

Perspectives on the Korean War in Japanese High School Textbooks: Research Trends of Japanese Academia and their Reflection in the Textbooks

Park So Young

This paper analyzes descriptions on the Korean War in Japanese high school textbooks. This paper also reviews Japanese academia's research trends on the Korean War and determines to what extent recent academic research has been reflected in the high school textbooks. First, even though Japanese academia understands the divided situation of the Korean Peninsula not only from the viewpoint of the Cold War but also as an aspect of the Korean people's conflict and confrontation, these views have been omitted in textbooks. Second, since the end of the Cold War, classified material from China and the USSR has been available to researchers. Thus there has been more research on the Korean War done in Japan, and the influences of the Korean War on Japan have been faithfully described from an economic standpoint. But there has been a lack of critical analysis regarding rearmament, and the Japanese army's participation in the Korean War is rarely described. Third, content about the circumstances surrounding the Armistice Agreement and the meaning of the Korean War is very limited.

Keywords: Korean War, Cold War, wartime special procurements, rearmament, Armistice Agreement, history education

I. Preface

The Korean War is significant in both contemporary Korean history and contemporary world history. In Korean history, the Korean War caused a more permanent division of the peninsula and the two contradictory systems have continued despite the end of the Cold War. In world history, the Korean War was a confrontation

caused by the Cold War between the U.S. and the USSR which strengthened America’s position and role in the world. Also, China heightened its international status through its participation in the Korean War and reemerged as an East Asian power. The Korean War provided Japan with an important turning point militarily, economically, politically, and diplomatically. Japan, who was pushing through the post-WWII reforms under the GHQ occupation, was in a serious economic depression and militarily adopted the standpoint of disarmament and neutrality as a defeated nation according to the Peace Constitution. However, because of the establishment of the People’s Republic of China and increased Cold War tensions, the Korean War motivated America to reconsider Japan’s role in East Asia. Thus, Japanese rearmament during the Korean War became a motive for the restoration of militarism and Japan regained its sovereignty by concluding a peace treaty in San Francisco. Also, by playing the role of a relay station and because of a wartime procurement boom, the depressed Japanese economy enjoyed a favorable business climate, laying a foundation for it to become an economic power.

This paper analyzes the descriptions on the Korean War, which marks a turning point in the world order and Japanese society as a whole after WWII, found in Japanese history textbooks. The role of history education is to accurately reflect historical research in textbooks and to lead the historical consciousness by making historical facts known. Therefore, this paper will review the research trends of Japanese academia about the Korean War and will determine to what extent this research is reflected in high school textbooks.

The target textbooks are Japanese history and world history textbooks that are used in Japanese high schools. While this paper mentions previously used textbooks for the sake of comparison, this paper focuses on textbooks with a high selection rate¹ and those whose contents cover the points of analysis.

1. Selection Rate of Japanese History and World History Textbooks for High Schools in 2006 (Shuppan roren 2006:71).

Selection Rate Subject	First	Second	Third
Japanese History A	Yamakawa shuppansha (32.6%)	Daiichi gakushusha (18.6%)	Tokyo shoseki (18.2%)
Japanese History B	Yamakawa shuppansha (66.8%)	Zikkyo shuppan (12.6%)	Tokyo shoseki (8.9%)
World History A	Yamakawa shuppansha (39.6%)	Daiichi gakushusha (13.4%)	Zikkyo shuppan (11.5%)
World History B	Yamakawa shuppansha (65.3%)	Tokyo shoseki (13.9%)	Zikkyo shuppan (6.9%)

Analysis covers the following five issues: 1) the establishment of a divided nation during the occupation period; 2) parties responsible for the outbreak of the Korean War as seen in Japanese texts up to the 1980s; 3) development of the war including the participation of the U.S., the USSR, and China; 4) the Korean War and its effects upon Japan; and 5) the aftermath and significance of the Korean War. These five issues are the contents found in textbooks as well as the basic direction of research in Japan about the Korean War.

II. Japanese Research Trends² of the Korean War and Characteristics of the Descriptions in Textbooks

Research on the Korean War by Japanese academia has developed since the latter half of the 1960s. From the 1960s to the 1970s, the issue of which side, North or South Korea, provoked the war was important. Research also focused on the agreement on apportionment of tasks between China and the USSR and the dispatch of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army to the North Korean People's Army. At the beginning of the 1980s, research diversified to include armistice meetings, the relationship between Korea and the U.S., and the absence of the USSR from the United Nation's Security Council. At the beginning of the 1990s when the Cold War ended and important data from China and, in particular, the USSR on the Korean War were opened, the research environment rapidly changed and reviews of existing research were performed. Among them, Wada Haruki (1996) reviewed the Korean War including the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of the war, the military and diplomatic participation of the U.S., China and the USSR, the development of the war, the effects of the Korean War upon Japan, and the significance of the Korean War.³

Textbooks on Japanese history and world history for Japanese high schools are divided into A and B and their contents are different. Japanese History A textbooks are mainly composed of modern and contemporary history while Japanese History B textbooks are presented diachronically from ancient times.

2. These are based on Yamaguchi Koichi (2000) and Wada Haruki (1996).

3. Sakurai 1998:196-8. Yamaguchi Koichi (2000:397) concluded that Japanese research trends on the Korean War follow these four points: the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of the war; the military and diplomatic participation of the U.S., the USSR, and China and the development of the war; Japan's participation in the Korean War; and the characteristics of the war.

Despite the diachronic description, they emphasize modern and contemporary history. The same is true for the world history textbooks (Kim 2006:853). It is natural that the descriptions on the Korean War differ between the Japanese history and world history textbooks, because the aims of the subjects are different. According to the teaching guidelines, Japanese history surveys the development of Japanese history from the viewpoint of world history in connection with the international environment while world history understands it in connection with Japanese history. As a result, Japanese history textbooks' description of the Korean War focuses on the independence of post-WWII Japan, its economic rehabilitation and rearmament, and America's strategy for Japan because of the Korean War. Meanwhile, world history textbooks deal with the political situation before the Korean War, the escalation from a civil war to an international war, and the influences of the Korean War upon Asia and the world based on the political changes in East Asia after World War II.

1. Establishment of a Divided Nation during the Occupation Period

Research by Bruce Cumings was an important turning point for the study of contemporary Korean history in Japan. Previous research mainly dealt with the circumstances after the outbreak of the Korean War, but research on Korea after liberation was developed on the basis of Bruce Cumings's argument. In particular, some remarkable research during the 1990s discussed the post-liberation movement that led to the division while grasping the then international situation on the basis of the confrontation of the Korean people over national founding (Yamaguchi 2000:396-7).

Yamaguchi Koichi emphasized the movement for national independence and presented the South Korean circumstances of occupation under the American military rule and those of North Korea under the USSR's military rule soon after liberation. He argued that in order to explain this period it is necessary to follow the Korean people's thoughts about the Moscow Conference in 1945 and the process of division into North and South Korea because of the confrontation between America and the USSR. Yamaguchi also argued that the division of Korea was caused by the Cold War. He maintained that research should include a well-balanced discussion about understanding the confrontation and antipathy of the Korean people during the Cold War (Yamaguchi 2000:397).

Understanding how a divided nation was established on the Korean Peninsula during the occupation period of America and the USSR is important

to grasping the true nature of the Korean War. Japanese textbooks describe this occupation period very briefly, and the description varies between Japanese history and world history textbooks. Without any explanation about the political situation on the Korean Peninsula during the occupation period, Japanese history textbooks describe very briefly the outbreak of the Korean War, the division of the Korean Peninsula by the U.S. and the USSR, and the establishment of two governments. Though the world history textbooks contain a little more description, they provide a critical description based on the result that North and South Korea were divided because of the Cold War. Fixing the 38th parallel as the dividing line, the idea of putting Korea under the trusteeship of the U.S. and the USSR, the movement to establish an independent nation after liberation, and the establishment of a divided nation contrary to the Korean people's desire are seldom described.

After World War II, the Korean Peninsula was divided into North and South Korea with the 38th parallel as the border. South Korea was occupied by America and North Korea by the USSR. In 1948, the Republic of Korea was founded in the south with Syngman Rhee as president and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was founded in the north with Kim Il-sung as premier. (Kimura et al. 2007:195)

The textbooks published by Tokyo shoseki and Daiichi gakushusha have almost identical descriptions. Only the textbook published by Zikkyo shuppan stated that "the preparation for establishing an independent government was progressed with the Preparation Committee for Founding Korean Government as its center"(Tsurumi et al. 2007:336).

In contrast, though not currently used, *World History B* published by Hitotsubashi shuppan precisely describes the situation on the Korean Peninsula with sections titled "What Happened to Korea after the Surrender of Japan?" and "Between America and the USSR" (Nitani 2001:311-4). It also describes the declaration of the establishment of the People's Republic of Korea by the Preparation Committee for Founding Korean Government, the divided occupation of Korea, the fact that an independent Korea by the Korean people became impossible because of the neglect of the existence of the People's Republic of Korea, the decision for trusteeship at the Moscow Conference, and the difficulty in establishing a unified government. Also, it introduces the deepening confrontation between the U.S. and the USSR caused by the declaration of the

Truman Doctrine, the enforcement of a separate election in South Korea, and America's oppression of the people who opposed the election.

Wada Haruki said that it is necessary to understand the Korean War from the viewpoint of the Cold War and a civil war. Ogushi Junji indicated that it is necessary to describe post-WWII history from the viewpoint of the Cold War and East Asia because the situation of the Cold War in East Asia overlapped with the process of decolonization and national independence (Ogushi 2000:413-4). However, the description in Japanese history and world history textbooks is insufficient. It is necessary to describe the establishment of the two divided governments on the Korean Peninsula from the viewpoint of the then ideological conflict about national foundation after liberation and the international political situation.

2. Who Began the Korean War?

Research on the Korean War done in Japan between the 1960s and 1970s always included the topic of who started the war? Although disputed by those who believed that the U.S. and South Korea invaded North Korea, Nobuo Seisaburo expressed his opinion that "the Korean War broke out as a military and revolutionary civil war provoked by Kim Il-sung." Kamiya Fuji insisted that the Korean War was about national liberation and was initiated by North Korea (Wada 1996:4). Because of the declassification of American diplomatic documents and information in the middle of the 1970s, research on who started the Korean War was developed. Okonogi Masao's *The Korean War—the Process of America's Participation* (1986) played an important role in making the theory of North Korea's invasion of South Korea an established one. There was research on the elements that enabled North Korea to decide to invade South Korea and research defining President Rhee's advocacy of a northward advance by the military as an impractical fantasy without American military aid (Yamaguchi 2000:398).

Reflecting this research, Japanese textbooks began to clarify who started the Korean War. Older textbooks contained an obscure description; however, in textbooks published after 1990, a definite description appeared.

In June 1950, a military skirmish occurred between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Korean War broke out. (Miyahara et al. 1980:331)

In June 1950, the army of North Korea attacked South Korea by surprise and the Korean War broke out. (Miyahara et al. 1999:208)

It has been proven that China and the USSR had agreed in advance to North Korea starting a war with South Korea. Kim Il-sung led the outbreak of the Korean War with the consent and support of Joseph V. Stalin and the consent of Mao ZeDong (Lee 2007:238-40).

On June 25, 1950, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea crossed the 38th degrees North latitude and invaded the Republic of Korea for a military unification of North and South with the support of the USSR. Therefore, the Korean War broke out. (Toriumi et al. 2007:148).

Until 1990, whether North Korea's invasion of South Korea depended on North Korea's own decision or a discussion with China and the USSR was analogized on the basis of the memoirs of Nikita S. Khrushchev. After 1990, telegrams between Stalin and Mao ZeDong and Shtykov, ambassador to North Korea, were released. They revealed that the USSR had supported, aided the plan for invading South Korea, and also adhered to hiding it. But it was not until the 2000s that the contents concerning the USSR's knowledge and support for the invasion were reflected in Japanese textbooks. This research is found mainly in Japanese history textbooks published by Yamakawa shuppansha.

3. Development of the Korean War

Using data and academic research from Japan, North and South Korea, America, China, and the USSR, Wada Haruki in *Chosen senso* (The Korean War) discusses the phases of the Korean War: development of the war; the degree of military and diplomatic participation of America, China, and the USSR; disagreement between Harry S. Truman and Douglas McArthur about marching north after the Incheon landing; and the proposal for a ceasefire and the conclusion of an agreement.

Wada Haruki analyzed Stalin's consent of North Korea's plan for a civil war based on the memoirs of Khrushchev and telegrams of Stalin. Kim Il-sung stated his intention to invade South Korea to the Soviets and asked for arms and ammunition. At first Stalin did not support this request, but he promised his support after Kim Il-sung and Bak Heon Yeong visited the USSR in April 1950.

While the USSR supported and aided North Korea's plan, it hid these facts until previously classified documents became available after the Cold War (Wada 1996:23-9).

Wada Haruki summarized the disputes that were taking place in America. One was between the internationalists John M. Allison and John F. Dulles and isolationists like George F. Kennan, over the extent of American intervention in the Korean War. Another was between Harry S. Truman and Dean G. Acheson, and Douglas McArthur over China (Wada 1996:149-63).

Wada Haruki concluded that in the process of dispatching the Chinese People's Volunteer Army and reorganizing the headquarters, Peng DeHuai was the commander of the Chinese and North Korean army by order of Stalin and, therefore, the Korean War changed into a war between America and China (Wada 1996:191-208).

Yamaguchi described Seoul under the occupation of the North Korean army and Pyeongyang under the occupation of the United Nations Forces (Yamaguchi 2000:399).

The development of the Korean War in Japanese textbooks is described as follows: the outbreak of the war; the preponderance of North Korea; resolution of the United Nations Security Council on North Korea's military invasion of South Korea and dispatch of American troops; North Korean army's advance to the south of the Korean Peninsula; the success of the Incheon landing by the United Nations Forces and counterattack to the Chinese border; the dispatch of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army and arms by the USSR; the escalation of the civil war into a war between America and China; stalemate of the war; and the Armistice Agreement in 1953.

In earlier editions of Japanese history textbooks, there was a tendency to describe the development of the Korean War briefly from the viewpoint of Japanese economic rehabilitation and rearmament. However, more recent editions describe from the viewpoint of world history, reflect academic research, and usually mention the dispatch of the United Nations Forces and its composition, changes at the front line, and the behind-the-scenes support of the USSR. This is conspicuously shown in the textbooks published by Tokyo shoseki, Yamakawa shuppansha, and Shimizu shoin.

In June 1950 when the Korean War broke out between North and South Korea, the United Nations Forces, mainly composed of American troops, supported South Korea while North Korea was supported by the Chinese

People's Volunteer Army. The following year, a fierce battle of advance and retreat continued near the 38th parallel. In July 1951, ceasefire negotiations began and the Armistice Agreement was concluded at Panmunjeom in 1953, two years later. (Bito et al. 1999:323)

In June 1950, the North Korean People's Army crossed the 38th parallel, invaded South Korea and the Korean War broke out. The United Nations Security Council defined North Korea as an invader when the USSR was absent from the council. It dispatched United Nations Forces, mainly composed of American troops that had been stationed in Japan. The South Korean side retreated to near Busan. However, due to the successful Incheon landing operation of the United Nations Forces in September, the South Korean side counterattacked and advanced to near the Chinese border. With materials from the USSR and with help from the Chinese People's Volunteer Army which was dispatched in October, the North Korean front line crossed the 38th parallel once again and went southward in December. Afterwards, the front line was fixed near the 38th parallel because of the counterattack by the United Nations Forces. The Korean War became a war between the socialist and the liberalist camps. (Yamamoto et al. 2004:367)

“While the USSR supported North Korea in the rear, the People's Republic of China, which was afraid of the American army's invasion in the northeast, dispatched a number of the People's Volunteer Army to help North Korea, counterattacked and put the American army to rout” (Otsu et al. 2008:367). This gives a hint that there was a negotiation between China and the USSR about supporting North Korea. As to why the USSR decided to participate in the war, there are two different opinions: one is that Stalin promised air support (Stueck 2001:200-38); the other is that without the support of the USSR, China solely decided to participate in the war and Stalin secretly supported the air force later on (Wada 1994:43-52). Japanese history B textbooks use the former opinion.

World history textbooks published by Sanseido, Hitotsubashi shuppan, Tokyo shoseki, and Shimizu shoin describe the possibility that America would use nuclear arms in the situation that the front line was being fixed and about the conflict between Douglas McArthur and Harry S. Truman over marching north. Most of the textbooks describe that the Korean War began as a civil war, escalated internationally because of the participation of the United Nations Forces and

Chinese People's Volunteer Army, and threatened world peace. The world wanted an end to the war, so an armistice agreement was concluded despite many difficulties. However, the circumstances surrounding the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement and two years' war of attrition for a respective favorable negotiation between the United Nations Command and the communist army are not mentioned.

4. The Korean War and Japan

Igarashi Takeshi dealt with the issue of the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Dealing directly with the activities of the Japanese communist party, he revealed that the Japanese communist party became the main body of the international Cold War, adopted a standpoint of intensifying the international Cold War, and failed to secure backing. Also, he viewed that the diplomatic posture of post-WWII Japan was formed at that time and discussed its characteristics.⁴

In *Chosen senso* (The Korean War), Wada Haruki analyzed the policy of Yoshida, then premier and minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Korean War. Yoshida, who started the National Police Reserve, took a passive attitude to urging minority groups in America and Japan that Japan should plan its self-defense through its own rearmament. Japan's decision to provide America with military bases, depend on the security treaty between America and Japan, and make an effort to rehabilitate economically without amending its constitution in a state of light armament was decided under the leadership of Yoshida (Wada 1996:227-30).

Wada Haruki said that Japan returned to its pre-WWII economic standard and established a foundation for economic growth after 1955 with profits gained through wartime special procurements: public entertainment like prostitution for American soldiers; the emerging of textile and metalworking industries by order of the American army; and the rehabilitation of the automobile industry. In particular,

4. Igarashi Takeshi stated four characteristics of Japanese diplomatic posture.: (1) In diplomatic relations between the governments of America and Japan, "a secret diplomatic character" concerning the problem of guaranteeing security appeared; (2) While one pursued a realistic policy and the other the ideology of national existence between the conservative and progressive camps in Japan, a third side was pursued; (3) While the conservative side pursued cooperative relations in diplomacy, the progressive side pursued the democratization of society; and (4) Taking diplomacy as the power politics of a 'powerless' state internationally, the restriction of the Japanese Constitution and the internal opposition were used as its basis (Wada 1996:223).

quoting *The 20 Years History of Toyota*, he said that the development of Toyota would have been impossible without the Korean War (Wada 1996:233-5).

Some other research states: all American military bases in Japan were used as supply bases; Japanese people were mobilized for sweeping mines in the Sea of Japan and some of them were sacrificed; successful economic rehabilitation depended upon America after the policy of Yoshida; and the necessity of considering the responsibility of Japan subjectively for the development of the Korean War (Yamaguchi 2000:400).

There are a lot of different descriptions about Japan and the Korean War in the Japanese history and world history textbooks. While Japanese history textbooks connect the Korean War with its influence on post-WWII Japanese politics, economy and society, world history textbooks deal mainly with the Cold War and the national movements in Asia and Africa and collaterally with changes that occurred in Japan. World history textbooks deal mainly with the establishment of the National Police Reserve in Japan because of the dispatch of American troops stationed in Japan to the Korean Peninsula, the economic rehabilitation because of a special wartime procurement boom as a transit place of the American army, and the circumstances surrounding the early conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

When the Korean War broke out, America started the police reserve forces that would later become the self-defense forces and strengthened the military bases on the mainland and Okinawa. In the meantime, the Japanese economy regained prosperity because of America's request for military supplies, which became an opportunity for development later on. Also, America hastened peace negotiations with Japan and began a peace conference in San Francisco in September 1951. However, China who had fought against Japan for a long time was not invited to the conference. India and Burma [Myanmar] were also absent and the USSR opposed the peace treaty. Though there was a strong opposition in Japan as to the peace led by America, forty-nine countries signed and concluded the treaty. (Shibata et al. 2004:365)

Like the contents described above, Japanese history textbooks describe precisely the participation of Japan in the Korean War, the Red purge, and the evaluation on the establishment of the police reserve forces. In the textbook published by Zikkyo shuppan, which reflects to a certain degree academic research, wartime

special procurements and partial participation of the Japanese people in the war are described. As to the special procurements in Korea, presenting the example that the Toyota automobile industry, which had been having difficulties because of the outbreak of the Korean War, regained its prosperity because of orders for trucks, it described that “the administration side welcomed such a situation as ‘the help of the heaven or the help of gods.’”⁵ Other publishers’ textbooks describe that the special procurements for the Korean War revived the Japanese economy and the production index of Japanese mining and manufacturing industries regained their pre-WWII average standard.

Only the textbook published by Zikkyo shuppan describes the participation of the Japanese people in the Korean War. It covers the topics of the sweeping for mines by the marine security office, the Japanese Red Cross using its nurses for the United Nations Forces, and transporting arms and ammunition. It also states that there were 381 casualties during the six months that Japan fought in the Korean War. It also suggests that the Japanese people didn’t participate in the Korean War voluntarily and describes that “some Japanese people were forced to participate in the Korean War” (Miyahara 2007:161).

The participation of Japanese people in the Korean War was classified and it began with the dispatch of 1,200 minesweepers. It is also accepted as an open secret that many Japanese railroad workers and sailors were dispatched to Korea for transporting military supplies and that former Government-General officials, because of their knowledge of the Korean language and Korean geography, worked with the American military. The data about the number of casualties was released in 1978 in Japan. It is estimated that more Japanese people than official records state participated in the front line and the rear and that there were more unidentified casualties. The Japanese people were not mobilized openly. The Treaty of Peace between America and Japan was concluded more easily because Japan promised in principle that it would participate in the Korean War (Ryu 1990:162-5).

The topic of Japan’s rearmament, including the establishment of the National Police Reserve, varies according to publishing company. The textbook published by Zikkyo shuppan states, “The establishment of the National Police Reserve caused a dispute as to whether it was a violation of Article 9 of the

5. Miyahara et al. 2003:148. However, in 2007 when this textbook was revised, the description of ‘special procurements’ was reduced and, instead, the contents on ‘the establishment of the police reserve forces’ increased.

Constitution prescribing non-armament” (Miyahara et al. 2003:149). The textbook published by Sanseido also states, “Regarding Japanese rearmament, critical voices have come out from every field considering the ideology of the Japanese Constitution of peace, non-armament, and neutrality” (Aoki et al. 2008:139). Meanwhile, the textbook published by Yamakawa shuppansha states, “When the Korean War broke out, the National Police Reserve was established upon orders of the GHQ to fill the military vacuum after the American army stationed in Japan moved to Korea. The annulment of banishing former soldiers from official posts was pursued and the former soldiers were adopted at the National Police Reserve” (Ishii et al. 2007:359). This textbook only described the facts, not revealing an opinion about rearmament and the adoption of former soldiers at the National Police Reserve.

There are descriptions about the Red purge, which was practiced as part of an anticommunist policy. “When the Korean War broke out, the purge of communists began” (Ishii et al. 2007:359). “After the outbreak of the Korean War, a Red purge banishing members of the communist party and their sympathizers from public agencies, organs of mass communication, and enterprises was pursued” (Miyahara et al. 2003:161). The fact that communist movements were oppressed as a part of an anticommunist policy after the outbreak of the war in Japan is emphasized.

In Japanese history textbooks, there is a tendency toward describing the influence of the Korean War from military and economic standpoints.⁶ However, considering that rearmament and the annulment of prohibiting former soldiers from official posts became a crucial motive for the revival of militarism, which is contrary to the basic principles of the Peace Constitution, it is viewed that the suggestion of critical opinions toward this will help understand the international relationships between Korea and Japan.

5. Aftermath and Significance of the Korean War

Research on the aftermath of the Korean War covers topics such as the casualties caused by the war, the suffering of prisoners, the problem of withdrawing foreign

6. Ogushi Zunji indicated that it is necessary to present more sufficient data on the process of rehabilitation and special procurements as influences upon Japan. He argued that as the economic rehabilitation based on the misfortune of a neighboring country is a problem throughout the post-WWII history of Japan, it is important to grasp this. Nevertheless, the description in Japanese history textbooks takes on a unilateral feeling (Ogushi 2000:414).

troops from the Korean Peninsula, the political conference for a peaceful solution, and defining the character of the war. As to defining the character of the war, Yamaguchi Koichi discussed that though the Korean War had assumed an image of a war by proxy in the midst of the Cold War, the understanding that it was a civil war and a revolution of the Korean people has increased (Yamaguchi 2000:400).

Also, Wada Haruki gives meaning to the Korean War: “The Korean War escalated into a war between America and China and ended in a tragedy that didn’t fulfill the aim of unification, and caused awful casualties and deepening the heterogeneity between North and South Korean societies. China fortified its position by fighting the war on equal footing with America. Taiwan entered into diplomatic relations with Japan with the help of America and also established its position. The main beneficiary of the Korean War was Japan. Since Japan’s political system and economic basis was established during this war, it can be said that the development of post-WWII Japan began with the tragedy of the Korean Peninsula” (Wada 1996:346-7).

Japanese history textbooks rarely mention the significance and aftermath of the Korean War but only describe the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement. In contrast, world history textbooks mention international influences such as the escalation of the Cold War in the Asia Pacific region and America’s containment policy of keeping communism from expanding in Asia. As to internal influences, they describe casualties, the devastation of the country, the appearance of dispersed families, the fixation of the division, and the deepening confrontation between North and South Korea. However, it would be much better to reflect the evaluation that as the Korean War was geographically confined to a small nation in Asia, the worst-case scenario of a direct confrontation between superpowers was evaded, which led to the progress and development of an international order (Stueck 2001:12-23). *World History B* published by Yamakawa shuppansha describe the international and internal influences.

The Korean War spread the Cold War to Asia and changed its character from an ideological war to a military confrontation. Afterwards, America reinforced its armaments on a large scale. By sending the 7th fleet to the Taiwan Strait and strengthening its military support for the French army in the Indo-China War, America made various military blocs in the Asia Pacific region and aimed to block China and the USSR. (Shibata et al. 2004:365)

III. Conclusion

This paper reviewed the research trends on the Korean War in Japan and studied how Japanese history and world history textbooks reflected the academic research. Even though the Japanese academia grasped the divided situation of the Korean Peninsula not only from the viewpoint of the Cold War but also as a conflict and confrontation among the Korean people, this viewpoint has been omitted in the textbooks. There is also the problem that the establishment of a divided government was just recognized unilaterally as a result of the Cold War. Thus there is no effort to emphasize North and South Korea's role in the division of the country. Second, after the Cold War ended, a tremendous amount of data from the communist side was made available, and this increased the amount of research on the Korean War in Japan.

Japanese history and world history textbooks for high schools have been repeatedly revised and reflect the most recent research. They clearly reveal North Korea's invasion of South Korea and the behind-the-scenes support of the USSR at the beginning and during the war. They faithfully described the influence of the Korean War upon Japan from an economic point of view. However, since a critical opinion about rearmament is not covered, they only selectively describe from a military viewpoint. Only the textbook published by Zikkyo shuppan describes the participation of the Japanese people in the war. This is because there was an argument about the movement toward rearmament at that time and they didn't want to describe the secret parts willingly. Third, the circumstances surrounding the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement and the meaning of the Korean War were partially described. It is expected that the evaluation will be reflected later on that the Korean War played the role of World War III by proxy and, therefore, prevented a direct confrontation between the superpowers.

Yui Osaburo has indicated that it is necessary to consider subjectively Japan's responsibility for the Korean War (Yamaguchi 2000:400). Yun Keun Cha also indicated that in defining the character of Korean history research in Japan, Japan should repent for its colonial rule, reorganize Japanese research on history, and play a leading role in the historical consciousness of the Japanese people (Yun 1998:203-4). Though history textbooks naturally reflect academic research and describe facts, a nation's historical viewpoint is often portrayed because of its decisive influence upon the historical consciousness of the people. This is the reason disputes over textbooks and historical consciousness occur.

It is hoped that the description in existing textbooks that the Korean War was only caused by the Cold War will be improved. It would be much better if the Korean War, which threatened East Asian peace and led the world to a tragedy, is correctly recognized and the lessons that such a tragedy should never be repeated be learned. Is it too much to suggest that Japanese history textbooks need to be changed toward contributing to northeast Asian peace?

References

- Aoki, Michio, et al. 2008. *Nihonshi A* (Japanese History A). Tokyo: Sanseido.
- Bito, Masahide, et al. 1999. *Nihonshi B* (Japanese History B). Tokyo: Tokyo shoseki.
- Ishii, Susumu, et al. 2007. *Shosetsu Nihonshi B* (Detailed Japanese History B). Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha.
- Kim, Hanjong. 2006. *Yeoksagyoyukgwajeonggwa gyogwaseoyeongu* (History Curriculum and a Study on Textbooks). Seoul: Seonin.
- Kimura, Seiji, et al. 2007. *Yosetus sekaishi A* (Outline of World History A). Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha.
- Lee, Wan Beom (Lee Wan Bom). 2007. 6.25jeonjaengeun bokhapjeoneuro sijakdoeeotda: naejeonseolgwa namchimnyudoseore Daehan bipanjeok jomang (The Korean War Began in Multidimensional Contexts: Critiques on Civil War Theory and Provocative Theory). *Reappraisal of Korean Contemporary History*.
- Miyahara, Takeo, et al. 1980. *Koko Nihonshi A* (Japanese History A for the High School). Tokyo: Zikkyo shuppan.
- _____. 1999. *Koko Nihonshi B* (Japanese History B for the High School). Tokyo: Zikkyo shuppan.
- _____. 2003. *Koko Nihonshi A* (Japanese History A for the High School). Tokyo: Zikkyo shuppan.
- _____. 2007. *Koko Nihonshi A* (Japanese History A for the High School). Tokyo: Zikkyo shuppan.
- Nitani, Sadao, et al. 2001. *Sekaishi B* (World History B). Tokyo: Hitotsubashi shuppan.
- Ogushi, Junji. 2000. Ilbon yeoksagyogwaseoui hyeondae ilhangwangyesa seosul (History of the Relations between Contemporary Japan and Korea). *Yeoksagyogwaseosogui Hangukgwa Ilbon*.

- Otsu, Toru, et al. 2008. *Shin Nihonshi B* (New Japanese History B). Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha.
- Ryu, Sang Yeong. 1990. Hangukjeonjaenge chamjeonhan Ilbongun” (Japanese Troops that Participated in the Korean War). *Wolgan mal* 48 (June).
- Sakurai, Hiroshi. 1998. Ilboneseoui Hangukhyeondaesa yeonguui gyeonghyang-gawa pyeongga (Trend and Evaluation of Research on Contemporary Korean History in Japan). *Hangukhyeondaesai jaeinsik 6--hyeondaesai heureumgwa hyeondae Hanguksa*.
- Shibata, Michio, et al. 2004. *Shin sekaishi B* (New World History B). Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha.
- Shuppan roren. 2006. Kyokasho Report (Textbook Report) No. 50. Tokyo: shuppanroren.
- Stueck, William. 2001. *Hangukjeonjaengui gukjesa* (The Korean War: An International History). Seoul: Pureun yeoksa.
- Toriumi, Yasushi, et al. 2007. *Gendaino Nihonshi A* (Contemporary Japanese History A). Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha.
- Tsurimi, Naohiro, et al. 2007. *Sekaishi B* (World History B). Tokyo: Zikkyo shuppan.
- Wada, Haruki. 1996. *Chosen senso* (The Korean War). Tokyo: Iwanami shoten.
- Yamaguchi, Koichi. 2000. Ilbonui hyeondae ilhangwangyesa yeongudonghyang” (Research Trends of the History of Relations between Contemporary Japan and Korea). *Yeoksagyogwaseosogui Hangukgwa Ilbon*.
- Yamamoto, Hirofumi, et al. 2004. *Nihonshi B* (Japanese History B). Tokyo: Tokyo shoseki.
- Yun, Keun Cha. 1998. Ilboneseoui Hangukhyeondaesa yeonguui gyeonghyang-gawa pyeongga nonpyeong (Trend and Evaluation of Research on Contemporary Korean History in Japan). *Hangukhyeondaesai jaeinsik 6--hyeondaesai heureumgwa hyeondae Hanguksa*.

Park So Young is a researcher at the Center for Information on Korean Culture, the Academy of Korean Studies. She received her M.A. from Oita National University. Her research interests are foreign textbook analysis and comparative studies of the grammatical structure between Korean and Japanese.