

Historical Issues in East Asian International Order from an Educational Perspective

KONDO, Takahiro*

abstract

In spite of the fact that historical issues are challenges of political education, Japanese educational studies have not been able to properly deal with them. One of the reasons is that Japanese educational researchers have accepted without question the presence of nationalistic understanding of history as the most important cause of the difficulties in East Asia, while supporting textbook lawsuits over the last few decades.

On this point, it is unreasonable to compare Japan with Germany which is more progressive in terms of overcoming its past, and to conclude that the undemocratic nature of the Japanese culture has bred such a social situation. Austria, which is deemed to be culturally closer to Germany than Japan, has likewise experienced history problems repeatedly since the 1980s. What this suggests is that the degree of progress made in efforts to critically examine history is dependent on the country's international environment rather than on its own culture.

This understanding corresponds with a recognition that has gained increasing acceptance over recent years, which is that Japan is not necessarily the sole party at fault in these historical conflicts in East Asia. Needless to say, this does not release the Japanese and Japanese educational research from their special responsibility to deal with these issues. What is demanded of Japanese educational research today is to reveal what sort of axis of conflicts has been formed over the understanding of history in each of the post-war East Asian countries, and how they interact with each other across national borders. By seriously addressing this task, Japanese educational research will be able to construct a new research field that can respond to the expectations of peoples beyond East Asia who either already have faced or may face similar problems in the future.

1 Historical Issues as Educational Challenges

Resolution of historical issues is undoubtedly one of the most important challenges con-

* Nagoya University
e-mail address: k46335a@nucc.cc.nagoya-u.ac.jp

fronting Japan today. Not only is the government having difficulty finding solutions, but also academic disciplines, including educational studies, are yet to find an effective way to resolve these problems. Based on this understanding, this paper examines the approach that should be taken by educational research as a preliminary step toward finding a specific means of resolving them.

The first thing that needs to be understood is the fact that historical issues should be dealt with by educational studies. What are often discussed as historical issues are the matters over history textbooks, matters involving visits to Yasukuni Shrine by key members of the government, post-war restitution and territorial disputes. The last three of these in particular may appear irrelevant to education for those who narrowly define the scope of educational research, but education cannot fulfill its social responsibility as long as we are to assume such a posture. In fact, Article 14 of the Fundamental Law of Education covers political education.

The former Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine is undoubtedly an act of political education. He is fully aware of media's attention. Furthermore, arguments over the isolated islands with little economic value that are situated between the Japan Archipelago and the Korean Peninsula, suggest that the political value of specific historical understanding is well understood by political leaders. Their remarks and actions are motivated by their desire to provide a nucleus to a vague sympathy that exists among voters, and to crystallize these feelings into solid political support for themselves.

It is obvious that their remarks and actions contain certain elements that are inconsistent with the historical understanding that forms the basis of post-war democracy in Japan, and that the above-described political process driven by these remarks and actions will lead to costly consequences that deteriorate relationships with neighboring countries. The theory and practice of political education must serve to analyze this political process, and to use the analysis for educational purposes if the goal of political education is essentially to contribute to democracy that functions in the international society.

It is certainly not only the case with Japan that educational studies cannot effectively handle historical issues. Similar problems that have erupted in various places of the world, including the Balkan states and the Middle East, are still searching for prescriptions. This fact, however, is actually a testament to the significance of and necessity for educational research that deals with such problems. It can therefore be said that the imminent tasks that confront Japanese education have a universal nature.

This is not to say that Japanese educational researchers have been indifferent to historical issues. On the contrary, a number of leading educational researchers have actively expressed their opinions on the issue of history textbooks. More than a few have taken part in the legal process over textbooks.

However, much of the past actions only provided resistance to the assault by the right wing and conservatives with political voices and actions. There is no denying that analysis of why historical conflicts repeatedly occur has tended to be lacking. In the following sections, an attempt will be made to identify what has prevented us from developing an appropriate framework for analysis, and how we should make our analysis instrumental to resolving the issues.

2 Impact of the Textbook Lawsuits on Japanese Educational Studies

As described earlier, post-war Japan witnessed what may be called "fighting educational

studies.” This ideological position has supported the textbook lawsuits both mentally and materially. Concurrently, these lawsuits have played a certain role in shaping the Japanese educational studies into their present form.

Since Saburo Ienaga filed the initial lawsuit in 1965, a series of lawsuits have been filed even after his death by his successors at each occasion of textbook screening. These lawsuits have achieved something in the process. They brought about a ruling that several individual acts of textbook screening by the Ministry of Education contained improper descriptions. The accomplishments went far beyond that. With the very act of fighting against the government in lawsuits, they gave the Japanese people an opportunity to be aware of the problems of the Liberal Democratic Party’s education policies that were manifested in the textbook screening process.

Specifically, these problems contain the following two aspects: The first is that of a nationalistic understanding of history. The second is the oppression of voices used to criticize the government.

The memory of pre-war oppression of free speech has caused many people to consider the above two aspects to be inseparable. Amid such a perception, Ienaga charged that the screening system itself violated freedom of expression, and by presenting the results of historical research, he was able to refute in court the one-sided recognition of history that was demonstrated in the textbook screening process.

However, limitations of this approach are evident today. The two problems are of fundamentally different natures: the latter has a legal character, while the former has a political character. Moreover, the activities of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform drove a decisive wedge in the gap between the two.

In other words, without the textbook screening system, textbooks that were made under the leadership of the right-wing society would have been handed to students uncorrected and might have helped spread a nationalistic understanding of history that did not clearly distinguish mythological anecdotes from historical facts. Furthermore, the system of textbook adoption on a district-by-district basis (instead of a school-by-school basis) which has been the target of criticism by progressives as defective part of the screening process, has played a role in limiting the circulation of such textbooks. The current system has limited the adoption rate of these right-wing textbooks to 0.04 percent in 2001 and to 0.4 percent in 2005 of the total number of history textbooks distributed to schools.

Certainly, the Society has conducted lobbying activities in local government arenas, and has achieved their objectives in Sugunami Ward of Tokyo, for example. Nevertheless, it is evident that the adoption rates mentioned above are still far below the level that could be reasonably expected given the magnitude of potential support for these textbooks¹. This reality implies that asserting the elimination of the textbook screening system today would help the right-wing organization expand its textbooks.

Furthermore, as stated earlier, the lawsuit has already affected the way educational research is conducted before the above-described contradiction became evident. In the process of wrestling with these two problems, a framework was constructed in which the first problem was deemed to be one that should be tackled by historians and the second one by education researchers. The framework in effect confined the educational involvement in history teaching to approaches from the perspectives of educational administration. As a result, legal understanding of the textbook screening system has been deepened, but a political educational analysis of the history teaching was delayed.

Educational studies in Japan cannot be said to have worked effectively to solve historical issues, including the fact that a Supreme Court decision at the end of the 20th century confirmed the constitutionality of the screening system itself. Here, the problem lies with a low sense of responsibility. When educational researchers look back on the political conflicts over history textbooks, they depict people who held a critical stance against the policies of the Ministry of Education in a positive light almost without exception simply because of the stance they took, and not because of their accomplishments. Such depictions seem to be basically shared in studies and media reports in foreign countries as well.

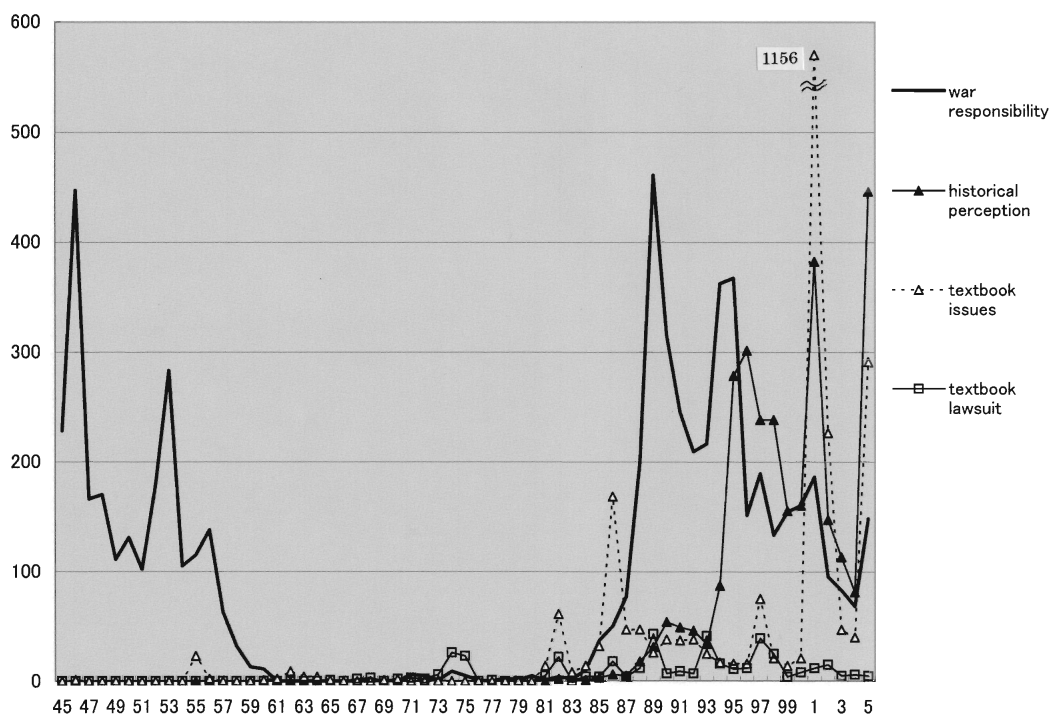
The following figure² shows the annual number of articles that appeared in the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper between January 1, 1945 and December 31, 2005 that contained the four terms indicated. The *Asahi Shimbun* does not necessarily reflect the general interest of the Japanese people. Nonetheless, it is effective at a certain level as an indicator of the political awareness of people.

At least the following two points can be interpreted from the figure:

First, the term “war responsibility” almost never appeared between the 1960s and the first half of the 1980s³, and it has been replaced by the term “historical perception” in the recent years.

Between 1988 and 1989, the number of articles that discussed war responsibility peaked, which suggests that the voices that argued the war responsibility of Japan and Emperor Hirohito commanded attention against the backdrop of his declining health and eventual death. The next peak occurred in 1995 on the 50th anniversary of the end of the war. In the meantime, the transition from “war responsibility” to “historical perception” is indicative of the fact that the war of aggression is now perceived as a past event rather than as an object of debate over who was responsible.

The second point is that the frequency with which the term “textbook issues” appears reveals the debate of an unprecedented scale that was triggered by the approval of the *New History*



Textbook published under the leadership of the right-wing society. Conversely, it suggests that the level of interest shown by the general public in the debate over history textbooks that was represented by the Ienaga litigation was not as high as educational researchers believe.

In other words, educational research in Japan has not actually exerted much political influence over the perception of history among the people in spite of the fact that it has placed higher priority on political action about history textbook issues over examining their underlying causes. Thus, the erosion of memory has steadily progressed.

Ienaga's struggle was not meaningless. However, Japanese educational research merely inherited it and failed to develop it. The fact that his textbook was criticized not only by the right wing and conservatives within Japan, but also by Korean historians (Zainichi Daikanminkoku Kyoryumindan Chuohonbu, 1982) is rarely mentioned even today.

3 Lessons from Post-War Europe

A new perspective is needed to find a means of breaking through this situation, and one perspective can be found in the experience of post-war Europe, especially in Germany.

There is an undeniably negative feeling within Japan about focusing on Germany in the context of historical issues. The right-wing and conservative debaters assert that the Japanese military, unlike Nazis, never engaged in ethnic genocide and that the historical act of invasion by Japan should not be compared with Nazi Germany, but with actions of the UK, which colonized India, and France, which controlled Indochina.

This is a pointless argument. If the so-called "overcoming the past" that Germany has accomplished was necessitated only because of the unprecedented cruelty of Nazism, this does not mean that such efforts should not be applied to relatively milder forms of cruelty. Japan, as well as the UK and France, has much to learn from post-war Germany.

Nevertheless, comparing Japan with Germany may have the risk of being trapped in cultural determinism regarding society and politics - a stereotype that has repeatedly been expressed when it comes to the analysis of both countries. To cite one example, the *Wages of Guilt* by Ian Buruma, which attempted to compare Japan with Germany in the countries' efforts to overcome their pasts, left room for cultural interpretations while maintaining that the differences between the two countries could be understood from a historical point of view (Buruma, 1994, 55). At least two problems can be pointed out with the logic of explaining the differences in the degrees that democracy has taken root in Japan and Germany on account of cultural differences, and further explaining the delays and progress in overcoming the past with such differences.

First, this framework cannot provide sufficient explanations concerning the background of historical issues, which grew increasingly serious as the democratization progressed in East Asian countries including Japan. In reality, the progress of democratization, and most notably that of free speech, in today's East Asia has led to strong voices of nationalism among people. Governments are finding it increasingly difficult to suppress these voices, resulting in rising tension among nations.

The second problem is the fact that Nazism and Japanese fascism are viewed as phenomena peculiar to the uncivilized cultures with "Asian" characters, and that "Western" cultures are thought to have nothing to do with them⁴.

Surely, it cannot be refuted that the abuse of civilians and prisoners of war, to say nothing

of the mass massacres that the two axis powers committed were extremely cruel acts. It is also true that contemporary Germans and Japanese should draw some political lessons from their past. Unfortunately, however, these two large-scale crimes were not the last of their kind in the history of mankind. Instances of the use of force driven by racism or nationalistic patriotism are abundant even in the post-war world. Development of weapons as technology of mass murders has continued, and some of these weapons are used by countries that urged defeated Japan and Germany to embrace democracy. This shows that these crimes should be regarded as ones that all countries are capable of committing.

In order to avoid such anticipated problems, attention is directed at Austria, a third subject, in this paper. Junzo Kawada, a cultural anthropologist, proposes a concept of “triangular measurement of culture.” (Kawada, 2004, 145) He proclaims the necessity of seeing a subject from two different positions to understand it in relative terms⁵. Austria appears to provide just one such new position in the comparison between Japan and Germany.

First of all, there should be no disagreement over the fact that the efforts to overcome the past in post-war Germany exceed those in the other two countries. These efforts can be called the “history education as political education.” Places reminding people of Nazism are found all over Germany, and larger sites are marked with memorials and messages of warning to not repeat the past. Smaller sites are marked by such items as memorial plates to encourage resistance to oblivion. It is virtually impossible to live complacently in any German city today without coming in contact with something that brings back the memory of the Third Reich.

Thus, history education has been promoted in post-war Germany through various routes to facilitate the country’s reinstatement in international society as a defeated country. In this paper, particular attention is paid to international activities relating to history textbooks. This is usually referred to as International History Textbook Research and is already well known in Japan. The Committee on History Research, jointly sponsored by the Japanese and Korean governments, commenced its activities in 2002⁶. The committee’s activities are modeled after the German activities.

However, in Japan, there is a problem with the understanding of the German example. The problem is the difficulty encountered in simultaneously placing the textbook dialogue with France alongside that with Poland. Specifically, people who consider the dialogue with Poland to be more important evaluate International History Textbook Research as part of Germany’s efforts to overcome its past, whereas people who focus their attention to the dialogue with France have a tendency to understand it in the context of European integration. These differences roughly correspond with the differences between the stances of the reformist camp and those of the middle-of-the-road liberal camp.

Both stances have problems. The latter views historical issues as obstacles to diplomacy and trade and has a tendency to perceive ethical viewpoints that accompany the understanding of history as secondary. In contrast, the former seeks reflection-led reconciliation with neighboring countries on one hand, while it shows weakness in its examination of the structure of historical issues that grew against the backdrop of the contemporary world.

The split in such perspectives perhaps should not be explained necessarily by the strength of ideological divisions in Japan. It is true that the textbook dialogue with France achieved phenomenal growth while the conservative administration of Germany, dominated by CDU and CSU, promoted policies of westward integration. In contrast, dialogue with Poland materialized while the SPD-led reformist government pressed forward with Ostpolitik, a policy of détente with its

eastern neighbors.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand at least the significance of the fact that these two activities were promoted in succession and in parallel. Regarding this point, it should be noted that when dialogue with Poland was initiated in the 1970s, CDU and CSU used it to criticize the government, labeling the efforts as pandering to Communists, but they switched their policy in favor of approving its value once they returned to power in Bonn in 1982.

In short, all the major political parties of Germany have fundamentally supported these activities. It goes without saying that German historians, including outstanding individuals such as Georg Eckert, have played huge roles. Still, these initiatives were taken with the political backing by the German-Franco Cultural Accord (1954), the German-Polish Cultural Accord (1976) and others.

There exists a view within Japan, whether it is expressed by either the right or left wing, that is critical of textbook screening and asserts that the government should not take part in any international dialogue over history textbooks. Their concerns are that a specific interpretation of history would be imposed on school education in the form of an international agreement. However, examples in Europe suggest a possibility that such excessive fastidiousness has actually delayed the resolution of historical issues. The government under Liberal Democratic Party has long used history for its own political education. When considering this fact, it would have been more appropriate to have pressured the government early on to take responsibility for resolving historical issues.

In contrast, the International History Textbook Research conducted by Germany and neighboring countries has achieved great results. This can be confirmed by examining the following two areas:

First, such joint research contributed to significant improvement of descriptions, particularly in Germany's history textbooks.

Generally, domestic criticism will always exist regarding the historical descriptions found in history textbooks. Such criticism provides impetus for improvement. However, improvement of textbooks resulting from domestic debate has its limitations, as exemplified by the textbook authored by Ienaga, who criticized the conservative description of history. Still, his textbook was in fact criticized by Korean researchers. The viewpoints of neighboring countries, therefore, are particularly meaningful in this debate.

It goes without saying that international dialogues have brought certain improvement to the textbooks of partnering countries as well. Even in Poland, which belongs to the old Socialist Bloc, history textbooks have emerged that honor the spirit of the German-Polish joint recommendations, especially after the country's transformation of its political regime.

Second, these results have been instrumental for the global community to recognize International History Textbook Research as an effective prescription for resolving historical issues. The current situation in which the German example is being used as a model by not only East Asia but also by the Balkans and the Middle East has added to Germany's positive image as a peaceful nation that seriously struggles with its dark historical legacy and who strives toward reconciliation with its neighboring countries. As a result, Germany, which has had to restart itself as not only militarily but also as an ethically defeated country, has minimized the distrust of its neighboring countries and been recognized internationally for having developed exemplary standards of history education. In other words, the country has made the transition from being a country to which peaceful democracy needs to be taught to a country that teaches it.

Such a favorable and optimistic view of Germany may seem alien to those who know the Bitburg and Jenninger incidents, not to mention the Nolte, Goldhagen and Walser controversies. Moreover, despite various efforts on history education there are over 4,000 individuals nationwide who are identified as neo-Nazi activists⁷, and there also have occurred incidents of racism-motivated violence.

What is notable, however, is the fact that these problems have not ballooned into major diplomatic issues. What seems to be at work is the international recognition of the country's efforts to strongly promote history education as political education that criticizes its Nazi past, in addition to the expression by political leaders of reasonable view about history. The effects of these efforts are not satisfactory as the various incidents mentioned above demonstrate. Nevertheless, they have at least reached a level where it is possible to placate sensational reactions among the peoples of Germany's neighboring countries.

The significance of these history education policies is all the more evident when compared to Austria. In Austria, a controversy erupted over the past of President Kurt Waldheim in 1985, the year in which German President Richard von Weizsäcker made an impressive speech in the Bundestag. This controversy led to the isolation of Austria in the international society.

It was discovered that Waldheim, whose impressive career included service as the General Secretary of the United Nations, was once a Nazi SA officer. He was presumably in a position to have knowledge of the executions of partisans, Jews and others, but no evidence has ever been found to indicate that he was directly involved in the atrocities. Nonetheless, this controversy evolved into a major diplomatic issue⁸. A number of possible reasons for this can be considered. The most fundamental is the posture referred to as the suppression of the past (*Verdrängung der Vergangenheit*), which was prevalent in the post-war Austrian society. In other words, when a specific point of controversy was found in Waldheim, the collective consciousness (or unconsciousness) to intentionally forget about the fact that the country once fought a war of aggression as a member of Nazi Germany collided violently with the determination to push for the pursuit of Nazi responsibility, which existed in various countries, most notably the United States and Israel. Unlike Germany or Japan, Austria may not indeed be unequivocally labeled an aggressor. It too was victim of the 1938 annexation by Nazi Germany. However, it is also true that not a small number of Austrian citizens welcomed German soldiers and cheered them as they marched by.

A focus on the troubling facts of the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s has been avoided in post-war Austria since the country's foundation. One reason is the reflection that the repeated and hostile conflicts between the left and the right in the wake of World War I made it impossible to form a stable government, causing the Nazis to intervene. Domestic reconciliation thus became the top priority. As the result of this "reflection," Austrian people achieved a miraculous economic recovery under the protective cover of "victimization," and secured a stable democratic state that was not possible before the war. In 1956 and 1957, Austria conducted joint research on history textbooks with West Germany (*Deutschland und Österreich*, 1956 & 1957). However, the period following the 1938 Anschluss was not discussed.

After the Waldheim incident, Austrian victimization finally came under scrutiny by the Austrian government. In its place, a "double truth" argument took the place of truthful historical understanding. According to this argument, Austria has two facets: one as a victim of Nazi Germany, and the other as an aggressor and member of Nazi Germany. This new image of the country was projected both within and outside of Austria, especially starting in 1988, the 50th anniversary of Anschluss, and descriptions in school textbooks changed drastically (Kondo, 2002, 94-98). In ad-

dition, with help from historians all over the country, the Political Education Section of the Federal Ministry of Education created a number of supplementary teaching materials that encouraged students to study Austria's dark past. Such efforts enabled the 60th anniversary of Anschluss to pass relatively peacefully.

However, this period of calm was short-lived. In early 2000, Austria was driven into isolation by international society once again. This was because the FPÖ, which was led by Jörg Haider at the time, took part in the federal government as the result of elections held the previous year. Haider made remarks expressing his empathy with Nazis. As the governor of the state of Carinthia, he made a remark at a Carinthia State assembly supporting the employment policies of Nazis. In addition, he praised the participants at a gathering of Nazi SS veterans as "people with backbones who are loyal to their beliefs." It is unclear whether these remarks reflected his true beliefs or if he was simply posing to win votes. Nonetheless, it is true that a certain number of Austrians supported him, or at least did not reject him. Such recognition resulted in 7-month long sanctions by EU and generated the perception that Austria had not made adequate efforts on its history since the Waldheim incident.

Considering such developments in Germany and Austria alongside the historical issues that Japan faces, it becomes evident that any attempt to explain the progress of efforts to overcome the past with ethnic cultures of individual countries is inappropriate. Austria should be close to Germany culturally but is more similar to Japan in that both countries have been subjected to serious history issues since the 1980s.

What separates Germany from Austria and Japan seems to be the international environment in which each country is placed. There was a clear necessity for Germany to make efforts to overcome its past.

For Germany, or West Germany, which became independent as a divided state, it was important to find its place solidly within the west European community, not only for the sake of its reintegration with East Germany, but also for its own survival. To counter the propaganda assault from East Germany, the awareness as Europeans who are backed by the tradition of freedom and democracy, in addition to securing economic prosperity, was a requirement. This first necessitated reconciliation with France and other neighboring countries to its west. As a result, the early German political education was clearly anti-Communist, but at the same time it embraced anti-Nazism. As the relationship with East Germany became stable with the construction of the Berlin Wall, the former receded while the latter was pushed forward. Dialogues with France and Poland about textbooks are indicative of these changes in the international environment and a corresponding shift in the focus of political education.

In contrast, the international environment in which Austria and Japan find themselves did not compel the people of these countries to feel the necessity of improving their relationships with neighboring countries as keenly as the Germans did.

Once freed from Nazis, Austria became a permanent neutral state in a narrow corridor between the Eastern and the Western blocs, managing not to form alliances with either side. This implies that there was little imperative for reconciliation with neighboring countries. Moreover, the victor nations promised Austrians victims' status in the Moscow Declaration (1943) before the end of the war to persuade them to stop cooperating with Germany. Hence, post-war Austria upheld a myth of victimization with the permission of the victor nations, so to speak.

A similar situation applies to Japan. To post-war Japanese, relations with foreign countries meant the United States before all others. Surely Japan's diplomatic relationship was normalized

with Korea in 1965 and with China in 1972. But ties with the United States have been overwhelmingly strong politically, economically and militarily. Thus, the relationship with Korea and China had only secondary significance for a number of years. During the negotiations for restoring diplomatic relationship with Korea, differences between the two countries with respect to the understanding of the process that led to the annexation of Korea became particularly apparent. But this did not have a significant meaning for most Japanese people. The US government's fundamental lack of interest in the Japanese people's historical perceptions also played a certain role in this situation. Rather, the US government's occupation policies laid a groundwork making it difficult for the Japanese to overcome its past in the early post-war years by providing immunity to the emperor, whose war responsibility was called into question by some in Japan.

Thus, both Austria and Japan proceeded with the construction of a democratic nation while not feeling the necessity to critically examine their past. Instead, many citizens of both countries understood themselves to have been victims of war rather than aggressors. Above all, Japan had the symbolic experience of having been struck by nuclear weapons.

Such a posture toward its past, however, became impermissible in international society, especially from the 1980s. Further examination will be required to determine whether this was due to the relaxation of the Cold War system, the formation of a model for overcoming the past in Germany, or the combination of these factors. Whatever the case may be, Japan began to find it imperative to develop and maintain good relations with not only the United States but also its neighboring countries. Austria also at this time suddenly faced the critical eye of the United States.

4 The Necessity of Political Education Focused on International Relations

Making a point of post-war international relations neither permits us to consider historical issues inevitable nor does it allow educational research to abandon its responsibility. As stated previously, the work of educational studies has to seriously examine these issues. In other words, Japanese educational research is now compelled to incorporate perspectives regarding international relations in East Asia.

This is not to say that Japanese educational researchers have lacked any political perspectives. Three dimensions, national, international, and global, can be considered in the process of criticizing education intertwined with nationalism. The importance of the first and the third dimensions has been well recognized. Early textbook lawsuits are examples of the former⁹. Assertions that make a connection between the globalization of new free economies and the shifting of education to the right are examples of the latter.

However, activities along the national dimension, such as textbook lawsuits, serve to make the presence of the right wing all too obvious. On the other hand, the understanding that political and economic globalization is heightening religious and ethnic fundamentalism in various regions tends to ignore the historical context of East Asia, and fails to adequately argue the problematic nature of Japan's right wing.

What was probably most needed was to clearly establish and promote the perception that the international order in post-war East Asia, which was formed under the hegemony of the United States, gain a rationale for the presence of people who were thought to be the cause of historical conflict in Japan. Instead, even such critical and well-intended activities as textbook lawsuits,

have been trapped in the framework of political conflicts driven by the existing international order because of inadequate understanding of the history of international relations. As a result, there was never formed the recognition that must become the basis for pursuit of measures to improve relations. Such absence of political educational studies is what has fostered today's apathy toward historical issues.

Finally, most historians and political educational researchers are probably in agreement today with the assertion that Japan is not the sole source of historical conflict and dissension in East Asia. There is also conflicting understanding over the history of Goguryeo between China and Korea. Furthermore, there exist various political stances within both countries regarding their respective history education policies. Such recognition resonates with the points raised in this paper. In other words, how were such multi-layered tensions formed, and how do they interact with each other? Finding solutions to these questions will be the immediate task of political educational research and the initial step toward the resolution of historical issues.

The recognition that Japan is not the sole cause of historical conflict naturally does not release the Japanese and Japanese educational studies from their own responsibility to struggle with these important issues. Even if the structural cause of these issues is sought in the international order of East Asia, the fact remains that Japan was an aggressor country in modern history. This awareness of responsibility demands that we shed our modes of routine thinking, and compels us to recognize the need for constructing a new research field within educational studies that enables the sharing of results with people of the world who have similar overt or latent problems.

Notes

- 1 Various public opinion researches during Koizumi administration (2001-2006) indicated that roughly between 30 and 50% of the people supported his visit to Yasukuni Shrine, whereas 40 to 50% of the people disapproved it. Support for his visits to the shrine is not necessarily synonymous with support for the Society's textbooks. Nevertheless, it is clear that the adoption rate of 1% or less does not accurately reflect the opinions of Japanese people.
- 2 This chart is drawn by looking up the articles of each year that include the terms "war responsibility (*senso sekinin*)", "historical perception (*rekishi ninshiki*)", "textbook issues (*kyokasho mondai*)" and "textbook lawsuits (*kyokasho so-sho*)" in Kikuzo II Visual for Libraries, the database of Asahi Shimbun articles since 1945.
- 3 The term "war responsibility" is not used exclusively in connection with Japan's war of aggression. It is found, for example, in articles that report on the Iran-Iraq War and the civil war in Yugoslavia. However, these entries are so few that they can be ignored as errors when examining the overall trends.
- 4 The arguments have been accompanied with the understanding that Germany achieved return to Europe after the end of the war.
- 5 What Kawada refers to in his book are heterogeneous cultures of Japan, Europe and Africa. He does not consider comparing two culturally similar societies, such as Germany and Austria. Nonetheless, his theory that "taking three points of reference facilitates the examination of one of them in relative terms" does not appear to prohibit its application in the context of this paper.
- 6 Japanese and Chinese governments agreed on establishing a similar committee on November 16, 2006.
- 7 According to the Federal Office for Protection of the Constitution, the number of neo-Nazi activists grew from roughly 3800 to 4100 between 2004 and 2005 (Bundesministerium des Innern, 2006, 67).
- 8 On April 27, 1987, the United States government imposed a ban on President Kurt Waldheim from entering the United States.
- 9 It is also true that starting in 1982, supporters of textbook lawsuits, and especially historians, began to pay attention to the voices of neighboring countries, and international perspectives are being incorporated.

References

- Bundesministerium des Innern, 2006, *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2005*, Berlin.
- Buruma, Ian, 1994, *Senso no Kioku - Nihonjin to Doitsujin*, Tokyo, TBS Britannica. (*Wages of Guilt. Memories of War in Germany and Japan*, New York, Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1994)
- 1956, Deutschland und Österreich 1700-1848. Empfehlungen der 1. deutsch-österreichischen Historikertagung Braunschweig, 9.-12. April 1956, in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht*, Bd.5, Braunschweig, Albert Limbach Verlag.

- 1960, Deutschland und Österreich 1848-1939. Empfehlungen der 2. deutsch-österreichischen Historikertagung Wien, 26. bis 30. Mai 1957, in: *Internationales Jahrbuch für Geschichtsunterricht*, Bd.7, Braunschweig, Albert Limbach Verlag.
- Kawada, Junzo, 2004, *Jinrui no Chiheikara (From the Horizon of the Mankind)*, Tokyo, Wedge.
- Kondo, Takahiro, 2002, Illusions in the Cold War Era, in: *Nagoya Journal of Education and Human Development*, No.1.
- Zainichi Daikanminkoku Kyoryumindan Chuohonbu (Central Headquarters of Korean Residents Union in Japan), 1982, *Kankoku Kokushihensaiinkai no Nihonkyokasho Kankokukankei Naiyobunseki (Analysis of Japanese Textbook Content Relating to Korea by Korean National Historiography Committee)*, Tokyo.