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KAISHA-SHI:
A BRIEF GLIMPSE OF JAPANESE COMPANY HISTORIES
AND COMPANY CULTURE

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Japanese Company Histories Interest Group Meeting at the annual meeting of the Association for

Introduction

A kaisha-shi is a publication providing a company's history, which is usually written, compiled,
produced, and distributed by that company. Kaisha-shi are impressively compiled works,
generally ranging from one hundred to several hundred pages, and in some cases even more, with
historical illustrations and photographs. They are available directly from the companies
themselves, but generally are not available for sale on the regular book market. Obviously, the
circulation number of copies of kaisha-shi is limited, compared with commercial publications. An
increasing number of companies are now publishing kaisha-shi -- it has been estimated that a new
kaisha-shi is produced every two days.

The kaisha-shi is a unique type of publication and can be an excellent source of detailed
information on Japan's business and industrial world. It can also serve as a tool for gaining
greater understanding of Japanese companies, their activities, products, structures, histories, and
even their socio-economic roles in their local, as well as in international, communities. The
records of individual companies were formerly unavailable to persons not connected with their
operations. Kaisha-shi, however, have made such information much more accessible to the
public, providing a wealth of information on the rationale and process of decision-making,
business strategies, operations, management and union relationships, and related numerical data
and chronologies.

On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that each company prefers to publicize their more
positive and stronger aspects rather than their negative or potentially image-damaging records. The
company determines what is included and published. Kaisha-shi are by no means "records," and
certainly not "research works." Because kaisha-shi are written by the companies themselves, and

1 Kaisha-shi are also called shashi, shashisho, or nenshi.

2 Approximately 90% of kaisha-shi are not-for-sale publications, but there are a few exceptions. Mitsubishi
Shashi (University of Tokyo Press, 1979-1984), for example, consists of 41 volumes and costs more than ¥322,000
per set.

3 Jun'ichi Aoyanagi, "Shashi Futsuka ni 1-iten Tanjo, Tsundoku' Henjo Mezasu," Nihon Keizai Shinbun, July 18,
1993. Traditionally, kaisha-shi have been criticized with the "4 NO words": no readers, no authors, no list prices,
and not at book stores (From Niigata Nippo 50-nenshi, 1992, postscript).
because they thus mainly emphasize their favorable aspects, researchers must be cautious when using them. Beyond these weak points, however, *kaisha-shi* attract the attention of many quarters, including the mass media, special libraries, and academic and research libraries, due to the rapid industrialization of Japan since the early Meiji period.

In addition, *kaisha-shi* are widely used by such groups as *Keieishi Gakkai* (Business History Society of Japan, hereinafter BHSJ), which was established in 1964 in order to study business history in Japan. This is reflected in BHSJ's quarterly journal, *Keiei Shigaku* (Japan Business History Review), whose articles frequently cite *kaisha-shi*. Before the formation of the BHSJ, there were a number of scholars who had studied the histories, transitions of business systems, and business affairs of Japanese and foreign companies. However, BHSJ believed that business history was a specific field independent from economic history or business administration. One of the founding members of the BHSJ was Keiichiro Nakagawa, then a professor of the University of Tokyo, who also studied at Harvard University's Business School from 1958 to 1960, and who is one of the most recognized authorities on *kaisha-shi*.

Other users of the *kaisha-shi* include members of the *Keidanren* (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations—abbreviated in Japanese as "Keidanren"—established on August 16, 1946, as a nationwide business association). *Keidanren* comprises 118 association members and 1,007 corporate members, in total, 125 regular members as of January 23, 2001, and maintains close contact with both the public/governmental and private sectors in Japan and abroad to work for a resolution of the major problems facing the business community. Without question, they contribute to the sound development of the Japanese and world economies. Members regularly use *kaisha-shi* to keep abreast of the activities of other member associations and companies.

**Characteristics of Kaisha-shi**

The "authors" of *kaisha-shi* are the corporations themselves. In the case of Furukawa Denki Kogyo Kabushiki Kaisha's *Sogyo 100-nenshi*, for example, edited by Nihon Keieishi Kenkyujo and published (produced) by Furukawa Denki in 1991, there are no individual author names in the standard catalog databases. In fact, however, this particular *kaisha-shi* was written for the company by Professor Haruhito Takeda (University of Tokyo), Professor Makoto Hasegawa (Shizuoka University), and Professor Eisuke Daito (University of Tokyo), as revealed in its

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4 Since the collapse of the "Bubble Economy" and other global factors, *kaisha-shi* have increasingly become more balanced, providing both positive and negative information.

5 Address for BHSJ: c/o Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo, 7-3-1, Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113, Japan. Phone: (03) 3812-2111, ext.4947.

6 As of October 1983, there were 618 individual members and 41 corporate members in the BHSJ. BHSJ publishes the quarterly (formerly 3 times a year) *Keiei Shigaku*, which contains articles, research notes, abstracts in English, reports, and book reviews (including reviews of *kaisha-shi*), and also holds an annual meeting and an international conference every year. For more information, see Hidemasa Morikawa, "Report of the Long-Term Trends of the Business History Society of Japan," *Japanese Yearbook on Business History: 1984*. Japan Business History Institute, 132. The BHSJ's journal is published by the University of Tokyo Press and is carried by most of the major academic libraries in the United States, beginning with the inaugural issue [vol.1, no.1 (June 1966)-current]].

7 Keiichiro Nakagawa, "Kigyo Senryoku to shiten Shashi [Shashi as a Company Strength]," *Chuo Koron Keiei Mondai Autumn* issue (1978): 66-72. This is a continuation of Nakagawa's article from the Winter 1963 issue of the same publication, pages 232-242.
unnumbered postscript. Furukawa Denki organized and established an editorial committee for its _kaisha-shi_ consisting of three elements -- _henshu sha_ (editors), _seisaku sha_ (producers), and _shuppitsu sha_ (writers)-- and the _shashi hensan-shitsu_ (company's _kaisha-shi_ office). Most _kaisha-shi_ are now created by such groups of experienced professionals and specialists working for the company.

It is said that companies produce _kaisha-shi_ for the purposes of 1) educating management, administration, and high-ranking level employees (_keieisha kyoiku_); 2) educating lower-level employees (_jyugoin kyoiku_); and 3) conducting public relations activities (PR _katsu do_). Plants and/or branches comprising a company may also produce their own _kaisha-shi_. As discussed above, _kaisha-shi_ are generally not-for-sale publications, which are unavailable through the regular book market, but are only available directly from the companies or in _furuhon-ya_ or _koshoten_ (used book dealers or other special book dealers). For this reason, _kaisha-shi_ are often called "illegitimate children" publications. Typically, _kaisha-shi_ include a preface or greeting by the company president and/or chairperson, text (introducing the company, then discussing its birth, growth, new business areas, and goals), an appendix, a chronology, notes, a select bibliography, and an index. Most _kaisha-shi_ also have a number of illustrations and photographs (some in color) of excellent quality. Recently, foreign language editions in full or summary form have also been published. When researching _kaisha-shi_, it should be noted that the formal name of a company may change, sometimes frequently, such as from _kanji to katakana_, or from Japanese to a foreign language, in the case of company mergers, absorptions, or splits.

The large number and importance of _kaisha-shi_ reflect the popular description of Japan as "Japan Inc." or as a country fueled by "_kaisha-shugi_" (company-ism). In this sense, _kaisha-shi_ can be seen as windows to, or mirrors of, modern Japanese culture and society. The _kaisha-shi_ provides a clear view of a company's culture and its social and/or philanthropic activities. First, the _kaisha-shi_ explains the company's official ideology as expressed in the company song, essays by the founder(s) and company elders, and lists of goals and values (_sha ze_ and _shakun_), which are celebrated at annual celebrations and public events.

Second, by listing its executives and their backgrounds, a company's _kaisha-shi_ also reveals the

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10 The titles of a majority of _kaisha-shi_ begin with the company name, but this is not always the case. Taiyo Gyogyo (in _kanji_) became Maruta (in _katakana_); Tokuyama Soda (in _kanji_ ) became Tokuyama Soda (in _katakana_); Mihiro Shokuhin (in _katakana_ and _kanji_ ) became Erevu Fuzu (in _katakana_ and English). All changes took place in 1993, and more changes recently.

11 As pointed out by Hiroji Baba, it is revealing that switching the characters for "_kaisha_" results in "_shakai_," because _shakai-shugi_ means socialism, while _kaisha-shugi_ means an opposite doctrine, company-ism. Hiroji Baba, "Gendai-sekai to Nihon Kaisha-shugi" (Contemporary World and Japan's Company-ism), Tokyo-daigaku Shakai-kagaku Kenkyujo-hen (Ed. by Institute of Social Science, Univ. of Tokyo). _Gendai Nihon Shakai_: Dai 1-kan (Contemporary Japanese Society: vol. 1), University of Tokyo Press, 1991.
close relationships between corporate executives and political and bureaucratic leaders. Government bureaucrats who retire early often assume key positions in corporations and private sectors, a practice known as *amakudari*, or “descent from Heaven.”

Third, *kaisha-shi* may list and describe videos/movies, printed materials/CD-ROMs, and other PR tools, which are used to promote the company. Publications in all formats, including their home pages on the World Wide Web, by the Japanese business world are particularly strong. Among these publications are company journals*13* and newspapers (*shaho* or *shanaiho*, *kaisha shinbun*, *14* and *kumiai* (union) *shinbun*) and annual reports (*nenji hokokusho* or *nenpo*). *15*

Fourth, the *kaisha-shi* reveals information regarding a company’s contributions to its community. For example, Shinwa Ginko in Nagasaki has been publishing the Shinwa Library (*Shinwa Bunko*) series for 30 years, beginning with its first issue on *Hirado Shiwa* (The History of Hirado) in 1954. *16* This effort was intended to contribute to the local community of Nagasaki through the publication of books on the history of the city and its relationships with foreign countries. The sixteenth volume in the *Shinwa Bunko* series is entitled *Nagasaki Tojin no Kenkyu* (Research on the Chinese in Nagasaki). *17* More commonly, a company may conduct such community-oriented activities as building museums, sponsoring cultural events and contests, managing hotels, hospitals and wedding and reception facilities; and establishing libraries, archives, and foundations to provide research grants. *18*

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*12* Many books have been published in English to explain the Japanese corporate system in detail, such as James C. Abegglen and George Stalk, Jr., *Kaisha: the Japanese Corporation* (New York: Basic Books, 1985). This book was reprinted under the title *Kaisha, the Japanese Corporation: the New Competitors in World Business* (London: Tauris, 1986). “Nihon Kabushiki Kaisha” no Showa-shi (Japan Inc. in the Showa Period), (Tokyo: Sogensha, 1995), is also a very useful work.

*13* Journals such as *Age of Tomorrow* (in English; no.1, 1961-current) and *Suntory Quarterly* (in Japanese; no.1, 1979- ) are written for general readers and are made available to the public. The former is a quarterly journal of the Advertisising Department of Hitachi, Ltd., Tokyo and the latter is a journal of Suntory, Ltd., Tokyo. *The Mugendai* (in Japanese; no.1, 1969- current), published by IBM Japan Ltd., is another popular company magazine.

*14* *San’yu Shinbun*, for example, is one of the largest *kaisha shinbun*, and has been published by the San’yu Shinbun-sha since 1953, which is organized by the Mitsui Group. The Publisher’s address: c/o Mitsui Building, 2-1-1, Nihonbashi Muromachi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 103, Japan. Phone: (03) 3241-4322; Fax: (03) 3241-6220.

*15* For example, Daihatsu Motor Co., Ltd., markets its products in more than 120 countries around the globe and the Company publishes its annual report in both Japanese and English.


*18* Libraries and archives include the Mitsui Bunko (Mitsui Library) established by Mitsui in 1918. The Mitsubishi Archives opened recently and published Mitsubishi Shiryokan Ronshu (vol.1[2000-current]) by Mitsubishi Keizai Kenkyujo. Sumitomo Shiryokan (Archives) is also in Kyoto. Foundations include the Ishibashi (Bridgestone Tires), Nihon Seimei (Nippon Insurance Co.), Toyota, Sezon Bunka (includes Isetan Department Store), Sumitomo,
Examples of *Kaisha-shi*

There are more than 1.3 million corporations in Japan. However, only 300 of these corporations have more than 5,000 employees. These large companies comprise only 0.02 per cent of all Japanese corporations, but account for nearly 14 per cent of all regular employees. The listing of 1,650 firms on the Tokyo Stock Exchange also indicates the number of major Japanese companies.

A number of Japanese companies have published their company histories in the form of *kaisha-shi*. The following list, by industry, represents examples of *kaisha-shi*:

a. Shipbuilding [Japan is the world's leading shipbuilding country and contracts about half of the world's tonnage]

*Mitsubishi* [Mitsubishi Heavy Industries]:

*Kawasaki* [Kawasaki Heavy Industries]:
*Kawasaki Zosenjo 40-nenshi* (1936).

*Ishikawajima* [Ishikawajima-Harima Heavy Industries]:

*Hitachi* [Hitachi Shipbuilding and Engineering]:

b. Shipping/Marine Transportation:

*Nippon Yusen Kaisha* (controlled by *Mitsubishi*):

*Osaka Shosen*:

c. Big Five Non-government Banks before WW II [40 percent of all bank deposits were held by these banks by 1935]\(^{20}\)

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Toshiba, and Mitsubishi Foundations.


20 Since the addition of the Sanwa Bank Group, these banks are now called the 6-*Dai Kigyo Shudan* (Big Six Conglomerate Corporations). The Japanese Bankers Association (JBA: Zenginkyo in Japanese short name) began in April 1999 as a reorganization of the Federation of Bankers Association of Japan. The JBA had 144 full members, 43 associate members, and 72 special members as of the end of 2000.
Daiichi:
*Daiichi Ginko 50-nen Shoshi* (1926).

Mitsui [now Sakura Bank, Ltd.):
*Mitsui Ginko 50-nenshi* (1926); *Mitsui Ginko 80-nenshi* (1957).

Mitsubishi:

Yasuda [now Fuji Bank, Ltd.]:
*Yasuda Ginko 60-nenshi* (1940); *Fuji Ginko 70-nenshi* (1952); *Fuji Ginko 100-nenshi* (2 vols. 1982).

Sumitomo:


d. Iron and Steel [The *kaisha-shi* of the top 5 Japanese integrated steelmakers are:]

Shin Nippon Seitetsu [Nippon Steel Corporation: the world's largest steel manufacturer and a producer of various steel product lines]:

Nippon Kokan K. K. [a steelmaker with a long history; it is also a shipbuilder and producer of heavy industrial equipment]:
*Nippon Kokan Kabushiki Kaisha 30-nenshi; 40-nenshi; 50-nenshi; 60-nenshi; 70-nenshi* (1942-1982).

Kawasaki Seitetsu [Kawasaki Steel Corporation]:

Sumitomo Kinzoku Kogyo [Sumitomo Metal Industries, Ltd.]:

Kobe Seikojo [Kobe Steel, Ltd.]:
*Shinko 50-nenshi* (1954); *Kobe Seiko 70-nen* (2 vols. 1974); *Kobe Seiko 80-nen* (1985)

**Notable *Kaisha-shi***

This section will highlight *kaisha-shi* that are particularly notable. The first group of notable titles consist of *kaisha-shi* which are valued at over ¥50,000 in the second-hand book market in Japan,
although they were originally published without any list price. These include:

*Sogyo 100-nenshi* (Furukawa Kogyo K.K.) 1976  ¥50,000

*Sumitomo Besshi Kozan-shi* (Sumitomo Kinzoku Kozan K. K.) 1991  ¥65,000/3 vols./set


A second group of notable titles are collections of conglomerate *kaisha-shi*. These include *Mitsubishi Shashi* in 41 volumes (University of Tokyo Press: 1979-1984) and *Sumitomo Shiryo Sosho* (Shibunkaku: 1985-2000+). These are important primary sources and reference works for researchers and scholars of Japanese corporate history in general, as they provide a comprehensive view of the history of each company composing the *zaibatsu* (big financial group) as well as the *zaibatsu* itself.

A third group of notable *kaisha-shi* are those in the field of mass communications. These *kaisha-shi* are notable for their historical value as comprehensive reflections of Japanese society. *Ryukyu Shinpo 100-nenshi* is a *kaisha-shi* produced by Ryukyu Shinpo-sha (Ryukyu Newspaper Co., Ltd.) in Okinawa in 1993. It provides not only the history of a prefectural level newspaper company, but is also one of the basic tools in the study of Okinawa history as a whole. The *Asahi Shinbun Shashi* was also a long awaited title. This is a commercially produced publication by the Asahi Shinbun (Asahi Newspaper Co., Ltd.) and consists of four volumes, *Meiji-hen, Taisho-Showa Senzen-hen, Showa Sengo-hen, and Shiryo-hen* (Documents). It contains a total of 2,800 pages including illustrations, and has a list price of ¥25,000. The *Asahi Shinbun Shashi* is not merely the history of one company, but also provides a historical overview of the Japanese press industry, as well as of politics, foreign relations, economics, society, and culture in modern Japan.

Finally, a fourth group of notable *kaisha-shi* are those which have been recognized for their excellence. Every other year since 1978, the *Nihon Keieishi Kenkyujo* (Japan Business History Institute) has selected excellent titles from among *kaisha-shi* and awarded prizes (*Yushu Kaisha-shi Sho*). The first award was given to *Mitsubishi Kogyo Shashi* in 1978; the second award was given to the *Kagoshima Ginko 100-nenshi* in 1980. The award was presented to *Tokyo Kaijo Kasai Hoken Kabushiki Kaisha 100-nenshi* in 1982, *Takeda 200-nenshi* in 1984, the *Sogyo 100-nenshi* (Osaka Shosen Mitsui) in 1986, *Mitsubishi Soko 100-nenshi* and *Iyo Tetsudo 100-nenshi* in 1988, and *Aji o Tagayasu: Aji no Moto 80-nenshi, Sumitomo Besshi*

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21 See details in *Taiundo Mokuroku* (Catalogue of Second Hand Books), Tokyo, Taiundo, no. 93 (January 1995).

22 The first series is a 6 volume set, as is the 3rd series (scheduled). The total cost of the whole series is approximately ¥120,000 (partial estimate).

23 Because this *kaisha-shi* is sold on the regular book market, it is an unusual *kaisha-shi*.

24 *Asahi Shinbun Shashi* must be purchased as a set.

25 The Institute’s Library has more than 8,000 titles of *kaisha-shi* and related materials. Address: 2-12-4, Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102, Japan. Phone: (03) 3262-1090.
Notable Kaisha-shi Collections and Libraries

There are notable collections of kaisha-shi in both Japan and the United States. One of the best and largest Kaisha-shi Bunko (company history collections) in Japan is the Nagao Collection, which is now the property of the Ryukoku University Library in Kyoto. The Nagao private collection consists of approximately 12,000 items on the histories of companies, industries, and organizations from the late Tokugawa period to 1985. Ryukoku University purchased the collection from Koji Nagao, a prominent entrepreneur, on the occasion of the University's 350th anniversary. In 1986, the University Library published a catalog for the collection, entitled *Ryukoku Daigaku Toshokan Shozo Nagao Bunko Mokuroku --Shashi, Dantai-shi, Sangyo-shi Shiryo--* (The Catalog of the Nagao Collections at the Ryukoku University Library: Historical Materials of Corporations, Organizations, and Industries), with an initial printing of 1,000 copies. An enlarged and revised edition of the catalog, which includes additional related titles acquired more recently, was published in 1990, again with a print-run 1,000 copies.

In addition to Ryukoku University, the Keidanren Library has shown strong leadership in promoting kaisha-shi publications and collections during the past several decades. The Keidanren Library was opened in November 1966 and since then has held numerous kaisha-shi tenjitkai (exhibition of kaisha-shi), including dantai-shi [see p. 36 below], video kaisha-shi, and even kaisha-shi of foreign corporations. The Nihon Keieishi Kenkyujo (Japan Business History Institute), which opened in July 1967, with the purpose of facilitating research of corporations, also has an extensive collection of kaisha-shi. The libraries or research centers of the University of Tokyo, Hitotsubashi University, Hosei University, Yokohama City University, and Nihon Keieishi Kenkyujo also have valuable collections of materials relating to Japanese companies, including kaisha-shi. In addition, Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan (The National Diet Library), Tokyo Shoko Kaigisho Toshokan (the Library of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry), Keizai Koho Senta (Keizai Koho Center - Japan Institute for Social and Economic Affairs), member libraries of Kogyo Shiryo Kyogikai (Business Archives Association), and Senmon Toshokan Kyogikai (Council for Special Libraries) also have impressive collections of kaisha-shi.

In the United States, the East Asian Library of the University of Chicago holds one of the largest collections of materials dealing with the histories of Japanese corporations, corporate unions, and

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26 These titles may be retrieved on the RLIN database. Of these eleven titles, the University of Chicago Library has ten items, and the remaining title will be acquired in the near future. These titles can be accessed on site and/or through interlibrary loan (ILL), in accordance with the library's general regulations. More information can be obtained by contacting the East Asian Library, University of Chicago Library, 1100 East 57th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, U.S.A. Phone: (773) 702-8434; Fax: (773) 702-6623; E-mail: oku4@midway.uchicago.edu.

27 For details, see "Shashigaku Kotohajime," *Ryukoku* 24 (1991): 1-5; "Shashi, Dantai-shi no Mokuroku (Ryukoku Daigaku ‘Nagao Bunko’ ni tsuite)," *Shuppan Nyo-su* (mid-June 1986); see also Fujita.


other business organizations and associations. Chicago has approximately 1,000 selected _kaisha-shi_, as well as a number of titles on labor unions and business organizations. In addition, the University of Chicago also has other materials providing information similar to _kaisha-shi_, such as *Matsushita Konosuke Hatsugenshu* (45 volume set: Collected Speeches of Matsushita Konosuke (1894-1989) [founder of Matsushita Electric Industrial Company]),30 and *Mitsui Honkan* (Mitsui Main Building).31

The Hoover Institution at Stanford University, the University of California at Berkeley, Ohio State University, University of Michigan, and the Library of Congress, as well as other major academic libraries, also have notable — in terms of quality and size— collections of _kaisha-shi_. It is also interesting to note that there are some notable _kaisha-shi_ from other East Asian countries. In Korea, for example, in 1997 Hyondaes Group published its _kaisha-shi_, Hyondaes osimnyonsa (Handae 50-yonsa), comprised of 2,585 pages in two volumes. Its editorial policy is very similar to that of Japanese _kaisha-shi_.

**Bibliographies**

There are a variety of reference tools to assist researchers in this field. The following are key examples of bibliographies for accessing _kaisha-shi_.


This includes 1,022 corporation histories and narratives covering 812 companies, together with another 165 histories of 140 special organizations. It was acquired by the Hitotsubashi University Library and the University’s Sango Keiei Kenkyujo (the Institute for Industrial Management) in February 1967. An enlarged edition with the same title was published in 1961 as the first volume of a series of special bibliographies. Volume 3 of the series, entitled *Honpo Kigyoshia Shi Mokuroku* (Bibliography of Biographies of Japanese Business persons), was published in 1969. It lists 654 individual biographies of 545 business persons and 30 collective bibliographies, which were procured by the Institute for Industrial Management of Hitotsubashi University as of 1968.


This bibliography covers _kaisha-shi_ held by the Management Analysis Bibliographic Center, Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration, at Kobe University. Although it was published in 1965, it is still useful.


This unique list, which was originally published in 1937 (supplements published until 1942), covers the holdings of the library of the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry before World War II, and includes a number of titles related to _kaisha-shi_.


31 This work was published for the 60th anniversary of the Mitsui Main Building, and is a comprehensive compilation of materials, records, and photographs related to the building and its historic and cultural significance. Published by Mitsui Fudosan Kabushiki Kaisha and issued in a 3 volume set in 1989.

This catalog covers kaisha-shi, keizai dantai-shi, and keizai tokushu hojin-shi which have been in the collection of the National Diet Library since the Meiji Period, as of August 1985. It includes a total of 6,500 titles, covering 2,352 companies and 2,243 other organizations.

Union Lists

Union lists indicate where certain kaisha-shi can be located and are another useful reference tool for researchers. In addition to the Shashi Mokuroku described above, the following titles are the most comprehensive union lists of kaisha-shi ever published in Japan or abroad.


This list covers 6,127 histories of 3,860 Japanese corporations written in Japanese and/or English from 1868 to 1983, which are now held by 43 Japanese institutions, including corporations, universities, research institutes, and libraries. The main body of the catalog is followed by a series of bibliographical essays. The appendix, entitled Keizai Dantai-shi Sogo Mokuroku (Union Catalog of Histories of Economic Organizations), is also helpful and has 783 entries, an index to some 450 economic organizations, and a bibliography. A supplement, entitled Shashi Mokuroku Tsuuroku, was published in 1992. In 1996, its enlarged and revised edition came out (818 pp.) and now supplements are being compiled.


This is a study sponsored by the Japan-United States Friendship Commission (Nichi-Bei Yuko Kikin) and conducted by the East Asiatic Library of the University of California at Berkeley and the East Asian Collection, Hoover Institution of Stanford University, in 1978. This checklist contains almost 900 Japanese titles of histories of approximately 660 companies and economic organizations in Japan and her former territories, held as of July 1978, by the two libraries above. The list is divided into three parts and has an alphabetical index for the following:

1. Histories of companies and trade associations;
2. Histories of economic organizations;
3. Histories of government corporations.

Microfilm and Reprinted Edition of Kaisha-shi

There are two major compilations of reprinted kaisha-shi. The first collection, published by Tokiwa Shoin (Tokiwa Publishing Co., Ltd.), is in print form and is entitled Nihon Shashi Zenshu (Japan Company History Collection). The second collection of kaisha-shi, recently produced by the Maruzen Company, is in microfilm form (both cassette and regular form). This collection,

32 Address: 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 925, Washington, DC 20005. Phone: (202) 418-9800; Fax: (202) 418-9802; E-mail: jusfc@jusfc.gov. Its UHR is http://www.jusfc.gov. This is one of the most vital organizations to support both Japan studies in the U.S. and American studies in Japan since 1975 (Public Law: 94-118).

33 Published by Tokiwa Shoin. 22 volume set. Market value: ¥50,000.
entitled *Micro-ban 'Nihon no Kaisha-shi' (Histories of Major Japanese Companies--Microfilm Edition).*34 is edited by Meiji University Professor Tsunehiko Yui and Hosei University Professor Yoshimitsu Imuta. It is a collection of 2,500 *kaisha-shi* from 1,000 large and mid-size companies on the first tier of the Tokyo Stock Exchange. These *kaisha-shi* are divided into 9 categories: Group I covers Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, Food Production, Textiles, Paper Pulp, and Ceramics industries (55 reels); and Group II covers Construction and Equipment, Chemical Products, Oil Products, Rubber Products, Leather Products industries (60 reels) and so on. The microfilming project of the entire collection was completed in 1997, and finding lists were also prepared. The original titles, which Maruzen filmed, are located at the following 15 libraries and institutions:

1. Hitotsubashi Daigaku Sangyo Keiei Kenkyujo Toshoshitsu
2. Kanagawa Kenritsu Kawasaki Toshokan
3. Kansai Daigaku Keizai Seiji Kenkyujo
4. Kansai Gakuin Daigaku Sangyo Kenkyujo
5. Keizai Dantai Rengokai Keidanren Refarensu Raiburari
6. Kin'yu Keizai Kenkyujo
7. Kokuritsu Kokkai Toshokan
8. Nihon Keietsu Kenkyujo Keiei Shiryo Senta
9. Osaka Keizai Daigaku Chusho Kigyo Keiei Kenkyujo
10. Osaka Furitsu Nakanoshima Toshokan
11. Osaka Shiritsu Daigaku Keizai Kenkyujo
12. Tokyo Daigaku Keizai Gakubu Toshoshitsu
13. Tokyo Keizai Daigaku Toshokan
14. Tokyo Shoko Kaigisho Shoko Toshokan
15. Yokohama Shiritsu Daigaku Toshokan

In 1995, the Toyo Keizai Shinpo-sha (Tokyo) published the *Nihon Kaisha-shi Soran* (Japanese Corporate History ; ISBN : 44929700881/ set) in a 3 volume set. Some 3,000 selected firms are covered in approximately 3,000 pages.35 In 1997 Yumani Shobo of Tokyo began publishing a reprinted series of *kaisha-shi*. In the year of 2000 alone, they reprinted 8 *kaisha-shi* that have been found to be so important to the study of the history of Japanese economy and industry.

**Dantai-shi of Japanese Economic and Industrial Organizations**

Related to *kaisha-shi* are *dantai-shi*, which are produced by *dantai*, or associations. In Japan, there are 20,000 commercial and industrial circles/associations, linking leaders of the major industries by type of business and/or by geographic region such as districts and cities. Like *kaisha-shi*, *dantai-shi* provide company-related information. Rather than providing information on only a single company, they provide information on an aggregate group of companies.

One of the most famous, important, and formal associations in the field of business and industry is the *Keidanren* (Keizai Dantai Rengokai=Federation of Economic Organizations), which consists of 123 organizations (as of May 1995). In 1999, the *Keidanren* published its 50-nenshi (Keizai Dantai Rengokai Gojunenshi) in about 1,500 pages. The CD-ROM edition of the title is indispensable to research. Another major body in the Japanese auto industry world is the *Jidosha*.

34 Price is $210/reel. The complete set (486 reels and 800,000 pages) of the title costs approximately $103,000.

35 Edited by the same publisher as one of the Company’s 100th anniversary publications. The list price of this title is ¥139,050; it must be purchased as a set. The same title, *Nihon Kaisha-shi Soran*, was published by Keizai Orai-sha in 1954 (906 pp.).
Kogyo Shinkokai (Japan Motor Industrial Federation, Inc. or JMIF), which was established in 1958, and promoted by the late Mr. Genshichi Asahara. At present, JMIF consists of Japan Automobile Manufactures' Association, Inc. (JAMA), Japan Auto Parts Industries Association (JAPIA), Japan Auto-Body Industries Association, Inc. (JABIA), and Japan Automotive Machinery and Tools Manufactures' Association, Inc. (JAMTA) and 74 member companies. Since 1967, JAMA, JAPIA, JABIA, and JAMTA have been called the Big Four organizations in the auto industry.

The following is the list of the general economic organizations (keizai dantai) in Japan, all of which have been actively publishing dantai-shi:

- Japan Federation of Economic Organizations
  (Keizai Dantai Rengokai = Keidanren)
- Japan Federation of Employers' Associations
  (Nihon Keieisha Dantai Renmei = Nikkeiren)
- Kanto Employers' Association
  (Kanto Keieisha Kyokai = Kankeikyo)
- Japan Association of Corporate Executives
  (Keizai Doyukai = Doyukai)
- Kansai Economic Federation
  (Kansai Keizai Rengokai = Kankeiren)
- Kansai Association of Corporate Executives
  (Kansai Keizai Doyukai = Kansai Doyukai)
- The Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
  (Nihon Shoko Kaigisho = Nissho)
- Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry
  (Tokyo Shoko Kaigisho)
- Central Federation of Societies of Commerce and Industry, Japan
  (Zenkoku Shokokai Rengokai = Zenshoren)
- Japan Junior Chamber, Inc.
  (Nihon Seinen Kaigisho)
- Tokyo Junior Chamber, Inc.
  (Tokyo Seinen Kaigisho)
- The Industry Club of Japan
  (Nihon Kogyo Kurabu)
- The Osaka Industrial Association
  (Osaka Kogyokai)
- Japan Federation of Smaller Enterprise Organizations
  (Nihon Chuho Kigyo Dantai Renmei)
- The Japanese National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce
  (Kokusai Shogyo Kaigisho Nihon Kokunai Iinkai)
- The Japan Association of Charitable Organizations
  (Koeki Hojin Kyokai)

Again, the significant number of kaisha-shi and dantai-shi reflect the tremendous growth of the Japanese economy, and Japan's status as a global economic leader.

Reference Tools

In addition to the titles mentioned in the text and/or footnotes of this article, there are two additional titles which are particularly useful tools for researching kaisha-shi.

a. Kaidaitsuki Sashi ni tsuite no Bunken Ichiran (Annotated Bibliography of Kaisha-shi). Dai

This is one of the best and most comprehensive lists/reference books on kaisha-shi ever compiled. The editor, Tetsushi Oomi, Director of the Dai Nihon Insatsu Kabushiki Kaisha CDC Jigyobu Nenshi Senta (Shashi Production Center, CDC Department, Dai Nihon Printing Co., Ltd.) is a well-known expert and consultant on editing, compiling, and publishing kaisha-shi. The contents include a list of books and pamphlets, as well as newspaper and journal articles regarding kaisha-shi.


This catalog covers a total of 13,000 items, which were published between 1945 and 1993. These items cover 5,600 kaisha and economic • manufacturing • labor • agricultural • fishing • professional dantai, including both kaisha-shi and dantai-shi.

Conclusion

As discussed above, kaisha-shi can provide valuable information regarding not only Japanese corporations and business organizations, but also broader insights regarding Japan as a whole, particularly as a highly industrialized and commercial nation. Each kaisha-shi typically includes discussions of the goals, history, structure, and activities of a corporation (or an association, in the case of dantai-shi), which both comprise and reflect the company’s position in Japanese society and, increasingly, in the global community. Researchers, academics, other Japan specialists, and libraries should not overlook kaisha-shi as an additional source for understanding Japan more fully. Very recently the world of "Kaisha-shi" is changing rapidly because the following formula is becoming more popular: The A, B, C . . . companies are amalgamated as A', B', C' . . . companies or as a bigger company since the collapse of the bubble economy and recent globalization.

SOURCES


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Japan’s Corporate System: the role of the entrepreneur, presented by the Softnomics Center and available through OCS America, Inc. (Nippon, the Land and its People; video series-English version, vol.9).


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