The Construction of 'participation' in the China-development Work

By

Tsang Yuk-lan

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of (Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy)

February 2004

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it reproduces no material previously published or written nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

Tsang Yuk-lan

Abstract of thesis titled 'The Construction of "Participation" in the China-development Work' submitted by Tsang Yuk-lan for the degree of Master of Philosophy at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in February 2004.

This study is about the operation of the discourse of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in the China-development field, particularly how domestic development organizations encounter and appropriate this discourse. The study employs an actor-oriented approach. This approach believes that people participate in social change should not be considered as passive subjects of the economic, social or institutional structures, but rather as agents whose strategies and interactions shape the outcome of development. Therefore, how domestic development organizations act carry analytical significance that may be overlooked by other approaches. In this light, political conflicts at the local level and the interactions of domestic and international development organizations deserve attention, particularly how they affect the way poor people decide and act in development processes.

Focusing on PRA in my study, I find that current development discourse that promotes civil society has often drawn on the idea of participatory development.

For international organizations that adopt a neo-liberal stance such as the World Bank, the introduction of market forces would automatically and ultimately lead to the emergence of civil society. Based on this assumption which of the links between economic and political liberalization, the expansion of the market would suffice to create the burgeoning of intermediate organizations. It is believed that an active civil society made up of these intermediate organizations that would act as a counter-balance to central political power. In fact, with the introduction of market reforms, the role of the Chinese government has changed in economic and social affairs; but it does not mean that its power has shrunk. Our study found that domestic development organizations may not be autonomous in their relationship with the state. The top-down nature of 'participation' revealed in the relationship of the state and the domestic development organizations suggest that the numerical growth of domestic development organizations would not be a relevant indicator in assessing the nature of civil society in China. On the contrary, there are tensions between the Chinese government, domestic development organization and international organizations at different levels. In my research, I found that the sensitivity of domestic development organizations towards political issues may explain why they present development programs and strategies as neutral, professional, thus covering up the political conflicts that it entails.

Acknowledgements

I lift up my eyes to the hills- where does my help come form? My help comes from the LORD, the Mader of heaven and earth.

<div align="right">(PSALMS 121:1-2)</div>

I would like to thank my supervisors Dr. Shae Wan Chaw and Dr. Ku Hok Bun to comment on this thesis.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Luk Tak Chuen first encouraged my interest in PRA. My thanks also go to Carl, my schoolmate, whose company in the final stage of writing up this thesis, make it less unbearable.

In China-development field, I owe my deepest debt of gratitude to the Miao villagers and to domestic development participants. I am particularly grateful for Han Mei who gave me her warm assistance and the health projects' staffs gave me their warm cooperation.

The members of my family deserve special tribute. They gave me their limitless patience and gave me a chance to do on my own way.

Abbreviations

ACFTU   (All-China Federation of Trade Unions)

ACWF   (All-China Women's Federation)

CCP   (The Chinese Communist Party)

G-NGOs   (Government-Non Government Organizations)

IMF   (United Nations Development Program)

LGPR   (The Leading Group for Poverty Reduction)

NGO   (Non-Governmental Organizations)

OECD   (The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development)

PRA   (Participatory Rural Appraisal)

UNCED   (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development)

UNDP   (United Nations Development Program)

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

I. Introduction

This study set out to explore the discourse of Participatory Rural Appraisal

(PRA) that has emerged in 1990s in China. The discussion attempted to

demonstrate the significance of an empirical research with a conceptual focus on

local actors actively participating in the development encounter. It means that the

thesis examines the intersecting as well as conflicting discursive practices of PRA

operated by multiple players at the international, national, and local levels of

development work in China. In brief, the thesis places itself in the theoretical

context of post-developmentalism in which the discourses and practices of PRA

should be deconstructed. It move the direction by complementing the

post-structural approach through the actor approach in examining how the agency

of the state, 'NGO' and development workers accommodate, negotiate, appropriate

or transforms the interpretation and practices of the discourses of participatory

development promoted by international organizations. This chapter starts with my

research objectives and research questions, and then concludes with a brief outline

1

of the rest of the chapters in this research.

II. Research objectives and research questions

The objectives of this research are as follow:

1). To address the discourse of 'participatory development' that is constructed by

the international organizations and the Chinese government in China.

a. To retrace the discourse of 'participatory development' in China.

b. To examine how the legitimacy of the knowledge of PRA i.e. capability building,

partnership and sustainability, is constructed by international organizations.

c. To explore how the Chinese government understands and re-presents the

discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics'.

2) To see how domestic development organizations[1] encounter and appropriate the

discourse of 'participatory development' in China.

---

[1] It is usually the case that local communities are served by domestic organizations from other cities or other parts of China (Chapter six below).

In my study, I take the view that the economic reform since Deng's China, a historical moment in Contemporary China, opens up a discursive space for the emergence of participatory development in 1990s. The study will focus on how domestic development organizations actively respond to the new era and strategically exploit the opportunities open up by ongoing changes of the PRA field.

Based on the above analyses, some research questions would be asked:

-How do the international organizations such as the World Bank translate PRA, a model of professional tools for participatory development into development policies and programs?

-What are the roles that the Chinese governments (central and local) play when incorporate the international organizations' policies into national policies and local programmes and projects?

-How do domestic development workers[2] encounter these policies in their specific political economic context? In other words, what strategies domestic development participants employ to surf through the sea of development discourses to purse their objectives?

---

[2] Domestic development workers mean that workers from those domestic development organizations. They are in fact the people from outside the project sites.

In order to answer these questions, I need to retrace how the discourse of PRA

becomes prominent in China-development field. Here, I draw on post-structural

analysis as one of the guiding framework to tackle the above issues, and the

questions stated above will also be pursued from an actor-oriented perspective. The

following section will present a portrait of the research background.

III. Research Background

In the 1980s, development discussions began with why thirty years of

conventional and top-down forms of development were not working, which was

amounting to a 'reversal of development'. Some scholars strongly criticized global

power is concentrated only in the West[3] after the end of the Cold War. The West is

less concerned with what happens in the non-West, especially in Latin America.

Therefore, some scholars tried to suggest that 'Third world' people must take over

their own development. For example, some researchers highlighted the

---

[3] In the academic field, post-structuralists pay closer attention to the development of the discourse through practice. Development is a discourse invented in the West which produces or constructs the non-West, and regards the people and communities in Asia, or Latin America as 'under-developed' (Chapter two below). In the other words, the real power of the west is not located in its economic muscle and technological might, rather, it resides in its power to define. The West defines what is, for example, progress and science. The non-West as 'developing societies' and 'Third World' are simply to be found out of existence. Thus, to hint an imbalance power, we have to deconstruct the definition of 'the West', 'the South', 'First World', 'Third World' and etc.

marginalization of women in the development process. Some even criticized the state-centered approach and argued that development should generate more self-sufficiency. 'Participatory development' has become increasingly popular in the 1980s when major donors and development organizations began to adopt participatory research and planning methods. Noticeably, the work of Robert Chambers (1983) advocates that all development agencies should promote grassroots developments and adopt Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to participatory development. 'Participation' here means generating more self-sufficiency rather than depends on top-down 'outsider' provision of service.

A call for 'participatory development' began in 1990s, the pressure came partly from the Arusha Conference, organized by the United Nation's Economic Commission for Africa in 1990, which called for 'popular participation and transformation'. Five hundred representatives of African grassroots organizations proposed strategies for making local people central to development through economic growth, good government, equity and popular participation. These ideas spreaded and influenced other international agencies. In 1991, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development published a policy paper (OECD) with a chapter on participatory development. Participatory development was defined as

strategies which promote 'economic services and broader popular participation in decision-making, on the orientation of government policies and programs' (OECD 1991:2). The approach also brought a response from the World Bank. The World Bank was arguing that the state should not be omnipresent and 'clients' should be involved in the production of their own services. 'The World Bank participation sourcebook' (1996), which provided a guideline on participatory methods and tools, became one of the canons of how participatory development was to be understood and practiced. PRA was installed in the operations of the World Bank. Nowadays, PRA is fashionable in the development field worldwide. In the case of China, most of the domestic development organizations would present their 'participatory development' projects that emphasized on using PRA approach to identify the local people's needs as endeavors in the meetings. It seems that a new statement about how development projects to be conducted.

Here, we must recall the conceptual discussions of 'participation development' that draw upon concepts of 'put the people first' (Chambers 1983) and state-society relations (Migdal 1988). Both the World Bank and Chambers' approach to participatory development have a similar interest in giving particular attention to civil society, participation, and the role of ordinary people in

articulating their visions of development intervention strategies. Development

seemed to gravitate around the 'balance' between state, market, and civil

organizations, each with different incentive schemes and compliance-co-operation

mechanism (de Janvry et al. 1991). In this analogy, NGO were regarded as

institutions, which could promote small-scale projects tailor-made to the needs of

the local communities in order to bring about an impact on the poverty situation in

the Third World (Chamber 1997; Edwards and Hulme, 1992).

The above discussion of civil society, participation and the role of ordinary

people would assume that there are differences in development intervention

strategies in different places. The above case of PRA, however, may have shown

that this may not be the case. Hence, it is understandable that in academics have

raised questions with regard to why development projects are so similar in so many

places? Some scholars, taking post-structuralists' views, analyze development as a

discourse invented in the 'First World', which constructs the 'reality' of the 'Third

World', inducing people and communities in Asia, or Latin America to look upon

themselves as 'under-developed' (Ferguson 1994; Escobar 1995). Thus, many

scholars have pointed out that the large multilateral and bilateral donor agencies

guide the thought and action of the states and many NGOs (non-governmental

organizations) around the globe. The above discussions were based on an analysis of the political relationships of relationships between NGOs, states and donors. In other words, underlying the politics of universality[4], the donor agencies especially in the World Bank with their financial and informational resources, inevitably dominate in the interactions with fund recipients (Howell and Pearce 2001). This analysis may allow us to understand why the term PRA is fashionable in development field worldwide. Although post-structural analysis enable us to view development as a discourse, someone criticized that it is not enough to recognize the colonizing effects of development discourse as seen in the construction of a 'Third World'. The colonizing effects not only manifest at the macro level, which can be observed by looking at how the World Bank or the states exercise their governance, but these effects may also be seen at the local level such as the process of local planning or the activities of local government (Everett 1997). In my view, post-structural analysis may provide framework to retrace the emergence of the discourse of PRA in China-development field, but we also need an analytical

---

[4] Here, I take the interpretation of Howell and Pearce on this term. For them, not only is there a tendency to assume that civil society within nation-states is homogeneous in moral purpose and values, but also that there is but one civil society in the world. Civil society is generally understood as both a universal norm and a universal fact. Moreover, with U.S. domination of civil society assistance, this universal norm and universal fact is elided with a U.S. vision of civil society with its roots in Tocquevillian ideas of self-association. The dream and the reality become confused so that donor agencies end up projecting their vision as an established and natural truth on other societies (Howell and Pearce 2001:118).

approach to understand how domestic development organizations make their decisions and how they act when encountering the development discourse.

IV. Overview of the Thesis

This thesis has been divided into eight chapters including the introduction and conclusion. The next chapter starts with a review of development theories. Recently, the new lexicon of 'participatory development' is frequently used in the propaganda materials of the World Bank or the Third World grassroots environmental and community movements. However, the concept of participation is subjected to different interpretations in different development theories. In Chapter two I will re-examine the conventional notion of development theories, and other related theoretical associated with discourse theory and populist theory to lay out the complex theoretical issues related to participatory development. And in the third chapter, I will present the research framework and methodology.

In the fourth chapter, I will set out to explore the discourse of participatory development that has emerged in 1990s in China-development field. It traced how international actors such as the World Bank and Chambers have translated PRA

into development policy and programs. In doing so, the assumptions of international organizations make about the relationships between civil society, the state and the market will be unearthed and examine how these assumptions get translated into practical efforts to strengthen PRA. In a sense, the Chinese government strategically deploys international organization's policies to serve its own politics.

So far, China-development provides a situation where international organizations created new forms of 'participatory development' discourse in relation to China. The Chinese government is politically and administratively cooperating with international organizations, and strategically modifies the nature of development projects to purse their objective. This raises the question of the relationship between the Chinese government and these international organizations. Do these international organizations over powered the Chinese state, thus leading to an endorsement of the use of PRA? Or does the implementation of PRA projects suit the interests of the Chinese government or domestic development participants? Some would argue that the World Bank and Chambers' ideas of PRA would influence the domestic development organizations and the government's policies to adopt the PRA model. Is that really the case in China? How does the Chinese

government play its game when it has to comply with international organizations' policies? This chapter will present how the Chinese Communist Party maintains its control over society. Through registration limiting domestic development organizations, and strongly intervenes in the development policies and projects, I will argue the CCP effectively maintain social control. Seen in this light, I will thus question whether the growth of domestic development organizations would be a relevant indicator in assessing the development of civil society in China. In addition, the ideas about 'participatory development' are derived from the study of international organizations such as populist Chamber's notion of PRA. What is the meaning of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' presented by the state? In this way, PRA discourse has served not only to further the political interests for international organizations, but has also created a form of identity for the practitioners in the China-development field. The chapter will conclude that PRA has become a predominant prestigious model in the mainstream development intervention.

The following chapter demonstrate that no unified view of PRA exist; rather a number of interpretations contesting for the status of orthodoxy exists at different levels with different domestic development workers making different interpretations of PRA and advocating different directions of development in

China. I will tackle this question in two ways. First I will demonstrate contestations between different domestic development workers that make different directions by their interpretation of PRA. Second I will explore the validity of the assumptions by looking closely at how people actually behave. Thus, the next chapters will consider some ideas about participation, gender and local knowledge, and then examines how these ideas get transferred or reworked by domestic development workers.

In chapter seven, I will consider some ideas about participation, gender and local knowledge, and then examine how ideas are transferred or reworked by domestic development workers. I will approach these questions here through a case study of health project to understand how domestic development workers actually behave in the local level.

In the final chapter, the major findings of the thesis will be recollected. Based on these findings, I will also come up to a conclusion that the discourse of development interventions, contrary to our initial expectations, may not operate primary at the international level, but is reworked by local actors with their own interests. At present, the Chinese government maintains its control over society. In

my view, the growing domestic development organizations are potentially

contradictory, embodying competing and conflicting interests throughout the

China-development field. If we say that the process of reform and the growth of

domestic development organizations bring about a radical reduction in central and

local state authorities, it may have simplified the complex dynamics of the power

struggle between different local and international actors. In brief, domestic

development workers present development programs and strategies as neutral and

professional, thus covering up the political conflicts that it entails. Through the

formulation of a step-by-step guide for participatory planning, PRA generates its

own form of discourse, and this discourse simultaneously constructs PRA as a

particular kind of knowledge transfer, and creates a structure of knowledge around

that object.

CHAPTER TWO

Deconstructing Development – Rethinking participatory development in China

I. Introduction

Recently, 'participatory development' has become the buzz-word in the propaganda material, promotional literature of the World Bank or the Third World grassroots environmental and community movements. The proliferation of participation concerns is a complex issue, and the idea of participation is given diverse treatment and significance in different development theories. In this chapter, I shall first review a series of development theories from the conventional accounts to the ones that incorporated post-structuralist insights. In particular, I shall try to bring out why the post-structural scholars concern the issue of knowledge in development. Challenging 'externally' imposed knowledge and policies, these scholars argue that collaborative forms of knowledge are created by these impositions, and these imposed knowledge and policies largely underpin the existing course of social development. The analysis of post-structuralist enables us to have a better understanding of

development, but it also put heavy emphasis on a one-sided concept of power

relationship when an actor faces the institutions. Here, I shall point out that actor

perspective may provide analytical tools for unearthing the local politics implicit in

participation. Hence, adopting actor perspective may allow us to explore how the

discourse of PRA has emerged in 1990s in China. Thus, I shall review PRA in the

next section.

II. Review on the development theories

1. The conventional development

An entry point for the inquiry on the nature of development as discourse is its

basic premises formulated in the 1940s. On 20 January 1949, Harry Truman set out an

international project of development in his inaugural speech as president of the United

States. An essential component of this concept was his appeal to the United States and

the world to solve the problems of the 'underdeveloped areas' of the globe. Thereafter,

underdevelopment was created. In this new era of modernization, the West use

modernization theory to explain under-development. The theory visualizes

development in terms of a progressive change that society will follow the universal

path from 'under-developed countries' towards 'developed countries' after the

modernity model of the developed (Western) World.

a) Sociological modernization theory:

Modernization theory elaborated the differences between traditional and modern societies in terms of modernity or development, with the model of modern industrial society being the unquestioned goal for all traditional or developing societies. Industrialization and urbanization are seen as the inevitable and necessary progressive routes to modernization.

Modernization theory is primarily an American idea developed by American social scientists in the period after the Second World War and reaching the height of its popularity in the mid 1960s. The theory is based in structural functionalism as developed by Talcott Parsons. Parsons offered a general theory of social action which comprised some aspects: the analysis of the fundamental logic of social action; the identification of the functional requisites of systems of action which allow the system to be maintained; then finally the idea of equilibrium is introduced as the endpoint to which all systems tend when disturbed. Parsons then used this general theory of action to analyze existing society. It was argued that the general social system comprised a set of sub-systems which could be dealt with by the various social sciences

(economics, sociology, politics and psychology). Modernization is thus the process whereby the less developed countries would shift from traditional patterns of life to become developed. This scheme was presented by the contribution of Walt Rostow (see Preston 1996). Rostow took the basic dichotomy of traditional and modern and expanded it to a five-element stage theory.[1] Rostow argued that every country had to pass through five stages in the shift from the traditional world to the modern. It not only seemed to give every country a chance of achieving development but even suggested that once begun the process was more or less automatic. The theory implies that only through material advancement could social, cultural, and political progress be achieved. This view determines the belief that capital investment is the most important ingredient in economic growth and development. The advance of poor countries is thus seen from the outset as depending on ample supplies of capital to provide for infrastructure, industrialization, and the overall modernization of society.

As well as having the capacity for economic and political influence, the developed nations also exercise hegemony in the control of the production of knowledge. The production of knowledge is one of the ways in which the West controls and even creates the Third World politically, economically, sociologically and

---

[1] All developing societies had to pass five stages: the traditional society, the pre-take-off society, take-off, the road to maturity and the mass consumption society.

culturally. Thus, development theory and modernization theory is constructed on the basis of the false polarities of 'traditional' and 'modern'. These theories were not sufficiently aware of the important of culture. Economic considerations were paramount, and in this respect dependency theorists were also no different from modernization theorists.

b) Dependency theory and world-system theory:

In the 1970s and 1980s many scholars challenged development practices. When modernization theory originated at the core of the global capitalist system, celebrating in thought of Euro-American material accomplishment, dependency theory or world-system theory reacted against its inadequacy in explaining economic backwardness in Latin America. They criticized economic models that presumed the goal of capitalist development for failing to take into account local social, cultural, and ecological factors. For instance, development theorists of dependency stressed 'the importance of considering both the historical experience of peripheral countries and the phases of their involvement within wider encompassing systems; the necessity of identifying the specific economic, political and cultural linkages of centres and peripheries; and the requirement for active state involvement in the pursuit of development' (Preston 1996:194). Thus, scholars were encouraged to view

development in the context of center-periphery relations[2] and the expansion of world

capitalism. Such as Cheryl Payer's indictment of the World Bank viewed development

as part of the expansion of global capitalism.

In brief, development was identified as a project of economic neo-colonialism.

Neo-Marxist theories stress the exploitative nature of development process, which are

due to the inherent tendency of expansion of world capitalism as it continues to open

up new markets in 'under-developed/third world societies' for surplus extraction and

capital accumulation. Although neo-Marxist challenges the notion of development,

they failed to question the social formation of development/underdevelopment of the

'Third World'; for instance, they never question whether the people wanted a change

in their society. Together with various other forms of Marxist-influenced development

thinking, the dependency theorists implicitly accepted the evolutionary model of

progress. Dependency theorists were profoundly modern in their worldview.

Dependency theory was the first major 'Third World' challenge to

Europe-centered academic discourse. It provided a much-need counter-point to

---

[2] The core-periphery relation implied a world division of labor in which the core countries took the role as industrial producers, whereas the peripheral areas were given the role as agricultural producers. Semi-peripheral status is thus an increase in the relative importance of industrial production. The rising semi-peripheries are ambitious state, more or less aggressively competing for core status (Hettne 1995:139)

modernization theory. However, dependency theory restricted its attention almost

exclusively to the economic and the political mechanisms of domination and control.

Dependency theory provided an alternative vision that accorded more closely with the

experience of 'Third World' countries. But dependency theory failed to address the

cultural dimension of domination. This was a crucial omission as cultural analysis is

central to any understanding of the relations of power and to any strategy of resistance

or dependency reversal. Diversity must be placed at the top of the agenda in

reformulating the question of development. The question of the meaning of

development is a central one.

2. Post-structuralism analysis viewed development

Since the middle 1980s, post-structural philosophy[3] has entered the field of

development studies. Some scholars begin to question the social formation of

development/under-development of the 'Third World' based on Foucault's discourse

theory. These works reflect an influence of the Marxist critiques of development,

post-structuralists choose to evaluate development in discursive terms. Post-structural

---

[3] As discussed before, Modernism represents the rational over the irrational, and that rationality is an inherent human potential, an inherent logic awaiting discovery in every mind. But Giovanni Battista Vico (1668-1744) opposed the radical rationalism of the French Philosophies in the name of the irrational for creating human nature and the irrational common senses in societies. It cannot be assumed that modern rationalism is so clearly the final, superior form of thought that everyone subjected to logical persuasion immediately succumbs to its obvious charms. The thinking has influence poststruralists to the analysis of development studies.

theory's fascination with discourse originates in its rejection of modern conceptions of truth. In modern philosophy truth resides in the exact correspondence between an externalized reality and internal mental representations of that reality ((Peet and Watts 1996:13). For Foucault (1980), each society has 'a regime of truth', with control of the 'political economy of truth' constituting part of the power of the great political and economic apparatuses: these diffuse 'truth', particular in the modern form of 'scientific discourse', through societies, in a process infused with social struggles. Here, a 'discourse' is an area of language use expressing a particular standpoint and related to a certain set of institutions. Many scholars rely on Foucault's ideas, a wider understanding in which 'discourse' is a combination of practice and the thoughts, ideas, and assumptions that shape such practice. Discourses 'are often competing, even conflicting, cultural, racial, gender, class, regional, and other differing interest, although they may uneasily coexist within relatively stable ('hegemonic') discursive formations' (Peet and Watts 1996:14).

a) Development as discourse:

In this sense, truths from the post-structural view are statements within socially produced discourses. Thus, development work as practiced by 'developed First World' countries in 'under-developed Third World' countries, is predominantly characterized by colonial relations of power that hints an imbalance power relationship. The

analytical focus of development study then falls on the specificity of the production of

discourses and discursive practice in Western society. But Young (1990) points out the

French post-structural philosophical tradition is concerned with the relation between

the universal truth claims of the Enlightenment and the universal power claims of

European colonialism. The new critical points stress on 'Enlightenment reason is a

regional logic supporting, reflecting, and justifying a history of global supremacy

rather than a universal path to absolute truth' (Peet and Watts 1996:14).

However, many scholars are increasingly using discourse analysis and have

changed to study development as a discursive field. For instance, the critique of truth

and re-emphasis on discourses of power, placed the non-West, produces a new

approach to inter-regional relation and thereby determined who has authority over

knowledge. Clearly, Said argues that the West has constructed the Orient as 'other'

and exclusive authority over its representation. 'Orientalism' is a 'mode of discourse

with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrine, even colonial

bureaucracies and colonial styles' through western eyes which enables other processes

of domination to proceed (Said 1979:2). Said claims that the Orient is not a free

subject of though or action. Various scholars challenge the premise that colonialism

was hegemonic, seeking to recover the subject of the non-West. Bhabha (1983:200)

argues that Orientalism suggests that 'power and discourse is possessed entirely by the colonizer'. For him, Colonial stereotyping of subject people is a complex and contradictory representational form. Hence, he highlights 'hybridity' as a form of resistance, which articulates colonial and native knowledge that may reverse the process of domination, because 'mimicry is at once resemblance and menace' (Bhabha 1983:127).

III. Recovering political agency/local development

Unlike Said's study of Orientalism, Escobar paid closer attention to the development of the discourse through practices. Escobar (1995) sees development discourse as the last insidious chapter of the larger history of the expansion of modern, western reason. He paid more attention to the issue that the 'Third world' is a construction, and how this construction come to be accepted as 'reality'. For example, the 'Third world' was encouraged to view development as a particular sort of economic transformation such as 'capitalist penetration', 'commodification' and 'capitalist development'. On the other hand, it presumes the dominant order of values of the West, for instance, it is preoccupied with what 'good thing' or 'bad thing' guided by the West. Escobar wants to show that this discourse results in concrete

practices of thinking and acting through which the Third World is produced. In contrast to developmentalism, Escobar (1995) argued for an analysis of how 'certain representations become dominant and shape indelibly the ways in which reality is imagined and acted upon' (Escobar 1995:5). According to Escobar, by the 1970s, the development apparatus had become hegemonic as an ideal as well as a set of practices. He argued that this apparatus came into existence roughly in the period of 1945-1955 and has not since ceased to produce new arrangements of knowledge and power, new practices, theories, strategies and so on. Development is a discourse invented in the First World which produces, constructs or maps the Third World, and regards the people and communities in Asia, or Latin America as 'under-developed'. From this perspective, development is anchored in the western economy, understood as part of western modernity, a form of knowledge and rationality. Ferguson also provides an insightful discussion of how the Thaba-Tseka Development Project[4] was altered and legitimate its interventions and manipulated by local actors, especially the provincial bureaucrats. His argument is that the World Bank represented Lesotho as 'underdeveloped' by suppressing the role that the local actors played in the process. As he said, '"Development" discourse in the period under review made no reference to local politics in Lesotho, or to the fact the ruling government was unpopular and

---

[4] This is a livestock/range management project in Lesotho for Ferguson studying development discourse.

unelected. This was not something which is unknown to the "development" writer; it was however something that was necessarily left unspoken in a World Bank Report' (Ferguson 1994:68).

Ferguson believes that international donors seek to depoliticize the nature and consequences of their projects. The process of intervention simultaneously bolsters bureaucratic state power. Post-structuralist Arturo Escobar (1994) and James Ferguson (1994) both share a view of development as a powerful discourse. They even called into question the underpinnings of the 'development apparatus', exposing how the World Bank constructs knowledge about the Third World by examining World Bank projects in Colombia and Lesotho. In sum, these two scholars' books have successfully deployed a regime of government over the Third World a space that ensures certain control over the 'subject people'.

IV. Development intervention

A recurrent theme has been the analysis of development rationality as a particular dominating product of a 'Western' ideology (exemplified in Escobar 1995), and has provided the basis for a critique of development as a discourse. The approach concerns with the imbalances of power between the parties involved in 'development',

and has tended to concentrate on the relationships between donors and recipients of international aid, on the various scales of nations, states or 'projects'. Actually, at the heart of development practice is the debate about the role of relationship between the state, market and civil society. In 1980s, some development theorists challenged the nation-state's economic and political models. Among these assumptions was the centrality of the political unit of the nation-state. The nation-state was thus assumed to play some key roles, either that of facilitating the forces that would help bring development, or fostering a national industrial capacity. But these theories could not explain the different responses and results in societies similarly suffering from poverty. Poverty and disparities between the rich and the poor continued to worsen in some countries. The state, as it had taken shape in many parts of the South, came to be seen as part of the problem to the process of development. For example, the states are lacking of accountability, authoritarianism, wasteful investment and corruption. The impasse in development thinking was not broken at this stage by any new theoretical insights, but by a set of policies informed by neoliberalism. Although dependency theory criticized the First world/ Third world relationships and the assumptions of modernization theory, it offered little practical policy advice. The result was seen to involve in theories that are shifting the practice from centralized state planning to favored market liberalism, with the withdrawal of the state.

At the beginning of the 21st century, these theories have changed towards

bringing back the state. It is believed that a decentralized state can work well with the

market, and also foster civic participation in civil society (Mohan and Stokke, 2000).

In Eastern Europe, 'civil society' represented a claim to the right of self-organization

in societies where the totalitarian state denied the very principle. Gradually, the idea

of civil society paved the way for a separation of the state from economic life and the

re-emergence of market economics. Civil society was being given to the political

sphere and democratization. However, this paves the way for a dialogue with Western

development and financial institutions seeking a new impetus to and agency in

development processes. The importance of the particular form of the state to

development is arguably less than the ability of the state to distance itself from

powerful groups in society in order to promote economic change above vested

interests (Howell and Pearce 2001). This debate marks an openness toward new

factors that might explain why societies change and how they change. In a sense, this

new approach requires the governments to reorient and reduce their role in the

economy. In other words, state intervention is only needed when one need to

guarantee a minimum living standard and to ensure that the market is properly

regulated. Within the context of these theories, the importance of NGO participation

has come to the fore. The numerous development organizations, governmental and non-governmental were called as the institutions of civil society. NGOs were regarded as institutions, which could genuinely protect interests of the poor and facilitate a people-centered development agenda in civil society. For example, NGOs request to promote small-scale practice in order to take over their own development in the Third World (Chambers 1997). The above analysis is based on the assumption that NGOs are unique to civil society organization but not the state and the market. However, many scholars began to question if NGO could function as a pure civil society actor or protect the interests of the poor. Neoliberalism aimed at dismantling even a rhetorical commitment to state provision of universal welfare, which began to introduce targeted programs implemented by nongovernmental organizations. This created unprecedented new relationships between donors and NGOs, which would have been inconceivable during the Cold War when NGOs were considered politicized voices of antistate opposition forces. With particular, as the funding from the large multilateral, bilateral donor agencies and the market capitalism shapes the structure of the state, the danger is seen as not only that of NGO incorporation into public agenda.

The above discussion illustrates that development theorists have taken the

challenge to inform development practice towards managing diversity, learning processes and relationship between the macro and micro (Schuurman 1993). This represents a change from the earlier approaches of state to current discussion of civil society in development processes. There are different historical influences in thinking about visions of how society should be organized. Both modernization and dependency theories were part of these thinking. The new meaning has emerged because new voices are being heard in the civil society debate through unprecedented levels of organization and non-Western grassroots movements. The concept of civil society legitimizes protects their right to challenge the present dynamic of global capitalist development, whether at the national or international level. Yet, civil society can also serve as a watchdog on the market, but only as long as it respects the market principle of economic organization. In a sense, this new approach requests the governments to reorient and reduce their role in the economy, which means need for some state intervention to guarantee minimum living standards and some state regulation of the market. Within the context of these approaches, the importance of NGO participation has come to the fore.

In fact, the conception of civil society in development thinking has been driven by a complex set of political forces. For example, it is perhaps unsurprising that the

enhanced emphasis within current development discourse on promoting civil society

has often drawn from ideas about the power of what the World Bank called 'ordinary

people.' Thus, one simple way to map development discourse is to see development

as means to secure key goals such as economic growth and social welfare. Here, a

post-structural view may begin with the devastating consequences of modernity, but it

less address local discourses appropriating by different local actors such as domestic

NGOs in the development process.

V. Local agency

In other words, post-structuralism analysis enables us to have a better

understanding of development, but it also heavily emphasizes on a one-sided concept

of power relationship in the process when an actor has to face the institutions. In fact,

they tend to portray 'subject people' as determined or conditioned by discourse. The

result will ignore the important role of local and national elite groups in important and

redefining 'western' development strategies. For instance, Escobar's discourse

analyzes the World Bank as an institution but he does not pin down the development

discourse on any particular set or sets of actors either in the World Bank or in the field

stations of rural Colombia. To the extent that local and national actors are visible in

Escobar's account, they are depicted as totally constrained by the World Bank, unable

to maneuver within the 'development regime'. Margaret Everett (1997) criticized that

he completely ignores the role of local and national elite group, as well as the state, in

importing and implementing foreign development strategies. Like Escobar's account,

Ferguson focus remains the World Bank as an institution and on the discourse. In

addition, for Escobar, resistance will lead to the 'unmaking' of the 'Third World' and

the opening of spaces for 'alternative production strategies'. In this view, resistance is

primary a way to construct new identities necessary for finding alternatives to the

hegemonic worldview presented by the development discourse (Escobar 1995). Yet,

Margaret Everett argue, 'resistance is also, and more importantly for local peoples,

about protecting land and houses from expropriation, and about demanding a fair

share of development benefits in the form of education and services. Neither author

discusses resistance in depth, nor does he explain how resistance is possible in light of

the ideological stranglehold that the development discourse appears to have in

poststructural accounts' (Everett 1997:5).

In brief, as Escobar urge to do, it is not enough to recognize the colonizing

effects of development discourse as the construction of a 'Third World'. Since the

colonizing effects is not only being manifested at the level of the World Bank or the

state, but also at the local level of the local planning organizations and local governments. For example, De Vireos urged us to analyze 'what "development" means to ordinary people, not only as a set of interrelated concepts, signs or rhetorics, but also as a metaphor which represents the endeavors, aspirations, frustrations of various sorts of social actors such as planners, politicians, farmers and entrepreneurs' (see Abram 1998:4). This leads others to study the conflicts between different actors at the local level with different interests.

Recently, this has come in the form of analyses that explore the complexity and multi-level nature of development processes (Long 2001). Inventions are seen not as the simple outcome of a value-free and linear planning process, but rather as the changing and negotiated manifestation of diverse and sometimes competing interests. The image of intervention as a discrete project in time and space with a clearly identifiable beginning and end is replaced with one of intervention as a 'set of social practices arising out of the interlocking of actors' strategies and intentionalities' (Long and ven der Ploeg 1989:237). The perspective is more useful to look at the relationships surrounding intervention practices as they actually take place. This involves examining the 'interface' between many different groups of actors, for example, the relationship between planners, project personnel, groups within local

communities, and so on. Hence, the actor perspective may provide a way for the study of local politics implicit in participation and hence the way 'agency' is constructed in a project. To take a case of PRA in my study, current development discourse on promoting civil society has often drawn from participatory development. For example, NGOs are assumed to promote small-scale practice in order to take over their own development in the Third World. But Long said that 'such formulations still do not escape the managerialist and interventionist under-tones inherent in participatory methods; that is, they tend to evoke the image of "more knowledgeable and powerful outsiders" helping "the powerless and less discerning local folk"' (Long 2001:186). For actor perspective, here, domestic development organizations performances have an analytical value for the understanding of political conflicts at the local level, especially the way in which these organizations affect the way poor people decide and participate in development processes. It could be said that even the stress on 'participation' and the widespread adoption of participatory research approaches, such as PRA, seldom escape such political conflicts on the local. For locating PRA discourses of domestic development organizations, let start with the literature review of PRA in the next section.

VI. Participatory Rural Appraise (PRA)

Paul Francis said, 'In the English-speaking world, perhaps the most influential writer on participatory methods has been Robert Chambers, and the method with which he is associated, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), has now begun to feature quite commonly in World Bank projects' (Cooke and Kothari 2001:75). Chambers defines PRA as: 'a growing family of approaches and methods to enable local people to share, enhance and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor and evaluate' (Chambers 1997:102). Debate surrounds the political nature of participation and what role knowledge generation plays. The intense concentration is to question the 'transfer of reality'. According to Chambers, human relationships can be seen and understood in terms of hierarchies of power and weakness, of dominance and subordination, of uppers and lowers. Local knowledge provides the key to the reversal of hierarchies of power in development planning; PRA reduces dominance and is empowering to the poorest. PRA practitioners as facilitators facilitating investigation, analysis, presentation and learning by local people themselves, so that they generate and own the outcomes, and also learn. Following this logic, PRA's methodology has built up an extensive research tools and method; including ranking, mapping and diagramming, and a number of manuals of these methods. Chambers built up an extensive research tools and method to collect and uncover information,

making connections and producing new knowledge. The assumption of knowledge is based on the undifferentiated and given the right tools to recognize and access.

At present, PRA has become prevalent in development practice, focusing on the valorization of local and non-Western knowledge, and has come to dominate in development field (Chambers 1997; Mohan 1999). But there have been numerous reviews and critiques of participatory research as a set of practices that reinscribe power relations between expert and local people. Generally, the critiques take two main forms: those that focus on the technical limitations of the approach which stress the need for a re-examination of the methodological tools such as PRA, and those that pay closer attention to the theoretical and conceptual limitations of participation and make a reflective thinking on their development project. All those involve the questions about the meanings of participation and power.

Irene Guiut and Meera Kaul Shah (1998) pay more attention to the theoretical and conceptual limitations of participation, urging to integrate gender thinking into participatory practice. Their book, *The myth of community* criticized Chambers' summary of the theoretical influences on PRA which called business management could not contribute the much-needed gender- aware perspectives on social change.

Thus, discussion of terms like community, participation and empowerment often result in conceptual and practical when used indiscriminately and out of contexts (Guiut and Shah 1998:6-13). For instance, Nelson and Wright describe empowerment as 'some can act on others to give them power or enable them to realize their own potential'. However, the book says 'if power is essentially about the "transformative capacity" of people or groups, empowerment involves increasing people's capacity to transform their lives, it is more than inviting people to partake in needs assessment or a decision-making process. Moreover, if empowerment entails redressing power imbalances by increasing the "transformative capacity" of the relatively marginalized, it takes time for people and groups to decide what they want to see changed, and why, and then to act. But many PRA practitioners described to reach real consensus in a two-week planning exercise. This begs the question of what can be expected from externally determined participatory research and planning processes when they are driven by speedy disbursement of funds' (Guiut and Shah 1998:11-12). These concerns raise some questions: How do we know which interventions or non-interventions have enabled or prevented empowerment? Can PRA practitioners say that it has been the PRA process, which has led to empowerment? Heaven Crawley suggests to distinguish between 'methodology' and 'strategy' in a process of change, because it forces an assessment of whether PRA attempts to identify and

challenge structural causes of problems, or whether it attempts merely to integrate

women into the existing system through an ameliorative process of gradual

improvement. In other words, the discussion surround whether PRA as an

empowering methodology or PRA as an empowering strategy. In sum, although this

book's scholar pays closer attention to the theoretical and conceptual limitations of

talking about participation, it does not only focus on the limitation of practice, but to

challenge participation as a loose term to describe a wide variety of practices that aim

for more inclusive development. They urge those engage in participatory

developments to understand gender differences in community and to integrate gender

thinking into participatory practice (1998:26).

To demonstrate the different strands of the critique, Billy Cooke and Uma

Kothari (2001) in their edited volume, *Participation: the new tyranny?* point out that

there is a need to address more directly how the discourse itself, not just the practice,

embodies the potential for an unjustified exercise of power. In the book, for example,

David Moss shows that project actors and the local dominant groups are not passive

facilitators of 'local knowledge' production and planning. They shape and direct these

processes by their interests. John Hailey shows that participative technologies have

become articulated by NGOs staff, donors and development agencies. He questions

the formulaic approaches to participatory decision-making promoted and even imposed by donors and other development actors. These kinds of analyses capture the dialectical relationship between local and extra-local forces and the 'local' is not isolated from broader economic and political structures. Uma Kothari moves between these critiques by analyzing of the techniques of power and the particular types of knowledge that the methodology creates and reproduces. She challenges some of the truth claims made by participatory practitioners about the validity of the data collected and raise questions about the extent to which it represents 'true' local knowledge. Definitely, this book shows how the diversity of perspectives on participation challenges the participatory development orthodoxy. The book says, 'questions such as "Whose reality counts?" (Chambers 1997)...suggest that there are contrasting versions of reality that mask the extent to which these development professionals in their applications of the ideas of participatory development, are actually still engaged in the construction of a particular reality-one that at root is amenable to, and justifies, their existence and interaction within it....This means going beyond the evident narrowness (verging on narcissism) of the existing self-acclaimed "self-critical" epistemological awareness to draw on a deeper and more wide-ranging set of analyses than has hitherto been the case. Thus, any meaningful attempt to save participatory development requires a sincere acceptance of the possibility that it should not be

saved' (Cooke and Kothari 2001:15). The book wants to 'acknowledge that the orthodoxy is not without its own reflexive self-criticism. This is, however, limited in scale and scope, and serves, perhaps unintentionally, to pre-empt more profound critique, as the contrast with the subsequent summary of the individual chapters demonstrates' (2001:2). In sum, the discussion draws on a set of analyses to use critical insights into participatory development discourse questioning the project of development itself. The authors' analyses are going beyond the meaning not only as an attempt to revise the orthodoxy view on Chamber's summary of PRA, but also the importance to conceal the power in negotiating relationships with institutions such as donors and individual agency. Yet, their issues are paid less attention to negotiation and represented the constant struggle between varying degrees by the different parties, especially in local actors as well as with outside institutions and personnel.

Overall, these two books take different perspectives and approaches into analysis participatory development. They all demonstrate different strands of the critique and analysis to challenge participatory approaches and demand at best their rethinking on questioning Chambers' summary of PRA that is called business management. But no single perspective or approach can fruitfully understand the complex situation in China-development field; the approaches represented by the preceding books pay less

attention to negotiation and are represented the constant struggle between varying degree by the different parties. For instance, in my fieldwork experience, in the discussion on Chambers' summary of PRA, some domestic development workers show appreciation. But the other group begins to make reflective thinking on PRA. These people try to pay more attention to the theoretical and technical limitations of PRA; some still believe in PRA, but some question or even deny PRA. It could be said that there are conflicting arguments between differentiated PRA participators. In additional, their strands of these books reflect the problem of neglecting the difference of different agents in encountering 'structural' imbalances of power and capital. This may share the character flaw of theory when using it to analyze China-development field.

VII. PRA in China

In China, there are very few academic books discussing about participatory development, but there have been numerous project reports reviewed on PRA. Generally, the reports and books stress the need for a re-examination of the methodological tools used such as in PRA, and those that pay closer attention to the theoretical and conceptual limitations of participation on their development project.

Due to the limitation of pages, I can only mention several reports and books to illustrate their views of participatory development.

In China's academic field, perhaps the most systematic book that discusses about participatory development was edited by Li Xiaoyun. Li's *Participatory Development: Theories-Methods-Tools*, examines the conceptual basis of participatory development, its ideological background, methods and practices. Certainly, the contributors to this volume have adopted Western philosophies of participation development, but largely in a straight-forward and uncritical review. Li noted that the discussion of development practice worldwide has moved towards an emphasis on more local development, in which 'participation' and 'empowerment' are stressed. The book presents the contributors' 'participatory development' emphasized on introducing PRA approach to identify the local people's needs. The PRA approach advocates the reduction of government intervention in the process. From this perspective, genuine development must come from 'below', instead of being enlightened from the state. The contributors endorsed the World Bank's notion of 'good governance', which means that governments should allow more room for the development of local institutions evaluation of social capital. The contributors further stressed the importance of under a socialist system with 'the Chinese characteristics' (2001:32-33).

However, they did not spell out the exact meaning of 'a socialist system with Chinese characteristics'.

Putting more focuses on the practical level, the project report *SW China PRA Reflection* discusses participatory development using a PRA approach. In the report, Andreaes Wilkes summarizes the main impact of participatory processes and the benefits as perceived by various authors on the basis of the 14 case-study report. Wilkes and his collaborators also advocated a reduction of role of government in development. One contributor to this volume mentions that 'adopting participatory methods does not mean that the government gives up responsibility, but simply that it gives autonomous operation rights to the farmers' (2000:17). Some reports suggest that 'along with the decentralization of some decision-making powers to farmers participating in micro-credit projects, government can focus more on providing services and training, ensuring organizational structures, assisting farmers and providing information' (2000:17). These statements seem to present a picture that the extent of governmental involvement in projects is too encompassing; therefore, there is a need to provide more enabling conditions to villagers so that they can contribute their ideas in the decision-making process. As Wilkes put it, 'participatory development implies significant shifts in the roles of government agencies' (2001:17).

Different from the above two books, the book *Gender and Development in China* pays more attention to gender thinking[5] in participatory practice. The authors distinguish between PRA approach and gender study. The development projects need to contribute to the much-needed gender- aware perspectives on social change[6]. The discussion on 'localization'[7] emerges in the book talking about gender study. The concern raises some questions: What is 'localization' in gender study? How do we concern with 'localization' in development practice? Are there any models of 'localization'? When discussing about the concept of 'localization', one of the authors also points out the shifting role of government. She believes that development workers need to deal with the local officials and not to break relationship with them. Then they are able to do the development projects. This process is in the name of 'localization' (2002:202). A context for discussing the practical level has beset the

---

[5] There are a lot of development studies discussing about gender in the academic field. Here the discussion is not focus on the literature review but only focus on the argument of PRA in this book.

[6] In the 1970s, women were discovered to have been 'bypassed' by development interventions. This 'discovery' resulted in the growing discussions of gender study, such as women in development (WID), has been analyzed by feminist researchers. Here the book's discussion is in related to the discussion of gender and development (GAD) study.

[7] In the academic field, many scholars translate *'bentuhua'* as 'indigenization' rather than 'localization'. It is because indigenous peoples are often characterized as 'natural people' in such a way that their way of life and their cosmologies are not premised on a relationship in which the 'human' sphere dominates and exploits the 'natural' sphere. The analysis is based on the reorganization that the problem of how to engage in a dialogue of equals with Others in a world saturated with Western hegemony have only begun to impose themselves on the concerns of Western social science. These problem are nowhere posed more sharply than when we consider the predicament of indigenous people. Yet, in the content of China- development, most domestic development workers and scholars only translate *'bentuhua'* as 'localization'. The content of 'localization' shift the focus of discussion to the issue of how to train up Chinese local staff in China-development projects, hoping that China-development is 'localized' by this process.

43

term's 'participation', 'empowerment' and 'localization' from their empirical results.

Overall, these books trumpet participatory development especially in PRA as a successful approach for a bottom-up way. The thinking is rooted in the discussion towards civil society institutions. In neo-liberal view, civil society institution can allow doing participation in development program and empowerment of target groups of poor people, and through this process, ensures the targets groups into the markets. In addition, they believe that the introduction of market forces would automatically and ultimately lead to the emergence of civil society. Based on this assumption which links between economic and political liberalization, neo-liberals claimed that the expansion of the market would suffice to create the burgeoning of intermediate organizations that would act as a counter-balance to central political power. Civil society is thus an important democratic check on the state. The debate was actually focused on the role of the state in development rather than democracy, responding to the critique of the developmental state. This led donor in the early 1990s to make new agreements to loans and technical assistance aimed at improving the democratic government of Southern countries. The idea is that a more democratic state could foster economic growth and development and allow the market to operate freely. In this context, a review of the state's role is emphasized. The state was expected to have less direct intervention on the market place. But in the political context in China, the

authors of these three books realize that the development projects must come under

the strong one-party state system. Therefore, they stress the importance of strategies

objective, namely 'localization' in the context of participatory development which

suit the political context in China. It implies that these studies are done under a

socialist system to pursue rapid industrial growth and have an influence while

enacting the state.

In fact, some would assume that socialist states have weak civil societies

because of the predominance of the party and state in social and political affairs and

the absence or weakness of domestic capital. Hence neoliberal believed by looking at

socialist economies in process of transition, we can see that the introduction of market

forces leads to the emergence of civil society. Yet, many scholars question the western

model of civil society insufficiently to address the state and society in the Chinese

context. Some argue that the conception of civil society has its limitation as a

description of current Chinese society.

Jean Chun Oi (1989), in her book *Rural China Takes Off*, points out that the

rapid economic reform is the result that prompted the role of local officials who are

playing an important role in a socialist system in the rural industrialization process. In

the rural reform process, local level officials 'act as part of the administrative apparatus, as part of the 'state', but local governments are distinct entities apart from the central state and society, with their own agendas, and increasingly with their own resource' (1989:9). After more than a decade of reform, local officials in China generate positions of political power and have gradually modified their role as agents of gaining rights to the resources. As a result, the local governments have been 'able to thrive independently in the new market economy, which is overseen by a still effective but now weakened central state'. (1989:199).

John Flower and Pamela Leonard (1996) argued that the western model of civil society fails to capture the flexible interpenetration of state and society in the Chinese context. In the study of NGO program in Sichuan province, the authors focus on the relationship between one international NGO and the state in order to demonstrate a particular pattern of cooptation and domination of societal networks. State networks are still powerful and cadres seek to maintain their control over rural society. The emergence of non-government organizations has been patterned by their unavoidable need to negotiate with the state for power, but also informed by the expression of local 'interests'. The authors mention that 'these interests are neither narrowly economic nor simply "affective", but expressions of a moral discourse created

through local identity and history memory' (1996:202). Despite the local perception

that the state is to blame for corrupting the moral order, the realms of state and society

were not conceptually separated. Instead, they were joined together in a seamless

fabric of moral interaction. Therefore, the author mentions that it must be understood

in terms of the co-optation, negotiation and historicity at the heart of this interaction.

"'Civil society'" speaks best to the Chinese condition as a metaphor describing 'a

forum or space of interaction' (1996:219). The content argues that the state-society

relation is not a zero sum.

Here, I agree with their point of views that local state is not easy to separate from

society in rural areas. For example, many officials are local people and they have

networks and kinship in the community. This evokes me to question whether the

introduction of market forces would reduce the role of the state? At the local project,

are NGOs easy to bypass the local governments in rural areas? One of the authors also

mentions that the notion of a receding state whose functions are taken over by

emerging non-government organizations is not wholly persuasive. This point is

related to the neoliberal view that the introduction of market forces would

automatically and ultimately lead to the emergence of civil society. The growth of

domestic development organizations in the expansion of the market would suffice to

create the burgeoning of intermediate organizations that would act as a counter-balance to central political power. Here, the author seems to disagree with the neo-liberal. Regarding this disagreement, other authors who discussed the role of the growth of domestic development organizations in the market reform in China may lead more light on this debate.

Jude Howell and Jenny Pearce (2001) examined the nature of the new intermediary organizations that have emerged in the reform period, which reflect on whether these organizations constitute a civil society. The authors find that different organizations are linked to the state in varying degrees; hence the room for maneuver and independence cannot be taken for granted. In a transitional economy where the state continues to play an important role in economic and social affairs and where the structure of society is undergoing change, the boundaries between the state, market, and elements of civil society are by no means clear. Here, the case shows that 'we cannot assume that autonomy from the state or antistateness necessarily translates into demands for democracy. The post-Tiananmen reordering of state-society relations points to an intermediary sphere with some autonomy from the state, which can negotiate particular interest's vis-à-vis the state and the market, provided these do not directly challenge the legitimacy of the party to rule. Hence it demonstrates the need

to think in terms of multiple civil societies existing across time and space, with diverse purposes, varying degrees of autonomy, and different political implications' (2001:145).

Oi, Flower and Leonard, as well as Howell and Pearce all tried to construct a different view of civil society from that of the neo-liberal's. The neo-liberals postulate that the market reforms would automatically lead to a decentralization of the Chinese government, as well as the growth of intermediary organizations. In fact, with the introduction of market reforms, the role of the Chinese government has changed in economic and social affairs; but it does not mean that its power has shrunk. At present, the expansion of domestic development organizations would seem to point to the rise of a civil society. Thus, I would ask if the Chinese government and domestic development organizations actively participate in development process in order to promote civil society or only to pursue its objectives? Reviewing the China–development filed, nowadays, the Chinese government especially local governments are involved in the rural industrialization process. Some local governments have been weakened by the reforms, whereas others have been strengthened. In addition, there are other actors such as domestic development workers. If we put the development books written by Chinese scholars in this political

context, can it help us to understand the meaning of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics'? Just like 'PRA with Chinese characteristics', in recent years the use of the term 'localization' has spread increasingly in China-development field. Regarding of the term 'localization' or 'PRA with Chinese characteristics', are these terms being appropriated by the state and the domestic development workers with different meanings and intentions? Can we understand the term of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' as the opening of spaces for different local actors producing development strategies in China? The international organizations attempt to imprint development policies or development programs on the development field, can the Chinese government transmute these policies and programs within the constraints imposed on them, into something quite different something that suit the Chinese context in order to adapt these policies to their own interests? Under the circumstance, do the domestic development workers strategically use the term of 'with Chinese characteristics' or 'localization' to cooperate with national policies inevitably?

VIII. Summary

To sum up, I have reviewed development theories from the conventional to the

post-structural theories in the discussion above. The concerns of the post-structural

scholars are linked to the question of development, challenging 'externally' imposed

knowledge and policies to create collaborative forms of knowledge underpinning

social development. Post-structuralist analysis enables us to have a better

understanding of the question: Why the current PRA has been widely adopted in

development aid industry and how did it appear? Yet, post-structuralist analysis has

placed too heavy emphasizes on a one-sided concept of power relationship in the

process when an actor has to face the institutions. This ignores the important role of

local and national elite groups in redefining 'western' development strategies.

Recently, this has come in the analyses of actor perspective that explore the

complexity and multi-level nature of development processes. Actor perspective may

provide for analytical tools for the local politics implicit in participation. Hence,

adopting actor perspective allows us to explore how the discourse of PRA has

emerged in 1990s in China. Here, I aim to see that the Chinese government and

domestic development organizations actively participated in development process to

pursue their objectives. In particular, the activities of domestic development

organizations provide an analytical focus for us to understand the political conflicts at the local level and beyond and how these activities of domestic development organizations affect the way poor people decide and act in development processes. The analysis based on a review of the existing approaching the China-development field as an arena[8] where domestic development organizations play out the dynamics of discourse and power in the representation of PRA.

---

[8] Arenas are spaces in which contests over issues, claims, resources, values, meanings and representations take place; that is, they are sites of struggle within and across domains (Long 2001).

CHAPTER THREE

Research framework and Methodology

I. Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion of actor perspective in studying domestic development organizations to encounter in the development process. As discussed before, actor perspective may provide analytical tools for exploring the local politics implicit in PRA projects. Hence, adopting actor perspective allows us to explore how the discourse of PRA has emerged in 1990s in China. Before that, I will first present the research justification. The final section will present the various criteria for the data collection methods related to the study.

II. Research Framework

1. **Research Justification:**

This section articulates the reasons why I focus on domestic development

organizations in this research.

a) Lacking of discourse analysis:

In the academic field, the adoption of discourse analysis and actor perspective in the field of development studies in China is relatively rare. Most local scholars studying development tend to focus on the evaluation of development projects in poverty alleviation and engage in debates about whether poverty is absolute or relative. Recently, some local scholars have a growing interest in studying the 'participation development'. They either focus on the theory and the technique of PRA, or the evaluation of the effectiveness of the development programs when using the PRA approach (Li Xiaoyun 1999). Yet, this approach seems to take for granted that development as a reality revealed, paying attention to the extent to which 'development' as practiced by 'developed First World' countries in 'under-developed Third World' countries, was a construction as the poststructural analysis or does it examine the development process in a more dynamic way. As I have mentioned before, 'development studies' represented the existing discourse and a particular dominating product of a 'western' ideology. Development Projects are altered and appropriated by local actors and national actors. Nowadays, there is a growing number of studies that employ discourse analysis, but in China, the discussion of discourse analysis is relatively limited when compared to other

countries. Hence, these experiences are valuable on understanding and make stimulation to academic discussions in China. Meanwhile, in view of the neglect of actor perspective in local studies, my study aims at presenting how domestic development workers encounter the discourse of PRA in China.

b) 'Localization' or 'With Chinese characteristics':

In recent years, the use of the term 'localization' and 'with Chinese characteristics' have spreaded increasingly in China-development field. Regarding of the term 'localization' or 'with Chinese characteristics PRA', these terms are being appropriated by the Chinese government and domestic development workers with different meanings and intentions. Hence, we can understand the term of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' as the opening of spaces for different local actors producing development strategies in China. If we put the development books written by Chinese scholars in this political context, it can help us to understand the meaning of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics'. But in academic field, it seems that development studies of China pay less attention to the discussion of discourse on 'localization' or 'with Chinese characteristics'. My study tries to illustrate the important of addressing the discourse of 'localization' or 'PRA with Chinese characteristics'.

c) The hidden issue of the Chinese government using PRA approach in a political context:

In the case of China, I observe that many domestic development workers present their 'participatory development' projects emphasized on using PRA approach to identify the local people's needs in the meetings. More importantly, in the recent years, domestic development organizations receive resources from the Chinese government, which request to use PRA approach in their poverty projects. This action symbolizes PRA as the new era. I think the emergency of the new era of PRA is in relation to the historical moment of economic reform.

In Deng's era, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been pursuing economic reform and an open-door policy. With particular the growing funds from the large multilateral and bilateral donor agencies and the state, many domestic development organizations have emerged in the reform period in China. The market reforms provide the policy changes to achieve the modernization goals. Since the early 1980s, a system of fiscal responsibility has been introduced. Each province needed to sign a contract with the central government, stipulating the amount of funds that had to be forwarded to the center annually. The major step in this direction took the form of decollectivization of agriculture, which means declining agricultural subsidies. But the declining agricultural subsidies would lead

to the financial crisis of the Chinese government, so they need to adopt 'PRA' approach to engage the poor towards market transition. It is because 'PRA' have become widely used by international organizations such as the World Bank as an approach improving the effectiveness of projects by beneficiary involvement. Actually, most of projects in domestic development organizations and national governments receive resources from the World Bank; they are requested to meet the agreement or the rules made by the World Bank. Therefore, it could be said that the sole purpose of the government using PRA is for funding. In sum, with the goals of modernization, the market reform significantly affected the context and dynamics for policy making concerning PRA. In this study, I will explore this 'hidden' issue.

The relevance of this research position was further justified considering the fact that domestic development organizations are not isolated from the wider and local transformations but interface with other actors in different and unpredicted.

2.   Actor perspective:

In development studies, there is a shift in emphasis on structures toward institutional and agency-oriented views. The emphasis on agency is that

development thinking becomes more local or regional. Another implication is the concern for differentiation and diversity. The concrete expression of the agency orientation in development thinking is the actor-oriented approach (Long 2001). The concern with diversity and agency introduces a new kind of tension: what is the relationship between the local and the global, between the internal and the external, between micro-and macro-policies? In methodology, what stands out is the trend towards complementing discourse analysis with studies that emphasis actor perspective. What is important to here is that discourses do not inhere in people; rather, we inhabit different discourses which frequently overlap or are in conflict with each other. The translation and integration our involvement in multiple discourses demands is something each individual must negotiate. Discourses are not disembodied ideas but the product of social action and interaction. The process of translation and negotiation takes place in a variety of sites in our lives. These sites constitute the contexts of culture creation. Different public cultures selectively emphasize certain ideas and forms representation while repressing others that are struggling against current hegemony (Jan Nederveen Pieterse 2001:12).

In order to come to terms with these processes, development thinking must be

underpinned by a conceptualization of culture as a dynamic and conflictual process. The process of negotiation and translation take place at a variety of sites where people struggle to have a say, to have their imaginary socially represented. Long elaborates on this useful concept of actor perspective. Actor approach assumes that people participate in social change should not be considered as passive subjects of the economic, social or institutional structures, but rather as agents whose strategies and interactions shape the outcome of development. As Long said that,

'Social actors, however, must not be depicted as simply disembodied social categories or passive recipients of intervention, but as active participants who process information and strategies in their dealings with various local actors as well as with outside institutions and personnel' (Long 2001:13).

The view of my research is that domestic development workers are conscious participants in the development encounter. Certainly, I will present the macro-institutional change in China-development field. Yet, the understanding of the macro phenomena is to be built upon the exploring of the micro process. According to Long, local actors are not isolated from the wider and local transformations but interface with them in different and unpredictable ways.

'Interface analysis focuses on the linkages and networks that develop between individuals or parties rather than on individual or group strategies. Continued interaction encourages the development of boundaries and shared expectations that shape the interaction of the participants so that over time the interface itself becomes an organized entity of interlocking relationships and intentionalities' (2001:69).

It implies that we have to contend with their differing perceptions and the images they form of these changes. We need to alert the 'meaning construction' process that people go through in these encounters. To this effect, people anticipate actions of other actors, which then shape their behavior towards those actors. In my research, I will see how domestic development organizations behave towards other actors, also operating within their encounters with their own forms of local and wider transformations. These various accommodation processes involve 'agency'. In the view of Long,

'Agency refers to the knowledgeability, capability and social embeddedness associated with acts of doing (and reflecting) that impact upon or shape one's own and other's actions and interpretations. Agency is usually recognized ex post facto

through its acknowledged or presumed effects. Persons or networks of persons

have agency. In addition, they may attribute agency to various objects and ideas,

which, in turn, can shape actor's perceptions of what is possible. Agency is

composed, therefore, of a complex mix of social, cultural and material elements.

Strategic agency signifies the enrolment of many actors in the enrolment of many

actors in the 'project' of some other person or persons' (Long 2001:240-241).

This implies that there are various forms of agency that social actors could be

associated with in a particular project. In the health project of my research,

domestic development workers and peasants are together involved. I need to think

more about the nature of their agency at the interface in the accommodation

processes. In addition, I need to consider political relationships at this interface. For

Long,

'Interventions are always part of a chain or flow of events located within the

broader framework of the activities of the state and/or international bodies, and the

actions of different interest groups operative in civil society' (Long 2001:32).

Therefore, I need to understand political relationships between domestic

development organizations, states and donors. In this respect, people are liable to use their bargaining and negotiation strategies entailing different tactics to influence projects towards certain unintended directions, As Long said that,

'The interactions between government or outside agencies involved in implementing particular development programs and so-called recipient populations cannot be adequately understood through the use of generalized conceptions such as 'state-citizen relations' or by resorting to normative concepts such as 'local participation'. These interactions must be analyzed as part of the ongoing processes of negotiation, adaptation and transformation of meaning that takes place between specific actors' (Long 2001:72).

In my research, I will show that domestic development organizations need to face donor and state influences. Hence, discourse analysis explores how they interact and interpenetrate situationally. Long argued that, 'Discourse frame our understanding of life experiences by providing representations of 'reality' (often taken-for-granted), and shape or constitute what we consider to be the significant or essential objects, persons and events of our world' (Long 2001:52).

Here, how does the concern for discourse relate to actor-oriented analysis? Long (2001) suggests that a first observation is that discourse may 'belong' to institutions such as the state, the World Bank or the local community. Hence, three kinds of discourse will be selected for my study. Firstly, the discourse of international organizations such as the World Bank in development agenda would be found. Secondly, the discourse of the state in development agenda will be concerned. Finally, the complexity and dynamics of discourse in the conception of PRA in domestic development organizations will be addressed. Based on research argument, this research will concern some aspects. This includes: the role of domestic development organizations in PRA under the current influences on development practice, the search of domestic development organizations strategically encounter with the State, international organizations and Civil Society for participatory development. Therefore, in terms of domestic development organizations can be used to understand the political dimensions of different actors' interactions. Here, the discussion shows how the needs for an empirical research with a conceptual focus on local actors actively participating in the development encounter. In my research, the present research data will be collected from various sources.

III. Working with methods

1. Ethnographic Case study

I shall employ a case study approach in my research. The case study approach is suitable because of the boundary defined by the project, from the other experiences of people, which is a key consideration for a study approach (Yin 1994). A case study, in this framework, is a methodology for generating data necessary for answering research questions. I need to discuss on the ethnographic material in a community, which can see how the interface between different actors in the development process does. In my case, the various forms of interaction between domestic development organizations and communities are the units of analysis. Through studying the case of health, I attempt to address the meanings of PRA that is being continually negotiated, adaptation, and transformed by local agents with their own agendas.

2. Interviewing

In my study, in-depth interviews will be conducted with the planner, the officials, academic field, domestic development workers such as PRA network's members and peasants. For instance, at the present moment, Chinese government

invites some local scholars to draft a handbook for PRA approach in China. In-depth interviews will be conducted with the draftsman. From the interview, I can share that people's constructs are in forms of looking at things and their own images. During the process of interview, I have to be aware of the fact that if not careful, I could provoke negative feelings of the people. I need to create space for interviewees to feel comfortably.

3. Participant observation

More importantly, these observations required careful exploration to get to the meanings of concepts that were implied in them. I observed the interactions during meetings and project activities, which was a more direct type of observation, the 'participant as observer' approach. In my research, I observed what domestic development organizations were emphasizing and what people from the village were commenting on. I then follow up with an interview with some members of the community members and the fieldworkers so as to validate these observations and their meanings. In addition, to involve the domestic development organization activities in development agenda will be concerned, for example, to join the PRA training workshop and adopt participant observation through attending the conference. It is about domestic development organizations involved in this

interactive process are influenced by their political discourse.

4. Documentary Analysis

To understand how domestic development organizations interfacing with other actors requires a comprehensive search for different level documentary information as background. In my study, I consulted documents such as project reports, project proposals, evaluation reports and project baseline information and international organizations in development agenda would be found. Most important, a lot of statement or literatures from the Chinese government need to be found. Whereas documents were vital in helping me to formulate better interview guides in the context of my research questions, and also provide a comprehensive research background for me to analyze the different level materials.

Overall, the methodology of this paper will be adopted towards development and poverty policies and ethnographic study of local actors actually implementing in the development programs. Three kinds of discourse will be selected for study. Firstly, the discourse of international organizations can be found in the official documents, statement or literatures. In addition, some participants from international organizations and domestic development organizations such as the

planner, local scholars and PRA network's members will be interviewed. Secondly,

the discourse of the state in development agenda will be concerned. At the present

moment, Chinese government invites some local scholars to draft a handbook for

PRA approach in China. In-depth interviews will be considered to interview the

draftsman. Most important, a lot of statement or literatures from the Chinese

government need to be found. Finally, the complexity and dynamics of discourse in

the conception of PRA in domestic development organizations will be addressed.

In-depth interviews with the planner, local scholars and PRA network's members

are in most important in my study. In addition, to involve the domestic

development organization activities in development agenda will be concerned, for

example, to join the PRA training workshop and adopt participant observation

through attending the conference. It is about the domestic development

organizations involved in this interactive process are influenced by their political

discourse.

5. The duration of field work:

The methodological gain of ethnography is to add a level of reflexivity, thus

to open the politics of development to a more profound engagement. In my case, I

am a committed member of a Hong Kong NGO which concerns rural development

in China for several years. This NGO dedicates to enhance self-help spirit and solidarity among different groups of villagers so as to build a caring community. These development experiences ignite my interest in exploring China-development issues in my research. Therefore, I not only take my position as a researcher but also as a development participant in doing this research.

Nowadays, the emergence of 'participatory development' has influenced in the development field. Many international organizations have adopted the PRA approach; moreover, many domestic development organizations claim expertise in PRA. In my fieldwork experience, all informants share an emphasis of 'participation'. PRA has become a tool in many development projects in the field of China-development. When I asked my informants how they understand PRA, most of them present PRA as a 'professional' technique to collect the information and data to understand the need of people. Some even argued that PRA is not only a tool but it is also a philosophy of development that emphasis 'participation'. PRA is thus claimed to be represented as gathering information and data, while reckoning this intervention of development participation will benefit rural people. In this process, domestic development workers play fundamental roles in development practice and discourse. As a person concerning China-development

issues, to see how domestic development organizations encounter and appropriate the discourse of 'participatory development' in China is important for me.

Thus, I entered the field in the spring of 2001. Within these two years, I attended four international and local development meetings in mainland. In the meetings, I used ethnographic observations to address the development participants' opinion and how they practice about PRA. In particular, I requested for a workshop in a meeting in order to listen to the development participants' opinion about PRA and the policy issue on PRA handbook published by the Chinese government. Some development participants were interviewed, such as the draftsperson of PRA handbook, Chambers' student, PRA networks members and so on. My study was focused on the particular locations with a health project in the southeast of China. In the health project, I volunteered to participate in the training program in villagers. So far I needed to collect and analyze textual materials such as NGO publications, newspaper, development policies and etc. Besides, I visited to four project sites of domestic development workers. The informal discussions with domestic development workers, villagers and the formal interviews of some officials were involved in my fieldwork.

6. Background of my trip to a Miao village:

In the summer of 2002, I came with a PRA group to do health training in a Miao village. The Miao village is located at the southeast of China. It is a hilly and poor region situated at south of a famous mountain. Most of the arable lands are scattered in the hilly area. The village is a small natural village and all the villagers are Miao people. All the villagers are engaged in agriculture. The minor crops are vegetables, sweet potatoes, peanuts, and so on. There is a public road from the village to town. After a rain, the road will become muddy and rugged. People could easily get stuck in the mud. The village is the nearest in distance to the town in that area. Generally, the villagers have to spend half a day by walk. But we could take a mini-bus from town which spends 30 to 45 minutes to get there. In the early 2000s the PRA group began to research and plan programs to women for health. The health project was funded by an international organization. The program's mission was using gender perspective on health issue. The domestic development workers were training local women in the formation of village-based women's groups that would focus their activities on parturition, nutrition and so forth. The workshop I attended was part of an intensive, two-day training session for the village women within their own communities. The workshop was organized and led by city-based, college educated domestic development workers. Four domestic development

workers and two local trainers were also present. The domestic development

workers who led the discussion were articulating PRA to facilitate the involvement

of the villagers. They talked about the problem of women of malnutrition and

sterilization. They defined these problems as being common to all women, and

being linked to their gender.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Emergence of participatory development and its

implementation in China

From this perspective, development can be best described as an apparatus that

links forms of knowledge about the Third World with the deployment of forms

of power and intervention, resulting in the mapping and production of Third

World societies. Development constructs the contemporary Third World,

silently, without our noticing it. By means of this discourse, individuals,

governments and communities are seen as 'underdeveloped' and treated as

such.

(Escobar 1995:213)

I. Introduction

The above analyses enable us to examine the discourse of participatory

development which could have taken place within the order of economic discourse

and are articulated upon a domain of institutions. Nowadays, the discourse of

participatory development has become internationally fashionable in development

work. The World Bank constructs the discourse of 'participation' on participatory

development was dominated by some values such as 'market' and 'economic

growth'. International organizations are being seen as a panacea for a country's ills

regard to economic growth. PRA, as one of participatory development approach,

has become a practice to identify local people to engage into the market in 1990s.

At present, the Chinese government is recommended to adopt PRA to alleviation

poverty programs by international organizations, because government for

international organizations is the agent for planning and implementing economic

and social policy. PRA in China does not make its effects feel only through

documents and reports, but also through policies, programs, and development

projects as the simple projection of the 'interest' of international organizations.

Some international organizations such as the World Bank have increased in their

collaboration with domestic development organizations, establishing specialized

units and creating PRA projects and programs. As a result, PRA as discursive

discourse has become the mainstream approach in China-development field.

In brief, for addressing different actors to the establishment of a PRA field, I

will try to expose the roles of international organizations, not only the World Bank

but also of Chambers in importing and implementing PRA in China. Since

participatory development was deemed as a panacea for all countries' poverty, the

discourse on PRA is being promoted by the international organizations in China. In

this chapter, I will try to show how the international organizations' policies

intersected with Chinese government policies to shape their development policies.

Some of the international organizations are attempting to create PRA through

different ways in order to influence the China-development field. The first section

illustrates the policies about the relationship between participatory development

and the market that began to be implemented in development field in the 1990s.

Next, the extent of the policies in promoting market orientation will be outlined,

and policies to foster the growth of these agencies in engagement with the concept

of PRA in China-development field will then be traced. I will examine three ways

of operationalizing the concept, namely, capacity building, sustainable

development and partnerships based on participatory development. The discussion

is meant to establish an understanding of the discourse of PRA.

II. The impacts of economic ideology by the World Bank

As economies develop, to support increasingly sophisticated

transactions, institutions must also evolve. This evolution can come
from changes in existing institutions, but it can also come from building
or transplanting new institutions. Who builds such institutions?
Governments, but also business and community actors and players in
international markets.

(The World Bank: Building institutions for markets, 2002:6)

Here, the authoritative statements of international organizations such as the
International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are extremely important in
representing societies and development priorities. Indeed, up till the end of the
Cold War, one of the economic and ideological debates were embedded in the
relative merits of the state or market as principles for organizing the economy. The
debate derives from the vision of neoliberalism. In the 1970s, development states
were viewed as a failure to bring economic growth to the countries especially
located in the South, and the welfare states became increasingly difficult to sustain.
The international organizations thus try to change the direction of development
practice. The change is based on the conception and treatment of poverty different
from before. Massive poverty in the sense appear only when the spread of the
market economy break down community ties and deprives millions of people from

access to land and other resources. In the manner of defining poverty there has been a change from targeting the specifically defined conditions of life of the people to sustainable development. The international organizations fear of the social unrest in the Third World which would burden the 'First World' and to question the desirability of unrestrained market forces. In this manner, the international organizations try to shift the responsibility for development to the country's governments and their people, which means that institutions[1] must have more consultative processes and more selective intervention. Here 'the consultative process' and more selective intervention imply the need for some state intervention to guarantee minimum living standards and some state regulation of the market. In a sense, this new approach requests the governments to reorient and reduce their role in the economy:

Transition means less government involvement in the economy. But where the government remains involved – in ensuring the supply of public goods, setting the rules of the game, helping institutions develop, and providing social protection – it needs to become more effective.

---

[1] Institutions, according to the World Bank, include governments, private organizations, laws, and social norms, which contribute to establishing recognized standards and enforcing contracts, thus making possible transactions that would otherwise not occur.

Governments everywhere have found it extremely difficult to reorient

and reduce their roles in the economy.

(World development report: from plan to market, 1996:12)

The approach of 'the reorient and reduce their roles' clearly shows that we

need not argue whether or not the state should intervene, but how. This approach is

in contrast to the previous position of the World Bank for the state policies. In the

1997 World Development Report *The State in a Changing World*, the paper

signaled the turning point in the World Bank's policies about the role of the state in

the economy, which recognized the need for some state intervention to guarantee

minimum living standards as well as some state regulation of the market.

'Development - economic, social, and sustainable-without an effective

state is impossible. It is increasingly recognized that an effective state -

not a minimal one - is central to economic and social development, but

more as partner and facilitator than as director. States should work to

complement markets, not replace them.'

(World Development Report: the state in a changing world 1997:18)

Actually, this approach proclaims not only a role for the state and the market

in economic organization but also for the civil society. It is based on the view that

the state should provide essential public goods such as health and education, which

can sufficient to properly regulate the market and alleviate the negative social and

environmental effects of the marketplace. Therefore, in the vision of free market

economics and liberal democracies, civil society is 'an intermediary sphere serving

to complement rather than replace the state. Its associational life not only fosters

social cohesion and democratic values but also is a site for the expression of

difference and diversity, consensus and conflict. It provides a home both of the

expression of private economic interests in the shape of chambers of commerce and

business associations as well as the collective voices of workers in unions' (see

Howell and Pearce 2001:67). The World Bank refocuses on the effectiveness of the

state and implicitly held Southern governments responsible for their economic

'backwardness'[2]. The economic backwardness would result in massive poverty. To

solve the problem, poverty could be attributed to factors that pointed to individuals

who are not engaging in the market. This idea is very consistent with the World

Bank policies of development and further education for those who have been

expelled from the labour market.

---

[2] As discussed in chapter two, the discourse of 'development' imposes a hegemonic view of reality, which defines non-western people as underdeveloped and backwardness.

Addressing information problems that hurt the poor, and taking time to learn about their needs and concerns, so that society can then offer them useful information and assist them in devising ways to reduce their isolation from markets and to improve their access to formal institutions.

(World Development Report: Knowledge for Development 1999:3)

The wording of 'to reduce their isolation from markets' shows that the international organizations seem to promote the view that poverty is a problem caused by idleness, improvidence and that the individuals do not engage in the market. Hence, poor women's access to basic education and health services is a strategy to push them into engaging in the labor market. These messages can be conveyed in the World Bank official development statement:

To narrow knowledge gaps, societies must ensure basic education for all and provide opportunities for people to continue to learn throughout their lives. Basic education is the foundation of a healthy, skilled, and agile labor force...Improving the education of girls is particularly important in countries with large knowledge gaps...But to sustain economic growth and to compete in the global economy, countries must go beyond basic

education...

(World Development Report: Knowledge for Development 1999:8)

As part of the 'new policy agenda', international organizations[3] were also popular for the purpose of enhancing democratization and participation of civil society in market-led development (Bebbington 1993).

International organizations can also be a force for institutional change. They too have had varying success in helping to build institutions well-suited to developing country needs. For instance, they have been instrumental in transmitting knowledge about different institutional designs across countries. But they have also advised on institutional reforms that have not been appropriate for a given country context.

(The World Bank: Building institutions for markets, 2002:6)

With this change, the NGO's role of strengthening civil society began to place within a political and economic agenda. This arises as a result of the World Bank's statement implying for restructing of the state's power in favor of 'good

---

[3] Here international organizations include multilateral and bilateral donor agencies, international and local non-government organizations.

governance' or 'participatory development'. Hence, by the mid-1990s the discourse

of stakeholder capitalism, civil society, participation and good governance had

begun to dominate policy thinking in the international organizations. To introduce

the concept of participatory development, a set of techniques that will help them to

control the social change and reach the 'targets' was demanded by the international

organizations.

Without a standard measure, we can not determine whether knowledge

gaps are growing or shrinking. Similarly, we lack a measure of a

society's ability to address information problems and the resulting

market failures.

(World Development Report: Knowledge for Development 1999:14)

The step requires the governments or NGOs to ensure a two-way information

flow when giving measurements of what constitutes the poor. This demands the

process of listening to the poor, because poor people know their own needs and

circumstances. Taking time to listen to them can greatly improve outcomes. In this

context, 'participation development' is the approach focused on shared learning

between local people and outsiders. In practice, in line with this approach the

World Bank, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Ford Foundation, and numerous other multilateral and bilateral donor agencies have promoted 'PRA' among different models of participatory development. For the World Bank, PRA is a planning approach focused on shared learning between local people, both urban and rural, and outsiders. In 1996, the participation sourcebook, guidance on participatory methods and tools was published. PRA hence began to be the mainstream of the World Bank operations. Paul Francis argues, 'the participation sourcebook is an unusual bank document in that...it attempts to convey an alternative way of looking at the world, adopting a tone that at once recalls a self-improvement manual and a mythical text...The key to behavioral change is seen to be as much a shift in the imagination of what is possible as the generation of a new set of methods, rules and guidelines' (Cooke and kothari 2001:82-83). The World Bank defines 'an alternative way' to recall a 'self-improvement' manual. 'Self-improvement' seems to be said that people must enlighten themselves to engage into the market. Reviewing on the discourse of participatory development, the term of 'participation' is dominated by some values such as 'market' and 'economic growth'. Poverty could be attributed to factors that pointed to individuals who are not engaging in the market. By bringing participatory development into different counties, the approach seeks to make capital ethical and

to inject it with a new morality. Alberto Arce argues that the strength of development discourse lies in the way that institutional authorities speak of 'certainties', and effectively represent these certainties in linguistic reference maps of reality (Arce and Long 2000:36). Obviously, in order to engage the people into the market, PRA become a powerful document of local need, believing that society needs a set of techniques to map out the reality.

In brief, pressed by the international organizations, economic liberalization is currently being seen as a panacea for a country's ills, it is being regarded as an important factor of economic growth by every county. As Benda-Beckmann (1994) argues that the World Bank through the discourse of good governance, politics and law has been made as the subjects of economics. Their primary concern is the reconstruction of the economy, in which legal and administrative elements become subordinated to economics'.

III. The impacts of economic ideology on China state

Going back to the case of China, 'market reform' has since become a powerful discourse representing in Deng's China. It has been noted in 'The Decisions of the

Central Committee of Community Party of China on Issues in the Creation of the

Socialist Market Economy', approved by the Third Plenary Session of the

Fourteenth Party Congress, that 'the socialist market economy is consistent with

the basic socialist system. Market forces will play a fundamental role in allocating

resources under the State's macroeconomic regulations'(see Marcoeconomic

reform in China 1997). As noted earlier, international organizations view that the

state should change its role to regulate the market. The policy follows the quest for

reorienting the government's role whose message can be conveyed in the World

Bank's countries' reports. For example, a paper of macroeconomic reform in China

in 1997 stated that:

The major tasks of macroeconomic reform are to create an institutional

framework through which the government can manage the

macroeconomy, ensure economic order, safeguard the rule of fair

competition, provide indirect instruments of regulation, and build

effective mechanisms with which to carry out policies.

(The World Bank: Marcoeconomic reform in China 1997:xiii)

In the World Bank official development discourse, poverty is caused by the

individual who does not to engage in the market. Chinese peasants thus in these

discourses are the obstacles of rural development, so there is a need for the

peasants to be enlightened. These messages are conveyed in the official

development statement; for example, a paper presented in an international

conference on China's Poverty Reduction Strategies in Early 21st Century stated

that:

The new forms of poverty, which have arisen in the context of economic

transition and marketisation, may be regarded largely as a consequence

of reform processes. Such poverty may be more transitory in nature,

reflecting the inability of individuals to cope with greater risks

associated with market transition and the simultaneous erosion of

collective or state provided social support.

(Joint Report: China's Poverty Reduction Strategies in Early 21st Century 1999:3)

This statement seems to summarize a general reaction to the rise of poverty in

China since the 1980s. Their views draw attention to the heavy demands on female

labor in the market. In the discourse of poverty, the image of peasants still

perceived as need to be developed, remains. In this manner, the state believes that

good government needs to bring the peasants to engage in the labor market and

trend towards the economic growth. The paper of the China human development

report stated that:

China has rightly paid much attention to labor market problems of

women in the transition environment, when market pressures and

discriminatory attitudes have led some enterprises to lay off or refuse to

hire women workers.

(UNDP, China: The China human development report 1999:112)

This view could be attributed to the impact of these international

organizations' ideology of development on the official conception of the issues

arising from economic and social development. In fact, the World Bank and IMF

became the agencies for Participatory Poverty Assessments and the poverty

eradication action plans since 1970s, NGOs and Nations were often ideologically

and politically guided by the IMF and World Bank. Most of the projects in NGOs

and Nations receive resources from the IMF and the World Bank; they are

requested to meet the agreement or the rules made by the IMF and the World Bank.

To take a case of sustainable development, we can see how the international

organizations implement international policies to influence the Chinese government policy.

IV. Sustainable Development

President Jiang Zemin stated at the Fifteenth National Congress on 1997 that 'China must implement a sustainable development strategy in the modernization drive'. The United Nations World Commission (1987), *Our Common Future*, has since then popularized the term 'sustainable development', it has gained great attention in the world in 1990s. In 1992, China participated in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro. The Conference of 'The Earth Summit' had over 100 heads of state and over 500 NGOs groups attended. At the meeting, the Agenda 21, a blueprint on how to make economically sustainable and social development, was produced which urged nations to adopt 'sustainable development' strategies to alleviate poverty. Agenda 21, the action plan for sustainable development, including the agreement on new financial resources and technology transfers required for its implementation, and institutional arrangements at the UN for overseeing the process. After the conference, in July 1992, the Environmental Protection Committee of the China

State Council decided to designate the State Planning Commission and the State

Science and Technology Commission to take charge of organizing more than 50

departments and over 300 experts to formulate China's Agenda 21. The team took

more than 15 months to draw up the China' Agenda 21. In March 1994, the

document was formally adopted by the State Council. China's Agenda 21 is the

overall strategy for China's sustainable development, which will be implemented in

poverty programmes. In other words, it is an important policy paper, which will

influence the development workers and local non-governments organizations

(NGOs) on how to carry out the development projects.

The above case shows that how international organizations stipulate the

Chinese government's policy to do 'sustainable development'. In the goals of

modernization, the market reform measures significantly affected the Chinese

government for policy making concerning 'sustainable development'. Alberto Arce

argued that the international organizations such as the World Bank, use the

linguistic representations of development to construct a meaningful discourse

sharing certain ideas that seeing market-oriented economic policies as a

contribution to good government and political accountability (Arce and Long 2000).

Here sustainable development implies to alleviate the negative social and

environmental effects of the market. Reviewing the official discourses in China

government, the government urges to demand a new regime of development.

Chinese peasants under this new regime have become 'subject target' who needed

to be enlightened. The formation of a culture in which economic growth becomes

dominant in China-development.

V. Participatory development

When the term of 'participation development' has become internationally

fashionable in development work, the international organizations require more

systematic assessment and monitoring of poverty implemented into poverty polices.

The Chinese government was recommended to adopt 'participation development'

strategies to alleviate poverty programs. The paper of 'China overcoming Rural

Poverty' stated that:

Involving the poor in planning and monitoring is an essential aspect of

successful programs and participatory approaches should be used much

more extensively in all future government poverty reduction efforts.

(China overcoming Rural Poverty 2001:39)

This statement seems to match in line with the picture of reality constructed. Most often, international organizations view PRA the practice of participatory development. Therefore, it had a chapter on participatory development in 'China overcoming Rural Poverty' report.

Development work around the world has found that allowing stakeholders a voice in project design, management, and evaluation improves results. Such approaches were not tried much in China before the 1990s, and still tend to occur primarily in programs supported by international organizations. Where they have been used, however, the results have been encouraging. Most of China's experiments with participation have been in project identification and preparation. Some projects are systematically developing strategies by creating a dialogue between experts and local beneficiaries...

(China overcoming Rural Poverty 2001:xxii)

International organization impetus to rapid economic growth is strong; it requires a bold new approach to development. Inevitably PRA became the mainstream development strategies towards economic growth. In my fieldwork experience, most of the informants have mentioned the term PRA, when talking

about their development projects. The agenda of all meetings I have attended will

discuss PRA. Most of the domestic development organizations claim to implement

PRA in their development strategies. In coming years, the poverty alleviation

projects request the officials to use PRA. At the present moment, the Chinese

government is not only going to use PRA in all poverty projects but also invites

academic to draft a handbook for PRA. The handbook will influence domestic

development organizations how to employ PRA.

Here we can see how the international organizations such as the World Bank

influence the government and local NGOs' policies in China. This is

understandable because the rise in official funding to the Chinese government and

domestic development organizations from international donors came mainly

through the World Bank and IMF. As discussed in chapter two, for international

organizations, there has also been a rethinking of the relations in the role of civil

society in the context of diminishing states and expanding markets. A well

developed civil society, according to neoliberals, can exert organized pressure on

autocratic and unresponsive states and thereby support democratic stability and

good governance. (see Mohan and Stokke 2000:3).

Benda-Beckmann argues that the World Bank through the representation of development 'matters of good governance as accountability, rule of law, participation, human rights or democratisation. Their primary concern is with the reconstruction of the economy, in which legal and administrative elements become subordinated to economics' (Benda-Beckmann 1994:2). Watts (1993) further argued that today economic liberalization is being seemed as a panacea for a country's ills that every country regards the economic growth. The apparent ability to 'make things better' is the main way of achieving power. Drawing on these discussions, we can know that civil society becomes as a development strategy for building relations between the state and the market. Through the discourse of good governance, making every country regards the economic growth. Under market-oriented, civil society institutions can allow doing participation in development program and empowerment of target groups of poor people, through this process ensuring the targets groups into the markets.

So far, the above sections have examined international organizations ideas about the relationship between the state, the market and participation. In this context, 'participation development' has become the mainstream development strategies towards economic growth. In practice, in line with this approach the

World Bank, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and numerous other

multilateral and bilateral donor agencies have promoted 'PRA' among different

models of participatory development. PRA become a powerful document of the

local need. At present, international organizations have attempted to put

participatory development into practice in China-development field. As already

mentioned, the international organizations such as the World Bank have tried to

influence the state and local NGOs' policies in China. But international

organizations embraced the concept of participatory development, giving

institutional[4] substance, they also need to think more to turn their ideas into

practice in China. In the attempt to develop the concept of participatory

development, these international organizations have adopted three broad

approaches: capacity building; partnership and sustainability. In the next section I

will explore the concept of participatory development.

VI. The discourse of 'Participatory development'

Participation development has become the fashion in the field of development

worldwide since the 1990s, not just for the mainstream of the donor agencies such

---

[4] Institutional substance means that international organizations try to make state agencies and NGOs more efficient and to include identified target people in the development process.

as UNDP or the World Bank, but also for third world grassroots organizations. Both

of these discourse, whether the World Bank line or its radical alternative, look to

civil society, participation, and 'ordinary people'[5] for their development visions.

Nevertheless, there are different interpretations in participation development

between these international organizations. The neoliberal positions criticize a

'top-down' strategy and request state agencies and non-government organizations

pushing for institutional reform so as to make institutions more efficient and to

include identified target people in the development process. The ultimate goal is for

economic growth. The conceptualization of participation and empowerment is

based on a harmony model of power[6] (see Mohan and Stokke 2000:3). In contrast

to neo-liberal view, poststructalist Escobar (1992) develops an 'alternative' concept

which focuses on 'bottom-up' social mobilization in society in order to challenge

the hegemonic interpretation of 'civil society' as developed by the neo-liberalism.

Therefore, the conceptualization of participation and empowerment is based on

conflictual and relational terms. In short, we can say that there are critical

differences between their positions. Participatory development implies not only a

---

[5] The current development discourse on consolidating and promoting civil society has often drawn from the various strains of populism, in other words about the power of what the World Bank called 'ordinary people.'

[6] Actually the 1980s saw a growing discussion or concern towards institutions, focusing on within civil society based on agreement with a consensus in a community.

broadly specified development strategy – that is to say, the promotion of

small-scale, owner-operated, anti-urban programs which stand against the ravages

of industrial capitalism – but also a particular sort of politics, authority structure,

and ideology in which an effort is made to manufacture a collective popular will

and an 'ordinary' subject (see Peet and Watts 1996:26). Generally, 'partnership' and

'capacity building' are the strategies for participatory development of international

organizations. When some donor agencies such as the World Bank[7] were already

beginning to realize the merits of NGOs, the two strategies become prominent in

the 1990s.

Capacity Building

In its basic sense, 'capacity building' is about enabling people both to

determine and achieve their objectives. It is based on the enhancement of learning,

for instance, through provision of more information to reduce uncertainty and

widen options for decision-making. However, capacity building applies for a

structural interpretation, it becomes the way of enhancing not just learning but the

agency located in an asymmetric power relationship (see Tembo 2003:26). For

international   organizations,   capacity   building   implies   that   international

---

[7] According to Howell and Pearce (2001), the World Bank did not engage with NGOs until the early 1970s. In 1981 formal World Bank guidelines were issued, which identified the roles that NGO might play in bank-financed projects.

organizations try to support local NGOs fund, providing training and technical

advice to foster or strengthen the emergence of non-government organizations and

research institutions in China-development field. In practice, international

organizations provide the local NGOs with financial and technical support, for

instance providing PRA workshops and training to domestic development workers

and holding international and local conferences for development participants. The

process involves assisting local NGOs to clarify their mission, develop PRA

approach, evaluate project effectiveness, and develop financial systems.

But in China-development field, the concept of 'non-governmental

organization' is a political term, many domestic development organizations will not

choose to claim as NGO (discussed in the next chapter). Therefore, many domestic

development organizations may not get extra resources, if international

organizations only provide resources for local 'NGOs'. Moreover, not all

international organizations provide resources to local NGOs, as the Chinese

government plays its active role in gaining better access to resources. Many

international organizations will choose to cooperate with the Chinese government

to reduce political resistance. Hence, 'capacity building' takes on the political

agenda where domestic development organizations are challenging structures and

accessing to resources. 'Partnership' also faces the political issue in this context.

Partnership

In general, the concept of partnership aimed at drawing different domestic development organizations together to work toward a common goal, recognizing that such cooperation has not for various reasons always happened previously or occurred without friction. It is assumed that the development organizations share a common vision, common interests, and common purpose. To achieve this objective, many international organizations announced their development policies and developed different programs to strengthen civil society. Indeed, these programs have led to a range of practical initiatives involving business in development and cooperative work between business and NGOs so as to promote environmental sustainability and economic development. In China-development field, international organizations have set up new partnership initiative to foster greater cooperation among state, market, and civil society for the greater goal of sustainable development. This in turn involved capacity building work for domestic development organizations and the Chinese government through training in planning, evaluation, and financial accounting. Some international organizations will foster domestic development organizations to develop networks such as PRA

networks, research institutions but some are cooperating in different ways such as providing advice and technical support to the Chinese government on enhancing the regulatory environment for infrastructural development. The partnership approach assumes shared notions of the public good, value consensus, and a common vision. Yet, partnership is a loose term for different international organization as a strategy to achieve their development goals. It is assumed that partnership is neutrality. However, international organizations have their authorities and power to decide the terms of their engagement. They can influence domestic development organizations through the 'partnership' process.

Sustainability

Sustainability implies that any form of transformation has to be undertaken with consideration of needs of the future and not just the present. In development case, development interventions should generate improvements in people's livelihoods, both for the present and for the future, going beyond the period of the intervention itself. In China-development field, the common interpretation of sustainability arises from a concern with the environment and its natural resources within which people's livelihoods are located. The interpretation is based on the statement of China's Agenda 21 and the statement influences the domestic

development workers on the way of implementing the development projects. As noted earlier, international organizations urged the Chinese government to adopt 'sustainable development' strategies to development projects. Nowadays, many development projects from international organizations focus more on environment and its natural resources in China-development field. Most often, international organizations request domestic development organizations to implement PRA, claming as bottom-up participation, into their environment projects. Yet, this kind of development intervention is the theoretical position through which external interventions come into people's livelihoods. This involves different people with different power positions to access and control over resources in a given social system. It is not surprising then there is a conflict of interests between international organizations, the Chinese government, domestic development workers and peasants.

In short, this section is meant to establish an understanding of participatory development that was interpreted by international organizations. These concepts provide the link between domestic development workers, the Chinese government and international organizations. Although there are critical difference strategies between different international organizations, these international organizations

shape participatory development in their concepts in China-development field. Indeed, these international organizations' working approaches, using these terms of participatory development to exercise power, manifested the Chinese government policy or domestic development organizations.

Nowadays, PRA is fashionable in development worldwide. Most of international organizations request the funding applicants to implement PRA into development projects. In fact, PRA as one model of participatory development seems to replace the term of participatory development in development field. This raises an interesting question that is PRA equal to participatory development? This paper is not focusing on answering this question. Yet, reviewing on the development field in China, when we are talking about PRA, it is almost equal to talking about participatory development. The term PRA came to prominence in development field. In my fieldwork experience, I rarely heard the term participatory development but frequently heard the term PRA. I find that some of domestic development workers don't know the term participatory development but know the term PRA. It could be said that PRA is equal to participatory development. Therefore, in the context of my study, when talking about PRA, which means equal to participatory development in the context of

China-development field.

Returning to our discussion, as noted earlier, the Chinese government requests

poverty alleviation projects to use PRA in coming years. Certainly, it is because the

domestic development organizations and the Chinese government compete for

funding that will lead to shape their planned programs and activities. As the

discourse of PRA became fashionable within development circles, some donors

began to set up specialized departments and units, appoint people with apparent

expertise in this field, and devise strategies and programs for creating, supporting,

and strengthening PRA. Here, in the next section I try to trace the process of

encountering with an institiutionalization of PRA described below through the case

of Chambers and foundations as well as with the NGOs. In China, international

organizations such as donor agencies have increased their collaboration with

domestic development organizations, establishing specialized units since the 1990s.

These agencies have established PRA networks, employed PRA experts, and

created PRA projects and programs. In this aspect, I can only brief some agencies,

such as the Ford Foundation and Oxfam Hong Kong who have background of

working with domestic development organizations to promote PRA.

VII. Who advocate the discourse of PRA

PRA is fashionable in China-development field, perhaps the reason is Chambers as the key people to introduce PRA in China in 1990s[8]. In my fieldwork experience, according to my informant[9], Robert Chambers was the person to introduce PRA approach in development work in China. In Oct 1993, the Chinese government invited Robert Chambers, the representative of Ford Foundation (福特基金), to develop the Yunnan development programs. For the next year, Robert Chambers got funding from Ford Foundation to hold PRA training workshops in Yunnan and established the Yunnan Participatory Research and Action Network in Southwest China. In 1996, my informant had started his PRA work in China. My informant later held PRA training workshop and established the Participatory Research and Action Network in Guizhou, Beijing and Sichuan. It could be said that these areas are the formal PRA networks in China although they are collaboration. At present, many domestic development workers from Yunnan, Guizhou and Beijing have known my informant and even had participated in Chamber's training workshop. My informant said that most domestic development workers will join these PRA networks or groups if they claim they are as engaging in participation development. It is because the network provides a good channel for domestic development workers getting funds from international organizations such as donors. More important, these PRA networks have great influence to promote PRA. PRA networks play the roles to foster PRA in domestic development

---

[8] Although the term 'participation' first came to appear in the statements published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1980 (Li, 1999:14), the participatory development works were spreading in China-development until 1990s.
[9] My informant is Chambers' student when he was in university, he then came to China to working in development field.

organizations. Therefore, many international organizations would like to invite PRA networks to do development works, this action helps to protect international organizations interests. In other words, PRA networks are as important institutes to spread PRA in China-development field. Observably, the international organizations such as Ford Foundation and Oxfam Hong Kong have many collaborating projects with these networks.

Foundations:

Some major international foundations such as the Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Brothers' Fund, sought to foster PRA. Many foundations began to establish specialized programs and projects in China. These foundations have different strategies to fund the applicants. For instance, the Ford Foundation is a famous U.S. foundation in China-development field. It began supporting development projects in China in 1979 and established an office and employ staff in Beijing in 1988. As a mark of its growing interest in PRA, the Ford Foundation sponsors a major international study of PRA in China. The program would sponsor domestic development workers to study an oversea such as Thailand or Philippines development course every year. In the course, my informant[10] said that he needed to learn the environmental management knowledge, GIS geography resources and gender study in the course. The study program of the Ford Foundation has an

---

[10] He is a member of PRA network.

influence for fostering PRA in China development field. On one hand, local development participants are difficult to study oversea if they have no funding sponsor. The program provides opportunities for educating domestic development organizations to learn PRA. On the other hand, the program would sponsor senior domestic development workers to study overseas. As I know, most of these domestic development workers have become core members in these PRA networks after finishing the study. This reflects the program to make it effects on the spread of PRA in China-development field. Here, we must say that different international organizations use different strategies to fund their development projects. For instance, the Ford Foundation has collaborative projects with PRA networks. In principle, the Ford Foundation would not sponsor local community projects unless development training, newsletter, etc. The Ford Foundation does not sponsor local community projects, apparently, domestic development workers are the development targets of the Ford Foundation.

International NGOs:

By contrast, some international NGOs would focus on sponsoring local community projects. These international NGOs are promoting PRA, but they also have different working approaches between these NGOs. The main reason is that

their different working approaches are based on how to understand the concept of

'participation'. As we have known, the concept of participation has appealed not

only to multilateral and bilateral donors but also to international NGOs, which have

either reoriented their roles or programs to focus on PRA. As in the example of

Oxfam Hong Kong, it's China program adopts a rights-based approach in

strengthening and protecting of participation. Oxfam Hong Kong began supporting

development and disaster management projects in China in 1987. It has

implemented development and disaster management projects in 14 provinces and

regions inside China. For example, Oxfam Hong Kong supported front line

development participants, representatives of poor people and researchers to

participate in a World Bank Development Debates Series. This emphasis on a

rights-based approach to Oxfam Hong Kong recognition that development needs to

be owned by the domestic NGOs[11] and people. In the introduction of the

establishing 'capacity building centre', Oxfam Hong Kong explains the centre to

assistance to female migrant workers from Chifeng either when they are working in

Beijing or after they return home. Clearly, local community groups are the

development targets of Oxfam Hong Kong. Apparently, Oxfam Hong Kong is

different working approach from the Ford Foundation. Like other international

---

[11] Here, domestic NGOs are including some domestic development organizations who do not
register but non-state organizations.

organizations, Oxfam Hong Kong also requests to implement PRA into development projects. To ensure the project and program will reach its long-term goal of 'fighting poverty'[12], the development program also emphases on applying PRA. As illustrated in the following funding requirement written by Oxfam Hong Kong, 'Continue to build the capacity of the network through increasing the opportunity for group members to apply and interview PRA concepts and methods in field projects'.

Clearly, domestic development organizations need to meet the requirement of PRA in their development projects. It associates that domestic development organization refers to their greater commitment to PRA, because the fund report need to response PRA. At present, international organizations regularly provide many training workshops with topics such as gender or PRA method to train up the PRA networks' members. Many meetings will be organized for local and international as well as publications for public. Most important, some of these domestic development organizations will play the roles as auditors to assess and evaluate the poverty projects, which are required by the international NGOs. It could be said that not only have existing organizations begun to adopt PRA, set up funding requirement, and appoint PRA networks, but new domestic development

[12] The term is presented by the pamphlet of 'the Oxfams Program in China'.

organizations have emerged to promote the 'concept' of PRA.

Nowadays, many domestic development workers claim themselves as PRA professional in practicing development work. This made me think about Escobar's work sharing the concept of 'institutional practice'. He mentioned that 'the dairy practices of institutions are not just rational or neutral ways of doing. In fact, much of an institution's effectiveness in producing power relations is the result of practices that are often invisible, precisely because they are seen as rational. It is then necessary to develop tools of analysis to unveil and understand those practices' (Escobar 1995:105). Actually, these international organizations as institutions are spreading the discourse of PRA in China-development field. Meanwhile, the discourse is reproduced by different parties; large multilateral agencies such as UNDP, which have had a relatively history of promoting PRA; international financial institutions such as the World Bank, which wield considerable influence over the macroeconomic policies of the Chinese government; Northern foundations such as the Ford Foundation and international NGOs working to foster PRA. In practice the spread of PRA are not separated from financing mechanisms by international organizations. Nowadays, PRA as discursive discourse has become the 'professional technique' to link with anti-poverty based on empowering the poor, rather than reducing poverty. This

reference to the professionalization of development that refer to a set of techniques and disciplinary practices through which the generation, diffusion, and validation of knowledge are organized, managed, and controlled; in other words, the process by which a politics of truth is created and maintained.

VIII. Conclusion

To summarize, this chapter has tried to establish an understanding on the emergence of PRA in China. I have tried to trace the historically background on the 'participatory development' discourse. It has acculturated within different interpretation by different international organization. Both of these discourse, whether the World Bank or its radical alternative, look to civil society, participation, and 'ordinary people' for their development visions. In brief, I set out a view of 'participatory development' as a form of social imagines, knowledge generation and social system operated. The understanding on the emergence of participatory development is to address the balance of power between the different actors in PRA discourse in China-development field. At present, both of the World Bank and Chambers present the expert views on the participatory development. PRA is becoming presented as a 'new' form of professionalism by international

organizations. It was presented as a panacea for defining program success and beneficiary the poor. PRA thus is becoming as a strategic for creating a space for international organizations negotiate their interests in China- development field. This evokes an idea of making PRA as a normative framework, is to make social operated by them.

At present, PRA is the mainstream approach in China–development field. PRA in china does not make its effects feel only through documents and reports, but also through policies, programs, and development projects. Although there are critical difference strategies between different international organizations, these international organizations shape PRA in their concepts in China-development field. Indeed, these international organizations' working approaches manifested the Chinese government policy or local development organizations. At the present moment, the Chinese government is not only going to use PRA in all poverty projects but also invites academic to draft a handbook for PRA. The handbook will influence domestic development organizations how to do PRA. In addition, local development organizations have great commitment to PRA, because the fund report need to response PRA. Following the logic, some would argue that the World Bank and Chambers' thoughts could influence the domestic development

organizations and the government's policies to take PRA view. It implies that the

Chinese government and the domestic development organizations are passively

involving in this process. Is this the case of China? How does the Chinese

government and domestic development organizations play their roles when

cooperating with the international organizations' policies? In the next chapter, I will

first focus on how the Chinese government cooperates with international

organizations' policies.

CHAPTER FIVE

Power, Discourse, and Economic Reform in China

Needless to say, the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America did not always see themselves in terms of 'development'. This unifying vision goes back only to the post-war period, when the apparatuses of Western knowledge production and intervention (such as the World Bank, the United Nations, and bilateral development agencies) were globalised and established their new political economy of truth... To examine development as discourse requires an analysis of why they came to see themselves as underdeveloped, how the achievement of 'development' came to be seen as a fundamental problem, and how it was made real through the deployment of a myriad of strategies and programs.

(Escobar 1995:213)

I. Introduction

In chapter four, I have mentioned that the neo-liberal conceptions of 'civil society' and 'participation' can impede the progress of developmental

interventions. 'Civil society' is characterized in neo-liberalism as an institution

of market-orientation. It is believed that civil society institutions can allow

participation in development programs and the empowerment of target groups

of poor people, and through this process, ensures the entrance of targets groups

into the markets. In this context, PRA is becoming the dominant discourse for

promoting participatory development in China-development field. We have

seen that how international actors have attempted to put PRA into practice. In

so doing, we should know that international organizations especially donor

agencies have financial sources. Through administrative procedures they can

set a scene of thematic breadth of programs and projects to influence funding

applicants. It is not surprising then that the government and domestic

development organizations were often ideologically guided by the international

organizations.

Today most countries have a pivotal concern in economic liberalization as

panaceas for a country's ills regard economic growth. This characteristic way

of thinking of international organizations has also influenced into China. In

China, the market reform is the historical moment in Deng's era. As mentioned

in Chapter four, the World Bank has tried to implement international policies to

influence the state policies towards economic growth. In the context of discussions concerning economic growth of underdevelopment countries, the World Bank trumpeted China as its successful case for socialist economic transition. The reform of 1978 was regarded as the proper pathway for China to follow and it exhibited the obvious successful formula of market reforms throughout the World (Firedman 1990). Apparently, the Chinese government was ideologically guided by the international organizations. But this is more apparent than real in the case of China. While the talk of 'success' of 'market reform' as a powerful discourse is often stressed by the Chinese government, market reform is for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is ultimately an attempt to legitimize its power and help it distinguish itself from its image in the Maoist era. It could be said that the Chinese government strategically deploys international organization's policies to serve its own politics. As PRA is becoming a strategy to incorporate the international organizations' policies, the Chinese government will adopt and redefine it to cooperate with development policies. Therefore, PRA is not only the development strategy for international organizations but also the strategy for the Chinese government to pursue its objectives. This alerts us to question civil society that reflects bottom-up nature of participation in which they emerge in China. For

international organizations that adopt a neo-liberal stance such as the World Bank, the introduction of market forces would automatically and ultimately lead to the emergence of civil society. Based on this assumption which links economic and political liberalization, neo-liberals claimed that the expansion of the market would suffice to create the burgeoning of intermediate organizations that would act as a counter-balance to central political power. Nowadays, PRA is not only the development strategy for the domestic development organizations but also for the Chinese government's development intervention. Did PRA provide a social space for the emergence of bottom-up nature of participation in the Chinese government?

This chapter tries to argue that even if the Chinese government is politically and administratively cooperating with the international organizations, it does so strategically and selectively to pursue its own objectives. It could be said that the market reform since Deng's China provides a discursive space for cooperating with the international organization's policies, especially in the emergence of PRA in China-development field in 1990s. From this perspective, we can see that the market reform demonstrates the political interests and the power relationships between the Chinese government,

international organizations and domestic development organizations. As a result, China-development field provides a situation where the Chinese government creates new forms of PRA discourse in relation to China.

II. The impacts of modernization ideology on the Chinese government

As noted earlier, the establishment of PRA field in China is a complex process involving a number of different institutions and practices. Some prominent actors such as Chambers and the World Bank are importing the discourse of PRA. More importantly, the Chinese government also concerns as subject in this process. Actually, after establishing of PRA institution in China-development field, it does not make its effects only through international organizations but also the Chinese government. Nowadays, the Chinese government does give serious attention to international organizations' discourses of development. Why is the Chinese government actively cooperating with international policies? To answer it, we must situate the economic reform as a political issue, and explore the social impacts of reform, and the state attempts to solve in the face of growing financial crisis to them. It is often assumed that the discourse of PRA is imposed by the international

organizations. Indeed, where the discourse of PRA has emerged is related to the development model adopted by the Chinese Communist Party.

In Mao's era, the development model was a strategy of self-reliance, not assistance from the capitalist world. This strategy emphasized collective labor organization. This collective labor organization emphasized the individual incentives to participate in labor derived from social and political ideals of the collective good. Socially oriented infrastructure consists of housing, schools and clinics, etc. It is because the Chinese Communist Party believed that poverty was caused by feudalism, capitalism and imperialism in Old China. Poverty should have disappeared when the New Socialist China was built in 1949. Therefore, the Chinese Communist Party denied the existence of poverty. Yet, the official discourse on poverty changed in 1978. After Deng Xiaoping came to power in 1976, the market reform brought a dramatic change of Deng's China. In the China's official development discourse, economic growth has to take precedence, and whereas poverty is now viewed as the results of individuals not having engaged successfully in the market. Here, the CCP has been pursuing a reform and an open-door policy. The report in the third plenary Session of the Eleventh Party Congress (1978) firstly indicated that more than

100 million peasants suffered from food insecurity and 25 per cent of production brigades earned less than 40 Yuan per capita income per annum[1]. It has become the first official discourse[2] on poverty. The third plenary meeting of the Eleventh Party Congress symbolized this 'paradigm change'.

The economic reform brought a response of Deng's China, because the Chinese Communist Party needed to develop an alternative development model to help it distinguish itself from its image from the Maoist era. In other words, the Chinese Communist Party portrayed the reforms as a necessary step in the right direction, so as to legitimize and strengthen its political power. Under this new 'paradigm', the new socialist state claimed itself a progressive one that will eventually lead the peasants out of the poverty. Poverty has accompanied the creation of concentrated personal wealth. Chinese peasants in these discourses are the obstacles of rural development, so the peasant needed to engage in the market transition. Thus, the reforms have attention shifted from state planning toward an increasing reliance on market forces, involving

---

[1] Luk Tak Chuen (1999) claims that the 40 yuan per capita income became the first official 'poverty line' in 1978. The Commune Management Bureau of the Ministry defined 150 kg of wheat per capita per annum in North China and 200kg of rice and South China as the poverty line in 1979. It is estimated that 50 yuan per capita was roughly equivalent to 150 kg of wheat in North china and 200 kg of rice in south China. Therefore, both 40 yuan and 50 yuan per capita were used as poverty measures and sometimes interchangeably.

[2] Here discourse refers to the announcement of the government.

the decollectivization of agriculture and the dismantling of the commune system in rural areas.

The market reform leads a development model to change from China's 'self-reliance' to being 'an aid beneficiary'. Following the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, the Chinese government permitted and encouraged international development agencies to provide funding and resources for projects in China. In 1978, the Chinese government took the first initiative to seek technical aid from the United Nations Development Program. Within two years, UN development agencies were supporting more than one hundred projects in China, ranging from installation of computers and training of technicians to improve livestock breeding and fisheries. In 1980, the Chinese government drew important assistance from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to develop energy sources, railways and the small-sized agricultural projects (Croll 1944:153). The increasing development projects brought new relationships between the Chinese government and foreign development agencies and symbolized a rapid change in China's international economic position. This would certainly influence the development strategies including poverty alleviation plan towards the economic growth.

III. The development strategies are trending towards the market transition

The reforms permitted the introduction of foreign direct investment, setting up four Special Economic Zones in Fujian and Guangdong provinces in 1979. At the beginning of the 1980s, the policy of 'Four Modernizations' was presented by Deng[3]. Deng points out, 'we should allow some people in some areas to become wealthy first'. The quest for rapid industrialization continues under the reform in China. The years of reform more focus on the rise in incomes in urban. At that moment, the Chinese government entirely initiated development strategies to set up Special Economic Zones in Fujian and Guangdong provinces. The development strategies could not back up the work of poverty alleviation. The poverty problem was highlighted by numerous poor people especially in rural area. In June 1984, *Renmin Ribao* (The People's Daily) published a letter written by a peasant who described how they still lived a very poor life. Thereafter a number of media reports highlighted the

---

[3] After Deng Xiaoping came to power in 1978, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been pursuing a reform and open-door policy. The quest for rapid industrialization continues under the reform in China. Investment decisions have been decentralized, both to the provinces and to the individual enterprises. Greater reliance is placed on the market and the market-oriented economic levers such as the taxation and credit system. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the policy of 'Four Modernizations' was presented by Deng. It is connected that is the modernization of agriculture, of industry, of science and technology, and of the military.

poor peasant lives in the northwest and southwest, old revolutionary base areas

and mountainous regions. Thus in the mid-1980s there was an increasing

official concern for poor, living in the reported areas, which reflected in

poverty alleviation programs and development projects reaching the village. In

1986, the state promoted the development strategies through the establishment

of LGPR[4] (the Leading Group for Poverty Reduction), with the working

principles that emphasized marketization and efficiency of grants and loans in

practice. For instance, the bureaucracy has not focused on the redistribution of

poverty alleviation funds in order to develop security programs and to help

those in need. On the contrary, the poverty alleviation programs had too much

of a direction towards the economic generation of income. The bureaucracy

would provide funds, technology, materials and training for the establishment

of enterprise and associations. A small part of village poverty alleviation

programs were income-generating activities, providing loans for villagers to

plant fruit trees or etc.

---

[4] LGPR is the key agency responsible for coordinating the nation's more than US$2 billion in annual funding for poverty reduction programs. This funding is organized under China's '8-7 Poverty Reduction Plan' (8-7 Plan), which was established by LGPR in 1994 to overcome remaining absolute poverty in the nationally designated 592 poor counties.

In short, the working principle of LGPR is to assist the enterprises to deal

with issues arising from market transition. Instead, income-generating projects

for the enterprises have shifted the focus from workers' needs to the

enterprises' needs. In 1992 and 1993, about half of the subsidized loans were

lent to industrial enterprises. Of this amount, more than 60 percent went to

county run enterprises and the rest went to township run enterprises. Although

in 1996 National Poverty Reduction Conference decided that 70 percent of

subsidized loans should reach poor households and 70 percent should be in

agriculture, local governments and peasants that were in need of funding are

still marginalized in the poverty alleviation programs. The poverty alleviation

loans did not aid the poorest in the village, largely because of the guarantee

repayment of the loans. This would lead to the exclusion of poor peasants and

the local governments of poor regions. In addition, the poverty alleviation

policy ignored basic social services in the poor regions. The concern for

economic efficiency neglected basic education and health programs since they

are 'economically inefficient'. As discussed before, some international

organizations such as the World Bank did suggest an alternative set of poverty

programs in the design and implementation of a wide spectrum of human

development projects in the distribution of income, health care, education and

the state of the natural environment. Nevertheless, these policies were problematic in the conception of poor people and women. These international organizations seem to promote a view that poverty was a problem caused by idleness, improvidence and individual not engaging in the market. The aim of the provision of basic education to women in poverty is to enable them to engage in the labor market.

It could be said that the aims of the policy changes are only for maintaining the market orientation and the modernization goals. The direction of the reform is to allow the market to play a fundamental role in allocating resources along with further decentralization. For instance, one of the policies is land reform. In Mao's China, the development model emphasized collective labor organization, but the Chinese government reoriented the lands returning back to the peasants during Deng's China. Land reform marked the beginning of the increased prominence of a state emphasizing marketization in local development initiatives. This was reflected in the orientation to fostering a modernization of China's agricultural production systems, worked with the Green revolution, introducing new varieties, chemical fertilizers, etc. However, the market economic system to decentralization takes great responsibility of

the Chinese state, it also would lead the local crisis. Since the early 1980s, a system of fiscal responsibility has been introduced. Each province needs to sign a contract with the central government, stipulating the amount of funds that had to be forwarded to the center annually. The major step in this direction took the form of decollectivization of agriculture, which means declining agricultural subsidies. The declining agricultural subsidies are representing of a larger financial crisis of the local governments, particularly the poor areas. This requires the Chinese government a rapid increase in international borrowing. The increasing of international borrowing is for solving the local crisis, because the central government is afraid that local crisis would lead to political crisis for them. Since 1978 China has become a major receiver of aid, and by 1988 China was the largest recipient of World Bank loans. The World Bank estimated that one-third of state investment in agriculture was financed by foreign source in China. China's indebtedness in 1990 was around US $50 billion. In 1993, the debt was approximately US$70 billion.

From the above, it could be said that the Chinese government makes new relationships with foreign development agencies in order to solve financial crisis. The financial crisis leads to China more involve in foreign development

agencies. It is often assumed that foreign development agencies can lead to the

Chinese government and domestic development organizations competing for

funding shape their planned programs and activities around foreign

development agencies. In fact, when foreign development agencies try to

influence the Chinese government's policies through development projects, the

Chinese government would play the active role involving in the process. This

is obvious at the local government, because many development projects were

carried into practice in local level.

IV. The local government and new intermediary organizations

1. The local government

Following the introduction of the fiscal responsibility and the

decentralization of political and economic authority, both of which favored an

increase in the power of the local government. Since the reform, greater

reliance has been placed on the market and the market-oriented economic

levers such as the taxation and credit system especially in rural areas. In

addition, the establishment of village enterprises has been identified both

nationally and in the village as the most important income-generating rural

activity. These great changes make local government draw attention to the management of generating resources and income. Local governments are officially involved in their 'business' and economic activities in villages. This would enable them to continue to exercise their power in the village, especially local governments take positions as brokers between foreign development agencies and villagers.

With the growth of development projects in the rural areas, it may not be surprising that local governments' involvement certainly in development projects and programs become more active. More often, development workers from foreign development organizations are foreigners. They need to find local partners[5] to do development projects. These foreign development workers would take positions of project coordinators to monitor different development projects. When involving in development projects and programs, foreign development workers have limitation for their short periodic visits to give advice, provide training or conduct evaluation. Therefore, daily local management of development projects and programs almost rely on the local governments. Local government subtle directs influence the daily operations.

---

[5] Local partners include local governments and domestic development workers (see discussion in chapter six).

To take an example, many development projects would provide small loans to

villagers to encourage them to breed livestock or establish handicrafts industry.

It is not surprising that local officials would easily intervene in the village

procedures of selecting credit recipients. Foreign development agencies request

to incorporate PRA into development projects. The assumption of PRA is to let

more villagers make decisions. Although the use of PRA may encourage

villagers participate in the process of selection, local officials still play active

roles in the selection process. In principle, the projects' applicant lists would

pass on to the village committee, and the village head also needs to consult the

local officials. The result allows local officials to manipulate development

projects and programs. In coming years, the poverty alleviation projects[6]

request the officials to use PRA, local officials' intervention in development

projects are more directly. At present, local officials almost rely on domestic

development workers using PRA to do development programs. After learning

PRA, they could bypass domestic development workers and directly intervene

in the development projects. Here, PRA seems to become the term for local

officials to have status to do development projects. At present, local officials

began to request domestic development workers to provide PRA training. In a

---

[6] In China, most development projects refer to poverty alleviation projects. Here, poverty alleviation projects specified denote these poverty programs are from the Chinese government.

conference on 'The Participatory Capability Building in Community in China'[7], when the conference's participants were discussing about PRA, a domestic development worker complained to me that many local officials take PRA only a term for justifying their development work. When he was providing PRA training for local officials, some of local officials said to him,

'Don't tell me the logic of PRA, I just want to know how to get the poverty project done.'

'My salary would be reduced if I do not know how to conduct PRA, so you just teach me how to perform.'

Here, the wording of 'the logic of PRA' implies that PRA shares certain preoccupations and interest. In principle, PRA approach concerns in local culture and knowledge. It is supposing that the articulation of people's knowledge can transform top-down bureaucratic planning system. For instance, Chambers argues,

---

[7] A center for community development studies got funding from an international organization to hold this conference. This conference discussed community development, and the conference's participants were mainly from domestic development organizations such as PRA network, G-NGO, academics with social science background, research centers and etc.

The essence of PRA is changes and reversals – of role, behavior,

relationship and learning. Outsiders do not dominate and lecture; they

facilitate, sit down, listen and learn ... they do not transfer technology;

they share methods which local people can use for their own appraisal,

analysis, planning action, monitoring and evaluation.

(Chambers 1997:103)

PRA reduces dominance and is empowering to the poor, it is based on

'roles of expertise are reversed, with local people as experts and teachers, and

outsiders as novices' (Chambers 1997:117). Following this logic, PRA

participants request as facilitators to facilitate investigation, analysis,

presentation and learn by local people themselves. However, this may not be

the understanding of those practicing PRA in the field. One participant in a

PRA conference reported, one official expressed his pragmatic attitude towards

PRA training clearly when he said 'I just want to know how to get the poverty

project done'. This official obviously neglects PRA's principle and takes PRA

only as a term to justify doing development work. Another official also said,

'my salary would be reduced if I do not know how to conduct PRA'. The

sentence seems to imply that knowledge of PRA is tied to participants' material

interests. As discussed before, PRA, claimed as a 'New professionalism', has

begun to feature quite commonly in international organizations projects such

as the World Bank projects. International organizations such as the World Bank

try to use resource to influence the government's policies. The Chinese

government certainly needs to meet this agreement. This made local officials

follow the policy[8] to 'learn' PRA. International organizations try to influence

the Chinese government's policy to use PRA, because the policy seems to be

more progressive and more beneficiary to peasants. Nevertheless, the policy

was problematic in the conception of PRA. It sounds interesting because local

officials request simplified PRA training to qualify as PRA participants. The

eagerness to become PRA participants of local officials may be explained by

the fact that they were bound by the discourse of PRA, which required

'professionals' in promoting their 'professional excellence' to meet foreign

development agencies' requirements. Given the growing room for local official

intervention in development projects and programs, we can foresee some of

tensions in the future between the local government and international

organizations, largely because they have different interpretation on PRA and

participation. After 'learning' PRA, local officials could bypass domestic

---

[8] The policy means that the poverty alleviation projects request the officials to use PRA in
the coming years.

development organizations and international organizations. The result would allow local officials manipulate development projects.

2. Domestic development organizations

The Chinese government and domestic development organizations request to incorporate PRA into poverty alleviation programs, the concept certainly is imported from international organizations. International organizations believe that PRA let more villagers participate in development projects, but development project workers from international organizations have communication problem with local people in villages. In addition, they have no information about the villages. Thus, daily local management of development projects almost rely on the local government. In Chinese community it is a guanxi (relationship) network; which is especially important in rural areas. This may allow some of villagers who have relationships with the authorities' people such as local officials or village head to join development projects. To reach development project targets, international organizations face a problem to the dissemination of project information to more villagers. They need to find a way to bypass local officials' authorities and pass project information on villagers. International organizations began to

be aware of the importance of domestic development organizations in the development process during the reform decade in China. Domestic development organizations are identified as information and resource channels between international organizations and villages. Comparing with the Mao's era, it is difficult to find the case in Mao's era.

In Mao's era, the Chinese Community Party's control over society was restricting over rural-urban and urban-urban mobility. The individual's permanent identity is restricted by whether you are a peasant or worker. People were mobilized only through political campaigns organized by the party and the mass organizations. The mass organizations, such as All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) and the Communist Youth League, were set up by the party which used to mobilize people for its political purposes and to provide a channel for the propagation of Communist ideology. It could be said that the intermediate social organizations[9] roles were limited at that moment. With renewed membership in the UN in 1971 and the restoration of diplomatic ties with the United States in

---

[9] Some believed that as evidence of the existence of 'civil society', the development of intermediate social organizations is an indicator that demonstrates characteristics of separation and independence in their relationship with the state and voluntariness and self-regulation in their activities (White, Howell and Shang 1996:6). Here, the meaning of 'intermediate social organizations like the term 'intermediary organizations' (Howell and Pearce 2001).

1972, China became more involved in multilateral institutions and international affairs. This led to new intermediary organizations take off from the mid-1980s. New intermediary organizations included trade associations, professional associations, welfare organizations and nongovernmental organizations. The diversity and complexity of associations were absent in much of the Mao's era.

In mid-1980s, the government has created a parastatal non-profit sector, setting up foundations or organizations advancing charitable, research, and policy objectives. These organizations are Governmental NGOs (referred to as GONGO). It brought a rapid development of local NGO thereafter. In particular, China has established a large number of community development and environment protection organizations in 1990s. The Chinese government's awareness of the growing importance of such local NGOs is reflected in its endorsement of the international regional NGO conferences.

In the Fourth World Conference of Women as well as the NGO Forum in 1995, the conference was organized by a women's group and unregistered[10]

---

[10] Domestic development organizations need to register as NGOs, but only a few domestic development organizations meet the regulations (see discussed later).

women's groups were tolerated. It seems that the Chinese government relaxed the political space to domestic development organizations, but domestic development organizations play a minimal role in the advocacy of welfare policies. Actually, the economic reform brings about the increase of individual wealth, but also a rapid rise of unemployment, expansion of disparity between the rich and the poor, worsening of environmental pollution and so on. The government needs domestic NGOs to play their roles in the provision of welfare in solving such social problems. These domestic development organizations are likely to attract increasing international organizations support in the future. Hence, the Chinese government welcomes international organizations to support local NGOs. In the government's mind, domestic NGO is designed to extend state access to international fund in solving the financial crisis. But the government also has anxieties about social instability, because domestic NGOs could connect with foreign anti-government organizations or become pressure groups. Therefore, the government is in need of developing domestic NGOs to undertake some regulations so as to be under its control. The regulations for 'Registration on Social Organization Registration and Management' and 'Registration and Management of Civil Non-business Unit' are promulgated in 1998. These regulations for the

133

registration of NGOs involve the following requirements. Firstly, all

organizations must be sponsored by a government, state-party or mass

organization department in a 'relevant' field. Second, only one organization of

any one type is allowed to register at each administrative level (i.e. only one

environmental organization). Thirdly, organizations are not allowed to operate

outside of the area in which they are registered: i.e., an organization registered

in Yunnan Province may not lawfully undertake activities in Guizhou (see

China Development Brief, Autumn 2002). Under these regulations, only a few

domestic development organizations meet the requirements to register as NGO

in the development filed. The regulations also limited autonomy to these

domestic development organizations. In 1998, the Ministry of Civil Affairs

checked up and reorganized social organizations all over the country and

investigated and prosecuted a lot of illegal cases or principle-breaking cases of

China's social organizations. The administrative procedure makes the process

of registration more complicated, and the number of social organizations

decreased from 220,000 in 1998 to 17,000 in 1999.

The above case of NGO registration is to see how the regulations for

domestic development organizations are fully under the government's control.

No doubt, there have been significant changes in the relation between domestic development organizations and international organizations in the market reform period. It seems that the market reform would bring the growing of domestic development organizations. Yet, if international organizations say the process of reform and the growing of domestic development organizations had radically reduced in central and local state authorities, I think these shifts are far from signifying the dramatic decline in state power anticipated by domestic development organizations. International organizations' assumption is too simple to understand the complex dynamic of the power struggle between different institutions. In China-development field, international organizations often assume that they can lead to the Chinese government competing for funding shape their planned programs and activities, but the fact is that the Chinese government strategically deploys international organization's policies to serve its own politics. As PRA is becoming a strategy to cooperate with the international organizations' policies, the Chinese government will adopt and redefine PRA to implement into development policy. This can be viewed in the Chinese government interpretation of the discourse of PRA 'with Chinese characteristics'.

At the present moment, Chinese government not only is using PRA in all poverty projects but also invites academic to draft a handbook for PRA approach. In my interview with one of the draftspersons[11], he said that development field needs a PRA approach handbook with Chinese characteristics. He explained that the concept of PRA is from the western countries, which may not be suited for China because of the different culture background. Therefore, the government needs a PRA approach handbook with Chinese characteristics to suit for Chinese culture background. This made me question what the cultural meaning of 'with Chinese characteristics' invited by the Chinese government does.

In the 'China Development Brief'[12] paper of 'New poverty Alleviation strategy Promises Targeting and Participation with Chinese Characteristics', it is clearly shown that the wording brings China closer to mainstream international practices. As mentioned in Chapter Four, international

---

[11] He is working in the Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Science.

[12] China Development Brief is a newsletter about the events of China-development field. The article of 'New poverty Alleviation strategy Promises Targeting and Participation with Chinese Characteristics' reported the official Chinese view.

organizations have adopted the wording of capacity building, participation and

sustainable development to develop the concept of PRA. The paper said,

> ...New working principles will bring China closer to mainstream
>
> international practice in areas such as participation and sustainability'.
>
> (China Development Brief, Autumn 2001:1)

> There is little sign of planners having considered changing the actors in
>
> poverty alleviation work to include the poor themselves, by methods
>
> such as capacity building training to allow farmers from poor villages to
>
> run their own projects.
>
> (China Development Brief, Autumn 2001:2)

We can see that the international practice words of 'capacity building',

'sustainability' and 'participation' are presented in the paper. Generally, the

international practice principles will guide the implementation of poverty

alleviation but interpreted by different actors. What is the meaning of 'PRA

'with the Chinese characteristics' mentioned by the Chinese government? The

paper said:

The official embrace of 'participation' as a guiding principle of future

work appears to chime with the current orthodoxy of many international

development agencies...However, closer inspection of the Chinese

wording of this principle may dispel any expectations of instant

institutional conversion to bottom-up community development

approaches. 'Zhengfu zhudao, gongtong canyu' means 'joint

participation under the guidance of the government'. It remains to be

seen what this will amount to.

(China Development Brief, Autumn 2001:3)

It may be that such phrasing with a mandatory nod to government

leadership, was necessary for advocates of participatory techniques to

obtain the State Council's blessing for the new methodology. But how

new is it? Mr. Wang (the interviewee of the official) emphasized that

the participatory principle lay well within the Communist Party's

traditional maxim of 'from the masses to the Party and from the Party

to the masses'.

(China Development Brief, Autumn 2001:3)

The discourse of 'joint participation under the guidance of the government' and 'from the masses to the Party and from the Party to the masses' clearly show that the Chinese government's ideology guide the implementation of poverty alleviation. This let us to understand 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' and the meaning of international practice principles interpreted by the Chinese government. Under the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics', the international principle of 'participation' is interpreted as 'participation must under the government's control' by the Chinese government.

From the above, we can see that how the Chinese government adopts and redefines the international organizations' policies. Here PRA does not provide a discursive space for the emergence of bottom-up nature of participation in the Chinese government. By contrast, PRA provides a discursive space for the Chinese government negotiating their interests. In practice, the discursive space allows the officials to exercise their power to intervene into the poverty alleviation programs. As noted earlier, the Chinese government is requested to incorporate PRA into poverty alleviation projects by international

organizations. The Chinese government strategically inscribes 'with Chinese characteristic' on PRA, the international principle of 'participation' is thus interpreted as 'participation must under the government's control' by the central government. At the local level, local officials strategically take 'simplified PRA training' to meet the central policy. To the extent that it presents the complexity and dynamics of discourse of PRA, and the complex dynamic of the power struggle between different actors. It could be said that China-development field has created an arena for different local actors appropriating the discourse of PRA. PRA, claimed as 'New professionalism', as discursive discourse has become the 'professional technique' to lie with anti-poverty based on empowering the poor, rather than reducing poverty. Nowadays, many domestic development workers claim themselves as PRA professors in practicing development work. Here the discursive practice of 'PRA with Chinese characteristic' has been reproduced as the regime of truth by CCP. Under the discourse of 'with Chinese characteristic', PRA has become the mainstream development strategies in China-development field.

VI. Conclusion

Some would argue that the government was often ideologically guided by the international organizations, but as we have seen, this is not the case. Actually, the discourse of PRA has been appropriated by the needs of the Chinese government. Since Deng's China impetus to rapid economic growth is strong; it requires a bold new approach about development to meet international organizations' agreements for solving the pressing social and economic crisis. In this political context, PRA takes on multiple meaning and significance functions for the Chinese government's development intervention. At present, the Chinese government welcomes international organizations to support domestic NGOs. It is because the Chinese government recognizes that domestic development organizations perform useful functions both for the state and the market and have promoted welfare as well as community services. Domestic development organizations are likely to attract increasing international organizations support in the future. Therefore, the Chinese government welcomes the growth of domestic NGOs and the use of PRA, it does not thereby mean that there is genuine bottom-up participation in society.

In fact, there is room for interpretations and maneuver for different actors, because the concept of participation may be subjected to different interpretations, giving raise to different conceptions of participants. Thus, in this light, who interprets and gives concrete shape to what constitutes 'participation' in actual practice is a significant issue. PRA tried to present the process of sharing in a seemingly value-free manner. This kind of 'just listened without intervention' is critiqued by some scholars. For instance, Von Kotze (1998) stated that in the recent history of relocation by donor aid and dependency on emergency relief, local people had become pawns in political events, rather than agents of their own lives. Therefore, how such planning possible without placing local conditions within the context of a broader socioeconomic and political framework is a question. Given the rooms for interpretation, we can only say that the Chinese government strategically selects PRA to pursue their objectives. The Chinese government is politically and administratively cooperating with the international organizations. Under the circumstance, China-development produces 'normative' position for domestic development participants addressing PRA incorporating the international organizations. Here the 'normative' position is very important because development project is a political issue in China-development field.

Nowadays, China-development has become as an arena[13] for different actors react on the discourse of PRA. If we view the domestic development organizations as actors involving in the development process, we would ask how they encounter in the discourse on 'PRA with Chinese characteristics'.

So far, in the previous chapter, I have tried to address the discourse of PRA that is constructed by international organizations. This chapter shows that the Chinese government has used 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' politically to safeguard its control in China-development field. Most likely, some would argue that how the Chinese government or international organizations view the discourse of PRA will affect the way domestic development workers perceive the discourse. Thus there is a need to address the Chinese government's and international organizations' perception on the discourse of PRA in order to fruitfully understand the domestic development organizations' encounter in the discourse in China. In chapters six and seven, I will focus on how the domestic development workers constitute their strategies to purse their objectives.

---

[13] According to Long (2001), arenas are space in which contests over issues, claims, values, meanings and representations take place; they are sites of struggle within and across domains.

CHAPTER SIX

PRA as an arena for negotiation of domestic development organizations

'The National Poverty Reduction Plan, which has been associated with significant reduction of poverty, will conclude at the end of 2008, has large-scale government programs' money', a domestic development worker said at a conference.

I. Introduction

In the previous chapters, I have mentioned that the state strategically select to pursue their objectives when imposing the international organizations' polices. The Chinese government produces 'normative' position for domestic development organizations addressing PRA cooperating with the international organizations but under its control. The works of international organizations such as Chambers and the World Bank came to be influenced by promotion of PRA. Nowadays, PRA has become a normative framework in China-development field. In coming years, all poverty projects in domestic development organizations receive resources from the Chinese government that are requested to use PRA approach. Thus, PRA is becoming a strategy for creating a space for domestic development workers negotiating their interest. As more and more people claimed to be experts on PRA, many domestic

development organizations have been established within these years. Some of these people are good at speaking foreign languages, so that they can directly contact with the international organizations and establish their own works. These domestic development organizations are different from PRA networks in how they understand the meaning of PRA and how these understandings of PRA are put into practice at local level. The emergence of large-scale development organizations leads the dynamics of different domestic development organizations and an argument of the PRA orthodoxy in the development field. In the study on this dynamic of discourse and power in the representation by the domestic development organizations, Long suggests that it is important to unravel the discourses utilized in specific arenas of struggle, especially where actors vie with each other for control over resources in pursuit of their own livelihood concerns.

This chapter attempts to unpack the conflict between different domestic development workers and organizations, with particular reference to their relationships with the Chinese government. As noted earlier, the Chinese government and international organizations would perceive their ideologies and intervene in the development field. Under the circumstance, the domestic development workers have internalized the discourse of PRA and made selective use of it to suit their different

purposes under different political economic contexts. As the result, PRA is becoming

a new mode of strategy interpreted by different domestic development workers.

II. The political environment for Domestic development organizations

(NGOs) in China- development field

Recently, there is a growth of domestic development organizations or institutions

with a range of development strategies, and all are pursuing their own concepts of

participatory development. The concept of participation development, particularly in

the work of the philosophy of PRA network, strengthened the PRA movement in

China in the 1990s. This is because Chambers' group called for establishing work

among the PRA networks in different countries. In addition, the emergence of

large-scale government and bilateral programs developed a number of research

centers or institutions in response to these development programs. These development

programs specifically focused on environmental protection and implementing

participatory programs among the rural peasants. This threw up some participation

principles and ideas for 'people's participation' and 'bottom-up management'. In this

context, these domestic development organizations or even PRA networks are very

difficult to define and categorize non-governmental organizations (NGOs) according

to their activities' approaches because they all claim to use PRA approach. In development field, NGO is a fashionable term used to 'refer to any organization that is not a direct division of a national government' (Weisgrau 1997:4). It is a common situation which development organizations are not established by the government in China-development field. One of the reasons is that it is difficult for domestic development organizations to meet the requirements because the regulations are strict rules of registration. Therefore, only few domestic development organizations meet the requirements to register as NGOs. According to one of my informants, their organizations need to register in order to do development work in China. Normally, they will establish a research center or institution but not an independent organization identifying as an NGO to do development works. These research centers or institutions such as academics of social sciences, community development research centers, institutions of ethnic culture, obtain funding from international organizations and the state council to do development projects. Many of these research centers or institutions attached in the academic field and PRA networks are not so called NGOs but registered organizations. Many domestic development workers who do the development work are part-time workers. Some research centers are independent organizations but registered at the Business Administration Department. These organizations employ full-time staff to do development projects. This also raises an

interesting question as to why these organizations do not register as NGOs.

In fact, many domestic development organizations will choose not to register as NGOs, because the government looks on domestic NGO as a political issue in development field. Domestic development organizations choose to attach in universities, so as to find a shelter for them to avoid the political context. More importantly, it is easy to associate the term NGO with foreign anti-government organizations or pressure groups in the government's mind. Domestic development organizations thus strategically choose not to register for distinguishing themselves from the radical implication of NGO. This leads to understand why some research centers claimed as non-profit organizations but registered at the Business Administration Department. In my fieldwork experience, most of domestic development workers claim themselves as PRA participants or PRA experts but seldom identify themselves as NGO people. Domestic development organizations' perspectives on relationship between NGO and self-identification can be understood within the increasing PRA approach. Their self-identification by domestic development organizations with PRA experts might provide status or positions for them to do development work. That is why local officials need short cut PRA training and then to do development projects. More importantly, the term PRA tends to be

neutral and not political. Domestic development organizations claimed as PRA experts are easy to attract international organizations and avoid taking political advantage.

Actually, the term NGO is itself a catchword in international organizations that implies a 'civilizing function'. Domestic development organizations very often do not have an explicit definition of the term NGO underlying their strategic plans. Take as an example, a research center's statement mentioned: 'To create greater awareness and understanding among policy makers and civil society about the actual and potential roles of local communities in natural resources management.' The above probably would be acceptable as a starting point to the domestic development organization: 'The strategy is establishing community development action funds to impact the awareness and participation of society for community development.' Domestic development workers are much more aware of international organizations' vocabulary and wordings and have taken pain to incorporate catchwords such as 'PRA' or 'NGO' into reports and proposals of development projects. It could be said that this is also the strategy for domestic development organizations existing in China development field.

Here, the politics of NGO registration allows us to see how the regulations for local development organizations came under the government's control. We also see how domestic development organizations strategically use PRA to suit the political context. Their strategies relate to the posing of their positions for the government or international organizations, with particular reference to how they interpret and identify the knowledge of PRA. This is the subject of discussion in the next section.

III. 'PRA': The Orthodoxy and Implications

Before portraying the impact of different actors involved, I need to categorize these domestic development organizations; definitely, I find it difficult to define and categorize these local development organizations according to their activities, because they all claim to do PRA and the working approaches are similar. For the sake of discussion, I distinguish three kinds of domestic development organizations according to their background. The background refers to their relationships with different international organizations such as Chambers' group or the World Bank and the Chinese government. Presumably, these domestic development organizations, claimed by the international organizations, are development agents to reach the rural people in development areas. Although they do not live in that community locally, they claim to

have the ability to promote local-level participation in programs addressing local need

and fostering capacity building within a community.

1. PRA networks - such as Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan and Beijing. These

networks are not formal organizations but open groups for development participants

to join. They have close relationship with Chambers' group and some international

organizations such as Oxfam, Ford Foundation (福特基金). Many members are

trained by Chambers or have studied in an overseas development course in Thailand

or the Philippines sponsored by international organization such as Ford Foundation

and Winrock International.

2. The independent institutions or research centers generally supported by

European and North American funds such as Rockefeller Foundation, Department for

International Development (DFID), and staffed by people who work in these agencies.

This type of development intervention is generally more research-related.

3. Foreign capital project management centers - these organizations are in

relation to state government. In other word, the operative word is 'government': state

policy shapes these organizations' potential range of development strategies in the

rural communities in which they operate. They are referred to as production-related

organizations, with credit programs or income-generation supported by the state

council leading group or grant organizations such as the World Bank, United Nations

Development Program (UNDP) or etc.

Their strategies are important to show certain kinds of ideas influenced by the

western thinking of participation development, but there are different ideologies that

stem from what in the relationship between the international organizations and the

Chinese government. Actually, these domestic development workers are more

strategically participating in the development encounter. The set of ideas and practices

drew these domestic development organizations to compose their own strategies,

either to become strategists to negotiate their own interests, for example getting funds

from overseas donors; or they could reflect on the discourse of PRA. These three

kinds of domestic development organizations will be discussed below in detail.

IV. PRA network

'PRA network is like a forum to let people discuss', a core member of PRA

network said.

As we have known, PRA networks are not formal organizations but open groups

for development participants to join. These networks have close relationships with

Chambers' group, because Chambers' group has established PRA networks in

different provinces. Many members in these networks enjoy this background, perhaps

because Chambers is the first person to advocate PRA approach in

China-development field. This background leads many development participants to

believe that the orthodoxy of PRA is delivered for PRA network by Chambers' group.

So the first generation who adopted PRA was the people who joined Chambers'

training workshop in 1993, Yunnan. At present, the people who have joined

Chambers' training workshops became the core member in PRA networks and played

the important roles such as consultants or trainers in the China development field.

Comparing with other kinds of organizations, these PRA Network members take PRA

approach seriously. I chatted with a member of PRA network who joined the PRA

workshop conducted by Robert Chambers. When we were talking about the recent

development of PRA in China, we touched upon the dynamics of different PRA

networks established by different countries. She complained that one of PRA

networks is not professional. One of the reasons why she regards that network as

unprofessional is that this particular PRA network was established later than the

network she joined. Also, the members in this network have not attended the training

workshop trained by Robert Chambers. In her view, this is a sign of incompetence. She regarded their works on PRA as not professional enough despite the fact that this network claimed itself as professional. She illustrated:

'PRA approach is not only as a tool for research but also represents a particular attitude or value. PRA approach demands of the researcher to make commitment and not only treating it as a job. Unfortunately, skilled PRA have become as an opportunity for earning money'.

Her conversation revealed her reflection on the discourse of 'PRA' approach. The words of 'make commitment and not only treating it as a job' implied that she drew up some PRA principles and value of critical awareness and personal responsibility presented by Chambers: to put people before things, to value judgement and commitment. Apparently, she was heavily influenced by Chambers. Perhaps this implies the background of whether you have received the training by Chambers that will influence the power you have in the PRA network and assess whether the orthodoxy of PRA you believe. The set of philosophy has influence on how PRA networks' members view their positions in the PRA groups which creates a hidden hierarchy within the PRA network. This is seen when the PRA network members

compare with other PRA network groups to establish ranking between people.

A core member revealed that the network he joined was not bigger than the one in Yunnan. The funding is smaller than Yunnan's. He illustrates that the Yunnan PRA network is the earliest network and actually helped to establish the network he joined; many international organizations have known them before. Also, he regarded his network members as not experienced and professional enough. He explained that many members of Yunnan had academic background and had been doing PRA for many years. In short, Yunnan PRA network is well established and his network needs to learn from them. Reviewing the conversation with him and the senior member trained by Robert Chambers, it seems that the Yunnan PRA network is regarded by them as something like an ideal model. The hidden hierarchy is also present in an interview with a young member. A young member said that she is very fresh in the PRA Network, because she does not have a lot of experience to do PRA projects and has just finished the training by the old members. So the first PRA project she proposed would invite the old member to join the working team, learning from her and giving advice. She thinks that this would benefit the proposal approval. In her view, the senior members[1] have influenced power in the PRA network, because they

---

[1] A senior member means a domestic development worker having experiences in development field.

155

have more knowledge of PRA from the training by Chambers.

Apparently, the hidden hierarchy created by a division based on quality, rank, such as: trained by whom, having how much experience to do PRA project, from which year the network established, how many memberships in the network or how much funding the networks get. The hidden hierarchy implies that they construct the orthodoxy of PRA ideas influenced by Chambers. The orthodoxy of PRA influenced by Chambers is the strategy for PRA networks' members to negotiate their power, both internally and externally. Observably, when talking with these senior members, they could be more critical in the development issue. When I discussed the issues concerning the PRA handbook that was going to be published by the Chinese government, the senior development participants were more active in presenting their options. The informants were greatly disappointed to learn that the Chinese government was going to publish a PRA handbook for development work.

'It is too terrible if PRA has become a set of regulations. PRA is not like a factory that you can follow the regulations step by step to do the development work', she said.

'The PRA Handbook needs to be modified by the World Bank, the part of tradition culture will be deleted', the other commented.

'The government has taken the concept of PRA to alleviate poverty projects, but the rural people know that the poverty alleviation projects are equal to money', said another.

'The poor people fully understand what local development participants want in poverty alleviation', another said.

Clearly, these senior members of PRA network criticize the policies of the central government. They even express their reflections on the policies of the World Bank. The words of 'the PRA Handbook needs to be modified by the World Bank' and 'the government has taken the concept of PRA to alleviate poverty projects' show these senior domestic development workers understood that the Chinese government and international organizations would influence their views on domestic development organizations and intervene in the development practice. In this context, PRA Handbook seems to become a tool for the World Bank and the Chinese government to purse their objectives. If we say the establishment of PRA to make bottom-up

participation, the saying seems to too simply to understand the political context in this issue. Actually, the establishment of PRA Handbook is only the 'professional' term for the Chinese government and domestic development workers appropriating the international organizations' requirements. It could be said that the 'professional' term is constructed by different actors to negotiate their interests. Therefore, domestic development workers may know what the establishment of PRA is. The informant's statement that 'PRA is not like a factory that you can follow the regulations step by step to do the development work' may reveal the informant's disagreement with the establishment of PRA handbook. The wording of 'the poor people fully understand what local development participants want in poverty alleviation' presents a picture of the poor people, as actors involving into the development process, with the ability to understand the poverty alleviation programs as a political issue. From these senior domestic development workers' conversation, do we say this mean that the PRA handbook would bring bottom-up participation in the development process?

In sum, we find that some senior members of PRA network express their reflections on the policies of the central government and the policies of the World Bank. Yet, when we consider other kinds of organizations, that may not be the case. To hear the reflections on the policies of government, especially in capital project

management centers which have relations with state government may not be that easy,

when compared to that of PRA networks.

V. Capital project management centers

In development field, many 'capital project management centers' acting as

consultants to do poverty projects are established within these years. These

management centers are called G-NGOs (government-non government organizations).

In other words, the operative word is 'government': the state policy that shapes these

organizations' potential range of development. These management centers regularly

invite experts from international organizations to train their officials. Many meetings

will be organized for domestic and international development organizations and there

will be publications as well. Most importantly, most of these management centers

claimed to be professionally equipped with PRA knowledge, playing the roles as

auditors to assess and evaluate the poverty projects required by the state and the

international organizations such as the World Bank. Considering that the economic

production projects are supported by these management centers, it is not surprising

that they may be critical of state policies when comparing with PRA networks. In my

fieldwork experiences, I find that many management centers take their views on

government's side in conferences. For example, in a conference on 'The Participatory Capability Building in Community in China', when the participants were discussing the role of the domestic development workers in the development projects, the management centers' staff insisted that the roles of 'Chinese NGOs' must be expertise and the official must intervene into the process. His thinking could be seen in a dialogue with other participants.

'If the projects were not requested by the government, you find it difficult to execute the projects. So, if you want to promote development projects, the official must intervene into the process. Most of us are the experts who get funding to do development works, but not the local people actually'. A management center staff said.

'If the expert is the person who assesses the problems in a community, then what is the resource for the expert to use and what roles of the local people play in this assessment process'? A participant asked.

'The community does not have enough capability building and there is no

direction to build up the community, we go there to find many problems easily'. The management center staff said.

'If there is an interest conflict between the government and the local people, what should you do'? The participant asked.

'The policies of the government represent the interest of local people', the management center staff said.

Apparently, the management center staff takes the side of the government. The wording of 'requested by the government' and 'the official must intervene into the process' clearly present their political position. Their position has influenced how they react to the development issue. The wording of 'the policies of the government represent the interest of local people' shows that 'If there is an interest conflict between the government and the local people', these project management center would take the side of the government. Their strategies relate to the posing of their positions for the government, and reference to how they interpret the knowledge of PRA. Apparently, the center staff has different interpretation on PRA. For common

understanding, PRA approach assumed that the people have capability building to build up the community. But the management center staff's statement 'the community has not enough capability building and no direction to build up the community, we go there to find many problems easily' simply denied the people's capability in this regard. As we know, the state policy will shape these organizations' potential range of development. The center staff's conversation certainly drew up some value that the peasants need to be eligible, presented by the state. Like Foreign Capital Project Management Center[2] report states:

'The goal of this technical assistance project is to provide more effective policy framework for Chinese government and strategic suggestion for international organizations such as Asian Development Bank for their more efficient efforts on China's poverty reduction. The major contents are better understanding of what is poverty and its measurement, who are the poor, what are the key causes related to poverty, the experiences and lessons relevant to Chinese government's efforts on poverty reduction, the constraints the poor are facing, etc'.

As discussed before, PRA has become the new type of knowledge, which aims to

---

[2] The center is under the auspices of State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation.

make sure the peasants engage in the market. Here, the discourses 'what is poor and its measurement', 'who are the poor', 'what are the key reasons related to poverty' is operated by the official discourse of the state. In the article of China Development Brief (2001) states:

Senior officials with the Leading Group for Poverty Reduction (LGPR) say there will be new methods to assess who the poor are, and greater flexibility on the threshold set for the national poverty line. Targeting of projects will be improved by channeling assistance to poor villages rather than officially designated poor counties, and new working principles will bring China closer to mainstream international practice in areas such as participation and sustainability.

(China Development Brief, Autumn 2001:1)

These management centers' working approaches manifested the state policy or the international organizations that shapes their development strategies. Here, the official discourse of 'participation' is as a guiding principle, which means 'joint participation under the guidance of the government'. Under this principle, funding for

poverty alleviation projects will continue to a large microfinance (see China Development Brief, October 2001). Naturally, the word 'participation' is used to mean 'empowering the weakest and poorest'. To Wright (1994), 'once these words come into everyday use in policy-making organizations, they may appear neutral and "common sense", yet they still carry their ideological positioning with them. In order to analyze the impact of participatory initiatives in organizational contexts, it is therefore important to denaturalize these words and see their ideological implications'.

.

I interviewed a participant who is the representative of Women Federation (婦聯). She said that her project was using PRA approach to identity the local people's needs and the program would be designed thereafter. A micro credit project was run so as to generate more self-sufficiency by the local people. The project benefited local people more than before. When I asked if the project would benefit the poorest rural people, she said, 'no, the poorest people have no capabilities to pay back the loan. We need to guarantee that the debts would be paid by repayment, so we will choose someone who has the capabilities to repay'. The above case study demonstrates how the project facilitators seek to promote 'participation' by local people in the credit system without involving the poorest villagers. These constructions of PRA

knowledge privileged certain interpretations of local 'needs'. It could also be said that

the terms of 'sustainability' and 'capacity building' in participatory development

convince people 'ready to participate fully in the development design'. To guarantee

that the development projects would be successful (to maintain the 'sustainability'

development), the poorest were marginalized in the participatory process (where they

have no capacity building).

Here, these management organizations present the knowledge of PRA as

strategies to negotiate their interests, for example, presenting their micro credit

project (小額信貸) to favor the state. Also, these management organizations said to

adopt PRA model, but in practice, they promote PRA, when they promote PRA, they

still employ a top-down model. More strategically, these management organizations

would implement the fashionable terms of 'sustainability' and 'capacity building' into

development projects. But rural people usually have been seen as the 'objects' rather

than the 'subject' in the participatory management even in the programs planning.

VI. The independent institutions or research centers

Actually, this is a common phenomenon. In many development projects,

individuals or poor groups are encouraged by domestic development workers to generate more income for themselves through credit, and the poorest are excluded in these income generation projects. This problem is widely known among local development participants. In the conference on The Participatory Capability Building in Community in China, an independent research centers' participant said,

'The poorer countries get less resources, many poverty projects of the government are not for the poor... Only five percent of poverty funding goes directly to helping the poor in need, but forty-five percent of it one used on the poor indirectly, such as accessing to electricity, or transportation and road access. That is the situation on the poverty projects of the government[3]...

As discussed in chapter five, the bureaucracy has not focused on the redistribution of poverty alleviation funds in order to develop security programs and to help those in need. The poverty alleviation programs had too much of a direction towards the economic generation of income. Here, his conversation presents that what the situation on the poverty projects in development practice. As he said, 'Only five percent of poverty funding goes directly to helping the poor in need, but forty-five

---

[3] The informant did not mention about the remains of fifty percent. Here, I interpret the meaning of the informant' statement is that only few part of poverty funding goes directly to helping the poor in need.

percent of it one used on the poor indirectly, such as accessing to electricity, or transportation and road access'. The independent research centers' participant also said,

'Nowadays, all government poverty projects use the participatory approach...We must not treat the participatory approach as a political campaign, but the government would like to do that'.

The wording of 'we must not treat the participatory approach as a political campaign, but the government would like to do' clearly shows that he could reflect on the PRA knowledge even the political actions of government. He could reflect on the PRA knowledge, but also strategies for negotiating their position. In the fieldwork of development, many independent organizations, claimed as the expertise on PRA, were established within these years. These centers or institutions registered at the Business Administration Department as staff agencies to provide consultancy to the visiting international NGOs or government in China to launch projects or programs. Most likely, they organize PRA training courses, workshops to international NGO according to those agreement and requirements and then get the consultant fee through these programs. Like a center said,

'To undertake feasibility study, research, appraisal, managing and executing programs and projects for the economic and community development in poor, ethnic, remoter areas in China. To submit the program or project progress, financial statements to international NGO according to those agreed criteria and requirements'.

Many of these organizations take the positions as a bridge between local communities and policy decision-makers i.e. government agencies and the World Bank, etc. This implies certain kind of PRA principle of partnership presented by the World Bank. The World Bank claimed to be working increasingly in partnership with NGOs too, it would take advantage of their closer links with 'the poor' and better meet their objective of fighting poverty. It is because 'the most successful examples of Bank-NGO collaboration are those in which NGOs have worked as partners' (World Bank 1994:20). Actually, domestic development organizations have resumed an advisory role to government, carrying out foreign development organizations' policy-related researches and programs. How do domestic development organizations view their positions on these 'partner' relationships between them and international organizations? What is the implication of the term partnership?

As mentioned in chapter four, partnership is a loose term for different

international organizations as a strategy to achieve their development goals. International organizations have their authorities and power to decide the terms of their engagement. They can through the 'partnership' process influence domestic development organizations. For domestic development organizations, arguably, the term 'partnership' is also a popular strategy for these domestic development organizations negotiating funding that would influence their position. For example, many of them visit the conferences talking about PRA to launch projects or programs. Observably, these conferences would identify some cases or projects to fund after their presentation and discussion, so they would present how professionals on PRA so as to please the donors. The knowledge of PRA is for them to negotiate their interest. Actually, they are clear in their positions on the relationship with international organizations. On the conference, when discussing about what principles or requirements the development projects need, the participants said,

'These tasks must let the "boss" to set up', said a participant.

'We need to mark contracts for auditing', the other suggested.

'And the audit process is for "boss" to manage', said another.

169

'Anyway, it is time for the "boss" to tell us what they need', the other said.

Here, 'the boss' means the donor, which describes these organizations, treated its donor 'partner' as Perera (1997) portrayed 'as a subcontractor, not a partner'. To illustrate how unequal the partnership and how inconsistent donors can be, Perera points out:

'While espousing participation, devolution, stakeholder analysis and so on, donors sought to impose hastily prepared plans produced by visiting consultants ... The temptation for donors (who are ordinary humans after all) to throw their weight about is almost impossible to resist' (quoted by Crewe & Harrison 1998:73).

This implies an obvious power imbalance between the giver and the receiver of money. For example, donor agencies can, through administrative procedures, set a scene of thematic breadth of programs and projects to influence funding applicants. But the term 'boss' also implies that these domestic development organizations know their position not as a partner but as a subcontractor and are clear in their positions on the relationship with international organizations. Actually, these domestic development organizations are actively involving in the process, they are 'situated' in

a political context influencing what the strategies they select to pursue their objective.

In the meeting, each participant would present their own project, and then would recommend some development participants they have known for joining the projects identified for funding. They thus would recommend the people who have similar experiences and who have worked in the same groups and coming from the same province to do those kinds of projects. This encouraged the more experience development participants to get involve but the less experienced to be excluded in the launching process. For example, an environment project is well known in natural resource management, I have heard their presentation in most of the meetings I have attended. Therefore, the phenomenon could be explained why these conferences are opened for only some selective development groups. In other words, these organizations would find 'partners' to launch the projects at these conferences supported by the donor 'partner'. This is not only the case in these independent institutions but a common phenomenon in the development field including the PRA networks even the management centers. Thus, 'partnership' means not the slogan by the founders but strategies for domestic development workers to negotiate their objects.

In sum, with the market reform, there are a number of domestic development

organizations in China development field. Simply put, I categorize three kinds of these domestic development organizations, namely PRA networks, the independent institutions and foreign capital project management. These organizations have different ideologies that stem from what their relationship is between the international organizations and the Chinese government. There are different actors such as the international organizations, the state and Chambers groups interacting and ideologies influencing with these domestic development organizations. But these domestic development workers need to develop effective strategies to deal with state policies, but they are not free to adopt any strategies they like, as they are 'situated' in a political context which conditions the strategies they may select to pursue their objective. In this process, some of these participants tend to reflect on some PRA principles and value of critical awareness and personal responsibility. These observations may indicate that this group of participants is more reflective. Some of them seem to link to what Chambers say 'people-center'. The more strategies of these organizations have origins in the negotiations over access to resources from the Chinese government and donor agencies. Apparently, the G-NGO would take side on the government when there are interests conflict between the government and the peasant. As just noted, to categorize the responses of these local development participants as either 'reflective' or 'strategic' may be misleading.

Although some of these organizations are more reflective than others, most of

these organizations have no critical awareness of the market-orientation, as

demonstrated by a representing paper in the conference on 'The Participatory

Capability Building in Community in China' stated:

'The growing track record of polarization in China has led to increasing concern

about poverty reduction. From an institutional arrangement standpoint, how the

poverty-reduction institution are [is] able to be well fitted into the market-driven

system would be considered as a key component of the structural transformation of

Chinese society. The research deals with how the empowerment of the poor could link

to institutional innovation and how the community becomes the crucial field where

the subjectiveness of the poor could be constructed and practicable...'

(Shen Hong 2002:40)

The market-driven system, as discussed in the previous chapters, is forced by the

Chinese government to view economic reform as a necessary step. In the discourse of

173

marketization, the domestic development workers' mission was to rescue the peasants.

Nowadays, the international organizations and the Chinese government are promoting

income-generating programs or credit programs which have become the mainstream

development programs. The mission of the domestic development organizations are

thus to improve the economic conditions of the communities within which they work.

This interpretation would influence how the domestic development workers assess the

local people need and neglect other kinds of need in a community i.e. social service.

In particular, they would identify these kinds of work with modernization.

More importantly, these domestic development workers' taken for granted the

legitimacy of modernization. That might explain why they tend to accept the

market-oriented vision of development of the central government. Given the above

analysis, it may not be surprising that development plans are formulated without

sufficient consideration of the social or cultural context of 'the village'. In a

conference on 'The Participatory Capability Building in Community in China', when

talking about the rural situation, a participant pushed for enterprise development (產

業化發展) as a mechanism for promoting the modernization of China production

systems (現代化農業發展) in rural areas. Actually, this view is very common in

development field. For many domestic development workers, how they understand

the meaning of 'land' may be related to a general image of 'economic' development. The values of 'land' are understood under the framework of market economy. That is to say, the economic concepts of supply and demand, price or capital significantly shapes how the domestic development workers understood the meaning of 'land'. Some domestic development workers are now accounting much of the contemporary poverty to the peasants' inability to acquire more market information from which they can support their production. In an effort to address these self-identified priorities, these organizations thus set up credit programs in rural around China. The participant said:

'Now, the economy is the first priority in Guangdong (廣東). The people have two pieces of land: one is for self-consumption and one is for market exchange. The goal is for earning money but not the quality of its productions'.

The domestic development worker is talking about the modern way of life; this embodies a particular view of economic behavior which is based on a pre-defined set of imagination and biases such as a market economy. In the meeting, another participant argued that the enterprise development is not beneficial to the peasants, because the traditional agriculture production of different crops takes place principally

within a particular piece of land. Enterprise development is promoting a large-scale

production of a single crop across a huge area and thus relies heavily on the markets.

But the markets are very uncertain; there will be a lot of risks for the peasants.

Moreover, the model of large-scale production will restructure the soil and the land

cannot return back to the old cropping patterns. It is clear from the above discussion

that many development projects have potential biases when interpreting the concept

of the land; these biases come from the project itself but more so from the

development participants themselves. Actually, in the mainstream academic discourse,

most of the mainland scholars maintained that rural reform is a necessary step to

develop the agricultural-commodity economy. In my interview with some scholars,

they all accept the view that rural reform helps commercialize local economy. Thus,

the penetration of a market economy into the rural during the economic reform in

China has led many domestic development workers to accept modernization that have

tended to support farmers to engage in market exchange. The problem evolves from

what Mosse (1995) said, 'dominant views will tend to dominate', and he illustrates,

'...PRA, far from providing a neutral vehicle for local knowledge, actually

creates a context in which the selective presentation of opinion is likely to be

exaggerated, and where minority or deviant views are likely to be suppressed. In

practical terms' community priorities' such as a school, soil and water conservation, social forestry or well deepening conceal private interests'. (1995:13)

Local NGOs' views of economy is not necessary the same as rural farmers' conception of economy. Land is treated by economists as resources and capital for investment and reinvestment for profit. But to peasants, land is for survival, but not for capital accumulation and making profit. According to Ku's (1998) anthropological study in a South Chinese village, the peasants often think that:

'Land provides food to them, and in return it is their zeren (責任, or responsibility) to maintain the fertility of land. Their 'guanxi' (關係, or relationship) with land is moral rather than instrumental; in other words, land is for survival, but not for profit maximization' (Ku 1998:146).

Their differences could be traced back to the content of development studies. Actually, the development studies that domestic development workers attend have a strong focus on 'human resource development', which has been more influenced by management studies than by the anthropology of organizations. As the above example, the domestic development workers presumes that land is a resource for profit, but the

perspective of anthropological study tries to understand the peasant what land means to the peasant. Therefore, land means different things to these two development participants. One of the reasons is that these development participants have different academic background. One informant said that they need to study development management, natural resource management and forestry economics. More importantly, it conceals the fact that domestic development workers' may have taken for granted the legitimacy of modernization. No doubt, these two development participants also go to the development field to understand what the poor needed. But the development participant with a background in anthropology tries to take into account local interpretations and understandings to address what is the local need. Given this academic background, he may be more alert that bringing a pre-defined set of imagination to understand the local people need is a problem that he has to avoid. For example, the presumption of the legitimacy of modernization of an observer may justify his conclusions that deviate from the poor's views. On the contrary, the other participant's thinking may be based on a pre-defined set of imagination and may have taken for granted the legitimacy of modernization. Bringing these views on how he interpreted what the local people need were, may significantly shape his observations. Based on the above analysis, we may suggest that how domestic development workers interpret the local people voices may to a certain extent be conditioned by the

domestic development workers' conception of economic development.

After analyzing the impact of the discourse of marketization, we would like to examine how these development organizations identify themselves as professional in the field. As a result of Chambers, identification of PRA as a new professionalism, these domestic development workers came to identify themselves as the experts. To Escobar, social movement is as member equal to the cultural struggles over meaning as over material conditions and needs. He focuses on 'bottom-up' social mobilization in society so as to challenge what revised neoliberal sharing the hegemonic interests within the state and the market. Therefore, he indicated a new mode of doing politics, for example self-production movements, which exercise power outside the state arena and which seek to create 'decentered autonomous space.' Apparently, these domestic development organizations here implies not promoting broadly specified development strategy – that is to say, the promotion of small-scale, owner-operated, anti-urban programs which stand against the ravages of industrial capitalism. Their development strategies could be used as a reference for understanding the particular sort of politics, authority structure, and ideology of PRA knowledge.

Here, we have focused on the predominance of ideas of economic rationality and argue that these are largely rooted in a modernization paradigm that has embodied in

much state thinking. Thus, PRA as new types of knowledge about development have been deployed in China development field, which try to ensure the conformity of domestic development workers to a certain type of economic and cultural behaviors. In the next section, I will address how these domestic development organizations identify themselves as the experts.

VIII. The expertise

In the development field, the domestic development organizations' perspectives on relationship between PRA and self-identification can be understood within this increasing 'new research method'. Rationales stemming from this conception do not alone determine the organizations' strategies – political concern is more important. Certainly, domestic development workers view PRA as their self-identification with 'expert knowledge'. This expert knowledge may involve many things, such as proficiency in Putonghua and English. An important part of it is the use of introduced PRA methods such as research or practice tool towards economic growth, particularly those connected with modernity. While values of modernity may be invoked in particular circumstances for particular purpose, the dispute of the orthodoxy of PRA knowledge has become very complicated. A core member of PRA network told me

that more and more people claimed as expertise on PRA, because they are good at

speaking English, so they can directly contact with the international organizations and

establish their own works. She complains,

'There is a big crisis in the fieldwork, PRA is being distorted by some people's

interpretation. If you were skilled in PRA approach, you would have earned the

consultant fee USD100 per day or more. PRA network tries to control the quality but

fail'.

As mentioned before, PRA network tried to use the background of Chambers'

training as the orthodoxy of PRA knowledge. The orthodoxy of PRA is perceived as a

professional strategy for people to negotiate their power. But now the expertise is not

only the indicator to claim whether domestic development workers joined the training.

It depends on whether you are proficient in foreign languages to launch the projects,

and whether the papers or reports are well presented to please the donors. Also,

whether one's area of study falls within the scope of concern of the state and donors,

like environmental protection, micro credit development and gender issues, is a

significant factor. For instance, recently, there is a fashion to use video to do

participation development and use the academic term of 'participatory action

research' to present in development work worldwide. Observably, some organizations claim to be using visual anthropology within these years in China-development field. In many conferences, more participants are presenting their projects using visual media than before. Generally, these conferences and these organizations have close relationships with large multilateral and bilateral donor agencies. They are good in English and make good presentations using the technical and academic terms in the meetings. Thus, it bars many domestic development workers from joining these meetings. One informant complaints that she wants to join the meeting but she doesn't speak English although she is a senior fieldworker. In addition, the registration fee (500 yuan) is expensive if you have no sponsor. The above mentioned cases illustrate that all factors will influence which networks the domestic development worker cooperate with, or which how one's background conditions one's network and the meetings one may attend, for example whether one may attend an international conference or a local conference, which funding you get or in which places you work. Based on the above factors that may influence domestic development workers' position, the domestic development organizations need to use different strategies to negotiate their position in the development field. Generally, they would identify themselves with different kinds of professional areas such as natural resource management, social forestry, and watershed management or gender study. More

strategically, they would like to establish a model in their specialized areas. The

model is a strategy for professional identification. In my interview with a member

whose project model is well known in natural resource management area, he disclosed

that if you want to influence government polices, you must let the official know your

successful cases, and then you are able to influence the government. He illustrates,

'Now, the government is going to establish two hundred National Park Reserves

(自然保護區) within twenty years, this is an unchangeable thing. You (the

government) have money, but it does not mean you (the government) can manage'.

He believes that the government is not knowledgeable enough to do participatory

development. Therefore, domestic development workers need to establish a model to

influence the government, and then promote the model to other provinces in China.

He believes that 'participation' is equal to 'localization', as an example he cited a

natural reserve in Guizhou, which has been managed by the villagers themselves for

twenty years in Guizhou. This implies the model is very important than the working

approach because the model has power to influence others and to get funding. He

said,

'If you have no funding, you cannot talk about doing participatory development'.

In the field, many development participants like him could reflect on PRA but also strategy in practice. They continue to use PRA as a mean to negotiate their position. But these are not all the cases. Actually, most domestic development workers are self-identified as professional on PRA. The PRA is always hanging on their lips. Some still believe on PRA, a young member of PRA network told me,

'So many people talk about PRA, it is certainly a good thing'.

Is this equal to 'good thing' even if many people are talking about PRA? In her sense, PRA presents as progressive and good thing. Actually I contact some domestic development workers, they seldom introduce themselves as professional on PRA even as they are very experienced. For them, PRA is only the slogan in the development field. They even complained that,

'It is crazy of the organizers to worship PRA'.

'PRA approach emphasizes that people have the capability for self-sufficiency. If so, why do they need "outsider" to identity their need'?

'We are more foolish than the peasants because they know what we need and then feedback to us'.

The wording of 'it is crazy of the organizers to worship PRA' clearly shows their opposition to the young member when talking about PRA. In development field, many domestic development workers like the young member tend to worship PRA. The action of worshiping PRA may lead them to reflect the roles of PRA experts. The wording of 'why do they need "outsider" to identity their need' implies that these domestic development workers reflect on PRA inherent imbalance power relationships between the people and the PRA experts. Perhaps this made them began to doubt the PRA approach. The wording of 'we are more foolish than the peasants' expresses their critical view on PRA. Although they are more critical on PRA, PRA is definitely identified as professional knowledge by domestic development workers in the development field. PRA is becoming a professional strategy for domestic development workers to negotiate their interests. This evokes the concept of institutionalization. To Escobar, the institutionalization of development refers to the establishment of an institutional field in which, and from which, discourses and techniques are produced, recorded, stabilized, modified, and put into operation

(Escobar 1998:431). Nowadays, PRA has become the professional term in China-development field. Domestic development workers must know the term PRA and then you are able to do development works. This made domestic development workers strategically use PRA to negotiate their interests. As argued before, the Chinese government is not passive involving in the development process. Here, we also see that domestic development organizations have actively participated when encountering international organizations and the Chinese government.

IX. Conclusion

Nowadays, the domestic development organization institutions not only created 'PRA', it also helped the domestic development workers turn themselves into subjects. We have seen that how the domestic development workers cooperate with PRA and negotiate their interests. As discussed before, the Chinese government would perceive their ideologies and intervene in the development field. The domestic development organizations thus strategically use PRA to maneuver in the political context. As the case of NGO registration, the domestic development organizations select not to register in order to avoid the political context. The orthodoxy of PRA is becoming a professional strategy for local development participants to negotiate their power. An

important part of domestic development organizations is the use of introduced PRA methods such as research or practice tool towards economic growth, particularly those connected with modernization. The adoption of the language of the market by local development organizations might make fundraising easier. The discourse of modernization for them is to justify why they do PRA – the peasants need to be eligible. Nowadays, institutions of development, such as the World Bank, bilateral donors, the international NGOs are all parts of the development establishment, as are academics concerned with development, international consultants. The Chinese government who is both a donor and a recipient of funds forms other donors. All are the subjects involved in the discourse of modernization. Modernization is in terms of PRA, foreign language and terminology in China development field, which presumed the society towards a market economy. It is an emphasis on the individual, on wealth creation, and on small enterprise development in development planning. Thus, new mode of PRA has been deployed in China development field, which tries to ensure the conformity of domestic development workers to a certain type of economic and cultural behaviors.

In sum, the domestic development organizations created their own strategies based on their self-generation. It is because they are not only 'situated' in a political

economic context that greatly influences what they do, but also 'situated' in a web of

ideas and precedents influencing what they choose to do. To categorize the responses

of these local development participants as either 'reflective' or 'strategic' may be

misleading. But the strategies of some domestic development workers have a similar

focus on self-awareness. This is not linked to strategies to which the rural social

movement literature, they are more linked to the centrality of Chambers in the

decentralization of local resource management, and a way influenced by wider

economic, political, and ideological relationships pressing by the Chinese government

and donor agencies. In this process, these domestic development organizations need

more effort to encounter the state's political and economic policies. This let us

understand that the new mode of PRA is influenced at least in part by the political

context of government. As discussed before, local officials have intervened in

development projects at the local level and they attempt to ensure by every means that

domestic development organizations would not bypass them. In the next chapter, I

will look more closely at how domestic development workers strategically select to

use PRA in different ways at local level.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Participation as strategy

I. Introduction

The domestic development workers' strategies reviewed in Chapter six

embodies the view that the political context in China drives their development

practice. Actually domestic development workers strategically react to state

policies. In this chapter, I begin to look more closely at how domestic development

workers strategically and selectively use PRA in different ways. The chapter will

describe the village-level program within a domestic development organization

intersection. The program will show that how the central tenets of PRA: local

knowledge, gender and participation are interpreted by the domestic development

organization. When analyzing domestic development organizations' strategies, it

requires examining them in the political context of local government. The case

evokes us to understand that the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics'

allows enough room for domestic development workers to maneuver within the

boundaries of a particular political context. 'Localization' is the term of

interpreting 'with Chinese characteristics' in the context of PRA. On this condition,

PRA has become a new mode deployed in China-development field.

II. The drinking as local practice in development work

As we noted in Chapter three, in recent years the use of the term 'localization' has spread increasingly in China-development field. Some domestic development workers' conception of 'localization' is defined in term of shifting the role of government. They believe that development workers need to deal with the local officials and not to break relationship with them. Then they are able to do the development projects. In the case of the health project which I studied, I find that the concept of 'localization' is commonly used by domestic development workers.

In the health project, the first thing for the project workers to do was a formal dinner with the local officials. At the dinner, the project workers and the officials drank a lot. Later, the project leader asked me to drink with the officials because the workers were getting drunk. After the dinner, the project leader told me that wine drinking was very important for doing development works in rural areas. She said,

'They haven't drunk with the officials at the beginning. They drink later because they find that there is a happy atmosphere when drinking together. The

190

atmosphere makes everything easy to talk. It could be said that this is an easy way to make good relationship with the local officials'.

As discussed in chapter five, local officials would intervene into the development process at the local level. Hence, domestic development organizations need to strategically use to encounter local officials. In the informant's mind, drinking is a strategy to make good relationship with the local officials. To make good relationship with local officials is the first step to make in their development project in the rural. Her opinion is similar to other members of the project, another member said,

'You must go through the government to do development work. The villagers will trust you after being introduced by the officials. The villagers can contact the government if there are problems in your project. This is what a development worker needs to do. I have a colleague who has left university. After learning PRA, he went to a village to contact the villagers directly. But the villagers complained to the officials, because they think he is a thief. Therefore, you must go to the village through the government'.

Here, this member understands that it is necessary to make good relationships with local officials by domestic development organizations, and emphases the importance of building good relationships with local officials. Dealing with the government in a satisfactory manner is an essential task for domestic development workers, it is the most important way of getting one's 'passport' to do development project. Their opinions present that local officials have power to influence and control the resources in a rural community. They could intervene or stop your development works. Observably, the local officials have intervened into the health project which I studied.

As presented in chapter six, domestic development workers' strategies are at least partially influenced by the context of local politics. The health case implies that the relationship between domestic development organizations and the government does not end at the central government level; the domestic development organizations' activities are related to the local government. Now, the domestic development workers believe that they need to deal with the local officials but not to break relationship with them. The value of 'relationship' is based on a belief that good relationship with local officials is essential to a smooth process of development. No doubt, this belief may be the said to be reflective of

reality of local politics. Yet, we have to note that the unquestioning acceptance of this belief may also reproduce the 'reality' of local politics. In other words, this belief in good relationship is constitutive of the reality of local politics. The domestic development organizations thus strategically use PRA rhetoric but are careful to maneuver in the political context. For instance, the domestic development workers attempted to use 'wine drinking' to legitimize local government authority to guarantee their position. Wine drinking is culturally constructed by the domestic development organizations which respond to the relationship with local government. In my fieldwork experience, many villagers present to me that wine drinking is part of the local culture in rural areas. Although we may not question that wine drinking is a sort of local knowledge. However, we would like to know in what senses, domestic development workers are utilizing these knowledge? Do they treasure local knowledge out of a respect for local culture, or it's just another strategy that they may deploy in their development projects?

III. Local knowledge

There is an enormous body of literature on PRA of local knowledge and more

focus on the necessary for gender-specific strategy to address the peasants' need. In the early 2000s the PRA group which I studied launched a health project, and they began to research and plan programs to women for health. The health project was significant for some reasons. They represented that a few domestic development organizations would do women health projects and integrate traditional culture into the projects in development field. The workers described their project as an alternative to development. 'Alternative' here means that they provide Miao (苗) language to respond a Miao community need[1]. This perception of domestic development organizations as a development alternative is common to their rhetoric, as well as the donor agencies that fund their activities.

In the conference of 'The 3rd International Conference on Montane Mainland Southeast Asia', all projects presented by domestic development workers attempted to integrate indigenous knowledge with development work. The conference claimed to use PRA to facilitate participants participating in the discussion. Some Montane people[2] from Thailand and Vietnam, but not from China, attended the meeting. Small groups were divided and some participants shared their feelings in

---

[1] In China-development field, because most of the domestic development workers do not live in the communities where they do the development projects, therefore, they can only speak Putonghua to local villagers in their development projects.

[2] Here, Montane people generally mean people who grow and live in mountain areas.

the meeting. Therefore, many participants including donors and domestic development workers trumpeted the success of the meeting. But the Montane groups complained of the use of English in the meeting. Observably, their feelings were not responded, the meeting kept adopting English as the official language. It evokes the question that who is the subject in the meeting? In the meeting, the participants talked about the Montane people's culture and knowledge, but the Montane people could not present at all. It would seem that 'indigenous knowledge' was simply a strategy for the development workers to assert their 'open mindedness'. Local knowledge seems to become 'rhetoric' for the domestic development workers presenting. This rhetoric emphasizes the 'local knowledge' aspect of development workers; yet in practice the influence of the view on local knowledge between development workers and local people is deeply affect by the politic culture of the larger context.

In the case of the health project, they used Miao language to facilitate the villagers learning health information. They even spent a lot of time to prepare some materials, with particular the translation of Han characters into Miao characters. But the materials have no use for the villagers because many villagers are illiterate anyway. Some educated villagers also do not know the Miao characters. It is not

strange because the traditional culture of Miao has no written language. The written language is constructed by the elite after Mao's China. The official objective of their action is for 'culture preservation', but it is more for getting power in a political context. That is why only a few people know the Miao language.

Actually, the understanding of local knowledge is related to materialize for a number of structural reasons. The project workers have little sense on the political environment of the village. In the process of observing the health training, I found points of conflict emerging between the development workers and the trainers in identifying the local situation. In the village, the health condition is very poor because of the lack of resources. It is common situation that the villager would produce a baby at home. In the workshop, the local doctor as the trainer told me about her frustration. She said,

'The project worker expects me not to talk about how to deliver a baby. She is worried about litigation if there is a problem on the procedure of parturition. I don't think so, she is too careful. I just want to talk to the villagers about what tools the parturition need'.

The trainer and the worker present different views on the parturition issue. It is related to their different backgrounds. The local doctor is a local person from the village, but the workers are from the city. They have different life styles and culture. Although one of the workers is from Miao community, she has left the community and has been living in the city for a long period. Her thinking and life style is no longer like a villager. Certainly, the urbanites bring their culture and value into the rural, the gap is clear. In the project, they find that the women in the village are suffering from malnutrition. So, they taught them the nutritional values of different types of food in the training workshop. When the worker asked the villagers what kinds of food having nutrition, the villagers answered sweet potatoes and vegetables. The workers had no response to their answer and taught them about egg. It would seem that they have no concept about egg in the context of the villagers because that is expensive. Even if the villagers learnt that eggs are nutritious, they cannot afford them. Another example is learning hygiene, they would teach the villagers using sanitary napkin in stead of toilet paper. Like the case of the egg, sanitary napkin is expensive for the villagers. The project workers told me that the villagers need health training, because they did not eat meat, vegetables and drink wine when they were pregnant. This is the case in Miao villages, because the traditional culture treats drinking as a cordial greeting.

Especially in traditional festivals, drinking is the habit for the villagers. In the

process, the woman plays the active role to entertain guests at home. Therefore,

many women have bad health because of wine drinking. A Miao woman told me

that she didn't want to drink but it was not easy to refuse even if she was sick. The

case leads us to understand more about the health issue on women, but the project

workers seems to pay little attention to the social, economic and political

environment.

The above examples seem to illustrate the problem of domestic development

workers in understanding local social, political, and economic environment. This

leads to the question of why 'domestic' development workers from urban

backgrounds could claim to be 'professionals' in rural development works?

Perhaps they are 'professional' in the sense of being able to conduct research to

assess local needs. All domestic development organizations must present their

research-based assessment for justifying their projects. It is the necessary step for

them to carry on their projects. But a college-educated, Han speaking urbanite is

hardly of the same class, socioeconomic status, or shared experience as a rural

villager. There are numerous inaccurate descriptions of the villagers' cultural

patterns in their local programs. Actually, doing research is also a strategy for

domestic development workers to establish their professional status in PRA in order to get funding. It could be said that their analytical framework is conditioned by the guidelines and requirements of the funding source. In addition, domestic development organizations are funded to execute local program, because they are presumed to be better able to assess local needs and to communicate with local residents. This presumption of the efficacy of domestic development organizations' programs may have neglected the structural inequalities inherent in the difference of economic status of the domestic development organizations and those they serve. For example, these local development programs have funding resources. Therefore, the domestic development workers have power to control the production of local knowledge they created in their programs. Local knowledge has become a mere rhetoric for them to obtain their interests. And in so doing, they often assume a superior role in talking about local knowledge.

IV. Gender inequality and development practice

Their superior roles also let them to talk about gender. Most often, the structural hierarchy is imbued with a set of behavioral norms associated with gender. As noted, the programs are targeted at women's health as a gender issue. It

is assumed that identifying those problems requires confronting the differences between men and women and to the unequal power relations these reflect. The case of sterilization is a gender issue in rural areas, which can help us to understand the unequal power relations between women and men. In the workshop in which I attended, a local woman revealed that if a wife and a husband did not want to have any children, it is normally the wife who would do the operation, but not the husband. Very often the man would not use condom, therefore it is difficult for them to do contraception. In addition, the government need to take birth control measures in rural areas, local officials would force the women to do surgical sterilization. So, the women bear a lot of pain in the sterilization surgery. Their speeches imply the unequal power relation on women and men. It would seem that the development workers are unaware that the unequal power relations on the sterilization issue is problematic. There was no thorough discussion between the workers and local people, and the former just introduced different contraception methods, explaining the advantages and disadvantages in these methods. The issue of addressing and responding to the villagers' needs cannot be separated from the development workers' value standpoint. Their actions would seem to suggest that these workers may have overlooked the complexity of power relationship between women and men. The commitment to gender analysis that they expressed rarely

gets realized as gender-sensitive practice in their work, usually this commitment finally turns out into 'targeting women' as objects to be acted upon by domestic development workers. How these domestic development workers' gender thinking would influence their action in development practice may be further illustrated by the following example. The youngest worker talk about her thinking of gender, she said,

'When I was in university, the teacher told me that gender issue was equal to women being more aggressive. After finished the gender training, I find that the teacher interpreted 'gender' incorrectly. Gender issue is not equal to women conflict with men. Actually, the unequal power relationship between men and women in China is deeply rooted. It is difficult and a long road to change the government's mind. I disagree with the point that women must struggle against men in order to be liberated. We must respect each other, and this must be taught from school age'.

Gender-sensitive practice in her mind was seen as aggressive, and she even felt uneasy when listening to criticism directed at men. Her approach seems to downplay the politics of local gender dynamics. But the gender issues will not be

solved or just disappear by avoiding to express their position in the name of 'value-neutrality', as it encompasses the full of realities of rural oppression. In the health case, the domestic development workers did not give due respect also the women's views of surgical sterilization, some of them may be less than willing to do the operation. More importantly, why does the government force the woman to do the operation but not the man in birth control policy? What is the implication of power relationship between men and women and what is the impact of the women health by surgical sterilization? All questions remind that the project workers think little about the dynamics of local gender and hierarchy in women health issue. As Parpart said, 'gender inequalities do not disappear simply through giving voice to women or including them in development activities (Parpart 2002:52).

Here, I must say that I don't think they have no political senses. On the contrary, they are aware of their position in the political context. I ask a worker if there were any intervention of the local officials in the research process, she said,

'That is why we need PRA training. We learn some skills to avoid the officials' attention. For example, you should divide people into two groups so as to disperse their attention. The health program is a small funding, so the officials will

pay less attention'.

Here, the project workers believe that PRA is useful for avoiding the sensitive issue of how to direct the official's attention, but I think her conversation implies that she is prouding of being a PRA professional. The project workers are also very sensitive on the dynamics of local women. The health program needs to elect a leader to coordinate the group. The result is an educated villager selected by vote to be the leader. The project worker said to me,

'Those women who have influence or power such as the wife of village head, the official's wife, were not elected by vote. It is a good thing, because they would be dominant in the program. The group members can select the leader they want. I feel less pressure when the women with authority failed in the election. The election is a satisfied result'.

As mentioned before, domestic development organizations need to face the complex power dynamic in the village. Although the project workers are sensitive with those women in authority, the project workers fail to articulate the problem of women's position on the unequal power relationship between men and women.

Some would argue that an understanding of gender issues from a feminist perspective introduces is question of power, control of resources, and conflict, which are potentially challenging and certainly difficult to deal with (Crewe & Harrison 1998:64). Based on the forgoing gender perspective, it seems that gender-sensitive practice has been bypassed in the health case. Moreover, the worshipers believe that PRA can be empowering for lowers, and especially, when gender-sensitive, it can be and has been empowering for women (Guijt and Shah, 1995). 'Empowerment' requires and implies changes in power relations and behavior (Chambers 1997:220).

Surprisingly, the term 'empowerment' is not used as but frequently as that of 'participation' in all the meetings that I have attended. Only a few of informants have mentioned the term of 'empowerment' during interview. This reflects a more general tendency to depoliticize gender issues. As discussed before, making good relationship with local officials is necessary for the domestic development workers. It implies that the rationale given for considering the local government power rather than addressing the villagers' inequalities, when addressing the community need by the domestic development workers. Therefore, domestic development workers are unable and unwilling to deal with such complexities in the political

context. They need to treat PRA as a simple principle and methodological tool to deal with the political issue. They take PRA as a neutral rhetoric and being a professional technical tool to do development works. Thus, we found in debates about gender and the talk of participation that often fails to address potential conflict and inequalities.

V. 'People's participation?

Some episodes of the health program lead us understand more about their meaning of 'participation'. That was the first day to do the training workshop; the time was 8:50a.m. The program would be started at 9:00a.m. The senior worker found that there were still no people in the room but other workers were only concerned for the preparation works, that is drawing and writing. I came with her to see whether the participants are in the culture club. When walking towards the club, she talked about her feeling. She said, 'as organizers, the most important thing is to organize people to join the workshop'. She then asked a villager to invite other villagers to join the program. After 30 minutes, we came back to the room and still no participants were there. The other workers seemed not to worry about the lack of participants, and kept drawing and writing.

The senior worker didn't say anything and just kept waiting. Her statement

revealed that her main duty, as organizer of the workshop, was to get as many

villagers to participate as possible, implying that other workers should also do the

same. However, her team members thought otherwise. Rather than inviting more

villagers, they spent much time on the preparation works, writing and coloring with

chalks and pens on many papers. Their actions recalled some scenes in the

international conference on Montane Mainland Southeast Asia. In the conference,

my impression deepens when every discussion group would prepare a tool bag with

ruler, different color pens, chalks, sticks and color papers of different sizes to be

used by the facilitator of the program. Reviewing these programs, it seems that

these workers interpreted PRA approach as mainly consisting of a body of group

work skills, involving different materials and activities to facilitate the group

members discuss.

This mode of PRA is a very common phenomenon in China-development

field. For example, in the health project, the workers would ask me for any games

for the participants to play. Is there enough time to play games in the session? The

aim is to make the program more interactive and active. In the training program,

they would play games and sing songs to make the villagers more active. They

would use many color papers and pictures to teach the villagers. In short, they would step by step follow the procedure to do development works. PRA is portrayed by them as teaching skill integrating into the planning process. Their actions reflect what they interpret the concept of 'participation'. I think participation may be involved actively and interactively, but it consists of 'mental' process. The villagers evaluate that they are happy in the process but hardly to understand the health learning. Observably, the workers put much effort on writing and drawing materials, but the materials are too complicated for the uneducated villagers to understand. In addition, the workers lead the discussion talking about health, but the learning is isolated from social, economic, ecological, political environment in rural areas. It could be said that 'participation' expresses what the domestic development workers know rather than from the villagers' viewpoints. However, PRA is portrayed as a technical concept in the China-development field inevitably. If you claim that you are using PRA method, you need to use different materials to present PRA techniques. Reviewing on PRA training, there has one or two sessions learning PRA techniques, drawing different maps, charts or diagrams.

Certainly, I know that domestic development workers strategically portray PRA as a teaching method to avoid the political issue, but they still need to

understand within a wider context of power relations. For instance, in the health case, the workers asked the villagers what their needs were. The evaluation indicated that the villagers answered 'road', 'electricity', 'school' and the last priority of midwife. The workers felt disappointed, because the item of midwifery was the main concern of the health project. Thereafter, they knew that the officials influenced the villagers' choices on priorities. Before the health project's workers came, a committee meeting was held in the village. The officials decided that the future plan of the village needed 'road' and 'electricity'. That is to say the official's decisions influenced the women choices. The case illustrates that in practice the influence of the relationship between local people and local government is deeply affected by day-to-day operations. As the result, the effect of local government 'participation' makes domestic development organizations rationalize the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics'. Their demands were neutralized so as not to challenge government policies if the government and local people have conflicting interests.

VI. Environment protection and the dilemma of rural development

The argument can be seen in enormous development projects on environment

protection. Nowadays, the Chinese government attached importance to the development of environment issues. To take a case in Guizhou, local government has issued regulations to protect natural reserves. They create the reserve boundaries and do not allow local people cutting words and hunting in some locations. Local people rely on local natural resources for subsistence. But the government does not have the funding to relocate or compensate local people when reserves are established. The resultant conflict between nature protection and subsistence for local people can be seen. Domestic development organization requests to do research devising strategy for alleviating conflict and human pressure on the protected reserves. After finished research, they promote biogas technology to the villagers. Biogas technology for livestock farms has been gradually introduced in China since the 1980s, it requires biogas transfer and the especially of pig manure, chicken manure, and cow manure. In the project, the peasants tended to be extremely poor. They do not have the capability in maintaining the biogas technology, because they need raise pigs or chicken. The government only gives limited subsidization for the peasants. Thus the promotion of biogas is not without difficulty and the conflict between the government and local people repeatedly occur.

Indeed, the persistence of environment perspective by domestic development workers in planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating development policies is evidence of the structural factors such as the government policies inherent in the process. The obvious cases of the government intervention in the development process are environment programs. For example, biogas was promoted by domestic development organizations as part of its strategy of alleviating conflict. The domestic development workers raised funds for biogas program by arguing that they would decrease the falling of trees. Their research shows that biogas programs bring environmental benefits. Actually, the research was based on the government's preferences. The biogas-users, meanwhile, used the new technology because they are rich. Most probably is realized that the government is involved with the program, because biogas program is initially promoted by government extension behavior.

Migration is another example. For building the three Gorges dam (三峡水库), the government needs to resettle and compensate the hundreds of thousands of people, most of peasants, who would be displaced from their homes by the construction of the dams and canals. But a number of cases told us that the peasants have little compensation and no benefits. Many conflict cases are presented in the

process. But most projects' research studies and projects by domestic development workers only show that the feature of migration, how to settle the migration or the impact of environment, they would not challenge the government policies. It could be seen that local development programs are more obviously national ideologies and individual interpretation.

In addition, funding is also perceived by domestic development workers as the biggest step on the path to develop programs. In my fieldwork experience, domestic development workers need to finish their projects within two years and meet some agreements. Under the circumstance, their projects construct a particular model and create a structured program planning around those projects. This is linked to the first step of research, the second step of training and the final step of evaluation. In particular, sustaining these projects is pressed by the donors, different domestic development workers have to use different strategies to meet the requirement. In the health project, they have program fee for the villagers running their programs after they have finished the health project. One worker of the project said,

'If the villagers have program fee, they could decide what they want. I think

this is the right action for sustaining the project. Every project seems to require

sustainability. We have just finished the training, the villagers can use the program

fee to buy some relevant books afterwards'.

For the workers, the availability of money determines if the project is

sustainable. There is a tendency for them to talk of 'the villagers' motivation',

without critical examination whether all villager members are of a single will.

Indeed they have different interpretation about money. After the training, the wife

of village head asks the workers whether the money will be given to the villager

head, the officials and the group members. She said that this is the group members'

suggestion. We may interpret that the wife of village head, in fact, was as making a

political statement. But problematic assumptions about sustainability are far from

unique to health project by the workers. Money cannot be fully understood only

within the context of how easy to do the program and as an effective way to solve

the health problem. Actually, the problem facing the health system in rural areas is

more connected to the government policy that gives limited resources to the rural

areas. Although the program fee decided to support a villager for midwifery

training after the workers have intervened, how to enhance the health system from

the poor conditions is more important. A two-year project seems not enough time.

VII. Conclusion

In sum, local development programs are more obviously a hybrid of donor influence, national ideologies, and individual interpretation. Thus, domestic development workers internalize and selectively use PRA to maneuver in the development field. With particular the value of 'relationship with the officials' is created, the rationale given for considering the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characterizes' repeatedly occurs. Thus, we can look in PRA constructing as a particular kind of pedagogy, and creates a structure of knowledge around that project. As the result, we can look in some conflicts between domestic development workers and the villagers, which initially through a discussion about local knowledge, gender and participation.

Rather than acting as 'misconception', local knowledge is defined as inappropriate behavior by domestic development workers. We have seen in the health case that people develop practices that, for instance, dictate what suitable food is for eating; what kinds of food should be taken when people are suffering from malnutrition. We have argued that this rhetoric of local knowledge is isolated from local social, political and economic environment. In practices, domestic

development workers' action cannot be reduced to functional purposes, such as addressing PRA rhetoric of particular development projects' requirements.

As in the gender study, the dynamics of local gender and hierarchy are often obscured in the empowerment rhetoric. Very often the clearest and most explicit statements are led by the representatives of domestic development organizations. The commitment to gender analysis rarely becomes gender-sensitive practice. It is only translated into 'targeting women' and gradually exchanged for the practical project reality. With the health case, the project workers failed to articulate the problem of women's position on the unequal power relationship between men and women. Such problems are easily understood in the political context they faced. Nowadays, domestic development workers face additional challenge because of local government. Domestic development organizations' activities do not end at the central government level. However, they are facing not only by local development or the men, but by a wide range of other domains such as the local elites, the women with authority.

So far I have focused on the health case to explore the problems in simple attributions of 'participation' by domestic development workers. For them, the notion of 'participation' simplifies as the meaning of active and interactive. Those

portray PRA as being a teaching skill that as a way of identifying with 'participation', whether domestic development workers failed to be 'seeing from the villagers' viewpoints'. In practice the influence of the relationship between local people and local government is deeply affected by day-to-day operations. The effect of local government 'participation' makes domestic development organizations take neutral and non-challenging government policies. The resultant conflict between nature protection and subsistence for local people can be seen.

Overall, this is clearly illustrated by the health case, which demonstrates the influence of the relationship between the domestic development organizations and the government as deeply affecting both strategies and program planning. It is because they need to portray PRA as pedagogy and professional tool, and then they are able to do development works in China-development field. So, PRA could be said as strategies for survival for domestic development organizations. It implies that the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' is exercising its power in China-development field. Under the circumstance, PRA generate its own form of discourse such as 'localization' or 'with Chinese characteristics'. The discourse simultaneously constructs PRA as a particular kind of pedagogy, which is linked to a way influenced by wider economic, political and ideological relationships.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

I. Introduction

This study set out to explore the discourse of PRA that has emerged in 1990s in China. The discussion attempted to demonstrate the significance of an empirical research with a conceptual focus on local actors actively participating in the development encounter. The study employed an actor-oriented approach, in order to understand the political dimensions of different actors' interactions. The study thus focused on three main discourses of this process, which allowed us to see how international organizations, the Chinese government and domestic development organizations encounter in the development policies.

In this chapter, I will summarize the major issues that have been discussed in this study. I then discuss their implications for our understanding of the complex dynamics in the development process. The final discussion turns to the limitations of the study and the recommendations on further studies in this area of growing importance.

II. Summary of the major issues

I have traced how international actors such as the World Bank and Chambers have translated PRA into development policies and programs. In doing so, the assumptions of international organizations make about the relationships between civil society, the state and the market are examined. I have also analyzed how these assumptions were translated into practical efforts to strengthen participatory development. For international organizations that adopt a neo-liberal stance such as the World Bank, that the introduction of market forces would automatically and ultimately lead to the emergence of civil society. Based on this assumption which links economic and political liberalization, neo-liberals claimed that the expansion of the market would suffice to create the burgeoning of intermediate organizations that would act as a counter-balance to central political power. Civil society is thus an important democratic check on the state. The debate was actually focused on the role of the state in development rather than democracy, responding to the critique of the developmental state. This led donor agencies in the early 1990s to make new agreements to loans and technical assistance aimed at improving the democratic governance of 'Third World'. Going back to the case of China, the international organizations have tried to provide loans and technical assistance to foster

economic growth. The introduction of market reforms during Deng's era, dramatically changed the role of the Chinese Communist Party in economic and social affairs. The expansion of domestic development organizations, both registered and unregistered, would seem to point to the rise of a civil society. Do the Chinese government and domestic development organizations actively participate in development process in order to promote civil society or only to pursue its own political and economic objectives? I have addressed this core question in different parts of my study. In Chapter Four, I have analyzed the process through which international organizations especially in the World Bank translated PRA into development policies and programs; in Chapter Five, the role of the Chinese government in incorporating the international organizations' policies was examined; and in the chapters that follow, how domestic development organizations and participants' constitute their strategies to pursue their objectives were discussed. The major observations and the summary of these chapters are concluded in the following paragraphs.

a). **The dominance of PRA in China-development field as a result of the intervention and constructions of international organizations**

So far, in Chapter Four we have seen that how international actors such as

Chambers and the World Bank have attempted to put PRA into practice in China-development field. In doing so we should know that these international organizations have financial sources, administrative procedures and thematic breadth of programs and projects. In promoting PRA, different actors asserted their roles by imprinting their ideologies on domestic development organizations. Chambers, a prominent actor, has expanded the role of experts, from whom certain types of knowledge have been introduced; institutions such as the World Bank, a key player in international finance, carried both capital and power. The Chinese government itself, has the power to decide on what knowledge is to be adopted. Under the shadow of these 'big' national and international actors, domestic development workers were forced to maneuver within the confines of state policies and international organizations' ideologies, their actions were not totally determined by them.

In addition, I have also tried to explore how the discourse of PRA was conceptualized in China-development. PRA is created by international actors especially Chambers, presenting a 'new' form of professionalism defining the criteria of program success and who are the beneficiary. Thus, the discourse of PRA has become the privileged, with status of professional knowledge in China-

development field. Meanwhile, the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics'

may be a strategic response of the Chinese government to create space in dealing

with international organizations and appropriating their discourse of PRA. In

coming years, all poverty projects in domestic development organizations receive

resources from the Chinese government that are requested to use PRA approach.

This symbolizes the dominance of PRA as the new era in the development field.

Here, the assumption of neoliberal view seems to present that local actors are

passively involving in the development process. But in the case of China, I found

that this was not necessarily the case.

b). **The Chinese government plays redefining and reinterpreting roles in**

development process

In Chapter Five, I set out a view of PRA as a political issue in China-

development field. Since Deng's China impetus to rapid economic growth is strong;

it requires a bold new approach and new type of knowledge about development to

solve the pressing social and economic crisis. PRA is thus the way for the Chinese

government to face the world. Here, the idea is quite different from the neoliberal

view. The neo-liberal assumes that the provision of loans and technical assistance

by international organizations can improve the democratic governance of Southern countries. But in the case of China, I found that the Chinese government is not passive in the development process. On the contrary, the Chinese government is politically and administratively incorporate into the international organizations. For example, as discussed before, the Chinese government cooperating with international organizations is the name of 'sustainable development' in order to get funding assistance. Nowadays, PRA is fashionable in development worldwide. To please the international organizations, all poverty projects in local development organizations receive resources from the Chinese government that are requested to use PRA approach in coming years. In this way, the Chinese government creates a new form of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' to legitimate the discourse of PRA. Thus, PRA discourse has served not only the political interests for international organizations but also interests of the Chinese government in the China-development field. These examples show that the government plays an active role to cooperate with international organizations.

In fact, how the Chinese government deals with the discourse of PRA is a political issue. Inspired by the case of PRA, I suggest that when doing research in China-development field, we need to address the 'hidden' agenda of the Chinese

government. To address the political context of the Chinese government, it is very important for us to understand the complex dynamic in the relationships between the Chinese government and international organizations. It is because the Chinese government will adopt and redefine international organizations' policies, incorporating these policy frameworks into its own development policies. In addition, Chinese government drafts a PRA handbook 'with Chinese characteristics'. The meaning of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' in the present political context may mean no more than development 'under government control'. This reminds us to address what the phrase of 'with Chinese characteristics' may mean in the study of the China-development field. For the Chinese government, the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' maybe a strategic response in the appropriating international organizations' terms and vocabulary. Under the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics', the common terms in development such as participation got interpretations that differs from their usual meaning. If we only analyze the development policies literally, it is not suffice to understand the meaning of these policies in the political context of the Chinese government. It is very important for us to address how the Chinese government interprets the term of development, with particular the discourse of 'with Chinese characteristics' in our development studies. So far, I have addressed that the

Chinese government involves the development process as an actor.

In my study, I have focus on the local actors. These actors include not only the Chinese government but also the local development organizations. In addressing domestic development organizations, the analysis helps us understand the assumption that the growing intermediate social organizations would constitute a challenge to the existing political power. Here, I need to understand how domestic development organizations take their positions towards the government's policies in the political context. As argued before, local actors do not involve in the development process passively. We will see that domestic development organizations strategically use PRA to negotiate their interests in China-development field.

c). **The complex dynamics of local development organizations in appropriating the interpretation of PRA of the state and international organizations**

As mentioned in Chapter Six, in the case of NGO registration, the regulations for local development organizations are under the government's control. But

domestic development organizations strategically use PRA to avoid being seen as engaging in politically sensitive activities in the present political context. For example, they will try to register under universities or not to register in order to avoid registration. In fact, their strategies maybe related to how they pose their positions relative to the stance of the government or international organizations, particularly to whether they interpret and identify the knowledge of PRA as a professional knowledge or as an advocacy for social change. For example, many of them take positions as a bridge between local communities and policy decision-makers i.e. government agencies and the World Bank, etc, so they would present themselves as professionals in PRA so as to please the donors. 'Partnership' is a popular strategy for these organizations to negotiate funding. In sum, PRA is a strategy for them to negotiate their interests.

In my study, I found that some more reflective domestic development workers tended to have a more 'fluid' conception of some PRA principles and valued critical awareness and personal responsibility, which were understood as being linked to 'grassroots movements'. Some more strategic domestic development workers tended to use PRA to negotiate their interests. To categorize the responses of these domestic development workers as either 'reflective' or 'strategic' may be

misleading. There are different actors such as the international organizations, the Chinese government and Chambers interacting and the ideologies of these different actors influence these domestic development workers. But these domestic development workers need to put more effort in their encounter with the state policies. Being 'situated' in the present political context seems to influence what strategies they may select to pursue their objective. For example, the adoption of the language of the market by the domestic development organizations might make fundraising easier, but it is more important to appropriate the discourse of marketization under different concrete situation. In sum, we can see these domestic development organizations actively involve in the process. This brings us to see domestic development workers strategically response to national policies. In addition, this alerts us to see how they generate their own PRA strategies to encounter the Chinese government, especially in facing the conflictual situation between the demands and voices of the Chinese government and that of the peasants.

d). Local government and the making of new mode of PRA

In Chapter Seven, I began to look more closely at how domestic development

workers strategically select to use PRA in different ways. I found that their actions

have to be understood in the light of their interactions with the local government. I

suggest that when analyzing domestic development organizations' strategies, we

shall examine them in the political context of local government. As discussed

before, some scholars also mentioned the important role of local state in the market

reform. As Oi, Jean (1999) mentioned that in the rural reform process, local level

officials act as part of the administrative apparatus, as part of the 'state', but the

local state is a distinct entity apart from the central state and society, with their

own agendas, and increasingly with their own resources. As a result, the local state

is able to thrive independently in the new market economy, which is overseen by a

still effective but now weakening central state. Flower and Pamela Leonard (1996)

have argued that the state-society relation is not a zero-sum one. But in their study

of NGO program in Sichuan province, the authors also mentioned that state

networks are still powerful and cadres seek to maintain their control over rural

society. The emergence of non-government organizations has been patterned by

their unavoidable need to negotiate with the state for power. Actually, these

scholars argue that the Western model of civil society is inadequate to address the

state-society relationship in the Chinese context. This alerts us to see how domestic

development organizations negotiate their interests with a complex network

comprising of international organizations, different domestic development workers

and organizations, and the Chinese government.

In addition, the health case lets us know that the discourse of 'PRA with

Chinese characteristics' is also becoming a strategy for domestic development

workers to 'situate' themselves in the political context. More importantly, the

discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' creates a discursive space for

domestic development organizations pushing for development programs and

strategies to avoid political conflicts. As discussed before, making good

relationship with local officials is a necessary task for the domestic development

workers. It implies that, when addressing the community's need, the rationale

given by the domestic development workers may indicate that they tend to consider

the local government power rather than addressing the inequalities in the village.

Domestic development workers are unable and unwilling to deal with such

complexities in the political context. They need to treat PRA as a simple principle

and methodological tool to deal with the political issue. They take PRA as a neutral

rhetoric and a professional technical tool to do development works. Thus, we found

in their debates about gender and the issues of environment protection that often

fail to address potential conflict and inequalities. In fact, the politically sensitive

environment induces domestic development organizations to present their development programs and strategies as neutral, and professional, and thus these programs do not constitute any challenging to the existing political power. Here, the point is very important for me to make my argument below.

III. Implications:

Local actors – a neglected party in shaping the state-society relation

In summary, some would say that the growing domestic development organizations would challenge the political power of the state. Our study found that domestic development organizations might not be autonomous in their relationship with the state, some of the reasons that may account for this fact is the existence of grave power deferential between the state and the domestic development organizations, and the top-down nature of the state's mode of governance; thus the growth of domestic development organizations would not be a relevant indicator of assessing the nature of civil society in China. On the contrary, there are tensions between the Chinese government, domestic development organization and international organizations at different levels. In principle, adopting the civil society model tends to lead one to interpret domestic development organizations as intermediate social organizations. However, with a new set of relationships

228

between the Chinese government and international organizations, domestic development organizations face two challenges: to maintain and negotiate their relationship with the state in which these domestic development organizations can claim that their programs are in line with the policy of practicing 'PRA with Chinese characteristics', but at the same time to claim that they act as 'intermediate social organizations' when dealing with international organizations. In recent years the use of the term 'with Chinese characteristics' has spread increasingly in China-development field. Regarding the rising popularity of the term 'PRA with Chinese characteristics', this term is being appropriated by the state and the domestic development workers with different meanings and intentions. We can understand the term of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' as the opening of spaces for different local actors producing development strategies in China. The international organizations attempt to imprint development policies or development programs on the development field, the Chinese government and domestic development organizations can transmute these policies and programs within the constraints imposed on them, into something quite different, something that suit the Chinese context in order to adapt these policies to their own interests. Under the circumstance, it is important for us to address how local actors interpret the use of the term of 'with Chinese characteristics' in development.

In the case of my research, I found that the politically sensitive environment induces domestic development organizations to present their development programs and strategies as neutral, and professional, and thus these programs do not constitute any challenging to the existing political power. Therefore, the civil society model of 'intermediate social organizations' may have take it for granted that the growing domestic development organizations as a relevant indicator of assessing the nature of civil society in China. As Jude Howell and Jenny Pearce (2001) reminded that different organizations are linked to the state in varying degrees, hence the room for maneuver and independence of civil organizations cannot be taken for granted in China.

Thus, if we say the process of reform and the growth of domestic development organizations bring about a radical reduction in central and local state authorities, I think it is too simple and inadequate to understand the complex power dynamic of the Chinese state and society relation. Actually, when doing our research, it is important to understand the political power existing in local state and central state. We must understand the local state is independent in the market economy. Domestic development organizations' activities interact with both the central and local government. In particular, at the level of implementing local

project, it is not easy for domestic development organizations to bypass the local state in rural areas. Most often, it is not easy for local state to separate from society in rural areas. For example, many officials are local people and they have networks and kinship in the community. Therefore, in the study of development issue, simple dichotomies of 'society' and 'state' or 'the villagers' and 'the officials' may not be appropriate for analyzing political power in this context. In the case of China, domestic development organizations would have an uneasy life if they were viewed as antagonist of the state. On the contrary, domestic development organizations may be considered as non-partisan rather than as antagonist of the state in shaping the state-society relation. Here, I suggest questioning the appropriateness and relevance of using the argument of civil society to analyze in China-development field. Instead I suggest seeing how domestic development organizations negotiate their interests with a complex network comprising of international organizations, different domestic development workers and organizations, and the Chinese government. In my view, the growing domestic development organizations are potentially contradictory, embodying competing and conflicting interests throughout the China-development field.

IV. Research limitations and suggestions for further studies

Throughout the research process, the study encountered many difficulties. In the China-development field, there are so many regional and local actors involving in the development process. For example, within the study of domestic development organizations, it is not adequate to follow only a few cases to address how domestic development organizations interpret PRA in their development practice, because there are so many domestic development organizations in China-development field. The most obvious limitation is that the interfaces were not studied in depth. Moreover, my study is more focused in domestic development organizations but not adequately followed through to the regional and national levels. Similarly, the study of the interface with the government and other local development organizations working in those communities, that had an influence on domestic development organizations and community interface, was not adequately explored. Moreover, this study has not explored everyday forms of resistance that are significant to the villagers. Responding to the domestic development workers in health case, I found that the villagers are capable of articulating alternative discourse in their resistance. Yet, my informants mostly come from academic field and PRA networks. This study is more focused on examining the complexity and

dynamics of domestic development organizations in China-development field. I was not able to conduct such a complicated and multi level study because of lack of time and the need to get the study focused in order to generate more concrete findings. Hence, I will suggest that the views of local people and see how the counter-discourses resistance is formed in the rural society should be addressed future studies. I will suggest future studies should look more closely at how 'local' people negotiate power in different ways. Are there conflicts between the local state and domestic development organizations as well as local peasants? What are the effect in the peasants and the development field when domestic development organizations and the state negotiate their own interest while implementing the development projects work? In addition, at the present moment, the Chinese government is drafting a handbook for PRA approach in China. How is the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' interpreted by the Chinese government? How does the knowledge of PRA penetrate into the local development projects? How do the development programs transform local society? All these questions may help us understand how the discourse of PRA is operating in China-development field. And studies of China development can examine how multiple and dynamic interpretations of these ideas, which are being redefined by local actors.

In short, the discourse of development interventions, contrary to our initial expectations, may not only operate primarily at the international level, but is also reworked by local actors with their own interests. More importantly, it is clearly demonstrated that the influence of the relationships between domestic development organizations and the Chinese government is deeply affected by both strategies and program planning of domestic development organizations. The domestic development workers need to portray PRA as a pedagogy and professional tool, and then they are able to do development works in China-development field. So, PRA could be said as strategic for survival for domestic development organizations. It implies that the discourse of 'PRA with Chinese characteristics' is exercising its power in China-development field. Under the circumstance, domestic development workers push for PRA which may present as neutral, professional, and avoid political conflicts in China. Therefore, we cannot accept the simple assumption that civil society would automatically strengthen the growth of domestic development organizations, and this growth would constitute a challenge to the central state.

Bibliography

Abram, Simone. 1998. 'Introduction: anthropological perspectives on local development', in *Anthropological Perspectives on Local Development: Knowledge and sentiments in conflict*, edited by Simone Abram and Jacqueline Waldren, Routledge, London.

Arce, Alberto and Long, Norman. eds. 2000. *Anthropology, Development and Modernities: Exploring Discourses, Counter-tendencies and Violence*, Routledge, London.

Astrid, Von Kotze. 1998. 'Monologues or Dialogues? Missed Learning Opportunities in Participatory Rural Appraisal', Convergence, Vol. 32 Issue 4, p47-55.

Benda-beckmann, von F. 1994. 'Good governance, law and social reality:problematic relationships,' Knowledge and Politics 7(3): 55-67.

Bevan, Philippa. 2000. 'Who's a goody? Demythologizing the PRA Agenda, Journal of International Development', Journal of International Development, Dev. 12:751-759.

Bhabha, Homi K. 1983. 'Difference, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism', in Francis Barker et al. Eds. *The Politics of Theory, University of Essex*, Colchester, p.194-211.

Booth, David. eds. 1994. *Rethinking social development: theory, research and practice*, Longman Scientific and Technical.

Booth, David. 1975. 'Beyond the Sociology of Development: Economy and Society in Latin America and Africa', Routledeg, London.

Brook, Timothy and Frolic, B. Michael. eds. 1997. *Civil Society in China*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Cardoso, F.H. and Faletto, E, 1979. 'Dependency and Development in Latin America', Berkeley: University of California Press.

Center for Community Development Studies. 2001. 'CDS STRATEGIC PLAN: advancing Natural Resource Management Livelihoods and Local Governance', Kunming, Yunnan Province, China.

CDS STUDIES PAPER NO.4. 2001. 'Reflecting voice of the poor: participatory poverty assessments in Nayong County', Guizhou, P.R. China.

China's annual plan and Performance Review. November 2000- October 2001. p1-21.

Chambers, Robert. 1983. *Rural Development: Putting the Last First*, Longman, London.

Chambers, Robert. 1997. *Whose reality counts?* Intermediate Technology Publications.

Cheater, Angela. 1999. *The Anthropology of Power: Empowerment and disempowerment in changing structures*, Routledge, London.

China Development Brief. 2001. 'New Poverty Alleviation Strategy Promises Targeting and Participation With Chinese Characteristics', Vol. IV No. 2: Autumn.

China Development Brief. 2002. 'Creating an official non profit sector', Vol. I No. 2: Autumn.

Cooke, Bill and Kothari, Uma. eds. 2001. *Participation: The new tyranny?*, Zed Books, London.

Crewe, Emma and Harrison, Elizabeth. 1998. *Whose Development? An Ethnography of Aid*, Zed Books, London.

Croll, Elisabeth. 1994. *From Heaven To Earth: Images and Experiences of Development in China*, Routledge, London.

De Janvry Alain, Elizabeth Sadoulet, and E. Thornebecke. 1991. 'States, markets and civil institutions', paper prepared for the ILO-Cornell-Berkeley Conference on States, Markets, and Civil Society, Ithaca.

Edwards, M. 1999. 'NGO Performance: What Breeds Success? New Evidence

from South Asia', World Development, Vol. 27, p.361-374.

Escobar, Arturo. 1995. *Encountering Development: The Making And Unmaking Of The Third World*, Princeton University Press.

Escober, Arturo. 1992. 'Culture, Economics, and Politics in Latin American Social Movements Theory and Research', in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, edited by Arturo Escober and Sonia E. Alvarez, Boulder:Westview Press.

Everett, Margaret. 1997. 'The ghost in the machine: Agency in "Post-structural" critiques of development', Anthropological Quarterly, Vol. 70: 137-151.

Ewards, M. and Hulme, D. eds. 1992. *Making a Difference: NGOs in a Changing World*, Earthscan, London.

Fairclough, Norman, 1993. 'Discourse and social change', Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers.

Farrington, John, Bebbington, Anthony, Wellard, Kate and Lewis, David J. 1993. *Reluctant Partners: Non-governmental organizations, the state and sustainable agricultural development*, Routledge, London.

Ferguson, James. 1994. *The anti-political machine: "Development", Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, Cambridge University Press.

Flower, John and Leonard, Pamela. 1996. 'Community values and state cooptation' in *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*, edited by Hann, Chris and Dunn, Elizabeth, Routledge, London.

Foucault, Michel. 1972. *The Archaeology of knowledge*, Tavistock, London.

Friedman, M. 1990. 'Using the market for social development', in *Economic Reform in China: Problems and Prospects*, edited by J. A. Dorn and X. Wang, University of Chicago Press.

Gramsci, Antonio. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, New York: International Publishers.

Green, Maia. 2003. 'Globalizing Development in Tanzania: Policy Franchising

through Participatory Project Management', Critique of Anthropology, Vol. 23, pp. 123-143.

Guijt, Irene. and Meera Kaul.Shah. eds. 1998. *The Myth of Community: Gender Issues in Participatory Development*, IT Publications, London.

Gupta, Akhil and Ferguson, James. eds. 1997 *Culture Power Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*, Duke University Press.

Guizhou Environmental Protection Bureau International Crane Foundation. 2001. 'Community-Based Conservation And Development: Strategies And Practice At Chohai', Guizhou Nationalities Publishing House.

Hecker, Rosaline. 1997. 'Participatory action research as a strategy for empowering aboriginal health workers', Australia and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, Vol. 21: 784-788.

Hobart, M. 1993. 'An Anthropological Critique of Development: The Growth of Ignorance', Routledge, London.

Howell, Jude and Pearce, Jenny. 2001. *Civil Society and Development: A Critical Exploration*, Routledge, London.

Joint Report of LGPR, UNDP and the World Bank. (Undated). 'International Conference on China's Poverty Reduction Strategies in Early 21st Century: Synopsis of the Background Reports'.

Joint Report of the Leading Group for Poverty Reduction, UNDP, and the World Bank Rural Development and Natural Resources Unit East Asia and Pacific Region. 2001. 'China Overcoming Rural Poverty'.

Ku, Hok Bun. 1998. *Defining Zeren: Cultural Politics is a Chinese village*, University of London, Unpublished PHD thesis.

Lieberthal, Kenneth and Oksenberg Michel. 1988. *Policy Making In China: Leaders, Structures, and Processes*, Princeton University Press.

Li, Tania Murray, 1999. 'Compromising power: Development, cultures and rule in Indonesia Cultural Anthropology', Washington, Vol. 14: 295-322.

Long, Norman and Ann. Long. eds. 1992. *Battlefields of Knowledge: The Interlocking of Theory and Practice in Social Research and Development*, Routledge, London.

Long, Norman. 2001. *Development Sociology: Actor perspective*, Routledge, London.

Long, Norman and van der Ploeg. 1989. 'Demythologizing planned Intervention: an actor perspective', Sociologia Ruralis, vol.XXIX, no.3/4, p.226-249.

Luk, Tak Chuen. 1999. 'The politics Economy of Anti-Poverty in Socialist China'in *China in Transition Issues and Policies*, edited by Teather, David C. B. and Yee, Herbert S, Antony Rowe Ltd.

Migdal, Joel S. 1988. *Strong societies and weak states: state-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World*, Princeton University Press.

Mohan, Giles. 1999. 'Not so Distant, Not so Strange: the Personal and the Political in Participatory Research', Ethics, Place and Environmental, Vol.2, No. I, p.41-54.

Mohan, Giles and Stokke, Kristian. 2000. 'Participatory development and empowerment: The dangers of localism', Third World Quarterly, Economic development, Vol. 21: 247-268.

Mosse, David. 1995. 'Authority, Gender and Knowledge: Theoretical Reflections on the Practice of Participatory Rural Appraisal', Research Issues In Natural Resource Management, KRIBP Working Paper No.2.

Munck, Ronaldo and O' Hearn, Denis. eds. 1999. *Critical Development Theory: Contributions to a new paradigm*, Zeo Books, London.

Nedervenn, Pieterse Jan. 2001. *Development Theory Deconstructions/Reconstructions*, Sage Publications Ltd.

Nelson, Nici and Wright, Susan. eds. 1995. *Power and Participatory Development: Theory and Practice*, Intermediate Technology Publications.

Oakley, P. and Marsden, D. 1984. *Approaches to Participation in Rural Development*, ILO, Geneva.

OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) 1991. 'Development Assistance Committee Chariman's Report', OECD, Paris.

Oi, Jean Chun 1999. *Rural China takes Off: institutional foundations of economic reform*, University of California Press.

Oxfam, Hong Kong. (Undated). 'The Oxfams Porgramme in China'.

Parpart, Jane. L. 2002. 'Rethinking participatory empowerment, gender and development: the PRA approach' in *Rethinking Empowerment, Gender and Development in a Global/Local World*, edited by Kriemild Saunders, Zed Books.

Peet, Richard. 1998. *Modern Geographical Thought*, Blackwell Publishers.

Peet, Richard and Watts, Michael. 1993. 'Introduction: Development Theory and Environment in an Age of Market Triumphasim', Economic Geography, Vol. 69: 227-253.

Peet, Richard and Watts, Michael. 1996. *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, development, social movements*, Routledge, London.

Perera, J. 1997. 'In unequal dialogue with donors: experiences of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement', in *NGOs, States and Donors*, edited by M. Ewards and D. Hulme, Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Porter, Marilyn and Judd, Ellen. eds. 1999. *Feminists Doing Development: A Practical Critique*, Zed Books, London.

Preston, Peter Wallace. 1996. *Development Theory: An introduction*, Blackwell publishers.

Reid, David. 1995. *Sustainable Development: An introductory Guide*, Earthscan Publications, London.

Rural Development Research Center at the Yunnan Institute of Geography. 2000. *SW China PRA Reflection: Project Report (in Chinese)*.

Said, Ewards. 1979. *Orientalism*, vintage Books, New York.

Scott, J.C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, Yale University Press, London.

Schneider, Hartmut. 1999. 'Participatory Governance for Poverty Reduction', Journal of International Development, Dev.11:521-534.

Shue, Vivienne. 1994. 'State Power and Social Organization in China', in *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World*, edited by Joel Midagl, Atul Kohli and Vivienne Shue, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schuurman, F. J. ed. 1993. *Beyond the Impasse: New Directions in Development Theory*, Zed book.

Small, Stephen A. 1995. 'Action-oriented research: Models and methods', Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol. 57: 941-963.

Teather, C. B. and Yee, Herbert S. eds. 1999. *China in Transition Issues and Policies*, Macmillan Press Ltd.

Tembo, Fletcher. 2003. *Participation, Negotiation and Poverty: Encountering the Power of Images*. Ashgate.

The World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. *Our Common Future*, Oxford University Press.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), China. 1999. 'The China Human Development Report', Oxford University press.

Von Kotze, Astrod, 1998. 'Monologues or dialogues? Missed learning opportunities in participatory rural appraisal', International Council for Adult Education, Vol. 31: 47-56.

Weisgrau, Maxine K. 1997. *Interpreting Development*, University Press of America, Inc.

Whaites, Alan. 1998. 'Viewpoint NGOs, civil society and the state: avoiding

theoretical extremes in real world issues', Development in Practice, Vol. 8 Issue 3, p343-349.

White, Gordon, Jude Howell, and Shang Xiaoyuan. 1996. *In Search of Civil Society: Market Reform and Social Change in Contemporary China*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

World Bank. 1994. 'A Global Partnership for Development', Washington DC.

- 1996. 'From plan to market, World development report', Washington DC.

- 1996. 'Participation through intermediary NGOs, Social Development Papers Working paper'.

- 1996. 'The World Bank Participation Sourcebook', ESD (Environmentally

- Sustainable Development), World Bank, Washington, DC.

- 1997. 'The state in a Changing World', World Development Report.

- 1997. 'Macroeconomic reform China: laying the foundation for a socialist market economy', World Bank discussion paper.

- 1999. 'Knowledge for Development', World Development Report.

- 2002. 'Building Institutions for Markets', World Development Report.

- 2002. 'Monitoring Evaluation: some tools, methods and approaches', World Development Report.

Wright, Susan. 1994. 'Culture in anthropology and organizational studies', in *Anthropology of Organization*, edited by Susan Wright, Routledge, London.

Yin, K. Robert. 1994. *Case Study Research: Designs and Methods (2nd Ed.)*, U.S.A., Sage Publication.

Young, Robert. 1990. *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, Routledge, London.

李小雲主編。1999。《誰是農村發展的主體》。中國農業出版社。

李小雲主編。2001。《參與式發展概論》。中國農業出版社。

安妮.拉德馬赫。2001。《誰傾聽我們的聲音》。中國人民大學出版社。

中國社會科學農村發展研究所編。2000。《中國農業發展研究報告 1》。社會科學文獻出版社。

張京輝/韓亞珠主編。2000。《貧困地區可持續發展道路抉擇》。人民出版社。

王築生主編。1998。《人類學與西南民族》。雲南大學出版社。

中國社會科學院研究所主編。2000。《農村外出務工女性 農民流動與性別》。中原農民出版社。

熊景明主編。2000。《進入 21 世紀的中國農村》。光明日報出版社。

陸德泉。 2001。〈新自由主義的全球化,農村管治和農村貧困:中國扶貧政治的個案分析〉香港理工大學:華人社會排斥與邊緣性問題研討會。

朱曉陽。2003。〈在語言 "膨脹"的時代再談 "參與式"的內在困境及 "補藥"〉摘自 中國農村網。

朱曉陽。2003。《反貧困人類學田野速食援助工業》。監測研究部。

西南地區會議論文集。2000。《參與式在農村發展中的運用和推廣》。

中國西南地區 PRA。2000。《中國西南地區 PRA 回顧課題總結報告》。雲南省地理研究所農村發展調研中心。

麗江民族文化與性別研究會編輯。2002。《社會性別與發展在中國第三屆年會論文集》。

沈紅。2002。〈窮人主體建構與社區性制度創新〉。摘自社會學期刊 2002 年第一期