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978-0-521-84692-9 - Democracy Without Competition in Japan: Opposition Failure in a One-Party Dominant State

Ethan Scheiner

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Democracy Without Competition in Japan

Opposition Failure in a One-Party Dominant State

Despite its democratic structure, Japan's government has been dominated by a single party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), since 1955. This book offers an explanation for why, even in the face of great dissatisfaction with the LDP, no opposition party has been able to offer itself as a credible challenger. Understanding such failure is important for many reasons, from its effect on Japanese economic policy to its implications for what facilitates democratic responsiveness more broadly. The principal explanations for opposition failure in Japan focus on the country's culture and electoral system. This book offers a new interpretation, arguing that a far more plausible explanation rests on the predominance in Japan of clientelism, combined with a centralized government structure and electoral protection for groups that benefit from clientelism. Although the central case in the book is Japan, the analysis is also comparative and applies the framework cross-nationally.

Ethan Scheiner is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Davis. He received a Ph.D. in political science from Duke University in 2001. He has been a visiting scholar at Keio University (Mita) in Tokyo, Japan; an advanced research (postdoctoral) Fellow in the Program on U.S.-Japan Relations at Harvard University (2001–2); and a postdoctoral Fellow at the Stanford Institute for International Studies (2002–4). His work examines parties and elections within both Japan-specific and explicitly comparative contexts. He has published articles on political parties, elections, and electoral systems in the *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Electoral Studies*, and *Legislative Studies Quarterly*. His analyses of recent Japanese elections appears (in Japanese) in *Foresight Magazine* in Japan.

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*Opposition Failure in a One-Party
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ETHAN SCHEINER

University of California at Davis



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UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10013-2473, USA

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It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521846929

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First published 2006

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Scheiner, Ethan, 1968–

Democracy without competition in Japan : opposition failure in a one-party dominant state / Ethan Scheiner.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-84692-7 (hardback) – ISBN 0-521-60969-0 (pbk.)

1. Democracy – Japan. 2. Jiyū Minshutō. 3. Political parties – Japan.

4. Patronage, Political – Japan. 5. Patron and client – Japan. 6. Japan – Politics and government – 1945– I. Title.

JQ1681.S34 2006

324.252–dc22

2004030868

ISBN 978-0-521-84692-9 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-60969-2 Paperback

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To Boo Boo,

Doo Doo,

Dr. D,

and the love of my life,

Melanie

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Glossary of Abbreviations

ELECTORAL SYSTEM TERMS

PR	proportional representation
SMD	single member district
SNTV/MMD	single nontransferable vote in multimember districts

JAPAN

CGP	Clean Government Party (<i>Kōmeitō</i>)
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan (<i>Minshutō</i>)
DSP	Democratic Socialist Party (<i>Minshatō</i>)
HC	House of Councillors (also called the Upper House)
HR	House of Representatives (also called the Lower House)
JCP	Japan Communist Party (<i>Nihon Kyōsantō</i>)
JNP	Japan New Party (<i>Nihon Shintō</i>)
JSP	Japan Socialist Party (<i>Nihon Shakaitō</i>)
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party (<i>Jiyū-Minshutō</i>)
NFP	New Frontier Party (<i>Shinshintō</i>)
NLC	New Liberal Club (<i>Shin Jiyū Kurabu</i>)
SDL	Social Democratic League (<i>Shakai Minshu Rengō</i>)
SDP	Social Democratic Party (formerly the JSP) (<i>Shakai Minshutō</i>)

AUSTRIA

FPÖ	Freedom Party of Austria (<i>Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs</i>)
ÖVP	Austrian People's Party (<i>Österreichs Volkspartei</i>)
SPÖ	Social Democratic Party (<i>Sozialistische Partei Österreichs</i>)

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Abbreviations

BRAZIL

PSD Social Democratic Party (*Partido Social Democrático*)
 PT Workers Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*)

GERMANY

CDU/CSU Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union
 (*Christlich Demokratische Union/Christlich Soziale Union*)
 SPD Social Democratic Party (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*)

ITALY

DC Christian Democratic Party (*Democrazia Cristiana*)
 PCI Italian Communist Party (*Partito Comunista Italiano*)
 PSI Italian Socialist Party (*Partito Socialista Italiano*)

MEXICO

PAN National Action Party (*Partido Accion Nacional*)
 PRD Party of the Democratic Revolution (*Partido de la Revolucion Democratica*)
 PRI Institutional Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*)

SWEDEN

SAP Social Democratic Party (*Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Arbetarparti*)

TAIWAN

DPP Democratic People's Party (*Minchuchinputang*)
 KMT Nationalist People's Party (*Kuomintang*)

OTHER ACRONYMS

DID densely inhabited districts (common measure of urban-ness)
 FECL Foreign Exchange and Control Law
 FIL Foreign Investment Law

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FILP	Fiscal Investment and Loan Program
GDP	gross domestic product
GNP	gross national product
JEDS	Japan Elections and Democracy Study
JES	Japan Election Studies

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Acknowledgments and a Note on the Use of the Online Appendix

I have many, many people to thank for helping make this book possible.

However, first, let me refer readers to a supplementary online appendix for the book. This appendix can be accessed by following the links from my Web site at www.ethanscheiner.com. (Yes, I succumbed to cyber-spatial egocentrism for the book.) To shorten the manuscript and keep it tightly focused, I cut many details and discussion of potential counterarguments and put them in the online appendix. Much of my work is based on multivariate quantitative analysis, but most readers of this book are unlikely to be interested in technical aspects of the statistics, even if they are intrigued by the substantive results. Therefore, I kept the substantive discussions of the quantitative work but moved the tables and technical discussions of the multivariate analyses to the appendix.

Now, on to the (very sincere) gratitude! This book began as my Duke University doctoral dissertation and my greatest intellectual debt is to my Duke advisors, Meg McKean and Herbert Kitschelt. Meg's detailed comments improved the book in numerous different ways, and her guidance has been invaluable. Herbert helped me clarify many important concepts and pushed me toward more comparative approaches and sophisticated analysis. He has done more than anyone to shape my political science brain. Great thanks too for the extremely helpful comments of my other Duke mentors, John Aldrich and Scott Morgenstern.

Five others were especially influential. Steve Reed has been a constant source of guidance and information and a tremendous sounding board for ideas. Also, I would be broke if I ever had to repay him monetarily for all the data he's shared with me. Kobayashi Yoshiaki was a magnificent host at Keio University in Tokyo, where I was a visiting scholar (May 1998 through August 1999), and an invaluable source of information and contacts. Rob "WB" Weiner has been an important colleague (and friend), always willing

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to discuss anything. I have learned much from Rob. My parents, Betsey and Irv Scheiner, led me to some of my most useful contacts in this project and are responsible (by association) for a huge chunk of any credibility (such as it is) I may have in the Japan field.

I was very fortunate to have people who were willing to read the *entire* manuscript. Ray Christensen, Dave Leheny, and Len Schoppa not only did so but provided detailed and insightful comments that improved the book immeasurably. Ellis Krauss and T. J. Pempel reviewed the manuscript for Cambridge University Press and offered the sort of comments every author hopes for: encouraging, but also outstanding and direct suggestions for improvement. I am also grateful to Betsey Scheiner and Melanie Hurley who copyedited the book for me. Neither ever touched a sentence without improving it.

Thanks to Kojima Aya, Ozawa Akira, Nakamichi Midori, and Tatsumi Mie, who helped me prepare for interviews and the surveys and correspondence I conducted. Indeed, it was Akira, Midori, and Mie who conducted the phone interviews/surveys on my behalf. Thanks to Yasuyuki Motoyama and Izumi Yoshioka, who helped in the United States with my Japanese materials, and to Jennifer Ramos and Shawn Southerd, for their research assistance. Thanks to Kurizaki Shuhei and Teshima Masahiro, who helped with my translations in Japan. Thanks to the Inter-University Center in Yokohama for helping bring my Japanese language ability to the point that I usually did not have to worry about accidentally saying horrible things about my own anatomy when I was intending to reference comments made by advisors. Most of my interviews would not have been possible without the very kind introductions provided by Hironaka Yoshimichi, Shinada Suguru, Yanai Satoshi, Nakajima Kaze, Igata Kōichi, Saitō Masamitsu, Chiba Ken, Tatsu Niioka, Kobayashi Yoshiaki, and Meg McKean.

Tons of thanks to Shigeo Hirano, Andy Baker, Yusaku Horiuchi, Orit Kedar, Jun Saito, and Guillermo Rosas, who provided advice on the statistical analysis. Great thanks to Scott Seaman for numerous pieces of information he found for me. Thanks to Kataoka Masaaki, who suggested using *Bun'yabetsu Jinmeiroku*; Susan Pharr for sharing JEDS96 (1996 Japan Election and Democracy Study, conducted by Bradley M. Richardson, Mitsuru Uchida, and associates); Dennis Patterson and Misa Nishikawa for sharing their campaign platforms; Masahiko Asano for his campaign expenditures data; Kabashima Ikuo and his zemi for their urban-rural SMD measures; Yusaku Horiuchi and Masaru Kohno for their Japanese Election District-level Census Data; Kobayashi Yoshiaki for sharing the JESII (Japan Election Studies II) Version 1, panel electoral studies funded by the Ministry of Education (FY1993–FY1997); and Mike Alvarez, Dean Lacy, Liz Zechmeister, John Brehm, and Jay Patel for suggestions on multinomial probit. Thanks to Cambridge University Press's editor Lew Bateman for shepherding this book through the publication process. Thanks also to

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Ernie Haim, who acted as production editor, and Sara Black, who copyedited the manuscript for Cambridge University Press.

Others offered intellectual and practical suggestions of great help: Ken Greene, Andy Baker, Christina Davis, Sid Tarrow, Kathleen O'Neill, Walter Mebane, Irv Scheiner, Peter Katzenstein, David Samuels, Bonnie Meguid, Dan Okimoto, Kenneth McElwain, Kay Shimizu, Jean Oi, Dick Samuels, Robert Pekkanen, David Laitin, Alberto Diaz-Cayeros, Beatriz Magaloni, Scott Desposato, Margarita Estevez-Abe, Orit Kedar, Susan Pharr, Christian Brunelli, Shin Fujihira, Gary Cox, Matthew Shugart, Mike Thies, John Campbell, Harlan Koff, Masaru Kohno, Aiji Tanaka, Sam Jameson, Steve Levitsky, Tomoaki Nomi, Kuba Zielinski, Karen Cox, Mavis Mayer, Paula Evans, Kären Wigen, Kris Troost, Paul Talcott, Jon Marshall, Mari Miura, Alisa Gaunder, Yamamoto Tatsuhiro, Frank Schwartz, Kosuke Imai, Thomas Berger, Bill Grimes, Yoku Yamazaki, Masami Hasegawa, David Soskice, Ronda Burginger, Brian "Skippy" Sage, Val Threlfall, Amy "B-Buster" Bantham, Heidi Glunz, Mike "Candle Man" Rothman, Andy Dodge, Allison Devore, Jeremy Weinstein, and Rachel Gibson.

I was fortunate to be able to work on this book while an advanced research Fellow at the Program on U.S.-Japan Relations at Harvard University, a postdoctoral Fellow in the Stanford (University) Institute for International Studies, and assistant professor in the department of political science at U.C. Davis. Parts of Chapters 2, 5, and 6 appeared as "Pipelines of Pork: A Model of Local Opposition Party Failure" in *Comparative Political Studies* (in press), "Democracy without Competition: Opposition Failure in One-Party Dominant Japan," which was (paper number 02-12) in the Occasional Papers Series at the Program on U.S.-Japan Relations at Harvard University, and "The Underlying Roots of Opposition Failure in Japan" in the Middlebury College Rohatyn Center for International Affairs Working Paper Series. Also, thanks to The Japan Foundation, the National Security Education Program, Sanwa Bank, the Aleanne Webb Dissertation grantees, Duke University Graduate School, Department of Education, the U.C. Davis publication assistance fund, my mom, and my wife for helping fund my research.

On a more personal – and, hence, important – note: The usual acknowledgment thanks many but then places the blame for any errors or silly analysis on the shoulders of the author; I know better than to do that. Any errors or silly analysis are entirely the fault of my friends, Vince Chhabria, Matt "Sporto" Brown, Amy Krause, and the members of the West Siyeed Fantasy Football league (and occasionally Scott Seaman and Dave Leheny). So much love and thanks to my great "steps" Margaret Chowning and Polly and Sarah Bowser, my wonderful in-laws Dick and Nila Hurley, my phenomenally supportive and smart family Betsey, Irv, and Jessica Scheiner, and, most important, my best reason for getting up in the morning, Melanie Hurley.

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A NOTE ON CONVENTIONS

Throughout this book, I write Japanese personal names according to Japanese convention: family name (surname) followed by given name.