

the exception of the 'international' schools, largely ethnically uniform. Secondly, Canadian private schools, unlike the public education system in Canada, are the only ones which include single-sex schools. Single-sex schooling is on the rise for girls in Canada as recent research has shown that girls learn better and develop more self confidence in all girls' schools. This has made these schools in greater demand than at any time in the past 50 years. Finally, Canadian private schools are the only ones that may have a religious orientation. While many are secular, there is a wide range of choice of religious affiliation in the private schools available to families. A preference for religious schooling has been on the rise over the past decade in particular and shows every sign of continuing to increase. This offers quite a contrast to private schools in Japan where religion plays far less a role in the selection by parents of a private school for their child.

Predictions for the Future

In Canada, the appeal of private schools is likely to continue, and enrolments are likely to increase until confidence is restored in the public system. We think that if and when Canadian public schools are reduced in size, so that there can be a development of a sense of shared community and the subsequent reduction in problems of anonymity, 'dropping-out' and violence, there will be a movement back to the public system. The future will also be dependent on whether the allegiance to private schooling, among the second and third generation of Canadians, will continue.

In Japan, the proportion of students enrolled in private schools will likely continue to increase unless/until there is reform of the state system including curriculum reform, recognition of individual worth, and decentralization of control. The low birthrate, and no immigration policy to increase the population to counter the decline with ageing, suggests that a relatively high percent of parents will continue to be able to afford private education for the typical one child family. It is likely, however, if the public system is strengthened, that the number of private schools will decrease as competition for able students forces some schools out of the market.

Conclusion

Japan's position in the world is changing and despite the present problems, its strong economic base should continue to make it the anchor of Asia and the Pacific Rim. In Japan, there seems to have been an uncritical acceptance of Western culture, particularly American culture. Language, by which culture is conveyed and on which cultural domination is based, seems to have become less and less sophisticated since it has gone through a process of massification and uncritical absorption. Some people have argued that linguistic dominance in itself creates a colonial mentality. On the other hand, the mastery of language creates a revolutionary potential, since those who were subjugated can now understand the culture of their "oppressors".

However, in the case of Japan as in the case of Canada, this oppression, this cultural imperialism, is subtle and pervasive. The private school system in Canada has not necessarily been the leader of cultural independence, although some of its graduates have led that movement. Canadian private schools are vulnerable to their students being recruited by elite American universities, and their carefully trained students being assimilated to American culture and its patterns of hegemony. On the other hand, if the schools have done their job well, it may be possible that their students will learn the culture and understand how to resist it. Nakano (1998) in writing about the Japanese society of the future sees the need for "forceful young mold-breakers" as future leaders of Japan. Is it not possible that Japanese private schools, perhaps even in conjunction with sending some of their students to Canadian private schools, could create the leaders that Nakano sees as so necessary for the new Japan? Is it not also possible that Canada could be a partner in this cultural transformation and not only contribute to, but benefit from the cultural renaissance in Japan? European culture in Canada has a short history dating back no more than 500 years, but a relatively long history, dating back to 1776 in dealing with the American problem. While it has less to draw on in terms of cultural depth than Japan, it has patterns of resistance to unwarranted absorption that might be valuable to