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A New Politics of Development Cooperation? Chinese and Brazilian Engagements in African Agriculture

IAN SCOONES^a, KOJO AMANOR^b, ARILSON FAVARETO^{c,d} and GUBO QI^{e,*}

^a Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex, Brighton, UK ^b Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana ^c Federal University of ABC, São Paulo, Brazil ^d Brazilian Centre for Analysis and Planning – CEBRAP, São Paulo, Brazil

^e China Agricultural University, Beijing, PR China

Summary. — This paper introduces a Special Section on Chinese and Brazilian engagements in African agriculture. The paper asks if a new paradigm for development cooperation is emerging, and argues that we must move beyond the simplistic narratives of either "South–South" collaboration or "neo-imperial" expansion of "rising powers" to look at the dynamic and contested politics of engagement, as new forms of capital and technology enter African contexts. Historical experiences in Brazil and China, as well as domestic political and economic debates, affect how interventions are framed, and by whom, and so influence what technologies are chosen, which investments are funded, and who gets trained. There are both political and economic drivers at the heart of these choices, but these are not uniform or uncontested, either in Brazil and China or in Africa. The Special Section argues for a focus on the encounters on the ground, moving beyond the broader rhetoric and generic policy statements. A key feature of Brazilian and Chinese engagements in African agriculture is the role of state–business relations in shaping and steering development, suggesting new forms of developmentalism. The paper concludes that there is a growing opportunity for learning from the Brazilian and Chinese experience, as this will be a long-run feature of African agricultural development.

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Key words - China, Brazil, Africa, agriculture, South-South cooperation

1. INTRODUCTION

With the rise of the BRICS there has been much talk of a new paradigm for development. With new knowledge, expertise, and investment, countries such as China and Brazil could generate a new dynamic of development, particularly in Africa, it is argued (Gu & Carty, 2014; White, 2013). The rhetoric of "South-South cooperation" and "mutual learning" has flowed freely. Solidarities and connections based on shared geographies, histories, and links forged through struggles against colonialism and slavery have been added to the mix. Others, by contrast, have argued that these new configurations of power and capital are simply a new form of "neoimperialism", replicating past patterns of extraction and exploitation in new guises (Bond & Garcia, 2015; Lumumba-Kasongo, 2011). Of course the reality is far more complex than these simplified characterizations (cf. Alden, 2007; Brautigam, 2009; Carmody, 2013; Power, Mohan, & Tan-Mullins, 2012; Taylor, Kopinski, & Polus, 2014; Taylor & Xiao, 2009). Getting behind the claims and digging into the details shows a more nuanced picture.

This Special Section therefore explores the emerging relationships between China and Brazil and Africa around a key productive sector, agriculture. Through detailed case studies and in-depth empirical investigations on the ground—in four countries in Africa, as well as China and Brazil—the papers together point to some important new features of development cooperation, associated with BRICS countries (cf. Mawdsley, 2012a; Mawdsley, Savage, & Kim, 2015; Li & Carey, 2014), including forms of "trilateral" cooperation (McEwan & Mawdsley, 2012). This includes the transfer of Brazil and China's own experiences in agricultural development—and associated narratives, expertise, and technologies—to Africa as part of development cooperation investments. The papers cover new forms of technology transfer, the growth of technical training efforts, the importance of state–business partnerships in investments, the role of small-scale investments by Chinese migrants to Africa in agricultural value chains, and the role of Brazilian and international civil society in mediating debate about the form and pattern of investment.

Together the papers show that there certainly are important changes afoot: recasting relationships, institutions, politics, and power in development engagements. Understanding the new roles of China and Brazil in the context of their own domestic political economies, and wider global trends in geopolitical restructuring and the shifting of the geographies of international capital, allows us to situate these developments in an historical perspective, and understand how China and Brazil are positioning themselves as key actors in African agriculture. Whether this adds up to a new paradigm is perhaps more questionable. Instead, despite important and significant shifts in styles of development cooperation, we also see many echoes of the past, set in a new geopolitical moment,

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with Chinese and Brazilian domestic experiences playing out in the African context.

This Special Section has seven papers. In the following sections we introduce some of the key themes highlighted by individual papers and across the set. The papers emerge from a project involving 25 researchers from China, Brazil, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and the UK.¹ The team represents a diverse array of disciplinary expertise, from agronomists to anthropologists to economists to international relations specialists to political scientists, all interested in different facets of development, bringing different literatures, academic cultures, and field experiences to the project. We have not tried to constrain this diversity. While all of us have offered insights and perspectives, with the aim of provoking exchange and conversation, we have not followed a singular approach, defined by a unified theoretical stance. Instead, we have encouraged deep empirical exploration of complex and fastchanging dynamics, with the aim of going behind the façade of standard approaches. The result is an eclectic mix of styles and approaches, but one we hope that adds up, as a rich tapestry, to a fuller understanding.

Since 2011 detailed field investigations of 16 cases of Chinese and Brazilian engagements have been carried out, involving extended fieldwork. Over 20 Working Papers and other articles have been published to date, and the papers in this issue draw from these, offering a more synthetic view of emergent patterns and trends. The African cases were chosen from a country-level mapping of what was happening where, based on secondary data, triangulated with interviews from officials. The cases were chosen to represent a range of styles of engagement-including conventional "aid" projects (mostly around technology transfer), private (or more often statebusiness hybrid) investments, training and capacity building efforts, investments in agri-food systems by migrants and civil society engagements protesting about investments and aid projects. Each case, while not representative in any statistical sense, as all were very different, offered a different angle on understanding the dynamics of engagement in agriculture by Brazil and China.

2. CONTEXTS FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN AFRICA

"South-South cooperation", and the extension of Chinese and Brazilian engagements in African agriculture, therefore emerges from a particular set of contexts. This includes the growth of new hubs of capital in China and Brazil, supported by global finance, that are entering a globalized competitive world; a recent, although now declining, commodities boom and massive growth in demand for resources; a huge growth in capital goods exports to Africa, especially from China; shifts in political contexts in China and Brazil seeing new foci on business and development and new emphases in international positioning; an extended period of neoliberal economic restructuring in Africa that provides space for private (or state-business) investment; African government and donor policies that offer support and subsidy for the extension of capital, and an elite, sometimes corrupt, politics in Africa that may see new investment as a route to shore up existing commercial and political interests. As Amanor and Chichava (2016) explain, all these factors play into the dynamics of development cooperation in Africa.

This reconfiguration is often read as a period "beyond aid", where development occurs through private investment, with less of a role for conventional aid agencies. Today private capital and global finance, from multiple sources, are driving forces in a globalized, financialized, liberalized world. In different ways, Brazil's and China's "development cooperation" efforts, just as those of the US or European countries, must be seen in this light; as an extension of capital and markets, now with new roles for the state, as part of state-directed "developmentalism" (Lee, 2014), and in relation to new patterns of accumulation by capital in new sites across the world (Moyo, Yeros, & Jha, 2012). As Gu *et al.* (2016) and Xiuli *et al.* (2016) highlight, the new, hybrid relationships between states and businesses, where state funding supports and guides and businesses implement, are of particular interest, as they reveal the emerging ways that expertise, technology, and finance are deployed in agricultural development through "development cooperation".

There is therefore important change, but also continuity. We are seeing new relationships being forged that are opening up possibilities for negotiation in African contexts, as new "donors", "investors", and hybrids between the two, arrive. This offers greater "agency" for African governments (Brown, 2012; Mohan & Lampert, 2013; Mohan & Power, 2008; Tan-Mullins, Mohan, & Power, 2010), and a new room for manoeuvre (Kragelund, 2008), that was not possible in previous decades, when the singular strictures of the International Finance Institutions, and the aid conditionalities of other Western donors, meant that only one option was on the menu. Today there is greater diversity and choice, and so negotiation is the order of the day. This presents a new landscape for development cooperation, defined to encompass more than just conventional aid transfers and involving an array of state-supported business relationships and investments. While China and Brazil remain small players relative to others, they are gaining influence, and certainly in the case of China, the scope and amount of both development assistance and wider investment is growing significantly. This includes a focus on agriculture (Buckley, 2013), a sector that is especially important for Brazil (Cabral, Shankland, Favareto, & Costa Vaz, 2013).

Agriculture has been identified by both China and Brazil as a strategic focus for engagement with Africa (Cheru & Modi, 2013). This derives from different motivations and incentives. Agriculture is seen as an area where both countries have comparative advantage. Both can point to agricultural "success stories" in recent decades. Both have experience in tropical and sub-tropical agriculture, involving similar crops to those found in Africa, and so can offer technical expertise and technologies. Agriculture has a different strategic value in the political economy of China and Brazil, with China increasingly relying on food and feed imports to satisfy growing demand, while Brazil's economy is heavily dependent on a strong agribusiness sector, reliant on export commodity sales (Mueller & Mueller, 2014). While expansion into Africa is very unlikely to feed China (Brautigam, 2015), there is interest in contract farming arrangements for key crops (including cotton and tobacco), and possibilities of investment along agricultural value chains, including for processing, machinery, and input supply, in forms that may favor poorer producers and business enterprises, as the technologies are sometimes more appropriate and the market standards less restrictive than investments from the West (Kaplinsky, 2013).

For Africa, with its significant rural population, large land areas and challenges of food security, agriculture remains a top priority, as affirmed in frequent statements from the African Union, presidents, and officials from across the continent. As a core productive sector, largely ignored by Western donors for decades, it is an area where external intervention could make a difference, it is argued (Collier & Dercon, 2014; Scoones, Devereux, & Haddad, 2005). With preferential trade deals, supported by the European Union and the United States, combined with the relative proximity of particularly European markets, developing export agriculture in Africa has commercial appeals for foreign investors too. Yet in practice, as the papers show, there are far fewer land-based investments on the ground than media reports might suggest (Brautigam & Ekman, 2012; Brautigam & Tang, 2009; Bräutigam & Zhang, 2013), as lack of infrastructure, distance to markets, tenure insecurity, and other challenges dissuade investors.

A major focus of our case study work was to get behind the often simplistic and unsubstantiated mainstream narratives about Brazilian and Chinese investment, and develop insights into the "encounters" that occur between Africans, Brazilians, and Chinese in these different settings (Scoones, Cabral, & Tugendhat, 2013). The aim has been to try and understand the processes of translation, brokerage, and negotiation that go on as part of "interface encounters" in these highly varied aid and investment projects across our cases (cf. Lewis & Mosse, 2006; Long & Long, 1992; Mosse, 2011). This more ethnographic and local lens was complemented by research on the domestic political economies in China and Brazil, and the actors, networks, and narratives that framed interventions in Africa. By understanding how agriculture, land, and food issues are dealt with domestically, both currently and historically, and how this is embedded in particular sets of expertise, institutions, and politics, this allowed us to see the case studies in a different light. For what goes on in Africa has traveled from particular contexts, entwined in "social imaginaries" (Taylor, 2004) and "narratives" of agriculture and development (Keeley & Scoones, 2003; Roe, 1991). These may get contested and renegotiated when they land, but they have much power and influence, structuring the way development cooperation is understood and practiced. Of course there is a flow back too; so experiences in Africa may have influences in Brazil and China. For example, as Gu et al. (2016), experience on tobacco growing in Zimbabwe by Chinese companies is helping their operations in Yunnan through the involvement of Zimbabwean experts. Equally, as Shankland and Gonçalves (2016) show for the debate about Brazilian investments in Mozambique, civil society protests against ProSAVANA in Mozambique are linking back to policy debates in Brazil about the focus of cooperation and investment efforts, as well as domestic policy on family farming. It is this two-way flow of knowledge, ideas, ideologies, practices, technologies and people that, in different ways, each of the papers focus on.

3. AFRICAN CONTEXTS

Engagements with Africa by China and Brazil are not new, and notions of "South-South cooperation" have long histories. As Amanor and Chichava (2016) discuss, the current rise of economic engagements, and associated political rhetoric, have to be situated in an appreciation of this history. In the 1960s and 70s China for example supported liberation struggles and newly independent African nations, as part of a commitment to socialist development in Africa. Certain strong ties were established with political parties, and individuals, some of whom remain in power. State-to-state relations were fostered in support of the China's position over Taiwan and its intensive lobbying for recognition on the UN Security Council (Amanor and Chichava, 2016). But these were also complemented by party-to-party interactions, often in earlier periods with groups fighting liberation wars, whether in Ethiopia or Zimbabwe. Brazil also has historical diplomatic and business connections with Africa (Dávila, 2010) and particularly strong links with Lusophone African countries. But development cooperation relations are more recent, projected in particular by the "presidential diplomacy" under former president, Lula da Silva (Cabral *et al.*, 2016). A strong diplomatic push to assert geopolitical influence was central, and aid and investment was seen as part of this. As with China, this extended beyond bilateral relationships, toward a wider influence on Brazil's role in multilateral institutions, whether the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), both now with Brazilian heads, which required African support.

In Africa, the emergence of the "rising powers", such as China and Brazil, has coincided with the rebounding of most economies in Africa following a long period of economic stagnation, caused by a persistent debt crisis, lack of investment, depressed commodity prices, conflict, and the consequences of structural adjustment. The major restructuring of African economies through the "liberalisation" period, often linked to strict conditionalities imposed by the International Finance Institutions, has opened up business opportunities for international capital, while restricting the role of the state and often undermining local businesses. But each country in our studies had different experiences of nation-building, structural reform, and economic adjustment, suggesting the need to go beyond glib generalizations of either "Africa rising" or African decline.

Thus in Ghana, a sustained program of economic liberalization has opened up opportunities for agribusiness, with state and often donor/NGO backing. This has resulted in substantial in-flows of capital from a range of sources, including China and Brazil but also western countries, as well as an opening up of business opportunities along value chains with the relaxing of regulations (Amanor, 2012). Combining recently with the discovery of oil reserves, and successful electoral transitions, the Ghanaian economy is seen as a relatively safe place to invest, although declines in the value of the local currency suggest persisting uncertainties. Yet challenges remain, especially in the land and agriculture sector. Despite claims that there is "idle land" ready for investment, negotiating access is complex, due to a decentralized land tenure and administration system, mostly in the hands of chiefs and local traditional authorities (Boamah, 2014; Schoneveld & German, 2014).

In different ways both Ethiopia and Mozambique have also declared that they are "open for business". Following years of conflict, and with deep structural poverty and food insecurity plaguing both countries, aggregate economic indicators both show dramatic upward trajectories. But their strategies contrast in important ways, which is revealing for how negotiations with Brazil and China unfold. Ethiopia, since the installment of the EPRDF government in 1991 has taken a strong "developmental state" stance, as articulated by the late prime minister, Meles Zenawi (Vaughan, 2011).² Depending on how it was projected, this could please western governments, with its call for investment and private business, but also drew heavily on Chinese thinking about the role of the state—derived in large part from long associations dating back to the influence of Maoist teaching in the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front. This has been reinforced, as Tugendhat and Alemu (2016) discuss, by intensive training and study tour engagements with China at all levels of the bureaucracy and party that have occurred since. Thus, the Ethiopian state has a clear developmental project, and in its latest Growth and Transition Plan, has identified strategic investments in infrastructure, as well as agriculture, and seeks support for this from particular sources. In Ethiopia China is heavily involved in the development of roads, dams, and other infrastructure, while Brazil was initially invited to be involved in the development of the sugar industry to support an ethanol-based biofuels program (Alemu & Scoones, 2013).

This strategic, developmental focus is less evident in Mozambique, where investments have been more ad hoc. However, the high-profile, but largely as yet unrealized, investment along the Nacala corridor, and the associated ProSA-VANA project, has been a major focus for the Mozambican government; although facing an array of resistance locally and internationally, as Shankland and Goncalves explain in their paper. Mozambican elite politics, where investments can support narrow forms of accumulation, have very often dominated, as discussed for the Chinese "friendship farm" irrigation scheme at Xai Xai (Chichava & Fingermann, 2015; Zhang, Li, Qi, & Wang, 2015), and more broadly in Mozambique (Alden & Chichava, 2014; Chichava et al., 2013). Whether this will result in new forms of developmentalism (neo-patrimonal or otherwise, cf. Kelsall, 2013) or fuel corrupt patronage politics will depend on local negotiations (Hanlon & Mosse, 2010).

Zimbabwe presents a contrasting case. Following the land reform in 2000, the flight of western capital and the withdrawal of support by international donors, created a vacuum into which others could move, capitalizing on agrarian restructuring (Moyo, 2011; Moyo & Chambati, 2013). In the 2000s the Zimbabwean economy was in a state of freefall, but those with a longer view could see the potentials. The Zimbabwean state was desperate for investment, and its "Look East" policy made connections with China (Youde, 2007); again building on much older friendships and political links dating to before Independence (Sachikonye, 2008). While China's support to the ailing economy and isolated regime has been inconsistent and fragmentary, and far lower than had been hoped for by President Mugabe and his associates, it has been important both practically and symbolically, particularly in Zimbabwe's on-going confrontation with the West (Alao, 2014).³ Following land reform, business opportunities in tobacco, opened up by the massive expansion of smallholder farming, resulted in the Chinese state-owned company, Tianze, becoming the dominant player in tobacco contracting in the country (Mukwereza, 2015; also Gu et al., 2016).

Each country setting is thus very different, and our cases reflect these particularities. Overall, we can see the expansion of capital and investment in all countries, with states and elites being closely involved. But we cannot understand what happens in Africa without reference to the contexts in Brazil and China, as well as wider changes at a global level. Demand for commodities—whether food, fuel, feed, timber, or minerals—had been growing over the 1990s and into the 2000s, pushed by demand from China in particular (Lu, Li, & Fu, 2015). Increasingly globalized finance was supporting this, through a complex web of instruments linked to multinational companies, with connections to multiple countries (Fairbairn, 2014). Globalized, financialized capitalism in the neoliberal era had taken on a different form, with massive reach and power (Harvey, 2007).

The 2007–08 financial crisis projected a greater need to find sources of investment for footloose capital, and land and agriculture as an emergent "asset class" became increasingly attractive (Ouma, 2014). The "global land rush", focused especially in Africa, intensified, and with this, investments from a range of companies, often closely linked to governments,

occurred (Hall, Scoones, & Tsikata, 2015). While there was much hype about the "land grab", and plenty of highly misleading reports and statistics bandied about (Scoones, Hall, Borras, White, & Wolford, 2013), it was a moment when there was a concentration of interest in agricultural investment in Africa, and both China and Brazil (along with many other investors) were heavily involved (Cotula, 2013).

For African governments, and particularly elites, this was seen as a great opportunity—finally to attract investment in areas that had languished for decades, as well as seek out opportunities for private accumulation through a range of joint initiatives and deals. The heat has gone out of the land rush, as commodity prices have declined, and the difficulty of establishing large land concessions in remote parts of Africa have been realized, but this period was important for galvanizing a process of engagement, and for the establishment of new ventures, that have morphed dramatically since their original inception (Hall *et al.*, 2015).

4. SHAPING DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION: CHINESE AND BRAZILIAN DRIVERS

China and Brazil have their own economic and political pressures, as well as state, business, and technological capacities. These in turn frame and drive these engagements in Africa. For China, the high level of resource demand to fuel the growing economy has been a central economic and political concern for the past decade or more. This is perhaps especially so for the case of food. The oft-repeated statistic that China feeds 20% of the world's population on 7% of its land has come under strain, as demand increases and food tastes shift. Chinese rhetoric has shifted to a focus on "global food security", and the need to support Africa to generate surpluses that China can in turn import to "fill the rice bowl" (Li et al., 2012; Ye, 2015). China's internal policy focus emphasizes both agricultural modernization and productivity increases, especially in large, mechanized farms, while also protecting the peasant sector to ensure rural stability. Chinese narratives about agriculture therefore often combine these, emphasizing the extraordinary success of peasant agriculture, especially under the Household Responsibility System (Li et al., 2012; 2015), while projecting a future of modern. Ye. technologically-advanced, mechanized agriculture, using the best of Chinese science (Tang, 2013). Since 1999 China has articulated a "going out" policy, whereby the extension of Chinese business enterprises and the sharing of technologies is encouraged across the world, including Africa (Gu et al., 2016).

High-level China–Africa engagements have profiled strong diplomatic and business ties between China and Africa, especially since the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) began its triannual meetings in 2000. State visits, trade missions, and a growing development cooperation program, significantly run from the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), all testify to the importance afforded to this effort. State-owned enterprises (SoEs), including from across the provinces, have been encouraged to be at the forefront of "going out" (Gu, 2009; Gu et al., 2016). Since the reforms, starting from 1978, a form of state market socialism has been generated-capitalism with "Chinese characteristics"-that involves a strong role for the state in financing and managing such enterprises, but an encouragement to operate as commercial, profit-seeking entities (Bremmer, 2009; Huang, 2008). There are a variety of financing mechanisms, and considerable

investments by the Chinese Development Bank, the China Exim Bank, and now the China–Africa Development Fund in facilitating new business opportunities, both at home and abroad (Corkin, 2012; Gu, Chen, & Zhang, 2014).

Yet Chinese companies, whether state-owned or private, are not all the same. Different provinces have embarked on reform and liberalization provinces in quite distinct ways. Different companies have varying central government and party involvement, and the form of state-business relationship is often quite different, even among SoEs, as Jing Gu and colleagues show in their paper. A variegated capitalism is evident within China, with different levels of state and party control (Lim, 2014; Zhang & Peck, 2014), and often a highly differentiated provincial character (Mulvad, 2015). When a "Chinese" business or development project is seen in Africa, we have to ask where it comes from, what its origins are, what links to business associations it has, whether it is being implemented individually or collectively, what forms of financing it is reliant on, and what configuration of state and private interests are involved in its organization and management.

Business-run Chinese Agricultural Technology Demonstration Centres (ATDCs) have been established across Africa, as part of a the flagship agricultural development cooperation program of MOFCOM, but they are all very different depending on these factors (Xiuli *et al.*, 2016). Some project a highmodernist vision of mechanized agriculture, while others ally more with a vision of the commercial peasant smallholder. It all depends on the company that is involved, as each can latch on to different elements of the conflicted and sometimes ambiguous policy narrative about Chinese agricultural development domestically.

Chinese policymakers have signaled a shift in economic policy, aiming to take the heat out of rapid growth and reliance on commodity imports, with a rebalancing toward boosting technology sectors and addressing environmental sustainability issues (Angang, 2015). This "new normal" of Chinese economic and political strategy may again shift the emphases of the "going out" policy, and possibly a downgrading of the natural resource extraction focus. However, it is unlikely to temper the need for many Chinese enterprises, both large and small, to seek new markets. Despite the rhetoric, Chinese capitalism is quite accepting of the new, liberalized free market conditions in Africa, as this opens new opportunities.

Investors are not only large-scale. They are often linked to a growing flow of Chinese migrants to Africa (Mohan, Lampert, Mullins, & Chang, 2014), engaging in a number of small-scale business activities, including in the agri-food sector. Migrants arrive through a number of routes, often as workers on large-scale infrastructure or construction projects, but also through mass movements to set up mining activities, as occurred in Ghana. A number of such migrants, as is shown for Ethiopia and Ghana (Cook *et al.*, 2016), set up businesses in agriculture—either small-scale farms, or more often getting involved in processing or retail, often linked to restaurants and shops serving the now large Chinese populations in major African cities.

Chinese involvement in African agriculture therefore reflects China's own policy narratives and imperatives, and is driven by a range of factors, often with strong state involvement. However, currently there is no evidence of massive rush for land resources by Chinese businesses, as some of the more lurid "land grab" scare stories suggested (Brautigam, 2015; Bräutigam & Zhang, 2013), although in the longer-term, the establishment of platforms for commercial engagement may result in further demands for land by foreign investors (Hall *et al.*, 2015; White, Borras, Hall, Scoones, & Wolford, 2012). Equally, there is no one form of Chinese engagement in agriculture. This ranges from migrant investors, to state–business led demonstration centers, to private or state-owned business investments—of varying scales and with often very different motivations, foci, and characteristics. The papers that follow highlight a range of these, drawing out the contrasts and commonalities.

Although on a smaller scale, there is a similar diversity in Brazilian engagement. This again reflects Brazilian domestic political contests and accommodations. This is especially apparent in the tensions between a framing focused on agribusiness and one focused on "family farming" (Favareto, 2016). Agribusiness narratives are often centered in particular on the celebration of Brazil's success in agricultural modernization; and especially the Prodecer and Proalcool experiences from the 1970s that projected Brazil into an agricultural powerhouse, especially in commercial soybean and sugar growing.⁴ As the core of the growth trajectory of Brazil's economy over several decades, the economic importance and political power of the agribusiness sector should not be underestimated. This has been promoted internationally as Brazil's potential contribution to Africa-waking "the sleeping giant" in the Guinea savannah (Morris, Binswanger-Mkhize, & Byerlee, 2009), propelling Africa's commercial agriculture to new heights (Collier, 2008).

Yet, this is not the only narrative of agriculture associated with Brazil. As Favareto (2016) shows there are at least three different constructions of family farming in Brazilian domestic political debate, each associated with different narratives and interests. These impinge on Brazil's international engagements in different ways. These include a productivist narrative linked to the cooperative movement, with strong links to some agribusiness interests. This emphasizes the potentials of family farming to increase productivity through technology and capitalization, and for a transformation to a more businessoriented style of agriculture. This is contrasted with a narrative around family farming that highlights a more territorial perspective, linking production to environmental and social goals, including labor rights. This has support among trade unions, various NGOs, and environmental groups, and has echoes in European perspectives on "terroirs", as well as more radical indigenous movements elsewhere in Latin America, around the notion of "Buen Vivir".⁵ This is in turn different to the more anti-capitalist agroecology and food sovereignty stance on "family farming" promoted by the Landless Work-ers' Movement (MST), in alliance with the global food sovereignty movement, La Via Campesina. All these versions of family farming resonate in Brazilian domestic political debate, and so have different influences on Brazil's interventions in Africa (Cabral, 2015; Cabral et al., 2013).

As Cabral *et al.* (2016) explore in respect of Brazil's "More Food International" (MFI) program in Ghana, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, these conflicting visions result in tensions in how Brazilian policy is projected. MFI, while promoting a position around "family farming", for example, has a central element that is firmly in the productivist camp, with its Africa program promoting Brazilian technology (mostly tractors, but also irrigation equipment and other farm machinery), as part of an export credit deal with Brazilian manufacturers. This sits in tension with a wider, more political outreach involving Brazilian bureaucrats with strong links to social movements (Pierri, 2013). This emphasizes a more localist perspective, with more radical links to agrarian reform. Led by the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA), the MFI program is seen as pushing a different vision of agriculture and development than others promoted through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food Supply (MAPA), supported by various agribusiness coalitions. In Mozambique, these interests collide in the highly controversial program, ProSAVANA, where agribusiness investments, supported through the Nacala Fund sit alongside plans for the development of smallholder farming along the Nacala corridor. As Shankland and Goncalves describe, the contrasting Brazilian "imaginaries" of agricultural development are exported to Africa under the ProSAVANA, but are also challenged by networks of activists, linking farmer unions in Mozambique with social movements in Brazil.

Brazil's world-renowned agricultural research institute. Embrapa, is heavily involved in Brazil's work in Africa. There is often a claim that, given similar agroecological conditions, Brazil can offer useful technical advice and help transfer technologies. This occurs through the Agricultural Innovation Marketplace,⁶ via Embrapa consultants advising a number of programs and businesses, and through its office established in Ghana in 2006. Embrapa's history is firmly associated with Brazil's success in agribusiness expansion, and so the organization is often seen to be closely linked to agribusiness concerns. However its scientific portfolio is much larger than this, and also includes programs associated with agroecology and small-scale farming. As with China's technology transfer programs, and the role of the ATDCs, it all depends on the context within which the different technologies are promoted. As Xiuli et al. (2016) emphasize, technology transfer is not just a linear process, but one embedded in a wider politics, and highly dependent on the performative space within which technologies are shared. In both Brazilian and Chinese development cooperation, these spaces vary widely across a range of different projects and programs.

As with China, the political context for Brazilian cooperation is fast-changing. The presidential diplomacy of Lula, that emphasized political and economic solidarity with Africa, shared experiences through slavery, and a commitment to "South-South" cooperation for development, has shifted as conditions in Brazil have changed. President Dilma Rousseff has not engaged in the multiple trips to Africa like her predecessor. She has other concerns at home, notably a sluggish economy, a growing political crisis linked to corruption scandals, and opposition to the Workers' Party rule by the urban middle classes. Combined with a contraction of the economy with the disappearance of the commodity boom of the late 2000s, this means that the current government is looking less to its influence abroad, and more to domestic political and economic concerns.⁷ A number of the much-hyped Brazilian investments in Africa have not materialized, including ProSA-VANA, which remains at the planning stage in Mozambique (Cabral, 2015; Shankland and Gonçalves, 2016). Equally, despite multiple visits and much bilateral discussion, it was India which took on the support for the expansion of ethanol in Ethiopia. Brazilian business had hoped that Africa would be a platform for export expansion, and would gain preferential trade, tax, and start-up finance deals. Africa was seen as a route to the European market for example, and a staging post for further exports to Asia. But Africa, with some exceptions, has proven to be a tough place to extend business ventures in agriculture. Expected funding for agricultural projects from Brazil's development banks, notably the BNDES, now with an office in Johannesburg,⁸ has been slow to materialize. In addition, red tape, local politics, harsh environments, poor infrastructure plague new capital from China and Brazil, just as they have old capital. That said, there is still a significant expansion of Brazilian companies in mining and infrastructural development; and for many such investments are seen as an important precursor to future investments in land and agriculture. While the land rush may have stalled, this may only be temporary.

The expansion of Brazil's investments in Africa is also affected by engagements with civil society. This again has changed over time. A decade or more ago, the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) was in the ascendancy and had a large influence over the MDA, and the associated aid and investment programs. Many former social movement activists, including from the unions, became bureaucrats within a Workers Party-led government, and so not surprisingly had an influence on the framing of policies. Today, the MST projects its role more in alliance with international movements, notably La Via Campesina, and together they have been important in presenting an opposition to ProSAVANA in Mozambique, together with local farmers' groups and NGOs. This internationalized discourse of opposition to the assumed depredations of Brazilian capital is discussed by Shankland and Goncalves in their paper. It throws up many contradictions, both in Mozambique, where a localist, agroecological vision is not universally shared, and in Brazil, where the MST/La Via Campesina version of "family farming" is not necessarily the dominant one, as social movements, cooperatives, unions, and farmer groups have sought a more pragmatic version that combines productivism with social and environmental goals, in their domestic struggles (Favareto, 2016).

Just as state and business visions of agriculture and development are exported, so too are civil society visions. Brazil's agricultural policy—with its two ministries and two different sectors, characterized as agribusiness and "family farm ing"—represents a form of "dualism". But, as discussed by Cabral *et al.* (2016), it is more complex than this, reflecting more than just two narratives and associated interests. As they show, this complexity is reflected in Brazilian engagements in Africa—but also the export of these tensions and conflicts to Africa, resulting in multiple discussions, negotiations, and sometimes misinterpretations. These debates are in turn reimported back to Brazil, enriching and elaborating discussions on what is meant by "family farming" (of course very different in the African context) and what role agribusiness should take in agricultural development.

5. A NEW POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION?

What then do the papers tell us about whether there are new modes of engagement emerging, and whether this amounts to a new style and politics of development cooperation? A number of themes are suggested.

First, commerce and business are central. Aid and public development finance—including through development banks—often provides support, but the underlying driver is the expansion of business interests, linked to geopolitical ambitions. These range from high-profile, prestige projects like the trilateral Brazil–Japan–Mozambique ProSAVANA project or the "friendship farms" and ATDCs from China to much smaller, less obvious, but cumulatively perhaps as significant, investments from migrants and small businesses in different parts of agri-food systems. Unlike in some OECD countries (although less so in recent years), where aid and trade are separated, the expansion of business interests is seen as central to the development cooperation project of both Brazil and China, alongside the extension of political and

diplomatic influence. Business-led investments of course may involve commitments to contribute to developmental goals, as with the companies running the Chinese ATDCs, which are expected to engage in training and demonstration activities, but whose contribution must be sustained through pursuing market-based activities. Equally, business investment, often with loss-leading arrangements supported by the state, may be geared to wider objectives, such as improving food security or boosting productivity in agriculture. The result is that business and development objectives become blurred; sometimes being mutually supportive, sometimes being in conflict. Brazil's MFI, for example, emerged at the confluence of trade and family farming political advocacy; an alliance, that in Mozambique at least, became increasingly difficult to sustain in the face of civil society criticism (Cabral, 2015).

As new hubs of capital globally, with growing economies and a demand for resources to import or markets to export to, it is no surprise that foreign policy and diplomatic overtures in Africa are linked to business interests. Training and capacity building efforts must be seen in this light, as discussed by Tugendhat and Alemu (2016). Building networks, soliciting political and commercial alliances, and training technicians and bureaucrats are all part and parcel of creating new platforms for capital expansion. While overt "land grabs" have not by-and-large been part of this, the expansion of business interests in mining, construction, and infrastructure development has very often preceded investments in agribusiness. For this reason, seeing agribusiness in its wider context, as farming, but also wider value chains including technology, inputs, and processing, is critical. Linked patterns of investment in certain areas-particularly along "corridors" or in "investment zones" allows often highly diversified companies to link infrastructure, logistics, mining, and agribusiness (Paul & Steinbrecher, 2013; Weng et al., 2013). This should be no surprise, but sometimes the rhetoric of "South-South cooperation", "mutuality", and "solidarity" diverts attention from the subtle and extensive operations of capital (Amanor and Chichava, 2016). For African politicians and business elites, a new source of investment offers new opportunities, and is widely welcomed, but as discussed in the conclusion, there are inevitably winners and losers.

In this respect, the emergence of China and Brazil as players in African agriculture follows a pattern of business expansion and capital accumulation seen many times before, emerging from older powers and older centers of capital. This is however different to earlier periods of capitalist expansion under colonialism, for example. It is too simplistic to argue that this is a repeat of imperial conquest and colonialism, but with new players (Bond & Garcia, 2015). In many instances the sources of finance are global, and the structure of companies and alliances are linked in ways that defy any direct association with nation states (Amanor, 2013). Yet, for both Brazil and China, the presence and directive role of the state is very evident. This is a second strong theme that emerges across the papers. The expansion of Brazilian and Chinese business interests, and with them an array of different "development cooperation" projects is very much in the mold of "state capitalism"-with Brazilian and Chinese characteristics. Thus the way state and business alliances are forged at home structures the way these are exported to Africa.

In important ways, this is different to how states tend to invest in and influence overseas business investment and aid projects in OECD countries. Here a long period of neoliberal policy means that business, often in large transnational corporate forms, operates independently, seeking finance on private markets, and without state involvement. Of course the origins of such business may be rooted in state support, and in the areas of agricultural technology highly dependent on statesupported research. The US and European agricultural biotechnology industries, for example, while notionally "private" today, have many public investments, especially through publicly-funded agricultural universities, that have supported their development over time.

Brazil and China embrace a "developmental" or "entrepreneurial" state model, with a strong, directive role for the state, in both innovation and subsequent support and steering (Chang, 2003; Mazzucato, 2013), an approach increasingly being adopted by Western donors too (Mawdsley, 2015). This takes many forms, as already discussed, but includes the important role for state development banks (BNDES and CDB respectively), a role for State-Owned Enterprises (particularly for China), and a strong focus of the aid effort on supporting and facilitating business (through, for example, the importation of tractors through MFI or the promotion of technologies through the ATDCs). As Gu *et al.* (2016) show, state-business alliances linked to China's African investments are hugely varied, reflecting the varieties of arrangements at home across different provinces and different business structures. The same applies to Brazil.

A central feature of much cooperation between Brazil and China and Africa is technology transfer. As already discussed, there is a frequent narrative that, because of their recent experiences of development, their technological capacity and the similar agroecological conditions, they have much to offer. Chinese and Brazilian "models"-based on iconic and often rather simplistically characterized experiences, whether the Cerrado "model" from Brazil or the intensive smallholder farms from China-are extensively promoted. A third theme that runs through the papers is the limits of this "technology transfer" paradigm, and the problem of policy "models". This has been an important lesson from Western development efforts in Africa and elsewhere over many decades (Chambers, Pacey, & Thrupp, 1989; Scoones & Thompson, 2009), but one that has not always been heeded. Technologies (or wider policy models) do not get elaborated in a vacuum. These are always embedded in social, economic, cultural, and political contexts (Sumberg & Thompson, 2012). If these contexts are not comparable, it is no surprise that the transfer of technologies or policies often fails. The cases of success—such as power tillers from China—are where there is a clear demand; a low cost, allowing wider ownership; the technology fits within a broader value chain; and imported technologies come with wider support for repairs and servicing (Agyei-Holmes, 2013). There is no doubting the excellence of Brazilian and Chinese science and technology capacity, residing in Embrapa or the Chinese Academies for example, but this may not have purchase in very different settings. Too often, technologies and policy models come wrapped up in wider visions of what agriculture and development should look like, and are not matched to local contexts.

As we have seen these visions—constructed as social imaginaries and promoted as policy narratives—are very often contested at home, so these contests only expand as they land in Africa. This is a fourth theme that cuts across the papers. Whether experts, consultants, trainers, policymakers, business people, or civil society activists, there are diverse views as to what is appropriate, both in Brazil and China, let alone Africa. Along with the technologies, narratives of development, imaginaries of particular places, and contests over development solutions are exported as part of the development encounter; and with these a long history and often intense domestic politics. These have important connotations for how development cooperation and business investments alike are conceived, translated, and implemented.

Thus, for example, Brazilian "family farming" has, as we have discussed, multiple, contested versions-and none of these are in any way similar to the conditions found in Africa. Subsidized tractors may well work for an emergent family farmer in southern Brazil, but certainly not on a two hectare farm in Africa, unless local institutional arrangements exist for their management and hiring across multiple farms. The same applies to Chinese technologies, and policy promotion. As Tugendhat and Alemu show, Chinese training courses promote a whole array of technologies and policy models-from hybrid rice growing methods to rural poverty alleviation prescriptions—but not many of these are taken up by their African course participants. Instead, the interventions-be they the transfer of farm equipment or the training of technicians and officials-serve very often more as a performative reminder of the importance of the link, and a symbolic affirmation of the idea of development aid as "gift" (Eyben, 2009; Mawdsley, 2012b) and the exertion of "soft power", and so carry greater weight and significance than their notional concrete aims. Much Brazilian and Chinese development cooperation is about the long game of forging networks and building relations, ones that can be made use of later, and that serve to establish China or Brazil as a player, competing with other donors, businesses, NGOs, and activist groups from western countries.

Another theme that recurs through the papers is a perspective on development cooperation and investment as a process: a series of negotiated encounters, which carry with them a range of meanings and implications. Our insights from particular projects in particular places pushes us to move beyond the structural analysis of political interests and geopolitics to a more textured, nuanced understanding of projects and investments in practice. Here the interactions between external experts and investors with local bureaucrats, technicians, and farmers become central. These can be understood as "knowledge encounters", where different visions, worldviews, cultural perspectives, as well as technologies, agronomic routines, and management practices are negotiated (Fechter, 2012; Lewis & Mosse, 2006; Long & Long, 1992).

As Xiuli et al. (2016) explain for the Chinese ATDCs, these can be fraught, sometimes resulting in misunderstandings and confusion. Combined with the pressures of the job-in this instance seeking a self-funding model within 3 years-the pressures on expatriate experts, who very often do not speak any locally-used language and are away from home for long periods-can be intense. Accommodations, friendships, and new relations have to be struck. Technology and policy transfer is also a very human process, mediated by a range of factors. As Cabral et al. (2016) show for Brazil, the deep commitment and political solidarity found among many Brazilian experts combines with a lack of understanding and failure to engage with local realities. These features are of course not new to Chinese or Brazilian cooperation (c.f. Lewis & Mosse, 2006), but it means that new cultural and political dimensions are introduced, and must be negotiated as part of development encounters.

For African counterparts this can be both enriching and confusing. Many African agricultural bureaucrats have had long exposures to Western aid programs, as well as investors, dating from the colonial era to the present. Very often educated in the West, they know the language, the routines, and the expectations. The often ritualized dance that is played out in the very uneven "partnership" between donor and beneficiary has been repeated many times over. While training programs and other forms of exposure are increasing, as documented for China by Tugendhat and Alemu (2016), Brazilian and Chinese development efforts are still relatively new. For senior policymakers trying to balance different donors off against each other, and seeking a range of investments in a sector, having some new players is widely welcomed. This allows more room for maneuvre, as the "aid coordination" of the last decade or so, and the standardized forms of conditionality that were attached had limited options.

The new players open this up, and their ability to challenge—sometimes inadvertently—some of the patterns in aid and development is refreshing. They also provide support for areas that Western donors have long ignored, such as the productive sectors, including agriculture, along with investment in core infrastructure, as many Western donors have prioritized the social sectors, and broader policy inter-ventions around "human rights" and "good governance". These interventions were often seen as unwelcome meddling by African states, and the absence of productive sector investments has been a concern, especially in the context of post-adjustment economies that had been hit hard by the withdrawal of state support. Basic training of state officials, including technicians, is widely welcomed too, given the limited level of support for this by Western donors (Tugendhat and Alemu, 2016). Thus China and Brazil are seen to fill a gap, and in a way that allows a new conversation with development agencies and investors to take place, allowing African states-although in highly different political-economic settings-to be more assertive in their negotiations and more selective in what they choose to take up.

6. CONCLUSION

We started our research by asking if there is a new paradigm of development cooperation emerging, with the "rising powers", including Brazil and China, leading the way? Did the positive rhetoric of South–South cooperation and mutual solidarity suggest that old dependencies and impositions in development were about to be thrown aside? Were there new ways of doing things emerging that all could learn from? The answers are somewhat equivocal. As the papers show, there are important new elements of Brazilian and Chinese cooperation in agricultural development in Africa, and with this a new politics for sure, but there are also many continuities from older experiences; and actually the achievements on the ground have often been more modest and troubled than the early hype suggested.

The emergence of new players in development cooperation is certainly welcome. It allows greater space for negotiation by African governments as they secure investments, loans, and aid projects. It expands the array of expertise and sources of technology that are available. It opens up new opportunities for exchange and learning from particular historical experiences of agricultural development. It encourages a more multi-dimensional set of interactions in development cooperation, where old donors, emerging powers, and African states are having to seek new, perhaps more equal, accommodations, and are beginning to learn lessons from each other. And it allows development to engage with the new geopolitics, where finance, power, and control does not reside only in "Western" countries and institutions.

With this, new logics for development cooperation are emerging. These go beyond the neoliberal frame of the Washington Consensus, where states were not supposed to engage and markets ruled. Instead a more "developmental state" stance is evident, with very particular Chinese and Brazilian characteristics, ones that Western donors are observing with great interest. Here states are seen as active participants in development processes: framing, facilitating, and steering development very actively. Strong state-business alliances are central to this, and have emerged as a core part of development strategy, in agriculture as in other areas. The particular (and diverse) experiences of both Brazil and China are crucial here, as Africa seeks to move beyond the debilitating period of economic reform and adjustment to a new developmental era.

This complex mix of aid, investment, trade, and diplomacy that characterizes the new politics of development cooperation creates a new dynamic in agriculture in Africa. The productive sectors such as agriculture have long been starved of support from Western donors. The focus of expertise has narrowed, and business investments have been limited. While there has been a recent galvanization of interest in agribusiness investment through the G8's New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition Initiative, this has largely focused on large-scale business investment, and not on wider agricultural development efforts. The Chinese and Brazilian interventions discussed in the papers show a huge array of engagements from large-scale "friendship farms", to supporting contract farming, to technology demonstration, to training experts, to supporting smallholder farming.

There is clearly no one Brazilian or Chinese "model", as development interventions emerge from often quite contested narratives around agriculture and development, linked to very different and variegated political settings. Rather than a single model, there are diverse experiments, and many development efforts in Africa are adapting through experimentation and adaptive learning; often through major challenge and difficulty, and sometimes failure. There are important lessons learned about state-business relations, about technology transfer, about the limits of large-scale farm investments, about supporting value chains, about technical training and demonstration in African contexts, and so on. Outside the few formal trilateral cooperation arrangements, very often Brazilian and Chinese initiatives remain piecemeal and isolated, and both African governments and Western aid donors fail to learn from them. This is a shame given the growth of investment and the opportunities for re-galvanizing African agricultural development after a long period of neglect.

But this should not be a search for a singular "model", as is sometimes suggested. These "models"—whether Brazil's agribusiness *Cerrado* experience or successful family farms or China's peasant farming revolution or high-tech modernized agriculture—are all constructions, located in particular historical, social, and political contexts. They emerge, as the papers describe, from competing narratives in domestic political and policy debates, which often travel to Africa. When such "models", rooted in particular social imaginaries and visions of agriculture, land on the ground, they confront different social, ecological, and political realities, and frequently unravel. Negotiations on the ground offer potentials for reframing, recasting, and redefining these narratives for local contexts. The role of civil society engagement is critical. We see this in the case of Brazilian development cooperation very visibly, and this allows for contestation of constructed, exported "models", and the presentation of alternatives. In China we see debates happening in different forms, but contrasts between approaches taken by different provincial companies across the ATDCs, for example, offer a diversity of approaches.

We argue that these knowledge encounters over development visions and pathways are essential. Some elements may indeed be relevant, others not. Experimentation, adaptation, revision, and continuous learning has long been part of, for example, Chinese policy processes (Husain, 2015), and so needs to be central to this current experience. These are long-term engagements, expected to unfold over decades, so early learning—and we are only at the start of this unfolding process now—is crucial. This of course contrasts rather starkly with the normal routines of Western aid agencies, with short project cycles, narrow deliverables, and strict monitoring and evaluation criteria. A more flexible, long-term, experimental form of development cooperation however may yet emerge from the Chinese and Brazilian experience.

A new politics and practice of development cooperation inevitably creates winners and losers. On the positive side, Africa has long waited for investment in agriculture and associated productive sectors. New, stable, state-to-state relationships that stand outside the Bretton Woods institutions' dictates allows for greater room for maneuvre for both Africa states and external investors. However, as various papers show, such arrangements can undermine a more inclusive or environmentally-sustainable approach, and are sometimes subject to elite capture, as certain investments are selectively appropriated as part of local accumulation strategies. As already discussed, new forms of Brazilian and Chinese development cooperation must also be seen in relation to the emergence of both countries as new hubs of capital, seeking opportunities for accumulation. Different drivers are relevant, with Brazil's economy centrally reliant on agribusiness exports, while China must balance the dual challenges of assuring national food security, while promoting business abroad. Just as the West's post-colonial development experience must be seen in relation to particular dynamics of both global and domestic political economies-whether postcolonial settlements in certain regions, Cold War contests between the West and the Soviet bloc or Western-led expansion of capital in the context of globalization-so too must contemporary Brazilian and Chinese engagements in Africa.

In sum, we must move beyond the simplistic narratives of either "South-South" collaboration or "neo-imperial" expansion to look at the real politics of engagement. This affects how interventions are framed, and by whom. It influences what technologies are chosen, which investments are funded, and who gets trained. Clearly there are both political and economic drivers at the heart of these choices, but these are not uniform or uncontested. The papers in this issue offer an insight into the early negotiations around a range of themes in African agricultural development; but the engagements of both Brazil and China in African agriculture are going to be part of a much longer story, from which much can be learned.

NOTES

1. See: http://www.future-agricultures.org/research/cbaa.

3. See: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2015xivisitpse/2015-04/ 23/content_20521787.htm. During 2014–15, however, Western countries have begun to re-establish aid relations with Zimbabwe.

^{2.} See: http://africanidea.org/m_zenawi_aug_9_2006.pdf.

4. The miracle of the *Cerrado*, The Economist (2010), http://www. economist.com/node/16886442. Also, Mueller and Mueller (2014) and Bacha and Vinicios de Carvalho (2014).

5. Although the definition of *Buen Vivr* is under dispute in the region.

6. A collaborative research initiative involving other international development actors, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the UK Department for International Development, the World Bank and the UN agricultural sister organisations, IFAD and FAO. http://www.mktplace.org/site/.

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7. See: http://www.economist.com/news/americas/21637436-mistakesdilma-rousseff-made-during-her-first-presidential-term-mean-her-secondwill-be.

8. See: http://www.bndes.gov.br/SiteBNDES/bndes/bndes_en/Navega-cao_Suplementar/Menu_Filiais/johannesburg_office.html.

9. See, for example, two UK Department for International Development programmes on Brazil (http://www.brazil4africa.org/) and China (http:// www.esrc.ac.uk/funding-and-guidance/funding-opportunities/29138/dfidesrc-china-and-africa-research-programme.aspx) premised on the sharing of "models" of development, especially with Africa.

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