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ALDERMAN

FEB 4 1998

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So what should the West do? Crnobrnja advocates an extended military presence under United States direction and European-led financing of reconstruction. He warns that the alternative could be a new war in and over Bosnia, with the wider consequences of which many have warned through the conflict. He is right to do so. The Balkans are full of weak and fractured states, as Albania's recent collapse underlines. If anything, the risk of overspill has increased. At the same time, the US has been tiring of its leadership role in European security, while in European capitals budgetary rigour has become the mantra. The big picture is not encouraging.

The strong points of *The Yugoslav Drama* are many. The author is a practitioner, a former Yugoslav diplomat who represented his country in Brussels, and who has keen insight into the workings of the various institutions that have been involved in the conflict. Himself a Serb, he castigates those members of the Serb elite who misused their community's nationalism in a desperate effort to stay professionally afloat in post-Cold War Europe. He writes then with credibility about how similar concerns were played out in Yugoslavia's other republics, and why the responsibility for the country's breakdown and, in part, even the atrocities that came in its wake, has to be shared. He dispenses convincingly with an argument that was often tossed about in the West as its governments agonized over the cost and terms of engagements. For Crnobrnja, there is no Balkan national megalomania, including indelible grudges and bestial behaviour, to which communities of the area succumb whenever they are released from the containing grip of superior force.

Less than expert Yugo-watchers will have to read the book in tandem with a chronology, a supply of maps (larger than the three provided here) and a who's who. Beyond that, the editing in the final chapters is substandard and the analysis is sometimes ambiguous. A prime example of this can be found in the passages relating to Marshal Tito's track record and legacy. Did the Yugoslav leader stand up to Joseph Stalin or was he pushed out of the emerging communist bloc? Was he a creative patriot or an apparatchik-opportunist? And what was really his part in the dissolution of his country? But these are hard questions, and Mihailo Crnobrnja is not the first to fail to come completely to grips with them.

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Japan's Postwar Party Politics

Masaru Kohno

Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, pp. xii, 172

Masaru Kohno has written a timely book which directs the attention of students of Japanese politics to the "fundamental logic of competition and strategic interactions that drives the dynamics of party politics in Japan" (158) just as the nation is experiencing unprecedented party system instability after many years of stable Liberal Democratic party (LDP) rule. Since 1993, when the LDP split, Japan has had a series of unstable coalition governments; it has seen the rise of over a dozen new parties; and it has seen the adoption of brand new electoral rules for the more important lower house. Making sense of all these developments has not been easy, and so Kohno is to be commended for directing our attention to relatively well-developed "microanalytic theory" which focuses on the basic competitive drive between and within parties that shapes political behaviour in all democracies.

Among the insights is the following. Coalition theory tells us that parties that find themselves at the centre of "policy space," able to turn left or right for allies, should be able to extract the most favourable terms in the deals that bring coalitions to power. This theory, Kohno tells us, helps us understand why Morihiro Hosokawa's Japan New party and Masayoshi Takemura's *Sakigake*—the small parties that located themselves in the middle of policy space in the weeks after the LDP split in the summer of 1993—were able to force the larger Liberal Democratic party to the right and the Japan Socialist party to the left to accept their recipe for electoral reform and to win the prime minister's slot for Hosokawa.

Kohno's book is not just about recent developments, however. Just one chapter (the penultimate one) covers developments in Japan in 1993, ending its coverage with the formation of the Hosokawa cabinet in the summer of that year. The remainder of the book examines party politics in earlier years: the politics of electoral reform in 1945-1947; coalition games prior to the formation of the LDP in 1955; the creation of the LDP in that year; the evolution of internal LDP norms during its period of hegemony; and the emergence of new "Centre" parties during the 1960s. In all of these cases, Kohno finds evidence that political outcomes were shaped by the kind of microanalytic logic described above. Just as the JNP and *Sakigake* benefited from being in the middle of policy space in 1993, he argues, the Democrats' bargaining positions were shaped by their position in the middle of policy space in 1947 and again in the lead-up to the LDP merger in 1955.

While Kohno is to be commended for directing our attention to microanalytic insights such as the ones described above, his effort to present his approach as a "forward-looking" interpretation of Japanese party politics that is superior to competing approaches falls short. First, as Kohno himself admits, socio-ideological cleavage patterns of the type stressed by most other analysts of Japanese party politics do set important constraints on party system development. The "policy space" that is central to his own analysis, in fact, is a reflection of the socio-ideological environment in which parties compete. This makes his microanalytic approach more of a *supplement* to traditional interpretations than a clear alternative, explaining a variety of details such as the timing of changes rather than the direction of change itself.

More troubling for Kohno's claim of superiority, however, is his inability to articulate a clear hierarchy of the "nested" microanalytic games that shape the outcomes in which he is interested. At times, Kohno treats parties as unitary actors, explaining specific outcomes by looking at the competition between them, while at other times looking at competition within parties. While this willingness to look to different levels makes his analysis richer, it deprives it of parsimony. If reference to one game or another can explain a variety of outcomes, it is difficult to describe the approach as "forward looking." Instead, what Kohno is able to do—like so many rational choice analysts—is to identify *after the fact* some rational basis for the observed outcome. Kohno's book would have been stronger if it was more honest about the fact that his microanalytic logic (like socio-ideological factors) merely sets constraints that shape outcomes and does not produce unique equilibria.

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