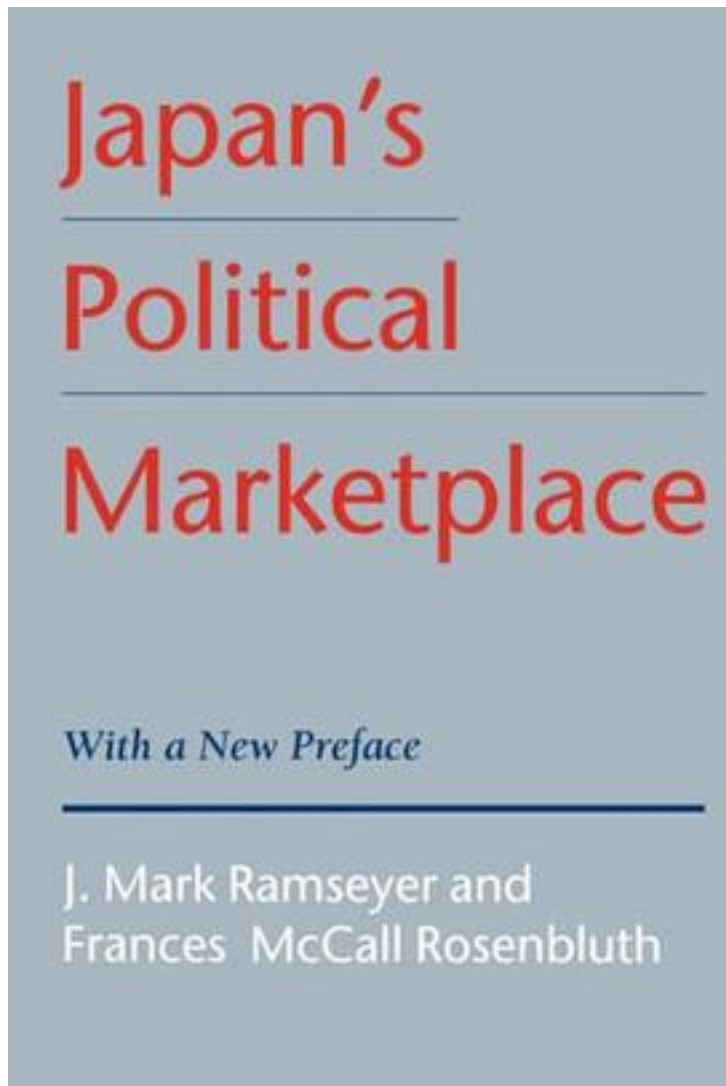


# Japan's Political Marketplace



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When discussing Japanese politics or the Japanese legal system, many scholars point to the peculiarities of the country's culture - its need for consensus, its rejection of individualism, its Confucian fascination with loyalty. Other scholars simply invent new theories ad hoc to explain what they see. But is Japan really so different that general social scientific theories don't apply? Ramseyer and Rosenbluth don't think so, and in this book they show how rational-choice theory can be applied to Japanese politics, with telling results. Contrary to general assumptions, the authors argue that the institutional framework of government - the rules of the game among political players - decisively shapes the character of political competition and incentives in Japan. They show how players in this competition adapt their organizations to the existing framework and at the same time try to manipulate it to their own advantage. The ruling Liberal Democratic Party is a case in point. In a detailed analysis, we see the LDP working within Japanese electoral rules to maximize its success with voters, and within constitutional constraints to enforce its policies on bureaucrats and judges. Surprisingly, the authors find that Liberal Democratic Party backbenchers effectively control factional and party bosses; that the LDP collectively keeps bureaucratic action closely in line with its preferences; and that the Japanese judiciary is also an agent of the legislative majority. Using the concept of principal and agent, Ramseyer and Rosenbluth construct a persuasive account of political relationships in Japan. In doing so, they demonstrate that political considerations and institutional arrangements reign in what, to most of the world, looks like an independently powerful bureaucratic state. Their book aims to influence our understanding of the Japanese political order and legal system. As a rational-choice analysis of an entire national political system, it should also affect the way we approach comparative politics and comparative law more generally.

#### 作者介绍:

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Saito先生的先生所著之书。

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河野教授的Reading Seminar上，此书是指定阅读的书目，而且几乎要读完全书。不过，坦率地说，在日本政治研究里，很少有这样可以被称为Bible类型的大作。在此之后，日本政治学取得了长足的进步，尤其就经验研究上来说，但是优质的理论牵引的突破性的作品，却迄今仍旧罕见。从某种程度上来说，在日本学习了一年多的现在，也真心少见这样思路异常清晰，惜墨如金却又真真见血的好作。此书无论写作风格，理论素养还是所勾勒出的若干假说，都非常值得反复咀嚼。自己第一次阅读此书的日文版的时候，两天就读完了，然而也并没有留下什么深刻的印象。现在再重新阅读的时候，能够学到的真心仍旧有很多很多

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