

## Review

Jun Morikawa (1997) *Japan and Africa: big business and diplomacy*. London: Hurst & Co; Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Katsuhiko Kitagawa

In January 1999, the Japanese government dispatched Ryutaro Hashimoto, former prime minister and foreign policy adviser, to Kenya and South Africa to promote economic partnership. In June, the Japanese Government strengthened its aid relations with South Africa by pledging a new development package worth US \$1.5 billion over the next five years. A fact-finding mission is to be sent to South Africa to identify projects to be funded by the money. The Japanese package coincided with the inauguration of Thabo Mbeki as president of South Africa. In the meantime, in March 1999, a historically significant meeting in Washington brought together 86 ministers from 46 sub-Saharan African countries and virtually every top officer in the Clinton administration to discuss issues like trade, investment, financial debt and other areas of conflict. At first glance, Japanese policy thus seems to operate within an African continent that is integrated into the world under American supremacy after the end of the Cold War.

This book inquires into the nature and causes of changing Japanese diplomacy toward Africa in the context of change in the existing general framework of Japanese diplomacy defined within post-war international relations. It then tries to suggest the analytical framework with which to explain Japanese international relations and diplomacy to Africa in the coming century. In this regard, the International Conferences of African Development held in Tokyo in 1993 and 1998 were of significance in two senses. They clarified in one sense the basic framework of Japanese diplomacy toward Africa in particular while, in another, they gave an opportunity to consider the way to promote democratic rule in Africa for Japanese diplomacy in general. These two conferences were coincident with the transitional period in economic policy on the African continent as

well as with two transitions in the South African administration (1990, 1994). It marked, by the same token, the transformation of Japan's African diplomacy looking equally at many countries to a more South African-centred approach.

After the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in South Africa, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan declared that it supported democratisation, national reconciliation and nation building in South Africa, and the Reconstruction and Development Project (RDP) propelled under Mandela's government. It is considered that this declaration related closely to Japan's cooperation with South Africa on the issues of the reform of the United Nations and anti-nuclear proliferation, which matter particularly to Japan. In addition Japan has equally expressed its serious view that development and stabilisation in the South African economy and polity is indispensable to development in the southern African region in particular and to the African continent in general.

Three essential analytical concepts of the Japanese diplomatic framework to Africa in this book are summarised below and, finally, some questions are raised.

First presented by Morikawa is the concept of dualistic diplomacy. Post-war Japanese diplomacy was predicated on the Japan-US Security Treaty, friendly relations with Western mining and manufacturing countries in Europe plus Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and friendly relations with anti-communist or non-aligned countries in the Third World, all in the context of the Cold War with the USSR. Thus Japanese diplomacy to Africa developed within a framework of economic expansionism and anti-communism. This included, on the one hand, a white African policy which meant support to the white minority rule territories as anti-Communist; and, on the other, a black African policy which meant constructing friendly relations with pro-Western or non-aligned countries whilst camouflaging the simultaneously active pro-Pretoria policy. In order to achieve these policies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed such tactics as (1) coordination and cooperation with Europe and the US; (2) cooperation with Organization of African Unity member states that were politically moderate and resource rich; (3) connections established by Liberal Democratic Party leaders, bureaucrats and men of business; and (4) the diffusion of public relations to promote Japan as a country with clean hands in Africa. This post-war Japanese dual diplomacy policy with regard to Africa progressed from the formative

period (1951-60), through the establishment period (1960-75), and into a period considered as corrupt by Morikawa (post 1975).

The second concept covers private economic diplomacy carried out by Keidanren (Federation of Economic Organization) which stands at the top of the Japanese business world and has implicitly influenced the policy-making process in the post-war Japanese political world. Private economic diplomacy in Africa has been pushed forward by the African Cooperation Committee organised within Keidanren through support by the overseas branches of Japanese companies spread throughout the African continent. Key companies include such general trading companies as Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Nisshoo, Itochu and Marubeni. Japanese big business has contributed to economic relations with Africa in terms of increasing imports of African raw materials, direct investment, positive participation in economic development project planning in African countries and applying and carrying out Japanese Overseas Direct Assistance projects. Contacts were established both with representatives of white minority rule and anti-apartheid activists, including the ANC, through the UN and OAU.

Thirdly, Morikawa points out that a racist mentality continues to hide under the umbrella of economic expansionism. The Japanese government promotes itself as a developed country inhabited by non-white people, which helps those who suffer from racial discrimination. However, the legacy of the imperialist mentality and the pre-war status of honorary white occupied by Japanese in white settler colonies is strong. It is argued in this book that the survival of this mentality took place in historically ambiguous circumstances marked by the gradual abolition of anti-Japanese discrimination by the Western powers and the Japanese appeal to an anti-racial clause in the charter of the League of Nations. It continued to thrive because the post-war Japanese made their prime inroads into the African market solely through contact with European immigrant-dominated societies and the international institutional framework constructed by the Western powers.

Even though the validity of dual diplomacy as an analytical concept is acceptable, the explanation of its origin remains more debatable. The actors and factors which produced this diplomatic dualism and the specific context in which it was produced, remain unclear. In order to make this concept completely convincing, a dedicated historical analysis should be extended to multiple aspects of economic and political affairs in Africa and

to diverse international structures which have connected Japan with Africa in order to draw out the structures that generated this policy.

The author emphasises the symbiotic and functional relations that exist between government, bureaucracy and the business world in the making of Japanese diplomacy to Africa. However, this reviewer would urge the author to reconsider the assumption that there is no difference between the official and unofficial mind. This depends upon the viewpoint of how to interpret capitalist development and overseas expansion in Japanese history. If the concept of economic diplomacy were to be divided up between the 'economic' and 'the diplomatic', this reviewer might suggest that the author's analysis of the economic sphere should be made more thorough.

It is unconditionally accepted that the method and analytical framework adopted in this book to critique Japanese diplomacy to Africa, as well as to Europe and the USA, are effective tools. By the same token, understandably, there is a need to criticise cosy relationships between government, bureaucracy and the business world in African countries. Viewing the new millenium from this period of global crisis, it is critically necessary that a global watchdog network should be constructed, in order to link a critical stance and democratic control over diplomacy, among both Africans and Japanese. In this regard, regrettably, no discussion of the Japanese attitude towards the decolonisation in Africa is found in this book. It should be seriously pondered how and why the advanced capitalist and ex-imperialist countries reveal common attitudes - 'a neo-colonial imperialism of decolonization' - following the independence of African countries in the late 1950s and 1960s.

In the works on social science and history written about Japan on the one hand, and social scientific analyses on African affairs which refer to Japan on the other hand, few touch upon the relations between Japan and Africa. Even though the research field on this topic is new, it is promising and fertile. It may be expected that particular case studies covering specific periods could be accumulated. In this sense *Japan and Africa* is indisputably a commendable contribution and establishes a foundation to explore this topic further.