

Book Reviews

Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, New York: Harper Collins, 2000

This book presents an ambitious and complex argument about the political role of one of the most important figures in the history of the twentieth century. Herbert Bix places the Japanese monarchy as an institution at the center of Japan's modern history, where it certainly belongs. He further places a particular individual, the Showa emperor, Hirohito, at the center of political decision making in the tumultuous and tragic decades of the 1920s through the 1940s. The argument that Hirohito as an individual was an actor who made numerous decisions of major consequence is likely to prove more controversial than the well-accepted view that the imperial institution stood at the heart of the prewar political system. A number of scholars in Japan and in the West have presented Hirohito as a relatively passive figurehead manipulated by those around him in all but a very few exceptional moments of political crisis or deadlock (most notably February 1936 and August 1945). Indeed, given the powerful commitment of some scholars to such a view, and the political implications of Bix's argument for both American and Japanese history, I am a bit surprised that (to the best of my knowledge) no critics have yet emerged to challenge Bix's core argument.

If, and when they do, they will face a difficult task, for Bix has assembled an impressive body of evidence to support his major claims. On the whole, I believe they will stand up to close scrutiny and serve as a point of departure and reference for future scholars, including those in Japan when the book is translated. This is not to say that all aspects of the argument and logic of this book are beyond question or debate. Such debate will not, however, undermine what I take to be Bix's two fundamental contentions: first, that Emperor Hirohito was armed with a view of himself as a hybrid monarch, in some respects and contexts holding to a theocratic belief in his absolute position above the constitution, and in some contexts guided by the constitution although not entirely constrained by it (p. 8); and, second, that Hirohito played a role mid way between that of master of the state and puppet, as he intervened consistently with subtle but real impact through his questioning and cajoling of the admirals and generals, court advisors, and civilian bureaucratic ministers who supervised the complex and divided institutions of government.

As he makes clear from the start, Bix builds his case less by unearthing new evidence in the form of smoking-pistol documents long hidden than by assembling evidence that has been

excavated painstakingly over the past several decades by historians in Japan. Bix's singular contributions, not duplicated by any scholar in Japan to my knowledge, are to interrogate such a wide range of materials spanning the emperor's entire life and to analyze his life from his upbringing in the 'teens to his years spent reluctantly on the political margins after World War II.

Readers coming to this book with no prior knowledge of the topic of the war and the emperor (probably a minority) may be surprised in the first instance that powerful voices have argued that Hirohito was a manipulated monarch who bore little direct responsibility for the run-up to war or its conduct and conclusion. But this is because, in large part, political interests on both sides of the Pacific have had a stake in downplaying or covering up the emperor's wartime role. For this reason, Bix is wise to both begin and end the book with an account of how the converging interests of Japan's postwar American occupiers, many key advisors and defenders of the Japanese court, and Hirohito himself produced an 'official' historical narrative that erased the emperor from the center of political action and from legal or even moral responsibility for the war.

Bix's Hirohito emerges as a man moved by a sense of duty to act vigorously, but carefully and pragmatically, guided, but not constrained, by the constitution. He did so in a complex political environment marked by factional competition between key organs of state and within them as well. Often he was pulled or pushed to ratify decisions already produced by those around him, but he sometimes pushed for actions that contradicted the wishes of his advisors, especially during the war. Bix argues persuasively that Hirohito acted consistently in pursuit of certain key goals. Above all, before, during, and after the war he acted with foremost concern to preserve a political order centered on the throne (the *kokutai*). In addition, at least until the war ended, he was fundamentally concerned to enhance and defend Japan's position in the world as an imperial power.

Bix lays out his first central point – that Hirohito was never simply a constitutional monarch but a figure whose position was rooted in a theocratic order that predated and transcended the constitution – in several chapters on his upbringing and education. Inevitably, as Bix recognizes, the evidence is circumstantial. We learn of what Hirohito's tutors told the young prince from the accounts they have left, but we do not have access to Hirohito's own account. Despite this unavoidable limitation, the analysis of Hirohito's sense of his (supra)-constitutional role is convincing.

The second thesis of the book, that Hirohito was a man who acted consistently and consequentially from his strategic perch at the center and top of the political order, is persuasive more often than not. In a number of places, however, Bix pushes beyond what his evidence apparently supports. For one minor example, at the time of the devastating Kanto earthquake (September, 1923) emergency orders were issued in the name of Crown Prince Hirohito imposing martial law. Note the passive voice of this sentence, which reflects my sense that almost certainly these orders were prepared by subordinates and simply signed by Hirohito. Bix, in contrast, uses the active voice: Hirohito 'gained his first experience as an active commander issuing emergency imperial edicts' (p. 140). Given that the normal decision-making process (as Bix notes elsewhere) was one where relevant authorities formulated plans or orders which were then presented to the prince or emperor for ratification where needed, it is important that we are given reasons why we ought to view any particular decision as a case where the prince or emperor played a particularly active role in instigating or questioning and

modifying such a decision. Without such information in this case, it seems more likely than not (though ultimately not knowable with certainty) that the prince here rather got his first major experience of signing off key orders prepared for him by ministers of state. Similarly, at the start of Hirohito's own reign, he issued a number of imperial rescripts. For Bix, this shows that Hirohito 'let the nation know that, in his eyes, the military still enjoyed privileged status'. Again, why imply that Hirohito instigated this message? It seems more likely that his advisors suggested to the emperor that he ought to convey such a message to the nation, and he agreed (p. 172).

Another case where the author seems hasty in attributing agency to the crown prince came in late 1925. Bix makes the important argument that the military at this point actively reinterpreted the concept of the emperor's constitutional 'right of supreme command' (*tosuiken*) to repudiate the idea of civilian control of the military. He notes as well that Army Minister Ugaki gave a 'special imperial lecture' to Hirohito in which he made this point (p. 155). So far, so good. But in the next sentence, we are told that, as a result, Hirohito 'on his own rejected the notion of civilian control of the military.' Perhaps so, but there is no further discussion or citation here suggesting a source for this conclusion. The simple fact that Hirohito heard a lecture advocating this position does suffice to convince us that he embraced it.

One key instance where Bix describes the emperor as an active agent when he may well have been simply ratifying a decision produced by wrangling between military factions and court advisors comes in May 1932. After the assassination of the party politician and Prime Minister, Inukai, a period of intense dispute ensued among top leaders over the choice of a new Prime Minister. Bix tells us that 'ten days following Inukai's assassination, Hirohito bestowed the premiership on elderly Admiral Saito' (p. 255). In a formal sense, this is unarguable, since all prime ministers were appointed by the emperor under the Meiji system. But Bix is here implying more than a passive confirmation of a decision reached by others. Having studied this story in some detail, I do see Hirohito as here signing off a decision made inevitable by the refusal of key military leaders, particularly those in the army, to accept another civilian, political party prime minister.¹ To suggest that Hirohito was an active 'king-maker' here seems a stretch. Bix could have strengthened his case by pulling back at such key points in the narrative to discuss the difficulty of assessing responsibility for a decision (or a non-decision) in the opaque and complex politics of imperial Japan.

Although I would have preferred to see more such discussions, Bix *does* recognize and nicely describe this complexity in at least two places in the book (pp. 177–181, 328–332). Readers should pay close attention to these passages. He describes a contentious and secretive process of the bottom-up (or middle-up) drafting of orders that eventually reach the emperor for approval. The key point is that a subtle form of feedback from the top, from Hirohito, was part of the shaping of these orders. As Bix says, Hirohito 'interacted with his Imperial Headquarters [during the war] through probing questions, admonitions, and careful repetition of his instructions and questions to his chiefs of staff and war ministers' (pp. 330–331). I believe the evidence for the emperor's close and consequential involvement in this process is overwhelming for the war years (1937 onward) and convincing if more ambiguous for the earlier years of his reign.

¹ Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Japan*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, p. 264.

Two crucial issues concerning the dynamics and methods of decision-making that needed further discussion in this book. First, how does one judge acts of omission? If the emperor failed to oppose his advisors or the military leadership in a key instance, and simply ratified a position presented to him (as seems to have happened in May 1932, or at key moments in the unfolding of the Manchuria crisis of 1931–1932), do we judge him responsible for non-action? He failed, that is, to say ‘no, we cannot turn away from party cabinets’ or ‘no, we must not let the Manchurian incident escalate into a major military action.’ Much of the controversy over assessing Hirohito’s war responsibility stems from divided views on this matter. My own opinion is that once Hirohito showed that he was willing and able to intervene with an act of commission in a similar context, it becomes fair enough to judge a non-action as a form of decision for which he bears at least some responsibility. Thus, in 1927–1928, as numerous studies have shown, Hirohito clearly took sides and criticized Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi’s handling of relations with China and with his own military commanders. As a result, Tanaka resigned. Once the emperor had demonstrated this ability and willingness to repudiate a Prime Minister, it seems fair enough to consider his failure to repudiate controversial actions by top leaders in 1931–1932 as, in fact, decisions or responsible acts.

Related, and perhaps even more complicated, is the matter of evaluating what we might call a tension between ‘process’ and ‘substance’ in Hirohito’s approach to matters of domestic order, empire, and war. It is just this tension that gives rise to further controversy in the historiography on the role of the throne. How does one assess a case where the emperor acts by seeking to restrain the military or pacify domestic opponents? Writers who seek to exonerate the emperor from war responsibility stress ‘substance’ and point to these as cases where Hirohito reveals his basically ‘peaceful’ or ‘constitutional’ inclination. Writers such as Bix who see Hirohito as a responsible actor stress ‘process’ over substance. They point to these as cases where – whatever his substantive goal – Hirohito reveals his hands-on inclinations and understanding of his role as activist monarch. A few of the many examples of this sort of behavior include the following:

- In April 1926 Hirohito prompts the government to commute the sentences of political dissidents (p. 160).
- In 1929–1930, in order to renew the treaty with the British and Americans, he clearly signals his support for the treaty wing of the Navy and the Hamaguchi cabinet by favoring the government’s decision to accept lower levels of naval strength than those sought by the naval chief of staffs (pp. 208–210).
- When the Japanese Navy attacked Chinese troops in Shanghai in 1932, Hirohito ordered the leader of the expeditionary force to curtail the action (pp. 250–251, n45 on p. 716). As Bix notes, this act of commission highlights imperial responsibility for acts of omission in allowing the Manchuria takeover of the same months.
- Most famously, Hirohito acted decisively to assert the authority of the cabinet and military high command over rebellious young officers acting in his name, but against his wishes, in the coup attempt of February 1936 (pp. 299–305).

Some explicit discussion of the cross-cutting implications in assessments of these sorts of interventions for the ‘good’ ends of curtailing military acts or supporting treaties with the West would clarified Bix’s argument and the points of contention among historians. As I see it, the evidence supports Bix’s basic argument with an ironic twist. The emperor was an activist

monarch, but his primary goal was always the pragmatic one of protecting the throne. Sometimes this meant seeking to reign in the more adventurous impulses of the military, especially at key moments in the late 1920s through the late 1930s. At other times, especially after the start of the Pacific War, this meant pushing (often against military advice), for more aggressive pursuit of the war.

Bix's treatment of Hirohito's wartime role as commander is very important, mainly because of the powerful evidence that the emperor involved himself on a day-to-day basis in scrutiny of military operations, in contrast to his prior style of indicating his views mainly in times of unusual crisis or deadlock. From the beginning of the war in China in 1937, and even more so after December 1941, Hirohito was constantly advised of the status of military activities, and he came to adopt a consistent (if internally contradictory) position. To wit, the war was unfortunate and it would be best to end it, but it had to be ended on favorable terms. To achieve this, the mantra of 'win big with a quick strike' came to guide Hirohito. He first took this position during the China war, seeing it as the only way to calm the situation without entangling Japan in a war with the Americans or British. He later took a similar stance in the war with the United States, pushing his high command, for example, to launch a larger attack than they wished upon American positions in Bataan (p. 447). Similarly, his queries and responses in daily briefings pushed the military to raise the stakes and keep the battle for Guadalcanal going, even after the field commanders were ready to retreat (pp. 458–459). The overall impression of Hirohito's aggressive pursuit of victory as the war turned against Japan is quite stunning, with top aides writing in their diaries of his exhortations that 'being ready to defend isn't enough. We have to do the attacking' (p. 471).

The chapter on the emperor's role in the diplomacy of surrender likewise makes the point that the emperor was concerned above all to protect the throne and *kokutai*. Hirohito rejected advice from early 1945 from advisors as important as Prince Konoe that he somehow find a way to end the war. Clearly the surrender was delayed because Hirohito and his advisors insisted upon a conditional surrender, at least upon the condition that the imperial institution be allowed to continue. At first glance, one can equally blame the American refusal to budge from its rather unusual demand for 'unconditional' surrender. Reading between the lines, Bix seems to argue further that even if the Americans had signaled flexibility on this key point, the emperor and his men would have viewed this as a sign of weakness. They probably would then have delayed surrender by seeking to win other conditions, such as the retention of the navy and army, or retention of Korea, or a surrender with no allied occupation. I would have been interested to see Bix address this point more explicitly.

The treatment of Hirohito's long postwar reign is relative. The emperor during the occupation years and afterwards clearly chafes at his new constitutional role as mere 'symbol of the state and unity of the people.' He tells Prime Minister Ashida in 1948 to 'do something about the Communist Party' (p. 633). He expresses opinions via unorthodox back channels, unsolicited, to American leaders in 1950 concerning the peace treaty and his uneasiness about article 9 of the constitution. Although he comes across as a basically ineffectual political figure from these years forward, he continues to take it upon himself to indicate political views to responsible leaders. Even in 1982 he tells an aide to relay his opinion on foreign policy to government leaders! He told this aide to 'tell the director [of the Defense Agency]' that Reagan's pressure on Japan raised the likelihood of conflict with the Soviets (681). Such behavior in the twilight of his life highlights the fact that this was the role he had been trained

to play, and had indeed played, throughout his prewar and wartime reign. As an old man – after 36 years in the constitutional role of mere ‘symbol’ – Hirohito was capable of telling an aide to pass on his opinion to the top military man in the land. Decades earlier, how could this same emperor – as a young man in a constitutional role that went far beyond symbolism – not have been more than capable of directly or indirectly indicating to his ministers what he believed they should do? In this way, Bix ends the book by offering an important argument by negative implication in support of this portrayal of the prewar and wartime emperor as an active, responsible monarch.

Andrew Gordon
Harvard University

P. W. Preston, *Understanding Modern Japan: A Political Economy of Development, Culture and Global Power*, London: Sage Publications, 2000.

In this book, P.W. Preston, a professor of political sociology in the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham, explores the historical development experience of Japan in the context of its relations with Asia-Pacific and the wider global system. It uses a classical European approach to social theorizing in an attempt to unravel the complex process of Japan’s ongoing shift to the modern world. Central to this approach seems to be exploring agent’s response to changing circumstances in identifying new pathways to the future in economic, political, social, and cultural spheres. A key conclusion is that Japan’s modernization project has ran through a series of discrete phases, and each phase has generated institutional and cultural residuals which have impacted on subsequent phases.

Chapters 2–4 explore pre-war development and show how Japan industrialized during the nineteenth century and became a great power in the face of elite concern for domestic development and international security. Preston examines the familiar changes which occurred during the Tokugawa period, the reforms of the Meiji period (which he sees as the first key episode in Japan’s modernization), Taisho democratization and depression, and the rise of the military. He places the pursuit of empire into three distinct phases: colonial rule in north-east Asia, broader expansion in Asia with a desire for security, and the rise of the military as a consequence of domestic problems, the war in China and criticism from the West. The desire for development and security conditioned Japan’s pre-war experience. The drive for transformation was dramatic and he identifies a variety of legacies, such as linkages with the Asia-Pacific, the developmental state, under-developed polity, hierarchical society, which have conditioned Japan’s subsequent modernization project.

Chapters 5–6 set Japan’s post-war developmental experience in the light of competing models of the modernist project. He discusses the occupation reforms, recovery and economic growth, and Japan’s emergence as a regional core economy. The Occupation (the second key episode in Japan’s development) brought Japan into the Western sphere. Furthermore, MITI (now, METI) and the LDP were crucial in Japan’s post-war economic development. Preston

then returns to some of his theoretical contentions in the Introduction, and explores Japanese development more broadly. He discusses competing orthodox market-liberal and institutional approaches in the context of the distinctiveness of Japan's modernization. He concludes that classical European approaches suggest a sequence of phases whereby Japan has ordered its ongoing transformation to the modern world. Japan was a late modernizer and late imperialist. The European approach, a clutch of political-economic, social-institutional and cultural-critical structural analyses, which relate to the behaviour of agents, presents us with discrete political cultural projects where elite concerns with national development and regional security are significant.

In chapters 7–9, Preston focusses on Japan and the regional and international political economies. Japan's shift to the modern world has been influenced by its relationship with technologically advanced Western nations and its relations with East Asia. The process of post-war reconstruction involved many continuities with pre-war patterns of economy and society. Japan is now treated as a core economy in the Asia-Pacific region, with Japanese trade, investment and aid as a force for regional integration. Yet, Japan shows few signs of embracing a wider role beyond its economic role in the region. Preston is not optimistic on reform processes throughout the 1990s. While noting change can be abrupt, he sees social change as being typically slow in Japan, and that this is consistent with Japanese historical experience.

Preston covers a long sweep of Japanese history and reveals many arguments and conclusions which are familiar to students of Japan. He relies on secondary sources and, in some places, on a limited number of these sources very heavily. While the book has potential in terms of thinking about Japan through the lens of classical European approaches to social theory, it suffers from analytic and methodological problems as they relate to the empirical analysis of Japan.

The first relates to the broad strategies of analysis used in the classical European approach. It seems to involve an eclectic analysis of economic, political, social, and cultural spheres. Preston identifies a range of issues, such as the role of the state, the nature of social institutions, and the role of culture and images, in thinking about Japan's shift to the modern world. While coverage of these different areas is relevant in any comprehensive understanding of Japan's developmental experience, the book has treated many of these issues superficially and has not identified nor elucidated the inter-relationships between the various political, economic, and social factors. We are left with a discussion where almost everything is covered, but where we have little understanding of the relationships between the various factors which have impinged in Japan's developmental experience.

The second relates to the key contention that seems to arise out of such an approach. Japan's development is categorized into discrete phases, yet Preston argues consistently throughout the book that the legacies of earlier phases mattered in understanding Japan's modernization path. The book would have benefitted from a more careful analysis of the issue of continuity and change. Arguing that various legacies are important implies important continuities in analysing the emergence of modern Japan. But, what does that mean for the notion of discrete phases? Does it mean that these phases are simply used for convenience to break up the examination into manageable bits? Or does it mean that they are analytically less relevant in our analysis of Japanese history more generally? What are the criteria for seeking to distinguish between continuity and change? Suggesting that phases matter and that phases may not matter confuses rather than enlightens.

It is not clear whether this book is intended to offer a new approach to thinking about Japan's modernization process, or whether it is intended to provide an introductory textbook for students of Japan. Whatever the audience, unfortunately, it does not measure up strongly on either count. The book contains arguments already covered in the literature, and it suffers from analytical and methodological problems. It may measure up slightly better in terms of an introductory textbook in the sense that it provides an introduction to a wide range of issues about the emergence of modern Japan. But, in political science, one still cannot go past the classic textbook, which combines historical and structural analysis, by J.A.A. Stockwin, *Governing Japan*, Third Edition (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1999).

S. Hayden Lesbirel
James Cook University

Ellis S. Krauss *Broadcasting Politics in Japan: NHK and Television News*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000

Ellis Krauss starts this fascinating book on Japanese TV news and its impact on the national legitimization of postwar Japan by citing the well-known remarks by Eisaku Sato. At his final press conference in 1972, after serving for the longest term as the Prime Minister, Sato contended, 'Where's the television cameras? Where's NHK? I won't talk to newspaper reporters. I want to talk to the people . . . I hate the biased newspapers!'

Although only 16 years old, I clearly remember watching the scene on NHK, the sole public broadcaster in Japan. It was followed by a strong protest from a representative of the 'reporters' club' (Kisha-Club) in the Prime Minister's office, 'We cannot overlook what you have said. By dividing the press into two, you have accused newspapers, and picked up TV as a good media. Such a biased statement should not be allowed.' Sato countered back, 'All right. Let's fight.' Finally, the newspaper reporters went out. Sato talked alone to TV cameras directly without being interrupted by any reporters. This was broadcasted completely by NHK, and Sato's reputation was seriously damaged.

Sato had assumed that the TV would faithfully depict what he wanted to say. And he believed NHK was the right media to do this. What actually happened was that the TV reflected how he behaved, even including what he did not want revealed.

TV does not faithfully reflect everything. Within its own institutional and historical constraints, TV broadcasts. The long incumbent LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) politicians have been struggling with these constraints, trying to occupy a more advantageous position. In Sato's case, TV unexpectedly showed that he was not only the winner of this game, but also the loser, in the sense that he inadvertently and naively betrayed his over-coercive power to the media, which claimed to be impersonal and neutral.

Focusing on NHK's more than 50-year-old history after the war, Ellis Krauss tries to systematically elucidate these constraints as well as the inner organizational dynamics. His major endeavor is to make it clear, in this context, how NHK contributed to the legitimization

of Japan's postwar state and how politics is intermingled with the process. After an introductory chapter with a 'new institutionalist' approach (chapter 1), the book covers NHK's news product characteristics (chapter 2), the making of flagship news program (chapter 3), the financial and legal status (chapter 4), leadership and management (chapter 5), career paths in the organization and the role of the labor union (chapter 6), the strategic development of new technologies (chapter 7), and market competition as well as changes in news products (chapter 8).

In a typical NHK news, coverage on national bureaucracy and related advisory councils is dominant (chapter 2). Parties, the Prime Minister, cabinet, Diet, and new policies are depicted less. In a comparative context with major news broadcasters in Western countries, this characteristic is very prominent. It does not mean that conflicts are not shown, but 'the state is almost inevitably portrayed as moving to solve or manage such conflict . . . a bureaucratic agency issues a warning to the public about a problem, an advisory council presents a report recommending changes to the law . . . ' (p. 34), and 'these stories are treated in an extremely factual, neutral, and impersonal way' (p. 35).

In chapter 3, by focusing on NHK's flagship news, the '7 p.m. News', Krauss makes it clear how the news is gathered through the mammoth vertical news organization. Its very peculiar news products come from the omnipresence of the 'reporters' club' in virtually every major organization in government and society, and news gathering using their only company, which is also characteristic of Japanese newspapers.

By introducing the history of NHK's reorganization after the war in chapter 4, its organizational constraints are scrutinized. Though NHK is a public broadcaster, in comparative perspective, it could be relatively more independent because of its legal and financial status. It has a history of frequent intervention, however, by the long-term incumbent LDP politicians.

From the viewpoint of leadership change, the stories of the successive presidents of NHK are narrated in chapter 5. Their lively descriptions also show how the politics intervenes into the news process through the top leaders. This is not a simple story, however, i.e. not about the influence of politics in a one way direction, but about leaders in NHK trying to be independent of political forces by utilizing the 'neutrality' slogan or other means such as 'new media' (which is a theme of chapter 7).

NHK news reporters pursue their career paths only in NHK, which is similar to many other private companies, including newspapers in Japan (chapter 6). This system naturally produces an 'organization man'. Even the labor union, the company union, works in this context, although it sometimes played the role of inside watchdog. The union historically contended for NHK's autonomy, but it is an irony that LDP politicians tried to intervene just because of it.

Chapter 7 focuses on NHK's development of well-known technologies from the mid 1960s. It developed DBS (direct broadcasting system using a satellite) as well as HDTV (high-definition television), both of which were strategically integrated into the whole broadcasting system. 'Strategically' here means that NHK tried to get financial independence through the profits from these technologies, which seemed to be the ultimate way to achieve independence from politics. In the 1980s, commercialization using subsidiary companies flourished for the same strategic purpose.

Chapter 8 describes the changes in market value of the NHK news program from both the

inside and the outside. As NHK's traditional '7 p.m. news' has been watched by the old rural conservative audience, the young urban/suburban population were to be covered sooner or later by creating an alternative news source. First came 'NHK NC9' in 1974 and later 'News Station' in 1985 from TV Asahi, a private broadcaster. Both of these news programs invented a new style with 'caster' (anchor) and commentaries as well as entertainment value, especially in the case of 'News Station'.

By summarizing chapters 1 to 8, Krauss writes in chapter 9 that 'NHK's political coverage is unique among the major industrialized democracies' public and commercial broadcasters in that it provides disproportional attention to the national bureaucracy, portraying it as the prime actor engaged in governing, managing conflict, and making societal rules and as an impersonal and active guardian of the interests of the average citizen' (p. 241). This situation lasted for a long time, at least from the 1960s to the 1990s, and contributed to the legitimization of the nation.

Within the organizational and political historical constraints, both NHK and LDP politicians have been trying to find rational ways of finding, modifying and manipulating the 'strategic openings' in institutional channels. Using a combination of informal means, such as interdependent relationships with newsreporters, and formal means, such as budgetary approval by the Diet as well as broadcast license authorization by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, the incumbent LDP was successful in establishing effective influence on NHK. Krauss concludes 'informal influences are more insidious and difficult to combat as they are, by definition, not transparent and thus more difficult to challenge with public or professional opposition. Weaker professional norms and identifications in Japan make a less effective counter against attempts by government to influence NHK' (p. 257).

The book is well organized and well based on extensive research from the early 1980s. It carves many hidden characteristics of Japan's public broadcasting which has been one of the most prominent information backbone of the postwar society.

Despite these contributions, I would like to raise two questions. First, it is not a patent of NHK to air bureaucracy extensively. As is shown in chapter 8, TV Asahi shows almost the same pattern. Then why is this? Did the private broadcaster which launched extensive news coverage three decades later just follow NHK's pattern? Or is it a Japanese political cultural characteristic, which is different from institutional ones?

Second, was NHK really the media of legitimization of the state after the war? Media are well trusted and so is the nation as a democratic system. Politics, however, is seriously distrusted and has been the target of dissatisfaction almost all through the postwar years. Then, was NHK successful only in legitimizing the system, but unsuccessful in doing the same for national politics, as was the case in Prime Minister Sato's last conference? I wonder how this can be possible because the state and national politics are both treated neutrally and impersonally in the same way on NHK.

This book needs to be widely read by academics in political science, mass communication study, Japan study, as well as policymakers who are interested in Japanese politics.

Ken'ichi Ikeda
The University of Tokyo

Dominic Lieven, *Empire: The Russian Empire and Its Rivals*, London: John Murray, 2000

This is a brilliant book, at once packed with information about the Russian empire and its rivals and a profound reflection on the nature of the political forms compatible with modernity. Without a doubt, this is by far the best recent general book on empires available, and it deserves the widest possible readership. It should also be said immediately that the book gives great pleasure: it is elegant, beautifully written, erudite and morally concerned.

The great cognitive power of the book derives from its definition of empire as a state whose historical impact has been large, whose rule tends to be over extensive territories and many ethnicities, whose non-democratic regime may or may not be accepted by its peoples, and whose force often derives from its serving as the carrier of a world religion or civilization. Two considerations at work here deserve highlighting. First, Lieven is well aware – as who could not be, given but a moment's thought? – that socio-economic theories of imperialism derived from 'capitalist empires' are not likely to much advance knowledge given that empires were present before the invention of our modern economic mode of production – together of course with the discovery that capitalism has blossomed once these millstones have been removed from their economies. Accordingly, Lieven is able to expand our view, particularly by paying proper attention to geopolitical forces and to nationalism. It is in relation to this latter force that a second consideration arises. It is simply not the case that empires have always been seen as illegitimate, for all that contemporary views condemn them in this manner. One obvious way of making this point is to recall that many of Jewish background, from Trotsky to Popper, had a sympathy for empire derived from knowledge that the alternative of nationalizing states might well lead to their own demise. In Lieven's case a distinction is drawn between very different types of rule. Tsarist and Soviet leaders made a terrible mistake, on this account, by absorbing Poland – whose sense of national identity was so strong that imperial rule was always likely to be seen as illegitimate domination. In contrast, rule over peasant or nomad populations, whether in Central Asia or the Ukraine, was not always seen as illegitimate – for the peoples concerned initially had no modern, national sense of cultural distinctiveness. One of the central concerns of the book is the nature of the social processes by means of which cultural distinctiveness develops, for it is this change that makes imperial rule generally illegitimate. It can be said immediately that more is involved here than levels of economic development: such Scots as Adam Smith and David Hume were perfectly happy to be but 'North Britons' for all that they were members of a sophisticated, thriving and urban culture.

I cannot resist saying something about the possible source of Lieven's understanding, and to comment upon its character. Biographical notes make it clear that he is descended on his father's side from the Baltic German nobility whose members provided some of the best and most loyal bureaucrats of the Tsarist empire. This has lent Lieven's historical works on this period an insider quality that is fully and marvelously present in this volume. One sometimes feels that advice is still being offered to a Tsar. He certainly speaks the language of realist geopolitics so to speak naturally, almost as of right – and consequently is a superb and reliable guide to what mattered most to the very identity of the entities with which he concerned. Further, he has knowledge and sympathy for the dilemmas facing empires, and is a sharp critic of facile liberal views presuming that all good things go together. Russia contains such diversity that it was and is hard to rule. Empires committed many crimes, but their nationalizing

successor states exacted their own horrible price in the form of vicious ethnic cleansing. Although the author argues that the nation-state very likely must be our political form, he is deeply interested in the viability of political shells larger than nation-states – above all, of the confederal arrangements of the heartland of Europe.

The method of the book seeks to set the Russian experience in the context of its most obvious rivals, that is, the empires of the Ottomans, of the Habsburgs and of Great Britain. Comparisons are two-way: the rivals are used to illuminate the Russian case (to which most attention is given), but Russia equally serves to cast light on the experiences of its rivals. Whilst it really is impossible to summarize the many rich and striking observations that result, not least those concerning Ireland, some hints of the flavor of the inquiry can be offered. Most obviously, a more or less explicit analytic scheme is at work contrasting aristocratic with bureaucratic and direct with indirect rule, with attention also being paid to whether the imperial elite intermarries with or rigidly stands apart from the populations over which it exerts control. Quite as important, however, is the contrast between territorially contiguous and overseas rule, whilst a very great deal is made of demographic factors – that is, the extent to which the metropolitan culture does or does not possess demographic weight within its own empire. All of this allows Lieven to see Russia at the end of the nineteenth century as an empire whose core had the possibility of becoming a nation-state, for all that its most Western dependencies were beyond the stage where national integration was possible. The Ottomans and Habsburgs, in contrast, lacked a ruling people, a *Staatsvolk*, of sufficient size to make this route possible. The account of Austro-Hungary is especially powerful, making much both of the fact that the Austro-Germans were not really, despite their economic and cultural dominance, a ruling group and showing great sympathy for the essentially liberal policy shown to the nationalities. Lieven is surely correct to note that the empire collapsed in the end more as the result of war than of the endless bickering occasioned by the nationalities. Differently put, the central contradiction of empire within this period was between the greater liberalism needed to gain the loyalty of the nationalities and the need to homogenize and centralize in order to compete in a highly charged geopolitical milieu.

I am enormously grateful for the sheer amount of information contained in this book, and further agree that no general theory of empire is possible. Nonetheless, I do find myself to be a social scientist when confronted with rather too many declarations by the historian that he is suspicious of generalization. One would like his ambivalences discussed openly. This is particularly true of his attitude towards nationalism. He rightly draws attention, as noted, to the level of self-consciousness in a nation, but beyond that wobbles on a key issue. At times he seems to echo Gellner in arguing in socio-economic terms to the effect that such consciousness is the inevitable result of industrialization/modernization. There is undoubted truth to the fact that it is very difficult indeed for a regime to incorporate any sizeable newly literate but previously socially disadvantaged group without nationalist demands being made. This is above all true of developing countries in which the spoils of state employment – in Sri Lanka 50% of employment was in the public sector – are so very vital. But on other occasions he seems to suggest that national awakening might have been avoided, or at least limited to a pre-secessionist stage. More consistent granting of voice might have resulted in greater loyalty. Lieven is particularly interesting in this regard about the Ukraine, noting that imperial attempts at repression merely politicised. Such policy was probably never going to be successful given the fact that the Ukrainians were split between empires, with those in Galicia being

notably developed in socio-economic terms. Furthermore, Ukrainians regarded Germans and Poles as greater enemies, at least until 1945, making them natural allies of Russia. So in this case mistaken policy seems to matter: different political choices might have created a nation as loyal as Scotland or Finland. Of course, no empire managed the transition towards a more liberal form, the practical meaning of which in reality would have been that of a constitutional monarchy, and this raises a second consideration. Lieven discusses several dilemmas or characteristic weaknesses of empires, most notably geopolitical overstretch, economic failure and limited state capacity – all in addition to the challenge posed by national awakenings. These factors are often interrelated, but one would nonetheless like some attempt – not least for the different cases discussed – to establish some weighting between them. In the case of the Soviet Union, for example, the nationalities seem to me to have occupied political space made available for wholly different reasons.

Let me conclude by noting that the book has riches that go beyond the analysis of the key cases. An early chapter is extremely interesting on Indonesia, India and China – as well as containing a wholly justified discussion of the American Civil War. A long last chapter discusses what happens after empire. Lieven is particularly good on contemporary Russia. His thoughts here follow from a chapter devoted to the Soviet Union that complements his much longer discussion of late Tsarism. He fears that contemporary Russia might get the worst of all worlds, gaining rulers more like Mobuto than Pinochet. Still, he cannot quite believe this, not least as the rich tradition of a high culture and a great state at least lend material from which it must surely be possible to ‘invent’ some new, non-imperial sense of a national identity. Nobody has described the situation better, and commentators and politicians should read these pages immediately. But their topicality should not hide the fact that the core of this book is so to speak timeless, a treasure for many years to come.

John A. Hall
McGill University

Samuel Merrill III and Bernard Grofman, *A Unified Theory of Voting: Directional and Proximity Spatial Models*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

This book proposes a model of voting that combines different elements of previous spatial models anchored in the rational choice paradigm. The new model aims to explain both the behavior of voters and the strategy of political parties and candidates.

The authors of the book begin by distinguishing three elements that are key in determining the voters’ decisions in issue voting, namely proximity, direction and intensity. Proximity is the distance along some issue/policy space between the voter’s ideal point and the candidate’s position. Direction refers to the direction of movement from a neutral or status quo point from which the voter is expected to evaluate policy change. Intensity means the overall intensities of both voter’s and candidate’s preferences for certain issues. The authors reexamine different models currently available in the literature in accordance with the varying combination of these elements. They reconceptualize Anthony Downs’s original spatial model

as “pure proximity model,” Steven Matthew’s directional model as “pure directional model,” and Rabinowitz-Macdonald’s (R-M) model as a model that combines direction and intensity components. After comparing voters’ utility functions assumed in each of these existing models, the authors present their own “unified” model, whose utility function is defined as follows:

$$U(V, C) = 2(1 - \beta) \frac{V \cdot C}{\|V\| \|C\|} [\|V\| \|C\|]^q - \beta \|V - C\|^2$$

The terms “V” and “C” above are vectors that represent voters’ and candidates’ positions respectively. The term “q” ($0 \leq q \leq 1$) is a parameter for intensity. Thus, the condition $q = 0$ means that intensity is irrelevant, in which case (if $\beta = 0$) the above equation becomes identical with Mathews’ pure directional model. If $q = 1$ (if $\beta = 0$), on the other hand, the equation can be read as R-M model. The term “ β ” ($0 \leq \beta \leq 1$), meanwhile, is a parameter that reflects the qualifying effect of the proximity element against directional models, i.e. “proximity constraint.” Hence, under the condition $\beta = 1$, the above equation becomes identical with Downsian pure proximity model. Having thus laid out the structure of their unified model, the authors claim that they can estimate relative salience of proximity, direction and intensity in light of the available data of actual voting records.

The authors further explore the relationship between the R-M model with proximity constraint and Grofman’s own “discounting model” which includes the discounting factor “d.” This factor reflects the voter’s judgement about the candidate’s ability to resist policy compromises once elected in office. The authors show that the two models predict the same voting decisions, if the discounting factor “d” in Grofman’s model is reinterpreted as β above and the status quo as the neutral point. All these efforts, of course, are to establish that their new model truly *unifies* various earlier models of issues voting.

Throughout their attempts at predicting voting decisions, the authors show that they are appropriately sensitive to some of the complex methodological problems that the previous research in this field encountered. One of these problems has to do with how to define the position of parties (candidates). In the previous studies, it has been shown that the predictive power of proximity models tends to increase if parties’ positions are defined as their locations perceived by individual voters. If parties’ positions are defined as the average of these voters’ perceptions, on the other hand, the R-M model improves its performance. While for the most part the authors use the voters’ individual perceptions to locate parties’ positions, they often make an effort of replicating the estimations based on the voters’ average perception, an effort that clearly strengthens their empirical claims. Another troublesome problem relates to the choice of utility functions used for estimating proximity models, namely between city-block, linear or quadratic forms. In presenting their findings, for the most part, the authors adopt the quadratic function, which is most widely used in the literature. Again, though, the authors are thorough in supplementing analyses using the linear function when necessary.

Based on such attentive specifications, the authors perform several empirical investigations into voting decisions under different party systems. In the United States where the electorate faces voting choices between two major parties, they find that the effects of proximity and direction are equally important regardless of whether voters are evaluating incumbents or challengers, although the effect of intensity is only relevant for evaluating challengers. In the cases of France and Norway where the electorate face multiple partisan choices, they find that

all three components are important, a finding interpreted by the authors as one reason why “moderately extreme” parties have been successful in these countries.

In the latter half of the book, the authors turn to the parties’ and candidates’ strategy under the above pattern of voters’ behavior, and explore the nature of equilibria thereof. In their theoretical discussion, the authors draw an intriguing result regarding both the two-party and multiparty competitions. As for the two-party context, it is shown that the voters’ “discounting” not only disrupts the policy convergence of the two parties toward the median voter’s position, but it also leads to the possibility that one of these two parties will continue to prevail electorally. In the multiparty competition context, according to the authors, the party positions at the equilibrium tend to be divergent even under one dimensional proximity model especially if votes’ choice is assumed to be determined in part by their partisan identification.

The most significant contribution of this book is that it successfully derives explanations for macroscopic phenomenon, such as the nature of party system and government alternations, based on the proximity, directional and mixed models of micro-level voting behavior. Such a bold and entrepreneurial exercise inevitably leaves some questions behind, including one regarding whether it is justifiable, from the cognitive-psychology standpoint, to treat the spatial dimension according to which proximity is measured as the same dimension with which to evaluate direction and intensity. Of course, this is one of many queries that can be dealt with empirically in future studies.

The insights presented in this book are particularly relevant in thinking about countries like Japan where there has been a long one-party dominance by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), persistent status quo positions seem to exist in most issues and the partisan voting is relatively strong. If the Japanese voters are voting according to the mixed model with an element of partisan voting, the Japanese case perhaps represents the pattern, predicted by the authors, in which parties neither converge into the median voter’s position nor diverge across extreme positions. In Japan, opposition parties tend to take extreme positions when new issues arise, but voters seem to be “discounting” their positions. The LDP, on the other hand, may be beneficiaries of voters’ discounting, as some of its extreme campaign promises (e.g. tax increases and constitutional revision) are water-downed in voters’ cognitive process. In the present Grofman model, the discounting factor “*d*” is set to be identical across parties. It would be an interesting and productive extension of this model to assume that voters assign varying “*ds*” to different parties.

The authors close the book with the anticipation of publishing a “follow-up volume” in which party identification and other social-psychological and sociological variables used in the more traditional literature of voting behavior will be incorporated to refine their model. Needless to say, such an endeavor will make their model even more “unified” than the model already presented in this book.

Hiroshi Hirano
Gakushuin University
(translated by Masaru Kohno)