

Changing Laodicean Politics in Japan-I: What China Can Learn from Japan's Experience¹

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Iron Triangle, and DPJ

Introduction

As the second decade of the 21st century approaches, China has been in the spotlight among academics, media, businesses, and politics. The book, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* by Martin Jacques, represents an excellent example.³ From the book title, one can assume what Jacques discusses in his book. Sound familiar? Yes, this is déjà vu all over again. About three decades ago, the book, *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America* by Ezra Vogel,⁴ also discusses Japan, addressing how it was going to overtake the United States. Vogel's expression – Japan as number one – became a famous phrase in contemporary Japanese history describing Japan's economic superpower during its heyday. Furthermore, since the 1980s some naïve scholars called Japan *Pax Nipponica*,⁵ expecting that Japan would dominate the "Pacific Century" in the 21st century.⁶ Recently, a similar term -- "Asian Century," referred to an irreversible political and economic shift from the global power from West to East (i.e., from the US to China), coined by a scholar in Europe.⁷ Yet, the "Pacific Century" is no longer a credible reality for Japan. Unfortunately, Japan's phenomenon is lasted only decades, basically disappearing from the front page of media attention, as well as, fervent discussions among political leaders, academic cycles, and business communities. As the financial and economic crises have loomed, Japan is no longer viewed as a model to be followed, respected, and appreciated. What happened inside Japanese politics? How did Japan slip from "number one" to number "nothing?" Why did the Japanese take so long to change the regime in the 2009 election? What can China learn from Japan's experiences? This paper analyzes contemporary Japanese politics, especially political reforms since the 1980s, which ultimately lead to the end of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)⁸ domination. After more than 20 years of the bursting of the Japanese bubble economy, to change and to reform LDP, is too difficult, too little, and too late. In addition to the incomplete series of reforms and the ill-fated domestic policies implemented by political leaders, the never-ending corruption scandal cycle

within LDP, the stubbornness of elite businessmen, and the inflexibility of the top bureaucrats, have completely resulted in losing the trust and faith of the Japanese voters in the 2009 election.

Laodicean⁹ Politics in Japan

Some Diet members have called the 45th House of Representatives (Lower House) election on 30 August 2009 the *Muketsu Kakumei* (無血革命), a peaceful revolution,¹⁰ a rarity in contemporary Japanese history (Table 1). The stunning upset victory by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) in the 2009 election defeated nearly 60 percent of LDP incumbents lost their seats including a former prime minister.¹¹ Prior to the Lower House election, some people predicted that the LDP might lose the coming 2009 election,¹² but no one predicted how many members of the LDP would be defeated in the election. There were too many reasons for the LDP to lose the election and too many reasons for the DPJ to win the election. Among them, laodicean politics was certainly one major cause for voters to overthrow the old regime.

Table 1: The Result of the House of Representatives Elections

(Inside of the parentheses indicates %)

	2009 Election	2005 Election	2003 Election
Liberal Democratic Party	119 (24.8)	296 (61.7)	237 (49.4)
Democratic Party of Japan	308 (64.2)	113 (23.5)	177 (36.9)
New Komeito	21 (4.4)	31 (6.5)	34 (7.1)
Japan Communist Party	9 (1.9)	9 (1.9)	9 (1.9)
Social Democratic Party	7 (1.5)	7 (1.5)	6 (1.3)
New Conservative Party			4 (0.8)
Club of Independent			1 (0.2)
Liberal League			1 (0.2)
People's New Party	3 (0.6)	4 (0.8)	
New Party Nippon	1 (0.2)	1 (0.2)	
New Party Daichi	1 (0.2)	1 (0.2)	0 (0.0)
Your Party	5 (1.0)		
Independent	6 (1.3)	18 (3.8)	11 (2.3)
Total	480 (100.0)	480 (100.0)	480 (100.0)

Source: Kohno Masaru, "Senkyo Kekka kara mita Mishuto Assho, Jiminto Taihaino Kozu [From the Election Result to Understand the Structure of the Landslip for DJP, the Lose for LDP]," in *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka* [Year 2009: Why the Political Change Occurred], edited by Tanaka Aiji, Kohno Masaru, Hino Airo, Iida Takeshi, and the Yomiuri Shimbun Public Opinion Survey Department (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 2009), p. 28.

Laodicean Politics

In the 20th century, the theories of laodicean politics have been studied by two well-known American scientists: David Riesman (1909-2002) and Harold Dwight Lasswell (1902-1978). On the one hand, Riesman's approach often refers to two groups of people: traditional style and modern style, expressing voting behaviors of their laodicean politics.¹³ The Japanese can be characterized the later group. On the other hand, Lasswell's theory indicates three types of personalities present in laodicean politics,¹⁴ with some combination of Riesman's approaches. Traditionally, laodicean politics or apathy has been a hostilely treated negative in politics for years. Often those who are not interested in politics, are illustrated as a marginal group holding a pessimistic view of democracy with lower education backgrounds.¹⁵ Yet, as discussed below the traditional stereotype of laodicean politics do not apply to Japanese voters.

Distrust of politics has dramatically risen; laodicean politics in Japan is nothing new. Over the last 20 years, poll after the poll,¹⁶ Japanese distrust of politics increased year after year. In a 1998 survey, Japanese distrust in politics was 75 percent, much higher than those of the British, 30 percent, and American, 32 percent.¹⁷ For the Japanese voters, "money politics" is the top reason for distrusting politicians.¹⁸ According to the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications, even in the latest public opinion poll of young people,¹⁹ age 16-29, approximately 76.6 percent do not trust the Japanese Diet, approximately 73.7 percent distrust political parties, about 66.4 percent distrust the media, and about 59.4 percent distrust the central government. Moreover, in a political awareness poll held by the *Asahi Shimbun* in March 2010, about 63 percent voters expected once again that the "re-organization of politics," meant further creation of the new political parties.²⁰ In other words, many voters expected further instability of politics. One reasons that Japanese demonstrated the highest level of distrust politics among the three nations survey (indicated in the above), according to the expert, was that Japan lacks *political change* or a *changing regime*.²¹ For people in Japan, no matter how the Japanese voted, the political system seemed to stay the same; the LDP dominated Japanese politics since WWII.²² This long period of LDP domination made the voters apathetic to Japanese politics. As a result, prior to the 2009 election, few Japanese voters believed that their vote had the power to change their government and their own future.

Some experts have stressed the end of the domination by the LDP in 1993,²³ but the 1993 change *was not* from the voice of the Japanese constituency, but rather from the power struggle among Japanese politicians themselves.²⁴ The 2009 change is completely different from the previous one in 1993; this time change is the voice of democracy, power of freedom, and the tsunami-like anger of the Japanese people. Since the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the Japanese had united together and had been tolerant of the imperial regime in order to achieve national

slogans -- “learning from the West” and “catching up with the West.” Under the Meiji government, those who paid taxes and were male had the right to go to the polling station; the majority of Japanese, including females were kept outside the polls.²⁵ After Japan lost the war in 1945, the new constitution drafted by American scholars, provided for fundamental democracy and freedom for all Japanese voters including females. Yet, the legacy of the old politics, meaning the root of the LDP since the Meiji era, had continued to grow and expand after WWII. The LDP with its majority in parliament became one of the longest one-party-ruling among industrial countries.²⁶ It is not an exaggeration to state that the Japanese voters, for the first time in Japanese history, have created *real political change* in the August 2009 election. The Japanese have completely changed the political landscape by themselves for the first time in Japanese history.²⁷ No wonder Okada Katsuya, the Foreign Minister, asked the Imperial Household Agency if the Japanese Emperor Akihito should change his opening statement in the Japanese Diet session in October to reflect these changes. The peaceful revolution shocked the world!²⁸

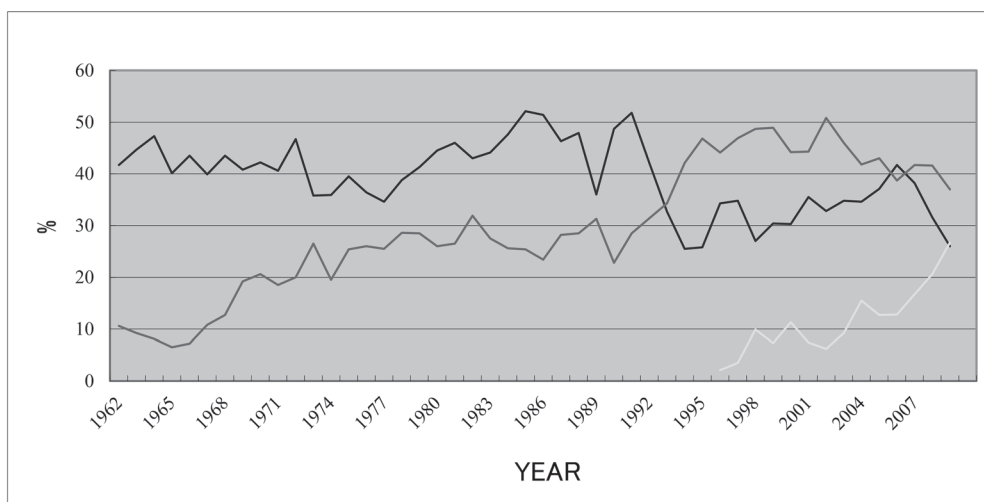
Power from Mutoha-so

Frustration rose among voters as the result of rigid politics (i.e., LDP domination), a stagnated economy, and unchanged culture in the central government. Some experts have stated that Japanese politics will never change.²⁹ However, the Japanese voter trends have changed dramatically since the burst of the bubble in 1990. The emergence of a huge group of voters, claiming to endorse *no* political party and considering themselves unaligned with any political parties, has emerged in a relatively short period of time. In the Japanese language, those who do not belong in a particular party, have been called *Mutoha-so* (無党派層) or *Seito Shiji nashi* (政党支持なし) [Endorse no political party], independent or unaffiliated voters, and were the swing voters in the last few elections, including the winning election by the Koizumi-led LDP in 2005.³⁰ In Japanese politics, independent or unaffiliated voters do not indicate voters who do not support any political parties at all. Rather, Mutoha-so will frequently shift their endorsement among political parties, depending on the circumstances.³¹ About 70 percent of the voters (in the period 1993-1996) who claimed to be unaffiliated voters,³² and about 35 million voters (in 2000) who belonged to Mutoha-so, endorsed political parties.³³ A large number of voters switched their LDP loyalty not to another party but to non-affiliation (Figure 1). The latest poll by *Yomiuri Shimbun*, released on 5 April 2010, showed nearly half of Japan’s voters who did not support any political parties.³⁴

Prior to the 2009 elections, *Yomiuri Shimbun* conducted 6 polls between October 2008 and June 2009. Overall, three out six surveys indicate that more than 60 percent of voters were willing to giving DPJ a chance to rule Japan (Table 2). Especially, five surveys showed that Mutoha-so supporters hoped DPJ would control the power in the Diet.³⁵ Even among LDP supporters, an average of 40 percent of

the people were willing to give DPJ an opportunity to govern Japan (Table 2).

Figure 1: The Trend of the Mutoha-so Supporters (1962-2009)



Notes: The Blue line indicates the LDP supporter.

The pink line indicates the Mutoha-so supporter.

The yellow line indicates the DPJ support.

Source: Tanaka, "Jinminto Suitai no Kozo [The Structure of the LDP Decline]," in *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka*, p. 8.

The first indication of independent voter behavior was the 1995 gubernatorial elections of Japan's two largest cities: Osaka and Tokyo. An actor, Aoshima Yukio, and a comedian, Yokoyama Nokku, who ran without the backing of any political party, won the gubernatorial races in both Tokyo and Osaka respectively. After the 1995 races, the movement of independent voters continued to play a crucial role as well as the swing voters in the gubernatorial elections of other major cities. In the 1999 gubernatorial election of Tokyo again, Ishihara Shintaro, who drew support from the independent voters, won the election by defeating candidates backed by the LDP and the DPJ. In 2000, Tanaka Yasuo, a writer, supported by the independent voters, won the gubernatorial race in Nagano Prefecture where former officials from the prefectural government had held the governor post for 40 years. Similarly, without the backing of a party, a female candidate Domoto Akiko, who drew a majority of independent voters, won the 2001 gubernatorial election in Chiba Prefecture, next to Tokyo. She defeated other candidates, including one supported by the LDP. Even in the national elections, the independent voters might have influenced the election results for the House of Councilors (Upper House) in 1995 and in 1998, as well as the House of Representatives in 2000.

Table 2: The Six Polls Conducted by *Yomiuri Shimbun* Prior the 2009 Election:
 [Will You Give A Chance For DJP For Ruling Japan?] (%)

	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
	2008/10/4-5	2008/12/6-7	2009/1/31-2/1	2009/3/14-15	2009/4/25-26	2009/6/27-28
Overall	58.2	64.9	64.0	57.6	59.7	61.9
LDP Supporter	37.6	45.1	44.8	35.7	39.0	39.0
DJP Supporter	95.3	96.9	96.9	97.6	94.3	95.9
Mutoha-so	60.5	66.0	61.3	57.8	62.0	60.9

Note: Mutoha-so: Independent

Sources: Yomiuri Shimbun Yoron Chosabu [Yomiuri Shimbun Public Opinion Survey Department], “Kokumin Ishiki no Ugoki [The Movements of the National Conscious],” in *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka*, p. 84.

As time approached the end of the twentieth century, two major developments occurred inside Japan. One was political change: various factions within the LDP fought each other. In 1993, these fights eventually led to splitting the party and ending the domination of the LDP, or one-party rule. A total of forty-six defectors from the LDP caused an end to the one-party-domination in place for 38 years.³⁶ The other was economic change: the bubble economy finally collapsed in the 1990s, remaining stagnated even today.³⁷ The two changes coincided with Japanese politics.³⁸ In the 1980s, Japan whose national slogan had been “catch up with the West” since the Meiji restoration finally achieved its national goal of being the second economic superpower in the world; Japan seemed to fit the image of the Pacific Century. Yet, Japan lost a golden opportunity to become the “Pacific Century.” After the bubble economy collapsed, successive governments led by LDP cascaded enormous amounts of cash into large infrastructure projects in an attempt to generate economic growth. These efforts by politicians produced few positive results; however, the escalation of Japan’s fiscal crisis worsened, reaching nearly 200 percent of GDP by the 2010 budget.³⁹

Peaceful Revolution

As the DPJ won the election in the Upper House in the summer of 2007, a group of scholars from Waseda University,⁴⁰ along with the *Yomiuri Shimbun* Public Opinion Survey Department, prepared for a joint project, which predicted that political change might occur in the 2009 Lower House election. A few factors lead to the LDP lose and DPJ’s win the 2009 election. First, while DPJ increased in power since the Hatoyama brothers founded the party in 1996,⁴¹ the LDP has continued to lose support and faith among voters. During this century, three Lower House elections were carried out. As the Table 1 indicates, DPJ received about

64.2 percent of the seats in the Diet during the 2009 Lower House election. Except for the 2005 election,⁴² the DPJ has constantly doubled its seats from 177 seats to 308 seats (Table 1). Meanwhile, the LDP has not gained new support since the 21st century (Table 3). In order to control the Diet, since 2000 the LDP started to cooperate with New Komeito (Buddhist Party). On the surface, the LDP increased its supporters during the elections in table 3 (i.e., see voter numbers: LDP-n). However, the fact of the matter is that members from the religious group Komeito had kept the LDP in power for ten years because the religious group had voted for members of LDP. In fact, the LDP had not increased its supporters and remained at the 20 million level (Table 3). By contrary, DPJ had constantly increased its supporters from 6 million in 1996, and doubled it by 2003. By the 2005 election, DPJ received nearly 25 million votes, increasing more than four times their support during the 10-year period (Table 3). In other words, by 2005, DPJ had controlled Japanese politics, but the religious group Komeito had helped the LDP to survive in power.

Table 3:

The Estimation of the Number of Votes Polled Got by LDP (Lower House)

GE	Year	NV	LDP-n	LDP	NK-n	NK	DPJ
35th	1979	54,522,013	24,084,130		5,282,683		
36th	1980	60,342,329	28,262,441		5,329,942		
37th	1983	57,240,829	25,982,785		5,745,751		
38th	1986	61,707,654	29,875,501		5,701,278		
39th	1990	66,215,906	30,315,417		5,242,675		
40th	1993	63,547,819	22,999,646		5,114,351		
41st	1996	58,262,930	21,836,096		*		6,001,666
42nd	2000	62,746,239	24,945,806	21,063,208	1,231,753	3,882,598	16,811,782
43rd	2003	61,196,640	26,089,326	21,861,482	886,507	4,227,844	21,814,154
44th	2005	69,523,186	32,518,390	28,385,144	981,105	4,133,246	24,804,786
45th	2009	72,019,655	27,301,982	22,970,615	782,984	4,331,367	33,475,334

Note: (*) indicates no data by NK since Komeito united with Shinshinto [New Frontier Party] in 1993.

GE: The General Election

NV: The Number of Voters

LDP-n: The Number of Votes Polled Got by LDP

LDP: The Number of LDP (=Total of LDP-n – Number of KN cooperation)

NK-n: The Number of Votes Polled Got by NK

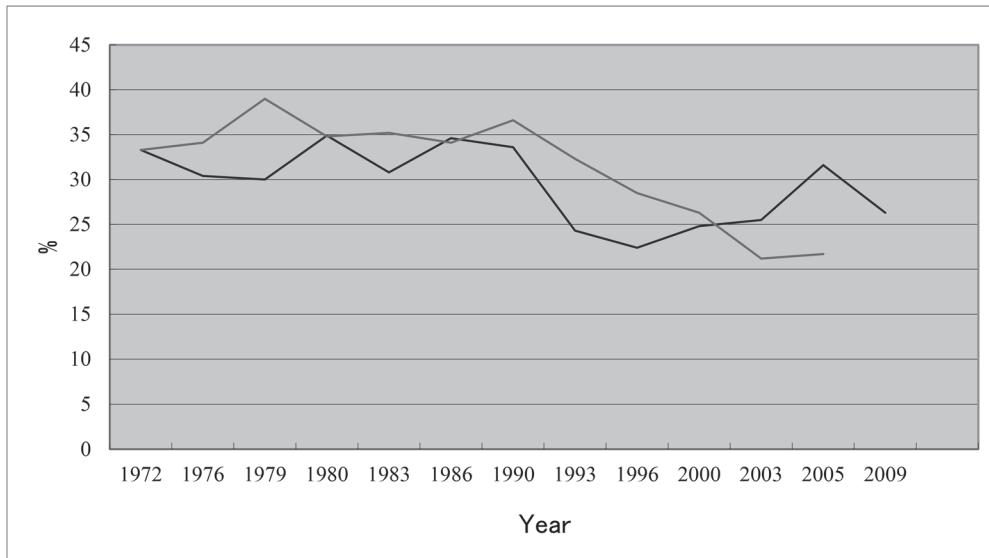
NK: The Number of New Komeito (=Total of NK-n – Number of LDP Cooperation)

DPJ: The Number of Votes Polled Got by DPJ

Source: Tanaka Aiji, "Jinminto Suitai no Kozo [The Structure of the LDP Decline]," in *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka*, p. 7.

Second, Japanese conservatives had begun to abandon the LDP. In Figure 2, the absolute vote received by the LDP since the economic burst in the 1990s, had declined dramatically as the four major conservative groups, including Nippon Izokukai [The Japan War-Bereaved Association], Nihon Ishikai [The Japan Medical Association], JAC [Japan Agricultural Cooperatives], and others, had decreased their support for LDP. These conservative groups had been the core voters for LDP's power since WWII. Once the core-base of the LDP diminished, there was almost no chance for LDP to sustain its power during the 2009 election.

Figure 2:
Absolute Share of Vote for LDP and the Conservative Members Join Rate (1972-2009)



Notes: The blue line indicates an absolute share of vote for LDP.

The pink line indicates that the members of the 4 conservative groups, such as Nippon Izokukai [The Japan War-Bereaved Association], Nihon Ishikai [The Japan Medical Association], JA [Japan Agricultural Cooperatives], and others, joins rate.

Source: Tanaka Aiji, "Jinminto Suitai no Kozo [The Structure of the LDP Decline]," in *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka*, p. 7.

Third, why did it all go wrong for the LDP in the 2009 election? The LDP has never figured out how to win over these increasingly influential Mutoha-so group voters. As Figure 1 indicated, Mutoha-so once again became the swing vote for the 2009 election. Ironically, as the stagnated economy started in the 1990s, more LDP supporters had reluctantly put their faith in the LDP. These voters had shifted into Mutoha-so bloc. Interestingly, the Japanese independent voters are different from those who have traditionally been treated as apathetic in politics. In Japan, those who claim their Mutoha-so, are relatively young, live in urban cities, and have

higher educational backgrounds.⁴³ Around 1993-1994, the line of the supporters of the LDP, according to the Figure 1, and the line of the Mutoha-so group crossed each other. During this period, political instability occurred in Japanese politics because of the ephemeral administrations that appeared in Japanese politics such as the Hosokawa cabinet (less than one year) and Hata administration (just over two-months). These factors might have influenced voters' behaviors, meaning political change might be possible in Japan. However, the leaders in the LDP misunderstood, misinterpreted, and misjudged the movement of the independent voters for years.⁴⁴

The Japanese Disease

The word, the British disease, refers to when the United Kingdom lost political confidence on the world stage, the economic competitiveness in global market, and the faith of the British toward their government. When Margaret Thatcher took the office, the British disease deeply spread over the country. Thatcher's policy marked a significant step toward conservative supply-side economics, privatization, corporate rationalization, and regulatory liberalization, and the departure from Keynesian liberalism.⁴⁵ After managing the British disease to carry out many economic reforms (e.g., financial "Big Bang") and political calculation (e.g., Falkland War against Argentina) by the "Iron Lady," the British enjoyed an economic boom in 1987-1988 due to the British disease, and Thatcher served three terms of the prime minister.⁴⁶

Japanese disease?

People might wonder why the voters in Japan took so long to change their regime even though people expressed distrust and laodicean politics for decades? In Japan, the political structure nexus between the complexity of the society and the movement of the voters' behaviors, have made the system difficult to understand. The burst of the economic bubble has deeply haunted the society as demonstrated by a lackluster economy, bottomless deflation, growing bankruptcies, rising unemployment, declining income, and the fragile banking system. The 1990s for Japan have been referred to as a "lost decade" and called as a "lost two decades" by the media in 2009.⁴⁷ Today, it is not appropriate to refer to Japan as using the terms "lost decade" or "lost two decades" anymore. The fact of the matter is that the Japanese disease has not been cured at all, but is rooted inside Japan since the 1990s. Since Japan seemed to flounder without a clear, long-term strategic national vision, scrambling to cope with the long recession after the bust of the bubble economy, the Japanese disease, adding traditional Japanese problems, such as an aging population and poor social safety net, has covered the political landscape with high unemployment, a stagnated economy, languishing stock market, and soaring dissatisfaction of the government. The reality of Japan is indicated in the following data. On 29 December 1989, according to the data from the Bank of Japan, the

Japanese stock market reached its peak at 38,915.87, down to the lowest 7,162.90 on 27 October 2008, and today (by March 2010) around 10,824.70, just less one third of the bubble peak. The unemployment rate in 1990 was just 2.1 percent, reaching 5.4 percent in 2003, and 4.9 percent today (by January 2010), according to Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications. Regarding economic growth, the average was near double-digits in the 1960s; according to cabinet office, the average reached about 4 percent during the two oil shocks between 1970 and 1979. After the burst of the bubble of economy (1992-2009), the average economic growth has been around 1.0 percent. There is not an end to the dark-tunnel of the Japanese disease at the present time.

-- To be continued --

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Endnotes

- 1 This is the first part of the paper, and the second part will be published in the next issue.
- 2 Notes: Japanese and Chinese personal names are given in the text in the customary order, family name first (i.e., Koizumi Junichiro or Deng Xiaoping). Works published in English by Chinese and Japanese authors are given in Western order, surname last (i.e., Ichiro Suzuki). Unless the English language work cited has employed a different system of romanization, the Chinese is used *pinyin* romanization (i.e., Mao Zedong). The paper originally was presented at the China-India-US Symposium Series on Development and Governance hold at India Institute of Management-Bangalore (IIMB), India during June 4-6, 2010.
- 3 Martin Jacques, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009).
- 4 Ezra Vogel, *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979). Interestingly, this book is still printing and selling in bookstores in the 21st century.
- 5 Ezra F. Vogel, "Pax Nipponica?" *Foreign Affairs* (Spring 1986): pp. 752-67. Woo-Hee Park, "Japan's Role in the Structural Adjustment of the Asian-Pacific Economies, *Journal of International Economic Studies*, no. 6 (1992): pp. 38-47. Patrick Collins, "Monetary Foundations for the Ear of "Pax Nipponica," *Journal of International Economic Studies*, no. 7, (March 1993): pp. 9-21. Regarding *Pax Nipponica*, see Inoguchi Takashi, *Global*

- Change: A Japanese Perspective* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), p. 5.
- 6 Regarding the issue of the “Pacific Century” see, The Annenberg/CPB Collection, “Inside Japan, Inc.,” in *The Pacific Century*, vol. 10 video tape, produced by the Pacific Basin Institute in Association with KCTS/Seattle (Burlington, VT: The Annenberg/CPB Collection, 1992). Frank Gibney, *The Pacific Century: America and Asia in a Changing World* (New York: Scribners, 1992).
 - 7 Guy Sorman, “It’s A Global Century, Not An Asian Century,” *Japan Times*, 8 April 2010, p. 13. Reprinted idem, “If You Predicated An Asian Century, You Should Try Looking Again,” *Daily Star*, 10 April 2010.
 - 8 Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) originated from the *Riken-Seiyukai* in the pre-world war two era. Seiyukai, which was founded by Ito Hirofumi, gathered bureaucrats in 1900. Most prime ministers including Ito Hirofumi, came from Seiyukai, which survived many difficult eras, including wartimes. After WWII, LDP with its majority in the Diet ruled Japan for 38 years (1955-1993), equivalent to the length of time between the Meiji Restoration and the end of the Russo-Japanese War. In world politics, it is unusual to witness a party ruling a nation under a democratic system for 38 years. Kitaoka Shinichi, *Jiminto: Seiken-to no 38nen* [The LDP: The 38-years in Power] (Tokyo: Chuo Bunko, 2008), pp. 9-10. Regarding the transformation of the LDP, see Kabashima Ikuo, *Sengo Seiji no Kiseki* [The Locus of the Post-War Politics] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2004).
 - 9 The word, laodicean, originates from the French and was the winning word of the 2009 spelling bee contest in the United States. Laodicean means indifferent, unconcerned, or lukewarm.
 - 10 Kato Gaku, “Hatsutoin [The First Day in the House of Representatives],” <http://www.election.ne.jp/10863/80117.html> (Access Date: 21 March 2010). Kira Shuji, “Yokoso Kira Homupeji [Welcome to Kira’s Homepage],” <http://www.kirashuji.com> (Access Date: 21 March 2010).
 - 11 Former Prime Minister, Kaifu Toshiki, has lost his seat during the 2009 election. Ellis S. Krauss and Robert J. Pekkanen, “The Rise of Fall of Japan’s Liberal Democratic Party,” *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 69, no. 1 (February 2010): p. 5.
 - 12 For instance, Sugawara Taku, *Yoron no Kyokkai: Naze Jiminto wa Taihai shita no ka* [The Misunderstanding of Public Opinion: Why the LDP Was Defeated Completely] (Tokyo: Kobunsha Shinsho, 2009), pp. 271-277. Tanaka Aiji, Kohno Masaru, Hino Airo, Iida Takeshi, and the Yomiuri Shimbun Public Opinion Survey Department, *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka* [Year 2009: Why the Political Change Occurred] (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 2009), pp. ix-x. *Asahi Shimbun* [Daily Asahi], 3 August 2009, p. 1.
 - 13 David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Book, 1956). Idem, *Faces in the Crowd: Individual Studies in Character and Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952).
 - 14 Harold Dwight Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (Cleveland: World Publisher, 1958). Idem, *The Analysis of Political Behaviour: An Empirical Approach* (London: Routledge, 1998).
 - 15 Tanaka Aiji, “‘Seito Shiji nasi’ so no Ishiki Kozo to Seiji Fushin [The Distrust Politics and the Structure of Awareness by the Independent Group],” *Senkyo Kenkyu* [Election Research], no. 7 (1992): p. 80.
 - 16 Along with *Asahi Shimbun*, Louis Harris Inc., and others conducted the polls from Japan, the U.K., and the US in 1998. “Seiji Fushin, Nihon ga Tosshutsu [The Prominence of the Distrust Politics in Japan],” *Asahi Shimbun*, 29 December 1998, p. 1.
 - 17 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

- 18 Ibid., p. 1.
- 19 “Yoron Chosa [The Public Opinion],” *Mainichi Shimbun* [Daily Mainichi], 19 March 2010. Regarding the official website of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications, see http://www.soumu.go.jp/senkyo/senkyo_s/naruhodo/naruhodo09.html.
- 20 *Asahi Shimbun*, 24 March 2010, p. 31.
- 21 *Asahi Shimbun*, 29 December 1998, p. 15.
- 22 It is understandable that many Japanese voters were not willing to take a risk in the election of a government dominated by the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) during the cold war.
- 23 T. J. Pempel, *Regime Shift: Comparative Dynamics of the Japanese Political Economy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), pp. 197-205. Gerald Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 116-125.
- 24 Ootake Hideo, *Nihon Seiji no Tairitsu Juku* [The Opposition Axis of the Japanese Politics] (Tokyo: Chuo Koron, 1999), p. 42.
- 25 John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, and Albert M. Craig, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation*, revised edition, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), p. 699.
- 26 Among democratic nations, it is uncommon that the LDP using its majority controlled power between 1995 and 1993, losing power for a couple years, and returning to power again with its coalition from 1996-2009. The other dominant parties among industries countries, such as the Swedish Social Democratic Party and the Italian Christian Democratic Party, are all holding coalition with other parties, but not by itself as majority in the parliament. Masaru Kohno, *Japan’s Postwar Party Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 4.
- 27 The first political transformation in Japan was during the Tokugawa Bakufu when Matthew Calbraith Perry (1794-1858) opened a new era for Japan in 1852-54, entirely breaking down the Shogunate system. The second political transformation of Japan was General Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964), who changed Japanese politics as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Japan after WWII for nearly 7 years until 1951. These transformations of Japanese politics were the direct influence of Americans, not the Japanese themselves. The 30 August 2009 election can be characterized as the third transformation of Japanese politics. This time, however, the Japanese voters changed the regime themselves without direct foreign pressures.
- 28 Since WWII, except in January 1995 when the Hanshin/Awaji Earthquake killed more than 6,000 people, the emperor has never changed his statement in the opening ceremony of the Japanese Diet. Okada made his request during the cabinet meeting on 23 October 2009. But, the emperor’s opening statement did not change, according to a constitutional expert, because it might involve political influence over the emperor, which is prohibited by the law. *Kyoto News*, 23 October 2009. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 23 October 2009. *Sankei Shimbun*, 23 March 2009. “Okadasi Hatsugen ni Hihan [The Criticism of Okada’s Statement],” *Asahi Shimbun*, 24 October 2009, p. 4. *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* [The Economic Journal of Japan], 23 October 2009.
- 29 Inoguchi Takashi, *Gendai Nihon Seiji no Kiso* [The Basis of the Contemporary Japanese Politics] (Tokyo: NTT Shuppan, 2002.), p. 55.
- 30 To avoid this problem being too long, the Koizumi phenomenon will not be discussed. The Koizumi phenomenon will be analyzed on a different occasion. Tanaka Aiji, “Jiminto Suitai no Kozo [The Declining Structure of the LDP], in *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka*, p. 9. Ushiro Fusao, *Seiken Kotai he no Kiseki* [A Track of the Political Power Change] (Tokyo: Kadensha, 2009), pp. 22-3.

- 31 Ootake, *Nihon Seiji no Tairitsu Juku*, pp. 92-3. Yoshida Shin'ichi, "Distrust of Politics: Will Voters Transform the Nature of Governance?" in *Governance For A New Century: Japanese Challenges, American Experience*, edited by Thomas E. Mann and Sasaki Takeshi (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2002), p. 16.
- 32 Yoshida, "Distrust of Politics," in *Governance For A New Century*, p. 16.
- 33 Tanaka Aiji, "Tohyoritsu 65% de Seiken Kotai ga Kanou ka? [Is it Possible to Change the Political Power Around Voting Rate 65%?] *Chuo Koron* (September 2003): p. 133.
- 34 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 5 April 2010, p. 2. "Nearly Half of Japan's Voters Don't Support Any Party," *Washington Post*, 5 April 2010.
- 35 The Yomiuri Shimbun Public Opinion Survey Department, *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka*, pp. 83-84. The fourth poll illustrated that DPJ got 57.8 percent, below 60 percent, support from Mutoha-so due to the Ozawa Nishimatsu "political money" scandal in March 2009.
- 36 Since WWII, only two political parties: LDP and Japanese Communist Party (JCP), have remained nominally intact.
- 37 On 29 December 1989, the Japanese stock market reached its peak at 38,915.87 point. But as of the writing of this paper, the Japanese market is still around 10,800 level.
- 38 Yoshida, "Distrust of Politics: Will Voters Transform the Nature of Governance," p. 15.
- 39 Reiji Yoshida, "Bubble Prophet Fears New Disaster," *Japan Times*, 19 March 2010, p. 3. Richard Katz, "Hatoyama's Challenge," *Time*, 9 November 2009, p. 40.
- 40 Four scholars: Tanaka Aiji, Kohno Masaru, Hino Siro, and Iida Takeshi, participated the project. It is the second time (the previous joint project held by Tokyo University and *Asahi Shimbun*) in Japanese history that universities and a major media joined a project to analysis on the election.
- 41 In September 1996, Hatoyama Yukio and Hatoyama Kunio contributed about 1.5 billion yen from their personal fund to create DPJ. In the beginning, LPD defectors including Kan Naoto joined the party. When Shinshinto [New Frontier Party] was dismantled by Ozawa Ichiro in the end of 1997, some members including Okada Katsuya joined the DPJ again. The turning point came in September 2003 when the Ozawa group decided to become members of the DPJ; this positioned the DPJ to compete with the LDP. Zhu Jianrong, *Riben Biantian* [Japan Clouds Over] (Beijing: Xin Shijie Chubanshe, 2009), p. 80. Kohno, "Senkyo Kekka kara mita Mishuto Assho, Jiminto Taihaino Kozu," in *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka*, p. 35.
- 42 Because the popularity of Koizumi Junichiro reached the highest rate at 85.5 percent and average about 52.2 percent during his 1980-days office, the analysis of Koizumi will be discussed on another occasion.
- 43 Tanaka, "Jinminto Suitai no Kozo," in *2009-nen: Naze Seiken Kotai Dattanoka*, p. 10. Idem, "'Seito Shiji nasi' so no Ishiki Kozo to Seiji Fushin," p. 96.
- 44 Ushiro, *Seiken Kotai he no Kiseki*, p. 297.
- 45 Javed Maswood, "Introduction," in *Japan - Change and Continuity*, edited by Javed Maswood, Jeffrey Graham, and Hideaki Miyajima (London: RoutledgeCruzon, 2002), p. 33.
- 46 "Biography," Margaret Thatcher Foundation, the official website Margaret Thatcher Foundation, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/essential/biography.asp> (access date: 20 March 2010).
- 47 *Asahi Shimbun* "Henten Keizai" Shuzai-han [Daily *Asahi* "Changing Economy" Reporter Group], *Ushiwareta Nijumen* [The Lost Two Decades] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2009).