

**Japanese Employment and Employee Relations: An Annotated Bibliography**  
by Bill Ford, Millicent Easther and Ann Brewer

(Working Environment Branch, Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, AGPS, Canberra, 1984) pp. viii + 180, ISBN 0 644 03396 7.

The rapid growth in recent years of research in Japan and the West on Japanese employment and employee relations makes the publication of this bibliography a timely and very useful tool for anyone wishing to read on these important subjects. The bibliography is the result of a team effort co-ordinated by Bill Ford, who, over the years, has developed good working relations with the major centre in Japan for research on Japanese labour, the Japan Institute of Labour. These ties with the Institute enabled Ford and his colleagues to include works in English by leading Japanese, as well as Western, specialists in industrial and labour relations. This in itself is a major contribution, for it gives the reader access to the wide range of scholarly debates, both in Japan and overseas, concerning the distinctive features of the Japanese employment system and its labour relations.

The 536 entries are organized under thirteen comprehensive headings which touch on all aspects of Japanese employment and employee relations. In addition to the expected headings, such as employment arrangements, labour market, unions, and employment relations, I was glad to see the inclusion of other significant topical areas, such as skill formation, human aspects of technological change, and the quality of working life. The entries, mostly written between 1970 and 1983, are cross-listed where appropriate and each is accompanied by an informative annotation. The author index and subject index make location of references an easy matter. All in all, the format and presentation of the bibliography meet the highest standards.

Inevitably in a work of this magnitude and complexity, there are omissions, some of which are significant: S. Levine, 'Postwar trade unionism, collective bargaining, and Japanese social structure' in R. Dore (ed.), *Aspects of Social Change in Modern Japan* (Princeton, 1971); V. Pucik and N. Hatvany, 'Management practices in Japan: an integrated system focusing on human resources', *Social Analysis* (Adelaide), 5/6, December 1980; and S. Kamata, *Japan in the Passing Lane: An Insider's Account of Life in a Japanese Auto Factory* (Unwin Paperbacks, London, 1983). This latter book was probably published too late for inclusion in the bibliography. Its discussion of the exploitation of workers on the production line should make it required reading.

As an historian of the Japanese labour movement, I was also disappointed by the omission in this bibliography of a number of historical studies which disclose how the present system of Japanese employment and employee relations evolved over time. Two works, among many, which should have been included are E. Kishimoto, 'The characteristics of labour-management relations in Japan and their historical formation', *Kyoto University Economic Review* (October 1965 and April 1966) and M. Sakurabayashi and R. Ballon, 'Labour-management relations in modern Japan: a historical survey of personnel administration' in J. Roggendorf (ed.), *Studies in Japanese Culture: Tradition and Experiment* (Sophia University Press, Tokyo, 1965). Without a rigorous knowledge of their historical background, many of the features of the situation in Japanese factories today cannot be fully understood since

precedent operates prominently in determining what is done or not done in Japanese employment and employee relations.

However, these criticisms do not diminish the significant achievement of Ford and his team in preparing this bibliography, and in any case, any shortcomings can be taken care of when a new, up-dated bibliography is compiled in the future. Another will be needed in, say, ten years because this literature is expanding so quickly. I hope the Ford team will take on the task, for they have done superbly in producing this volume.

**Stephen S. Large**  
University of Adelaide

**Manpower Planning and Industrial Development in Uncertain Times** edited by J.M. Bennett and G.C. Lowenthal, *Papers presented at ANZAAS Symposium, 24 March 1983, Sydney* (N.S.W. Division of ANZAAS Incorporated, Sydney, 1983) pp. viii + 141, ISBN 0 86758 1557.

This book contains thirteen papers presented at a symposium organised by the NSW Division of ANZAAS in 1983. The contributions reflect the interdisciplinary ethos of ANZAAS, coming from the private sector, assorted educational institutions, and government. Proceedings are grouped into four sections covering manpower planning objectives, questions of supply and demand, government forward planning mechanisms, and manpower forward planning in the private sector. The seminar theme grew out of concern that "in the long term the development of this country's resources was likely to be constrained by the non-availability of trained manpower" (p.iv). The organising committee hoped that the symposium would highlight the issues critical to effective human resource development in the future. The result is a kaleidoscope of issues, ranging from future needs, current mechanisms, different parameters faced by industries, enterprises and individuals, to more practical difficulties in co-ordinating contingent groups.

The book is extremely useful in terms of the empirical detail presented. Jenkins, in the opening paper on occupational/industry manpower planning, discusses the need for planning to respond to macro- and micro-economic factors within a consultative framework, with the usual trio of employers, unions and government being expanded to include professional bodies, educational institutions, immigration authorities and training bodies. Stewart, looking at development prospects in mining and manufacturing over the next decade, argues that our ability to cope with cost pressures will depend on the extent to which we face hard realities. Smith, Rumsey and Ford focus on attitudes towards training and 'skill'. Smith, looking at future training needs, argues that we have still to develop responsibilities and objectives in regard to post-school skill acquisition. Acceptance of minimum education provision has not led to similar criteria being applied to employment related skills. Rumsey discusses the role of technical education in industrial development, seeing our long-term prosperity as being dependent on "a labour force well-trained in modern technologies with inbuilt flexibility and adaptability, whose members