

# Tradition and Modernity: Working Culture in the Western Model and Japanese Model, as an Expression of a Cultural Models. A First Reading

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## Abstract

In this short article, I'll leave the application of cultural models (in the West and in Japan), which define and construct a new reality (linguistic, cultural, social, work). Through this first reading will redefine better the cultural aspect of both worlds and you will better understand the similarities and differences between the Western model (even for the synthesis made by Adriano Olivetti) and the Japanese model (which is not only a way of producing, but also is a cultural expression).

**Keywords:** Western model, Japanese model, tradition, and cultural aspects and economic future.

## 1. Introduction

In the debate that is now focused on end of Fordism and in its new phase of post Fordism, the Japanese model remains one of the most obvious consequences, with its lean organizational form that allowed a continuous improvement of production processes and continuous adaptability in cultural production. In fact, Japanese management techniques have been the subject of great attention in recent decades.

Between 60 and 70 years many Western companies, including for the success of the Japanese model considered the winning model. Lean manufacturing, as

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elements of cultural identity, had to be based on very specific social conditions to function effectively. In fact, the Japanese model is going to affect the building of a new social reality, touching on cultural, institutional, trust between employees and the company.

## **2. Working Culture in the Western Model and Japanese Model**

In short, the success of major Japanese firms is not attributable only to a certain set of working practices or managerial skills, such as a particular manufacturing process some personnel policy; but the effective new vision in the Western world to conceive of the Organization as a community to which you belong, which gives prominence to common problems, develop forms of mutual aid and create an interdependence between the various members and where, being hired, means a guarantee of mutual fidelity (the job will last a lifetime and the employee will develop a form of absolute dedication to the enterprise) , almost like a second family.

Whereby you can get, almost, to ask employees, not merely to the tasks assigned, but to cooperate voluntarily in search of more advanced and innovative solutions in the management of production processes, expanding the range of activities carried out inside the factory, also in view of the fact that they themselves can become customers themselves; It is therefore in their interest that the company produces at best.

This configuration allows employees to increase the variety of the work to be done and to increase the degree of emotional involvement, on it. For a first socio-economic analysis this may suggest that in the Japanese model, very symbolic resource use, as trust between counterparties, you can see how cognitive and symbolic resources, redundancy becomes right in the Japanese model, the all instrumental to the essential material resources used in the production process.

The advent of the Japanese model, as new construction of socio-economic reality and its social implications ranging from the reminder of the tradition to the factors located, deserves a close examination on aspects that are not evident human resource management strategies. In fact, a "post modern" interpretation of consent in Japanese transplant as pure AWE interiorized, points out that the prospect of lifetime employment is an option that is often reserved only for employed males average although this practice now is failing due to the phenomenon of outsourcing.

Among employees "contoterzisti" and other workers, it has created a kind of barrier, whereby the work experience and the perception of the work turns out to be different between the two groups. For this reason, in the choice of personnel selecting individuals able to adapt easily to corporate culture: the

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selection of candidates is intended to test their adherence to the values and philosophy of the company. In any case, and surprising as the employee enters empathy with your workgroup, almost like a second family, and where work becomes a central part of their lives.

To demonstrate this, even the temporal phases dedicated to relaxation and leisure opportunities organised by your company, are far more than other workers in other countries.

In fact, the companies themselves for the welfare of its employees, spend much more of Western companies: each person is invited to develop and maintain good relationships with work's colleagues.

Underlying these inputs, are shared values, system-wide country (social, cultural, economic): entrepreneurship, commitment to improvement, to be humble, to be kind, to be collaborative.

All are immersed in this cultural and organisational work climate that hides, however, another cultural aspect and situated: the true Japanese is still strongly hierarchical social structure and the location of an individual is largely determined by its level of education, age, gender and the firm for which he works, the ratio of "padrinaggio" between old and new worker came; ultimately, a transpose in the working world the social model, with the surprise ending that was building a consistent model of social control.

All unknown social schemes, at least until the economic boom of the years ' 50, in Italy.

The authority and still based on a paternalistic cultural tradition and aspects that very topic-based cultural tradition as the difference between the various individuals and strong competitiveness or adaptation to the dominant values and norms, transforming the work itself into something unnerving and exhausting.

It is clear that overstated the apparent harmony which govern Japanese society. In fact, there are many signs of conflict both within a company that in cooperation or competition in the same market.

The harmony that allows a group of work can be interpreted as a compulsion that is less in moments of leisure. You can also say that Japanese workers are less satisfied with their jobs than workers in the West, because many of them consider inadequate the pay they receive for the stressful work shifts to which they are subjected.

The contrast, then, with the social-cultural context-in fact remains very apparent there are many Western political practices so to speak Japanese management, if you look at and evaluated from a Western point of view, may appear unacceptable or even illegal, while referring to the tradition of Japanese world.

In conclusion, what can be the class that derives from the study of the Japanese model. We must first ensure that the socio-economic experience of the

Japanese model is read only positive twist; are not unitary contexts in which employees interact happily to achieve common goals. They're not like Adriano Olivetti experience taught in Italy, where the company was seen as a community.

In fact, despite reaching the largest extension in the years 50/70, the company based in Ivrea always has an extensive system of social services because of its sense of identity and to respect the role of the individual, which does not coincide with the Western or Japanese model.

The first mutua company, which contribute in equal measure the employees and management dating back to 1909, just one year after the establishment of the company; in 1932 creation of Fondazione Domenico Burzio (named after the first Technical Director of Olivetti and close associate of Camillo), created to ensure the worker "a social security beyond the limit of insurance"; the Office social workers and bus service to transport employees from surrounding countries in Ivrea are established in 1937.

With Adriano Olivetti, the measures are institutionalized: take the form of a comprehensive system of social services, are characterized by a strong focus on the person and the constant search for quality and efficiency. Also, I'm not a master franchise, but a right of the worker.

In this setting contributes significantly to the Management Board, established in 1948 and remained in Office until 1971. The Board is an internal organ but autonomous; It comprises representatives of the company and employees; has power Advisory on work organisation, planning of industrial plants, production planning, improving the living conditions of workers in and out of the factory and has binding opinions with respect to the allocation of resources by the Directorate of social services and assistance.

Ultimately, the anticipation of welfare state — all anchored in the force, also, of the tradition.

### **3. Discussion and Conclusion**

The enterprise is one of the main drivers of change in the social fabric and then has to contribute to the quest for better quality of individual and collective life. The philosophy behind this vision is not foreign to the idea that an extensive welfare system contributes to improving productivity (i.e. productivity) and the involvement of employees, as they know that their future and that of their families is protected and secured.

In other words, creating a positive social environment strengthens the loyalty of the worker and his willingness to collaborate actively in the development of the enterprise.

In any case, the social services of Olivetti do not aim to replace the public system, but rather to remedy deficiencies or to anticipate the times. And

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indeed, with the gradual strengthening of the welfare State, as a result of new laws and new collective bargaining agreements, the role of corporate services will decrease, as has been the case especially from years ' 80.

So does not seem to have been in Japan, where tradition and modernity join together out of necessity and not by Convention. The Japanese model includes, therefore, socio-cultural elements, but often this representation obscures the true soul.

Invoking tradition to mask a technology "frugale" (where, for "frugale", does not mean low quality), to improve the physical conditions of human labor, allowing greater adaptability and coordination of staff to ensure that the Japanese Organization, as social and economic model, relies on a network of personal relationships and spread of commitment and trust.

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