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**A Comparative Study of History Education in South Korea, Japan and Germany:  
Nationalism, Democracy and International Relations**

This comparative education research analyses the History curriculum, History school textbooks and History education practices in classrooms of South Korea, Japan and Germany. On the one hand, it aims to criticize the nationalistic characteristics of History education in South Korea and Japan. On the other hand, it provides concrete information about how German History curriculum and textbooks have changed from nationalism and political narrative oriented into method and competence oriented teaching and learning guidance since 1970s through the deliberation and endeavor of people from all walks of life, such as historians and educational administrators.

This research project consists of two parts: 1. Documentaries Analysis and Empirical Examination;

1. Documentaries Analysis

Firstly, in regard of previous Studies: Studies of Korean history education researcher have criticized history textbooks of South Korea which overemphasize national identity. Researches about Japanese history textbook point out nationalistic propensity with victimhood narrative and insufficient mentioning of atrocities against other Asian people in early 20C. Articles on History Education in Germany introduce German government's efforts on historical reconciliation with neighboring countries through avoiding producing negative images of each other. Beutelsbacher Consensus of Germany which prescribes neutral politic education in Germany is also introduced in various South Korean journals.

Secondly, it will compare History curricula of aforementioned three countries focusing on Objectives, Competences, Contents and Guideline for Evaluation. In South Korea and Japan, national curricula of History subject stipulate objectives and contents of History lessons in schools, By contrast, 16 different regional governments in Germany have their own History curriculums, and different types of schools, gymnasium and other vocational school types, have different curricula. This study focuses on History curriculum of Baden-Württemberg for Gymnasium. South Korean National History Curriculum contains following Objectives: 1) Pupils understand the main facts and concepts of Korea and world history, and grasp the interrelationships between them. 2) Pupils understand the political changes in Korean history and world history, focusing on themes. 3) Pupils identify the historical background and interrelationships of the problems faced in today's society, and expand their understanding of the modern world and our country. 4) By comparing and analyzing various

historical data, pupils develop historical thinking abilities in order to comprehend historical facts synthetically and contextually. 5) Pupils develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, together with self-awareness, reviewing various historical data. 6) Pupils respect the cultural and traditional values that appear differently in time and space, and develop a posture of respect for democratic and peaceful values. Whereas History curriculum of Baden-Württemberg includes value of history subject instead of specific objectives. It allocates many pages describing following 5 historical competences: Questioning Competence (Fragekompetenz), Methodological Competence (Methodenkompetenz), Reflexion Competence (Reflexionskompetenz), Orientation Competence (Orientierungskompetenz), Knowledge Competence (Sachkompetenz). These historical competences are closely linked with the History textbook contents. The process of deciding new history curriculum in BW will be also examined focused on constituent of human resources of the curriculum committee, topics of meetings, reports written during the progress.

Third part is textbook comparison. It compares textbook unit compositions, descriptions about relations between neighboring nations, unit summaries, questions which are proposed in units and images such as photos, maps, paintings and statistic tables. Institution of textbook publication and approval also differ from nations. In South Korea and Japan, the government screens textbooks and its approval is essential for being used as textbooks, while in Germany each regional government decide whether to screen and approve give approval without screening process.

## 2. Empirical Examination

In this part, perceptions and attitudes of history teachers will be analyzed by method of interview, and the structural interview contains following question categories: Becoming History Teacher, Meaning of History Education, Teaching, Curriculum, and Evaluation

Secondly, through participatory observation, it will compare History lesson practices of elementary (5, 6 grades), lower (7, 8, 9 grades) and upper (10, 11, 12 grades) secondary level in South Korea and Japan to gymnasium (5 ~ 12 grades) in Baden-Württemberg. Focuses are lesson objectives and teacher-students, students-students interactions, worksheets, note taking.

Lastly, evaluation in school semesters and history subject knowledge asked on university entrance examination will be compared. Generally speaking, exams of South Korea and Japan are multiple choice test, whereas exams in Germany asks pupils to describe knowledge and opinions in sentences.

History education has been a source of persistent conflict among East Asian nations since the Japanese History Textbook Controversy in 1982 along with recurrent territorial arguments and controversial acts of political leaders. A number of articles have criticized the nationalistic nature of History education in South Korea and Japan, which potentially reproduces hatred against each nation and misunderstanding on the past among impressionable pupils. My research intends to raise awareness on this issue and contribute to changing these practices. Detailed knowledge on History Education in Germany which focuses on teaching pupils historical competences and how to address historical issues with various methodologies would provide concrete know-how for History educators in East Asian countries. The Openness and Peace-orientation of History Education is urgently needed and important for the next generation, not only in South Korea and Japan, but also in China, Taiwan and North Korea. This is because the pupils of today are living in a globalized and international society in which many cultures interact with each other.

**Keywords:** History Education, History Curriculum and Textbook, History Education in East Asia, History Education in Germany, Democracy, Nationalism, National Identity and History Education, Historical Competence, Historical Method.