

# Historical Narration of the Second Sino-Japanese War in Current Japanese High School History Textbooks: The Logic of its Causal Interpretations

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## 1. Introduction

For the past twenty years, diplomatic relations between China and Japan have been worsen after Japanese Prime Ministers and Cabinet members repeatedly worshiped at Yasukuni Shrine in official capacity, after the revision of history textbook with whitewashing tones was finally qualified by Ministry of Education in 2000, and after the sovereignty on Senkaku (Diaoyu) islands had been declared unilaterally by Japanese side in 2012. Since then, anti-Japanese sentiment was lit up and triggered large-scale anti-Japanese protests in Asian countries. The worship at the Shrine, the revision of history textbooks and the sovereignty declaration on Senkaku (Diaoyu) islands all raised a common awareness that Japan is returning to the militaristic way as it had done half a century ago. Japan's cognition toward the warfare history therefore has become a deadlock lies on Japan's diplomacy with its neighbor countries.

Problems of Japanese history textbooks not only directly reflect Japanese government's current position and its attitude toward the warfare history, it also indirectly casts a restless diplomatic relations which would be possibly framed in the future between Japan and other countries. Therefore, when a junior high school history textbook revised the warfare history by denying, glorifying and whitewashing Japanese atrocities it rampaged in Asia, and when MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan) adopted and finally qualified the problematic textbook in 2000, Asian countries are not only indignant to Japan's glorified, diluted and denied narration toward the warfare history, rather, Japanese government's position and attitude toward the past war crimes simultaneously arose a crisis awareness among Asian countries that Japan is re-embarking on the militaristic way it had gone in 1920s. In 2013, MEXT passed the screening and qualified fifteen Japanese history textbooks which were newly published by six presses, and from April 2014, they are all available to be adopted in Japanese high schools. How do the newest history textbooks identify the nature of the wars? How do they depict and interpret the second Sino-Japanese war (the War of Resistance against Japan)? What kind of official position is being represented and what kind of historical conception is being conveyed via the lens of historical narrations?

This research selects the second Sino-Japanese war as a case study. It mainly covers the four historical events occurred between 1937 to 1938, which are the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (see 2.3), the Nanjing Massacre (see 2.4), the 731 Unit (The Epidemic Prevention and Water Purification Department of Kwangtung Army, see 2.5) and the Three Alls policy (kill all, burn all, loot all, see 2.5). The four historical events are not only the most

typical war crimes that Japanese military had waged in mainland battlefields in the past, they are also the most controversial historical events being found at the center of the diplomatic conflicts between China and Japan.

In this paper, the fifteen history textbooks are firstly classified by different publishers. According to the publishers, the four historical events are selected for a comparative analysis, including the narrations of the historical events and its causal interpretations. The analysis of the narration aims to check if the historical events are mentioned and how are they depicted in the textbooks; the causal interpretation aims to observe the logic that the causal interpretation follows. Based on both narrative and interpretive analysis, this paper is not only aiming to clarify the position the textbook authors stand at, and the historical conception the authors trying to convey, rather, it presents an observation of Japanese government's current position toward warfare history, and to foresee a possible trend that what kind of Sino-Japanese relations might be reframed via the lens of current history education.

The scope of this research is limited within the current use of new history textbooks in Japanese high school (qualified by MEXT in 2013 and adopted to use in both 2014 and 2015). The newest Japanese history textbooks are published by six different publishers with total fifteen textbooks. There are five history textbooks published by Yamakawa Press (*A303 Modern Japanese History A*; *A307 Japanese History A*; *B301 Detailed Explanation of Japanese History B*; *B307 The New Japanese History B* and *B308 High School Japanese History B*); four history textbooks published by Jikkyō Shuppan (*A302 High School Japanese History A*; *A305 New Japanese History A*; *B304 High School Japanese History B*; *B305 Japanese History B*); two history textbooks of Tokyo Shoseki (*A301 Japanese History A The History from Modern* and *B303 New Selected Japanese History B*); two textbooks of Shimizu Shoin (*A306 High School Japanese History A The Newest Edition* and *B306 High School Japanese History B The Newest Edition*); one history textbook of Daiichi Gakushūsha (*A304 High School Japanese History A People • Life • Future*) ; and one textbook of Meiseisha (*B302 The Newest Japanese History B*) . See figure 1 and figure 2 at the end of this paper.

## **2. The Mentioning, the Narration and the Interpretation of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1938)**

### **2-1. Chinese People's Image toward Japanese History Textbook**

Before I start the analysis of Japanese high school history textbooks, I conducted a random survey on internet. This anonymous survey was conducted from June to September of 2014 via the online questionnaire system named "Drift Bottle" of a Chinese Social Network QQ. The question was set as the note inside of the Drift Bottle, and the bottle was randomly sent to different areas of China. The people who were using the Drift Bottle system would receive the bottle at the same time I sent. Since there was only one question had been sent to random people, their feedbacks were received immediately and have been reserved automatically in the Drift Bottle System. For protecting the privacy, the personal information of the total 102 samples were not shown on their feedback except the region they were from and the nickname they were using at that time. There were 102 in total have confirmed as valid and all 102 samples' answers supplied in this paper are complete, accurate and factual.

The survey set only one question of "do you think all of Japanese history textbooks denied the invasive war in China?" The random questionnaire collected all answers from 102 samples. In total of 102 samples, there are 68 (66.7%) answered "Yes" (which means 66.7% samples believed that all Japanese history textbooks denied the invasive war in China); there are 22 samples, about 21.6% said "No" (which means 22 samples considered that not all the Japanese history textbooks denied the invasive war in China); and 12 samples, about 11.7% answered "No idea", because they admitted that they haven't had chance to read Japanese history textbooks.

The random research on internet refers a common awareness that even most of Chinese people did not

have a chance to read Japanese history textbook, the negative image toward Japanese history textbooks are widely existing among Chinese people, and which has become one of the negative sentiments toward Japan and Japanese people.

## 2-2. The Mentioning of the Historical Events from 1937 to 1938

Based on the result of the random questionnaire, I started my research on newly published history textbooks which are currently available to be adopted in Japanese high schools. The research is divided into two parts: the first part is data-gathering, includes the mentioning and the narrations of the events; the second part will examine how the causal interpretation of above mentioned historical events is presented in textbooks of different publishers. The four historical events are included in this research, which are the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, the Nanjing Massacre in 1937, the war crimes of the Epidemic Prevention and Water Purification Department of the Kwangtung army (the 731 Unit) and the Three Alls policy from 1938 to 1942.

According to the statistics, all fifteen newly published history textbooks mentioned both the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (*Rokōkyōjiken*) and the Nanjing Massacre/Incident. In all fifteen textbooks, there are seven textbooks adopted to use “massacre” instead of “incident”, and the other eight textbooks, four textbooks of Yamakawa Press, one textbook of Shimizu Shoin, two of Tokyo Shoseki and the textbook of Meiseisha chose “incident” instead of “Massacre”.

Regarding the war crimes that the 731 Unit had committed in mainland China, there are eight textbooks mentioned this historical events, in which Tokyo Shoseki with its two textbooks mentioned the 731 Unit crimes by separated columns at the bottom of the text; four textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan gave detailed description regarding the 731 Unit crimes in the text; the textbook of Daiichi Gakushūsha and one textbook from Yamakawa Press mentioned the 731 crimes in footnote by details. Other seven textbooks, including four textbooks of Yamakawa Press, two textbooks of Shimizu Shoin and the textbook of Meiseisha avoided mentioning the 731 Unit crimes neither in text nor in footnote.

In the narration of the Three Alls Policy that Japanese military launched in mainland China from 1938 to 1942 in current use high school history textbooks, there are total nine textbooks mentioned the Three Alls Policy in the text, in which, all four textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan described this policy by details in the text; two textbooks of Tokyo Shoseki concisely described this issue in the text; one of Shimizu Shoin and one of Yamakawa Press wrote one sentence to introduce the Three Alls Policy in the text; and Daiichi Gakushūsha depicted the Three All Policy by details in footnote. Other six history textbooks including four textbooks of *A303*, *A307*, *B307* and *B308* of Yamakawa Press, *B306* of Shimizu Shoin and *B302* of Meiseisha<sup>1</sup> all avoided to touch even the name of the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy in its textbooks.

According to the data analysis regarding the historical events in fifteen history textbooks that had been newly published in 2014, it is observed that not all the high school history textbooks ignored or denied the war crimes that Japanese military had committed in mainland China in the second Sino-Japanese War. At least all of the newly published textbooks mentioned the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and the atrocities in Nanjing in 1937. However, regarding the other crucial war crimes like the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy that Japanese army had committed in mainland China from 1938 to 1942, there are still half of the textbooks avoid touching the events. In those textbooks, not only the content have been completely concealed, even the name of the 731 Unit, or the name of the Three Alls policy are avoided to appear in the textbooks.

The mentioning of the historical events is recognized as one important variable to identify the scope of

<sup>1</sup> *A306*, published by Shimizu Shoin is the only textbook mentioned the Three Alls Policy but not the 731 Unit crimes. In other eight textbooks which mentioned the 731 Unit crimes are all including the narration of the Three Alls Policy.

narration of current high school history textbooks. However, when we try to identify the position that the narration stands at, the logic that the causal interpretation follows and the historical conception it conveys to, the mentioning of the historical events only supplies a solid basis rather than a sufficient argument. Except the solid basis, the comprehensive understanding of the war history from the historical narration is more depending on the interpretive analysis. Before we identify the logic of causal interpretation of the events, let us first take an overview of the narration and the interpretation of the second Sino-Japanese War in the newly published history textbooks.

### 2-3 The Narration and the Logic of Causal Interpretation of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937

#### *The Narration and the Causal Interpretation of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident*

The Marco Polo Bridge Incident is mentioned in all newly published history textbooks. This incident is not identified as the beginning of the second Sino-Japanese War; instead, it is identified as the armed conflict between Japan and China. In newly published fifteen history textbooks, they all wrote that before the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, even both Chinese and Japanese side signed a ceasefire agreement at local site, the war flame was still expanded to the north and south China. When the fierce conflict was erupted in Shanghai in August of 1937, the war had been largely expanded without the war proclamation. All history textbooks thus defined the conflict in Shanghai in August of 1937 was the factual outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War.

The process of Marco Polo Bridge Incident in most of history textbooks is concisely described in the context by one sentence that there was an armed conflict between Chinese and Japanese army at Marco Polo Bridge, the outskirt of Beijing in July 7, 1937. The detailed description regarding who shot at first and who fired back to whom by what kind of reasons are not mentioned in fourteen history textbooks except the textbook of A303 of Yamakawa Press. In this textbooks, it described the details in footnote that “when the Japanese army was implementing military exercise at night, it noticed that someone was shooting to them and soon they confirmed that the shooting was coming from Chinese side, then Japanese army started to shoot back at Chinese side. However, regarding who shot at first remains lots of statements and keeps unclear till today.”<sup>2</sup>

The causal interpretations of why after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident the armed conflict was expanded to the north and south China are concisely explained in all history textbooks as well. However, most of them failed consistency even in the textbooks published by the same publishers.

In the textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan, A305 gave more details regarding the reason of the reinforcement, it explains that because “Konoe cabinet predicted that China will surrender and the war would be ended soon, thus the Konoe cabinet decided to send massive troops to China”<sup>3</sup>; and B305 states that was because “Japan wanted to attack China again, aimed to force Chinese anti-Japanese movements yield to Japanese assault, and to gain more resource and market from the North of China.”<sup>4</sup> But in the same publisher, the textbook A302 and B304 described that the expansion of military operation was because “Konoe cabinet declared the non-expansion policy, but still sent massive troops to the North of China”<sup>5</sup>. The latter two textbooks did not give more details about the connection between non-expansion policy and the reinforcement.

Similarly, two textbooks published by Tokyo Shoseki indicated Konoe cabinet’s ambivalent position by stating “the cabinet declared the non-expansion policy, but admitted that it had dispatched the massive troops to

<sup>2</sup> A303 *Modern Japanese History A*, Yamakawa Press, 121.

<sup>3</sup> A305 *New Japanese History A*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 88.

<sup>4</sup> B305 *Japanese History B*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 307.

<sup>5</sup> A302 *High School Japanese History A*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 115; B304 *High School Japanese History B*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 208.

the North China in the meanwhile”<sup>6</sup> without more details about the logical connections between the non-expansion policy and the reinforcement. Two textbooks of Shimizu Shoin and the textbook of Daiichi Gakushūsha states that Konoe cabinet made the decision that sent massive troops to the North of China, but it did not mention the non-expansion policy the cabinet had made at that time.

Compared to the above mentioned causal interpretation of military expansion after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in other publishers, five textbooks published by Yamakawa Press give more details of why the military operation had been expanded to North and South of China. The textbook of *B308* explained that the expansion of the battlefield was due to the pressure from military headquarter (I hereby translated Gunbu into military headquarter)<sup>7</sup>. In the textbooks of *A307* and *B301*<sup>8</sup>, they wrote that “although Konoe cabinet declared the non-expansion policy, under the pressure of military headquarter, the cabinet altered the policy and decided to send massive troops to the North China”. In *B307*, it explained that Konoe cabinet declared the non-expansion policy, but when the conflict in Shanghai in August of 1937 (the second Shanghai Incident) occurred, the local militaries expanded the military mission, and after that, Konoe cabinet finally admitted that the battlefield had been expanded<sup>9</sup>. The textbook *A303* stated that even though the ceasefire agreement had been locally agreed upon, Konoe cabinet insisted that the Marco Polo Bridge Incident was a planned anti-Japanese movement launched by armed Chinese side, which was why the cabinet decided to dispatch Japanese military to China<sup>10</sup>.

The narration and interpretation of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in the textbook of *The Newest Japanese History (B302)* published by Meiseisha presented completely different perspective with other fourteen textbooks in both narration and causal interpretation. The Marco Polo Bridge Incident in *B302* was described as a “sudden conflict between China and Japan”, in which it wrote: “...the tentative ceasefire agreement had been agreed after Konoe cabinet claimed the non-expansion policy. However, at the end of the July, a lot of Japanese residents were killed in Tongzhou (an area located at the suburban of Beijing); and in August, Lieutenant of Japanese Marine Isao Oyama was killed in Shanghai, which forced Japanese government to address this situation by military force. To protect Japanese resident, Japanese government ordered out reinforcements which led to the expansion of the Sino-Japanese conflicts. In August, the conflicts spread to Shanghai, the conflict became fierce fighting between Chinese and Japanese militaries (the Second Shanghai Incident). Japan gave up the non-expansion policy and accordingly Chiang Kai Shek commanded to fight and communist party joined after. Finally, the battlefield in China had been amplified (called Nikka Jihen, or Sino-Japanese War).”<sup>11</sup>

According to the comparison among newly published history textbooks, even though the narration and the interpretation of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident were described in all newly published history textbooks, the narrations and interpretations regarding this historical event reflected two different characteristics. Firstly, causal interpretations regarding the event lack of consistency even in the textbooks published by the same publisher. Secondly, logical connections, including the correlation between the reinforcement and the ceasefire agreement, and the relation between Konoe cabinet’s declaration of the reinforcement and pressures from the military headquarter are neglected to construct in some textbooks.

### ***The Logic of Causal Interpretation of Marco Polo Bridge Incident.***

In a total of fifteen history textbooks, there are only two textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan (*A305* and *B305*)

<sup>6</sup> *A301 Japanese History A: The History from Modern*, Tokyo Shoseki, 128; *B303 New Selected Japanese History B*, Tokyo Shoseki, 216.

<sup>7</sup> *B308 High School Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 284.

<sup>8</sup> *A307 Japanese History A*, Yamakawa Press, 153 ; *B301 Detailed Explanation of Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 352.

<sup>9</sup> *B307 The New Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 315.

<sup>10</sup> *A303 Modern Japanese History A*, Yamakawa Press, 121.

<sup>11</sup> *B302 The Newest Japanese History*, Meiseisha, 258.

clearly stated that the motivations of the reinforcement was “to get more natural resource from the North China”, “to force Chinese anti-Japanese movements yield to Japanese military”, the reinforcement thus to be sent because “Japanese government thought that the war will be ended as long as the massive troops to be sent”<sup>12</sup>. According to this logic of causal interpretation of battlefield expansion, it indicates Japan’s egotism and ambition in war time; and it also opened a channel to guide readers to understand why Chinese people took resistance toward Japanese army in the beginning of the full-scale wars. The logic of causal interpretation of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in two textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan offered a relatively objective and comprehensive angle to understand the Marco Polo Bridge incident.

Completely different with above mentioned two textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan, the textbook of Meiseisha altered the motivation from “plunder resource” and “force Chinese yield to Japanese military” to a justified and reasonable interpretation. In the *B302*, *Newest Japanese History B*, it explained that Japan’s reinforcement to China was for protecting Japanese residents because “a lot of Japanese residents were killed in Tongzhou”, and when “a lieutenant named Isao Ōyama of Japanese Marine was murdered in Shanghai in August”, Japanese government decided to “give up the non-expansion policy” and “determined to send the division of Imperial Japanese Army” aim to “address the situation”, and then “the battlefield of war was broadened”<sup>13</sup>.

In the textbook of Meiseisha, the logic of causal interpretation of the battlefield expansion settles on the Japan’s gained benefit was taken at first; the war thus became a result because Japan tried to take its benefit back from Chinese side. If the history textbook selects the fragment of the historical event without explaining why the Japanese people were killed in wartime China, and why Chinese people launched strong resistance to Japan, the interpretation conveyed in history textbook of Meiseisha might lead students to understand the motivation of the war was rationalized and justified.

In the other two textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan (*A302* and *B304*), two textbooks of Tokyo Shoseki (*A301* and *B303*), the textbook from Daiichi Gakushūsha (*A304*) and two textbooks from Shimizu Shoin (*A306* and *B306*), they all admitted the reinforcement had been declared by Konoe cabinet, but all of them lacks of the detailed interpretation regarding why and how the decision had been made<sup>14</sup>. The logical relation between the declaration of non-expansion policy and the decision of reinforcement is necessarily explained, since the contradictions between Konoe cabinet and the military headquarter caused the political instability in domestic Japan at that time, and the power strengthening of military headquarter was the core reason that the reinforcement can be finally committed.

In the five textbooks published by Yamakawa Press, contradictions between Konoe cabinet and military headquarter are more emphasized in the three of five textbooks, but the interpretations lack of consistency within five textbooks of Yamakawa Press. In the interpretation of textbooks of *A307*, *B301* and *B308*, it explained that the non-expansion policy had been declared by Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro at first, but it was strongly confronted by the military headquarter immediately, and under the pressure of military headquarter, the final decision of the reinforcement had been actually forced by Konoe cabinet.<sup>15</sup> In the textbooks of *A303*, the causal interpretation of the expansion is explained as “Konoe cabinet insisted to state that the Marco Polo Incident was provoked by Chinese preplanned armed resistance toward Japan, thus the cabinet therefore decided to send

<sup>12</sup> *A305 New Japanese History A*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 88; *B305 Japanese History B*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 307.

<sup>13</sup> *B302 The Newest Japanese History*, Meiseisha, 258.

<sup>14</sup> Even the textbooks *A305* and *B305* of Jikkyō Shuppan clearly stated the motivation of the military reinforcement to China was because Japan wanted to gain resource and believed China would surrender soon, the other two textbooks *A302* and *B304* gave less description regarding the motivation of the military expansion.

<sup>15</sup> *A307 Japanese History A*, Yamakawa Press, 153; *B301 Detailed Explanation of Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press; *B308 High School Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 286.

massive troops to mainland China.”<sup>16</sup> In the textbook *B307*, it firstly depicted that the non-expansion policy had been declared by Konoe cabinet, but when the second Shanghai Incident in August was occurred, the military action had been expanded by local militaries, and after the Shanghai Incident exploded, Konoe cabinet admitted that the battlefield already been amplified.<sup>17</sup>

According to these interpretations, the logic of causal interpretation of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in five textbooks of Yamakawa Press reflects diverse and inconsistency. Whether the declaration of reinforcement was forced by military headquarter (*A307*, *B301* and *B308*), or it was declared by the Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro due to his insistence that China provoked the incident at first (*A303*), or the reinforcement was not declared until the Shanghai Incident broke out in the August 1937 (*B307*) kept inconsistency and confusing. According to the logic of causal interpretation in five textbooks of Yamakawa Press, the beginning of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and the amplification of the battlefield are conveyed more likely by a patient narration. In these interpretations, the contradictions between the cabinet and the military headquarters were unavoidable; the cabinet tried his best to cease the war but the declaration of military reinforcement was forced by military headquarter due to Chinese resistance toward Japan; thus the expansion of battlefield was unexpected.

## 2-4. The narration and the logic of causal interpretation of the Nanjing Massacre/Incident

### *Narration and Causal Interpretation of the Nanjing Atrocities*

In the newly qualified fifteen history textbooks, all of them mentioned the Nanjing Massacre or Nanjing Incident either in text or footnote. In all fifteen textbooks, four textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan, the textbook of Daiichi Gakushūsha, one textbook of Shimizu Shoin and one textbook from Yamakawa Press adopted “massacre” to describe this historical event, and other eight textbooks chose “incident” to identify the Nanjing atrocities.

In the three textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan, *A305*, *B304* and *A302*, the Nanjing Massacre is set as the specific topic excluded from the text by detailed descriptions including the number of death, War crimes Japanese military had committed on Chinese people, the celebration of fall of Nanjing, and the introduction of Memorial Hall of Victims in Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders.

Similar to the textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan, the textbooks of Daiichi Gakushūsha<sup>18</sup> also adopted “massacre” to describe the crimes in Nanjing. In this textbook, the crimes of killing including women and children, the disputes on victim number are mentioned in both text and footnote. In the textbook of *B307* published by Yamakawa Press and textbook *B305* published by Jikkyō Shuppan, the Nanjing atrocity is narrated both in text and footnote that “Japanese military killed at least ten thousands of Chinese captives and local Chinese people which was criticized by international society”<sup>19</sup>. The textbook of *A306* published by Shimizu Shoin depicted the killing crimes including women and children that Japanese military had committed in Nanjing, but did not mention the number of death<sup>20</sup>.

In the seven history textbooks which adopted “massacre” to describe Nanjing atrocities, Japanese military’s war crimes of killing, arson and outrage toward local Chinese people are admitted in all of seven history textbooks, although six of them questioned the exact number of the death, the criminal fact of killing are clearly described in the textbooks either in text or in footnote.

In other eight textbooks which adopted “Nanjing Incident” instead of using “Massacre” also described Nanjing atrocities in text or footnote. Two textbooks of Tokyo Shoseki (*A301* and *B303*) described Nanjing

<sup>16</sup> *A303 Modern Japanese History A*, Yamakawa Press, 121.

<sup>17</sup> *B308 The New Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, pp. 315-316.

<sup>18</sup> *A304 High School Japanese History A: People · Life · Future*, Daiichi Gakushūsha, 115.

<sup>19</sup> *B307 The New Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 316. *B305 Japanese History B*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 307.

<sup>20</sup> *A306 High School Japanese History Textbook A : The Newest Edition*, Shimizu Shoin, 145.

Incident as “many Chinese people including women and children are killed by Japanese army”, and added footnote to explain the dispute regarding the number of death.<sup>21</sup> In another textbook of Shimizu Shoin *B306*, the arson, the killing and robbery are concisely introduced in the text, but number of death is concealed.<sup>22</sup> Four textbooks of Yamakawa Press all adopted “Nanjing Incident” instead of “massacre”. In the textbooks of *A307* and *A303*, descriptions of the killings toward Chinese people by Japanese military in the period when Nanjing was captured are mentioned in the text, and the textbook of *B301* concisely wrote the same content but only in the footnote.<sup>23</sup> Four textbooks of Yamakawa Press which adopted “incident” instead of “massacre” depicted the atrocities in Nanjing, except *A303* mentioned the number of Chinese victims death, other three textbooks all ignored to mention the number of death.

Except the textbook *B302* published by Meiseisha, in which Nanjing incident only appeared in the footnote with dilute description of “because of Japanese army, many local soldiers and people got injured and killed”<sup>24</sup>, other fourteen textbooks which adopted “incident” or “massacre”, Nanjing atrocities are all depicted in either text or footnote. They all admitted that Nanjing atrocities were committed by Japanese military and which was strongly blamed by international society at the wartime, but there were six textbooks did not mention the number of death.

### ***The Logic of Causal Interpretations of the Nanjing Atrocities.***

Regarding the causal interpretation of why and how the Nanjing atrocities occurred during the Japanese occupation in December of 1937, most of the textbooks (except the textbooks of Meiseisha and *B308* of Yamakawa Press) narrated by detailed descriptions.

Textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan adopted the massacre by most detailed descriptions. In the textbook of *B304* and *A302* (Jikkyō Shuppan), a question of “what Japanese military did in China” is set as the separate column at the beginning of the Chapter, in which not only what war crimes Japanese army had committed in its occupation, the name of the commander, the issued file of killing, the celebration in domestic Japan after the occupation were detailed described as well<sup>25</sup>. The other textbook *B305* of Jikkyō Shuppan pointed a particular narration regarding the reason and the process of Nanjing atrocities had happened: “Opposite to Japan’s prediction that Chinese people would surrender after a heavily attack, Chinese anti-Japanese nationalist frontline had been established and the strong resistance from China was strengthened. Japan then sent massive force and occupied the capital city of National Government Nanjing in December. During that time, Japanese military not only killed prisoners, but also killed deserters and lots of Chinese local people, looted, set fires and committed atrocities in Nanjing. The Nanjing Massacre was undergone lots of criticisms by international societies after then. The number of victims including the soldiers reached at least 100,000 people weeks before and after the occupation.”<sup>26</sup>

In the textbook *A305* of Jikkyō Shuppan, except the concise narration of Japanese military killed many Chinese soldiers and local citizens, a separate column was set with a photo, criticized the celebration of Nanjing’s fall at that time: “Lighting Celebration for Nanjing’s Fall: during the weeks of occupation in Nanjing, lots of local citizens and deserters were killed. The victims were about 200,000 or at least over 100,000 according to different

<sup>21</sup> *A301 Japanese History A: The History from Modern*, Tokyo Shoseki 129. *B303 New Selected Japanese History*, Tokyo Shoseki, 216.

<sup>22</sup> *B306 High School Japanese History B: The Newest Edition*, Shimizu Shoin, 227.

<sup>23</sup> *B301 Detailed Explanation of Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 353.

<sup>24</sup> *B302 The Newest Japanese History*, Meiseisha, 259.

<sup>25</sup> *B304 High School Japanese History B*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 208; *A302 High School Japanese History A*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 114.

<sup>26</sup> *B305 Japanese History B*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 307.



statements. The massive killings were also happened on Japanese military's advance route from Shanghai to Nanjing. In Nanjing city of China, The Memorial Hall of Victims in Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders showed the victims reached 300,000. Domestic Japan at that time was kept unknown about the atrocities Japanese military committed in Nanjing."<sup>27</sup>

In four textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan, the logic of the interpretation was settled based on the massive troops had been sent to Nanjing, and massive killings thus happened due to Japan's brutal occupation. The mentioning of the criticism from international society reflected its recognition of war crimes and the mentioning of the Memorial Hall of Victims in Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders presented its confession to the victims in Nanjing atrocities.

Similarly, in the two textbooks of Shimizu Shoin (A306 and B306), two textbooks of Tokyo Shoseki (A301 and B303) and the textbook of Daiichi Gakushūsha (A304), even though the atrocities in Nanjing was depicted in some textbooks as "incident", the massive killing was detailed narrated in either text or the footnote of the textbooks. In the textbook B303 of Tokyo Shoseki, A304 of Daiichi Gakushūsha and the textbook A306 of Shimizu Shoin, the Three Alls Policy were narrated as the supplementary description of Nanjing atrocities. It presents that Japanese military had committed brutal occupation in mainland China in Nanjing in December of 1937, also in the northern part of China after the Nanjing atrocities<sup>28</sup>. In the textbook of A301 of Tokyo Shoseki, Nanjing atrocities were depicted in both text and footnote, in which, the massive killings, especially the violence toward woman were mentioned<sup>29</sup>.

Completely different with above mentioned textbooks, the textbook of Meiseisha, without detailed description regarding the war crimes in Nanjing, the causal interpretation of the atrocities in Nanjing were connected with the battlefield expansion after the Rokoūkyō incident in 1937. The textbook explained the military expansion as "Konoe cabinet tried to seek the peaceful ways to solve the ceasefire with China via Germany, but the battle fire didn't extinguish...and the hope of ceasefire was defeated"<sup>30</sup>. The logic of causal interpretations of the textbook of Meiseisha, no matter for the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, or the atrocities in Nanjing is all interpreted by a reasonable narration, in which, albeit the war crimes were not denied, the motivation of the war was purposively diluted, and rationalized by a reasonable interpretation.

In the five textbooks published by Yamakawa Press, the textbook B308, which is the only textbook Press describes atrocities in Nanjing as one sentence without detailed explanation neither in text nor in footnote<sup>31</sup>. Different with it, B307 is the only textbook of Yamakawa press which adopted "Nanjing Massacre" to describe the atrocities and it is the unique textbook in all fifteen published textbooks which reminded the connection between Japan's drastic change after Meiji Era and the occurrence of Nanjing Massacre: "...After the Meiji Era, to be one of the hegemony became Japan's target, which guided Japan embarked on its modernization. However, the Nanjing Massacre exposed a big deterioration, which was generated from the rise of parochial Japanism after 1930s."<sup>32</sup>

In the same Yamakawa Press, textbooks B301 and A307 adopted the interpretation that since the anti-Japanese frontline was established by both Kuomintang and Chinese Communist Party in September of 1937, Japan thus started to reinforce its military into China. The Nanjing incident was committed by Japanese

<sup>27</sup> A 305 *New Japanese History A*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 89.

<sup>28</sup> B303 *New Selected Japanese History B*, Tokyo Shoseki, 216; A304 *High School Japanese History A: People • Life • Future*, Daiichi Gakushūsha, 115; A306 *High School Japanese History A: The Newest Edition*, Shimizu Shoin, 145.

<sup>29</sup> A301 *Japanese History A: The History from Modern*, Tokyo Shoseki, 129.

<sup>30</sup> B302 *The Newest History*, Meiseisha, 258.

<sup>31</sup> B308 *High School Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 286.

<sup>32</sup> B307 *The New Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 316.

military before and after the occupation<sup>33</sup>. The numbers of victims were concealed in textbooks *B308* and *B301*, the textbook *A303* and the textbook *B307* questioned about number of victims as follows: “Regarding the number of victims who were killed in the Nanjing Incident, there were different statements showed the number from thousands to 300,000 (by Chinese side), but the truth is actually kept in dark. Scholars pointed that the number of Chinese side is exaggerated.”<sup>34</sup> “Chinese side assumed the death of victims including soldiers reached one hundred thousands, but the record is insufficient, and since it is difficult to identify victims and dead soldiers, the exact number of sacrifice is not clear so far.”<sup>35</sup>

Five textbooks published by Yamakawa Press adopted different terminology to identify the atrocities in Nanjing as either “massacre” or “incident”. All textbooks of Yamakawa Press admitted the fact of Nanjing atrocities in either text or footnote. Two of them supplied the logic interpretation of Japanese brutal occupation triggered mass killings, and one textbook presented the drastically change of Japanese society after Meiji Restoration and indicated that Nanjing Massacre which actually exposed Japanese society’s deterioration and triggered Nanjing massacre. Two textbooks of Yamakawa Press (*B307* and *B303*) supplied different perspectives of victim number but another two textbooks expressed its suspicion of victims number emphasized by Chinese side.

According to the statistics, even though different textbooks adopted “massacre” or “incident” to describe atrocities in Nanjing in 1937, most of textbooks narrated the war crimes in text or in footnote by detailed descriptions. In fifteen newly published history textbooks, six textbooks ignored to mention the death of victims in Nanjing atrocities, two presented its suspicion challenged Chinese perspective, and other eight textbooks mentioned the dispute of the death number. Except the textbook of Meiseisha whitewashed the event as an unavoidable sacrifice in wartime, the other fourteen textbooks confessed the atrocities and confirmed the atrocities were committed by Japanese military, in which four textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan, two textbooks of Tokyo Shoseki, one textbooks of Shimizu Shoin, two textbooks of Yamakawa Press depicted that killings included lots of women and children.

## **2-5. The narration and the logic of causal interpretation of the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy**

The bacteriologic warfare committed by the 731 Unit (The Epidemic Prevention and Water Purification Department of Kwangtung Army) , the Three Alls Policy (kill all, burn all and loot all) and the Nanjing Massacre are recognized as the most barbarian military missions in Chinese battlefield of the Second Sino-Japanese War. In recent decade, along with the evidence have been found and proved, the Nanjing Massacre has become an undisputable fact of the second Sino-Japanese War in 1937. The description of Nanjing Massacre thus has been mentioned, described by more details in most of the current Japanese high school textbooks. Regarding the other two war crimes of the 731 Unit and the crimes of the Three Alls Policy committed in mainland China, both of them are mentioned in all eight textbooks, but are completely concealed in other six textbooks<sup>36</sup>.

In the eight textbooks that mentioned both the 731 Unit and crimes of the Three Alls Policy, there are six textbooks intensively introduced the 731 Unit and Three Alls Policy by both picture and interpretation in text and also in footnote. In the textbook *A301* of Tokyo Shoseki, the introduction of the 731 Unit is separated with the main text and set as the special topic on the bottom of the page. In this textbook, the history of the 731 Unit, the missions it was conducting, how were the biological weapon used in battlefield in China, how many people

<sup>33</sup> *A307 Japanese History A*, Yamakawa Press, 153; *B301 Detailed Explanation of Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 353.

<sup>34</sup> *A303 Modern Japanese History A*, Yamakawa Press, 121.

<sup>35</sup> *B307 The New Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 316.

<sup>36</sup> *A306* of Shimizu Shoin is the only textbooks described the Three Alls Policy in the context but did not mention the war crimes of 731 Unit.

were dead in the biological experiments are precisely recorded in the textbooks.<sup>37</sup> In the same page, the reason of why the Three Alls Policy was implemented is explained by “the anti-Japanese movements were widely opened and led by Chinese Communist Party. For exterminating these movements, Japan started to commit the Three Alls Policy, means loot all, kill all and burn all. And in this military mission, Japanese military used toxic gas (prohibited by international society) in anti-Japanese bases in North of China.”<sup>38</sup> In the same publisher, the textbook *B303* is also set the special topic of both the Three Alls Policy and the 731 Unit on the bottom of the page added by both picture and literal interpretations.<sup>39</sup>

One textbooks of Yamakawa Press and one textbook of Jikkyō Shuppan, *B301* and *B305* didn’t provide precise introduction of the 731 Unit in the text but marked in footnote and admitted that the prohibited toxic gas and bacterial weapons were coming from the institution of Japanese military in Manchuria which had been used in North battlefield of China. The footnote also explained that the 731 Unit was a special military institution for bacterial warfare, and many Chinese and Russian had forced into the live human experiment<sup>40</sup>.

Another three textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan (*A302*, *A305* and *B304*) and one textbook of Daiichi Gakushūsha (*A304*) all explained both the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy in both text and footnote with pictures and literal explanation. Except above mentioned introduction of the 731 Unit, Textbook *A304* of Daiichi Gakushūsha, *A302* and *B304* of Jikkyō Shuppan explained that the toxic gas was coming from a secret factory in Okunoshima (Takehara City of Hiroshima prefecture). The factory was supplying toxic gas used in Chinese battlefield until 1945<sup>41</sup>. The textbook *A305* of Jikkyō Shuppan set a column to introduce the Three Alls Policy in the page of second Sino-Japanese War and described how the live human were used for bacterial experiment and how the bacterial weapons were used in battlefield in China.<sup>42</sup> *A306* of Shimizu Shoin mentioned the Three Alls Policy with concise introduction in the text, explained that this inhuman cruelty raised Chinese people’s extreme resistance toward Japan, but didn’t mention the name of 731 Unit.

In the analysis of the 731 Unit crimes and the Three Alls Policy in newly published fifteen history textbooks, a polarized narration is observed. There are about half of the textbooks completely concealed the war crimes of the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy, even the name of the crimes were not mentioned in either text or footnote. In contrast, the other six textbooks which mentioned both the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy, both narrations and the causal interpretations are presented by very detailed description in separate column, text or footnote with pictures or the issued files. No matter if those textbooks would be widely adopted by Japanese high schools, the trend that authors of Japanese history textbooks started to recognize the importance of the other crucial war crimes might probably alleviate current tension between Japan and China.

### 3. Conclusion

When the problematic Japanese history textbook passed screening and qualified by MEXT, the criticism toward the history textbook itself and the criticism toward the Japanese government are never eased up. Current studies toward Japanese history textbooks are mainly focus on the problematic textbook used in Japanese junior high school, however, when MEXT qualified another fifteen history textbooks in 2013, the scope the textbooks cover, the content it includes, the narration it adopts and the position the interpretation stands for still keep

<sup>37</sup> *A301 Japanese History A: The History from Modern*, Tokyo Shoseki, 137.

<sup>38</sup> *A301 Japanese History A: The History from Modern*, Tokyo Shoseki, 137.

<sup>39</sup> *B303 New Selected Japanese History B*, Tokyo Shoseki, 216.

<sup>40</sup> *B301 Detailed Explanation of Japanese History B*, Yamakawa Press, 365; *B305 Japanese History B*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 307.

<sup>41</sup> *A304 High School Japanese History A: People · Life · Future*, Daiichi Gakushūsha, 115; *A302 High School Japanese History A*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 115; *B304 High School Japanese History B*, Jikkyō Shuppan 209.

<sup>42</sup> *A305 New Japanese History A*, Jikkyō Shuppan, 93; *A306 High School Japanese History A: The Newest Edition*, Shimizu Shoin, 145.

unknown. Whether the newly published textbooks exactly match the negative image that Chinese people keep in mind? Whether the high school history textbooks are the same as the problematic textbooks in junior high school? How do the new history textbooks describe the past wars and identify the nature of the war?

According to the statistics of Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education<sup>43</sup>, the newly published fifteen textbooks are used in academic year of 2014 and 2015. In 2014 and 2015, the adoption rate of textbook *A301* of Tokyo Shoseki was 31.5% in 2014 and dropped to 22.5% in 2015; the adoption rate of textbooks of *A304* of Daiichi Gakushūsha was 29.2% in 2014 and increased to 34.4% in 2015; two textbooks of Japanese History A of Yamakawa Press owned 21.3% in 2014 and reached 21.9% in 2015. In eight published textbooks of Japanese History B, three textbooks of Yamakawa Press owned in totally 80.4% of adoption rate in 2014 and kept the biggest ratio 75.2% in 2015 (*B301* of Yamakawa Press owns the largest adoption in both 2014 and 2015). The four textbooks of Jikkyō Shuppan which described the most details regarding the war crimes in the Second Sino-Japanese Wars, only two textbooks (*A305* and *B305*) were adopted by high schools and reached 5.6% and 4.5% adoption rate in 2014. The textbook of *A305* kept small increase to 8.6% in 2015 but *B305* dropped to 4.3% in 2015. The adoptions of the textbook *A302* and *B304* of Jikkyō Shuppan were zero in both 2014 and 2015, exactly like the textbook of Meiseisha, who owns zero adoption in both 2014 and 2015 as well.

Combined with the data statistics, this research is valuable for four parts of view. Firstly, the newly published history textbooks are not like what most of Chinese perspectives that all of Japanese history textbooks denied the invasive war in 1930s. In total fifteen history textbooks of six different publishers, there are eight textbooks identified the second Sino-Japanese war was invasively, and over half of the textbooks (especially Jikkyō Shuppan, Tokyo Shoseki and Daiichi Gakushūsha) confirmed not only the invasive nature of the war, but also presented lots of cruel atrocities that Japanese military had committed in mainland China in wartime. Secondly, the problematic textbook with zero adoption in both 2014 and 2015 still passed the screening and qualified by MEXT. In newly published textbooks, the textbook published by Meiseisha chose a reasonable way to describe the historical events, in which glorified, denied and the justified narration toward the war crimes are reflected as common characteristics of other problematic textbooks of Japanese junior high school. Third, the causal interpretations toward the second Sino-Japanese war in the textbooks published by the same publisher lack of consistency. In total of fifteen history textbooks of six publishers, the narration regarding the historical events keep consistent, but the causal interpretations reflects inconsistent. In the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, the relation between ceasefire agreement and the reinforcement are mentioned in some textbooks but are ignored to explain in other textbooks. The atrocities in Nanjing are all mentioned in fifteen newly published textbooks, in which some textbooks depicted the atrocities by details including the issued file, the name of commander and the killings including women and children, but there are some textbooks avoided to mention even the number of the victims. Similarly, both of the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy are mentioned in eight textbooks with detailed descriptions in separated text, main text or in footnote, but completely concealed in other six textbooks. Fourth, even though the history textbooks with detailed description of war crimes were qualified by MEXT, their adoption rate in Japanese high schools is relatively lower than the textbooks with less detailed descriptions of war crimes.

According to the research, the high school history textbooks in current Japan reflect more complicated

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<sup>43</sup> 平成 26 年度使用都立高等学校及び中等教育学校（後期課程）用教科書教科別採択結果（教科書別学校数）  
<http://www.metro.tokyo.jp/INET/OSHIRASE/2013/08/DATA/20n8m300.pdf>. (Accessed on March 2, 2015)

平成 27 年度使用都立高等学校及び中等教育学校（後期課程）用教科書教科別採択結果（教科書別学校数）  
<http://www.metro.tokyo.jp/INET/OSHIRASE/2014/08/DATA/20o8s500.pdf>. (Accessed on March 2, 2015)

situation than before. MEXT keeps qualifying both leftist and rightist textbooks in the same year; the textbooks with most details descriptions of Nanjing Massacre, the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy were not adopted by any of Tokyo's high school (zero adoption of the textbook of Meiseisha too); the five textbooks of Yamakawa Press with its less consistency of causal interpretations of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, restrained description regarding the atrocities in Nanjing, the 731 Unit and the Three Alls Policy, and identified the second Sino-Japanese War as "advanced" or "occupied" rather than "invasive", owned the highest adoption rate in both 2014 and 2015.

After decades' debate on Japanese history textbooks between Japan and other Asian countries, the content and the structure of Japanese history textbooks have greatly changed. It is good to see how hard Japanese civil organizations are fighting and seeking historical recognition toward the past war crimes that can be accepted both in Japan domestically as well as in other Asian countries. However, since the content and the structure of history textbooks have experienced drastic transformations in post-war era, finding a way of overcoming the traumatic memory will unlikely be easy.

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## 222 Historical Narration of the Second Sino-Japanese War in Current Japanese High School History Textbooks

**Figure 1**

The Mentioned Historical Events (Japanese History A)										
No	Publisher	Book Code	Date of Publication	Name of the Book	Nature of War	Marco Polo Bridge Incident	Nanjing Incident/Massacre	731 Unit	Three Alls Policy	Adoption in Tokyo Schools 2014 and 2015
1	Tokyo Shoseki	2東書 A301	20140210	Japanese History A: The History from Modern	Invasive (Shinryaku)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Incident)	Yes	Yes	28/34
2	Jikkyo Shuppan	7実教 A302	20140125	High School Japanese History A	Invasive (Shinryaku)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Massacre )	Yes	Yes	0/0
3	Yamakawa Press	81山川 A303	20140305	Modern Japanese History A	Occupied (Senryo)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Incident)	No	No	9/14
4	Daiichi Gakushūsha	183第一 A304	20140210	High School Japanese History A People・Life・Future	Invasive (Shinryaku)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Massacre)	Yes	Yes	26/52
5	Jikkyo shuppan	7実教 A305	20140125	New Japanese History A	Invasive (Shinryaku)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Massacre)	Yes	Yes	5/13
6	Shimizu Shoin	35清水 A306	20140215	High School Japanese History A : The Newest Edition	Invasive (Shinryaku)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Massacre )	No	Yes	11/19
7	Yamakawa Press	81山川 A307	2013005	Japanese History A	Advanced (Shinshutsu)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Incident)	No	No	10/19

Figure 2

The Mentioned Historical Events (Japanese History B)										
No	Publisher	Book Code	Date of Publication	Name of the Book	Nature of War	Marco Polo Bridge Incident	Nanjing Incident/Massacre	731 Unit	Three Alls Policy	Adoption in Tokyo Schools 2014 and 2015
1	Yamakawa Press	81山川 B301	20140305	Detailed Explanation of Japanese History B	Advanced (Shinshutsu)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Incident) (Footnote)	Yes (footnote)	Yes	85/111
2	Meiseisha	22明成社B302	20140303	The Newest Japanese History	war, Japan's retake of its benefit	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Incident) (Footnote)	No	No	0/0
3	Tokyo Shoseki	2東書 B303	20140210	New Selected Japanese History B	Invasive (Shinryaku)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Incident)	Yes	Yes	14/25
4	Jikkyo Shuppan	7実教 B304	20140125	High School Japanese History B	Invasive (Shinryaku)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Massacre)	Yes	Yes	0/0
5	Jikkyo Shuppan	7実教 B305	20140125	Japanese History B	Invasive (Shinryaku)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Massacre)	Yes	Yes	5/7
6	Shimizu Shoin	35清水 B306	20140215	High School Japanese History B The Newest Edition	Advanced, Occupied (Shinshutsu, Senryo)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Incident)	No	No	3/8
7	Yamakawa Press	81山川 B307	2013005	The New Japanese History B	Advanced (Shinshutsu)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Massacre)	No	No	1/3
8	Yamakawa Press	81山川 B308	2013005	High School Japanese History B	War, Occupied (Senryo)	Yes	Yes (Nanjing Incident)	No	No	4/7

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