

Beyond Political Abuse of History Textbook  
Visual Literacy Issue in the History Textbook Controversy 2000-2001<sup>1</sup>

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Introduction

In 2001, the Japanese Ministry of Education, culture, sports and technology approved a Japanese history textbooks published by Fusôsha 扶桑社 as one of the eight authorized books for use in junior-high schools from the academic year 2002. The permission provoked domestic as well as international controversy. The new history textbook was edited by the so-called Society for History textbook Reform 新しい歴史教科書を作る会。The Fusôsha edition was regarded by many historians in Japan as reactionary and anachronistically nationalistic, and its authorization was criticized by Korean and Chinese authorities as damaging to diplomatic ties.

The present paper first offers a critical overview of the issue. After a short survey of the domestic and inter-Asian reactions, I attempt, second, to analyze the text book editor's use of illustrations. The treatment of Japanese art history in the Fusôsha edition provoked controversy which shows ideological confrontation of the two opposing stand points. However the Fusôsha edition is not the only questionable history textbook. I will examine in the third place visual strategies and editorial rhetoric of the junior-high textbooks as a whole. The examination will reveal the necessity of re-thinking visual literacy in historical education. I would conclude my presentation by proposing a new approach to visual materials.

I. A Critical Overview of the Controversy

The Society for History textbook Reform, the so-called Tsukuru Kai, was founded on Dec. 2 1996. Nishio Kanji 西尾幹二, a "Germanist" who specializes in Nietzsche studies, became its first president. The main body of the Society is composed of former members of the Research Group for the Liberal View of History 自由主義史観研究会, founded in Sep. 1995 (liberal meaning conservative and anti-Marxist), and was presided over by Fujioka Nobukatsu 藤岡信勝, professor in the Dep. of Education of the University of Tokyo, a former member of Japanese Communist Part. In the prospectus, published on Jan. 30, 1997, the Tsukuru Kai asserted:

Postwar history education in Japan consisted in forgetting the cultural heritage and tradition of the Japanese, and contributed to the loss of dignity of the Japanese nation. Especially in modern and contemporary history, the Japanese are treated as if they were shameful war criminals destined to apologize forever for their crimes, one generation after another. After the Cold War period, this masochistic tendency of self-criticism has grown so strong that the descriptive passages of current history textbooks take the propaganda of Japan's former enemies as historical facts. No other country

in the world does such an irrelevant education<sup>2</sup>.

The Society declared that its purpose consist of offering “a reliable history textbook for the coming generation of the Japanese nation” as it is “indispensable to recover the judicious history of one’s own country, as every nation and race is entitled to possess one without exception<sup>3</sup>.” To the submitted version of Tsukurukai text, the Ministry’s examination committee stated 137 “opinions” that needed to be addressed before approval could be granted. By responding to those “opinions” the Society finally obtained state permission on April 3, 2001, and the « new textbook » entered among 8 possible choices of the books to be adopted at the junior high school level from the beginning of the academic year 2002.

Prior to the submission, Nishio Kanji, the main ideologue of the Society and the first President, published his History of the Japanese Nation 国民の歴史 on Oct, 10, 1999. Supported by a huge financial outlay and backed by extensive publicity by the conservative Sankei Shinbun 産経新聞 newspaper, the book became the fifth best-seller of the year 1999. By Jan. 2002, it had sold more than 720.000 copies. While supporters of the Society applauded this unprecedented success, mainstream historian, mostly on the political left, saw the sensational popularity of the book as rooted in demagoguery, and despised it as a scholarly shame. Nagahara keiji 永原慶二, a venerated Marxist historian and member of the Liaison Team for the Truth and Freedom of Historical Textbooks 「教科書に真実と自由を」連絡会, accused Nishio of an “unforgivable challenge to the achievements of post-war scholarship<sup>4</sup>.” In defense of history as scientific discipline (in the Marxist sense of the term), Obinata Sumio 大日方純夫 called Nishio’s book “a blasphemy to the development of Japanese social science” despising it as an abusive patch-work concocted in the purpose of the baseless embellishing of the Japanese history. Nishio is unpardonable as he is “overlooking people’s struggle against the rulers and power in domestic scene, while it denies and negates Japan’s acts of aggression against the Asian people<sup>5</sup>.” Evidently Japanese main-stream Marxist historians counterattacked Tsukuru-kai.

The Korean and Chinese Ministries of Foreign Affairs warned against the Fusōsha edition and protested its approval by the Japanese government as damaging to relations with neighboring countries. To understand these protests, historical background must be explained. (1) On Nanjin Massacre. Up until 1982, the Chinese government preferred avoiding the issue so as to put emphasis on economic cooperation with Japan. But with the “First textbook controversy” in 1982-3, Beijing clearly changed its mind. China officially put the number of victims of the Massacre at more than 300. 000. The figure was originally based on the baseless propaganda disseminated by non other than the Japanese army. As the Japanese right wing revisionists have tried to refute the number of victims, the issue has become intensely political and has come to a deadlock, making any neutral and emotion-free evaluation impossible.

(2) In the 1982 controversy, the question of labeling Japanese military action came to the focus. While Japanese authorities preferred ideology-free terminology of “military advancement,” it was out of the question for the Chinese government not to recognize it as “invasion.” For the People’s Republic of Chinese under Marx-Leninism, refusal of the term of “invasion” was simply a violation of historical fact, whereas in Japan the issue revolves around the ideological interpretation. The gap in terminology spilled into the arena of politics and diplomacy, making and rational elucidation impossible. Let us add that Tsukurukai never use the term of

“invasion” to qualify the maneuver of Japanese army, while putting the term of “invasion” to Soviet Union’s military action. The fact simply shows that the choice of terminology is mechanically regulated in coherence with the ideological framework.

(3) Another cognition gap remains with regard to the difference between “state edited textbook” 国定教科書 and textbooks under state authorization 検定教科書. The Japanese government asked for the neighboring countries’ understanding claiming that in a democratic regime, it did not have the right to impose any ideological control over the process of textbook authorization. This explanation however was interpreted by both Korean and Chinese authorities as proof of Japanese government’s rejection of assuming its political responsibility, and it was taken as unpardonable excuse to the permission of Fusôsha edition textbook.

(4) Finally, lack of description on the key issues, such as Unit 731, the Japanese imperial army’s wartime secret biological weapons research group, cannot avoid Chinese and Korean accusations that Japan is intentionally concealing and suppressing historical truth. However, to accept unconditionally every requested change in the inclusion and exclusion of deeds and facts in accordance with foreign pressure inevitably raises doubts about Japan’s political sovereignty. Right-wing nationalistic reaction and counter-attack to this “humiliating compromise” eventually resulted in the promotion of the Tsukurukai textbook.

These are in brief a summary of some of the most basic circumstances preceding the Fusô-sha book controversy<sup>6</sup>. In Korean case, however, the situation becomes more complex. Let us mention just one case to show the difficulty. After the First textbook controversy in 1982, Japanese government modified its guideline for the high-school textbook in 1989. Following the guidance of “showing due concern to neighboring countries,” the 1994 version enlarged descriptions on Korean history. In this process some contemporary Japanese such as Yanagi Muneyoshi 柳宗悦 came into focus of the textbook editors, as Yanagi publicly protested against crude colonial rule and invasion. The Japanese editors thought it wise to insert the case of a Yanagi, who saved the Kunfua-men 光化門 from destruction.

But these descriptions were not welcome by Korean critics. Mentioning Yanagi was taken only as an easy excuse and an attempt of self-exculpation of the Japanese. It would be a mistake, they cautioned, to find in Yanagi an appropriate subterfuge as it does not acquit Japan’s colonial crimes nor exonerate Japan’s responsibility. For some Korean historians, the presence of those pro-Korean Japanese like Yanagi remains either unacceptable as historical fact or meaningless on grounds that it did not contribute to the Korean independence<sup>7</sup>. Indeed Yanagi was judged as the typical colonialist and his paternalistic attitude toward Korean people had been harshly criticized as arrogant in the 1970s<sup>8</sup>. To mention Yanagi amounted to one more maneuver to justify Japan’s rule of the Korean Peninsula. Such an attempt of rationalization must be categorically rejected.

For ordinary Japanese such a categorical rejection is hard to understand. And yet Japan is deeply involved in the creation of this rejection. So as to understand the background, just have a brief overview of the Korean scholarly hypothesis on the Japanese rule which have been developed in the last half century. For a long period of time, “Japanese aggression and Korean resistance” was the basic framework of understanding. Anti-Japan was the chief expression of Korean national dignity and integrity. However, if “anti-Japan” is the only possible core of Korean identity, this would logically mean that no Korean identity can be established without Japan. This of course was hardly acceptable to Korean nationalism. The aggression and resistance hypothesis is no longer tenable, and it was gradually replaced by a new “development and plunder” hypothesis in

the 1980s. Korean modernization and development in industry and commerce was achieved hand in hand with Japan's colonial policy which entailed usurpation of Korean resources. However this hypothesis has been abused, by Tsukurukai and other right wing Japanese politicians, so as to justify the Japanese annexation as a positive facture to Korea's social and industrial modernization. The underlying logic of these hypotheses clearly indicates that there was no room for the Korean scholars to positively evaluate Japanese rule of the peninsula, because it could inevitably undermine the Korean identity.

In recent years, younger generation of Korean scholars has developed new ideas of "discipline and reproduction." The totalitarian mass mobilization during the Japanese wartime rule was reproduced by the Post-war dictatorships both in the North and in the South and Japanese style disciplinary indoctrinations of national consciousness was surreptitiously reshaped into the Post-war Korean hyper-nationalism. To such Korean post-colonial idea, some Japanese Marxist scholars seem to be frustrated. As the Marxism was forbidden for long in South Korea under military dictatorship, the Korean scholars are lacking in "authentic" Marxist understanding of the imperialism and colonialism, at least from the Japanese standard. These Japanese scholars fear that these important issues in the post-war scholarship of Japanese social sciences is too easily de-constructed in Korean Post-Colonial theories, before being fully understood or properly digested. This adds one more complicated factor for the mutual scholarly communication. Agreement remains difficult to be reached between Korean and Japanese scholars on the issues of colonial history<sup>9</sup>.

Let us now have a brief look at the development of the controversies in Japanese academia. The authorization of the Fusōsha edition textbook seems to have reinforced the traditional opposition between conservative nationalist and Marxist left in Japanese academe. Left-wing pro-Marxist, mainstream historians resented that all the efforts they have made in the last fifty years were jeopardized by the right-wing politicians and ideologues, as their maneuver has supplied convenient pretext for bureaucratic sabotage against the truth in history. Right-wing ideologues, for their part, criticized the compromises that the Ministry of education had made, and also condemned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its humiliating submission to foreign (i.e. Korean and Chinese) reproaches and pressures, which they alleged to be interference into Japan's domestic issues, a violation against which the Ministry should have protested<sup>10</sup>.

In front of such opposition between the right and the left extremes, some critics pointed out hidden connivances that both the left and the right share. Mamiya Yōsuke 間宮洋介 sees there a danger inherent in the system of official authorization of the textbook<sup>11</sup>. First, he points out a confusion in the understanding of the notion of neutrality. Both the right and left wings seem to believe in the formal neutrality of the procedure of examination, as the neutrality is the key to authenticate their products. However the formal neutrality of the procedure does not necessarily guarantee the neutrality of its end product. Neutral examination procedure alone does not automatically create neutral and irreproachable textbook. In addition, it will be too naïve to believe that the formal and strict neutrality of the bureaucracy guarantees ideological neutrality.

Second, both the conservative and left wing editors of textbooks search for official authorization, as the authorization confers guarantee of authenticity and provides social recognition upon their products. Hence incompatible worldviews enter in conflict in their quest for the official authentication. It goes as if only the

officially authorized textbook conveyed the truth in history. As a result, both sides believe in the legitimacy of their own ideologies and accuse their opponents of historical fallacy. Is the official authorization abused for the sake of ideology? Or what does it mean if the opposite ideologies (regime and anti-regime) can search for the same official recognition by the regime?

Third, Mashiko Hidenori ましこ・ひでのり, for his part, points out that both the neo-nationalists and old-Marxists share a sort of morbid persecution delusion<sup>12</sup>. Marxists are claiming to be the victims of the right-wing/bureaucratic conspiracy. The authors of the Fusô-sha book also complain that they are victims of unjustified attacks, in their case, by domestic Marxist historians as well as from the hostile neighboring regimes. Curiously enough, both of them, right and left, claim to be the victim of state censorship, despite the fact that both of them are searching for the state authorization, which would allow them to establish their own state-granted hegemony and to ensure prevalence of their camp's political ideology over the coming generations of the whole Japanese nation.

Needless to say, so far as it serves the regime, any authorized textbooks functions as an ideological apparatus par excellence. And Mashiko finds it strange, fourthly, that both sides of the controversy seem to believe in the absolute efficiency of their tool of indoctrination, and forget the plain fact that any apparatus of indoctrination can inevitably create side effects and unexpected negative reactions. Mashiko goes so far as to declare that the Fusô-sha edition may be the most useful tool for a good Marxist teacher, if the teacher is clever and tactful enough to make use of it as a defective product 欠陥商品 to be critically analyzed and refuted in the class room. As Mao Zhatung 毛沢東 did during the Cultural Revolution, Fusôsha version text book may be used as the exemplary "bad teachers" Fānmian jīaoshī 反面教師.

Fifth and final remark. The greatest irony, according to Mashiko, is that the so-called neo-liberal ideologues are living proofs of the historical failure of the post-war American democratic education in Japan, as all of them are the (by-)products of the American occupation. Nothing is more tragic-comical than the fact the Fujioka, a key person of the Tsukuru-kai, is a renegade activist of the League of Democratic Youth 民主青年同盟, central cell organ of the Communist Party for the formation of new party leaders. Is this treason, Mashiko wonders, the failure of the Japanese Communist Party or that of the GHQ of the American occupation Army? The authors of the textbooks, in final analysis, seem to have learned nothing at all from this historical failure of which they are living witnesses, as they naively believe in the efficacy of indoctrination.

## II .Ideological Confrontations on Visual Materials --Art History in Question

Let us now turn to the second part. On Dec. 15, 2001, a special meeting was held on the textbook issue at the Eastern Branch of the Association of Art History in Japan<sup>13</sup>. Among the panelists was professor Tanaka Hidemichi 田中英道. Majored in Western Renaissance, Tanaka was elected second President of the Tsukuru-kai on Oct. 1, 2001. It is widely acknowledged that description on art history in the Fusô-sha edition was written by Professor Tanaka. Another speaker, and principle opponent to Tanaka was Chino Kaori 千野香織, specialist of Japanese art, who previously had published an article of critical interest accusing the Tsukuru-kai textbook of attempting to conceal visually the truth in history<sup>14</sup>.

In this paper, Chino first points out the fact that the Fusôsha edition is the only textbook for junior high school students that gives an overview of Japanese Art History, and remarks that “the illustrations of the frontispiece convey the impression that a coherent Japanese beauty was created from the Jômon Neolithic era onward.” In the lack of mention to Ainu people to the Okinawa inhabitants, who may also use the textbook, Chino sees the proof of “deliberate concealment of the minority groups,” and she contested the nationalistic and deceptively glorifying title “The Form of Japanese Beauty 日本の美の形.”

Let us juxtapose descriptions of Fusôsha edition with Chino’s critical commentary, so as to clarify the points at issue. Following the title, we read the motto “The Japanese beauty to be boasted in the world 世界に誇る日本の美” to which Chino remarks: “Inferiority complex of the author betrays here as the reverse side of his fervent worship and adoration of the Western Fine Arts.” As a matter of fact, Tanaka continues that “Shôgun Manpuku at the Kôfukuji Temple or Kuni-nakaji Kimimaro at the Tôdaiji Temple are sculptors as great as a Donatello or a Michelangelo” to which Chino reposts: “Such an identification of the name of sculptors is only a personal and idiosyncratic opinion of the author and such individual names are not widely accepted nor supported among the specialists.” Here is an opposition between specialists in Western art and in Japanese art.

Tanaka tries to convince the young readers of the excellence of Japanese art so as to awake their respect to the cultural heritage: “With a love of the Japanese beauty in heart, we have to learn the importance of transmitting the cultural heritage to the next generation.” However, Chino would not recognize the relevance of Tanaka’s comparative approach. “The excellence of Japanese art cannot be proved by way of comparison with Greek or Western Renaissance canon. Such a conception itself is already terribly anachronistic.” At times emotional reaction makes Chino’s remark sarcastic. “The anxiety expressed in the Buddhist monk’s face makes the work one of the most excellent portraits in the world.” This observation is welcomed by Chino’s exasperation. “I guess that I would not be the only person who got ashamed of these remarks” which she finds ridiculous. Apparently Chino is here objecting to the qualification which Tanaka advanced in due respect to the pre-supposed universal canon of Beauty.

While Fusô-sha edition gives an overview of the Japanese art, it practically does not “show any interest in so many world heritages which remain out of Japan.” Chino judges that “this narrow-sightedness is particularly conspicuous in the Fusôsha edition.” I am not in a position whatsoever to defend Tanaka Hidemichi. Still I have to admit the fact that the frontispiece of the Fusôsha edition was extremely practical when I was asked at the University of Salamanca to give an initiation course of Japanese art history in 2002. Ironically Tanaka is a scholar who has tried hard to communicate the “Japanese beauty” to Western scholars, while it was enough for Chino to uniquely talk about Japanese art in which she was specialized, as her audience was mainly composed of Western specialists of Japanese art. Obviously, to concentrate on Japanese art history alone does not necessarily mean to overlook the world art. At the same time, Tanaka’s presentation shows a danger: the search for international recognition is often mingled with the idea of national dignity.

In her conclusion, based on her precedent observation, Chino cannot help manifesting her “strong anger against the abuse made by the Fusôsha textbook toward Japanese Art History.” One may feel empathy with Chino’s political engagement as a feminist art historian and willingly share her anger. At the same time, one must acknowledge that her stance is no less ideological than the Fusôsha editors. She disagreed with the idea of national art history, which Tsukuru-kai glorifies and aims to establish through the apparatus of national education. It is an open question whether an authorized textbook should contribute to a sense of national dignity and

nationalism or conversely call that sense into question. Here is a frontal collision of opposite interests. No compromise would be possible. My regret is that Chino's argument is not well enough developed to logically dissuade the neo-nationalists from their egocentric ambition of re-establishing "beautiful and coherent Japan" as a nation. And I wonder how one can be angry about the abuse of the concept of "Japanese art history" when one has already refuted the legitimacy of it.

It is understandable that a feminist scholar in Chino's position had to manifest her opposition to Tsukuru-kai textbook. Yet I doubt it deserved the effort. To all our regret, Chino Kaori passed away prematurely only two weeks after the debate, at the age of 49. The controversy literally cost her life.

### III. Visual Strategies and Editorial Rhetoric

In her last paper published before her death, Chino noted the following: "The treatment of historical materials calls for documentary criticism 文献批判. So is the case with visual documents. Either visual or verbal, representations are not historical facts *per se*. As far as visual documentation is concerned, however, non of the historical textbooks under discussion escapes criticism. All of them contain some problems without exception<sup>15</sup>." Though theoretically self-evident, this remark turns out to be astonishingly relevant and brings us to the re-examination of the use of illustrations. This will reveal visual strategies and editorial rhetoric which are involved in the process of the textbook making.

One of the most striking examples to analyze the visual strategies and editorial rhetoric is the treatment of the Choson Government-General building 朝鮮総督府, which was constructed in front of the Gyeongbokgung 慶福宮 royal Palace in 1922. After Japan's defeat it was eventually transferred into National Museum of Korea. It stood half a century after Japan's colonial rule, until it was demolished by the order of President Kim Young Sam on Aug. 15, 1995. The dismantling provoked controversy: should the infamous memory of the Japanese rule be preserved or destroyed? Among Japanese junior-high school textbooks, the Teikoku Shoin edition gives a bird's eye view picture of the site, objectively commenting that the new reinforced concrete building is located in front of the wooden royal palace. The commentary hints oppressive and aggressive attitude of the Japanese rulers towards Korean cultural heritage, as the Sôtokufu building was an obvious violation to Korean national dignity. While using the same 1935 photo, the Tokyo Shoseki edition introduces it with a dialogue. "It seems that the building blocks the front of the palace," says a boy. "Is this building still there?" asks a girl. This edition calls attention of the readers to the recent (memorable of not memorable) fate of the building that symbolized Japan's colonial rule.

The Tsukuru kai textbook shows a photograph, in which the Government-General building completely blocks view of the royal palace behind it. By the choice of the angle from which the picture is taken, the fact of hiding the royal palace itself is tactfully erased. One may presume that the choice of the picture by the Fusôsha edition shamelessly justifies Japan's rule of the peninsula. Still this presumption may be too tendentious to be fair, because three other textbooks show different photos in which the palace is not visible, and one textbook simply do not include any photography of the building. The comparison with the case of Osaka Shoseki suggests that as far as the photo of the building is concerned, the Tsukuru Kai's version seems to be calculated so as to perfectly neutralize and camouflage the ideological intention of the Society for the History textbook reform. However the quick review that we proposed raises an intriguing question: what is the fair way of treating this building? How to distinguish the "fair" treatment from the "unfair" and by what criteria?

Let us take up in the second place the case of Korean national hero, An Jung-Geun 安重根, who assassinated Itô Hirobumi 伊藤博文, Japan's first resident-general in Korea during the period of protectorate that preceded annexation. (It may be mentioned that Itô could have been assassinated by the covered plot of Itô's enemies in the Japanese army who put the crime on An, so as to rationalize and justify Japan's occupation of the Peninsula). To treat An as a criminal assassin is enough to provoke strong nationalistic indignation among the Korean people. Many Japanese textbooks have already taken "appropriate" measures to avoid such accusations. Nippon Shoseki edition makes a rather clever juxtaposition, placing Itô's portrait of Japan's 1000 yen bill next to An's portrait on a Korean postal stamp. The rhetoric of juxtaposition assures certain neutrality suspending the vintage point of the editors.

Tokyo Shoseki edition inserts a text box, separate from the main narrative, with a Japanese translation of the description of An as it appears in the Korean state edited national history textbook. While giving voice to Korean official interpretation by way of quotation, the editors themselves refrain from showing any opinion of their own. The Nippon Bunkyo Shuppan edition has a picture of An with the caption, "An, the hero of national salvation" bracketed in quotation marks. This quotation makes an ironical implication, because no Japanese figures in the textbook as "hero of national salvation." The honorable title is thus reserved uniquely for those people who had suffered under Japanese rule.

It may be not useless to mention that the name of An is lacking in the Tsukuru kai version. The Ministry of education guide line 指導要領 recommends, but do not require, that certain individuals who contributed to the nation be named. Apart from some eminent individuals, whose names must be included (and some critics point out their examining committee's nationalistic tendency), no strict official guideline is given as to which historical person's names are indispensable. List of the names to be avoided in the textbooks does not publicly exist either. Such an exclusive list, if shown, might jeopardize the stance of formal neutrality of the Ministry; and it could be criticized as an indicator of state control. The shallow margin reveals itself only by making comparisons of the result of the authorization. And the comparison alone allows a critical eye to discern the political stance of each of the editors: if An Jung-Geun is excluded from the Tsukuru-kai edition, it serves as a clear sign of the editors' unwillingness to accept Korean national understanding of the Asian modern history. And this omission was accepted by the authorization procedure.

In contrast, the name of Yu Gwan-Sun 柳寬順 appears in several Japanese textbooks. Her commemorative monuments are shown in illustrations. "As a girl student, she was arrested because of her involvement in the Independence demonstration, and was tortured to death in the prison at the age of 16 because of her determination" (Teikoku Shoin edition). Her inclusion clearly indicates editors' political position underlying the choice, as well as the fact that the ministerial control did not eliminate her name in the process of examination. As a result, we recognize that Yu Gwan-Sun may be included, on the left margin, and An Jung-Geun may be excluded, on the right margin. This may hint at the implicit margin of the official authorization in 2001. And all the editors are playing the game within this quasi-invisible framework.

One may remark the extreme standardization of the Japanese textbooks examination. Required conformity allows only a very limited margin, and one should know the implicit rule of the game so as to discern the political position of the each player. It must be noted that from the editors no question is raised as for the framework of the game itself. It seems that the only goal of all the players is to obtain official permission (experience, such as the Ienaga textbook trial, shows that law court suit takes too long and is not efficient and



will easily destroy business profitability).

The treatment of Yu Gwan-Sun raises two more questions. Why was she chosen? Is she summoned there to testify to the criminality of the Japanese oppression? Is it not part of the tactics of the editors to show their political correctness? Is she not treated as pretext to avoid criticism from the neighboring countries? Was she not chosen as a protective decoration for the Japanese so as to avoid possible diplomatic frictions? If so, one can easily criticize the treatment by claiming that all the effort for the improvement of the textbook amounts to highly calculated political compromises the editors are searching for in the textbook marketplace for the sake of mercantile purposes. Indeed the profit from market share of the textbook publication is vital for editors. In sum, for a critical eye, Yu Gwan-Sun may be regarded as no more than a commode subterfuge, an ersatz of Yanagi Muneyoshi, for the Japanese editors to exculpate themselves from their guilty consciousness as well as from political implications. How can one defend oneself against such kind of criticism by taxing it as farfetched?

All this shows that a textbook, right or left, and however carefully edited with a good will, and officially authorized, remains extremely vulnerable and may be easily criticized for political purposes in any unexpected circumstances.

Uncritical reference to monuments and historical paintings must also be put into question. As Chino Kaori judiciously pointed out (and this entails her criticism to the national authorization), both the right and the left wings indiscriminately and indiscreetly make use of iconographical sources for their own purposes (Curiously, the same Chinese historical painting of the May 4<sup>th</sup> movement in front of the Tiananmen Square appears both in Nippon Bunkyo Shuppan edition and Teikoku Shoin edition, as if it were a historical document). Visual images are picked up without serious source criticism, so as to illustrate editors' messages. Media studies remind us the basic fact that any public monument or official painting is conveyor of political messages and serving for propaganda (or guideline, if you prefer) to manipulate (or lead) public opinions. This rudimentary starting point in visual literacy seems to be completely forgotten or overlooked in the case of textbook issues. This brings me to my final point, moving from Junior-high to High school history textbook.

#### IV. Visual Literacy in Question

When I was high school student more than 30 years ago, two oil paintings caught my eye in my history textbook. One is Beijing's *Forbidden City* 紫禁城(1942), by Umehara Ryūzaburō 梅原龍三郎, the other was *A Portrait of a Lady in Chinese Dress* 金蓉(1934) by Yasui Sōtarō 安井宗太郎. At the opposite page, there was a map of Japan's (or, more precisely, Kantōgun army's) invasion/military advancement into the Northeastern part of China, known as Manchuria<sup>16</sup>. As a high-school student, I could not see any connection between the paintings on the left page and the Japanese military expansion/invasion in the Continent on the right page. Thirty years later, the two paintings still appear, no longer in monochrome but now in the color frontispiece, of the same Yamakawa editions. And many textbooks repetitively continue to reproduce the same two paintings, as a routine, as if the inserting of these two paintings were a matter of course.

When I was teaching in Beijing in 2000, I show the same page to my Chinese students. At first glance, they did not show any interest. I explained that Beijing was under Japanese military rule, when Umehara's *Forbidden City* was executed; that *A Lady in Chinese Dress* may be interpreted as a Japanese version

of Orientalist painting, as is the case of *Les Femmes d'Algers* (1832) by Eugène Delacroix. Yasui himself visited Manchuguo by official invitation and executed oil paintings of the *Lama Buddhist Temple in Chende* (1938). Depicting such historical monuments as *Chende Lama Temple* by Yasui or the *Temple of Heaven* (1939) in Beijing by Umehara may be easily interpreted as a metonymical act of peacefully retracing the military occupation by the Japanese Army.

Just as taking pictures of a new territory is part of a geographical mission of the new rulers, so is the symbolic marking of the view of the Forbidden City which Umehara realized by way of painting from the top of the Beijing Fangtien. Let us remember that a simple scene of the *Rising Sun in the Mongolian Desert* by Fujishima Takeji 藤島武二 in 1937 was an explicit justification of the Japanese Empire's expansion so as to assure the life line of the Greater Asian Co-prosperity Zone 大東亜共栄圏. The series of *Rising Sun* constitute Fujishima's final works in his effort to 'serve the nation by way of painting brush' 彩管報国.

In retrospect, Yasui's *Lady in Chinese Dress* is reinterpreted as aesthetically supporting Japan's domination over effeminate China. Exotic female fashion is one of the most distinctive features of colonial paintings, and it was not by chance that Yasui follows the same scheme. Japan's military occupation of Beijing is aesthetically duplicated through Yasui's oil painting, in the same fashion as the Odalisque motif of the Western orientalist painting, which J.A.D. Ingres enthusiastically produced as an erotic compensation of French colonialism. Astonishingly enough, both of Yasui and Umehara's paintings remain the two pieces of work most frequently reproduced in Japanese High-School history textbook, without any critical commentary. In Beijing, when I pointed this fact out, my Chinese students got excited, as they thought they could finally detect unquestionable proof of Japanese political will to invade China, as they were translated into pictorial language in the realm of Fine Arts. For my part, it was the optimal moment to explain the so-called "political unconscious" as was proposed by American Marxism theorist, Frederic Jameson, who was highly popular among Chinese scholarly intellectuals at that moment.<sup>17</sup>

Of course, the Japanese painters were not aware of their unconscious commitment to the Japanese militarism, to which they were not actively involved or from which they even willingly tried to keep their critical or a-political distance. Not only the painters themselves but also historians and editors of the textbooks have been unconscious of the political implication of these works, or more precisely, they have remained politically unconscious of their own behavior.

However eliminating these paintings from the textbook is not what I want to propose here. The elimination would only result in concealment of what should be revealed. Condemning the painters of their unnoticed colonial spirit is not my business. Blaming the historians for their insensibility is not the issue, either. Instead, it would be more heuristic to awaken our own critical consciousness by cultivating our own visual literacy. Rather than accusing the people of shortsightedness in their past, it is more important to check and notice our own political unconsciousness so as to realize a better education in the future.

## Conclusion

One year earlier than Yasui, Tsuchida Bakusen 土田麦僊 executed the *Korean Ladies in Toilette*

(1933). The composition is certainly based on *l'Olympia*, by Édouard Manet, which was itself a descendent of Ingres's *Odalisque*. Bakusen had re-appropriated Manet's another masterpiece, *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* into a genre painting based on the Japanese local custom of his hometown, Kyoto in 1927, and extended the same strategy of re-appropriation to the Korean Peninsula in 1933. Indeed the Korean local custom provided the Japanese painters with convenient and attractive exotic subject matter. One of the earliest examples being *Autumn* (1920) by Kojima Torajirô 児島虎次郎, exhibited at the Parisian Salon des Indépendant in 1920<sup>18</sup>.

It is easy to remark that in these cases, Japanese male painters are duplicating and transferring the Western colonial genre painting of female figure into East Asian setting. The representation of women in colonized country is executed by masculine colonizer. The power structure between the colonizer and the colonized, between the male painter and the female model metonymically repeats Japan's rule of Korea in terms of the metaphor of male domination over the female dominated. Judging from this interpretative framework, Kojima's painting may be regarded as a typical example of Japanese colonialism. However, to see the Korean woman in *Chima* and *Chogori* only as a proof of the Korean subjugation to Japan would be misleading. In my opinion, female subject matter in the painting cannot be automatically reduced to the subjugated and passive victim of the will of domination the male painter incarnates.

In his short story, *Richô Zan'ei* 李朝殘影 (*The Remains of the Day of the Li Dymansty*, 1963), a Japanese writer, Kajiyama Hiroyuki 梶山季之 focused his interest on the relationship between Japanese painter and Korean model in Seoul under Japanese rule in 1940<sup>19</sup>. A paper back edition gives the synopsis. "In Keijô (Seoul) in 1940, a Japanese painter Noguchi sees a beautiful Kisen dancer of the royal court, and asks her to become the model of his ambitious painting. But she would not listen to him and refuses the proposal. An unforgettable incident was graven in her memory (repression of the 3.1.Movement, in which her family members were murdered), and she could not help abominating the Japanese army. The fact brought a strong commotion to Noguchi, whose father was the lieutenant involved in the incident..."<sup>20</sup>

In Kajiyama's story the colonial painting is re-contextualized in the political reality and serves as a tool to elucidate the hidden power structure of the colonial rule. His fiction shows a possibility of cultivating the visual literacy through a piece of painting. In contrast, the historical textbook has either reduced pieces of painting into silence or abused them as an obedient vehicle through which editors tried to convey their own message or even ideological propaganda. So as to critically cultivate visual literacy in the class-room, similar effort as the one proposed by Kajiyama through his literary work is badly needed. Kajiyama's fiction may be much more helpful than the history textbook as a starting point to discuss the historical reality in the classroom. His novel also reveals the pitiful limit of textbook fabricated under the strict official guideline, and shows us one possibility to overcome the sterile controversy about the history textbook issue itself. The novel also tell us a lesson: Let us finish pursuing political hegemony in the name of truth in history.

The novel was put into movie by director Shin Sang Ok 申相玉 in 1967. How was Kajiyama's original Japanese message translated into Korean and how was it re-interpreted in the filmic version? The question would require another study, which would be perfectly adequate for the theme of this 7<sup>th</sup> NAJAKS in Copenhagen, *Translating Japan and Korea*<sup>21</sup>. With the hope that the following sessions will open fruitful discussions on the issues of trans-cultural translations, I finish my talk in the guise of a modest introduction to

the issue<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a shortened and updated version of my paper, « Use and Abuse of Images in Japanese History Textbooks and the history textbook Controversy of 2000-2001» in Historical Consciousness, Historiography, and Modern Japanese Values, International Symposium in North America, 2002, IRCJS, 2006, pp.19-38. The paper was read at the Nordic Association for Japanese and Korean Studies, at Copenhagen University on Aug. 24, 2007. My thanks go to Professor Yôichi Nagashima, who kindly invited me to the key-note speech.

<sup>2</sup> Prospectus of the Tsukuru kai, issued on January 30, 1995. The translation is mine.

<sup>3</sup> “Declaration” of the Tsukuru kai, Dec. 2, 1996. The translation is mine.

<sup>4</sup> Nagahara Keiji 永原慶二, *Juyûshugi shikan’hihan*, 『「自由主義史観」批判』, Iwanami Booklet 岩波ブックレット、2000.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Kyôkasho ni shinjitsu to jiyû wo’ Renrakukai 「教科書に真実と自由を」連絡会 (ed.), *Tettei Hihan Kokumin no Rekishi* 『徹底批判『国民の歴史』』, Ôtsuki Shoten 大月書店、2000.

<sup>6</sup> On these issues *Asahi Shinbun* newspaper, June 7, 2001, for example, gives an overview with an interview to the Korean ambassador to Japan. Another interview to Japan’s former ambassador to the United States is reported in the issue of July 27, 2001. See also the August 18 issue. The fact I am quoting from this newspaper does not mean that I am entirely confident of the editorial of this quality paper.

<sup>7</sup> Kirisutokyôgakkô Kyôiku Dômei Kansai Chiku Kokusaikouryû Iinkai キリスト教学校教育同盟 関西地区国際交流委員会 (ed.), *Nikkan no Rekishi Kyôkasho wo yominaosu* 『日韓の歴史教科書を読み直す』 神戸学生青年センター出版部、2000, p.61.

<sup>8</sup> For more details, see Shigemi Inaga, “Reconsidering the Mingei Undô as a Colonial Discourse: The Politics of Visualizing Asian ‘Folk Craft,’” *Asiatische Studien, Études Asiatique*, LIII-2-1999, pp.219-230.

<sup>9</sup> Inaga Shigemi 稲賀繁美, “Shinryaku to Hinkon’ kara ’Kaihatsu to Shûdatsu’ sarani ’Kiritu to Saiseisan’ he: ’Shokuminchi Kindai’ to iu mondai wo megutte,” 「「侵略と貧困」から、「開発と収奪」さらに「規律と再生産」へ: 「植民地近代」という問題をめぐって」 *Tosho Shinbun* 『図書新聞』, Oct. 26, 2002, No.2603.

<sup>10</sup> Uesugi Chitose 上杉千年, *Rekishi Kyôkasho no Kentei to Gaiatsu*, 『歴史教科書の検定と外圧』, Kokuminkaigi Sôsho 国民会議叢書、2001.

<sup>11</sup> Mamiya Yôsuke 間宮洋介, «Rekishi kyôkasho, Kôteki shônin motomete kisou rekishikan: Kokka yori shimin shakai no mondai» 「歴史教科書 公的承認求めて競う歴史観 国家より市民社会の問題」, *Asahi Shinbu* 朝日新聞, May 31, 2001.

<sup>12</sup> Mashiko Hidenori ましこ・ひでのり «Senkô nanasha to Fusôsha no Rekishi Kyôkasho» 「先行7社と扶桑社刊の歴史教科書」 *Tosho Shinbun* 『図書新聞』, No.2545, 2001.

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- <sup>13</sup> Chiba Kei 千葉慶, « Chûgakkô no Rekishi kyôkasho niokeru nihon bunka-bijutsu no katararekata » 「中学校の歴史教科書における日本文化・美術の語られ方」, *Aida* 『あいだ』, No.79, 2001.
- <sup>14</sup> Chino Kaori 千野香織 « Shikakuteki ni Rekishi no impei wo hakaru » 「視覚的に歴史の隠蔽をはかる」 『歴史教育大論争』 *Rekishi Kyôiku Daironsou* 別冊歴史読本 Bessatsu Rekishi Dokuhon、2001, pp.40-46.
- <sup>15</sup> Chino, *Ibid.* p.43. Translation is mine.
- <sup>16</sup> Cf. Han Suk-jung, “The Problem of Sovereignty: Manchukuo, 1932-1937,” *Positions*, 12-2, 2004, pp.487-482.
- <sup>17</sup> Frederic Jameson, *Political Unconscious : Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981.
- <sup>18</sup> Inaga Shigemi 稲賀繁美 « Ekkyô suru Gakujutsu : 20 Seiki zenhan no Higashi Ajia no Iseki Hozon Seisaku » 「越境する学術:二十世紀前半の東アジアの遺蹟保存政策」 *Bijutsu Forum 21*, 『美術フォーラム 21』 vo.6, 2002, pp.40-46.
- <sup>19</sup> Kajiyama Hiroyuki 梶山季之, *Richô Zan'ei* 『李朝残影』 初版 1963 ; 講談社文庫 1978. English translation is included in *The Clan Records: Five Stories of Korea*, Maui: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995. Translation by George Akita and Yong-ho Choe. 残影 is translated as ‘remaining shadow’ in this English translation but ‘the remains of the day’ would be more exact.
- <sup>20</sup> Text is quoted from the jacket of the Kôdansha bunko edition. Translation is mine.
- <sup>21</sup> Cf. Shigemi Inaga, «Cultural Metamorphosis in translation: Tsuchida Bskusen, Kim So-un and Kajiyama Hiroyuki» NASJAK Göteborg meeting in 2004. Yomota Inuhiko 四本田犬彦 analyses another short story by Kajiyama Toshiyuki, Zokufu (「族譜」 “The Clan Records”) in “Zokufu” to “Chokubo”—Kankoku de Eigaka sareta Kajiyama Hiroyuki, 「族譜とチョコボ—韓国で映画化された梶山季之」 in *Wareraga “Tasa” naru Kankoku* 『吾らが<他者>なる韓国』 Parco 出版, 1987, pp.245-255; Heibonsha Library enlarged and revised edition, 2000, pp.314-327.
- <sup>22</sup> . Needless to say, my attempt is only one choice among others, and which has no ambition of being an exclusive analysis of the extremely complicated issue of educational controversy. Presenting an exhaustive list of literature concerning the controversy also belongs to impossibility. Let me mention only some of the non-Japanese noteworthy papers on the issue which attracted my attention.
- Ishii Shirô, “Traditions of Narrative History and the Recent History Textbooks Debate: A Pending Issue for Japan in the Twenty-First Century,” *Anglo-Japan Academy Proceedings*, International Center for Comparative Law and Politics, Graduate School of Law and Politics, The University of Tokyo, 2002, pp.285-304.
- Steffi Richter and Wolfgang Höpken, eds. *Vergangenheit im Gesellschaftskonflikt: Ein Historikerstreit in Japan*, Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2003.
- Pierre Lavelle, “La société pour la rédaction de nouveaux manuels d’histoire: Renouveau ou déclin du nationalisme?,” *Cipango : Cahier d’études japonaises*, Centre d’études japonaises, Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales, No.10, 2003, pp.7-88.