



Japan's Backroom Politics: Factions in a Multiparty Age (New Studies in Modern Japan)

Watanabe Tsuneo

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Japan's Backroom Politics is the translation of a classic study of the rough and tumble of Japanese politics and conservative party factions in the first two decades of postwar Japan. The original book, published in 1967, was written by the preeminent political writer at the time, Watanabe Tsuneo, who later became the controversial owner of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*. The book was written when a generational change was occurring in Japanese politics after several of the early party leaders had passed away, including his political mentor, Ono Bamboku. Comprising ten chapters, including a comprehensive preface on the author, *Japan's Backroom Politics* discusses in great detail the history of and personalities within the near-dozen factions and sub-factions that existed at the time. He introduces the resiliency of factions within the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, noting the role of money, influence, party presidency, and the chance at the premiership, among other factors, which subsequent commentators and scholars have elaborated on. Moreover, using extensive data and a penetrating analysis, Watanabe provides a historical as well as an international comparison of Japanese factions, making predictions about the future of Japanese politics.

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