ТЕМАТИЧЕСКОЕ ДОСЬЕ

Восточная Азия: возвышение КНР, сотрудничество в целях развития, партнерство с РФ

ВОСТОЧНО-АЗИАТСКАЯ ПАРАДИГМА МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ ПОМОЩИ

TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AS INTER-CULTURAL DIALOGUE: ODA AND JAPAN'S EXPERIENCE OF "SELF-HELP"*

TAKAHASHI Motoki

Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies, Kobe University 6578501, 1-1 Rokkodai-cho, Nada-ku, Hyogo, Japan

This paper aims to clarify uniqueness, strengths, and weaknesses of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA). Western countries have been criticized of its tendency to impose their own values through provision of ODA, ignoring differences in cultural contexts and failing to build interactive relationship. The origin of this tendency can be found in fundamental shortcoming of the Western intellectual approach, which Habermas critically described as *monologue*. Japan's ODA appears to be an alternative since the country has been emphasizing respect for recipient countries' own initiative and heralded the idea of "Support for Self-help". Yet, Japan's ODA is not rooted in a deep understanding of cultural aspects of development, which would enable the donor country to have interactive *dialogue* with recipient countries. Japan's unique approach reflects historical relations with Asian recipient countries in which Japan has shared interests with others. Japan's ODA is not value-based as Western donors but interest-based, and the country has likewise lacked imagination of differences in cultural contexts. Emerging donors, while claiming that they are not imposing values, can risk the failure same with Japan. It is recommended that recipient countries themselves express their own cultural uniqueness so that development cooperation could be a process of creative inter-cultural dialogue.

Key words: culture, developing countries, Official Development Assistance, Support for Self-help, monologue and dialogue.

^{*} Philosophical concept of this paper is based upon my previous paper "From Monologue to Dialogue: Building the Public Sphere" (in Japanese). The original English version of this present paper was presented at International Forum on International Development Cooperation in the Field of Culture (Theme: Expanding International Development Cooperation in the Field of Culture for Sustainable Development) hosted by Korean National Commission for UNESCO on October 29, 2014. I am most grateful for the Commission's generosity to allow me to publish this revised version of the paper in Journal of International Relations. Also, I hereby express a deepest gratitude to Ms. IRITANI Satoko for supporting me in producing this paper.

Introduction

Culture influences what a human being consumes and produces and thus how markets function in the everyday reality of society. Culture influences what one favors as well as what one fears, and thus how the power is formed to regulate people's behavior. Culture influences who are included in a group, thus how 'communities' are formed, and finally whom one helps each other. Overall, culture is essentially and multi-dimensionally important for the formation and existence of society as a historical construct. Therefore, development, as human and social transformation would not be sustainable without cultural foundation and, in some cases, cultural changes [11].

International development cooperation including Official Development Assistance (ODA) is not merely a transfer of physical resources. Instead, international development cooperation should be regarded as a channel through which knowledge is exchanged between societies and thus different cultures mutually encounter, sometimes clash, and hopefully interface and benefit.

As a matter of fact, development cooperation has often been used as a means to render partner countries or recipients (hereafter recipients) assimilate what development partners or donors (hereafter donors) desire them to do so. It often involves economic, political, and social values which donors desire to transplant. Needless to say, these values are intertwined with culture in ways that vary from country to country [11]. It appears that Western ODA donors tend to try to disseminate their own values. It has been said that in doing so, they ignore the differences found in cultural contexts, and thereby effectively 'impose' their own particular understanding of culture-development relations on recipients. The origin of this type of ODA approach can be found in the thinking and communication embedded in Western modernity that cannot imagine what 'others' value, and fails to build an interactive relationship through *dialogue*. Their style of communication could be regarded as being close to *a monologue* which Habermas criticized as a fundamental shortcoming of the Western intellectual approach [2].

In Africa and elsewhere, Japan is recognized as an exceptional ODA donor that does not 'impose' its own culture and values. In this sense, one may say that Japan is, to some extent, a forerunner that emphasizes respect for the recipients' initiative, or *owner-ship*. This may be, in part, due to Japan's unique historical background and such reserved attitude, which has, over time, of Japan had over time changed into a more definite conception, crystallized into an idea of "Support for Self-help", which means respect for the ODA recipients' own initiatives.

In this article, we first attempt to explore the historical and intellectual background which has led some developed countries to ignore the cultural differences of developing countries, by looking at the history of modern development. Secondly, we clarify how the historical background of development has caused the 'imposition' of particular values and conceptions on culture-development relationships through development cooperation practices. Thirdly, the background and main features of Japan's unique approach, based on practical interests rather than ideal values to guide development cooperation are examined. These are symbolized by the idea of "Self-help Support", and are clarified by concrete examples of development cooperation. Finally, I would like to indicate tasks which partners of global development should overcome to realize development cooperation as an inter-cultural dialogue.

Genesis of Development and Culture

One may say that the history of development started with that of the humankind. Our ancestors invented complex tools, discovered fire, and began agricultural cultivation. People soon started to build social structure partly to ensure the survival of as many members as possible against the inevitable onslaught of nature. These historical processes unfolded over time with concomitant cultural changes.

Society has transformed into its present state, where complex systems of mass production and mass consumption have become indispensable factors of social life, for industrialized countries and others. Human rights, especially the right to life, are increasingly recognized as fundamental elements of human dignity around the world, though its global guarantee is yet to be effectively achieved.

Progress, as mentioned above, however, has never been continuous or steady over the course of human history. It is only recently that humans have started to attempt to make this progress *consciously* and *socially*. There had been no deliberate efforts to achieve society's holistic development, until the beginning of modern time.

Hegel heralded 'the end of history' in the West, meaning that what the modern West had achieved in terms of development was a manifestation of World Spirit (Weltgeist), the ultimate goal of humankind's progress [3. P. 121]. Here, he could be perhaps held responsible for introducing Western-supremacism or Euro-centrism into the concept of development. It is certain that Hegel argued that all human beings are entitled to natural freedom which development of world history would bring about. Nevertheless, regarding Asia's lack of freedoms, he ranked it lower, or more backward, than the modern West, despite recognizing its long history of civilization [3. P. 33]. Furthermore, Hegel mentioned that Africa's "condition is capable of no development or culture", and Africa "is no historical part of the World" [3. P. 117]. In Hegel's eye, Africa was not part of the world's history, since Africans were not conscious of the existence of God and were thus denied a human's natural freedom which led to an acceptance of slavery. This perception was an example of the Western thinkers' horrendous lack of imagination about 'others' of different cultures [7]. Such a lack, became the embryo of modern racism, a derivative of Euro-centrism. Also, this lack of imagination in understanding Africa was said to have been passed on to the late twentieth century, by such leading intellectuals as Arendt, who is known as a fundamental critic of modern racism [1].

In the wave of development, partly due to the naïve fervor of post-Hegelian Westerners to 'save', 'enlighten', or 'civilize' the poor others, spread all over the world, Western-supremacism was likewise extended. It was shared by not only Westerners but also non-Westerners exposed to the so-called "Western Impact" with serious implications. From the 19th century to the 20th century, Westernization was synonymous with modernization and progress.

Leading up to the 21st century, Western-supremacism, connected with development, has been radically challenged both inside and outside the West. Inside, there has been sincere self-reflection, partly prompted by cultural relativism. Outside, it was shaken by the rise of nationalism. ODA was a response by Western powers to the rise. At the same time, ODA is a representation of the post-Hegelian fervor in saving others. While

Western-supremacism seems to have become a relic of the past, the said lack of empathy toward others, still influences ODA practices causing the 'imposition' of a particular understanding of cultural values on developing countries. Development cooperation often involves 'false paradigms' of development invented by experts from developed countries [10], which in some cases are even supported by their counterparts in developing countries.

To overcome the problems associated with ODA and thereby to materialize culturally more appropriate and enriching development cooperation, we have to clarify why the lack of imagination over affairs in developing countries persists, even though Western-supremacism has, to some extent, been weakened.

Development Ownership and Monologue

Present day development cooperation between a sovereign country or an international organization and others was non-existent in the era of Hegel. Yet, development cooperation, including ODA, is surely a successor of the post-Hegelian fervor to spread development, as mentioned above. Targets of development cooperation now concentrate mainly on poor people who live in comparatively low-income countries and Africa, which was excluded by Hegel from world history, but has become a major recipient of development cooperation. Provision of development cooperation is now undertaken by citizens from many countries, and is not limited to the West. Those engaged in contemporary development cooperation have been struggling to overcome Hegelian Eurocentrism, not to mention racism itself, and are now associated with respect for national determination of people's initiatives and cultural relativism.

On the other hand, *aid dependency*, derived from contemporary development cooperation has become a new problem. Development cooperation, provided to support infant and thus weak states, has now been blamed for perpetuating their weakness. However, attempts are being made to promote development *ownership* on the side of developing countries. The donor's attempts to strengthen the tenuous ownership of recipient countries, however, has sometimes met with very feeble responses from the latter. This asymmetry, as well as application false paradigms, is very likely evidence of the still strong influence of Hegelian thought over development as discussed above.

We herewith have to reconsider the background of increasing calls for ownership of aid-recipient countries. Aid dependency has been a long-standing issue of development cooperation, but it is only fairly recently that 'ownership' has become a key concept. The rising attention toward ownership apparently came about due to the revealed ineffectiveness of conditionality-based development cooperation, especially the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). SAP, initiated in the early 1980s, was a comprehensive policy package proposed the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in return for lending large amounts of money.

SAP was not fine-tuned to each country but rather uniformly applied and painful. Yet recipients were not effectively allowed to refuse conditionalities prescribed by the World Bank and IMF at the risk of suspension of substantial amounts of aid money by the two institutions. Other donors, including bilateral ones, followed suit which con-

tributed to more pressure on recipients to accept the attached conditions. Suspension of aid sometimes had destructive impacts on the economies of aid-dependent countries, and caused political destabilization leading to regime change. SAPs partially succeeded in promoting economic liberalization and the introduction of fiscal discipline, but had no real tangible effects on the recovery of economic growth or the overall betterment of the people's welfare. African countries found it especially difficult to fully recover from economic stagnation until the beginning of the 21st century. Furthermore, SAPs were criticized for their pernicious effects on social development in the indebted countries in the 1980s.

Considering the Western donors' motivation to solicit support from low-income countries at the height of the Cold-War, it is somewhat puzzling why SAPs were forcibly implemented, risking destabilization of friendly governments in recipient countries. There would certainly be some managerial necessity since the two international financial institutions had to handle debt crises in developing countries, by reducing the extent of state intervention. However, considering the strained geopolitical situation in and around 1980, reasons only based on debt management cannot explain the 'imposition' of SAP.

The World Bank (1994; 1998) argued that failures of SAP in Africa were due to lack of recipient governments' ownership, rather than the contents of the program itself [12; 13]. In their review, intellectual concerns about why recipients could not formulate firm commitments in SAP and why recipient societies were not whole-heartedly oriented towards market-based economies were absent. Overall, there were lack of intellectual interest in the recipient countries' historical and socio-cultural backgrounds and neglect of the wisdom naturally formulated inside recipient societies. Their perception of society was a construct limited to the application of theories developed in one single academic discipline: Neo-classical economics. It is not difficult to infer the existence of the dogmatism behind their intellectual attitude.

In an attempt to understand the implications and origins of the inferred dogmatism, we must reexamine one of the deep-seated problems within social scientific knowledge inherent from the era of Hegel which was indicated by Habermas. Habermas, a leading contemporary philosopher, explored the intellectual origin of the ironic failure to respect the freedom of Marxists who sought the holistic liberation of humankind. He maintained that the history of modern intellectual development, which started from Hegel, was a process of repeated self-questioning (an accumulation of monologues) by a society sharing the same spirit. Hegel elaborated on development as follows: an obstacle against development of spirit is spirit itself; spirit has to overcome itself; development of spirit is a process of continuous and rigorous struggle against itself. This Hegelian monologue views their own philosophy, which was built through self-questioning of their own past, as absolute, the "Providence of God." Hegelian Euro-centrism would have originated from the presumption that the agent of absolute self-questioning is the Western world itself. Though Marxism tends to be against racism and Western supremacism, Habermas believed that Hegelian monologue was also inherent in Marxism. In Marxist theory, rather than being the "Providence of God," the whole of humankind, especially the proletariat class, continuously questions itself and develops its own law of development of history. In other words, the law of development history is continuously self-questioned and can only be overcome by itself. We find here the origin of the horrendous ignorance of *others*. According to Habermas, in order to avoid logic absolutizing itself, we have to reconsider how we cognize *meaning* of a matter. Meaning is generated in a dialogical process to achieve a sharing of meaning between different parties [2]. Shared meaning of a matter is the foundation of a society with a particular culture. Therefore, without dialogue, there would be no society or no common culture.

Marxism, generally neglected dialogue as elaborated above, and absolutized its own logic. This is not only a problem of Marxism. It may be a widely shared feature of Western modernity as a whole. At least, all of Hegel's successors, who attempt to contribute to modern development through application of logic formulated only through self-questioning, without dialogue, risk complication with this problem. SAP and the Neo-liberalist development way of thinking behind it, are no exception.

Neo-liberal developmentalists intervened in domestic economic affairs of sovereign recipient nations through SAP conditionalities, and drove governments in those nations to play paradoxically extensive roles in market-oriented policy reforms. This paradox can be explained by their simple belief that efficient economic market mechanisms potentially exist ubiquitously all around the world. This belief seems to be a typical product of the modern monologue in development thinking, which ignores the social and historical differences and cultural premises of others, to make market mechanisms function as theoretically expected.

Such monologue in development seems to have been extensively and persistently reproduced even after recognition of the need to respect ownership on the part of recipients began sprouting at the beginning of the 1990s. ODA donors started to demand predefined political conditionalities such as institutionalization of multiparty competition. This was a direct outcome of the end of the Cold War due to the weakened bargaining power of recipient countries vis-à-vis donors.

Japan's ODA: An Alternative to Aid as Monologue?

In the context of our discussion of culture and development cooperation, relevant characteristics of Japan's ODA, until recently, could be summarized by the following interlinking points: first, a relative concentration on the economic sectors; second, an emphasis on *technical* aspects rather than policies; third, an adoption of the project approach instead of program; fourth, a relatively conservative stance vis-à-vis application of predefined policies or political conditionalities. While one should note that although there have been remarkable changes in the thoughts and approaches of Japan's ODA, until recently, they had been conventionally thought of as major characteristics of ODA resulting from Japan's historical circumstances.

The history leading up to and after Japan's disastrous defeat in the Second World War in 1945 with its ultra-nationalism being politically crushed, left Japan open to the possibility that the superiority of its own culture and values may be suspect. Japan started its ODA in tandem with war reparations and compensations in the 1950s. Nevertheless,

during the decades following the War, antipathy and suspicion of Japan prevailed widely in Asia as seen in the anti-Japan riots in Southeast Asia in 1974. Under these circumstances, where Japan owed ethical debts to ODA recipients, demanding political conditions through ODA was diplomatically out of the question, especially in regard to Asian recipients [9].

The Japanese government rather opted to seek to share *interests* with recipients rather than to attempt to spread its own *values* through ODA. In 1978, then Prime Minister FUKUDA Takeo expressed regret over the past, a commitment to pacifist constitutional principles, and a will to contribute to the industrialization of Asia. Mr. Fukuda made a series of visits to Southeast Asian countries in the year and presented, in a speech about new Asian diplomacy in Manila, what was to be remembered as the Fukuda doctrine. The new Asian diplomacy expressed in the doctrine is widely viewed as contributing to improvement of relations with Southeast Asia afterwards. From then on, receiving approval from Asian countries, Japan's ODA has been aimed at achieving economic betterment of at least a part of recipient societies. The said Japanese post-War choice of sharing interests rather than values might be related to the country's traditional pragmatist culture which differentiated it from Western orientation for universal idealism. Deep exploration of this point is academically interesting but far out of the scope of this paper.

Under these circumstances, Japan logically opted for a relative concentration of its ODA in economic sectors such as industrial infrastructure and production in both industry and agriculture. Also, Japan emphasized, in its implementation, technical assistance such as transfer of scientific technology and de-emphasized its involvement in policy and socio-cultural dimensions. Japan also adopted the project approach in its implementation of ODA rather than programs, to specify scopes and purposes of its aid activities as much as possible. These choices can be understood as attempts to avoid its ODA being perceived as political intervention.

As a member of the G7 and an important partner with US and the Bretton Woods institutions, Japan extensively assisted SAP by filling the financial gaps of low-income countries. Japan, however, distanced itself from SAP's simplicity, by making partial criticisms of the single-minded seeking of small government and the ignoring of recipients' nationalist desires for self-reliance [6]. Japan has never taken the lead in setting or demanding political conditionalities (or sanctioning against failures to do so), except in a very few cases related to pacifist disciplines. Sanctions on the basis of anti-military principles of the ODA charter, such as stoppage of ODA protesting China's nuclear test in 1995 was a notable example of the exceptions. In almost all other cases, Japan has followed the suit of other bilateral donors' collective actions to use ODA suspension as means to induce recipients to observe conditionalities.

In the beginning of the 1990s, having observed a relatively successful industrialization and betterment of people's livelihoods in Asia, Japan changed its ODA thinking perhaps more positively, symbolized by the term "Support for Self-help" stipulated in the ODA charter in 1992. Japanese started to think that respect for the recipients' ownership of development, or "Support for Self-help" could bring about better results.

Some believed that such thinking had been a tacit philosophy consistently influencing Japanese thoughts and practices in ODA since its beginnings. The very timing of this change, in the early 1990s, had an implied criticism of the Western 'imposition' of conditionalities. Western donors' reflection on SAP and recognition of the importance of ownership and Japan's new emphasis on "Support for Self-help" were clearly incorporated in the OECD-DAC's epoch-making policy document formulated in response to the new global situation after the Cold War [5].

By the 1990s, Japan started to extend its ODA coverage to social sectors such as education and health. Having experienced the provision of ODA for a half century, having spread ODA sectorally, and having extended ODA to diverse developing countries from Asia, to Africa, and on to Latin America, Japanese aid administration developed more competence and professionalism in designing and implementing its ODA. Over time, partly in response to global commitments to poverty reduction, officials and experts became more concerned about developmental effectiveness as well as the prevention of negative impacts on human, social, and environmental dimensions. There has been a quest for more holistic development outcomes adopting more programoriented approaches, one of latest of which was the new proposal by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to emphasize policy dialogues with recipient countries through comprehensive program-based ODA (MOFA 2010) [4].

Lately, Japan has made substantial efforts to promote holistic village development programs in remote areas of Africa, which is a favored form of Japanese collective Self-help. The Japanese assumption is that rural African communities can be collectively mobilized in participatory activities of production improvement. This image of improvement for an African village was influenced by Japan's own experience with its rural culture. In many remote areas in Africa, however, Japanese-like collective action for productions is not common. African households are often engaged in production for themselves, even though they strongly support each other in critical times. Consequently, the Japanese concept of collective self-help often conflicts with the African farmers' propensity to work individually [8]. It might be another challenge for Japan to incorporate a realistic understanding of rural African communities into its activities, so that they can be as effective as possible.

Overall, while Japan has been trying to get out of its unique monologue as a result of its post-War historical circumstances, there are still a number of challenges for Japan to build positive relationships with its ODA recipients on the basis of development dialogue. Understanding that an awareness of the different cultural aspects of recipient societies is necessary to achieve effective development, would be one of keys.

Conclusion

Development cooperation could be a channel of dialogue where different cultures interact and interface to formulate new shared cultures which could enrich the process of development. In other words, development cooperation between different countries could be a process of creative inter-cultural dialogue. However, development cooperation on the basis of either Western value-based monologue or Japan's conventional interest-

based approach has not been able to capitalize on these large potentials of international development cooperation. It is certain that there have been remarkable reform efforts to respect ownership of recipients or support "self-help" in a past few decades by traditional ODA donors. Also, while the advent of emerging donors has worried traditional donors, this offers alternatives to recipient countries. The new donors do not attach value-based conditions to their development assistance and this may enable recipients to strengthen ownership. Yet emerging donors risk falling into monologues, the same as Japan had in the past, if they seek to base their development assistance solely on an interest-based approach, ignoring cultural differences and inter-cultural exchanges. In sum, both traditional and emerging donors should engage in creative inter-cultural dialogue, which respects the importance of culture and pursues exchanges between different cultures on the basis of shared concerns about development.

Last but not least, you know yourself best. Recipients, such as low-income African countries, need to stand up for their own cultural identity and express their own cultural uniqueness, through development dialogue in which they could convince people from different cultural backgrounds. Such recipients' commitments in dialogue beyond cultural boundaries should, above all, be an essential factor for development cooperation as inter-cultural dialogue.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arendt H. 1986. Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft. Antisemitismus, Imperialismus, totale Herrschaft. München-Zürich: Piper.
- [2] Habermas J. 1985. Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- [3] Hegel G.W.F. 1985. Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy (translated by T.M. Knox and A.V. Miller). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- [4] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2010. Enhancing Enlightened National Interest: Living in Harmony with the World and Promoting Peace and Prosperity (ODA Review Final Report).
- [5] Development Assistance Committee, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) 1996 "Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation".
- [6] Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan (OECF) 1993. "Issues Related to the World Bank's Approach to Structural Adjustment: Proposal from a Major Partner", OECF Occasional Paper No. 1.
- [7] Said E.W. 1978. Orientalism. New York: Vintage Books.
- [8] Shishito Ryuji. "How African peasants are perceived in rural development?: A Case of Participatory Project in Zambia". mimeo.
- [9] Takahashi Motoki. 2010. "The Ambiguous Japan: Aid Experience and the Notion of self-help" in Howard P. Lehman ed. Japan and Africa: ODA and Globalization in the 21st Century. Routledge, Abingdon: Routledge, p.39-70.
- [10] Todaro M. P. and Smith S.C. 2011. Economic Development (11th edition) Prentice Hall.
- [11] United Nations Education and Science Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2013. "The Hangzhou Declaration: Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies".
- [12] The World Bank 1994. Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results, and the Road Ahead. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [13] The World Bank 1998 Assessing Aid: What works, What doesn't, and Why. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО В ЦЕЛЯХ РАЗВИТИЯ КАК МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНЫЙ ДИАЛОГ И ЯПОНСКИЙ ОПЫТ «САМОПОМОЩИ»

Такахаши Мотоки

Высшая школа исследований международного сотрудничества, Университет Кобе 6578501. 1-1 Роккодай-чо. Нада-кею, Хёго. Япония

При написании этой статьи автор стремился показать уникальность и выявить сильные и слабые стороны японской официальной помощи в целях развития (ОПР). Западные страны неоднократно подвергались критике за свою склонность навязывать собственные ценности путем предоставления ОПР, игнорируя различия в культурном контексте и проявляя неспособность выстроить интерактивные отношения. Истоки этой тенденции можно найти в фундаментальном недостатке западного интеллектуального подхода, который Хабермас критически описал как монолог. Японская ОПР представляется альтернативой, с тех пор как страна стала уделять особое внимание инициативе стран — реципиентов помощи и провозгласила идею о «Поддержке самопомощи». Тем не менее японская ОПР пока не коренится в глубоком понимании культурных аспектов развития, что позволило бы стране-донору выстроить интерактивный диалог со странами-получателями. Уникальный подход Японии отражает исторические отношения с азиатскими странами — реципиентами помощи, где у Японии были общие интересы с другими государствами. ОПР Японии не базируется на ценностях, как у западных доноров, а основана на интересах, но стране также не хватает четкого представления о различиях в культурном контексте. Новые доноры, заявляя, что они не опираются на ценностные ориентиры, рискуют в итоге повторить ошибку Японии. Странам — реципиентам помощи рекомендуется выражать свою культурную самобытность для того, чтобы сотрудничество в целях развития превратилось в процесс творческого межкультурного диалога.

Ключевые слова: культура, развивающиеся страны, официальная помощь в целях развития, поддержка самопомощи, монолог и диалог.