

# How Is the Allied Occupation of Japan Taught in American Universities?: History Textbooks and Occupation Scholarship

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## 連合国日本占領の語り：米国の歴史教科書と占領史研究

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### 概要：

この論文は、米国の大学で使用されている東アジア史・日本史の教科書から5種を選び、連合国日本占領（1945～52年）がどのように描写されているのかを比較分析する。占領・戦後史研究はさらなる発展と再検討を要しているが、これらの教科書では、現段階までの研究・歴史学の流れがどこまで反映されているのかを見る。主に、占領期を日本史の文脈に置き、戦前からの歴史を考察しながら、日本人を主体として描いているか、そして占領期に行われた政策と戦後日本の発展との相関をどのように分析し評価しているのかを明らかにし、どこまで米国視点のサクセスストーリーとしての語りから脱しているかを検討する。その可能性と課題の難しさに触れつつ、改めて占領史研究の発展の必要性に言及する。

Defeated in the Asia-Pacific War by the Allied Powers, Japan was immediately placed under Allied occupation in September 1945, which would last until April 1952. This Occupation of Japan was officially a joint venture of the Allies but essentially an American enterprise ultimately to “demilitarize” and “democratize” their former enemy. The Americans controlled much of the policymaking and comprised most of the occupation forces; symbolically, General Douglas MacArthur was appointed as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). Using the existing Japanese administrative system, the American occupiers indirectly had many reform programs enforced for over the next six years.

Normally, the Occupation of Japan is described in the context of

shifting U.S. policy toward East Asia during this transitional period: the end of the Second World War to the beginning of the Cold War. U.S. post-surrender policy for Japan, planned and continuously revised in Washington from the summer of 1942, aimed to pacify “militarist” and “aggressive” Japan through sweeping domestic reforms. In truth, many Japanese – from conservatives to progressives – while opposing some of directives, took advantage of the “chances” brought about by defeat and occupation not only to dissolve the war regime and reinstitute peacetime conditions but also to realize reforms, old and new. Sometime between 1947 and 1949, the U.S. government “reversed” its occupation course now in order to counter an emerging new enemy – Communism – and thus began to rebuild Japan’s economy by cooperating more with the old guards than the political left. Agreeing to return to Japan its administrative powers with a peace reached in San Francisco in September 1951, the Allies – excluding the Soviet Union or China – officially terminated the Occupation, which came into effect the following spring. Simultaneously, Japan and the United States concluded a security treaty, thus forming a Cold War alliance system.

The Allied Occupation of Japan is of paramount importance to many Japanese in their history and historiography. Some of the key contemporary political and diplomatic issues, such as constitutional revision, the visit to Yasukuni by state officials, and the U.S.-Japan security alliance, all originated in measures taken during this period. Although there is a general agreement that Occupation policies laid the foundation for postwar Japan, however, how the Occupation period should be interpreted and narrated in the context of postwar Japan is still under debate. Scholars both in the West and in Japan have agreed that the Occupation should be understood as a continuation of the “mobilization period” covering a longer historical span from the interwar and wartime periods.<sup>1</sup> Yet, given the underdevelopment of Occupation studies, it is still questionable if this perspective prevails

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1 Narita Ryūichi, *Kin-Gendai Nihon-shi to Rekishi-gaku: Kakikaerareta Kako* (Modern Japanese History and Historiography: The Past Which Has Been Rewritten) (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2012), 203-05, 237-38, 246-48, 265-66, 269-70.

over the traditional view of the postwar era as one started anew with Japan's surrender, separated from pre-1945 history. Scholars in Japan have confirmed that it is yet to be known whether "postwar" reforms, or more precisely which ones, have their origins in the Occupation period; what exactly happened to each of the Occupation reforms after its implementation; and to what extent the execution of reforms and their success – if they were successful – were attributed to the planning and leadership of American occupiers; in other words, how Japanese agency, or their pre-1945 origins and initiatives, can be found.<sup>2</sup> Thus, in reality, reevaluation of the Allied Occupation and its relation with Japan's postwar development needs to await ongoing research on individual reforms and events during this period and their aftermath.

In the United States, few recent scholars have worked on the Occupation of Japan. Traditionally, it has naturally been researched and interpreted mainly in the context of U.S. foreign relations. For both orthodox and revisionist scholars, the Occupation was the time when the Americans, after successfully crushing an enemy nation, demilitarized and democratized it to ensure the peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific and then promoted Japan's economic rehabilitation by incorporating it into their Cold War system. However, unlike the orthodox school, the revisionist school of the 1960s and 1970s took a critical position toward these U.S. policies for Japan, and at the same time, Japan scholars have placed Japan's postwar in a larger context of modern Japanese history and tried to depict the Occupation as a Japanese experience. For example, in *Embracing Defeat* (1999), a prize-winning book and the only comprehensive work on this subject in the English-language literature, John W. Dower sheds light on the political activities and daily lives of various Japanese groups and individuals, in parallel with his longtime thesis that the Occupation was America's half-done imperialist undertaking in remaking Japan into a truly democratic

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2 See Fukunaga Fumio and Kōno Yasuko eds., *Sengo toha Nani ka: Seiji-gaku to Rekishi-gaku no Taiwa Jō · Ge* (What Is the Postwar Era: A Dialogue between Political Science and History 2 vols.) (Tokyo: Maruzen Shuppan, 2014).

country.<sup>3</sup> What is evident is that his criticism of U.S. policymakers and Japanese conservative leaders remains strong and frames his narrative - and yet in fact he contradictorily praises the success of postwar Japan, which he attributes to the preservation of Japanese bureaucracy. A younger generation of scholars now focus on Japanese-American cultural interaction or specific policies, such as education, women's rights, or the movie industry.<sup>4</sup> Due to a general scarcity of scholars interested in the Occupation period, however, this thematic research has not advanced further to challenge the established narrative in the United States.

In this essay, I analyze the narratives of the Allied Occupation of Japan in American college textbooks covering Asian and Japanese history. An examination of the narratives they contain as a mirror of scholarship illustrates the collective production of currently dominant intellectual trends. Also, as is already well-known, history textbooks are an important source of knowledge and a medium of making collective memories. This study thus can suggest what the Americans "know" about the Occupation of Japan, and how they interpret this historical event.

In fact, chances to learn the history of the Allied Occupation would be very limited only to students of certain majors such as history, Japanese studies, or political science. However small the number of actual learners might be, it is still worth studying how the Occupation is described in American college textbooks, because universities offer Americans the

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3 The exception is Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, trans. Robert Ricketts and Sebastian Swan (New York: Continuum, 2002). This is, however, a translation of his Japanese book *GHQ* (1983), largely supplemented by his later findings.

4 See Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Mire Koikari, *Pedagogy of Democracy: Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008); Hiroshi Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment: Hollywood and the Cultural Reconstruction of Defeated Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010); Masako Shibata, *Japan and Germany under the U.S. Occupation: A Comparative Analysis of Post-War Education Reform* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005).

only opportunity to study it in detail. Also, importantly, textbooks are the main information source not only for students but also for teachers. Most professors rely on textbooks as well as monographs when they teach their courses, and especially for non-experts on specific subjects, textbooks serve as a crucial foundational source. The role of academics in producing and passing knowledge to others is significant, and thus it is valuable to figure out how history textbooks, reflecting scholarly trends and consensus, describe the Occupation of Japan.

For analysis, this paper looks at five major textbooks used in American universities: Andrew Gordon's *A Modern History of Japan* (2013), Marius B. Jansen's *The Making of Modern Japan* (2000), James L. McClain's *Japan* (2002), *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization* (2013), and *Modern East Asia* (2013).<sup>5</sup> Below I will analyze the depictions of the Allied Occupation of Japan as presented in these sources. In doing so, I will look particularly at the following interrelated issues regarding the Occupation: 1) historical agency, 2) continuities and discontinuities, and 3) overall assessment. To examine the treatment of 1) and 2), I will focus on specific programs – constitutional revision, labor reform, and the *zaibatsu* dissolution – and comparatively see how they are described in each textbook. The choice of these three points of comparison is in keeping

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5 Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University, 2013); Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2002); Conrad Schirokauer, David Lurie, and Suzanne Gay, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2013); Patricia Ebrey and Anne Walthall, *Modern East Asia: A Cultural, Social, and Political History Volume II: From 1600*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2013). I also looked at *A Brief History of Chinese and Japanese Civilizations*, but I found the description of the Occupation of Japan here almost identical to that in *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*. Gordon teaches at Harvard University, and McClain at Brown University; Jansen used to be at Princeton University. Lurie is in Columbia University while Gay teaches at Oberlin College. Anne Walthall is in the University of California, Irvine. Schirokauer and Ebrey are China specialists.

with the typology of Occupation reforms that Iokibe Makoto, emeritus professor of law at Kōbe University, suggests: joint reform, those done on Japanese initiative, and those instituted by the Americans. Rather than viewing the amendment of the Meiji Constitution as a top-down reform, Iokibe finds Japanese motivations and influence; he sees the expansion of workers' rights as a consequence of long-term Japanese efforts, and on the other hand asserts that the Americans planned and led the decentralization of the conglomerates.<sup>6</sup> As additional research is surely needed to judge if this categorization is appropriate, Iokibe's thesis seems reasonable and convincing enough. It should be helpful for us to see what could have been done without American intervention and what could not have in order to recognize Japanese agency and pre-1945 legacies in democratization reform.

In a way, thus, this paper illuminates how textbooks have "Japanized" the story of the Occupation, incorporating both Japanese and western scholarship and as a result complicating the traditional U.S.-centric perspective. This study will also provide a clue to understanding why, despite the scholarly move to reconsider continuities from the prewar to the postwar, the conventional narrative remains dominant: under American directives, Japan swiftly underwent domestic reform to be reborn as a peaceful and democratic, and later prosperous, country after the war. I will consider the nature of a textbook, namely if it is a survey or an advanced text, or if it is an East Asian or a Japanese history book, as it influences how much space is spared for the Occupation of Japan. Yet, overall, this study will show the limitations and possibilities of Occupation studies in both research and teaching.

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6 Iokibe Makoto, *Senryō-ki: Shushō-tachi no Shin-Nihon* (The Occupation Period: Prime Ministers' New Japan) (Tokyo: Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 1997), 59-62, 148-59, 164-79, 199-226; although his categorization of democratization reforms is somewhat different, also see Iokibe Makoto, *Nichi-Bei Sensō to Sengo Nihon* (The Japanese-American War and Postwar Japan) (Osaka: Osaka Shoseki, 1989; repr., Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2005), 202-24.

### *Modern East Asia*

*Modern East Asia*, which is an introductory book on modern East Asian history for a lower-division course, has only a brief narration of the Allied Occupation of Japan. As it includes the histories of China, Japan, and Korea since the sixteenth century in a relatively thin book, focusing on socio-cultural rather than political aspects, the textbook spares only four pages for the Occupation. Nevertheless, it is still disappointing that the authors do not show transwar continuities, thus blurring Japanese agency, or discuss the impact of the Occupation on post-occupation developments in Japan. They are clearly aware of the new scholarly consensus to see Japan's wartime to occupation experiences as continuities, as they locate the Occupation in the period from 1931 to 1964. They state, "[although] the United States occupied Japan and instituted reforms designed to transform it into a demilitarized democracy, [reforms] that had lasting impact built on trends apparent during the war."<sup>7</sup> Despite that, the authors only briefly mention pre-1945 legacies in a specific sector – the heavy industries – and for other reforms, they all appear planned and enforced by the American occupiers.<sup>8</sup>

Overall, *Modern East Asia* portrays the Occupation from an American point of view. It explains the basic goals and structure of the Occupation, and the treatment of the emperor first and then discusses four representative democratization reforms on the Meiji Constitution, the Civil Code, land ownership, and the educational system. This is followed by coverage of economic policies from anti-monopoly measures to the Dodge plan, and promotion of trade unions to their restriction, all developing in the context of the Cold War, which was transforming the Occupation course. As for constitutional amendment, the most known reform during the Occupation, it takes the conventional narrative: Prime Minister Shidehara Kijūrō formed a committee at General Douglas MacArthur's order in October 1945; dissatisfied with the committee's draft, MacArthur ordered the Government Section (GS) to make a constitution in February 1946; and

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7 Ebrey and Walthall, *Modern East Asia*, 456.

8 *Ibid.*, 459, 467-68, 471.

it was presented to the Japanese government, which after some debate and modification published it as its own draft in the following month. However, without fully considering Japan's political and ideological backgrounds, this narrative carries the view that the Japanese government was simply too conservative and incompetent to make a democratic constitution. This image is strengthened by a perfunctory reference to "political parties, progressive and socialist groups, scholars, and think tanks [that] drafted constitutions ignored by the prime minister's committee," and this note does not save native political and intellectual forces for constitutional reform.<sup>9</sup> Thus, in this textbook, revising the Meiji Constitution is presented as being completely passive on the part of the Japanese and far from what Iokibe calls a joint work.

Likewise, *Modern East Asia* credits activation of organized labor to Occupation authorities. It states, "To promote democracy, SCAP had the Trade Union Law issued in December 1945." The text does not overlook Japanese actors, by continuing "workers seized the opportunity to organize" and "[now] legitimate political parties, the Japan Communist Party (JCP) and the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) fostered trade unions." However, the book still has them appear as opportunistic recipients of their new privileges. The discussion about labor union activism is brief and is soon concluded in arguing how it led to the "Reverse Course."<sup>10</sup> This narrative hardly evokes the developments in improving workers' conditions since the Taishō period even as a context, if not interpreting them as the only force behind the passage of labor laws.

The *zaibatsu* dissolution is no exception. Spared only one paragraph, the explanation is brief and presents it unmistakably as an American work. The book actually summarizes that American "trustbusters," viewing monopoly as undemocratic and problematizing the *zaibatsu's* cooperation with the state in its war efforts, pushed for the breakup of the conglomerates. It continues that "SCAP ordered the holding companies for

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9 Ibid., 463.

10 Ibid., 464.

the ten largest conglomerates dissolved, broke up the Mitsui and Mitsubishi trading companies, forced family members to sell their stock and resign from boards, and purged fifteen hundred executives accused of aiding the war machine.”<sup>11</sup> Although, according to Iokibe’s analysis, the prime mover of this initial economic reform was the American occupiers, a complete absence of Japanese responses in this explanation adds to the America-centered narrative.

In short, *Modern East Asia* barely places the Allied Occupation in Japanese historical context or portrays the Japanese as actors. It also refrains from discussing the impact of war and the Occupation in postwar Japanese development, but the authors comment only on the realm of the economy. They attribute Japan’s economic recovery to “reforms initiated by the U.S. occupation” and America’s Cold War policy toward Japan, but also claim that it was “built on the bureaucratic, educational, and industrial foundation laid before the war” as well.<sup>12</sup> If this sentiment had been applied to many other aspects of postwar Japan, the textbook could have better featured Japanese agency, even considering its page limitations.

### *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*

Another textbook for a freshman-level history survey, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, faces a similar difficulty presenting complexities in formation and implementation of reforms during the Allied Occupation. It uses only about seven pages to review the Occupation. Although this period is placed in the “postwar” from 1945 to the present in this book – unlike in *Modern East Asia*, the authors more fully acknowledge continuities through prewar and postwar periods at least. One of the most significant legacies is clearly the bureaucracy, which was left almost intact by the Occupation’s decision to indirectly administer Japan.<sup>13</sup> They also write very accurately that “[the] process of policy formation was complex,

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11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., 471.

13 Schirokauer, Lurie, and Gay, *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*, 237.

involving Washington, the Occupation bureaucracy, and the Japanese and reflecting divisions within and between these groups.”<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the text never elaborates on this statement, and the Japanese historical context is almost non-existent.

In terms not only of perspective but also of organization and contents, this book and *Modern East Asia* are similar. *A Brief History* first explains the Occupation structure and its objectives; the military tribunals and purge of the political and military leaders as demilitarization programs; the treatment of the emperor; the new constitution as a political reform; changes in the educational system as a case of social reform; economic policies which dealt with land redistribution, labor unions, the *zaibatsu*, and the “Reverse Course”; and finally the end of the Occupation with the beginning of the Cold War.

In addition, everything seems to have been done single-handedly by the Americans. The postwar constitution is portrayed as an American creation. The text simply writes that “[the] new constitution that was drafted and practically dictated by the Occupation went into effect in May 1947,” and afterwards describes only its characteristics such as popular sovereignty, empowerment of the legislative branch, expansion of civil rights, and Article 9.<sup>15</sup> As for the policy to promote labor unions, too, its summary only explains what the Occupation authorities did. It was their attempt to “eliminate or at least reduce the concentrations of economic power, which Americans viewed as a major component of Japanese authoritarianism,” and it succeeded in “develop[ing] a vigorous union movement” – ironically too much so that it was soon restricted.<sup>16</sup> Japanese reaction and origins are neglected in these descriptions.

Interestingly, decentralization of *zaibatsu* monopoly pushed through at the American initiative, according to Iokibe’s categorization, better describes how the Japanese reacted to it and how it ended up. The

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14 Ibid., 236.

15 Ibid., 237-38.

16 Ibid., 240.

authors argue that the Occupation's scheme to break up the conglomerates was half-done not merely because of a shift in Occupation policy but also due to lack of Japanese support regardless of differences in political ideologies. They assert that there existed a "marked lack of enthusiasm for American-style trust busting [as] [few] shared the American faith in the ultimate benefits of maximum competition." In fact, the Japanese, from conservatives to radicals, shared a feeling that companies should be big to maintain international competitiveness, and thus "disagreed about ownership and control, not about the structure of industry and commerce." The authors rightly comment on the importance of considering both Japanese and American elements in measuring degrees of success and failure of Occupation reforms as the *zaibatsu* dissolution suggests.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the fact that Japanese actors and historical backgrounds of Occupation programs rarely appear in this textbook, it actually does a fair job assessing the Occupation. As it remains unresolved, the authors remark only that the Allied Occupation must be evaluated in the postwar context since many aspects of contemporary Japan's state of being originated in policies taken in this period.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, they conclude: "What seems clear is that the Occupation brought about major changes, but it was most successful in areas that had Japanese precedents and substantial support." Particularly the development of representative government, reform of the agricultural sector, and expansion of human rights, which includes women's equality, naturally followed all the movements dating back to the Meiji and Taishō periods.<sup>19</sup> Also, the textbook critically mentions American ignorance and arrogance. The occupiers were ethnocentric, so that "[despite] or due to their lack of preparation, the Americans were convinced they had the answers, and their conviction of the righteousness of their values and policies remained firm even after the onset of the Cold War induced them

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17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., 242.

19 Ibid., 243.

to change course.”<sup>20</sup> However, these serve as mere insightful comments that are not reflected in the description of Occupation-era reforms. Summarizing within the allowed space from the occupier’s point of view, *A Brief History* produces another conventional America-centric narrative of the Occupation.

*Japan, The Making of Modern Japan, A Modern History of Japan*

McClain’s *Japan*, Jansen’s *The Making of Modern Japan*, and Gordon’s *A Modern History of Japan* better reflect the recent scholarly trend and more fully integrate the Japanese perspective than the previous two works. All are meant for upper-division courses devoted specifically to Japanese history. More voluminous texts, they focus only on the modern period since the Tokugawa era and spare twenty to forty pages to describe the Allied Occupation of Japan. Particularly, McClain’s and Jansen’s books recount more background information for the Occupation reforms. By placing this foreign occupation period in the context of Japanese history, however, all three shift the traditionally American narrative to a Japanese one.

In explaining the Occupation administration as well as its original motive and ultimate goals, neither McClain, Jansen, nor Gordon fails to discuss how the Japanese – from bureaucrats to ordinary citizens – acted and influenced the outcomes of reform. Gordon, for example, succinctly states, “Despite the surface appearance of overwhelming American power in occupied Japan, both elites and ordinary citizens retained space to interpret the reforms of the occupiers” as the latter relied on the Japanese bureaucrats and experts to implement policies and needed them to ensure popular support.<sup>21</sup> In so arguing, these authors all illuminate a longer history of Japanese efforts at reform and bring to light Japanese native agency of change. McClain acknowledges the role played not only by the Japanese bureaucracy and Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, but also by other groups, including women, labor unions, and other political activists,

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20 Ibid., 236.

21 Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 232.

“who put forth their own plans for change, some of which they originally had formulated in the Taishō era and then set aside during ‘the period of national emergency.’”<sup>22</sup> Gordon, too, attributes the “fate of reforms” more to a “transwar legacy of prewar and wartime history” than to the occupiers’ promotion, and summarizes that “[individuals] and groups in Japanese society and government who had long been concerned with shaping their modern institutions continued their efforts, in conflict with each other as much as with the occupation forces.”<sup>23</sup> Although Jansen’s focus was rather on the political and social elites in and outside of government than the grassroots participants, he similarly analyzes the relationship between the occupier and occupied in promoting reforms as follows: “The setting within which postwar politics were played out included points at which Japanese and Allied plans converged, others where SCAP proposals initially shocked, but ultimately served, Japanese interests, and still others at which Japanese obstruction combined with American opposition to bring SCAP proposals to a halt.”<sup>24</sup>

For these authors, labor legislation exemplifies a case where the Japanese had prepared for reform well before 1945, and ironically could finally push for it, taking advantage of the opportunity provided from foreign occupation. Jansen and Gordon, tracing back the reformist effort to the 1920s, argue that bureaucrats from the Home Ministry – which was soon to be abolished – played a key role in promoting labor rights.<sup>25</sup> Jansen dismisses the “heroic narrative ... that reforms thundered down from the Olympus of the Dai Ichi Building” and concludes that “it is clear that the implementation of complex social engineering required the full cooperation of Japanese officials.”<sup>26</sup> Jansen’s categorization of Occupation reforms is reminiscent of Iokibe’s analysis, but McClain’s view of labor reform is more

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22 McClain, *Japan*, 528.

23 Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 232.

24 Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, 681-82.

25 Ibid., 683; Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 233-34.

26 Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, 683.

similar to it. Rather than narrating this simply as an example of a Japanese-American cooperative work, he explains how in effect the Japanese took the initiative in reforming labor. McClain recounts that during the Taishō period, bureaucrats in the Home Ministry pressed for labor legislation, including workers' health insurance, to prevent social turmoil. Equally important, he reveals that even before SCAP gave Shidehara Kijūrō the order of "Five Fundamental Reforms," which included promotion of labor unions, the Japanese cabinet had formed a group of bureaucrats, scholars, and union leaders to prepare labor bills, and their activities required little SCAP intervention.<sup>27</sup> By following Japan's politics at the administrative level, McClain more effectively and convincingly presents labor reform as a social measure owing its success to Japanese expertise and leadership.

On the other hand, all these three textbooks introduce industrial decentralization as a case of forced and half-way reform, so to speak. McClain's and Jansen's explanation of factors leans to insufficiencies and eventual shifts in U.S. policy toward the Japanese economy more than to reluctance of Japanese political and business leaders. Like *A Brief History*, McClain describes why the Americans considered the breakup of major *zaibatsu* necessary for fostering democracy and what they actually did between 1945 and 1947. A lack of Japanese support for trust-busting and an incomplete purge simply add to the onset of the Cold War as an explanation for un-thorough anti-monopoly policy.<sup>28</sup> Jansen, too, discusses SCAP's motive and the steps taken for industrial deconcentration, which he briefly mentions the Japanese hesitated to support at first; he then details opposition emerging also in Washington by 1947. Unlike McClain, however, Jansen positively interprets the effect of the *zaibatsu* dissolution no matter how limited in extent, which helped new enterprises to form and regroup around banks in postwar Japan.<sup>29</sup> Gordon best examines Japanese political

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27 McClain, *Japan*, 544-45. Also see Iokibe, *Senryō-ki*, 73, 166-67; *Nichi-Bei Sensō to Sengo Nihon*, 213-14.

28 McClain, *Japan*, 543-44, 554.

29 Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, 686-88.

and intellectual backgrounds to explain why the breakup of the *zaibatsu* gained little domestic support and thus frustrated America's initial policy. He argues, very much as does *A Brief History*, that "[there] was little intellectual or popular support for thoroughgoing free markets and economic deconcentration" either from the ruling elites or from the leftist groups which were interested in shifting ownership from private hands to the state but "did not oppose large-scale economic organizations in themselves."<sup>30</sup> Gordon, with a more critical yet objective gaze than Jansen, finds the origins of state-guided capitalism and bank-centered enterprises in Japanese interest to retain large corporations, in addition to the U.S. decision to abandon its original attempt to dissolve the *zaibatsu* at the beginning of the Cold War.

In comparison, the postwar constitution garners the least attention from these three authors. Like the authors of the two survey books, McClain, Jansen, and Gordon take constitutional amendment as another example of a forced and yet essentially successful reform, despite continuous controversies particularly over Article 9. For Jansen, the rewriting of the Meiji Constitution is a case that, catching the Japanese off guard, found little enthusiasm but in the end satisfied their needs.<sup>31</sup> All of the authors in one way or another repeat the traditional account of the making of a postwar Japanese constitution: finding unsatisfactory "conservative" changes suggested by the governmental committee, SCAP swiftly made a draft constitution, which was far more liberal than the cabinet's plan, and imposed it upon the Japanese government; continuously debated and revised in the cabinet and in the Diet, a new constitution was born, which transformed the emperor to a mere "symbol" of the state and the unity of the people and expanded the guarantee of fundamental human rights now covering the equality of women, the right to collective organization, and the right to "maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultural living." Only McClain briefly mentions that even the noted, liberal constitutional scholar

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30 Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 234.

31 Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*, 681-83.

of the Taishō period, Minobe Tatsukichi, opposed constitutional reform and various groups wrote their own constitutions.<sup>32</sup> But this does not do much to acknowledge Japanese agency or historical continuities. Unlike Iokibe, the making of the postwar constitution is depicted basically as SCAP's work, which the Japanese were forced to accept.

Overall, judged from Japan's postwar prosperity and stability, the Allied Occupation is seen as a success and clearly marks a turning point in modern Japanese history. These three authors attribute the success to the Japanese as well as Americans, and explicitly or implicitly to both things changed and not quite changed. Gordon nicely concludes that the maintenance of order in postwar Japan relied on transwar continuities, the most important of which was the survival of the old guard, and changes "accelerated" by reforms after 1945, such as labor reform, land reform, and legalization of women's rights.<sup>33</sup> McClain similarly comments that "many of the reforms, in either their original or 'rectified' versions, accelerated developments whose beginnings could be traced back to the prewar past," and only the reforms that found old or new supporters from Japan could be lastingly implemented. In terms of the extent and intensity of change, he equals the importance of the Occupation in Japan's modern history to the Meiji Restoration.<sup>34</sup> Generally speaking, by more fully illuminating Japanese actors and continuities since before 1945, these textbooks convey a better and more nuanced evaluation of the Occupation reforms.

In summation, this paper has discussed how the selected five history textbooks of Japan or East Asia narrate the Allied Occupation of Japan. All in all, with an exception of *Modern East Asia*, they do consider Japanese agency and continuities to varying degrees, diverging from the narrative that portrays the United States as the solo force of change and credits Japan's postwar development to U.S. Occupation policies. As Japanese

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32 McClain, *Japan*, 537-39.

33 Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 241.

34 McClain, *Japan*, 561.

scholars have reconfirmed, each Occupation-period program requires a careful reexamination of its origins, implementation, and aftermath, and a comprehensive analysis of all such case studies would eventually allow the Japanese to come to terms with their postwar history and create a new narrative. But the textbooks of Japanese history under examination seem to sum up the backgrounds of some reforms – if not all – and their significance in postwar Japan as best as they can at the moment with available research.

Nevertheless, these textbooks are yet to break fully from the dominant America-centric image of the Occupation period. It is symbolic that all the textbooks discuss the making of the postwar constitution in a very conventional way that a draft constitution was written and imposed on the conservative Japanese government by SCAP. They carry the orthodox narrative as a result of describing only basic facts such as the structure and objectives of the Occupation, representative reform programs, and the impact of the Cold War on occupation policies – in other words by focusing on what the occupiers did. A clear reason why the established narrative remains powerful is that a new narrative is still in the making: although everyone agrees that the Occupation marked a decisive moment in the modern history of Japan, furthering its democratizing process since earlier periods, scholars – especially Japanese – have agreed that they need to clarify the origins of reforms and their actual outcomes to create a different narrative. However, as the simple truth, in writing about the Occupation, it cannot completely deny the fact that the United States as the main occupier stayed a powerful existence setting contours for reform programs and accelerating Japan's democratization. It is true that the narrative of the Occupation from 1947 onward is dominated by America's Cold War policies, but with Japan placed under Allied – technically American – occupation and incorporated into the U.S. Cold War structure, it seems flawed to negate American power or overly reduce the significance of U.S. strategic interests and the international surroundings. In fact, however the U.S.-centric narrative could be challenged, doing so would be difficult as long as the United States remains predominant in the world system, and the U.S.-Japan alliance formed in the Occupation period continues. About the current

status of Occupation studies, Fukunaga Fumio, professor of law at Dokkyō University, comments in his most recent, award-winning *Nihon Senryō-shi 1945-1952* (2014) that the “task of placing the Occupation in the ‘postwar,’ framed and based on the new constitution and the U.S.-Japan security treaty, remains undone.”<sup>35</sup> This remark suggests political and intellectual conditions that inform this field of research that scholars are facing.

History textbooks are of course only one means to create and spread a historical narrative. In reality, how instructors use the books and describe the Allied Occupation of Japan, and what other materials they use to complement their textbooks heavily influences how this subject is presented to a student audience. In this regard, the best known, most comprehensive book on the Occupation in the United States, John W. Dower’s *Embracing Defeat*, has a critical place. While he extensively discusses Japanese daily lives and post-surrender culture, his criticism of American imperialism ironically strengthens the image that the United States was a powerful imposer of various punitive and reform measures. In addition, as evidenced by citation of his work by the Bush administration to justify American intervention in Iraq, Dower’s thesis that the United States should have completed democratization by cooperating more with Japanese liberals and progressives than with conservatives implicitly supports U.S. efforts at domestic reforms in a foreign country. Whatever material is provided in class, on the students’ side, their personal experience, their view of American involvement in the world, and the degree of interest they possess for Japanese history all impact how they would interpret the Occupation of Japan, too.

However, as a reflection of scholarship and a standard text of historical events, which is the first step to learning history, textbook descriptions still matter. To remake the narrative on the Occupation, research on this subject should develop further, and that will eventually be

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35 Fukunaga Fumio, *Nihon Senryō-shi 1945-1952: Tokyo · Washington · Okinawa* (The History of the Occupation of Japan 1945-1952: Tokyo, Washington, and Okinawa) (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2014), ii.

incorporated in history textbooks. Narratives are continuously recreated along with changes in political and intellectual circumstances. But as the study of the Occupation is as yet still underdeveloped, more scholars should work on the topic both individually and collectively, ideally crossing national boundaries. As the Occupation period has an incomparable historical importance for the Japanese, Japanese historians should lead the study and more actively work with foreign scholars to mutually develop their scholarship.