

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND HISTORICAL MEMORY: REVIEW OF PATRIOTISM IN JAPANESE SCHOOLS

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Abstract:

The current rise of patriotic ideals in Japanese school as a result of review of Fundamental Law of Education (1947), certification of nationalist textbooks from "Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform" (Atarashii Rekishi Kyōkasho o Tsukuru Kai [新しい歴史教科書をつくる会]) and the teachers' reactions against the State intervention and in favour of freedom of conscience have shown that historical memory management in teaching of History has an important role in Citizenship Education.

Making a brief review about configuration of Japanese Education System (shōgakkō [小学校], chūgakkō [中学校], kōtōgakkō [高等学校] and daigaku [大学]) from the Meiji era (1868 – 1912) to the present; we are going to understand the key elements that have currently promoted the entry of patriotism in Japanese schools. By the end of the 20th century, the cultivation of patriotism like educational goal had already become widespread among right-leaning interests under the leadership of the Liberal Democratic Party and through its revision to the official Curriculum Guidelines (Kondo y Wu, 2011). Controversy has increased in recent years since the flag of the Rising Sun and Kimi-gayo had become the national flag and anthem in 1999. Issues like these have mobilized national and international public opinion.

Key Words: Japan, Educational System, Textbooks, Historical Memory, Social Education

Evolution of Japanese Educational System: From Meiji Restoration to Early Showa Period

At the beginning of Meiji Restoration (1868), Edo period [江戸時代] and Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1868) ends. Although that shogunate had brought peace and stability to Japan, It had also blocked the country's communication abroad. The first new Meiji government reform was the enactment of "Charter of Oath" that aimed to end the political exclusivity of military government in last shogunate (or bakufu) and to communicate Japan with foreign countries; in fact, the fourth clause promised to "explore the world in search of wisdom" (Bolitho, 1991). It also referred to reconciliation with the defeated for proper functioning of the new administration and for defense of education for all citizens, regardless of their social class (Beasley, 1995). During the Meiji era [明治時代] or "era of cult to rules" (1868 - 1912) it was created the Ministry of Education (1871) under Dajokan (State Council of the Japanese government). Similarly, in 1872, it was implemented the Law of the Education System, which proposed a school system based on the American model. In words of the founder of Keio University, Yukichi Fukuzawa, it was raised a curriculum guided by Western rationalism and utilitarian morality. Fukusawa (1835 - 1901) was officially recognized in Meiji era for his work in introduction of institutions and Western thought in Japan. In his collection of essays "*gakumon no susume*" (1872 - 1876; Shunsaku, Nishikawa and Masaki Komuro, 2009) proposed an education based on practical learning closer to ordinary needs, an idea that was expressed in the word "*jitsugaku*" (Nishikawa, 1993: 526). However, in first elementary schools, it was used translations of elementary American textbooks, showing a reality alien to Japanese people in an initial attempt to westernize the Japanese education (Onaha, 2008); to which was added a centralized control administration taken directly from France.

Despite efforts to decentralize education through enactment of the Education Order of 1879, it was modified in 1880, guiding a curriculum that strengthened centralization and conservative ideals. These ideals were embodied in the Imperial Edict of Education of 1890, which summarized the basic

principles of Japanese education, with evident Confucian ideals. In the words of Navarro Rodriguez and Serrano, "*children were taught to transmit the glory of fundamental character of the Empire and to capture and transmit the best traditions of ancestors. So it was a reaction to rapid westernization of the country and a desire to return to the purity of Japan*" (2008: 630). Those guidelines were lasted until 1945. Education became a powerful tool of indoctrination in obligatory education (first 6 years of primary school). Furthermore, the guidelines were also extended to secondary education in the early 1930s.

In the late nineteenth century, literacy and school attendance was extended. During the first decades of twentieth century, attention begins to focus on improving of quality of education, adopting in practice some John Dewey's ideas (although with certain limitations). In relation to this issue, we highlight Masatarô Sawayanagi's work (1978). This pedagogue, born in 1865 and died in 1927, became director of Gakuen Seijou and he began to reorganize programs based on students' needs and everyday experiences; including, as Kobayashi says (1990): organizational and democratic participation. Meanwhile, Japan acquired a leading position in Asia as an empire with the annexation of Taiwan and Korea. Onaha (2008) adds that this situation resulted in colonial education policies that imposed Japanese language and discrimination of local teachers, who were not able to access management positions. This relationship of domination was justified with impulse of study of historical relations between Japan and the occupied territories.

In general, during Taisho period [大正时代] or "great rectitude period" (1912 - 1926), and years between 1926-1937 in Showa period [昭和时代] or "illustrated peace period" (1926 - 1989), despite of westernization of the Japanese educational system and the existence of some progressive experiences in schools, the government exercised a tight control to ensure traditional values and moral exaltation, and to inculcate loyalty to emperor through a militarized education policy (Beasley, 2007). This situation increased after demonstrations against patriotism curriculum of teachers and students, after Chinese Japanese War II in 1937 and after start of Pacific War in 1941; all under influence, in this case, who was Minister of Education since 1937 to 1938, the ultranationalist general of the Imperial Japanese Navy, Sadao Araki (1877-1966), who had previously been Minister of War since 1931 to 1934.

The surrender of Japan in World War II (1945) implied educational reforms imposed by government of U.S.A. occupation forces in Japan, with support of educational missions in 1946 and 1950. Some of those reforms were not sustained after Japan regained its sovereignty in 1952, but set the basis of Japanese education system after the war. That is, the creation of a Committee of State Coordination, Navy and War in 1945 continued with a document (108) which recommended abolition of military training courses, Japanese history and ethics, emperor worship, reverence toward the imperial palace, recitation of Imperial Edict of Education or exhibition of portraits of imperial couple (Takemae, 2003). The Imperial Edict of Education of 1890 was declared void and removed from schools in 1948, following the establishment of Fundamental Law of Education (1947). In accordance with the Constitution of Japan (1946), Fundamental Law of Education prohibited state intervention in religious education, guaranteed academic freedom and ensured the extension of right to free and compulsory basic education for all citizens. However, as Alexander Bukh (2007), from "*Japan Society for Promotion of Sciences*", reported: after defeat of Japan in Pacific War / East Asia (1931-1945 or 1937-1945, depending on whether we include or not the Manchurian Incident), incomplete reforms were carried out by the U.S.A. occupation forces. This led to a paradoxical situation in which faculty was set predominantly by progressive historians, while political and bureaucratic powers (including the Ministry of Education) were left intact. This ideological divergence revived conflicts that influenced on teaching of history and which were included in textbooks of 50s.

From North American Impositions To Impulse Of Patriotism: Fundamental Law Of Education (1947) And Its Revision

The surrender of Japan in World War II (1945) resulted in a series of educational reforms imposed by government of U.S.A. occupation forces in Japan with support of educational missions conducted in 1946 and 1950. Some of these reforms were not sustained after Japan regained its sovereignty in 1952, but in any case, set the basis of the Japanese education system after the war. That

is, the creation of a State Coordination Committee, Navy and War in 1945, will continue to issue a document (108) which recommended the abolition of military training courses, Japanese history and ethics, emperor worship, reverence toward the imperial palace, the Imperial Edict recitation of Education or the exhibition of the portraits of the imperial couple (Takemae, 2003). The Imperial Edict of Education, 1890 was declared void and removed from schools in 1948 following the establishment of the Fundamental Law of Education (1947) that, in accordance with the Constitution of Japan (1946), prohibiting state intervention in religious education, guaranteeing academic freedom and ensured the extension of the right to free and compulsory basic education for all citizens. However, as reported by Alexander Bukh (2007) of the "*Japan Society for Promotion of Sciences*", after the defeat of Japan in the Pacific War / East Asia (1931-1945 or 1937-1945, depending on whether or not the Manchurian Incident), were carried out incomplete reforms by U.S.A. occupation forces. This led to a paradoxical situation in which faculty were set predominantly by progressive historians, while those political powers (including the Ministry of Education) and tape were left intact, they dominate the conservative forces. This ideological divergence revived a series of conflicts that influenced to teaching of history and which were embodied in textbooks of 50s.

Closer to structural aspects of curriculum, one of the most notable complementary laws would be Law of School Education (1947). This Law takes up proposal of the pedagogue Abe Shigetaka (Takemae, 2003). That organization of school education represent a model still valid today: elementary education (shôgakkô [小学校]) - 6 years; basic secondary education (Chûgakkô [中学校]) - 3 years, upper secondary education (kôtôgakkô [高等学校]) - 3 years and university education (daigaku [大学]) - 4 years. Elementary and basic secondary education (9 years) would become mandatory. If we compare Japanese and Spanish structure, first three stages correspond respectively to Primary Education, High school Education and Baccalaureate. According to the report PISA (2000 to 2006), and regardless of debate emerged about revision of Fundamental Law of Education of 1947, it exist a decline in academic performance of Japanese children. In 2002, implementation of selflearning, creative and more relaxed curricula also failed. Those would be some of conditions that, in 2006, would lead to the government enacted the first revision of this law. That revision includes guidelines for an education that instills civic enthusiasm, respect for traditions and culture, love of country and family, and about halt decline of learners knowledge. Obviously, under those reforms, curriculum also began to review in 2008, expanding learning times, knowledge and skills, among other issues (Web Japan, 2011). In 2012, new guidelines on the curriculum for primary schools were programmed to settle in and, in 2013, we expect similar changes for secondary education.

Textbooks As Tools Of "*Ideological Management*"

During World War I, governments of various States realized about the great potential that textbooks could have as a tool of indoctrination and, in many cases, "*demonization of the enemy*". However, it would be in World War II when this trend radicalizes to the point of promotion of xenophobic textbooks. In essence, after departure of kings of most of Europe, leaders like Hitler, Lenin or Stalin started to adopt a role like messianic governors that exerted a strong influence on content of textbooks aimed to construction of ideologically partial conceptions about national citizenship (North, G., 2006). This situation tried to be unsuccessfully resolved by the League of Nations. After the World War II, UNESCO took over problems of xenophobia in textbooks with support of teachers. Lässig (2009) highlights the influence of Georg Eckert. That is, immediately after the war, this German historian organized a series of conferences to seek reconciliation with former enemies of Germany (France, Britain, Poland and Israel) through shared texts. Relevance of this initiative is that, today, textbooks of Social Education, Geography and History have become tools for developing of tolerance and social cohesion between countries.

About this requirement to encourage harmony and social cohesion in schools (national and supranational sphere) and in relation to characteristics of textbooks, it is pertinent to paraphrase William Meija, who says that "*for editors, producing and publishing a textbook is a challenge, because they must face up to the demands of school curricula, their possible interpretations, the tradition some teachers want to keep and the change that others demand, the dilemmas that result from the tensions between a profitable product that can sell well and the educational service that*

requests quality in terms of teaching and content, the interests of different social groups and the careful treatment of genders, ethnic groups and political, religious and environmental movements, among others" (Mejia, 2009: 467). Interest in textbooks as resources for socialization of future adult citizens is especially evident in case Social Science, Geography and History textbooks, whose contents and its use in classroom can facilitate the setup of a social reality determined by prevailing political force. This situation implies that textbooks in this area are always object to criticisms and, in this way, ideological factors emerging from them can be especially conflicting.

Controversy In Revision Of History Textbooks: The Birth Of "Tsukuru Kai"

Omission of controversial issues or how they are represented in textbooks are two of key points that relate to inclusion of historical memory in teaching of history, a fact that determines a citizenship model to be trained for the present and the commitment that students will be willing to take for the future. However, despite the effort to transmit an apparently aseptic knowledge, these materials generate controversy, even they are able to affect to relations between countries. One of significant cases would be in Japan where different currents in textbooks settings collide: a progressive trend, which seeks understanding between countries through the critical analysis of historical memory, and a nationalist trend, which seeks to change the narrative of dark episodes in textbooks, for example, the slaughter of Nanjing that would be called "*Nanking Incident*" (Zhao and Hoge, 2006). This trend also tries to remove those episodes, for example, existence of "comfort women" in territories colonized by Japan (Nozaki, 2001) or it tries magnify military actions from the past as patriotic deeds (McNeill, 2005).

In essence, the conflict between revisionists and counter-revisionists today leaves evidence about importance of ideological aspects in teaching of history and interpretation of memory. By the way, we take as an significant example the case of ex - Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (2006 - 2007) who was a leader of conservative coalition of Liberal Democrats since 2006 and who showed a point of view of history consistent with his support (and former leader) to controversial revisionists narratives from "*Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform*" (Atarashii Rekishi Kyōkasho o Tsukuru Kai [新しい歴史教科書をつくる会]), commonly known like "*Tsukuru Kai*"; a point of view that was expressed in his book "*Utsukushī kuni e*" or "*to a beautiful nation*" (Abe, 2006). Tsukuru kai was established in 1997 and starred one of the greatest chapters in the current controversy over the teaching of history in Japan since 2001, when Japanese Ministry of Education (now Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) adopted a "*revised textbook*" from this society. Those revised History textbooks, which had a nationalist, conservative and partial character, mobilized public opinion and diplomatic policy of South Korea, China and Japan (Beal, Nozaki and Yang, 2001; Nozaki, 2008).

Nevertheless, David McNeil (2005), of Japan Policy Research Institute, says that "*Tsukuru Kai*" enjoys strong financial and political support and from conservative media. He also says that this association blames "*Marxists*" and "*feminist*" sectors the "*decline of national principles*". In this line, McNeill puts emphasis on the development of a conference organized in 2004 by "*Tsukuru Kai*" where it get to declare that Japan was not an aggressor during World War II, Japan fought to defend itself of United States and European powers; that Japan did not act as a colonizing country in Asia, Japan liberated to Asia of Western forces; and that the "*masochistic*" character in teaching of history has taken to young Japanese to a situation of moral decay. Nobukatsu Fujioka was initial driving force of nationalist movement for reform of Japanese History curriculum. He understood as necessary the omission of some controversial issues such as "*comfort women*" (sex slaves of the Japanese military during World War II), and other "*dark matters*", considering that they were prostitutes and that there was no need to teach that to students (Masalski, 2001).

In an opposite position would be the progressive conception of history teaching in Japan. In this regard we must noteworthy the figure of thinker and historian Saburō Ienaga, visible head of progressive textbooks and known, among other things, for his struggle against the "*certification*" of textbooks by the Ministry of Education (1965 -1997). This author raised critical issues about Japanese Democracy, war, memory and academic freedom (Ienaga, 2001). Nowadays, those issues, as we can see, are highly topical issues. Ienaga defended the plurality in textbooks and teacher autonomy in

selecting of contents. His criticism to textbook focuses on lack of remorse about past (Ienaga, 1993), referring to damage done by Japan in Asia, responsibilities of Showa emperor, Hirohito, and responsibilities of Japanese, in general, in war. In different ways, nationalists - conservatives have continually criticized the existence of biased textbooks by "American vision" or "Soviet vision" of Japanese History without a proper Japanese viewpoint. Therefore, conservatives seek to develop a Japanese nationalism with positive character and without "imported criticism"; a criticism that Fujioka (2000) referred it when he told about "Jigyaku rekishi-kan" or "masochistic view of history". Since 2002, following the publishing activity and revision of "Tsukuru Kai", although their textbooks are very minority use in schools, It has promoted openness to new debates on Japanese modern History.

Meanwhile, Bukh (2007) has made a deep study on formation of national identity in wartime narratives contained in Japanese History textbooks of basic secondary education or Chûgakkô [中学校] (similar to "Educación Secundaria Obligatoria" in Spain) in different decades. He has observed that, despite revisionist activity of Tsukuru Kai, the current trend is to design books less bulky and with more inclusion of victims' voices. Similarly, this author has specified the existence of preferences about memory inclusion in teaching of history. This author has focused attention on a number of recent past traumatic chapters in Japan: Russo - Japanese War, Pacific / East Asia war, battle for Okinawa, Korea and China, and voices of the victims. Focusing on last two blocks for reasons of space and focusing our vision on textbooks after 2002 we would emphasize that there is a preference to place the situation of Korean and Chinese just after the suffering of Japanese in order to create a sense of solidarity and community among the three countries. The current trend of textbooks breaks hegemonic notions of national History teaching (factual, monolithic and free of any critical) and it prefer teaching approaches where teaching of conflicts is based on an analysis of evidences and the point of view of victims of colonization and aggression (text and images), guiding process with the need to assume a critical consciousness and to assume an empathetic attitude when we are discussing about causes and responsibilities in traumatic events of the recent past. This trend, as we can see, is closer to the didactic and pedagogy defended by Ienaga (1993, 2001), which involve the formation of critical citizens and peaceful, able to understand Japanese History through understanding of "the other".

Historical Memory In History Textbooks: Forget Or Remember?

Within Project Alpha II 0296-A "Teaching of History and collective memory", directed by Mario Carretero in 2004, his work (with the same name) emerges. In that work, different European and Latin American researchers take part to study matters involved in construction of memory; an issue that, as we have seen, affects to the model of citizen who we expect to educate. Among other issues, in this project framework, it has proven that in different countries (USA, Mexico and Spain), entry of conservative governments has questioned the work of a lot of specialists. It also was found that in referred to polemic issues in recent history (World War II or the Vietnam War); countries like Japan, Germany or the United States omitted information concerning to state violence, defeat and its causes and it appear some non-valid contents from field of historiography (Carter, Rosa and Gonzalez, 2006).

Historical memory, which saves a lot of connection with citizenship, must be understood from all possible viewpoints (Ienaga, 2001, Mejia, 2009). Conceptions of citizenship, history and society are determined largely by human factors. Like in Spanish case, in Japan, in progressive trends, there is a tendency to critical analysis of historical memory; whereas, in conservative trends, there is a tendency towards hiding military actions or justifying them through revision of historical memory (Nozaki, 2001, 2008). This last option implies deny assaults and avoid responsibilities in "great patriotic deeds" of the Imperial Japanese Army in conflicts of recent past.

Thus, there are not major differences between ideological disagreements that affect to teaching of history in Japan and Spain. That is, when, in Spain, we analyze controversies in relation to critical analysis of historical memory, as is the case in Japan, we found several explanations. In this sense, Ruiz - Vargas (2008) defines historical memory as a claim that seeks "to show that some of our history, close or relatively close, has not yet ended, (...) pending for any kind of restitution and, therefore, it still continues hurting its evocation" (Ruiz - Vargas, 2008: 72). In general, at the time to

construct a responsible citizenship, we start from the reality and we understand that a simple "functional instruction" does not imply changes (Sawayanagi, 1978, King, 2000). Students should be able to participate in order to develop skills that will them confront to real social problems. A concrete example of interdisciplinary and enhancement of social change is found in the so-called "*Community Writing Projects*" (Simmons, 2010) where it is understood that investigation should be done in the context of a civic forum in order to promote active participation and, consequently, a social change through dialogue and attending to social, political and ethical contexts.

Furthermore, factors that determine a critical thinking are, according to Yinger (1980), Hervás and Miralles (2004): knowledge, experience, skills, attitudes and environment. These factors also will allow the construction of good social behavior through analyzing of attitudes of irrational hatred (gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion), not forgetting analyzing of hatreds based in intransigence of fundamentalisms (extreme left and extreme right, religious fundamentalism and secular fundamentalism, etc.) that often reflect an unhealed memory. In other words, it is a total act of civic irresponsibility to deny a conflict, considering that critical analysis of conflicts are bases for a truly democratic and free society. Therefore, we understand as necessary to promote a rational assumption of moderation and application of a principle of active listening to the others in the classroom, not to seek consensus, but to understand the different points of view.

Teachers' Reactions In Front Of Reforms And Patriotic Educational Guidelines: Struggle For Freedom Of Conscience

As it was stated in publication "Worlds of Education" published by Van Leeuwen (2007), general secretary of international teaching union "International of Education": the proposal of revision of 2006 (already approved) had rejection of political opposition, mobilized thousands of angry teachers because nobody counted on with them for that review and lack of support from most of Japanese citizens. In these protests, various social organizations participated; including "Japan Teachers Union", and its representative, Yasuo Morikoshi, who described as undemocratic because surveys showed that only had the support of 4%, of citizenship. Leeuwen, referring to this reform, indicates that "the dialectic of patriotism and national humiliation has not moral basis and it does a disservice to the youth. Historical accuracy is a prerequisite for learning from the past and for ensure the future in key of citizenship and democracy" (2007: 5). It question positive aspects of education reform advocated by conservative authorities. Unions, generally, highlighted the impact that this reform could mean for freedom of teachers' expression and potential conflicts with international standards.

However, teachers' discontent is not unique in this 2006 revision. For its direct link with memory and its subsequent impact on schools, we must emphasize that, in 1999, the Japanese parliament approved the "*Law Concerning to National Flag and Anthem*" which proclaimed "*Hinomaru*" (the white flag with red circle in the center) and "*Kimigayo*" (national anthem from 1868 to 1945) as national symbols. In this sense, the journalist Jun Hongo (2007) from "*The Japan Times*" confirms what for some people are symbols of national pride, for others they are symbols of imperial and militaristic past. That is why this law has become source of multiple controversies. One of the most significant incidents was the suicide of a school principal in Hiroshima in 1999 after a discussion generated about an order from local Board of Education that requested him pay tribute to flag and anthem (Onaha, 2009). In theory, recognition of *Hinomaru* and *Kimigayo* did not involve any action by citizens; but, since 2003, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government published a guideline which made mandatory explicitly to include "*Kimigayo*" at ceremonies of classes end and to stand up before him. The justification was on curriculum guidelines set by the central government to promote respect for the anthem and the flag (Hongo, 2007). In the same year, as it was stated from the newspaper "*The Nation*", a score of teachers refused to comply with that guideline considering that it violated their freedom of conscience. Response of authorities was salary reduction, suspension for six months or non-renewal of contract (for temporary workers). In 2006, Tokyo Tribunal ruled in favor of these teachers claiming that "*teachers are not obliged to sing Kimigayo*" and "to force somebody to do it is a violation of freedom of thought and conscience". In other words, Tokyo Tribunal considered that this policy was contrary to "*Fundamental Law of Education*" (1947), which prohibits to Government "*any excessive intervention*" in teaching.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government appealed and continued punishing teachers who refused to stand up before an anthem whose lyrics praises to emperor and that, according to teachers, it had strong militarist connotations from Japan's imperial stage. More than 400 teachers have been punished (pay cut), suspended, reprimanded or even re-educated. One of the best known cases is about the teacher Kimiko Nezu in 2008. Nezu posted on his blog the whole process and her experiences; she also continued mobilizing under suspension, moving public opinion and received numerous national and international supports from platforms and school unions against militarization and in favor of teachers' freedom (Steffenhagen, 2008, Inouye, 2008).

Nowadays, these issues are a source of controversy, but despite the pressures, there are teachers who have decided to fight for public education and freedom of conscience (Myart-Cruz, 2009), basing in that their obligation is to mold the students as citizens (articles 9 and 19 of the Constitution of Japan, 1946) and rejecting the current state intervention in matters of national identity formation. The researcher of the University of Tokyo, Yoshihiro Kokuni (2007, Onaha, 2009) has questioned the policies of the new national government. He stressed the existence of parents and teachers' movements to rescue Democracy in Japanese schools and the existence of more interest and concern from young people about current direction that national policies are taking.

Conclusion

To affirm that memory belongs to the past, that it is totally buried and it has no place in the teaching of history; it is like to say that there is an illusory consensus similar to which involved the process of transition to democracy in Spain. In this sense, Moulian (1998) says that consensus is the highest stage of oblivion. Similarly, we have seen as political and ideological divergence is reflected in school and in teaching of history, in different countries like, for example, Spain and Japan. Lack of dialogue between political authorities and teachers generates rejections. Similarly, the inclusion of issues that affect to freedom of conscience generates discomfort and conflicts between education policy and education professionals.

In general, since 1999, polemics in Japan, about legislation of Liberal Democratic Party which are recognized as national symbols "*Kimigayo*" and "*Hinomaru*", and the debate about guidelines for inclusion of such symbols at official ceremonies of graduation (especially since 2003) are analogous to disputes about inclusion of the subject Education for Citizenship in official curriculum by the Spanish Socialist Workers Party. In both cases there are "*objectors*" and in both cases, governments have rejected this objection. Historical memory and ideological aspects are the main characters in all these facts. A clear example of this, we have it in the birth of agains - narratives in history textbooks from Tsukuru Kai. In other words, the memory management can be a powerful instrument of social control. The refusal to accept a critical analysis of historical memory, praise of military action and omission of traumatic events in history and victims' voices have been the conservative and patriotic reaction to the widespread use of textbooks where these episodes are narrated and where they attends to the victims' voices from a critical point of view.

To summarize, if 60 years ago, in Japan, conflicts appeared around of disparity between a conservative (political and bureaucratic) authorities and progressive academia; currently seem these conflicts are repeating. In other words, while patriotic trend seeks to find solutions to "*moral decay*" of young people through the "*love of country and tradition*", progressive trend seeks to exercise their profession without giving up their critical awareness about recent past. In the middle of a process of reform in education and emergence of academic debates, it seems more necessary than ever that, in Japan, as in Spain, we must recover critically the memory in history teaching; strengthening bonds between countries (and different historical sides in conflicts), not to forget, but not to repeat traumatic events that could affect all citizens.

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