

AGENDA

“DIVIDED MEMORIES: HISTORY TEXTBOOKS AND THE WAR IN ASIA”

An international conference will be convened on February 11-12, 2008 at Stanford University at the Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center to examine the role of high school history textbooks in the formation of historical memory regarding the events of the Sino-Japanese and Pacific wars and their outcome. Shorenstein APARC researchers have looked at the treatment of those events, in the period from 1931-1951, in the most widely circulated high school history textbooks (national and world history), including those used in college preparatory course, in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the United States. Translations of those textbooks into English have been prepared for use by historians and other scholars, allowing a comparative study of how historical memory is being shaped in the school systems.

The conference will have three main goals: first it will ask historians to comment and analyze the treatment of history in those textbooks, comparing it to accepted historical understanding. Second, it will look at the process of textbook writing and revision – in some cases (China and Taiwan particularly), the main textbooks have undergone significant revision recently and our data set includes the old and new versions of history textbooks in use in schools. Third, the conference will examine how the formation of divided memories impacts international relations in East Asia and between the United States and Asia and how this effort to understand this process may aid the goal of reconciliation.

The proceedings of this conference will be the basis of an edited volume, including comparative excerpts from the textbooks themselves, to be published by an academic press in the United States and hopefully in Asia as well. Participants will be asked to prepare a written paper for presentation and for publication.

FEBRUARY 11

8:15 Breakfast

9:00-9:45 INTRODUCTION TO DIVIDED MEMORIES

This will present the theoretical basis of this project, the comparative structure, the role of education in the formation of national identity and the creation of historical consciousness and some of the previous efforts to deal with the history issue through other approaches.

Speaker: Gi-Wook Shin, Stanford University, Shorenstein APARC

10:00-12:30 PANEL ONE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEXTBOOKS

Historians from the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan will discuss and compare the textbook material that has been translated for the project. They will address the following questions:

Do the textbooks reflect the mainstream views of historians in their country? Are there alternative points of view? What are they and why are they not reflected in the textbooks?

Compare the treatment of the historical period (1931-1951) and the key events of that period in your country's textbooks and those of the other countries? Why do you think those differences exist? Do you find that textbooks from other countries provide a more balanced treatment of history than those of your own country and if so, why?

Are the treatment of the events of this period significant different than what is presented in movies, television, books, video games and the media? How much impact do textbooks have on the formation of historical memory compared to those other influences on historical perception?

Group One 10-11:00

Mark Peattie, Stanford University

Li Weiye, Director History Department, Peoples Education Press, Beijing

Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao, Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies, Academia Sinica

Break 11:00-11:15

Group Two 11:15-12:30

Peter Duus, Stanford University

Tohmatsu Haruo, Tamagawa University

Chung Jae-Jung, City University of Seoul

12:30-2:00 Lunch

2:00-4:30 PANEL TWO: TEXTBOOK WRITING AND REVISION

This panel will look at the process of textbook writing and revision of textbooks in all five educational systems. Participants will be historians and other scholars who have been directly involved in the writing and/or revision of high school history textbooks.

We will ask them to describe their personal experience including describing the process by which textbooks are written, edited and approved. How are authors selected? What guidelines exist about what a textbook should cover? What was the role of government and political leaders in shaping this process? Who ultimately has the largest say about the content – the author (s), the screening committees, professional educators, editors,

education ministry officials, politicians? Were changes made in their manuscripts and if so, why? Did you feel you were pressured to make changes or did you feel ultimately that you made the principal decisions about content?

In educational systems where major changes have been made recently (China, South Korea and Taiwan), why have these changes taken place? Do they reflect shifts in government policy, changes in public opinion, or the introduction of new historical evidence and/or interpretations?

Mitani Hiroshi, Tokyo University

Chen Qi, Peoples Education Publishing House, China

Chou Liang-kai, Feng Chia University, Taiwan

Kim Do-Hyung, Yonsei University

Bert Bower, Teachers' Curriculum Institute, California

February 12

8:15 Breakfast

9:00-11:00 PANEL THREE: DIVIDED MEMORIES AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

This panel will examine the policy implications of the Divided Memories and Reconciliation project. How does this problem of divided memories impact international relations in Northeast Asia and US-Asian relations. Does this effort to create greater mutual understanding promote better relations?

This panel will also discuss recent efforts to write a “common history” of Northeast Asia among Korean, Japanese and Chinese scholars. What motivated such efforts? What achievements have been made? What are the main obstacles to such an effort and can they promote shared memory and reconciliation in the region? Are there models for cross-national cooperation on textbook production to be found in the European experience? The panel will also present Stanford’s experience in promoting international and cross-cultural education.

Daniel Sneider, Stanford University

Daniel Chirot, University of Washington

Park Soon-Won, George Mason University

Gary Mukai, Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education

11:00-12:00 PUBLICATION PLANNING

Discussion of plans for publication and other concluding items.