JAPANESE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS:
LESSONS FOR THE WEST**

1. GENERAL DISCUSSIONS

Clark discusses the nature of authority in Japanese industry and the effect of Japanese industrial and commercial organization on the distribution of wealth and power. He clarifies Japanese employment procedures, typical ways in which employees interact, and the nature of competition between businesses. A close examination of life within a single Japanese company is included.


This study of the Japanese blue-collar worker's world and behavior is based in part on the author's experiences as a worker in a Tokyo diecast plant and in a rural auto parts company. He discusses wage structure, worker search for advancement and security, the motivation of the workers, and the relationship of the employee to the company and to the union.


Cole outlines aspects of the Japanese system of employment security and interfirm mobility. He contrasts the Japanese system with practices in other industrialized nations, and he analyzes the differences.


Cole presents a comparative study of the social organization of work in American and Japanese industry. He concentrates on patterns of job mobility in the two nations, differing concepts of the work ethic, and approaches to decision-making. He discusses those aspects of Japanese philosophy and practice that businesses in the U.S. might learn from. Among the topics discussed are worker alienation, quality control, job humanization, worker security, and self-development.

Dore, Ronald. British factory-Japanese factory: the origins of national diversity in industrial relations. Berkeley, CA 94720. University of

*Prepared by Kevin Barry, Librarian, Industrial Relations Section.
**Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.
California Press (2223 Fulton St.). 1972. 432 pp. $15.00, cloth; $6.95, paper.

Based on a detailed examination of two British and two Japanese factories, Dore's study examines the various ways in which the systems differ from each other in patterns of industrial organization and direction of development. He takes a close look at their different cultural traditions and trends of change.


Hanami examines incongruities between the Western labor relations model and the actual postwar Japanese labor environment which, although modeled on Western counterparts, is impacted upon by the idiosyncracies of Japanese traditions and social conditions. He looks at various forms of employee-employer conflict and confrontation occurring in Japan and uses legal case studies to analyze the unique characteristics and principles of dispute settlement in that country.

Jacoby, Sanford. "Origins of internal labor markets in Japan." Industrial Relations (Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720), Spring, 1979. pp. 184-196. $16.00.

Jacoby examines the applicability of both particularist theories and the specific human capital theory to the Japanese industrial relations system, and he finds problems with both approaches. He cites the importance of the increase in plant size and complexity, the changes in skilled labor organization, and the desire to forestall unionization.


———. Labor and the economy illustrated. 1980. 28 pp. (Japanese Industrial Relations Series no. 4).

———. Labor unions and labor management relations. 1979. 40 pp. (Japanese Industrial Relations Series no. 2).

———. Wages and hours of work. 1979. 32 pp. (Japanese Industrial Relations Series no. 3). Series 1-4, $5.00.

This series on industrial relations in Japan makes available the latest accurate and reliable information on the labor market and labor relations in Japan.


Based on the results of extensive fieldwork and analysis of questionnaire responses, this study relates three sets of variables—technological modernization, modernization of social organization, and organizational effectiveness—at the level of manufacturing plant. The authors contend that the Japanese "paternalism-lifetime commitment model" exaggerates the uniqueness and traditionalism of Japanese organizational structure and that, in fact, Japanese companies are moving quickly in the direction of Western, modernized structures and will continue to do so.

This report examines three fundamental Japanese industrial relations practices—lifetime employment, a seniority-based wage and career advancement system, and enterprise (“company”) unionism. It reviews the main institutions involved in industrial relations and argues the importance of the consensual system of decision-making and the special attitudes workers and managers bring to the enterprise. The report concludes by reviewing the Japanese system in relation to what is occurring in other countries.


The author suggests that the postwar economic boom in Japan can be largely attributed to the way business, labor and government work as a partnership, and he closely examines the unique patterns and prospects of this cooperation.


Reubens discusses a variety of Japanese public and private training programs which embody the basic principles and practices of similar programs in other countries but which have managed to retain traditional Japanese values. She presents evidence suggesting a decline in commitment to the lifetime employment system.


Vogel presents the full scope of Japanese successes in business, education and government. He examines the emergence of the Japanese company system and ways in which industry fosters good spirit, hard work, and high performance among its employees. He points out those aspects of Japanese policy and practices that might prove useful in the U.S. experience.


The authors present the results of a cross-national survey of American and Japanese production workers over a 15-year period. They analyze responses to six key questions and conclude that the Japanese, to a much greater extent than the Americans, have succeeded in achieving a close identity of interests and merger of values and priorities between workers and managers which has served to promote harmony, increase productivity, and facilitate decision-making.
2. Aspects of Japanese Management


Abegglen presents a description and analysis of the Japanese employment system at three points in time—1956, 1966, and 1972, a period of rapid economic growth in Japan. This book also updates and reprints in part an earlier book entitled The Japanese factory: aspects of its social organization.


In a special issue featuring Japanese management and industry, Hazama takes a close look at the collectivism of the Japanese people and its link to Japan's business success. He offers a very detailed examination of collectivist management as embodied in Japanese organization structure. The merits and demerits of collectivism are discussed.


The author looks into: the way personnel management is being conducted in Japanese industry; worker motivation to serve and produce; the principles of reward and promotion; work satisfaction; training and education programs; participation and communication; quality control and safety practices; and the role of labor unions in Japanese society.


Eleven Japanese executives discuss characteristics of the Japanese business system and fundamental differences between U.S. and Japanese management practices. Among the principal topics discussed are: decision-making by consensus; the lifetime employment system; and "wa", a Japanese principle of thought which attempts to stress the unity and harmony of things.


Focusing on a trend toward democratization of Japanese management, Odaka reviews the directions of managerial ideologies and practices since the end of World War II. Based on empirical studies, he examines the attitudes and conditions of Japanese workers, how they feel about their jobs and leisure activities, and what they think of their companies and labor unions. He looks at the impact of changes in technology and productivity on the Japanese worker and the new opportunities afforded younger workers as a result of these changes. He concludes with a program for the promotion and development of worker participation and self-government.