

*Book Review*

## Japan as an 'Aid Receiver' from the United States and World Bank and an 'Aid Provider' to the Emerging Donors in Asia

Jin Sato and Yasutami Shimomura (eds), *The Rise of Asian Donors: Japan's Impact on the Evolution of Emerging Donors* (Routledge-GRIPS Development Forum Studies Series) (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), vi + 189 pp, £100.00 (Hardback), ISBN 978-0-415-52439-1

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#### Abstract

This timeous book is not only concerned with the proactive role of Japanese foreign aid in graduating some Asian economies (particularly China and India aside from South Korea) from recipient nations to emerging donors but also connected with how Japan has historically and spectacularly transformed itself from an aid beneficiary of the United States and the World Bank to one of the globe's topmost aid benefactors. However, it has many puny sides. At the start, this loosely organized volume suffers from not only a poorly planned title but also many antithetical statements, improvident observations, irrelevant exaggerations, fact avoidances and unrealistic optimisms. Besides, none of this biased book's authors (including both editors) are appropriate experts essentially from international relations disciplines. As a result, the co-editors were unable to adopt such ideal approach as 'aid diplomacy' or 'donor-recipient partnership' to theoretically and arguably validate any central question/problem posed as part of their research method. More critically, although they have talked much about the traditional proposition on foreign aid, they have eventually failed to confidently prescribe any convincing suggestion (mainly on the increasingly important human security issues and sustainable development goals) for this policy-oriented work in which the reviewer was so interested. Hence, the foremost advice from the reviewer to the editors is that they should try their utmost to produce an exceptionally outstanding piece with truly creative thoughts on comparative development aid with an emphasis on their nation's self-esteemed official development assistance (ODA). Yet, this cursory study possesses several plus points. No doubt, the cooperative undertaking for which most of the contributors are Japanese citizens and some of whom were engaged with in-depth country case studies has whatsoever been actualized for both involved stakeholders and related literatures in a purposeful and contrasting way. Of course, as this independent and authoritative article-length book review is filled with robust criticisms and sharp judgments, it will definitely be of valuable feedbacks for further improvement of the intellectual activities by this so-called prominent publisher's book series as a commercial joint venture.

#### Keywords

Japan, China, India, South Korea, Asia, United States, World Bank, Foreign Aid, ODA, Development Cooperation, Emerging Donors, International Relations

As the first editor (Jin Sato) in his introductory chapter acknowledges with gratitude, this book is the outcome of a series of discussions that took place under a research project funded by the Grant-in-Aid from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). Also, the editors thanked the Japan International Cooperation Agency Research Institute (JICA-RI) and the University of Tokyo's Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia (IASA) for jointly organizing a conference on the developmental lessons from postwar Japan's aid. It is because they believe that the exchange of views shared in this event was reflected in this book's chapters. Besides, almost all authors (including the two editors) of this publication are academics from Japan's well-known universities located in and around the greater Tokyo area. One contributor himself is the deputy director of JICA. Indeed, the second editor (Yasutami Shimomura), who is a Professor Emeritus at Hosei University, served as Dean of this university's Graduate School of Environmental Management. He has had much professional work experiences as an ex-staff of the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF), the implementing agency for loan aid furnished by the Government of Japan as well as a former member of the Board of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), formerly the Export-Import Bank of Japan (JEXIM), which is claimed to be the world's largest source of development finance. To be more striking, a graduate from the New York-based Columbia University, this senior Japanese is a prolific author whose copious volumes primarily on Japan's official development assistance (ODA) including this book have been produced from some of the globe's best-known publishers in recent years.

Anyway, I am not here at our Dhaka-based newly created Bangladesh Asia Institute for Global Studies (BAIGS) that is formerly known as the Asia Pacific Institute for Global Studies (APIGS), a world-leading foreign policy research think tank, to sing the praises of any book what the majority of academic presses and the mediocre type of reviewers usually do. Frankly, I should point out the feeblednesses more than the soundnesses of this volume, because I have read it in and out. Also, my intention is not at all to negatively downsize the book creators' ideas, but to positively construct my valid criticisms as a part of the exercise on scholastic autonomy in this succinct but systematic review piece, from which all the concerned peoples, institutions and organizations (especially the authors and publishers of this volume) would sanguinely benefit. In support of my claim, several of my highly authoritative and genuinely influential articles on Japan's ODA policy have already been published in reputable journals hosted by the Tokyo-based related research institutions and professional associations as well as many of my pieces on foreign aid from both established and emerging donors have appeared in globally renowned publication outlets outside Japan. Very confidently and delightfully, I am probably one of a very few non-Japanese Japan scholars from the international context in the world who has received the advanced edu-

cational degrees as well as so many research funds and scholarly distinctions from Japan, acclaiming that I am a winner of outstanding Asia academic awards named after two most influential prime ministers (Yasuhiro Nakasone and Masayoshi Ohira) in contemporary Japan.

First of all, the book's contents do not go according to its main title. More explicitly, the volume is divided into two parts with 10 chapters, consisting of Part I (chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5), and Part II (chapters 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) in addition to the introductory chapter 1. In First Part, two big chapters (2 and 3) describe how aid from the United States at variance with Washington's diplomatic pestering in an austerity has over the 1950s persuaded Japan to form a functional configuration as a donor needed for the progress of its international economic cooperation. In chapter 4, the authors narrate the stories about how the World Bank has triggered technology transfer and technology development, for example, the advancement of *Shinkansen* (bullet train), in domestic Japan in the post-World War period, while chapter 5 (penned by them) concentrates on evaluating this Bank-supported loan for two pilot farm projects for this country's regional development after 50 years later. Nevertheless, all these chapters are impertinent and preposterous. Therefore, as the editors inescapably needed to corroborate and incorporate this sizable portion (ie, Part I) for their book, the existing main title "*The Rise of Asian Donors*" should have justifiably been replaced by "*Japan's Emergence from a Recipient to a Donor*", which is entitled by them for this part. Indeed, as the Second Part entitled "*The Rise of Emerging Donors and Japan's Impact*" is directly related to the thematic steam and intrinsic purpose of this volume, I eagerly desire to extend my creative thoughts both 'in line with' and 'in opposition to' the conventional perceptions presented by the each individual chapter's author for Part II.

In this section, chapter 6 on the Republic of China (PRC), which exceedingly covers the impact of major donors (mainly the Soviet Union in the 1950s) on China as an aid recipient, spotlights that Japan's massive bilateral ODA schemes have helped China to implement its open and reform policy through multiple channels, while miraculously affecting this country's economic development and foreign aid policymaking process. This writer views: "In the mid-1970s and early 1980s, Japan was the most important model for China. However, as the Chinese economy developed, Japan became less important" (p. 109). The author, who urges to essentially continue to pay close attention to China's status as a concurrent recipient and a donor, purblindly concludes that China still receives foreign assistance, even though it became the world's 2nd largest economy in 2010. Frankly, this chapter largely reads a public relations (PR) document delivered by a spokesperson of foreign ministries in Tokyo and Beijing. It is obviously because it does not sharply investigate how the Government of Japan and the Japanese ordinary people feel about a fast militarily and economically rising China as their nation's

'dearest darling' in foreign aid since 1979 has today become a most 'risky rival' with Beijing's 'two fist' (ie, aggressive) strategy designed to take advantage of Japan's gradually weakening condition. With an emphasis on the synthesis of aid, investment and trade, the next chapter 7 less importantly identifies some internal features encapsulated in the socioeconomic circumstances for China's external aid. Though it even strives to discover some similarities between the aid approaches of Japan and China, it can be questioned how it makes sense in a sturdy and strong way that the chapter's co-writers (one of whom is the second editor himself) compare China as an 'unripe donor' with Japan as a 'mature donor'. Granted that the possibility of the 'East Asian Aid Model' is foreseen in this chapter, it still remains far-fetched about how such a 'best practice' of foreign aid as an indispensable component of international public goods could be replicated for the developing sub-regions of Asia, let alone the other world continents, unusually when none of these emerging donors possesses remarkably exultant mega-scale loan projects and large-scale business conglomerates what Japan is endowed with.

The author's speeches in chapter 8 dealing with Japan's nearest neighbor (South Korea) also seem to be overly verbose. It is because the chapter generally responds to the following often-asked enquiries about: how Japan has mattered for the transitional pathway of this country to a concomitant donor from a traditional recipient; why Tokyo has provided Seoul with aid; what kind of aid Japan has given to it and Korea to its aid receivers; whether the Republic of Korea (ROK) has engaged itself in the international ODA framework. In the chapter's finishing part, this writer is yet cross-examining why Japan assisted in Korean donorship, and how it means for Japan now that Korea has become an aid donor, without offering necessary answers to these questions. But the author should have critically delved into whether the Korean publics in general hold the attitude similarly as in the same of the Chinese citizens who are nowadays utterly ungracious to Japanese, since Japan's 'yen loans' (ie, 'soft loans' significantly contributing to economic growth through funding of industrial infrastructure projects) to their country have ended in 2008. Notwithstanding the truth that this chapter embellishes how Japan's technical cooperation has led to nurture Korea's human resources, we are yet informed of the secret about the symptomatic pattern of donor-recipient relations between Japan as a 'great power' and Korea as a 'middle power'. It might have been interesting for the involved parties, if this author had avoided his narrow-mindedness to build a foresight into whether Korea could really be a meaningful donor illustration. It is just because this nation, which had sadly been under the combative colonial rule of the Japanese Empire during 1910-1945, has come from being one of the world's poorest countries half a century ago to the globe's 11th most sizeable economy now while becoming a member nation in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) since 2010, has frequently been heralded as the foreign aid success story. With this regard,

the author has given an inaccurate information, ie, Japan is seen in this chapter as the only Asian donor in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC). For the writer's further knowledge, Korea is the 24th largest DAC provider in terms of its ODA as a percentage of gross national income (GNI), and the 14th biggest by volume.

Concerning chapter 9, it provides a protracted history of the aid policy goals of India (as both a receiver and a giver) with a 10-page coverage that mostly follows a News-writing style, when only two and a half pages consider the "Role of Japan in the evolution of Indian aid policy", which is this Chapter's title. Nonetheless, though the analysis of this Japanese national working for JICA as its ODA decision-maker pinpoints the non-political dimension that distinguishes Japanese aid from aid by others, the chapter overlooks the most crucial reasons what basically motivate the JICA to sign various ODA loan agreements with the Indian government on the economic infrastructure sector in contrast to JICA's nugatory attention to the fundamental life-risking and life-saving realms of humanitarian emergencies as a means of its grant aid. As it is logically revealed in this chapter, the traditional donors ask how India as a country with the most overgrown poverty-stricken population on the planet could afford to provide aid. Whereas, this chapter appraises why India has stoutly decided to refuse foreign aid on different occasions from Western donors, even though these decisions hindered relief to its own disaster victims. But it is still unanswered why New Delhi of an already 'wealthy India' badgers Tokyo for an increasingly gigantic amount of ODA loans from Japan at a time when this supposedly powerhouse itself gives more aid than it receives simultaneously. So, it is at the same time a question why a 'post-tsunami Japan', which encounters a waning ODA tendency because of its three decades-long economic misfortune, ought to shoulder its responsibility towards India, regrettably a 'nuclear power country' that has as far as one can see failed to become a 'role model' particularly compared to China's notably favorable achievement capitalized on Japan's ODA, despite India's position as one of the globe's highest recipients of multilateral development aid. In this connection, some Indian critics themselves are interrogating the veritable value of foreign aid, warning that much of it is unfortunately lost to political, bureaucratic and other corruptions. Instead, this JICA official eventually seems so cheery about interpolating that India did in fact learn something from Japan's approach to providing foreign aid contrary to the status of this nation that is up to this time far away from institutionalized policies and practices for foreign aid.

In the concluding chapter 10, the following two statements made by the volume's second editor respectively in the first and second paragraph (p. 181) contradict each other: "How to deal with emerging donors, particularly China, is a controversial issue for the traditional donors", and "The preceding section stressed that

the emerging donors' role is complementary to the traditional donors' one". In the second paragraph, he continues to suggest: "Moreover, their roles are vital as they could create 'an era of competing aid approaches'. In other words, they could transform the donor community (the DAC members and multilateral institutions) from a polar to a multipolar world" (p. 181). Also, he repeats the following statement that has already been made by some of his colleagues: "The rise of emerging donors is expected to counterbalance the excessive movement toward a polarized world, as they can expand the menu or the list of options for the aid recipients so as to enhance the recipients' leverage (Sato et al. 2011)". The book's last two sentences stipulate: "By proposing alternative aid approaches, the emerging donors are expected to contribute to the creation of an 'open public forum'. This is the role expected of the emerging donors" (p. 181). Such an incautious remark would easily invite someone to engage in a contest along the following lines: What are verily these alternative aid approaches? Why should they forge a substitute aid system? Will it not oppose the existing global aid architecture?

In any of his above propositions, this editor looks highly optimistic about some prognostic capacities of the emerging donors in general, rather than the already arrived donors in Asia, which is main and only theme of their book to cover. He is still catechizing the following three particular questions even in the final chapter: First, how and why did aid recipients transform into donors? Second, how can the Asian emerging donors contribute to the global development agenda? Third, what kinds of roles can the emerging donors play in the international aid community? But it would have definitely been useful to us if he had answered my more reasonable questions in respect to his above three questions as well as in line with this volume as follows: First, what a unique upshot his nation (Japan) based on its endogenous knowledge of economic prosperity can more eagerly and purposefully make to foster the South-South Cooperation (SSC) by the emerging donors of Asia both across this region and the Global South, and accordingly help ensure their equitable economic growth as well as collective self reliance by energetically and harmoniously partnering among all the foremost stakeholders including the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) while making the use of their own available resources and technologies, because Japan even caused by its continuously stagnant financial situation is still globally regarded as a dominant aid influencer and a conventional aid donor? Second, whether will the incipient donors of Asia (typically China and India) as the aspirant economic powers over the long haul be able to persuasively prove their performances in addressing the United Nations-endorsed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that is the pre-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), when the financial involvements of both these unmellowed aid powers even compared to Japan's stakes for the global and regional multilateral institutions are up to the present time so small as to be not worth considering, ostensibly condemning that its frightfully hostile

neighbor (China) has woefully transgressed against Japan's ODA by misusing the Japanese taxpayers' money mostly for modernizing its military forces? Third, how could China and India act in such a manner as to achieve a desired result for bolstering an absolutely inclusive global order for economic governance at a juncture when: (1) The West (mainly Europe)-dominated rich countries as members of the OECD might not demonstrate their political willingness to welcome the emerging donors; (2) China, which with its aid-like investments is so impelled by commercial interests around and beyond the Asian region (substantially in Africa), has allegedly shown its reluctance to accept some rules prescribed by the OECD's member states; and (3) In the case of India, it has not expressed any interest in joining this multilateral platform and even New Delhi has pulled out of cooperating with it?

The editors deem: "It highlights the historical sources that explain the pattern and strength of foreign aid that these new donors provide" (p. i). Indeed, there exist baggy books that mostly cover Japan's overseas development aid from the broadest perspective. In contrast to such a synoptic viewpoint, it would therefore have rather been more imperative for responding to whether Japan is really ready to more strongly implement its newly adopted 'pro-poor' human security policy as against its traditionally maintained 'industry-led' economic growth strategy when Tokyo's ODA policymakers face humongous pressures both domestically and internationally. More comprehensively, the Japanese editors of this volume admire that their country has remarkably shouldered for the East Asian miracle by utilizing its ODA for infrastructure building conducive to the promotion of private-sector trade and investment of Japanese multinational corporations (MNCs) led by the automobile and electronics companies. But such a guiding light is not a brand new one, while many skeptics (particularly from these East Asian recipient nations) are repeatedly casting aspersions on Japan that despite Tokyo's ODA generosity, this nation's self-serving aid efforts merely mean its own 'industrialization' or 'mercantilization'. Also, the editors underline an importance that the developing countries inside and outside Asia may learn from the growth-oriented approach of the East Asia's emerging nations (like China, South Korea and Singapore) that have successfully graduated from ODA from their country (Japan) in recent decades. But there are a lot of harsh censures even from some Japanese ordinary people as well as civil society themselves that Tokyo's business-driven official development assistance is not sufficiently attentive to the most fundamental needs of the poorest in the recipient countries, regardless of the fact that Japan as one of the most ebullient nations has since 2003 boosted Tokyo's diplomatic linchpin by giving an emphasis on the 'human security' paradigm with a colossal policy shift in the Charter of its ODA for a global future encompassing the three principal and integrated dimensions of 'sustainability' comprising social, economic and environmental.



“Why do countries give aid”? (p. 1). This is the starting sub-title of chapter 1 drafted by the first editor. But it is also a back dated and mostly asked question. In actuality, there are already countless literary works in the publishing world that have responded to this fundamental question concerning foreign aid by adopting various theories. Very rationally, the editors should have taken an analytical ‘donor-recipient’ approach, even though this outmoded type of relationship too often engenders a feeling of humiliation and frustration for which there is no justification, and which may at times absolve the political elites in developing countries from blame for a fault or wrongdoing. In other words, it is in sharp contradiction with ‘candid partnership’ in which a matching relationship prevails between partners based on open exchange and fruitful dialogue as well as equal respect and mutual benefit. Unusually however, this kind of donor-recipient relations is until now too firmly rooted in the twist of both the Northeast Asian nations’ ambivalent dependencies and the bitter historical legacies plagued by these neighboring economic powerhouses. Even the editors did not necessarily develop a theoretical skeleton on ‘aid diplomacy’ as the anchor of foreign policy and international relations (IR) to attain the goals of such a qualitative research. Moreover, they did not unfold that in spite of enormous cynicisms over foreign aid as an interdisciplinary hybrid of politics and economics, there is a consensus on the real effect of ‘quality’ (ie, prompt, purposeful and productive) ODA to the poor recipients in a sharply unequal but growingly interdependent world. It has apparently happened, because the book’s first editor is a natural resource scientist and the second one is an expert on environmental management. Coming across that one writer is a historian and another is with an IR background, most of the chapter contributors are development (agrarian/agricultural) economists and policy analysts. In this connection, the editors have exhibited their bias, because all participants (except one who is Chinese from China) of this joint project are Japanese mostly from Japan.

Given that the first editor has tried to rationalize the selection of Japan as a particular case study at a sub-section captioned “Why focus on Japan?” in his introductory chapter (p. 3), it sounds neither clear nor pertinent. Rather, he parrots the following obsolete comment made by an American academic “According to Lancaster (2010), Japanese aid has long been characterized as commercial” (p. 3), when failing to inevitably assert his personal voice on the foremost strengths or/and distinct attributes in line with the overarching principles and modalities of ODA locally from his homeland as an old donor. So, if it is factual or as it is the most carping concern I contended before, it can just be questioned why the emerging donors will unavoidably be lured by Japan as a perfect example of international development aid cooperation. Additionally, I understand that the book has selected three emerging economies from Asia (China and South Korea from Northeast Asia and India from South Asia), since Japanese ODA has markedly



shaped their current positions as 'donors from recipients'. But the term '*Asian*' in the book's main title is loosely applied. To be frank, the editors visibly lack a sound knowledge about the region of Asia as a whole. For details, it remains vague why Indonesia (Southeast Asia), which has for several successive years been the single largest (No. 1) recipient of Japan's gross bilateral ODA, is not chosen as a case study. As the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) website discloses, in addition to Mainland China and South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong (Northeast Asia), Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand (Southeast Asia), Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait (West Asia, ie, the Middle East or the Persian Gulf) have by now graduated from Japanese ODA disbursed to them. Crucifying that two different chapters are offered from the same authors in Part I accompanied by an excessively historical reportage, a separate chapter indicating a full sub-region-wise list of these other emerging donors in Asia together with a succinct picture for all these Japanese ODA recipients might have been more fascinating. It would have also been sensible for us to learn how the Asian countries namely Saudi Arabia and Turkey as currently not only the members of the powerful multilateral Group of Twenty (G20) but also the rising donors other than the emerging aid givers outside the Asian region including South Africa (Africa) as well as Brazil and Mexico (South America) have practically been decided to change themselves as the recipients of Japanese ODA. While it is at the same event criticized that Japan has yet little involvement in the poverty-propelled African region, the ODA Charter of Japan evidences that most of this nation's aid has gone to the Asian continent (especially East Asia) where many of the "Top 10" bilateral ODA recipients from Japan (as of 2013) are located. But the Japanese editors probably feel timorous to confess that the geographical focus of Japan's ODA extension on East Asia is not simply a natural outcome of their nation's perpetuation of strategic ambitions, political motivations and economic benefits (primarily its energy interest in Central Asia and Northern Asia, ie, Russian Asia beyond the Middle East), it is also reportedly related to Tokyo's monetary compensation for the war victims of this region in tandem with its postwar reparation policy because of wartime sins and offenses committed by Imperial Japan as one of the earth's most warmongering countries.

What is more, since the first sentence of the book's synopsis inquires "Why do poor countries give aid to others?" (p. i), any smart reader could fairly ask the editors: What is their definition about 'poor'? How can the 'poor countries' provide foreign aid and for whom they allocate their limited amount of monetary resources, while they themselves have normally and long been the aid receivers from the aid givers that are rich and industrialized nations? Why is there a difference between 'emerging donors' and 'poor countries', observing that some emerging donors (eg, China and India) are widely regarded as 'great powers' (both economically and militarily) at present? More specifically, the second editor declares:

“China and India, two major emerging donors, were still classified as ‘low-income’ countries by the World Bank in the early twenty-first century” (p. 176). Even so, this research was completed much later, and it still uses the outdated data. It is fact-based that by GNI per capita as of 2015, China belongs to list of the upper-middle-income group and India to the lower-middle-income group. Anyway, neither China nor India should any more be called a poor nation. China must no longer be ranked even as a ‘developing country’, since it has in 2010 toppled Japan itself as the 2nd most gigantic economy in the world. As the editors also contrarily acknowledge, South Korea, which is 2nd to and only along with Japan from Northeast Asia, enjoys its status as a member belonging to the list of World Bank high-income economies. Besides, I cannot treat the main title of the volume as an intelligent one. It is because all the three synonymous terms (*Rise, Evolution, Emerging*), which are incautiously utilized in the title, when the same word (*Donors*) is ineptly used in both main title and sub-title. Furthermore, the key phrases of the title, ie, ‘*Asian Donors*’ and ‘*Emerging Donors*’ are not elaborated at all. Needless to say, expecting that this volume due to its ‘regional’ approach should have covered only Asia, the editors strive to incorporate some ‘global’ facets to an unwarranted degree, and it is not reflective in the book’s title/sub-title as it stands.

To summarize, the co-edited publication’s thickheaded title, irrelevant contents, irreconcilable statements, descriptive redundancies, circumstantial gaps apart from its poorly organized chapters, relatively old ideas and overwhelmingly enthusiastic anticipations rather than quite realistic forethoughts have made me very much puzzled. At the same time, it is badly short of any underlying question for theoretical hypothesis, analytical argument for heated debates and/or focal point for research problems. It is more heartbreaking that the editors have ultimately put forward some superficial suggestions that do not consistently reflect any light from the previous chapters of this policy-oriented project. To put it differently, they were not able to stumble upon any substantive message that can undeniably be accepted. With this respect, the attention on practical situations or true repercussions of international development aid from Japan as a modest pathfinder for the ‘human security’ arrangement for Asia and the world has by and large been ignored in this joint work. Still and all, I was so intrigued to get answers to the following questions: (1) What actions can this non-Western donor take so as to be free from the United States as a troublesome consequence of Washington’s unceasing domineering attitudes for its own geo-strategic advantages toward Tokyo’s aid as the most cardinal diplomatic contrivance, and thereby become a sovereign donor nation? (2) Whether should Japan be seriously afraid that its bargaining position as a traditionally established global aid power is threatened by the futuristic ventures of its rivals as new donors in Northeast Asia (notably China) as the long recipients of its ODA amid changing but ungainly geopolitical realities in Asia? (3) How could the Asian emerging donors coordinately with

Japan, other leading donors as well as non-state actors globally through effective delivery of aid tackle such increasingly challenging human-centered sustainable development agenda as extreme poverty, chronic hunger, health diseases, education barriers, natural disasters, etc., that even many middle-income countries in this region still confront? I was reasonably and eagerly awaiting that the editors in their big volume would have resonated with me a process of talking about these urgent issues, but they dashed my hopes much. Honestly, these many-sided loopholes and limitations can easily help to make their book a low-quality one, which is not based on the end product of a rigorous study with scholarly rigor or research flavor.

Notwithstanding many hypercritical utterances and harsh protests from me, the book should not only be seen negatively to the hilt. Without doubt, it deserves a number of good marks. First, I have most recently reviewed another book, which is similar to this title. In contrast, this title highlights the chronicled experiences gathered by Japan not only as an 'aid provider' but also an 'aid recipient'. Second, it is unusually rare to find that even though most of the contributors are Japanese nationals, they engaged themselves in such a collaborative enterprise on the emerging powers in Asia and finally produced this book as its fruit. Third, this comparative survey offers a cohesive paradigm that contributes towards enhancing our prevailing perceptions of the overseas development assistance cooperation network interfaced by multiple actors (both internal and external) and affairs. Fourth, most chapters add several references in Japanese as well as the related chapters present literary materials in Chinese (translated into English in both cases), even though this publication goes without the Korean and Indian language sources. Fifth, this East Asia-centric investigation, which does not convey its information with many obscurities and is up to attain its self-defined objectives, will be suitable for a few fixed circles (the government officials in particular) in Japan, South Korea and China.

It goes without saying that the emerging powers worldwide have come to noticeably transform the political economy of the 21st century's global order and especially with Asia's nascent donors' reverberations on reshaping the international aid governance architecture in a multipolar world amid competitive economic globalization. In accordance with such a progression, this timely and relevant text could surely be treated as a guide to ancillary services for the literatures on various disciplines including Japanese Studies, Asian Studies, International Relations, International Development, Development Cooperation, Policy Research, etc. In closing, I do not have any reason that discourages me from giving my best wishes to Sato and Shimomura (the book's co-editors) for their untiring joint effort. But I cannot help adding a few more words. In order to cope with the proliferating challenges in the profoundly changing development aid landscape attempting

to be more responsible for the insecure humanity in the impoverished world, the fabrication of some newfangled social values in Japanese ODA coupled with a culture of reforms in aid handling bodies has become vitally felicitous today. Hence, the editors must try their best to come up with another outstandingly unprecedented volume by dint of their brainstormed ideas aligned with my unpropitious but constructive suggestions that can make a sober impression on my scholarly mind's spirit of inquiries strongly enough to really appreciate them, rather than always seeing their nation as an exemplar of phenomenal transformation (from recipient to donor) thanks to its historical background of foreign aid and/or its mammoth volume of total ODA over about the last 60 years remarkably Japan's ranking 'Number 1' in the list of all global donor countries during the 1990s in which they take immense pleasure, or blindly overpraising the overseas development aid strategies of the newcomers (conspicuously China and India) that are allegedly controversial.

It should not be missed to mention that all the concerned stakeholders (academics, policymakers, professionals, activists, etc.) would definitely discover this so sharply argued, methodically systematized as well as entirely developed review piece of intellectual incitement not only innovative and suggestive but also effective and representative. My truthful, straightforward and unbiased opinions on this volume will particularly be useful for the mandatory progress of publishing pursuits by Routledge that has helped to bring it to light at a time when this commonly named publisher repeatedly contends that it remains the largest and best one among the globe's academic publishing industries in the areas of social sciences and area studies. It is also relevant to add that this book has actually been realized with the Development Forum of the Tokyo-based National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS). For a little bit more details, this Japanese Government-funded university-level national institution asserts itself that it has since its establishment in 1997 been not only an elite, highly selective as well as stand-alone graduate school throughout Japan but also one of Asia's leading think tanks globally gorgeous to development practitioners, public decision-makers and social scientists focusing on policy studies. In fact, this research-intensive institute has in 2015 been categorized as Japan's 2nd highest-ranking one (after the University of Tokyo) on the study of economics and finance. Moreover, it is appreciated that this GRIPS-run book series endeavors to build on policy consensus and make for policy capability in practice by portraying concrete cases and comparative experiences from various mindsets, procedures and institutions while adding new viewpoints to global development thinking with a concentration on East Asia revolving around Japan. However, because this book series program of the GRIPS Development Forum is not yet free from doubts about the qualitative (rather than quantitative) value of its published works, it needs to be under an obligation to have a remodeled way to confidently respond to such interrogation

marks. In essence, both of them by consolidating their academic power with more enlightened professionalism must try their best to convincingly persuade the involved public audiences as the potential customers, not merely for their large voluminous books' sales by taking global target marketing strategies.

## **Bio**

A double Masters earned from University of Dhaka and Hitotsubashi University as well as a Waseda University-awarded Doctorate degree holder, Monir Hossain Moni is currently a Research Professor and Head for the Program on Japan & Global Affairs under the Division of Asia & Globalized World (for which he is also shouldering his responsibility as Director) of the Bangladesh Asia Institute for Global Studies (BAIGS), a Dhaka-based unique, modern, evolving as well as inspiring 'role model' independent think tank beyond national and regional borders. Dr Moni's broadly diversified academic expertise area rotates around global multi-disciplinary and cross-comparative studies with concentration on North-east Asia shedding light on Japan as a traditional power neighbored with China as an emerging power and South Korea as a proactive middle power amid the inter-relational and intra-regional strategic, political, economic, environmental, social, cultural and technological dynamics of the 21st century's advantageous but emulous globalization system. Pursuant to his prolonged research interests and specialties, this prolific, enthusiastic and optimistic as well as extensively worldwide traveled scholar has exceptionally contributed imaginative, authoritative and thus universally effective pieces to the leading journals produced not only by all the higher education world's most prominent publishers but also by many emerging presses across Asia and beyond in the most recent years. A winner of outstanding academic (scholarly and research) awards named after Japan's two prime ministers (Yasuhiro Nakasone and Masayoshi Ohira), Professor Moni is always committed to make his sincere efforts to publish for constructing a much-needed value towards helping flourish a more cooperative, stable as well as magnificent humanity with change and difference in the true sense.