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EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Maiden Edition of the *Nigerian Journal of History & International Studies* (NJHIS) is the realization of a dream conceived some years back by the members of the Department of History and International Studies, Lagos State University (LASU). The dream, unfortunately, could not be realized immediately due to a number of logistic problems.

The Journal is an independent publication of the Department of History & International Studies, Lagos State University, with a multi-disciplinary approach without losing sight of our original historical and international studies.

The maiden edition has five articles carefully selected from a pool of articles, submitted by erudite scholars. The first, "Nigeria-Japan Trade Relations, 1914-1954," delivered by Prof Gabriel Ogunremi at the Departmental Seminar Series, was the last lecture delivered by him. Prof Ogunremi was the first Head of History and International Studies Department, and the first Professor of History, Lagos State University. He no doubt contributed immensely to the uplift of the department. It is hoped that the articles will contribute immensely to knowledge and nation-building.

We thank all the contributors and assessors, while encouraging other scholars with flair for areas of our attention to send their contributions for assessment.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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NIGERIA-JAPAN

TRADE RELATIONS, 1914-1954

Gabriel Ogunremi

INTRODUCTION

To the Third World countries, Japan is a model in many respects. For one thing, Japan is a latecomer as an industrialized nation when compared with European or even North American countries. For another, it is a country that nature did not endow with raw materials for the purpose of industrialization and economic development. Yet, it has become a giant, indeed, a superpower economically. Many Third World countries, therefore, naturally feel that if Japan made it they too need not be hopeless. Surely, more industrialized countries are springing up. Among the new ones are South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Sri Lanka, all in Asia.

It is shown that although the Third World countries are lumped together, they are in different stages of economic development. While countries such as China and India are on the higher stage of industrialization, many African countries such as Nigeria are at the very low ebb. If these countries are prepared to learn from the lessons of history, they must learn the Japanese history.

The attempt in this paper is not to delve into the economic history of Japan or Nigeria, but to analyze how and when Japan started trading with countries as remote from it as Nigeria.

It will help to explain the two countries' geographical settings and the dynamism in their trading efforts. The paper will also expose Nigeria's trade with the outside world under the aegis of colonialism. Its trade with Japan, in particular, will be treated in two sections: Firstly, from 1914 to 1931 and secondly from 1932 to 1954. However, before all this, we shall have a little discourse on international trade theory since our focus is on Nigeria's external trade.

THEORY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The Nigerian Japanese trade relations is anchored on the theory of international trade which will be treated here as simply as possible. This theory was first properly developed by David Ricardo (1782-1823) in England in the nineteenth century. Although there had been earlier economists who had discussed it, Ricardo, in his *Political Economy and Taxation* (1817) elaborates on the theory and exposes it extensively for public consumption.

According to the theory, each country produces those commodities for which its opportunity costs are lowest. Here, the comparative costs, and not the absolute differences in cost, are considered the most significant. This means that a country will produce those goods for which it has a relative cost advantage over others. It has, therefore, had to import those goods from countries which have relative cost advantage over it.

For further elaboration, we can examine a simplified model. In an external trade involving at least two countries, A and B, and involving at least two commodities, three possible cases may be considered. First is the case in which each country can produce one commodity, but not, the other. This may be for geographical or other reasons. The two countries will simply exchange their products. The trade is then based on a clear comparative advantage.

The second is the case where each country can produce one commodity more cheaply than the other. It will be more profitable for each country to produce the commodity which it can produce more cheaply and exchange it for the one which another country can produce more cheaply. The third is a situation where both countries can produce both commodities but a country, say country A, can produce both commodities more cheaply than B, but it can produce one commodity more cheaply or efficiently than the other. In this case, country A may import from country B some or all of the second commodity in order to leave the major share of its productive resources free to produce the commodity which it can produce most efficiently. This model can be extended to trade among all countries to show that each one will specialize in producing those goods for which it has a comparative advantage.

The foregoing is a simple model which cannot tell the whole story. Although most theories are derived from actual practices, they cannot fully

explain all practices. For example, the model examined does not fully involve a situation where country A has to trade with country B in some commodities in order to avoid extreme trade imbalance and justify bilateral trade agreement between the two countries. But even here our third example will still fit into some extent because country A will not have to produce those commodities in which it has comparative advantage in producing.

Also, in order to check trade imbalance and satisfy bi lateral trade agreements a country may purchase a commodity from a farther distance and at a higher price than from another country at a lower price. This is true of the Nigeria Japan trade in petroleum. Japan can buy all her oil more cheaply from nearby Indonesia or Saudi Arabia than from Nigeria. That would mean buying almost nothing from Nigeria in exchange for Japan's electronics, automobiles and others.

Geographical Setting of Japan

Much of the early history of Japan was influenced by its geography. Located in south east Asia, Japan is a country of four islands with a good combination of temperate climate, a large amount of annual rainfall, fairly fertile soil and proximity to other great and ancient homes of civilization, especially the Chinese civilization. Compared with her neighbors - China, India, Russia or with some other countries such as the USA or Nigeria, Japan is a small country territorially, although a giant population wise. Still, it is larger in size than the British Isles or Italy.'

Like Italy, Japan is a mountainous country. All the four islands — Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu — are "great hills."² All these hills occupy about seventy two percent of Japan, leaving just about twenty eight percent for farming, buildings and so on — on the plain land. This explains the reason for Japanese small tractors, which although are less efficient than the large ones, are suitable for Japanese farming. Neither are the hills left unused; quite a lot of rice growing takes place. All this enables Japan to produce more than sufficient food for its teeming population of over one hundred and twenty three million (1992). The mountainous nature of Japan has also pushed her to the sea, making it the greatest seafaring people of Asia. Also, "the cold and warm sea currents which bathe the shores of the islands have always provided rich fishing

grounds for the hardy Japanese fishermen."³

An important geographical factor which helped in shaping the history of Japan has been the factor of isolation. An arc of islands. This is further intensified by its array of mountains and valleys. This has contributed to Japanese civilization which is largely copied from and closely linked with China, to the extent that Japan has been labeled a cultural daughter of China.^{3a} However, it cannot be said that Japan slavishly copied Chinese or any other culture blindly. The isolationist nature of Japan enabled it to depend on its resources for its architecture, farming, works of art, and many others in its early history.⁴

All these have a lasting impression on the Japanese. They are conscious of themselves as superior beings. They saw and treated other people as foreigners and sometimes as "barbarians." This contributed to the *sakoku* (closed country) whereby the Japanese shut out outsiders and shut in themselves during the Tokugawa era of Edo period (1603-1868). During this period the Japanese developed all that they copied so well and adapted them in such a way that the original owners could not identify them as theirs. This early isolation and development helped Japan to emerge as a strong nation economically and even militarily as testified to by its defeat of its erstwhile "cultural mother," China, in 1854, and of a renowned power, Russia, about a decade later. It has also enabled Japan to recover so surprisingly after its terrible defeat in World War II.

A study of Nigeria-Japan trade relations reveals that well before World War II, Japan had started being an economically developed country. Its industries had produced textiles, bicycles, umbrellas and many others not only for its population but also for export, to countries even as remote as Nigeria.

NIGERIA-JAPAN EARLY TRADE, 1914-31

Japan's trade with Nigeria began as early as 1914 when, incidentally, Nigeria began to be treated administratively as one country. It can therefore be said that Nigeria [Japan trade is as old as Nigeria, as shown in Table 1, but for some three years during the war, 1916-1918, and another three years later 1923, 1925 and 1926, the trade, between the two countries persisted.

The year 1931 has been chosen as terminal for this section because

1932 represented the beginning of a large scale importation of Japan's products into Nigeria. Whereas in 1931, Japan's export to Nigeria was £11,597, it rose to £121,678 in 1932.

However, as well known, it was a one sided trade—a trade of Japan's exports to Nigeria. This situation continued till 1956 when Japan's importation of Nigeria's products began. But effectively, the importation began on a fairly large scale in 1958.

Although within the period under discussion, 1914 to 1931, the trade was one way and on a small scale, Japan's exports grew. In 1914, commodities worth only £131 were exported to Nigeria. This was nothing out of Nigeria's total imports of £6.9 million. Then it fluctuated until 1928 when it recorded £6,476. This increased further to £11,597 in 1931.

The structure of Japan's exports to Nigeria is significant for two reasons. First, it demonstrates the usual beginnings of industrialization, and secondly it can be used to counter the usual assumption that Japan's economy started from scratch after World War II.

With Japan's little arable land, it had properly developed its agriculture by the beginning of the twentieth century. In other words, as in Great Britain, Agrarian Revolution had preceded its Industrial Revolution. Its first preoccupation was to feed its growing population. Agriculture also provided the growing industries with domestic raw materials and also furnished exports with which to pay for industrial materials and machinery.

Thus production of rice, Japan's staple food, increased by 30% from 1890 to 1914.⁵ With more supplies of rice into Japan from her then colonies, Korea and Formosa (Taiwan), Japan was able to export rice abroad in order to secure necessary payments for its imports. Therefore, Japan's earliest exports consisted almost wholly of agricultural, fishing and mineral produce supplemented by the handicrafts of traditional industries.

Again, as in the case of almost all countries beginning to industrialize, Japan began with industrial production of textiles. Cotton spinning mills were built with imported machinery from Britain. Textiles produced locally gradually substituted import manufactured textiles. Experimental factories were set up by the government for production of cement, sugar, beer and a great variety of import substituting, western style goods.⁶

Table 1: Nigeria-Japan Early Trade 1914-1931

Years	IMPORTS		EXPORTS	
	Totals £ Mn	Japan's Share £	Total £ Mn	Japan's Share £
1914	6.9	131	6.4	—
1915	5.0	6	4.2	
1916	5.7	—	6.0	
1917	7.5	—	8.6	
1918	8.3	—	9.5	—
1919	12.0	67	14.6	
1920	25.2	984	16.9	—
1921	10.7	25	8.2	—
1922	10.9	95	8.9	—
1923	11.7	—	10.8	
1924	12.9	166	14.3	
1925	16.2	—	16.9	—
1926	13.5	—	16.5	
1927	15.6	36	15.4	
1928	16.6	6,476	16.9	
1929	13.4	1,931	17.5	—
1930	12.7	932	14.7	55
1931	6.7	11,597	8.5	—

The result of this industrialization by the early twentieth century was Japan's exports of goods. Foreign trade developed especially in raw silk even before the Meiji Restoration in 1868. So also were export trades in tea, rice, copper, coal, marine production and textiles. It is not surprising that among Japan's first exports to Nigeria were rice worth only £25 and mats and mattings, valued at £88. As from 1920 her exports were mainly textiles. In 1929, of Japan's total exports of £1,531, hosiery cotton

amounted to £1,761 and almost the whole export in 1930 comprised textiles of one type or another. It is also the export of textiles that raised her export to Nigeria from start in 1930 to £11,597 in 1931. But in that year, there was an additional, remarkable export of boots and shoes.

One other reason why Japan's early trade with Nigeria is striking is that it portrayed Japan's economy at this stage as a rapidly growing one. It is instructive that even during the Tokugawa period (1603-1868) which preceded the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan's population of about thirty million could hardly be regarded as "poverty stricken peasants" living in "self sufficient rural villages."⁷ During this period, enormous changes had been introduced in urbanization and literacy.⁸ Also in this period, Tokyo was reported to be the biggest city in the world with a population of about 1.4 million people.⁹

Since the 19th Century, Japan had constructed her first railroad, from Tokyo to Yokohama, as early as 1870/72, with a British loan. Even earlier, in 1866, she had completed her first steamship, the *Chiyodaqata*. By 1893, she had acquired, mainly from abroad, her first 100,000 tons of steam vessels. She had also had 4,000 miles of telegraph lines and 2,000 miles of operating railway. By 1876, she had built 7,640 factories which employed 435,000 operatives.¹⁰ The foundation for heavy industry was already established in 1896 when the government built the Yawata Iron Works. As early as 1901 this iron [and steel industry had begun operation."

The foregoing reveals that although Nigeria and Japan were trade partners in the early twentieth century Japan was far ahead of Nigeria in terms of industrialization. The structure of the trade was dictated by the economic stage of each of them. Whereas Nigeria was a producer of raw materials whose export crops were just taking off and which relied partly on traditional manufactures which were becoming rather inadequate for the growing population, Japan was already able to provide for its population and was, in fact, able to export a great quantity of its manufactured products. When it is realized that, in its export trade, Japan was competing with Britain, the first industrialized nation in the world, one cannot fail to

appreciate Japan's economic position even at that time. That it was able to export to Nigeria at a lower price, despite its long distance, is quite amazing. Yet, Nigeria was not its only or major trade partner. It was exporting virtually to all British colonies and more especially to the South east Asian countries.

It seems quite understandable that the trade between Nigeria and Japan was one sided at the early part. The British Colonial Government needed every product which Nigeria was capable of exporting — as raw materials for its factories. It is, therefore not feasible that Japan would be allowed to import raw materials from Nigeria. However, also important was the question of transport costs which were quite high even at that time. Transporting bulky, low priced goods over a long route from Nigeria would so considerably increase Japan's production costs that it would have to sell at much higher prices than it did. That would have made it almost impossible for it to sell such finished products in Nigeria and other faraway countries, at relatively low prices. Besides, as it also, happened later, Japan was able to buy most of its raw materials, especially the types that Nigeria could supply, from Asia, especially the south east Asian countries. It hardly needed cocoa then, which it even now regards as luxury, and Indonesia among others could supply it rubber and other tropical products.

NIGERIA-JAPAN LATER TRADE, 1932-54

The structure of Japan's trade with Nigeria did not change much in the period, 1932 L.54. Neither did the pattern the one sidedness of the trade improve. This period is being examined separately mainly because it is necessary to look into the details of the commodities in the trade, and partly to see the growing importance of Japan's trade vis a vis Nigeria's other trading partners especially with regard to Japan's competition with Britain. Britain felt concerned about Japan's competition not only in Nigeria but also in many British colonies. Efforts which Britain made to restrict Japan's trade with its colonies call for analysis especially because restrictions imposed by Britain on Japan's products were detrimental for

a short while on Japan's trade, with Nigeria in particular and British West Africa in general.

Again, it was only another war, World War II, that interrupted trade between Nigeria and Japan. In figures, the trade improved considerably. Whereas up to 1931 Japan's share of Nigeria's import trade was so negligible (0.1%) that it is not worth comparing with the total. But as from 1932, it began to increase its share gradually. Japan's imports fluctuated, but rising from 1.1% of the total imports in 1932 to 6.9% in 1934. Although her share in 1937 fell to 6%, in actual figures, it rose from £392,000 in 1934 to £917,000 in 1937.

However, after the war, as from 1948, Japan's share of Nigeria's imports greatly improved, jumping from £0.4 million in 1947 to £1.6 million or 3.7% in 1948. This further increased to a share of 12.7% in 1949. This trend continued until 1954. Indeed, 1955 recorded another fairly considerable increase. In 1954 Japan's exports to Nigeria amounted to £0.3 million. This increased to £16.6 million in 1955, or from 8.1% to 12.1% of Nigeria's imports. The year 1955 therefore began a new record.

Changes occurred in the structure of Japan's exports. However, textile products still predominated. A look at Tables 2, 3, 4 and 5 gives an idea of the products exported by Japan to Nigeria. With regard to apparels, shown in Table 2, Japan's share increased considerably with time. Whereas in 1920, £294 worth of apparels were exported, it had risen to £21,507 by 1931, capturing 35.5% of Nigeria's total imports of the product. It also rose from £21,507 in 1936 to £32,918 in 1937. Similarly, such increases can be identified in Table 3 for some textile products. For example, both in quantity and value, the plain grey cotton piece, the printed cotton piece and the silk manufactures more than doubled from 1933 to 1934.

Table 2: Japan's Export of Apparels to Nigeria, 1920-1938

Year	Totals £	Japan's Share £	Japan's Share %
1920	984	294	29.8
1928	6,476	1,736	26.8
1931	60,877	21,507	35.3
1932	80,797	2,581	3.1
1933	45,763	5,772	12.6
1934	42,428	7,480	17.6
1935	113,872		
1936	142,082	21,507	15.1
1937	321,226	32,918	10.2
1938	67,637	18,826	27.8

Source: *Blue Book: Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria for various years.*

Note: Figures for 1935 for Japan could not be traced when writing

However, Table 4 reveals a backward trend for the printed cotton piece and grey cotton piece from 1934 to 1935. In both, quantity and value, these two products fell drastically as a result of British restrictions on Japan's products in British colonies. It can be seen that the export of printed cotton piece fell from 1,862,769 square yards to a mere 175,032 square yards, recording also a fall in value from £28,435 to £2,623 from 1934 to 1935. In the same way the grey cotton piece got a big slash from 2,612,141 square yards, valued £33,035 in 1934 to 118,000 square yards, valued £1,247 in 1935.

With the expansion of Japan's exports, various other products were listed on Nigeria's imports. Boots and shoes were among such

products. If Table 3, depicting the 1932 and 1933 imports can be used as a good example, it does not seem that the products were making much progress. Other products include fish, hats, caps and berets, clocks and matches, earthenware and glasswares, umbrellas, buckets, sewing machines, and lamps and lanterns. It can be seen that all these were production of light industries which characterized Japan's early state of industrialization. Such products were imported by purely primary producers such as Nigeria.

Regarding Japan's share of the non textile products, it would appear it compared favorably again, with Britain and Mme other countries. Hats, caps and berets share as high as 47.8% of total imports of the products in 1937, according to Table 5. Importation of umbrellas and parasols was also high in 1936 when 39.2% of the total importation of the commodity was recorded. Even more imporffant in the list is the importation of earthenware whose share of the total in 1936 amounted to 36.9% and 51.1% in 1937.

Table 3: Japan's Exports to Nigeria, 1932 and 1933 Compared

1.	PRODUCTS	1932		1933	
		Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value £
	Boots and shoes leather	316 pairs	61	218 prs	35
2.	Boots & shoes other than leather	160,041 pairs	9,327	179,963 "	9,302
3.	Slippers	1,164 "	40	1,623 "	34
4.	Hats, caps, bonnets etc.		13		493
5-	Class and Glassware		110		1,921
6-	Earthenware	27	30		146
7-	Lamps & Lantern	27	9		100
8_	Iron & Steel Manufactures		47		187
9.	Plain Grey Cotton Piece	29,750 lb	1,500		18,976
10,	Bleached Cotton Piece	202,049 "	9,594	432,508lb	328
11.	Printed Cotton Piece	145,897 "	11,229	349,921 "	26,219
12.	Cotton Piece Dyed	156,977 "	7,787	25,165 "	3,607
13.	Cotton Piece Coloured	448,984 "	25,796	171	45
14.	Cottons Unenumerated		1,00		
15.	Hosiery Cotton		18,216		
16.	Silk Manufactures		4,25		

Source: *Blue Book: Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria for 1935 and 1936.*

The growing participation of Japan's exports in Nigerian trade constituted an uneasy concern for Britain. If we look at the figures of both countries, there seems to be reasons for Britain to fear Japan's competition.

Although, according to Table 4, Britain was not performing badly

in exporting some textiles to Nigeria, for some products such as hosiery cotton singlets, Britain's export was well behind that of Japan. In the years 1934 and 1935 when Britain exported less than 50,000, and 274,000 valued £2,093 and £210,787 respectively, Japan's amounted to well over one million singlets for each year, valued about £30,000 for each of the two years respectively.

Japan's competition was even more glaring. Between 1934 and 1948 the competition did not seem serious for Britain, although for certain products it was high. However, as from 1949, Japan came quite close to Britain, securing as much as a quarter of Britain's share in that year and also in 1955. Even in the other years, apart from 1953, Japan's exports were close to Britain's especially when it is realized that besides Britain, other countries such as the U.S., Western Germany, France and the Netherlands also exported to Nigeria. If we exclude Britain, Japan's performances vis-à-vis Germany and the U.S. would be more prominent. It, in fact, came next to Britain in 1934 and also between 1949 and 1952.

Similarly, Table 6 demonstrates Japan's performance in its exports to Nigeria between 1946 and 1950. Whereas it captured 9.4% of Nigeria's imports in 1950, West Germany's was 2.3%, the United States of America's 3.9% and Netherlands only 2.6%.

TABLE 4: Comparative Cost of Some of Japan's and Britain's Imports to Nigeria, 1934 and 1935

PRODUCT	Year	JAPAN			BRITAIN		
		Quantity Sq. Yds.	Value per unit	Value	Quantity Sq. Yds.	Value	Value per unit
Cotton Piece							
Printed Cotton piece	1934	1,862,769	28,435	0.015	7,392,041	167,706	0.022
Grey Cotton piece	1935	175,032	2,623	0.014	24,315,620	545,970	0.022

PRODUCT	Year	Pieces	Value	Value per unit £	Pieces	Value	Value per unit £
Hosiery Cotton Singlet	1934	1,223,044	29,107	0.023	49,470	2,093	0.042
	1935	1,111,591	30,128	0.027	273,820	10,787	0.039
Umbrella and Parasols	1934	37,161	1,731	0.046	29,821	3,768	0.125
	1935	66,156	3,499	0.052	42,525	5,667	0.133
Toilet Soap	1934	2,100	50	0.023	118,034	4,163	0.035
	1935	11,508	290	0.025	167,658	5,579	0.033

Source: Blue Book: Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria for 1935 and 1936.

Notes: By the Conversion Factor of 1934 and 1935, £5 = 500 cents (E.0001 .., 0.5 cents)

Thus, Japan's performances in Nigeria as well as in many other British colonies led to agitations from the British manufacturers, asking the government to restrict Japan's imports in the colonies.¹² Although the old colonial system was based on Imperial Preference at the beginning of the nineteenth century, by the end of the century it has been lifted. Britain had clearly embraced a free trade policy.¹³ But owing to various competitions against her in the colonies in the early twentieth century. It announced in June 1920 that "preferential rates for goods of imperial origin has been addressed to all Colonies and Protectorate, except those which are precluded by existing international agreements from doing so, and a few others in which preference is already in force."¹⁴ Incidentally, Nigeria, and also Gold Coast (Ghana) could not accept the Imperial invitation because they were committed to the Anglo Trench Treaty of 1898 which was in operation till 1936 for Nigeria, but not for Gold Coast which had also been involved in the Anglo Dutch Treaty of 1871.¹⁵

The other two British West African colonies, Sierra Leone and Gambia, were, however, involved in preferential tariff. The main purpose of this action was to safeguard British and its Empire's trade against foreign competition, especially Japan's. In the same way, other colonies such as British Guinea and Trinidad imposed preferential tariffs.

No doubt, the Imperial Preference imposed by Britain in the 1920s conflicted against her policy of open door economy, and it was not vigorously pursued. It was therefore rather ineffective. This became clear during the depression years of the early 1930s. Britain had to call a Conference, the Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa, Canada, in 1932, to deal with the matter." It was then agreed that the door must be closed to some foreign imports into colonies. In order to keep old rules, the new system was in the nature of tariff alterations and imposition of quotas on imports.

This policy affected Japan's exports to Nigeria. Its exports had been seen to have grown quite high. In 1933, textiles had risen to eleven million square yards. Therefore, in 1934, Britain had to use her tariff powers to assist her textile manufacturers."

Table 5: Nigeria's Imports From Japan, 1936-38

PRODUCTS	1936			1937			1938		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
1. Fish	384.6	1.4	0.3	562.6	8.2	1.4	396.0	2.8	0.7
2. Hats, Caps, Bonnets, etc.	64.2	18.9	29.4	143.2	68.5	47.8	34.0	0.17	34.2
3. Clocks and Matches	9.1	1.6	17.5	155.1	2.0	13.2	7.9	0.6	7.5
4. Cutlery	21.6	3.5	16.2	37.3	5.1	13.6	11.8	1.1	9.3
5. Implements & Tools	126.2	2.5	1.9	155.4	4.4	2.8	88.7	2.8	3.1
6. Earthenware	100.4	36.9	36.7	144.4	73.9	51.1	58.5	24.6	42.0
7. Glass a& Glasswares	42.1	16.6	39.4	50.6	0.6	1.1	18.0	0.2	1.1
8. Buckets, pails & basins	102.6	20.7	20.1	131.2	10.1	7.6	38.1	23.4	61.4
9. Sewing machines	15.6	0.2	0.5	70.7	0.3	0.4	22.4	0.2	0.8
10. Umbrellas and parasols	14.3	5.6	39.1	38.0	10.6	27.8	13.2	3.9	29.5
11. Plain grey cotton-piece goods	363.8	2.0	0.5	316.89	12.2	3.8	178.0	9.4	5.2
12. Other grey cotton-piece goods	83.7	3.2	3.8	33.7	0.3	0.8	—		—
13. Bleached cotton-piece goods	1116.3	5.7	0.5	1104.3	7.4	0.6	386.8	9.0	2.3
14. Printed cotton-piece goods	838.7	5.7	0.6	998.3	11.2	1.1	329.1	15.6	4.7
15. Cotton-piece goods dyed in the piece	838.4	2.8	0.8	335.3	6.8	2.0	172.9	2.0	1.1
16. Cotton-piece goods-colored	920.9	4.4	0.4	1224.3	—	—	570.8		—
17. Cotton-piece goods -unenumerated	114.1	31.1	27.2	78.0	33.7	43.2	36.1	14.6	40.4
18. Velveteen	12.5	2.8	22.4	38.6	0.6	1.5	16.2	4.0	24.6
19. Cotton yarn	72.7	1.5	2.0	125.7	24.7	19.6	47.5	1.5	3.6
20. Jewelry	32.9	14.6	44.3	56.8	28.6	50.3	14.7	7.2	48.9

Source: *Blue Book: Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria for 1935 and 1936.*

Note 1: Total. 2. Japan's share. 3. Japan's share%

Table 6: Japan's Share in Nigeria's Imports and Exports, Compared. Selected years in Percentages.

	UNITED KINGDOM		WEST GERMANY		U.S.A.		NETHERLANDS		JAPAN	
1946	64.6	75.2	5.0	—	10.6	1.5	1.5	2.8	—	—
1950	59.8	79.3	2.3	1.2	14.6	2.6	2.6	1.7	9.4	—
1954	45.3	71.1	9.4	3.1	4.7	10.5	4.1	6.4	8.1	—
1960	42.9	46.9	7.0	7.6	5.3	9.4	5.3	12.8	12.4	1.5

Source: Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1963

In order to restrain the competition, the Governor of Nigeria set quotas on Japan's products. Japan's textile export to Nigeria was fixed at 2.4 million square yards in 1935.

Reactions by Nigerians concerning the Governor's restriction of Japan's products were rather unfavorable to Britain.¹⁸ Certainly, it was not in the interest of the Nigerians because Japan's textile were cheaper than those export exported by Britain. This can be gleaned from the comparative costs of textiles exported to Nigeria in 1934 and 1935 by both Britain and Japan, as shown in Table 4.

It can be seen that when printed cotton *qs,iece* exported by Japan cost 7.5 cents and 7 cents per square yard in 1934 and 1935 respectively, Britain's cost 11 cents per square yard for each year. Similarly, Japan's singlets cost 12.5 cents each in 1934 whilst Britain's was 21 cents each. The difference is even more striking in the case of umbrellas. While Japan's cost of an umbrella in Nigeria was 23 cents, that of Britain was 62.5 cents. Also, in 1933, Japan's was 26 cents per umbrella, but Britain's was 66.5 cents each. Even Japan's toilet soap was cheaper at 11.5 cents each than Britain's of 17.5 cents each. These little differences meant much when multiplied by a great number of units.

However, the question of quality of products is more difficult to prove. It is quite possible that Britain's exports were of higher quality than Japan's. For example, there was the case of both countries' importation of bicycle into British North Borneo at the same period, 1934-1935. Britain's bicycle was \$27 and \$29 each in 1934 and 1935, respectively, while Japan's cost \$17 and \$19 in both years. Yet, in spite of Japan's low cost, demand for herbicycles declined while that of Britain increased. The people discovered that the more expensive British bicycle was a better investment in the long run than the cheap Japanese bicycle."

While it seems easy to identify quality in the case of machines, it is not so easy for textiles. Quality in textiles might not necessarily mean durability. Indeed it would be the other way round, because a cheap, thick, coarse cloth might not serve an agricultural population than fine texture that would be unable to withstand bushes and thorns in villages. The cheap one is, therefore, likely to be preferred.

Besides, it would appear that Nigerians did not complain about the reality of Japan's textiles. It certainly fitted purses of the 1930s and

thereafter. No wonder when the Governor restricted importation of Japan's textiles in 1934, the Nigerian members of the Legislative Council were against the idea. They complained that the restriction was in the interest of only the British.²⁰

Yet, the quota was fixed on Japan's textiles in 1934. This was a great blow to her trade in West Africa generally and particularly in Nigeria. For example, Japan's exports of textiles to West Africa fell from 15.1 million square yards in 1933 to 4.3 million square yards in 1938.²¹ Its export of the product to Nigeria fell correspondingly to about one third, from about 11 million square yards in 1933 to 3.6 million square yards in 1938.²² These, however, were the official trade figures. It is possible that a great deal was smuggled into the country during the Period as it happened in some other colonies. It is also interesting to note that to the British manufacturers the decline in Japan's exports to the colonies meant little because their exports of textiles did not correspondingly increase. What happened was that other textile producers such as India and Hong Kong which also exported cheap textiles took the advantage of the quota imposed on Japan and exported quite a lot to Nigeria.

Neither can it be said that Japan's overall production correspondingly reduced as a result of the quota. Japan directed her drive to non-quota areas. For example her imports to East Africa increased considerably. This is because she was able to sell at a lower price.

This low price of Japan's products did not necessarily mean low quality but might be due to other reasons. One of such reasons is the cheap but efficient labor in Japan. With a large population in a small country, it was quite easy to recruit labour cheaply. Another reason is that Japan was employing relatively new machineries and did not have to spend as much on depreciation as Britain had to. Therefore, despite Japan's long distance to Nigeria, its exports were comparatively cheaper, and so met the needs of the people of Nigeria.

It can be argued that Japan's low priced exports had a trade creation influence among poor communities who could not purchase more expensive products. The cheap products penetrated into remote corners of many countries. Indeed, Japan's textiles were probably the first factory manufactured textiles ever worn by a great number of people. In such a way, the products stimulated further demand and opened market for the

more expensive British textiles.

However, Japan's exports to Nigeria showed a downward trend from 1934 when the quota was set on her products. This trend continued effectively till 1942; and the trade began to take off again from 1948. Most of these years, in any case, fell in the war period, when Britain restricted imports from hard currency countries, was adversely affected. Within this period total imports declined from £72.2 million in 1937 to £547 million in 1945. The import even went as low as £26.2 million in 1941.

Correspondingly, Britain's share fell from £7.9 million in 1937 to £3.6 million in 1941, and it never reached £8 million during the war. It is, therefore, not surprising that Japan's share of Nigeria's imports fell drastically, reducing to nothing between 1943 and 1946. This was the effect of the government's restrictions on import during World War II.

Japan looks to be rather aggressive in her trade pursuits. She refused to be discouraged by the series of quotas and restrictions imposed on her. Instead, it became rather more keen in her trade drive. Its export to Nigeria leapt from nothing in 1946 to £7.4 million three years later, 1949; and considerably increased again to £11.3 million in 1952. In this way Japan again constituted itself a strong competitor against Britain.

For two basic reasons, Britain had to impose restrictions on Japan's products in the early 1950s as it did in the early 1940s. First, Britain was losing its position in the world market to United States, Canada and Japan.²³ It had to protect this position because its prosperity depended largely on trade. Secondly, Britain had to strengthen and protect the international value of the sterling. This was necessary because there were deficits in the balance of payments in the sterling area. Consequently, it imposed the Exchange Control Ordinance b. 35, in 1950; and this was amended in 1952 to enable the government protect the sterling.²⁴

However, when there were productions imbalance of payments in the sterling area and when Britain's world supply position improved, it relaxed the import control regulations in respect of many countries. Yet, the United States, Canada and Japan were still discriminated against.²⁵

Judging from Japan's import increase of 1952, it is hardly surprising that in that year restrictions, which had been imposed in 1950, were, strictly tightened against Japan. In 1954, however, Japan and Britain

negotiated an agreement which resulted in an allocation of import licenses for a great amount of Japan's Imports. Thus Japan, again, pursued its trade to a favourable conclusion. The lift of the ban in 1954 showed immediate result in trade figures in Nigeria. Japan's export increased considerably from £9.3 million in 1954 to £16.6 million in 1955. It also meant a closer relationship to Britain from ratio 1:10 to ratio 1: in the Nigerian trade.

CONCLUSION

In retrospect, this paper has delved, albeit superficially, into the trade relations between Nigeria and Japan from 1914 to 1954. It has clearly shown the advantageous position of Japan vis 13fis Nigeria. Whereas Japan was exporting its products regularly into Nigeria, Nigeria exported virtually nothing until after 1954.

Throughout the period under review aid even beyond it, Nigeria was a colony of Great Britain. Its economy, which was dominated by the colonial power, never expanded positively to enhance its development. Forces of both its exports and imports were dictated to it without its knowledge. The result was it's abnormal trade with other countries. Conversely, Japan which was never colonized developed its economy in such a way that it was able to compete favourably with Britain, the workshop of the world.

The success story of Japan's economy today is instructive to Third World countries. Japanese success is hard earned, based on hard work, discipline, strong determination to succeed and effective leadership. The Japanese work no hard that they have been ridiculed as workaholic. The workers are so disciplined and involved in the economy of Japan that they never allowed disruptive industrial unrest to cog the wheel of their economy. The leaders are so sympathetic with and interested in their

workers that workers hardly change their employers. All workers in an institution or industry are treated as a family and are catered for by the state in all ramifications. Nigeria can learn and do likewise.

ENDNOTES

This paper constitutes part of a larger work done on Nigeria [Japan Trade Relations. It is an offshoot of a research done in Japan as a Fellow of Japan Foundation in 1980. I still remain grateful to the Foundation, the Institute of Developing Economic Tokyo, which effected me its facilities for the research, and the University of Lagos which granted me a study leave.

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