

Asian Studies in Africa

PANEL ABSTRACT:

Asian Aid Relationships in Africa I: Comparing Japan and China

Two panels on Asian Relationships in Africa combine ten papers on various aspects of Asian aid relationships in Africa in order to inspire a discussion on the benefits of Asian Studies programs at Universities in African countries. The overall argument is that Asian Studies in Africa is key to enhancing Asian Studies globally by adding African perspectives and to nuance understandings of the Asian presences on the African continent. Furthermore, the study of Asia can inform various African state, civil society, and private sector stakeholders in their current and future interactions with Asians, globally and locally. The concrete cases presented by this panel are related to relationships between Japan and/or China and various African countries. The political scientist David Arase compares Japanese and Chinese aid to Africa. The political economist Yumiko Yamamoto analyzes the rise in Japanese foreign aid to West African countries. The political scientist Cheng Cheng offers a new perspective on the Chinese characteristics of the ODF process and Chinese Foreign Aid policy to Africa. The political scientists Fatai Ayinde Aremu and Pedro Amakasu Raposo both discuss the influence of the TICAD process on the Japanese foreign aid policy to Africa. The combination of these five papers invites a discussion of the specific roles of Japan and China in Africa and the wider implications of their actions and policies in African countries for global foreign aid or ODA regimes.

PAPER ABSTRACTS:

The evolution of Japanese and Chinese economic development assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa: Deja vu all over again?

By David Arase

Both Japan and China at the outset of their respective economic assistance programs in Sub-Saharan Africa were engaged in industrialization efforts to catch up with the advanced Western economies. Over time, Japanese overseas economic assistance policy began to converge with norms governing OECD members' Official Development Assistance (ODA) until today, when Japanese ODA, though still distinctive, largely conforms to DAC norms. There are signs that Chinese aid policy is changing in response to pressure from OECD aid donors and African aid recipients. The question is whether Chinese development assistance will follow a similar policy trajectory and converge with OECD aid norms. An analysis of the similarities and differences of Japan and China as aid donors will suggest why China, unlike Japan, will not converge with Western aid principles and practices.

Japanese ODA to West Africa (2000-2009)

By Yamamoto Yumiko

Since 1989, Japanese ODA to West Africa has increased dramatically. This paper addresses the key questions: How and why does Japan provide foreign aid to West Africa, a diverse and predominantly francophone region composed of 16 countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Gambia, Ghana, Togo, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Liberia, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau)? What are their tools? On which countries does Japan focus, when did Japan first become involved in West Africa, and why? The paper argues that an increased demand for oil in Japan in the 1990s and the continuing political instability in the Middle East attracted Japan to West Africa with its wealth of natural resources (diamond, gold, phosphate, liquefied natural gas, oil, and aquatic resources). Based on six parameters (aid statistics, organisation, delivery system, diplomatic relations with West Africa, destination, and motivation), this paper assesses the Japanese strategy for foreign aid to West Africa by examining the Japanese motivation to get involved strategically in natural resource projects. The analysis includes observations on how Japanese motivation is tied to political intention and the decision to target only a few countries deemed to be of political and economic importance to Japan. The paper is developed from the author's book *Politique d'aide au développement de la Chine, de l'Inde et du Japon en Afrique de l'Ouest (Les Indes savants, forthcoming)* and includes observations on the influences of the interests and actions of China and India in West Africa.

“ODF with Chinese Characteristics” and ODA in Africa

By Cheng Cheng

Since the beginning of the 21st century, China's engagements in Africa, many of which have been labeled as “aid”, has raised global concerns about its overall impact on African development as well as potential erosion of prevailing ODA regimes. The most criticized practice, so-called “Mega Deal”, is to offer huge and concessional Chinese official finance for African infrastructure construction, sometimes with natural resource as collateral. In this sense, tracking and analyzing these financial flows might provide an opportunity to learn the intentions and paradigm implied within highly diversified Chinese projects, in order to lay down a better framework for further study about its impacts on prevailing ODA regimes.

While many studies and media reports have been delivered on this topic, most of them tend to be ambiguous about the nature of these financial practices, whether it is ODA, fits the broader category of Official Development Finance, or is better loosely described as “aid”. The challenge is that neither the ODA defined by OECD, nor External Assistance defined by Chinese authority is suitable, if we want to capture the quality and the quantity of China's financial contribution into African development. While ODF provides a broader rubric for better understandings, it fails to address some uniqueness of Chinese practice.

This study is organized as follows: firstly, conceptualizing “ODF with Chinese Characteristics” with three essential elements of ODA and adjusted arithmetic of its concessionality, but also the unique features of China’s behavior as the framework of the research; Secondly, comparing qualified Chinese development projects with matching ODA practices. Finally, upon the new conceptualization and the comparison between Chinese ODF and Western ODA practice, the plan is to evaluate the impacts of “ODF with Chinese Characteristics” on the current ODA regime.

Giving with Good Intentions? Convergence and Divergence of Ideas on Japanese Foreign Aid in Africa

By Fatai Ayinde Aremu

Studies on Japanese foreign aid to Africa show that in terms of the underlying principles, content and configuration, elements of continuity and change are constantly in motion. It is long established that Japanese aid is influenced by economic and geopolitical considerations (explaining Asia attracts the highest share), *gaiatsu* (accounting for Afghanistan’s large share) and humanitarian situations. Africa’s share of Japanese aid remains negligible and it is highly concentrated in a few countries. Various Japanese Prime Ministers have used TICAD platforms to canvass for increased Japanese aid engagement in Africa. The outcomes of these pronouncements and high-profile international diplomacy have yet to produce substantial change in the structure of Japanese aid relations with African countries. This paper engages the issues that confront Japanese aid in Africa with a view to reviewing how these issues are addressed in the literature by African and Japanese scholars. How are these issues framed and presented in the literature? Do African and Japanese writings converge or diverge on the subject of aid? What are the dynamics that underpin the rendition of the discourse on Japanese aid in the literature? These are some of the issues to be examined in this paper.

The TICAD aid network in the shadow of rising Asia-Africa partnerships

By Pedro Amakasu Raposo

One argues that the TICAD definitely changed Japanese aid network in terms of traditional recipient and interest approach beyond the Cold War *logic* of narrow bilateral engagement and assumed multilateral contours of continental partnership. Whether it was intentional or not is no longer important. The question is whether the TICAD has changed the ‘old top-down’ pattern of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to implement its aid, or instead African recipients post-Cold War needs, and / or emerging powers engagement in Africa enhanced changes in Japanese agency towards a more ‘bottom-up’ approach, to make the agency more ‘ownership friendly’. The analysis is achieved through appropriate literature on aid distribution and project implementation in Africa. Compared with 1993, presently the TICAD faces a dual problem: the first relates with the different perspective each-other (Japan-African partners) have about the ‘ownership’

and ‘partnership’ issue, and the second with emerging economic partnerships, particularly from China (FOCAC), India (AIF), but also South Korea (KAF) which represents a disruptive challenge to Japan’s model of partnership. Previous analysis suggests that gradually their differences (key principles and norms) are decreasing and their similarities (key areas and interests, cooperation modalities, and even accountability systems) are increasing, which further complicates JICA’s response. This paper aims at finding points where TICAD can develop a differentiated view in terms of assistance pattern of the various emerging powers partnerships have with Africa. By investigating the history of TICAD and mapping significant projects of JICA with old and new recipients in terms of development outcomes, one expects to provide what kind of interest (material) and/ or purpose (development) each partnership (implementing agency, ministry, or institution) prioritizes. In doing so one expects to understand what best distinguish TICAD from other Asian partnerships.

PANEL ABSTRACT:

Asian Aid Relationships in Africa II: A Broader Temporal and Geographic Perspective

Two panels on Asian Relationships in Africa combine ten papers on various aspects of Asian aid relationships in Africa in order to inspire a discussion on the benefits of Asian Studies programs at Universities in African countries. The overall argument is that Asian Studies in Africa is key to enhancing Asian Studies globally by adding African perspectives and to nuance understandings of the Asian presences on the African continent. Furthermore, the study of Asia can inform various African state, civil society, and private sector stakeholders in their current and future interactions with Asians, globally and locally. The concrete cases presented on this panel include insights on the impact of history on and the multiplicity of Asian countries involved in aid relationships on the African continent. The first paper is by the historian Annette Skovsted Hansen who maps the impact of historical networks on aid distribution in Africa. The historian Peter Adebayo outlines the history of Chinese foreign aid in Africa. The political scientist Hyo-Sook Kim presents an analysis of Korean aid to Africa as part of Korean foreign relations today and the political scientists Michael Arndt and Ajay Dubey present papers on current and historical features of Indian aid to African countries. This panel continues the discussions of panel I by introducing Korean and Indian actors in the aid relationships on the African continent. Several of the papers of this panel offer concrete and explicit historical arguments for the actions of various stakeholders in Asia and Africa today in order to inspire a discussion of temporal and geographic dimensions of Asian relationships in Africa.

PAPER ABSTRACTS:

Time and Trust: Impact of historical networks on aid distribution in Africa

By Annette Skovsted Hansen

Aid relationships in Africa often rely on old networks established by various flows of migrants, students, merchants, colonial administrators, missionaries, development workers, fellows, and diplomats. Many of these have been or are Asian or of Asian descent. The main aim of this paper is to see current Africa strategies as part of a long history of a variety of stakeholders on the African continent. I argue that trust and lack of trust based on long term relations influence choices on aid distribution made by African and partner countries. The analysis is based on a reading of OECD statistics on aid distribution in combination with select interviews with stakeholders in foreign aid, and archival findings on the historical presence of Japanese, Chinese, Indian, European, and North American people on the African continent. By looking at the impact of historical networks on ODA distribution in Africa, we can map a territory, within which current stakeholders from Asia are bound to operate. In the case of Japan, a fifty year history of capacity development projects in Africa has established channels of communication and trust to compete with longer term European, Chinese, and Indian ties. One example of how Japan has tried to build networks in Africa is Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Kenya. The university was first established as Jomo Kenyatta College of Agriculture in 1981. The focus remains agriculture and technology and social science and humanities' courses are not offered. Therefore, an Asian Studies program is not part of the profile of the university. Nevertheless, the ties to Japan are still evident in announcements on the university website. The argument of the paper is that there are long-term historical links between Japan and Africa that appear in need of research from an African perspective.

A Historical Reassessment of Chinese Aid to Africa, 1956-2014.

By Peter Adebayo

The phenomenal growth of Chinese aid to African countries especially in this 2nd decade of the 21st century have continued to draw the attention of researchers, international historians, policy makers, and development practitioners to take a closer look at the nature and character of the aid provided by China to Africa. Indeed, this irresistible historical trend of China could be said to have started in November 1956, when the Chinese government gave 20 million Swiss Francs in cash as a financial grant to the Egyptian government to support their fight for rights over the Suez Canal. The paper offers an overview of specific examples of Chinese aid to African countries that illustrate the character of Chinese aid in order to answer questions to the current Chinese aid policy. What has been the nature and character of the Chinese aids to Africa? Is the aid meant to satisfy Beijing's insatiable thirst for natural resources or the desire to promote what Deborah Brautigam has called 'diplomacy to promote good relationship and that the pattern is not linked to natural resources' or is China using its aid for what Joseph Nye has called 'soft power.' Or can the aid be seen 'as a means

of support and as making change,' including socio-cultural as well as politico-economic aspects. Are there conditionalities provided for the aid?

Against the background of these pertinent questions, this paper discusses - from an African perspective – the history of Chinese Aid to Africa beginning from 1956 till date. The methodology for carrying out this research is based on oral interviews, archival materials and copious review of literature that deals with China and Africa. On the whole, a multidisciplinary approach will be adopted for the study. It is hoped that the study will contribute to the literature on Sino-African relations.

Policy-Making of Korean Aid to Africa

By Hyo-sook Kim

South Korea (Korea) started its aid program in the 1960s under conditions of confrontational diplomatic competition with North Korea. The end of the Cold War, however, brought a shift in the main objectives of Korean aid. Korea began to recognize its responsibility as a newly industrialized country and necessity of economic cooperation with developing countries. These objectives, particularly economic interests, have been the most significant determinants of Korean aid allocation since 1990s. Although the main objectives of Korean aid have not changed, the proportion of aid to Africa has increased since the mid-2000 after a dramatic decrease in 1990s. Why has Africa's priority in Korean aid improved since the mid-2000s? What factors have led to these changes in Korean aid allocation? To answer these questions, the paper focuses on domestic stakeholders in Korea and their policy preferences as internal factors. Under the foreign policy in each president, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports increasing aid to Africa in pursuit of diplomatic interests and humanitarianism. Interested in economic interests, the Ministry of Strategy and Finance has been increasing loan aid to Africa recently. In addition to these governmental actors, non-governmental actors, including NGOs and Korean enterprises, have their own policy preferences and try to reflect those on aid policy. On the other hand, external factors also affect Korea's aid policy. Political stability and economic conditions in African recipient countries and aid activities of the other donors in the region have stimulated the increase of Korean aid. To maintain its identity as a developed country, Korea also has incentives to follow norms and aid trends in the international aid community. This paper argues that increasing influence of external factors and interaction between the internal and external factors affect policy-making in Korean aid and result in the improvement of regional priority of Africa.

Advent of a “Game Changer”? - India's Economic, Political and Strategic Engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa and India's New Role as a Development Aid Donor

By Michael Arndt

In her position as an emerging power, India has reassessed and reinvigorated the entirety of her relations with Africa in the past decade. These relations now cover the economic, political, and the security sphere and possess a pan-African quality. They are a function of the matrix of India's ideational foreign policy change, economic growth trajectory, energy insecurity and India's role as an increasingly important international stakeholder.

The main argument of the article is that India has successfully worked out her very own policies, institutional structures and inter-regional development schemes with unique characteristics to develop and deepen linkages with Sub-Saharan Africa. India is also emerging as a major development donor with no ties to the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in Sub-Saharan Africa, with far-reaching implications for the way development aid will be distributed in Africa in the future.

The different Indian strategies of engagement - with the private and public sector complementing each other - show that India now has the potential to become a "game changer" in the current new scramble for Sub-Saharan Africa and will impact the way other countries think about and deal with engaging Sub-Saharan Africa 'on the ground' as well as in international fora and organizations.

Political Economy of Indian Aid Diplomacy in Africa

By Ajay Dubey

With the launch of India Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) at New Delhi (2008) and at Addis Ababa (2011), India emerged from an Aid recipient to an Aid giving country. The IAFSs attempted to recast its Africa policy under the new African settings and new Indian imperatives. The IAFSs were organized under Banjul formula of African Union, which almost all important external players in Africa outright rejected. It was opted to protect Indian goodwill in Africa by giving a collective negotiating power to Africa, and to engage new actors like African Union and regional organizations to decide items, terms and spread of the projects from India. Over US\$8 billion of Aid package/projects for Africa, under two Forum Summits, were to be executed largely in agreement with AU and its 8 regional economic groups.

With disappearance of old rallying points in Indo-Africa relations like liberation struggles, racial discriminations, South-South cooperation etc, and economic interests emerged as prime movers of new relations. Emergence of new actors in Africa like AU and regional organizations, the assertive role of African countries in multilateral agencies and institutions of Global Governance, and the opening up of African primary resources like oil and markets to newly emerging economies, made India respond to this new challenge. Keeping in mind its fast growing economy looking for markets, investments, and energy resources, the presence of a large old Indian Diaspora in Africa, and growing competition in Africa, India went for IAFS. The paper intends to examine how building on multidimensional relations and historical goodwill, a unique strength of India, IAFS suited the Indian foreign policy bureaucracy, which was in a reverse role to disburse huge amounts of money to foreign countries, initially, without any adequate monitoring and vigilance mechanism in place.