best solutions to the problem at hand. The experience this support gives both the communities and Farm Africa at large is used to further increase the development of agricultural aid. Further changes are done by pushing heavily on political policies directed toward poor communities. (Farm Africa 2009a)

Farm Africa did from time to time cooperate with LAMP; this was possible due to the similarities of the two projects. But even though they are quite similar Farm Africa has to be seen as more participatory, this because of the more targeted help Farm Africa provides. The money for the projects is not funneled through a local government thus increasing the chance of corruption but is instead given to the community more directly. A general goal in Farm Africa is to empower the ones they help; this can be done by such simple things as to teach them about market prices to ensure that they get paid fairly for their goods. (Dr Sultan)

6.1.1 Farm Africa’s strategy

Communities that are depending on agricultural for their main income also face a series of diverse problems. Included in these are climate variation and dwindling natural resources. The overall goal of Farm Africa projects is to increase household incomes, nutrition and accesses to animal healthcare and at the same time protect their local environment. As a result of the work being done by Farm Africa in these areas a broader understanding is being formed around good practice in environmental and sustainable work. The aim is that other organizations can use these findings to replicate poverty reducing projects in different areas.

Farm Africa’s overall strategy is directed at four key points. The first is to produce models of good-practice that later can be applied to diverse situations and are proven to reduce poverty. The second goal is to get governments to get behind the idea of agricultural development as a keystone in poverty reduction. Third is to share the expertise gathered through conducted projects with governments, private sector and community members to improve overall agricultural practices. The final goal is to broaden the understanding of agricultural work and Farm Africa’s objectives using the communications methods available. These four goals is Farm Africa’s solution to poverty reductive measures. (Farm Africa 2009b)
6.1.2 Empirical findings about Farm Africa

The active Farm Africa program that I got in contact with was the TOBRA project. TOBRA is a community based project in Tanzania focused on the dairy goat farmers. The goal of TOBRA is to use imported goats from the UK to breed with local goats thus increasing both the new goats’ immune system and milk production. This project is directed at women to make sure that the surplus created from the extra goats stays within the household. The extra income that the goats represents e.g. because the availability of selling the milk helps the women start up their own side projects. These are usually directed at home improvement or to finance their children’s education.

My first informant for Farm Africa Dr. Sultan a coordinator for Farm Africa’s project pressed the fact that if some of the projects were to phase out they would make sure that they have teach the local community enough to keep the project going after that Farm Africa no longer officially supports the project.

Female farmers of the age of 44 years were interviewed in the study. She had been benefitted by the TOBRA project and had some saying in how the interaction with Farm Africa had affected her day to day life. As a participant in Farm Africa’s TOBRA project she received four goats and the surplus they created for her she invested in chickens, pigs and further plantation all to further increase the surplus created by the project. Nowadays she cultivates among other things bananas, coffee and piripiri.

6.2 LAMP

LAMP started in 1991 and covers the Manyara region, in which Babati is included. This area includes Kieto, Simanjiro and Singida Rural. Responsible for the coordination with Swedish counterpart and funder SIDA is the Department of Regional Administration and Local Government at the Prime minister’s office.

The most important components of LAMP are the focus on capacity building at village levels and support for community empowerment and democratic development. The overall goal with this is poverty alleviation, sustainable natural management and development of democracy. LAMP has provided greatly into the formation of the National Forest Policy, the Amended Local Government Act and the Forest Act.

LAMP has developed into being a broad program focused on land management and soil conservation. This is done in close harmony with local communities and governments as well as NGO: s. the work is often done in smaller steps, village by village. LAMP operatives are faced with different conditions at every village all with unique problems and variables. LAMP presses the fact that inhabitants in Tanzania do not resists the opportunity to change, modernization and development. It is the lack of information about their rights and obligations that hinder development, something that LAMP strives to address directly. (LAMP 2006)
LAMP was implemented by the District Councils and lower local governments in the districts of Singida, Simanjiro, Kiteto and Babati. In these areas LAMP was integrated fully to the local government’s development process. The funding for LAMP project came from Swedish based Sida. The districts were themselves responsible for planning and executing activities. At the end of 2007 LAMP reports on their homepage that many of the previously LAMP funded project had become self sustainable.

An initial focus on natural resource management from LAMP, with focus on participatory forest management gradually switched over to land management. LAMP started out with emphasis on forest management to hinder the ever decreasing forest cover to disappear completely. The switch to more of a land management oriented program was justified due to unpredictable weather patterns, erosion and community pressure.

Included in this second phase of LAMP was a support to water supply schemes and rainwater harvesting. This was to improve the quality of life for the farmers and increase the yields. Food security is one big hindrance in the struggle against poverty. Also a comprehensive education about land rights and land ownership was implemented. Good governance and democratic participation in the management of natural resources was a big target for LAMP. During the second phase of LAMP some focus were on improving overall district public service delivery and promoting business development. (ORGUT 2006)

6.2.1 Empirical findings about LAMP

The first informant to be interviewed about LAMP was Anatoly Rwiza the district natural and environmental manager. He expressed concern about the fact that in some cases implementation of LAMP project has been met with struggle and some degree of hostility. The most usual scenario where this happens is when LAMP operatives goes into a community and conserves areas that have been used for a specific purpose. Areas for grazing and wood gathering are potential hot spots for conflict. To avert these conflicts substitutes or proof of future greater benefits than present drawbacks has to be presented.

The fact that close communication is viewed as something positive is reflected in the interviews from Ajasanda. Here a close communication between the LAMP project and the village has taken place for some time. LAMP got involved in the village after a great flooding in the early 1990’s. The two main objectives were to make sure that the lake did not flood again and to teach the farmers about soil contour to prevent further erosion. After the initial focus on preventing future flooding the scope broadened and forest management got up onto the agenda. The informants have seen a row of improvements from conserving the forest. Included in these are better accesses to traditional herbs, better air and easier to keep bees.

There is a good relationship between LAMP and the community, they listen to the people and make sure that the project target specific needs. They use local expertise and train young people to pass knowledge to their parents and elders, a practice that also is used by Farm Africa.
6.3 The road project

In an attempt to increase poverty reductive measures in Tanzania the nation’s government has developed a 10 year transport sector investment program TSIP for short. This program is an extension of already existing actions against poverty such as the Tanzania Joint Assistance Strategy and the Millennium Development Goals. The main goal for TSIP is to achieve an implementation of the transport policy strategies. One of these projects that get a high priority status is the Singida – Babati – Minjingu road project.

By developing the infrastructure hopes are that a wider economic development will follow and thus reduce poverty nationwide. Reduction of poverty and infrastructure development is in line with Tanzania’s governments wish to complete the Millennium Goals. TSIP has a part of the government’s aspiration made a priorities’ list of transportation infrastructures that either need to be rehabilitated or developed. In this list is the Singida-Babati-Minjingu road.

The state of the road today is quite poor and bank funding is necessary to achieve a quick upgrade to paved standard. Part of the funding comes from The African Development Fund and the funds intervention in this project is both in line with the funds strategy to prioritize infrastructural projects and the governments development policies. Part of the loan will be used to finance the foreign exchange cost and consultancy services.

The objective with the Singida-Babati-Minjingu road itself is to integrate the region with the rest of the country and to make the central transport corridor that cuts through the northern part of Tanzania more accessible. Responsible for the implementation of the project is TANROADS – the Tanzania National Roads Agency and it will take 48 months, starting September 2208 and concluding in October 2012. (Infrastructure Department 2007)

6.3.1 Empirical findings about the road project

Much of the criticisms against the road project expressed by community members along the road in Magugu village were directed towards the stewardship of the project. They did not want the Chinese in charge of the road construction. This is due to a quarrel between local communities and the Chinese workers mostly regarding rumors of e.g. disciplinary beatings. This was recognized by Leonce D. Unbu the village executive officer. He also pressed the fact that after discussions with TANROADS the supposedly beatings had went down in frequency and that it can be written off to the fact that the Chinese are new in the area.

On the morning for the interviews heavy rain had caused flooding in many of the houses adjoined to the road, the village members had previously erected flood protecting barriers, something that the Chinese workers took down. The flood preventing measures would be placed back upon completion of the road, until then the house owners were themselves responsible for taking care of the water damages.
General consensus among the informants was that they wanted someone else in charge of the construction and now that they were stuck with the Chinese a closer communication between them and local communities were necessary. A greater involvement from the local community would make it easier to handle problems like the reoccurring flooding.

The informant with the most positive impression of both the Chinese and the road project were a male farmer that lived along the road. He saw future potential for increase trade and better transportation. Important to note here is that the rest of the informants where women and their access to cash-crop trading were limited. His view was shared by a group of road workers that also partake in an interview.

Reoccurring trough all of the interviews was the fact that the road construction was viewed as a positive for the community but that they wanted someone else than the Chinese to conduct the construction.

6.4 Comparison between the projects

One of the reoccurring criticisms against LAMP is that the use of local government to implement the project invites corruption. During the interviews a view emerged that there might have been some issues with employment at the LAMP projects, people got jobs without having to go through a thorough background check, if this statement holds water it might very well be one of the underlying causes for some of the corruption problems that LAMP faced. During the interview with Ally he mentioned that the communication between LAMP and targeted communities is not as good in every area as it was in Ayasanda. This has sparked rumors about villages that where promised help from LAMP and never got it, this could not be confirmed as a fact during the interviews and is left as a rumor. This supposedly mismanagement of employment and communication can all act as bridles in the effectiveness of LAMP.

Even though LAMP and Farm Africa bears many similarities there are some crucial differences. Farm Africa completely bypasses local government and eliminates in that fashion some risk for corruption and increases its target effectiveness. But Farm Africa has a more narrow approach to their aid and even though they have a higher target achievement they don’t provide enough help in all cases. Like the goat farmer in the Himiti district who would have benefitted greatly for some extra assistance outside the TOBRA project but is now hindered due to the fact that she has no means of transportation to sell the surplus that the project has given her.

The development program that bears the smallest amount of similarities with the others is the road project being executed by Chinese workers. Even though it is not an all out Chinese project but licensed to them by the government of Tanzania how they are being perceived by local communities differs very little from how it would if it were a Chinese project. It is important to note that the infield studies were directed towards perception and for that the road project provided ample results.
The project itself is being seen upon as a general improvement for the regional and the nation at large. The fact that many of the workers involved in the more tasking parts of the construction is being flown in from China means that the experience needed to perform the construction leaves with the Chinese. This is a big difference from how Farm Africa and LAMP chooses to do their development work and points to the fact of involvement or non involvement as a key difference between western and eastern aid.

7. Discussion

In a discussion about the development of the African continent and the traditional dependency formed between western parties and Africa it is important to note a few things. From a western viewpoint it have for a long time been the Bretton Woods institutes that have been responsible for the development theories implemented and the discourse around them. Western donors have focused on an economic heavy development that closely matches their own industrialization process. This view on a standardized path to development dates back to Harry Truman’s division of the world into two camps, one developed and one underdeveloped. He stated that if the underdeveloped countries would follow the United States standard they too would gain development and become in western terms more civilized. Even though during the more recent decades more of a poverty alleviating focus entered the discourse, the economy heavy base never faded completely.

As previously mentioned the Bretton Woods institutes has been the leaders in western based development. They have implemented the development practice set by the Whasington consensus. This means a propagation of a market based development and with the introduction of the post Whasington Consensus an increase in interference in foreign state affairs where deemed necessary to achieve development. This in coagency with widespread financial crisis in the 1980’s meant that many developing countries had to implement the developing strategies suggested by the IMF and the World Bank. The conditionality and political strings attached to aid given from western donors made many African leaders in the forum on China-Africa cooperation in 2006 turn to Chinese representatives in search for an alternative. What they got was the Xiaokang path. The discourse around the Xiaokang path differs heavily from the one around the western alternative. By promoting sustainability and quality of life it offers an appealing alternative. But a lack of official papers and clear distinction of the Chinese development path makes it hard to evaluate if it meets its own standards.

Both of these development strategies are implemented in the African continent and the outcome is not easy established. The strategies are in some degree visible in the developing projects being executed by different parties in Babati. The U.K based Farm Africa by passes local governments and focuses their involvement and money directly onto local communities. By doing this they not only decrease the risk of corruption but they also are in risk of creating a separate power structure where the project has greater decision power than the local government of where and how the development money should be invested. In doing this they showcase some small signs of colonial thought. In this they are not alone. LAMP with its great involvement in local communities and use of local governments risks to inadvertently transfer western thought patterns and know-how, something that
are imbedded in the definition of dependency theory. It is most certainly not an active plan but the risk is nonetheless present. And in interview questions about how western traditions and viewpoints are valued it was mostly good responses. Some said that they had seen a great shift in both clothing preferences and extracurricular activities to fit a more western standard. This is in no mean solely because of the presence of western based development projects but they are certainly not hurting the western soft power in the area.

The road project being executed by Chinese workers also bears similarities to the larger Xiaokang path and the Chinese government’s policy of noninterference. The Chinese in charge of the road construction mostly rely on their own workers for the more tasking parts and are not as involved in the local communities as the other development projects. This comparison is a bit unfair towards the Chinese because of the difference in projects but the way they interact with local villages along the road and their decision to not teach as many of the local inhabitants but to rely on workers flown in from China shows in a small way on their government’s policy of noninterference.

But to connect the local activities to a larger picture it is important to note a few things. There has undoubtedly been an unfair historical relationship between the African continent and western parties and this is most likely going to change in the same pace as America loses its hegemonic power. That a global power shift is going to occur is no longer something that needs speculating.

The trademarks of the dependency between Africa and the West are that of unfair trading and transference of moral values and how a civilized nation is supposed to look like. This has mostly been achieved by the conditionality of the aid given from the Bretton Woods institutes. But the fact that China today is a great contributor to the financing of the United States state apparatus is a clear sign that change is on the horizon. What this will mean for the African continent is not yet set in stone. An increase in trade between Africa and China has already occurred and so far it is following the pattern set by its western predecessors, African natural resources in exchange for cheap Chinese products that might very well end up keeping Africa in a similar cycle of dependence towards China that it historically has had against the West. So if Africa is going to remain in a cycle of dependence is it better that it is against China? The answer is not an easy one and will probably not be finalized for some time to come. But in formulating the answer one must consider the conditionality of the western aid against the noninterference policy implemented by the Chinese government. The conditions of western aid assured the development of human rights and democracy reforms but it also meant that the sovereignty of many governments where diminished. It also brought with it a cut in the government’s power and ability to protect internal markets from foreign exploitation. In short western aid has taken away some of the nations own choice of development whilst promoting the progress of human rights and democracy. At this point one might ask themselves if this not is a harsh trade and why a government needs to be forced into the development of democracy. This is where the Chinese policy of noninterference enters the frame. By giving aid without political strings China lets the nations they offer aid to develop in their own direction whilst preserving the state’s size and function in the country they are aiding. This means that they might let a country remain under totalitarian rule but it also
means that they while let a nation progress towards democracy at their own pace. In a perfect world a merger between the two policies would occur. Something the Chinese development discourse actually shows signs of doing when it closes the gap to the western counterpart. A noninterference development theory that promotes development of human rights and democracy; without cutting the states size and power and thus open the nation for exploitation from foreign interests. But what needs to happen to break the cycle of dependence and lift the African continent onto the world market. Firstly they have to be paid fairly for their natural resources and genetic resources. They need to be treated equally and be given a chance to develop their own economy without having to bear the burden of acting as a dumping ground for western companies. This with the formation of the African union and a shift to a multi polar world order without the United States as a sole hegemonic power might very well be a possibility. This is something that time will have to tell for sure but the foundation is there for a new fairer position for the African continent.

8. Conclusions
To summarize, my own findings showed a will and openness towards involvement from foreign sources. Even though some quarrel existed among some villagers and the Chinese road constructers they all wanted a greater involvement in the project. To reconnect this to the dependency theory a transference of values from foreign sources in my limited study is not looked upon as something oppressive from the aid giver, this is true both in the Western and Chinese case. There were some concerns about cheap Chinese products had taken over to much of the local markets. The text analyze showed more tendencies to a new dependency forming between the African continent and China. This is due to a couple of observations. One of the main ones is that a great increase in trading between Chinese agencies and the African continent which consists of an exchange of natural resources against low price production goods is most likely going to form a new dependency towards China instead of Western donors. This is supported by the fact that the trade interest from China is very similar to the ones that western parties historically has put on the African continent. And without a unified front from African nation’s chances of change is very small.
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Appendix

**Basic Interview script**

Gender: Male Female
Age: Position:

What development project are you closest to?

*How is the interaction between the community and the Project?*

If any problems arise how easy are they to address?

*Do you wish more or less involvement from the project worker/the ones in charge for the project?*

What are the benefits/drawbacks of the development project?

*If you were to make a comparison towards any other development active in the Babati area, preferably one of the three presented here what would it be?*

*Do you wish more or less involvement in the local community?*

I used this basic interview script as a start for my interviews, the answers from these question or changes from external influences such as recent accidents and the like guided me to other, appropriate questions. But all questions related back to the perception of foreign aid and the involvement in local communities.