

Abstract of 2016 Dissertation Requesting a Doctoral Degree

Studies on the formation of History Textbooks during Late Qing and Early Republic Eras

- With focus on the influence from Japan and the development of the new education and textbooks systems -

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Abstract:

1. Perspectives of studies of the history of history textbooks

Studies about history textbooks are attracting attention due to recent active debates on history textbooks in Asia. In China, studies in this field began to emerge in 1980's while in Japan, it is still a very new area that only emerged in early 2000. In this research, I view history textbooks both as school textbooks and as books that reflect the characteristics of historical documents. Therefore, as in the case of the studies of historical documents, I will consider the political, social, and academic conditions of the time, and attempt to shed light on the thoughts and perspectives of the editors of these textbooks through historical verification and analysis.

It is a well-known fact that in the post First Sino-Japanese War period, popular interest in Japan increased in China, and Japan's influence was prevalent in many facets of life. However, many of the current studies seem to consider Japan's influence only at its face value. Further, they do not give due consideration to the trends of the education and textbook systems of this period. For this reason, in this research, I attempt to reveal the history of the formation of modern history textbooks and their characteristics in China while also looking at the influence of Japan and the development of the education and textbook systems.

2. Reference documents

At present, studies of the development of modern history textbooks are still at a basic research level. As such, we do not have a clear overall image of this research field. Within the scope of my research, I was able to gain some understanding of the textbooks archived in China, but using these textbooks for research is a future topic for us. In Japan, we have some collections of history textbooks archived in the Saneto Bunko at the Tokyo Metropolitan

Library. Those textbooks and documents, the existence of which I was able to confirm, include many that are related to Japan some of which are hard to find in China. In this research, I used Chinese history textbooks and other relevant materials available in Japan as well as those I was able to obtain from China.

3. Research objectives

The objective of my research is to elucidate the following four points; (1) transition from the period of exploration of early textbooks to accepting history textbooks written in Japan, (2) basic trends in the fundamental characteristics of Japanese textbooks translated into Chinese and successive changes observed in them, (3) ideal history textbooks that the Ministry of Schools aimed for while paying attention to the characteristics of the textbook assessment system, (4) formation of the predominant paradigm of modern history textbooks based on the changes in the “worldview” observed in these textbooks. Therefore, in order to more clearly elucidate the above four points, I engaged in research focusing on the following 5 points; 1. Influence of the traditional history textbooks, 2. Trends in academia and the intellectual history, 3. Influence of Japanese history textbooks, 4. Variation in history textbooks, and 5. Formation of modern education and textbook systems.

4. Brief overview of the era

The Qing dynasty government proclaimed “political reform (變法上諭)” on the twenty-ninth day of the twelfth month of the twenty-sixth year of Kuangzhi (1901.1.29) and declared “nurturing talent and promoting the country (育才興國)” as one of the new policies. After Wu Runlun (吳汝綸) returned from Japan, the government issued “Authorized School Regulation” on the first day of the twelfth month of the twenty-seventh year of Kuangzhi (1902.1.10), then proclaimed “Government decreed School Regulation” on the thirteenth day of the eleventh month of the twenty-ninth year of Kuangzhi (1904.1.13) and established the modern education system. Finally, on the tenth day of the eleventh month of the thirty-first year of Kuangzhi (1905.12.6), the Ministry of Schools was established. Textbook assessment began in the thirty-second year of Kuangzhi (1906). Therefore, proclamation of the Authorized School Regulation stimulated writings, translations, and editing of textbooks, and as a result,

contributed significantly to the development of history textbooks in China. To follow up on the various textbook publication activities, the Ministry of Education which was established was founded and implemented a system for textbook management.

In 1912, the Provisional Government of the Republic of China was established in Nanjing after the Xinhai Revolution, at which time, the Ministry of Schools was renamed as the Ministry of Education (教育部) with the aim of establishing a new education system. However, shortly afterward, Yuan Shigai (袁世凱) took over political power, and the Department of Education was moved to Beijing. From the perspective of the history of textbook publication, late Qing trends are continuous with early republic trends. The government re-established and organized its textbook system under the control of Yuan Shigai.

After World War I and the May Fourth Movement in 1919, so-called Renxu School System was proclaimed in 1922. This was a revolutionary incident in the history of education. In view of history textbook development, the proclamation of the “Outline of the Coursework (課程綱要)” in 1923, which was made to reflect current trends, marks a significant point. That is, the thoughts reflected in the “Outline of the Coursework” verify that history textbooks in China had become completely devoid of any influence from Japanese history textbooks, and thus China’s own history textbooks were born.

5. Research structure and summary

This research consists of four chapters. “Chapter 1 - Exploration of the history textbooks in the pre-modern era.” In this section, in order to provide a general view of the trends of history textbooks before the proclamation of the “Authorized School Regulation,” I will focus on the prominent figures who received traditional Chinese education but explored new education, new education of history, and textbooks for the coming generations. In particular, I will focus on Wu Rulun who was influential in introducing the Japanese education system and discuss the struggles he faced when he traveled to Japan to observe Japan’s history education. In “Chapter 2 Characteristics of Chinese translations of Japanese history textbooks,” I will discuss the most representative textbooks of “Qing history,” “Western history,” and East Asian history,” and elucidate the characteristics on how the Japanese history textbooks were accepted in China. In particular, for the “History of East Asia” , I will refer to several works by Jitsuzo Kuwabara (桑

原隲藏) and discuss the changing attitudes in regard to accepting these texts. In Chapter 3, “Idea of history education and the revision of textbooks with the establishment of the textbook assessment system,” I will compare the “Authorized School Regulation and the Government Decreed School Regulation” to consider the position of history education in the modern education system, and discuss the characteristics of the concept of history education and the textbook assessment system. In particular, I will carefully evaluate the characteristics of the textbook assessment system since heretofore, the system had been regarded as identical with the textbook screening system in Japan. I hope to clarify the characteristics of the history textbook assessment in China. In Chapter 4, “Trends of history textbooks after the re-establishment of the textbook system,” I will discuss the process of re-establishing and re-organizing the textbook system during the formative stage of the Republic of China after the Xinhai Revolution by focusing on the periods under the power of Yuan Shigai and post May Fourth movement. In particular, I will examine the “Proposed Pedagogical Essentials 教授要目草案” that had never been discussed before. This draft was issued while Yuan Shigai was in power, and by revealing its characteristics, I will clarify the significance of the “Outline of the Coursework” for history studies issued in 1923.

6. Changes in the “concept of the world”

I will summarize the objectives of my research regarding the “changes in the ‘concept of the world’ in creating history textbooks” under objective (4). The concept of the world in history education in China went through the following changes; 1) “Concept of the history of the Nation under Heaven (official history),” (pre-modern period)→ 2) “Dichotomy of the history of China and foreign countries (late Qing and early Republic era) ” → 3) “New concept of world history” (after the May Fourth Movement) .

The concept of history according to 1) is based on the belief that the nation is a pseudo family centered around the emperor, and its history is formed by the family members (ministers and consorts) . Foreign countries are regarded as subordinates that would make tributes (or to be made to pay tributes). History education as national education begins with the change from 1) to 2). The idea of the dichotomy of Chinese and world history proposed in 2) was an innovative idea that was developed by incorporating the changes that were taking place

in Japan and revising them to fit the situation in China. Unfortunately, too many random factors were incorporated together.

In the 3rd stage, Chinese history is considered a part of world history and is compared with it. This concept had a significant influence to later history education in China and the formation of China's national identity. According to this concept, history is divided into two parts – World history (western history) and Chinese history, and history textbooks after this period are basically based on this dichotomy. In China, due to the international conflicts and wars after the foundation of the Republic, the idea of nationalism was enforced. Although the idea of nationalism went through some changes along with the changes in political power, the government continued to emphasize the philosophy of nationalism.

7. Significance of my research

First, I confirmed that before the government introduced textbooks translated from Japanese, prominent figures with liberated ideas such as Laing Qichao (梁啟超), Zhang Binglin (章炳麟), Liu Shipai (劉師培), and Xia Zengyou (夏曾佑) were able to form a general idea of history education while actively pursuing ideal history textbooks. Then, I concluded that Wu Rulun who visited Japan was the central figure in the exploration of the possibility to maintain the traditional Chinese national studies while aiming at introducing western studies.

Second, I denied the idea that these Chinese elites went to Japan to learn during the late Qing period as a quick way to gain more knowledge about western learning. Instead, I proposed that they accepted western learning as they were digested and accepted in Japan from the viewpoint of East Asian history. Japanese text books demonstrate certain creative characteristics that are not found in western textbooks, and late Qing Chinese government and elites paid attention to such unique details.

Third, this research sparks questions about the Chinese translation of Japanese history textbooks, which have never been discussed before. Although the current research is not extensive, I have examined the most representative textbooks of Qing dynasty history, Western history, and East Asian history that were translated into Chinese, and in general, I clarified that the translations changed from faithful reflections of the original textbooks to those that were better suited for Chinese students as so deemed by the government and elites in charge of

textbook publication, and finally, to generate a demand for creating textbooks by the Chinese authors for the Chinese students.

Fourth, my focus on the characteristics of the textbook assessment system in China that were different from the textbook screening system in Japan is one of the significant points of this research. The Department of School Systems attempted to clarify their politics including the use of versed textbooks and textbooks that were translated completely from Japanese while flexibly exploring the right direction for their textbooks in order to improve the quality of all publication not bound to textbooks only.

Fifth, I focused on the continuity of the textbook system from late Qing to the early Republic era and clarified the changes. This perspective is also one of the significant points of my research. The Republic of China that was established by the Xinhai Revolution is a transition from the imperial government that lasted for over 2,000 years and marks the most revolutionary stage in the history of China. Textbook administration finally fell into the hands of the Department of Education after the turmoil of the early Republic era. Thus, I shed light on the fact that textbook assessment was conducted in detail and in reality, became something very similar to “screening.”

Sixth, the Proposed Pedagogical Essentials issued under the rule of Yuan Shigai, had never been discussed before. With the fall of the power of Yuan Shigai, this policy was never executed, but I consider it to be the completed form of the idea of the history of China and foreign countries that had been pursued by the Chinese government since late Qing.

Seventh, I concluded that the concept of world history reflected in the “Outline of the Coursework” for history issued in 1923 became the primary concept of history education in China. In this outline, history of China is considered as part of and compared to world history. This outline had a significant influence on China’s national identity after this period.