

# Kōchikai of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party and Its Evolution After the Cold War\*

**Karol Zakowski**

(University of Lodz, Poland)

— <CONTENTS> —

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| I . Introduction  | IV . Internal Causes of the Fading of<br>Kōchikai |
| II . The “Yoshida Doctrine” and the<br>“Conservative Mainstream”<br>until the 1990s | V . Kochikai at Present                           |
| III . Kochikai at a Crossroads:<br>The End of the Cold War                          | VI . Conclusion                                   |

· **Key words** : Liberal Democratic Party, factionalism, conservative mainstream, low-profile policy, Yoshida doctrine, Cold War

**[ABSTRACT]**

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) held power in Japan almost unceasingly in the years 1955-2009. It has been widely known as a federation of factions rather than a homogeneous organization. One of the most important among its intra-party groups was Kōchikai, a faction created in 1957 by the future Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato. By adhering to a so-called “Yoshida doctrine,” the politicians of Kōchikai were able to shape a “conservative mainstream” in the party. During the Cold War they constituted a moderate group within the LDP, opposing remilitarization of Japan and constitutional revision. It was as late as the

---

\*An earlier version of this paper was presented at the International Convention of Asia Scholars 6 in Daejeon in August 2009. The author is grateful to the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education for financial support.

1990s that their political beliefs had to face new challenges and the power of Kōchikai started to fade. This process was caused not only by the evolution of geopolitical position of Japan, but also by intra-party factors, such as a general weakening of LDP factions. In September 2009 one of the most influential politicians of Kōchikai, Tanigaki Sadakazu, was elected as the new party leader after a disastrous defeat of the LDP in parliamentary elections one month earlier. Today's Kōchikai, however, does not have as clear ideological leaning as the faction of Ikeda Hayato. In the paper I examine the evolution of Kōchikai's ideology through the succeeding generations of factional bosses, with an emphasis put on the changes after the end of the Cold War.

## I . Introduction

There exists no easy linkage between factional politics and decision making mechanisms in the LDP. Factions fought wars and entered into temporary alliances competing for the post of party leader. The groups which supported the winner gained the strongest influence in the government. The prevalence of right or left wing factions in intra-party mainstreams indirectly affected Japan's policy. For decades Kōchikai constituted "the left lung" of the LDP, and as one of the biggest groups it often participated in intra-party mainstreams.<sup>1)</sup> The moderate stance of Kōchikai to a certain degree stabilized Japan's postwar policy. The end of Cold War showed however that intra-party factors alone cannot explain the changes in Japanese diplomatic line. In fact, it was the evolution of international situation that forced Kōchikai to gradually transform its ideological leaning.

The thesis that LDP factions held their individual ideologies is rather

---

1) During the Cold War Kochikai was clearly outside the intra-party mainstream only in the years 1957-1959, 1967-1970 and 1974-1976. See: Fukunaga Fumio, "Habatsu Kozo kara Mita Kochikai : Soshiki, Jjinteki Kosei, Rikurutomento" [Kochikai from the Perspective of Faction's Structure: Organization, Personal Composition, Recruitment], *Dokkyo Hogaku* 67 (November 2005), pp. 82-83; Kitaoka Shin'ichi, *Jiminto : Seikento no 38 nen [LDP: 38 years of the Ruling Party]* (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Shinsha, 2008), pp. 334-336.

controversial. Factions were established on the basis of interpersonal relations, not ideology.<sup>2)</sup> To become party leader, influential politicians, patrons (*oyabun*), needed the support of clients (*kobun*), younger Diet members who in return sought protection for successful political careers. By being loyal to their faction bosses, politicians gained financial support, invaluable assistance in electoral campaigns and prospects for promotion in the party hierarchy. During the period of LDP hegemony it was a custom that to maintain intra-party balance a newly elected prime minister distributed party and governmental posts according to the recommendations from faction leaders.<sup>3)</sup> Without factional affiliation it was much more difficult to advance in political rank. This symbiosis between faction bosses and less experienced politicians constituted a cornerstone of factional solidarity. Usually it was political interest, not political beliefs, that made politicians join one group or another.

On the other hand, although factional affiliation generally was not based on ideological leaning, separate groups still developed some distinctive ideological cues.<sup>4)</sup> Each faction was originally formed by a charismatic politician and it is natural that his political convictions were internalized by his followers, or at least by a majority of them. The ties of loyalty and gratitude to the faction boss, or perhaps even more the will to become his successor, impelled faction members to share his political views. Former LDP leader Kōno Yōhei admits that the ideological inclination of each faction was inherited by succeeding leaders of the group, but it became less and less evident with the changes of generations.<sup>5)</sup> Moreover, the reform of electoral system in 1994 caused weakening of factional solidarity, which even further blurred differences in ideological cues of separate groups.

The same process applied to Kōchikai, a powerful faction which constituted a part of a so-called “conservative mainstream.” Originally Kōchikai used to

---

2) Yamamoto Shichihei, *Habatsu. Naze so Naru no ka* [*Factions. Why Is It That Way?*] (Tokyo: Nansosha, 1985), pp. 101-103; Kong Uisik, *Ilbon Hyeondae Jeongchi-ui Ihae* [*Comprehension of the Contemporary Japanese Politics*] (Busan: Sejong Chulpansa, 2003), pp. 137-138.

3) Iseri Hirofumi, *Habatsu Saihensei. Jiminto Seiji no Omote to Ura* [*Reorganization of Factions. Inside and Outside of the LDP Politics*] (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1988), pp. 124-129; Uchida Kenzo, *Habatsu* [*Factions*] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1983), pp. 134-139.

4) Fukunaga Fumio (2005), *op. cit.*, pp. 112-114.

5) Interview with Kono Yohei, Residence of the Speaker of House of Representatives, Tokyo, 13 March 2009.

be a group characterized by a moderate realist policy and adherence to the “Yoshida doctrine,” but at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century it became a less coherent faction, only partially preserving its original political stance. The history of Kōchikai to a certain degree reflects the evolution of Japan’s postwar policy. The end of Cold War and the changes in international situation in the 1990s created a less favorable environment for a low-profile policy, so far represented by Kōchikai leaders.

## II. The “Yoshida Doctrine” and the “Conservative Mainstream” until the 1990s

There are many interpretations of the term “conservative mainstream” (*hoshu honryū*) in the LDP. According to one of the most popular definitions it signifies a group of the followers of Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru. Yoshida came to power rather unexpectedly. When Hatoyama Ichiro’s Liberal Party (Jiyūtō) won in the first postwar elections in 1946, many of the most prominent politicians of this party were purged from public service. Hatoyama had no choice but to ask Foreign Minister Yoshida Shigeru to become prime minister. One of the conditions was that Yoshida would cede the leadership of the party as soon as Hatoyama was allowed to return to the politics.<sup>6)</sup> The purge was lifted in the beginning of the 1950s, but it was as late as 1954 that Hatoyama managed to become prime minister, overturning Yoshida’s government. When Ogata Taketora’s Liberal Party<sup>7)</sup> and Hatoyama’s Japan Democratic Party (Nihon Minshūtō) merged in 1955 forming the LDP, it was Hatoyama’s group that prevailed. On the other hand, during his long premiership Yoshida had brought to his party many high-ranked former bureaucrats, who would eventually form the “conservative mainstream,” a so-called “Yoshida school” in the LDP.<sup>8)</sup>

Yoshida’s political stance was to focus on economic development, leaving the region’s military defense to the U.S. Army. His approach to diplomacy

---

6) Hatoyama Ichiro, *Hatoyama Ichiro Kaikoroku* [*Memoirs of Hatoyama Ichiro*] (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjo Shinsha, 1957), p. 55.

7) Ogata Taketora succeeded Yoshida as the leader of the Liberal Party in 1954.

8) Wang Zhensuo, *Zhanhou Riben Zhengdang Zhengzhi* [*The Party Politics of Postwar Japan*] (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 2004), p. 74.

and security policy was very realistic. Yoshida knew that Japan, which suffered severe damage during World War II, could not afford an early remilitarization. He perceived Article 9 of Constitution, prohibiting Japan from possessing any military power, as the best guarantee that Japan would not bend to American pressure and would not participate actively in the Cold War arms race. On the other hand, Yoshida did not want his policy to become a permanent doctrine. In the 1960s he confirmed that he had opposed the ideas of remilitarization because they were unrealistic when he was prime minister, but he also admitted that Japan should gradually become more independent in the field of self-defense.<sup>9)</sup> Contrary to Yoshida's hopes, the political line adopted by him became a doctrine that would dominate the Japanese diplomacy for decades.

The "conservative mainstream" was mainly composed of two powerful factions led by Satō Eisaku and Ikeda Hayato. It was the latter that adhered the most to the "Yoshida doctrine." In 1990 there were still almost no supporters of constitutional revision among the Kochikai members, but the political stance of the former Satō faction on this matter was much more ambiguous.<sup>10)</sup> Satō faction, especially since Tanaka Kakuei's leadership in the 1970s, tended to focus on domestic policy and pork barrel politics rather than on foreign or security policy. As for the factions descending from the Japan Democratic Party, a great majority of them appealed for remilitarization of Japan and renouncement of the "Yoshida doctrine."

Kōchikai was created in June 1957 as a group of about 40 members of Parliament. No other LDP faction has preserved its original name, which derives from an old Chinese poem, for more than half a century. The main goal of Kōchikai was to promote the candidacy of Ikeda Hayato for the post of LDP leader.<sup>11)</sup> The members of Kōchikai were proud of their origin and the "Yoshida doctrine" was even regarded as an important part of factional identity. Together with the former Satō faction, Kōchikai managed to keep the "conservative side-stream" (*hoshu bōryū*), which descended from Hatoyama's Japan Democratic Party, in check for decades. Even if the supporters of

---

9) Yoshida Shigeru, *Sekai to Nihon [The World and Japan]* (Tokyo: Bancho Shobo, 1963), pp. 202-204.

10) Honzawa Jiro, *Jiminto Habatsu [The LDP Factions]* (Tokyo: Pipurusha, 1990), p. 133.

11) Ito Masaya, *Ikeda Hayato to Sono Jidai [Ikeda Hayato and His Times]* (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1985), pp. 51-52.

remilitarization and constitutional revision came to power, they were unable to fulfill their plans. Successive Kochikai leaders emphasized their adherence to the ideas of pacifism, respect for economic growth and close relations with the United States. According to Kato Koichi, during the Cold War Kochikai was especially characterized by economic rationalism (*keizai gōrishugi*) and internationalism (*kokusai kyōchōshugi*), which meant that it was not excessively anticommunist nor did it emphasize any ideology at all.<sup>12)</sup>

As soon as Ikeda Hayato became LDP leader and prime minister in 1960, he announced the “plan of doubling the national income” (*kokumin shotoku baizō keikaku*). Ikeda wanted to double the income of the Japanese people in a decade.<sup>13)</sup> The plan inspired a whole generation of Japanese striving to achieve a level of life comparable with the United States. It meant that intra-party discourse shifted from the attempts of remilitarization or constitutional revision to the plans of accelerating economic growth. Nevertheless, Ikeda himself did not perceive his own plan as a permanent renunciation of military power. Besides putting an emphasis on economic growth, he announced his intention to “educate human resources” (*hito zukuri*) to strengthen patriotism and the will of the Japanese to defend their country by themselves. Ikeda’s secretary, Itō Masaya, admits that Ikeda did not exclude even a possibility of acquiring nuclear weapon by Japan. Nevertheless, Ikeda did not want to hurry with constitutional revision or remilitarization as long as the public opinion opposed it.<sup>14)</sup>

When Ikeda died of cancer in 1965 the position of Kōchikai leader was assumed by Maeo Shigesaburo. He appreciated the “plan of doubling the national income” as a policy that made Japan an economic power and enabled the Japanese to attain a decent level of life.<sup>15)</sup> On the other hand, Maeo felt that the “Yoshida doctrine” was wearing out in its original form. In the 1970s he wrote:

The Japanese, who directly after the end of war under occupation were

---

12) Interview with Kato Koichi, Parliament of Japan, Tokyo, 13 March 2009.

13) Shioguchi Kiichi, *Kikigaki. Ikeda Hayato. Kodo Seicho Seiji no Keisei to Zassetsu* [*Written Story of Ikeda Hayato. The Formation and Failure of High Growth Politics*] (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1975), pp. 189-202.

14) Ito Masaya, *op. cit.*, pp. 234-241.

15) Maeo Shigesaburo, *Gendai Seiji no Kadai* [*The Problems of Contemporary Politics*] (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1976), pp. 51-53.

driven only by the need of finding food, later under the American security system forgot about the problems of their security and entirely devoted themselves to the pursuit of economic prosperity. Prosperity however cannot exist without security. (...) The Japan-American security system does not lighten our responsibility of self-defense. It is primarily the Japanese themselves who should defend Japan. (...) We have no choice but to stick to the Japanese-American security system, and at the same time continue gradually strengthening the abilities of self-defense.<sup>16)</sup>

Nevertheless, Maeo never became prime minister and did not propose any concrete plan exceeding the framework of the “Yoshida doctrine.”

In 1971 Maeo ceded the leadership of Kōchikai to Ōhira Masayoshi. Ōhira preserved all the basic principles of the “Yoshida doctrine,” but he tried to adapt them to a new era. He opposed remilitarization of Japan or revision of the pacifist Constitution which he called “a work of art that hammered out an ideal humanism.”<sup>17)</sup> On the other hand, he felt that Japan needed to reassess its diplomacy in a changing international environment of the 1970s. The Vietnam War and two “Nixon shocks” revealed the limits of American power. Ōhira called for a “general settlement of the postwar period” (*sengo sōkessan*). As an economic power Japan was to play a more active role in the international society.<sup>18)</sup> In 1972 Ōhira declared:

During the 25 years of the postwar period our country has developed a diplomacy centered on partnership with the United States. In other words, our country has avoided deep commitments into a precipitous global policy, and devoted itself to economic recovery, leaving defense to the Security Treaty between Japan and America. It brought its results. In the meantime, however, America’s leadership has gradually weakened and the economic power of our country has strengthened. Thus, the so-called period of dependence on America has ended and Japan is pressed to conceive a new independent approach to its diplomacy and defense policy.<sup>19)</sup>

---

16) *Ibid.*, pp. 174-191.

17) Fukunaga Fumio, *Ohira Masayoshi. “Sengo Hoshu” to wa Nanika [Ohira Masayoshi. What Is “Postwar Conservatism”]* (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Shinsha, 2008), p. 269.

18) *Ibid.*, pp. 272-277.

19) Ohira Masayoshi, *Ohira Masayoshi Kaisoroku: Shiryohen [Memoirs of Ohira Masayoshi: Documents]* (Tokyo: Ohira Masayoshi Kaisoroku Kankokai, 1982), p. 213.

It did not mean that Ohira disregarded the USA. On the contrary, he emphasized: “The axis of Japanese diplomacy is nothing else but cooperation with the United States. It concerns not only politics, defense, economy or commerce, but also the sphere of thought and culture.”<sup>20)</sup> Furthermore, Ōhira was the first Japanese prime minister who called the cooperation with the USA an alliance. In the field of domestic policy he announced a “design of a garden cities state” (*den'en toshi kokka kōsō*), calling for decentralization and a more balanced economic growth. “Garden cities” were to be a remedy for environmental pollution and disintegration of traditional social groups triggered by a sudden industrialization and urbanization in the 1960s.<sup>21)</sup> In 1978 Ohira proclaimed a “strategy of comprehensive security” (*sōgō anzen hoshō senryaku*), putting emphasis on economic cooperation and cultural exchange, not only on the military aspect of cooperation with America in the field of security as before.<sup>22)</sup> This idea was an attempt to substitute the rise in defense spending, demanded by the United States, for non-military contribution to the global peace, such as development aid.<sup>23)</sup> Ōhira surely was one of the most creative Kōchikai leaders during the Cold War and some of his thoughts could have evolved into a significant reevaluation of the “Yoshida doctrine.” Unfortunately, he did not have enough time to fully develop all of his ideas when he became prime minister in 1978, because he died suddenly in the middle of a severe factional struggle inside the LDP in 1980.

After Ōhira’s death Suzuki Zenko was elected prime minister and the next leader of Kōchikai. Suzuki was a very moderate politician who strictly adhered to the “Yoshida doctrine.” In relations with the United States he continued Ohira’s concept of a “comprehensive security” (*sōgō anzen hoshō*). During his visit to the USA in 1981 Suzuki declared that the Japanese Constitution did not admit a collective right of self-defense, and emphasized the security should be understood more widely, also as diplomacy, provision

---

20) Ohira Masayoshi, *Watashi no Rirekisho* [*My Curriculum Vitae*] (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1978), p. 130.

21) Fukunaga Fumio (2008), *op. cit.*, pp. 153-156.

22) Ohira Masayoshi (1982), *op. cit.*, p. 282.

23) Susan J. Pharr, “Japan’s Defensive Foreign Policy and the Politics of Burden Sharing,” in Gerald L. Curtis (ed.), *Japan’s Foreign Policy After the Cold War. Coping with Change* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1993), p. 243.

of resources, energy and food.<sup>24)</sup> Suzuki seemed less willing than Ohira to admit that Japan had to adapt to the changing international environment and less flexible in interpretation of the “Yoshida doctrine.” He even stated that the alliance between Japan and America did not imply a military meaning.<sup>25)</sup> Until his death in 2004 he opposed the plans of Constitution revision.<sup>26)</sup>

The last chairperson of Kōchikai during the Cold War, Miyazawa Kiichi, was widely known as a “dove.” He formally assumed the leadership of the faction in 1987, but it was as early as 1984 that he had announced a new policy of the group, “plan of doubling the assets” (*shisan baizō keikaku*). It was a clear reference to Ikeda’s slogans of a high-rate economic growth. This time Miyazawa wanted to double the social assets, especially in the field of housing, sewers and roads.<sup>27)</sup> He believed that the “Yoshida doctrine” was still an effective policy in the 1980s. Miyazawa called the pacifist Constitution “the first great attempt in the history of mankind” not to become a military power. According to him, this experiment was successful and Japan “should anyway continue walking with confidence the road that proved successful until today” despite internal and external problems which could appear.<sup>28)</sup> Even though he was aware that the Japanese government would be criticized for avoiding military contribution to the global peace, he insisted Japan should focus only on economic assistance to the developing countries.<sup>29)</sup>

As we can see, all of the leaders of Kōchikai cherished similar political ideas. They put emphasis on economic development, alliance with the United States and preservation of the pacifist Constitution. Ohira Masayoshi, Maeo Shigesaburo, Ikeda Hayato and even Yoshida Shigeru himself were more flexible in their interpretation of the “Yoshida doctrine,” and felt that Japan should not be completely dependent on the United States in regard to self-defense. They did not propose however any viable political concept that could

---

24) Suzuki Zenko and Azumane Chimeo, *Hitoshikarazaru o Ureeru. Moto Shusho Suzuki Zenko Kaikoroku* [Worrying about Inequality. Memoirs of Former Prime Minister Suzuki Zenko] (Morioka: Iwate Nipposha, 2004), p. 95.

25) Uji Toshihiko, *Suzuki Seiken 863 nichi* [863 Days of Suzuki Government] (Tokyo: Gyosei Mondai Kenkyojo, 1983), pp. 170-212.

26) Suzuki Zenko and Azumane Chimeo, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

27) Miyazawa Kiichi and Kosaka Masataka, *Utsukushii Nihon e no Chosen* [Challenge to Create a Beautiful Japan] (Tokyo: Bungei Shunshu, 1984), pp. 111-166.

28) *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

29) *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

become a new ideology of the faction. Because the “Yoshida doctrine” proved very effective, the leaders of Kōchikai in the 1980s, Suzuki Zenko and Miyazawa Kiichi, seemed to strictly adhere to this low-profile policy without feeling a need for its modification. It was the end of the Cold War that forced politicians of this moderate faction to reflect more deeply upon their political stance.

### III. Kōchikai at a Crossroads: The End of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War brought a serious change in international position of Japan. In the 1990s Japan had to respond to new regional challenges and revise its security strategy. The collapse of the Soviet Union put into question the sense of American military presence in East Asia.<sup>30)</sup> Discussion over the contribution to the Gulf War, as well as an increasing sense of threat from North Korea (missile tests in 1993, 1998, 2006 and 2009, nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009) and China (nuclear tests until 1996, “missile diplomacy” towards Taiwan in 1996, dispute over the natural resources of the East China Sea), revived national debate on the amendment of Article 9 of Constitution. Japan was gradually moving away from the “Yoshida doctrine,” assuming more responsibility for the regional stability. Enactment of Peacekeeping Operations bill in 1992, decision by Koizumi government to send Self-Defense Forces to the Indian Ocean in 2001 and to Iraq in 2004 were the turning points in Japanese security policy.

Because of the evolution of Japan’s geopolitical position, nationalist ideas gradually became more popular in Japanese society, or at least on the Japanese political scene, at the expense of moderate groups. Traditional leftist parties almost disappeared due to the bankruptcy of the communist ideology. At the same time, one of the most influential politicians from the former Sato faction, Ozawa Ichirō, left the LDP in 1993 and created the Renewal Party (*Shinseitō*). His main goal was to make Japan a “normal country” (*futsu no kuni*) with all the attributes of an independent state. It is interesting that Ozawa, who started a new national debate on constitutional revision, referred

---

30) Mike M. Mochizuki, “Japan’s Changing International Role,” in Thomas U. Berger, Mike M. Mochizuki, and Jitsuo Tsuchiyama (ed.), *Japan in International Politics. The Foreign Policies of an Adaptive State* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), p. 4.

to the example of Yoshida Shigeru as a leader who was not afraid to fight for his vision at all costs.<sup>31)</sup> Ozawa argued that Japan needed a new vision for the new times. The rise of younger politicians who did not remember the atrocities of World War II signified the strengthening of a right wing, both within the LDP and the new conservative parties.

Also the politicians of Kochikai had to adapt to the needs of the new period. It was the leader of this faction, Miyazawa Kiichi, that became prime minister in December 1991, just in the middle of a national debate on the limits of Japan's contribution to the maintenance of global peace. In 1990 and 1991 Japan was severely criticized by America for not having sent Self-Defense Forces to assist in the Operation Desert Storm. Although Kaifu Toshiki government provided to multinational forces a financial aid of as much as 13 billion USD, this effort was not appreciated properly. The LDP prepared a revolutionary bill which would admit participation of Self-Defense Forces in the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. The International Peace Cooperation Law was enacted in June 1992, thanks to a compromise with some of the opposition parties.<sup>32)</sup>

Also Miyazawa Kiichi, who had long opposed sending Self-Defense Forces abroad, did not spare his efforts to pass the bill. He admitted that he actively supported the new law not only because Japan suffered a severe criticism during the Gulf War, but also because the Japanese public started a new discourse on the limits of Japan's security policy. Thanks to the bill Miyazawa wanted to precise what the Japanese government could, and what it could not do to protect the global peace.<sup>33)</sup> On the other hand, he did not change his mind on constitutional revision. Miyazawa argued that there was no need for constitutional revision, because the changes in the interpretation of Constitution worked just as precedents in the British common law.<sup>34)</sup> He was afraid that the slogans of building a "normal country" could lead to a

---

31) Ozawa Ichiro, *Nihon Kaizo Keikaku [Blueprint for a New Japan]* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2006), pp. 29-30.

32) Some of the new bill's stipulations, such as the Peacekeeping Forces, were temporarily frozen.

33) Iokibe Makoto, Ito Motoshige, and Yakushiji Katsuyuki (ed.), *90 nendai no Shogen. Miyazawa Kiichi. Hoshu Honryu no Kiseki [Testimony of the 1990s. Miyazawa Kiichi. The Way of the Conservative Mainstream]* (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 2006), pp. 159-164.

34) Miyazawa Kiichi, *21 Seiki e no Ininjo [The Mandate for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century]* (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1995), pp. 50-55.

revival of militarism:

I think that we surely did not imagine Peacekeeping Operations nor Peacekeeping Forces when the Constitution was being created. However, they are allowable at present, so is there a need for a revision? There is also an opinion that because self-defense constitutes an inherent right and duty of a state, it should be clearly stipulated. (...) Actually, self-defense is a limitless concept. There exists also an interpretation that during the World War II Japan fought to protect itself, but speaking objectively it is difficult to call the intrusion into China and the things we did a self-defense. Because we made mistakes in the past, we should think with restraint about “self-defense.”<sup>35)</sup>

In 1993 the LDP lost power, but one of the members of Kochikai, Kono Yohei, was elected as the new party leader, the first one that never became prime minister. Kōno was an outsider in the faction, because he joined it in 1986 after having headed a small party, the New Liberal Club. Although until the 1970s he had belonged to Nakasone faction (his father Kono Ichiro was Nakasone’s predecessor as faction leader), when he returned to the LDP, he chose Kōchikai. Kono admits that he could not stand the rightist policy of Nakasone faction, but he felt a great personal respect for Miyazawa Kiichi.<sup>36)</sup> Indeed, his political beliefs resembled the moderate policy of Miyazawa. Kōno argued there was no need for constitutional revision because the existence of Self-Defense Forces had been acknowledged by the Supreme Court of Japan. At the same time he underscored that he did not want to treat Constitution as a taboo nor oppose a discussion on its amendment.<sup>37)</sup> As for the history problems in relations with the neighboring countries, Kōno admitted that the Japanese did not display a sufficient regret for their deeds during the World War II.<sup>38)</sup> It was he who, as chief cabinet secretary in Miyazawa government, announced the report on “comfort women” and

---

35) *Ibid.*, pp. 58-60.

36) Interview with Kono Yohei (13 March 2009).

37) Kono Yohei, *Hakushu wa Iranai: Atarashii Seiji o Motomete* [*Applause is not Necessary: Appealing for a New Politics*] (Kyoto: Toyo Insatsu, 1976), pp. 85-91.

38) “Sekai” Henshubu (ed.), *Hoshu Seijika wa Ureeru* [*Conservative Politicians Are Anxious*] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1986), pp. 329-330.

apologized for such practices.<sup>39)</sup> Kōno argued that nationalism is dangerous when it is used by politicians to strengthen the unity of a nation without paying enough attention to the international situation.<sup>40)</sup>

Also Kato Koichi, who became Kochikai leader in 1998, had much in common with the previous chairpersons of the faction. He admitted that Japan had already fulfilled its goal of achieving a level of life comparable with the West, and should find a new vision. According to him the new national objective should be “symbiosis with nature” (*shizen to no kyōsei*), because the respect for social harmony has always been a part of the Japanese culture.<sup>41)</sup> Kato felt that the alliance with the United States no longer fitted the post-Cold War situation and needed a major reevaluation. When he was secretary general of the LDP, he worked for the establishment of new guidelines for the Japanese-American security treaty.<sup>42)</sup> As a member of the “conservative mainstream,” he claimed that the military alliance with the United States was still profitable to Japan as one of three conditions of stability in East Asia. The other two conditions were protection of the pacifist Constitution and renunciation by Japan of offensive weapons, together with nuclear arms.<sup>43)</sup>

Katō emphasized that he did not treat Constitution as a taboo and would support its revision if it was really necessary. He referred to three situations when Article 9 should be amended: in the case of establishment of a permanent Peacekeeping Army under the jurisdiction of the United Nations, if America demanded that the alliance with Japan should be completely equal

---

39) The “comfort women” were the women, especially from China and Korea, forced by the Japanese Army to prostitution during World War II. See: Li Xiushi, *Riben Xinbaoshouzhuyi Zhanlue Yanjiu* [*A Study on Japan's Neo-Conservatism Strategy*] (Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2010), pp. 90-91.

40) Interview with Kono Yohei (13 March 2009).

41) Kato Koichi, *Ima Seiji wa nani o Subeki ka: Shin Seiki Nihon no Sekkeizu* [*What Should the Present Politics Do?: The Design of Japan in the New Century*] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1999), p. 280.

42) The new guidelines were signed in 1997 and ratified by Japan in 1999. They strengthened the cooperation in the field of security policy between the two countries. The new guidelines met with protests from China, because they comprised “cooperation in situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security,” which could include Taiwan. See: Mori Kazuko, *Nitchu Kankei: Sengo kara Shinjidai e* [*Sino-Japanese Relations: From Postwar Period to a New Era*] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006), pp. 138-140.

43) Kato Koichi (1999), *op. cit.*, pp. 212-219.

(that is when Japan provided a commensurate amount of weapons and soldiers), or if Japan was to participate in the regional forces created together with the neighboring countries. Katō considered each of these three conditions very improbable and warned that in any other case the revision of Article 9 would be harmful to Japan and its international position. He emphasized:

I think that the fact that Japan possesses Article 9 of Constitution brings a great stability to the international scene around Japan. Article 9 of Constitution is a declaration of postwar Japan's basic diplomatic policy, and because it is based on the regret after the World War II, it gives a great sense of security to the neighboring countries.<sup>44)</sup>

Kato Koichi evidently felt uneasy that the ideas of the LDP right wing met with an increasing support, or at least understanding, of the Japanese public opinion. According to him, the emergence of nationalism in Japan and the strengthening of the former Kishi faction (one of the most rightist groups in the LDP) was a result of a global trend to reinforce religious or ethnic divisions in the post-Cold War world.<sup>45)</sup> He wrote:

I am often called a dove, but if it means sensitivity to the international situation and respect for cooperation with the countries of the world, I can be called like that. Even more, I am rather proud of it. Stirring a loud domestic dispute without any regard for the international environment surrounding Japan just to gain emotional support of public opinion is a conduct improper for a politician.<sup>46)</sup>

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Katō criticized the rise of nationalism and the emergence of LDP “hawks” during the cadency of Koizumi Jun'ichiro (2001-2006).<sup>47)</sup> He emphasized that Japan itself is partly responsible for stirring anti-Japanese sentiments in the East Asian countries. Similarly to Kono, he explained that there is a “good nationalism,” which

---

44) *Ibid.*, p. 221.

45) Interview with Kato Koichi (13 March 2009).

46) Kato Koichi (1999), *op. cit.*, pp. 233-234.

47) Kato Koichi, *Atarashiki Nihon no Katachi* [*The Shape of a New Japan*] (Tokyo: Daiyamondosha, 2005), pp. 55-57.

means just love towards ones fatherland, and a “bad nationalism,” which is used by the politicians to strengthen nation’s unity against an external threat. He called Koizumi’s policy the latter and warned that although visits to Yasukuni<sup>48)</sup> were part of domestic policy, this problem returned as a “boomerang” by triggering deterioration of relations with the neighboring countries.<sup>49)</sup>

As we can see, the politicians of Kōchikai had to respond to the new challenges after the end of Cold War, and stopped treating the “Yoshida doctrine” dogmatically. Nevertheless, they tried to preserve their moderate policy as much as possible, and it was not easy in an increasingly tense international environment. Operation Desert Storm, North Korean threats, war with terrorism or growing assertiveness of China seemed to justify the need for remilitarization of Japan and constitutional revision. It were the Kōchikai leaders that continued protecting the pacifist Article 9, but their voice was less and less heard inside the LDP.

#### **IV. Internal Causes of the Fading of Kōchikai**

Nevertheless, the weakening of Kōchikai was caused not by ideological factors, but rather by the changes in an internal structure of the faction. Kōchikai managed to avoid major splits during the Cold War, but it was not longer the case in the 1990s. There were two main reasons of the weakening of solidarity among the Kōchikai members. The first one concerned a gradual change in the role of factions generally, and the other one was connected with an evolution of Kōchikai itself.

The fact that the first serious split among the Kōchikai members occurred as late as in 1998 does not mean that there were no intra-factional frictions in the group earlier. In fact, the first sign of internal rivalry appeared directly after Ikeda’s death in 1965. Maeo Shigesaburō became a new leader, but many young politicians were unhappy about that choice. They accused Maeo

---

48) Yasukuni is a shrine in Tokyo dedicated to the Japanese who died fighting for their country. Since the 1970s it has been also commemorating class-A war criminals sentenced to death penalty by Tokyo Tribunal after the end of World War II . East Asian countries, especially China and South Korea, have opposed the visits of the Japanese prime ministers to this controversial shrine.

49) Kato Koichi (2005), *op. cit.*, pp. 88-93.

of lack of abilities to run the faction. During his leadership Kōchikai became less influential and was unable to effectively compete with the other intra-party groups. In 1971 young politicians organized a *coup d'état*, overturning Maeo and giving the power to Ōhira Masayoshi. Kochikai avoided the split, but the grudge between Ōhira's and Maeo's camps remained.

Perhaps even more serious intra-factional struggle surfaced following the sudden death of Ōhira Masayoshi in 1980. When Suzuki Zenkō assumed the responsibilities of faction chairperson, two powerful politicians, Miyazawa Kiichi from Maeo's camp and Tanaka Rokusuke who belonged directly to Ōhira's camp, started competing for the nomination as his successor. The so-called *Ichi-Roku sensō* ("war" between Ki"ichi" and "Roku"suke) took place in the first half of the 1980s. In November 1980 Tanaka Rokusuke established Shinsedai Kenkyūkai (New Generation Study Group), a supra-factional group which was mainly composed of Kochikai members from Kyushu (Tanaka Rokusuke himself came from the Fukuoka prefecture), such as Asō Tarō, Ozato Sadatoshi and Koga Makoto. The majority of them were young politicians of only 1-2 cadencies.<sup>50)</sup> Tanaka Rokusuke claimed it was Ōhira Masayoshi that had advised him to establish a new faction.<sup>51)</sup>

What is interesting, Tanaka seemed to hold quite a different interpretation of Kochikai's ideology than Miyazawa Kiichi. First of all, he criticized Miyazawa's "plan of doubling the assets" as a "parody" of Ikeda's "plan of doubling the national income," because it lacked the elements of community-building and focused merely on a material side of economic growth.<sup>52)</sup> Tanaka Rokusuke conceived differently also the meaning of the "conservative mainstream." In his interpretation, this term was not necessarily referring to the group of ideological successors of Yoshida Shigeru. Tanaka claimed that all politicians who felt responsible for the country, who were not afraid of tough decisions in the interest of Japan, and had abilities to govern, including such rightist prime ministers as Nakasone Yasuhiro,<sup>53)</sup> belonged to the

50) Uji Toshihiko, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-89.

51) Tanaka Rokusuke, *Ōhira Masayoshi no Hito to Seiji [Ōhira Masayoshi as a Person and His Policy]* (Tokyo: Asahi Sonorama, 1981), p. 27.

52) Tanaka Rokusuke, *Hoshu Honryu no Chokugen [A Frank Discourse on the Conservative Mainstream]* (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1985), pp. 134-153.

53) Nakasone Yasuhiro, prime minister in the years 1982-1987, was known for his rightist convictions. As a partisan of constitutional revision and remilitarization, he wanted to challenge the "Yoshida doctrine." He decided to raise the Japanese defense budget above

“conservative mainstream.”<sup>54)</sup> As the rest of Kōchikai politicians Tanaka did not want to revise the Constitution,<sup>55)</sup> but he felt that the “Yoshida doctrine” should evolve together with the change of generations. He asserted:

No matter how successful a policy is, it can wither and become distorted over time. If we leave it that way, the original goal will paradoxically become harder to achieve. When children grow up, their clothes will not fit anymore. By love to their children, parents make them wear the clothes that fit the most children’s stature, juvenile clothes for the juvenile, youth’s clothes for the youth. Similarly conservatism does not mean a persistent protection of old things, but rather a need for change of means and methods to adapt to the evolution of the reality.<sup>56)</sup>

There was one more difference between Miyazawa Kiichi and Tanaka Rokusuke. The former came from the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Finance, and the latter was a former journalist. The distinction between the former bureaucrats (*kanryō-ha*) and the professional politicians, so-called “people of the party” (*tojin-ha*), was very important in the first decade of LDP’s existence, but it faded over time. Kōchikai managed to preserve its bureaucratic character longer than other LDP factions. Until the 1970s former bureaucrats constituted the majority of its members, with half of that group coming from the Ministry of Finance. Also Ikeda Hayato, Ōhira Masayoshi and Maeo Shigesaburō had worked in this ministry. The situation started changing under the administration of Prime Minister Ōhira. The LDP leaders usually used their position to increase personal influence by recruiting young politicians to their factions. In the elections of 1979 many party activists without bureaucratic background joined Kōchikai, and the percentage of former bureaucrats suddenly dropped to 40 percent. Moreover, Suzuki Zenko was the first Kōchikai leader without a bureaucratic *curriculum*. In the 1980s the former bureaucrats constituted one-third, and at the beginning of the 1990s only one-fourth of the faction members.<sup>57)</sup> Tanaka Rokusuke died in

---

the limit of 1 percent of GNP, and on 15 August 1985 he paid an official visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, triggering protests from China and South Korea. See: Li Xiushi, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-68.

54) Tanaka Rokusuke (1985), *op. cit.*, pp. 118-120.

55) *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

56) *Ibid.*, p. 130.

1985 and Miyazawa Kiichi could become Kōchikai leader in 1987, but the divisions between the former bureaucrats and the “people of the party” seemed to remain.

In 1994 the factional system in the LDP was largely deregulated due to an electoral reform. The decline of factionalism was detrimental to Kōchikai. It is not surprising that especially the politicians belonging to the powerful “conservative mainstream” did not support too eagerly the idea of eliminating factions from the Japanese political scene. There were exceptions, such as Maeo Shigesaburō, but many members of Kōchikai seemed to share Ōhira Masayoshi’s stance on factionalism. In 1975 Ōhira stated metaphorically: “Various musical instruments, conserving their uniqueness, organically merge a whole palette of tones and create a splendid chorus that can play a symphony. The melody that comes out then is incomparable with the tone of a violin alone.”<sup>58)</sup> According to Ōhira, the factions (musical instruments), which represented different political stances, were the best warrant of an intra-party democracy.

Nevertheless, LDP politicians could not stop the electoral reform. In 1994 a new law was passed, creating 300 small-sized constituencies and 200 (later changed to 180) seats for the members of Parliament from the party lists, instead of the middle-sized constituencies that existed before.<sup>59)</sup> LDP politicians no longer had to compete each over in a single constituency, which weakened *raison d’être* of intra-party groups. Furthermore, with the establishment of a system of state subsidies for political parties, the ability of providing political funds to individual members of Parliament shifted from the faction bosses to the LDP central organs. It triggered a further weakening of factional solidarity.<sup>60)</sup> In these circumstances Kōchikai was more prone to both internal tensions and external pressures.

When Miyazawa Kiichi ceded factional leadership to Katō Koichi in 1998, Kōno Yōhei left Kōchikai together with a group of more than ten politicians. It was the first split in the 40-years history of the group. There were many

---

57) Fukunaga Fumio (2005), *op. cit.*, pp. 97-100.

58) Iseri Hirofumi, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

59) I Sangbong, *Poseuteu “Jeonhu Jeongchi”-ui Ilbon Jeongchi* [*Japanese Politics after the “Postwar Politics”*] (Seoul: Hyeongseol Chulpansa, 2002), p. 128.

60) Lee Kiwan, *Ilbon-ui Jeongdang-gwa Jeongdang Jeongchi* [*Japanese Parties and Party Politics*] (Seoul: Doseo Chulpan Maebong, 2006), pp. 138-141.

reasons of this division. A so-called *KK sensō* (KK war) between Kōno and Kato became evident in 1995, when Kato Koichi decided to support Hashimoto Ryūtarō, not Kōno Yōhei, in the elections for the post of LDP leader.<sup>61)</sup> Kōno emphasizes that he joined Kōchikai because of his personal respect to Miyazawa Kiichi, so he belonged to the group only as long as Miyazawa was its leader.<sup>62)</sup> Anyway, among the politicians that left the faction in 1998 there were former members of the New Liberal Club and other “people of the party,” such as Aso Taro or Kono Taro. It was clear that the split was also caused by the divisions between the former bureaucrats, who constituted the factional “elite,” and the politicians without a bureaucratic background.

The next split had quite a different character. In January 2001 Kōchikai eventually broke into two groups due to a so-called “Kato’s rebellion.” In November 2000 Katō Koichi declared that he was envisaging supporting the motion of no confidence against the government of Mori Yoshiro. The Japanese mass media claimed he hoped to overturn unpopular Mori and become prime minister himself. Kato did not suspect he would have to face an opposition to his plans within his own faction. Mainstream politicians managed to persuade the majority of Kōchikai members to vote against the motion. In January 2001 they officially formed a new group headed by Horiuchi Mitsuo, who ceded the leadership to Niwa Yuya and Koga Makoto in 2005. The minority remained loyal to Katō Koichi. In 2002 he was succeeded by Ozato Sadatoshi and in 2005 by Tanigaki Sadakazu. Both groups kept the original factional name and considered themselves to be the rightful line of Kōchikai. Horiuchi faction even moved its office to the former headquarters of Kōchikai to emphasize that it fully inherited the traditions of the “conservative mainstream.”<sup>63)</sup>

In 2001 Prime Minister Koizumi Jun’ichirō declared that one of the main goals of his government was to destroy factions inside the LDP. It triggered a second phase of the weakening of these intra-party groups. Koizumi managed to maintain a high rate of popularity thanks to his abilities of political marketing. In the 1980s Nakasone Yasuhiro employed a similar political

---

61) Tsuchiya Shigeru, *Jiminto Habatsu Koboshi* [*The History of the Rise and Fall of LDP Factions*] (Tokyo: Kadensha, 2000), p. 130.

62) Interview with Kono Yohei (13 March 2009).

63) Oshita Eiji, *Koga Makoto no Shin Seikai Hana to Ryu* [*Koga Makoto’s New Political World, Flower and Dragon*] (Tokyo: Bisuto, 2007), p. 256.

style. Both Koizumi and Nakasone were “people of the party,” who had skills to seduce the public opinion. On the contrary, Kochikai was traditionally dominated by the former bureaucrats, good at administering the country, but not at persuading politicians from other groups or public opinion to their policy, which became more important with the fading of factions. Miyazawa Kiichi admitted that Kōchikai was not good at parliamentary strategies (*kokkai taisaku*), which meant the skills of negotiating with the opposition parties.<sup>64</sup> Lack of abilities of political marketing was one of the reasons of the failure of “Katō’s rebellion.” Katō Kōichi did not succeed in acquiring the support of public opinion for his plans. He later admitted that he started his “rebellion” without a proper preparation.<sup>65</sup>

Katō was the last former bureaucrat who assumed the post of Kōchikai leader. In 2005 he wrote nostalgically: “The LDP factions were always criticized, but I do not think they were such a bad thing if we take into account their functions.”<sup>66</sup> He emphasized that individual factions used to have their own characteristics, for example Kōchikai specialized in economics and internationalism, but this period has already passed together with the electoral reform. In small constituencies the support of 10 or 20 percent of electorate no longer suffices to become a member of Parliament. The LDP candidates cannot specialize in a single field anymore and have to appeal to all citizens, avoiding unpopular declarations. According to Katō it waters down their political programs.<sup>67</sup> It is true that at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the groups descending from Kōchikai lost much of their original character.

## V. Kochikai at Present

Because of the split in 2001, Kōchikai was degraded in the hierarchy of LDP factions, becoming the fourth and fifth largest group. On the contrary, when Koizumi became prime minister, though he proclaimed a war with

---

64) Mikuriya Takashi and Nakamura Takafusa (ed.), *Kikigaki. Miyazawa Kiichi Kaikoroku* [*Interview. Memoirs of Miyazawa Kiichi*] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), p. 297.

65) Kato Koichi (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 164.

66) *Ibid.*, p. 42.

67) *Ibid.*, pp. 41-43.

factionalism, he managed to increase the number of members of Mori faction (Seiwa Seisaku Kenkyukai, since 2006 headed by Machimura Nobutaka), he had originally belonged to. The domination of Seiwa Seisaku Kenkyukai was symbolized by the fact that four successive prime ministers (Mori Yoshiro, Koizumi Jun'ichirō, Abe Shinzō, Fukuda Yasuo) at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century came from this faction. Also after LDP's defeat in the parliamentary elections in August 2009, it kept its status of the biggest group inside the party. Because Mori faction has been traditionally regarded as a rightist group, its hegemony triggered a further strengthening of the camp of "hawks" in the LDP. The necessity to become competitive with the biggest factions was one of the incentives to start talks on merger between the three groups descending from Kōchikai. Eventually the concept which prevailed was middle-Kōchikai (*chū-Kōchikai*) without Kōno faction. Koga and Tanigaki groups reunited in May 2008, once again turning into the third largest LDP faction. Koga Makoto became the new leader.

Koga only partially fits into the traditions of Kōchikai. Contrary to Kato Kōichi, he welcomed Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. It is easy to understand taking into account that since 2002 Koga has been a chairperson of Nihon Izokukai, an organization of the families of the Japanese soldiers who died in World War II. On the other hand, Koga cannot be called a rightist radical nor a declared "hawk." He claimed that prime minister had to take into consideration the protests of Asian countries and refrain from visiting Yasukuni on 15 August, even though Nihon Izokukai had long striven for the visits of the Japanese officials on the day commemorating Japan's surrender in 1945.<sup>68)</sup> It is obvious that Koga has to find a compromise between his functions as the Kōchikai leader and as the chairperson of Nihon Izokukai. It is not easy, because at the same time he has to emphasize the importance of peaceful cooperation with China, as well as deny the legality of Tokyo Tribunal which convicted class-A war criminals worshipped in the Yasukuni Shrine. In the matter of constitutional revision, Koga seems to go one step further than Katō, admitting the need for amendment, but also, what is characteristic to Kōchikai leader, emphasizing that it has to be done with greatest caution.<sup>69)</sup>

---

68) Oshita Eiji, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-289.

69) *Ibid.*, pp. 376-383.

At present there is only one more faction descending from Kōchikai. In December 2006 Kono Yohei ceded the leadership of his group to Aso Taro. Although the faction does not call itself Kōchikai (in 2006 its name was changed from Taiyukai into Ikōkai), it partially descends from the “conservative mainstream” and Asō Tarō himself is grandson of Yoshida Shigeru. Nevertheless, Asō holds his own interpretation of Yoshida’s policy. Similarly to Tanaka Rokusuke in the 1980s, he claims that Yoshida did not want his doctrine to become fossilized and petrified. Aso even goes one step further than Tanaka Rokusuke by admitting the need for constitutional revision. On the one hand he is proud of his grand-father’s legacy, and on the other he emphasizes that Japan has to prepare for the challenges of a new era. According to him, Yoshida’s policy was adequate for the postwar period, when the country had to rebuild its infrastructure and could not afford remilitarization. This policy was a success, because it enabled Japan’s economic reconstruction.<sup>70)</sup> Nevertheless, Asō underscores that Japan has to adapt to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the time has come for the revision of Constitution.<sup>71)</sup>

As foreign minister, Asō announced in 2006 his conception of a “value oriented diplomacy” (*kachi no gaikō*). Its essential part was an idea of an “arc of freedom and prosperity” (*jiyu to han’ei no ko*), which meant a line of young democracies situated at the outer rim of Eurasia from South Korea, through ASEAN, India and Turkey to Central and Eastern Europe. Aso claimed that Japan should actively support in these countries such values as human rights, democracy and market economy.<sup>72)</sup> This idealistic approach to foreign policy seems to be opposite to the Kōchikai’s traditional diplomatic line. Although the leaders of this faction have always emphasized the importance of such values, during the Cold War they held a very realistic view on Japan’s foreign policy. On the contrary to the LDP right wing, they tended not to dwell excessively upon ideological divisions in the world. Suffice it to emphasize the role of Ikeda Hayato and Ōhira Masayoshi in promoting nongovernmental trade and normalization of diplomatic relations

---

70) Aso Taro, *Aso Taro no Genten. Sofu Yoshida Shigeru no Ryugi* [*The Sources of Aso Taro. The Way of Grandfather Yoshida Shigeru*] (Tokyo: Tokuma Shoten, 2007), pp. 122-123.

71) *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169.

72) Aso Taro, *Jiyu to Han’ei no Ko* [*The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity*] (Tokyo: Gentosha, 2008), pp. 27-46.

with the communist China.<sup>73)</sup> Asō welcomes the emergence of China as a world power and underscores the importance of maintaining friendly relations with Beijing,<sup>74)</sup> but placing the promotion of human rights in his diplomatic agenda sounds contradictory to this goal. Nevertheless, when Asō was prime minister (2008-2009), due to an economic crisis he had much graver problems to cope with, and it seems he did not have enough time to fully develop his idea of a “value oriented diplomacy.”

Also Asō’s approach to Japan’s history seems controversial. On the one hand he admits that Japan should display a “humble regret” for the deeds in the past,<sup>75)</sup> but on the other he praises an extremely nationalistic comic book *Sensō Ron* by Kobayashi Yoshinori,<sup>76)</sup> which presents a completely distorted version of the World War II. Furthermore, Asō holds a similar stance on the Yasukuni problem as Koga Makoto, opposing the creation of a separate place for the worship of class-A war criminals. He also proposes to deprive the shrine status of a religious organization to enable the visits of Emperor and state funding for this facility.<sup>77)</sup>

As we can see, the policy of the present bosses of factions related with the former Ikeda group only partially reflects the long traditions of Kochikai. It no longer is a bureaucratic faction and its leadership was assumed by professional or generational politicians. Both Koga Makoto and Aso Taro cannot be called “doves” in the style of their predecessors, Miyazawa Kiichi or Kono Yohei. Not only do they appeal for constitutional revision, but also hold nationalistic views for example on the visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, which seems incoherent with their slogans of the importance of maintaining friendly relations with the neighboring countries.

---

73) Sun Hongyan, “Zhong-Ri Guanxi Zhong de LT Maoyi” [LT Trade in Sino-Japanese Relations], *Changchun Daxue Xuebao* 17-3 (May 2007), p. 58; Liu Li, “Daping Zhengfang yu Dangdai Zhong-Ri Guanxi” [Ohira Masayoshi and the Contemporary Sino-Japanese Relations], *Dongbeiyi Luntan* 3 (1999), pp. 22-25.

74) Aso Taro, *Watashi no Gaiko Senryaku* [*My Diplomatic Strategy*] (Iizuka: Aso Taro to 21 Seiki no Kai, 2006), pp. 58-61.

75) Aso Taro, *Totetsumonai Nihon* [*Incredible Japan*] (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2007), p. 23.

76) *Ibid.*, p. 58.

77) *Ibid.*, pp. 141-152.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The Kochikai was evidently one of the most important LDP factions. During the Cold War its politicians contributed greatly to the maintenance of a low-profile, moderate policy of Japan, symbolized by the “Yoshida doctrine.” Although Yoshida Shigeru and some of Kōchikai leaders felt the need for a modification of Japan’s security policy, the “Yoshida doctrine” was regarded as an important part of factional identity and remained almost intact until the beginning of the 1990s. Thanks to the low spending on defense, Japan was able to focus on the nonmilitary attributes of power and achieve an amazing rate of economic growth and a high level of technological development.

Nevertheless, the end of the Cold War brought a sudden change in Japan’s international position and revealed the inability of the “Yoshida doctrine” to cope with the challenges of the contemporary world. The Kōchikai members had to adapt their political stance to the post-Cold War circumstances. They worked for the passage of International Peace Cooperation Law in 1992 and for the formulation of new guidelines for the alliance with the United States in 1996-1997. Nevertheless, the leading politicians of Kōchikai in the 1990s, Miyazawa Kiichi, Kono Yohei and Kato Koichi, shared a common stance on constitutional revision. Though they did not have a dogmatic approach to Constitution, they opposed the amendment of the pacifist Article 9 and wanted to continue revision only through the change of its interpretation. The Kochikai members traditionally emphasized the importance of international cooperation, and according to them Article 9 played a great role in stabilizing situation in East Asia.

Besides revealing the inadequacy of the “Yoshida doctrine” to the post-Cold War situation, the 1990s brought a decline in factionalism among the LDP members, which weakened the ties among Kōchikai politicians and triggered two painful splits in 1998 and 2001. The LDP right wing profited from the weakening of this moderate faction and seized power in the country. Furthermore, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership of Kōchikai was assumed by a new generation of politicians who only partially inherited the original ideology of the group. They still emphasize the importance of cooperation with the neighboring countries to an extent greater than the rightist radicals in the LDP, but they are no longer willing to sacrifice for it their stance on constitutional revision or on the interpretation of Japanese history.

## REFERENCES

- Asō, Tarō. *Asō, Tarō no Genten. Sofu Yoshida Shigeru no Ryūgi* [The Sources of Asō, Tarō. The Way of Grandfather Yoshida Shigeru]. Tokyo: Tokuma Shoten, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Jiyū to Han'ei no Ko* [The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity]. Tokyo: Gentōsha, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Totetsumonai Nihon* [Incredible Japan]. Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Watashi no Gaikō Senryaku* [My Diplomatic Strategy]. Iizuka: Asō Taro to 21 Seiki no Kai, 2006.
- Fukunaga, Fumio. “Habatsu Kōzō kara Mita Kōchikai: Soshiki, Jjinteki Kōsei, Rikurūtomento” [Kōchikai from the Perspective of Faction’s Structure: Organization, Personal Composition, Recruitment]. *Dokkyō Hōgaku* 67. November 2005, pp. 75-131.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ōhira Masayoshi. “Sengo Hoshu” to wa Nanika* [Ōhira Masayoshi. What Is “Postwar Conservatism”]. Tokyo: Chuō Kōron Shinsha, 2008.
- Hatoyama, Ichirō. *Hatoyama Ichirō Kaikoroku* [Memoirs of Hatoyama Ichirō]. Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū Shinsha, 1957.
- Honzawa, Jirō. *Jimintō Habatsu* [The LDP Factions]. Tokyo: Pipurusha, 1990.
- I, Sangbong. *Poseuteu “Jeonhu Jeongchi”-ui Ilbon Jeongchi* [Japanese Politics after the “Postwar Politics”]. Seoul: Hyeongseol Chulpansa, 2002.
- Iokibe, Makoto, Itō Motoshige, and Yakushiji Katsuyuki. ed. *90 nendai no Shōgen. Miyazawa Kiichi. Hoshu Honryū no Kiseki* [Testimony of the 1990s. Miyazawa Kiichi. The Way of the Conservative Mainstream]. Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 2006.
- Iseri, Hirofumi. *Habatsu Saihensei. Jimintō Seiji no Omote to Ura* [Reorganization of Factions. Inside and Outside of the LDP Politics]. Tokyo: Chuō Kōronsha, 1988.
- Itō, Masaya. *Ikeda Hayato to Sono Jidai* [Ikeda Hayato and His Times]. Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1985.
- Katō, Kōichi. *Atarashiki Nihon no Katachi* [The Shape of a New Japan]. Tokyo: Daiyamondosha, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ima Seiji wa nani o Subeki ka: Shin Seiki Nihon no Sekkeizu* [What Should the Present Politics Do?: The Design of Japan in the New Century]. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1999.
- Kitaoka, Shin’ichi. *Jimintō: Seikentō no 38 nen* [LDP: 38 years of the Ruling Party]. Tokyo: Chuō Kōron Shinsha, 2008.

- Kong, Uisik. *Ilbon Hyeondae Jeongchi-ui Ihae [Comprehension of the Contemporary Japanese Politics]*. Busan: Sejong Chulpansa, 2003.
- Kōno, Yōhei. *Hakushu wa Iranai: Atarashii Seiji o Motomete [Applause is not Necessary: Appealing for a New Politics]*. Kyoto: Tōyō Insatsu, 1976.
- Lee, Kiwan. *Ilbon-ui Jeongdang-gwa Jeongdang Jeongchi [Japanese Parties and Party Politics]*. Seoul: Doseo Chulpan Maebong, 2006.
- Li, Xiushi. *Riben Xinbaoshouzhuyi Zhanlue Yanjiu [A Study on Japan's Neo-Conservatism Strategy]*. Beijing: Shishi Chubanshe, 2010.
- Liu, Li. "Daping Zhengfang yu Dangdai Zhong-Ri Guanxi" [Ōhira Masayoshi and the Contemporary Sino-Japanese Relations]. *Dongbeiyi Luntan* 3. 1999, pp. 21-26.
- Maeo, Shigesaburō. *Gendai Seiji no Kadai [The Problems of Contemporary Politics]*. Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1976.
- Mikuriya, Takashi and Nakamura Takafusa. ed. *Kikigaki. Miyazawa Kiichi Kaikoroku [Interview. Memoirs of Miyazawa Kiichi]*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007.
- Miyazawa, Kiichi. *21 Seiki e no Ininjō [The Mandate for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century]*. Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1995.
- Miyazawa, Kiichi and Kōsaka Masataka. *Utsukushii Nihon e no Chōsen [Challenge to Create a Beautiful Japan]*. Tokyo: Bungei Shunshū, 1984.
- Mochizuki, Mike M. "Japan's Changing International Role." In Thomas U. Berger, Mike M. Mochizuki, and Jitsuo Tsuchiyama. ed. *Japan in International Politics. The Foreign Policies of an Adaptive State*. Boulder and London Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007, pp. 1-22.
- Mōri, Kazuko. *Nitchū Kankei: Sengo kara Shinjidai e [Sino-Japanese Relations: From Postwar Period to a New Era]*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006.
- Ōhira, Masayoshi. *Ōhira Masayoshi Kaisōroku: Shiryōhen [Memoirs of Ōhira Masayoshi: Documents]*. Tokyo: Ōhira Masayoshi Kaisōroku Kankōkai, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Watashi no Rirekisho [My Curriculum Vitae]*. Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 1978.
- Ōshita, Eiji. *Koga Makoto no Shin Seikai Hana to Ryū [Koga Makoto's New Political World, Flower and Dragon]*. Tokyo: Bīsuto, 2007.
- Ozawa, Ichirō. *Nihon Kaizō Keikaku [Blueprint for a New Japan]*. Tokyo: Kodansha, 2006.

- Pharr, Susan J. "Japan's Defensive Foreign Policy and the Politics of Burden Sharing." In Gerald L. Curtis. ed. *Japan's Foreign Policy After the Cold War: Coping with Change*. Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1993, pp. 235-262.
- "Sekai" Henshūbu. ed. *Hoshu Seijika wa Ureeru [Conservative Politicians Are Anxious]*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1986.
- Shioguchi, Kiichi. *Kikigaki. Ikeda Hayato. Kōdo Seichō Seiji no Keisei to Zasetu [Written Story of Ikeda Hayato. The Formation and Failure of High Growth Politics]*. Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1975.
- Sun, Hongyan. "Zhong-Ri Guanxi Zhong de LT Maoyi" [LT Trade in Sino-Japanese Relations]. *Changchun Daxue Xuebao* 17-3. May 2007, pp. 57-59.
- Suzuki, Zenkō and Azumane Chimaō. *Hitoshikarazaru o Ureeru. Moto Shushō Suzuki Zenkō Kaikoroku [Worrying about Inequality. Memoirs of Former Prime Minister Suzuki Zenkō]*. Morioka: Iwate Nippōsha, 2004.
- Tanaka, Rokusuke. *Hoshu Honryū no Chokugen [A Frank Discourse on the Conservative Mainstream]*. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ōhira Masayoshi no Hito to Seiji [Ōhira Masayoshi as a Person and His Policy]*. Tokyo: Asahi Sonorama, 1981.
- Tsuchiya, Shigeru. *Jimintō Habatsu Kōbōshi [The History of the Rise and Fall of LDP Factions]*. Tokyo: Kadensha, 2000.
- Uchida, Kenzō. *Habatsu [Factions]*. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1983.
- Uji, Toshihiko. *Suzuki Seiken 863 nichi [863 Days of Suzuki Government]*. Tokyo: Gyōsei Mondai Kenkyūjo, 1983.
- Wang, Zhensuo. *Zhanhou Riben Zhengdang Zhengzhi [The Party Politics of Postwar Japan]*. Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 2004.
- Yamamoto, Shichihei. *Habatsu. Naze sō Naru no ka [Factions. Why Is It That Way?]*. Tokyo: Nansōsha, 1985.
- Yoshida, Shigeru. *Sekai to Nihon [The World and Japan]*. Tokyo: Banchō Shobō, 1963.