

Djibouti: From a colonial fabrication to the deviation of the “Shekou model”

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Abstract

Djibouti is a postcolonial African city that embraced neoliberal ideology after the country’s independence, and yet still lags behind in the world’s economy. With the fragmentation of both its society and space, the city has continued to be a playground for global powers, because of its strategic location for trade and global security. In the global era, Djibouti's aspirations for development have encountered China's “Belt and Road Initiative”. Through a series of recent investments, China Merchant Group, a Chinese state-owned enterprise, has attempted to redeploy the successful model in Shenzhen in the horn of Africa. This study first delineates the history of Djibouti from the colonial to independence periods, and then examines how China's experience is being applied in African lands. The study is significant in revealing the processes and problems of global investment and planning in the developing countries.

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