

the country develop history and political science programs with a heavy European content. We study German, Spanish and Italian in our high schools, with a few brave souls even devoting attention to the language of Julius Caesar. On a broader basis our legal profession draws from the well of European experience, our political system looks to Westminster as the "Mother of Parliaments" and Canada's leading professional theatre is devoted to the works of one of Elizabethan England's more successful dramatists.

On the other hand the Asian influence upon Canada has been almost non-existent. Asian philosophy has not been a factor in shaping our social structures and the delights of Asian literature are foreign to the vast majority of us. Asian languages in the pre-college level are generally ignored, while even in post-secondary institutions only a brave few undertake the study of Chinese and Japanese. It is instructive to note that in 1978, 295 of the 417 students studying Japanese in Canadian universities were in first year, with only seven studying at the fourth year level.

In spite of the efforts which have been made in recent years, it seems to me that we have so far failed to invest in the Asia/Pacific region the intellectual and cultural capital it deserves. Given this situation it is not surprising that the understanding of the Asian reality in Canada is sadly lacking in comparison to that of Europe. Without firmly-based cultural foundations and the historical network of shared experiences there is little to encourage our artists, academics and other professionals to share their experience with Asian colleagues.

Within this context it is most interesting to look at the example of Japan and Australia which, like Canada, experienced a dramatic shift in the 1970s in certain aspects of their relations with the Asia/Pacific world and which have attempted to encourage and develop those relations across a broad and textured front.

Example of  
Japan

Japan's economic and political interests in the region require no explanation. It is interesting to note however that, despite the intensity of activity in these areas, the Japanese concluded that a broader approach was required and that enhanced efforts had to be made to develop better understanding and awareness.

A variety of institutions are involved in this effort on the Japanese side, the most well-known being the Japan Foundation, which dispenses 37 per cent of its annual budget of more than \$25 million in Asia. The Foundation, funded by a \$200-million endowment supplied by the government and private industry, supports academic, linguistic and cultural exchanges which seek to insure that the common elements shared by all Asians is dramatized, and that the unique qualities of the Japanese experience are understood and appreciated. The Foundation is an independent organization but works closely with the Foreign Ministry in establishing its objectives and is guided by Japanese embassies in countries where there is no resident Fund office.

The ASEAN countries receive particular attention from the Japan Foundation. In addition, other programs have been initiated with ASEAN to complement its efforts. These include a cultural fund with a \$30-million endowment to promote inter-