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# The Introduction and Transformation of a Western Political Institution to Japan : Electoral Rules in the House of Representatives

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Since the beginning of the Meiji Era, Japan has introduced things from western civilizations such as the political system, the educational system, and the military system. Japan has modified them so that Japanese could find them convenient and appropriate. However, Japan has been known for its uniqueness because the Japanese way of things (especially the Japanese way of politics) has not necessarily been fully understood. Some even call Japan an “enigma” (Wolferen, 1990). I argue that Japan is as unique as other democracies and it is not an exception. Here, I contend that Japan is not an exception among democratic countries in terms of how political institutions affect the way of politics.

The electoral system is one of the most important political institutions affecting the fortune of political parties. Since Japan's Meiji government first introduced an electoral system in 1889, Japan has changed its electoral system. This paper examines how politicians behave differently under the two latest electoral systems employed in Japanese politics and reviews the pros and cons of Japan's electoral reform of 1994. I also describe the causes and content of the reform from the Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) system to the Mixed Member Majoritarian (MMM) system and the various expectations of the reforms.

## ***1. Single Non-Transferable Vote electoral systems (SNTV)***

### ***1-1. Historical Background***

The Japanese electoral system was first introduced in 1889 by the Meiji government. The first electoral system introduced to Japan was an imitation of the one used in England at that time. Japan's first electoral system had 214 single-member electoral districts and 43 two-member electoral districts. Since voters cast two ballots in the 43 two-member electoral districts, it was almost equivalent to a single-member district electoral system with total seats of 300. Since then, Japan has modified its electoral system to large-member, single-member, medium-member,

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large-member, medium-member district, and the current Mixed Member Majoritarian (MMM) systems as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Japan's Electoral Systems in the House of Representatives

Year	Electoral System	Total number of seats
1889-1898	Single-member district <sup>1)</sup>	300
1902-1917	Large-member district <sup>2)</sup>	376
1920-1924	Single-member district <sup>3)</sup>	464
1928-1937	Medium-member district <sup>4)</sup>	466
1946	Large-member district	.
1947-1993	Medium-member district <sup>5)</sup>	466-511
1996-	MMM	480

After the Second World War, the Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) system was reintroduced to Japan when the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) insisted that another election be held to ratify the new Constitution. Following the order of SCAP, the conservative parties in Japan managed to readopt the SNTV system that had been used since 1925 in Japan<sup>6)</sup> (Kohno 1997, 38-44). Returning to SNTV was a reasonable decision because Japanese larger parties failed to reach an agreement on a new electoral system, but each party found it beneficial for all to establish a system that prevented small parties from wielding their influence.

The Japanese Constitution stipulates that members of the House of Representatives are elected to four-year terms, but these usually end early, as the prime minister may dissolve the chamber and call elections at any time. The first postwar election was held in 1946, where two basic changes were instituted: (1) women were granted the right to vote, enabling all Japanese 20 years old or older to vote in national and local elections, and (2) the Communist Party was legalized. The 1946 lower house election was held under proportional representation (PR) in prefecture-wide districts<sup>7)</sup>. However, this PR system generated a number of new parties, and the Socialist Party performed pretty well.

### 1-2. *How SNTV Functioned*

The number of electoral districts and the overall number of seats in the Lower House have changed over time. In the last election held under the SNTV rules in 1993, 511 Lower House members were elected from 129 electoral districts, which ranged in size from 2 to 6 seats. Each voter cast a single vote for an individual, not a party or party list. The vote was nontransferable; so if candidates received more votes than necessary for victory, their unnecessary votes could not be transferred to

another candidate belonging to the same party.

Actually, this system was much like the single-member district plurality rule employed for legislative elections in the United States, Britain, and Canada, except for one important difference : instead of only the top single vote-getter receiving a seat, the top two to six vote-getters each received a seat in the House of Representatives. How many seats will be gained in each district depends on the number of seats available in a district. For instance, in a 3-seat district, a candidate will win a seat if that candidate comes in third place. A candidate need not be in the first place to be a winner.

The combination of a nontransferable vote with multi-seat districts created a variety of incentives and consequences to which parties and candidates had to respond. If a party sought a parliamentary majority, it had to win at least 256 seats out of 511 seats. This means that the party had to win an average of almost precisely two seats per district (256 seats in 129 districts). It follows that parties needed to nominate an average of at least two candidates per district, because all candidate would not necessarily win a seat. Besides, a voter could cast only one vote, which meant that the candidates from the same party had to compete directly with each other for the pool of the same voters. A candidate's most antagonistic rivals were not members of other parties, but candidates in his own party.

One may wonder how candidates differentiated themselves from other candidates running under the same party label, with the same party platform ? In addition, they were likely to have more or less the same ideology. How did candidates persuade their voters to favor them over their "comrades" ? One plausible answer is that a party's several candidates might have taken different policy positions. For instance, Candidate A might have supported higher military spending whereas Candidate Y favored less. But parties didn't want their candidates competing with each other over policies in front of voters since the fighting between two candidates would have brought voters into total confusion as to the party's policy positions. Intra-party policy battles could occur, especially in primary elections. But the major difference is that once a party's candidate is chosen, people stop the battles so that the party can show a unified front against its homogeneous opponent. The dilemma Japanese politicians faced under SNTV can be equivalent to the situation where the primary and general election campaigns were taking place at the same time.

The LDP solved this vote-division problem by allowing its candidate to create decentralized campaign organizations, called *koenkai*. Using either geographic or professional relationships, individual LDP candidates targeted groups in their districts and specialized in allocating political favors to those groups. Those groups donated money and LDP members used these funds to build up loyal personal

support. The party helped its candidates by allocating pork-barrel projects for which candidates could claim credit and by enforcing a policy-specialization scheme. The party paid special attention so that its two to six candidates within a given district could specialize in different areas of policy making. This is how they could differentiate themselves from each other in the same electoral district. Each individual candidate would thereby have a natural group of supporters within the district. Each group was protected from competing claims by their "comrade" rivals. For instance, one of the co-partisan members would cultivate a farmers group in a particular district, whereas others would cultivate small retailers in the same district (McCubbins and Rosenbluth 1995, 35-55).

The distinctive feature of SNTV is its restrictive rules for campaigning. Most of the rules survived the electoral reform of 1994. Unlike in the U. S., Japanese candidates were not allowed to advertise on television or the radio. The only exception is that they were given two five-minute spots on the government-controlled public broadcasting system. Door-to-door canvassing was prohibited, and candidates had a limited number of newspaper ads. The official campaign period only lasted for 12 days<sup>8)</sup>. It was illegal to do any campaigning outside of that period. The law also limited how much money candidates could spend on their campaign.

All of these restrictions gave an advantage to incumbents at the expense of challengers. That is, under SNTV, it was name recognition and personal relationships with voters that mattered most. In addition, these campaign restrictions made it harder for new comers to establish themselves (Hrebennar 1992, 47-48).

### ***1-3. Mainstream vs. Anti-mainstream Faction***

The LDP was composed of mainstream factions and anti-mainstream factions : the former supported the prime minister and divided up among themselves cabinet and key party posts ; the latter looked for opportunities to replace the prime minister with a candidate of their own. In the early 1970s, the LDP experienced internal conflict (called a "civil war") for the post of prime minister between two major factions : the Tanaka faction headed by Kakuei Tanaka<sup>9)</sup> and the Fukuda faction headed by Takeo Fukuda.

The LDP's response to the Civil War makes identifying the mainstream harder from the 1980s on for two reasons : first, Tanaka switched to a more proportional allocation of goodies and used "backroom" selections of prime ministers when Nakasone, Takeshita, Uno, Kaifu, Miyazawa were chosen by Tanaka. Before Tanaka became the prime minister of Japan, the faction from which the prime minister was selected and the factions supporting the prime minister used to be given all goodies. This means that factions which did not support the prime minister failed to receive

any goodies. Tanaka was determined to replace this system with one in which his faction would always be in the mainstream.

Tanaka never put forward a member of his own faction for the post of party president (de facto prime minister). He did not want to give a chance to someone in his own faction to seize his own authority. His strategy was to leave the top position to someone from another faction, while exercising power over the prime minister and the party through control of the post of party secretary-general and choice of cabinet positions.

In other words, Tanaka changed the previous "mainstream versus anti-mainstream faction" system to the "all mainstream faction" (*shoshuryuha*) system<sup>10)</sup>. It became impossible for anyone to become prime minister without the support of the Tanaka faction and without being willing to give that faction key party and cabinet posts in numbers proportional to the percentage of LDP Diet members that were in the faction. Since the Tanaka faction was the largest faction, it received the most posts. These two reasons make it harder to figure out which factions supported the prime minister and which didn't, making identifying the mainstream (in the sense of the standard definition) harder from the 1980s onwards.

The way the Tanaka faction exerted its power over the governments was by placing one of the faction's senior members in the post of party secretary-general — the most powerful post in the LDP. The secretary-general has the final say on candidate nominations and is in charge of the party's funds, two sources of powers that enable him both to do favors for and to punish party members. Thus, merely identifying the "mainstream faction" in the LDP can be confusing in studying the party nomination process in the LDP because of Tanaka's king making process during the 1980s. Rather, distinguishing the party secretary-general faction from the other major factions within the LDP makes more sense.

Besides the two most important posts in the LDP (the party president and the secretary-general), there are two other important posts : the chairman of the Executive Council (CEC), the chairman of the Public Affairs Research Committee (PARC). Given the importance of these four party posts, these posts were always regarded as the mainstream factions'. Thus, just identifying the factions that get these four posts as the mainstream makes the most sense.

## 2. *Mixed Member Majoritarian (MMM)*

The new electoral rules are called Mixed Member Majoritarian (MMM). This is a hybrid of 300 single-member districts (SMDs)<sup>11)</sup> and 180 proportional representation (PR) districts<sup>12)</sup>. PR districts are divided into 11 regions<sup>13)</sup>. Voters cast two votes : one for a candidate in the single-member district and the other for a party in the regional PR district. In the PR districts, each party shows voters a region-specific list

of candidates. However, since the list is *closed*, voters could not express preferences for one candidate over the other within the same party, which should lessen intra-party competition for the support of voters.

This does not mean that factional competition within a party was eliminated. Although only one candidate runs in SMDs and PR districts have *closed* lists, party members still seek *better* districts and better PR slots. Party leaders still eagerly strive to become the party president.

The new electoral system permits double candidacy : candidates can run in a single-member and in a proportional-representation district. That is, if an SMD candidate who is also put on his party's PR list wins in the single-member district, his name is removed from the party list, enabling the candidates below him on the list to move up the list. If he loses in the single-member district, he will be elected if he is ranked high enough on the party's PR list. Moreover, a party might list multiple candidates running in single-member districts at the same position on its party list. For instance, the LDP might list 10 single-member district candidates for the second position on its regional PR list. If 4 of those 10 candidates are elected in their districts, their names are deleted from the PR party list. The 6 defeated candidates are re-ranked according to how small the percentage difference is between their vote and the vote of the winner in their districts (*sekihairitsu*).

### 3. Electoral Reform

An electoral institution can be thought of as a *product of path dependency* (Kohno 2002, 150). Usually, parties in power do not have incentives to change the existing electoral institution because they do not want to risk losing their hold on power. Many democratic countries have witnessed fewer changes of electoral institutions than changes of regime. On the other hand, parties in power could change the current electoral institution to their advantage<sup>14)</sup>.

The Japanese Diet changed its electoral rules, imposed greater restrictions on political fundraising, and introduced government subsidizing of political parties in 1994. A history of failed attempts to modify the electoral rules dates back to the 1950s. They tried in vain to change the rules in 1956, 1965, and 1973. Why did they fail to make changes at those points in time, and why was such legislation passed on January 29, 1994 ? Let me summarize several explanations for the 1994 electoral reform in the following section.

#### 3-1. Overview of the Explanations for the Electoral Reform in 1994

There are several possible explanations for this remarkable event <sup>15)</sup>. First, numerous campaign finance scandals, beginning with the Recruit affair, would explain the public calls for reform that invited the legislative response. The

frequency of campaign contribution scandals might have created strong public sentiment against the current way of politics. Replacing old rules seemed to become imperative, even among those who had done well under the old rules because even they might have feared a voter backlash if they had not supported reform. However, since scandals have been endemic in Japanese politics, the series of finance-related scandals will not explain why reform passed in 1994 and failed in the past. There must be another reason.

Others argue that political reform was successful in 1994 because the LDP lost power. Actually the reform seems to have been closely associated with the 1993 political earthquake in Japan, which divided the ruling LDP and brought down the government after a vote of non-confidence. Elections were called, and the LDP defenders formed a coalition government with other opposition parties (except for the communist party). The new coalition, led by Morihiro Hosokawa, promised to enact reform legislation by the year's end. However, the coalition government was not only formed and dominated by former LDP politicians but also enacted only after the coalition government struck a compromise with the LDP. Neither the coalition government led by Hosokawa nor previous LDP governments had any numerical advantages in passing the reform bills.

A third explanation is that the political reform in 1994 succeeded because of the personal commitment of Prime Minister Hosokawa. Indeed he staked his career on a pledge to enact political reform legislation, but so did the other previous Prime Ministers, such as Kaifu and Miyazawa. Thus, the personal commitment of a leader does not seem to provide a convincing explanation.

The reform bill consists of the following two major parts. One is reform of fund raising, and the other is the reform of the electoral rules from SNTV to a hybrid system of single-member districts and proportional representation (PR). The reform of fundraising has the following three features : (a) it reduces the fundraising abilities of individual politicians, (b) corporate contributions are scheduled to be banned, and (c) parties come to control money and public financing. The most important change under the new rules is that it is not an individual candidate, but a party, that controls the money.

### **3-2. *Various Expectations***

Multi-member districts (MMDs), in which voters choose more than one representative, are a common institutional feature in modern democracies. MMDs have existed, or still exist, in the British House of Commons (in the 19<sup>th</sup> century), the Indian parliament (in the 1950s), the U. S. Senate, many U. S. state legislatures, and the Japanese House of Representatives (prior to 1994). Candidates elected in MMD systems confront strategic considerations that differ from those faced by

representatives in SMD systems, which will lead to different types of party politics as shown in Figure 1.

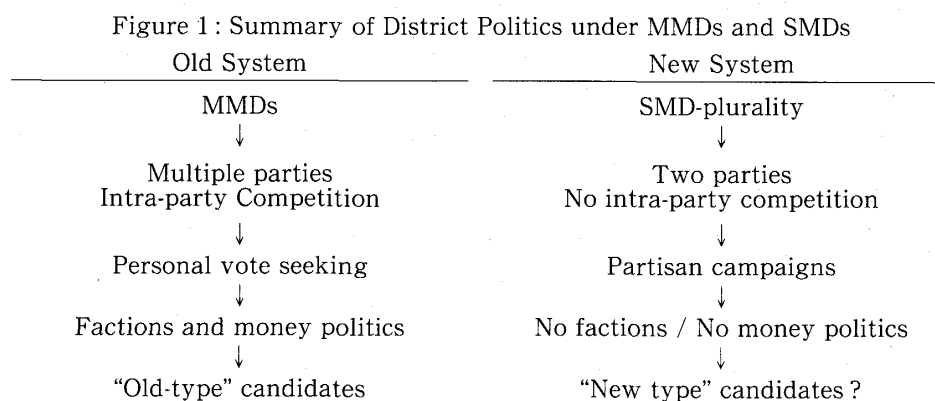


Figure 1 shows how *district politics*<sup>16)</sup> differ between MMD and SMD systems when electoral systems are changed from MMDs to SMDs. These expected differences have produced several predictions about future political outcomes. In general, SNTV will lead to multiple parties with intra-party competition and personal vote seeking, which encourages factional activities and money politics<sup>17)</sup>. On the other hand, SMDs will lead to two parties without intra-party electoral competition and more partisan electoral campaigns. This should lead to a decline in factions and money politics. Paying special attention to the case of institutional change from SNTV (which is one type of MMDs) to MMM in Japan in 1994. Let's take a closer look at various expectations brought about by the institutional change from MMDs to SMDs.

### 3-2-1. End of Intra-Party Competition

First of all, intra-party competition will be eliminated under SMDs. Under SNTV, the existence of multiple candidates from the same party running in each district was supposed to be the major source of factionalism (Hirose 1989, Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993, Nagahisa 1995 ; 1996). Now, since only one candidate from each party runs in each district, intra-party competition among factions should disappear, which should reduce the importance of factions. Instead, the relative importance of parties is expected to increase in the electoral arena since the campaign money necessary to run elections comes not only from factions but also from the party under the new rules<sup>18)</sup>. In addition, the relative importance of parties is consolidated because parties have the final say regarding which candidate should be ranked higher on the party PR list. Parties also make the final decision concerning which candidate should be endorsed in single-member districts.



### 3-2-2. *Two Party Systems*

Second, SMDs will affect the number of parties in the Diet. As Duverger argued, single-member district plurality rules will lead to a two-party system (Duverger, 1964). If Duverger's law is right, then single-member district plurality rules will force the two parties to converge toward the median point where they garner the most votes. They will end up with a two party system in which their policy positions are very similar. On the other hand, proportional representation will lead to a multi-party system. Since the hybrid electoral rules Japan introduced has these two dynamics at the same time, it has not been easy to predict what kind of party systems these hybrid rules will produce<sup>19)</sup>.

### 3-2-3. *Regime Alternation*

Third, an eventual two party system would make regime alternation more likely (Sasaki 1999, 16). If a party in power fails to satisfy voters, then voters could easily let the other party gain power in the next election under single-member district electoral rules. This occurs because the disproportionality of SMD outcomes often manufactures majorities, giving that the largest parties' seat shares are significantly above their vote share. Thus, even a small difference in the *vote share* received by a party could make a large difference in its expected seat share, which results in regime alternation (Sakagami 1995, 72).

On the other hand, there is a completely opposite expectation that the two party system will result in an incumbency advantage, which will mean less regime alternation. Proponents of this view expect that one big party will continue winning from one election to the next under the single-member district system.

### 3-2-4. *Policy-Oriented Electoral Campaign*

Fourth, electoral campaigns under SMDs are expected to become more policy-oriented, which will lead to less emphasis on money politics (*Jiyu-hoso-dan* 1994, 27). The logic behind this is as follows. In the past, candidates needed a smaller vote share to win under SNTV, but they need more than 50% of the vote under the new rules<sup>20)</sup>. Thus, they need to appeal to a wider range of voters by talking more about policies in order to garner more votes than before. In the past, talking about policies during a campaign didn't differentiate LDP candidates running in the same electoral district because they belonged to the same party. But now, talking about policies should make a difference since each candidate is the only candidate each party supports in each district.

On the other hand, others expect that there will be more money-oriented electoral campaigns under SMDs. Bueno de Mesquita argues that legislators in MMDs produce less pork than those in SMDs because more information is revealed

in SMDs than in MMDs (Bueno de Mesquita 2002, 3). Basically, Bueno de Mesquita's claim seems to be in line with "more money-oriented electoral campaigns under SMDs." Admitting that legislators under the Japanese MMD system produced surprisingly large amounts of pork (Hirano n. d.), Bueno de Mesquita argues that pork production is only expected to be high in MMDs when a mitigating institution changes the informational environment to alleviate the team production problem (Bueno de Mesquita 2002, 16). He attributes Japan's higher level of pork under MMDs to the fact that in Japan politicians develop personal constituencies for whom they provide private goods. These personal constituencies serve to reveal additional information about the individual politician, thereby mitigating the team production problem and potentially explaining the variation in legislative outcomes between the US and Japan (Bueno de Mesquita 2002).

If Bueno de Mesquita's claim is true, then the fate of different types of Japanese electoral campaigns depends on whether or not politicians continue to develop personal constituencies (*koenkai*) for whom they provide private goods under SMDs. If politicians in Japan continue to develop personal constituencies under SMDs, then Japan will witness much more money-oriented electoral campaigns because *koenkai* have the same information effect as SMDs. *Koenkai* and SMDs will both increase the incidence of pork barrel politics. On the other hand, if politicians in Japan no longer develop personal constituencies under SMDs, then voters will be provided with less information, leading Japan to hold less money-oriented electoral campaigns than was previously the case.

Others attribute the "more money-oriented electoral campaigns under SMDs" concept to the smaller size of each district under the new rules, which stimulates candidates to buy more votes in order to win, characterized as "dirty campaigning" (*dobuuta senkyo*)<sup>21)</sup>. These authors argue that candidates will be more personal-vote-oriented and spend three times as much on campaigning as before, and that wasted votes yielded by the new electoral rules will decrease the total turnouts (Miyakawa 1996, *Jiyu-hoso-dan* 1994). Some Japanese politicians support this view and others do not. The Asahi Shimbun daily newspaper shows that 10 out of 19 politicians in Saitama Prefecture are doubtful that they conducted a policy-oriented campaign while 13 out of 24 politicians in Kanagawa Prefecture agree that they ran a policy-oriented campaign in the 1996 lower house election. It is reported that 21 out of those 24 members in Kanagawa believe that they will run a policy-oriented campaign in the future (Asahi Shimbun, November 17, 1996).

### 3-2-5. Increasing Incumbency Advantage

Fifth, the incumbency advantage is expected to be weaker in MMDs systems than in SMDs systems (Cox and Morgenstern 1995, Katz 1986, Ashworth and Bueno

de Mesquita. n. d., Bueno de Mesquita 2002). The incumbency advantage will be weaker in MMDs than in SMDs because of the team production problem in MMDs : voters learn less about incumbents in each round. Consequently, voter confidence in the higher skills of an incumbent is mitigated in MMDs and so the incumbency advantage is weakened (Bueno de Mesquita 2000, 3).

Additionally, since the threshold of winning gets higher under SMDs, candidates need to garner more votes to get elected than before by either appealing to a wider range of voters or by buying more votes to win. Incumbents have the upper hand in garnering more votes if they have official resources to do so, which results in giving advantages to incumbents in garnering votes.

Although the incumbency advantage has been the most frequently examined issue in the last 25 years of congressional elections research in the U. S.<sup>22)</sup>, little research exists on the incumbency advantage in Japan. Reed uses a linear regression of votes on incumbency status controlling for the previous vote and partisan swing<sup>23)</sup>, paying special attention to two exceptions necessitated by the Japanese SNTV electoral system. One exception is that the candidate's previous vote in his analysis is eliminated to avoid underestimating the incumbency advantage. The other is introducing an appropriate baseline for comparison by defining a candidate who did not run in the previous election as a "new face," which eliminates previous runners-up and perennial candidates. Reed (1994) concludes that 1) the incumbency advantage has grown between 1958 and 1990 in the Japanese House of Representatives Elections, 2) the vote for new faces has also grown because the total number of candidates has fallen, 3) incumbents have had an increasing advantage over new faces over time, and 4) the incumbency advantage drops and new faces do better in years when scandals occur<sup>24)</sup>.

#### 4. Conclusions

This paper examined the two latest electoral systems that Japan has introduced since 1889, SNTV and MMM. I paid special attention to how each electoral system functions and what we can expect to see in the political arena when SNTV changes to MMM. The biggest difference between SNTV and MMM is the number of winners in each district : only one candidate wins under MMM whereas multiple candidates win under SNTV. This leads to other several expectations, such as the diminishing role of factions within parties, the advent of a two party system, more frequent regime alternation, more policy-oriented electoral campaigns, and increasing incumbency advantage.

Since Japan has witnessed only three Lower House Elections under the new electoral systems, it may be too early for all of these expectations to be actually realized. However, in the most recent lower house election in 2003, some of these

expectations seem to have been realized. These include a weakening of the role of factions within the LDP, especially in the nomination process, a converging toward a two party system, and a more policy-oriented electoral campaign known as a “manifesto campaign.”

[Notes]

- 1) 214 members were elected in 214 single-member electoral districts whereas 86 members were elected in 43 two-member electoral districts.
- 2) 45 prefectures each had district electoral magnitudes ranging from 3 to 12.
- 3) There were two major differences between the single-member district system used between 1889 and 1898 and the one used between 1920 and 1924. One difference was that the former system allowed voters to cast two ballots whereas the latter didn't. The second difference was that the ratio of candidates elected from single-member districts used between 1889 and 1898 was 71%, and the ratio decreased to 64% for the single-member districts used between 1920 and 1924.
- 4) 466 members were elected in 122 electoral districts with varying district magnitudes between 3 and 5. Voter cast one ballot.
- 5) Originally, 466 members were elected in 117 multiple-member districts with varying district magnitudes between 3 and 5. Several redistricting were conducted, so that the total number of the house reached 511 in the 1993 election.
- 6) For a historical account of the choice of SNTV in the prewar years, see Soma, 1986.
- 7) This system was equivalent to a large-member district system where voters cast 2 to 3 ballots depending on each prefectural district magnitudes. The district magnitudes in each of the 53 prefectures varied from 4 to 14.
- 8) This was shortened from 30 days to 25 days in 1952, to 20 days in 1958, 15 days in 1983, 14 days in 1992, and finally to 12 days in 1994.
- 9) When Tanaka became prime minister in July 1972, public-opinion polls ranked him the most popular prime minister in Japanese history. He had grandiose plans to “remodel the Japanese archipelago,” largely by sponsoring massive public-works projects in Japan's underdeveloped regions along the Japan Sea, where Tanaka originally came from. Tanaka was compelled to resign in November 1974 under a barrage of accusations of corrupt dealings involving real-estate and construction companies that hoped to profit from these government projects. A few months later, he was arrested on suspicion of having accepted 500 million yen in bribes from the Lockheed Corporation. Indicted on August 16, 1976, he was convicted, a little more than seven years later, on October 12, 1983, in the Tokyo District Court, and sentenced to four years in jail. He appealed the court's decision. His final appeal to the supreme court was still pending when he died in December 1993. The Lockheed scandal did not force Tanaka out of politics, but rather drove him into the dark recesses of LDP power, where as the self-styled “shadow shogun” (*yami shogun*), he sought to control those who ostensibly controlled the party and the government. Over the next decade, until he was incapacitated by a stroke in 1985, Tanaka was the LDP's undisputed kingmaker. Anyone who wanted to become prime minister needed to have the support of the Tanaka faction. When Yasuhiro Nakasone became prime minister in 1982, the press chided him for being head of a “Tanakasone cabinet.”
- 10) The LDP has been characterized as all mainstream faction (*sou-shuryuha*) since 1970s (Curtis 1999, 82; Sato and Matsuzaki 1986, 67).
- 11) Strictly speaking, SMDs is a part of MMM, but in this paper, I use SMDs and MMM interchangeably.
- 12) The Diet passed the law to reduce the total number of the PR seats from 200 to 180 in 1999.
- 13) These 11 regions and the district magnitudes are as follows (the district magnitude is in parenthesis) : Hokkaido (9), Tohoku (16), Kita-kanto (21), Minami-kanto (23), Tokyo (19), Hokuriku-Shinetsu (13), Tokai (23), Kinki (33), Chugoku (13), Shikoku (7), Kyushu-Okinawa (23).
- 14) Kathleen Bawn (1993) offers an instructive case on altering electoral institutions in Germany after

- the Second World War. She suggests that parties' preferences in changing electoral institutions should not only depend upon seat maximization for parties but also on the political situation each party faces.
- 15) Raymond V. Christensen (1995) offered a nice summary of these explanations. Takeshi Sasaki (ed. 1999) provides additional evidence.
  - 16) Although the new electoral rules are made up of a single-member district tier and proportional representation tier, and these two parts influence party strategies, I will mainly concentrate on the district part in this figure for the sake of the argument.
  - 17) Bueno de Mesquita (2002) argues that differences have been noticed across MMDs systems. Some MMD systems (such as those in the U. S.) seem to be particularly subject to the free-rider problem associated with team production, while others (such as that which existed in Japan as SNTV) appear to lead to a very high level of pork production and constituency service.
  - 18) This is due to Grants for Parties (*seito kofukin seido*) and electoral regulation laws (*seiji shikin kaiseiho*). (*Asahi Shinbun* June 8, 2000).  
In the 2000 HR election, the LDP headquarters gave 300 million yen (equivalent to \$30,000 in U. S. dollars if \$100 equals 100 yen) in cash to each LDP incumbents. It is also reported that the LDP headquarters gave 200 million yen per incumbent to each faction (*Asahi Shinbun* June 8, 2000). In addition to the money they received from the LDP headquarters, each LDP incumbent received campaign money from each faction he belonged to. For instance, the Obuchi faction gave its 58 incumbent members 300 million yen each, and the Eto-Kamei faction gave its 42 members (except those who had previously served as a cabinet member) 200 million yen each (*Yomiuri Shinbun* May 7, 2000).
  - 19) Although little theoretical work has explored the causes of the strategic effects of multi-member districts versus single-member districts, there are a variety of expectations about the party system that the new hybrid electoral rules will bring about. For example, Adam (1996) examines the effect of single-member vs. multi-member districts on the types of parties that will emerge in a standard median-voter framework. As for the case of Japanese politics, Kawato argues that the Japanese party system will converge into a two-party system, and it will be observable in both SMDs and PR (Kawato 1996), while Suzuki expects the opposite (Suzuki 1999). Sato predicts that one party will dominate the whole Diet because SMDs give a substantial advantage to larger parties (Sato 1997). Kishimoto and Kabashima expect that the Japanese party system will become a three party system (Kishimoto and Kabashima 1997).
  - 20) Theoretically, this happens only when the number of candidates will be reduced to 2 in each district. With regard to the number of candidates, using a measure suggested by Laakso and Taagepera (1979), Suzuki reported that the effective number of candidates running in each district in the 1996 HR election is 2.95 (Suzuki 1999).
  - 21) "*Dobuita senkyo*" can be defined in two ways. One means pork-barrel politics and the other means visiting every single voter in a candidate's district. (From a discussion at a panel at the Conference of Japan Electoral Studies, held on March 20, 2000 in Tokyo.)
  - 22) A number of studies examine the incumbency advantage in the U. S. At the federal level, see Alford and Brady (1989) ; Alford and Hibbing (1981) ; Ansolabehere, Brady, and Fiorina (1988) ; Born (1979, 1986) ; Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina (1987) ; Collie (1981) ; Erikson (1971 & 1972) ; Fenno (1978) ; Ferejohn (1977) ; Fiorina (1977) ; Garand and Gross (1984) ; Jacobson (1987) ; Krehbiel and Wright (1983) ; Tufte (1973) and others. At the state level, see Breaux (1990) ; Cox and Mortgensten (1993) ; Jewell and Breaux (1991) ; King (1991 a & 1991 b) ; Niemi, Jackman, and Winsky (1991) ; Weber, Tucker, and Brace (1991).
  - 23) Reed regresses a candidate's vote on a set of dummy variables for each party, and a dummy variable for incumbents. The coefficient for the incumbency variable is an estimate of how many votes an incumbent expects to get simply because he is an incumbent.
  - 24) Four sharp declines are witnessed in 1967 (the Black Mist Scandal), in 1976 (the Lockheed Scandal), in 1983 (Tanaka Kakuei's conviction), and in 1990 (the Recruit Scandal) in the plot between the incumbency advantage and the new face (dis) advantage (Reed 1994, 294).

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