

Chapter 5

Summary and Conclusions

Chapter 3 details the results of interviews conducted with 18 public individuals in business, politics, and academia, all of whom were experienced and interested about Japan. The interviews confirmed six possible social studies topics to be included in a study of Japan in British Columbia high school social studies courses: Culture, History, Geography, Economy, Japanese Language, and Japanese/Canadian Relations. The subjects also identified a number of other topics for consideration. These suggestions were grouped into a seventh category labelled Other.

Support for the inclusion of Japanese studies in British Columbia high schools was unanimous amongst the 18 interviewed subjects. Consistency of opinions regarding the specific topics was not as definitive but a Spearman rho analysis of rank-order data on the six possible topics revealed a positive agreement between the opinions of academics and businesspersons $r(4) = .87, p < .05$, an agreement between businesspersons and politicians of $r(4) = .79, p < .1$, and a strong positive relationship between the opinions of academics and politicians, $r(4) = .95, p < .01$.

The interviewed subjects ranked culture and history as the most important topics with economy, geography, language, and Japanese/Canadian relations following in descending order of value. Beyond support for individual topics, subjects clearly indicated that none of these topics should be taught in isolation but rather as interrelated to each other. A study of Japanese history, geography, and

economy was seen as a means of illuminating the culture of modern-day Japan. Similarly, it was felt that Japanese language training should be used to help students understand the mind-frame of the Japanese people. The subjects also identified a number of other topics such as a study of China and a study of other nations of Pacific-Asia as important to a social studies course on Japan.

The strength and enthusiasm of the subjects' responses supported a move towards greater Japanese studies content in British Columbia high schools. The interview results led to an examination of the present British Columbia social studies high school curriculum and beyond that to an analysis of the textbooks presently in use in social studies courses.

Chapter 4 presented a detailed analysis of the curriculum for each Grade 8 through 12. The extent of actual and possible Japanese content at each grade level was discussed. Beyond this, textbooks mandated for use and those available as supplemental resources were carefully examined and categorized according to the criteria established in the Methods section. The remainder of this chapter will provide a general summary of the analysis for each grade and subsequent conclusions in terms of what a student at each level can expect to learn about Japan.

Grade 8

The British Columbia curriculum guide for Grade 8 social studies contains direct reference to the ancient history of Japan. Specifically, 13.3% of allotted time is devoted to the major heading of the Middle Ages in India, China, and Japan. Guiding questions in the

scope and sequence chart assist teachers in covering Japanese history. Beyond this direct reference, a total of 45% of the curriculum has portions which permit or infer reference to Japan. An example of this allotment is the 15% of time permitted for current events and the exploration of the curriculum in greater depth. Geography is also covered indirectly through five specific statements which encourage the study of the relation of geography to the present state of a nation.

In summary, the Grade 8 curriculum provides a significant concentration on Japanese history, an indirect geographic component, and latitude to expand Japanese content. However, beyond the historical focus in Grade 8, further Japanese content would require a high degree of teacher interest and motivation.

The prescribed texts for Grade 8 social studies vary from minimally acceptable to adaptable to not applicable. The prescribed history text, Patterns of Civilization, Volume 1, provides a minimal introduction to the history, culture, and geography of Japan and is supplemented to the same degree by the accompanying authorized teacher's guide. The Hosford Study Atlas concentrates a section on China and is adaptable to Japan whereas the pure geography text, Geolab 1, is not applicable.

The texts, The Canadian Oxford School Atlas - 5th Edition, British Columbia, Geographic Essentials - B.C. Edition, Map Skills Using the Canadian Oxford School Atlas - 5th Edition, B.C., and Geographic Essentials, Teacher's Manual, which are applicable to Grades 8 and 9 and as far as Grade 11 in the case of The Canadian Oxford School Atlas - 5th Edition, British Columbia, provide some valuable statistical data on Japanese geography, economy and Japanese/Canadian

relations as well as data on other nations of Asia. They will assist a teacher willing to emphasize Japan in fulfilling the geography requirement specified in the curriculum guide.

A student in Grade 8 is mandated by the curriculum to study the middle ages of Japan and the subsequent geography and culture of the country. The prescribed texts in Grade 8 will provide a cursory study of these topics. Beyond this basic coverage the student is dependent upon a knowledgeable and motivated teacher to expand Japanese content. For that teacher, the curriculum guide provides the latitude to spend more time on Japan and the Social Studies Annotated Bibliography - Grade Eight provides a list of supplemental texts for greater depth of coverage.

The supplemental texts applicable to Japan are true to the intent of the curriculum guide and prescribed texts. These supplemental resources tend to emphasize historical data which by necessity includes a cursory discussion of Japanese geography and culture for the time period being discussed.

A distinction should be made however, between those resources which educate the teacher and those which educate the student. The best supplemental texts, such as Edwin O. Reischauer's The Japanese, are suited to the teacher. At best, a teacher could only use extracts from these higher-level resources. The student supplemental texts concentrate on Japanese history and show great variation in quality.

In summary, of the five texts presently prescribed for use in Grade 8 social studies, one is categorized as Minimally Acceptable, one as Recommended, one as Unacceptable and two as Adaptable. The four authorized texts in Grade 8 are categorized as one Minimally

Acceptable, one Adaptable and two Not Applicable. The Japanese Language is the only topic identified as valuable for study by the interviewed subjects which was not covered by at least one of the prescribed or authorized texts. Under the Other topic, China, Asia and Canadian/Asian relations were covered.

The ten supplemental books analysed resulted in four Minimally Acceptable, three Unacceptable, two Highly Recommended, and one Recommended. Every topic supported by the interview subjects was covered by the texts. History was discussed in every supplemental text analysed but Japanese/Canadian relations by only one. The remaining topics were covered to varying degrees. Under the Other topic, International Influence, Asia, China and Korea were all discussed by one or more books.

In conclusion, Grade 8 social studies teachers emphasizing Japan in their courses include reference to the ancient history of Japan. The prescribed history text for Grade 8 provides the necessary data. The curriculum guide for Grade 8 allows for greater concentration on Japan throughout the social studies course; however, resources become a problem. The teacher has to engage in extensive research and curriculum development to include specific Japanese content beyond the mandated history component.

Consequently, a Grade 8 student, in the initial high school year, enjoys an introduction to Japan. This occurs through a study of early Japanese history with a corresponding examination of Japanese geography and culture. However, the depth of that study and the coverage of other relevant topics on Japan depends on the motivation of the teacher and the availability of supplemental resources.

Any serious move to improve Japanese content at the Grade 8 level requires greater depth than available in the prescribed texts. A cursory examination of thousands of years of Japanese history and no effort to relate that history to contemporary Japan does not provide young British Columbians with a solid and meaningful knowledge base for interacting with Japanese citizens. Further, the dependency on teacher initiative requires the provision of extensive resources for social studies educators beyond a list of supplemental resources. A series of in-depth recommendations to correct these conclusions is provided in the final chapter of this study.

Grade 9

The Grade 9 British Columbia curriculum guide for social studies does not specifically mandate a study of Japan. Japanese history is only referred to as peripheral to European history, as in the study of the impact of the European industrial revolution and European imperialism upon Japan and other nations of Asia. In studying modern-day industrialization, Japan is one of a choice of five nations suggested for a case study of a contemporary industrial state. As in Grade 8 the choice of Japan would require an interested and knowledgeable teacher.)

In Grade 8, an historical study of ancient Japan is required by the curriculum guide. However, in Grade 9 Japan could be completely omitted within the broad parameters of the Grade 9 curriculum. The motivated Grade 9 social studies teacher with an interest in Japan could utilize time for extension work (15%) to include Japan but this is strictly a teacher's option. The Grade 9 curriculum guide does not

follow through with the precedent for Japanese history studies set in the Grade 8 curriculum scope and sequence chart.

The prescribed texts in Grade 9 vary in Japanese content. The text Exploration Canada and accompanying teacher's resource handbook are devoted to the 55% of the curriculum on early Canadian history and are thus not applicable. The European history text, Patterns of Civilization, Volume II, is the companion book to the Grade 8 text. The Japanese content in the Grade 9 volume is more limited in scope, and restricted to one era of Japanese history, the Meiji Era, with a cursory look at the corresponding culture and economy of the day. The text is Minimally Acceptable but omissions and generalizations come close to misleading students. The authorized teacher's guides for the two prescribed texts parallel the student texts in both coverage and categorization.

Supplemental texts for Japanese studies in Grade 9 social studies, as listed in an annotative bibliography, are very limited. In fact, only one resource book was readily available for extending Japanese content but this text was categorized as only Minimally Acceptable.

In conclusion, there is no direct reference to Japan in the Grade 9 social studies curriculum guide. A full 55% of the course is devoted to a study of Canadian history and Japan does not qualify as a separate topic of study in the remainder of the course unless selected by a teacher from a choice of five industrialized nations. Correspondingly, the prescribed and supplemental texts are sparse in Japanese content. Most notably, the precedent set for Japanese studies in Grade 8 is not continued to any appreciable degree in Grade 9. A social studies

teacher wishing to emphasize Japanese history could only do so as a comparative study involving European developments or as a study of one era of Japanese history, the Meiji Restoration. In the first case, no resource is available, and in the second case coverage is weak. The study of Japan as an example of an industrialized nation would again require extensive teacher initiative and research.

For a student entering Grade 9, the historical progression from the Tokugawa Era to the Meiji Restoration is covered but beyond this, Japan is omitted. If Japan is not chosen as the industrialized nation to be studied, reference to Japan throughout the year could be covered in virtually one lesson. Continuity with depth and useful resources are lacking in Grade 9.

Grade 10

The Grade 10 social studies curriculum guide devotes one-half of the year to a continuation of the study of Canadian history. However, the second half centers on Canada's contemporary economic activities with a direct emphasis (10%) placed on Canada and the Pacific region. Within this framework, a study of British Columbia's association with Pacific Asia is mandated. The stress on Pacific Asia underlies reference to the culture, geography, and history of Japan and Japanese-Canadian relations. It must be noted that the curriculum guide refers only to the Pacific region but Japan is accepted as a major player in the region.

A student in Grade 10 social studies is mandated by the curriculum guide to study Pacific Asia. This includes an examination of Japan and a close look at the economic relationship between British Columbia and the Asia-Pacific region.

The prescribed text for Grade 10, Our Land: Building the West, contains reference to six of the seven topics recognized by the experts who were interviewed with respect to their priorities for Japanese studies. With the exception of Japanese-Canadian relations, coverage tends to be cursory and contains misleading generalizations. However, the coverage does contain significant Japanese content and is encouraging as one of the newer texts available. The text allows student learning about Japan without dependence on teacher interest and ability.

In conclusion, a student in Grade 10 social studies will receive instruction on Japan within the context of the Asia-Pacific region. The Grade 10 course, when compared to Grade 9, is much more clearly and strongly oriented towards Japan. It is regrettable, however, that the historical data presented in Grades 8 and 9 is not utilized in the discussion of economic relations with Japan today. By reviewing the historical roots of Japanese economic activity and the historical characteristics of Japanese business practices, British Columbia students would better understand the why's and how's of doing business with Japan.

Grade 11

The Grade 11 social studies curriculum guide reveals an initial concentration on Canadian government and contemporary Canada. Emphasis then shifts to wider global issues such as population growth and the impact of technology, where no particular nation is singled out for discussion. The ethnic history of Japanese people within Canada is an option but in reality a study of Japan is not specifically required in

the scope and sequence chart of the Grade 11 curriculum guide. In fairness, the global issues mandated for study could include a Japanese perspective but as in earlier grades, the onus of responsibility falls on the interest and ability of the classroom teacher.

The new prescribed text for the geography component of the Grade 11 course does contain reference to Japan. However, because the text deals with a number of far-reaching global issues Japanese coverage is very cursory.

In Grade 11 a student is not required to study Japan. He will come in contact with the country through familiarity with the prescribed text, but data is fleeting and minimal. Of greatest concern at the Grade 11 level is the fact that the strong economic examination of Japan in Grade 10 is not pursued in Grade 11 even within the context of the curriculum topics. As was the case in Japanese history from Grade 8 to Grade 9, an initiative in Japanese studies in Grade 10 is not carried through in Grade 11. A high school student entering the last year of public education and having completed the social studies curriculum will have experienced the frustration of sporadic study of Japan. His/her study of Japan will have been inconsistent and consequently the knowledge either confused, superficial, or both.

Grade 12

At this point in time, Grade 12 is divided into History and Geography, subjects which are based upon curriculum guides which are

now well-dated. These courses are presently being revised. The history course could include Japan under several broad headings but post-World War II Japanese development is conspicuous by its absence. The geography curriculum is strictly a technical, scientific approach to the study of the earth. Case studies are encouraged but this presupposes a great deal of teacher expertise in Japanese geography.

The geography texts are not applicable to Japan because of their earth-science perspective. The history texts include reference to Japan, and the nation is viewed fairly, if not always thoroughly, in the context of twentieth-century world history. The Grade 12 history texts reveal a consistent omission of Japan's resurgence following World War II.

A student in his or her final year of high school has the option of studying history and/or geography or neither. Those students who choose History 12 will learn Japanese history in a world-history context from the early to mid-twentieth century. Unfortunately, he or she will not study the recent history of Japan's revival and re-emergence onto the world scene. A student choosing to study Geography 12 will concentrate on technical geographic data and it is unlikely that Japan would be covered in this context.

Summary

In conclusion, a British Columbia student entering high school can expect to learn isolated aspects of Japanese history, geography, culture, economy, and Japanese-Canadian relations. There is no consistent pattern of study of Japan in British Columbia social studies curriculum guides or in the prescribed texts. The degree of emphasis on

Japan will depend in large part on the interest, motivation and expertise of the classroom teacher. The topics recognized by the research subjects as integral to a study of Japan, specifically: Japanese culture, history, geography, economy, language, Japanese-Canadian relations, and other varied topics, are, to varying degrees, covered in the high school years but the coverage is often cursory and lacking the essential element of interrelationship. The topic of Japanese language does not warrant discussion to any appreciable degree in any of the texts. Many of the topics identified during the interviews and labelled "Other" do appear haphazardly throughout the social studies courses and texts. However, in essence, the courses of study are not true to the intent of the subjects' objectives. Students are unlikely to graduate from Grade 12 with a thorough understanding of Japanese history, geography, culture, economy. Nor will they have a basic understanding of the Japanese language or its origin, the fundamentals of Japanese-Canadian relations, or knowledge of associated other topics. Perhaps, most importantly, students will not gain the ability to use such knowledge to foster greater contact between Canada and Japan. To change this situation, the last chapter of this study will offer a series of recommendations designed to improve the study of Japan in British Columbia social studies classrooms.