

Lautensach's book being a full-scale regional geography, its translation and editing demanded a lot more than just a good command of English and a thorough knowledge of the geography, in the more narrow sense of the term, of Korea. The Deges, it appears, have measured up to the task in almost all respects. Next to the material achievements themselves the reader will also appreciate their "self-effacing" motivation. I would like to add two remarks, none of which, however, will belittle the Deges' achievements. The first one has to do with the transcription of Korean terms and names, place-names in particular. The editors decided to follow the system of transcription that was created by the South Korean government in 1984. This they appear to have done in order to make the renderings in the text consistent with those on the maps, which apparently had to be drawn in South Korea and therefore were subjected to the South Korean transcription rules. The South Korean system of transcription is not identical with the one that has long been internationally used by the Korean studies community, viz., the system of McCune/Reischauer. Readers familiar with the latter will therefore sometimes feel bewildered by the renderings in the book, but the Deges can scarcely be held to blame for this. My second remark refers to the map that is found in the pocket attached to the back cover of the book. The map does not show the correct provincial subdivision of the present-day North Korean state. One wonders whether the map was drawn in that way in order to make it consistent with the administrative geography of Korea as it was at the time the book was written. If so, an editorial remark clarifying the point would have been helpful, lest the reader who wants to be informed on the provinces of the DPRK be misled.

Dieter Eikemeier

Yung H. Park: *Bureaucrats and Ministers in Contemporary Japanese Government.* (Japan Research Monograph 8). Berkeley, CA: University of California, Institute of East Asian Studies, 1986. 192 pages, \$ 15.00.

Park has written an important - and much needed - contribution to the analysis of Japan's power structure. For too long Japanese political scientists have recycled the notion of bureaucratic omnipotence in Japan's power coalition of government bureaucracy, organized business interests (*zaikai* etc.) and the ruling LDP. Some academics, to be sure, have picked *zaikai* (the confederate

business elite) as the true wielder of power, but very few have spotted the obvious: that 45 years of continued rule might have taught LDP factional chieftains and their lieutenants how to use their power effectively and efficiently to their own ends (also when in charge of a ministry).

The 'bureaucratic dominance' argument traditionally runs as follows: party politicians as ministers are usually inexperienced, ill-informed, in office only for 10/12 months, with no political assistants in the ministry, and too busy with Diet, faction and constituency business to be able to manage their ministries properly. Hence they need to rely on the drafts prepared by their ministry officials and actually rubberstamp the intrabureaucratic compromise deals worked out by their subordinates.

However, through his research (interviews with senior Dietmen, former ministers, senior officials, as well as surveys of decision making analyses) Park found fairly convincing evidence for a different and more differentiated ministerial power structure. As Japan's political elite (i.e. the LDP factions) consolidated its grip on power from 1955, ministerial appointments became the reward not only for decade-long faithful service to party and faction, but also for political expertise and experience in the respective field of policy specialization. All ministries have their equivalent in policy divisions in LDP headquarters, headed by a junior Dietman. The LDP's Political Affairs Research Committee (PARC) likewise has subcommittees, composed of Dietmen (*zoku*), which specialize in and follow each ministry's work. Senior officials are regularly 'invited' to explain their policies and programmes before these committees in which their former and prospective ministers also sit. Over the years senior politicians have in fact become intimately familiar with their specialist policy field (often more so than the bureaucrats who rotate every two years), as well as with 'their' ministry's operations and most senior and middle level officials involved.

This expertise aids their performance and standing when appointed minister. In fact, Park quotes numerous examples of quite arbitrary personnel decisions taken by the minister himself and insists that only senior officials acceptable to him are promoted to bureau chief and administrative vice-minister positions.

In response, bureaucratic decision making has moved up the hierarchical scale, as senior officers are better informed about the preferences of their political masters. The famous *ringisei* project, drafted and negotiated by a desk officer proper, and circulating upwards – hankos attached for mutual approval – is left to purely routine business. For all other more substantial or political issues, decisions are made first at political or senior administrative level, with

a *ringisei* procedure following as a pure formality. Ministers themselves (including the 'bureaucrats-turned-politicians') know that their tenure in the ministry will be short and that their performance - both professionally and in fulfilling factional interests - will reflect on future ministerial postings and political career prospects. Hence they are likely to put party, factional and important interest group views above those of their subordinate bureaucrats. According to Park, some ministries, esp. those commanding large public works budgets or important licensing powers (like the Ministries of Transport, Construction, Post, and Agriculture) are virtually 'colonized' by the LDP and its mainstream factions. In fact, following Park's evidence, a close union between two branches of the constitutional triple division of power appears to have taken place in Japan: executive and legislature seem almost merged (which would not come as a surprise in any country which has not seen its ruling party voted out of office in more than 40 years).

Curiously, however, organized business interests are only seen by Park as supportive of the LDP's dominance over the bureaucracy. In his view business leaders having turned 'salaryman-managers' dislike political risks and shy away from the limelight. They rather distribute their more or less compulsory contributions uniformly among LDP factions, and hence forego the opportunity to exercise specific political influence.

Still, in this reviewer's opinion, organized business' track record for achieving their stated objectives is surprisingly strong - as is their ability to form an 'understanding' with 'their' ministry in charge to shape policies of little imminent concern to busy politicians.

The basic weakness of Park's monograph relates to the fact that his conclusions essentially exceed his scope of empirical analysis, which is largely limited to the Jiminto (LDP) - bureaucracy relationship: the full power triangle (perhaps it would be appropriate to call it a coalition of sorts) including organized business is by no means analyzed in the same depth.

Yet, Park has written a well researched book, abundant in empirical references, on an important subject matter - of interest not only to contemporary Japanologists, but to any political scientist wishing to investigate the effects of prolonged one party rule in a pluralist democracy. While tending to overstate his case, the empirical evidence presented remains solid and plausible (as far as the relations between senior LDP MPs - including ministers - and 'their' ministry are concerned). Initially reading is a truly fascinating enterprise, yet, after ca. page 100 frequent repetitions of the author's basic thesis begin to become tiresome and indicative of deficient outlining. Also, frequent printing

errors and the lack of indexes and of a bibliography are further signs of hasty editing.

Albrecht Rothacher

Edwin O. Reischauer: *My Life between Japan and America*. Tokyo: John Weatherhill, 1986. 367 pages, Y 1500 (Far Eastern edition)

The memoirs of E.O. Reischauer, the great old man of North America's Japanese Studies are bound to stir interest. It is not only the fact that he can write - lucidly, intelligently and amusingly (when appropriate) - but also the fact that he has lived a successful and perceptive full life both as an academic and as a political actor in most senior positions dealing as an American with Japan. In political terms, his life and personal experiences include war service in the US army as well as service as ambassador in Tokyo as the representative of Japan's now foremost ally. As a Japanologist his life and personal orientation have seen the shift from esoteric research on Sino-Japanese classics to the systematic study and interpretation of modern Japanese society.

Reischauer was born in Tokyo in 1910. He grew up there, went to the States in 1927 for undergraduate studies at Oberlin College (Ohio), followed in 1930 by further studies at Harvard for a specialization in Far Eastern Studies which, however, did not really exist there either. In 1935 he returned to Japan, married, and as a young postgraduate lived the prewar Japanese way of life in Kyoto (researching on medieval Japanese history and literature). After travels to Korea and China he returned to Harvard as a lowly instructor in 1938. After brief service with the State Department's Far Eastern Division, he served from 1942 with the US army, helping to crack and decipher Japan's military codes and teaching Japanese to US officers. After the war Reischauer briefly joined the State Department again to work on US postwar planning in Japan and Korea, only to return to Harvard in 1946. Promoted full professor in 1950, he did not operate as academic empire-builder in his "Golden Years" at Harvard, but rather as "intellectual loner, preferring to work by himself" (p. 115). Yet even then a clear shift to contemporary Japanese issues and normative political prescriptions for bilateral relations becomes evident in his writings.

One of his publications, a *Foreign Policy* article entitled "The Broken Dialogue" dealing with Japanese-US mutual misperceptions in the aftermath of the 1960 Ampo turmoil in Japan, brought him to the attention of the incoming Kennedy administration's headhunters looking for "the best and the brightest"