Japan Academy Prize to:

Sadafumi KAWATO
Professor, Graduate Schools for Law and Politics,
The University of Tokyo

for *Electoral Systems and Party Systems*
and *Japanese Diet and Party Politics:*
Creation, Transformation, and
Political Outcomes of Legislative Institutions

Outline of the work:

Professor Sadafumi Kawato has been a leading scholar of empirical political research in Japan. He has written *Electoral Systems and Party Systems* (published in January 2004) and *Japanese Diet and Party Politics: Creation, Transformation, and Political Outcomes of Legislative Institutions* (published in September 2005). Election and Japanese Diet have been considered distinct research areas respectively with enormous primary sources and data. It is truly rare that Professor Kawato has outstanding accomplishments in the both areas.

These two books build on his former work, *Party Politics in Japan 1890–1937: Parties in Parliament and in Elections* (published in October 1992). In this book, he conducted research into prewar Imperial Diet, parties, and elections, and analyzed the historical changes using quantitative methods. He set three analytical perspectives: (1) the institutionalization of the House of Representatives and the development of parliamentary parties; (2) the development of parties in the electorate; and (3) changes in electoral system and the effects of those changes on the evolution of parties. *Japanese Diet and Party Politics* can be considered a continuation of the first perspective in the analysis of postwar Diet. *Electoral Systems and Party Systems* is an extension of the second and third perspectives to the analysis of the postwar Japanese electoral data as well as US historical electoral data.

Electoral Systems and Party Systems is a collection of ten articles on elections. The central theme is an empirical examination of Duverger's law that establishes the relationship between the electoral system and the party system. Against this law, Professor Kawato argues that the electoral system is not necessarily the most important factor determining the party system and party competition. Most relevant to this argument is chapter 6 whose title became the book title and which was subtitled 'A Comparative Analysis of Five Electoral Systems in Japan.' In this chapter, Professor Kawato analyzes past Japanese electoral data to show how and explain why Duverger's law holds and does not hold under various electoral systems used in Japan. Other chapters also include a variety of rich empirical analyses, although only a few of them are touched upon here.

Chapter 1 entitled 'Nationalization and Partisan Realignment in Congressional Elections' is a translation of the original article that appeared in the *American Political Science Review*, the most prestigious journal in political science. Professor Kawato analyzed the US Congressional election data from 1842 to 1980 and showed for the first time in the American academic world that the nationwide uniform electoral swing has taken place cyclically, corresponding to the partisan realignments of the 1890s and 1930s. In chapter 7 entitled 'Partisan Competition under Medium-sized District System (MDS),' Professor Kawato theoretically showed and empirically verified that MDS is sub-pure-proportional giving large parties seat bonuses, and at the same time super-d'Hondt proportional, being more proportional than d'Hondt formula. This is a remarkable research achievement.

Japanese Diet and Party Politics presents a long-term analysis of postwar party competition over the creation and transformation of legislative institutions and parliamentary procedures. This book overwhelms readers with

the quality and the quantity of data analysis no less than his 1992 book. Moreover, in theoretical consistency it surpasses other scholars' work as well as his previous work.

Professor Kawato's approach is called rational choice institutionalism. He utilizes rational choice models in historical research to derive a general hypothesis shown below in Japan's institutional context:

> While rational political actors such as legislators, bureaucrats, political parties, and cabinets are constrained by the Japanese Constitution and other legal institutions, they make decisions to maximize their utility, and their interdependent decisions lead to certain political outcomes. Political actors also seek to change institutional rules and parliamentary procedures to maximize their utility.

Professor Kawato develops an original deductive model, undertakes political historical research by scrutinizing legislative primary sources, and tests the above general hypothesis and more specific hypotheses by conducting sophisticated statistical analyses of all postwar legislative bills. Let us briefly summarize his achievements.

First, much work in political science has accumulated on Japanese Diet and postwar party politics, not to mention Constitution scholars' work on Japanese Diet. However, most of previous research remains descriptive accounts of the institutions and political processes. Professor Kawato's work is the first comprehensive study to theoretically and empirically analyze the interactions between the legislative institutions and political processes.

Second, Professor Kawato builds upon overseas recent legislative research trends to propose nonnormative and testable models that explain mechanisms of Japanese Diet institutions. In analyzing the relationship between the Diet and the Cabinet, he does not treat the two organs as unitary actors but focuses on the interactions of political actors within them. Thus by utilizing the micro-level actor-based models of legislative process, Professor Kawato goes beyond the traditional institutional analyses to show clearly and persuasively Japan's distinct institutional features and their unique political outcomes from a comparative perspective.

Finally, Professor Kawato has a strong orientation toward empirical research and thorough hypothesis testing procedures. He derives testable and falsifiable hypotheses from deductive theoretical propositions, examines them by analyzing massive historical sources and more than 15,000 legislative bills, and provides numerous original and interesting findings. His work stands out as excellent political scientific empirical legislative research distinct from normative Diet research of Constitution scholars. Professor Kawato's work utilizes both qualitative political historical approach with thick in-depth descriptive analysis and quantitative empirical methods. It sets the standard for good social scientific research.