A New Development Model for Japan

AKIRA KOJIMA
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by Bill Emmott

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The world we live in is far from simple. That is what makes it endlessly fascinating to anyone who is curious about human behaviour, about technology, about the forces of nature, and all the other things that affect our societies, economies and political systems. Information about all of these forces is more easily available than ever before. But that very abundance of information, along with the complexity of modern life, mean that intelligent analysis is more important than ever before. We have an information surplus, but a severe shortage of good analysis and understanding.

That is where Akira Kojima comes in. Throughout his long and varied career as a journalist, economist and public intellectual, he has understood his own role and duty with admirable clarity: to understand, to analyse, to explain, and if possible to suggest what policy recommendations might flow from that analysis—all in the service of his readers, both inside Japan and well beyond. We should all be grateful for what he has done for us. This book offers a splendid selection of the analysis and ideas with which he has served us.

Although the notion of “globalization” has become popular only recently, in truth our countries have for many decades been closely connected with one another, whether through trade, flows of capital, exchanges of technology or exchanges of people and culture. Yet too often our own thinking has not expanded to reflect that trend of international integration. In too many countries, policymakers, journalists and other commentators look only inwards, at domestic affairs and domestic examples, as if the rest of the world did not exist.

Yet it does exist, and we should be grateful for the fact. For in economics, in society and in public policy we all have so much to learn from one another. We affect each other but also our countries are, in effect, continual laboratory experiments or case studies from which we can all learn. The best analysts and policy-thinkers are those who recognize this point.

In my country, Britain, for too long debate took place that seemed to assume that no one else had relevant experiences in running fiscal or monetary policy, or health care systems, or welfare states, or education, or efforts to boost productivity. The only analytical reference was British experience and British arguments. This was a recipe for sterile argument and for policy fail-
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ure. Fortunately, in recent years, the eyes of British intellectuals, commenta-
tors and policy analysts have been opened much wider: our political and poli-
cy debates now take a healthy and welcome look at what has happened in
other countries, especially in Europe.

To me, what Akira Kojima represents is exactly this sort of open-minded,
globally aware analysis. Just as in Britain, the policy debate in Japan is in con-
stant danger of being parochial, insular and very inward-looking. Too many
of the arguments are based only on Japanese experiences, and too many tend
towards a rather cosy and thoughtless consensus—not a consensus based on
deep, shared thought, but a consensus based on the avoidance of challenge
and of controversy.

It is never easy nor comfortable to challenge the consensus. It is never
easy to look outside the local debate and to draw upon international experi-
ence. It is never easy to offer new ideas, new analysis or new proposals. But
good policy and all economic and social progress depends upon people who
resist the easy course and try to take on the difficult task of thinking new
things, of coming up with new ideas and often controversial proposals.

In these times of global economic turmoil, of the apparent collapse of the
American banking system, of the seeming challenge posed by scarce resources
and by high energy prices, of the rise of new economic powers in Asia and
elsewhere, we all need clear thinking and clear analysis. We need help in navi-
gating our way through the fog. We need people who have experience, who
have seen past crises and who have a sense of how they have been resolved.
We need thinkers who are willing to accept that none of us can have all the
answers, that none of us can truly know what the future will hold, but who
are willing to offer expert guidance and intelligent thinking at least to help us
find a path along which to walk.

So I warmly commend this book of ideas, of analysis, of recommenda-
tions by Kojima Sensei. The world needs thinkers and analysts like him. Japan
certainly needs thinkers and analysts like him. We all need to try to stand back
and to reflect coolly and deeply about the state of the world, about the prob-
lems we face but also about the potential solutions to those problems. Kojima
Sensei's book offers a fine contribution to such cool and deep reflection.

Bill Emmott

BILL EMMOTT worked as a journalist at The Economist, the world's most widely read
economic and current affairs weekly, for 26 years. From 1993 until 2006 he was The
Economist's editor-in-chief, during which period the worldwide circulation more than
doubled, from 500,000 to more than 1.1 million. He is the author of eight books, six of which have concerned Japan, including most notably *The Sun Also Sets* in 1989 and *The Sun Also Rises* in 2006. His latest book, published in 2008, is called *Rivals—How the Power Struggle between China, India and Japan will Shape our next Decade*, in English, or *Asia Sangokushi* in the Japanese edition, published by Nikkei.