

The Asian History Exposition in the Higher Education Press Version “World History (Modern History Volume)”

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Abstract

This article analyzed the Asian History exposition in the “World History (Modern History Volume)”, which was the new textbook in modern history of the world pressed by the Higher Education Press in 2007 December for the history major undergraduate in Chinese university. This article had full recognition on this college textbook for an undergraduate to study modern history of the world compared to the previous college textbook for an undergraduate to study modern history of the world has great progress, and also pointed out that it had some problems. This article would list some problems associated with the Asian history in this new textbook. These problems mainly include the following aspects: historical distortion, biased discusses, contradictory formulation, different translation, and inaccurate translation, elaborated indistinct and word error etc.. This article would discuss these problems associated with the Asian history in accordance with the East Asia, West Asia, South Asia, North Asia and Southeast Asia and other regions, in order to help the mend of the “World History (Modern History Volume)”, and provide a more accurate and interesting college textbook on modern history of the world for the later undergraduate to learn and think.

Key words: Higher education press version; World history (modern history volume); Textbook; Asian history exposition; Problems

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, the author had read the new undergraduate textbook for history major, world history (modern history volume), which was published by higher education press in 2007 December. This new textbook was national planning textbook for higher education, was the second volume of the four volumes “world history”, and edited by Liu Xincheng and Liu Beicheng. This textbook has 407 pages and 440 thousand words, divided into thirteen chapters. This is the first edition of this textbook. Because most of the universities in China had adapted this textbook, so the quality of this textbook was particularly eye-catching. The author believed that compared with the old textbook world history (Modern History Series) which was published by higher education press in 2001 March. This new textbook substantially compressed space, from two volumes 835 pages and 770 thousand words into one volume 407 pages and 440 thousand words, and had consult many foreign latest world history textbooks and many other books, and had absorbed a large number of academic research achievements, and had introduced the view of global history, then the structure and narrative mode also had adjusted greatly, and had enhance the rationality and the time spirit of this textbook. The formulations of a lot of problems in this textbook were more objective and

comprehensive, more in line with international standards. All these showed that this new textbook had significant progress. The Asian history exposition in this textbook also had great progresses; the exposition was more objective and fair than the textbooks before. But from the requirements of Chinese universities history major students in the twenty-first Century need a higher quality and a better textbook on the modern history of the world, from the organic unity of scientific, knowledge and readable to measure, the Asian history exposition in the new textbook also needs some improvement. In line with the principle of seek truth from facts, and to reflect the history facts of Asian history in the modern history of the world as true as possible, and to give students the real knowledge, meanwhile gradually revised for new textbook, and to bring forward the deficiencies in the new textbook and the corresponding suggestions for improvements, are the ineluctable responsibilities of the history teachers in universities, and this also accord with the desires of new textbook editors expressed in the preface of this new textbook.

In this article, the questions discussed in Asian history of the "World History (Modern History Volume)" were classified according to the region. This article would divide Asia into West Asia, North Asia, South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia and other regions to discuss. In all the listed questions, there are historical distortions, jaundiced discusses, inconsistent formulations, different translation, inaccurate translation, unclear discusses, wrong words etc..

1. THE EXPOSITION OF EAST ASIA HISTORY

The new Textbook page 156 pointed out: "Some place, such as Hida and Owari no Kuni had absorbed pottery technology of Korea, made 'Arita Sampo', 'Sekawa Sampo', and 40% of Edo daily-use pottery products were produced in Sekawa." (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.156) This exposition exits three problems. Firstly, according to the exposition of Kiyoshi Inoue's "The History of Japan (2)", the place where fire "Arita Sampo" was Hizen in Northern Kyushu, not Hida. (Inoue, 1974, p.351) When Toyotomi Hideyoshi invaded Korea, Hizen-han Daimyo Nabeshima Naoshige took Korean potters Yi Sam-pyeong to Japan. In 1616, Yi Sam-pyeong established Tengu Valley kiln in Arita of Hizen, and this was the progenitor of 'Arita Sampo'. Secondly, according to the exposition of Kiyoshi Inoue's "The History of Japan (1)", Owari no Kuni produced "Seto Sampo", rather than "Sekawa Sampo". (Inoue, 1974, p.239) Finally, "Seto Sampo" was not appearing in the 16th century to the 17th century, but in the 13th century. "Seto Sampo" is the generic term of Ceramics produced in Seto and its surrounding areas of Owari no Kuni,

originated in the Heian Jidai. In 1223 (Joo 2 years), Kato Kagemasa came to the Song with Dogen. After his return, "Seto Sampo" was developed rapidly. (Takeuchi, 1988, pp.76-77) Thereafter Kato Kagemasa was known as "the father of Japanese ceramics".

The new textbook page 163 pointed out:

Tokugawa Bakufu's "Sakoku Policy" made science and technology and the advanced social thought of western countries could not enter Japan, thus the Japanese could not understand the rapid changes of the external world, their vision was limited, innovation and enterprising spirit was depressed, resulting in "the formation of a kind of "insularity" which was extremely arrogant, lack of ethnic positive. (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.163)

But the new textbook 377-388 pages pointed out:

Even under the Sakoku Policy, Japan did not completely abandon the tradition of absorption of foreign culture. In addition to use for reference Chinese culture and canonized Zhu Xi theory, Bakufu also retained the path for understanding of Western science and technology. In 1720, the Shogun ordered allow inputting Western books which are independent of Catholicism in order to modify the calendar. Because Japan only allowed the merchant of Holland to do business, so Japan raised a new knowledge, 'Rangaku' which was research of Western science and technology through a Dutch translation. Rangaku pursuers had translated more than 500 kinds of books, mainly related to natural science, such as Medicine, Astronomy, Geography, Agriculture and Physics, etc., later also involved the History, Religion, Philosophy and other humanities knowledge. Rangaku was a kind of new academic system which brought by the contact of Japan and western modern civilization. The propagation of Rangaku made the mentality preparation for the Meiji Restoration. (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, pp.377-388)

The two kinds of formulations exit apparent contradictions, and the second kind of formulation is more in line with the actual situation of history. Japanese scholar Kiyoshi Inoue's exposition in the "The History of Japan (2)" is also consistent with the second formulation. (Inoue, 1974, pp.436-439)

The new textbook page 380 pointed out: "By the end of 1866, Emperor Komei who against Toubakuundou died suddenly. Fourteen years old Mutsuhito inherited the throne, was became the emperor Meiji (1867-1912 in reign)." But the same page pointed out: "In 1868, Emperor Mutsuhito announced the new government's political program "Five Agreements". In September (1868), Emperor Mutsuhito set for the reign title of Meiji." The problem is that, since in 1868 September Emperor Mutsuhito set for the reign title of Meiji, so we could not call Mutsuhito as "Emperor Meiji" when January 9, 1867 he just ascended the throne. After September 8, 1868, Emperor Mutsuhito set for the reign title of Meiji, we could call Mutsuhito as "Emperor Meiji". The second exposition has also aware of this problem; therefore from Mutsuhito succeeded to the throne to he announced the reign title, it calls Mutsuhito as "Emperor Mutsuhito".

2. THE EXPOSITION OF WEST ASIA HISTORY

The new textbook page 29 pointed out: "At last, in 1453, Osman empire army conquered Constantinople, and the Byzantine Empire was perished. Since then, Constantinople was changed its name to Istanbul, and became the capital of Osman Empire which believed Islam." (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.29) But the new textbook page 402 pointed out: "In 1878, the Russian army approached Turkey capital, Constantinople, Turkey was forced to sign treaty with Russia at San Stefano where was the outskirts of Constantinople and residence of Russian army." (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.402) Obviously, for the name of Osman Empire's capital after 1453, the new textbook presents two self-contradiction formulations. In fact, Chinese scholars have not formed a consensus on this problem. There are two kinds of typical formulations. One formulation is Istanbul. Such as Huang Weimin's "Middle East Countries General History: Turkey Volume" pointed out: "In 1457, June, Mohamed II had moved the capital from Edirne to Constantinople, and the city was renamed to the Istanbul (the Islamic city)." (Huang, 2002, p.70) The other formulation is Constantinople. Such as "Istanbul" lemma in "concise Encyclopedia Britannica" pointed out: "Istanbul: Turkey's largest city and seaport. (ancient name was Byzantium; before it was renamed to Istanbul, commonly known as Constantinople) After Turkey moved the capital from Constantinople to Ankara in 1923, this city was renamed to Istanbul in 1926."¹ Two kinds of formulations of the new textbooks are very similar to these two typical formulations in Chinese scholars, except the first formulation changed the time for rename Constantinople from 1457 to 1453. Therefore, two kinds of formulations of the new textbook both have certain rationality, but in the same textbook needs a unified formulation.

The new textbook page 399 pointed out:

The South Asia and Southeast Asia were basically carved up by Britain, France and Holland. In East Asia, China becomes the biggest bone which most of imperialist countries scrambled for. In the Middle East, Near East and West Asia, Iran and the Osman Empire were still the main partition aim of Western Europe powers and Russia. (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.399)

"The Middle East, Near East" in the exposition is not very correct. Because "The Middle East, Near East" is the political geography concept, with a strong European center color, is not the pure natural geographical concept, and West Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia are the natural geographical concepts, and the scope of the Middle East, Near East and West Asia has a great overlap. Use these two formulations together is not very appropriate. The editor use so complicated and

¹ "Concise Encyclopedia Britannica" Newsroom of China Encyclopedia Press, 1986, pp.52-53

controversial statements should on the consideration of the Osman Empire across the Europe, Asia and Africa, worry only use West Asia could not completely express the territory of the Osman Empire. But the topic of this part is "imperialism in Asia", so could put the Osman Empire in West Asia, because the core part of the Osman Empire is located in Asia. Therefore, I suggest the editor delete "Middle East, Near East", leaving only the "West Asia".

3. THE EXPOSITION OF SOUTHEAST ASIA HISTORY

The new textbook page 399 pointed out:

In 1886, the British designated Burma as a province of British India; so on the whole completed the conquest of South Asia. British India almost covered the Indian subcontinent and extended to Malacca, including today's India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma, Malaysia and Singapore. (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.399)

This exposition exit two problems: Firstly, although Burma belonged to British India at that time, but Burma is located in Southeast Asia, not South Asia. Therefore, the British designated Burma into British India has nothing to do with whether the British complete the conquest of South Asia. Secondly, in 1886, British India did not include today's Malaysia and Singapore. In 1826, Britain United Singapore, Malacca and Penang form the "Straits Settlements", still under the jurisdiction of the British East India Company. In 1859, the Governor of British India Lord Canin wrote: Except assume the office of the governor, none of British India civilian wants to be sending to the Straits Settlements, because it means too great sacrifice for his career. Then, in 1867, after the agitation for several years by the Straits Settlements business circles, the British government finally believed that the Straits Settlements now could self-reliance and did not rely on foreign aid, so agreed to designate the Straits Settlements the jurisdiction of Colonial Ministry. (Winstedt, 1974, p.409) Wang Shengzu's "The History of International Relations (Volume 2)" pointed out: In 1867 April, the Straits Settlements was officially upgraded to a royal crown colony, and was designated to the jurisdiction of Colonial Ministry of the British government. (Wang, 1995, p.220) In 1874, the British settlers and the royal family of Perak signed "Pangkor Treaty", and this made Perak became the first protected state of the UK. Subsequently, the English settlers also made Selangor, negeri sembilan and Pahang became the protected states of Britain. In 1877, the British Indian Empire was officially established; its jurisdiction scope did not include the now Malaysia and Singapore.

The new textbook page 399 pointed out: "Only the Kingdom of Siam (Thailand) remained independent, and sandwiched between the British colony and the French

colony." (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.399) But the new textbook page 400 pointed out:

On the whole, at the beginning of the 20th century, only Japan "go out Asia and go into Europe", and joined the ranks of the imperialist countries; Most of Asian countries and regions descended to colonies; China, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan maintained a certain degree of independence, but also lost part of sovereignty. (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.400)

Obviously, for the Kingdom of Siam whether had maintained the independence, these two expositions exist contradictions. Jerry Bentley and Herbert Ziegler's "New Global History" pointed out:

To the end of 19th century, except the kingdom of Siam (now Thailand), the whole Southeast Asia had descended to the colonies of Europe imperialist countries, and the independence of the kingdom of Siam was mainly due to the settlers believed that the kingdom of Siam was an important buffer country between British Burma and French Indochina. (Bentley & Ziegler, 2007, p.971)

Wang Shengzu's "The History of International Relations (Volume 3)" pointed out:

From 1894 to 1895, Britain and France scrambled for Muang Sing which city near the China border. This brought Britain and France to the verge of war. Finally, the British made concessions, decided to give up the territorial claims on the east land of the Mekong River in exchange for common guarantee on the independence of the Menam River Valley. In January 15, 1896, Britain and France signed the 'Declaration on Siam and other places', therefore, Siam was divided into Britain and France's orbit. Britain and France agreed that without the consent of the other country, one country could not send army to the areas of the Menam River and other river and their tributaries in any circumstances or by any excuse, could not claim any privileges and interests by oneself in the above areas; maintain the independence of the kingdom of Siam (Menam River Valley), and the two countries agreed that not to conclude any single handed agreement which would enable the third country could take any action in this area. In this way, the only center area of Siam was retained as the buffer region of the two Asian colonial empires, Britain and France. However, the scramble between Britain and France for Siam did not stop. Until April 1904, Britain and France concluded entente, generally ended the dispute of Britain and France on the Siam issue." (Wang, 1995, p.198)

So, although at the beginning of the 20th century, the Kingdom of Siam loses part of sovereignty, but still maintained a certain degree of independence. Therefore, the first exposition is accurate, and the second exposition exit errors.

4. THE EXPOSITION OF SOUTH ASIA HISTORY

The new textbook page 165 pointed out: "His grandson Aurangzeb (1659 - 1707 in reign) through a long war, at last completed the conquest of the entire South Asia subcontinent, at this time the territory of the Mughal Empire reached the maximum." (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007,

p.165) This exposition exist the historic facts error. Lin Chengjie's "Indian History" had pointed out that:

Until now, the entire subcontinent except the southernmost corner was under the rule of the Mughal Empire. India had realized the hitherto unknown unification. A small area of the southernmost tip of South Asia subcontinent was still under the independent rule by a group of feudal princes. Aurangzeb was not on purpose to leave this small blank, but because the repression of Marat uprising in successive years keep fighting had exhausted his last effort and resources of Mughal empire, though he intended to end this small step for the unification of India, but his ability was not match his ambition. (Lin, 2004, pp.159-161)

Therefore, the Mughal Empire really reached the maximum territory under the reign of Aurangzeb, but did not achieve the conquest of the entire South Asia subcontinent, the small area of the southernmost tip of India peninsula was always out of Mughal empire.

The new textbook page 360 pointed out: "In the 18th Century, the Maratha had launched an offensive in the North, South and East, and moved upon Delhi, conquered the central and southern large areas of India. The Maratha territory roughly equivalent to today's India." (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.360) But the problem is, Maratha territory was not so large. In the middle of the 18th century, the Maratha Confederacy reached its peak of power. It could affect most of the area of Deccan Plateau, the Indus River and Ganges River plain which including Punjab, Bengal, Orissa and other places. Lin Chengjie's "Indian history" pointed out:

Maratha Maharaja fought in all direction so that the territory of the Union extended more and more. In 1740s to 1750s, Maratha Maharaja had rained almost the whole of the Deccan Plateau and part of northern India. Maratha Maharaja had become the largest and most powerful country in all India separatist forces. In the South India, the dispute happened mainly between the Maratha Confederacy, Mysore and Hyderabad. These three countries not only scrambled the territory of surrounding small countries, but also often captured each others' territory. Maratha military strength was stronger than the other two countries. It claimed to realize reunification of the India, let Maratha national flag 'fly over from the Krishna River to the Indus River'. However, it is outwardly strong but inwardly weak, never able to conquer and unify the whole India. (Lin, 2004, pp.207-209)

Therefore, the Marathas had occupied only part of northern India, and in southern India, even if remove many small countries, at least Hyderabad and Mysore were the worthy rivals of Marathas. There is a big gap between Maratha territory and today's India. The exposition of textbook is inconsistent with the historic facts.

5. THE EXPOSITION OF NORTH ASIA HISTORY

The new textbook page 185 pointed out: "To the end of the 17th century, Russia had completed the conquest of all the Siberia." (X. C. Liu & Liu, 2007, p.185) Then, the

question is whether Russia had conquered the entire Siberia in the late 17th century. Bai Jiancai's "The Russian Empire" had pointed out:

In the northeast direction, because encountered stubborn resistance of the indigenous Chukchien, until the second half of the 18th Century, Russia took more than one century to annex the Chukchi Peninsula, and expanded the Russian territory to the Northeast Asia angle. In this period, the Russian settlers had got some situation of the Kamchatka Peninsula in late 17th Century, put the talons to Kamchatka Peninsula, and defeated the stubborn resistance of the indigenous people. In 1830s, Russia had occupied all the Kamchatka Peninsula. Later, Russia used the Kamchatka Peninsula as a base to expand overseas. In 1743, Russia had occupied the Commander Islands. In 1761, Russia had entered Alaska in the North American, and then took forcible possession to Alaska which more than 1,000,000 square kilometers and locates in North America. (Bai, 2000, pp.179-180)

Therefore, the Russian conquest of entire Siberia was no earlier than the second half of the 18th century, rather than at the end of the 17th century.

CONCLUSION

Needless to say, to compile a high quality, rich of the times flavor, and meet the requirements of modern world history textbook in the 21st century university is very difficult. To bring forward an Asian history exposition which has both strong technicality and intense readability is more difficult. But in order to train the new century talents which have world vision and truth-seeking spirit, we have to grasp the nettle, and continuously improve the quality of textbooks. While improvement of the textbook's quality is never get things done once

and for ever, need to keep thinking, exploration and improvement, need to constantly absorbing the new scholarship. As a history teacher in teaching first-lines of university, find and point out problems in the usual process of textbook, make a little effort for the gradual improvement of textbook, which is the purpose of writing this article.

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