

Introduction

Economic, social and political indicators reveal the importance of the Pacific Rim, and Japan in particular, to the next generation of Canadians. For example, by 1982, Canada's focus of international trade had shifted dramatically. Freeman (1985) notes that this was the first year that the value of Canada's trade with Asia exceeded that with traditional trading partners in Europe. This dramatic shift in trading patterns was especially evident in British Columbia as indicated by the report of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects of Canada (Macdonald et al., 1985). In concluding its report the Macdonald Commission, among other recommendations, observed that the twenty-first century would be the "Century of the Pacific". This trend had been predicted earlier by Pierre Trudeau, speaking in Tokyo in 1983, when he stated:

I can see the Asia Pacific region in the 21st century being the engine of global economic and cultural development that Europe was in the 19th century. The potential is there--resources, a vast population, the dramatic chemistry of Eastern culture and Western technique (as cited by Freeman, 1985, p. 3).

In response to this prediction, action was taken to promote Canada's links with the Pacific Rim. On June 1, 1984, by a special act of Parliament, the House of Commons passed Bill C-42 to establish the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada. This organization has as its objective "the promotion of respect and trust amongst the peoples and institutions of Canada and the Asia Pacific region towards their cultural, social and economic enrichment." Similarly, the Asia Pacific Business Institute, was established pursuant to a joint application of

the three major universities of British Columbia to the government of Canada. The institute was designed to become a self-supporting educational facility encouraging growth of Canadian business opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region.

When Prime Minister Mulroney formed the present government he endorsed the importance of the Pacific Rim and appointed as one of his senior advisors, Charles Macmillan, author of The Japanese Industrial System and who was identified by Newman (1984), writing in Maclean's magazine, as one of the world's leading non-Oriental authorities on Japanese productivity. As an influential advisor to the government, Macmillan remains committed to a turning away from our traditional mind-set of looking toward Europe for our economic ideas (Newman, 1984).

These developments in awareness of the importance of economic links with Japan evolved over a period of time. Both Canadian Confederation (1867) and the Meiji Restoration (1868) occurred within a few months of each other and consequently both nations entered the world scene together. A short time later (1871) British Columbia joined the Canadian Confederation, and as a result, Canada became a member of the community of nations bordering on the Pacific Ocean.

Japan's growing importance as a trading partner with Canada following World War II was evident as early as 1953 when Japan became Canada's fourth-largest market. In 1954 Japan became Canada's third most important trading partner. This relationship was enhanced during the 1960's when Japan emerged as a major economic power. During this same period Canada enjoyed economic growth and in the face of growing American protectionism led the Trudeau government to opt for

the "third option" in economic policy, that is the search for alternative trading partners to the United States.

Hence it was not surprising that by 1973 Japan had become Canada's second largest customer with a total of \$2.8 billion in two-way trade and an \$800 million balance-of-payments surplus in Canada's favor. Moreover, both the Canadian surplus and Japan's position as Canada's number two trading partner have been maintained ever since, although the volume of trade lessened slightly during the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, one scholar, Klaus H. Pringsheim (1983) pointed out that the contact between the two nations had been long-standing and significant and "the fact that both governments fully appreciate the mutual benefits of their unprecedented economic and political cooperation augurs well for the second half-century of the diplomatic history of Canada and Japan" (p. 190).

Other considerations point to the growing importance of Japan and the Pacific Rim to Canada's economic development. In 1963 B.C. began actively promoting Japanese tourist travel to British Columbia. This was before the federal government began enticing Japanese visitors to the country as a whole or before provincial governments began promoting visits to their individual provinces. At that time it was calculated that 300 Japanese tourists a year were visiting British Columbia. Today that figure approximates 200,000. The former Director of Market Development--Ministry of Tourism, Province of British Columbia, also pointed out that in 1964 it was not possible to find even one brochure of printed Japanese in Vancouver stores and restaurants catering to the Japanese. Today that situation has changed significantly (personal interview, February 9, 1987).

Recognition of the growing importance of Japan to British Columbia has led to a consideration of improving the state of Japanese studies in Canadian schools. Support for such improvement comes from the highest levels of government on both sides of the Pacific. Prime Minister Nakasone of Japan for instance, had supported publicly improvement of cross-cultural understanding between Canada and Japan. In a letter to a Victoria school involved in a Japanese exchange visit he stated, "As I believe the immense value to young people of international exchange and understanding, the efforts of these two schools for furthering friendship and understanding across the Pacific should be highly commended" (personal communication, April 3, 1986). Similarly, Prime Minister Mulroney, speaking before the Japanese Diet in May 1986 also encouraged educational exchanges, "I am making it a priority to develop increased Canada-Japan exchanges involving students, professionals, parliamentarians, artists, athletes, and industrialists" (Mulroney, 1986, p. 32).

A number of professional publications also support the concept of expanded education about Asia. The 1985 Annual Report of the Asia Pacific Foundation speaks in specific terms about education:

Our first effort should be to learn more about the peoples and the cultures of this region; more about their languages, their customs, the way they do business, the way they administer themselves. Moreover, in the past they have learned important lessons from us. Now it is our time to learn from them (p. 6).

In discussing priorities the Report goes on to suggest that, "These important goals include the addition to our educational system, from the elementary school to the university level, of a greater focus on the history, cultures and languages of the Asia Pacific region" (p. 10).

Beyond rhetoric, there is evidence to suggest that educational institutions have begun to improve curricula dealing with Japan. At the tertiary level, the University of Victoria has established a Department of Pacific and Asian Studies. Daniel Bryant, chairman of the department, noted in a Victoria Times-Colonist newspaper interview (Waters, 1987), that the number of students registering for courses in Pacific and Asian studies is growing every year. The same article detailed Camosun College's (Victoria) plans to offer a two-year diploma program in Pacific Studies commencing in September 1988. Moreover, the Victoria Times-Colonist of July 18, 1986 reported that the University of British Columbia received \$500,000 from business and government in 1986 to establish the first Canadian endowed chair in Korean studies. The University of Calgary opened a new Centre for International Education and Business in 1986. The University of Calgary Public Affairs Department advises that the Centre will focus on three areas. One of them, International Relationships, involves expanding the current world-wide network of student and faculty exchanges with emphasis on the Pacific Rim countries. Finally, proposals for an International Conference on the Pacific Rim, scheduled for the University of British Columbia in June 1988, provides further evidence of attempts to promote scholarly exchanges at both the tertiary and secondary levels of education.

The British Columbia Ministry of Education has also recognized the importance of the Pacific Rim in its recent curricular changes. The new British Columbia Social Studies Curriculum Guide--Grade 8-11, 1985, envisaged an increased emphasis on Asia, especially in Grade 10 wherein 10% of the suggested time allotment has been assigned to the topic of

Canada and the Pacific Region and the Indian Sub-Continent (p. 60). Moreover, the Ministry has developed a curriculum for Japanese language in 1986 which is now making its debut throughout the province. Finally, in the fall of 1987, a British Columbia Government newsrelease announced a major educational initiative, "designed to prepare B.C. citizens for trade and cultural opportunities with the Pacific Rim." In this newsrelease education is regarded as important. As the release points out, "Our ability to compete in Pacific Rim trade will demand a growing number of graduates from our schools who understand and appreciate the languages and cultures of that area of the world." Japan is a key player in Pacific Rim developments.

British Columbia's independent school system has also undertaken to improve Japanese studies. To this end many independent schools have implemented greater Asian content into their programs of study. For instance, a Victoria independent girls' school has hired a full-time Japanese instructor to teach social studies and Japanese language. A coeducational independent school in the same city has an extensive Japanese language course at the junior school level. A third Victoria independent school has established a regular exchange program with Setagaya Gakuen, a private boys' school in Tokyo which donated \$10,000 Cdn. to the development of Asian studies in its Victoria sister-school. Students from this school toured Japan in March-April, 1986. Teachers accompanying the students endorsed the value of such programs for improving students' appreciation and awareness of Japan (Crawford, 1986).

The Japanese government has also undertaken steps to facilitate the growth of Japanese studies in Canada. For example, in 1985, the

Consulate-General of Japan in Vancouver commissioned the preparation of a unit of study on Japan and financed a special orientation workshop for teachers. Both of these developments attracted considerable interest on the part of British Columbia classroom teachers.

Despite these laudable moves toward greater Pacific Rim awareness in the education sphere, extensive research is required to guarantee thorough input and evaluation of the curricular materials related to Japan; the economic hub of Pacific Asian activity.

Of all the subjects taught in the province of British Columbia, the discipline of social studies most lends itself to the pursuit of knowledge about Japan. The British Columbia Social Studies Curriculum Guide, "examines people in society as they interact with each other and with their many environments--physical, cultural, political, legal, and socio-economic--in Canada and the world, in the past, the present and the future" (p. 5). A study of Japan fits nicely into these parameters. However, in spite of the encouraging reference to the Pacific Rim in the British Columbia Social Studies Curriculum Guide as detailed above, Japan is covered only as part of a general theme and not as a discrete course or unit. Moreover, total suggested time for Asian studies does not exceed 15% during any given year.

With these considerations in mind, this study undertook to examine closely the British Columbia Social Studies Curriculum Guides to determine to what extent Japanese studies could be included in provincial curricula. In this examination curricula and curricular resources, specifically textbooks, were examined to determine the extent to which Japanese studies were already extant in curricula and significant lay people and educators were interviewed to determine their views on the issue.