

CONFERENCE POLICY REPORT

"Canada - East Asia: Business Connections"

Intent of the Conference

In October of 1998, Renison College and the University of Waterloo hosted their fourth annual East Asian Autumn Festival. The festival included a wide-range of cultural activities and was well attended by the Kitchener- Waterloo community.

The festival's official opening took place on September 30 at the Kitchener City Hall. Along with the "Tastes of East Asia Food Fair", the evening featured martial arts demonstrations, a presentation of Chinese and Korean dances, and a display of traditional Chinese costumes. Visitors also learned about origami and calligraphy techniques and sampled Chinese and Western folk music.

An information fair was held the next day in which participants learned about employment, study, and research opportunities in East Asia. Representatives from a variety of organizations and institutions were on hand to answer questions from the interested public. On the same day, several guest speakers took part in the celebrations. Dr. Jusuck Koh, principal architect for Oikos in Seoul, Korea gave the keynote address. He spoke about the connections between culture and architecture in a talk entitled, "Korean Culture Reflected in Architecture and Landscape." In a literary evening held at the University of Waterloo's Theatre of the Arts, audiences were treated to two unique perspectives of Canadian - East Asian relations. Dr. Peter Li discussed his work, "The Chinese in Canada" in which he explores the historical development of this group in this country. Author Kerry Sakamoto read from her best-selling novel "The Electrical Field". This work was nominated for the Giller Prize and the Governor General's Award for Fiction and explores the lingering effects of the Japanese-Canadian internment during the Second World War. The evening also showcased a special screening of the National Film Board's "Under the Willow Tree: Pioneer Women in Early Canada", under the direction of Dora Nipp.

The Festival concluded on October 3, 1998 at Renison College with cultural demonstrations of origami, calligraphy, Aiki Ju-Jitsu and Karate techniques. Participants enjoyed samples of East Asian cuisine before concluding the festivities with demonstrations of the Chinese Lion Dance, and instructions in Acupuncture and Bonsai gardening.