

Tsukiai—Obligatory Personal Relationships of Japanese White-Collar Company Employees

Author(s): REIKO ATSUMI

Source: *Human Organization*, Spring 1979, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Spring 1979), pp. 63-70

Published by: Society for Applied Anthropology

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44125552>

---

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Society for Applied Anthropology is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Human Organization*

JSTOR

Tsukiai—  
Obligatory Personal  
Relationships  
of Japanese  
White-Collar  
Company  
Employees

REIKO ATSUMI

*Reiko Atsumi is a Lecturer in the School of Modern Asian Studies, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia. The research on which this paper is based was conducted in Tokyo between 1972 and 1974.*

THE PROCESS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION has brought about a number of structural changes in Japan. These include increased urbanization, the nucleation of families, occupational specialization, and the emergence of a large, middle class, white-collar population in the cities. Many of these phenomena duplicate changes that have occurred in industrialized Western countries. There are, however, some phenomena which do not correspond to the patterns observed in the West. One example is found in the area of interpersonal relationships. Many company employees in Japan often spend their after-work hours with their fellow employees and other work-related people. Although this phenomenon is also observed in the West, the frequency and extent of the Japanese practice far exceeds that in the West (cf. Rohlen 1974:111). For example, a questionnaire<sup>1</sup> result concerning where and with whom the respondent had had supper on the preceding five evenings revealed that 45% of the sample had had supper outside the home with some work-related people twice or more during the preceding five working days. Only about a third of the sample said that they had had supper at home on each of the five days. Group trips, parties of various kinds, and other group activities sponsored and/or organized by the company (or by a small unit of the company) are also common (Vogel 1963; Plath 1964; Rohlen 1974). These facts have generally been interpreted as expressions of a uniquely Japanese cultural pattern of strong group solidarity and loyalty to the company on which the employee's economic life depends (Nakane 1970). The interpersonal relationships in such instances are said to be frank and intimate.

It is also known, however, that some people do not associate with their fellow workers after work as often as others do, or that they reluctantly participate in such group activities (Rohlen 1974:110). These individuals tend to be regarded by their fellows as lacking in the proper attitude towards *tsukiai*, not to mention the requisite skills. Also, when people associate with their fellow workers, they sometimes reluctantly or apologetically justify their behavior by saying, "I have no choice, because *tsukiai* requires it." Expressions of this type are frequently heard in Japanese society. The underlying connotation in such expressions is a feeling of obligation. That is, a person accompanies his workmates to bars and restaurants because he feels he ought to do so, not because he really wants to; or a person joins an overnight trip of his office group because he considers it as a necessary chore. Thus this sense of obligation seems to contradict the commonly accepted notion that the Japanese company employee associates with his fellow workers after work only because he likes to be with his group in order to strengthen group solidarity. It also contradicts the proposition that this is the group with which employees feel most relaxed and to which they feel

closest. Interpersonal relationships that result from a sense of obligation are quite different in quality from the relationships spontaneously induced by mutual attractions or shared interests. If two people are real friends who are attracted to each other or share a common interest, they enjoy their association, but if a person has to associate with another because of a feeling of obligation or social necessity, such an association is certainly felt to be a burden, and makes it difficult for the participants to truly relax and enjoy themselves.

This sense of obligation was long ago pointed out by Benedict (1946) as the governing principle underlying Japanese social behavior. Dore (1958) also observed the prevalence of practices based on obligatory social relationships in urban Japanese life. Such practices are not only confined to status inequalities but also observed among status equals such as neighbors and fellow employees.

The viability of such traditional interpersonal relationships in Japanese economic and industrial organizations has been questioned by a number of social scientists studying the impact of industrialization in nonwestern societies. For example, Bendix (1967:20) claimed that a "substitution of contractual and monetary ties for the earlier familial or quasi-familial relationships between employer and worker" is a necessary concomitant of industrialization. Bennett (1967:447) also stated that "Japan's current industrial growth and urbanization is producing or reinforcing the institutional patterns of a general type familiar in all the highly industrialized societies of the West." This proposition is known as the "convergence theory" (Karsh and Cole 1968). Cole's (1971) findings on the Japanese blue-collar worker also suggest that some of the structural changes that have occurred in the factories are weakening the traditional structure of management, although he states that the traditional web of reciprocal obligations is at present successfully utilized as a powerful control device in the relationship between the worker and the factory as well as between the superior and the subordinate. He further suggests that the Japanese blue-collar worker is increasingly being freed from these traditional bonds and will sooner or later face the problems experienced by more independent individuals. This latter hypothesis still requires substantial evidence. Cole's findings, however, are illuminating in the sense that the traditional pattern of interpersonal relationships is adaptive to an industrial setting, although his treatment of the traditional web of reciprocal obligations is limited to the more formalized interactions, and to the context of the superior-subordinate relationships among blue-collar workers in factories.

This ambiguity concerning the nature of the Japanese company employee's interpersonal relationships makes one wonder whether the statements that have appeared in many writings about Japanese interpersonal relationships are oversimplifications or overgeneralizations. That is, the patterns of the Japanese company employee's interpersonal re-

lationships may not be so uniform, but may vary from individual to individual and from circumstance to circumstance.

Thus, there may be some employees who wish to spend, and do spend, a great deal of their time associating with their fellow workers and other work-related people, and there may be others who do not really wish to spend time in this way but feel more or less obliged to do so. And there may be still other people who do not feel it necessary to spend so much time with their fellow workers after work and in fact spend very little of their time in such activities.

If such differences in perception, motives, and behavioral patterns among employees exist, then we wish to know why. This kind of group activity must have some meaning and function for those who take part in it. What are the meanings and functions underlying such activities? What variables are involved in producing the differences? What kinds of people consider such activities important to their well-being? Are the differences related to a person's age, educational background, the size and/or the type of the company where he is employed, his position and status in the company, the type and function of his job, and so on?

### *The Present Study*

In order to obtain answers to these questions, intensive interviews with 19 key informants were carried out in Tokyo during a two-year period between 1972 and 1974.<sup>2</sup> The analysis of the results of these interviews, combined with questionnaire results and other supplementary data, has revealed the following: (1) Personal relationships with work-related people are clearly distinguished from friendship in terms of the motives, the degree of permissiveness, and the functions each kind of relationship fulfills. (2) Japanese company employees engage in after-hours activities with their colleagues and other work-related people out of a sense of obligation or necessity, and such group activities are regarded as a means to achieving a practical end. (3) The degree of participation in such group activities varies from individual to individual, depending on the employee's work environment.

Tsukiai is the key word in this study. It best describes the basic concept underlying the pattern of informal and after-hours relationships among Japanese company employees. In this study the term *tsukiai* is defined as personal relationships cultivated as a result of social necessity or feelings of obligation. It is sometimes referred to by Japanese employees as their "official" or work relationships. In contrast, there are "private" friendships which develop out of mutual liking, attractions, interests, and likemindedness. These two categories of personal relationships, *tsukiai* and friendships, are mutually exclusive. This conceptual distinction can be equated with Wolf's distinction between instrumental friendship and expressive or emotional friendship (Wolf 1966:10). There is a clear distinction between the

two in the Japanese company employee's perception, and the same individual does not assume both roles vis-à-vis another individual. Several criteria are used for making this categorization. One is the degree of permissiveness or openness in the relationship, for example, as seen in the permitted topics of conversation. Another is the quality of reciprocity, i.e., whether a person expects emotional or affective satisfaction from the relationship or instrumental gain from it. Another criterion is the degree of spontaneity, namely, whether or not a person associates with another by his own volition (see Table 1). Most of one's personal relationships with fellow workers and other work-related people outside the work situation proper fall into the category of *tsukiai*, obligatory personal relationships, whereas "private" friendships are maintained with a small number of the employee's former classmates (from his secondary school and/or university) and with people with whom he shares common interests but with whom he has no work relationship.

What is it that obliges a Japanese company employee to associate with his fellow workers and other work-related people? Some employees associate with each other quite often and quite extensively, spending almost all their after-hours time on weekdays in *tsukiai* activities. The after-hours activities of one of my informants, Mr. Sato, illustrate this pattern. Mr. Sato is a thirty-nine-year-old deputy section manager of the personnel department of a medium-large<sup>3</sup> manufacturing company in Tokyo. Since there was no section manager in his department at the time, Mr. Sato was the acting section manager. His after-hours time is almost entirely taken up by association with coemployees and business associates. The description given below does not represent an exceptional week. On Monday

afternoon, Mr. Sato attended a meeting of a regional association concerned with the regulation of conditions of work; he had dinner with the members, and stayed for the social hour afterwards. On Tuesday, he had a similar afternoon meeting, and then a dinner and a social hour with the people who had attended the meeting. On Wednesday, he spent his after-hours time with his boss (the department manager) and some colleagues at nearby bars and snack shops. On Thursday, he had a meeting in the afternoon and later attended a dinner and social hour with ten members of a management study group. On Friday, he dined with several department and plant managers of the company in the company's club room. On Saturday, he stayed in the office in the afternoon to do some accumulated work and took supper alone in the office. (On Saturdays, one half of the employees in Mr. Sato's company work until noon, and the other half take the day off.)

Some other employees do not participate in *tsukiai* activities as often or as extensively as does Mr. Sato, although many of them do take part in such activities to a limited extent. Why are there such differences in the degree of participation in *tsukiai* activities between different employees? What variables are involved in producing such differences? I hypothesized that differing degrees of participation in the *tsukiai* activities are primarily related to the following three variables: (1) the size of the company in which a person is employed, (2) the function the person performs, and (3) the employee's perception of his present and future career as a company employee. The analysis of my interview results provides support for these propositions. Namely, those who work for large Japanese companies, those who hold "generalist" positions with interdependent functions, and those who perceive themselves as "successful" or "elite"

TABLE 1. *TSUKIAI* AND FRIENDSHIP OF JAPANESE WHITE-COLLAR COMPANY EMPLOYEES.

	<i>Tsukiai</i>	<i>Friendship</i>
1. Basis of relationship	cultivated as a result of social necessity or feeling of obligation	developed out of mutual likings, interests, attractions, and likemindedness
2. Purpose of relationship	a means to attain an instrumental goal	for its own sake, i.e., for enjoyment
3. With whom relationship is maintained	immediate coemployees and all work-related people N.B. Network can be extended depending on the need perceived	ex-classmates, hobby mates, coemployees without direct work relationships N.B. A limited number of people makes up the core
4. Activities shared	drinking and eating, playing mahjong and/or golf, participating in company-organized activities such as trips, parties, and contests	drinking and eating, playing mahjong, golf, and/or other games or sports, pursuing common interests and/or hobbies, taking trips, and occasional home visiting
5. Topics of conversation	work and company-related problems, social, economic, political issues, and sports and pleasures	almost any topics including personal concerns, worries, problems, etc.
6. Qualities of relationship	transient instrumental restrictive tense segmentary (atomistic) superficial formal	lasting affective permissive relaxed exhaustive (overall) involved informal

company employees, have a higher degree of involvement in tsukiai activities than do those who work for small Japanese companies, those who hold specialist positions with independent functions, and those who consider themselves "off-the-main-road" or "nonelite" company employees. It was also found that a higher degree of involvement in tsukiai activities was a result of their perception of a stronger need for tsukiai relationships in their work environment (Table 2). \*

Let me now explicate the mechanism underlying the differing degrees of participation in tsukiai activities. In large Japanese companies, work is not assigned to an individual employee, but to a group of employees. In such a system, mutual support and harmonious teamwork among colleagues are prerequisites for carrying out their work successfully. This means they are bound to establish good relationships and to understand each other well. Also, planning and decision making in the large Japanese company is a long and circuitous process based on group consensus, as explained by a number of economists (Brown 1966; Drucker 1971; Hazama 1971; Hijikata 1971; Shishido 1973; Yoshihashi 1973). The system involves several steps. First, a detailed proposal or policy plan is prepared by an employee at the middle level of the management structure (e.g., a section manager) and those immediately below him. The proposal is then circulated vertically and horizontally to all departments and divisions that are or may be concerned with it. If any questions or doubts are raised in the course of its circulation, the proposal is returned to the originating department or section for revision. After it is approved by

every section and department involved, it is submitted to the top executives. In such circumstances, authority and responsibility are diffused and shared by many individuals. Furthermore, Japanese employees avoid, as much as possible, overt oppositions or confrontations involved in either or types of alternatives. The prototype of this system is that of the traditional Japanese village community (Kida 1967). Group consensus is pursued in order to ensure that every member of the "community" takes part in the planning and the decision making, and so that every individual involved is satisfied with the result. A consensus is more easily achieved when the individuals involved know one another well and understand each other's position and feelings. This is why tsukiai associations are actively pursued among those who work together, those who share authority and responsibility, or those who represent different organizations that have business relationships with each other.

In other words, the function of tsukiai activities is twofold. First, tsukiai aims to cultivate smooth relationships among work-related people. Second, it provides the employees of a large Japanese company with opportunities to exchange background information necessary for efficient job performance. By background information I mean information such as who is doing what in what connection, who has what kind of relationship with whom, who has what kinds of tendencies, viewpoints, resources, power, etc. In short, tsukiai activities facilitate communication flow and enhance the level of understanding of the ongoing activities of the company. These aims are difficult to attain in brisk business meetings during work hours. The white-collar "generalist" employee in the large Japanese company must be able to relate well with his colleagues and other work-related people and be thoroughly familiar with up-to-date information on the ongoing activities of his company and its business, even if he is not already involved in the matter at hand himself.

In this study, tsukiai activities with one's fellow workers and other work-related people were found most typically among the "generalist" employees of large Japanese companies. They were most highly developed among employees in the middle management, e.g., section managers and deputy section managers. These people associate with work-related people after work almost every working day. Questionnaire results also give some support to the above conclusion (Table 3). These are the people who must be able to relate well to people both above and below them, and to people outside their own company. They must also be able to assess accurately possible reactions of the relevant individuals and offices to their proposals, so that such proposals will go through to the top management for approval without a great deal of preliminary fuss.

On the other hand, tsukiai and tsukiai activities with work-related people are neglected or underdeveloped among the employees of small Japanese companies. These employees do not have the same need to engage in tsukiai

TABLE 2. PATTERNS OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF JAPANESE WHITE-COLLAR COMPANY EMPLOYEES.

Relationships with:	Work-related people		Nonwork-related people
	need perceived	practice	practice
Typical employee of small Japanese co.,	-	-	++
Employee type A <sup>1</sup> large Japanese co.,	+	+	++
Employee type B <sup>2</sup> large Japanese co.,	++	++	- or +

Notes:

- (-) indicates none or little, in degree.
- (+) indicates some or moderate degree.
- (++) indicates a high or excessive degree.

<sup>1</sup> This type includes those employees who consider themselves to be "less successful" as company employees, or those employees who hold an independent or specialist position.

<sup>2</sup> This type includes those employees who consider themselves to be "successful," and perform interdependent functions in the company.

**TABLE 3. PERCENTAGES OF JAPANESE WHITE-COLLAR COMPANY EMPLOYEES WHO HAD HAD SUPPER WITH WORK-RELATED PEOPLE DURING PAST FIVE DAYS (%)**

Frequency	Large & medium-large company employees		Small & medium-small company employees
	Titled (N=45)	Untitled (N=45)	(N=19)
0	18%	40%	53%
1	20	22	21
2	29	20	16
3 or more	33	17	10

activities as do those who work for large companies. If a person is employed in a small Japanese company, first of all, he is more familiar with the other employees' functions, perspectives, attitudes, personalities, and backgrounds. Second, he does not have to speculate as to how other people will react to his proposal or plan. He himself and/or his immediate superior can discuss the matter with the president of the company directly. Furthermore, their business relationships are mostly based on well-established particularistic relationships with a limited number of business partners. So why bother to associate with fellow workers or business associates after work? If the employees of a small firm do associate with their fellow workers or other work-related people, such as dealers, it is not because of the need to know them better or to get background information on some problem; rather, it is because of a common interest or some other relationship, such as neighborhood of residence or kinship.

In a small company, an employee can easily become an integral part of the group during the normal working hours. However, advanced industrialization has brought about a tremendous expansion in the size and complexity of a great many business organizations, and a corresponding increase in the number of employees with various backgrounds and functions. Inevitably, compartmentalization of the company occurs as the company grows in size. For example, one of the large Japanese manufacturing companies for which three of my informants work is divided into more than 20 major departments. This company also has factories in 14 different areas all over the country. In any large Japanese company, a great many individuals and organizations are involved in various transactions and kinds of processing. It requires an extra effort for the white-collar company employees in a large Japanese company to establish smooth, productive relationships with work-related people (cf. Rohlen 1974:107) and to attain a sufficient level of understanding of the company's complex activities. It is in this context that we find the *raison d'être* of the white-collar company employee's particular type of tsukiai activities with his fellow workers and work-related

people. Tsukiai activities such as playing mahjong together, or drinking and eating together after work, provide a common experience through which an empathetic relationship is cultivated and background information is exchanged. Therefore, tsukiai relationships play a most important role among employees in a large Japanese company, and tsukiai activities become more intensive and frequent among those who have a deeper involvement, as well as interdependent functions, in the company's business.

Incidentally, one may wonder who pays all the expenses that are associated with tsukiai activities. Overnight trips and various parties are commonly sponsored by the company or, at least, subsidized by the company. Daily informal tsukiai expenses are usually paid for by the employees about half of the time. The remainder may be charged to the company's account. Some employees, particularly those in the middle management or those with titles, have the use of a company account that has been designated for tsukiai purposes. The company's entertainment account definitely reinforces tsukiai activities, but it is not the entertainment account that impels Japanese white-collar company employees to participate in intensive tsukiai activities. Rather, it is the necessity for tsukiai relationships that causes participation in tsukiai activities. And it is this necessity that has led inevitably to the setting up of entertainment accounts.

By now it must be clear what the avoidance of tsukiai activities by a "generalist" employee of a large Japanese company would entail. He would be greatly handicapped in the performance of his job. It is unlikely that he could cultivate and establish empathetic relationships with his workmates during office hours. His relationships with these people would most likely remain businesslike and superficial. In addition, he would be cut off from important sources of background information of the kind mentioned previously. A deficiency in tsukiai would clearly be harmful, even fatal, to one's prospects for a "successful" career as a company employee in a large Japanese firm, although it may not be quite so disadvantageous to employees with specialist positions, who at present constitute only a small minority in Japanese companies.

A conspicuous feature of the Japanese white-collar company employee's tsukiai relationships, in addition to their instrumentality, is the almost complete exclusion of wives from the related activities. This demarcation between home and work or private and public life has been pointed out by a number of other scholars.

Vogel (1963), for example, states that the "salary-man's" network of personal relationships and his wife's network of personal relationships are mutually exclusive, that is, his activities with his "friends" from work are separate from the wife's leisure activities with her "friends." Salamon's study (1975) further elaborates the separate network of personal relationships maintained by the wives of the Japanese employees in middle management. A parallel is not found

among the German housewives in the corresponding category. In comparing the employees of certain British factories with those of certain Japanese factories, Dore (1973) observed that the Japanese man spends time in bars and "enjoys" weekends at hot-spring resorts with his workmates rather than with his wife, and pointed out the separation of the man's work life from the rest of his life. A similar observation is presented in Rohlen's work, i.e., the bank employees he studied "prefer to keep office and personal relations separate from their families" (Rohlen 1974:225).

The reason for the exclusion of family members from one's work relations is self-evident. Wives of Japanese white-collar company employees are not included in their husbands' tsukiai activities because they are not a part of the organization and hence do not share a common goal for which tsukiai functions as a means. Tsukiai activities are an important, and probably the only available, means for Japanese white-collar company employees to achieve the goals indicated earlier. Including wives in these activities would not really contribute to the attainment of the goals being pursued. Tsukiai associations are designed to cultivate empathetic relationships among colleagues and work associates. Participation by the employees' wives is unrelated to this end and might well interfere with its achievement.

Because of this instrumentality, most tsukiai relationships cannot become relaxing, enjoyable experiences (cf. Rohlen 1974). Japanese white-collar company employees do not usually seek to associate with their fellow workers and work associates just to enjoy the relationship itself, although it cannot be denied that a certain amount of pleasure and fun is associated with drinking and eating together or playing mahjong together. Tsukiai relationships superficially resemble "private" friendships and it is hard for an outsider to differentiate between them. In terms of frequency of contacts, tsukiai relationships with fellow workers in most cases supersede other kinds of personal relationships. The range and kinds of activities involved may not be much different between friendships and tsukiai relationships. Only in the perception of the employee is there a clear-cut, unambiguous demarcation between the two. This is reflected in the selection of topics of, and the extent of revealing oneself in, conversation. Tsukiai with fellow workers is not a substitute for personal relationships with "private" friends, however frequent the contacts may be. The Japanese company employee does have personal relationships of the affective and unreserved sort. Many company employees maintain such personal relationships outside their work relationships, but they do not necessarily feel satisfied or happy with the way they allocate their time and energy to them. Some employees wish that they could spend more time with their family and friends, or in other pursuits. But at the same time they are not entirely dissatisfied with their present situation either, because spend-

ing time with their fellow workers and other work-related people is rewarding to their work and career. This is inextricably bound up with their sense of values, that is, their belief that working for the company is nearly everything. Tsukiai provides a culturally acceptable means of seeking "success." At present, many Japanese white-collar company employees are not willing to sacrifice these values, nor are they willing to give up the success that is represented by frequent or constant tsukiai activities.

Although intensive tsukiai activities are carried out at the expense of other social and nonwork activities, it is not correct to assume that those company employees who are involved in intensive tsukiai associations seek "success" at the expense of their family lives, or that those who are not involved in intensive tsukiai associations revert to *my-home-ism*.<sup>4</sup> Behaviors and attitudes of my informants relative to home and family life are amazingly uniform, regardless of affiliation or position within a company. All of my informants basically agree with the ideal of differentiated roles of husband and wife at home. They claim that the man's potential is best realized in the domain outside the home, whereas women have a natural talent for domestic work and homemaking. Those who are less involved in tsukiai associations are not necessarily more interested in helping their wives at home, or in pursuing activities with their families, than those who are involved in intensive tsukiai associations. Employees with less of a need for tsukiai associations tend to spend more time with their "private" friends or in extrawork activities.

Since tsukiai is a means of achieving certain instrumental goals, an employee's network of tsukiai relationships changes when his goals change. For example, if a person changes his job, leaves a company, or is transferred to a different section, another department, or a branch office, his previous network of tsukiai may no longer have the same meaning nor serve the same function. If it does, however, he will definitely continue the old tsukiai relationships. Although changing companies is not commonly practiced among white-collar employees working for large Japanese companies, intra-company mobility is quite frequent. Of those informants who work for a large or medium-large Japanese company, all but one employee had had one or more intra-company transfers. The employee who had never been transferred is an engineer and had been employed by his company for his special qualifications and skills. The number of intra-company transfers is high among "generalist" employees. For example, Mr. Honda, who had been with his company for 20 years had had four intra-company transfers. He remained in four of the five positions for a period of one to four years, and in one for 11 years. Bank employees seem to follow a similar pattern. Rohlen's study (1974:105) gives the average time in a section or branch of a bank as 3.75 years.

When a person moves from one office to another, his tsukiai network also changes, or at least the function of the

old tsukiai relationships changes. Accordingly, the contacts with the old tsukiai associates become infrequent after such a transfer, or old tsukiai relationships change in quality or completely die out. This is precisely why many of the Japanese white-collar employees working for large Japanese companies do not change their jobs. A most important skill for the white-collar employee of large Japanese companies is to relate well to any and all individuals with whom he comes into contact, inside as well as outside the company. A critical asset is his network of tsukiai relationships, because most of the white-collar company employee's work is very much dependent on the social climate of his job. This includes such factors as the kind of resources, assistance, and support he can mobilize. The real reason for not changing companies is not that the employees feel obliged to the group or loyal to the company, but rather that they cannot sacrifice the tsukiai relationships that they have painfully cultivated with their fellow workers and other work-related people. Without this asset of tsukiai relationships, a Japanese "generalist" white-collar company employee is miserably incompetent to do what is required and expected of him. The top administrators of large Japanese companies are well aware of the importance of the tsukiai network and the social climate in a Japanese company. Accordingly, they do not attempt to recruit mid-career men from the outside. Instead, the system tends to reward those who stay with the same company until retirement age.

### Conclusion

It is therefore quite apparent that the uniquely Japanese cultural pattern of tsukiai has a definite function to perform among Japanese company employees, and it is particularly adaptable to the work environment in large companies. Expansion and the inevitable compartmentalization of large manufacturing and commercial enterprises are a consequence of advanced industrialization. With the successful utilization of particularistic tsukiai relationships, Japanese white-collar company employees are able to cope with the impact of advanced industrialization. Tsukiai with fellow workers and work associates maintains intact the traditional ideology of sharing work and responsibility, and of achieving a consensus among all these people. Through an intensive analysis of what seems at first glance to be solidarity-perpetuation behavior among Japanese company employees, this study has disclosed that the Japanese company employee is much more pragmatic in his relationship with his company than the traditional theory has suggested. The study also demonstrates that Japanese cultural patterns continue to influence the particular shape that Japan's modern industrial organizations take.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> As supplementary data, 125 short questionnaires were collected from married male Japanese white-collar company

employees working for various companies in Tokyo and the vicinity in 1973.

<sup>2</sup> These 19 informants are all college-educated male Japanese who satisfied the following criteria: (a) they were employed by manufacturing or trading companies that have an office in Tokyo; (b) they were engaged in white-collar work, which includes positions of a professional-technical, clerical-secretarial, or managerial nature; and (c) they were married. Their ages ranged from the late twenties to the mid-forties.

<sup>3</sup> In this study the company size is operationally defined in terms of the total number of employees. That is, companies with fewer than 29 employees are classified as small; those with 30 to 299 employees as medium-small; those with 300 to 999 employees as medium-large; and those with 1,000 or more employees are classified as large.

<sup>4</sup> This coinage refers to the attitudes and behaviors that stress one's own home and family life. Men with my-home-ism are generally portrayed as men of little ambition (cf. Dore 1973:212).

### REFERENCES CITED

- Bendix, R.  
1967 Preconditions of Development; a Comparison of Japan and Germany. *In Aspects of Social Change in Modern Japan*, R. P. Dore, ed.
- Benedict, R.  
1946 *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Tokyo: C. E. Tuttle.
- Bennett, J. W.  
1967 Japanese Economic Growth: Background for Social Change. *In Aspects of Social Change in Modern Japan*, R. P. Dore, ed.
- Brown, W.  
1966 Japanese Management: the Cultural Background. *Monumenta Nipponica* 21:47-69.
- Cole, R. E.  
1971 *Japanese Blue Collar*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Dore, R. P.  
1958 *City Life in Japan*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.  
1973 *British Factory—Japanese Factory*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Drucker, P. R.  
1971 What We Can Learn from Japanese Management. *Harvard Business Review* March-April: 110-22.
- Hazama, H.  
1971 *Nihonteki Keiei [Japanese-Management]*. Tokyo: Nihonkeizai Shinbun-sha.
- Hijikata, B.  
1971 Toward Constitutional Renovation of Corporate Organizations. *Management Japan* 4 (4): 24-29.
- Karsh, B., and R. E. Cole  
1968 Industrialization and the Convergence Hypothesis: Some Aspects of Contemporary Japan. *Journal of Social Issues* 24 (4):45-64.
- Kida, M.  
1967 *Nippon Buraku [Japanese Community]*. Tokyo: Iwanamishoten.
- Nakane, C.  
1970 *Japanese Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

- Plath, D. W.  
 1964 *The After Hours: Modern Japan and the Search for Enjoyment*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Rohlen, T. P.  
 1974 *For Harmony and Strength*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Salamon, S.  
 1975 The Varied Groups of Japanese and German Housewives. *The Japan Interpreter* 10 (2):151-70.
- Shishido, T.  
 1973 The Framework of Decision Making in Japanese Economic Policies. Unpublished manuscript.
- Vogel, E. F.  
 1963 *Japan's New Middle Class*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Wolf, E.  
 1966 Kinship, Friendship and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies. *In The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies*, M. Banton ed. London: Tavistock Publications.
- Yoshihashi, T.  
 1973 Linkages Between Social Bonds and Productivity Efforts in Japan. Unpublished manuscript.