I would recommend Lardy's book not only to policy-makers and students of economics within China but to anyone who wants fresh insights into China's agricultural development or who believes that economics makes for dull reading.

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Secondary Education in Japan

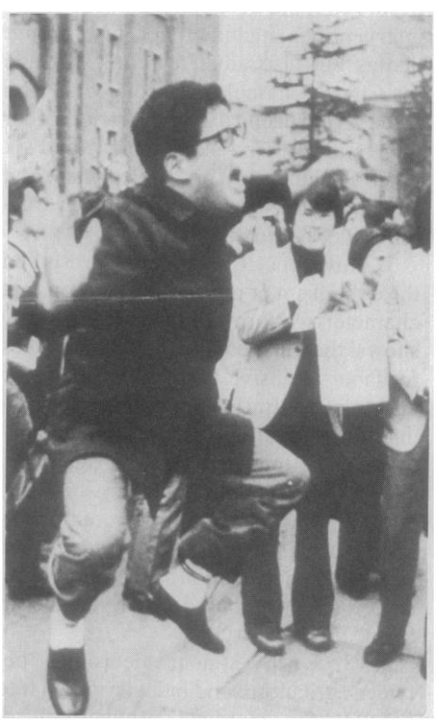
Japan's High Schools. THOMAS P. ROHLEN. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1983. xii, 363 pp., illus. $35; paper, $10.95.

Japan possesses a system of secondary schools that is second to none in rigor. The minimum Japanese high school curriculum includes three years of mathematics, three of English, three of social studies, three of Japanese, and two or three of science. Every high school student studies international economic issues in depth. All acquire some knowledge of European, American, and Chinese history. Most have read some Shakespeare as well as other foreign literature. And many study a second foreign language while completing the standard requirement for English. It need hardly be said that Japanese high school students work hard. They attend school for 240 days of the calendar year, not 180 as in the American pattern. They commonly spend three to five hours daily on homework and together with teachers are charged with cleaning and low-level maintenance of their school's physical plant.

The author of the present book sets forth this and much other information concerning the Japanese secondary school system in a cogent and careful manner. An anthropologist by training and a management consultant by profession, he applies the same techniques to this study that he earlier employed in studying a Japanese bank. On the basis of their general reputations and some prior information, Rohlen selected five schools in the city of Kobe with different clienteles and emphases along the spectrum of college versus job preparation. After collecting information from numerous written or printed sources, he attended classes, interviewed teachers and students, and observed their daily routines. He then relates his findings to a broader Japanese context.

Rohlen is apparently the first investigator to have approached the subject in this way or to have written on Japanese high schools in such detail. Until recently the Japanese took their high schools entirely for granted and foreigners had very little interest in them. But these attitudes are naturally changing as Japanese achievements gain notice. For the past 20 years Japanese school children have ranked first internationally on standardized tests in mathematics and near the top in science. And each year some two million take calculus in high school, whereas a mere 165,000 Americans do so. But the positive aspects of the Japanese schools are considerably broader than this. Classes proceed in a disciplined and orderly manner with low disruption levels by the standards of American society. There is very little use of drugs. And students participate widely in sports and other recreation activities.

However, none of this should imply that a state of perfection exists; for over the college preparatory schools—a majority of all high schools—hangs the cloud of "examination hell." In Japan, formal testing is the exclusive device for deciding admission to college, and the tests endeavor to gauge an applicant's mastery of knowledge, not potential for college-level work. Because of this format, memorization and endless preparation are widely believed to pay off, and a proliferation of cram schools, study guides, special tutors, and youthful anxiety have become the predictable result.



"Pick up any of Japan's national news magazines in February and March and you will find university examinations to be lead stories." This cover photograph from one of the magazines "shows a student jumping for joy at being accepted—presumably to Tokyo University, for the building in the rear looks like that campus. By the apparent age of the celebrant, he has finally succeeded in passing the entrance examination after a number of tries." [From *Japan's High Schools*]

These patterns have naturally elicited hostility, and Rohlen describes some of the criticisms. He points out that most Japanese think the examinations rob young people of social development, cause them emotional distress, encourage them to memorize rather than analyze information, and promote intellectual conformity at the expense of more critical thought. But he also endeavors to show that the system has certain strengths. The schools themselves produce workers who adapt to a rigorous environment. Examinations based on knowledge tend to reward effort as opposed to mere intelligence. Everyone thinks he or she has a reasonable chance to succeed. And by eliminating interviews, emphasis on grades, and personal recommendations, the examinations may help curb personal favoritism. There is in any case little prospect for change in the short run. When the Education Ministry abolished public "practice" examinations in the late 1960's, private testing companies experienced rapid increases in demand for their services. And as the public high schools tried to downplay exam preparation, certain private high schools began to surpass them. In the 1950's and 1960's, all top-rated high schools were public; now in the 1980's the top-ranked schools are private. University entrance examinations remain a focus of public debate and suspicion even as competition among individuals serves to strengthen their hold on the country.

A salient issue for Americans, of course, is what we can learn from this system. Rohlen, while not too explicit about this, first seems to say, "Not very much." He does not in any case see the Japanese secondary school as a "model" for its troubled American counterpart. The societies are too different, ours ethnically diverse, theirs essentially uniform. Popular expectations are too far apart. Americans want teenagers to cultivate social skills and a sense of independence; Japanese lean more toward discipline and more time for social maturation. And the respective philosophies of education diverge too greatly, the Western tradition stressing logic and analysis over Japanese education's emphasis on facts. These differences, at the same time, can be defined too sharply. Americans certainly recognize the im-

portance of information; and, though in Japanese understanding wisdom and insight come slowly for students, they do eventually come.

In fact, such qualifying phrases bring us closer to Rohlen's true perspective: the Japanese high school can serve as a "mirror" for the secondary schools of America. It can help to identify problems and indicate directions for change. And it can serve to clarify goals and point up the means to attain them. In fact, the two-country comparison that informs much of this work is among its most valuable features. This thoroughly researched, thoughtful, and elegantly crafted book deserves careful reading by every educated American.

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Designs and Ideals

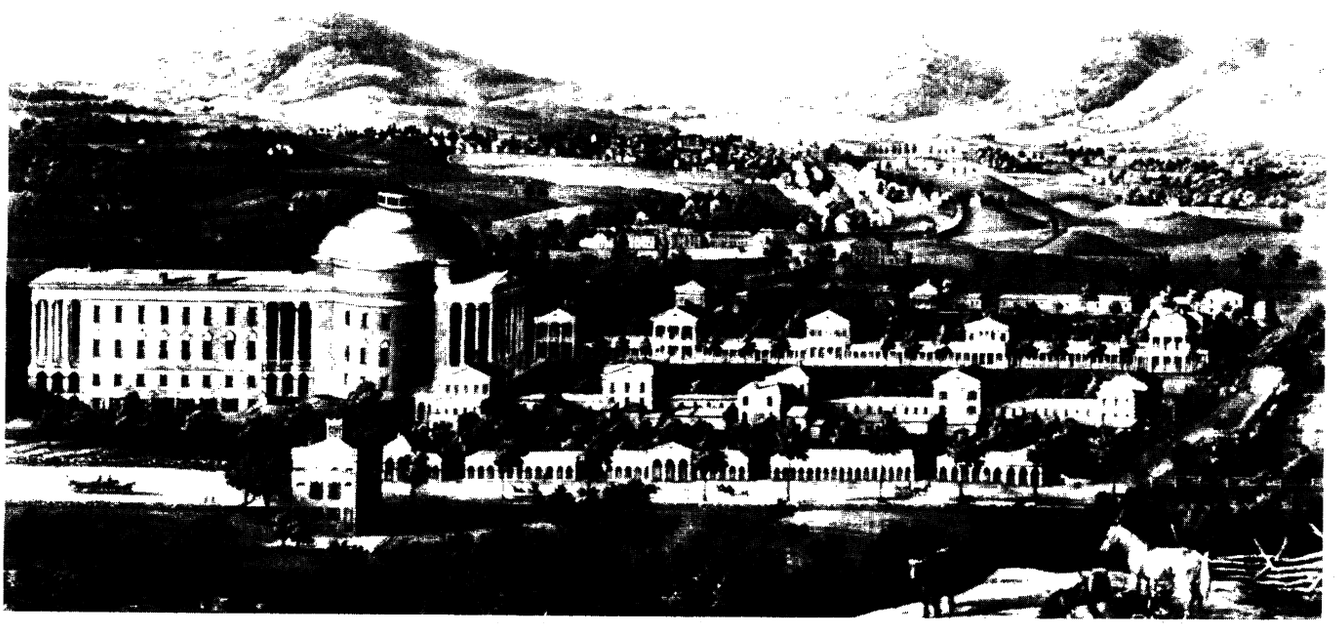
Campus. An American Planning Tradition. PAUL VENABLE TURNER. Architectural History Foundation, New York, and MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1984. xii, 337 pp., illus. $35.

Not only does the United States produce more college graduates per capita than any other society in history, it has over the past three and a half centuries built more colleges per capita as well. These buildings constitute a significant—and insufficiently recognized—portion of our architectural heritage. When Harvard College's first building was erected in the late 1630's, it was the largest structure in the British colonies. The same could be said of Princeton's Nassau Hall when it was constructed in 1753. And in the 20th century, especially since World War II, college campuses have been among our largest building complexes.

The history of campus architecture is, then, a topic of considerable importance, as well as one of interest and concern for those of us who have spent our student days and most of our professional lives on college campuses. Paul Venable Turner's lavishly illustrated and clearly written book appeals to and largely satisfies this sort of interest.

In seven chapters Turner surveys the principal trends in campus architecture from the colonial period to the present. What is important to him is the absence of precise European precedents for American campus architecture. He is anxious to celebrate American cultural innovation, which he associates with the expansiveness, openness, and inventiveness of American society. Within this framework, he examines the formal campus plans, the layout of buildings in those plans, and the architectural styles adopted.

Thus he stresses the way the colonial college—in contrast to the cloistered English model—opens out to the surrounding society. The University of Virginia, Jefferson's "academical village" designed in a Roman classical revival style, represents the highest ideal of republican education, and the later land-grant colleges are presented as manifestations of America's uniquely democratic society. Rarely do tensions emerge in this story, yet one can infer them playing between the two chapters Turner devotes to the civic ambition implicit in the Beaux Arts planning identified with Columbia University in the 1890's and to the genteel, collegiate, even monastic style exemplified by Woodrow Wilson's Gothic-style Princeton University a decade later. Whatever their perceived educational and architectural differences at the beginning of the 20th century, however, both the Columbia and the Princeton models sustained the development of a



View of the University of Virginia (somewhat out of scale) from the west. "The essential character of Jefferson's design for the University of Virginia was determined by his vision of the ideal education. . . . The notion of separate pavilions serving as both the teacher's home and classroom, with students' rooms linked directly like guest wings, was the most logical physical expression of this ideal." But "the insistence on having professors live at the center of the campus, above their classrooms and next to the students, was too demanding and inflexible for most American institutions, and was almost never adopted elsewhere." [From *Campus: An American Planning Tradition*; lithograph by F. Sachse and Co., 1856; University of Virginia Library]